



Cardiff Students' Union
Undeb Myfyrwyr Caerdydd

Student Senate
Cardiff University Students' Union
Tuesday 13th February 2024, 5pm
Via Zoom

Agenda

Please contact the Student Voice Team via email (democracy@cardiff.ac.uk) if you have any questions.

Standard Items	1. Welcome	
	2. Apologies	
	3. Minutes from the previous meeting	(P2)
SU Submitted Items	4. Report from the Trustees	
	5. Lapsing Policy <i>(There are no lapsing policies to note for this Student Senate)</i>	
Submitted Items	6. Tabled Motions:	(P10)
	i. A better future for Welsh Students	
	7. Officer Accountability Reports	(P12)
Any Other Business	8. Elections	(P14)
	9. Dates of Future Meetings	(P15)



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ITEM THREE: Minutes from the previous meeting

Student Senate – Minutes

Tuesday 5th December 2023, 5pm – Via Zoom

Attendees:

Committee Members

Tanisha Kohli (Chair)
Angie Flores Acuña (SU President)
Madison Hutchinson (VP Societies and Volunteering)
Alex Meers (VP Heath Park)
Deio Owen (VP Welsh)
Georgia Spry (VP Sports)
Micaela Panes (VP Postgraduate)
Noah Russell (VP Undergraduate)
La'shaunna Williamson (Anti-Racism Officer)
Matilda Durant (LGBTQ+ Officer)
Hanna Pageau (Students with Disabilities Officer)
Finnerty Templeman (Student Parents & Carers Officer)
Nathan Mintz (International Students' Officer)
Trystan Gwennap (Ethical and Environmental Officer)
Daisy Tipping (Women's Officer)
Aby Anderson-Peled (Student Senator)
Amelia Hamilton (Student Senator)
Andrew George (Student Senator)
Gokula Krishnan Kelambakkam Rajendiran (Student Senator)
Jonathan Williams (Student Senator)
Masud Rahman (Student Senator)
Raashi Khanna (Student Senator)
Shane Toner (Student Senator)
Sushama Swathi (Student Senator)
Gulshanbanu Ansari (Student Senator)

Rhys Davies (Student Academic Rep)
Iwan Williams (Student Academic Rep)
Hannah Baird (Student Academic Rep)
Yu (Timothy) Lee
Alexandra Ibbott (Randomly Selected Student)
Jack Morewood (Observer)
Wilbur Hyde (Observer)
Cadewyn Skelley (Observer)



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Staff

Tali Atvars (Head of Student Voice and Advice, Info Point)

Hannah Fatkin (Deputy Head of Student Voice)

Sophie Loudon (Democracy and Projects Coordinator)

Cymen Cyf (Translation Services)



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Standard Items	
Welcome	<p>Tanisha Kohli (Chair) welcomed attendees to the meeting and TK mentioned that Tali Atvars (Head of Student Voice and Advice) is the Info Point for this meeting.</p> <p>TK also highlighted that there are translation services available for English and Welsh speakers. The Chair explained the agenda and voting process to all attendees and talked through the agenda. The Chair also provided a reminder to attendees of the importance of respecting all opinions.</p>
Minutes of the previous meeting	<p>TK (Chair) went through the minutes page-by-page asking for any amendments.</p> <p>Page 3 Alex Meers (VP Heath Park) mentioned that his engagement for Heath events was at least 300 attendees and a correction on Placement Bursary Funding which is referring to the NHS Bursary and Placement experience.</p> <p>No issues raised for pages 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7</p>
Students' Union Submitted Items	
Report from the Trustees	<p>Angie Flores Acuña (SU President) began by stating that this would be a brief overview of the report from the trustees for the month of November.</p> <p>Angie (SU President) provided updates on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Following the previous meeting and in collaboration with the university, along with the funding received for Black History Month and more inclusive initiatives, we hosted an event that showcased African and Caribbean talent, drawing over 150 attendees. 2. The Medics Varsity between Cardiff University and Bristol University took place with the initiative of Alex Meers (VP Heath Park) and Georgia Spry (VP Sports and AU President). 3. The Winter Wellbeing campaign, planned by Madison Hutchinson (VP Societies and Volunteering) and Georgia Spry (VP Sports and AU President), is ongoing throughout December to support students during the Christmas period. Planned activities, such as visits to Winter Wonderland, will continue until December 18th. 4. Madison (VP Societies) highlighted the success of the Movember Campaigns, which raised over £80,000 for charity.



	<p>5. Angie (President) discussed the success of the Winter Showcase, organized by Madison (VP Societies), showcasing the various talents of different societies within the university.</p>
Submitted Items	
Item 5: Bye-Law Amendment	<p>Deio began by explaining that the purpose of the proposed change to the title of VP Welsh Language, Community and Culture is to ensure that the position accurately reflects the reasons behind its creation last year.</p> <p>Deio explained that changing the title to VP y Gymraeg would better represent the role's responsibilities and expand its remit to include all matters pertaining to the Welsh language within the University.</p> <p>No one spoke against the amendment.</p> <p>Deio summarised the proposal and thanked the senate for their time.</p>
Item 6: Campaign Officer Title Change	<p>TK (Chair) read item 6 of the agenda and invited Hanna Pageau to elaborate on the proposed amendment.</p> <p>Hanna Pageau outlined the proposal, which is to change the Campaign Officer's title from Disabilities Officer to Accessibility Officer while retaining the name of the Students with Disabilities Association.</p> <p>TK (Chair) invited Senate members to speak against the motion if they wished. TK (Chair) then invited Micaela Panes (VP Postgrad) to speak.</p> <p>Against</p> <p>Micaela (VP Postgrad) acknowledged the intention behind changing the title but emphasized the importance of specific representation for the individuals this role encompasses.</p> <p>Micaela focused on the visibility and advocacy for these students, expressing concern that an accessibility officer title might broaden the scope too much, leading to potential misunderstandings.</p> <p>For</p> <p>Daisy Tipping (Women's Officer) noted the evolving role of campaign officers and emphasized that disabled students need a dedicated avenue to advocate for their accessibility needs.</p> <p>Daisy highlighted that the accessibility officer can still advocate for disability needs.</p>



	<p>Against</p> <p>Alex Meers emphasized the need for fluidity in the Campaign role, allowing officers to respond to current issues.</p> <p>Alex argued that renaming officers based on current focuses might limit the flexibility of future officers.</p> <p>For</p> <p>Matilda Durant (LGBTQ+ Officer) countered by stating that accessibility will always be relevant for students with disabilities.</p> <p>Matilda noted that the officer, under the new association, would also be the president of the Students with Disabilities Association and could still run events and campaigns.</p> <p>Matilda stressed that everyone understands the role of an accessibility officer, as accessibility is at the core of the position.</p> <p>Against</p> <p>Angie (SU President) reminded everyone of the type of candidates they want to attract for these roles.</p> <p>Angie emphasized the importance of attracting students who can relate to their communities and expressed concern that changing the role's name sets expectations from the beginning.</p> <p>For</p> <p>Nathan mentioned that the core of the role is to improve accessibility at the university. Nathan echoed the opinions of Matilda and Daisy, emphasizing that, since the association remains the same, the role still fundamentally represents disabled students.</p> <p>Nathan also noted that the name change would feel more inviting to students, as the term "disability" might not fully encompass the scope of the role.</p> <p>Against</p> <p>Micaela raised the point that the name change could introduce ambiguity and confusion for future officers. For instance, "accessibility" might be interpreted in various ways, potentially including financial</p>
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	<p>accessibility.</p> <p>Micaela mentioned that senior management aims to better integrate Campaign Officers into university meetings to represent their communities. Changing the title might increase the scope of the role, possibly diverting attention away from the specific needs of disabled students.</p> <p>For</p> <p>Daisy highlighted her understanding of the Campaign Officer role and countered Micaela's argument about ambiguity by pointing out that the association is still retaining the name of the Students with Disabilities Association.</p> <p>Against</p> <p>Angie wanted to clarify that the role of Campaign Officers is left up to the individual to define.</p> <p>Summary</p> <p>Hanna provided a summary of the motion.</p> <p>The Chair drew the debate to a close and reminded senate on the voting procedure.</p>
Item 7: Lapsing Policy	TK (Chair) explained there were no lapsing policies to note for this meeting.
Item 8: Tabled Motions	<p>Motion I: Advocacy For The Abolition of Tuition Fees</p> <p>TK (Chair) explained the process of the motion for the abolishment of tuition fees and invited Cadewyn Skelley to present the motion.</p> <p>Cadewyn highlighted that the student demographic is diverse in age, gender, and sexual orientation, all sharing the common goal of self-improvement.</p> <p>Cadewyn argued that the English and Welsh governments have shifted the responsibility from the state to students, asserting that education should not be tied to a lifelong debt clause. He pointed out issues with the current repayment plan system, noting that fluctuating interest rates increase the time repayment takes, likening it to a student tax.</p> <p>Cadewyn also expressed concerns about the new Repayment Plan 5,</p>



	<p>which lowers the minimum payment threshold and could result in a significant increase in student loan repayments for working and middle-class students, especially considering the cost of living.</p> <p>Against Motion:</p> <p>Gokula Krishnan Kelambakkam Rajendiran mentioned that fees are necessary for a functioning government, as funding for departments drives research and projects forward.</p> <p>Gokula provided an example of the Norwegian government initially abolishing academic fees for bachelor's and master's degrees, but they were reintroduced due to an inability to handle the influx of students.</p> <p>Gokula expressed concerns about future research and projects being hindered due to a lack of funding.</p> <p>For Motion:</p> <p>Hanna showcased the examples of Germany and Scotland, where being at the forefront of research and technology is possible without tuition fees.</p> <p>Procedural Motion Put Forth:</p> <p>Info Point explained the process of the procedural motion and passed back to the chair to manage debate.</p> <p>The chair invited Alex Meers to open the debate for the procedural motion.</p> <p>Alex agreed overwhelmingly with the spirit of the motion, stating that the SU should refrain from restricting societies on what they are allowed to campaign for. No further speakers spoke for or against the procedural motion.</p> <p>The Chair invited the room to vote on the procedural motion.</p> <p><i>Procedural Motion Passed</i></p> <p>Debate closed for Motion I and the Chair reminded members of the voting procedure.</p>
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Any Other Business	
Item 9: Notice of Elections	TK (Chair) reminded members that the Students' Union Spring Elections nominations open on 11th December.
Next Student Senate Meeting	Tuesday 13 th February 2024
MEETING ENDED	
VOTING RESULTS	
Minutes from the previous meeting: Approved	
Bye-Law Amendment: Vice President Welsh Language, Community and Culture to Vice President Cymraeg: Approved	
Campaign Officer Title Change: Students with Disabilities Officer to Accessibility Officer: Approved	
Advocation for Abolition of Tuition Fees: Resolves 1: Approved	
Advocation for Abolition of Tuition Fees: Resolves 2: Approved	



ITEM SIX: Tabled Motions

MOTION ONE

A BETTER FUTURE FOR WELSH STUDENTS

Proposer: Deio Owen

AGM Notes

1. Students' Unions have been at the forefront of creating and enacting innovative policies over the years, improving equality, rights, values, and opportunities for students.
2. For centuries, Wales has been under the control of the United Kingdom, and from that has suffered economically, culturally, linguistically and environmentally, to name only a few.
3. The calls for a Welsh referendum on independence, in addition to the independence referendum that was held in Scotland, shows that there is a growing call for a better future.
4. As of now, Wales has significantly less devolved powers than Scotland, including powers over the Crown Estate.
5. The implementation of a full time Vice President Welsh Language, Community and Culture this year shows the commitment of the Union to the language and culture of Wales, and the support from the 2021 AGM attendees demonstrates the support of the student body to protecting Welsh language and culture.

AGM Believes

1. Nominating people for national honours (CBE, OBE, etc.) ignores and upholds the dark history of the British Empire and is opposing our values as an organisation.
2. Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliament already has devolved powers. Despite this, the Senedd nor the Welsh Government have the ability to form an education system that is sustainable for the future, is suitable for the present nor has worked in the past.
3. We must break free from the United Kingdom for us to create the Wales that we would like to see, a Wales where everyone has the ability to live in a country that is just, equal and contemporary.
4. Wales can forge itself a better future outside of the control of Westminster by avoiding the waste of money spent on failed projects that aren't even for the benefit of England, without even thinking of it benefitting Wales, such as HS2, and the extraction of Welsh water over the border.



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5. Wales does not have an equitable voice in Westminster, as we have seen with the drowning of Tryweryn as a staunch reminder. The reduction of seats given to Wales shows that whatever voice we currently have in Westminster is being diminished.¹
6. Independence, refusing honours, and breaking free is not a purely political matter as they are matters of culture, values, beliefs and intent.
7. If Cardiff University is to be an Anti-racist University, the University needs to refuse nominating individuals for national honours due to their close connections to the Empire.
8. Cardiff Students cannot get the representation that is required and deserved through a British National Union of Students and as such, we should support the establishment of a separate Union for Wales, as Scotland is already doing².
9. Education is already devolved to Wales and our time should be used focusing on making change through developing and nurturing the relationships with Welsh Government and HE Regulatory bodies, rather than trying to get our foot through the door at Westminster.
10. Other options are available to honour an individual, such as through the national awards here in Wales, the UK and internationally.
11. We believe in and support a Wales that is its own independent Nation, one that welcomes people and celebrates everyone who decide to make Wales a home.
12. Only an independent Wales, with its own Government and institutions, voted for by the people of Wales, that we could trust in to deliver for the good of its people.

AGM Resolves

1. Cardiff Students' Union believes in and supports Independence for Wales, for the advancement of education of students, through supporting a Wales void of Westminster rule and control, being able to create a better education system for Wales.
2. The Students' Union should lobby the University to refuse to nominate individuals for National Honours that are connected to the British Empire.
3. The Union and its officers will not suggest names for the University to nominate for National Honours that are connected to the British Empire (by the discretion of the CUSU Board of Trustees)
4. The Union and its Officers shall lobby the University to use other national awards and honours rather than those connected to the British Empire.
5. The Union shall release a statement opposing National Honours that are connected with the British Empire as it goes against our values as an organisation.
6. By supporting an Independent Wales, the Union shall look at and campaign for new options for a national body to represent the students of Wales outside of NUS UK.
7. The Union and its officers shall demand that the University acknowledge and reject participating in Empirical systems.



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ITEM SEVEN: Officer Accountability Reports

Sabbatical Officers

Following phase 1 of the democracy review and as outlined in the Students' Union governing documents, the Sabbatical Officers are each required to have their own executive committee (excluding the Students' Union President). Each executive committee is required to convene an accountability session at least three times per academic year whereby they ensure their appropriate elected officer is held to account on their work against their manifesto, year priorities, and actions on relevant passed policy. In the case of the Students' Union President an accountability council was directly elected in the Autumn Elections.

Each Sabbatical Officer's first accountability session took place between 4th December 2023-22nd January 2024, with the scheduled accountability sessions due to take place 12th-23rd February 2024.

The full accountability reports for each accountability session can be found on the Students' Union website here: <https://www.cardiffstudents.com/your-voice/democracy/accountability//>. These reports are made available to Student Senate as required by the Union's governing documents. This page is also accessible by all Cardiff University students.

During the accountability sessions the members are asked to determine whether they have any concerns regarding the elected officer's performance that they wish to bring to the attention of Student Senate. No concerns were identified by the accountability sessions and therefore these reports are presented for note only.

Campaign Officers

Similarly, the Campaigns Officers each have their own committees elected from their association members. The association committees are then responsible for holding the accountability sessions for their respective elected officer as outlined above. Whilst associations and association committees are not new or a result of the democracy review, the role they are asked to play in regards to an officer's accountability is.

Reinitiating the associations and ensuring the same accountability process is followed has been slightly harder than originally envisioned by the democracy review, through no fault of the Campaign Officers themselves. The democracy review will therefore be proposing a rethink of the accountability requirements of Campaign Officers which is better in touch with their role and responsibilities and takes note of the fact they are unpaid volunteers who do immense work across campus.

The majority of Campaign Officers have completed their accountability reports which can be found here: <https://www.cardiffstudents.com/your-voice/democracy/accountability//>. In the case



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that an accountability session was convened with the association committee the full report has been completed as intended. Where a full committee has not been elected, the elected officer has completed the relevant sections within their power. Where an accountability report is missing, the Student Voice team will be working with the relevant elected officer to ensure one is completed as soon as possible. Any reports missing will be highlighted at the next Student Senate meeting.



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ITEM EIGHT: Elections

Nominations have now closed for the Students' Union Spring Elections. A Notice of Poll outlining all candidates will be made available on the Students' Union website from Wednesday 7th February 2024.

KEY DATES

Voting opens: Monday 4th March 2024 (10:00)

Voting closes: Thursday 7th March 2024 (16:00)

Results announced: Friday 8th March 2024



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ITEM NINE: Dates of Future Meetings

Student Senate 4: Thursday 21st March 2024

Student Senate 5: Tuesday 23rd April 2024

END OF PAPERS



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