**08/12/2021 Student Council Minutes**

Held online via Zoom

49 Council Members in Attendance

Guests: Jonathan Powles and Maeve Cowper.

Sabbatical Officers: President, VP Education, VP Student Development, VP Welfare and Wellbeing  
Chair: Peter Ilesanmi

1. **Welcome**

Chair welcomes everyone to the meeting. The Representation and Communications Team Leader provides an overview of how Council will run explaining that Sabbatical Accountability and Question Time, then members will debate the policy ideas submitted by students and voting will take place via Polls on Zoom.

1. **Senior Managers and Sabbatical Officer Question Time**

*Maeve Cowper, Head of Student Development and Jonathan Powles, Vice Principal Learning and Students from UWS, will be your guests this meeting. Maeve oversees student services, wellbeing, and student life and Jonathan is responsible for all things learning and teaching, including overseeing the new curriculum framework work. They will be joined by your Sabbatical Officers: Ellie, your student president; Kevin, your VP Education; Claire, your VP Student Development, and Luke, your VP Welfare and Wellbeing.*

Chair welcomes guests, Jonathan Powles and Maeve Cowper, and Sabbatical Officers. Maeve and Jonathan thanked the Council for inviting them along.

Chair invites the Sabbatical Officers to say a few words.

President, Ellie Gomersall said she is really excited for the meeting and to hear everyone’s thoughts, ideas, and any questions they may have.

Vice President Education, Kevin Miguim, welcomes members and encourages questions and suggestions. The Sabbatical Officers enjoy this meeting most as this is where they are accountable to students and can update students on their progress.

Vice President Student Development, Claire Morris, encourages the members to reach out and get in touch with her if they need anything as she is here to support them and overcome any boundaries students may have to learning.

Vice President Welfare and Wellbeing, Luke Humberstone, welcomes members and also said this is his favourite meeting.

Chair thanks guests and officers and invites questions from members

**Q:** Member asked if there is any help on how to use zoom?

**A:** Maeve advised that the Academic Skills Team are providing sessions for online meetings to practice how to use screens and speak etc. **Action - Maeve will send a link to Sabina.**

Jonathan also encourages students to ask lecturers if it must be over zoom. Jonathan also advised there is support available and encourages members to get feedback from students on how they are receiving this support and to also raise it with your regional reps.

**Q:** Member asked if there is any way students can get more access to labs for primary research?

**A:** Jonathan replied to email him or their course rep as they should have access to the labs.

**Q:** Member notes information from the University regarding the transition from one type of module to another school is a bit clunky, is there anything that can be changed or improved?

**A:** Ellie said to email her so they can have a discussion to work out how this can be improved as Ellie had the same experience.

Jonathan added further that your personal tutor should be giving you advice on this. If they are not, then any feedback from students regarding this should be collated and emailed to him as this is something he is interested in.

**Q:** Member noted the difficulty with combined hybrid and in person lessons are very difficult when you are the person online. This is due to the Tutor walking around the room or interacting with students in the class, which results in online students unable to hear or follow the lesson very well.

**A:** Jonathan advised this combined learning is not an advised way for tutors to have lessons and discourages it. However, often this type of combined method is due to resources which means classes can’t have two separate classes i.e. one online and one in person which is why they are combined. Jonathan encourages the members to engage with Students to discuss a better design that they think could work better.

**Q:** Member asked if the University could use one platform for all modules rather using Aula and Course worker? It can be confusing.

**A:** Jonathan agreed and advised the University are transitioning between noodle to aula. We will be using Aula fully by end of this academic year.

**Q:** What is the University doing to engage students?

**A:** Kevin advises that we believe the Student’s Union exits in order to engage students. He encourages students to have a look on the Student Union website under ‘what’s on’ to see what is being offered to engage students <https://www.uwsunion.org.uk/whatson/>

Maeve advised there are different teams running within Student Services, for example Careers Employer Insight, Employer mentoring programmes and the International Team hosted an International Student Day which had a lot of student engagement. Student Services now have Instagram and is taken over by student buddies on various days – please follow Student Services on Instagram.

**Q:** How can UWS help international Students that are coming from red flag countries?

**A:** Maeve advised there is support for student’s quarantining. Student buddies are reaching out to those student’s quarantining and helping them access various services for example shopping etc. Maeve will get back to Peter regarding financial assistance if any for those students quarantining from red flag countries.

**Q:** Students are feeling overwhelmed with the number of assignments due at the same time. Is there a way to pace modules to 3-4 days between assignments? Also, they struggle to deal with the mental health aspect with feeling overwhelmed with regards to this issue.

Also regarding extensions there is feedback that International students and women are more likely to be denied extensions, can we ensure this is more equitable?

**A:** Kevin advised that Short Life Working group are keen to produce a set of guidelines to avoid these deadline clashes. Also, he advised to speak to your Lecturer in avoiding these clashes. Kevin sympathises regarding the negative impact this has on their mental health and advised we have advice workers that can help students.

Ellie said it is important we have consistency across the board i.e., one lecturer shouldn’t be more helpful than others and we need to look at this. It shouldn’t matter who your lecturer is, you should be able to ask for extensions.

Claire reiterated communication is key with lecturers and our advice workers are extremely helpful. Also, UWS have emotional out of hours helpline where you can speak to a counsellor over the phone. students can speak to a professional counsellor 0800 028 3766 from 5pm to 9am

Jonathan advised it should be possible to create a scheduling system and will need to be brought to the Student Partnership Forum. **– Action Jonathan/his team and Saab officers**

**Q:** Not question – comment from member saying they felt the overall support system offered by UWS and lecturers are approachable. Classes are interactive, gives student sense of belonging and is something to commend.

**Q:** Member doesn’t know what else to advise her class as they said they did not know they were to attend a class which was advertised. Is there anything else she can advise them other than to keep checking the handbook and Aula?

**A:** Jonathan advised this will take time, there is work to do and we need to keep chipping away at the communications and expectations.

Jonathan and Maeve thanked everyone for their questions and would both love to come back. Maeve said if anyone has any questions for her to please feel free to email on [maueve.cowper@uws.uc.uk](mailto:maueve.cowper@uws.uc.uk)

**3. Review of previous minutes (Paper 2)**

Minutes accepted as accurate

**4. Policy debate (Paper 3)**

* 1. **Round App – Submitted by Graeme Martin**

Proposer not present.

Ellie will have a chat with Catering department.

Chair moves to vote

Policy rejected

* 1. **Make IT work remotely on student laptops – Submitted by Iona MacGregor**

Proposer not present.

Ellie proposes she will have a chat with ITDS on their policy on this and unsure if this is a Student Council Policy.

Chair moves to vote

Policy passes

* 1. **Engagement – Submitted by Andrew Mahady**

Member gave their experience and advised this does need to be addressed as they had to arrange their own their own support.

Claire advised this is part of her manifesto and she has been engaging with the disability team. Claire has reviewed the UCAS form, which only allows a student to indicate they have one disability. If a student indicates they have a disability this information is shared with the team at UWS. Claire said students should not be seeking support on their own. During T2 Claire is actively going to be working on getting this information to the University sooner. This is something which is already being addressed. Peer support can be offered via the Union and Disability society if anyone needs it.

Chair moves to vote

Policy passes

* 1. **Improve Support for Students’ Mental Health - Submitted by Luke Humberstone**

Luke advised these are the latest recommendations since last meeting.

Chair moves to vote

Policy passes

* 1. **Votes at 16 - POLICY LAPSE**

This is already in Scotland.

Chair moves to vote

Policy lapses

* 1. **Refectory– Submitted by Iona MacGregor**

Luke advised that due to the current restrictions regarding Covid, this may not be the best time to pass this policy.

Ellie advised that the University would not get China plates as they are too expensive. Recyclable containers are much better and what we are already moving towards

Chair moves to vote

Policy rejected

* 1. **Course Enrolment and Teams - Submitted by Rabia Rehman**

Member contributed that they think this is more a problem to be brought to course leaders and brought up that way rather through policy.

Luke said they have had issues from students regarding enrolment. We need to explore ways this can be improved in valid class links for courses. Luke said this policy would help.

Member said that Nursing students were 4 weeks behind and no access to any materials but were still expected to attend class with no idea of what we were doing. Ellie said to email her if she is needing any assistance.

Ellie said in her manifesto students should have timetables etc 6 weeks in advance of their course, but this is separate to this policy and ongoing.

Chair moves to vote

Policy passes

* 1. **Demilitarise UWS – POLICY LAPSE**

Member said that he has a military background and the work that the armed forces do is positive, and this should be lapsed.

Ellie encourages this to pass because the policy asks 3 specific things and is not against the armed forces. Sometimes they have aggressive marketing campaigns. This is not about the military itself it is just the marketing tactics.

Author said reason for this was policy was due to a documentary they had seen which revealed that military intake is higher in areas where there is higher rates of poverty and felt Paisley is vulnerable to this and does not want recruitment advertising on campus.

Chair moves to vote

Policy passes