



Newman Students' Union

NEWMAN STUDENTS' UNION

STUDENT COUNCIL MEETING

The fourth meeting of Student Council was postponed to be held on:

26 January 2012 in the Lecture Theatre at 15.30

The following occurred on 19/01/2012

Minutes

4.1 **WELCOME** – the meeting were welcomed.

In attendance:

Union Chair – Nicholas Kennedy

NSU President – Joshua Clare

NSU Vice President – Sarah Kelly

NSU Societies Officer – Martha Guy

NSU Sports Officer – Sarah Addly

4 students

NSU Development Manger – Rob Balding – Minuting

STUDENT QUESTIONS

Questions are shown in bold

Answers are shown in standard font

Questions submitted in advance via suggestion box:

Why has the printing system changed. It is so long winded and has taken me half an hour to print an assignment. What is going to happen on Dissertation hand in day?

The President explained that changes are due to an update with the swipe/access cards to make it easier in the long run. In the short term an alternative is being worked on. The President has raised issues with the library and they are working on

Agreed as accurate at Student Council Meeting _____



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a fix. In the meantime printers are available elsewhere on campus such as TB and T blocks.

The change to 12 noon as the hand in deadline was questioned and it was also asked what happens if a student is stood in the queue at noon.

The President explained that this change is in preparation for electronic submission. It will mean that when submission changes to electronic the time change will ensure that there are staff about to help any students who may have teething problems with the new system. The name will also be changed from 'deadline' to 'close of submission' to try to highlight that coursework can be submitted at any point before the date rather than at the last minute. With regards to the queue, staff will collect access cards from anyone there at the close and use this to distinguish between those who were there on time and those who were late.

Can the Library close later?

The President explained that the library opening times are being reviewed, however it's up to student to prove that it is required to be open longer. Access to students needs to be balanced against the environmental impact of having such a large space open to users. Security are keeping a record of how many students are asked to leave at closing time. Other computers are available elsewhere on campus later into the night. A student commented that security have informed them of this when they had been asked to leave the building.

It was asked if assignments could be explained at the beginning of a module rather than part way through it to allow more time to work towards them.

The President will re-iterate this to Learning and Teaching Committee, however the meeting were asked to note that improvements and more information is being made available via Moodle.

A student stated that the Library should have been open on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day.

The President stated that this had been suggested too late last year to put forward to the University and that Staff do need to have a holiday. It was also questioned if enough students would use the library if I was open on these days.

When will the Halls Committee meet?



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The Vice President stated that they were organising this to happen in the next two weeks. It has been delayed due to changes in members. An email will be sent with more information. It will cover halls and Newman Houses.

Why has there been little to no advertising for this meeting?

The Chair apologised and stated they had just not done it and will try harder in future.

Why were the minutes and agenda not on the website before the meeting, and if they were why was a link not sent to all students?

The Vice President stated that they had not received these and so had not put anything online. It was stated that the Chair had sent items to the President but these had not been received by the Vice President. This will be improved for the future.

How is the Trustee Board working?

The President explained that meetings are taking place and are relatively short considering the content when compared to other meetings which is good. The Board is working quite well so far. The Executive Trustee (NSU Sports Officer) had nothing further to add and agreed with this comment.

For the Sabbaticals – what are your plans for Semester 2? The Chair put this question to all positions.

President – the main focus will be the Student Charter, this involves working with a group of students to carry out the key work but wants to engage all students. The Charter will set out expectations students have of the University and vice-versa among other things. They also highlighted that the NUS Finance Survey is still running, the aim is to look for a fairer deal for students. By completing the survey students will be entered into a draw for a £500 prize.

Vice-President – will be re-launching the 'I AM A Member' campaign, is organising Go Green Week, also Organising Climate Week with the University as well as FairTrade Fortnight. These all fit in well with the Green Impact. Is also organising Re-Freshers week including Entertainments, Sports, Societies, Healthy Eating and walks around the reservoir.

Societies Officer – Will be working towards getting the Societies websites active with the Vice-President and transferring all societies to a new constitution template.

Sports Officer – Has looked at the results from the Wednesday Afternoon survey and the results have shown that this is not as straightforward as first thought and will



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require further work. Is also working towards Sports Relief Activities and B.I.S.C. (Birmingham Inter-University Sports Competition).

The Academic Officer mentioned in a previous meeting that they were collecting data for a questionnaire about resources. Have you done this? If so, how did you do it and how many students got involved?

The Executive were unable to answer this question on the Officers behalf. The Chair is to put the question to the officer at the next opportunity.

Why has the website not been updated? There are still several missing parts. I hope to see it updated for the New Year.

The Vice President stated that the website has now been updated and is being updated daily. The Societies Officer stated that the Society mini-sites are not done yet and that it not being up to date is not a single persons fault.

Why were students not informed of this meeting earlier? Why was there not an all student email. Is this not the job of the Union Chair?

The Chair stated that they were unable to send all student emails and they rely on Staff/Executive to send them. An email was sent out for this one although it could be done earlier in future. Students commented that the email sent was in italics and was hard to read. The Chair/Vice-President are to ensure future emails are clearer.

Why did one Executive member not attend the Christmas Pat when they were required to?

The Vice President stated that the Officer couldn't afford to.

What is happening about the missing society constitutions?

The Societies Officer stated that they had written a template constitution with the help of a society committee member. All societies will be switching to this template by the end of February, NSU will keep an electronic copy and a hard copy for reference.

Where are the minutes for all the society committee meetings?

The Societies officer stated that there had only been one meeting so far and these minutes have been sent to those who attended. The next meeting is being organised in the next two weeks.

What is happening with the Problems to do with attitude and what did they spend there budget on?



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The Vice President stated that as far as the Executive are aware nothing has been spent inappropriately and any further questions are up to the members to raise at the Societies own Annual General Meeting.

Every single event I have attended in this uni. has been poor. I feel that there hasn't been enough thought put into organising them and it seems that students are not given the opportunity to give ideas for the events. As a 1st year student even I know that freshers was the worst this year from 2nd and 1st year students. Jus because you all had your freshers does not mean you can slack on ours. I feel we have been robbed for our social life.

The Executive suggested students join teams, societies or associations as these student group currently run most union entertainment events. People do try hard and are proud of the events they put on. If these are not suited look at other options. NSU is member led so come in and share views with us so that they can be fully discussed.

Can we invite people who are linked to the library and the project to a meeting. They need to hear students views from the actual students, rather than always form the Executive at university meetings (though this is a good thing).

The President agreed this was a fair point, however students need to help improve attendance to these meetings to make it worth while for project leaders to attend.

Can we have guest speakers at meetings?

The President asked for the sorts of speakers to be clarified although stated that this could be a good idea.

We would like more events for Charity, e.g. meningitis.

It was suggested that students speak to the R.A.G. (Raise and Give) Society Chair as this society runs most NSU Charitable fundraising. The Chair is Fay Richards.

Further questions asked at the meeting:

Are the Library Stairs (outside) safe or unsafe? They keep being closed and then re-opened.

The President stated that the Health and Safety Committee are aware of this. The recent closure was due to the icy weather and no staff being designated to grit them at the weekend. A solution is being organised. The (damaged?) glass is due to be replaced, however as it is custom made this is not a quick process.



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It was asked if the interior Library doors could be opened at weekends as halls students have to walk the long way around the campus.

It was stated that this has already been dealt with.

It was asked if lighting by the 'Kissing Gate' could be improved for when it goes dark.

The President stated that this has been requested however is unlikely to happen due to the location. If students feel unsafe leaving that way the University has suggested asking security to escort them off-campus.

It was stated that there has been cases of lots of work having to be submitted simultaneously (particularly Science).

The President will raise at the appropriate meeting.

It was asked if Executive could spend more time checking their emails for grammar and spelling mistakes. The number of mistakes currently made is unacceptable.

The Executive agreed to do this. The meeting was also notified that further training for emails was due to take place.

Date of the Next Meeting

tbc.

Meeting closes 16:05