**Academic Council Minutes**

DATE: Monday 23rd October ROOM: 3148 (The Halle) TIME: 12.00-1300

**Jay Brown**; President – Academic Life (**JB**)

Chair: **Louise Ford;** President – Student Activities (**LF**)

Secretary: **Julie Read** – Student Support Coordinator, SU (**JR**)

**Dan Doyle;** Chief Executive Officer, SU (**DD**)

**Attendees:**

Sheryl Weir, Psychology

Eilidh Smith, Drama

Mehaa Sakthivel, Strategic Communications

Charlie Atkinson, Theatre and Film

Angel Stead, Drama

Claire Shortt, Arts, Festival and Cultural Management

Adrian Duscall, Drama

Daniel Hobbe, Dramatherapy

Sarah McKay, Theatre and Film

Ian Swift, Occupational Therapy

Adithye Nair, Strategic Communications

Ava Dillon, Hospitality and Tourism

**Apologies:**

Emma Haston

Lisa Hewitson

Reeca Dagg

Julia Macintosh

Carmel Schmid

1. Welcome and Introduction: **LF** welcomed the students and thanked them both for attending and volunteering for the role.

2. QMUSU Update: **JB** thanked the reps for completing the training and encouraged those who haven’t yet finished, to do so. Advised there will be another catch-up session later this semester.

He then introduced Dan Doyle, new CEO of the S.U. and Dan gave a little information on his background working in Student’s Unions.

**JB** then reminded reps that TGIT has restarted, every Thursday from 5-7pm in 1875. Free hot meals for all students. He and LF will soon be adding social activities to the evenings.

Next was a reminder of the Post-Grad officer elections which are underway and the opportunity to question the candidates this afternoon in Maggies at 2.30pm. All post-grad students were encouraged to vote.

**JR** then gave an update on the HelpZone reminding reps that help is available to deal with Appeals, Disciplinary hearings, Extenuating Circumstances and more. Encouraged reps to share this information with their cohorts and also to remind everyone to use the Turnitin similarity checker before submitting assignments, and NOT to use AI to produce assignments. There has been an increase in the number of disciplinary cases related to allegations of plagiarism.

3. Student President Update: **JB** reported that the recent Class Rep Training had been very successful with a good turnout and that there will be (provisionally) an in-person catch-up session on 17th November. Time and venue tbc.

The Officers’ Committee have started to produce a monthly newsletter and the first one is now live on the QMUSU website. If reps have anything they would like to see included in this, they should contact JB.

Update on the Race Equality Steering Group (RESG) and Black History Month. Last week we had the guest speaker, Dr Kenesha Liinton-Williams, and more events will be publicised in future Moderators.

JB has been working with Paolo Tisi, the QM Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer on the trans-inclusion policy to be implemented in January 2024. It is expected that this will lead to a more positive trans-inclusion culture on campus and will support trans staff and students, as well as providing training for staff in how to communicate with trans students. Trans staff and students can now be issued with new staff/student cards with their new names and it is hoped that bigger issues will also be tackled.

4. Question of the Semester: the Questions used are discussed and decided on by the Officers’ Committee at the beginning of the Academic year. This semester’s question is related to student spaces on campus and can be accessed using this link [**https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/cyzah4ii**](https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/cyzah4ii)

5. Class Rep Feedback: The floor was opened for questions/issues.

**Charlie Atkinson**: concerns about the inadequacies of trigger warnings issued before watching films on the course and also lack of warning about flashing lights which can impact students with epilepsy. Students have not yet had the opportunity to raise that at SSCC, however, Sarah McKay stated this had been raised at SSCC last year. She also reported issues with subtitles in some films which don’t seem to match the actual words spoken/ Recommended this is also taken to SSCC but **JB** will write in advance to Michael Stewart to ask for more detailed trigger warnings.

**Meeha Sakthivel** raised concerns about an elective (Media and Creative Industries) that had been offered on her course but was impossible to choose as it clashed with the core module. Meeha had brought this to the attention of the course coordinator and had emailed staff to express concern but had not yet had a response. Apparently, this module had been available to students last year. **JR** asked Meeha to forward the email she had sent.

In addition, one class has online and offline classes. Students would prefer more offline lessons as these are more engaging. This was raised at the last SSCC. Encouraged to raise again.

Meeha also raised the issue of students not receiving reminder emails from Reslife to apply for accommodation, resulting in many students missing the application process and having to find private accommodation. General discussion on the difficulties of finding accommodation followed. **JB** will contact Reslife with reference to improving communications with students.

**Angel Stead** reported that there was still a lot of confusion with Canvas and as their lecturer, Kate Nelson, is currently absent, her replacement is struggling with uploading resources and information. Students report finding it difficult to locate important information. Likely to be a wider issue as staff and students get to grips with the new system. **JR** suggested asking the lecturer to use the 24/7 Help facility in Canvas for advice and support.

**Adithye Nair** reported that some electives on his course did not have course descriptors added in time. Some were issued too late for students to make informed choices and therefore lost the opportunity to take up limited places. Again, advised to raise at SSCC.

**Ian Swift** advised that the recent placement allocations in OT had left a lot of students unhappy. Understands that places are limited but will raise this at a course meeting later this week. It was suggested to ask if some students might be able to swap with each other if this could work.

6. Date of Next Meeting: ~~Friday 24~~~~th~~ ~~November 2-3pm in Room 2092~~. Changed to Thursday 30th November 1-2pm Room 2092

Followed by Tuesday 6th February 1200-1300 Room 2092 and Tuesday 12th March Room 1400-1500 Room 2091

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