

Minutes of the 3rd Caledonian Student Voice Meeting of Session 2023/24

Meeting held on Monday, 19th February 2024, in-person in NH208, at 17:00pm.

Sign In:

Present: Robert Gallacher (Chair); Chidozie Nwaigwe (Student President); Jennifer Abali (VP SHLS); Solomon Ajala (VP GSBS); Wilfred Obi (VP SCEBE); Heather Andrews (HA); Emma Dow (ED); David Grimm (DG); Maria Habib (MH); Zovi Jenson (ZJ); Afia Kazmi (AK); Kyle Kennedy (KK); Jade MacDonald (JM); Joshua Maher (JM); Rachel Murray (RMU); Sofiat Nafiu (SN); Temple Nwosu (TN); Azeez Odu-onikosi (AO); Uchenna Ohanaka (UO); Ehiosu Okperhan (EO); Olalekan Oladele (OO); Zain Qureshi (ZQ); Paul Riley (PR); Aleena Saddiq (AS); Ellie Stirrat (ES); Aiebee-Iberedem Tim (AT)

Absent: Annum Arshad (AA); Chunda Casca-Ogosu (CC); Sofia Congradyova (SC); Jorja Jenkins-Urquhart (JJ); Natalie Kiely (NK); Holly MacKinnon (HM); Asmita Meshram (AM); Leah Phillips (LP); Esraa Saade (ES); Samrat Sarkar (SS); Molly Stirling (MS); Gracjan Walaszewski (GW)

Apologies: Jay Blakeway (JB); Cristanos Bonaba Ike (CB); Daniel Byron (DB); Nickolle Carrasco (NC); Kacy Chaudhry (KC); Gordon Edwards (GE); Harry Hooper (HH); Rana Imran (RI); Vitalina Matuseva (VM); Stacey McFadyen (SM); Raiyan Mehmood (RM); John Olarinde (JO); Laiba Tareen (LT); Lee Tipping (LT); Lee-Anne To (LT); Divine Tshibangu (DT); Erin White (EW); Desmond Wussah (DW); Maryam Yunis (MY)

In attendance: Sara MacLean (Student Voice Team Leader); Philip Morton (Clerk)

Observers: Salman Ahmav; Patrick Anyanwu; Robert Kmoeffe; Lynda Mbelede; Onyinye Muobike; Prince Ogaraku; Friday Oshiotse; Ahozle Senders

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. Chair Announcements

It was confirmed that the Vice Chair would act as Chair in the absence of KC.

The Chair welcomed all members to the third meeting of Student Voice for 2023/24 and asked members to raise their voting card if they wished to speak. Members were reminded of what conduct is acceptable during the meeting.

2. Change to Committee Meeting Rules – Use of Mentimeter

The Chair explained the Mentimeter voting system and requested the approval of its use.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the Change to Committee Meeting Rules – Use of Mentimeter.

Vote: For: 20; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0.

The Change to Committee Meeting Rules – Use of Mentimeter was approved.

3. Full Time Officer Reports

The Full Time Officers presented their reports and highlighted points for noting.

The Student President highlighted the achievement of completing their team objective in relation to alleviating the cost of living crisis as well as ongoing student engagement and carbon literacy training for all students. It was approved at Senate for students to have a third attempt to pass their course at point of graduation when one submission is necessary to pass. It was added that revised resit dates will be brought to Senate to potentially move forward. It was confirmed that policy should be available now on the GCU website.

Vice President GSBS commented that there had been a number of visa issues for fee paying students graduating in September that were resolved through work with the university visa team. TN commended the Full Time Officers for their achievements at school level.

Vice President SCEBE noted the Teaching Awards, Wi-Fi boosters installed on campus and the GCU app progress. Vice President SHLS highlighted Feel Fab Feb and free gym memberships available from the Students' Association throughout February.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the Full Time Officer Reports.

Vote: For: 12; Against: 1; Abstentions: 0.

The Full Time Officer Reports were approved.

4. Student Voice Officer Reports

The Chair asked for Student Voice Officers to provide verbal reports.

The Care Experienced Officer commented that they had spoken to the principal to promote what care experienced is and services within the university. Further work with the outreach office was highlighted to encourage care experienced children to enter university.

The Black or Minority Ethnic / Mental Health and Wellbeing Officer highlighted multiple excursions and nature trips to promote wellbeing as well as allowing students to experience more places in Scotland. The International Students' Officer raised events held during Trimester A including Black History Month, Solidarity for Africa, a joint trip with the Ethnic Diversity Network to Edinburgh as well as cultural music nights and upcoming sports events.

The Disabled Students' Officer noted meeting with the officer of GCU London for Disabled students to discuss services provided. The Caledonian Court Officer created a network to reach residents of Caledonian Court for providing information and highlighting issues.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the Student Voice Officer Reports.

Vote: For: 22; Against: 1; Abstentions: 1.

The Student Voice Officer Reports were approved.

5. Societies Proposed for Affiliation

The Chair presented the list of new societies seeking affiliation to the Students' Association in the absence of the Societies Council Chair.

Affiliation for Societies:

- Caledonian Rocketry Society
- Cali's Angels
- GCU Audio
- East African Society
- Glasgow Ahlulbayt Society
- Cheese and Wine

- GCU Tech Society

The Chair called for a vote to approve the Societies Proposed for Affiliation.

Vote: For: 15; Against: 6; Abstentions: 3.

The Societies Proposed for Affiliation were approved.

6. Ideas

The Chair presented ideas (based on the number of votes submitted on the Students' Association website) for approval.

Where is Palestine Statement

The proposer commented that although a statement was released on 23rd December 2023, that they were not aware of this release. It was noted that the statement released was different than the committee requested and that it felt hidden from public view. It was proposed that adjustments be made to the statement and for this to be posted on social media channels. The Student President commented that the previously approved statement was presented to the Students' Association Trustee Board with amendments made to call for peace and as to not alienate any student on-campus. It was clarified that the Trustee Board do not make decisions to influence the voice of students but are involved with matters relating to possible financial or reputational risk. The Student President confirmed that the released statement is to be re-communicated via social media channels.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the full idea proposed.

Vote: For: 13; Against: 6; Abstentions: 5.

The Idea was approved.

Only Open Library for GCU Students in Exam Session

The Proposer presented their idea to Student Voice, adding that although they understand the university library is also for local community use, that it would be beneficial if this was for GCU students only during the two week exam period due to lack of seating and space during this time. DG commented that the library is a safe space for children who may need a warm space, to avoid being on the street or as an escape from abusive households. It was commented that in their experience, many interruptions in study were from GCU students although one floor could perhaps be used for GCU students only as to not alienate others.

Vice President SCEBE suggested an amendment that level 0 and 1 could be used by the public with the remaining floors held for GCU students during the exam period.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the changed improvement for library levels 2, 3 and 4 to be for GCU student use only during two week exam periods.

Vote: For: 20; Against: 3; Abstentions: 0.

The revised improvement was approved.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the full idea proposed.

Vote: For: 17; Against: 4; Abstentions: 1.

The Idea was approved.

Have Multiple Exam Dates

The Proposer presented their idea to Student Voice.

The Student President commented that exam date review had been raised in Senate last year but was not approved, there are current discussions on the matter being held to be proposed to Senate once again. It was noted that pending approval, that it will be raised with the university to highlight student enthusiasm for review. ED asked if a second exam date would sit within the same exam period or whether they could choose when to sit, and if there were a second exam date and a student was unable to attend one, whether they would have the option to attend the second. DG added that Postgraduate students could be employed to mark additional exam sittings to alleviate lecturer workload if there are current staffing issues.

There were no improvements added to this idea.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the full idea proposed.

Vote: For: 18; Against: 4; Abstentions: 1.

The Idea was approved.

The Standardisation of Presentation of Content

The Proposer presented their idea to Student Voice. It was commented that this is an issue for all students that wish for all content to be standardised and has been raised by multiple students who struggle to find learning materials. JM commented that this is a user experience issue in terms of menu designs and folder systems and that templates with guidance could be supplied to tutors for use. It was noted that one system may not work for all students and customisation of content or choice of standardised options may help. It was further added that a system for customisable options for disabled students to make content more accessible would be beneficial including, for example, a logo that shows where accessibility options are available.

DG commented that if all lecturers followed a standardised format, a system in which students could customise from this on an individual basis would be helpful. ED noted that each school and subject area provide different content which could be added differently depending on these factors.

There were no improvements added to this idea.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the full idea proposed.

Vote: For: 15; Against: 1; Abstentions: 2.

The Idea was approved.

Sensory Room

A statement received from the proposer was presented to Student Voice.

DG commented that there should be an amendment to protect the sensory room if installed as a previously installed wellbeing space is now used as a storage room. AK added that the space could be used similar to the Faith and Belief centre where access can be granted to student cards for use.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the changed improvement for the space to be long-term protected as to not be re-purposed for storage and that the space would require card access privileges.

Vote: For: 11; Against: 4; Abstentions: 4.

The revised improvement was approved.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the full idea proposed.

Vote: For: 17; Against: 5; Abstentions: 2.

The Idea was approved.

The Chair called for a vote to raise the guillotine by 15 minutes to allow for additional ideas to be presented.

Vote: For: 14; Against: 9; Abstentions: 0.

The Guillotine Extension was approved.

Have Prayer Room in Library

The proposed idea was presented to Student Voice. An observer questioned the necessity of the idea due to the Faith and Belief Centre being readily available. DG highlighted that the Faith and Belief Centre does have a closing time and not always available but perhaps it should be a shared room similar to the previous quiet and reflection space that was available during Covid.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the changed improvement to rename this a Quiet and Reflection Room.

Vote: For: 16; Against: 1; Abstentions: 3.

The revised improvement was approved.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the full idea proposed.

Vote: For: 18; Against: 2; Abstentions: 2.

The Idea was approved.

Unfairness to the International Community in Terms of Catering

The proposer presented their idea to Student Voice and commented that an increase in catering options either through Baxterstorey or by allowing external catering is necessary. It was highlighted that at a previous society event, that the society had made and provided authentic meals for guests that could not be supplied due to policy on external food brought into the Students' Association. **21** confirmed that health and safety policies including food hygiene, food temperature, allergens etc. are the reasoning for limited catering options in terms of not allowing external food to be brought in.

There were no improvements added to this idea.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the full idea proposed.

Vote: For: 23; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0.

The Idea was not approved.

7. Elections

The Chair presented the Student Voice Elected Positions needing filled for 2023/24. It was noted that anyone wishing to volunteer should ensure that they are available for the meetings their position holds as to not impact studies.

The following Student Voice Members ran for each Student Voice Elected Position:

- Senate Student Representative (1 open place)
Afia Kazmi, Paul Riley

- Learning Enhancement Subcommittee (1 open place)
Jade MacDonald

This position was duly elected.

- Elections Committee (3 positions):
Jennifer Abali, Aleena Saddiq

This position was duly elected.

8. Minutes of Student Voice Meeting on 4th December 2023

The Chair invited members who were present at the last meeting of Student Voice to consider the minutes of the previous Student Voice meeting held on 4th December 2023.

There were no corrections or comments added.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the Minutes of Student Voice Meeting on 4th December 2023.

Vote: For: 15; Against: 1; Abstention: 3.

The Minutes of Student Voice Meeting on 4th December 2023 were approved.

9. Matters Arising from Meeting on 4th December 2023

The Chair invited members of Student Voice to ask the Full Time Officers any questions regarding the Matters Arising.

There were no questions or comments added.

10. Minutes of Student Voice Sub-Committees

The Chair called for a vote to approve the Minutes of Student Voice Sub-Committees.

Vote: For: 11; Against: 1; Abstention: 7.

The Minutes of Student Voice Sub-Committees were approved.

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy was outlined and was noted that a re-draft will occur before being presented at the EDI Committee and again to Student Voice.

12. Full Time Officer Nominations

The Full Time Officer Nominations were noted with a closing date of Friday 23rd February 2024.

13. Honorary Membership Nominations

The Honorary Membership Nominations were noted with a closing date of Thursday 14th March 2024.

14. AOCB

There was no further business to be presented.

The meeting was concluded at 19:15pm.