



Student Council Minutes

For the meeting: Thursday 29 October – 6:30-8:30pm

Present:

Jacques Le Chevallier
Stacey Johnston

Chair of Student Council
DSC Member

Sarah Redrup
Tom Phipps
Stephanie Harris
Max Austin

Student Living Officer
Union Affairs Officer
Sport & Student Development Officer
Undergraduate Education Officer

Ann O'Malley
Rhys Taylor

Representation and Change Coordinator
Minutes

There were 145 voting members in attendance and 10 observers

1. Introductions

The Chair called the meeting to order at 18:30 and announced that the meeting was quorate.

2. How Student Council works

Chair explained what student council is, who student council consists of and how the cards work. See presentation.

3. Officer introductions

The full time officers present introduced themselves and talked through 2 current plans.

Sarah - focusing on Don't Rent Yet Campaign throughout November. Campaign to help students understand what they need to know about renting and house hunting. Second campaign is a student-led mental health support group. Secured funding to run two support groups led by students that is free to students, hoping to establish a PG specific group.

Max - outlined his plans around access to exam scrips - pilots rolling out in January exams, hoping to roll out across the University in the summer. Lecture series with university support - Bristol SU as an intellectual centre - talks from high profile people to generate discussion

Laura (updated by Max) - PG Network development with 4 welcome events with good attendance. Diversifying the curriculum - training course reps at Student Leaders Conference.

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Steph - cost of sport at Bristol remaining a priority and gathering student feedback on this, also focusing on Get Active and Varsity. First student leaders conference on Saturday - 250 attendees and now focussing on next SLC

Jamie (updated by Steph) - series of liberation discussions such as Prevent 101 - about the government's prevent agenda. Also looking at changes to DSA and ensuring that the university is working in the interest of disabled students.

Tom - engaging students who are traditional hard to engage in societies - International and PG students. Guide for clubs and socs on engaging PG students and providing specific training for engaging PGs. Consultations/Q&A with senior staff, first was with the VC last week discussions include BME attainment, divestment and overall satisfaction. Student attendance could have been better but discussion was positive and effective. Launched 5 year strategic plan - Tom outlined the 4 areas of priority

4. Articles Approval needed

Tom outlined the SUs articles and that changes need the consent of Student Council. Outlined the proposed changes including university representation and rewording of role titles and the investment through social enterprise activity and reinvest in the SU.

Request for separate vote on each amendment to take in parts

Vote on voting as a whole - passes
Vote to approve the changes - passes

5. QAA 'The Big Review' 2015/16 - We'll be presenting our approach to influencing the University's external review in 2016 by the Quality Assurance Agency, and launching our consultation to enable students to shape the priorities for change that will influence the direction of the University for the next 5 years.

Max outlined what the Higher Education review and what the student written submission is, and what the role of the QAA is. Outlined the requirements on universities – Self Evaluation Document and Student Written Submission.

SWS has to reflect students' experiences at Bristol and importance of engaging students in the process. MA outlined the process that the SU took to outline the main themes and areas of concern and start producing the submission.

Emphasised the importance of student engagement and that student feel ownership over the process and submission. MA outlined the general themes/content of the submission and the overarching theme of disparity between students.

Encouraged students to attend consultation and take online consultation.

Vote to delegate approval to Standing Committee - passes

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6. Motions:

1. Commitment to BME welfare and attainment Motion

Speech for: Hannah D - WP Students Officer - outlined the motion and background information and Bristol stats. Outlined BME attainment gap that exists in UK HE.

Speech against: No speech against

Questions:

- Asian students perform well in anglo-centric education system. Point 1 discusses eurocentricity and in advert racism. Response: NUS published comprehensive report - Race for Equality - and breaks down the stats for subgroups within BME definition.
- Discrimination in marking - how that is identified given that there is anonymous marking policies. Response: no detailed analysis of marking but lots of information on implicit bias and anonymous marking and overall attainment gaps
- What happens if Bristol stands up for the race for equality charter? Response: similar to Athena Swan accreditation to measure the success of women in STEM. Bristol has adopted this and can see online what level of accreditation each school has on Athena Swan. Race accreditation would do the same.
- Final assessment results - results determined by students and their ability not their background. Does this not happen. Response: this is the ideal but not all subjects mark anonymously and that affects attainment.

Vote: motion passes

2 - End Blacklisting at UoB

Speech for: Sofia Doyle - outlined the background to the motion and key information.

Speech against: No speech against

Questions:

- Would blacklisting allow people who have been dismissed because of malpractice be able to be employed again. Response: very different things. Info does not show that. All union workers.

Vote: motion passes

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3 - Bristol SU to support students in lobbying for wider food choices to facilitate for religious student groups

Speech for: Noah Levy - outlined the motion and the need to cater for a diverse range of growing students and multifaith campus.

Speech against: no speech against

Questions:

- news coverage of maltreatment of animals and motion doesn't cover ethical slaughter – Response – not related to motion

Vote: motion passes

4 - Students' Health Service to be Accessible to All Genders

Speech for: outlined the reasoning behind the motion and the need for support to legitimise the request

Speech against: no speech against

Questions:

- no questions

Vote: motion passes

5 - Support a Strike Ballot

Speech for: Zack - background to motion around governmental funding changes to education. Outlined strikes in other countries and their impact, including UK demonstrations. NCAFC asked for SUs to vote on motions to trigger a vote at NUS in each member union to decide on student strike.

Clarification from chair on supporting ballot on strike, not supporting a strike

Speech against: Tom Phipps - agrees with the proposer in all the reasons why they call for this strike, but disagrees with the approach. Encourages students to consider tactics that targets support from MPs, for example.

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Questions:

- Question for Tom - in 2009 saw student strike around tuition fees in Germany and Quebec - outlined a number of proposals where student strikes have been successful. Why is it not suitable now? Response: are we targeting the right people? Need to target people who can make a difference. Agree in principle not on tactics. Zack response: this is part of a number of tactics and a wider campaign, need to consider what other action students can take but more students should be involved
- Question for Tom - people may disagree on action, but should we have a vote on whether we should take strike action. Response: should have detailed discussion before we decide on tactics now.
- Question - clarification on what the motion actually triggers. Response: if ballot doesn't get approved then the strike won't happen. Outlined NUS procedures on member ballots.
- Question to Zack - what other actions could we be taking? Response: national demo coming up soon, lobbying MPs, demos/occupations on campus.

Vote: motion passes (second count conducted)

6 - Bristol SU must recognise Holocaust Memorial Day

Speech for: Hannah Rose - outline the history of the Holocaust and the Memorial Day on 26th of January. Outlines SU current policy on racism and discrimination.

Speech against: no speech against

Questions:

- no questions

Vote: motion passes

7 - Lobby the University to work towards achieving the Flexitarian Restaurant Award in all cafés within University

Speech for: Sophie Gordon - outline the background of the Award in Bristol. Flexitarian - more sustainable and ethically sourced food choices. Population is growing and putting demands on food sources

Speech against: Sam - Computer Science and maths Course Rep - university already has policy on sustainable food sourcing and sustainable approaches to providing food. Need clarification on what action the SU should be asking the university to take.

Questions:

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- Will this mean removing meat options that are already there? Response: no not about restricting choice but opening up more options and ensuring that food is ethically sourced and sustainably sourced
- Scientific evidence about the positive impact of sustainably sourcing food and the University already has organic and sustainable product - should we be pushing for more? Response: objection is about the award not what the award tries to achieve. Need more specific measurable. Response from Sophie: website specifies criteria required to achieve the award
- Will this include gluten free etc. Response: flexitarian does not include this.

Vote: motion passes

8 - Improvement in University Time-Table notice

Speech for: Avni - electronics course rep - background to current situation about breaks between lectures and what the motion seeks to achieve.

Speech against: Charlie LGBT+ society - consider the logistics of the motion and how this would be delivered by the university, especially for 2nd and 3rd years and for larger student cohorts

Questions:

- Has there been any discussion with university staff about how the changes would affect staff as well as students. Response: the staff would benefit from more structured timetables for time for self-study
- Consideration for large blocks of study? - would students be unhappy with large blocks of lectures. Response: not calling for large breaks between lectures, just wants more consistency in timetabling and allow more self-study time
- How do you propose that departments allocate rooms among themselves? Response: solution among departments where students study on set programmes.

Vote: motion fails

7. Democratic Standards Committee elections

Outlined purpose of DSC and elections timeline

8. Any other business

None

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The chair close the meeting at 20:10

Student Council Chair: bristolsu-council@bristol.ac.uk

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