



**Meeting:** COUNCIL/SENATE/STUDENTS' UNION COMMITTEE

**Date and Time:** Thursday 3 December 2020 at 2.15pm

**Venue:** Via MS Teams

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Present:

Professor I White (Chair)	Vice-Chancellor and President
Mr T Hollingsworth	Appointed by Council
Professor P Lambert	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching)
Mr F Masala	President, The SU
Ms C Morgan	Student Representative
Ms K Robinson	Elected by Senate
Dr J Troyer	Elected by Senate
Ms A Willingham	Education Officer, The SU

In Attendance:

Mrs J Loveys	Director Accommodation & Hospitality Services (until minute 1244)
Mr A McLaughlin	Chief Executive, The SU
Ms J Medland	Project Manager (Learning, Teaching & Student Experience)
Ms A Pater	Deputy Director (Academic Governance & Compliance)
Mr A Payne	Director of Student Services
Ms E Pollinger	Secretary
Ms R Sheer	Acting Director of Academic Registry
Dr C Wilson	Vice-President (Student Experience)

Apologies:

Mr G Barnstable	Student Representative
Dr M Harney	Appointed by Council
Professor A Heath	Academic Director, CLT
Ms K Maluta	Student Representative

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**ACTION**

**1239. CHAIR'S WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Courtney Morgan who was attending her first meeting as Student Representative and Emily Pollinger who was attending her first meeting as Secretary.

#### **1240. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members confirmed that they had no conflicts of interest to declare apart from all being students, staff or Council members of the University.

#### **1241. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020 (Paper CSSU20/21-012) were APPROVED as a correct record.

#### **1242. MATTERS ARISING**

- Minute 1234 (3) – Furlough Scheme

The Chair gave an update on behalf of the Director of Human Resources (DoHR) and noted that the University now has very few people on this scheme in recent months. He explained that the DoHR encouraged departments to plan as far in advance as possible and hardship funds remained available to student members of staff. The Chair also noted that the Government had announced further funding to be made available for hardship.

- Minute 1234 (4) – Transgender Policy

The Chair gave an update on behalf of the DoHR and noted that a draft policy had been developed for both staff and students. The policy drew on best practise from fourteen different universities including Cardiff, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Oxford, UCL, UWL, Southampton, Manchester and Cambridge as well as relevant organisations including GIRES (Gender Identity Research & Education Society), The Equality Challenge Unit Trans student and staff guidelines, The Transgender Law Centre model employment policy, Stonewall, ACAS, UNISON and the NHS.

A stakeholder plan was in place and stakeholder feedback was incorporated into the policy. A student working group had been formed, the draft policy had been shared with them, and a meeting held to discuss initial feedback. Francesco Masala had arranged a further meeting of the working group before Christmas.

Tim Hollingsworth advised that in his role as Chief Executive of Sport England, he was aware of some of the sensitivities around transgender definitions in competitive sport and in access to facilities such as the university Sports Village. He offered to contribute to the development of the policy. Francesco Masala welcomed this offer of expertise.

**TH/FM**

- Minute 1234 (2) – Prevention and Early Intervention in Postgraduate Mental Health

The Director of Student Services noted that a Fika mental fitness app had been launched, it would be available over Christmas and built upon during the second semester.

#### **1243. STUDENTS' UNION BUSINESS**

- **Academic Representatives Elections report**

Annie Willingham presented an overview of the 2020/21 Academic Representatives elections (Paper CSSU20/21-013); she noted that restrictions in place due to Covid-19 had affected participation in the election process. She also noted that a review of the Academic Representatives system had been scheduled for this year as part of the Student Voice Framework.

Andrew McLaughlin noted that the democratic processes of the SU satisfied the statutes and code of practice as outlined in the Education Act. Jenny Medland noted that the Student Experience Board would be overseeing the Student Voice Framework review and a committee route had been planned for any changes that might arise from the review.

**JM**

The Chair noted that this would need to have been completed by Easter in order for changes to be put in place in time for the next academic year.

The Committee NOTED the Student Academic Representatives Election report.

- **Top Ten issue: Lecture Capture**

Annie Willingham presented Paper CSSU20/21-014. She outlined the work that had already taken place to develop a lecture capture policy of benefit to both staff and students. This had included discussions with the UCU union.

The Committee noted the clear benefits to students including international students in different time zones and noted that recorded lectures were also beneficial for lecturers as evidence of learning covered.

The Committee agreed that a robust lecture capture policy would future-proof the University and noted that guidance already existed on the CLTC pages.

The Committee NOTED the report and the action being proposed.

- **Top Ten issue: Supervision**

Francesco Masala presented Paper CSSU20/21-015. He noted that the report of the Independent Advisor for Postgraduate Students showed that supervision could still be improved. Dr Wilson noted that the Doctoral College had drawn up an 18-point action plan, supervision remains the main theme and the Doctoral College would be providing training in confident conversations. Dr Wilson would be able to provide updates on progress against actions throughout the year.

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The Committee NOTED the report and the action being proposed.

- **Top Ten issue: Sustainability**

Francesco Masala presented Paper CSSU20/21-016. He noted that divestment from carbon industries had been discussed at the Committee last year. The University had committed to divestment in 2018 however the University Treasurer had informed him that the majority of investments were not direct. The Chair confirmed that the Investment Group had been reconvened.

Recommendation 1: The Committee NOTED the paper.

Recommendation 2: The Committee RECOMMENDED support for the sustainability agenda.

Recommendation 3: The Committee NOTED that Francesco Masala would share the views of the Committee at the next Finance and Audit meetings, namely the creation of a plan to de-carbonise our investment portfolio within a certain timeframe.

FM

**(5) Top Ten issue: Additional costs**

Francesco Masala presented Paper CSSU20/21-017. He outlined ways to ensure financial transparency, value and equity for the student body. The Committee discussed this issue from the perspective of both prospective students and current students.

Courtney Morgan noted that this year's offer of access to all SU clubs and societies for a single fee had been welcomed by the first years and had allowed them to try new activities without a cost barrier to involvement.

The Committee considered and NOTED the recommendations:

Recommendation 1 - *Increase transparency around the costs of being a student*

*at Bath, ensure the website reflects this.* Dr Wilson noted that she was the UEB lead for this Top Ten issue and would be working with the SU

CW

to understand the financial journey for different students according to their interests and priorities. Recommendations 1 – 4 were included in her project plan which was to:

- Ensure the information on the website is up to date
- Identify and be transparent about costs
- Consider how to reduce costs
- Compare equity of access regardless of financial background.

*Recommendation 2 - Create a timeline of anticipated expenditure for varying levels of student activity to allow for students to budget in-year.*

*Recommendation 3 - Explore reducing University-owned costs by a set percentage.*

*Recommendation 4 - Discuss what the University can do to address the financial inequalities across our student body.*

*Recommendation 5 - Discuss how C/S/SU can keep financial transparency, value, and equity on the University agenda.* The Committee NOTED that a strategic conversation was taking place in Council about the perception of the University as a 'high-income' university amongst prospective students and what the University could do proactively to attract and welcome students from a low-income background.

The Director of Student Services noted existing schemes in place such as bursaries and Gold Scholars. The Chair added a recommendation to the project plan to draw together the information on the mechanisms of support that already existed such as accommodation bursaries.

#### **1244. SENATE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

Angela Pater presented Paper CSSU20/21-018. She noted that Senate had engaged in an Effectiveness Review in 2019/20 with an external chair and that Senate and its Committees have been considering the proposals made throughout 2020.

She noted that Appendix 1 of the paper listed the Senate Effectiveness Review's recommendations relating to this Committee. Some overlap had been identified between the scope of the Committee and the scope of the Student Experience Board (SEB). The SEB's draft terms of reference had been tabled as Appendix 2 of the paper.

She noted that any changes to the Committee's terms of reference would require approval by both Senate and Council.

Dr Wilson noted that the SEB was due to have its first meeting in the New Year. The previous incarnation as the Student Experience Project Team had been focussing on the University's Covid response.

The Committee discussed the overlap in scope between the Committee and the SEB and AGREED to retain the current structure of CSSU for one year by which time SEB would be fully in operation and consider the proposals from the Senate Effectiveness then.

**Sec**

**1245. DATES OF MEETINGS**

The programme of meetings for 2020/21 was noted as follows (all meetings at 2.15pm):

- Thursday 18 February 2021
- Tuesday 20 April 2021

**1246. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair thanked Andrew McLaughlin for his hard work as Chief Executive of the SU and noted that this was his last meeting as he is moving on to a new role as Head of Strategy & Innovation at South Gloucestershire Local Authority later in December.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution and the SU Officers for their excellent reports.

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The meeting concluded at 3.25 pm

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