

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST STUDENTS' UNION

MINUTES

Statutory Meeting of the Students' Union Council
held on 28 October 2019 in The Lounge, Level One, SU Elmwood.

Present:

Adam McKenna	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
Aditya Ajit Sali	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
Aidan Moran	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Angela Rogan	Executive Management Committee - Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) Faculty Officer
Ashley Kane	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Axelle Larue	Students' Union Council - MHLS Representative (Undergraduate)
Calum Irvine	Students' Union Council - MHLS Representative (Undergraduate)
Charlotte Nolan-Browne	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Chawit Jittanon	Students' Union Council - International Student Representative (including INTO)
Ciarán O'Brien	Executive Management Committee - VP Welfare
Collins Akor	Executive Management Committee - Postgraduate Research Officer
Connor Veighey	Executive Management Committee - Union President
Conor Loughran	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
David Griffith	Students' Union Council - MHLS Representative (Undergraduate)
Dyuti Das	School Representative - School of Pharmacy (SPMY)
Eden Baker	School Representative - School of Nursing & Midwifery (SNAM)
Ellen Fearon	Executive Management Committee - VP Student Activities
Emily Bond	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
Emma Quin	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Gift Sotonye-Frank	Executive Management Committee - VP Postgraduate
Grian Ní Dhaimhín	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Hamsavani Rajeswaren	Executive Management Committee - VP Equality & Diversity
Hannah Orr	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Hayley Donnelly	School Representative - School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences (SMED)
Jack Powell	School Representative - School of Biological Sciences (SBIO)
Jacob Kyle	Students' Union Council - MHLS Representative (Undergraduate)
Jamie Waring	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Jan Carson	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Jason Bunting	Executive Management Committee - VP Education
Jessica Lawrence	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
John Ewing	Students' Union Council - All First Year Representative
Jonathan Davis	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Katie McCleary	School Representative - Social Sciences, Education and Social Work (SSESW)
Kyle Johnston	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
Lauren Bailey	Executive Management Committee - Postgraduate Taught Officer
Mark Francos	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Mark Hamilton	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
Matthew Kelly	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Michael Upham	School Representative - School of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering (SMAE)
Midhun Madhusoodanan	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Molly Liggett	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Nathan Horbury	Students' Union Council - All Student Representative
Neville Cobbe	School Representative - Institute of Theology (ITHEO)
Niall Polland	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Padraig Quinn	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Peter McMurray	Executive Management Committee - Medicine, Health and Life Sciences (MHLS) Faculty Officer
Rebecca Russell	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
Ryan Zantinge	Executive Management Committee - Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) Faculty Officer
Sandisiwe Nyanda	Students' Union Council - International Student Representative (including INTO)
Sarah Biggers	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Sean-Diarmaid Kelliher	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Tany's Insley	Students' Union Council - International Student Representative (including INTO)
Tiffany Gracias	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Xinlu Zhang	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)

In Attendance:

DAMIEN CORRIDAN (CLERK OF COUNCIL)
KRISTINA CONNOLLY (MARKETING ASSISTANT)
LOUISE MCGEOUGH (ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION ASSISTANT)

Connor Veighey (Union President) welcomed all attendees to the first Statutory Meeting of the 2019-10 session of the Students' Union Council.

1. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from the following Councillors:

Ahmad Merzah	Students' Union Council - MHLS Representative (Undergraduate)
Aodhán Ó'Baoill	Executive Management Committee - Irish Language Officer
Aoibhinn Graham	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Bella Bella	School Representative - School of Chemistry & Chemical Engineering (SCHEM)
Holly Huddleston	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
Huda Al Baqali	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
Leah Rea	School Representative - School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics (SHAPP)
Megan McAlister	School Representative - School of Psychology (SBS)
Peter Smyth	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Rebecca Holmes	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Samuel Holst	School Representative - School of Mathematics & Physics (SMP)
Sophie Carlisle	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Sultan Abbas Shajahan Sait	Executive Management Committee - Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students' Officer

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2.1 Annual Business Meeting of 30 March 2019

It was agreed that the minutes of the Annual Business Meeting of 30 March 2019 (SUC/M/13/3) were a true and accurate record of proceedings.

3. BUSINESS ARISING

There was none.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 Introductory Remarks from the NUS-USI President (Robert Murtagh)

The NUS-USI President, Robert Murtagh, addressed Council, encouraging participation by Councillors in the national union and detailing some NUS-USI priorities for the year ahead, including:

- Publicly-funded tertiary education system
- The impact of Brexit on students
- Partnership and union development
- Consent and reform of Relationship and Sex Education

4.2 Introduction to Student Council and the Procedures for Student Council

The Clerk of Council gave an overview of the procedures for Student Council and encouraged members of Council to contact the Student Voice Team with any queries.

Councillors were advised that they are required to send apologies to the Deputy Clerk of Council if they are unable to attend a meeting of Council. It was noted that any member of Council who misses three consecutive meetings of Council shall have been deemed to have resigned their seat.

4.2 Introduction to the Students' Union Executive 20189-20

Connor Veighey (Union President) introduced Councillors to members of the 2019-20 Executive Management Committee:

Connor Veighey

Union President

Jason Bunting	VP Education
Hamsavani Rajeswaren	VP Equality & Diversity
Gift Sotonye-Frank	VP Postgraduate
Ellen Fearon	VP Student Activities
Ciarán O'Brien	VP Welfare
Angela Rogan	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) Faculty Officer
Sultan Abbas Shajahan Sait	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students' Officer
VACANT	Disabled Students' Officer
Ryan Zantinge	Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) Faculty Officer
Liam Magill	Environmental and Ethical Trading Officer
VACANT	International Students' Officer
Aodhán Ó'Baoill	Irish Language Officer
Elliot Beever	LGBT+ Officer
Amber Gillespie	Mature Students' Officer
Peter McMurray	Medicine, Health and Life Sciences (MHLS) Faculty Officer
David Oaikhena	Part-Time Students' Officer
Collins Akor	Postgraduate Research Officer
Lauren Bailey	Postgraduate Taught Officer
Adam Aicken	Student Carers' Officer
Emman Sohail	Student Parents' Officer
Kit Penlington	Trans Students' Officer
VACANT	Women Students' Officer

4.3 Volunteer SU - Inspiring Leaders Programme – Deadline (29 October 2019)

The Vice President Activities (Ellen Fearon) presented an overview of the Volunteer SU Inspiring Leaders programme and advised Councillors that the deadline for applications was 29 October 2019.

4.4 Autumn Election 2019 – Update

The Council noted that elections took place for Course Representative positions, and for the following constituencies of Council:

- Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
- Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences
- Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences
- Postgraduate
- All Students
- All First Year Students
- International Students
- School Representatives

The Council further noted that elections took place for the following Non-Sabbatical Student Officer positions:

- Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) Students' Officer (Bye-Election)
- Mature Students' Officer
- Part-Time Students' Officer
- Student Parents' Officer
- Postgraduate Research Students' Officer
- Postgraduate Taught Students' Officer
- Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) Officer
- Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) Officer
- Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences (MHLS) Officer

1,832 students voted across all elections on Tuesday 8 October 2019, casting a total of 6,642 votes across all elections. This represents the second highest turnout on record for autumn elections and the largest number of individual votes cast.

4.5 Council Membership – Update

The Council noted that the current membership of Council was ninety-one members.

4.6 Executive Management Committee – Membership Update

The Committee noted that the Union President has received notification of the resignation of the following Part-Time Student Officers:

- Disabled Students' Officer (Michael McConway)
- Women Students' Officer (Chloe Ferguson)
- International Students' Officer (Anirudh Sawhney)

Council noted that a bye-election will be conducted to fill these posts in accordance with the Rules.

5. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS / RULES AMENDMENTS

There were none.

6. BUSINESS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Appointment of Returning Officer for the Student Officer Elections 2019-20

The Council approved the proposal by the Director of the Students' Union to appoint Nora Duncan (Senior Development and Campaigns Advisor, NUS-USI) as Returning Officer for the 2019-20 Student Officer elections.

6.2 Student Officer Plan of Work 2019-20

The Student Officers provided an overview of a paper detailing the Student Officer Plan of Work 2019-20 (SUC/P/19/14).

In accordance with Rule 4 (1.21) of the Constitution, Council approved the Student Officer Plan of Work 2019-20 (SUC/P/19/14).

7. BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION

7.1 Students' Union Redevelopment Project – Update

The Union President presented a brief overview of progress on the development to-date, including confirmation of the recent approval of planning permission by Belfast City Council and the current status of the draft designs for the project.

7.2 Students' Union Strategic Plan 2020-25 – Update

The Union President stated that planning has commenced for the development of the next Students' Union Strategic Plan looking beyond 2020, including a detailed consultation with various stakeholders including:

- Students of the University
- Students' Union Staff, Student Officers and other student representatives
- Senior staff and operational staff across the University
- Members of Senate
- Students' Union Management Board lay members
- External stakeholders, including the business community, the local community and voluntary sector and other external stakeholders

A five-year strategic plan will be drafted in the coming months with a view to securing the required approval from students and the University in early/mid 2020.

It was confirmed that Council will be consulted and have final approval of the Strategic Plan.

7.3 Students' Union Autonomy – Update

The Union President reported that the Union and the University appointed a consultant to complete an independent study into the current relationship between the Students' Union and the University.

Following completion of the review, and in consultation with the Registrar and Vice-Chancellor, it was agreed that the Students' Union shall develop a draft Relationship Agreement for consideration by the University.

This document will clarify the existing relationship and areas in which progress can be made in order for the Students' Union to operate under a more autonomous and independent model.

The Union President confirmed that full autonomy remained a long-term goal and that Council will have approval of any draft relationship agreement.

8. BYE-ELECTIONS

There are none.

9. ELECTIONS

Nominations were invited for the following positions:

9.1 Union Speaker (1 vacancy)

Michael Upham, Mark Francos, Kyle Johnston and Jessica Lawrence were duly proposed. This election also featured Re-Open Nominations. Following the tallying of votes cast (Upham 11, Francos 22, Johnston 8, Lawrence 24, Re-Open Nominations 0), Ms Lawrence was deemed elected and chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Council endorsed the convention, that the second placed candidate in the election of Union Speaker, Mark Francos, will assume the post of Deputy Speaker.

9.2 Students' Union Management Board (3 vacancies)

Conor Loughran, Mark Francos and Sean-Diarmuid Kelliher were duly proposed.

The candidates whose names are underlined were elected.

9.3 Standing Committee (15 vacancies)

Ashley Kane, Mark Francos, Jamie Waring, Grian Ní Dhaimhín, Aidan Moran, Jack Powell, Nathan Horbury, Conor Loughran, Katie McCleary, Calum Irvine, Charlotte Nolan-Browne, Rebecca Russell and Tanys Insley were duly proposed and deemed elected.

It was noted that nominations will be re-opens for the two remaining vacancies.

9.4 Environmental and Ethical Committee (10 vacancies)

Michael Upham, Ryan Zantinge, Emma Quinn, Emily Bond, Adam McKenna, Mark Francos, Mark Hamilton, Jack Powell, Tiffany Gracias and Jonathan Davis were duly proposed and deemed elected.

9.5 University Senate (1 vacancy)

Jonathan Davis, Eden Baker, Ryan Zantinge, Emily Bond, Mark Francos, Grian Ní Dhaimhín and Jack Powell were duly proposed.

The candidate whose name is underlined was elected.

9.6 Academic Council (1 vacancy)

Jack Powell, Eden Baker, Jamie Waring and Emily Bond were duly proposed.

The candidate whose name is underlined was elected.

9.7 Academic Board (4 vacancies)

Conor Loughran, Emily Bond, Charlotte Nolan-Browne and Hannah Orr were duly proposed.

The candidates whose names are underlined were elected.

10. MOTIONS

10.1 **Climate Emergency**

Council Notes:

- That the impacts of climate breakdown are already causing serious damage around the world
- that the 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C', published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in October 2018, (a) describes the enormous harm that a 2°C average rise in global temperatures is likely to cause compared with a 1.5°C rise, and (b) confirms that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector;
- That students across the world have played a leading role in pushing climate breakdown to the forefront of government agendas, and that it's important that this work continues and that Universities are also held accountable for their climate policies as well as local and national governments;
- That whilst the Students' Union can carry out an action plan to reduce its own carbon footprint, so much of our ability to do this is controlled by the University's own carbon management plan due to our lack of autonomy, and Queen's ownership of our Students' Union buildings
- that strong, radical policies to cut emissions are essential to our future, and also have associated health, wellbeing and economic benefits; and
- That, in recognising this, a growing number of local authorities, unions and institutions have already passed 'Climate Emergency' motions.

Council therefore commits to:

- Declare a 'Climate Emergency' that requires urgent action
- Lobby the University to make their activities net-zero carbon by 2030
- Ensure that all future decisions by the University and the Students' Union, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with this shift to zero carbon by 2030
- Establish a Climate Action Group within the Students' Union to monitor progress on all of the above

Proposer: Ellen Fearon (Vice President Student Activities)
Seconder: Niamh Oddy (Student)

Following a show of voting cards, this motion was carried.

10.2 Introduction of Postgraduate School Representatives

Council Notes:

1. The number of postgraduate representatives on Council has increased from 13 to 20 this year.
2. PG students are still disproportionately underrepresented across the University.
3. PG students are one of the fastest growing student cohorts at QUB and they are significantly academically underrepresented, despite their diverse academic needs
4. Currently, the percentage of filled postgraduate Course Representative positions for PGR and PGT programmes sits at 27% and 49% respectively, out of a total of about 250 postgraduate representative positions that should be filled each year.
5. This year it has been agreed with the University that student representatives on the University's Postgraduate Forum are to be elected by the Students' Union, rather than nominated by Schools. This is, at best, a short-term measure and does not resolve the deficit in PG representation across campus.

Council Believes That:

1. There should be formal representation across the University, at School-level for PG students.
2. Postgraduate students should not be represented by undergraduate students in SSCCs as they are unlikely to understand and effectively put forward the issues that affect postgraduate students.
3. Increasing elected postgraduate representation at all levels, including at school level, is necessary to ensure postgraduate engagement within the QUBSU as well as within their schools and Faculty.
4. School-level representation should be expanded to include one School Rep (Undergraduate) and one School Rep (Postgraduate) for each School/Institute that offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
5. Both of these roles should be regarded as co-equal School Representatives, with the duties and responsibilities pertaining to their respective roles.

Council Resolves That:

1. The Vice President Postgraduate and Vice President Education shall lobby the University to give recognition to these posts across the University by embedding these in the appropriate University Regulations / Guidelines.
2. The Students' Union shall bring forward appropriate amendments to the Constitution to enable the election of postgraduate School Representatives and to give them membership of the Students' Union Council and other relevant fora.
3. The Vice President Postgraduate and Vice President Education shall work with Students' Union staff and the Graduate School to develop a model of training to support postgraduate academic representatives to fulfil their role effectively

Proposer: Gift Sotonye-Frank (Vice President Postgraduate)
Seconder: Jason Bunting (Vice President Education)

Council agreed that consideration of this motion be postponed until the November Statutory Meeting of Council.

10.3 Student Officer Scrutiny Committee

Council Notes that:

- Elected Student Officers are accountable, through Council, to the membership of the Students' Union.
- Student Officers provide verbal and written reports to Council throughout their terms of office.
- Student Officer can be questioned on their work by Councillors, both formally and informally.
- Student Officer reports are voted upon by Council, which has the power to ensure that mechanisms are put in place to monitor the work of an Officer.

Council Believes that:

- Student Council meetings do not provide sufficient time to provide detailed scrutiny of the work of Student Officers.
- Student Officer are not sufficiently questioned by Council nor are Student Officer reports given due consideration by many Councillors.
- The Students' Union Council will be more effective if a Scrutiny Committee is established for the purpose of reviewing Student Officer reports and questioning Student Officers.
- Such a Committee should support, and not replace existing scrutiny undertaken by Council.

Council Resolves to:

- Establish a Special Committee, to be known as the Scrutiny Committee of Student Councillors to review the work of Student Officers on an on-going basis for 2019-20 academic year.

Committee Remit:

The remit of the Scrutiny Committee, as delegated by Council, shall be:

- To review the work of Student Officers, in particular by reviewing their published Reports
- To question Student Officers on their published Reports
- To make recommendations to Council on the work of Student Officers
- To make recommendations to Council on existing processes for scrutinising the work of Student Officers

The Council may request the attendance of any Student Officer at a meeting of the Committee.

Student Officers are obliged to attend any meetings to which they are summoned.

The Committee shall meet on at least one occasion between each Statutory Meeting of Council.

The membership of the Committee shall be nine elected members of the Council, with voting rights, and the Union Speaker (who shall chair the Committee), without voting rights.

Council agreed that consideration of this motion be postponed until the November Statutory Meeting of Council.

11. REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Council agreed that consideration of this matter be postponed until the November Statutory Meeting of Council.

12. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There were none.

Reports from individual Student Officers will be considered at the November Statutory Meeting of Council.

13. REPORTS FROM OTHER UNION COMMITTEES AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

There were none.

14. REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES.

There were none.

15. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS.

There were none.

16. QUESTIONS (TO ELECTED STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES)

There were none.

17. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

There was none.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Ms Lawrence announced that the next Statutory Meeting of the Students' Union Council would take place on Tuesday 12 November 2019 at 6.00 p.m. in the Senate Room, Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast.

DAMIEN CORRIDAN (Clerk, Students' Union Council)