

# General Meeting

5th October  
5-7pm

C.LTW1 / MS TEAMS

## Agenda

- Welcome and Attendance
- Minutes Ratification
- Challenges to Order Paper
- Dates to Note
- Elections & Resignations
- Reports ([Paper A](#))
  - Union President
  - Sports Union President
  - Vice President Communities
  - Vice President Education
- Motions
  - Mandatory First Responder Training for All Committees ([Paper B](#) and [Appendix 1](#))
  - Commitment to Fighting the Housing Crisis ([Paper C](#))
  - Representation and Transparency (Sabbatical Officer Meetings) ([Paper D](#))
- Any Other Business
- Date of Next Meeting: 5-7pm, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023
  - Motion Deadline: 10am, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023
  - Motion Amendment Deadline: 10am, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

## Paper A: Reports

### Union President Sabbatical Report, Leen Ali

Hi Guys, I am Leen Ali and I am the Union President for 2023/24. As President, I am the overall representative, spokesperson and ambassador of the Union. My work also revolves around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, aiming to support equality-related campaigns. I chair the Equalities Zone, a space where all underrepresented voices are uplifted. Had the great opportunity to attend NUS Lead & Change where I met other Sabbatical Officers and got to learn from their plans and experiences!

#### Showcasing Students

- Have joined the Digital Screens working group to review options of promoting student events.
- Working with the University to help promote diversity as well as inclusivity through a range of events, including an International Festival.

#### International Students

- Working with INTO and the University towards further integrating INTO students into the rest of the student community.
- Looking into the incorporation of interculturalist approaches into mental health support at the University.

#### Asking, Listening, Acting

- Had my first 'go out and talk' session (speaking to students around campus asking for their opinions of work I'm doing and/or the University, etc..). Have 3 more due to take place this semester.
- Promoting engagement with and reviewing Equalities' Zone.
- Working on a range of events for Black History Month with the University as well as at our Students' Union.

You can contact me at [president.union@stir.ac.uk](mailto:president.union@stir.ac.uk) or my official Instagram (@stir\_president).

### Sports Union President Sabbatical Report, Murray Bushell

As Sports President, I look after all 54 of our Sports Clubs. Since returning for my second year of Sports President, the summer months have been spent attending conferences, planning for the upcoming year and running campaigns to start the year. I attended both SSS conference and BUCS conference, building relations with fellow Sabbs across the country. Following on from this I was elected chair of the Sabbatical Forum in Scotland. For campaigns we have run two at the start of the year. Full Time On Initiations and Sport Swaps. FTOI, looks to spread the word that we are against initiations and encourage welcoming cultures for new members. Sport Swaps is encouraging current members to take up another sport at university and we have 24 clubs signed up.

#### Alumni

- Looking to engage more with our alumni community.
- Hosting one big alumni day for our clubs to bring back old members.
- Hopefully reap the rewards regarding finances, development, engagement, employability, etc.

### **Development**

- Set up an accreditation system for our clubs.
- Work with careers to create a personal development plan for committee members.

### **Promotion**

- Work with the university to promote our clubs more.
- More use of social media campaigns to promote what clubs we have.
- Look to promote our Tier 2 clubs more to help with recruitment.

You can contact me at [sports.union@stir.ac.uk](mailto:sports.union@stir.ac.uk). Make sure to also follow us on Instagram, @stirlingsportsunion, to keep up to date on all things sport!

### **Vice President Communities Sabbatical Report, Zoë Crosher**

As Vice President Communities, I work on many things including societies, sustainability, volunteering, housing and transport. One of my biggest highlights since starting in June include attending NUS Lead & Change conference in Leeds, where I met dozens of other Sabbatical Officers from up and down the UK! Another highlight for me was the Welcome Week Societies Fayre, where we had 60 Societies and over 120 volunteers.

### **Mental Health First Aid**

- We have achieved funding to begin rolling this out to society members
- I've also been working with the Student Support Services on a program called 'Look After Your Mate'
- Ideally by the end of the year, at least one member from all societies will have taken on the training

### **Student Parent Support**

- Received funding for furniture, books and toys to put into a parent study room space, which is currently being sourced
- Ran a student parent networking session during Welcome Week and got some really useful feedback
- I'm currently rolling out a Student Parent Experience survey, which will help inform my future work

### **Community Food Initiative**

- Received funding to fill the community fridge for a full year!
- Currently working with a food distributing company called FareShare, so that food can be delivered weekly to the fridge
- Pushing for more donations so that the fridge can be sustainable by the end of the year

You can contact me at [communities.union@stir.ac.uk](mailto:communities.union@stir.ac.uk) or my official social media channels @stir\_communities.

## Vice President Education, Katie Gethings

Hey, I am Katie, your Vice President for Education and I take care of all things academics and education. I chair the Education Zone and take care of the Academic Representatives at the University. I am here to represent and advocate on behalf of anything academic so I am the person to go to if you have any questions or issues regarding your education. Some highlights from my first few months in Office have been attending NUS and sparqs conferences where I met other Sabbatical Officers, presenting the Student Experience at University Symposiums and seeing all the connections that strung out of Welcome Week!

### **Academic Representatives**

- I have been working with the Union, to redevelop the recruitment and training for Academic Representatives.
- Included more detailed asynchronous online training resources and introduced in-person Rep Conference to expand on this and provide a Rep community.
- Developed ways to expand Rep skills and working with Careers to help demonstrate how being a Rep improves your employability.

### **Life skills workshops**

- Began work to introduce Personal Finance and Money Management workshop for students in November.
- Working with Finance lecturer and student lead SMIF society.
- Working to bring Stress management and finding part-time work workshops as well.

### **Consent Course**

- Met with Herriot-Watt Students Union to learn how their consent course runs and how they got to where they are.
- Introduced a Consent Working Group at the Union – which anyone is free to join.
- Working with Reclaim Stirling to help fulfil the Emily test motion that passed last year and how we can improve the culture of consent at the University.

You can contact me at [education.union@stir.ac.uk](mailto:education.union@stir.ac.uk) or my official social media channel on Instagram @stir\_education.

## Paper B: Mandatory First Responder Training for All Committees

Proposer: Zoë Crosher (Vice President Communities) | Second: Murray Bushell (Sports Union President)

### **Motion Resolves**

1. That the Stirling Students' Union actively supports the first responder GBV awareness training, hosted by the University. The Students' Union should highlight this training to students, ideally once a semester, and must include this within training resources for volunteering positions, such as Club Academy and Sports Committee Training.
2. That at least one committee member from every Sports Club and Society must complete first responder training, for each academic year.
3. Every student who completes the training will be accredited for it. The 'SV and GBV Awareness Club Award' (see [Appendix 1](#)) will be formally introduced. This award will be presented on Society and Club pages on the Students' Union website.

### **Motion Notes**

1 in 3 women worldwide experience either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime (World Health Organisation, 2021)<sup>1</sup>. Currently, sexual crimes are at the highest level seen since 1971, and account for 5% of all recorded crimes in Scotland (Rape Crisis Scotland)<sup>2</sup>.

Students often do not feel comfortable talking to a member of staff if they have been a victim of GBV, and so this bridges the gap as many students will feel more comfortable disclosing to a fellow student or friend. This training allows the student that the information is disclosed to, to deal with it in a safe way.

The training was optional last year, which acted as a trial period to see how successful the training was. 35% of Sports Clubs and Societies completed the training during this period. Pre-session and post-session feedback was gathered from every student who completed the training. This feedback showed the following:

- 'I have a good idea of what is expected from a first responder'
  - Pre-session: 40% responses were 'unsure'
  - Post-session: 70% responded 'strongly agree'
- 'I have a good understanding of the specialist Sexual Violence and Misconduct Liaison Officer role (SVMLO)'
  - Pre-session: 55% responded 'unsure'
  - Post-session: 100% responded either 'agree' or 'strongly agree'
- 'I have a good understanding of what support is available for me if I receive a disclosure which is a welfare concern'
  - Pre-session: 27% responded 'disagree', and 72% responded 'unsure'
  - Post-session: 100% responded either 'agree' or 'strongly agree'

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/about-what>

The Students' Union has already been mandated to support the implementation of the Emily Test, with the motion having passed at the last general meeting on April 13th with 91.9% in favour. This motion will help to further the argument in favour of implementing the Emily test at the University.

### **Motion Beliefs**

As a Students' Union, actively supporting this training will ensure support for a much larger number of students, and improve GBV awareness at the University, building a better and more inclusive culture.

It is likely that students will confide in their fellow students about issues such as GBV, and this allows students to respond safely.

This motion will also protect the students and committees who have been trained as first responders, as it will stop them from being put in a difficult and potentially unsafe situation.

DRAFT

## Paper C: Commitment to Fighting the Housing Crisis (Paper B)

Proposer: Eliot Wooding-Sherwin | Second: Justine Pedussel (Housing Volunteer Officer)

### **Motion Resolves**

1. That the Students' Union shall work constructively with local campaigns at Stirling committed to fighting the housing crisis, such as the Stirling Solidarity Space.
2. To create a page on the Stirling Students' Union website with:
  - A statement of intent to fight the housing crisis and student homelessness.
  - A statement of intent to fight the University of Stirling rent increase.
  - Information from the Stirling Students' Union survey conducted last year, and from the information in NUS Scotland's 'Fighting for Students: the Cost of Survival' 2023 report<sup>3</sup>.
  - Information from Living Rent, Shelter Scotland, and Citizens Advice Bureau (Scotland) on rights as tenants.
  - The Stirling Solidarity Space petition to Oppose the University Rent Hike.
  - The Stirling Solidarity Space Housing Experiences Survey.
3. That the Sabbatical Officers should lobby the University to reverse the increase in accommodation rent which started in 2023.
4. That the Sabbatical Officers should lobby the University to introduce policy so that the number of students they take is accurately compatible with available affordable accommodation in Stirling.

### **Motion Notes**

That Stirling students are experiencing a cost of living crisis which massively impacts housing; with the majority of students at Stirling left with £50 after rent (according to a Student Union survey conducted in the academic year 2022/23).

That last year, the National Union of Students Scotland survey found that the average cost of rent for student accommodation had increased by 34% since 2018. As a result, 12% of Scottish students have experienced homelessness, 45% of students have gone without heating due to a lack of money, and 35% have been unable to pay their rent in full (NUS Scotland's 'Fighting for Students: the Cost of Survival' 2023 report).

That despite this, the University of Stirling has increased its accommodation rent, starting September 2023, by up to 9%.

Also, that the University of Stirling has increased its accommodation rent and increased its student intake by another thousand. Leading to an increase in student homelessness.

That to build a stable and equal University, every student and staff member should have access to affordable housing.

That as per the 'Support of Actions for Better Housing' motion passed last semester (April 2023), "actions taken by students to encourage the University to better the state of housing shall be supported by the Students Union."

### **Motion Believes**

That the University of Stirling Students' Union should be committed to fighting the student housing crisis and student homelessness.

That the University of Stirling should reverse the rent increase of 2023.

That the University of Stirling must establish new affordable accommodation before increasing its intake of students.

DRAFT



## Paper D: Representation and Transparency (Sabbatical Officer Meetings)

Proposer: Dan McPadden | Seconder: Luna Larkin

### **Motion Resolves**

1. To define 'relevant meeting' as any meeting held by Sabbatical Officers with the University, at which it is expected matters relating to the Cost of Living Crisis will be discussed. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes any meeting related to housing, the cost of education, and services students are likely to use e.g buses.
2. To instruct Sabbatical Officers to consult with students through social media and/or email before relevant meetings.
3. To instruct the Union to share the outcomes of these meetings and, where possible, make available minutes of these meetings.

### **Motion Notes**

That engagement remains low within the Union, despite improvements over recent years.

That many students remain unaware that it is the job of Union Officers to represent the interests of the students in meetings with the University.

That Volunteer Officers - most recently the Housing Officer - have created greater engagement by publicising meetings in advance, and explicitly asking through social media what students would like to be asked.

### **Motion Believes**

That greater openness can only lead to better engagement with the Union, and make the students represented by Sabbatical Officers in these meetings more involved.

## Paper B Appendix 1

The training covers the following topics:

- Outline the role of first responder
- How to manage confidentiality and data sharing
- Support available to students
- How to escalate a concern
- What support and resources are available

### **Award: SV & GBV Awareness Club Award**

Bronze Ribbon: One committee member has undergone basic first responder training.

Silver Ribbon: Half the committee attended First Responder training, and half the committee should also have attended Bystander Intervention training.

Gold Ribbon: All committee members have attended First Responder training, and have underwent Bystander Intervention training.

As mentioned above, the silver and gold tiers of the award require committee members to attend the University's Bystander training. This training aims to support students to gain a better understanding of the overall strategy and of the issues that will be discussed.

The training covers the following topics:

- Support available
- The role of bystanders
- The extent of GBV in Scotland and common myths
- The definition of consent
- How to support friends
- Different types of abuse
- The definition of the bystander effect