



extraordinary council minutes

4th week hilary 2006

Dan Simpson: Extraordinary Council so only one motion.

Charlynn Pullen: Idea of model A is to give free and fair admission, principle of common criteria, as final assessment is done by university in exams, it seems sensible that assessment in the first instance is also done by university. This is supported by those in the university who look at admissions. The idea is that everyone should be assessed in the same way in a free and fair system.

Benny Evan, Corpus: Given that models are only frameworks, why are you only focussing on models and not the principles?

Charlynn: I feel principles are inherent in the models, if you feel this is not the case I will accept a friendly principle based amendment.

Phil Davies, Magdalen: Will there be an attempt to standardise costs of interview and costs to students?

Charlynn: I would expect this to happen, there will be a central bursary I expect colleges would be pressured to top this up if they faced especially high rents.

Jen Taggart, Wadham: Why will this not be rejected as admission reforms were in 2002?

Charlynn: Those voting on principles supported it, didn't when college mandates were introduced. It was supported in principle by individuals, but not when voting as college. There has been an increase in central testing in subjects.

Iain Anstess, Magdalen: Foreign students face different levels of fees, how would you ensure they were not disadvantaged?

Charlynn: It would be run similarly to the graduate system, presumably central bursary to ensure no one was disadvantaged.

?: Would UCAS acceptance be before knew which college?

CP: no, after

?: How access extra-curricular?

CP: On basis of time management.

Will Dawson, ChCh: What evidence exists to show that the current system is not free and fair?

Charlynn Pullen: Everyone who experiences admissions across the university feels that admissions across colleges is not standardised, but it is common knowledge that there is a different chance of getting in at different colleges, backed by table at back of university prospectus.

Ellie Cumbo: Have equal opportunity issues been considered?

CP: There will be no positive discrimination, but there will be a contextualisation and a sense of where students are coming from. This will make our admissions in the sense of UCAS more accessible to schools without Oxbridge knowledge.

?: What does contextualisation mean?

CP: Nothing certain yet, I would support an amendment saying what we believed contextualisation was. Cambridge model which we're not using is to weight GCSE score against school's average GCSE score.

?: How will we know tutors stick to these centralised standards?

Charlynn: Under model A people would get two interviews each with two tutors, at the moment some people are interviewed once by one tutor, greater number of interviewers gives greater chance of fairness.

?, Blackfriars: Will mature students be taken into account in terms of contextualisation?

CP: Yes

No further SFQs

Move to debate.

Frank Hardee, Oriel: I don't think this motion solves the problem. I don't think ranking is desirable. Whenever you formalise something in this way, it means private school pupils will be able to tick more boxes and move up the ranking system.

POI: Nothing to stop contextual information being taken into account.

Frank Hardee, Oriel: This ranking system will eventually lead to the demise of the interview, as cut off point in ranking rises higher. Tutors won't get a say in terms of what pupils they get. Best colleges will be able to pick best candidates and will widen collegiate inequality. Both models have been drawn up on the back on an envelope, and neither model solves problems.

Amendment 1: To add Council believes 5, "information on school performance should be taken into account as part of the admissions process".

Accepted as friendly, no opposition.

Amendment included.

Amendment 2: Removes St Hilda's from Council believes 2.

Opposition

Ailbhe Menton, St. Hilda's: This will continue the negative perception of St. Hilda's.

Alice Wilby, SPC: It's a different environment, I don't think people should be put there against their consent. Especially because it will be those candidates at the bottom of the list that go there.

SFQ: Is the amendment just saying don't mention St. Hilda's?

?: Yes

Oliver Russell: St. Hilda's receives a lot of flack, Harris Manchester and PPHs don't receive that amount of flack.

Olivia: Council can say it's fair just to remove St. Hilda's before it goes to student press.

Jo Chick, Corpus: I don't think we should take this away just because it might insult people from St. Hilda's.

Will Dawson, ChCh: I can imagine a lot of people wouldn't want to go to ChCh, no one should have to go to a college they don't want to have to go to. Unsure why Hilda's is different.

James Lamming: Difficult for anyone in this room to say what it is like to go to St. Hilda's. Collegiate migration exists.

?: Eventually it's a collapse of centralised admissions, if you allow this to go in and argue you shouldn't be forced to go to colleges if they don't want to. If we believe you ought to be able to say I don't want to go to a college we don't believe in centralised admissions.

MTV

Navid: Lot of stuff

Iain: We've got a whole Council. People have had their hands up since the start.

?: You don't just get assigned a college, you get to express preference, but St Hilda's does make up a college in Oxford and people should be able to say what college they want to go to.

Iain Simpson, Magdalen: We know what this policy means, don't need to specify St Hildas.

?: Will St Hilda's be changing it's policy soon?

?: Unsure, vote won't be this term.

Ellie Cumbo: I think this would help stop St. Hilda's bashing, because people would know everyone at St. Hilda's wanted to be there.

Ailbhe, St Hilda's: My JCR all believed that even though they didn't necessarily want to be there, they all want to be there now.

?, St. Hugh's: I think we should respect college views, if St. Hilda's don't want to be there I believe their name should be removed.

Ailbhe: St. Hilda's people want to be there now.

Alice Wilby: Believe you should be able to choose what kind of education you want.

Amendment clearly passes.

Amendment 3

To insert Council further believes 5: Individual college ethos is important and any admissions system should support that.

Luke Tryl, Mag: College ethos is of great importance, and I think we want to preserve this because of our unique status.

Oliver Russell: This is about academics, not ethos.

Iain Simpson: Are we saying you should be sent to Teddy Hall if they think you're sporty? I don't know what this means, I think college ethos is acquired, I don't think people pick colleges on the basis of the college stereotype.

MTV

MTV clearly fails

David Green, Lincoln: This motion just sounds like a bland platitude, I'm not sure what is gained by including it.

Will Dawsey, ChCh: This should be a statement of our beliefs, we're not trying to make policy. For a lot of people in this room college ethos is important.

Iain Anstess: Phil can explain.

Ellie Cumbo: I think we should consider PR aspect of making it clear we respect college ethos.

Phil Davies: This is a statement of intention. We are a collegiate university, each with a large number of quirks. It is commonly believed, certainly amongst many of my own JCR, that OUSU does not believe in college inequality.

MTV

Luke Tryl: I think we need to make it clear we respect college autonomy.

?: I don't think this is worded well.

Carries 42:23

Amendment 4

To strike further believes 4 and replace it with "model A significantly reduces the autonomy of colleges".

Opposition

?, Balliol: Using centralised ranking to invite for interview and not having colleges doing interview does reduce autonomy.

CP: Colleges are still able to pick their students, and the people in departments and the tutors in colleges are the same people.

Frank Hardee: Unless every tutor will interview every candidate, people will be interviewed by those not at their colleges.

?, Corpus: Under model A, tutors will no longer be able to interview everyone they take in.

?: I've never been interviewed by the people who tutor me.

?: But they were at your college.

Alice Wilby: If you're saying this will reduce autonomy than you're saying the current system is unfair.

MTV

No opposition

Charlynnne: Each tutor will still be able to choose their students, they will have all the information.

?: This does reduce autonomy, colleges won't be able to interview those they accept.

Amendment passed.

Amendment tabled to add "model B reduces autonomy".

Opposition

Charlynnne: I don't believe it does reduce autonomy.

?: This makes no distinction between A and B

Ian ?, Balliol: This says model B reduces, model A significantly reduces autonomy.

MTV

No opposition

31-24-16 Amendment passes

Amendment to strike Council believes 2 and 3 and add "models A and B are not the only ways of achieving fairness" and express support for a new model, to be taken in parts.

Part 1: To strike council believes 2 and replace with "models A and B are not the only options"

?, Balliol: Models A and B aren't the only options and we have an alternative plan.

Ollie Russell: We have been asked to discuss model A and model B, not our own models.

Frank Hardee: Surely by critiquing models A and B we are discussing them.

Jo Chick: Need to think in terms of principles we'd like.

?: What is important is the principles the models embody, and then once we've agreed one submit it to them.

Ellie Cumbo: To tell the university to go back to the drawing board is counter productive.

Aidan: We've got lots to discuss, lets talk about models A and B, or else we'll be talking about the other 100 models I'm sure people could agree with.

Emma Norris: Seems much more sensible to proceed on the basis of principles not choosing a model.

Jo Chick, Corpus: Need to focus the debate around the principles.

MTV

Opposition

Iain Simpson: This determines whether we talk in terms of principles or models. We need to get this decision right.

MTV passes

?: Need to talk about principles

Ollie Russell: Need to talk about the models and our response to them.

Clearly passes to strike 2.

Now discussing whether to strike 3

Opposition

Iain Simpson: Really sorry to do this but I think we're making a mistake.

?: We've already voted once on this, think this is now wasting time.

MTV

MTV passes

Clearly passes to strike 3.

Now discussing whether to express support for two separate interviews

SFQ: what does independent mean?

?: different college

Passes

Now discussing increasing pooling

Charlynnne: Pooling works on the basis of how many tutors a tutor is friends with in terms of who they can call up.

?: Pooling system is centralising, it's not people just calling up their friends.

Lots of discussion

Jack Hawkins, Balliol: This isn't as clear as I wanted, if you support the idea of a more central and better pooling system then vote for this then we can tweak it after it's passed. Let's pass the principles.

MTV

Jack Hawkins, Balliol: I think I've said it.

CharylInne: If you believe in free and fair admissions you will vote against this.

35-24-1

Passes

Now discussing to have support for interviews based on central list inviting those to interview, and having centralised admissions office. Central ranking ends after interviews in college.

Jack Hawkins: The idea is that all the paperwork gets done centrally, and people are invited to interview on the basis of a central list, but it is up to tutors discretion who to accept.

Oliver Russell: Fundementally we are talking about academic judgement. That should be made collectively by a body of academics. Should not be down to the judgement of individual tutors. It should not be the case that the judgement of individual tutors cannot be justified, there should be peer reviewed. Academic decisions should be judged by other academics.

Jo Chick, Corpus: Tutors are subject to review, they are choosing someone who they think at the end of three years will get the best grade.

Alice Wilby: If you vote for this amendment you are voting through something that is fundamentally unfair. What makes college tutors so special that they should be able to override the department.

David Green: There should not be difference between colleges on the grounds of admission. Unless there is peer reviewing of admissions we will never have a completely fair system.

Binya,?: Can people stop pretending that if you don't want centralisation you want people to be admitted based on the grounds of how chummy they are? This will have a level of centralisation, if you want more centralisation you should accept this and then put an amendment forwards for more centralisation.

MTV

Opposition

Herve Hansen, Queens: I think we've heard enough, lets get on with it.

?: This is a crunch point of this discussion lets get on with it.

41-19-0.

Jack: If you agree with centralisation put this through, if you support more vote it through then vote against it.

?: I'm not a supporter of centralisation, but if this goes through that's the debate over. This pegs us in when we go to the university. This leaves us no room for manouver or debate.

34-36-5

Amendment fails

To add Council further believes that there should be flexibility amongst subjects.

Jack Hawkins, Balliol: This is merely saying different subjects need different levels and different styles.

Charlynnne: This wouldn't allow any model of centralisation at all.

?: That's too strong, and could potentially lead to disaster. The differences between subjects are a major cause of interview stress.

Ellie Cumbo: Academics aren't going to allow themselves to be tied down if they feel it will harm things.

?: Access issues by making it more complex.

?, Mansfield: There needs to be different subject tests because different subjects are different. Needs to be flexibility.

MTV

Frank Hardee: Let's just vote on it

Aidan: Won't last much longer.

MTV Passes

Jack: This is being proposed because different students are going for different departments and each department has different needs.

Charlynn: The system is at breaking point because different subjects have massively different systems.

Amendment clearly falls.

Amendment to strike believes 2.

?: I think the p

Charlynn: section to specify that people have to agree to culture of specific environment – as happens in interview at PPH now. Make sure people not allocated to a college which is wildly inappropriate.

Frank: if objections to a particular environment, means that centralized admissions is bad – keeping decentralized is best safeguard.

Alice – 25% of people at college they didn't apply to.

Hannah – allows opt-out safeguard within central framework. Wild inappropriateness.

MTV – no opp.

No summaries.

Motion falls.

Amendment to add “Council should broadly support model B in the admissions working party report”. This would strike nothing.

?: Model B allows an improvement in fairness and transparency. Model B still allows for some college autonomy, but increases college fairness and equality.

CP: It is massively important that Oxford has a fair ranking system. The problem with model B is that there would be students who weren't accepted into Oxford despite having been ranked highly enough.

MTV

Opposition

Opposition withdrawn.

Amendment to strike council believes 1

?: Clears up inconsistency.

Alice Wilby: Target Schools is the body of OUSU that does the most admissions work, it's useful to have an indication of what OUSU policy was before, and what people who deal with admissions believe.

Hannah: This forum now is OUSU, it doesn't matter what we used to believe.

Amendment clearly passes

Amendment to strike Council further believes 3, that extra-curricular activities should be considered.

?: Academic criterion should be the only judgement.

Ollie Munn, Lincoln: Extra-curricular activities are important as well.

Omar ? : This discriminates against those who are from deprived backgrounds and don't have as many extra-curricular activities.

?, Merton: Extra-curricular is completely irrelevant to academic stuff.

?: I think that extra-curricular is a way for people deprived backgrounds to show initiative.

Ollie Russell: Because very little I did at school that related to a degree, the tutors were interested in the extra-curricular stuff I did. A level results are a test of memory. Extra-curricular stuff is important.

Iain Simpson: I think we have to realise that tutors need some way of differentiating.

MTV

Some confusion over whether someone was for or against a motion. They decided they were in favour of the amendment.

Frank Hardee: Extra curricular stuff is important.

Council decided it was against the amendment.

Procedural motion to strike resolves 1, strikes resolves 2, have a three way vote between model A, model B, and no model based position, merely a position incorporating the votes of council. VP-AccAcAff will then invite representatives of the three different positions to be present whilst writes a paper based on the result of the votes that have been held.

30-10-9 Motion carried.

Model A (Oliver Russell, Magdalen)

We must remove the burden from college secretaries or it will collapse. Last term the system crashed during interviews, people were reduced to passing around pieces of paper.

The second reason is that it is only fair that the method by which you are assessed at the end of your degree is the same model by which you are accepted. I am fed up of going to college meetings where I hear about admission tutors favouring a certain type of student. Model A is a suitable framework.

Model B (Phil Davies, Magdalen)

If we go to the university and give them a large list of what we think the model should be they will laugh at us. We need to show that we can achieve consensus without wrangling over small details. We shouldn't come up with a plan C which they then have to try and learn.

Model C/No position (?)

Should have the model as it stands now, where there is fair pooling.

15-10-21

Procedural motion to take an indicative poll of the number of people who are committed to voting for no further centralisation.
12 votes.

Procedural motion to have a vote between

Models A or B

Neither

21-17

Amendment: Replace Further believes 4 and 5 with "Both models reduce college autonomy but model A to a greater extent"

No opposition. Passes

Amendment: More cohesive pooling system – Jack (Balliol)

Opposition

Hannah Stoddart: This is what we currently have

MTV

18-7-8

Not 20 positive votes, falls

Clear and transparent selection criteria

No opposition

College selection should not affect chances of receiving offer from the University.

Iain Simpson: However we change the system we should do so to have the aim of removing the empirical fact that you are more likely to receive an offer from certain colleges.

Passed nem con.

Hannah: A central interview against central criteria to decide whether you were good enough for Oxford or not. Colleges receive rankings list, colleges then invite students from that ranking list to see if they like that candidate.

Charlynnne: Problem is that everybody should get two interviews to show themselves capable of getting a place at Oxford or not. I agree with the other points, but I think having two central interviews is important.

Hannah: I'm not at all against the idea of having two central interviews, but having interviews at both central and college level is important.

Helen Bagshaw: This is partially motivated by the fact that the current system is an administrative nightmare. I appreciate the point but I don't think it's a viable option. Staying up for a week isn't feasible with January modules, and two trips to Oxford for interview very difficult.

MTV opposition

24-10-3

Not 2/3, MTV fails.

Some people talk. I was tired by now.

MTV Passes

Motion fails

MTV on the motion as a whole
23-11-2
MTV fails.

MTV
MTV Passes

CP:
This is what you have a voted for, you need to vote for the whole motion, then we can take all this away and I can write a submission for the consultation.
Motion passes nem con.