

Cranfield Students' Association (CSA)



Annual General Meeting 2017

Date: Thursday 15th March 2017

Time: 13:05 – 14:30

Location: CSA, Cranfield University, Cranfield

Present: Kelechi Anyaoha (President & Trustee)
Renan Soares (Vice President (Cranfield) & Trustee)
Godfrey Nnabuife (International Officer)
Victor Igwemezie (Green & Residences Officer)
Aung Myint Aye (Engagement Officer)
Ali Alderete (Events Planner Officer)
Mohammed Aminu (SWEE Research Representative)
Yunlin Cheng (SOM Research Representative)
Shivani Daiya (SOM Education Representative)
Tom Teschner (SATM Research Representative)
Elom Koshi Adzaho (SATM Education Representative)
Vilius Portapas (Student Trustee)

38 student members

Sue Richardson (CSA Co-ordinator)
Martin Davey (CSA General Manager)

Apologies: John Chubb (External Trustee)
Jo Dunster (External Trustee)
Stewart Oates (External Trustee)

KA welcomed everyone to the meeting. The CSA Officers and Representatives introduced themselves.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matter Arising

There were no objections to the minutes of the AGM dated 10th March 2016.

It is now possible to pay fares on the Unobus by phone.

The laundrette is now open until midnight; the CSA continues to campaign for 24 hour opening.

An Events Planner Officer has now been elected.

Finance report

MD presented a summary of the CSA financial report for the year 2015-16, as given in the audited accounts for the CSA.

Overall, the CSA made a surplus of £48537 on the year. This was due to successful events, a lower than normal need for repairs and replacement of equipment and the delay of some planned expenditure that has now gone ahead. It is intended that this money should be spent for the benefit of students, including further premises refurbishment. Capital expenditure will be aimed at Clubs and Societies, but individual students are encouraged to make proposals.

The report was accepted without further comment.

Approval of auditors

It was agreed that Wright Connections Ltd., (Priory Business Park, Stannard Way, Bedford, MK44 3RZ) be approved as auditors to the CSA for a further year. Following a question from a student, MD explained why it was thought that Wright Connections were doing a good job.

This was agreed that Jonathan Vowles (114 High Street, Cranfield, Beds, MK43 0DG) be approved as accountants to the CSA for a further year.

Ratification of the Appointment of External Trustees

It was agreed that Jo Dunster and Stewart Oates be appointed as CSA External Trustees for a first three year term. MD outlined the qualities that these two candidates brought to the Board of Trustees. There were no objections to the appointments. It was noted that a third External Trustee would be required in the summer, and that suggestions of suitable candidates would be welcome.

Affiliation to NUS

It was agreed that the CSA would continue to be affiliated to the NUS for another year.

Amendment to the Constitution

In addition to the amendments to the CSA Constitution and Bye-laws described below, and agreed by the Trustees and University Council, KA proposed that an alteration should be made to the Constitution such that the Chair of Trustees would be the CSA President rather than an External Trustee. He explained that this was supported by NUS, followed a general trend in Students' Unions and increased the responsibility held by elected officers.

There was some discussion as to how this would impact removal of the Chair if they were not suitable. It was noted that students can remove the President, but that there should be a mechanism to remove the Chair independent of this power. It was agreed that the Board of Trustees should be able to remove the Chair if the motion was successful.

There was extensive discussion as to whether the Chair should be an External Trustee, a Student Trustee or the President. These addressed the link between power and responsibility, the democratic wishes of students and the independence of the Chair.

Based on the expressed mood of the meeting, KA withdrew the proposal. The Chair will continue to be an External Trustee as selected by the Trustees.

CSA Trustees' and Executive's Reports

These were presented by KA to the meeting.

Executive Report

CSA Objectives

1. Represent your rights as students
2. Support your life at Cranfield
3. Engage to develop your potentials

Representation

- Meetings with Schools took place in December. The main aim was to meet the students in their work environment. From each meeting a report was prepared and actions by officers followed and their outcomes will be reported back to students (YOU ASKED WE DID IT). The main points raised cover campus accommodation, travel, Library, CSA and MSc courses and researchers activities.
- Course Reps training sessions were arranged in November (CDS and Cranfield) together with the PVC for Education, Lynette Ryals, CSA General Manager, Fran Radcliffe (Assistant Registrar). The purpose was to give an overview of the organisation of the University, the role of Course Reps and communication with staff

and the CSA. It offers the CSA the opportunity to have first interaction with the course reps.

- The Exec Team have been involved in Open day and welcome week events. Two members are always making presentations on being a Cranfield student to prospective students during open days.
- Members of the executive represent students in different committees of the University

Research community

- ✓ Instrumentals in the lunch of the new Cranfield Doctoral Network. This will increase researchers' activities the university and themes and research groups.
- ✓ Regular research students' forum of researchers and support to Theme researchers' forum.
- ✓ Engaging the research committee to ensure annual review timetables are adhered to reduce incidents of postponement of annual review dates.
- Events: SATM researchers coffee time, Researcher students forum, CSA Support to CDN – Water Science, Design and Agrifood 3 minutes Thesis competition and quiz. Research students pup quiz.
- Upcoming event: CV preparation for research students, Researchers forum – Cranfield and University of Bedfordshire, SWEE conference.
- Major challenge: To have students led researchers' forum across the university as there is in SWEE.

There is a major change in research students' engagement, we can only hope on improvement and innovative ways as the years roll by.

Communication

- Social networks: actively improved and increased interaction on CSA Facebook page, Facebook Groups (e.g.: Cranfield Researchers), Twitter
- Emails: focused communication/news, course reps
- Webpage, Leaflets, Noticeboards.

Events and Activities

- Summer 2016: President's Ball, SLTA award ceremony, SAFAD run, Cranfield Olympics, Clubs & Societies Awards, Incredible India, Water fight, The Last Dance (for MSc), CSA Exec Award Night.
- Autumn 2016: Induction and welcome events and activities for new students (e.g.: Insta Mixer, Clubs and societies fairs, Pumpkin Carving, Halloween, Movember beer pong)

- Winter 2016/2017: Themed parties, CSA Tortilla challenge, International Week on 13-18 February – Country presentations, Rio party, and Food and Cultural Expo; Beer festival run in parallel.
- March Clubs and Societies fairs (9 March 2017)
- Student Led Teaching Awards (SLTA) - nominations in started 7 April 2017
- Trips: Successful trip to different places in UK since March 2016 to date (467 students). Places visited are Duxford Air Museum, Warwick Castle + Stratford, Whipsnade Zoo, Central London, Cambridge, Birmingham, Central London, London Kensington. Oxford will be on 25 March 2017.
- Support for the Chinese New Year

Commercial services

- The café, bar and shop are in good sharp so far. International foods are still available at the CSA every day of the weekdays. Afro-Caribbean food, Middle East food, India food and Spanish paella are now available.
- Bar continues to act as the center of social activities, being the focus for most entertainment events.

Transport

- UNObus has an app that students can use in making payments online. This is in response to students demand. The CSA will continue to put pressure for better services.
- We have a report on improving Uno bus carried out by a student. We are committed to ensuring the recommendations are implimented by Uno bus.

Other Achievements

- The bar area has been renovated. This will be followed by the space of the entrance to the bar and cafe.
- Extended café closing time to 9 pm from 8:30 pm
- Free Dart at the CSA bar
- Vegetable allotment for students (The Cranfield University Students' Gardening Initiative)
- Review of the lighting in the residences
- Free water bottle expected to reduce wastes
- Changes in hand over date from May to July
- Election booklet and CSA governance made handy
- Student engagement - spinning wheel

Trustees' Report

- 2016 CSA Accounts are available at the charity commission website for public access
- Students are well represented in University committee and influences decision making of the university
- CSA was involved in Prevent duty discussions to protect students interests
- SLTA were run successfully, and will take place again the 2016-17.

Amendments to the CSA Constitution

The CSA Trustees proposed the following amendments to the CSA Constitution, and these were accepted by University Council following some revisions. The CSA Bye-laws were also changed to follow the alterations to the Constitution.

Constitution

Section 11.2 Amendments to the constitution

Section 19 Referenda

Section 50.1 Removal of Trustees by the Members via Referendum or General Meeting

At least 500 members to cast a vote in a referendum changed to at least 400 members, to allow for changing student numbers.

Bye-laws

Section 3; clause 7 Officer Trustees

Change terms of office to refer to the election procedures to ensure consistency.

Section 6 Election of Officer Trustees, Executive Officers, Student Trustees, NUS Delegates and similar positions for which elections may be necessary

Insertion of a new clause 46 to state that the CSA President is *ex officio* the primary CSA delegate to NUS national conference. This ensures that the President attends the conference and brings the CSA in line with other students' unions.

Section 7: clause 2 Conduct of referenda

Change to be consistent with constitution above.

Section 15; clause 5 Clubs and societies - recognition

Change the minimum number of members from 15 to 10 to encourage the formation of clubs and societies.

Section 15: clause 20 Clubs and societies – budgets and funding allocation

Section 15: clause 25 Clubs and societies – budgets and funding allocation

Change authorisation from a Clubs and Societies Manager to the Clubs and Societies Committee to reflect the actual basis of authority and working procedures.

Section 15: clause 26 Clubs and societies – officers

Insertion of the sentence “Elections must take place on the first meeting of the society in the academic year, and the members of the society and the CSA Co-ordinator must be informed of the date, time and place in advance of the meeting.” To ensure democracy within clubs and societies and enable monitoring of such by the CSA.

Questions to the Executive

A student asked what happens to suggestions placed in the suggestion box. SR replied that the suggestion box has now been removed following damage.

A student then asked what mechanisms exist for students to make suggestions. KA replied that this should be through the President or other Officers.

A student noted the discontinuation of the University shield, and suggested that this is not a good thing as it an iconic image and there is student demand. MD explained that there have been problems with the University change of logo and their system of approval for the use of the logo and crest; the latter is highly restricted. KA agreed to work with students to campaign on this issue.

A student asked whether it would be possible to circulate important CSA documents by email, especially to research students. KA agreed that this could be taken up with the University. TT explained that the University did not like issuing student email details for communication. The CSA does use its own website and social media. A student noted that students get lots of unnecessary emails, but not the important pieces of information. TT agreed that some people have access, but not necessarily the right people. A student suggested that a sign-up system for a newsletter would be useful.

A student requested a different bar and café; more recycling bins; better value food; a free pool table. KA replied that these items would be look into.

A student complained about the move of the medical centre to the village, and that this made it difficult to get appointments. KA replied that the clinic was moved by the NHS nationally, not the University, due to the small size of the Cranfield community. However, it is still an issue being taken up with the authorities. YC stated that this is all due to the centralisation of the NHS all over the UK. However, the need is understood, and the CSA is working on the issue.

A student questioned whether the changes in the Referendum rules in the Constitution had been properly explained to students, and whether this meant the CSA was no longer a charity.

KA explained the process and wording of the Constitution; the CSA is still a charity and the changes were properly carried out.

A student reminded the Executive that at the 2015 AGM representation to NUS was discussed. KA replied that this was now all arranged satisfactorily.

A student called for there to be an explicit recycling policy for the CSA. KA agreed to take this forward.

KA thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.