

Meeting:	<b>SUMmit</b>
Location:	<b>Council Chamber</b>
Date & Time:	<b>Wednesday 27 March 2024 17:15 – 19:00</b>

**Present:**

Peter Irvine	Chair of Summit
David Lam	SU Activities Officer
Hanna Hajzer	SU Community Officer
Amber Snary	SU Education Officer
Abbie Watkin	SU Sport Officer
Aaron Horwood	Hall Rep Member
Akansha Matta	Peer Support Member
Anny Li	International Exec Member
Eesha Ganesh	Race Equality Chair
Jess Smith	Disability Action Group Chair
Joyeeta Kar	International Exec Member
Steven Kockaya	PGT Exec Member
Mahima Yadav	Hall Rep
Elliot Rose	Media Exec Member

**In attendance:**

Charlie Slack	Head of Student Voice and Engagement
Amy Young	Insight and Engagement Manager
Ryan Bird	Chief Executive
Melissa Oram	Student Voice Coordinator (Change & Inclusion)
Jackson Peace	Student Staff Member

**1. Welcome from the Chair**

The Chair welcomed members of SUMmit to the third meeting of 2023/24.

The minutes of the last meeting 19 February 2024 were approved as correct by members of SUMmit.

**1.1 Call for Statements Update**

The Chair gave an overview of the call for statements responses, 94 of which were received. Feedback from students was mixed, with some favoring a continuation of the current academic year schedule and others preferring a longer year with more breaks.

A member of Summit asked if PG students were also consulted; the call for statements went out to the entire student body but we do not currently have data on the breakdown of responses by UG/PG, but we can get this for a later date.

A member asked if a week's holiday would be in addition to a reading week or instead of. The proposer's suggestion is that it is holiday times during the academic year rather than specifically at the 6 week point of a semester.

The Activities Officer clarified that The SU do not decide on timetabling and can only lobby the

University for change.

The Head of Voice asked if it would be useful to get feedback from registry regarding any implications if the academic year shape changed. The proposer agreed that this would be helpful.

The paper will be shared with members of SUMmit after this meeting, to allow members to make an informed vote on next steps.

## 2. Apologies

Apologies were noted from:

- Jimena Alamo, SU President
- Titus Hiller, NUS Conference Delegate
- Lisa Shaw, Sports Exec Member
- Valerie Tsang, Activities Exec Member
- Dhanishtha Upadhyay, Diversity & Support Exec Member
- Lauren Wright, Feminism & Gender Equality Rep
- Caitlin Grainger-Spivey, Academic Exec Member
- Ishita Khattar, LGBT+ Rep
- Mandy Wilson-Garner, Deputy Chief Executive
- Kiara Singh, Peer Support Member

## 3. Proposed Standpoints Discussion:

### 3.1. Standpoint 1: The SU believes that all students must have access to a fair, equitable pathway to participation in all areas of university life in alignment with their gender identity.

Discussion:

The proposer introduced this standpoint, which had been carried over from the previous meeting of SUMmit.

- A member asked for clarification on what 'fair and equitable pathway' means. The proposer clarified that this refers to fairly considering all students' welfare, ensuring the right of the student, respecting their identity and safety and those of others. The proposer highlighted that students should not be disadvantaged due to their gender and stated that it is important for the SU to have this standpoint.
- One member asked which aspects of a student's life this standpoint could make a difference to. The proposer clarified that this could affect all areas of university life but especially sports participation and safe access to gendered spaces such as toilets.
- The proposer asked the Sports Officer for support with EDI issues within Sport. The Sport Officer said she believes things are getting better for inclusivity within sport & that The SU encourages use of gender-inclusive language, General Meetings, and mixed teams, however we are mandated to follow the rules set by the sport national governing body such as BUCS regarding transgender participation in sports. The Chair asked what would happen if The SU went against national guidance – The Sport Officer said that she did not know. We would likely have to boycott BUCS. The Chair asked if we know of any other SUs planning to boycott BUCS over transgender policies within sport; we do not.
- One member asked what the aim is of the standpoint. The proposer clarified that it is not only about sport. It is aimed to be a positive stance for transgender & gender non-conforming students to show that they are welcomed and included at Bath.

- The Sport Officer queried perceived shortcomings in The SU's current inclusivity efforts. The proposer said they will not go into personal details in this setting but detailed some difficult situations they have faced at university and general lack of support.
- One member suggested amending the wording around 'in alignment with their gender identity'.

The Chair asked for any final points or comments. The proposer made a final summary statement about the importance of the SU/university actively promoting and encouraging inclusivity in a widespread nature.

Members of SUMmit took an indicative poll to determine the next steps and with a vote of 10/13 decided to proceed to an online vote of SUMmit members to determine if the Standpoint should be adopted by the SU.

**Decision:** The Standpoint proposal will proceed to an online vote of SUMmit members

### **3.2. Standpoint 2: The SU believes that the University should provide model solutions, annotated examples, and official mark schemes for all past exam papers available.**

Discussion:

In the absence of the proposer, the Education Officer gave an overview of the standpoint, citing issues within Engineering and a general inconsistency across departments regarding access to past exam papers.

Members gave feedback on their own experiences:

- A member discussed their own experience studying Automotive Engineering which is a relatively new course, in which lecturers give annotated examples or tutorials.
- A member said they have taken courses across four departments, and across these the approach has differed hugely.
- A member agreed that there is no clear benchmark, and it needs to be fair for all with no discrepancies between marks.
- A member asked if this could be extended beyond exams to include essays and coursework with annotated examples and raised a broader concern around marking being subjective.
- A member asked if it is already standard practice to communicate that essays and exams can be moderated by more than one lecturer which leads to discrepancies in what lecturers want from students, and asked if the standpoint can be broadened to include this.

Members of SUMmit took an indicative poll to determine the next steps and with a vote of 12/13 decided to proceed to an online vote of SUMmit members to determine if the Standpoint should be adopted by the SU.

**Decision:** The Standpoint proposal will proceed to an online vote of SUMmit members.

### **3.3. Standpoint 3: The SU believes in reasonable and justified tuition fees for international students on placement.**

Discussion:

The Education Officer presented this standpoint, which has come from the Academic Exec, after a

member of the Academic Exec shared her experience of paying £12,000 as an international student on placement.

- A member queried whether we are just asking for more transparency of what fees go towards. A member responded that there is already quite a bit of transparency, but that she really considered if it was worth doing a placement year due to the high cost.
- The Chair asked what has come up during the current Education Officer's term. The Education Officer responded that massive concerns have been raised over high fees for international students. The SU President has also been approached about this issue.
- The Education Officer believes that international students are bearing the brunt of home student fees being capped.
- A member gave their experience of members raising concerns to the Race Equality committee around high placement fees, especially as Visa holders' working hours are also capped. There are also widespread EDI concerns around excessive placement fees, which put lots of financial pressure on international students, with cases where some international students work full time whilst studying full time. The Activities Officer asked if we have specific examples of this happening at Bath. One member reported knowing students who have fainted due to lack of sleep and excessive working hours.
- One member suggested that it is encouraged at colleges and sixth forms that international students work to support their studies at university, so international students come to university with this mindset.

Members of SUMmit took an indicative poll to determine the next steps and with a vote of 13/13 decided to proceed to an online vote of SUMmit members to determine if the Standpoint should be adopted by the SU.

**Decision:** The Standpoint proposal will proceed to an online vote of SUMmit members

#### **3.4. Standpoint 4: The SU believes that the University should open more safe and quiet spaces on campus and in the city for use by students.**

The proposer presented the standpoint, explaining that this is a project which has been worked on for a couple of years by the Disability Action Group (DAG) with the Accessibility Committee and that the project is projected to take 5 years. The Standpoint has been submitted to ensure prolonged commitment from the SU.

- The Chair expressed his support for this standpoint.
- One member asked if the proposer thinks there are not enough quiet spaces on campus now. The proposer said there is the sensory space in library, triage spaces in the Roper Centre and a rest room but that this is not enough.
- One member agreed there should be this kind of space in the city but queried how feasible this is. The proposer explained that we have Dartmouth Avenue and the Virgil Building in the city and currently a company is doing an accessibility audit of university spaces to determine how accessible spaces are and what could be improved.
- The Education Officer gave further context about the current campus spaces; the only space on campus where you can be alone is the rest room upstairs as other spaces are open to multiple people and are used by staff & students. Concerns have been raised about using that space for a breastfeeding/pregnancy room. The proposer clarified that there is a need to have both spaces.

- One member asked what a 'safe and quiet space' is. The proposer explained that AccessAble clarify 'safe' as a space for those in crisis or distress who need privacy whereas a 'quiet' space is a low sensory space.
- One member asked how many students use safe/quiet spaces. The library has some data on rooms such as the sensory room. The member asked where the proposer thinks spaces like this rank in terms of priority if it is not a legal requirement to have these spaces. The proposer agreed that the Uni has financial restraints around space generally.
- One member asked if the standpoint can be broadened to include 'the university should have more spaces in general, including safe/quiet spaces' as it is already hard to find study spaces in general on campus. The Chair clarified that this has already been a standpoint at SUMmit (November 2021).

Members of SUMmit took an indicative poll to determine the next steps and with a vote of 12/13 decided to proceed to an online vote of SUMmit members to determine if the Standpoint should be adopted by the SU.

**Decision:** The Standpoint proposal will proceed to an online vote of SUMmit members.

*Members took a five-minute break.*

#### **4. Officer updates/ Questions to Officers**

Officer updates had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair asked if members had any questions for Officers.

##### *Transport*

One member asked about GPS' in buses and if there is an update on this, which is one of the Top Ten items. The Sport Officer clarified that we are going to be doing a secret shopper activity on First Buses to evidence that the GPS system has not improved, despite First Bus pledging to replace their GPS system by March.

First Bus have taken over the 22 route, but the number of buses will not be increased due to the congestion along the route.

##### *Housing*

One member asked if there is room for working towards the housing Top Ten in conjunction with the bus Top Ten, as students are moving out towards areas covered by the 22 Route. The Sport Officer offered to speak to the SU President for her response. This was also covered in Questions to Candidates by the SU President.

##### *Other*

One member asked if there is a prospect of a marking and assessment boycott this year. The Education Officer responded that UCU have suggested that there is not going to be one this year.

#### **5. Any other business**

No other business was raised by SUMmit members.

**The SUMmit meeting finished at 18:55.**