

Minutes

Education Zone

8th February 2024

There will be a meeting of the **Students' Union Education Zone** on **Thursday 8th February 2024** from 5pm via **Microsoft Teams**.

In order to ensure the meeting is kept to time please ensure all attached papers are read in advance.

IN ATTENDANCE

1. Members Present
Katie Gethings KG VP Education

2. In Attendance
34 Academic Reps and Faculty Officers

3. Staff Support
Natalie Hay NH Democracy & Representation Coordinator
Caroline Dunthorne CD Welcome Desk

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 Minutes were ratified by KG.

CHALLENGES TO ORDER PAPER

- 3.1 No challenges to order paper.

DATES TO NOTE

- 4.1 Societies ball: 28th March
- 4.2 Bus Forum: 3rd April
- 4.3 Sports Ball: 5th April
- 4.4 Postgraduate exams: 18th April
- 4.5 Undergraduate Exams: 22nd April

ELECTIONS & RESIGNATIONS

- 5.1 No positions elected.

REPORTS

- 6.1 VP Education
KG Academic Rep in person training for the first time since pre-covid. Great to have extra touch points for Academic reps to build relationships and network so would love it to continue next academic year.

A student asked if this event will still be counted on their record because they signed up but were unable to attend.

KG responds saying that the event was not counted for anyone because it was a new event.

KG organised the first Finance Fayre. There were originally workshops but getting attendees was difficult so a fayre in a public place such as the Atrium was a much bigger success. There were people from the Money team,

Global Justice, Citizen Advice Bureau and the union had various stalls. Lots of students attended and got resources to better manage their personal finance journey.

- 6.2 Adelayo Adebayo (AA) makes an introduction as the next VP Education.
- 6.2 Engagement Officer
ZR [ZR was absent and did not provide a written report.]
- 6.3 Postgrad Officer
JD [JD was absent and did not provide a written report.]
- 6.4 Alternative Pathways Officer
DD [DD was absent and did not provide a written report.]
- 6.5 Care Experienced Officer
YES [YES was absent and did not provide a written report.]
- 6.6 Parents and Carers Officer
NF I have been supporting students and recommending services like SLS. I have been working with Kirsty on an ADHD project that she has been trying to get together to help other students. I have attended several careers conferences and I have another one of the 26th.
- 6.7 Mature Students' Officer
AR [AR was absent and did not provide a written report.]

UPDATES, DISCUSSION AND DECISION TOPICS

- 7.1 Year recap
KG Over 250 reps have completed their training. This is the first time in-person training has been back since pre-covid and we are making the experience more interactive. There is now a weekly newsletter for all academic reps with information and opportunities. We have also organised informal meet-ups such as the Christmas meet up which allowed for much more networking to take place.

The new SSFC policy has come into place this year which we have all been part of which has allowed for the meetings to be more student-focused. The feedback you guys have provided is being brought to the University and they are listening. This is not what the final policy will look like, but we are taking the steps to get there.

The first ever A.I. policy is now in place and our feedback was given to the University's senior management which has been received very well. Our voices are being heard within the larger University with this Student partnership agreement.

There are over 700 RATE Award nominations this year which is amazing. The ceremony for RATE will be in May so please come along.
- 7.2 Feedback
KG presents three questions on a Mentimeter with the following responses.

Q: What change in the SSFCs or faculty approach to Reps have you noticed this year?

- More consistent communication between Reps and the faculty.
- More interested in what reps are having to say and making change.
- Staff more open to mentioning things that are weaker in the module to the Reps.
- Module coordinators are better at getting feedback from the class.

Q: Have you found the training this year to be helpful? If so, how?

- Good blend of in-person and online
- Like the in-person rep training as we got to meet new people
- Good to bounce off other reps.
- Really good
- Online was a great experience.
- The Additional links provided for further support was good.
- More follow-ups especially for first time
- In-person is good for learning from more experience reps.
- The careers training was helpful.
- Like knowing where to signpost people to get support.
- Like that it was more practical.

Q: What would you like to see next year?

- The Microsoft Teams forum being continued.
- Continue with the in-person training.
- The academic symposium was helpful.
- More in-person opportunities to develop relationships with other reps and staff.
- Keep the blended in-person and online training.
- A more permanent online forum? KG responds saying we try to use teams for that.
- I really felt part of the union.
- Chances to participate in departmental meetings? KG responds saying the union can advocate for this, but it is a department choice.

7.3 What's next?

KG The final orders of business for you as academic reps are contributing to your final feedback forums and making sure you submit the handover forms. These will be sent out in a couple of weeks' time and will only take around 15 minutes to complete.

OM I haven't had great interaction between my faculty, the students and myself so my handover form will not have much information on it. Is that okay?

KG Yes. We just want to see what you have been doing, it is only for next year's reps but if people are not getting involved then that is something you should mention in the form.

The date of submission of My Stirling Award is closing very soon so make sure your hours for being an academic Rep are logged and hand in the final audit.

OM Is it worth signing up for the My Stirling Award at this point in the year?

NH You can backdate the hours that you can log but I don't know how long so it would be worth checking with the My Stirling Award team directly.

OM Do Student Rep hours count for Postgrad students?

NH Yes. There are also other awards you can sign up for such as the Satire Award and volunteering transcript through the Union as well.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Questions

OM Is the handover needed for reps who started in January or is it only for the yearlong modules?

KG They are on a semester basis so the reps who started in January will need to complete them as well.

- OM Are the handovers the same for MSC Students?
KG You will be doing your handovers next semester if it is a January-to-January course. We will also be providing extra assistance for those doing their thesis at the same time.
- OM This is another point of feedback but is there a way to motivate reps to talk to the module coordinators and vice versa. Maybe get them in the same room or get into faculty meetings?
KG We are trying to bridge that gap and we can try but it is not always possible.
- OM Is there a way to check how many points you have checked off the list?
KG Send an email to the academic reps' email address (studentreps.union@stir.ac.uk) with your name, student number and all your module codes. This will allow us to check which of your 6 points you have completed.
- OM What happens if I do not have enough points?
NH For all the modules that you have completed the 6 required points of contact will be listed on your official transcript once you have graduated. If you are doing multiple modules over multiple semesters, then the ones that you have not completed these 6 points will just not be listed on that transcript.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 Next Academic Year