

Minutes of the 3rd Caledonian Student Voice Meeting of Session 2020/21

Meeting held on Monday, 8th February 2021, on Microsoft Teams, at 5.00pm.

Sign In:

Present: Eilidh Fulton (Chair); Susan Docherty (Student President); Tabitha Nyariki (VP SHLS); Zoe Nicholson (VP SCEBE); Adil Rahoo (VP GSBS); Ewan Batty (EB); Yasmin Sweeney (YS); Nikolay Naydenov (NN); Elizabeth Shaw (ES); Sarina Vlaytchev (SV); Alexander Van de Rose (AVR); Louise Dunn (LD); Georgina Smith (GS); Fiona Reed (FR); Anthony Rodrick (AR); Daneyal Mirza (DYM); River Gowans (RG); Laiba Tareen (LT); Vincent Water (VW); Bethany Thomson (BT); Kathinka Mumme (KM); Eleanor MacLennan-Patton (EM); Stephen Pender (SP); Cara Burkitt (CB); Monisa Hussain (MH); Monica Allen (MA); Anupama Nigam (AN); Siona Piotta

Absent: Nabila Khan (NK); Harrison Elue (HNE); Muhammad J Ayub (MJA); Yonca Gocer (YG); Kimberley Brown (KB); Louise Thomson (LOT); Amanda Kerr (AK); Robert Gallacher (RBG); Elisabeth Dumortier (ED); Kirsty Heigh (KH); Seona Halbert (SH); Erika Tonhauser (ET); Muhammad Usman Misri (MM); Polina Klimoveca (PK); Chloë Wood (CW); Amer Sultan (AS); Daniel Moore (DM)

Apologies: Jonnie England (Deputy Chair); Ikeoluwa Odukudu (IO); Laura Clark (LC); Zalha Abasi (ZA); Catherine Mackie (CM); Mary Welsh (MW); Hannah Einarson (HE); Connor Davidson (CD); Nicola McMaster (NM); Abbie Stone (AS); Douglas Livingston (DL); Abbie Meehan (AM); Bronwyn Doherty (BD); Dylan Duffy (DD); Bethany Stevenson (BS); Ayesha Tareen (AT);

In attendance: Alaistar Robertson (Director of Academic Development and Student Learning), Sara MacLean (Student Voice Team Leader), Raisah Khan (Clerk)

Any member of Student Voice, excluding Full Time Officers, who miss two meetings of Student Voice without apologies in an academic year, will have automatically deemed to have resigned as a member, Officer, Department, PGT or PGR Rep.

1. Welcome

The meeting started at 5.00pm. The Chair welcomed all members to the third digital meeting of Student Voice for 2020/21. Members were asked to keep their cameras on and microphones off unless they wanted to discuss something or present a paper. The Chair asked members to raise their digital hand if they wanted to speak to help the Chair keep order. Members were reminded of what conduct is acceptable during the meeting.

2. Requests for changes to the Agenda

There were no requests for changes to the agenda by the members.

3. Strategy for Learning 2030

The Director of Academic Development and Student Learning presented the new Strategy for Learning 2030 and asked Student Voice for their feedback. It was noted that the strategy is still in its consultation period and input from students is encouraged. The primary goal of the strategy is transformative education through offering a diverse and blended approach to learning and teaching. This will mean that GCU will move towards having campus provision but will have an increasingly online offer to achieve a blended approach. The strategy also provides more flexibility to students through a step off and step on approach. However, it was noted there may be limitations on this in

certain programmes due to their requirements. The Director of Academic Development and Student Learning highlighted the 6 areas for action which were:

- Excellence in learning, teaching and student experience
- Equality of participation and attainment for students
- Greater personalisation of the student experience
- Student Agency
- Enhancing Assessment and Feedback
- Employability

The KPI's were also highlighted:

- SIMD20 intake – 20%
- SMID20 retention- 20%
- NSS- %age of subjects in the upper quartile
- Degree completion, 80%
- Graduate Outcomes

The Student President suggested including the SDG's into the KPI's as they will also be embedded into the Students' Association strategy. Student wellbeing was also suggested to be included as an KPI which was welcomed by the Director of Academic Development and Student Learning Experience.

DYM asked if the strategy could be implemented sooner due to the rapid developments in online learning following the outbreak of Coronavirus. The Student Voice members were reassured that the strategy will be agile and reviewed every year to make changes where necessary. It was also confirmed that once the paper has been drafted for Senate, this will be circulated to students for further feedback.

There were no further questions. The Chair thanked the Director of Academic Development and Student Learning Experience for his attendance.

The Director of Academic Development and Student Learning Experience left the meeting at 5.31pm.

4. Minutes of Student Voice meeting on 7th December 2020

The Chair invited members to consider the minutes of the previous Student Voice meeting held on 7th December 2020. No questions were raised by members in relation to the minutes. The Chair said that only those present at the previous meeting could vote to approve the minutes of the meeting at Student Voice held on 7th December 2020. **Vote- For: 18; Against: 0; Abstention: 5.** The previous Student Voice minutes from 7th December 2020 were approved.

5. Matters Arising

The Chair asked the Full Time Officers to provide a verbal update on the progression of the matters arising.

5.1 Referendum on exams before Christmas

This matter will be carried over to the following academic year 2021/22. This matter is ongoing.
Action: Student President.

5.2 Phasing Out of Single Use Coffee Cups

This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP GSBS.**

5.3 Plastic Free Campus

This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP GSBS.**

5.4 Session on Academic Writing and Expectations Within Courses

The Vice President SCEBE and Vice President SHLS have attended a meeting with ADLTQ and it was confirmed that there are academic skills workshops within their schools and this has been fed back to the Department Reps. The Vice President GSBS will also look into this. This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP GSBS.**

5.5 Replace/Upgrade of Equipment in ARC

This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP SCEBE.**

5.6 Increase Wildflowers on Campus

This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP GSBS.**

5.7 Reflection Spaces in Each Building on Campus

This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP SCEBE.**

5.8 More Food Recycling Bins on Campus

This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP GSBS.**

5.9 Leftover Cafeteria Food into Take Home Meals

This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP SCEBE.**

5.10 Improved Sanitisation on Campus

The Student President confirmed that she has attended a meeting with the Director of Estates to discuss changing the door handles to brass as requested in the previous Student Voice meeting. The Director of Estates agreed to look into the prices for this and will carry it forward. In the meantime, more cleaning staff will be hired to ensure that door handles on campus are kept clean. This matter is ongoing. **Action: Student President.**

5.11 GCU Branded Merchandise

The matter has been agreed in principle. However, the different branding and personalisation options are yet to be confirmed. This matter is ongoing. **Action: Student President.**

5.12 GCU Must Seek SA Advance Input On All Future Emails

This University have agreed on this with the Students' Association. This matter has been completed.

5.13 Embed Climate Change Training into Curriculum

The Vice President GSBS attended a meeting with the University in regards to embedding climate change training into the curriculum. There have been 2 suggested ways of approaching this. The initial approach will be for carbon literacy training to be piloted in GSBS. Following this, the training may be extended across the academic schools which will be certified by The Carbon Literacy Trust. This matter is ongoing. **Action: Vice President GSBS.**

5.14 More Car Parking Spaces in the City Centre for Students

The Vice President GSBS has spoken to the University about more car parking spaces for students and working in partnership with companies to provide cheaper parking. It was noted that this will be resolved after Coronavirus. This matter is ongoing. **Action: Vice President GSBS.**

5.15 Request University to Track Student Suicides

The Vice President SCEBE confirmed that she has been appointed to the Student Suicide Working Group and attended the introductory meeting. There will be further updates in the next Student Voice meeting. This matter is ongoing. **Action: Vice President SCEBE.**

The Student President explained that at the last Executive Committee, the Full Time Officers discussed the challenges in progressing some of the actions. The Student President asked Student Voice if some of the actions could be postponed. However, the Full Time Officers will continue to provide updates on actions they are able to work on and progress.

The Chair called for a vote for the matters arising to be postponed to the academic year 2021/22. **Vote- For: 23; Against: 0; Abstention: 3.** The request for the matters arising to be postponed to the academic year 2021/22 was approved.

6. Student Voice Committees

The Chair called for a vote to approve the previous minutes of all Student Voice Sub Committees. **Vote – For: 23; Against: 0; Abstention: 2.** The previous minutes of all Student Voice Sub Committees were approved.

7. Full Time Officer Reports

The Chair asked the Full Time Officers to provide a brief verbal update on what they have been working on and any updates to policy areas in their remit.

Student President

- A full account of the work carried out by the Student President is provided in the written report.
- Has spoken to the University about a no detriment policy. It was agreed that a fair assessment policy will be introduced and the Full Time Officers have been consulted on this.
- Supported work of the Vice President SHLS and the Tackling Racism Working Group. A presentation on the work carried out by the Students' Association on tackling racism was shared at University Court day.
- Continuing to engage with students in various ways.

VP SCEBE

- Involved in NUS campaign to lobby the Scottish Government for funding for the Students' Association and this has been secured.
- Working on Feel Fab Feb and promoting this to support student mental and physical health.
- Started working on Sports Awards 2020/21.

VP SHLS

- Attended Tackling Racism Group and launched recommendations. These were taken to University Court day.

- Continuing to meet with the Dean and Vice Dean SHLS to discuss digital literacy and work on increasing student engagement and enhance student experience in SHLS.
- Engaging with students through Full Time Officer engagement activities.

VP GSBS

- Involved in the NUS campaign to lobby the Scottish Government for funding for the Students' Association and secured this.
- Attended regular meetings with the Dean of GSBS.
- Actively involved in International Committee. Proposed a paper to International Committee asking to include student experience in the remit.

EB asked if a video can be created to explain the fair assessment policy to students as not all students will understand what it means. The Student President noted that this would be useful and agreed to create a video. **Action: Student President.**

The Chair invited members to take a vote to approve the Full Time Officers reports. **Vote – For: 22; Against: 0; Abstention: 2.** The Full Time Officers reports were approved.

8. Student Voice Officer Reports

The Chair asked the Student Voice Officers to give a brief verbal update on the work they have been doing.

Civil Engineering & Environmental Management Department Rep

- Keeping in contact with Academic Reps within department.
- There were some issues raised in regards to academic writing support but this has since been resolved.

Mechanical Engineering Department Rep

- Raised concerns over student carers who have been struggling with balancing work load and worried about impact on exams in January 2021.
- Looking forward to the fair assessment policy being implemented to address student concerns.

Finance, Accounting & Risk Department Rep

- Keeping in contact with Academic Reps within department.
- Some student concerns raised about exams. However, there have been many positive reported experiences.

Management & Human Resource Management Department Rep

- Issues have been raised in regards to marking.
- Students worried about the step up from 2nd to 3rd year studies and the impact of Coronavirus.

Media & Journalism Department Rep

- Keeping in contact with students.
- Attended meeting with Head of Department to discuss issues raised by 4th year students.

Biology & Biomedical Sciences Department Rep

- Created WhatsApp group which has been good for communication.
- Regularly answering questions on Q&A.
- Offering moral support and help with tutorials to students who are struggling.

Physiology & Paramedicine Department Rep

- Created WhatsApp group to keep in contact with the different groups.
- Attended a meeting at the end of Trimester A 2020 to identify and address issues.

Podiatry & Radiography Department Rep

- Created WhatsApp group which has been good for communication.
- Overall, most students feeling satisfied.
- A few problems reported in Radiography to do with poor communication but the Vice President SHLS is working on resolving this.

SCEBE PGT Student Representative

- Reported issues in relation to labs and consulting with lecturers and academic staff

GSBS PGT Student Representative

- Will be making contact with Academic Reps and will provide an update in the next meeting.

LGBT+ Officer

- Organising the Glitter Ball.
- Attended meeting with the Student President to discuss the Glitter Ball.
- Finding guest speakers for the event and encouraging participation.

International Students' Officer

- Keeping in contact with international students.
- Will contact members from other societies to create networks and promote diversity.

Mental Health and Wellbeing ' Officer

- The MHWG plans socials events (online) for February, March and April. This follows the success of the pilot event last trimester.
- The work of the Student Mental Health Agreement 2021 is almost complete and should be published soon. There are extra provisions being made for the effect Co-V2 has had on students, though there is continuing concern that most students are not declaring their distress or engaging with the supports available from either GCU or SA.
- University Mental Health Day is coming up in March and the team are considering the best way to offer something that will be useful to students. Please email your suggestions to: mentalhealth@gcstudents.co.uk.

SHLS PGT Student Representative

- Receive valuable feedback from the MSc Reps of the SHLS course.
- Created WhatsApp group and sent multiple emails to create opportunities for feedback.

- Created doodle poles to organise informal MT discussions for the start of January. There have been 2 responses so far.

Magazine Editor

- In progress of creating the Spring Edition, with the final deadline for the Societies Co-ordinator to proof read being around March/April.
- Still putting articles up on the website to keep viewers interested in the content.
- There has been no movement in terms of a Spring event, but this will be discussed with the committee.
- Rachel Gibson (Entertainment & Tech + Social Media Lead) and Hannah Temple (Head of Design) are taking the reins for the Elections edition of the magazine, they will organise this with the Societies Co-ordinator.
- In terms of this year, a print edition for Spring may not be created, due to COVID-19 still in full effect. However, this be discussed at the next meeting.

Societies Council Chair

- The societies council has recruited a new member to replace an inactive member from last trimester so there will now be additional support to the societies they are responsible for.
- Feel Fab Feb is in full swing, with the societies council recruiting from the societies to represent and host activities throughout.

Cyber Security Department Rep

- Issues were raised in feedback from the Class Reps but all of these have been resolved.
- Head of Department attended a class in December to address an issue that students had raised.
- Head of Department raised concerns over the use of discord during exams as there had been reports of students cheating. This was addressed with the discord moderators and chat privileges have now been suspended during exam times. These have been relayed to the student body via the Class Reps.
- Involved in the Computing Department programme review board on 28th and 29th of January 2021.

Sports Council Chair

- Released Trimester 2 video welcoming students back to online learning.
- Working on raising awareness on LGBT.
- Events Subcommittee meeting attended to organise the Sports Ball.

Radio Station Manager

- Due to the ongoing situation with Coronavirus, the members are not able to access the station and so there were no updates.

Ethical and Environmental Co-Officer

- Ambassador for COP26 Volunteering.
- Will communicate with the FTO's to try and promote information on COP26.
- Involved in discussions with Matt Crilly, NUS Scotland President to be involved in a future event.

No questions were asked in relation to the Student Voice Officer Reports and the Chair invited members to take a vote to approve all the reports. **Vote – For: 22; Against: 0; Abstention: 1.** The Student Voice Officer reports were approved.

9. Elections

The Chair called for the nomination for the position of a Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee Rep (1xPGR). There were no nominations for this position so this will be carried forward to the next Student Voice meeting.

10. Ideas

Student Voice was asked to discuss and decide whether to approve the Ideas.

10.1 A GCU Official Facebook page for students to buy and sell course books

'I and a lecturer were discussing textbooks and we realised the only good places to buy were usually Amazon or Facebook marketplaces. We think it would be a good idea to have a GCU official Facebook page that allowed students to sell and buy core textbooks. It could help build connections, give both sellers and buyers better prices and profits, and could be reassuring for students to buy books of each other than someone unknown.

I know GCU has a bookshop on campus but sometimes books are so expensive so this may be a good addition for some students and I don't think it would require much upkeep once the page was made.'

VW explained that a Facebook group already exists called 'Glasgow Caledonian University Second Hand Books' where preowned textbooks are being bought and sold by GCU students.

The Chair suggested postponing the idea to the next Student Voice meeting when the proposer can speak for the idea. The Student Voice members agreed to this. In the meantime, Student Voice members were provided with a link to the group in case any students make contact about this.

10.2 A daily mile walk

'To encourage health and mental wellbeing - can we map out a mile walk around our Glasgow Campus? it would also be a good way for students to meet other students from other schools as we don't seem too good at interacting at times!!'

The Student President spoke on behalf of the proposer and explained that this can easily be achieved as there are ways of finding routes on digital maps which can be shared with students.

There were no concerns raised against the Idea.

The Chair called for a vote for the Idea for a daily mile walk map. **Vote: For: 19; Against: 1; Abstentions: 2.** The Idea was approved. The Vice President SCEBE agreed to take forward this Idea. **Action: Vice President SCEBE.**

10.3 Move lockers to library

'Move all lockers to library so they can be accessed by students who spend their weekends studying in the library.'

No Student Voice member offered to speak on behalf of the proposer so the Chair suggested postponing this until the next Student Voice meeting. The Student Voice members agreed to this.

10.4 Change Care-Experienced Policy lead remit to include estranged students

'In previous discussions with the care-experienced officer, it is my understanding that these two representation areas can often go hand-in-hand and it would mean that the students who identify as estranged can also be represented. Following a meeting with the corporate parent steering group, it is my understanding that we do have estranged students at GCU - even though it may be a small cohort, it means they can be included in our representation structure at GCU Students Association.'

As Care Experienced policy lead, the Vice President SCEBE spoke on behalf of this Idea. The Vice President SCEBE explained that this is a good idea and encourages representation at GCU.

There were no concerns raised against this Idea.

The Chair called for a vote for changing Care-Experienced Policy lead remit to include estranged students. **Vote: For: 15; Against: 3; Abstentions: 5.** The Idea was approved. The Vice President SCEBE agreed to take forward this Idea. **Action: Vice President SCEBE.**

10.5 Basic first-aid kits and medications

'It would be a good idea to have an easily accessible basic first-aid kits and medications on campus and student accommodation.'

The Student President explained that there are already first aid kits and first aiders available on campus. The legal ramifications of allowing students to access the first aid kits themselves were discussed.

GS suggested an improvement by making students more aware of where first aid kits and first aiders are. This would adapt the idea to raising an awareness campaign for what first aid and medication is available to students.

The Chair called for a vote to consider the improvement. **Vote: For: 22; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0.** The Improvement was approved.

The Chair called for a vote for the Idea with an improvement to raise an awareness campaign for what first aid and medication is available to students. **Vote: For: 24; Against: 0; Abstentions: 1.** The Idea was approved. The Vice President SCEBE agreed to take forward this Idea. **Action: Vice President SCEBE.**

10.6 Cheaper foods or make it worth

'Prices in the canteen are ridiculously high. Would suggest better food for the price or bring down the prices. Quick groceries for students like bread milk fruits. Helps those who make their own meals. Sometimes the couple of meals are like those that have chicken are undercooked.'

The Student President spoke on behalf of the proposer and explained that work had already been carried out on this before the pandemic. Previously, the University was asked to provide better prices and better dietary options. This can be raised with the University again. MA attended a meeting with the catering lead in March 2020 to discuss dietary requirements. It was noted that the catering lead was keen to include the suggested changes, however, this wasn't taken any further due to the outbreak of Coronavirus and changes in priorities.

The Chair called for a vote for cheaper foods and better dietary options on campus. **Vote: For: 22; Against: 1; Abstentions: 1.** The Idea was approved. The Vice President SCEBE agreed to take forward this Idea. **Action: Vice President SCEBE.**

11. Full Time Officer Elections Nominations Deadline

Student Voice noted the Full Time Officer Elections nominations deadline.

12. Developing our Strategic Plan 2025

Student Voice noted the Developing our Strategic Plan 2025.

13. Honorary Life Membership Nominations Open

Student Voice noted that Honorary Life Membership Nominations are open.

The Chair thanked all members of Student Voice for their attendance and engagement in the third virtual Student Voice meeting.

The meeting was concluded at 6.49pm.