

Activities & Engagement Officer – March Report

Name: Ana Boikova

Here's what I've been up to!

- I was the student voice on the IQR panel that was reviewing the Philosophy department, hearing student voices and giving recommendations about how the student academic experience can be improved and the social aspects so that they feel part of a community within their department.
- I have been working closely with the UCL alumni team to set up the alumni event that we will be hosting in May, gathering alumni, sending invites and planning the most suitable structure so that student leaders are able to learn the most of the event and find it very useful.
- Many of my conversations over the past 2 weeks have been about the need for space for club and societies activity with key UCL stakeholders.
- I have been working on giving more recognition to students for the work that they do during their studies and therefore introduced new awards in the community awards: I have added the activity rep to the officer of the year so both can be recognised. I have also given feedback on the sports and arts awards so that they are more inclusive of all the students that achieve success. This year we should hopefully get more nominations through that and also through staff being able to nominate, an idea that originated from the sports officer at activities zone.

How have you communicated with students in the last fortnight?

- Travelled to Sheffield for BUCS Nationals to support all our athletes who were competing in fencing, RAX, Badminton, Swimming, Karate, and Climbing. I spoke to many of our students.
- Attended a PGR induction event and talked to many of the new students about the Students' Union and what we can offer in terms of extra curricular activities.
- Scheduled and held many 1-1 meetings with students to help them with their issues and answer their queries.
- Was part of the IQR panel for the Philosophy department, speaking to a wide range of students there and hearing their feedback of their department and studies.
- Spoke to my officers and reps at activities zone.
- Attended Eda's Phineas Art Gallery launch and spoke to many of the students there that were in attendance.
- Attended the UCL Charity Swimathon and spoke to many students there.
- Helped out at the joint cheerleading showcase with ICL and KCL and spoke to many of the members there.
- Went on the Project Active Hike with Hiking club and interacted with many of the students there.
- Watched the Carousel in the Bloomsbury Theatre.

Sabbatical Officer Priorities

1) Sports are central to student life, helping students grow, become more resilient, and achieve their full potential.

- Gave feedback about sports awards and what we can do to improve them this year and so students feel more recognised.
- The varsity has launched, which is something I have been working with the sports officer, the reps, and staff on.

2) Students make the most of their university experience by self-discovery, learning from each other, developing skills, and having fun.

- I have been working closely with the UCL alumni team to set up the alumni event that we will be hosting in May, gathering alumni, sending invites and planning the most suitable structure so that student leaders are able to learn the most of the event and find it very useful.
- I have been in many conversations with the provost and key UCL stakeholders about the need for space for club and societies activity.
- I have been working on giving more recognition to students for the work that they do during their studies and therefore introduced new awards in the community awards: I have added the activity rep to the officer of the year so both can be recognised.
- Attended a Doctoral Researcher panel and networking induction session to talk to the new PhD students and promote what the SU does. I talked with many of the interested students about the club & societies and how they are open to all students. I have also discovered more about the PhD students experience and passed this onto recruitment in hopes they are able to improve some of the social aspects of it.

3) Students have access to a thriving arts programme that broadens their horizons while supporting their wellbeing and developing their skills.

- Gave feedback about arts awards and what we can do to improve them this year and so students feel more recognised.
- I have been in many conversations with UCL and the key stakeholders about the lack of space for arts groups and cultural society, including the limit of Bloomsbury theatre and studio shows and the fact that the students are rehearsing in rooms that are not built for purpose.
- I have been supporting the arts team on one of their most important projects - Fair Chance so that arts can be more accessible to the wider student body.

Attendance at important Union meetings and events

1) Union meetings attended and main outcomes

- Held a drop in session with Rachel for the UE voting members in case they needed more clarification on the proposed sports rep policy.

- Had a debrief about the international festival, talking about WWW and what could be done better for the future ones. My key suggestions were around making the themes more understandable every day and also including students who want to get involved outside of societies.
- Chaired a club/society disciplinary panel.
- Met with a student regarding his proposed policy to AZ about changing the way affiliations work: he wanted the application to be on a rolling basis and to make it more clear that other affiliated societies have no say about if a new one will go ahead. This was then taken to zone, where everyone unanimously agreed that we should have a Term 3 affiliations panel to give more opportunities for students to set up for the next academic year.
- Consulted with Engineering society and other students that may be affected by the new fossil free sponsorships to discuss how we can come up with solutions that could be in line with the policy without it affecting the current activities of the society ahead of the union executive decision.
- Was part of the panel for Term 2 affiliations.

Attendance at important UCL meetings and events

1) UCL meetings attended and main outcomes

- Met with members from the alumni team to discuss our progress on the student leader alumni event and to create some internal deadlines for organising such an event. We have now been working on getting the alumni together and setting it up.
- Attended the University Mental Health Charter group instead of Rachel, mainly talking about the need for us to implement an islamophobia action plan and do much more for our international student experience so that all nationalities feel safe and welcome on campus.
- Had a meeting with the provost, where I mainly updated him on the progress of the union in Term 1 in line with the student life strategy and focussed on the key issue that we face, which is the lack of space.
- Had a lunch and meeting with the UCL EDI team. Me and Rachel talked about the issues that need to be considered with the move to the new triaging system of Report & Support, where all student queries go to SSW. We have also discussed how we can do a comms piece around Report & Support, particularly about the difference between anonymous and named reports so students understand what to expect.
- Met with UCL's new Head of Recruitment & Admissions and did a tour of all our spaces, talking about some of the events and things we do to make sure Student Life and the SU is at the centre when UCL is speaking with its prospective students.
- Met with the team working on the SU Building, both from UCL and the architects, to discuss the current updates and look at the new mock up designs on the potential location.
- I was the student voice on the IQR panel that was reviewing the Philosophy department, hearing student voices and giving recommendations about how the student academic experience can be improved.