



## Student Council

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017, 6-8 pm, Teviot Debating Hall

### MOTION WORKSHOP SUMMARY

---

#### 1. President

- a) Improving the University's complaints process.

*What will we do?* Lobby the university to ensure both parties are held accountable for their actions in regard to the University's regulations, and that there are more immediate repercussions.

*What is the background to this?* If you are a minority in the University there is no proper channel to voice complaints or hold people to account, so the process should be adhered to within time frames and parties should be held to account.

Other ideas:

- Recognising international students for our ability rather than our financial capacity
- Affordable weekend travel to KB
- More options for travel at busy times (like 8-9am, 4-5pm)
- Wide access to after-hour study spaces regardless of which school students are for
- More outreach about elections/democracy etc. to get more student involvement
- Free big cheese on your birthday
- End structural inequalities – fix it
- Space for liberation officers in the new student centre
- A university community
- Better transport to Little France and other campuses
- Build more floors on the library or a new central library 2
- Increase speed limits

#### 2. VP Activities & Services

- b) Reducing financial barriers to accessing activities.

*What will we do?* Reduce membership fees across the board (especially bundle packages), require accountability from society Presidents about why they are asking for that price, have the



University subsidise/pay for membership, and encourage alumni to donate to society fees/sponsor.

*What is the background to this?* Students are excluded from societies because of upfront membership costs and other costs e.g. equipment, and societies aren't cost-conscious enough in their events.

*What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?* Everyone should have equal access to activities, as they will improve student experience/NSS results, and more people will participate.

- c) Widening access to activities for part-time, parent, carers and working students.

*What will we do?* Reduce financial barriers (see other motion), encourage societies to vary their activity times/days, and publicise events/meetings in advance (for planning).

Other ideas:

- Society templates – not easy to edit
- Rainy hall – supplies
- Fund for school convenors/initiatives
- Approve societies more than before Xmas
- Fringe time: Student Association/Teviot space available e.g. bar
- Social spaces for ECA

### 3. **VP Community**

- d) Increase in guarantor scheme and discuss who can access it (especially international and exchange students).

*What will we do?* Review criteria, promote it more to all students who may need it, and make clear what it provides, deadlines etc.

*What is the background to this?* Many international students do not have a UK-based guarantor and have to pay 3-6 months in advance, making it high risk and inaccessible.

*What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?* We believe that all local and international students should be able to access affordable and safe housing without discrimination and receive housing support and advice from university.

- e) Zero food waste

*What will we do?* Prevent excess food that is not sold in Students' Association outlets being thrown in the bin. To stop this waste where



possible we will partner with local charities and organisations and donate it to them for the benefit of the community, donate it to student groups who run food reuse projects or have staff take home food instead.

*What is the background to this?* Unsustainable, bad for the environment, and it helps with social issues across Edinburgh as less people go hungry.

*What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?* Personal experience, social justice, and ethical and moral reasons.

Other ideas:

- More food sharing drop-off points
- Bring back VegWare at Student Association venues
- Less packaging
- Subletting regulations
- Lobbying council to have better rules to make flats safe and sustainable to live in by students
- More university flats and more students should know.

#### 4. VP Education

a) Consistent guidelines and practices of PT's

*What will we do?* PT's should be from the same background, and there should be more PALS, peer and academic families in each subject, with more incentive to take on these roles.

*What is the background to this?* No clear guidelines for PT's, inconsistent practice across school and university, and many students not applying for special circumstances that need it.

*What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?* Dissatisfied with the system, which has an unfair disadvantage.

Other ideas:

- Keep the paper after the exam initiative – exam feedback from markers should be available for all exams.
- More diversity in courses through a more inclusive curriculum, hiring more people of colour, better implicit bias training, end racism
- Rate of expansion equal to support facilities (classes too large)
- Uptake of replay – who makes this compulsory?
- Discouraging professors from intentionally drawing attention to the few women in STEM for non-academic reasons
- Tutorial allocation is difficult and short/last minute
- Class rep training into each should with school meetings (in person)



# Representation & Democracy

- ECA: PT's, heads of course and main point of contact are often the same staff member, which makes students uncomfortable reporting problems.
- Law school: 7 exams in Semester 1 and all those count 100% towards the final grade, which means it does not represent the students' knowledge at all.

## 5. VP Welfare

- Therapy dogs in KB as well
- Ergonomic (adjustable height) chairs throughout the library and all study spaces
- Cultural awareness and counselling and intersectional services
- Reach out to attempt to increase engagement among students with ASD/social difficulties through more quiet/sensory friendly student spaces around the university
- University cafes should label carb content, sugar etc.
- The Vet should – February welfare week online aspect
- More kettles/microwaves in Library and other study spaces
- More food in university and Student Association venues for those with intolerances and allergies other than gluten free e.g., DF, nut free etc.