

OVERALL EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Overall Executive held 23rd January 2015 on the Jordanstown Campus.

PRESENT: Mark Bell (Overall President), Declan Shiels (Sports President), Robbie Banham (VP Coleraine), Micky Quigg (VP Magee), Sarah Gordon (VP Belfast), Colum Mackey (VP Jordanstown),

IN ATTENDANCE: Karen McKillop (Marketing Manager), Emmett Mullally (General Manager),

APOLOGIES: Sarah Curran (VP Campaigns and Communications)

15.01 MINUTES

The meeting scheduled for 12th December 2014 did not take place, minutes from meeting on 25th November were accepted.

15.02 MATTER ARISING

None

15.03 PRESIDENTS COMMUNICATIONS

The President noted that following the agreement of a new budget by Ministers in Stormont, the previously announced budget cuts have been reduced by £20 million. This money has not been allocated to institutions as yet, therefore there is still a lack of clarity around the financial position. He reported that the University has significant funds allocated to the Widening Access agenda, and in light of the cuts, this has been reduced by £3.8 million which can now be used elsewhere.

It is now estimated that 220-250 less student places will be made available for the next academic year, reduced from previous figures of around 500.

University Council are also hoping that the Magee development will now go ahead in June.

The President welcomed the Officers back after the Christmas and New Year break.

15.04 OFFICER REPORTS

The President noted from his written report:

- Met with Jean McMinn, Head of Student Support to discuss student issues with accessing financial advice and the hardship funds.

This led to a discussion of the current arrangements of the Students' Union Hardship Fund. It has been suggested that members of the Student Support team join the committee which administers the SU fund.

AGREED: Student Support would join the SU Hardship Fund committee, however the SU members would retain the autonomy to make unrestricted financial awards based on student needs (as opposed to the system of capping assistance which is currently the practice within Student Support).

- Met with the space planners and Provost to discuss the plans for the SU provision in the Belfast redevelopment. AGREED: UUSU officers to continue lobbying for a commercial venture in the new Belfast campus – a paper will be submitted to UU&SU Forum outlining the business case.

VP Magee noted:

- Applied for NUS funding for National Voter Registration day in partnership with North West Regional Council – potential of £500 for an event

VP Jordanstown noted:

- Has been working closely with the Academic Representation Coordinator to develop the Student Experience Forums, and meeting with Deans to progress this;
- Active on the Digital Learning and Social Learning Spaces working groups

VP Belfast noted:

- Facilitated DEL budget submissions from 6 different groups of students before Christmas;
- Will be carrying out the NUS Community Project in Semester 2 along with NUS;
- Participated in volunteer management training which has been very useful.

Sports President noted:

- St John's ambulance society have offered to provide first aid support for sports events, will be helping with an indoor cricket tournament;
- Collingwood Football Tournament trials have taken place;
- Planning for the Colours Awards have begun

A report was not submitted by the VP Coleraine.

15.05 STUDENT PRESENTATION PROPOSING COLERAINE RADIO SOCIETY

Andrew Adams presented proposals for a Coleraine Radio Society, noting his previous experience in community radio. He also provided an overview of the license arrangements, equipment needs and ideas for advertising.

The Committee were supportive of the project, however asked that Andrew submitted a written overview of the investment required and also some further information on the current guidelines on issues of liable for presenters/producers of programmes.

AGREED: Further information to be submitted and decision to be taken at the next meeting of Overall Executive.

15.06 SOCIETY ONLINE MEMBERSHIP

The Student Engagement Manager presented proposals to have additional resources around Freshers Week to assist with the administration of societies memberships. This would negate the need to move to a more expensive online system of membership at this time.

AGREED: Part time students to be employed to assist with this task

15.07 FRESHERS WORKING GROUP

AGREED:

- Group to be taken forward as noted in report, with the addition of all VPs – not just 2.

15.08 STUDENT COUNCIL

Overview of agenda for upcoming meeting discussed and Officers encouraged to ensure their Councillors attend.

15.09 SABBATICAL TRAINING PLAN

The following points were noted in relation to the summer training for Officers:

- Management and leadership training should be encompassed;
- BUCS training would be more beneficial for the Sports President than SUT;
- Consider efficacy of SUT overall for all officers;
- Provide more training on general student issues, such as housing;
- Embed good practices for handover from Officer to Officer

15.10 UUB COMMUNITY PROJECT

VP Belfast asked officers to review the upcoming project again and she would be asking for involvement from the team over Semester 2 to carry out and report on the listening exercise on the Belfast campus.

15.11 NSS ACTION PLAN

The General Manager presented the updated action plan. He emphasised the importance of Officers and staff being able to demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of their work: reports are one way of doing this as well as recording the student issues being dealt with and evidence of feedback from student shouts.

15.12 ELECTIONS 2015

The Overall President advised officers to review the current job descriptions for sabbaticals, and the overviews provided in the election information, and to update where necessary.

He also noted that Officers intending to rerun should be aware that they need to book leave and to organise this with himself as soon as possible.

A discussion was had on the meaning of the constitutional clause 'students must be in good academic standing to at the time of election' – this will be referred to Student Council for clarification and a decision.

AGREED: a paragraph will be added to the election pack indicating that successful candidates will be subject to ACCESS NI checks, as the role does involve working with under 18s. The Student Engagement Manager to arrange.

15.13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13TH February 2015.