

Moray College UHI – Student Voice Rep Meeting Minutes

31 October 2022 – 10 AM to 11 AM

Present:

Class Reps: ROB KERR 18023097, KAYLEIGH VAN NOORDWYK 22002857, PHOENIX CROSS 22019480, MARTIN HIGGINS 18009051, SAMANTHA TROUP 15026843, EDWARD ALLAN 12005454, MARCUS MCCORMICK 21018556

Staff: Colin Watson – Facilities Manager, Heather Sharp - Quality Manager, Kenny McAlpine – Deputy Principal, Aimee Cuthbert -Assistant Voice Manager, Nicole Hyslop – Student Guidance Advisor, Veronica Borseth – Student Voice Assistant

HISA Officers: Melissa Carr - Depute President Education

Apologies: Emma Low, Finn Macdonald, Jonathan Heady

Welcome:

Melissa Carr (MC) welcomed everyone, introduced herself, saying that she would be the chair for the monthly meeting. MC then introduced Colin Watson (CW), the Facilities Manager.

Senior Management Slot – Colin Watson:

CW introduced multiple topics which UHI Moray have been looking to address recently, and asked for feedback from the Highlands and Islands Students' Association (HISA) and the student voice reps (SVRs) on the following topics:

- **Recycling – How do we encourage/improve this across campus?**

CW asked how we improve recycling across the campus. CW stated that currently lots of items are contaminated with food, and then put in recycling, but as it's contaminated, it can't be processed. CW asked if there could be some kind campaign with HISA about recycling. CW added that they're potentially changing the type of bins they have on campus to see-through ones, so that the contamination is visible, and hopefully encourages correct usage of the bins. An SVR added that maybe adding a section for liquids as well would be helpful. CW added that they are looking into providing that. An SVR added that the holes are not very big on the bins, and that the ones in the seating area upstairs are very thin, so you have to force the items. This led to the next point, which was littering.



- **Littering**

CW encouraged everyone to use bins, as many drinks are left lying around, and facilities have added a lot more bins to hopefully combat this.

- **Smoking/Vaping on campus**

CW said that emails have been sent out to students about smoking and vaping on campus, reminding everyone that it is against the rules. CW added he'd appreciate HISA's support on this, potentially in conjunction with an anti-littering and recycling campaign. CW shared that staff have been trying to approach this in a friendly manner, however some staff get laughed at when requesting students move off campus when they are smoking. This behaviour breaks the rules set out in the student handbook and is overall not appropriate.

- **Students working late on campus – How do we address this?**

CW stated that they've been having issues with students working on campus till late, and not signing in with reception after 5 PM. This is a health and safety risk and can lead to issues with students being locked in or forgotten during a fire. Any student on campus after 5PM needs to sign at reception. CW asked Heather Sharp (HS) if this is stated in the student handbook? HS responded that she is unaware and asked whether CW had asked for it to be in the handbook, to which CW said he was uncertain. CW added that the campus also tries to accommodate any students that need to be in during holidays, though of course opening times are sometimes reduced due to maintenance during these times.

- **Students eating and drinking during class – How do we address this?**

CW stated that there is a "no eating in classrooms" rule, saying that doughnuts during meetings is okay and drinking out of bottles is okay. It's more an issue when/if people do spill; they need to tell the staff about it. Recently a newly fitted carpet had coffee spilled on it, and was left unreported, which led to it being stained permanently, which can affect the attractiveness of the college for prospective students. If estates or reception are notified in time, they can rescue some items if it's caught fast enough.

CW added that some lecturers have been telling students that they are allowed to eat during class, however this is incorrect. This was most likely a leniency due to there not being a refectory, however since this is not the case anymore, students should not be eating during class. If students are eating in class due to timetabling not allowing them a break, this should be addressed, as students are entitled to take a break. If this is the case, CW is happy to speak to staff/lecturers if their timetabling doesn't allow for a break.

CW noted that they are currently functioning with very few cleaners, and that because of this, not all bins will be emptied daily. This can lead to issues if students leave food related items in the bins and can stink up the classrooms. CW stated that the staff would like to treat all students as adults when it comes to these issues, and encouraged everyone to use common sense and be considerate when eating or drinking.

An SVR asked CW about a scenario that a certain student in their class has experienced. The student had been chastised for eating and vaping during class, while the classes were



online. CW responded that it should not be an issue, and can't be enforced, as it's off campus. The SVR added that after the incident, the lecturer sent out an email saying that smoking and eating during their class is not allowed. HS added that she's not sure on the policy around this, and that the student in question should discuss this with their course team. HS also said that there is an Online Etiquette document, however it doesn't specify about smoking or eating. The student who was chastised should discuss this with their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT).

Another SVR added that in their class, there was confusion about drinks in the classrooms, and asked whether drinking via sealed containers is acceptable? CW responded saying that it is allowed to drink beverages that are in sealed containers.

Senior Management AOB:

HS commented at this point, encouraging all students to complete the Early Student Experience Survey (ESES). The deadline for completion is this Friday (4th Nov), and the survey itself is an important step for evaluating the students' feedback on their student experience. HS asked that all SVRs encourage all their peers to complete the survey. The survey has been sent out via email to all students. Incentives ARE also offered for completion. All students that complete the survey, will be entered into a prize pool, and two lucky students will win a £50 voucher valid in Elgin stores.

Officer Update:

MC then spoke about some of the recent things that she has been doing, one of which was attending her first Board of Management meeting. This meeting is where high level decisions about UHI Moray get made, and MC represents the student voice during those meetings.

Secondly, MC spoke about how the HISA By-Elections have been successful, and Aaron Wappler will be starting with HISA as the new Depute President Activities & Welfare in November.

MC added that when it comes to the manifesto she was elected on, one of her main points was to create a bookable space for students, where they can complete group projects without disruption. MC will speak to IT, as well as accommodation, to see what is possible. MC added that she hopes that there will be progress on this within the next couple of months. CW added that B005 is a room being set up for VC drop ins, and maybe can be used for MC's manifesto idea. MC asked whether students could book it, to which CW said he was unsure. CW also mentioned for MC to get in contact with Stuart Cruickshank the Admin Manager, to find out more.

Regional Officer Update:

MC then read a short statement made by Heather Innes, Regional HISA President, on her intention of supporting students experiencing the Cost-of-Living Crisis, by putting together a



working/advisory group to focus on this subject. Her next action is to reach out to all academic partners within UHI to see what provisions are in place locally for students affected by the crisis.

Open Floor Feedback/AOB

Before opening the floor to feedback, MC read the following statement from Aimee Stephen from Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

“Developing the Young Workforce in Moray (DYW Moray) is looking for some UHI Moray students aged 16-24 years old who will be willing to conduct an informal 20-minute focus group about their views on employability in Moray. These views will be anonymous and will be presented to the DYW Moray board to ensure that Moray Young People are at the heart of decisions being made at these board meetings. If you are interested in supporting the first focus group session, please get in touch with Aimee, Business Liaison at DYW Moray to find out more - aimee.stephen.moray@uhi.ac.uk”

After which, the floor was opened up to feedback by MC.

An SVR added that the people on their course really want access to the gym during lunch times. VB interjected that for students to use the gym, the UHI Moray would have to hire someone to supervise the gym the entire time. The college are currently in the process of sourcing funding for a Gym Assistant; however, VB will check with Kelly McLaren on the progress on this, and feedback at the next SVR meeting. CW added that it may be worthwhile to ask the Health and Safety Officer to reassess the risk assessment. Another SVR asked whether the gym would be available to all students, not just the sports and fitness groups, to which VB confirmed that it would be available to all students, should it reopen.

Another SVR asked if the art students could get an exhibition, or somewhere to display their artwork, as they have plenty with no-where to put it. In response to this, Kenny McAlpine the Deputy Principal (KM) said he'd support this, as one of the things that he noticed when he originally started, was the lack of decoration around the college. KM thinks it would be a great opportunity to support the art students and will take this forward to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

An SVR requested that more benches be added outside the Victoria art building, as the one picnic table isn't enough for the number of art students. They also asked whether the Art students could get a microwave and kettle. In response, CW said that he'd see about fixing more benches for them. He also said that he thought there already was a microwave and kettle up there, however, would have no issue if the students were to buy a new kettle for the building. As for the microwave, using one would go against the rule of “no eating in classrooms”.

Lastly, an SVR raised if it would be possible to stock protein foods in the vending machines. CW added that we can make requests from the suppliers, though it would be best to approach either Garry Rendall or Alistair Fowlie about the provisions.

VB added that future SVR training would be taking place online, with dates to be circulated soon. VB also spoke about a potential future volunteering opportunity for students, that would be paid. More info to be sent out via email.



MC thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

Monday 21st November at 10 AM – 11 AM by Blended Meeting.

Student Voice Rep meeting minutes by Veronica Borseth

