## UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

## STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8 MAY 2017

**Present:** Mrs J Shireffs (Convener), Rev M Anderson, Dr R Bernard, Ms M Chapman, Mr N Curtis, Mr L Fuller, Mrs C Inglis, Prof A Jenkinson, Prof C Kee, Dr L Leiper, Ms A McClellan, Dr G Mackintosh, Mr L Macleod, Prof E Pavlovskaia, Mrs M Paterson, and Ms A Shipley with Ms C Cameron (Clerk), Ms K Scaife, and Mr A Wight. In addition, Mr R Hughes was in attendance for item 28.

**Apologies** were received from Ms K Allan, Ms D Bruxvoort, Ms J Chalmers, Mr L Forsyth, Prof H Hutchison, Ms J Killin, Prof P McGeorge, and Prof J Masthoff.

25. PRESENTATION FROM ABERDEEN UNIVERSITIES’ OFFICER TRAINING CORPS

The Convenor welcomed Prof M Ross to the meeting in her capacity as Convenor of the Military Education Committee, along with Lt Col P Fox of the Aberdeen Universities’ Officer Training Corps (AUOTC), and Officer Cadets T Shannon, W Capon and I Matheson.

The Committee received a presentation on the work of AUOTC, and noted the following points:

* the AUOTC did not exist primarily to recruit students to the regular or reserve army, but to develop individuals, with only 11% of OTC cadets nationally progressing to regular or reserve army duty;
* students involved in AUOTC benefitted from a range of development opportunities which were difficult to replicate elsewhere, including access to accredited leadership training programmes and regular overseas expeditions;
* Officer Cadets were paid for all time spent attending OTC training or events, including time deployed overseas, and that training should not interfere with academic studies, taking on average one evening per week and every other weekend;
* the OTC aimed to create future civilian leaders who were influencers of policy on military matters.

The Convenor thanked Lt Col Fox and the Officer Cadets for their informative presentation.

26. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2017

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

27. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

It was noted that SPARQS were continuing to work on the Student Partnership Agreement toolkit, and that discussion around the Student Partnership Agreement was ongoing.

The Committee welcomed the appointment of a new Mental Health Advisor, due to start in August 2017.

The Committee offered its congratulations to the victorious University Boat Race teams.

28. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

28.1 Student Support Provision

The Committee received and considered a report on the provision of support for students through the Student Advice and Support Office and the University Counselling Service. The Committee noted the following points:

* the move to a time-limited model for Counselling had meant that more students could be seen across the academic year than under the open-ended model;
* the Counselling Service was looking at providing more early interventions for students including workshops focusing on common issues, resilience training and developing psycho-educational information;
* a new “Solution-Focused Session” had been piloted where students had one appointment of 60-90 minutes to look at potential solutions to problems. Initial feedback had suggested that up to 70% of students who signed up for this option did not require further Counselling.
* other new initiatives include a rolling block of mindfulness for students, and a Write to Recovery creative writing programme.

The Committee noted that the key messages in the paper should be communicated to a wider audience. It was agreed that the Head of Counselling should work with the Student Engagement Manager on a communications strategy. **Action: KS/RH**

29. REPORT FROM THE DIRECTORATE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The Committee received and considered a report from the Directorate of Academic Affairs.

30. REPORT FROM THE DIRECTORATE OF STUDENT LIFE

The Committee received and considered a report from the Directorate of Student Life. The Committee noted that HeadSpace at Hillhead had been shortlisted for a College and University Business Officers’ Award for Excellence in Student Experience.

The Committee recorded its thanks to Mr L Forsyth for his exceptional contribution to the student experience, and wished him well.

31. REPORT FROM AUSA

The Committee received and considered a report from AUSA. The following key points were noted:

* the University had won the recent Granite City Challenge, winning 24 out of 33 sports events;
* AUSA had made a submission to “Healthy Body, Healthy Mind” and were hoping for three stars;
* a survey of student workers was ongoing;
* while AUSA welcomed the rent freeze, the Cut the Rent campaign work was ongoing;
* work would be undertaken to publicise the forthcoming Aberdeen City Council consultation on the provision of Houses in Multiple Occupancy scheme;
* AUSA were pleased with the turnout of around 15.5% for the recent leadership and Student Council elections;
* there had been an increase in engagement with class representatives and School Convenors, which had been welcomed by UCTL;
* more than 100 nominations had been received for the Student Teaching Awards.

The Committee noted its appreciation for the work of the outgoing sabbatical officers.

32. AUSA DISBURSEMENT

The Committee noted that budgets for the year ahead had not been finalised. It was agreed that the AUSA Disbursement would be decided by delegated authority in due course.

**Action: JS/CI**

33. MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Committee received and noted a report from the Military Education Committee.

34. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2017/18

Meetings of the Student Experience Committee in 2017/18 had been scheduled as follows: (all held at **2.00 pm**):

Monday 2 October 2017

Monday 5 February 2018

Monday 14 May 2018