



Date: Thursday 23 February 2023
Time: 18:00 – 20:00
Venue: Malet Place Engineering Building 1.03

Activities Zone

Minutes

Chair: Mary McHarg, Activities & Engagement Officer

Members:	P	AP	AB
Alexa Wong, Societies Non-Portfolio Rep			X
Alice McNally, Sports Rep		X	
Angel Ma, LGBTQ+ Officer			X
Chiamaka Agu, Sports Officer	X		
Demetri Alvanis, Sports Rep		X	
Diane Le Rouic, Sports Rep	X		
Haoyu Wang, Societies Officer			X
Harper Taylor-Hanson, Trans Officer		X	
India L Deans-Smith, Volunteering Rep	X		
Issy Smith, Sports Rep		X	
Jingi Ye and Yalin Chen, Volunteering Officer (Job Share)	X		
Kevin Fang, Sports Rep	X		
Lewis Murphy, Arts Officer		X	
Manon Simmons and Sasha Green, Women's Officer (Job Share)			X
Margaret Cheung, BME Network Representative	X		
Martha Hancock, Societies Non-Portfolio Rep	X		
Mary McHarg, Activities and Engagement Officer, Chair	X		
Maya R Khurana, Societies Rep – Performance Art	X		
Nell S V Wedgwood, Societies Rep – Student Media	X		
Oluseyi (Seyi) A Osibamowo, Equity & Inclusion Officer	X		
Toma Ogawa, Volunteering Rep	X		
Yifu Li, Volunteering Rep	X		

In Attendance:
Julia Rooke, Representation and Democracy Coordinator
Samira Chowdhury, Democracy Assistant, minutes
Chloe Longdon, Sports Development Coordinator
Rupinder Sandal, Head of Societies and Projects
Student Observers (George Ponodath, Deniz Akinci, Chloe A Yn)

1. Preliminary matters - Welcome and Introductions

MM (Chair) warmly welcomes attendees to zone.

2. Announcements - Leadership Race Promotion

MM states nominations are open for leadership positions, for positions such as the Sabbatical Officers. She encourages attendees to apply, emphasising that it is an amazing opportunity.

3. Announcements - IT and Digital Strategy

MM states that the SU is looking to update its website, and so would like feedback on what students currently like and dislike about it. She states that links to feedback forms will be shared on the papers page after the meeting. Members must fill in the form specific to Student Leaders.

Action Point for Members: Please submit feedback on improving the SU's website using the link for Student Leaders

4. Matters for Information - Staff Updates

CL (Sports Development Coordinator) gives updates: Team UCL is happening, tickets are on going on sale for Varsity (which is on 16th-20th March), and the Captain's Launch event is happening soon.

JR (Representation and Democracy Coordinator) also encourages attendees to apply for leadership positions.

5. Matters for Information - Affiliations, disaffiliations and disciplinary actions

MM outlines which clubs and societies are disaffiliated.

6. Matters for Information - Club and Society Grant Allocations 2022/23

MM reminds attendees that funding is available for clubs and societies and encourages them to apply, so they have the wherewithal to organise more activities.

7. Matters for Information - Follow up on action points from previous meeting

There were no action points to follow up on.

8. Matters for Discussion - Ideas for Awards Season

MM asks attendees to give feedback on their ideas for improving the upcoming Awards Ceremonies.

Member emphasises that the Award Ceremony should be kept short but engaging. In order to accomplish this, she states that they should not have a speaker, but they should have programs, a red carpet and photo opportunities.

Member states that they should have Goodie bags for attendees to take home, more food at the venue, increase the number of categories in which societies can win awards, publicise the event more, give winners certificates, and have an after-party. She believes these improvements would incentivise clubs and societies to be nominated for awards.

Action Point: MM states if attendees have any other ideas, they should email her directly at ae.officer@ucl.ac.uk

9. Policy Proposals - Reaffirming the duration of Trial Membership as 28 Days

Student observer George Ponodath presents his policy proposal, arguing that the duration of Trial memberships for clubs and societies should be limited to 28 days, preventing trial members from standing or voting in elections. He states that an exception can be made for students returning from Study Abroad. He also states that students who struggle financially to afford full membership should apply to the SU's Participation Fund for financial help.

MH (Societies Non-Portfolio Rep) gives support to the policy. She states it is possible for students to also apply to the Union for an exception if they would like to run in elections but have not been a member for 28 days. MH states as a leader of a society herself, students have emailed her, refusing to pay. She does not like the idea of students running in elections for a club they have not attended or invested much time into.

RS (Head of Societies and Projects) states that taster memberships are important, allowing students to join a club at any point. She emphasises that the SU's priority is for clubs and societies to be as accessible as possible to students. RS states not that it is not a bad thing for students to try out a club and then decide to run for a committee position. They are also important as they help to remove the financial burden on students. She also states that this is not a mass concern, as students on taster memberships and who are not actively involved in a club are unlikely to run for or stand in elections. She also states that this policy could significantly impact term 1 by-elections by reducing candidates, crippling a lot of clubs and societies.

MH states that all the money that their club gets is from membership. She says students opting for taster memberships instead of full memberships affects the events they can put on. RS advises that her club can implement a rule that you cannot attend an event without full membership.

CA (Sports Officer) argues that it is unlikely that a student on a taster membership who has not taken an active role in the club is voted in.

Attendee states her confusion about how a taster membership works. RS explains that students can get involved at any point in the year. She also states that not every student is eligible for the Participation Fund: it is not an automatic guarantee that every student who applies will get it as a panel assesses their financial need.

RS states that the SU may not have the ability on their website to kick out students from clubs and societies. Attendee states it is difficult to filter by taster vs standard members on the SU website.

RS states she can change the name to reflect the idea that taster memberships are not meant to be a permanent way to join a club. She states she can also consider changing the process so that taster members are not included in the voting demographic. This is important as societies with higher electoral turnouts are awarded extra funding.

Attendee states that students should not be financially advantaged from joining a club or society. OAO (Equity & Inclusion Officer) reminds her that the SU's Participation Fund already exists for this reason, allowing students who are financially struggling to pay for society membership and also for any equipment they need to join in. She suggests there should be more comms about the fund. OAO states the point of the taster membership is to allow students to try a club rather than help eliminate financial barriers.

JR states that the Participation Fund is also more accessible compared to other funds: for instance, students do not have to provide bank statements.

RS and JR suggest to the proposer to adjust their policy based on the discussion today and then later bring it back to the zone, so that it could possibly be implemented next academic year.

Action Point: JR will check whether it is possible to split standing vs voting in an election

10. Matters for Approval - Approval of minutes from the last meeting

Minutes are approved.

11. Matters for Approval - HLM Panel

MM explains that Honorary Life Membership (HLM) is awarded to students and staff who have gone above and beyond in supporting, representing and advocating for UCL students. Students can nominate themselves or another student/staff member via a Webform on the Union website.

MM asks whether any members would like to be part of the panel that decides. MH (Societies Non-Portfolio Rep) volunteers to be on the panel.

12. Officer Updates and Questions - Activities and Engagement Officer

MH asks whether any members would like to join her campaign to protect Birbeck's Student Central building from closure. This is important as it is a large venue that can accommodate a lot of people, it also has club and society rooms, a large swimming pool and sports facilities.

Action Point for Members: Members interested in this cause should email MH a short statement on behalf of their clubs and societies, outlining why it is important that this building remains available to students. This email should be sent preferably by mid-next week.

13. Officer Updates and Questions - Equity & Inclusion Officer

There were no questions.

14. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	Mary McHarg, Activities & Engagement Officer
Signature:	Mary McHarg
Date:	16/03/2023