

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST STUDENTS' UNION

MINUTES

Statutory Meeting of the Students' Union Council
held on Thursday 19 March 2015 in The Space, Level 1, Students' Union

Present:

Aaron McMurray	School Rep, Maths and Physics
Alex Crowley	EPS
Anna-Leigh Hunter	School Rep, Modern Languages
Annalisa Misra	EPS
Aoibhin McNeill	EPS
Brendan Corr	Open
Caoimhe McNeill	EMC
Chloe Patterson	EMC
Colin Stevenson	EMC
Collette McAllister	AHSS
Connor Malone	PG
Conor Fearon	PG
Courtenay Mercer	School Rep, History and Anthropology
Derek Crosby	PG
Diane Murdock	School Rep, EEECS
Ellie Drake	AHSS
Fergal McFerran	Open (Union Speaker, in the Chair)
Helen Monaghan	MHLS
Jack Patterson	AHSS
Jack Steenson	School Rep, Management
James Camblin	EPS
James Rodgers	School Rep, GAP
Jan Sen Yu	AHSS
Jonathan Irwin	AHSS
Kathryn Waller	AHSS
Katie Perry	AHSS
Kyle Moutray	Open First Year
Matthew Lowe	PG
Matthew McCallion	School Rep, Law
Michael Quigley	PG
Molly Devlin	School Rep, Pharmacy
Molly Harrison	PG
Neil Anderson	EPS
Niall Robb	AHSS
Nyemahame Okwu	MHLS
Oisin Hassan	PG
Patrick Sally	EMC
Paul Loughran	EPS
Rachel Hill	Open
Rachel Ireland	School Rep, English
Raymond Dillon	EPS
Ruth Maxwell	Open
Sammy Wade	AHSS
Saoirse O'Neill	Open
Sophie Stratfull	AHSS
Stephen McCrystal	AHSS
Timothy McLean	Open
Vicky-Leigh Young	School Rep, Chemistry and Chemical Engineering

In Attendance:

Damien Corridan (Deputy Clerk of Council)
Dominic Doherty (Clerk of Council)
Niamh McGovern (The Gown)
Kristina Mulholland (Marketing Assistant)
Kylie Noble (The Gown)
Paul Wyatt (The Scoop QUB – Queen's Radio)
Rebecca Hall (President – NUS-USI)

Connor Malone (Union Deputy Speaker, in the Chair) welcomed all attendees to this Statutory Meeting.

975. ELECTIONS

There were none.

976. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS / RULES AMENDMENTS

976.1 **Proposed Removal of Constitutional Requirement for a Candidate / Student Officer to be in Good Academic Standing at the Time of Election and throughout their Period of Student Office**

Remove the following (Clause 14.2 of Chapter One of the Students' Union Constitution):

"They shall be registered students of the University who are in good academic standing at the time of their election and shall be registered by the University as full-time students for the academic year of their sabbatical office."

Replace this with the following:

"They shall be registered by the University as full-time students for the academic year of their sabbatical office."

In addition, remove the following (Constitutional Rule 4, Appendix 1, Clause 3.2):

"A Student Officer shall remain in good academic standing throughout his / her term of office."

And renumber the current Clause 3.3 accordingly

Proposer: Sarah Wright (40002922)

Seconder: Seán Fearon (40079053)

Caoímhe McNeill, moving the amendment, stated that this constitutional amendment had been previously approved by Council, but as there had been queries regarding the process of approval, the amendment had been submitted again in order to remove all doubt, and that Council should approve the amendment, reaffirming the decision taken at the previous meeting.

Timothy McLean (Open), opposing the amendment, thanked Councillor Wright for resubmitting the amendment, noted the importance of Council following approved procedure as a protection to minority groupings on the Council and stated that the amendment would allow anyone to stand for office even if they weren't in good academic standing.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor McNeill waived her right to summarise.

A display of voting cards indicated that 34 Councillors were in favour; this proposed amendment to the Constitutional Rules could not therefore attract the required number of votes from Council to come into effect.

976.2 **Amendment of Constitutional Rule 2 to Increase the Period of Time between the Close of Nominations for the Student Officer Elections and the Opening of Polling for same:**

Rule 2, Clause 9.12

Replace "the eighth day before" **with** "the twelfth day before".

Proposer: Sarah Wright (40002922)
 Seconder: Brendan Corr (40107847)

The Union Speaker, Fergal McFerran, resumed the Chair and thanked the Deputy Speaker for his taking the Chair for the opening period of the meeting.

Brendan Corr (Open), moving the amendment, stated that increasing the time between close of nominations and the voting period would enable the Students' Union to prepare candidate election material and to promote participation in voting in a more effective manner.

Niall Robb (AHSS), opposing the amendment, stated that the Council voted to extend the nomination period in the previous year and that further lengthening the campaign could discourage involvement in the student officer elections.

Caoímhe McNeill, speaking on the amendment, stated that the amendment was more related to the close of nominations than the extension of polling and that Union staff need more time to prepare candidate materials.

In response to a point of information from Niall Robb, Caoímhe McNeill stated that it was her intention to bring forward proposals to amend the range of election materials made available to candidates.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor McNeill waived her right to summarise.

A display of voting cards indicated that 38 Councillors were in favour; this proposed amendment to the Constitutional Rules could not therefore attract the required number of votes from Council to come into effect.

976.3 **Provision for the filling of casual vacancies on the Students' Union Council**

Amend Rule 1, Clause 3 as follows:

Insert a new Section 3 after Section 2 and re-number the subsequent Sections accordingly. The new Section 3 shall be worded as follows:

3. Casual vacancies in the membership of the Students' Union Council shall be filled in the following manner:
 1. In the case of a multi-member constituency, the next highest-polling candidate who was unsuccessful in the previous general election for the constituency concerned shall (with their prior consent) be co-opted to fill the vacant seat in time for the next meeting of the Council.
 2. In the case of a single-member constituency, or in the case of a multi-member constituency in which there is a lack of consenting candidates available for co-option to fill any vacant seats, a bye-election for the purposes of filling the vacant seats shall be held no more than 30 days following the seats falling vacant.
 3. In the case of a multi-member constituency where there are consenting candidates available for co-option, but the number of available consenting candidates is less than the number of vacancies to be filled, the available consenting candidates shall be co-opted to fill a number of the vacancies which is equal to the number of available consenting candidates. A bye-election shall then be held no more than 30 days following the seats falling vacant to fill the remaining vacancies.
 4. If a member of the Council is elected to represent one constituency then subsequently elected to represent another constituency in an election held at a later date, then the member shall be deemed to have resigned from their previous seat and the seat shall be deemed to have fallen vacant.

5. If a member of the Council is elected to represent more than one constituency in elections held on the same date, then the member must select which constituency they wish to represent by the first meeting of the Council following the election. The member shall be deemed to have resigned from the other seat(s) and the seat(s) shall be deemed to have fallen vacant.
6. The Rules regarding nominations for bye-elections shall be the same as those which apply to nominations for the position concerned at a general election for that position.
7. This Section shall not apply in the case of casual vacancies caused by the failure of the outgoing member to attend meetings of the Council, excepting either the conclusion of an unsuccessful appeal regarding the vacancy by the outgoing member concerned or in cases whereby the outgoing member concerned fails to make an appeal regarding the vacancy in accordance with the Rules.
8. This Section shall not be interpreted as applying to casual vacancies among the Student Officers.
9. In this Section:
 - consenting candidate available for co-option* means such a candidate as outlined by sub-section 1 above;
 - outgoing member* means a member of the Council who has vacated their seat;
 - general election* means an ordinary election held to elect most or all members of the Council near the beginning of the academic year;
 - multi-member constituency* means a constituency from which more than one member of the Council is elected to represent, as prescribed by Rule 2.8 (i.e. either the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences constituency, the Engineering and Physical Sciences constituency, the Medicine, Health and Life Sciences constituency, the Postgraduate constituency, the Open First Year constituency and the Open constituency);
 - single-member constituency* means a constituency from which only one member of the Council is elected to represent, as prescribed by Rule 2.8 (i.e. the School Representative constituency).

As well as the above, amend Chapter One of the Constitution as follows:

In Clause 9.3, insert the following after “in accordance with the Rules.”: “Casual vacancies in the membership of the Council shall be filled in accordance with the Rules.”

Proposed: Matthew McCallion (40134313)
 Seconded: Oisín Hassan (40058773)

Matthew McCallion, moving the amendment, stated that the poor turnout at the present meeting, and the resignation of nearly one fifth of Councillors was a poor reflection on the Council and that those who were deemed to be resigned should be replaced, to better give opportunity to those who wish to serve and there needs to be a full and active Council to hold officers to account.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor McCallion waived his right to summarise.

A display of voting cards indicated that 41 Councillors were in favour; this proposed amendment to the Constitutional Rules could not therefore attract the required number of votes from Council to come into effect.

977. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following Reports were considered by the Council:

Report of the Union President	SUC/P/15/9
Report of the Vice President Campaigns and Communications	SUC/P/15/10
Report of the Vice President Clubs and Societies	SUC/P/15/11
Report of the Vice President Education	SUC/P/15/12
Report of the Vice President Equality and Diversity	SUC/P/15/13
Report of the Vice President Welfare	SUC/P/15/14
Report of the Vice President Community	SUC/P/15/15

- 977.1 The Union Speaker notified Council that it was understood the Report of the Union Speaker had not been submitted to the Clerk of Council within the timeframe set down in the Standing Orders and was thus considered to be rejected by Council, subject to right of appeal to Council.

A display of voting cards indicated that Council assented to defer consideration of the Report of the Union President to the next meeting of the Council.

- 977.2 The report of the Vice President Campaigns and Communications was taken as read.
- Following a show of voting cards, the Report of the Vice President Campaigns and Communications (SUC/P/15/10) was accepted.

- 977.3 The report of the Report of the Vice President Clubs and Societies was taken as read.
- Following a show of voting cards, the Report of the Vice President Clubs and Societies (SUC/P/15/11) was accepted.

- 977.4 The Union Speaker notified Council that the Report of the Vice Education had not been submitted to the Clerk of Council within the timeframe set down in the Standing Orders and was thus considered to be rejected by Council, subject to right of appeal to Council.
- A display of voting cards indicated that Council assented to consider the Report of the Vice President Education.
- The Report of the Vice President Education was taken as read.
- Following a show of voting cards, the Report of the Vice President Education (SUC/P/15/12) was accepted.

- 977.5 The Report of the Vice President Equality and Diversity was taken as read.
- Following a show of voting cards, the Report of the Vice President Equality and Diversity (SUC/P/15/13) was accepted.

- 977.6 The Report of the Report of the Vice President Welfare was taken as read.
- Following a show of voting cards, the Report of the Vice President Welfare (SUC/P/15/14) was accepted.

- 977.7 The Union Speaker notified Council that the Report of the Vice President Community had not been submitted to the Clerk of Council within the timeframe set down in the Standing Orders and was thus considered to be rejected by Council, subject to right of appeal to Council.
- A display of voting cards indicated that Council assented to consider the Report of the Vice President Community.
- The Report of the Vice President Community was taken as read.

Following a show of voting cards, the Report of the Vice President Community (SUC/P/15/15) was accepted.

978. REPORTS FROM OTHER UNION COMMITTEES AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

978.1 Report of the Education and Welfare Committee

There was none.

978.2 Report of the Campaigns and Communications Committee

There was none.

978.3 Report of the Community, Equality and Diversity Committee

There was none.

978.4 Report of the Clubs Societies and Student Development Committee

A verbal report was presented by Jack Patterson, Chairperson of the Committee, detailing a recommendation to amend Rule 8, Paragraph 820 of the Constitution in order to give Conditional approval to the following proposed Clubs and Societies:

Queen's University Belfast Shinken-Do Martial Arts Society
Queen's University Belfast Polymath Society
Queen's University Belfast Weightlifting Club
Queen's University Belfast Barnardo's
Queen's University Belfast Saudi Society
Queen's University Belfast ABC for Life
Queen's University Belfast Microbiology Society

It was noted that all of the above had provided all of the stipulated documentation, which was available for inspection upon request.

Recognition each of the above named Societies was approved.

978.5 Report of the Environmental and Ethical Committee

There was none.

978.6 Officer Review Group

There was none.

979. REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES.

There were none.

980. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS.

There were none.

981. QUESTIONS.

To the Vice President Welfare

981.1 Council passed a motion in November asking the officer team to lobby the Minister for Employment and Learning regarding monthly student finance payments. Could you provide an update on what action was taken and what response was received? In

addition, could you highlight what action will be taken (petitions, questions in the Assembly, campaigns) for the remainder of the semester to ensure that we receive monthly student finance payments allowing students to budget effectively and alleviate the risk of falling into financial hardship?

Proposed: Sarah Wright (40002922)
 Seconded: Ruth Maxwell (40009309)

The Vice President Welfare stated that the matter had been discussed at the Executive Management Committee and, arising from this discussion, the Union President had raised the issue with the Minister for Employment and Learning, a MLA has been contacted with regard to sponsoring an event in Stormont to raise awareness of the issue at which students could directly discuss the matter with MLAs.

In response to a supplementary question regarding the timing of any proposed event, the Vice President Welfare stated that he hoped that the event will take place before his term of office ends.

- 981.2 Considering that we have a large proportion of students living in poverty, partially due to a lack of monthly student finance payments, why has the Union failed to prioritise National Student Money Week, and what do you feel could be done to improve students' engagement in such an event for next year?

Proposed: Ruth Maxwell (40009309)
 Seconded: Sarah Wright (40002922)

The Vice President Welfare stated that he has worked with the Students' Union Advice Centre to promote National Student Money Week, including the hosting of an event in the Union. He further stated that it was necessary to expand money management advice and give more information to students during the welcome and induction week, to build on activities already in place, such as blogs and other promotional activities.

In response to a supplementary question regarding the use of available communication channels, the Vice President Welfare stated that the range of channels for communication should be reviewed.

- 981.3 Could the Students' Union have done more to support, promote and accommodate the most recent SHAG Week?

Proposed: Matthew McCallion (40134313)
 Seconded: Sarah Wright (40002922)

The Vice President Welfare stated that he had become ill in the period just prior to SHAG week and was unable to organise activities for that reason, but in lieu of this, he provided assistance and materials to the Sexpression Society, who ran a series of activities during the week in question.

The Vice President Welfare further stated that he wished to host a sexual health workshop.

To the Vice President Campaigns and Communications

- 981.4 The new postgraduate building is set to open in a matter of weeks. Could the VP Campaigns and Communications please update Council regarding what progress has been made to ensure that opening hours in the new building will be extended over the examinations period, and whether this is likely to happen in advance of the forthcoming summer examinations period?

Proposed: Ruth Maxwell (40009309)
 Seconded: Jack Patterson (40106346)

The Vice President Campaigns and Communications stated that he had met with the head of the Postgraduate Centre regarding the issue and they are attempting to source funding to support the cost of providing additional opening hours, but it was unlikely that it would happen in this academic year, due to budget constraints.

To the Vice President Equality and Diversity

- 981.5 When the VP Equality and Diversity assumes the role of Students' Union President for 2015-16, will she follow the precedent set by former Union Presidents and take part in the November 2015 Remembrance Sunday commemorations?

Proposed: Kyle Moutray (40129967)
 Seconded: Jack Patterson (40106346)

The Vice President Equality and Diversity stated that she wished to be a representative of all students but was not in a position to commit to any particular events at this stage as she was unaware of any other commitments at this time that may coincide with her participation in the commemorations. The Vice President stated that she would always prioritise her activities in accordance with student needs and priorities.

982. MOTIONS.

- 982.1 This Council calls upon Queen's University Belfast to publically disclose information concerning the details of the investments made using QUB's endowment funds. In particular, we call for the public disclosure of:

- (i) A list of the companies which Queen's is currently invested in;
- (ii) The amount currently invested in each company; and
- (iii) The annual returns being made on each investment.

Proposer: Seán Fearon (40079053)
 Seconder: Oisín Hassan (40058773)

This motion was withdrawn by the proposer.

- 982.2 This Council demands that Queen's University Belfast immediately freeze any new investments and commits to the complete withdrawal of any existing investments, in:

- (i) Companies whose main business is the extraction and / or production of fossil fuels; and
- (ii) Any co-mingled or mutual funds that contain fossil fuel holdings.

Proposer: Seán Fearon (40079053)
 Seconder: Oisín Hassan (40058773)

This motion was withdrawn by the proposer.

- 982.3 This Council authorises the staging of Students' Union Referenda on the following dates, for the purposes outlined:

- On Thursday 14 May 2015, to ratify those changes to the Constitution and its Rules that have been adopted by the Council during its 2014-15 session and, in addition, to ratify the Students' Union Strategic Plan 2015-20.
- On Tuesday 20 October 2015, to determine the Union membership's view on continued affiliation to the national students' unions.

Proposed: Ciaran Gallagher (Union President)
 Seconded: Caoimhe McNeill (Vice President Equality and Diversity)

Caoimhe McNeill, moving the motion, stated that this was a procedural motion to enable members to approve constitutional amendments and to consider the Union's new Strategic Plan 2015-20.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor McNeill waived her right to summarise.

A display of voting cards indicated that 42 Councillors were in favour. The motion to stage two Referenda was clearly carried by the required majority.

- 982.4 Council notes that information regarding NUS-USI, NUS and USI delegate elections goes to student councillors and not the entire student body.

Council expresses concern that students who have not been elected to council but are active in student politics, clubs or societies and SSCCs do not have an equal opportunity to run for election to national conferences to represent QUB students.

Council asks that all information pertaining to national conferences and the NUS-USI update should be sent to all Queen's students.

Proposed: Sarah Wright (40002922)
 Seconded: Brendan Corr (40107847)

Brendan Corr (Open), moving the motion, stated that this motion would ensure that a more broad range of students are aware of delegate elections for the national conferences.

Niall Robb, speaking on the motion, stated that, as far as he was aware, the information was sent out to a broad audience, including Clubs and Societies.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor Corr waived his right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.5 Council notes that Amnesty International NI has called for abortion to be permitted in Northern Ireland in cases of fatal foetal abnormality, rape and incest in line with international human rights standards.

Council is concerned that at least 59,614 women have been forced to travel to access reproductive healthcare and abortion since 1970, including women who have suffered a sexual crime or have received the devastating news that their foetus has fatal foetal abnormalities.

Council affirms that seven in ten people in Northern Ireland support such a reform of such restrictive laws.

Council supports the Amnesty International NI #MyBodyMyRights campaign and asks that the Executive Committee join with NUS-USI and other groups to campaign for change.

Proposed: Ellie Drake (40076883)
 Seconded: Sarah Wright (40002922)

The Union Speaker declared an interest in the tabled motion and temporarily vacated the Chair. The Deputy Speaker assumed the Chair in his stead.

Ellie Drake (AHSS), moving the motion, stated that it was imperative that Council supports a motion that extends the right of women to avail of abortion facilities in Northern Ireland in the cases of fatal foetal abnormality, rape and incest, noting that over fifty nine thousand women in Northern Ireland have travelled to GB for an abortion, some of which have to pay in the region of £1,000 for access to this service, and many of whom are students.

Matthew Lowe (PG), opposing the motion, stated that he could not support such a motion due to his religious beliefs; predicted fatal foetal abnormality did not always result in death and that rape and incest cases are in themselves very traumatic to the mother, without also punishing a child for something that they were not responsible for.

Collette McAllister (AHSS), supporting the motion, stated that women needed to be treated with respect and had to have the right to make difficult choices and access to essential medical services, particularly if they were unable to travel to GB.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor Drake waived her right to summarise.

Following a secret ballot, as requested by a Councillor, the motion was clearly carried, with 29 votes in favour, ten votes in opposition and four abstentions.

- 982.6 Council notes that students can access the Student Support Fund and Hardship Fund if they encounter financial difficulties.

Council expresses concern that, whenever student applications to these Funds are declined, students are not informed why they have been rejected and will not receive funds or further support to alleviate financial difficulties.

Council instructs the Students' Union Advice Centre / Queen's Income and Finance Office to supply all students with an explanation why their application has been rejected and to offer further support.

Proposed: Sarah Wright (40002922)
Seconded: Ruth Maxwell (40009309)

Ruth Maxwell (Open), moving the motion, stated that students should, in the interests of fairness, be made aware of the reasons behind their rejection and should also be referred to alternate support services.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor Maxwell waived her right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.7 Council is concerned that there are an increasingly large proportion of students who fall into financial hardship throughout their time at Queen's as a result of emergencies, as well as a lack of monthly student finance payments and financial education.

Council notes that a motion advocating for financial workshops was passed in December 2014 and Council strongly advises that there should be additional workshops later in the academic year.

Council also instructs the sabbatical officers to run a QUB Students' Union 'National Student Money Week' (NSMW) each year, in line with other universities on the mainland.

Council recognises that whilst we participated in NSMW this year, students would benefit from a full week of innovative and creative activities in their Union, as well as across campus at key buildings, engaging more students including the most vulnerable and at risk of financial hardship.

Proposed: Ruth Maxwell (40009309)
 Seconded: Sarah Wright (40002922)

Ruth Maxwell (Open), moving the motion, stated that councillors should support this motion to ensure that the Union focuses on running a full schedule of events for National Student Money Week.

Chloe Patterson (EMC), speaking on the motion, stated that money management campaigns could be incorporated into activities such as 'Pop-Up SU'.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor Maxwell waived her right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.8 This Council recognises the efforts of the Students' Union as a whole to campaign for the betterment of the entire student population at Queen's. Council further recognises that some of the campaigns that are run are not always well known by the wider student body and that, in light of the recent student elections, a stronger bridge is needed to be built between the Students' Union and the student population.

In order to ensure that the hard work of each student officer and member of staff in the Union is recognised, this Council instructs that the Students' Union reviews and updates the Union website to reflect the campaigns that have been run in the past, projects that are currently live, and campaigns scheduled for a later date.

In addition, Council further instructs that each sabbatical officer is responsible for updating their own campaigns on the website, and for scheduling and highlighting future campaigns that they will be involved in. Council believes that each sabbatical officer should use social media to promote campaigns that they are running, to maximise student participation and to enhance the student community.

Proposed: Ruth Maxwell (40009309)
 Seconded: Timothy McLean (40082757)

Ruth Maxwell (Open), moving the motion, stated that councillors should support this motion to ensure that students are aware of the campaigns of the Union and are encouraged to participate in them.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor Maxwell waived her right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.9 This Council recognises that it is often difficult for the University to schedule and timetable examinations for all students within the limited time and space during exam period. Council notes that some lecturers are scheduling examinations as class tests during the Semester, rather than during the formal examinations period.

This Council further notes that some lecturers fail to notify the Examinations Office of these class tests, and this therefore causes problems with students who have additional needs. Rooms such as lecture halls have been used in the past for these class tests, and this Council believes that these should not be used for a variety of reasons, from comfort to difficulty in invigilating the class tests.

This Council therefore instructs the VP Education and the VP Welfare to work with the University to ensure that no student should have to sit either an examination or a class test in a room that is considered unfit for examination conditions, and to highlight the need for lecturers to register every class test with the Examinations Office, in order for the needs of all students to be met. Council further instructs that the sabbatical officers bring an update on this matter to the Council at its next meeting.

Proposed: Ruth Maxwell (40009309)
Seconded: Sarah Wright (40002922)

Ruth Maxwell (Open), moving the motion, stated that councillors should support this motion to ensure that all students have suitable access to appropriate facilities when undertaking assessments.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor Maxwell waived her right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.10 This Council notes that, at present, only 33% of people in Northern Ireland have signed up with the Organ Donation Register. Council further notes that 15 people die each year whilst waiting for an organ in Northern Ireland.

Council recognises the benefits that a campaign to encourage 'sign ups' to the Organ Donation Register could have within the Students' Union and therefore instructs the Vice President Campaigns and Communications to organise a series of 'sign up days' to encourage students and others to register.

Proposed: Jack Patterson (40106346)
Seconded: Colin Stevenson (40040325)

Jack Patterson (AHSS), moving the motion, stated that considering organ donation was a duty of all citizens, nearly all of whom would avail of a donated organ if their lives depended on it, and the Union should encourage students to join the organ donation register and inform their families of their decision.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted.

In summation, Jack Patterson (AHSS), stated that it was important that has many people as possible sign up as only a fraction of actual donations are actually used.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.11 This Council notes that, as the examinations season approaches, the libraries at Queen's become increasingly busy, with students finding it difficult to find suitable seating and space for working.

This Council further notes that there is currently no provision for disabled students to avail of priority seating in any of the silent study areas in the McClay Library and that whilst disabled students can book group study rooms for individual use, this may be unsuitable for some students with mobility disabilities and other types of disabilities.

This Council therefore instructs the VP Equality and Diversity to contact the McClay Library and encourage them to implement a facility of priority seating for students, particularly those with mobility disabilities, within a silent study area.

Proposed: Stephen McCrystall (40109651)
Seconded: Oisín Hassan (40058773)

Stephen McCrystall (AHSS), stated that it was important that Council sends a message to the University to continue enhance the provision for disabled students un the McClay Library.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor McCrystall waived his right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.12 This Council notes with serious concern and condemns the decision taken by Newry and Mourne District Council to approve the naming of the Patrick Street Play Park in Newry after a convicted IRA terrorist, Raymond McCreesh, on 2 March 2015. Council further notes that the vote was taken prior to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland making a final formal ruling on the matter.

This Council believes in the interests of reconciliation and believes that any public space, including the Students Union, should not be used to glorify terrorism.

Proposed: Timothy McLean (40082757)
Seconded: Jack Patterson (40106346)

Timothy McLean (Open), moving the motion, stated that it was a shame that many Councillors don't want to debate this issue - given that the Equality Commission has stated that Mourne District Council have "failed to follow its own equality scheme" – given the desire of some Councillors to debate a whole host of other equality issues, particularly as the issue concerned the naming of a public space after a convicted terrorist.

Connor Malone (PG), speaking on the motion, stated that the description of a person as a 'terrorist' should not be used in the debate, as in the strictest legal and academic terms, a wide number of state and 'anti-state' actions could be classified as 'terrorist', detracting from the true sentiment of the motion.

Ellie Drake (AHSS), proposed a Special Motion, that the business under discussion be suspended indefinitely, stated that the motion under discussion was divisive, sectarian and did not benefit the Council or students.

A proposal to proceed to the vote on the Special Motion was accepted.

Following a show of voting cards, the Special Motion was clearly carried.

- 982.13 Council notes that, at present, the University has no policy regarding the availability of online learning resources, such as lecture slides, notes etc.

Council believes that, in order to enhance the student learning experience, students should be provided with lecture slides / notes via Queen's Online Learning (QOL) at least 24 hours in advance of the lecture, with the exception of guest lecturers / speakers.

Council therefore instructs the Vice President Education to work with the University and individual Schools to create a policy on the availability of online learning resources.

Proposed: Jack Patterson (40106346)
Seconded: Hannah Niblock (40003332)

Jack Patterson (AHSS), moving the motion, stated that students should have access to resources at least twenty four hours before lectures.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor Patterson waived his right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.14 Council notes that printing prices are currently 5p for black and white and 20p for a coloured page. Council believes that this is an extortionate amount for students to have to pay and adds to the problem that hidden course costs create for students. Council also believes that the fact that discount is not offered whenever students print double sided is unfair and exploitative.

Council instructs the Students' Union Executive Management Committee to lobby Queen's for cheaper printing and to campaign for an alternative to the expensive printing that is offered by the University.

Proposed: Caoimhe McNeill (40022327)
Seconded: Seán Fearon (40079053)

Caoimhe McNeill (EMC), moving the motion, stated that it is possible to find alternative arrangements for more affordable printing for students.

Nyemahame Okwu (MHLS), supporting the motion, stated that printing costs were extortionate and that the Union act on this issue.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor McNeill waived their right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.15 This Council notes the decision of the GAA to disallow openly gay referee David Gough from wearing a rainbow armband during a recent match at Croke Park.

This Council totally rejects the GAA's flawed reasoning behind this move, and calls for the organisation to reflect upon the impact that it will have on young players and supporters across the island who are already struggling with their identity and a persistent homophobia in society.

Council instructs the Vice President Equality and Diversity to write to the GAA and implore them to proactively work on their anti-homophobia policies, whilst asking them to recognise that the referendum on same-sex marriage in May 2015 is one of equality, not politics.

Furthermore, Council instructs the VP Equality and Diversity to lobby any such sporting organisations to allow members to campaign freely on LGBT+ equality issues, without fear of silencing or prejudice.

Proposed: Oisín Hassan (40058773)
Seconded: Seán Fearon (40079053)

Oisín Hassan (PG), moving the motion, stated that it was disgraceful that the GAA was preventing its members from expressing their support for LGBT rights.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor Hassan waived his right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

982.16 This Council instructs Sabbatical Officers to only use the term 'Northern Ireland' in any official documentation, when referring to Northern Ireland.

Proposed: Jordan McMullen (40125688)
 Seconded: Jonathan Irwin (40101330)

This motion was withdrawn by the proposer.

982.17 This Council recognises that a great number of mature students face various problems and difficulties regarding receiving the support available to other students and with regards to taking part in the social life of the University and the Students' Union.

This Council believes that mature students should have the same opportunities as other students to take part in the social life of the Students' Union and that mature students should be able, as far as possible, to receive a greater level of support than that which is currently available to them, taking into account the various individual cases, e.g. family life, employment, travel, etc.

This Council instructs:

- the VP Equality and Diversity to devise a strategy to ensure that mature students have opportunities to take part in the social life of the Students' Union;
- the VP Welfare to devise a strategy to ensure that mature students are able to receive the full benefits of the support available to other students (as far as possible); and
- the VP Campaigns and Communications to establish events and campaigns to assist the VP Equality and Diversity and the VP Welfare in the above tasks.

Proposed: Matthew McCallion (40134313)
 Seconded: Brendan Corr (40107847)

Matthew McCallion (School Rep), moving the motion, stated that the motion was self-evident and that mature students deserved better support from the Students' Union.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor McCallion waived his right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

982.18 This Council recognises the requirement for students to arrive at lectures and tutorials punctually.

This Council believes that, in order to better facilitate this with regards to students with mobility disabilities, there should be a regular bus service exclusively for disabled students between Elms Village and the main campus.

This Council instructs the Union President and the VP Welfare to liaise with the Translink Youth Forum in order to establish an hourly bus service exclusively for students from Elms Village to the main campus.

Proposed: Matthew McCallion (40134313)
 Seconded: Jonathan Irwin (40101330)

Matthew McCallion (School Rep), moving the motion, stated that provision of such as bus service would improve the student experience, especially that of disabled students.

Kathryn Waller (AHSS), speaking on the motion, stated that disabled students have been able to get taxi trips funded when they were entitled to the Disability Support Allowance.

Chloe Patterson, speaking on the motion, stated that it may be possible to use the bus owned by Elms.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor McCallion waived his right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

- 982.19 Council notes with grave concern the abolishment of the Student Experience Bursary and the cut of almost 25% to the Student Bursary. Council notes that the university informed the Students Union that these cuts are a directive from DEL at a meeting of the Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Project Group on 13/03/2015

Council believes that these cuts will have a detrimental impact on students who would usually benefit from these bursaries. Council also believes that the University should not have accepted these cuts without proper consultation with the student body and strong opposition to DEL.

Council instructs the Executive Management Committee to determine who exactly has forced these cuts. Council also instructs the Executive Management Committee to lobby the relevant people to reverse these cuts and to voice a strong opposition to these cuts.

Proposer: Caoimhe McNeill (40022327)
Seconder: Ciarán Gallagher (40007279)

Caoimhe McNeill (EMC), moving the motion, stated that this cut only came to light in the middle of a University Committee meeting, that the University was blaming DEL for a decision that it is taking of its own accord, a decision which impacts on students from the lowest socio-economic backgrounds and that it was not believable that the University were making this cut as their 'only option'.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Councillor McNeill waived their right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was clearly carried.

983. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

There was none.

984. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Union Speaker announced that the next Statutory Meeting of the Students' Union Council was scheduled to take place at 6.00 p.m. on Monday 27 April 2015 in The Space, Level 1, Students' Union.

DAMIEN CORRIDAN (Deputy Clerk, Students' Union Council)