

Moray College UHI – Class Rep Meeting Minutes

16 February 2022 – 12pm to 1pm

Present:

Class Reps: Hannah Gardner 12000903, Lilia Lee, Brendan Baker

Staff: Veronica Borseth, Nicole Hyslop, Heather Sharp

HISA Officers: Depute President Education Rhiannon Stradling, - Depute President Activities and Welfare Caelum Leese

Apologies: Mharie Marshall, Jennifer Mair, Emma Coutts, David Patterson

HISA Previous Actions:

There were no previous actions.

HISA CON, Policy, and Elections Update

RS spoke about how there was HISA con at the end of last month, and spoke about some of the activities that were part of the event. RS also mentioned how they found it enjoyable. Caelum Leese (CL) added that there were many discussions about politicians.

RS went on to say that all policies that were submitted were all passed, and went on to touch on a couple of the policies that were submitted. RS also stated that if anyone wanted further information on the policies that were passed, they could get in touch and RS would provide further information.

RS spoke about the most important part of HISA CON being the start of elections. RS then urged students to nominate themselves to be in the same position as RS or CL in the coming year. RS also emphasised that doing so is a great opportunity, so put yourself forward. CL interjected and said that everyone is a great candidate. RS came back in with “even if you don’t win, it’s a great opportunity to gain skills, and if you win, you’ll get a job out of it!” RS also noted that there is no pressure to stay in the running if you should change your mind.

NEUK

Veronica Borseth (VB) mentioned the Neuk Collective, it’s a group of four neurodivergent artists – Robyn Benson, Dylan Esposito, Tzipporah Johnston and Dawnne McGeachy – set up in 2020 with support from Creative Scotland. Their work focuses on advocating for neurodivergent people



specifically in the arts – so people with autism, ADHD, ADD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Anxiety etc.. So, if you are interested in helping to support neurodivergent artists, they have an extensive list of resources available. <https://neukcollective.co.uk>

Bus Travel Scheme Update

RS mentioned that there was free bus travel available to students under the age of 22. Nicole Hyslop (NH) informed the students that the information relating to that will be at their student hub, if students are in receipt of travel funding, there will be a letter on their student hub explaining how to apply for free bus travel. NH noted that the free bus scheme was launched on the 31st of January, but the student finance will be paying funding for travel until the 4th of March, so there is still time to sort that out. NH recommended that it be done as soon as possible if that is something that you require.

NH states that if some of your travel award includes a mileage allowance i.e. you don't live on a bus route, this won't be affected. If you do live on a bus route, and you are in receipt of travel, from the 4th of March, you'll stop receiving that funding. You'd also be expected to utilise the free bus travel. If for any reason you can't use the bus, if you have personal circumstances that don't allow that, you can appeal those decisions. Appeals for the continuation of the travel payments can be made by using the button on your student hub.

National Student Survey Update

RS introduced the subject of NSS, saying that the National Student Survey is available to students who are in their final year in higher education. RS noted that might not apply to everyone in the meeting, but having this information passed on would be much appreciated. RS also offered to send out a link to the survey to anyone who might need it.

RS spoke about how the NSS is run by NUS, and that it is currently open, and that the aim is for students to be able to give feedback of their experience at the university. RS added that it's a great way for NUS to see how everyone is doing when it comes to studies.

Link in chat : www.thestudentsurvey.com

Heather Sharp (HS) added that the results from the NSS are one of the things that potential students look at when deciding where to continue or start their higher education journey, so it's good for students who are at the end of their journey to provide that feedback to help potentially younger students to decide whether or not they want to come to university. HS reiterated that it is a really good opportunity for students.

Refreshers!

RS went on to promote the Refresher's Fayre, which is a free event that will be from 10 am – 1 pm on the 22nd of February down in the conference room. There are going to be stalls from local businesses, there will be free food, and student discount offers as well as freebies. There will also be the opportunity to speak to local businesses regarding funding and housing. RS and CL will be there, so if anyone wanted to come along for a chat, then book a time slot and come along. Sadly due to covid there is a limited capacity, so there is a time booking system in place. RS also stressed that there will be Covid regulations in place, so mask wearing, hand sanitisation, social distancing etc.



Link to event - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/freshers-fayre-tickets-245784015607>

Open Floor Discussion

HS asked Colin Watson (Facilities Manager) to introduce himself so that he can leave afterwards if needed. CW stated that he started his post back in August 2021, and that it's been a "quick learning" period for him. He acknowledged that there are major issues with the building, but that it's going to take time to get it turned around. CW also mentioned that he has been communicating with RS previously, and that he has passed on all RS's comments to Derek Duncan, and is just waiting to hear back. However, it might take some time as some of them might require policy changes. CW also mentioned that he has spoken to Heather (HS?) about them as well, and that they seem do-able, but has received no official communications back yet. SW stressed that he would have liked to have more to share on that point, but that is just where we are with it currently.

CW mentioned his concern about graffiti and vandalism, and pled for SVRs to raise any instances with staff. CW also confirmed that there have been two cases of racist graffiti at the college, and that they are photographing the evidence and then removing them as quickly as possible. Also if students see vandalism, if you see or hear anything, raise it with staff. CW stressed that the college would be handling any of these instances with discretion, so as to not get any of the people informing on these instances in trouble. CW commented that from a facilities point of view, he's happy to see students back at the campus, as it felt like a ghost town back when he started in August.

CW also stated he hopes to make the experience better for students, and wants to work closely with HISA. CW said that if there is anything, don't wait for meetings, don't hesitate to come forward to him personally and let him know. CW also said that the best way to contact him quickly is through Heather Sharp, as she has a direct line to him. RS added that HISA can also signpost students to CW or HS if needed.

Hannah Gardner (HG) asked if there was any updates regarding provision of vending machines and the refectory. CW responded by saying he has spoken to Derek Duncan about that, and that they are in the process of procuring a contract for vending machines. HS also noted in chat that there were no current plans to bring it back. There is also a small café/tuckshop available in IPod, that's open from 10 - 11 am, then 12 – 1 pm. CW also noted that Beechtree is open Wednesday through Friday, however sadly they don't have enough students to be open 5 days a week. CW is aware of the situation and said that he'd keep us updated.

RS mentioned that there are plans in place for getting a food van up at Linkwood, and CW interjected saying that he personally been working on that. CW went on to say that the college was in the process of choosing a vendor, and that after that all the college needs to do, is give written permission to the vendor wanting to sell food on their property. That vendor would also have to apply for a licence with the council, which is apparently a straightforward thing.

CW said that he is aware of the issues with Linkwood and the main campus, and that work is underway to try and fix things, however that it will take time. RS thanked CW for his help.

Officer Updates:



CL thanked everyone for attending, then mentioned that HISA are in the process of procuring a space at the Linkwood Campus.

CL mentioned that his main manifesto point is helping students to find what they'd like to do, and wants to create a space where they can do so safely. CL spoke about how he is creating a "Social Hotspot" club, where he hopes students will come to chat (eg about studies, lecturers), and not have to worry about any negative repercussions as it's a private space. CL is hoping to have the first meeting in early to mid March. CL also hopes to promote honesty and openness within this club, so as to boost student's confidence. More information to follow.

RS hopes to have an LGBTQIA+ session in February, since it is LGBTQIA+ history month. RS did also state that if it doesn't happen this month, it'll happen next month. More information on this will be circulated when dates and locations are finalised.

Closing comments

RS asked if there were any comments or questions.

CW mentioned that he won't be able to attend all meetings, since he is in a very busy period.

Brendan Baker (BB) raised that at Linkwood there is a motorcycle specific parking space which cars are parking in. CW will get in touch with facilities and hopefully get them to place traffic cones there so as to stop people from parking there with their cars.

Note: Since this meeting, CW has been in touch with the site assistants at Linkwood and a sign will go up very soon on the motorcycle only parking space to deter cars using it.

HG queried whether the seating in the library is opening up yet. NH responded by saying that she believes they are closed, but will find out for the next SVR meeting.

Note: Since this meeting, CW has confirmed that there are still restrictions in place – Discussion Room and study pods are still not accessible to students and only every alternate computer is available for use (this is indicated by the yellow/black tape crosses on computer desks). The college also asks that students still wear masks, hand sanitise and sanitise keyboards/desks before and after use.

HG also queried what was happening with the shop at student services, as the current shop only accepts very precise change. NH responded by saying that she would ask student services about the matter, and that it was most likely due to them not having a till currently. CW came in to say the college is trying to procure a new till system, and that might have something to do with the lack of till.

HG also mentioned that some of their friends didn't know that you could buy studying supplies on campus, so raised that it might need better advertisement. NH will bring that up with Student services. RS mentioned that in future HISA can advertise that at the local office. NH requested that RS hold off on advertising it until NH has heard back from Student Services.

RS thanked everyone for joining, and closed the meeting.



Wednesday 16th March at 12pm - 1pm by blended Meeting.

Class Rep Meetings minutes by Veronica

