



Student Guild of Curtin University

Representation Board - Meeting #8

Monday 26th of June 2023 Online

Minutes

Meeting opened 8.04pm

1. Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners

"The Curtin Student Guild would like to pay our respect to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of our community by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which the Bentley Campus is located, the Wadjuk people of the Nyungar Nation; and on our Kalgoorlie Campus, the Wongutha people of the North-Eastern Goldfields. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this university, city and this region."

2. Attendance

- 2.1. Members Present; Aleena Shaji, Hannah Northey, Dylan Botica, Veronika Gobba, Mitchell Craig, Jude Soussan, Jasmyne Tweed, Bhaarath Kathiravan, Max Zhang, Athina Hilman, Veer Singh, James Cabrera (8.09pm), Rey Nairn (8.40pm), Hiba Alsoeady (8.50)pm
- 2.2. Others Present; Jo-Ann Naidu
- 2.3. Apologies and Leave of Absence; Ryan Kirby
- 2.4. Absent; Elicia Lelliot, , Danica Scott,

3. Disclosure of any potential or perceived conflicts of interest. None

4. Items for discussion

4.1 Action: For Representation Board to consider possible changes to the university self-certification assessment policy.

Dylan Botica discussed an item sent to LSEC about reducing and limiting self-certification for assessment extension. Jon Yorke said that Curtin staff were not supportive of continuing self-certification. Curtin considering reduction to maximum of 3 days instead of 5 days and not used for final exams, tests or assessments. Dylan invited Representation Board members to provide feedback about self-certification and changes to it. This was important in terms of Guild developing a position. Noted there were 20,000 self-certification requests in 2021. Imari Morris was not in favour of reducing the time period. Mitch Craig said self-certification should continue. He said that it had not increased the number of extension requests. It was noted that it was not always possible to see a doctor straight away and the cost was an issue for many students. This would impact international students disproportionately.

Hannah Northey asked what had brought about this change in attitude from Curtin. Dylan said that self-certification was brought in during COVID-19. It was noted that some self-certifications had been rejected for no reason by Curtin staff. Dylan Botica outlined some options put forward by Jon Yorke. Changes would come into effect next semester. Other options the university was discussing included the number of self-certifications per study period would be reduced but length would stay the same, self-certifications would be available only to students from an equity background, setting up a working group to look at longer term solution and ceasing self-certification. Imari Morris said that they were not in favour of self-certification only for equity backgrounds because of the amount of time it takes students to get the appropriate diagnosis and documentation in the case of disability. Mitch Craig talked about how automating the approval was also being considered by the university. Discussion about whether it should be available for final exams and final assessments. Mitch Craig and Hannah Northey said they would not support the exclusion of final assessments. Jasmyne Tweed asked for clarification about self-certification with regard to group assessments. Veronika Gobba said in terms of group assessments it was

for an individual not the group.

Veronika noted that there was not enough policy about self-certification to guide staff. Discussion about self-certification and exams. Jo-Ann Naidu noted that there appeared to be a lack of trust from staff with regard to self-certification. Clearer guidelines were needed. There appeared to be nothing proposed to address this issue. Jo-Ann noted that there were more students struggling with mental health issues and that there were longer wait times to see doctors. Bhaarith Kathiravan discussed the costs to international students of visiting a doctor. Dylan Botica said that feedback from Representation Board members suggested that the Guild stance would be that this was a staff communication issue and the Guild would be considering a campaign if changes were made. Mitch Craig said that this could be a positive for the university. Athina said that self-certification applications should be automatically accepted. Dylan Botica said that the guild could put this forward to Curtin. Rey Nairn said that Accessibility Services were supportive of self-certification because of shortage of doctor appointments, lack of bulk billing and the fact that Curtin did not accept pharmacy medical certificates. Jude Soussan discussed the issue from the perspective of theatre arts students.

Motion: That the Representation Board recognizes self-certification for assessment extensions as a vital, important and positive system for students. The Guild notes that self-certification significantly reduces barriers to retaining equity students in their course and any negative changes will be a move away from universal design. The Guild supports self-certification being retained with the current limitations. The Guild encourages the university to make self-certification automatically applied within the current limitations and to provide clear education and guidance to teaching staff and that REB will run a campaign to support this policy

Amendments were proposed by Rey Nairn and Mitch Craig. This was amendable to Dylan Botica.

Motion: That the Representation Board recognizes self-certification for assessment extensions as a vital, important and positive system for students. The Guild notes that self-certification significantly reduces barriers to retaining all students but especially equity students in their courses and any move to curtail or further limit will be a move away from universal design. The Guild supports self-certification being retained within the current limitations. The Guild encourages the university to make self-certifications automatically applied within the current limitations and to provide clear education and guidance to teaching staff and that Representation Board will run a campaign to support this policy.

Moved Dylan Botica
Seconded Rey Nairn
Carried

5. Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Representation Board is Thursday, the 20th of July at 5:30pm to be held in Council Chambers. Documents and motions are to be submitted not later than 5:00pm on Thursday 13th July to chair.representation@guild.curtin.edu.au and secretary@guild.curtin.edu.au

Meeting closed 8.56pm

