

Meeting	Academic Council
Date and Time	Wednesday 26 th April 2023 (14:15–16:05)
Location	3WN 3.7

Meeting Minutes

Item	Item
1	SU & Education Officer Update
	<p>The Education officer gave an update on their efforts to improve student experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing transparency about the marking boycott • Information about the Education Awards – on May 3rd, 2023 • Continuous efforts to advocate for lecture recording policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lecture Recording Campaign this week ○ Gathering information from students ○ Utilising a new contact • Introducing the new faculty reps
2	Sustainability (Talk)
	<p>A talk was given by Prof. Steve Cayzer on the Climate Action Framework and the actions the university is taking on sustainability. Following the talk, a discussion arose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One member suggested that more engagement with the SU would. SC answered that from next year, initiation meetings and talk on the framework will start yearly in the year. • Another member suggested that a mandatory formative course for climate action (similar to the ones about academic integrity, sexual harassment, etc.) would be a good way to spread awareness. SC shared that an induction level course called “Global Citizenship” which combines all these topics is in the works. • A member from the MechEng department suggested the introduction of more hands-on side-projects related to the topic in 1st and 2nd year of engineering. SC replied that there are plans to implement a module called Responsible Engineering Practices, which would encompass topics like business, climate and sustainability. Its main aim will be to allow students to find creative ways to embed climate action in their degrees. • Another member suggested that group projects that they have in their course on the topic of sustainability which can be transferred

	<p>to/implemented in other departments. SC said that there are plans for workshops. Another way in which this is targeted is through adding a new position - Climate Advocates in departments, which will be responsible for implementing the Climate Action Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another member asked whether there are plans to increase the amounts of renewable energy used on campus. SC replied that whilst there is a lot of currently unrecognised effort (there is more renewable energy on campus than suspected), there is a constant ongoing discussion on how to improve these numbers. • A different member asked on ways in which sustainability is taken into consideration in new buildings on campus (citing the disappointing performance of the Management Building). CS admitted to the sustainability underperformance of the Management Building, but expressed optimism that standards are currently being improved. • A member from the Math department asked how sustainability can be incorporated in the teaching practices of their department. SC underlined that every field is related to sustainability in some way and it is a matter of creative thinking to successfully make the at connection. For Maths, he cited the example of understanding climate through mathematical models.
3	Further Strike Action (Discussion)
	<p>The Education officer shared the news that the UCU has renewed its 6-month strike mandate. Whilst nationally the marking boycott is supposed to start on April, 20th, the local (UofBath) strike will begin on May 2nd. The SU supports its stance from the referendum and doesn't support the UCU Strike. The PVC for education had been contacted by JK regarding the effect of the strikes on graduation, however, at the time of the meeting, there were no updates. In light of all that, JK asked the group three strategic questions concerning the strikes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is your biggest concern about the upcoming strike action? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. One of the groups expressed concerns regarding the place in the marking's "pecking order" of first year students. Whilst final years will get priority, the group felt that there needs to be transparency with regards to the release of marks of first -year students as they need that information when applying for placements.

- b. Another group was critical of the lack of a clear position of the uni. They believed that the lack of transparency on whether the strikes will happen, how long will they last and what the university is ready to implement is detrimental, especially to final-year undergraduate students who need clarity on their grades in order to be accepted to their master's degrees or job offers.
- 2) How can the University support students during the strike?
- a. One of the groups suggested hiring more staff for marking, but were wary of the plausibility/possibility of this strategy as a counter-measure to the strikes. GN shared that there is a fine line, as external markers can be hired for the sake of avoiding delays.
- b. The group from 1b. reiterated their position that there must be more clarity and transparency on the Uni position on that matter.
- 3) How can the SU support students during the strike?
- a. One of the groups asked for more clarity on opportunities to either support or deny the strikes. GN said that the SU cannot actively be taking a stance but mentioned the Voice team and the UCU Bath website as sources of useful information.
- b. Another group advocated for putting more pressure on the Uni to resolve the issue. In their opinion, the SU should reiterate the impact the strikes have on students and call out the University on the massive mental toll they entail. They also cited the problems of replanning resits for international students: cost, stress and ecological effect

Further Strike Action (Discussion)

- If grad is delayed, what about people who have impending deadlines for master's courses/job offers who need to provide manuscripts
- For international students, this comes between travel plans/logistics and can pose as a huge financial burden
- POLIS – unfair treatment at a department level as their dept. faces the most negative implications of the striking action
- Lack of clarity feels unfair and keeping students in the dark is affecting their mental health
- Younger lectures – more impacted, more likely to strike
- Engineering – some people has no/one cancelled lectures during strike

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science – some people had half cancelled sessions during the year • Concerns – first year not priority and using grades for placement, welfare of lecturers, final years not graduating • Uni support – pay lecturers, reassure students, financial compensation • SU Support – advice for approaching complaints process, rent strike • Do we support strikes – no, they’re too long and affect students, student scared about their degrees • Marking strikes – affects final year students, get more marking staff
4	Non-Invigilated Exam Spaces on Campus (Discussion)
	<p>The last topic of discussion was the availability of spaces on campus where students could take their non-invigilated exams should there be obstacles to doing them at home.</p> <p>Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet • Private <p>GN posed the question of whether the presence of a staff member will be useful or detrimental. One hand, this would enable keeping noise levels to a minimum, but on the other it will defeat the purpose of lack of invigilation. A possible compromise might be the usage of support staff.</p> <p>Other ideas that arose were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping it department-specific • Using quiet study spaces to do the exams • Possible SU invigilation (in its role of a separate organisation) • Should those spaces be bookable • Promotion through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SU Instagram stories ○ Direct emails ○ Informing departments to spread awareness ○ Moodle page
5	AOB
	No Comments Raised.
6	The meeting ended at 15:48. This was the last meeting for the year.