

# Council Minutes

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Week Michaelmas Term 2016

3<sup>rd</sup> Week Council was held at 5:30pm on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2016, at Garden Quad Reception Room, St John's College.

We aim to make Council as accessible as possible, and ensure that it is always in accessible venues. However, if there are any accessibility requirements that we are not meeting for yourself or others, please contact OUSU's Democratic Support Officer at [dso@ousu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dso@ousu.ox.ac.uk). If you have any questions about OUSU Council, please feel free to contact the Chair, Matthew Dawe, at [chair@ousu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:chair@ousu.ox.ac.uk).

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
- c. Elections in Council
- d. Reports from and questions to the Sabbatical Officers, Executive Officers, Representatives of the OUSU Campaigns and RAG (*Raise and Give*)
- e. Items for Resolution
  - 1. Urging the Oxford University Press to withdraw its appeal in the Rameshwari Photocopy Services case before the Delhi High Court
  - 2. Higher Education Bill
- Below the Line\*
  - 3. Consequential amendments to Campaign constitutions
  - 4. Co-option of Student Trustee
- f. Items for Debate
- g. Any Other Business

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### a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

No issues raised

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### b. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None.

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### c. Elections in Council

#### **Consultative Committee for Health and Safety** – Connor Broyles (Christ Church)

Hust requested. CB gave a overview of experience from work

Connor Broyles-48

Ron-6

**Was elected**

#### **Graduate International Students' Officer** – Connor Broyles (Christ Church)

Hust requested. CB introduced themselves and gave overview of experience from the US.

Connor Broyles-39

Ron-8

**Was elected**

**Graduate Women's Officer** – Catherine White (St Edmund Hall)

Hust requested. Candidate wasn't present.

Catherine White-37

Ron-11

**Was elected**

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**d. Reports from and questions to the Sabbatical Officers, Executive Officers, Representatives of the OUSU Campaigns and RAG (*Raise and Give*)**

**REPORTS**

**Jack Hampton** (St Catherine's)-A lot of committees and meetings. Preparing for the Universities vote on the TEF. This involves meeting with the voting the members of Council. Jack also ran a new training workshop for Common Room officers, looking at team strategy and accountability.

**Marina Lambrakis** (St John's)-Lots of committees. Grad accommodation a lot of work going on to guarantee accommodation for 1<sup>st</sup> year Grad and International Grad students. Additionally looking at provision for Part Time students Higher Education and research Bill and this has taken up a lot of time. International week is happening in 5<sup>th</sup> week-International Students Campaign working on.

**Beth Currie** (Corpus)-Zero waste week and homeless awareness week. Next week is Living Wage Week. Veggie Pledge also launched today 26/10/16. Applications for community wardens in East Oxford have been extended.

**Orla White** (Brasenose)- Harrassment policy pictures up on the Womcam Page. Working along standardized Sexual Harassment policies amongst colleges. Next couple of weeks first respondents training. Any CR Presidents who have been receiving the hate-mail letters, OUSU are taking them to the policy for investigation.

**Eden Bailey** (VP Accaff) and Sandy Downs (VP WEO) absent as at NUS Zones Conference but council encouraged to email in for questions.

**Marina Lambrakis** informs council that her two Part Time Exec officers have stepped down. Marina will inform scrutiny committee.

**Orla White** (Brasenose) informs that Eden Bailey (VP Accaff) was elected into NUS's Higher Education Zone Committee.

No verbal reports from PTE or Campaign Chairs.

**Eoin Monaghan** (Oriol)-Is there any more CR Exec training?

**Jack Hampton** (St Catherine's) replied there is a smaller training on the 5<sup>th</sup> November and a bigger training event taking place in Hilary.

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## **e. Items for Resolution**

### 1. Urging the Oxford University Press to withdraw its appeal in the Rameshwari Photocopy Services case before the Delhi High Court

#### **Council Notes:**

1. The Delhi High Court in the case of *the Chancellor, Masters and the Scholars of the University of Oxford, trading as Oxford University Press v. Rameshwari Photocopy Service*, permitted the photocopying of certain course materials.
2. That the Oxford University Press has filed an appeal against this judgment before a larger bench of the Delhi High Court, scheduled to be heard on 29 November 2016.
3. That the authors and academics published by the Oxford University Press have recognized the social consequences of this decision and have opposed the filing of the original lawsuit.
4. That the case found that, contrary to the publisher's stance, Oxford University Press have not and will not suffer any significant losses by allowing students to photocopy excerpts of academic works for course packs.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. That the court's verdict protected the right of the students in India to have an affordable and meaningful education.
2. That the decision of the Oxford University Press to appeal the decision ignores the tremendous resource constraints with which students and institutions in developing countries are faced, and the many economic hurdles they have to overcome to access knowledge goods.
3. That if the Oxford University Press is successful in its appeal, it will result in an increase in the cost of higher education in India to the extent that higher education in India will be inaccessible to all but a privileged few
4. That it is disappointing for a University Press, affiliated to a University which strongly believes in devising ways for securing equitable access to knowledge, and instituting open access regimes with greater reach, to pursue such an aggressive litigation in a developing country.
5. It is important to support better access to education for students across the world, in line with existing OUSU policy.

#### **Council Resolves:**

- 1) To condemn this decision of the Oxford University Press to appeal the decision of the Delhi High Court.
- 2) To urge the Oxford University Press to withdraw their appeal before the Delhi High Court.
- 3) To mandate the OUSU Sabbatical officers to take all possible efforts to convince the Oxford University Press to withdraw their appeal before the Delhi Court.
- 4) To support the open letter to the Delegacy of the Oxford University Press by the students, urging them to withdraw their appeal.
- 5) To encourage all members associated with Oxford presently or in the past, to sign the above-mentioned open letter.
- 6) To continue OUSU's commitment to supporting better access to education for students.

**Proposed:** Gopika Murthy Lekshmi (Exeter)

**Seconded:** Arushi Garg (Magdalen)

Proposer and seconder of the motion were invited to speak for the motion, however were not present.

**Marina Lambrakis** (St John's)-Procedural motion to move the motion to the next OUSU Council.

51 For

0 Against

2 Absentions

**Motion Moved to 5<sup>th</sup> Week OUSU Council (9<sup>th</sup> November 2016)**

## 2. Higher Education Bill

### **Council Notes:**

1. OUSU has policy to oppose tuition fees and to campaign for free education.
2. The Higher Education Bill proposes to link fees to a measure of teaching excellence called the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The TEF will assess universities and colleges based on metrics of graduate employment, student retention and student satisfaction, as well as taking into account additional evidence submitted.
3. Stage two of the TEF will be used to determine what level of fee increase English universities are allowed – up to a maximum of a rise in line with inflation. This will result in a differentiated system of tuition fees where institutions deemed to be “excellent” will be able to charge higher levels than other institutions in the sector.
4. Later stages of TEF indicate that differential fee levels between subjects will be considered.
5. All existing evidence focusing on access to Higher Education highlights that debt aversion disproportionately affects prospective students from the least socio-economically privileged backgrounds alongside other underrepresented groups when applying to university.
6. The power to decide whether to enter TEF lies with the University of Oxford.
7. OUSU contributed extensively to the feedback on the Green and White Papers that preceded the Bill, opposing the majority of proposals.
8. The Government has already turned maintenance grants and NHS bursaries into loans, curtailed the disabled students’ allowance and allowed interest to be charged on student loans.
9. The government’s decision to allow interest to be charged on student loans is in breach of the contracts that students signed, together with breaking the promise made to many university applicants.
10. These policies leave the poorest students with more than £53,000 debt after three years’ undergraduate study.
11. The participation rate increase for the poorest students has stagnated and 18-year-olds from the most disadvantaged backgrounds are 2.4 times less likely to apply.
12. If the TEF is implemented, fees could reach £11,697 by 2025-26.
13. The University of Oxford has already indicated to OFFA that they may increase fees for the 2017/18 academic year to £9,250 for new and continuing students.

### **Council Believes:**

1. That fee increases resulting from entry into TEF, in conjunction with the Government’s decision to allow interest to be charged on student loans, will discourage more students

from less-privileged backgrounds from applying to university and in particular to the best universities.

2. The principle “you should pay more for better education” is a core motivation behind the TEF.
3. The proposals of the HE bill to be contradictory to the professed aims of the bill to increase accessibility to education and bring students ‘into the heart’ of Higher Education policy.
4. Linking tuition fee rises to an assessment of teaching quality will have severe ramifications, entrenching inequality between higher education providers and contradicting the government’s ambitions around widening participation.
5. The National Student Survey scores provide only a limited measure of satisfaction, not quality of teaching.
6. The proposed metrics for the TEF do not measure teaching experience and are therefore not fit for purpose.
7. It is unfair to increase fees for students already on course and that it amounts to a betrayal of student trust regardless of legality.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To mandate the Sabbatical officers to oppose Oxford University opting into TEF from year two onwards, and to oppose the increase in fees for continuing students in particular.
2. To mandate the Sabbatical officers to work with the National Union of Students and other student unions to oppose TEF nationally.
3. To mandate the Sabbatical officers to keep the student body informed of developments regarding TEF.
4. To mandate the Sabbatical officers to lobby the University of Oxford to work to mitigate against any fee increases’ (if and when they happen) impact on students from less socioeconomically privileged backgrounds through bursary and hardship support coupled with outreach efforts.

**Proposed:** Jack Hampton (St Catherine’s)

**Seconded:** Eden Bailey (Magdalen)

Amendment received from **Marina Lambrakis** (St John’s) and **Jack Hampton** (St Catherine’s).  
Amendment received as friendly.

Amendment Text:

#### **To add**

*Resolves 5. To oppose and condemn the linking of fee increases to the assessment of Teaching Quality.*

*Resolves 6. To oppose and condemn the introduction of differentiated fees across the Higher Education sector*

*Resolves 7. To make Resolves 5 and 6 OUSU Policy*

**Jack Hampton** (St Catherines College)-Gives a overview of the Higher Education Bill, specifically for the Teaching Excellent Framework. TEF is supposed to give more information to students about their choice for Uni’s and then in the future subjects. JH explains that the metrics used are not good in actually judging Teaching Excellence due to the rushed nature of getting the policy through. JH Also explains that differentiated fee’s are then built into the system as a result of the TEF framework. In the future there could also be differentiated fee’s by subject over time. This will damage Access for students who will have pay more for better quality education. TEF also includes including TEF in year

4. Opting in makes it harder to opt out in the future as a number of years down the line it will be harder to leave. In year 4 Postgraduate Taught subjects will also be included.

**Anastasia Tsikas** (Wadham)-Should we focus on TEF being a bad measure of assessing Teaching Excellence or the fact it's linked to tuition fee's. What should be our long term strategy?

**Jack Hampton** (St Catherines)-The vote to enter the TEF is on Monday. The metrics aren't going to change before Monday. As the metrics stand it doesn't measure teaching. Even if they do come up with a measure of measuring teaching excellent, OUSU would oppose it anyway if it linked to differentiated fee's.

**Marina Lambrakis** (St John's)-OUSU have been following a line of flawed metrics. We are also arguing that the TEF doesn't just have bad metrics but is the link to fee increases. Article published by an Oxford academic last week in Blueprint was very strongly against the TEF.

**Jack Hampton** (St Catherine's) Just because we're arguing against the TEF doesn't mean we are against looking at Teaching Quality in Oxford. We have robust methods internally, but we're againsts this flawed system nationally.

**Jack Klempay** (Wadham) Can we introduce some text to the motion that specifically puts a stance against the link between TEF and fee's.

**Marina Lambrakis** (St Johns)-It's in the amendments.

**Lucas Bertholdi-Saad**-(Wadham) What is the likelihood we enter the TEF on Monday?

**Jack Hampton** (St John's)-Can't speculate on the issue. Many of the meetings are confidential and can't disclose some of the information. Students will be told at the earliest opportunity.

**Marina Lambrakis** (St John's)-There is a body above University council.

**Jack Hampton** (St Catherine's)-Congregation is a meeting (like a parliament) of academics and admins above a pay. They can be called by 25 Academics. If they vote, it will be above the VC as it's the highest about University Council.

**Francois Adaffana** (St Catherines) If fee's increase, less international students may want to apply due to higher fee levels and we want to ensure that Oxford remains Number 1 in the world ranking.

**Jack Hampton** (St Catherine's) Only for Home and EU Students.

No request/points for debate

55 For

1 Against,

2 Abstentions.

**Motion passed.**

Below the line:

### 3. Consequential amendments to Campaign constitutions

#### **Council Notes:**

1. Recent changes to OUSU's governing documents approved by Council (Trinity Term 2016), and in particular, minor amendments to the provisions concerning OUSU's campaigns and requirements for their constitutions.
2. That a series of consequential changes are needed to the constitutions of all of OUSU's Campaigns; Council approved some of these in Trinity Term 2016.
3. That Campaigns have been consulted on these changes, and that the amendments now only require Council's ratifications.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To ratify the amendments to four Campaign constitutions, as provided in track-changes format in the Appendix (separate document on Council website).

**Proposed:** Orla White (Brasenose)

**Seconded:** Sandy Downs (Corpus)

No request to discuss.

**Motion passed.**

### 4. Co-option of Student Trustee

#### **Council Notes:**

1. There is a current vacancy on OUSU's Trustee Board for a Student Trustee. The vacancy is until the end of Hilary Term 2017.
2. Student Trustees are usually elected in a cross-campus by-election, but Council and the Trustee Board can decide jointly not to hold a by-election and to keep the vacancy open. The Trustee Board have already agreed this is the best option.
3. The timetable for elections means that voting in a by-election could not take place until the end of Michaelmas Term.
4. If the vacancy is kept open, the Trustee Board have the power to co-opt a Student Trustee in the interim (that is, appoint a student instead of electing one). This has been done before.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. A cross-campus by-election would not be a good use of time or resources, and it would be better to appoint a trustee until March while encouraging interested students to run in the main Hilary Term elections.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To agree to keep the current vacancy of a Student Trustee open, permitting the Trustee Board to co-opt a Student Trustee until the end of Hilary Term 2017.

**Proposed:** Bethany Currie (Corpus)

**Seconded:** Jack Hampton (St Catherine's)

No request to discuss.

**Motion passed.**

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**f. Items for Debate**

None.

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**g. Any Other Business**

Jess-(St John)s JCR event for Presidents who identified LGBT, BME, Disabled. 6-8pm in Larkin Room.

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