

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY THE 13th FEBRUARY 2020 AT 6 PM
IN THE WILLIAMS ROOM, MCINTYRE BUILDING

Present: As per sederunt

Apologies: J Quinn, S Boyle, L O'Connor, L McBlain, F Paterson, H Baer,
T Banos, T Atsegoh, A Korosteleva, W Ng, K Mackay, J Hegele, D Darulis

Attending: P Swinton, B Hay, I Henderson, J Small

1) Welcome, Apologies and Sederunt

2) Minute of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes of previous meeting approved with the exception of two now-amended points –

- The accidental inclusion of a time-stamp next to D Ealey's Council report
- An incorrectly recorded comment from L Brady regarding the section in H Mylin's Council report dealing with the Vet School's queries on lecture recording transcripts – L Brady said that the provision of transcripts of lecture recordings is being discussed in Colleges such as the CoSE. This was initially incorrectly recorded as L Brady having said the provision of transcripts had already been successfully implemented by Colleges such as the CoSE

3) Peer Support – Lauren McDougall

L McDougall delivered a brief introduction to the Peer Support programme at the University, clarifying the nature of how the programme currently operates. She said Peer Support programmes are currently funded by the Schools who choose to provide the service. However, in the last 6 to 9 months there has been a desire within the University to provide Peer Support on a broader, University-wide basis. This desire has come about from discerning that the issues students wish to discuss are not generally course/School-specific, but rather are more universal issues. As discussion moves forward on implementing Peer Support in more Schools as part of a University-wide drive, support for the initiative is strong, particularly from students who wish to provide

empathetic support to their peers and who value the opportunity to gain new skills and experience. There has, however, also been opposition from staff who believe the training and volunteering commitments for students are too great given their existing University workloads. Staff have also expressed concerns on whether students are equipped to deal with the issues presented through Peer Support, despite the 30 hours of training and regular support/supervision from clinical psychologists Peer Supporters receive being more support than academic staff are given to deal with pastoral/mental health issues.

L McDougall asked Council members to provide feedback on their experiences regarding Peer Support so that this could be used in further discussions.

G Kokkinidis asked when training and recruitment takes place for Peer Support.

L McDougall said normally recruitment takes place at the beginning of the first semester and training normally takes place across the first semester. Recruitment has been trialled at the end of summer in advance of semester 1 beginning, however, generally training and recruitment take place in the first semester. When training is undertaken the student is committing to one academic year of being a peer supporter.

K Zhang asked if Peer Support is primarily focused upon helping undergraduate students.

L McDougall said Peer Support is available to all students at the University. As Peer Support is currently run by the individual Schools who choose to provide it, they have control over how the service is advertised, and the service is often targeted towards undergraduate students. Some Schools however, such as the Vet School, have more diverse groups of peer supporters.

K Summers said there are postgraduate peer supporters in the Vet School.

L McDougall said that, whilst the majority of Peer Support services have been provided at School-level (with all training being provided to students within a specific School) the College of Arts has provided Peer Support at College-level and have trained 8 PGR students and 22 undergraduate students within the College to become peer supporters. If Peer Support was implemented on a University-wide basis, then the hope would be Peer Support training would be provided to students of all levels.

H McLachlan asked how many students had signed up to be a peer and how many peer supporters had been assigned a peer.

L McDougall said that peer supporters are not assigned peers – Peer Support generally operates on the basis of a ‘use-as-you-need’ drop-in service. Most School-level Peer Support services have an email address which students in the School can contact for support, and drop-in times are advertised in advance of sessions taking place. Peer Support social/community-building events have also been organised in the past, with the aim of proactively supporting student wellbeing as opposed to the service only existing in a reactive capacity. Currently, approaches to operating Peer Support differ across different areas of the University, however, if Peer Support was to be implemented at University-level, the hope is that the provision of Peer Support services would be more consistent.

H McLachlan asked how many students are currently involved in Peer Support.

L McDougall said that in the current School-level system of Peer Support, Schools recruit a maximum of 12 trainers for each training programme. Next week there will be 72 peer supporters from across 5 different Schools and one College finishing their training. Whilst this a large number of students, if Peer Support was implemented more broadly then far more students would be given the opportunity to train as peer supporters, as well as far more students being given the opportunity to access Peer Wellbeing Support.

A Bhardwaj asked if Peer Support was a one-to-one mentoring service.

L McDougall said Peer Support is not a mentoring service, as it is not intended to be used for ongoing support, but rather as a means of support for students dealing with particular issues such as academic stress, exam-time anxiety, relationship troubles and loneliness/home-sickness. Peer Support, rather than being designed for supporting students through long-term mental health issues, is based on the idea of early intervention, so that students who recognise that they are struggling have a way of accessing support before an issue might escalate into something more serious. Whilst not a mentoring service, Peer Support can be conducted on a one-to-one basis. The student requiring support would simply email their School's Peer Support service to request to speak to a peer supporter one-to-one.

M Serneabat said that she has had very positive experiences with the peer support offered by GU Positive Minds, adding that speaking with a student who is living through their studies at the same time allows an empathy to exist which is useful for dealing with issues – something that may not be possible if support was only available from staff. M Serneabat said she would like to see a form of peer support implemented more widely in the University, in a way that wasn't solely run by students as it is with GU Positive Minds.

L McDougall said the benefit of the University's Peer Support system is that student peer supporters are offered support and supervision from trained clinical psychologists. There are also very clear escalation routes to CaPS if a peer supporter has concerns about a student's mental health. The SRC has pro-actively campaigned for wider implementation of Peer Support based on the fact that the service is delivered and monitored by clinical psychologists.

L McDougall will email Council members asking them to relate any further feedback they have regarding Peer Support, with this feedback being used to further current discussions on the proposal of the service's wider implementation at the University.

4) Discretionary Zones and GPA Paper – Liam Brady

The Clerk of Senate, Jill Morrison, wishes to conduct a review into the operation of discretion in the award of degree classifications, as well as the operation of rounding in the calculation of GPAs. The proposed review stems from a perceived possible lack of fairness in the current system with regards to the fact that under the operation of discretion two students from different Schools who have the same GPA may ultimately be awarded different degree classifications. Part of the review is the proposal that discretion be removed entirely and that degree classifications be awarded on the basis of a suggested set of GPA thresholds. There is, however, an argument that eliminating the element of human judgement inherent in the operation of discretion and relying solely on GPAs would render the degree classification process unfair. L Brady has brought the proposal to Council in order to gain feedback from Council members with regards to the proposed changes.

L Brady put Question 1 from the proposal, regarding the removal of discretion, to Council.

P Aasen asked what the current sentiment is from staff on the proposed changes.

L Brady said at the Academic Standards Committee there was acknowledgement of both sides of the debate and that one prevailing opinion was not evident. He added that the paper outlining the proposed review has been sent out to the University's Heads of Schools, Heads of School Administrators, the Directors of the University's Research Institutes, as well as Learning and Teaching staff. L Brady said that the proposed changes would have a profound impact on the degree classification of any student whose GPA falls within the discretionary zones under scrutiny. As a result, it is vital that Council, who represent the student voice on the matter, offer a considered input on this issue, whether it be at this meeting or in a future Council consultation meeting.

D Henderson said he does not think discretion should be removed as every student is different and has a different academic background. As such, when a student's GPA is very close to an upper degree classification he does not believe that academic staff should be disallowed to look at the student's academic record and make an informed judgement as to

what degree classification they should receive, particularly when the difference between classifications can have a sizeable impact on the student's future career prospects.

H McLachlan said that, as a student's GPA is technically to 3 decimal places, degree classifications depend on a School's rounding process. If Schools round differently then a 17.5 GPA in one School could result in a different degree classification to a 17.5 GPA in another School. He added that a universally consistent rounding process should be adhered to across Schools to ensure fairness. H McLachlan also said that in the School of Chemistry students who are between classifications will attend a viva – a process involving a panel of external assessors who aim to assess a student's academic level –and this process will inform the outcome of the student's degree award. H McLachlan believes this is an effective and fair process.

F Shoughari said he agrees with 17.5 as a GPA threshold but proposed another system of awarding degree classifications – a system which has been formulated by Professor Joseph Gray, Head of Assessment in the School of Life Sciences. Prof. Gray's system proposes that an un-rounded GPA of 17.5 or above would receive an automatic First Class Honours classification. The discretionary zone would be between 17.1 and 17.4, which would be the difference between a student receiving a First and a 2:1. The element of human judgement would be removed from the decision-making process, and instead the correct degree classification would be calculated through preponderance: if the student has received an A grade in over 50% of their courses then they are awarded a First; if less than 50%, they are awarded a 2:1. F Shoughari believes this would be the fairest approach to awarding degree classifications which are on the borderline between two classifications, with the system also effectively tackling the issue of outliers – poor exam results which are not consistent with the rest of a student's academic record. F Shoughari has written a paper explaining this system and can forward this to members of Council who wish to read it.

L McDougall said an Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out on the proposed reform of the discretion process if it has not been done so already. This would highlight any potential for students with additional

support needs to be negatively impacted by the removal of human judgement from the degree classification process.

K Zhang said it is important to acknowledge that different subjects cannot be assessed in the same way and that examiners should have the authority, as experts in that subject, to mark accordingly with what they believe to be appropriate and fair, and this judgement should also be applied when awarding degree classifications.

G Kokkinidis said he thinks the system proposed by F Shoughari is the most fair and reasonable approach to deciding degree classifications which are borderline cases.

S Kirby said he thinks the element of discretion in this process should not be removed as it allows academic staff to acknowledge a student's personal circumstances, if relevant, and judge accordingly.

H McLachlan asked for clarity on how different the rounding/discretion process is between different Schools.

L Brady said he could not provide an accurate answer to this, however, the presence of a difference in approaches is what is perceived to be the issue motivating the proposed review. L Brady also said that improvements to guidance for examiners when using discretion have resulted in positive feedback from examiners, however, the issue of a potential unfairness resulting from differing applications of discretion remains.

After asking Council members for their opinion on whether the changes in the proposed review should be carried out, S Kirby acknowledged a lack of consensus on the subject at present and suggested Council members take time to consider this proposal.

L Brady said he will be submitting his comments to the ASC on Friday 20th February and asked all members of Council to provide individual feedback to him before this time, and encouraged members to consult the University's Guide to the Code of Assessment for further information.

S Mason asked if Council members, as elected representatives, are permitted to approach the student body to gather feedback on this proposal.

S Kirby said Council members are permitted to gather opinion from students regarding the proposed changes.

5) Refreshers' Report – Kirsty Summers

Refresher's Week 2020 took place between the 13th and 17th January. K Summers would like to thank all of those involved in the organisation and delivery of this successful event, particularly the SRC Admin Team and J Small for providing graphics for the event.

General feedback has identified that a different approach to running the 'Ask the SRC' event would be beneficial for increasing student engagement with this event. Suggestions from Council members on how this event might be run differently are welcome, and those with ideas should email K Summers or approach her directly.

G Kokkinidis asked if the upcoming 'Ask the SRC' event on the Garscube campus is the first of these events to take place outwith the Gilmorehill campus.

K Summers said that the 'Ask the SRC' event at Garscube would be the first of these events to take place off the main campus this year, and that more of these events are currently being planned.

6) Take-a-Break Report – Tom McFerran

The Take-a-Break Winter campaign ran from the 9th to the 20th December, 2019. The campaign saw the successful implementation of several recommendations made by the previous campaign's team. These included a change in the campaign's name (from 'De-Stress' to 'Take-a-Break, so as to omit the negative connotations associated with the word 'stress') as well as different events and changes to where the campaign was promoted (utilising the screens in the University Library, for example). Consideration has also been given to how effective

preparation can ensure a successful delivery of the campaign during the next exam diet.

As part of the wider cross-campus 'Look After Yourself' campaign, participation from the other student bodies in the Take-a-Break campaign was varied, with some of the student bodies contributing effectively to the programme of events on offer, and others not involving themselves.

With regards to preparing for the next campaign, Council members are asked to provide help and assistance, where possible, in the packing of Take-a-Break goodie packs as the absence of Council assistance with this during the recent campaign made the task more challenging and time-consuming.

T McFerran would like to thank L O'Connor for undertaking a successful Take-a-Break session in the Medical School – the first time this has been offered in this School. If any Council members would like to host their own events for Take-a-Break (particularly within their own School or College) or provide feedback on how events may be run differently, they are welcome to contact either T McFerran or K Summers. Comments from Council members can also be added to the report.

A Nikolaou said that more Council members would be able to help pack the Take-a-Break packs if the packing sessions were moved to a date earlier than the exam period. He suggested this would be possible as most of the contents of the packs do not have short expiry dates.

K Summers said this would be difficult in semester 1 as there is no gap between the end of classes and the beginning of exams, as there is in semester 2.

A Nikolaou suggested arranging the packing to take place considerably earlier than when the packs are actually needed.

T McFerran said Council members were contacted well in advance of the packing date, however, there was ultimately still a lack of Council presence when assistance was needed.

S Kirby said this suggestion would be noted and provided to the team tasked with delivering next year's campaign.

G Kokkinidis asked what the date would be for the Spring packing session.

K Summers said this will depend on securing donations from companies but once a date has been confirmed Council members will be informed.

S Mason suggested a sign-up system to diffuse responsibility across Council for helping out with the various campaigns and events that the SRC carries out.

T McFerran said this would be an effective idea if Council members were to agree to it, as it would help to ensure that responsibilities were being shared across Council, rather than assistance repeatedly being provided by the same Council members.

S Kirby said a similar system is already in place for the SRC ambassadors so this can be looked into further.

K Summers said the Sabbatical Officers understand that Council members are very busy during exam periods, however, a small commitment of time is greatly appreciated.

K Summers said there are several SRC events taking place soon which require assistance in their delivery, including a Tea-Stress stall on 17/02/2020.

R Symon asked for more notice to be provided for when help is required, as students' busy study/work commitments mean they need to plan ahead in order to accommodate requests for help/assistance.

H McLachlan said he would like to be able to provide more help in the organisation/delivery of SRC activities, however, University commitments render this difficult. He asked if there could be greater flexibility with regards to the times of the day Council members could provide help.

S Kirby said this feedback would be noted for the future.

A Waite asked how well the SRC Ambassadors were being utilised to assist with SRC activities.

S Kirby said that the SRC Ambassadors contributed effectively to the SRC's activities in the first semester, however, there has been a slight drop-off in the help provided in semester 2, as was expected with this new initiative.

S Kirby said that each Council member has a responsibility to assist with the organisation and delivery of the SRC's activities. The Sabbatical Officers understand that a member of Council's circumstances may inhibit them from being able to provide this assistance, and on those occasions S Kirby would ask that Council members send their apologies so that alternative means of help can be organised.

7) RAG Officer Motion – Kirsty Summers

B Hay advised that normally a 7-day notice period is required when considering a name-change proposal. However, as the motion is of timely import with regards to the upcoming SRC election, Council members, if they so wish, could agree on the proposed name change at this meeting, with the decision being homologated at the next meeting of Council.

K Summers explained that over the last few years the position of Charities, Clubs and Societies Officer has seen a gradual shift in the role it fulfils within the SRC. The role has steadily become increasingly focused on co-ordinating charity fundraising efforts, with a significant decline in activities pertaining to SRC-affiliated clubs and societies – an area of work largely overseen by the VPSA and the SRC Admin Team. The proposed change to the title of this position better reflects its current responsibilities. In addition to the name change, the position's explanatory text would also be updated, with the following suggested as a new text –

'To liaise regularly with the VP-Student Activities, to help run and facilitate the organisation of events throughout the year with the RAG Committee (contributing to the RAG campaign), in addition to supporting clubs and societies with their own fundraising initiatives.'

K Summers advised that the clubs/societies-related element of the role would not be removed entirely; the role would facilitate the fundraising efforts of clubs and societies and would still provide clubs/societies with a point of liaison for contacting the SRC.

K Summers said 'Raising and Giving Officer' has been chosen as the proposed new title for this position. The Sabbatical Officers propose that this title encapsulates the nature of the position's roles and responsibilities, whilst simultaneously promoting the efforts of the RAG Committee.

M Daniel added that the RAG presidency is an important facet of the role in question and one which requires considerable time and attention. She added that the title 'RAG Officer' would also represent a clear and desirable future position to the members of the RAG Committee who may eventually choose to run for this position.

S Kirby said that the proposal of changing this position's name is ultimately an effort to provide the position with a title accurately reflective of its roles and responsibilities.

S Kirby opened the floor to comments.

G Kokkinidis said he agrees that the name of the position should change. He asked if, due to the introduction and expansion of RAG activities to the role, whether the creation of a new additional clubs and societies-related position on Council would be necessary.

K Summers said that the clubs and societies-related element of the role did not diminish as a result of the position's focus on RAG activities – the C&S-related element of the role has diminished gradually over the last 3-4 years as responsibility for dealing with this area has shifted more to the SRC Admin Team and VPSA.

E Hardy said she understands the motivations behind the proposed name-change but does not feel the name 'Raising and Giving Officer' is an appropriate title for the position as it would tie the role too closely to the Raising and Giving Committee. She suggested that a more appropriate title for the position would be 'Charities Officer.'

D Henderson added that he thinks the majority of students' contact with the SRC comes from their involvement in affiliated societies. As such, he would be concerned about the implications of the removal of the only role which explicitly includes C&S in its title, given that C&S are a major reason for student engagement with the SRC.

M Daniel said the actual amount of C&S-related emails she receives is minimal in comparison to the level of correspondence she conducts with external charities and charitable bodies within the University. With C&S-related queries being handled by the SRC Admin Team and the VPSA, her involvement with these queries extends to forwarding emails onto these SRC personnel, when students can (and do) already contact them directly. While this position would still act as a point of contact for C&S, this name-change would reflect the fact that acting as a main point of enquiry for C&S-related queries is no longer part of the position's core roles and responsibilities.

K Summers agreed that C&S constitutes an integral part of the student experience. She added that currently the C&S part of the role is in its title only and that the removal of C&S from this position's title would not diminish the SRC's focus on C&S. Instead the VPSA and SRC Admin Team would continue to deal with all C&S queries and administration as it currently does.

L McDougall said that the position of CSS Officer existed before the position of VPSA was introduced. With the introduction of the VPSA role, a more senior point of contact now exists whose role is to represent C&S.

L McDougall added that she does not agree specifically with the proposed name-change, however, as she feels that 'RAG Officer' would seem inextricably linked with the position of 'RAG President' – the latter being

a non-representational role. She said both roles should be kept separate in order to distinguish between them, suggesting 'Charities and Fundraising Officer' as an alternative name-change and arguing that this position could still work closely with RAG whilst allowing a focus on other charitable and fundraising activities.

S Kirby said he was unsure a more general title for this position would be suitable given that currently the position's core activity revolves around RAG.

K Summers said she thinks a title with a wider scope would allow the Council member undertaking this role to engage with charitable endeavours outwith RAG.

L McDougall said a more general title such as 'Charities and Fundraising Officer' could incorporate assisting C&S with their own fundraising efforts, whereas 'RAG Officer' could seem closed off to any non-RAG activity.

L McDougall added that RAG's current profile and the possible lack of awareness among students of what RAG is/what its acronym stands for could result in decreased engagement with this representative position – an issue which would not arise if the role was given a more general descriptive title.

M Daniel said a title that is fully reflective of her position would be difficult to arrive at, however, the position's accompanying explanatory text would help to convey the nature of the position's duties. She said in her role she does work with C&S but this is usually through RAG. M Daniels added that any student who wishes to undertake the role should know that they are taking on the RAG Presidency also.

L McDougall said that the CSS Officer and the RAG President could be differentiated between as two distinct roles.

K Summers said efforts have been made to distinguish these roles from each other, and future efforts could be made, but thus far these efforts have proved unsuccessful.

M Daniel said she attempted this year to establish a hierarchical structure within RAG whereby members could eventually progress to the position of President if they wished to take on the role. This would have enabled RAG to be active in its own right regardless of whether the CCS Officer was engaged with RAG activities. However, these efforts proved unsuccessful and RAG remains inextricably linked with the role of the CSS Officer – something students who may wish to run for the position should be aware of.

H Mylin said she believes removing the C&S element from the position's title would encourage C&S to engage directly with the personnel who deal with this area of work. She added that she believes 'RAG Officer' would seem too focused on RAG activities, suggesting 'Charities, Raising and Giving Officer' as a more broadly encapsulating title.

P Aasen said given that the name-change is being proposed to reflect the fact that the duties of the role have changed over time, a broad title would be more suitable than a focused title, as this would accommodate the possibility of the position's duties changing again in the future.

D Henderson said removing the 'Charities' part of the title could result in external charities not knowing whom to contact with their enquiries.

M Daniel said that most UK Universities have a RAG team and a RAG Officer and that these roles are understood by external charities as points of contact. M Daniels recognises that a lack of awareness of the RAG acronym could lead people to not associate the position of RAG Officer with charitable activities, however, the fact that RAG stands for Raising and Giving does accurately explain the nature of the role's activities.

K Summers said based on experience from the National Student Fundraising Association's 2019 conference, external charities actively seek out RAG Committees within Universities with regards to fundraising opportunities. As such, removing 'charities' from the position's title would not affect the role's engagement with external charities. The potential issue of removing 'charities' would arise from students' lack of

awareness/understanding of the term 'RAG.' With this in mind, a broader, more easily accessible title may be a preferable alternative.

S Mason said a title which was broader in scope would be more suited to the representational nature of the position.

A consensus was reached on changing the title of the position from 'Charities, Clubs and Societies Officer' to 'Charities Officer.' As such, this motion shall be homologated at the next meeting of Council.

8) Council Reports:

a) SRC President: Scott Kirby

S Kirby has been working with the University's Defence Sector Investments Working Group – a group set up in response to the demands being made by the GUADC for the University to divest from the arms industry. The demands of the GUADC have now been discussed in the University Court and discussions to potentially divest from the arms industry have advanced to the University's Investments Advisory Committee, on which S Kirby is the student representative. These discussions will continue over the next two months and S Kirby will update Council with any progressions, with the hope that the University will decide to invest their funds (including endowment funds) ethically.

The candidates for the 2020 Rector Election have now been confirmed. There are five candidates in total and each candidate's manifesto is available to read on the University's website. Voting will open at 9am on the 23rd March and close at 6pm on the 24th March.

At the meeting of University Court on 12/02/2020 S Kirby presented on the SRC's Annual Report for 2018/19 and highlighted several challenges that are expected to face students at the University in the coming years. If any member of Council wishes to gain feedback on this discussion they can approach S Kirby directly.

The University's Sustainability Strategy is now open to consultation via an online survey on the University's website. Council members are encouraged to complete the survey as the implications of the finalised Strategy will impact students significantly in the years to come.

UCU have balloted on two counts for a further 14 days of strike action to take place between 20/02/2020 and 13/03/2020. The strikes look set to be considerably disruptive and student feedback on the matter thus far has indicated that students are more dismayed at this strike action than they were with regards to the previous UCU strike. While the SRC recognises the right of staff to strike, due to the level of disruption the strike will cause to students' learning and teaching, S Kirby proposes that the SRC take a firm stance in response to the strikes, calling upon the tripartite lobbying group (comprising UCU, USS and UUK) to come to an agreement as soon as possible in order to minimise disruption to students.

H McLachlan asked who is responsible for the pension fund which forms part of the ongoing dispute.

L McDougall said the pension fund in question is the University Superannuation Scheme – an independent sector wide pension scheme whose members include staff from many different universities. The scheme is externally managed by a board of trustees and universities pay into the scheme.

H McLachlan asked for clarification on the proposed SRC stance i.e. whether this would centre around student concerns or concerns over the USS pension scheme.

S Kirby said the SRC's stance on the strike would reflect students' dismay at the UCU for calling further strike action.

L McDougall clarified that the contention over the USS pension scheme revolves around differing valuations of an identified shortfall within the fund. She added that the strike action is not solely in response to the pension issue however, and is being taken as a response to several

issues including the casualisation of contracts, workloads and pay improvements.

L McDougall added that the reason some of those who supported the previous strike action are now dismayed stems from the fact there were already ongoing discussions and negotiations regarding these issues – discussions which are now not being able to reach resolution due to further strike action being called.

E Hardy said she agrees with the SRC taking a firmer stance in response to the strikes. While recognising the importance of the cause and advocating SRC support for the reasons underpinning the strike, she said not enough time has elapsed between the previous strike action and this strike action for any meaningful resolutions to have been reached. The strike has significantly impacted the teaching E Hardy has received over the academic year, a situation worsened by her status as a fee-paying student.

K Zhang said the strike action has deeply impacted 1-year PGT students who have only received one semester of teaching. K Zhang asked if the money withheld from staff who strike could be distributed as compensation among students whose teaching has been affected.

S Kirby said that the money withheld from staff who strike is directed to a strike fund. With the considered input of the SRC this money is then re-invested in ways designed to improve the student experience. S Kirby said he agrees that PGT students have been significantly impacted by the strikes.

P Aasen asked for clarification on the mention of a second UCU ballot as he is under the impression that this strike was voted upon and authorised by the Autumn vote.

S Kirby said the initial ballot for the strikes was valid for 6 months, with UCU stating if no progress had been made on the issues at hand they would ballot their members again for further strike action – something which is now taking place.

P Aasen asked for clarification on what a firmer stance from the SRC on the strike action would entail.

S Kirby said that the stance would accurately reflect the views of the students at the University who are being adversely affected by the strike action. The SRC would put pressure on the tripartite lobbying group involved as well as lobby the University itself to come to an agreement which would end the disruption being caused to students.

D Henderson said that given strike action is generally a last resort in the pursuit of change, he is dubious as to why the strike has been called, as negotiations on the strike were ongoing prior to further strike action being called. Whilst acknowledging the validity of the reasons underpinning the strike, D Henderson believes the parties involved should make every effort to resolve the issues at hand in order to minimise further detriment to students' learning and teaching, and that, as student representatives, the SRC should take a firm stance to push for this.

D Ealey said students' increased anger at the strike action would lead to increased frustration with the University rather than the UCU.

T McFerran said the impact the strikes are having upon students extends beyond their academic progression – University support services are also being affected, meaning students are unable to make use of much-needed services provided by, for example, the Disability Service. As students are being affected so profoundly the SRC must take a firmer stance to push for a resolution to the issues at hand.

H Mylin said declaring support for the strikes does not further the progress of resolving the issues at hand, as the effectiveness of strike action depends on the disruption and agitation it causes.

S Kirby said that the SRC is not declaring support for the strike, but rather expressing solidarity with the University workers' right to strike.

B Hay said the SRC's approach should not direct blame towards any particular party involved in the dispute – rather, it should emphasise

that all parties involved need to demonstrate a commitment to resolving the dispute.

T McFerran said, with regards to the SRC offering meeting space to the UCU during the previous strike action, if a firmer stance is to be taken on the impending strike action then this must be reflected in the provisions, or lack thereof, offered to the UCU.

S Kirby closed discussion and summarised the SRC position as calling for the tripartite lobbying group involved in the disputes to come to an agreement in order to prevent any more detriment to the provision of the University's services to students.

b) VP Student Activities: Kirsty Summers

K Summers presented the feedback gained from Council on the subject of Graduate Attributes at the Graduate Attribute and Employability WG on 15/01/2020. The group was grateful for the considered feedback from Council and there are now plans to increase awareness of GA by including the term in students' studies from the offset as well as a communications campaign centred around an infographic.

K Summers and T McFerran have met with the Harm Reduction Society and the University to discuss the possibility of implementing harm reduction workshops at the University. Discussions with the society and University are ongoing and Council members are encouraged to provide their input on this project if they wish to contribute feedback.

RAG Week took place between the 3rd and 7th of February. K Summers thanked all those who showed their support at the week's events, over which a total of £2.5k was raised for charity. This brings the overall total raised by the University's RAG activities to over £25k for the year.

There are two upcoming RAG fundraising events – a Clubs vs. Societies HIVE Night on 29/02/2020 and a Clubs and Societies Charities Ball at the Hilton hotel on 30/03/2020. Council attendance and support for these events are highly encouraged.

K Summers thanked all members of Council who promoted the VCS awards on Facebook as this was responsible for a surge in nominations. K Summers asked any Council members who would be free after 3pm on 14/02/2020 for assistance with administration tasks relating to the VCS nominations.

G Kokkinidis asked if the Charities Ball at the Hilton was open only to members of clubs/societies.

K Summers said the event is open to all students.

O McLaughlin asked how the tickets will be allocated for the event.

K Summers said tickets will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

c) VP Education: Liam Brady

The plan to hold an Arts & Social Sciences Careers Fair has now been replaced with the intention to hold a series of smaller careers events. This decision has been made following feedback from Ann and Shirley from the Careers Service which suggested that students are no longer engaging with careers fairs. The smaller events would focus specifically on a certain theme of career and may be organised in a 'round the table' format. Discussions on these events are ongoing - involving E Hardy and P Aasen - with the delivery of the events looking to be something that will be taken up by the new Sabbatical Officers in semester 1 of the next academic year.

The Class Representative Conference took place on 10/02/2020. The event was a success with good levels of attendance and strong engagement from those in attendance. L Brady would like to thank all those who helped in the running of the event as the event generated valuable feedback.

STA nominations close on 28/02/2020. L Brady highly encourages academic representatives who have not yet nominated someone from

their School to do so. He asked Council members to promote the nomination process in any meetings they may have with Class Representatives and said that Council members are encouraged to promote nominations on their social media. There are also promotional flyers which members of Council can distribute to further promote nominations.

K Summers congratulated L Brady on how well organised/delivered the Class Representative conference was.

L Brady said the conference received very positive feedback from those who attended the event, with some attendees emailing members of Council to express how much they enjoyed it.

D Ealey asked for more information of the Numeracy, Maths & Stats meeting detailed in L Brady's Council report.

L Brady said this meeting involves an effort to address what support is currently/should be in place for students of the University with regards to numeracy, maths and statistics. L Brady said he could update D Ealey with the progress of the meetings going forward.

d) VP Student Support: Tom McFerran

A service-level agreement has been written to outline the plans for the Glasgow Rape Crisis drop-in service at the University. After receiving feedback from B Hay and the SRC Advice Centre, the agreement is now in a near-finalised state and will be reviewed by GRC and the University. The hope is that the agreement will be approved and the drop-in service will be implemented and running within the next 3-4 weeks.

LGBTQ+ History Month is currently underway with successful events having already taken place and new events being added. Council members are encouraged to visit and engage with the art exhibition in the Library featuring art by 32 LGBTQ+ artists from within the University and from further afield. A careers talk from Nicola Smith (Head of Government Partnerships International, UK Civil Service) has also been confirmed as part of the month, and will take place on 24/02/2020.

Council members are encouraged to both promote and attend the event.

Events are currently being planned for International Women's Week which will take place between the 9th and 13th of March. The week will feature a theme celebrating inspirational female authors, with the Library screens being utilised to promote this. There will also be pop-up stalls distributing books by these authors. Council members, students and clubs/societies are encouraged to engage with this initiative and to suggest women of influence who can be celebrated as part of it. Any student who wishes to suggest someone for inclusion in the celebration should email T McFerran with the email subject 'IWW Author.'

T McFerran met with Alan from Terrence Higgins on 12/02/2020 to discuss the improvement of sexual health provisions at the University. Whilst long-term provisions are not currently possible, TH will deliver Positive Voices talks to students with the aim of helping de-stigmatise sexual health concerns, and will also trial a one-off drop-in clinic in the McIntyre Building in the next 1-2 months. T McFerran is currently discussing the possibility of implementing a drop-in clinic on a long-term basis with H Speirs.

L McDougall said TH delivered a Positive Voices talk last year and it was very well-received.

e) Charities, Clubs and Societies Officer: Morgan Daniel

The RAG x GUCFS x GUFRR Pre-Loved Pop-Up event took place on 03/01/2020. The event was a success, with £460 raised for charity.

RAG Week featured successful events such as Bongos Bingo. M Daniel would like to thank S Kirby and T McFerran for their help in hosting the event. M Daniel would also like to thank all those who paid their Library fines as part of the Library Fines for Charity drive.

f) Disability Equality Officer: Rachel Symon

R Symon and L Brady attended the Library Committee Meeting on 13/02/2020. The Library would be grateful for Council members' feedback on Kanopy – a streaming service which the University is trialling for a year. As the service is quite expensive the Library would like feedback from students so that an informed decision can be made on whether to keep the service after the trial period. R Symon will send an email to Council members requesting their feedback.

In advance of a meeting with Susan Ashworth and Martina McChrystal regarding the digitisation of short-loan books, R Symon would encourage Council members to provide feedback on why they believe this would be beneficial to them. Council members will be emailed by R Symon and they can provide feedback by return.

g) International Students Officer: Stephanie Mason

A date and time has now been confirmed for the Linguistic Society International Poetry Evening – this will take place 6pm – 10pm on 25/02/2020 at DRAM! Council members are encouraged to promote this opportunity to peers who may wish to present poetry in their own native language. International Student Support have already promoted the event in an email to students. S Mason is planning to meet with ISS more regularly so any Council members who are organising events which may pertain to international students should pass the event details to S Mason and she will pass on to ISS.

S Mason attended a 'Starting the Conversation' workshop.

h) LGBTQ+ Officer: Indigo Korres Nte Paoula

LGBTQ+ History Month has been well received thus far. I Korres encouraged Council members to visit and engage with the art exhibition in the Library, as well as attend other events due to take place as part of the month.

i) Race Equality Officer: Moni Serneabat Ungar

A 'Starting the Conversation' workshop will be held in Room 208 of the McIntyre Building on 21/02/2020. Attendance from Council members is highly encouraged.

The Decolonising the University Conference will be held on 23/03/2020. The plan is to have School Representatives in attendance so invitations for this will be sent out in due course.

j) UG Arts Convenor: Emma Hardy

E Hardy has been asked by Wendy Anderson to gather information on positive steps that have been taken within the College of Arts to create a sense of community in the classroom. Council members are encouraged to pass on their experiences to E Hardy with the feedback generated being used for an CoA event in April.

E Hardy and H Mylin met with staff from the Hunterian Museum on 12/02/2020 to discuss how to improve student engagement with the museum. Both Council members have been asked to help lead a project to improve student engagement, with the project providing scope for more students to be involved. Council members will be contacted in due course regarding this.

k) UG MVLS Convenor: Fadel Shoughari – n/a

l) UG Science and Engineering Convenor: Harry McLachlan

H McLachlan reported that Chemistry lecture recordings are being implemented for first year students with support from Chemistry staff.

m) UG Social Sciences Convenor: Patrick Aasen

P Aasen reported that the College of Social Sciences does not currently have a Dean, with the advertising of the position having not yet been rolled out.

n) PG MVLS Convenor: Hannah Baer – n/a

- o) PG Convenor Social Sciences: Ketong Zhang

S Kirby expressed thanks to K Zhang for his input on the recent SRC Facebook Live video which addressed student concerns surrounding coronavirus. S Kirby said feedback on the video thus far suggests it went some way to alleviating anxiety experienced by international/Chinese students regarding coronavirus.

- p) PGR Convenor: Jamie Quinn – n/a
- q) Business School Rep: Chang Xu – n/a

- r) Chemistry School Rep: Jenny Newton –

Lecture recording was discussed at the Chemistry LTC on 13/02/2020. This is now being implemented for 1st years within the School, with staff offering positive feedback on its implementation.

Staff in the School of Chemistry are experiencing issues booking rooms for teaching.

K Summers said this issue would need to be addressed and resolved by Space Management and Timetabling, adding that a new room-booking policy is due to be implemented soon.

S Kirby said the issue could be looked into but would need resolved under the new room-booking policy. He added that there is hope that the opening of the JMSLTH will help to alleviate space constraints which are currently being experienced.

- s) Computing School Rep: Andreas Nikolaou – n/a
- t) Critical Studies School Rep: Annabel Bowen Nielsen – n/a
- u) Culture and Creative Arts School Rep: Beth O’Hare – n/a
- v) Geographical and Earth Science School Rep: Sam Malis – n/a
- w) Humanities School Rep: Austen Waite – n/a
- x) Life Sciences School Rep: Anna Makova – n/a

- y) Mathematics and Statistics School Rep: Damien Ealey

D Ealey and D Henderson met with Robert Garnish from Estates and Buildings and Anne Macgregor from Accommodation Services on 12/02/2020 to discuss improving student safety at Halls of Residence. Discussions are ongoing.

S Kirby asked if D Ealey was still experiencing issues in terms of being able to sit on SSLC meetings.

D Ealey said the issues he experienced have now been resolved as he has contacted his department and has received an invite to the Level 3 SSLC.

z) Medicine School Rep: Lewis O'Connor –

K Summers said she will follow up with L O'Connor regarding the meeting he held with the GUSA President to discuss MedChir sport affiliation.

aa) Modern Languages and Culture School Rep: Samantha Boyle – n/a

bb) Physics and Astronomy School Rep: Darius Darulis – n/a

cc) School of Psychology Rep – Gregory Kokkinidis – n/a

dd) Social and Political Sciences Rep: Duncan Henderson

D Henderson has been in discussion with Accommodation Services regarding increasing safety measures for students who stay in Murano Street Student Village. AS are now looking into various ways of making the footbridge near the halls safer for students. Proposed measures include a new security policy whereby students can contact residents ahead of time and they will be met and escorted across the bridge; regular patrols of the bridge at night, as well as the distribution of personal safety alarms.

D Ealey said a loudspeaker may also be installed on the bridge with the hope that this can help to deter those who should not be there.

S Kirby thanked D Henderson and D Ealey for meeting with R Garnish and asked that, once these measures have been confirmed in writing by

Accommodation Services, they pass this on to a Sabbatical Officer so that 1st Year representatives can publicise these positive changes.

ee) General Rep: Avantika Bhardwaj – n/a

ff) General Rep: Luke McBlain – n/a

gg) General Rep: Matthew Wilson – n/a

9) AOCB

S Kirby asked members of Council who are not planning to run in the Spring Election to consider promoting the opportunity to run for their position to their peers. He encouraged Council members to promote their position to Class Representatives, with the hope that next year will see a full Council with all positions filled.

K Summers asked Council members who have ordered a blue Council jumper to please set aside time to collect it.

The SRC's new Marketing and Communications Officer Jamie Small introduced himself to Council. J Small said he looks forward to working with the SRC Council going forward.

The next Council Consultation will take place on 27/02/2020 at 5.30pm in the Williams Room.

10) Date of Next Meeting – 12th March 2020