

St Catherine's College MCR Open Meeting

held on Sunday Week 5 Hilary Term, 13 February 2011

Call to order: 20.15hrs

Executive Committee Present: Christoph Haase, Theresa Kevorkian, Hugh Taylor, Conor Fleming, Tara Mills, Joachim Steinberg, Christina Fuhr

Total MCR members: 25

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

2. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

3. Changes to International Student Visa

Christoph summarised the action taken by OUSU to lobby against the proposed changes to international student visa. It was noted that OUSU very much appreciated the contribution received from Common Rooms across Oxford. For those interested in the topic, the documents sent by OUSU to the government can be obtained by emailing Christoph.

4. Graduate Continuation Charge

Christoph briefly explained the developments that lead to the proposal of the university of a graduate continuation charge. The MCR heard that the university is currently proposing to charge DPhil students in their 4th year a continuation charge of half the annual tuition fee at the home/EU rate. It was noted that since the charge is not a tuition fee it will most likely not be covered by scholarships or research grants. However, MPLS have indicated they might cover the charge for their students. It was discussed that there does not seem to be sufficient evidence that the university is going to improve the supervision of DPhil students so that the duration for completing a DPhil will stay within three years. In particular as mentioned by Theresa, if supervisors fail to appropriately review the progress of their research students, students could be forced to start a 4th year without having committed any fault. It was noted that if a continuation charge were to come, only payment in termly installments would be acceptable. Moreover, it was felt that College should set up a hardship fund that can provide help to students in an unbureaucratic manner. One possibility could be to make the graduate research expense fund available for covering continuation charges.

5. Damages Caused to the MCR During the Ball

Theresa informed the MCR that the ball committee had obtained permission to use the MCR during Catz ball. Contrary to what was agreed on, the MCR had been used to host several bands that were playing at the ball. When the MCR was handed back, it was found that somebody had broken into the fridge and stolen beverages. Moreover, some wine glasses went missing and the MCR was not returned in a clean condition. Theresa would meet in the upcoming week with the Home Bursar and the Ball Committee in order to discuss compensation for the damages caused.

6. Other Business

Jake asked if there were people interested in setting up an MCR cricket team for Trinity Term.

Meeting finishes 20.30hrs.