

KE Meeting 4 - Minutes
18.12.2019

Attended:

Yacopo Baldacchino	Matthew Xuereb	Elsa Cassar
Omar Chircop	Clint Meli	Sandrine Borg
Beppe Galea	Nicola Kirkpatrick	Rachel Micallef
Yasmine Ellul	Celine Cuschieri Debono	Jake Alex Gauci
Michael Piccinino	Jillian Spiteri	Naomi Deguara
Cristina Aquilina	Sarah Ebejer	Bernice Bonello

Excused:

Chris Grech	Daniel Vella	Chiara Vassallo
Mattea Fenech	Edward Degabriele	Matthew Gauci
Nico Muscat		

- Approval of Agenda

Agenda approved nem con

- Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes approved nem con

- Students Charter

Yacopo Baldacchino: Last meeting we discussed the general points on the Students' Charter. The Education Commissioner gave a brief description on the Charter and explained that we shall be attempting to make it legally binding. The plan, as we mentioned last meeting was to set up a task force to amend the Charter, however, this was not possible since not enough people applied to be in the task force and it was no longer feasible.

Matthew Xuereb: Some issues that we face many complaints from the students on are timetables, exam dates and scheduling. So these need to be amended, especially since the collective agreement with the staff is being amended. We need to work on this so I encourage you to help us. The collective agreement will pass through Council so if a student representative on council is present in the task force, we can have updates. Rather than going for the measures that are in the Charter currently, which were amended last year, we should opt for a set of principles. This is the first step to compile measures which can be enforced.

Yacopo Baldacchino: The task force will be in charge of the specifics and there will be lobbying with University.

Omar Chircop: Last year we mentioned that we cannot specify any enforcement measures but we can mention that such measures should be in place.

Matthew Xuereb: Would anyone volunteer to become part of the Students' Charter Task Force? The proposal is to compile a set of principles and measures so that we can have a discussion about what can be changed.

Yasmine Ellul: Last year there were discussions about the Students' Charter. What happened to these discussions?

Matthew Xuereb: Yacopo and myself feel that last year's approach in this matter wasn't the best. The Commission has every right to present the work again.

Yasmine Ellul: As long as the valid points that were made are built upon.

A Students' Charter Task Force meeting was scheduled for the 8th February.

- KE Reform

Yacopo Baldacchino: I made this point to discuss the state of the Commission in general and whether it is working effectively this year. Something that I think should be discussed is the fact that the term of a student representative lasts for two years. I personally think it should be less.

Matthew Xuereb: I tend to agree with the length of the term since for the sake of Faculty Board, there should be a sense of continuity.

Michael Piccinino: When it comes to Senate there needs to be continuity. For example, the changes in undergraduate regulations took years.

Yacopo Baldacchino: What worries me is that student representatives become less active at the end of their term. Since most University courses last three or four years, one often becomes a student rep after the first year so a lot of student reps end up being representatives whilst not being students themselves

Matthew Xuereb: Once I graduate, I still hold the position so it's important to consider if it would still be relevant if I would have started a postgraduate career. I think the term should stop once a student representative has graduated

Yasmine Ellul: You have the option to resign or to remain if you have graduated

Sarah Ebejer: You, as the Education Office, could approach the person to ask if they would like to remain as representatives.

Matthew Xuereb: I don't think it should be from KSU's end

Michael Piccinino: I don't know whether the term of a student representative can be amended. The way forward is that in the case of undergraduate, the term finishes once they graduate. For postgraduate students it would be different. If it is not difficult to change, it would make sense to add attendance to KE meetings to the role of a student representative.

Yacopo Baldacchino: Is there anything within KE that you think should change, both in the short term and long term?

Omar Chircop: I think we should add a group chat between us

Yacopo Baldacchino: Is there enough communication with the faculties?

Celine Cuschieri Debono: I think there is communication, but the question is whether they are acknowledging what we're saying.

Matthew Xuereb: There is a lot of bureaucracy in Faculty Board meetings.

Matthew Xuereb: Whereas student organisations have a role in educational policy, student representatives don't have a role in social policy matters. There needs to be a structure where the two are combined in some way. The question is whether there should be only one Commission that works on all policy, or two separate ones that work together.

Yasmine Ellul: Student organisations could be invited to KE meetings and student representatives could be invited to KPS meetings.

Omar Chircop: I would rather if the current structure is improved. For example if the student organisations are invited to KE meetings, since they are already being involved in academic matters.

Matthew Xuereb: If there was an official merging of the two Commissions, both representatives and organisations would have votes.

Yasmine Ellul: I believe such meetings would be more effective and the products would be more substantial.

Matthew Xuereb: The Commission needs to be more involved when it comes to matters discussed during the meetings. If there was such a streamlined system, maybe there would be more interest.

Yasmine Ellul: Meetings need to be scheduled from beforehand, especially if the two Commissions are joined. There isn't enough knowledge about student representation

Matthew Xuereb: If the Commissions were to be merged, student reps would have an equal vote as a student organisation

Yasmine Ellul: It could be that they wouldn't have an equal vote. It depends on how many members a student organisation has

Michael Piccinino: There are organisations, like SDM and Pulse that represent a lot of people

Yacopo Baldacchino: Apart from that, there would be more votes for the bigger Faculties whilst ignoring the needs of smaller institutes and centres.

Matthew Xuereb: Currently there cannot be voting in KE/KPS meetings.

Michael Piccinino: Going back to the point of the reform, KE meetings should be part of the Education Act.

Omar Chircop: I think there should be mutual support and communication between student representatives and organisations.

- Student Representative Campaign

Yacopo Baldacchino: In past years, there used to be campaigns for student representative elections. Photos used to be taken and posted on social media. These were, in my opinion, not as effective as they could have been. The plan is to combine this with articles about the work of the student reps within Faculty Board and within the Commission. The hope is that more people become aware of the work of the Commission and they get to know who the student reps are. The tentative dates for this are February/March.

- Other Matters

Michael Piccinino: Keep in mind the changes to the undergraduate regulations for the upcoming examination period. There is also a review of the postgraduate regulations so take note if there are any of the regulations that you think should be changed.