

J.16-21: A Motion for the Creation of a ‘Forum for Life Long Learners’ to better facilitate representation of and social interaction between ‘mature’ students.

This SRC & SSC NOTES:

1. There is currently no formal or informal association for mature students in the Union or within the University.
2. A forum was held on Tuesday 8th November 2016 for students aged 21+ to express their views on their university experience and how it could be improved. The main issues that were raised are as follows:
 - 2.1. Some mature students feel isolated from their classmates who have had avenues to facilitate social relationships through living in halls. Many mature students cannot live in halls due to family commitments.
 - 2.2. The commuters’ room opening hours is not sufficient.
 - 2.3. Lack of childcare provision from the University and in the town in general means that events are often difficult to attend.
 - 2.4. Part time, particularly evening degree students, do not feel part of the university experience.
 - 2.5. Some PhD students with families do not feel they are included in university life enough to attend social events.
 - 2.6. The cost of travel is a burden – and many are unaware of the subsidies available through university funds.
3. It is clear that although there are many academic and social concerns, they are not being articulated to the University or the Students’ Association because there is no formal organisation for mature students.
4. The University’s head of enterprise and engagements, Verity Brown, is very much supportive of the proposition to develop an association for mature students. She has offered to lend University resources and support where appropriate.

This SRC & SSC Believes

1. Mature students are a valuable contribution to university life – and should not feel isolated or detached from the student experience.
2. The social aspect of university life, including what occurs in the Union, should be open and accessible to all members of the University regardless of age.
3. The voice of mature students should be given an organisation wherein they can voice their distinctive concerns, promote dialogue between other groups, and find solutions.

This SRC & SSC Resolves

1. To endorse the creation of a ‘Forum for Life Long Learners’ – to be chaired by the SRC member for Age Equality.
2. To help advertise the new association, and form a new committee – to first meet at the start of next semester.
3. To add Appendix One to Chapter 27 of the Association Laws.

Proposed: Equal Opportunities Committee

Appendix One:

Chapter Twenty-Seven: Equal Opportunities

5. Forum for Life Long Learners
 - 5.1. The Forum for Life Long Learners shall be a forum where mature students, students of 21 years of age and above, can express their views on their university experience.
 - 5.2. The forum aims to promote communication and cooperation between mature students and the Students' Association through the
 - 5.3. Committee:
 - 5.3.1. Members of Committee
 - 5.3.1.1. The SRC Member for Age Equality: Shall chair and convene the meetings. They will also be in charge of communicating the concerns raised in the forum being brought to the appropriate parties, either the Students' Association or the University.
 - 5.3.1.2. Secretary: Shall be in charge of taking minutes during the meetings.
 - 5.3.1.3. Treasurer: Shall be in charge of the finances for the Forum.
 - 5.3.1.4. Representative for Students with Children
 - 5.3.1.5. Representative for Commuting Students
 - 5.3.1.6. Representative for Part Time Degree Students
 - 5.3.1.7. Representative for PhD/Masters
 - 5.3.2. Selection process:
 - 5.3.2.1. The Treasurer and Secretary shall be selected through an interview process.
 - 5.3.2.2. The interview panel shall consist of: The SRC Member for Age Equality and the Association Equal Opportunities Officer.
- 5.4. Meetings:
 - 5.4.1. Will convene at least once per month.
 - 5.4.2. Calendar will be publicized in the commuters' room at the beginning of every semester.
 - 5.4.3. Shall be open to all mature students.