

Dear Senior Management Group,

This year, the University accepted 1,200 more students than the previous year. We recognise that you are working to resolve space and timetabling issues, however we are concerned that the student experience has been dangerously side-lined thus far.

This is not the first time the SRC has written to SMG about student numbers. In 2014, the SRC President outlined her concerns about the seriously negative impact of over recruitment and three years later, we are repeating history.

As was highlighted to us at the Court Strategy Away Day, student satisfaction informs league tables, and thus the University's reputation and ranking. We know that student satisfaction will drop as a result of the over recruitment and hope that you seriously consider making both short and long term changes to improve the experience for all the 28,000 students we now have.

The thousands of pounds of income brought into the University through student fees should be channelled directly back into improving the current student experience, rather than used to increase the University's operating surplus. We have outlined below our concerns and the priorities we feel would have an impact on students current and future.

Support Services

There have been no extra resources or spaces allocated to the Counselling and Psychological Service or Disability Service to compensate for the increase in demand. Considering the University's commitment to supporting its students, especially their mental health, **funding and dedicated space should be allocated to both services** to reflect the increase in pressure they have seen in the last month.

Exams

10% of our students use the Counselling Service and we recognise that university is a highly stressful environment, as commented on by students in the NSS open comments. In 2017, MaRIO took a paper to Chief Advisors Sub Committee showing that around 30% of undergraduates who had withdrawn from their studies cited stress experienced at University as a factor in leaving. This year, over recruitment will mean students will have evening, weekend and more exams over a shorter period of time. In September, SMG approved the Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan, which we contributed to and support fully. However, given the current over recruitment and strain on resources, what message is the university sending out to students? That mental health is a priority yet nonetheless the university are going to increase the pressure on them during the most stressful time? We would like a guarantee that **serious consideration will be given to planning the spring exam timetable** to ensure that students do not bear the brunt of this over recruitment during the most demanding part of their academic year.

Welcome Survey

You launched the Welcome Survey on the 24th of October in an attempt to capture feedback from new students on their experience. At Open Days, we are telling the next intake of students that the University offers an excellent student experience, but we are doubtful that our ambassadors will be voicing that same message in future. In light of the PTES results, it is important now more than ever that we know how our students, especially our PGT community, have found their experiences so far. We request that SMG **increase efforts to improve the response rate, report transparently and in**

good time, and act swiftly upon the feedback received through the survey and end of year feedback.

Study Space

Over the previous academic year, there has been an increase of only 150 study spaces in the Library. Through our representative structure, we hear election after election that students want the University to increase the number of study spaces available to students. The Library is at capacity and the Learning and Teaching Hub is two years away, we need an immediate solution. Although the SRC have been working with the Library to pilot 24-hour study space and has been opening pop-up study spaces during the exam period for years, this will not solve the capacity issues between 9am-5pm all year round. We would like SMG to **increase the number of permanent study spaces on campus considerably reviewing the current estate and improving the use and management of underused teaching and office space.**

Supervision

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan stated that there has been an increase in the number of staff reporting mental health conditions and we hear through the Staff Survey every year that colleagues are unhappy about their ever-increasing workload. Considering the University prides itself on offering high quality research-led teaching and supervision, we may ask ourselves who is going to supervise 1,000 extra PGT students from April onwards? You cannot expect staff to cope with this dramatic increase without recruiting and reallocating resources. We ask that the University **ensure there are enough staff to effectively supervise the extra students.**

Lecture Recording

As a quick gain with long-term impact, investing in the student demand to **increase the number of spaces with lecture recording capacity and encouraging staff to opt into the current policy** will not only make learning more accessible and increase student satisfaction, but will reduce some of the strain on our current estate. Although there has been a commitment to have all lecture theatres adapted by 2020, accelerating this is a key priority for the SRC.

We sincerely hope this is the last time the SRC has to write to you about over recruitment. The SRC prioritises the student experience above all else and this experience is now being compromised by the oversight which allowed 1,200 extra students to be enrolled this year. We hope we do not allow those students, many of whom are here for only one year, to leave feeling that the University of Glasgow is not worth the substantial fees they have paid to study here.

Considering the marketisation of universities in England is causing such a negative impact, our student community need to be reassured now more than ever that their student experience is prioritised over ever-increasing income.

We sincerely hope that as we reach the end of the semester, Senior Management Group will invest in the student experience, specifically in relation to the priorities above.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Powell - SRC President

Hannah-May Todd - Vice President Education

Lauren McDougall - Vice President Student Support

Pritasha Kariappa - Vice President Student Activities