



Date: Tuesday, 10 December 2024
 Time: 18:00 – 20:00
 Venue: B06, Drayton House, Hybrid (Teams)

Union Executive Agenda

Chair: Goksu Danaci, President

Members:	P	AP	AB
Eda Yildirimkaya, Equity & Inclusion Officer		X	
Ana Boikova, Activities and Engagement Officer	X		
Rachel Lim, Welfare & Community Officer	X		
Darcy Lan, Postgraduate Officer	X		
Shaban Chaudhary, Education Officer	X		
Goksu Danaci, President	X		
Anji Suri & Danilo Paganelli, LGBTQ+ Officer			X
Suzanna Chen, Disabled Students' Officer			X
Rawleka Wilson & Sharvari Patil, People of Colour Students' Officers			X
Elisa de Aragao Bibay, Women's Officer	X		
Alan Salazar Guerra, Sustainability Officer	X		
Amanda Ng & Rory Clarke, Trans Officer	X		
Kody Christiansen, Elected Officer from Education Zone			X
Jack Sibeon, Elected Officer from Activities Zone	X		
Anam Eijaz Ahmed Choudhary, Elected Officer from Welfare and Community Zone	X		
Manaal Tariq, International Students' Officer			X

In Attendance:
Madeline Macintyre, Democracy Assistant, Minutes
Simon To, Staff
Nick Miao, Editor of Cheese Grater

Actions Log 2024/25	Responsibility	Update due:
Progress on sustainable banking options	President	3 February 2025
Promote the Research Students' Network	PG Officer	3 February 2025
Improve transparency of club sponsorship processes	AE Officer	3 February 2025

Preliminary Matters

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed zone members to the third Union Executive meeting of the year.

Matters for Approval

2. Approval of Minutes from previous meeting

The Chair sought agreement from attendees to move forward with the agenda after confirming everyone was happy with the minutes from the previous meeting.

3. Union Policy Designations

Reference Code	Title	Previous Lead Officer	Suggested Lead Officer
UP2308	Lobby UCL to evaluate enhancing the lighting infrastructure across campus	N/A	Equity & Inclusion Officer
UP2306	UCL Should Provide Cheap Meals	N/A	President
UP2305	Pronoun Integration at UCL	N/A	Equity & Inclusion Officer
UP2304	Food Information Posters	N/A	Welfare & Community Officer
UP2203	Commitment to Harm Reduction	Postgraduate Officer	Welfare & Community Officer

Matters for Information

4. National Policy Round-Up

- Simon To (Director of Policy, Governance & Advocacy) provided a recap of national policy topics discussed in previous Union Exec meetings, including the renters' rights bill and Universities UK's blueprint for change.
- Emphasis was placed on the importance of engaging with international student representatives, particularly the International Students Officer, in Union Exec and zone meetings to ensure their concerns are addressed in policy discussions.
- It was clarified that several policies had not been previously assigned to specific officers, and changes were proposed to ensure clearer designation of responsibilities.
- It was noted that certain policies adopted within the last two years remain valid until June 2026, ensuring continuity in the Union's policy framework.

Sabbatical Officers

5. Sabbatical Officer Priorities & Updates

President, Goksu Danaci (GD):

- GD shared updates on ongoing negotiations and plans for UCL building projects, focusing on finding transformative yet fast delivery options and lobbying for a Student Union-focused Estates Board, which is set to be established in the New Year.
- They attended COP29, advancing sustainability initiatives, including sustainability training shaped with input from experts and exploring sustainable banking opportunities.
- Regular meetings were held on topics ranging from training, governance structures, and banking issues to further support the Union's sustainability agenda.
- GD reported on the recent Board of Trustees meeting, which was successful and concluded efficiently, along with a financial review meeting for the quarter showing positive outcomes.
- They announced upcoming meetings with student trustees and ongoing efforts to engage with students through informal catch-ups.
- GD is exploring alternative advertising systems for the Students' Union and working on related developments.

- Clarifications were provided on the Union's current banking arrangements with Barclays, addressing questions about alignment with the Union's sustainability policies and transparency in decision-making. GD reassured attendees of efforts to explore alternative banking solutions and emphasized the challenges in transitioning institutional accounts.

Postgraduate (PG) Officer, Darcy Lan (DL):

- DL announced the launch of a new programme event, *Postgraduate Supercharger*, aimed at helping postgraduate students develop transferable skills, starting with a session on networking practice featuring three alumni.
- They are working on building the PGR (Postgraduate Research) student community by collaborating with the Doctoral School, participating in PGR induction events, and promoting student union activities.
- DL highlighted the launch of a *Research Students' Network* and encouraged students to subscribe and engage with the platform.
- Upcoming postgraduate-focused events were discussed, including dedicated postgraduate and broader student events, along with leading focus groups to gather feedback on graduate engagement and improve services.
- Efforts to expand extended learning opportunities for postgraduate students were outlined as a key priority.

Activities & Engagement (AE) Officer, Ana Boikova (AB):

- AB outlined plans for upcoming projects, including a panel event in February and the *Three Peaks in 48 Hours Challenge*, an activity scheduled for after exams, with student participation encouraged.
- The Discovery UK programme has seen strong student interest, with trips filling up quickly, and more events are planned for the year despite some cancellations due to weather.
- Discussions with UCL Estates are ongoing to improve sports facilities and extend room booking hours to 11 PM, with potential solutions presented to UCL Council.
- A new £5,000 fund will subsidize high-cost or niche activities, enabling societies to host events with grants of up to £500 available for eligible initiatives.
- A revamped taster event programme will focus on increasing society accessibility by prioritizing non-member participation while still allowing members to join. Application windows and guidelines will be shared with societies soon.
- AB emphasized the Union's ongoing efforts to enhance student activities and make societies more inclusive and accessible to all students.

Education Officer, Shaban Chaudhary (SC):

- SC reported progress on the Excellence Project and Extended Learning Opportunities initiatives, which have seen significant student participation.
- Assessment and feedback remain key concerns, particularly regarding the National Student Survey (NSS). While new principles have improved some areas, challenges persist. SC is collaborating with UCL heads of department and faculty teams to address these issues.

- Timetabling and scheduling have faced significant disruptions due to a cyberattack that impacted access to shared teaching spaces and CMISGo application failures at the start of the term. These issues have caused delays in assignments and scheduling, requiring extensive coordination to resolve.
- SC emphasized that the cyberattack forced UCL to reassign spaces for daytime teaching, further complicating scheduling for students.
- A detailed update on education initiatives and challenges is being prepared for a forthcoming presentation, and resolving these disruptions remains a priority.

Equity & Inclusion (EI) Officer, Eda Yildirimkaya (EY):

- EY discussed incorporating British Sign Language courses and a Media Week under the extended learning opportunities initiative, with Media Week planned for Term 3, following successful efforts to open up media spaces on campus.
- They provided updates on UCL student experience initiatives, including welfare spaces for after-hours use and events, such as therapy dog sessions, which have been well-received by students.
- EY mentioned ongoing efforts to improve transportation options for students, with plans to collaborate with TfL and provide updates soon.
- They attended a Camden Council meeting to address women's safety concerns, focusing on issues like lighting near student accommodations and pathways used during late-night study sessions.
- EY highlighted work with the Women's Network and Cheese Grater team on a campaign strategy, ensuring complementary efforts in safety and inclusivity.
- EY addressed concerns about the Refectory's safety inspections and food quality, noting dissatisfaction with current options and exploring creative solutions, including vending machine ideas.

Welfare & Community (WC) Officer, Rachel Lim (RL):

- RL provided updates on drafting an official policy for facilitators based on feedback from academic students during an ongoing pilot. This policy aims to consolidate support provided by personal tutors and outline their connections to other support systems within UCL.
- They are actively working with UCL accommodations and heads of accommodation to address issues and improve processes for student welfare.
- They mentioned their ongoing efforts to address challenges and successes related to sleeping pods conversations, a topic they have been pursuing for several months.
- RL shared their commitment to maintaining and strengthening relationships with student welfare groups, particularly in light of the absence of a welfare officer last year, and ensuring a seamless transition for the next officer.
- The importance of fostering collaborations with elected officers and establishing structured meetings for future welfare initiatives was emphasized.

Matters for Discussion

6. Quad Closure

- The Quad and surrounding areas will be renovated as part of the UCL 2026 Bicentenary Legacy, focusing on improving accessibility and usability.
- Renovation work will address accessibility issues such as potholes, enhance biodiversity, and increase the availability of bookable spaces for student events.
- The renovation will include the Main Quad, North and South Cloisters, Haldane Room, UCL Art Museum, Provost's Dining Room, and the Whistler Room.
- The project will begin in January 2025 and is expected to be completed by January 2026, during which the Quad will remain closed.
- Alternative spaces for large events, such as Gordon Square, Senate House, JBR, Wilkins Terrace, and UCL East/Marshgate, have been arranged, with adjustments made to booking times and capacities.
- The renovated Quad will offer flexible layouts, allowing for multiple simultaneous events, including performance areas, fairs, and a mini theatre.
- Sustainability and biodiversity improvements are key components of the renovation, with efforts made to make the space more environmentally friendly.
- Concerns were raised about the design of green spaces, graduation photo arrangements during the closure, and contingency plans for potential delays, which were addressed during the meeting.
- Financial aspects of the renovation were referred to UCL, as the Students' Union is not managing the budget for this project.

7. Term 1 Zone Round-Up

Activities Zone

- AB emphasized the importance of improving transparency and communication within the Students' Union and the Activities Zone to ensure students are informed about decisions and processes.
- Efforts are being made to clarify decision-making processes for clubs and societies, including guidance on different membership types and how to join societies.
- The Zone provided guidance for clubs and societies on securing sponsorships effectively and ethically.
- Discussions included support for student-athletes, focusing on class exemptions to help balance their academic and sporting commitments.
- Feedback from students was actively sought to improve the Zone's operations, including ensuring agendas are sent out a week in advance and making discussions more accessible.

Welfare & Community Zone

- RL outlined five key objectives for the Welfare and Community Zone: improving signposting for UCL's wellbeing services, enhancing the Flourish program in halls, investigating international students' accommodation experiences, advocating for diverse mental health service providers, and increasing accountability within UCL accommodation services.

- Progress has been made on feedback exercises for hall experiences and UCL-affiliated GP practices, with findings being used to enhance student welfare services.
- The *Project Period* initiative is being expanded to include more inclusive access across all buildings and gender-neutral bathrooms.
- Efforts are underway to improve transparency in case management, ensuring students have better information about the trajectory and handling of their wellbeing cases.
- RL highlighted ongoing research into the potential for student peer mental health support schemes and partnerships with psychology students to provide more diverse mental health resources, with findings expected after the Christmas break.
- Building a stronger sense of community among welfare representatives remains a priority to foster collaboration and improve the Zone's overall impact.

Education Zone

- SC outlined five key objectives for the Education Zone: improving the Programme Excellence Project, expanding the Student Support Framework, enhancing assessment and feedback, strengthening community and space, and providing better training for postgraduate teaching assistants and staff.
- They highlighted the launch of the International Student Research Project (ISRP), which allows international students to provide feedback across Russell Group universities.
- SC co-chaired the first Student Partnership Committee meeting, aiming to address issues reported from departmental SPCs and strengthen the partnership framework.
- Challenges with timetabling and space allocation, especially for postgraduate courses, were discussed, with SC advocating for centralization to address these issues.
- The Education Zone's priorities were presented to senior leadership, and collaborative efforts are ongoing to implement the initiatives effectively.
- SC emphasized the importance of feedback and encouraged attendees to engage further on any issues related to the Zone's objectives.

8. Term 2 Policy Suggestions

- The discussion began with a review of national policy developments, including changes to minimum wage, the rise of tuition fees and maintenance loans for home undergraduates, and the anticipated spring White Paper addressing university funding and governance.
- Research on the international student experience was highlighted, focusing on immigration, orientation, and post-graduation opportunities.
- The Union is reviewing its existing policies to ensure alignment with national developments and student needs, with several policies nearing their expiration, such as commitments to sustainability training, harm reduction, and emergency helpline posters.
- Participants were encouraged to identify gaps in the Union's policy framework and suggest new policies, particularly those reflecting discussions from the zones.
- The importance of improving communications about officer priorities and evolving policies was emphasized, with suggestions including newsletters, Instagram updates, and press releases.

- Attendees were invited to brainstorm policy ideas during the break and submit them for consideration in Term 2.

Any Other Business

9. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

(The meeting finished at 19:46)

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	Goksu Danaci, Chair
Signature:	Goksu Danaci
Date:	30/1/25