



Date: Tuesday 8 June 2021
 Time: 17.00
 Venue: Online

Governance Committee Minutes

Chair: Ayman Benmati, Education Officer

Members:	P	AP	AB
Aparna Sree Asok, Student Trustee (ASA)	✓		
Asad Rajput, Student Member (AR)	✓		
Ayman Benmati, Education Officer, Chair	✓		
Carol Paige, Democracy, Operations & Community Officer	✓		
Clare Bracey, External Trustee, Non-UCL		✓	
Jim Onyemenam, Postgraduate Students' Officer		✓	
Oluwakemi Gbadamosi, Student Member (OG)	✓		

In Attendance:
Rebecca McLoughlin, Governance & Administration Coordinator, minutes
Simon To, Policy, Governance & Insight Manager

1. Welcome & Introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the last meeting of the Governance Committee for this academic year. The Chair noted apologies from the External Trustee (Non-UCL) and the Postgraduate Students' Officer.

2. Minutes and matters arising from the meeting on 19 January 2021

The Chair noted that the following action will be carried forward to the next meeting of the Governance Committee:

The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager to bring back a proposal with the various options for electing student trustees to the next meeting of the Governance Committee.

ACTION: The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager to bring back a proposal with the various options for electing student trustees to the next meeting of the Governance Committee.

The Board approved the minutes for the meeting dated 19 January 2021 as a true and accurate record.

APPROVED

3. Returning Officer's Report (Spring 2021)

As the Deputy Returning Officer was unable to attend the meeting, the Policy, Governance & Insight Manager gave a summary of the Returning Officer's Report for the elections in Spring 2021. They advised that the Returning Officer provides a report after the elections to confirm the elections were returned fairly and democratically as well as highlighting any issues and observations.

The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager highlighted that the biggest change in these elections was that they were held entirely online. However, they were also the most successful

elections, in regards to voter turnout. Overall, 19.5% of students voted. The Student Member (AR) asked if the voter turnout had to reach quoracy. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager replied that there was not a quorum for voter turnout. The Chair asked how our voter turnout compared to other students' unions. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager replied that it really varies but most other London students' unions have a voter turnout of around 15%. They added that it can be difficult to compare depending on the size of the university and their student population. The Student Member (OG) asked if we knew the reason for this increased turnout this year. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager responded that it could be due to the increased online presence and promotion of the elections and added that there has been a full debrief after the election and lessons learnt to take forward. The Democracy, Operations & Community Officer added that they felt the engagement with students regarding the No-Detriment Policy just before the elections made students more aware about what was going on in the Union and the upcoming elections.

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4. Conduct of elections and any matters requiring further consideration

The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager asked the Committee to reflect on any issues or matters from the elections. The Chair asked about the use of WhatsApp during elections. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager replied that social media platforms can be difficult to monitor. They added that whether or not something is an unfair advantage to other candidates would be looked into.

The Chair asked about the number of candidates for the NUS Delegate positions. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager confirmed that the elections for the NUS Delegate position were moved to the Spring for the first time. This was so that students would be more aware of NUS by the time the elections took place, and it is also closer to the NUS Conference so we were hoping that drop-outs due to unforeseen circumstances might be lower. They also added that this year the NUS Conference was held online and not residential so the position may not have been as attractive or engaging as before.

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5. Review of governance arrangements in accordance to good governance codes

The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager advised that the Charity Governance Code was refreshed in December 2020 and the principles around Integrity and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion were substantially revised. They noted that we have mapped our practice and planned actions against the two refreshed Principles and they gave an summary of the proposed actions for each refreshed principle to bring us in line with the code.

The Student Member (OG) asked if there may be a need to include something about safe spaces. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager replied that this is covered in our Safeguarding Policy (action point 3.7.1) but this could be shared more widely. The Student Member (OG) also asked how we intended to deal with power imbalances. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager replied that this will be covered in the EDI Policy which the Board will develop. They added that the new Equity Officer will also have input into this when they start in July.

The Committee resolved to the mapping undertaken for the refreshed principles of the Charity Governance Code and confirmed the proposed new actions to be added to the Governance Review Action Plan.

RESOLVED**6. Governance Review Action Plan Progress Report**

The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager outlined that the Committee is responsible for the monitoring and oversight of progress against the Governance Review Action Plan. They noted that the appended action plan outlines progress as of May 2021. They confirmed that the actions still pending have been reviewed and the deadlines have been revised to reflect current capacity and furlough arrangements. The Chair asked what the new proposed deadlines were. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager confirmed that they were all noted under the new deadlines column on the action plan.

The Committee received the progress report on the action plan and noted the revised due dates for the remaining actions.

RECEIVED**7. Board Schedule & Business Cycle 2021-22**

The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager advised that the Committee considers the Board Schedule and associated Business Cycle; and reports thereon to the Board. They highlighted the main changes to the Board Schedule and associated Business Cycle. They noted that all the dates had been checked against dates of significant religious and cultural events to ensure there were no clashes.

The Democracy, Operations & Community Officer asked if the Remuneration Committee could be rescheduled as it was very close to the Chief Executive's appraisal date. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager replied that the timing of the Chief Executive's appraisal needs to be looked at and next year we will make sure there is more time between these.

The Democracy, Operations & Community Officer asked why the refresh of the Sustainability Strategy had not been included in the Business Cycle. The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager replied that this has since been added and confirmed that the refresh of the Sustainability Strategy will be considered by the Board in the December meeting.

RECEIVED**8. Revisions to the Governing Documents**


The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager summarised the revisions to the Governing Documents which had been adopted by Union Executive.

RECEIVED**9. New Officer Structure**

The Committee received the report on the new Officer Structure.

RECEIVED**10. Any Other Business.**

There was no other business.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	Osman Teklies, Chair
Signature:	
Date:	29/11/21

Action List

Actions	
The Policy, Governance & Insight Manager to bring back a proposal with the various options for electing student trustees to the next meeting of the Committee.	Policy, Governance & Insight Manager