

Student Council Minutes – 02/11/2022

Chair

Rebecca Hunt RH Student Council Chair

In Attendance

Caius Datt	CD	Undergraduate Education Officer (Exeter)	Online
Francesca Whetstone	FW	Community Officer	Online
Jack Myrick	JMy	Open Officer (Falmouth)	Online
Tes Choi	TC	Liberation Officer	Online
Abigail Lockwood-Morris	ALM	Sports Officer	
Jordan Pidwell	JP	Volunteering Officer	
Jonathan Stowell	JS	Environment & Ethics Officer	
Soham Rege	SR	Postgraduate Education Officer (Falmouth)	Online
Amber Clifton	AC	Open Officer (Exeter)	Online
Charlie Kwong	CK	Distance Learning Officer	Online
Kira Orchard	KO	President Welfare and Inclusivity	
Luke Court	LC	President Falmouth	
Georgi Griskeviciene	GG	President Exeter	
Lauren Taylor	LT	President Student Experience	

Presenting

Charlie Atkinson CA Student Voice Coordinator, Exeter

Minutes

Matt Parker MP Student Voice Manager

Apologies

Nick De Prazer	NDP	Mature Students' Officer
Bobby Angelov	BA	Societies Officer
Jack Mullock	JMu	Accommodation Officer

Minutes

Agenda

Item	Minutes	Member
1	Welcome and Introductions	
1.1	Apologies delivered	RH
1.2	Introductions	RH
	RH happy to work with PTOs on projects they would like to achieve.	
	Introduction from all members of Student Council and SU staff.	
2	Holding Presidents to Account	
2.1	Kira Orchard explains the way presidents' priorities are spread out this year, with individual and shared priorities between the team.	KO
2.2	KO has completed all individual priorities.	KO
	First is the 'we bleed' campaign, free period products in toilets. KO is going to continue to meet with head of FXPlus to ensure that campaign stays active following presidential term.	
	May receive feedback from Reps which will feedback to next student council session.	
	Student Training Opportunities	
	Bystander intervention training now available to Falmouth and Exeter students. Students can sign up over handshake. Council is first group of students to learn about this.	
	Cost of Living	
	All presidents doing a lot of work to support and attending lots of meetings with University and FXPlus staff.	
	Kira working on setting up food support e.g., food bank at the lodge.	

2.3

LC presents progress on priorities

Increasing employability resources for Falmouth students with opportunities for networking and showcasing work on campus and in the community.

One showcase has taken place already – Black History Month digital showcase
Has also received green light from FXPlus to run an everchanging gallery exhibition in the libraries on Penryn and Falmouth Campuses. Ideally this will continue beyond term of presidency. This should make the campus feel more student owned and more like an arts campus and will provide the opportunity for creatives to get inspired by each other.

Also involved in discussions within employability spaces on campus to talk about bridging the gap between undergraduate and alumni to support with employability.

Cost of living

Getting Falmouth to discuss cost of living from a student perspective. Has managed to get a working group set up within Falmouth university to steer how they are approaching cost of living.

LC spoke about the Mitigation policy, access to hardship fund for Falmouth students and the cost of learning.

Improving experience of partner students

There is no lived student experience at the partner institutions. This was raised at the Collaborative Provisions Committee to ensure that the students have the same opportunities as we do down here.

Accommodation

Truro accommodation. Work has started to set up focus groups, to gain student feedback which had previously been lacking. This will make the difference between zero and some student input.

2.4

GG updated on their priorities:

Exeter Connect

GG has been trying to connect student communities and opportunities across campuses and combat the satellite campus narrative from Streatham campus. This is with the hope to gain better connections across all four campuses. Truro have to have more student experiences than we feel on Penryn.

Managed to get a group of HASS students sent to a study abroad fair, as there was no opportunity for something similar in Penryn. Thirty students were sent to Streatham, with the aim to hold something similar in Penryn. GG is looking for feedback as to what this might look like.

Academic Support

Through the personal tutoring system. GG is in high level conversations about how the personal tutoring system is working and how there not enough guidance to personal tutors directly.

Student retention can be supported by tutors and want to stop students slipping through the gaps of wellbeing services etc.

Pushing the idea of personal academic journey mapping to give structure to the sessions.

Cost of Living

Exeter have set up a lot of cost-of-living subgroups, which represent Cornwall's perspective, as they are not always considered.

SU has set up a cost-of-living group as well.

Exeter University have done four things:

- 1 million pounds added to hardship fund
- Established a Winter hardship fund

- 2.5
- Matched the PGR stipend increases from UKRI, and are looking to extend that to self-funded PGR students as well
 - Mitigation for short term financial hardship.

Community after Covid

GG is making it a bit more rooted in Cornish culture and keep identity with Falmouth university.

LT Update

Connection through collaboration, getting all groups and institutions working together

Taster sessions, events, themed weeks

Spaces across both campuses

Sensory space on Penryn campus

More standardisation for societies

Support networks between committee members

Society spotlight, starting next week

Redevelop affiliation procedure for societies

Can now happen with 72 hours, currently temporary solution

First activities forum this month

Working with FXplus to help plan their events and make them affordable – promoting as well

Working with sports centre for more flexibility in prices and payment plans.

Cost of living, letters sent to local members of parliament

- 2.6
- All signed NUS letter to chancellor

Planning talk money week to get students to talk more openly about finances

Green committee training complete.

Questions for Presidents

KO

FW attended bystander training and found it good.

CD asked could we make bystander training mandatory for committees.

LT stated Athletics Union at Streatham have made this mandatory.

GG

JS to GG – something that could be helpful for making connections for student activism across campuses and meet equivalent PTOs

Action: MP to speak with Exeter Guild to see about what their roles are and how they would pair.

Student Council want to be on the same page as council on Streatham.

Potential for council members to meet a couple of times a term to discuss projects and progress?

JP – emails about careers fairs happening on Streatham with no time to organise attendance. Would appreciate more access to careers in Streatham.

GG agrees

JP – concerns with using the word hardship when applying for funds – potentially something like ‘access fund’

Presidents agree

KO – fully agrees, more work needs to be done with institutions on use of that word, some groups aware of that issue. Need to offer an alternative.

People aware it is a problem

Currently focussing on pumping more money into it.

RH – is there any budgeting support available?

KO - SU advice team can support and resources available on the website.

Next week is talk money week to break down stigma about talking about money.

RH – where do the resources come from? – KO student mind

3.0 **Matters Arising**

Democracy Review

SU currently undergoing a democracy review of democratic structures and officer roles.

First step happening now, CA to be leading focus groups for Presidents' roles this month to get as much feedback from both universities.

Actual information on handout is information from Board of Trustees

4.0 **Feedback**

RH encouraged other PTOs to talk about what they would like to achieve in your position and what help they might want and that the presidents will be running campaigns that they can support on.

JP –aiming to improve promotion of SU volunteering roles outside of the university.

Currently working with Jedd Kulis (then Activities Coordinator, now Engagement Manager) to help find volunteering opportunities with institutions that are safe and secure for students. Working on creating a checklist of the sorts of opportunities they would like to work with. Aiming to make it more focussed. Supporting with employability

FW – looking at a wider community outlook and promoting different study spaces in Penryn and Falmouth to support students getting out into the community.

Could be listed on SU website of businesses that would support students to work in.

LT – we have had a few local businesses in Falmouth come to the SU to support student spaces in town. Would be happy to work together on that.

TC – looking to do a lot more research into feedback channels at the university and how they can support the marginalised students.

Following up on student consent training – ACTION: MP to follow up with them about VAWG group.

Specifically with Exeter university but want to work with both.

JMy – Talking about communication with students about large disconnect between what the SU is doing and the students. Trying to improve communications since there has been issues with that in the past. Know loads of people that did not know elections were going on, wants to help promote that more.

Up for working with other people on the issues

LC – Reason why I wanted to run for president as was passed over by the SU. Has insight of the students that were missed. Would love to work with JMy.

CD – Strong believer that the way education is delivered needs to be more in tune with how things are in the real world. Want to set up mandatory unconscious bias training for all students at the universities.

RH - Might be another President Inclusivity issue

AC – really interested in increasing communication on changes that are happening to students it is affecting.

Rep system changes are not being communicated back. Want to increase the feedback loop.

RH – Postgrads get a lot of emails that are not emails.

JS – Applied very last minute but due to experience of running campaigns on campus and that there is a disconnect between campuses.

Within manifesto talked about green policies that SUs come up with are very focussed on student behaviour rather than making change at high levels of universities.

Maybe environment and ethics maybe to be separate roles.

Agenda 5.1 – Exeter is under a lot of scrutiny regarding wellbeing of students. Sensitive topics regarding suicide.

Higher than average rate of suicide in last 6 years among Exeter students. Need to put forward more scrutiny to university regarding they are supporting their students in the minute

Need to be able to support students as quickly as possible and with as few barriers as possible.

JP – had a case where they had to access several different teams in order to get help which made things a lot worse.

Organisations working with are having a similar case – universities don't like to act before the court case.

KP – Fxplus have set up a drop-in service and for students where they can get support immediately. Services outlined on attached document – not being communicated enough and by no means a perfect fix.

LC – in terms of how Presidents can help students with this – Presidents meet with Clare Manser monthly to help improve these systems. Any work that PTOs can do and feedback that they have is important for these spaces.

KO – potential for PTOs to come into these changes.

LC – Falmouth keen on improving support to students

JS – is it possible to have a brainstorming session for ideas.

KO – are Wellbeing Opinion Panels still taking place? Action: MP to ask Clare Manser.

This change has come about off the back of wellbeing opinion panels.

JMy – EDI panel that is taking place. JMy feels there should be one place that students can go to relating to Mental Health and then depending on the circumstances it gets forwarded to the right departments

RH – important to have the support easily available for people not at crisis to be easily. Is there potential for a buddy system?

Falmouth have a student mentor system.

Bioscience has peer 2 peer mentors

JS – in times of crisis people do not think straight, needs for immediate support.

For example, buttons in pods to alert people when you are in crisis.

KO – SafeZone has a function for directly contacting someone for support if they need. Could this be implemented for someone in mental health crisis.

JMy – sent an application to accessibility support pre-emptively if he needs it in future. Was not clear which route was correct. Can see how it can be off putting or confusing.

RH – interested PTOs can form a subcommittee

JS – sign that we need to act since so many people in group have experienced troubles.

ALM – Wanting to start rebuilding student awareness of Student Council and Sports Officer after Covid.

Potential collaboration Varsity with Streatham campus Collaborative experience with Streatham campus and Falmouth and Exeter in Cornwall.

GG potentially interested.

Helping people to get out of Cornwall sport-wise

Just came from a meeting talking about FTI final year showcase – in the works now

LC – departments very good at displaying their work internally but should extend beyond these departments – extend to whole student body.

ALM – already have that in the FTI for Christmas, but it does not seem like people are aware of it.

JMy - Opportunity here for working between departments.

5.0 AOB

JS - Two-pound meal campaign, sustainably sources meal for 2 pounds. Ran in Devon.

KO - Presidents aware. Raised it for FXplus and have been told there is nothing they can do. Glad to hear that students are bringing this up as we can show that students care about it as well.

LC - Difficult as commercial services are through FXplus.

Launching our cost-of-living campaign next week with the SU.

Emma is Kira's equivalent at the Guild. We are aware and trying to do something similar.

LT - We do not want to tell students that FXplus have told us no as that will reduce confidence

JS - Fxplus are an awful company to work for as a student staff:

- Cutting shifts
- Underpaying
- Difficulty capturing pay.

One suggestion would be to get in touch with the fxplus unions to and SU could support students to sign up.

Food officer has already been in touch with sabs to raise the food costs issue.

6.0 Next Steps

RH - Autonomous role but please do reach out for support. If you are struggling, please reach out.

Wednesday afternoons work well so RH will liaise with MP to put next meeting in.

MP will send out details of WhatsApp group and advice about balancing workloads.