

Minutes of the meeting
Student Senate
Thursday 14th April 2016
DG124, 12pm-3pm

Present: Aidan Laycock (LOS), Nathaniel Abakah-Phillips (NAP), Lucinda Izzard (LI), Izzy Tooke (IT), Grace Mason (GM), Lucy Titley (LT) Nikki Foster (NF), Ellen Gambles (EG), Vickky Firth (VF), Mel Perkins (MP), Katherine Armstrong (KA), Caitlin Smithson (CS), Caitlin McDougall (CM), Katie White (KW), Angus Williams (AW), Fran Rhodes (FR),

In attendance: Paul Murtough (Minutes), Louise Aiken (Membership Engagement Manager, LA), Harrison Rimmer (Student Engagement Co-ordinator), Matt Allton (Social Media), Matthew Walton (Sports and Activities Manager), Karl Swales (Sports Co-ordinator).

Apologies: Ellen Gambles (HLS representative), George Coombs (GC), Danielle Ward (DW), Sophie Walker (SW), Vicky Weekes (VW), Sven Kluever (SK)

Maximum number of voters: 15

1. Apologies

As stated above

2. Declaration of Interest

None

3. Membership

As apologies were noted it was decided there was no need to review the membership.

4. Senate Motions

S51: Reduce the cost of S&S dinners

NAP introduced the motion which asks for the annual dinners to be subsidised.

For: LI stated that it should be considered and that there could be funds somewhere to assist.

Against: (Not specifically an against) VF asked how much would the subsidiary be? And what the expectation of footing the cost would be?

For: LT stated that currently, the prime objective of the Sports and Societies Committee is to fundraise, a better focus (if subsidised) would be around inclusion and gaining numbers.

Against: MP stated that as the price decreases the need for two dinners is less appealing.

VF also stated that the additional (hidden) costs of the dinners are not taken into account currently, such as the costs of personal care for the events alongside the expense of the dinner.

NAP summated the motion and LoS requested the vote.

Vote for Motion:

For: Against: Abstain:
13 0 1

Motion Passed

5. Honorary Life Membership

LoS called for the nominations of honorary life memberships and asked for those who have nominated to speak on behalf of their candidates,

Nominees were:

Ellen Gambles
Caitlin McDougall
Katie White
Vickky Firth
Grace Mason
Angus Williams

Once speeches were submitted, LoS called for the vote from members of Senate.

Successful candidates were:

Ellen Gambles
Vickky Firth
Grace Mason
Angus Williams

Candidates will receive recognition of this award at the Annual Student Awards on May 13th.

AW joined the meeting

6. National Conference Motions

Amendment 201C: Engaging with the Green Paper

The motion calls for national action against the proposed Green Paper and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) which, if implemented, will create a policy to levy the cap on tuition fees.

LoS opened the floor for discussion.

VF asked if this would then impact on loans and create an increase?

IT responded, stating that this is currently unknown.

CS asked how much the tuition could rise by.

PM stated this is also unknown at this time.

LI stated that this leads to a path of elitist universities.

AL (LoS) stated that this would potentially create new routes for students; forcing them to take Part time study alongside full time employment.

NAP stated that this would follow trends – if established at other institutions, YSJ may look to follow similar pathways.

CS asked what is being voted on by senators?

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IT responded, stating the vote is to clarify whether delegates should vote to support the national campaign to remove the tuition element from the TEF

VF stated that the current plan makes it more difficult for lower income family members to attend and afford university.

LoS called for a vote on the proposal.

Vote for campaign support:

For Against Abstain:
12 0 0

Liberate my degree:

This motion calls for universities to widen the current curriculum and engage a broader demographic of students. Currently degrees are seen to be dominated by the white middle classes and little scope is offered beyond this.

LI asked how current programmes could be improved.

NAP stated that YSJ currently offers a good range of programmes and modules, but there is always room for improvement.

KA other institutions have led this by renaming buildings etc.

EG asked how this would affect study in MA/ PG disciplines.

VF mentioned a concern of over representing

LoS called for a vote on the proposal:

Vote for campaign support:

For: Against: Abstain:
12 0 0

209: Freedom of information

This motion calls for action to lobby institutions to be open and transparent to their students, this comes shortly after proposed changes to the freedom of information act.

VF asked how would information be shared to students?

PM stated that this information, would possibly be presented as items on the website.

KA stated that currently meetings which last a couple of hours are held, purely to review papers that could be readily available to students.

FR stated the principle is good, however, negative attitudes to staff/courses already exist and this could fuel more angst.

VF stated she agreed with the sentiment and it could cause further hostility internally.

IT stated that everyone, including the institution is entitled to confidentiality.

AW stated that comments, regardless of what they are, shouldn't sway people's views and decisions, focus on a positive light.

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CS stated that there is the potential that students will not care about some of the information. AL (LoS) stated this data, could be useful to influence senate discussions. NAP stated that as the motion has been proposed by a larger institution, is it that they do see a benefit to receiving more information, but by this, it does not overtly affect students of YSJ.

LoS called for a vote on the proposal.

Vote for campaign support:

For: Against: Abstain:
10 1 1

410: Graduation: The final hidden cost

The motion stated that graduation poses a higher cost than anticipated by students. The motion calls for action to enlist universities to provide subsidised graduations for their members,

FR asked if there is a cost for tickets to graduation?

AL (LoS) stated cost per ticket was £10 (for family/friends)

VF When do we call for universities to stop subsidising?

AW Our graduation is an excellent event, and the cost of £10 is miniscule to pay,

KA stated that costs for gowns is expensive, there are only two suppliers for gowns for the UK, could this not be subsidised?

CS stated this isn't the focus of the motion, it is directed to universities.

FA stated that those who do not receive a high level of income should be considered in this discussion

MP stated that it is unlikely that the external companies would want to drop their pricing.

CMc responded in agreement, that it isn't realistic to expect companies to reduce their pricing.

NAP stated that on a realistic level, it could cost the institution around £72,000 to subsidise the current cost.

EG the motion asks for research to be done into the possibility of this.

FR asked if we vote for, could there be a push to better advertise the costs of graduation?

AW stated the research should lead the decisions.

LoS called for a vote on the proposal

Vote for campaign support:

For: Against: Abstain:
10 4

503: Students are citizens too!

The motion cites that students are integral members of their community and should be recognised as such, there is animosity against students and NUS wish to rectify this.

KW stated that the media and local community continuously portray a negative outlook on students

LI stated that contrary to this, local community meetings welcome students and have a good mind set.

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KA stated that the media generally cover the negative.

KW potential to shed new light on students and community partnerships.

VF stated that this could lead to possible representation in the community

KA stated that small towns have shown as having been affected by students, housing price increasing etc. can understand why there is such anxiety on the subject.

CS stated that the local community can be quite scary and daunting.

IT reiterated by asking how can students integrate when we struggle with the community around us.

LoS called for a vote on the proposal:

Vote for campaign support:

For: Against: Abstain:

9 1 4

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