

Scrutiny Panel Meeting 2 (FTOs) Minutes

Date: 10/12/20

Time: 3pm-5pm

No	Time	Item for discussion	
1	3:00pm-3:05pm	Welcome and matters arising	The Scrutiny Panel decided what order they would ask questions, and whether they had questions for Officers
2	3:05pm-3:20pm	President Report & Questions	<p>TA provided update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Black Voices Working Group - Confidence in Guild's structures - inclusive language - Referendum - All Student Meeting - Presented policy to Appointments Panel about BAME representation on Trustee Board - Student Engagement Group - provide opportunity for students on forum - grant, certificate of participation (more than just volunteering) - Recommendation from Scrutiny Panel from last meeting - supporting Disabled Students' Panel <p>ET: Can we hear more about the Black Voices campaign?</p> <p>TA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenges include University not getting back to students quick enough, waiting on data to support working groups - Hard to give it all of the attention it needs - Discussions around accessibility and BAME councillors - Looking at why black students aren't engaging, and what we can do about this - Looking at things that came out of the Decolonisation Conference <p>ET: You're doing a great job!</p> <p>TA: Thank-you. In terms of education, Jules is looking at work on awarding gaps, and best practices to decolonising the curriculum</p>

			<p>ET: Can you tell us more about plastic cup usage?</p> <p>TA: We declared a climate emergency, and are working with Ethical & Environmental Officer, Sports Officer and Environmental Committee in University. Looking at running a climate emergency campaign. Will ensure that the Guild is setting the example to the University, and not just asking the University to do all of the sustainability work.</p> <p>OO: What was the VC's response to the climate emergency?</p> <p>TA: VC explained that the reasons provided for declaring the climate emergency were all valid. Have had discussions with the VC and Matt to create volunteering opportunities for students.</p> <p>OP: Can you tell us about the Preferendum, there is lots of talk about this?</p> <p>TA explained the rationale for the Preferendum, and the Guild's current stance on UCU strike action.</p>
3	3:20pm-3:35pm	<p>Activities & Employability Officer Report & Questions</p>	<p>AR provided her updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not On Campaign training - Sub-committee meeting this morning for Activities Committee - constitutional training - Positions on sub-committee rotated, so everyone will have the chance to input on operational decisions - anything controversial to Activities Committee - Health & Safety Committee - looking at external memberships, and byelaws for this with Officers - MDSC - worked with MDS students to change date of exam - Meetings for UEB Festival - Meetings with societies <p>OO: Would like to ask about Zoom fatigue - any plans with how to engage students with UoB Festival?</p> <p>AR: Taking different approaches to this, there will be some in person events for UeB Festival (taking into account that we may still be in Tier 3)</p> <p>OP: Can you tell us more about connected Christmas?</p>

			<p>AR: Working with societies on this (e.g. Bake Soc - baking gingerbread, cake, Politics Society - film recommendations). Encouraging students to review and comment on recommendations.</p> <p>JB: My questions have been answered</p> <p>JT asked a question about progress on some work.</p> <p>AR: My schedule has been jam-packed working with Part-Time Officers, Not On Campaign, and other work, so this has been pushed back a bit. Hoping to have skeleton together by January, and take this to Super AGM, which will take place in Semester 2. Working on committee handbooks.</p> <p>JT: Part-Time Officers yesterday commented that they're happy with the support from Full-Time Officers.</p>
4	3:35pm - 3:50pm	<p>Education Officer Report & Questions</p>	<p>JS entered the meeting.</p> <p>JS provided updates on his work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Took student concerns (including idea submission about temperature of study spaces on campus, tuition fees etc) to a meeting - Working with Student Voice on Speak Week - great turnout, data analysis underway - 2 very new projects - Guild transparency and - Head of Funding, Graduation & Awards - looking at scholarships for students and the criteria for them, as they are very exclusive - this is in area we can improve <p>ET asked a question about exam timetables.</p> <p>JS: It is confusing, including myself. Can't provide an update until Monday, as all Guild Officers will meet with University staff on Monday. Some exams will be happening online, can't really give much detail on this. The Officer involved in the conversation will have a more concrete answer on Monday.</p> <p>JB: Is there any progress with the UoB App?</p>

			<p>JS: Have raised concerns of students, including information not being consistent - believe that this will go to the Student Insights Panel. Will also be working through the Guild with the University to look at this.</p> <p>JT: You've been an Officer for a few years now, how do you feel about the new democratic system?</p> <p>JS: It's really useful to hear more from students quite often. Part-Time Officers are also on a committee, which is great.</p> <p>JT: I'd like to ask about module information and signing up to modules?</p> <p>JS: Sitting on a University Board for this - we're changing the form to Microsoft Forms. There's been some user testing from the Part-Time Officers.</p> <p>ET: I'd like to ask how Speak Week went, and when you can give us feedback on how that went?</p> <p>JS: Engagement was really good, it was all online this year. We were happy with how it went, and we had record PG turnout. Student-staff in the Student Voice team are currently coding/analysing the data.</p> <p>ET: I'd also like to ask about Assessment Support Week?</p> <p>JS: Majority of that being handled by University, I've mainly been involved through the Student Mentors in the Guild. Looking at guidance around student conduct.</p>
5	3:50pm-4:05pm	<p>Postgraduate Officer Report & Questions</p>	<p>RC provided updates on her work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speak Week - target was 400, had ~372 - happy with this, I'm confident that pushed it out as much as I could - Promoting Speak Week through every social media channel that could think have - Going to write a report that will go to PGR & PGT reports and Deans of PGT & PGR - Looking at Birmingham PG Review - talking to VC about bias in admissions process, particularly for ethnic minority students - asking VC to push

			<p>university to track reasons why students are rejected from applications</p> <p>ET: I was going to ask about PG Speak Week, but you've already answered this. Congratulations on the turnout!</p> <p>OO: You mentioned in your report about talking to the University about January start withdrawals - what are you doing to support students who were affected by that?</p> <p>RC: Looking at this, and looking at campus experience etc. In September, not financially viable for university, and the Guild wasn't involved in these conversations. Pushing for withdrawn students to maintain their place for September. We made it clear to the University that they should be providing support to these students</p> <p>OO: So do these students have guaranteed places in September 2021?</p> <p>RC: Yes, the students were offered guaranteed places in September 2021, and they were presented with a couple of options</p> <p>JB: Can you tell us about how Brum for Brew has gone?</p> <p>RC: This hasn't happened for a few weeks - this is partly due to my own organisation, and partly due to engagement. I do intend to continue with this, and am looking at ways of promoting it (e.g. Reps Newsletter).</p> <p>RC explained more about how she is promoting Brum With A Brew, and how she is looking into how to communicate with Postgraduate students.</p> <p>JT: I'd like to ask about the study sessions idea that you talked about? Is this specifically Discord sessions?</p> <p>RC: The idea was to support different student groups (e.g. mature students who haven't been in University for a while, international students who may only be in the UK for a year, etc). I also need to look more into how to communicate with Postgraduates (e.g. email).</p>
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			RC provided more clarification on this.
6	4:05pm-4:20pm	International Officer Report & Questions	<p>WLC provided updates on his work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring information on rights sent to EU students - Promoting Islamophobia Awareness Month with ISoc - Outcomes of students accessing services - Counsellors - looking at changing counsellors - EDI changes - Celebration for cultural societies online - Have lots of meetings that have been going to - Hate Crime Review Group - still quite new - Took on advice about Guarantor Scheme - Trying to get more support for International students who are coming back <p>ET: Can you tell us more about the NHS Support Fund, is this a national thing?</p> <p>WLC: International students aren't accessing this fund, as you have to have 5 years residency for this.</p> <p>OO: Question about EU Settlement Scheme - want to know how exactly you're raising awareness of the scheme - students have to already have arrived in the UK before 31st December to access the scheme</p> <p>WLC: This is a good question, we are expecting that this is coming. I've started a blog post. We sent out a newsletter to students about this, through University Comms/Student Services. Have you heard about it?</p> <p>OO: Saw something in a newsletter about it, but wondering what else you have done? It may be good to reach out to student societies such as ISA, and the societies could refer the international students to international student services.</p> <p>OP: Do you have any plans in place for the new COVID guidelines, with new travel restrictions and International students who are going home for Christmas?</p> <p>WLC: Trying to get PCR test from International Services. Looking at support for when International students come</p>

			<p>back. It's around £200 to take tests per student, this is more costs for the students.</p> <p>OP: I understand this is difficult, as the government are being difficult with restrictions.</p>
7	4:20pm-4:35pm	<p>Welfare & Community Officer Report & Questions</p>	<p>CM entered the meeting</p> <p>CM and the Scrutiny Panel greeted each other.</p> <p>CM provided updates on her work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusivity/accessibility of wellbeing services - pending updates from last meeting are still pending - have a meeting next week, and had a meeting with Nahid from Student Services on changing counsellors and how it's communicated to students, how are wellbeing teams being actively culturally sensitive - Had a productive meeting with Gemma (staff member who leads on Not On Campaign), looking at plans for next year - Anti-racist university-wide approach - I felt like I wasn't making much progress on this, but I've updated my plan on this, and hoping to do more work on this in the new year. I'd also like to signpost about EDI services in the University to students <p>ET: I'd like to ask about the Care Leavers Working Group which was on your report</p> <p>CM: I've been to one of these meetings, and found it interesting. I'd like to do work around estranged students, which comes under the "Care Leavers" category. I'm also looking at Joshua Williams' (last year's President) work around this.</p> <p>JB: Do you have any recommendations for improvements for Not On?</p> <p>CM: We didn't see as many sign-ups as expected - maybe due to Zoom fatigue. As societies aren't doing in-person events, and there's no club nights and parties, students may be thinking less about sexual misconduct.</p> <p>JT: What will you do to help the welfare of students over Christmas?</p>

			<p>CM: Have been looking at this, and Mentors and Wardens have been doing a great job looking at this.</p> <p>CM provided more clarification on this.</p> <p>ET: Part-Time Officers yesterday were thinking a lot about their legacy.</p> <p>ET: Could you tell us more about bike thefts, and how that is going?</p> <p>CM: In GOG, we split ideas from “Your Ideas” between us, one of the ideas that I took was about bike theft. Higher up in the University, it’s been acknowledged as an issue.</p> <p>ET: It’s great the University is acknowledging this as an issue</p> <p>CM: It’s an issue that probably affects staff too.</p> <p>CM and the Scrutiny Panel thanked each other and CM left the meeting.</p>
8	4:35pm-4:55pm	Sports Officer Report & Questions	<p>SO entered the meeting and provided updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Scrutiny Panel fed back on catering on nutrition last time - met with someone about this again. - Met with James to talk about the food story, and nutrition, food, sustainability etc - Chefs in University have talents and skills that can be used - Looking at ways of making meals on campus healthier, more sustainable and with more options - Work on getting the gym open with some activity - lots of students not going home for all sorts of reasons (e.g. can’t travel, don’t celebrate Christmas etc) - Safer Exercise - mainly for women and non-binary students, but there is some feedback from male students too - looking at how we can make exercise safe in Selly Oak, and collaborating with different people (e.g. Wardens, society, running groups)

			<p>ET: The work you're doing around safer exercise is great, as this hasn't been picked up before. I'd like to ask about your work on supporting athletes?</p> <p>RH: I haven't had a meeting for this yet.</p> <p>ET: It's great how you've got sport back up and running again.</p> <p>RH provided more information about this to the Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>ET: It would be great if you worked with other Universities in Birmingham.</p> <p>JB: Any advertising for Commonwealth Games to prospective students?</p> <p>RH: Yes, there has been.</p> <p>RH provided more information about this.</p> <p>JT asked the Scrutiny Panel if they had any more questions.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Panel had no more questions.</p> <p>RH and the Scrutiny Panel thanked each other, and RH left the meeting.</p>
9	4:50pm-5pm	AOB	N/A