



Student Council

Thursday 27th October 2016, 6 – 8 pm, Teviot Debating Hall

MEETING SUMMARY

Overview

<u>Motion</u>	<u>Result</u>
Give Edinburgh students a voice: integrate voter registration and enrolment	Passed
Edinburgh University Students' Association condemns Antisemitism	Passed
Students must oppose the UK government's immigration clampdown (Expenditure request)	Passed
NUS and UCU National Demonstration (Expenditure request)	Passed

1. Welcome and overview

Welcome and overview of the agenda by Alec Edgecliffe-Johnson, Edinburgh University Students' Association President. Overview of changes to democracy regulations as a result of democracy review.

2. Accountability

Reports from the Sabbatical Officers were given and questioned from the floor.

a) Report from Jess Husbands, Students' Association Vice President Societies & Activities

- **Question 1:** On a motion passed last year to get better funding for the student counselling service, and how the funding still hasn't gone up much.
- **Answer 1:** They are looking at the best ways to develop the funding, and they have established a new counselling service at Moray House. They are still questioning the balance between the role of the NHS and of student counselling for student welfare

Report Passes: For: 127, Against: 3.5, Abstain: 14

b) Report from Patrick Garratt, Students' Association Vice President Academic Affairs



- **Question 1:** Regarding postgraduate tutoring – are undergraduates aware of what their postgraduate tutor is supposed to do – often there are overexpectations.
- **Answer 1:** The code will not put any more work on postgrad/postdoc tutors, unless they are paid for it. This is to really make the distinction between students and staff, which is often blurred for postgrad/postdoc tutors.
- **Question 2:** Regarding what avenues there are to contribute own opinion to this postgrad review.
- **Answer 2:** Working to get students involved with UCU and set up postgrad forums for discussion about how they are treated.

Report Passes: For: 128.5, Against: 1, Abstain: 15

c) Report by Jenna Kelly, Students' Association Vice President Services

- **Question 1:** Regarding Kings' Buildings sandwich bar – are there any plans to extend this?
- **Answer 1:** The queue has now been split into sandwich making queue and coffee queue – will look into further ways to shorten the queue.
- **Question 2:** Regarding investment for Kings' Buildings house and where the money has gone.
- **Answer 2:** £0.5 million put in, upstairs has been developed but the project has been delayed, but full intention to spend the whole money on KB

Report Passes: For: 125, Against: 5, Abstain: 14.5

d) Report from Alec Edgecliffe-Johnson, Students' Association President

- **Question 1:** Regarding the participation grant and how it is spent on societies.
- **Answer 1:** There is a societies fund for societies but the participation grant is for individuals to cover the costs of equipment, travel etc.
- **Question 2:** Regarding a reported £200,000 deficit in Students' Association budget.
- **Answer:** This was based on estimates of the budget, but actually we have potentially made a lot more during the festival. In either case, given significant reserves the association has been building, we are in a very safe financial position.

Report Passes: For: 133, Against: 3.5, Abstain: 13

3. Motions



i. Give Edinburgh Students a Voice: Integrate Voter Registration and Enrolment

Motion request (extracted from motion for background information purposes):

1. Lobby the university to integrate voter registration and enrolment, so that students can choose to submit information via an online form for both matriculation and voter registration
2. Follow the 'Sheffield Model' implemented at other institutions and outlined in this document, where the university has an agreement with the council that allows it to collect data for voter registration via its existing online system for matriculation

Discussion of motion:

Speech in favour:

1. Referendum results showed how little students voted
2. We should have integrated enrolment, where students tick a box to share their information with the council
3. Early results in other places seem to suggest it increases participation

No opposing speaker.

Motion Passed: For: 120.5, Against: 4, Abstain: 19.5

ii. Support Edinburgh University Students' Association Condemns Anti-Semitism

Motion request (extracted from motion for background information purposes):

1. Edinburgh University Students' Association will reaffirm its commitment to fighting antisemitism and will condemn it in all its forms.
2. The Students' Association will adopt the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) Working Definition on antisemitism (see below) as a document integral to identifying and fighting antisemitism.

Discussion of motion:

Speech in favour:

1. There have been multiple experiences of antisemitism, but when this is called out people have been called liars
2. Jewish community have become doubtful that the students' association really condemns antisemitism

Speech in opposition:



1. There is a specific issue with the definition used by EUMC. It confuses antisemitism with antizionism and for this it has been called unworkable
2. Issue with self-determination clause - There are a number of laws in Israel which discriminate between Jews and non-Jews

For the motion speech:

- Quotes email from a Jewish father saying he will not send his sons to Edinburgh because they feel threatened. Regardless of Israeli policy, we should be concerned with someone not coming to Edinburgh

For the opposition speech:

- The EUMC definition confuses antizionism (which is a political agenda) with antisemitism. You can be against a state and against the concept of what Israel is without being anti-Semitic. Need to find a proper definition that doesn't associate questioning Israel with questioning Jewish people

Question:

- Is there a way of finding a definition that achieves this?

Answer:

- Jewish people define antisemitism. There is a clear distinction present in the EUMC definition

Comment:

- Judaism is an ethnicity as well as a religion. This motion is seeking to end antisemitism on campus, there are plenty of ways to prevent Israeli policy otherwise

Comment:

- None of the things objected to in the amendment are incompatible with criticising the actions of the Israeli government. They all refer to issues which are completely reasonable

Summation:

- This is the definition that the Jewish community uses, it isn't just thought up. We need a way to stamp it out, voting for anything less will show that Edinburgh doesn't take antisemitism seriously

Motion passed: For: 127.5, Against: 13, Abstain: 19

iii. NUS and UCU National Demo (Expenditure request)

Motion request (extracted from motion for background information purposes):

1. To request, dependent upon travel arrangements with other students' associations, a maximum of £1,650 from the Students' Association's campaigns budget to subsidise the cost of coach travel to the NUS and UCU National Demonstration on 19 November.

Discussion of motion:



Speech in favour:

1. This money is specifically for campaigning – in this motion there are two coaches worth for £1650 and these are to support other universities in colleges in Edinburgh.
2. About the demo, there are fundamental changes to education. Since Brexit, there has been some terrifying rhetoric coming out from the government regarding foreign people, we need to combat this and march for international students and FE students

Comment:

- This is a really important thing to do when education is under attack. It would only take £10 billion a year to fund free education. This is a political choice to make it free. All of society benefits from having educated people. Need to support the NUS and use the support of UCU, so we can make education a public good and a universal right.

Comment:

- Student from the US saying that they are an education refugee, they could not possibly afford US education. This is why the motion is so important.

Question:

- Is this funding going towards less economically able students?

Answer:

- Yes, we are putting funding aside to spend on this

No opposing speaker.

Motion passed: For: 48, Against: 1, Abstain: 6

iv. Students must oppose UK immigration rules (Expenditure request)

Motion request (extracted from motion for background information purposes):

1. Give People & Planet up to £200 for campaign materials including banner making, leaflets, posters and other related expenses to help run the Migrants' Rights campaign on campus.

Discussion of motion:

Speech in favour:

- £200 to spend on migrant's rights, for different societies, to raise awareness about the terrible situation for migrants in the country, which will only get worse from Brexit

Question:

- Do any of these societies have plans for what this money will be spent on?

Answer:



- P&P have plans to focus on the daily express, a week of actions in Glasgow, helping asylum seekers and students in Scotland to go down to Yarlswood for a protest

No opposing speaker.

Motion passed: For: 43, Against: 4, Abstain: 7

4. Societies Council Report.

Before each meeting of Student Council, Societies Council produce a report detailing any new societies which require approval. These societies will already have been approved by Societies Council who have assessed if they are distinct from any existing societies, can demonstrate there's a demand for their group, and have a sustainable committee structure in place. This Student Council vote formalises the societies as members of the Students' Association.

Societies Council Report Approved: For: 108.5, Against: 1.5, Abstain: 17.5

Meeting close.

Turnout:

Total number of ballots from students: 77

Total number of ballots from elected representatives: 56

Total number of ballots: 133