



Glasgow University Sports Association

AGM- 25th March 17:15 via Zoom due to COVID-19

Minutes

1. Introduction & Welcome

Present: Student GUSA Council members, GUSA Council representatives, club representatives, University Sport members, Senior GUSA Council members.

2. Ratification of last minutes

The minutes from 26th August 2020 were approved and no amendments were required.

Proposed: Ciaran McMonagle

Seconder: Jayny Saunders

3. Presidents Report

It has been a challenging year for students across the country. When I was first elected back in March 2020, I did not expect the role to be behind a screen for the entire year, and I am sure many of you feel the same. Despite this, no-one gave up, and it was incredible to see just how much activity was actually able to go ahead due to the adaptations and flexibility that everyone was so willing to implement. Back in August, I did say that many of us were lucky to be sitting there and able to attend the AGM in good health. I meant it then and I mean it now. We often take for granted the things that mean the most to us, some of us will have undoubtedly had a challenging year and my heart goes out to everyone who has been struggling. I would like to express my thanks to all of the club captains, secretaries, treasurers and committee members who have worked tirelessly to ensure the physical and mental wellbeing of their members. By the end of this report, I hope to reflect just how much work has gone on behind the scenes at both the GUSA and club sport level as well as with our colleagues at UofG Sport.

Freshers Week in September was an extremely challenging yet rewarding week to organise. GUSA hosted our very first outdoor, socially distanced sports fayre which saw over 2600 people in attendance. This number was around the maximum capacity we were able to host with social distancing requirements. A large part of the support received for the fayre was through the tireless work of the SRC in securing the marquees for use. We were one of the few universities at the time who had made efforts to host an outdoor fayre thanks to Jayny's fantastic work ethic. Club taster sessions were a little different with all of the risk assessments and social distancing requirements, but they ran smoothly nonetheless thanks to all of you guys. Of course, the traditional GUSA events in the union including the party and recstravaganza were not able to go ahead due to COVID. However, GUSA worked with the university to provide a self-isolation online activity schedule including a host of GUSA events such as bingo, quizzes and fitness classes. We also successfully applied for funding to purchase 720 yoga mats & resistance bands to supply all international self-isolating students with some sports equipment upon arrival at Glasgow. Some of our members also actively supported students by providing food packages and welfare visits during their period of self-isolation.

Overall, fresher's week ran as smoothly as it could given the circumstances, but the lessons learned and the wide-spread availability of COVID testing on campus will hopefully make this September run in a more reassuring and safe manner for students whatever this September will look like.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, no BUCS activity took place over last year due to the various COVID restrictions however, our commitment to reaffiliating with BUCS has meant that our clubs should maintain their league standings from years past.

The membership of club sport has unfortunately decreased this year as would have been expected with COVID. On the positive note, this decrease was a lot lower than anticipated (down 31%) on last year with over 17818 attendees at club sport sessions over semester 1 with 2847 students participating regularly. The total split being 58% female members and 41% male members and 1% identifying in another ways. This in part is thanks to the marquee that allowed us to facilitate outdoor sessions for traditionally indoor sports. The partnership between GUSA, the SRC and the university has been crucial in maintaining the marquee and the communication required to ensure its continued existence.

With regards to travel – there have been no major incidents in part due to the reduced journeys and travel restrictions imposed by the pandemic. We have received no reports of any buses needing to be removed from the fleet and would like to mention a thanks to all the drivers who have supported Ciaran in maintaining the fleet by regularly driving the buses to ensure the batteries are charged and the brakes do not seize up. Ciaran has done an excellent job maintaining the buses but also launching the first GUSA x SRC sustainability challenge. Our hope is that this becomes a regular part of the GUSA calendar in order for GUSA to show its commitment UofG's Green New Deal in Its ambitions to become a carbon neutral university. Ciaran's passion has led to him rerunning and rebranding the role of travel to Travel & Sustainability Convenor.

Our finance department has naturally seen a reduction in claims this year as COVID has curtailed much of the activity that clubs would claim for however, GUSA has made a commitment to honour club coach payments for any online sessions taken as well as generally committed to club coaches by clubs in order to help support our coaching

community and freelancers through a difficult financial period. The addition of Jennifer Sung and the club sport portal has made the process of claiming money back far more efficient allowing plenty of time for the GUSA finance convenor to work on other initiatives such as establishing the new hardship fund for sport committee. The hardship fund for sport which will now be in place from this April will support students in acquiring a gym membership who may be undergoing financial hardship due to a wide range of circumstances. The evidence shows that physical activity and community support are key protective factors for mental wellbeing, for this reason the fund would support the cost of a UofG sport membership and 1x club sport membership. Clubs would receive £60 maximum as part of this initiative however, we do not expect individual clubs to lose out on money due to a high range of hardship members as this will be capped as per the funds budget.

The Glasgow Taxi's Cup unfortunately did not take place in full due to cancellation following the COVID outbreak. However, I am delighted to say that the week saw over 500 students compete in our virtual taxis cup challenge covering 20,493km in just one week. Reflecting on this year, the addition of a university wide challenge to the taxis cup may become a regular occurrence in future years. I look forward to seeing Glasgow reclaim the taxis cup next year.

GUSA did not hold our annual 1881 Alumni dinner this year due to the various restrictions however, next year is set to be a great event with Mark Beaumont confirmed for attendance. It will notably mark the 140th year of GUSA so the event will be taking place in the Hilton. Catherine has done an outstanding job growing the new GUSA alumni database now holding thousands of new signatures and keeping track of Blues & Colours alumni, as well as club exec. She created a highly engaging alumni newsletter which is circulated quarterly to alumni. Catherine has also been working to set up a GUSA run cross-club alumni page which will be seeing its launch in the coming months.

GUSA's publicity has seen some new initiatives this year. Our publicity convenor, Anna, cross-collaborated with our videography team, VP, Charlie, and Club Sport Convenor, Jayny, in order bring about our first ever GUSA TV segment. The addition of the videography team and partnership with Glasgow University Student Television (GUST) has seen our media content vastly improve over the year. We hope that GUSA TV becomes a regular part of the GUSA publicity offering.

In terms of Fundraising, a huge shout out to James – our outgoing fundraising convenor who helped raise an amazing amount of money for Scottish Sports Futures with his brilliant idea to make the GUSA fundraiser become a cross GUSA club collaboration. The total fundraised for SSF was over £3100. James also worked with Bertie and Anna to create our GU-Sports Performance group and Instagram. You can now follow the page which showcases UofGs top student athletes. This has also led to the rebranding of the Health and Fitness convenor to “Health & Performance” which James will be undertaking in his second year on council.

Ewan had a really productive year developing GUSA's welfare policies and were very proud of the work he put in. Ewan and I both worked on student conduct procedures in collaboration with the other student bodies, SW@G and the university. This saw the launch of the dear safe space campaign. This year, GUSA relaunched our commitment to the Healthy Body Healthy Mind award and have covered a lot of ground quickly seeing us achieve most of the criteria leading up to the silver award thus far. GUSA also saw the launch of our peer wellbeing support pilot which has allowed 8 participants to be trained as GUSA

Peer wellbeing supporters which will allow us to launch a listening service in order to better support our GUSA members next year.

It was a sad year for the traditional “events” remit in terms of GUSA and UofG sport events however, that did not stop George launching our very first intramural league. George quickly took to developing the idea when it looked like competitive sport would not return for a while. The initial plan for 9 sports had to be readjusted to 4/5 sports initially and then further reduced at the higher tiers to 3 sports. The leagues saw a total of 316 unique sign ups which was a testament to George’s hard work and the support of the intramural house captains and vice captains.

As Health & Fitness Convenor, Bertie had a challenging year trying to reimagine and rebrand the GUSA Gym buddy’s initiative. Now termed the GUSA active buddies, in order to reflect the offering across different sports rather than just support in the gym, the initiative is looking to launch in September stronger than ever. Bertie created the GUSA Virtual half marathon training group which has seen over 80 runners participate in the Strava group. Bertie was also GUSA’s honorary bingo master and host to Renee MacGregor’s talk on eating disorder awareness.

Charlie remained flexible with the GUSA Ball hoping to organise it in May should restrictions have eased however, as semester 2 began, it became more evident that this would not be possible so the GUSA Ball was unfortunately cancelled for the year. Nevertheless, the video that was created by Charlie and all the clubs showcasing all of our different clubs was great to see. The blues and colours dinner unfortunately had to be postponed to next year, but we still intend to host a virtual awards ceremony in the month of April. Charlie was also an invaluable member of the GUSA exec helping comanage the council along with Jess who’s keyboard took a beating this year whilst she ferociously typed up the GUSA council minutes.

The GUSA elections were another number to take a slight hit this year with the elections being by in large virtual due to the COVID restrictions. Additionally, there were no contested executive positions so seeing 1176 unique votes cast was an impressive display of the efforts that the contested convenors put into their campaigns. The GUSA council did put on several round table discussions where members of GUSA were able to come along to ask questions and gain a deeper understanding of the work that the council does. This will hopefully continue in years to come and increase engagement for GUSA elections. Notably, all positions have been filled and the number of contested positions falls only 1 short of last year at 3 positions despite the ongoing pandemic.

It was an absolute pleasure of mine to be able to lead GUSA through this year. I have been totally in awe and completely inspired by how much work club captains, GUSA council and all cross-campus representatives have put into supporting one another this year. Whilst it would have been nice to enjoy some normality this year, I would not trade the lessons learned and the experience up because this is an experience that I will always have with me. I strongly believe that the world has had a bit of an awakening to the value of sport and physical activity and that sport, and therefore GUSA, is at the heart of student wellbeing and satisfaction. I would like to thank the outgoing convenors and current GUSA council for all of their efforts this year, they have kept me motivated with their passion for sport this year. I would also like to welcome the new council, 6 of whom are returners and wish you all the best of luck. You will be well supported with so many returners with a year of COVID experience under their belt.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who have helped and contributed to GUSA this past year.

All of the volunteers who give so much of their time and effort to ensure that our clubs, and GUSA remains true to its aims and objectives. The most impressive thing from when I last wrote the AGM report in August is the consistency you have all maintained. Consistently pushing for adapted sport, for virtual socials and training sessions. It would have been easy for you to switch off and it be excusable given the circumstances, but many of you did not, so from the bottom of my heart, thank you!

Thanks, must also go to everyone at University of Glasgow Sport for keeping me in check and ensuring the Association thrived and that I was well supported throughout the year. I cannot thank you all enough.

To our senior Council members, Frank Coton, Des Gilmore, Kirsty McConn-Palfreyman, David Duncan, David Denton, Simon Kennedy and Phil Morrice – your support continues to be invaluable and provides a strong insight into past council initiatives, and strong ties to the university which are invaluable. Thank you all for stepping up to new various roles within GUSA sub committees and funds.

I would also like to take a short moment to remember the members of our community which we have unfortunately lost along the way, Ben Stamp & Lewis Ferguson, both valuable members of our community who were taken far too soon.

And finally, to the forever dubbed COVID exec, Charlie and Jess. Both very strong and empowering women who kept me in line and well supported throughout the year. Never shy of letting their opinion be heard but able to always do so constructively and adding value to ideas. I am proud to have shared the stage with you both and wish you both the best in the future. I believe I speak for both Charlie and I when I say we're both very proud of you for stepping up to the plate Jess, and at least you have had a year's experience of COVID so it's not an entirely new terrain. I hope things return to a lot more normality soon with the vaccination programme underway and that 2021 will be a far more "normal" year, whatever that may look like!

I cannot help but mention that last year I campaigned on a set of manifesto points which I thought would bring about some significant improvements to GUSA and I am a little disappointed that I could not action many of them given the hand we were dealt but I have grown to realise that so many things in life are out with our sphere of control and if I have any wisdom to impart from my 7 years at university before I leave is that the way you choose to react/feel about external variables is one thing that will always been in your control. So be kind to one another, be patient and be courteous. You never really know what someone is going through unless you ask.

Thank you all,

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4. Honorary Treasurer's Report

GUSA, like all organisations, had an unusual year in 2020/1. The accounts for the year ended 30th July 2020 are impacted by the pandemic in the final months, and the current financial year to 30th July 2021 will be impacted severely.

- The main sources of income in the year to 30th June 2020 were:
 - Overall Court grant was £296k
 - Freshers Week and GUSA Ball income of £54k (these are offset by costs – with a surplus being made - £6.5k Ball ; break-even – Freshers Week)
 - Other income of £18k – mostly sponsorship, donations and travel reimbursements that net off.

- Overall income was down from £466,752 to £443,198 – the main reasons being decreased grant from the University Court of £51k, offset by more income from other sources.

- Expenditure to 30th July 2020
 - GUSA has kept costs under controls and in accordance with the current finance guidelines.
 - Most costs were broadly in line with the previous year, with increases in Entry fees and affiliations and insurance and a drop in freshers week expenses.
 - £24k was spent on Merchandise
 - Overall costs increased by around £72k.
 - Miscellaneous expenditure represents various expenditure including stationery costs and catering.
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- Overall this meant that at year end GUSA had a surplus of £14,756, compared with a surplus of £107,918. This surplus will go to reserves and will be used in future projects.

- Balance Sheet
 - The net assets of GUSA at the end of July 2020 were £309k
 - Cash balances at 31 July 2020 were £371K (2019 – £413k)

Situation since 31 July 2020

- The operations of GUSA have been impacted by the pandemic

- The move to the Xero accounting system means we have meaningful up to date financial information.
- The Core grant received from the university was £296,000 with total income to 18th March 2021 being £314,174.
- Overall costs to 18th March 2021 have been £111,240
- The bank balances at 18 March were - £559,119.

5. Ratification of Election Results

Senior Council:

These members are there for the support and advice, not eligible to vote but are strong allies to the association. First is the ratification of the senior council members, to re-elect current members:

Frank Coton: Honorary President
 Phillip Morrice: Honorary Treasurer
 Kirsty McConn-Palfreyman: Court Representative
 Simon Kennedy: Senate Representative
 David Denton: Honorary Vice President
 David Duncan: Honorary Vice President
 Derek Casey: Honorary Vice President
 Des Gilmore: Honorary Vice President
 Euan Smith: Honorary Vice President

Proposer: Ewan Galbraith
 Secunder: Jessica Woodcock

Student Council

President – Jessica Woodcock (Unopposed)
 Vice President – Anna Woodcock (Unopposed)
 Secretary – Jayny Saunders (Unopposed)
 Alumni Convenor – Ewan Galbraith (Unopposed)
 Club Sport Convenor – Vivek Pandya (Opposed)
 Events Convenor- Sarah Hedley (Opposed)
 Finance Convenor – Samuel Horsch (Unopposed)
 Fundraising Convenor – Michael Rafferty (Unopposed)
 Health and Fitness Convenor – James Patterson (Unopposed)
 Publicity Convenor – Isla McClung (Unopposed)
 Travel Convenor – Ciaran McMonagle (Unopposed)
 Welfare Convenor – Milly Legget (Opposed)

Proposed: Charlie Dickens

Seconded: Samuel Horsch

6. AOCB

1. The following amendments to the constitution were proposed:

MEMBERSHIP 4.2.2 The association reserves the right to extend the title of Patron to the University Chancellor whom, in the opinion of the Council, has made a substantial contribution to the Association's aims and objectives or may have the potential to significantly raise the profile of the Association and its activities.

GOVERNANCE 3.4 - In the event of force majeure (such as acts of god, floods, global pandemic or other extraordinary causes) preventing the association from achieving any proposed timelines or objectives, a vote at a meeting of the GUSA council shall decide whether the association may temporarily act out with the constitution on a specific article. This must be communicated to all members of the association formally in writing.

Proposed: George Fournarakis

Seconded: Jayny Saunders

Objection to amendments: N/A

The amendments to the constitution were passed.

2. Alumni Trial

The GUSA Alumni Membership Trial has been extended for 1 year due to COVID-19. GUSA will be taking on more clubs to the trial and applications forms to be apart of it will be sent out in due course. The clubs currently on the trial will remain on the trial, unless they wish to withdraw.

7. AGM Close

SK closed the meeting.