

**Student Council Minutes**

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (5pm)**

**Location: W040, De Havilland**

**In attendance:**

*Paul Dosunmu (PD) – Chair of Student Council  
University of Hertfordshire students (x46)*

**Elected Officers**

*Muhammad Sajid (MS) – Vice-President Activities  
Farhan Rafique (FR) – Vice-President Community  
Amy Holloway-Smith (AHS) – Vice-President Education*

**Students' Union Staff**

*Rebecca Hobbs (RH) – General Manager  
Steve Owen (SO) – Student Voice Manager  
Tash Crump (TC) – Campaigns and Policy Advisor  
Rachel Nield (RN) – Research Coordinator  
Laura Chambers (LC) – Representation Coordinator  
Warren Bingham-Roberts (WBR) – Representation Coordinator (Clerk)*

**Apologies:**

*Maryam Zaman (MZ) – Deputy Chair of Student Council  
Rida Shafqat (RS) – Students' Union President*

<p><b>SC-1</b></p>	<p><b>Welcome and introductions</b></p> <p>Paul Dosunmu (PD) welcomed everyone to the second Student Council meeting of the year, emphasising how proud he was to have been elected as its Chair in the first. He outlined the purpose of the meeting, and offered some words of encouragement to all students in the room with regards to pushing through deadlines and exams.</p> <p>PD then handed over to the panel (Muhammad Sajid, MS; Farhan Rafique, FR; Amy Holloway-Smith, AHS; and Rebecca Hobbs, RH), who briefly introduced themselves and their roles to attendees of the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>SC-2</b></p>	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>PD noted apologies from Maryam Zaman and Rida Shafqat, who were unable to attend the meeting.</p>	

<p><b>SC-3</b></p>	<p><b>Acceptance of urgent business</b></p> <p>PD noted that there was no urgent business submitted for discussion at this meeting.</p>	
<p><b>SC-4</b></p> <p><u>SC-4.1</u></p>	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b></p> <p><i>Minutes (09.10.19)</i></p> <p>PD invited MS to provide an update on the actions assigned to him from the previous meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <b><i>“MS to look at communicate issues between Societies and their members, particularly through the email system.”</i></b></li> <li>2- <b><i>“MS to investigate whether it is possible for Societies to promote their events on interactive screens.”</i></b></li> </ol> <p>MS informed the meeting that the communication issue had been resolved, and that Societies could indeed promote their events on interactive screens.</p> <p>PD invited AHS to provide an update on the progress of the “White T-shirt Policy” motion that was passed at the previous Student Council:</p> <p><b><i>“S.C.9.1 White T-shirt Policy”</i></b>  <a href="https://hertfordshire.su/your-say/student-council/">(https://hertfordshire.su/your-say/student-council/)</a></p> <p>AHS informed the meeting that the policy was still in the process of being written, and will be brought back to Student Council when complete.</p> <p>PD then confirmed that the minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.</p>	<p><b><u>ACTION: COMPLETE</u></b></p> <p><b><u>ACTION: COMPLETE</u></b></p> <p><b><u>ACTION: ONGOING</u></b>  AHS/TC to finalise a White T-shirt Policy that will be implemented by the Students' Union.</p>
<p><b>SC-5</b></p> <p><u>SC-5.1</u></p>	<p><b>Updates from the Students' Union</b></p> <p><i>Notice of By-election results (Oct 19)</i></p> <p>RH informed the meeting of the recent By-election results, with the following students elected:</p> <p><u>Campaign Officers</u></p> <p>Muhammad Saad Raees – Postgraduate Officer  Muhammad Rehan Rafique – Environmental Officer</p>	

	<p><u>National Union of Students (NUS) Delegates*</u></p> <p>Sireesha Gurram Muhammad Saad Muhammad Khayam Nizamani Maryam Zaman Amy Holloway-Smith Sudhanshu Savner</p> <p>*RS will also attend the NUS National Conference as lead delegate in her capacity as Students' Union President.</p> <p>RH also noted that there were a record number of votes cast in this year's By-elections (4975).</p> <p><u>SC-5.2</u> <i><u>Byelaw 4 - Elections and Referenda</u></i></p> <p>RH introduced the purpose of the changes to this Byelaw, with particular focus on the fact that students nominating themselves as a candidate for election will now only need 3 other students to sign their nomination form, as opposed to the 15 that were required previously. There were no concerns or queries with regards to the changes being made.</p> <p><u>SC-5.3</u> <i><u>Byelaw 7 - Licensed Premises Code of Conduct</u></i></p> <p>RH informed the meeting of the need to repeal this Byelaw, with the following note attached to the agenda:</p> <p><i>"This Bye Law is being repealed following legal advice from the firm Poppleston Allen. Licencing law dictates that the personal licence holder of a designated premises has the full and final authority over persons allowed to enter the venue and therefore the venue's entry policy is not subject to the other democratic procedures of the Students' Union."</i></p> <p>There were no concerns or queries with regards to the change being made.</p>	
<p><b>SC-6</b></p> <p><u>SC-6.1</u></p>	<p><b>Reports from the Elected Officers</b></p> <p><i><u>Muhammad Sajid (Vice-President Activities)</u></i></p> <p>PD invited MS to give a 5 minute update on what he'd been up to since the last Student Council meeting.</p>	

<p><u>SC-6.2</u></p>	<p>MS gave a brief overview of what his role entails, before moving on to explain some of the things he's been working on since the last Student Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He informed the meeting that Societies were now able to use the Style Bar as a bookable space.</li> <li>- He also explained that one of the main projects he's been working on is the removal of the "Timber Wall" next to the EleHouse, based on student feedback received during Speak Week. The reason for doing so is to make it easier for students to get to lectures, and get home following a night at the Forum. It will continue to be worked on with the University.</li> <li>- He noted the fact that he was reading from his phone rather than paper, in response to student feedback around being more sustainable with regards to printing.</li> <li>- He mentioned that he'd been working with different teams within the Students' Union to support some of the things they're working on.</li> <li>- He expressed that he was pleased to see a number of new Academic Societies set up.</li> <li>- He mentioned that the Society Handbook had been published for all Committee Members.</li> </ul> <p>PD drew the update from MS to a close, and invited questions from the students in attendance.</p> <p><b>Question: How much increase has there been in engagement?</b></p> <p>MS: Society memberships have risen by 10% compared to last year, especially among Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students, largely due to a successful Freshers' Fair.</p> <p><u>Farhan Rafique (Vice-President Community)</u></p> <p>PD invited FR to give a 5 minute update on what he'd been up to since the last Student Council meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FR informed the meeting that the Uno Bus App had been launched, so students could now download it to view timetables.</li> <li>- He mentioned that he had been lobbying for Halal food to be added to the EleHouse menu.</li> </ul>	
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- He mentioned that there were some benches around campus which were broken, and so was working on getting them fixed.
- He spoke about his plans to lobby for the implementation of napping stations on campus, based on student feedback received during Speak Week.

PD drew the update from FR to a close, and invited questions from the students in attendance.

**Question: The shuttle bus is supposed to be free for students and staff showing their University ID card – why do some buses going to De Havilland campus charge?**

FR: Only the buses with a star on them are free, as they take a different route to the shuttle bus itself.

**Follow up question: Sometimes it is allowed on buses without the star, is it a case of miscommunication?**

FR: I will look into it.

**Question: Is it possible to get some more vegan and vegetarian food options at the EleHouse?**

FR: Aramark are currently reviewing the menu, which they will be inviting student feedback on next month.

**Question: What is the Students' Union doing to encourage people to get involved in the General Election?**

FR: As Elected Officers, we have made a video promoting it which is out now, we have been sending emails out to students, and we have been using social media platforms to promote it too (including our individual accounts).

MS: We also set up a stall last week to promote it.

AHS: We have also made use of the digital screens.

RH: We also have a dedicated member of staff who is working with the University on this. We can't tell students who to vote for, but we can encourage them

**ACTION:**

FR to confirm the (reasons for) differences in prices for buses going to De Havilland campus from College Lane.

<p><u>SC-6.3</u></p>	<p>to register to vote (which can be done at both your Home and University addresses if that applies to you).</p> <p><b>Question: The shuttle bus activity has been reduced this year, including on Sundays – what is the reason for this?</b></p> <p>FR: Uno bus have been collecting feedback from the Schools with regards to students’ timetables, so the schedule currently available is based on class times.</p> <p><b>Question: Where can I find bus timetables, and would it be possible for there to be updates available when buses are delayed?</b></p> <p>FR: Uno bus have recently introduced the “Uno buses” app, which gives updates on timetables and delays.</p> <p><b>Question: How often are buses supposed to run on Wednesdays?</b></p> <p>PD interjected at this point to bring questions to an end, praising the good discussion that was being had, but explained that due to time the meeting would have to move on. He suggested that any more questions related to Uno buses be directed to FR outside the meeting, and that FR come back with an update on students’ feedback at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Question: Would you also be able to look into customer service? Some bus drivers can often be quite aggressive and not very nice at all.</b></p> <p>FR agreed to look into this when collecting feedback.</p> <p><i>Amy Holloway-Smith (Vice-President Education)</i></p> <p>PD invited AHS to give a 5 minute update on what she’s been up to since the last Student Council meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AHS explained that her role as Vice-President Education was to represent students’ academic interests.</li> <li>- She mentioned that she had attended the University’s Academic Board, where the Black,</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> FR to collect students’ feedback on Uno buses, and come back to Student Council with a summary report of the issues that have been raised so far this year.</p>
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	<p>Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Attainment Gap was discussed at length.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She explained that she was looking into start of term issues, and plans to go out and speak to students in person about them as well.</li> <li>- She explained she was part of the Timetabling Review group, and that a separate governance group relating to this had been created too. The purpose of this group is to look at consistency of timetabling across Schools, as well as 7 main areas of focus, one being to deliver a “core student promise” with regards to what timetabling should look like.</li> <li>- She mentioned that she had attended the BAME student success working group, where the Students' Union and University are working together to tackle the BAME Attainment Gap. She noted that she was frustrated at how little action had been taken so far, but happy to see that aims were now being drawn up.</li> </ul> <p>PD drew the update from AHS to a close, and invited questions from the students in attendance.</p> <p><b>Question: Will there be any change to timetabling for Postgraduate students alongside Undergraduates, especially with regards to Wednesday afternoons?</b></p> <p>AHS: The Timetabling Review includes all students. Wednesday afternoons are currently only free for Undergraduates, but this can be looked at, and I can lobby for changes based on student feedback.</p> <p><b>Question: If the Wednesday lectures motion is passed, will it apply to all?</b></p> <p>AHS: It would be best to discuss this during the agenda item itself.</p> <p><b>Question: With regards to the consistency of the timetable, some students have 1 class per day and others have 7 – will this be worked on by the committee?</b></p> <p>AHS: The Timetabling Review group has already discussed this as there has been strong feedback from students, particularly from those who commute from off campus. Can't divulge confidential information but this kind of consistency is one of the key focuses.</p>	<p><b><u>ACTION:</u></b></p>
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**Question: What is being done to promote awareness of students' Mental Health?**

AHS: In the Students' Union, we have started up a scheme called Wellbeing Wednesdays, which includes a series of different events that should hopefully cater to all students' needs.

**Follow up question: I'm talking more about creating awareness of the difficulties that students might face, and how they can share their feelings?**

AHS: The Advice and Support team in the Students' Union can talk to you about a range of issues students might be facing. Some Schools also have dedicated job roles that can help with this (e.g. Personal Tutors). The University's Wellbeing Service also provide all students with 6 free 1 hour sessions for this purpose as well.

**Follow up question: It's my understanding that there's a 4 month waiting list for the University's Wellbeing Service – is anything being done to improve that?**

FR: There's no waiting list for the Students' Union's Advice and Support.

**Follow up question: Would it be possible to increase awareness of this service?**

FR: There has been a 20% increase in students making use of Advice and Support so far this year.

**Follow up question: One of my friends was struggling with Mental Health and the University threatened to kick them out – what can be done about this?**

FR: I'm sorry to hear that.

PD: This is the kind of thing that you can submit as a motion to Student Council.

RH: We need to collect more feedback to understand students' views and issues around this subject.

AHS to collect students' feedback on Timetabling, and come back to Student Council with a summary report of the issues that have been raised so far this year.

**ACTION:**



	<p>AHS: It would be good if someone submitted a #HertsEmpowerment post about this. (details on how to do this can be found here: <a href="https://hertfordshire.su/your-say/hertsempowerment/">https://hertfordshire.su/your-say/hertsempowerment/</a>)</p> <p><b>Q: Through events like the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Away Day and Student Rep Training, it appears that there has been a lack of engagement from School Community Organisers (SCOs) with regards to communicating with Student Reps – are you doing anything to address this?</b></p> <p>AHS: The Elected Officers are paired with SCOs, so we're going to set up meetings with them to highlight the importance of their role and connection to Student Reps.</p> <p><b>Follow up question: Will this be in Semester A?</b></p> <p>AHS: Definitely as soon as possible.</p> <p>PD drew the questions to a close, bringing an end to the Reports from the Elected Officers.</p>	<p>Elected Officers to gather more student feedback around the subject of Mental Health, and bring an update back to the next meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> AHS and Elected Officers to set up meetings with SCOs and emphasise the importance of them engaging with their roles.</p>
<p><b>SC-7</b></p>	<p><b>Oral report from the Student Trustees</b></p> <p>There were no Student Trustees in attendance, so no update was available.</p>	
<p><b>SC-8</b></p> <p><u>SC-8.1</u></p>	<p><b>Business submitted by individual members of Student Council</b></p> <p><u>Wednesday lectures (Motion)</u></p> <p>PD invited the student (Dwarakanath Giridhar, DG) who submitted the motion to provide a brief overview of what it entailed.</p> <p>DG introduced his motion, arguing that there shouldn't be lectures after 2pm on Wednesdays for anyone, as it's not fair for students who take part in sport. He</p>	

explained that the issue had been raised at his Engineering Programme Committee Meeting (PCM), and students were not happy that they had lectures on Wednesday afternoons. He submitted the motion to ask that the Students' Union lobby the University to make Wednesday afternoons free for everyone.

PD invited questions and comments on the proposed motion from the students in attendance.

**Comment:** I personally don't mind.

**Comment:** It's my understanding that it's legal requirement on the University to not schedule any classes after 1pm on Wednesdays.

**Question:** What about the students that don't do sport? Some people might have an issue with moving lectures to another point in the week. Why can't sport be done on weekends instead?

**Question:** How many people are asking for this?

RH: Between 1100-1300 students currently engage in sport, and with regards to the point on moving fixtures to the weekends, Universities are bound by the Wednesdays as they play against one another.

MS: As Chair of the Athletic Union (AU) Committee, this issue has been raised in the past, and having the Wednesdays free is not just about sport, it's about Societies having the opportunity to put on activities as well.

**Comment:** Students who miss out on Wednesday lectures can catch up by making use of drop-in hours.

**Comment:** This motion should be considered course by course.

AHS: The University does already adopt a policy like this, with any lectures that do happen on Wednesdays only coming as a result of them being explicitly signed off by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

PD brought the discussion to a close, suggesting that the motion was taken to a vote.

Votes were cast as follows:

**FOR = 13, AGAINST = 22, ABSTAIN = 6**

<p><u>SC-8.2</u></p>	<p>The motion did therefore not pass.</p> <p>PD thanked DG for submitting the motion, as well as those who contributed their thoughts to the discussion.</p> <p><u>Group work (Motion)</u></p> <p>PD invited the student (Dwarakanath Giridhar, DG) who submitted the motion to provide a brief overview of what it entailed.</p> <p>DG introduced his motion, arguing that group work is used quite a lot as a method of assessment, which can be unfair on some students due to them being too dependent on the work and input of others, which can hamper their ability to get a good grade.</p> <p>PD invited questions and comments on the proposed motion from the students in attendance.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> I'm in support of this, I have 4 group work modules so it can be quite hard to keep on top of things due to having to communicate with others.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> For Engineering, the course is accredited so some require group work in order for it to meet the specification. It also makes you a better person as you learn to work together with other people.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Some work is peer assessed, so if people aren't bothered it can have a negative impact on grades.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> What about changing this motion so that it doesn't apply to courses that require it? Could we amend it to focus on making group work fairer?</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> I think group work is fine, you should just pick good people for your group.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Maybe we could apply to this only certain Schools.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> A girl on my module was excluded from her group – there should be more done to include people.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> We could drop group work in modules where it's not required.</p>	
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**Comment:** As grades are in the students' hands, we could introduce peer rankings.

PD interjected at this point to suggest that the motion was amended based on some of the comments that had been made. He proposed that the motion was changed so that it only applied in cases where group work was not an official requirement of the course.

TC suggested that a second amendment was made so that it included an action to lobby the University to review how group work is assessed overall.

PD suggested that a vote was taken on each amendment in turn.

For the first amendment, votes were cast as follows:

**FOR = 41, AGAINST = 0, ABSTAIN = 1**

The first amendment therefore passed, and was added to the overall motion.

For the second amendment, votes were cast as follows:

**FOR = 42, AGAINST = 0, ABSTAIN = 1**

The second amendment therefore passed, and was added to the overall motion.

**Comment:** How will this be taken forward if passed?

AHS: It could be quite a lengthy process, as it would have to go through the Board of Examiners.

RH: It would fall under AHS's responsibility to take up with the University.

PD then explained that the meeting would now vote for the motion overall, as amended.

Votes were cast as follows:

**FOR = 36, AGAINST = 3, ABSTAIN = 5**

The motion therefore passed.

**ACTION:**

AHS to take Group work motion forward, as amended, and lobby the University to make the changes proposed.

<p><u>SC-8.3</u></p>	<p>PD thanked DG for submitting the motion, as well as those who contributed their thoughts to the discussion.</p> <p><u><i>Society inclusion officers (Motion)</i></u></p> <p>PD invited MS to provide a brief overview of what the motion he submitted entailed.</p> <p>MS explained that students want to meet and make friends with new people when they go to University, and that Societies are one of the main ways in which they can do so. He argued that every Society should therefore have an Inclusion Officer, who will be able to ensure that all events are welcoming for all.</p> <p>PD invited questions and comments on the proposed motion from the students in attendance.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Rather than have a specific committee position dedicated to this role, there should be wider training for all committee members as a whole.</p> <p>MS: There is already a lot of training, but there have still been issues raised around unwelcoming spaces. We need a specific officer position to take on this role and ensure inclusivity is promoted.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Would it be possible to add this to an already existing role, particularly for smaller committees?</p> <p>MS: We can look at amending the motion to make it more flexible.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> I agree with the point about smaller committees, but could we look instead at introducing this as a role within the Students' Union as a whole?</p> <p>MS: We do already have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Officer, but there are small specific issue that happen within Societies that need to be accounted for (e.g. WhatsApp groups).</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Is this extended to the AU as well? Lots of people often feel excluded from sport.</p> <p>MS: I do sit in meetings with the AU, but I don't have a remit over the Clubs. I can lobby for it though.</p>	
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**Question:** Could we change it so that once a Society has reached a certain number of members, this role then becomes a compulsory one?

AHS: Even if a Society only has a small number of members, they should still receive the same level of service, it shouldn't be exclusive to bigger societies.

**Question:** Could we amend the motion so that for smaller Societies (less than 10 members), this role is added to that of the Chair?

PD interjected at this point to suggest a couple of amendments to the motion as originally submitted. First, that it includes an action to lobby the AU for the introduction of the same role with its Clubs; second, that for Societies with less than 10 members, the responsibilities of the proposed role fall instead upon the existing Chair of the Society. He suggested that a vote was taken on each amendment in turn.

For the first amendment, votes were cast as follows:

**FOR = 35, AGAINST = 0, ABSTAIN = 12**

The first amendment therefore passed, and was added to the overall motion.

For the second amendment, votes were cast as follows:

**FOR = 28, NO = 2, ABSTAIN = 14**

The second amendment therefore passed, and was added to the overall motion.

PD then took a vote on the motion overall, as amended.

Votes were cast as follows:

**FOR = 33, NO = 0, ABSTAIN = 13**

The motion therefore passed.

PD announced that the meeting had to be adjourned at this point, as time had run out and the room wasn't

**ACTION:**  
MS to take Society inclusion officers motion forward, as amended, and implement / lobby for the changes proposed.

<p><i>SC-8.4</i></p>	<p>available any longer. He thanked everyone for coming and the contributions they made, and encouraged them to continue engaging and attending these meetings in future.</p> <p><u><i>Smoke-free campus (Motion)</i></u></p> <p>NOTE: As there wasn't time to discuss this motion during the meeting, the proposer was contacted afterwards, and will be working with the Students' Union to decide what steps can be taken to address the concerns that were highlighted in the motion.</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> TC to work with the student who proposed the motion, and report back to Student Council with an update on progress made.</p>
<p><b>SC-9</b></p>	<p><b># Herts Empowerment</b></p> <p>No time.</p>	
<p><b>SC-10</b></p>	<p><b>Scrutiny Committees</b></p> <p>No time.</p>	
<p><b>SC-11</b></p>	<p><b>Discussion of urgent business (if any)</b></p> <p>No time.</p>	
<p><b>SC-12</b></p>	<p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>No time.</p>	
<p><b>SC-13</b></p>	<p><b>Confirmation of next meeting</b></p> <p><i>Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (5pm)</i> <i>Location: Room tbc, College Lane</i></p>	