

In attendance

Chair – Will Jones

President- Tonari Arikekpar

VP Activities – Isla Symons

VP Education – Darcie Jones

VP Wellbeing and Diversity – Daniella Marley

UPSU Chief Executive – Nicky Goldthorpe

Representation and Democracy Manager – Tracy Priestman

There were a minimum of 28 and a maximum of 29 students in attendance across the course of the meeting.

Reports and the finance presentation can be found online at

<http://www.upsu.com/studentvoice/agm/>

Minutes

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone in attendance and explained that as a charity UPSU has a legal requirement to present accounts to its members each year for approval.

As well as general matters of housekeeping, the Chair then went on to run through the following points:

- Please respect the opinions of other people and their right to speak, if you get involved in a debate then please make sure that you are questioning the issue and you do not get personal.
- Any inappropriate language or behaviour will not be tolerated and anyone being inappropriate or offensive will be asked to leave.
- Any student registered on a University of Plymouth course is classed as a full member, unless they have chosen to opt out. All full members can speak and vote on any issue. Other people present may speak but cannot vote.

	This meeting will be conducted in accordance to UPSU Memorandum & Articles and its by-laws as well as all other relevant policies.
Notice of Any Other Business	No Other Business
Matters to Discuss	Will Jones (ASM Chair), explained that students had the opportunity to submit questions online before the meeting, and these will be discussed later.
Accounts and Finance Presentation	<p>The Chair delegated the presentation of the Accounts and Finance report to Nicky Goldthorpe, UPSU Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>The accounts cover the period from 1st August 2022 - 31st July 2023</p> <p>The Chair presented UPSU annual affiliations.</p> <p>Affiliations were ratified For: 15 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0</p>
Questions	<p>Questions:</p> <p>Q: Most international students are complaining of their lecture hall being cold, what can the SU body do for the School to fix the central heating?</p> <p>A: Will Jones (ASM Chair) explained that faults can be reported at estateshelp@plymouth.ac.uk. They are the main contact for any estates related issues.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Q: The various Course Representatives, are they been paid?</p> <p>A: Tracy Priestman (Representation and Democracy Manager) responded that the SU has started to pay School Reps a stipend this year. The Course Rep roles are voluntary, and as democratic review takes place we are looking at a reward scheme but this will not be monetary and will remain voluntary.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Q: What is the possibility of splitting sports into a separate union like at many other unis. Surely this would allow teams to be represented in a more beneficial way, as objectives are different to socs?</p> <p>A: Isla Symons (VP Activities), reported that this happens at other institutions such as Exeter where they have an Athletics Union and is run on the university</p>

campus. However, this is dependent on the individual university stance around sport. Isla reassured the student that she is advocating for sport and is leading conversations with the university but it is difficult as is dependent on the relationship between the SU and the university.

Q: Only 4% was spent on welfare (same as last year, and SU said it was mainly salaries). How can the SU be more transparent with where the finances for wellbeing activities are coming from?

A: Nicky Goldthorpe (UPSU Chief Executive Officer) responded that the SU accounts are on the website and that her along with other members of the Senior Leadership Team are happy to talk with anyone regarding how they can be more transparent with finances. The team are happy to breakdown the financial reports to students. The 4% includes the 3 full time staff the SU employ at the SU Advice Centre.

Q: Is there a way to have a reduced price in societies if one only wants to take part in social events and will pay for their own gear.

A: Isla Symons – This lies with individual societies, you can approach a society to be involved but the society fee is set by them and not the SU. Isla said that if students are wanting to negotiate, approach the society directly as these responsibilities lie with societies themselves.

Q: In previous years suicide/mental health awareness training was offered to course reps. Is it possible to have mandatory suicide awareness training for Course Reps and School Reps?

A: Tracy Priestman responded that previously there was resource from the university support services to provide wellbeing training to reps. It is dependent on university resources and currently they do not have capacity to do this. Regarding making the training mandatory, we would not make it mandatory but can make it optional as it can be triggering due to the sensitivity of the topic. Will source to see if this feasible in future.

Q: Some course reps have not been given training since they were elected after. How can the SU help make this process flow better next year ensuring everyone has proper training?

A: Tracy Priestman explained how there was an end of October deadline set for Course Reps to be nominated or elected. Names are shared with the Student Voice Team by the Faculty on a spreadsheet. The team can only invite reps/

	<p>send training to reps that we know of. There has been delay of reps that are being nominated and the team are still receiving them, but this is based on university information. It is not possible for to offer 1:1 training due to capacity in the team, we do offer regular Course Rep drop ins and can offer mop-ups if there were a significant number of reps untrained.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Q: A lot of people are disappointed about the proposed changes to graduation, how have the SU voiced students concerns / what is there response?</p> <p>A: Tonari Arikekpar (UPSU President) explained that we had feedback after the SU created a survey regarding student opinions and knowledge of changes to graduation. This was promoted during the campus market and on social media. Findings were then shared with the university. Students also had the opportunity to share their concerns with the DVS at the Open Forum with the DVC. Tonari noted that the SU are currently in conversation with the university regarding Postgraduate ceremonies.</p>
<p>Reports</p>	<p>Board of Trustees Report</p>
	<p>There were no questions concerning the Board of Trustees report.</p>
	<p>Open Meetings and Elected Representatives Report</p>
	<p>There were no questions concerning the Open Meeting and Elected Representatives Report.</p>
	<p>Sabbatical Officers Reports</p>
	<p>After each Sabbatical Officer presented their update, the floor was opened for questions.</p>
	<p><u>Tonari Arikekpar, President</u></p>
	<p>There were no questions from students.</p>
	<p><u>Darcie Jones, VP Education</u></p>
	<p>There were no questions from students.</p>
<p><u>Isla Symons, VP Activities</u></p>	
<p>There were no questions from students.</p>	
<p><u>Daniella Marley, VP Wellbeing and Diversity</u></p>	
<p>There were no questions from students.</p>	

Any other Business	<p>There were no items raised at the start of the meeting. The chair did open the floor for any final questions or remarks.</p> <p>Q: Regarding the question previously asked about mandatory suicide/ mental health Course Rep training, students are being passed from person to person when they seek help. Is there a way you can collate a resource together so Reps can signpost?</p> <p>A: Tracy Priestman (Representation and Democracy Manager) explained that she was more than happy to talk about this after the meeting, and that we can work on providing Course and School Representatives a resource for signposting.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Q- A student commented that at the Open Societies Forum with the DVC, it was made to feel quite a hostile environment for international students and for the students on the committee it was worrying, particularly when international students are paying high fees and want to feel safe. How are you going to ensure that these environments are going to be a safe space for all students?</p> <p>A: Isla Symons (VP Activities) apologised and explained that she did not want anyone to feel that way. Isla commented that there has been a lot of reflection regarding the environment of the event. The Open Forum was the first of its kind so it was difficult to know how to proceed but assured the student that they have learnt from it and how to move forward.</p> <p>Regarding international fees, Isla explained that this is an ongoing conversation with the university.</p> <p>Isla reassured the students that if there are any queries or concerns regarding forums, raise it with her and she is happy to discuss.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Comment: A student is from the LGBT+ society and neurodivergent, finding it hard to focus during the event and to understand what is going on due to the sensory overload (pool being played, music on etc).</p> <p>A:Tracy Priestman, Representation and Democracy Manager- Thanked the student for the feedback and will take it on board for next year.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Q- A student asked whether the stipend that School Reps receives also applies</p>

	<p>to deputies?</p> <p>A: Tracy Priestman (Representation and Democracy Manager) explained that this does currently only apply to School Reps and is a new initiative this year. We would potentially be looking to do this in the future, but it is dependent on budgets. Each deputy set-up is different per school, and we are looking to provide a recognition scheme but can't guarantee that this will be monetary.</p>
Meeting ends	<p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending and reminded them that concerns and ideas can be raised at any point through the year, either with academic reps, Sabbatical Officers or members of staff.</p>