

Minutes of the Union Executive Meeting

Wednesday the 21st of October 2020

Present: Temi, Ade, Jess, Shian

In Attendance: Stevie, Ed, George (Minuting)

1. Welcome and Introductions

TA welcomed all to the meeting

2. To receive apologies for absence

TA accepted the apologies of RR and AO

3. AOB

None

4. Minutes from last meeting (date)

Minutes were accepted.

Action points were acted upon from the previous meeting.

Action: TA to engage with NF and have written evidence regarding compensation from COVID and lockdown; implications to education.

Action: RR and JW to work with AH and BA regarding communicating the great work Rafiki does. TA also added that HB (Community and Wellbeing Officer) should be involved in this meeting too.

5. Campaign Expenditure Proposals

TA updated the committee on the Transgender Day of Remembrance.

TA put forward the proposal of becoming a sponsor for the Salford Pride Transgender Day of Remembrance, including details of sponsorship and cost.

TA queried the financial status in relation to campaign expenditure, acknowledging that cost must be cut down this year.

AOO agreed that for sponsorship but forward the question as to what the cost affiliated would contribute to.

SW also agreed regarding the breakdown of the cost.

Action: GC to receive a cost breakdown from Salford Pride.

6. University Committee Updates:

AOO provided a Council update.

AOO updated the committee on the Masterplan. Media City was previously not included in the Masterplan. It has now been made explicit in the plan.

AOO informed of the possible movement of AskUs and the SU to a different location on campus, to improve engagement and interaction with student services.

AOO stated that the student feedback and engagement interview with AG (Women's Officer) was positively received by the Council.

Actions were planned regarding Equality and Diversity at the University.

AOO informed the committee that there has been a successful appointment for an Equality and Diversity lead. AOO stated that whilst the individual appointed will be great in engaging with students and wanting to enact said change. Although, the question remains as to whether the appointee will have the influence to make enough change at the University.

TA informed the committee that they, AOO and EM will meet with JC regarding the management accounts to provide greater insight to finances.

7. Sabbatical Officer Updates:

TA to begin:

TA has struggled to develop their objectives due to the demand from the University.

TA outlined that the BAME Awards Gap workstream were not informed of the appointee of the executive lead.

TA stated that the Recording Lectures changes to the University will be written into policy and that has been confirmed in a formal meeting. A separate agenda item will be brought to the relevant committees to ensure there is a focus on these changes.

AOO reiterated the plan of action for the Recorded Lectures, joint objective.

AOO but forward a question to pre-empt the responses from the members of SLTEC, to ensure the objective was as efficient as possible.

The aim is to develop a draft policy, which can then be brought to the various stakeholders i.e. Trade Unions, QEO etc.

TA agreed and stated that the Recorded Lectures agreement could act as a base policy for the relevant staff members to work on over the next phase.

SW highlighted the positive outcome of the HR representative in engaging with Trade Unions. SW commended the efforts of all involved.

Action: TA to liaise with all relevant members who attend SLTEC to organise a ‘plan of action’ regarding the conversations that will take place; pre-empt the conversations that are due to take place and prepare an approach before SLTEC.

SC provided an update:

SC is happy to proceed with further involvement in the Recorded Lectures, joint objective.

SC outlined that further work needs to be done with MC regarding the Dissertation Framework objective. Future consultation will take place with students.

Information regarding international partnerships is on hold till ADA (A&M) has provided SC with further details.

SC put forward the possibility of other Sabbs attending a meeting with the library.

TA informed the committee that a further section of the Sabbatical tracker has been added, to provide the team with a space to include updates for any work that lies outside of their personal or shared objectives.

AOO update:

AOO provided an update regarding both virtual (live chat) and face-to-face engagement. Future opportunities to engage with students on campus.

AOO has confirmed that engagement with academic programmes has been extremely successful. Students within these meetings have been very vocal, so the opportunity to meet students (virtually) and improve the connection between students and their Union has been integral.

Next stages to academic engagement will be to speak with School and Course Reps regarding setting up academic societies within the SEE school.

AOO outlined to BHM events and online activities have been successful throughout the month. Future opportunities will be continued outside of the month and positive steps have taken place regarding the Black Awards Gap project group.

JW provided the last update:

JW is working with students to gather videos that will provide new first years with a ‘top tips’ style structure, specifically on what to do and what not to do when starting University and on placement.

JW is working with AH and the University regarding wellbeing and wellness sessions. Further promotion of Rafiki and the triage of the Union’s services to students is ongoing.

JW will be speaking with HB regarding 1-2-1 tutor support.

AO was not present to provide an update.

8. Partnership Steering Group

No update at this meeting.

9. Academic Regulations Committee Update

SC informed the committee that PMQs are to be extended as a result of COVID-19.

SC stated that no major updates came from the meeting that would be relevant for the committee to be aware of.

10. COVID Update

EM provided a general update but did state that multiple changes have occurred since the last meeting.

The University now provides a University case number of COVID cases. The University and the Union have not fallen into similar trends as other institutions, as the trend has started to flatten and event decline.

EM stated that whilst the region has moved into a Tier 3 stage, yet the changes to the approach of services and education on campus will remain relatively the same, as the procedures in place are safe for students and staff.

EM outlined that the Tier 3 structure for each region currently affected is different in each region. Therefore, changes to AKB are in reference to allowing individuals to visit AKB must now be eating a substantial amount of food alongside drinking. A timescale system may be put into place. The risks are on student satisfaction and the staff availability to carry out further functions. Current conversations are taking place regarding the feasibility of AKB remaining open over the weekend.

EM is speaking with the University regarding their risk appetite towards what the concept of a substantial meal is. Further conversations will take place on Friday after the Government issues guidance for Greater Manchester Tier 3.

Further conversations have taken place regarding social isolation of students in student halls; CLV and private halls. RR, BA, AH and AW have worked hard to create an online portfolio to accommodate these concerns. EM stated that the University has provided further funds to support said projects.

EM put to the committee any recommendations regarding where this fund can be spent.

AOO put forward the recent news regarding the death of a University of Manchester student and the unanswered speculation online regarding whether the death was related to COVID-19 or not.

TA stated they had seen such information but wasn't entirely sure what the truth was.

AOO stated that the work of the Students' Union and the University in creating a safe, accessible and enjoyable student experience is clear to see.

SC queried the recent online statement regarding AKB.

EM provided detailed information.

11. AOB

No AOBs.

Meeting Close at 12:02