



KE Meeting 1 - Minutes 20.08.2019

Attended:

Yacopo Baldacchino	Matthew Xuereb	Michael Piccinino
Chiara Vassallo	Rebekah Attard Trevisan	Celine Cuschieri Debono
Naomi Deguara	Christian Aquilina (KSU)	Matthew Gauci
Kyle Mangani	Chris Grech	

Excused:

Clint Meli	Edward Degabriele	Elisa June Campbell
Denise Gatt	Luca Spiteri Monsigneur	Nicole Busuttil
Nicola Kirkpatrick	Mattea Fenech	Omar Chircop
Chaya Fenech	GUG	Yasmine Ellul
Clive Seychell	Naomi Attard	Beppe Galea
Kleaven Pisani	Nico Muscat	

Absent:

Lara Attard	Anne Camilleri	Matthew Vella
Martina Tabone	Owen Grech	Jillian Spiteri
Raiden Psaila	James Nicholas Delia Spiteri Cornish	Adam Pace
Laura Cuschieri	Owen Micallef	Yolande Newton
Anthony Rizzo	Sabrina Abugrin	Yvette Farrugia



Johann Agius	Jean Karl Micallef Grimaud	Robert Tabone
Anthony David Brincat	Nathan Gatt	Roderick Bonello
Julian Demicoli	Clive Seychell	Joslyn Saliba
Gabriel Mallia	Myron Jose Agius	Duncan Muscat
Karl Andrew Schembri	Eunice Bonello	Ernie Christ Farrugia
Matteo Camilleri	Damian Cuschieri	Charlotte Axisa
Nigel Micallef		

1. Approval of Agenda

All in favour

2. Approval of Minutes

Michael Piccinino: the minutes of the last KE meeting need to be arranged to include the full names and surnames of the people speaking.

3. Introduction

Matthew Xuereb: Would you mind if I record the meeting? To facilitate things, we can discuss including the possibility of recording KE meetings in the standing orders.

Matthew Xuereb: We can also discuss the possibility of the KE meeting being livestreamed.

Chiara Vassallo: I don't believe this should be included in the standing orders because it depends on the topic

Matthew Xuereb: Having a recording of the KE meetings would increase accountability.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: When we were elected as student representatives we received an email for contact information so the reps can be informed that KE meetings are going to be recorded.



Matthew Xuereb: It shouldn't be a problem to include the recording with the minutes so that everyone would have a reference of what was discussed.

Michael Piccinino: I wouldn't be comfortable with the recording going around but I wouldn't mind that the Council's records include the recording. This is because the recording can be taken out of context.

Yacopo Baldacchino: Obviously, we know that the attendance is what it is and that students are not coming to meetings so it's important to attend and encourage other student reps to attend. I know that everyone has work commitments and other personal matters but these meetings are important.

4. Standing Orders

Yacopo Baldacchino: I have sent the amended standing orders by email

Matthew Xuereb: These are proposals for amendments to be discussed so nothing is final

Michael Piccinino: it would make sense that today we agree on the principle and they are sent by email and voted for by email.

Yacopo Baldacchino:

2.2. The Board of Discipline shall also be responsible for the enforcement of these standing orders. The interpretation of the Board of Discipline is the definitive interpretation.

Michael Piccinino: I can see the intention of the point, but I think it should be placed as the last point as it is not a definition and that the wording should be changed. The board of discipline is not tasked with enforcement and in fact, the Education Commissioner is given this task in 2.1. The point should state that the Board of Discipline is empowered to investigate, interpret and take action as required on the Standing Orders, according to the KSU Statute and their decision can only be challenged by the appeal procedures according to the statute.

Matthew Xuereb: if the commissioner has the power to interpret the standing orders when they are regulating the commission there is a conflict of interest



Michael Piccinino: if something comes up during a meeting, someone has to take a decision if something happens. This can be appealed later but someone has to be in the position to decide. According to the statute, the final decision is either that of the board of discipline or the board of appeal but enforcement has to be the duty of the commissioner

Celine Cuschieri Debono: what is the fine line that divides the competence of the Commissioner to interpret the standing orders and take decisions to the regulation of the KE meeting and where the competence of the Board of Discipline starts.

Matthew Xuereb: The point where someone feels that the Commissioner has broken a rule, it becomes the competence of the board of discipline

Chiara Vassallo: if I'm not mistaken, the board of discipline comes into effect when the statute or standing orders are not abided by.

Michael Piccinino: or when there is a question of interpretation

Chiara Vassallo: but there was a possibility that the statute was not abided by. If a motion was approved the board cannot intervene.

Michael Piccinino: the board can agree that they shouldn't intervene

Matthew Xuereb: there is a right to appeal to the board

Chris Grech: we can arrange it to the board intervenes when the statute and standing orders are not abided to.

Michael Piccinino: keep in mind that the standing orders are subsidiary to statute

Celine Cuschieri Debono: why don't we include an exhaustive list?

Michael Piccinino: that has to be in the statute not in the standing orders

Celine Cuschieri Debono: they would still have an interpretive feature since they would be interpreting if there is actually a breach but what can constitute a breach needs to be listed

Michael Piccinino: a breach is anything that goes against the statute



Michael Piccinino: there is something written about interpretation somewhere

Celine Cuschieri Debono: I agree that if there is a breach the board should intervene but not if it's in the spirit.

Chiara Vassallo: the way Michael is suggesting is just reiterating what is already written in the statute.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: I am proposing that this needs to be supplemented by a list for the sake of clarity

Chiara Vassallo: you would be having a lot of avenues for loopholes

Rebekah Attard Trevisan: I like the way it has been written

Yacopo Baldacchino: Part of point 2.3 was changed from "two representatives elected by the students on each Board of an institute/centre/school with a minimum of 100 students" to "two representatives elected by the students on each Board of an institute/centre/school". Student reps coming from institutes and centres having less than 100 students did not have a vote which was not just, although the point is debatable.

Chiara Vassallo: realistically, smaller institutes and centres are the ones that need most help

Michael Piccinino: I don't have a problem with changing it since it was never enforced. From a practical perspective, they do not have the two people that may be elected. The number is part of the law within the education act. The discussion we should be having is whether we should allow the student reps elected to vote. There are arguments on both sides.

Chris Grech: if they are being elected, why shouldn't they have a vote. The decisions taken by the commission are affecting all students, irrespective of the size of the course.

Chris Grech: attendance in KE meetings can only increase

Chiara Vassallo: regarding this point, there is a part that states that for faculties 3 student reps are elected, isn't this supposed to be 2 student reps

Yacopo Baldacchino: no there are 2 undergrad and 1 postgrad



Yacopo Baldacchino: 3.1. Meetings should be held not less than once every three (3) months according to Article 18.1.13 of the KSU statute.

Yacopo Baldacchino: Basically, there was typo in this point.

Yacopo Baldacchino: 3.8.1. A student representative will also lose their vote, following being absent to half of the KE meetings or more, even if they have been excused. This does not apply to students on Erasmus, as long as they inform the Education Office prior to departure.

Yacopo Baldacchino: this is quite controversial

Michael Piccinino: the idea is really good, because the need has been there for many years. The problem is that if I were to be elected in February, between February and May there will only be approximately one meeting so if a student rep misses this meeting they will lose their vote.

Kyle Mangani: this needs to be regulated by comparing to the term

Chris Grech: there may always be genuine cases so sick notes need to be taken into consideration

Matthew Xuereb: if someone feels that the commission is important and they are not healthy enough to attend meetings, then it is your responsibility to resign

Chris Grech: KE does not define the student rep

Matthew Xuereb: we are saying, failing to attend half the KE meetings throughout the year

Michael Piccinino: the minimum, however, is 4 meetings during the year so if you fail to attend 2 you will lose the right to vote

Kyle Mangani: eventually a meeting should be held with the dean if student reps are not attending the KE meetings

Matthew Xuereb: we can add a clause in case of health issues and Erasmus

Rebekah Attard Trevisan: what if the Student Representatives are abroad not in the case of Erasmus



Chris Grech: it stems from the problem that KE meetings are planned haphazardly

Kyle Mangani: it would make sense for a calendar of dates to be proposed

Chris: excused should not be used for work purposes

Celine Cuschieri Debono: I don't think the excused should be removed but better enforced. A sick certificate or plane tickets should be provided.

Yacopo Baldacchino: in the standing orders a valid excuse is mentioned, but what constitutes a valid excuse?

Celine Cuschieri Debono: we should define what a valid excuse is

Matthew Xuereb: it could be amended to include Erasmus and going abroad for reasons related to representation

Kyle Mangani: I'm understanding your point because this will very likely happen once, it doesn't make sense for a Student Representative to be excused for going on holiday for all the meetings

Celine Cuschieri Debono: a valid reason must be given

Naomi Deguara: but what constitutes a valid reason?

Michael Piccinino: Valid reasons should be listed, including sickness and in certain cases, going abroad

Celine Cuschieri Debono: you are proposing that not even one meeting you can miss?

Matthew Xuereb: it doesn't count for the consecutive meetings that you would need to miss to lose the vote

Celine Cuschieri Debono: it needs to be clearly stated for which point it needs to be applied

Matthew Xuereb: going abroad for reasons related to representation of youths or students

Kyle Mangani: should we include going abroad for sports

Matthew Xuereb: should someone like that take up the role of a Student Representative?



Chris Grech: no one here is committed solely to KE

Celine Cuschieri Debono: With the same argument, we need to choose between being a student representative and in a student organisation

Matthew Xuereb: this is for missing half the meetings

Yacopo Baldacchino: 4.5. The Quorum of the Commission is one fourth (1/4) of all the representative members and is at the discretion of the Education Commissioner.

Chiara Vassallo: at the discretion of the education commissioner makes me extremely uneasy

Michael Piccinino: I don't agree that the education commissioner has discretion because there is a possibility that if the 4 student reps that attended the KE meeting agree with him, he will hold the meeting but if not it will be postponed. I think it's a temporary solution.

4.5. The Quorum of the Commission is one fourth (1/4) of all the representative members. If after 30 minutes this number is not reached, the members present make up the Quorum.

Chris Grech: many organisations do it in this way

Michael Piccinino: the percentage of students that attended KSU's AGM this year was not proportionate to the amount of students in the university

Chiara Vassallo: even when taking large organisations into consideration

Michael Piccinino: if the document is sent by email there is no excuse that they won't see it

Michael Piccinino: this gives us time to reflect on how to amend the situation

Celine Cuschieri Debono: there isn't a way to make the KE meetings compulsory?

Michael Piccinino: student reps are elected by the university so KE is not compulsory

Matthew Xuereb: I would suggest having separate reps elected within KSU and there is a parallel system

Chiara Vassallo: the only times when there is a good turnout is exactly after the elections and at the election for commissioner



Matthew Xuereb: we all need to make an effort. As KSU we will be speaking to all the student reps individually. We need to find ways of how to inspire motivation in these reps since they have already been elected.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: go through the list and speak to the reps that are not attending the meetings individually. Don't make it too formal.

Yacopo Baldacchino: 4.7.1. Proxies are to be sent by email to the Education Office, 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting, and submit a physical copy in to the Education Commissioner directly. Should the Education Commissioner be unavailable, the proxy can be handed in at the KSU Office as long as the Commissioner is informed.

Michael Piccinino: I would amend it to simply sending by email

Matthew Xuereb: I don't agree. The procedure for the election needs to be set in the statute not in the standing orders. The procedure of the election needs to be purely the responsibility of the electoral commission

Michael Piccinino: the standing orders are in the meantime until an AGM is held. The proxy should be received by email since there is a timestamp

Matthew Xuereb: how are we going to define what the email is? there is a technical aspect. The way it is currently, it is not defined in the statute what the email of the commission is

Michael Piccinino: the official email of the commissioner and proxies are not only for the election

Matthew Xuereb: the education commissioner should have no role in the election

Yacopo Baldacchino: this isn't related to the election, this is about proxies. The election will be discussed later.

Naomi Deguara: the email of the commissioner not commission

Michael Piccinino: the email must be of the commissioner in the case that in the future the commissioner and coordinator have different roles



Matthew Xuereb: we need to include appendices with the standing orders showing a template of the proxy

4.7.1. Proxies are to be sent by official email to the Education Office, 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting.

Yacopo Baldacchino: 5.1. The election for the next KE Commissioner is to be called by the Electoral Commission set on the date of the KSU Annual General Meeting.

5.1. The election for the next KE Commissioner is to be called and run by the Electoral Commission appointed on the date of the KSU Annual General Meeting.

Yacopo Baldacchino: 5.2. The Education Commissioner is to publish a list of the student representatives who have lost their vote due to absenteeism prior to the election.

Michael Piccinino: we need to define what it means to publish

Matthew Xuereb: notice on the KSU noticeboard and by email

Michael Piccinino: the list should be of the student reps that are allowed to vote for transparency purposes

Michael Piccinino: we only see who is allowed to vote for the election, however, the commission votes in every meeting so technically if someone lost their vote before today, not only for the election. The list needs to be updated regularly, not just for the vote taken for the commissioner. It is the responsibility of the commissioner to keep track of the students that have a right to vote.

Matthew Xuereb: what I'm proposing is that after the AGM, the commissioner loses his powers

Michael Piccinino: this has to be done through a statute change. In the meantime, we need appropriate standing orders.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: there were students that were excused but were listed as absent



Michael Piccinino: the point is that they had to read the minutes and point out any errors. I think the chair of the education commission should compile the list but what we need to agree on is how one can challenge the list

Matthew Xuereb: once the AGM has happened, it would become the duty of the education commissioner to pass a copy of the minutes to the electoral commission and they decide who has a right to vote. This would make the election independent.

Michael Piccinino: if someone is going to lose their vote, they should be informed beforehand and given the chance to justify if there is a mistake.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: I'm arguing for when there is a mistake in the minutes

Yacopo Baldacchino: if there is a mistake it is the responsibility of the representative to inform us

Michael Piccinino: once the minutes are approved, they can never be amended.

Matthew Xuereb: someone that surprises me is that no one ever contests what is said during the meeting

Michael Piccinino: my final point is that the final list is passed by the minutes

Matthew Xuereb: however, then the electoral commission needs to have an email

Michael Piccinino: they do have an email, kummissjoni@gmail.com. The commission is autonomous and decides what email it wants to use

Yacopo Baldacchino: 5.2. The Education Commissioner is to publish a list of the student representatives who have the right to vote prior to the election. By email and noticeboard. List has to be updated throughout the year. Commissioner needs to send the minutes to the electoral commission.

Yacopo Baldacchino: We shall now discuss point 10.

Matthew Xuereb: The scope for this is that there is a procedure to follow if any issues arise. The committee would only have consultative power.



Michael Piccinino: we need to define which student organisations are concerned

Matthew Xuereb: the commission should decide which organisations would be concerned for each faculty.

Michael Piccinino: We need to add an annex including all the organisations that would be included if an issue arises. We also need to add a point stating that other entities shall be consulted based on the circumstances.

Yacopo Baldacchino: I added the arising committees to the standing committees instead of replacing them because the purpose of the standing committees is to publish a report on the important points discussed during Faculty Board meetings. This was not done in previous years.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: do you think that there are enough Faculty Board meetings?

Yacopo Baldacchino: should we do this every semester?

Michael Piccinino: Every semester or as requested by a member.

5. Students' Charter

Matthew Xuereb: as a council, we are going to insist that this becomes binding.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: how do you propose this is done?

Matthew Xuereb: through pressure as a commission and having a proper resolution. Even if we need to remove certain points. UMASA should be consulted in the discussions.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: pressure needs to be high on this issue.

6. KSU Subcommittee

Yacopo Baldacchino: If you'd like to apply to be part of the subcommittee, there is a link in the Facebook page

Michael Piccinino: send a link in the next email

7. Standing Committees



Yacopo Baldacchino: We already discussed these during the point on the standing orders. We shall keep the standing committees as is and the report shall be issued every semester or as requested.

8. Student Representative Promotion

Yacopo Baldacchino: We need to see how to increase attendance and promotion of who the student representatives are and the work they are doing

Celine Cuschieri Debono: we need to appeal more to students by shooting videos of the student reps and asking informal questions.

Yacopo Baldacchino: I had an idea to collaborate with university media organisations during the elections for student reps in November and February.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: we should take this a step further and get the nominees for student reps to debate between themselves

Michael Piccinino: I am very weary of this since the role of the student rep is dependent of arising issues

9. Rent a Toga

Yacopo Baldacchino: If you can promote the initiative with students from your respective faculties it would be a big help.

10. Other Matters

Matthew Xuereb: Barts' Medical School is a very pertinent issue and at some stage we may call for an Emergency KE. We might have to propose a resolution.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: There is a problem regarding Administrative Law in our faculty and we are trying to push for the genuine cases. Until now we had no reply so we shall send a reminder.

Matthew Xuereb: We will be handling this problem with the registrar.



Celine Cuschieri Debono: There is an issue with regards to the dissertation since some marks have not been issued

Christian Aquilina: The deadline of 5th August applies only to study units not dissertations but it depends on the board of examiners.

Celine Cuschieri Debono: They responded that there were more than a 100 vivas and results are being published as they come. We asked if they will have enough time to resubmit the dissertation should they fail it and the response was that students have 6 months to resubmit and we will look at them on a case by case basis.

Michael Piccinino: university is taking very long to reply to students applying for postgraduate whether the course shall be opening or not. This is especially detrimental to foreign students.

Rebekah Attard Trevisan: they need to make it appoint to inform the students of possible other entry points that the courses offer.