

Guild Council
10:00, Tuesday 22 February 2022, Teams
Notes

These notes are designed to capture key information on attendance, topics covered, decisions made, and actions assigned. It is not intended to be a detailed account of the discussions (see [agenda](#) and [recording](#)).

1. Welcome.

The meeting was recorded to be published online.

2. Attendance and Apologies.

Present

GP	Guild President
VPE	Vice President Education
VPLE	Vice President Liberation & Equality
VPO	Vice President Opportunities
CO-Hums	Humanities College Officer
CO-EMPS	Engineering, Mathematics and Physics College Officer
CO-CLES	Life and Environmental Sciences College Officer
CO-SSIS	Social Science and International Studies College Officer
CO-CMH	Medicine and Health College Officer
9/10	Quoracy reached.

Apologies

<i>None received.</i>	
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In Attendance

CGC	Chair of Guild Council
SGC	Student Governance Coordinator
AIC	Academic Impact Coordinator

3. FOR APPROVAL: The Minutes from the last meeting.

The notes of the last meeting were approved as accurate and will be published online.

4. FOR INFORMATION: Update on actions.

The action log was published with the minutes. VPO completed outstanding actions.

5. FOR INFORMATION: Notifications of any other business.

None.

6. FOR INFORMATION: Officer Updates.

Guild Chair: to begin we will discuss officer updates from both full time and college officers, providing a brief summary of what we have been doing from the end of term one and start of this term (term 2) so far.

CO-Hums: Everything going well as far as humanities is concerned. Collecting feedback about exams and how that's going to work in the future. Lots of departments are rethinking assessment structures. Main thing I've been working on is a well-being event for my peer support scheme with the humanities families which is currently organised and planned for 11th of May. There haven't been any issues apart from individual programs which we've been able to resolve with our ADE.

GP: End of this term and beginning of this term we have been focusing on sustainability with 'Green Week' events being lined up for next week. Planning on presenting a letter to the University Awards asking for commitments to ensure as a university we are on track in terms of climate and sustainability commitments. Also, currently LGBTQ+ history month and received a lot of positive feedback from students regarding events for this. Final thing, University are increasing rent prices and it is something that we have been trying to prevent but have been unable to do so. However, did manage to get the University to commit to looking at different ways in which they can support the students who will be most affected by these increasing rent prices (i.e. bursaries and grants) so they will not be too negatively impacted.

CO-CLES: No negative academic feedback to report. Currently working on a podcast with other societies with upcoming podcasts featuring women in STEM and Students of Colour Association. Working closely with Psychology Society to plan event in March. Promoting well-being poster around Washington Singer and Peter Chalk and being used by University staff. Also, discussions around road safety for students.

VPLE: Working on night safety survey as part of wider gender safety project. Discussions with Gender Safety Group with the University. Spikeys for societies which can be requested by committees for events, looking at how well this does and potential of partnering with other companies. There was a disabled students and students with additional requirements welcome day event in refreshers week, hopefully able to make this a bigger event in September and continue for other freshers' weeks. Planned and delivered well-being week 31st of January to 4th of February with lots of societies involved. Continuing with gender safety and night safety (surveys and focus groups). Also looking at the University's online process of sexual misconduct and behind the scenes stuff you might not see online.

CO-EMPS: COVID restrictions being eased allowing for return of old stuff. EMPS illuminate programming – coding help session ran by students are back up and running as of last week. Also return of breakfast clubs. Engineering has bi-weekly pizza lunches on a Friday (replacing breakfast club). Physics is doing the Unitu trial, there has been a slow start, but posts have started going up. Working on the reps and staff accessing the feedback in a timely manner and increasing awareness of the programme. Wellbeing committee has been active, looking at alternative assessments for long term conditions and how to increase support for final year students. One thing put in place – awareness that fourth year students can still go to see their third-year tutors. Lots of strategy group meetings taking place focusing mainly on assessment models. Also looking at restructuring tutorials.

CO-SSIS: Grants and funding given to politics and IAS subject chairs for their respective events. Politics – show representation of female figures in politics, IAS – discussion about past traumas (received funding from ADE directly). SSIS increase social media engagement and increasing follower count. Private mental health grant approved by ADE and College and now talks held with central University to request funding. Secured personal tutor review – ensure that if a student achieves less than 40% their personal tutor will get in touch with them. Currently consulting Colleges to ensure assessments are fair and rigorous. Current induction review looking at how students will be inducted in September. A week ago, EDI and consent training was pushed. Priorities for upcoming months – the impact of exams and assessments due to easing restrictions, impacts of COVID on student experience, and turnaround time in terms of assessments.

VPE: Working with reps and COs around University plans for academic restructure – workshop sessions and looking at holding one with PGRs. January there was lots of anxiety around return of on campus exams. Also, Omicron surge meant some students unable to attend in person exams and only option given to them was August deferral which potentially leads to disruption of final year students' graduate plans and can be costly finding accommodation for international students. Alternative put in place with option for May deferral (not applicable for online exam deferrals). Unitu rolled out, going well and there is a steady increase. Working on ways to incentivise further activity. Looking forward at personal tutor feedback from staff as well as students to identify

possible disconnect. Also looking at ways we can improve May exam period based on what we learnt from January period.

VPO: Online and in person events held in refreshers week were well attended with lots of student engagement. Looking at improvements for committee training, sustainability training this week and on Saturday a training day looking at domestic abuse and sexual violence prevention with company Tanda in the Lemon Grove. Also working with the AU and university to put on disability awareness training. Anti-spiking bottle tops available for committees. Streamlining of activities system so risk assessments are much smoother and quicker to fill out. Societies can request spikeys on online form and can book one on one meetings with the activities team. Also launch of 'give it a go on committee' students can run one-off society events even if not on committee – encourage students who may not be able to be full time committee member to get involved (i.e., WP students), develop employability skills and encourage other members to apply for committee roles.

CO-CMH: Working on go green theme in line with go green week which has received positive feedback from staff and students. Lockers and gender-neutral toilets available for all students.

7. FOR DISCUSSION: To explore whether PGR students, particularly those on the St Luke's campus, are adequately represented [student submission].

Student Q: Is there an update from the CO-DC (Doctoral College)?

SGC: CO-DC officer has not attended.

VPE: Regarding concerns for PGR space, got in touch with relevant people in various departments to make sure that they have all the pathways they need to apply for permanent desk space. There has been noise around maternity and fraternity policies in colleges which is currently being looked into. There are PGR talks planned later on this term focussing on 1) future of work 2) registration status of PGR students and how much support they are being given regarding access to supervisors and resources as well as their representation 3) the impact of referrals and timing of referrals on well-being and mental health. Also, a workshop coming up this term about how PGR representation should look with the new restricting. Looking to find a system that works for the unique situation that PGRs are in.

VPO: Currently working with the president of the Post Graduate Society on a few employability projects.

Student: The issue with St Luke's not specifically the officers – issue is the Guild structure and length of term that the officers have – no consistency meaning no improvements are being made to current lack of representation on St Luke's campus. No representation for PGR students on St Luke's from the Guild or the University regarding events or services offered. Something I have experienced for three and a half years of doing PhD – no matter how many CEOs or officers I speak to about the issue with St Luke's – same conversations and it's not going anywhere. Good example: offering bottle tops – students on St Luke's does not have easy access, coffee mornings not over on St Luke's, lack of in person events that are inequitable to St Luke's – NOT an officer issue it is a Guild structural issue. Length of term offices are held – unable to fix these structural issues. Community of people on St Luke's are being ignored – not inclusive. There needs to be a long-term plan for St Luke's – officers that only hold office for a year can never achieve long term goals for St Luke's because it is not long enough. Lack of societies that represent St Luke's. Good idea for societies to receive inclusivity badges for going over to St Luke's to hold events there.

CO-SSIS: Throughout time as CO strived to ensure that there is inclusivity regardless of campus location. Regardless of where you are located – students are equally covered as far as well-being concerned. Worked with PG Society to ensure that events, socials are being advertised to all students irrespective of campus location and on top of that with personal tutor review – actively participated and spoken to the DOE regarding implementations that St Luke's may have. From an SSIS perspective we have tried to include St Luke's as much as possible and spoken to CO-CMH about issues St Luke's may be facing.

Student: Reality is that students on St Luke's do not have equal access to wellbeing services, you have to travel to Streatham to attend a meeting in Reed Mews. Only welfare officer who comes to St Luke's is [CB] who is fantastic but there should be more support networks. No travel provisions to enable students from St Luke's to travel to Streatham via bus.

CO-SSIS: Well-being provisions is a central university decision but at the college level we are trying to ensure that given the fact that well-being is an issue throughout St Luke's as well as Streatham trying to open it for all students. A private mental health grant allows students across the colleges to access private mental health which is based on university and college funding to ameliorate any issues that the well-being services they may have.

VPO: We do need to improve the problems but there are answers to specific things mentioned. Refresher's week – 5 events on St Luke's campus which were fully booked (could still be more). Did try and book a stand at Cross Keys and have an event but unfortunately because of university's SLA we were not allowed. Also wanted to do a St Luke's society's freshers fair but unfortunately the societies over there were unable to for one reason or another. Spikey bottle stoppers – they can be collected from the Guild reception from St Luke's – will be made clearer in promotions. Inclusion badges – the criteria are that you are able to receive one once you host a number of events on the St Luke's campus, but this is definitely something that can be made a bigger thing and room to improve.

GP: Looking forward, the length of term for full-time officers is an issue. However, the likelihood of changing the length of term for full time officers is unlikely for lots of reasons. For example, if a person holds office for 2 years other students will not be given a fair chance at running for an election and if someone is not doing their job effectively 2 years of time is a long length of time to hold office for. A way of overcoming the problem regarding lack of inclusivity of St Luke's campus is that it is going to be embedded in the five-year strategy plan which is in the process of being planned as we speak. The longer-term support for St Luke's will be enabled through this long-term strategy and with full-time members then we should be able to overcome this problem. Once this strategy is finalised this will be communicated to students and hopefully the aforementioned points made by this student. Strategy is one thing but how it is operationalized is another so there will be feedback opportunities on how this strategy is embedded. There is a commitment to the fact we are working on this.

Student: Needs to be more energy within the Guild – more proactive attitudes for St Luke's efforts. PGRs struggling for various reasons – perhaps a wellbeing event can run exclusively to help them. Needs more social events – not necessarily a specific event needed – more chilled out events needed.

Action: GP: Something that definitely can be looked into. Different term times for students on St Luke's – can look at optimising use of the quad on the campus to run events during the summer. When weather is better the outdoor space can be utilised – making something where students can be involved in the process.

Action: VPE: In conversation with CO-DC regarding events that are in process of getting approved one of which is an event specifically for international students to be held on St Luke's utilising quad area – put in touch with Associate Dean for racial equality and inclusion. Unity pilot is in beginning stage but there is representation from the whole of the medical college – all of CMH included as well as Truro. CO-CMH and I can liaise a bit on how we use Unity on how to gather more widespread insight as to the sentiment around d what we could be doing better as well as improvements to guild structure.

Action: VPO: Can speak to activities about making sure that the promotion of spikeys is made clear on St Luke's.

Action: SSIS: Me and my team will physically go to St Luke's and see what it's like. Send out emails to GSC reps to make sure everyone is fine and if there is anything SSIS officers can do on our end. Long term issues can be resolved with meetings to ensure everything is done. If there are any other issues, we can talk to senior academics within GSC to ensure students perspectives as well as the way academics are going align with each other.

8. Any other business.

None.

Action Log (as of 18 March 2022)

Guild Council 2021/22 Action Tracker				
Meeting	Person	Action	Status	Date closed
09-Sep-21	Guild President	The Guild President will have the approved candidates informed of their approval. Update: done 20 Sept 2021.	Complete	20-Sep-21
09-Sep-21	Guild President & Student Governance Coordinator	The Guild President and the Student Governance Coordinator will send the byelaw changes to the Board of Trustees. Update: Trustees ratified changes 18 Oct 2021.	Complete	18-Oct-21
09-Sep-21	Guild President & Student Governance Coordinator	The Guild President and the Student Governance Coordinator will work with the Appointments Committee to select a Chair for Guild Council (ideally before the next meeting). Update: chair appointed.	Complete	26-Oct-21
06-Oct-21	Staff (Comms)	The Guild has highlighted wellbeing resources but will look into what information on abortion we could provide. Update: see https://www.exeterguild.org/news/article/7222/Resources-for-Wellbeing-Sexual-Health-Pregnancy-and-Contraception/	Complete	07-Oct-21
11-Nov-21	Student Governance Coordinator	SGC to upload the minutes with a log of actions. Update: see https://www.exeterguild.org/pageassets/voice/guildcouncil/GUILD-COUNCIL-2021.10.06-NOTES-approved.pdf	Complete	15-Nov-21
11-Nov-21	Vice President Opportunities	VPO to pick up with Nightline about their offer of training for student group committees. Update: working with Nightline on this.	Complete	22-Feb-22

11-Nov-21	Vice President Opportunities	VPO will take this feedback on potential training for student group committees to the Activities Team. Update: I've fed back to Activities and I am now working with the University to develop a bespoke Disability Awareness training session for societies and AU Clubs. I am also drafting a digital training session which outlines how societies can make their social media content more accessible.	Complete	19-Jan-22
30-Nov-21	Vice President Liberation & Equality	VPLE to meet with the Voice Team to discuss the proposed wellbeing forum further. Update: met with the Voice Team.	Complete	06-Dec-21
22-Feb-22	Guild President	Something that definitely can be looked into. Different term times for students on St Luke's – can look at optimising use of the quad on the campus to run events during the summer. When weather is better the outdoor space can be utilised – making something where students can be involved in the process.	In Progress	
22-Feb-22	Vice President Education	In conversation with CO-DC regarding events that are in process of getting approved one of which is an event specifically for international students to be held on St Luke's utilising quad area – put in touch with Associate Dean for racial equality and inclusion. Unity pilot is in beginning stage but there is representation from the whole of the medical college – all of CMH included as well as Truro. CO-CMH and I can liaise a bit on how we use Unitu on how to gather more widespread insight as to the sentiment around d what we could be doing better as well as improvements to guild structure.	In Progress	
22-Feb-22	Vice President Opportunities	Can speak to activities about making sure that the promotion of spikeys is made clear on St Luke's.	In Progress	
22-Feb-22	College Officer - SSIS	Me and my team will physically go to St Luke's and see what it's like. Send out emails to GSC reps to make sure everyone is fine and if there is anything SSIS officers can do on our end. Long term issues can be resolved with meetings to ensure everything is done. If there are any other issues, we can talk to senior academics within GSC to ensure students perspectives as well as the way academics are going align with each other.	In Progress	