

**Durham Students' Union
Assembly Agenda**

Tuesday, 7 February 2017– 19:00, ER201

Time	Subject	Who	Paper
19:00-19:01	A. Welcome	Chair	
19:01-19:03	B. Apologies for absence and Conflicts of interest	Chair	
19:03-19:05	C. Minutes of the meeting on 6 December	Chair	UA/1617/024
Routine Business			
19:05-19:20	D. Update on Officer Work	Student Officers	UA/1617/026
19:20-19:30	E. Update: Champagne Society	President	
19:30-19:40	F. Union Strategy – Presentation	President	
Items for Discussion			
19:40-19:45	G. New Societies Ratification	Chair, Societies Committee	UA/1617/027
19:45-19:55	H. Motion: Policy on Reading Week	Krish Mehta	UA/1617/028
19:55-20:05	I. Motion: Policy for NUS National Conference HE Bill & Widening Participation	Kate McIntosh	UA/1617/029
20:05-20:15	J. Motion: Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free	Harry Cross	UA/1617/030
20:15-20:20	K. Motion: Fossil Fuels	President	UA/1617/031
20:20-20:25	L. Motion: Principles of Student Engagement	President	UA/1617/032
Any Other Business			
20:25-20:40	M. Questions to Officers		
For Your Information			
	N. Board of Trustees – minutes		UA/1617/033

Next meeting will be 9 March 2017, ER201

Agenda closes (so papers must be in) 30 February at 17:00.

Assembly is committed to making its meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. If you consider yourself to have any access or reasonable adjustment needs, please contact the Union President at dsu.president@durham.ac.uk at least 2 days in advance to make arrangements.

Durham Students' Union Assembly Agenda

Tuesday, 6 December 2016– 19:00, CG93

Chair: Andy Corkhill

Observing: Christine Stretesky (Director of Governance and Compliance), Gary Hughes (Chief Executive), Georgina Lambert (Marketing Manager), Mike Potter (Campaigns Coordinator), Shelley McCormack (Director of Engagement).

Apologies: Kieran Laurie, Stella Alexandrova, Craig Bateman.

Welcome

Andy Corkhill welcomed Assembly members to the meeting.

Apologies for absence and Conflicts of interest

The Chair announced that Kieran Laurie, Stella Alexandrova and Craig Bateman have submitted apologies. James Creer declared a conflict of interest as President of the applicant Applied Psychology Society, George Walker declared a conflict of interest as an exec member of the applicant Durham for Accessible Education Society and Anna Greenall declared a conflict of interest as President of the applicant Marxist Society.

Minutes of the last meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2016 were approved.

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2016 were approved.

NUS Delegates Q & A

The NUS Delegates were asked 3 pre-submitted questions.

Annual Policy Review

The Chair of Governance and Grants Committee explained that policies lapse after 2 years. Governance and Grants Committee have reviewed the policies and made recommendations and are now asking Assembly to approve these recommendations.

Harry Cross questioned whether the policies would return to Assembly if amended. Charles Walker confirmed that they would.

Andy Corkhill asked Assembly to vote on the motion.

30 members voted to approve the recommendations.

0 members voted against the recommendations.

1 member abstained from voting.

Update on Officer Work

Alice Dee gave an update on her work as President. James Creer asked for more information regarding the support that the Union will be offering for students transitioning from Queens Campus. Alice Dee explained that this had been difficult as the University has not made all the key decisions that will influence how the Union will support these students but it will be a priority next term.

Lisa Whiting gave an update on her work as Academic Affairs Officer. David Evans asked if Lisa could come to MCR Presidents Committee to give an update, Lisa stated she will. William Waters asked what course reps can do if they are not being supported by their department, Lisa asked William to ask the student to get in touch with her and she would get in touch with the department to log issues and lobby them to better support reps. Harry Cross asked Lisa if she knew from the Vice Chancellor what other universities are doing nationally regarding TEF. Lisa explained that she had not heard anything explicit but feels like universities may not be sharing information due to competition relating to fees. Alice Dee explained that the Vice Chancellor had spoken to other members of the Russell Group.

Kara-Jane Senior gave an update on her work as Activities Officer. Megan Kroll asked whether the questions in the participation and impact survey were general or specific to extra-curricular activities within Durham (eg: Students' Union/Team Durham/Colleges). Kara explained that the survey focusses more on the individual student and they can discuss being involved in any extra-curricular activity.

Jo Gower gave an update on their work as Community Officer. There were no questions.

Adam Jarvis gave an update on his work as Development Officer and also explained about his involvement with the Maiden Castle redevelopment. Megan Croll questioned a comment Adam made regarding it being positive that the redevelopment was supportive of college sports as JCR Presidents' Committee have found it extremely focussed on elite sports. Adam agreed it could be better but it has improved due to the work of the group they both sit on. A student asked whether the additional students from Queen's Campus had been factored into the working group, Adam explained that this was predominantly the reason for the redevelopment.

New Societies Ratification

Thea Burton, the Chair of Societies Committee explained that Societies Committee had proposed to ratify the following societies:

Research

English Law Students Association

Ale appreciation

Parkour Freerunning Society

Queen's Campus Trading and Investment Society (if they remove Queen's Campus from their name)

Field Game Society

The Definite Article

Marxist Society

Gin Society

Informal Political Discussion Society

Buddhist Society

Polish Society

Rugby Supporters Society

Magic

Durham for Accessible Education

Thea that Societies Committee had proposed to reject the following societies:

Applied Psychology Society.

The President of the Law Society spoke against Societies Committees recommendation that the English Law Students Association (ELSA) be ratified on the grounds that it was a duplication of Law Society and could hinder the group receiving sponsorship. Kara-Jane Senior explained that ELSA had existed up as Students' Union society until June when they did not re-ratify in time. There was a discussion regarding cost and membership benefits of each society.

James Creer spoke against the rejection of the Applied Psychology Society as the course was only based at Queen's Campus. Thea explained that the Union regulations state that societies need to be sustainable in the long term which would not be possible when the course stops upon moving to Durham City. James Creer stated that he believed that very few societies operated across both campuses in practice and therefore Applied Psychology should not simply be a subcommittee of the Psychology Society.

Gina Cuomo explained that SwDA members had been confused regarding the use of the term accessible as SwDA members had thought it related to physical accessibility in the name of Durham for Accessible Education.

Tom Harwood questioned ratifying the Marxist Society as it was extremely politically left and questioned whether Assembly would ratify a society that was extremely politically right. Tom explained that previously Assembly had rejected a male human rights society and Students for Britain. Anna Greenall stated that Marxism was a legitimate political belief and does not have dissimilar beliefs to the current Free Market Society.

Andy Corkhill explained that Assembly would vote on Societies Committees recommendations except for ELSA, Applied Psychology, Durham for Accessible Education and Marxist Societies in one go.

29 members voted to approve the recommendations.

1 member voted against the recommendations.

0 members abstained from voting.

The following Societies were ratified as Students' Union Societies:

Research

Ale appreciation

Parkour Freerunning Society

Trading and Investment Society

Field Game Society

The Definite Article

Gin Society

Informal Political Discussion Society

Buddhist Society

Polish Society

Rugby Supporters Society

Magic

Assembly then voted on the ratification of ELSA.

11 members voted to approve the group.

15 members voted to not ratify the group.

3 members abstained from voting.

English Law Students Association was therefore not ratified as a Students' Union Society.

Assembly then voted on the ratification of Applied Psychology Society:

21 members voted to approve the group.

5 members voted to not ratify the group.

2 members abstained from voting.

Applied Psychology was ratified as a Students' Union Society.

Assembly then voted on the ratification of Marxist Society.

21 members voted to approve the group.

4 members voted to not ratify the group.

5 members abstained from voting.

Marxist Society was ratified as a Students' Union Society.

Two members of the exec for Durham for Accessible Education stated they are happy to change their name to reflect financial accessibility.

Assembly then voted on the ratification of Durham for Accessible Education.

30 members voted to approve the group.

0 members voted to not ratify the group.

0 members abstained from voting.

Durham for Accessible Education was ratified as a Students' Union Society.

Ratification of Grants

Charles Walker explained that Governance and Grants Committee had received 85 applications and that they had made recommendations to allocate ordinary grants.

Assembly unanimously voted to accept Governance and Grants Committees recommendations.

Proposed Officer Restructure

Alice Dee explained the rationale for the report. Andy Corkhill asked if there were any points of clarity. James Creer asked when the recommendations would take effect; Alice Dee explained that if it is approved by the Trustee Board and by the University that the recommendations would take place for the elections held in February 2017.

Harry Cross asked why the proposal for a postgraduate role only covered an academic remit and whether this would cover workers' rights. Alice explained that the whole officer team would be involved in that but it would be led by policy and the priorities of the officers. A student asked which Academic Officer would do the work that was mandated in the TEF policy last Assembly, Alice explained that both officers would work on it.

David Evans said that although MCR Presidents do not explicitly work on academic issues, he asked should the postgraduate academic officer be the lead contact for middle common rooms. Alice stated that as common rooms are not academic bodies, it was best to remain with the President but stated that middle common room presidents will be a key stakeholder group for the Postgraduate Academic Officer.

David Evans questioned the start time of a Postgraduate Officer and when they would start. The Union's Chief Executive, Gary Hughes explained that the Chief Executive legally can negotiate a start time with the post holder.

Andy Corkhill asked if any members of Assembly wished to speak against the proposal. Adam Jarvis stated he believed that Student Officers should directly represent all students and the Postgraduate Academic Officer would only represent around 21% of the student population. Lisa Whiting responded saying that despite having two of her objectives being postgraduate related, this would not necessarily always be the case. Megan Croll stated that postgraduate students have very different needs to undergraduate students and only a postgraduate would understand these. Thom Addinall-Biddulph stated that the Union previously had part time officers and the last one to be removed was the postgraduate officer and whilst it was great that Lisa was choosing to focus on Postgraduate issues, a solution needed to be sustainable.

William Waters stated that some students did not like the term 'liberation' in the title of Welfare and Liberation Officer and would prefer 'equality'. Ted Lavis Coward stated that service users of the associations have a preference for the term liberation. Harry Cross queried if only members of liberation groups could vote for the Welfare and Liberation Officer. Christine Stretesky explained that the education act states that all members of a Students' Union have to be eligible to vote in an election for a Student Officer.

29 members voted to approve the recommendations of the report.

1 members voted to reject the recommendations of the report.

0 members abstained from voting.

Nightline Update

Jo Gower explained that Nightline would be moving to the Union in January. Rosa Tallack stated that they felt they would be better supported by the Union than the DSO framework.

Any Other Business

William Waters asked Jo Gower whether the structure of Environmental and Citizenship Committee should change as there were more candidates than places for the open places but only one for the Political and Causes Societies. Jo stated that she was open to change and that Will should speak to a member of Governance Staff or submit a motion to make this change for future years.

Meghan Hosch asked Alice Dee for an update on the post applicant visit day. Alice stated that JCR Presidents were leading on this.

#	Andy Corkhill	Chair	
1	Alice Dee	President	
2	Kara-Jane Senior	Activities	
3	Lisa Whiting	Academic Affairs	
4	Adam Jarvis	Development	
5	Jo Gower	Community	
6	Adeline Chow	ISA	
7	Ted Coward	LGBT+a	
8	Courtney Cliffe	SwDA	
9	James Colville	Mature Students Association	
10	Iris Lang	People of Colour Association	
11	Anna Greenall	Academic Affairs Committee	
12	Thea Burton	Societies Committee	
13	Tom Channon for Megan Croll	JCR PresComm	
14	Bethany Fleming	DUCK Exec	
15	David Evans for Abi Sted	MCR PresComm	
16	Charles Walker	Governance and Grants	
17	VACANT	Environmental & Citizenship	
18	Rosa Tallack	WEDComm	
19	Craig Bateman	Media Rep	
20	Megan Croll for Mitchell Langcaster-James	St. Cuthberts	
21	Thomas Addinall-Biddulph	Ustinov	
22	Will Waters	St John's	
23	George Walker	Van Mildert	
24	Tom Harwood	St Mary's	
25	Harriet Barsham	St. Chad's	
26	Nicola Tweedy	Grey	
27	Meghan Hosch	Hatfield	
28	Jazz Beard for Kennedy Round	John Snow	
29	Luke Hollander	St Aidan's	
30	Chris Waters	Collingwood	
31	Kieran Laurie	St Hild & St Bede	
32	Laura Doherty	University College	
33	James Creer	Stephenson	
34	Stella Elena Alexandrova	Trevelyan	
35	Rachel Meyer	Josephine Butler	
36	Harry Cross	Open Position	
37	Johan Seidenfaden	Open Position	
38	Dominic Birch	Open Position	
39	VACANT	Open Position (freshers)	
40	Dominic Robson	UG Academic Rep	
41	Hannah Britt	PGR Academic Rep	
42	VACANT	PGT Academic Rep	
Attended	Sent Apologies	No Attendance or Apologies	Not in post

President, Alice Dee

Plan of Work update

Priority One: <i>I will make sure College Students' Union Reps play a key role in shaping Durham SU because I understand the importance of Colleges in our time at Durham and it's so important that we work better with your reps.</i>		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
Establishment of a regular meeting with College Union Reps.	Next meeting is in place and key discussion will focus on a draft of the 'College Union Rep' role' description	We now need to establish purpose and direction for regular meetings.
Developing the definition of role 'College Union Rep'	First draft of the 'College Union Rep' role complete and has been circulated to College Union Reps.	Discussion and critiquing of description at next meeting.
SU Staff support for Colleges	After a change of staff roles, our new Campaigns Coordinator role has taken on support of College Union Reps. This is the first time that the Union Reps will have a named staff contact within the Students' Union. Staff member will be first point of call for queries about events, projects and campaigns within the Union and is developing communications strategy to ensure effective two way communication between college reps and the Union.	Communications plan to be presented to the Union Reps for comment and will then be implemented based on suggested changes.
Establish projects requiring College Union Rep input	When discussing the role, College reps agreed that they would be utilised fully if given responsibility for specific projects. I feel the SU would benefit from engaging in this wider group of students, so intend progress this suggestion.	Involve College representatives in wider College and SU based projects, such as consultation on accommodation fees.

Priority Two: <i>I will insure as many students as possible are involving in making decisions about things that affect them. We're entering a big time of change in Durham and it's vital that we, as a student body, help shape what's going on around us.</i>		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
The focus group met with the University, to discuss and critique the drafted framework of standardised consultation.	The framework was largely met with a positive response, with some suggested changes and room for extensions.	Implement suggested changes.

Trial the framework using an example topic	The hope is that we can trial the process using a proposed change that has a relatively moderate level of impact on students.	Review the success of this process and adapt the framework to accommodate any changes as a result of the process.
Ensure these processes are adopted as standard for University projects going forwards.	This may be tricky as it requires a culture change in prioritising student views. However, we have the support of key members of the UEC for this.	Pass the framework through the relevant University governance structures and communicate the changes.

Priority Three: *I will make sure Queen's Campus students keep benefiting from the best student experience possible. Because in the lead up to and during the move of Queen's up to Durham, we need to make sure that student priorities are the focus of decisions and that Queen's students are welcomed to Durham.*

Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
QC Transition group membership	I now attend the main transition group meeting.	Eventually present proposals to group.
Support for Students in the School of Medicine Pharmacy and Health	Update website with information for students, arrange meetings between Newcastle and key leads in Queens.	Monitor support for students.
Meet with JCR Presidents and College Union Reps to discuss changes and affects to Common Rooms	Mainly to discuss the details and timelines of the transition process and establish the issues this will cause Queens students.	Work to address issues and lobby University for support.
Involved with the 'bid' process for the building of new Colleges on the Mount Oswald site	Process enabled key students to be present and for us to ensure that the designs for new Colleges suitably meet the needs of our students.	

Other actions and meetings		
Activity	Officer comment	Change made for students
University strategy meetings	Still ongoing and taking up time...	Keeping student views a priority during development and implementation of new strategy.
NUS Governance review	I reviewed and submitted queries and concerns about the NUS governance review, to be voted on at national conference. The SU also submitted an organisational response.	Improving NUS and reforming their governance is a key priority to ensure that the NUS works for us.
SU strategy	Development of the SU strategy for the next 3 years is beginning. It's going to be	Strategic direction for the SU to enable our organisation to support and benefits its'

	exciting! Make sure you have your say.	members further.
Champagne Society	The Winter Ball went well and enjoyed by students. The Police are happy with the steps we have taken to ensure student safety.	
PVC induction	A very positive full-day induction held with both of the new members of UEC	Ensuring that figures at the highest levels of DU leadership prioritised students and their needs.
Accommodation fees	Establish a process to engage key student leaders to discuss and present options to the University.	Maintaining pressure on the University to make College accommodation more accessible.
North-East Policy conference	Hosted other SUs from the NE (first time this has happened!) to discuss issues, how we can work together and policy ideas for National debate	Ensuring issues relevant to our students are influencing the national agenda.
Substituting for the Community Officer	Unfortunately Jo has been ill so I've been covering for a few meetings and making a few necessary calls on her behalf.	Keeping a student presence discussions around issues affecting our members.
Trying to be more of an adult and completed dry January	I thought you might like to know this.	I'm more responsible?
Elections cycle	Meeting with potential candidates about running for elections	Ensuring the SU and students have (another) strong officer team to lead next year.
Work with SCR Bede Sixth Form, Stockton	Met and working with a local sixth form to establish their student council.	Supporting our local partners and involving local young students in engaging with student politics.
Dunelm House Media Coverage	Lots of media coverage about the University's decision to apply for Certificate of Immunity from Listing for the building. Produced a statement, met with campaigners, architects and media about the proposals.	Ensuring that the media coverage is accurate and that students are aware of the developments.

Academic Affairs Officer: Lisa Whiting

Priority One: Develop, implement and review the new undergraduate course rep system		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping out processes so course reps are fully supported Recruiting for an "Education Policy Co-ordinator" who will be responsible for supporting course representatives Working with the Academic Support Office to review elections in every department Organising focus groups so course reps can be more involved in the development of the University's Education Strategy Planning next Academic Forum 	<p>I feel like the project is progressing well and after departments review the running of this year's elections I'll be able to identify the remaining problem areas. With the new Education Policy Coordinator being recruited I believe next year the system will be properly supported both internally and within the University. I'm also looking forward to running course rep focus groups so more students can be involved in the strategic side of the University.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse department feedback and identify areas to develop Run focus groups and plan future topics Academic Forum

Priority Two: Research and develop a new system for postgraduate representation		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Deputy Heads of Faculty (Postgraduate) to discuss draft proposals for postgraduate representation Planning and preparing for new Postgraduate Academic Officer through an audit of current officer committee positions and where they would be most useful Met with potential PG Academic Officer candidates to talk them through new role and structure 	<p>I'm very happy with how the PG representation work is progressing with thanks to Hannah for all her hard work drafting the proposals. We still need to establish any distinctions between PGT and PGR elections within A&H and SS&H faculties before the final proposals go to FECs but this should be done in the upcoming meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Deputy Heads of Faculty Proposals to FECs and Education Committee Establish Union staff support for PG officer and reps

Priority Three: Reinforce and promote the rights of PGR students		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the PGR Faculty Reps to collect contracts Talking to PGRs who have had particularly bad experiences Planning focus group for broader discussion of issues facing postgraduates who teach 	<p>After speaking to PGR students about the wide range of issues they've faced during their PhD, I'm beginning to realise these issues will not all be solved during my time as an officer. So I'm building up a strong evidence base focussing on PGR pay, with a hope that the future PG Officers will look into the other areas when they come into office.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish analysing and comparing contracts Hold focus group and analyse feedback Conduct interviews to create case studies Present report to the relevant members of the University

Other actions and meetings		
Activity	Officer comment	Change made for students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PVC (Education) induction Eating space in the library <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Planning pilot for eating space in foyer Putting together business case for longer term eating space solution Recruiting candidates for elections Teaching & Learning facility design visits and consultation meetings TEF submission working group Widening participation focus group and workshop Lecture capture business case going to UEC Developing academic strand of SU strategy Met with Master and Vice-Master with Grey to discuss accessibility Revisiting anonymous marking 	<p>There have been a lot of additional projects due to TEF, new PVC and the T&L build as well as things I know students still care about such as lecture capture and eating space in the library so I've been trying to balance time between them. The consultation on the new T&L building has been poor and I'm pushing for more on that. Discussions on widening participation in light of TEF are going well with an upcoming workshop to establish current confines of access agreement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a good relationship with new PVC (Education) which will lead to clearer lines of communication from students and future Academic Officers There will be a pilot of eating space in the foyer of the library even if I have to clean the library myself More consultation on T&L building so the building will genuinely meet the needs of students. Started with Mary's but still more needs to be done.

Activities Officer - Kara-Jane Senior

Plan of Work update

Priority One: I will show how participation in student activities benefits and improves students' experience at Durham, because this research will enable students, employers and wider society to understand the importance of our work.		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation survey has closed. We had over 1000 students fill it in. Data is currently being analysed. 	<p>This project will consist of two student surveys; the first looking at participation in student groups, and the second on the impact of participation in student groups. The data from these surveys will enable us to better understand students' habits and interests outside academia, and could be used as evidence in campaigning for more support (including financially) for student activities. This piece of work will be very useful for the Opportunities Officer next year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile a report of our findings from the survey. Data will be shared with other interested parties, including Experience Durham. Design the impact survey.

Priority Two: I will make Durham SU processes easier for student groups, because our most dedicated volunteers deserve our best efforts to make their work hassle-free, and rewarding.		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed the New Society application process, to make it smoother and clearer both internally & externally. Reviewing the support given to groups applying for grants. Working with Societies Committee to improve AGM & Handovers, and financial processes. 	<p>This project will focus on making student group processes more efficient and easier for students.</p> <p>Major student group processes will be reviewed and a Student Group 'Business Cycle' created for clarity internally and externally. Other processes are being continuously looked at and improved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update guidance for students online (new society applications & grants). Review re-registration process for societies.

Priority Three: I will make sure Durham SU supports all student groups to provide outstanding experiences for their members, because we need to assure basic standards and celebrate outstanding achievements in one, simple, process.		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing the Student Group Regulations. Researched society schemes at other students' unions. 	<p>This project seeks to implement a quality societies scheme, to support execs and ensure a minimum standard experience for students regardless of group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present research to Societies Forum for societies to pick out what elements they like and don't like. Draft up the Quality Societies Scheme using feedback from Societies Forum.




Other actions and meetings		
Activity	Officer comment	Change made for students
Lessons From Auschwitz – Holocaust Memorial Day [27/01/2017]	After taking part in the Holocaust Educational Trust's Lessons From Auschwitz programme I wrote a few articles about my experience, and we promoted awareness of Holocaust Memorial Day.	We want to make our University as inclusive and safe as possible. With everything going on in the world at the moment, this is highly relevant to students that face oppression and prejudice both within and outside the University community.
Refreshers Fair [18/01/2017]	We hosted a joint event with Experience Durham, giving students another chance to find out about the range of opportunities they can get involved with. The event went well and we'd look to repeat it in future.	This was a good chance for our newest societies to promote themselves in person, as they would not have been at the Union Fair in October. It also promoted to students that it's never too late to join a group or start something new.
New PVCs induction [18/01/2017]	The new Pro-Vice Chancellors for Education, and for Colleges and Student Experience, started in the New Year. This day was an opportunity for the Officer team to meet with them to inform them about the Students' Union, student life, and our priorities at the moment. The Development Officer and I spoke to the PVC Colleges and Education more in-depth about the wider student experience at Durham, and I gave both PVCs a tour of the Students' Union, emphasising the importance of facilities for our student activities.	A good working relationship between the Officer team and senior staff within the University is important to ensuring that students' views are heard at the highest levels, and that there is a heightened understanding of students' experiences within the University executive.
North East SUs Policy session [19/01/2017]	Officers and staff from Newcastle, Northumbria and Teeside SUs joined with some Durham SU officers, NUS delegates and Association reps to discuss things we could work together on (including student opportunities).	Joining up with other SUs makes our voices stronger nationally. The project ideas and policies discussed would have a positive impact on all aspects of student life.
Board of Trustees [25/01/2017]	At this meeting we had a workshop to help develop Durham SU's new strategy, looking at what our mission, vision and values should be.	It's essential that the Students' Union has clear objectives that align with what students need from us both today and in five years' time. An effective students' union is of major benefit to its members (students).
Meetings with student groups	I have discussed a range of issues with various SU student groups.	Improved experience for our groups, ensuring they are in the position they want to be and are well supported.
Active citizenship	Exploring ways to encourage students to be 'active citizens' (getting involved in the community), and looking at how we can better work with Student Community Action (SCA).	Opportunities for students to learn and develop skills in different ways that interest them, as well as contributing positively to the community.
Other general officer things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officer team meeting with the VC. Attending student events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to PVCs above. Ensuring students know who I am, and finding out more about students' thoughts and interests.

You can keep up with what I'm doing day-today by following me on Twitter ([@durhamSUact](https://twitter.com/durhamSUact)) or adding me on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DurhamSUact).



Adam Jarvis - Development Officer

Objectives 2016 – 2017




Priority 1: #WorkInsights

	Project Progress	Officer Comment	Next Steps
	Results from Employability and Skills survey have been collated and reviewed.	The results, from a diverse range of sectors, have provided a really useful insight into desirable graduate qualities.	Planning informational campaign and working with University to establish what is/can be offered to help students develop these skills.
	Identifying businesses which are willing and able to offer Work Insight placements.	Through the Employability and Skills research and other links, I've already established a number of willing participants.	Continue to identify employers who are able to offer placements with an aim to launch in time for the Easter and Summer holidays.
	Working with History Society to set up a Careers Insight event which covers a greater range of career options.	I'm really excited for this event on Wednesday 22 February since it is something we haven't tried or done before.	Reviewing the event to establish best practice moving forward.





Priority 2: #SupportingDUCK

	Project Progress	Officer Comment	Next Steps
	I've met with members of the DUCK exec and our finance team to better work out how to improve internal financial processes.	This was a really positive meeting and is the start of looking at the ways in which staff members work with DUCK.	Continuing to review the staff support for DUCK and the handover booklet to cover new roles and processes.
	Working with an external charity to secure a preliminary match funding agreement.	This will really benefit DUCK, both financially and with the expertise that the charity can offer in terms of development.	The contract is to be reviewed at Audit and Risk Committee and I'm also looking to help DUCK develop a long-term strategy.

Priority 3: #SupportingCommonRooms

	Project Progress	Officer Comment	Next Steps
	College Drop-Ins have continued this calendar year and will be continuing throughout Epiphany.	It's been really useful going out to the colleges to talk to students about their experiences and helping advertise our activities.	Continue drop ins whilst reviewing them to make improvements for the next two terms and next year.
	Reviewing both the training programmes we offer to common rooms, and training feedbacks to establish best practice.	This is starting now to allow enough time to develop material based on what students say would have been useful to them.	Working with the University and a number of common rooms to establish what we can offer that actually helps students.
	Regular meetings with Union reps are continuing and are being embedded as standard practice within the Students' Union.	These have been going well and building a positive relationship and strong communication channel with the colleges.	Work is underway to review the purpose of and support for Union reps.

Other Projects

Leadership Development Programmes	Learning and Development Webpage	Alcohol Behaviour Intervention Training	Maiden Castle Sports Park Development
			

TO: Assembly
FROM: Societies Committee
RE: New Society Ratification
DATE: 7 February 2017

The Union has received several applications for new societies. Societies Committee has met and makes the following recommendations:

Society	Description	Aims	Recommendation from Societies Committee
Pakistan society	<p>The Durham University Pakistan society (DUPAS) are a multifaceted group of students who believe in promoting Pakistani culture & facilitate Pakistani's currently pursuing education at Durham University. DUPAS will provide a platform of cultural exchange, social networking & numerous activities for current & prospective students, at Durham University.</p> <p>Meetings & events will be held throughout the year which will consist of Iqbal day, talks by notable Pakistani's, qawwali night, Eid, PSL screening & numerous other activities.. Furthermore there will be events in which Pakistani music & cuisine will be showcased. Food served on these events will be halal.</p> <p>Lastly any student who wants to taste new food, listen to nice music & make friends is more than welcome to join & come to our events.</p>	<p>The Pakistan student society will act as a platform & will provide a sense of belonging to every Pakistani pursuing higher education at Durham University.</p> <p>The society will showcase Pakistani culture & bridge the gap between ourselves & students of other nationalities. This will allow us to not only showcase culture but also remove misconception's.</p> <p>All activities carried out by the society will be in accordance with the rules & regulations set out by Durham University.</p> <p>Through networking events arranged by the society it will allow Durham students to get information on developments relating to Pakistan. Talks arranged by Pakistani student society will allow a positive image to be generated in Pakistan about Durham university & will make Durham alumni a popular target in the Pakistan job market.</p> <p>It will allow students in Stockton & Durham to enjoy authentic Pakistani food without having to go to Newcastle.</p> <p>DUPAS will provide guidance to members in adapting to life at Durham University.</p> <p>Create opportunities for members to explore North East of England & Scotland.</p> <p>To make members become proactive & operate the society on a financial sustainable basis.</p>	Ratify

Friends of Fiji	The Friends of Fiji society is an opportunity to spend 4 weeks in the heart of Fiji teaching and living in a remote Fijian village. The expedition will challenge you in ways you could never imagine, promoting your initiative, teamwork and leadership skills as you partake in a remote way of living and endurance activities. During the day you will be a teaching assistant in the local village school, after school a sports coach whilst in the evenings you will have the pleasure of trying traditional Fijian customs such as “Grog” and learning the Meke. This is a unique opportunity which works in accordance with the Fijian Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Fiji National Sports Commission, to offer tailored classroom support, introduce new sports and to ensure sustainable development in Fiji. Not to mention, it also looks brilliant on your CV!	Offer opportunities to Durham students to meet new people, explore and appreciate the remote areas of the South Pacific Islands Enable Durham students to challenge themselves as they take on a new way of living and in doing so, develop initiative, teamwork and leadership skills through remote living and endurance team activities. Such traits are prerequisites in any form of employment following university. Investing in Fiji's younger generation by increasing their opportunities and facilitating access to improved infrastructure, education, training and support.	Ratify
Bangla Society	Welcoming all Bengalis and non-Bengalis alike to come together to celebrate and learn about Begali culture.	The society aims to bring all Bengali students together, allow them to celebrate Bengali traditional events, dinners, spend time with one another and also organize occasional cultural programs. The perfect society to socialise and	Ratify
Mixed Martial Arts	Devoted to providing Durham students training and practice in Mixed Martial Arts.	To train Durham students in the sport of Mixed Martial Arts and to provide a safe environment in which to develop skills and ability relating to Mixed Martial Arts.	Ratify

TO: Assembly
FROM: Governance Team
RE: Motions
DATE: 27 January 2017

The following motions have been submitted to Assembly for consideration and debate:

- Policy on Reading Week – Kirsh Mehta
- NUS Conference submission (Ensuring Equality of Opportunity in the HE Bill) – Kate McIntosh
- Keeping Wednesday Afternoons Free – Harry Cross
- Principles of Student Engagement – Alice Dee
- Fossil Free – Alice Dee

Each Motion will be taken in term for consideration and debate. As a reminder, debates on motions shall normally follow this order:

- member proposing the motion;
- requests for clarification from members of Assembly;
- member opposing the motion;
- alternating members of Assembly proposing and opposing the motion;
- members with general comments on the motion;
- summation by the opposition;
- summation by the proposer.

Additionally, amendments shall be debated after the first proposition speech and in the same order outlined above. The first proposition speech and the first opposition speech shall be of no more than three minutes' duration. Other speeches shall be of no more than two minutes duration. The Chair shall have the right to restrict the number of speeches in favour of or opposed to the motion if no new material is being introduced to the debate.

If the majority of Assembly vote for a motion, it will become policy of Durham Students' Union with exception of the motion for NUS Conference submission which, if passed, will be submitted to NUS Conference on behalf of Durham Students' Union. NUS regulations dictate that any policy submitted to NUS National Conference must first be submitted to a Union's democratic decision making body.

Major amendments to any proposed policy must be submitted in writing to dsu.governance@durham.ac.uk no later than 17:00 on Thursday 2 February. Major amendments will be circulated via email before the meeting. Minor amendments can be made during Assembly at the discretion of the chair.

Proposer: Krish Mehta

Assembly Notes:

1. That Durham University is part of the elite Russell group universities, with a strong focus on student satisfaction and high performance, and is one of the best universities in the country.
2. That, in order to maintain the high academic performance and student satisfaction, many top Russell group universities, such as Imperial College London, University College London, London School of Economics and Political Science, University of Manchester, Queen Mary University of London, and University of Exeter, amongst others, employ "Reading Weeks" in term-time. These weeks provide a much-needed week without lectures and seminars (i.e. A non-teaching week) in the middle of term to help students catch up on essential reading, complete their assignments, perform better, and de-stress and enjoy their university experience.
3. In 2015, a University of Cambridge group called the Cambridge Defend Education (CDE) carried out a campaign titled "End Week 5 Blues". Daisy Hughes explains this Cambridge concept of Week 5 Blues in her article in the Huffington Post as "a pithy way of saying we have institutionalised the mental health issues and tiredness that accumulate for most students over the first four weeks of term and which everyone accepts make the fifth week of term really, really hard."
4. That currently the University is looking to review the academic year structure and may later look to semesterise which would increase the length of terms

Assembly Believes:

1. That Durham University students feel like they are encouraged a kind of rush mentality whereby handing in anything, as long as it meets a deadline, is acceptable, whereas they would rather take the time to make a piece of work really good.
2. That Durham University students can perform to the best of their abilities, as well as de-stress and cope better with University life, if they aren't under-slept and over-worked. If reading weeks are employed then students will have the opportunity to catch up on much needed rest, work better on their course, release stress and have the chance to enjoy university life better.
3. Reading weeks could help reduce mental ill health and wellbeing issues and this is important in the context of growing numbers of students presenting to the Counselling Service with anxiety (cases rose from 186 in 2012-2013 to 444 in 2014-2015).
4. That currently, the English department is the only department in Durham University to employ reading weeks and that certain departments, such as Psychology, may require reading weeks to deal with the high work-load, whereas others might not. For this reason, it would be beneficial for the University to understand how reading weeks might benefit students and in which Departments it might be considered best practice.

Assembly Resolves:

1. To mandate the Academic Affairs Officer to work with Faculty and Course Reps to garner student voices/views to establish if there is need for reading weeks in different Departments.
2. To mandate Academic Affairs Committee to lobby the University to: 1. commission a piece of work on reading weeks, which explores best practice within the Russell Group and wider HE sector; and 2. conduct a consultation with Departments and Support Services to establish the potential benefits, costs, feasibilities and implications of making reading weeks best practice across the most relevant Departments.
3. To mandate Academic Affairs Committee to advocate for this policy in discussions relating to the academic year.

Proposer: Kate McIntosh

Durham Students' Union Notes

1. That NUS National Conference is taking place on 25-27 April, with motions deadline on 28 February. As a member, Durham Students' Union can submit up to 1400 words, with no single motion being more than 600 words.

Durham Students' Union Believes

1. That the attached motion is in line with our current policies, is necessary and is 321 words long.

Durham Students' Union Resolves

1. To send the attached motion (HE Bill & Widening Participation) to NUS National Conference 2017.

Conference believes:

1. Introduction of banded tuition fee limits for HE institutions (based on assessment by the teaching excellence framework) would actively discourage applications to the highest rated HE institutions by students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds
2. The HE Bill in its current form fails to comprehensively address the need to ensure equality of opportunity in admissions to HE institutions
3. There are currently no clear government plans to ensure that students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are equally as likely as their counterparts to apply to the highest rated HE institutions

Conference further believes:

1. Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds would be less likely to preference the highest rated and most expensive HE institutions, despite the provision of tuition fee loans, because the prospect of higher debt as a result of attendance at a higher rated institution remains unfavourable
2. The HE Bill will as a result cause an increasing disparity of economic background across higher education
3. The HE Bill will be a hindrance to equality of opportunity in higher education unless these contradictions are comprehensively addressed

Conference resolves:

1. To campaign against the HE Bill on the grounds that it fails to ensure of equality of opportunity
2. To lobby MPs to vote against the HE Bill on these grounds
3. To provide members with information about how the HE Bill will affect them, and information about how to contact their MP to feedback
4. To support an amendment to the HE Bill which places the burden of responsibility for the proportionate representation of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds with the government
5. To support an amendment to the HE Bill which commits the government to providing more detailed criteria for what constitutes equality of opportunity
6. To support an amendment to the HE Bill which commits the government to partially funding tuition in order to equalise tuition fees across the price bandings, for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds

Motion: Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free

Durham Students' Union notes:

1. That free Wednesday afternoons enables sports teams and student groups to organise a range of important activities
2. Nationally, Universities are increasingly expanding teaching hours into Wednesday afternoons as they expand student numbers without increasing staff numbers or lecture space at the same rate
3. Departments in Durham are already scheduling teaching hours on Wednesday afternoons at later times than they did previously due to the pressures of increasing student numbers
4. Durham University plans to expand student numbers by 4,000 over the next ten years.

Durham Students' Union believes:

1. That the proposed expansion of student numbers in the University estate master plan will increase pressure in Durham to expanding teaching hours into Wednesday afternoons.
2. That free Wednesday afternoons are important in empowering students to take part in sport, politics, activism, volunteering, art, learning and other student-led activities.

Durham Students' Union resolves:

1. To express its support for NUS national policy to Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free
2. For the Activities Officer to establish a working group consisting of the Academic Affairs Officer, Student Groups and Academic Representatives to campaign to 'Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free'
3. To mandate this working group to:
 - a. Collect evidence regarding the importance of free Wednesday afternoons for students at Durham University
 - b. To allow this working group to communicate with the executives of student groups and sports teams to this end
 - c. Seek from the University a time-specific guarantee that it will keep Wednesday afternoons free

TO: Assembly
FROM: Alice Dee, President
RE: Annual Policy Review – progress made
DATE: 27 January 2017

Background

At the 6 December 2016 Assembly, you agreed to refer the below policies to the President. Having reviewed both policies, the President recommends the following:

Policy	Recommendation
Fossil Free	Renew – a University-wide 'Divestment Commission' is currently progressing based on this policy. A decision will be taken in June, so it's important we keep this policy live whilst the topic is reviewed.
Principles of student engagement	Renew – this is a document of high level principles agreeing how the University will consult and engage with students. These principles are currently being developed into a practical actions (see my priority updates) but it's important that we keep this policy live as an ongoing commitment to ensuring University engagement with students.

The policies in question are attached hereto.

Action to be taken/Recommendations

Discuss and debate if necessary, and adopt both policies.

Approved by Assembly:

Assembly notes:

1. Freedom of Information requests have revealed that the university to not keep their quarterly periodic reports of investments. It is highly likely that the University invests in fossil fuel companies.
2. In their 2010-2020 strategic plan, Durham University state they wish to be 'widely regarded as a university at the forefront of environment sustainability'
3. The world's 200 largest fossil fuel companies, by proven carbon reserves are well in excess of the amount of carbon that can be safely burned to have a chance of staying below 2C of global warming
4. CarbonTracker's Unburnable Carbon 2013[\[1\]](#) report which highlights the overvaluation of fossil fuel reserves and the huge financial risks of investing in fossil fuels.
5. That People & Planet, in partnership with 350.org and others, has launched a Fossil Free UK campaign, calling on UK higher education institutions to divest from fossil fuels and sever their links with these companies.[\[2\]](#)
6. Glasgow University and the University of Bedfordshire have agreed to divest from fossil fuels for both moral and financial reasons.[\[3\]](#)

Assembly Believes:

1. That we are running out of time to keep global warming below 2C above pre-industrial levels- the limit for ensuring a safe and stable future for the economy, the planet and all people on it, as recently outlined in the IPCC's 5th Assessment Report.[\[4\]](#)
2. That the fossil fuel industry, by extracting, processing, promoting and facilitating the use of, selling and profiting from fossil fuels, as well as by having a major influence on government policy, is complicit in causing climate change and its catastrophic impacts.
3. That we must do everything in our power to rapidly reduce the global use of fossil fuels and expand clean energy alternatives
4. That our university should be a role model in society, acting responsibly and helping create a safe future that is better for everyone.

Assembly Resolves:

1. To mandate the Ethical and Environmental Committee to coordinate and put resources toward a high-profile Fossil Free campaign around fossil fuel divestment on campus, including the dissemination of information about Durham University's investments and the companies it invests in.
2. To mandate the President to request updates of the university's investment portfolio and to share them with Ethical and Environmental committee.
3. For the President to lobby the university to work toward ending all future investments in fossil fuel companies and to divest from fossil fuel industry companies.
4. For the President to lobby the university to make a public commitment to divesting from fossil fuels.
5. To mandate the Student Officers and Ethical and Environmental Committee to actively work with Durham University People & Planet Society and other external organisations involved in fossil fuel divestment and related campaigns.

Principles of student engagement policy**Approved by Assembly: 29/10/2014****Assembly notes:**

1. That Assembly approved the Principles of Student Engagement last year
2. A series of subsequent meetings with the university led to some minor amendments to the principles that was felt were in keeping with the document:
 - a. It was suggested that student engagement is a two-way conversation and that the principles should show clearly that both staff and students have responsibilities in the process. Although this is implied throughout, for the avoidance of doubt the following has been appended to point 3: “of both staff and students”
 - b. One of the key principles is that student engagement applies across the whole university. While the Union is the central organisation for the representation of students, we felt it was important to explicitly mention the common rooms as key drivers for engagement. Point 4 has been amended to include: “as well as the Union and common rooms”.
 - c. Point 8 outlines the purpose of engagement and feedback. The results of such experiences may not be agreed by all parties, which is recognised by the inclusion of the following: “staff and students shall recognise the legitimacy of honest and polite disagreement”.
3. That University Senate has approved the changes outlined

Assembly resolves:

1. To approve the final Principles of Student Engagement set out in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1*Introduction*

1. Students and staff work in partnership to co-create Durham’s distinctive educational environment. Through effective student engagement in partnership with Durham Students’ Union, the University shall continue to enhance its provision, ensure a collegial and respectful environment based on mutual responsibilities of both staff and students, and develop our students’ skills and qualities.
2. Durham University’s Education Strategy is committed to ensuring that all members of the University work “together as an academic community committed to educational excellence and a culture of reflective practice”, and “a student-

centred approach to education”, where “students are inducted into academic communities of practice at the same time that they develop the intellectual and personal qualities that will prepare them for their future lives and employment.”

3. Durham Students’ Union is committed to being “an enabling students’ union which develops and supports our students as they strive to create a lasting, positive impact in society and in their own lives through their university experience.” The University shall develop an effective partnership with the Union, which is the representative body of all Durham students.
4. The following principles shall apply to student engagement across the University, including, but not limited to, academic departments, colleges, and professional support services, as well as the Union and common rooms.

Guiding Principles

1. Either directly, or through their representatives, students shall be engaged in a meaningful manner in decision-making processes related to the student experience.
2. The Union and University shall agree the means by which students are represented on appropriate bodies within the University. The University shall recognise and respect the democratic processes of the Union by which representatives are selected.
3. It shall be made clear to all students the opportunities available to engage with the University, both formally and informally, on issues relevant to their diverse student experiences.
4. Students shall be made aware of the purpose for seeking engagement and feedback, and also its consequence and impact. Staff and students shall recognise the legitimacy of honest and polite disagreement.
5. Student engagement activity shall be timely, inclusive, collegial, well-communicated, and informed by relevant evidence.
6. Student engagement and feedback activity shall contribute to enhancement of the University’s educational provision, services and governance. Students and student representatives shall be encouraged to identify areas for enhancement, and work in partnership with staff to improve the life and work of the University.
7. Effective student engagement shall be a means of identifying student queries and concerns. Where concerns and queries are raised, the University and the Union shall provide a clear, timely and meaningful response.
8. Students shall be enabled and encouraged to praise and celebrate good practice across the University.
9. Engagement activities shall recognise the diversity of the student body, ensuring that typically underrepresented student groups and those with protected characteristics are equitably engaged.

10. The University and Union shall offer training, development and support opportunities to all staff and students involved in student engagement activity.
11. The University and Union shall monitor and review student engagement activity in order to ensure continuation of good practice, enhancement of engagement activity, and action in line with these principles.

**Durham Students' Union
Board of Trustees**

Minutes of meeting on 27 October 2016

Present

Anthony Baker	Co-opted Trustee (Chair)	AB
Oliver Colling	Co-opted Trustee	OC
Martin Parker	Co-opted Trustee	MP
Alice Dee	President	AD
Lisa Whiting	Academic Affairs Officer	LWh
Adam Jarvis	Development Officer	AJ
David Evans	Student Trustee	DE
Charles Walker	Student Trustee	CW
Kara-Jane Senior	Activities Officer	KS
Jo Gower	Community Officer	JG
Daniel Fox	Student Trustee	DF

In attendance

Gary Hughes	Chief Executive	GH
Christine Stretesky	Director of Governance & Compliance	CS
Laura Wilkinson	Executive Assistant	LWi
Michael Jayson	Auditor	MJ

Apologies

Louise Shillinglaw	Co-opted Trustee	LS
Holly Foxon	Student Trustee	HF

Notification of AOB and conflict of interest

None.

Previous minutes & matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by board members subject to the amendment of a typing error.

Financial Audit

MJ presented the financial accounts and audit report to members, explaining that it had already been looked at in more detail by Audit & Risk Committee. He advised that the recent turnover of CEs and finance staff had added to risk assessment, but it was a good audit result regardless. MJ noted that the vast majority of errors found were not material, but just ways we account for things, which the new finance manager would resolve easily.

AB stated that it was great to see we have done so well during such a turbulent year, and said well done to all those involved.

MP asked for clarification that the typing errors found during Audit & Risk Committee had been corrected and MJ responded that they had.

OC noted that Finance Committee would continue to look at dynamic cash management, and that it would be put in place ASAP.

MP stated that a lot of cash is currently being held by student groups, which needs to be looked at. KS advised that staff would be meeting with every student group over the next few months to discuss finances with them and how they spend their money. KS also informed members that one of her objectives for the year is to set up a quality society scheme for student groups which should help with the holding on to money issue because it could affect where they rank. AB asked CS what level of authority we have over our groups spending their money. CS advised that she and KS would be looking more into whether this falls under risk assessment, but to change the student group regulations it would have to go to Assembly.

Regarding the level of reserves, MP explained to new trustees that last year we were holding too much money in reserves. When a new policy was released by the charity commission, a decision was made to release some of it. OC added that it would be reviewed at least on an annual basis. CS advised that the reserves are currently set at £158,000. AB asked OC to present in more detail at the next meeting.

AB thanked Michael for presenting the audit report to the board.

Further Action:

- LWi to email copy of audit report to all trustees

Appointment of Vice Chair

AB explained to new trustees that last year it was recommended that the President would automatically become Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees. However, to change this officially it would need to be taken to the full student body, so we are holding off until there are more pressing issues. AB requested that the board vote on AD, and future Presidents, to automatically become Vice Chair. AD left the room.

The members voted and the proposal and appointment passed.

JG noted that it should be possible that if the President doesn't want the position, another Officer becomes Vice Chair; all agreed.

Annual Assurance Return

CS informed board members that each year we provide an assurance statement to the University that shows we have done everything we are expected to do throughout the year, under the Education Act. CS explained that trustees needed to authorise the Chair of the Board signing the document. GH advised that although he had some minor concerns, he was happy for the document to be signed off as is for now, and changes can be made over the next year. **All members were all happy to approve the document being signed by the Chair.**

People of Colour Association – Change of Standing Orders

CS updated board members that at last night's assembly, a group of students presented a proposal to create a People of Colour Association and Assembly voted in favour. It will be now be added to the standing orders should the board approve today. **All members voted to approve the People of Colour Association.**

Appointment of the Senior Returning Officer/Deputy Returning Officer

CS advised that the election system requires that we have a SRO and DRO. We have always used NUS as the SRO due to them being an impartial 3rd party, outside of the Durham area. If the SRO were to make a decision that a student didn't agree with, it would be taken to Governance & Grants Committee which would have the final decision. It was proposed that CS would be re-nominated as DRO and NUS as SRO. CS would be allocated a SRO from NUS for each election period. The SRO writes a report afterwards to confirm that have we delivered a fair election.

All members agreed that CS would be Deputy Returning Officer and that NUS would be Senior Returning Officer.

Annual Board Declaration of Interest

Forms were handed out to trustees and AB advised that any conflicts must be noted, and that signing today is based on today's information but if anything changes then you must inform the Board. CS advised that she would compile a register that the Chair would have at every meeting to make him aware of each member's conflicts. These could include being on a society exec, being a member of student staff etc. AB advised that if in doubt of whether something is a conflict or not, it's always best to declare.

Further Action:

- All trustees to complete by Friday 4 November

Report from Chief Executive

GH advised that he would take the paper as read and talk through some of the key points.

GH informed board members that the two Engagement Facilitators have for a long time, wanted clarification on their roles. He stated that the Executive Assistant who has been on maternity leave had decided not to return to work, and he feels the empty role would be better changed to another 'Engagement Facilitator'.

He proposed that the three roles be renamed to Education Policy Coordinator, Campaigns Coordinator and Student Groups Coordinator, and stated that he felt there is currently no staff support to help the Officers deliver their objectives, which would be resolved by this change.

AB asked how much the job descriptions would be changing, and GH advised that they are currently short and simple so adaption can be done. AB noted that we need to be careful because if we are changing the roles so significantly they would have to re-apply for their job. JG stated that the job descriptions are what the EFs feel like they do anyway, and AB responded that he has concerns that someone on the outside who didn't apply due to the how the role advertised, possibly may have should it have been the new description.

AB advised that we need to look at the details of what each role is doing and see how significant the difference is. KS and AD both felt that the EFs are already doing what the new descriptions state, and that the decision shouldn't be held off any longer. AB advised that it all depends on how much change there is but hopefully we can go ahead without re-advertising the two already in post. If we can have as objectives then great, and then advertise for the third role.

DF asked how much a contract can be changed legally and AB informed him that it was 50%.

AJ stated that he didn't feel the new job titles reflected the roles, GH agreed to relook at this.

GH proposed that HR committee looked at it in more detail. All agreed.

AB congratulated GH on being asked to be part of the NUS strategy creation, and stated that it would be a great thing to take us to that next level.

Further Action:

- HR committee to discuss Engagement facilitator roles then bring back to the Board
- Look at level of authority for Board and GH regarding staffing

Financial Report

AB advised that the Finance Committee meeting was cancelled and this would be brought to the next Board meeting. GH apologised for the paper not being ready, and informed members that although the accounts were accurate, the presentation was confusing and needed to be re-worked by Martin, the new Finance Manager who would be starting with us on Monday 31 October. OC reiterated that there was nothing to worry about with financial accounts, but the presentation of the management accounts needed amending.

Durham SU 2016/17 Plan

GH informed board members that the VC is expecting the Union to generate its own resources and not solely reliant upon the University's grant.

MP asked that regarding the Health and Safety Policy renewal being missed, would this now fall in annual business cycles? CS updated that it would, along with all other policies.

Strategy 2020 Presentation

GH presented a Strategy 2020 Presentation. AB thanked GH for his presentation and board members discussed the strategy plan.

AB stated that he felt it should be extended to a 5 year strategic plan, as so much effort and time was being put into it, give it more longitude. GH agreed that this could be done and perhaps it could be

split, with the first three years being more detailed. All members agreed that this would be a good idea.

AB noted that the timeline dates looked appropriate. AJ said that the last date on the timeline – August for the organisation plan, seems too ambitious for the officer objectives to be finalised. AD agreed that they needed more time for objectives to gather student input. LWh felt the objective process should be speeded up, because having them complete by October this year seemed too late already being 3 months into post. GH advised that although the organisation plan will be in place by August, Officers would still have time to finalise objectives and gather student input.

AD noted that a big focus should be made on handover and induction to make it a smoother process. CW pointed out that it is important for the student trustees to handover too, and attend the final meeting of the year. CS assured all that the student trustee elections are planned before the final board date. AD and GH would lead on making sure there is a good handover process.

JG felt like there needed to be more student consultation when developing the strategy and that before it is finalised it should be put online for feedback, like the University have done with the Estates Strategy. GH agreed that it would be useful to think about a consultation framework. It was discussed that it could be taken to the last Assembly of the academic year, with trustees all attending to be questioned. AD noted that it may be useful to look at the Wider University Strategy too. CW stated that it is crucial from a political perspective that we are meeting the standards that we expect of the University.

Report from Assembly

AD presented a report from the previous night's Assembly meeting, and thanked the Governance team for the election packs they had made.

AB notified the Board that he would be meeting with the exec of Champagne Society along with CS and KS to draft strict rules for their education and probation period. CS advised that as part of the education aspect, they will be involved in Durham City Council safety group.

CW noted that it was really great that we had a lot of people running for committees and three for chair, it shows that Assembly was advertised in the right way.

CW asked if the chair of assembly get training. CS advised that she would be meeting with him soon to go over the role and responsibilities, and would continue to work closely with him, having pre-meetings before each Assembly.

AB stated that Assembly is useful for the board to understand what is interesting the students and what issues they have and encouraged co-opted trustees to attend one.

AJ had concerns that the way voting is done at Assembly instigates a herd mentality and asked if it is being reviewed. CS advised that the voting would stay as is, it is in the standing orders that it's done by hand count. AD stated that we need to encourage the members to feel empowered enough to vote and suggested we look at training for assembly members so they feel more confident. CS stated that from watching at the meeting, most members did look confident and lifted their cards at the same time. AB suggested that the Chair could make the room feel confident and empowered at the beginning of the meeting.

AD advised that in the future she would like to look at whether officers should be voting members of assembly. JG stated that Assembly could be asked what they think about officers voting.

Further Action:

- LWi to circulate Assembly dates to trustees

AOB

AB asked for equality and diversity to be considered at a future meeting of the Board.

Further Actions:

- Schedule an August Board meeting (LWi)
- Set Committee dates next week (LWi)

The meeting was adjourned at 16.25

CS updated that the co-opted trustee role advertisement closes next Monday, so far there are 5 candidates who would be reviewed by staff and then taken to Governance & Appointments Committee.