



Student Council

Thursday 21st November 2019, 6-8pm, Teviot Debating Hall

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AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Accountability
Paper A
3. Accessibility Break
4. Motions:
 - i. Motion for free bus passes for disabled students, submitted by Ellen Blunsdon
Paper B
 - ii. Motion for elected Officials' Transparency and Accountability, submitted by Jordan Dowd
Paper C
 - iii. Motion for the freedom of Student Press, submitted by Craig Buchan
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5. Any Other Business (AOB)
Shout outs



Paper A: Accountability Reports

Report from Andrew Wilson, President

As your Students' Association President, I represent students to the University and beyond, as well as leading your Students' Association in the right direction, here's what I've been up to this month:

Getting In and Getting On

Ensuring that each and every student, regardless of background, can access the University of Edinburgh and get in to education, but also get on whilst they're here, making the most of their University experience with the best support available to them

- Attended the University's Sense of Belonging Task Group, discuss how can make sure each and every student can feel like they belong to a community at the University of Edinburgh
- Attended Antisemitism Awareness training provided by the Union of Jewish Students
- Fed into University Accommodation development proposals and existing project to achieve the best deal and experience for students
- Discussing with senior University colleagues about how best to mitigate and alleviate concerns of the impact of industrial action on student's academic and overall experience

A Relevant Students' Association

Our Students' Association must be relevant to student life which is why I have:

- Worked with colleagues on scoping out a 'Shop Small' scheme, to advertise local business and to show to students where they can get a discount – watch this space!
- Continued planning a Sexual Health and Guidance (SHAG) week, staying true to my manifesto commitment to make Edinburgh sexier
- Meet regularly with colleagues in the Estates department to discuss and develop plans for the new Student Centre project – the transformation redevelopment of Teviot Row House
- Fed into discussions about how we can best deliver good customer service and overall good customer experience at Teviot, Potterrow, Pleasance and Kings' Buildings House

Students as Changemakers

As students, we have the power to shape local and national decisions, here's what I've been doing to facilitate that:

- Continued with outreach across University campuses to encourage students to Register to Vote (now we have a concrete deadline) and now morphing the campaign into a Get Out To Vote campaign and organising a viewing party for the General Election results
- Reaching out to General Election candidates to talk to them about student priorities and issues going into the election
- Attended the European Commission's 'European Universities' event in Brussels to represent the University of Edinburgh and our alliance, UNA Europa – creating a truly European inter-university environment
- Organised a Question Time with the Principal and Vice Principal Students so students can ask their questions directly to those in power!

How can the University improve student experience? What should the Students' Association be doing for students? – Got answers? Get in contact, I always want to hear from you! Email me at president@eusa.ed.ac.uk or find me in Potterrow!



Report from Beth Fellows, Vice President Activities and Services

Increase Participation and Communication

- I am starting to get the ball rolling with the Schools Dodgeball Tournament in collaboration with the Sports Union. It is going to be Wednesday 5th February 2020 3-6pm in Sports Hall in Pleasance. Please contact me if you are interested in getting a team together from your school, open to staff and students.
- I have been working with Information Services to get a trial set up with a mock calendar for the events to go into the outlook calendar. This is to see how it will look. I have been working with a member of student staff to make sure this stays completely relevant for students. Hopefully the trial goes well and I would like to have this implemented during Semester 2, especially in time for our student elections in February/March.
- The Wednesday afternoon survey is now closed with 5,075 responses which is a solid 13% of the student population. I am now working with members of staff in the university and surveys team to crunch the numbers and analyse all the data to see what students want. I will then take this forward once I have finished analyzing the data and make an action plan.
- My #Take ten campaign had brilliant engagement with both students and staff. It was widely shared and engaged with. In addition, the feedback I had for the design and some of the ideas in the planner was really positive across the University. The most rewarding feedback was hearing that people had actually planned to start to take up more regularly some of the activities that are in the planner, such as learning a new language or yoga. I hope this is a planner that can be saved as an image and interacted with as and when people feel they need.

Improving Services

- The free yoga service is booked for Semester 2 and we have now gained support for the service from Sport and Exercise to help keep this project sustainable. I am having discussions with Sport and Exercise as we want to expand this project to Easter Bush campus and we have an instructor lined up, unfortunately we are having a few challenges finding a room for it every week.
- I have been working with staff to try get a King's Buildings Christmas market, which is going to be Monday 25th November, more information to follow so keep your eyes peeled for this.

Celebrating Students

- So November saw two incredible #WeAreEdinburgh profiles, from Hamish and Mel on the themes of Mental Health and Wellbeing week and Disability History Month. Hearing from students themselves about what events they are involved in but also their diverse experiences here at the university is really important for the university to hear. Special mention to Mel for talking so powerfully about how hard it can be being a disabled student and how although the right conversations are beginning to happen there is still so much the university need to do to improve. If you have not seen these profiles yet please check them out of the Student Association Facebook and Instagram, they come out every fortnight on Thursday.
- The Student Awards nominations are opening next Monday 25th November so please start thinking about who you might like to nominate for a diverse range of awards. The Student Awards night is held at the end of Semester 2 and is a fantastic night so please get nominating!



Report from Steph Vallancey, VP Education

Hidden Course Costs

- I have been developing one of my key manifesto points and addressing all hidden course costs at University. The first, and largest focus has been on Edinburgh College of Art and the amount of money students are expected to pay to finish their degree. I am currently gathering data of each programme and course submission requirements for materials and the costs of those and looking at the realistic solutions to addressing this problem.
- Following the Winter break, we will be developing a paper to capture all the course costs in the University and asking for action to address the problem!!

School Reps/Representation

- Working with staff at College of Science and Engineering to develop representation pathways for issues to be escalated that are particularly relevant to the college. We have two different groups running, one for Taught students and one for Research students. If successful we will be looking to see if this would work well in the other two colleges, CAHSS and CMVM.
- Have met up with SPARQs and Education Network regarding current issues emerging in Education for Higher Education. Working to collate resources to develop a handbook/tool kit for both school reps and schools in help to get the most out of their roles
- Will be developing this over the next month or so, and ensuring it is fit for use for the next wave of elected reps!
- Had our second School Rep Forum, with our not so newly elected Postgraduate reps!

Industrial Action

- The UCU have voted in favour of industrial action on two different ballots in dispute over Pensions and over working conditions and pay. Members will be striking for 8 days between Nov 25- Dec 4 and will be participating in action short of a Strike thereafter.
- We are having continuous meetings with the University over the action, to prepare and respond to ensure minimal impact on students' studies.

Curriculum Review

- We have had fortnightly meetings with the new Vice Principal Students, updating on our objectives as well as beginning conversations over the upcoming curriculum review. This is being developed alongside feedback from students and opening discussions over the 'Edinburgh Graduate', and how we shape the curriculum to capture everything in one space.
- This will encapsulate a lot of my objectives from the year including assessment and feedback, and curriculum development. This is a huge project that the University is undertaking and will take several years to implement, but very exciting and impactful change coming out of it!! We are just in the initial discussion phases however, all sabbs are involved to shape this to be the best impact on all students
- Have invited Colm, VP Students to Rep Lunch December 4th to talk with representatives over the upcoming plans and have their input and feedback to shape the discussions



Report from Rosheen Wallace, VP Community

Bus user forum

- Have arranged for the University to host a forum open to all students who use buses, in order to consult on future options for buses and ensure they suit students' needs.
- The forum will be held on Thursday the 28th of November from 6-8pm and I am particularly encouraging those who might be able to give a representative view of bus users to attend.

Improving bike facilities

- Planning a video to provide information about where there are bike facilities to use on campus.
- Met with staff from the transport department who are looking into a suitable location for another external bike pump.
- Next steps on this - filming!
- On a related note, I answered the Scottish government consultation on a proposed new bike path from Cameron toll to Edinburgh BioQuarter detailing how this would greatly benefit students.

Sustain.Ed follow up

- Have agreed for the sculpture created at Sustain.ED to be located at King's Buildings House, where there will be a suggestion box asking what the Students' Association can do in terms of Sustainability.
- Had an initial meeting to discuss how to continue work on sustainability within the Students' Association.
- In the coming months, staff will form a committee to discuss how we can embed sustainability in everything we do as a Students' Association.

Affordable Student accommodation

- Attended Peffermill student accommodation project board where I strongly supported the build of more beds and advocated for as many affordable beds as possible to be included.
- Attended accommodation program board, supporting plans for more postgraduate halls to be built.

Other

- Met with SHRUB (volunteer led group who lead circular economy initiatives) to discuss how the freshers Freshshop could be improved for next year, and how the partnership can be developed in future.
- Attended a new University group set up to discuss how to reduce and offset carbon emissions from business travel and aviation.
- Attended Southside Community council and will attend Marchmont community council as many students live in these areas.
- Spoke at a training event for staff working in student housing on the importance of affordability for students.



Report from Oona Miller, VP Welfare

Committing to Campus Accessibility

- Attended meetings with University Estates department to devise how disabled students can be better consulted with on small works and major projects – Disabled Students' Forum in January will be first opportunity for this contact, and so far the development of Inclusive Design Guidelines by Estates have been identified as a core area for feedback.
- Researching state-of-play vis a vis disability policy in higher education institutions.
- Beginning meetings with University Estates and external organisations providing technological accessibility solutions, with the aim of procuring a product which could enhance the experience of disabled people using UoE / Students' Association buildings, through the £15m designated to Disability Access and Egress Project Board.
- Publicising the option for students to raise any significant issues of access/egress with me directly – the use of the Board's funding pot has not been fully agreed so there remains flexibility in the scope of this project!

Fostering a Compassionate University Community

- Successfully lobbied to coordinate a #NoExcuse Awareness Training (consent training) pilot with Rape Crisis Scotland and Residence Life, which will have Residence Assistants intensively trained in order to deliver consent training to their residents. This has been a significant goal of the University Taskforce for Tackling Sexual Violence and Gender-Based Violence regarding resources for prevention.
- Planning a Sexual Health and Guidance (S.H.A.G.) Week with Andrew to take place in February 2020 – this will be a week of education and celebration on sex, sexual health and relationships. If you have any ideas for events, we'd love to hear from you!
- University Executive has agreed to fund 11 new members of University staff in Counselling, Disability Service and Chaplaincy, who will fit with the expanded vision for wellbeing services in the Health and Wellbeing Centre. This is the result of many years of lobbying! I continue to push for the diversification of staff through these new posts, and expansion of appropriate service provision at King's Buildings.

Tackling Elitism and Building Inclusivity

- Attended antisemitism training from the Union of Jewish Students and have met with the President of the Jewish Society – we are working together to improve inclusivity and support for Jewish students in student groups, the Students' Association and the University
- Investigating how low-income (etc.) students could be linked with staff from similar backgrounds to build a sense of community and showcase success and tackle the "I don't belong here" feeling; as a companion piece, looking at how to improve staff literacy when it comes to supporting students from low-income (etc.) backgrounds

Mental Health and Wellbeing Week

- A success! Doing outreach stalls and getting out and about it's clear this week yields worthwhile conversations for many in the student community, and prompts people to seek help that they might not have done. I'm especially pleased to note how proactive staff and students are in running their own events. I was also thrilled to start a dialogue between students and politicians, and hope Edinburgh can be a significant part in the national conversation on student mental health provisions.



Paper B: Motion for free bus passes for disabled students, submitted by Ellen Blunsdon

What we will do:

1. Free bus passes will be available to disabled students as an adjustment option from the Student Disability Service.
2. These will be provided to students on an individual basis depending on personal need as determined by the Student Disability Service.
3. This will automatically be provided to students who have previously been registered with the Student Disability Service and are deemed to need this adjustment to prevent students from making extra appointments and increase waiting times for other students.

Background to this:

1. With the cancellation of the shuttle bus service between central campus and Kings' Buildings, in the 2020/21 academic year, the University will be offering discounted bus passes to students who rely on buses to get to classes.
2. For disabled students, this discount is not enough.
3. The disability charity Scope estimate that being disabled costs an extra £583 per month. This comes from buying mobility aids, extra heating, carers and, especially, extra transport.
4. While Edinburgh City Council does offer free bus passes for disabled people, you need to present 'proof' of your disability in the form of a benefits letter. As many disabled people aren't eligible for benefits, are in the long process to receive benefits or have had their claims denied, University provided bus passes are clearly needed to help disabled students.

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. The University should be doing more to give disabled students the accommodations they need to get to classes.
2. Disabled people also deserve to have access to free transport for personal use to optimise their student experience, e.g. for use to get to sporting facilities, society events, meeting with friends etc.
3. Disabled students already have to combat extra costs and the removal of the shuttle bus should not further negatively impact their financial situation.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

Paper C: Motion for elected Officials' Transparency and Accountability, submitted by Jordan Dowd.

What we will do:

1. The Students' Association Representation and Democracy team will record the individual votes of *Sabbatical Officers, Activities Representatives, and School Representatives* on accountability reports and motions
 - i. The method for collecting data on individual voting records will be subject to consultation coordinated by Representation and Democracy
2. When the ballots are counted after each session by the Representation and Democracy Team, all FOR, AGAINST, and ABSTAIN votes (or absence) of each *Sabbatical Officer, Activity Representative, and School Representative*, for all motions and accountability reports, will be tabulated into a spreadsheet or table, like below:
3. A table of votes such as this will be published on the EUSA website alongside the overall vote results
 - i. The method of publication and distribution will be subject to consultation coordinated by Representation and Democracy.

<i>name</i>	<i>position</i>	<i>motion 1</i>	<i>motion 2</i>	<i>motion 3</i>
<i>Jimmyjohn Smith</i>	<i>Sab Officer</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>against</i>	<i>for</i>
<i>Matilda F. Buttersworth</i>	<i>Society Rep</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>against</i>	<i>abstain</i>
<i>Jenny Marx</i>	<i>School Rep</i>	<i>against</i>	<i>against</i>	<i>for</i>
<i>Zelda Edmund Fitzgerald</i>	<i>Society Rep</i>	<i>absent</i>	<i>absent</i>	<i>absent</i>

4. The full implementation of paragraphs 1-3 will not take place until Representation and Democracy have written a clear and publicly available procedure which sets out how the Students' Association will support Elected Representatives to manage their public profile in light of this accountability mechanism.

Background to this:

1. Several other UK universities' student unions have adopted similar motions to publish the vote results of elected officers and representatives; we have specifically modelled this motion and the format of our results presentation on the system in use for several years at the student unions of Saint Andrews University and Cambridge University.

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. Our primary motivation in submitting this motion is to ensure that students and societies have access to the voting record of Sabbatical Officers and Elected Representatives.
2. This encourages elected officials to vote in a way that is consistent with their manifesto items, which is especially important because the votes of Officers and Elected Reps are weighted



- 1.5x as much as other students' votes, with the explicit justification that they are tasked with voting on behalf of the interests of their student constituencies.
3. In general, publishing elected officials' voting records seems to be in line with best democratic practice in any Student Union or similar organization, and has worked well in the Student Unions at other UK universities
 4. It is within EUSA's own regulations that there ought to be a closer connection between constituent and representative. Part 6, Section G, subsection ii of the student democracy regulations states that "Elected members of Student Council shall consult their student constituents on motions and issues to be voted on at Student Council in order to represent their views." There is clear scope for accountability within this democratic process, which will be heightened by the passing of this motion.
 5. The Students' Association Safe Space Policy aims to 'create an environment in which all students, staff and visitors feel welcome, respected, and able to fully participate in our events activities' - as such, accountability structures must not problematize the ability of Elected Representatives to fulfil their democratic responsibilities.
 6. This motion specifically excludes Liberation Officers from its provisions, because they are elected by their defined constituencies rather than by the entire student body and because these offices already have higher direct student engagement than many other elected positions, as was discussed when the previous version of this motion was debated in October.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.



Paper D: Motion for the freedom of Student Press, submitted by Craig Buchan

What we will do:

1. Prevents the Students' Association from obstructing student media societies' publication of works of journalism, including when this journalism refers to the Students' Association;
 - a. With the exception when the works of journalism in question are discriminatory or could potentially raise legal issues for the media society.
2. Prevents the Students' Association from compelling student media societies to publish works of journalism on matters of the association's choosing, including events or programmes run by the Students' Association;
3. Orders that current levels of Students' Association funding or advertising spending for media societies are maintained at the current or an increased level going forward;
4. Dictates that the access of student media societies to the Students' Association or Students' Association support may not be compromised or restricted now or in future.

Background to this:

1. The Student have as recently as this semester been prevented from reporting on information by the Students' Association as the information was deemed to reflect poorly on the association;
2. The amount of income The Student is receiving from the Students' Association has been halved this year;
3. The Students' Association has, upon learning of the intent to propose this motion, made efforts to improve the relationship between The Student and the association.

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. A free press is an important part of a democratic society, and this should extend to a democratic student community;
2. A strong and vibrant community of student journalism is an asset to the student body as a whole;
3. The current ability of the Students' Association to restrict student journalism prevents proper scrutiny of their work;
4. The Students' Association should be striving to act in the best interest of students and using its limited resources effectively, and should prevent negative coverage by doing so instead of censoring student journalism;
5. The Students' Association should not be able to threaten restricted funding and access of societies valued by the student body in order to protect its own image;
6. While this motion stems from experiences related to The Student, the same principles should apply to all student media societies and publications.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.



Paper E: Amendment to the motion for the freedom of Student Press, submitted by Association Exec

What we will do:

1. Prevents the Students' Association from obstructing student media societies' publication of works of journalism, including when this journalism refers to the Students' Association;
 - a. With the exception when the works of journalism in question are discriminatory or could potentially raise legal issues for the media society and/or for the Students' Association who carry an ultimate legal liability for 'The Student'
2. Prevents the Students' Association from compelling student media societies to publish works of journalism on matters of the association's choosing, including events or programmes run by the Students' Association;
3. Orders that current levels of Students' Association funding or advertising spending for media societies are maintained at the current or an increased level going forward;
 - a. Recognise that The Students' Association does not fund the Student Newspaper directly, but acknowledge that advertising spend from the Students' Association is an important part of funding; in this context, note that whilst having no spending authority on this matter, Student Council supports the continued spend on advertising at current (or higher levels) for all media societies and welcomes the commitment to do so from Association Executive
4. Dictates that the access of student media societies to the Students' Association or Students' Association support may not be compromised or restricted now or in future.

Submitted by Association Exec



Paper F: Motion for Shuttle Bus (KB) Continuation, submitted by Juliette Martin

What we will do:

1. We would like the Students' Association to do everything in their power to lobby the University to keep the shuttle bus running at current level of service between Bristo Square and King's Buildings running past the scheduled termination of this service at the end of the academic year 2019/20.
2. We would like the Students' Association to officially support the indefinite continuation of the shuttle bus service at the current level of service.
3. We would like the University to keep running the shuttle bus indefinitely at its current level of service.

Background to this:

1. Story broke in The Tab on 21st May 2019 that shuttle bus between KB and Central would be discontinued for academic year 2019/20, citing then-EUSA president Eleri Connick as saying that the decision was in response to students being "dissatisfied with current transport support services". It was also reported in this article that an 'alternative' unaffordable £420 Lothian Buses Student Ridacard would be available. The changes to the shuttle bus service were said to not have been opposed by EUSA.
2. Students then received an email from Prof Dave Robertson (Head of College of Science and Engineering) on 22nd May 2019 explaining that the shuttle bus would no longer be operational in the academic year 2019/20, and again citing reduced cost Ridacards and discounted JustEat bike passes as an advantage.
3. After a student letter was circulated expressing dismay at the decision to cancel the shuttle, an email was sent to students from Prof Robertson and Hugh Edmiston (Vice Principal for Business Development and Director of Corporate Services) on 26th July 2019 informing students that the shuttle bus would remain operational until the end of the academic year 2019/20.

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. The shuttle bus is primarily a means of getting students between classes taking place at KB and classes taking place in George Square. Students in first and second year in schools such as Physics primarily have lectures at George Square, but laboratories and workshops at King's Buildings, and so students rely on the shuttle bus to get to classes spread over two campuses on time. Students on many joint honours degree programmes (e.g. Computer Science and Physics) have to travel between King's Buildings and the Central Campus for the entirety of their degree and rely on the shuttle to get between their classes. Getting rid of the shuttle would be leaving these students in the lurch when it is already incredibly stressful getting between the campuses in the first place. Additionally, 4th and 5th year students can elect to take



courses from other Schools (e.g. Informatics), and having to pay to commute to classes may significantly affect course choices.

2. The shuttle bus also makes it easier for first and second year students at KB to take outside courses in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (and vice versa!), without worrying as much about timetabling and the stress of getting to class on time, so that they can experience the broad education that makes an education at Edinburgh, and indeed many universities across Scotland, so attractive. Cancelling the shuttle would reduce these options due to the geography of the university and would be unfair to students hoping to broaden their learning experience by taking subjects outside of science (or humanities). Upon the completion of the KB Nucleus in 2022, many science electives will move to King's Buildings rather than remain at George Square, so abolishing the shuttle will reduce opportunities for pre-honours humanities students to take science electives (e.g. astronomy), as their transport options to get to King's Buildings.
3. Furthermore, the introduction of an 'alternative' £420 bus pass, despite being a reduced price, is still simply unaffordable for many students. By cancelling the shuttle bus, this would mean that only first and second year students who can afford to take the bus would have access to a wider range of subject choices. This makes the abolition of the shuttle bus service a regressive move and is rather a step backwards in the efforts of the University in tackling elitism and widening participation.
4. Abolishing the shuttle bus will do nothing to help links between the university and the local community, and may help foster resentment in locals against students as abolishing the shuttle bus will inevitably make the regular 41 bus service overcrowded and particularly unpleasant during lecture crossover times.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.