



Date: Tuesday 30 May 2023

Time: 18:00 – 20:00

Venue: Online - Zoom

Education Zone

Minutes

Chair: Hamza Ahmed, Education Officer

Members:	P	AP	AB
Abdulaziz E S A Abdulhadi, Faculty of Medical Sciences PGT Rep	X		
Andrea Franchini, Faculty of Engineering PGR Rep	X		
Angel Ma, LGBTQ+ Officer			X
Angela Escobar Brown, Faculty of Laws UG Rep			X
Aria Yu, Faculty of Engineering PGT Rep	X		
Avanija Menon, Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences UG Rep			
Azure Lo, Faculty of Life Sciences PGT Rep	X		
Callie Yoo, BME Students' Officer	X		
David Chandler, Faculty of Arts and Humanities PGR Rep			X
Denis C Yegon, Faculty of the Built Environment PGT Rep	X		
Emma Francis, Research Students' Officer	X		
Gabriel Huang, Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences UG Rep			X
George S Ponodath, Faculty of Population Health Sciences UG Rep	X		
Georgia M V Constantinou, Faculty of Medical Sciences PGR Rep			X
Graham W Van Goffrier, Mathematical & Physical Sciences Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep			X
Greg Koc, Faculty of Life Sciences UG Rep (Job Share)	X		
Hamza Ahmed, Education Officer (Chair)	X		
Harper Taylor Hanson, Trans Officer			X
Harriet R Israel, Institute of Education PGT Rep	X		
Henry R Wilson, Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences PGT Rep			X
Joy Han, Faculty of Brain Sciences UG Rep	X		
Julia Wojciechowska, Faculty of Arts and Humanities UG Rep		X	
Kairan Mai, Faculty of Arts and Humanities PGT Rep			X
Kenta Tsuda, Faculty of Laws PGR Rep			X
Kerem Isik, Faculty of Life Sciences UG Rep (Job Share)	X		
Krystel C Fernandes, Faculty of Brain Sciences PGT Rep			X
Madigan Dockrill, Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences PGR Rep			X
Manon Simmons, Women's Officer (Job Share)			X
Marine-Oceane L G Verdez-Scholler, Medical Sciences Undergraduate Rep			X
Nandni Nandni, Faculty of Laws PGT Rep	X		
Noha Soliman, Faculty of Brain Sciences PGR Rep			X
Oluseyi (Seyi) A Osibamowo, Equity & Inclusion Officer			X
Ramota Adelakun; Roemann Osman, Faculty of Population Health Sciences PGR Rep			X
Sara Motwani, Built Environment Undergraduate Faculty Rep			X
Sasha Green, Women's Officer (Job Share)			X
Sianne Chinwuba, Population Health Sciences PGT Rep		X	
Tianyi Yao, Institute of Education UG Rep	X		

Veronica A Boron, Faculty of Life Sciences PGR Rep			X
Xiaoyu Guo, Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences PGT Rep		X	
Yasmin Garcia-Sterling, Faculty of the Built Environment PGR Rep			X
Yasmine Abdu, Faculty of Engineering UG Rep	X		

Quorum: 17

In Attendance:
Rhiannon Ellis, Representation and Democracy Coordinator, minutes

1. Preliminary matters - Welcome and Introductions

- Hamza Ahmed (HA) welcomed attendees to the final Education Zone meeting of this academic year.

2. Staff Updates

- No staff updates

3. Outcomes from and inputs to UCL committees

- HA provided a verbal an update on the following points:
 - 1) The new Education Committees have started. The Student Staff Partnership Committee which a few faculty members are part of has held two meetings since the last Education Zone. The second meeting was today (HA is the co-chair). Terms of references and the relationship between the respective committees are being finalised.
 - 2) HA has been attending the EACP working group (working group that is looking at mitigating the impact of the marking and assessment boycott). The group is looking at the regulatory procedures to ensure that students will not be negatively impacted by the boycott and will be able to graduate on time. This group has been meeting very regularly and they have now sent the updated procedure and regulations to all the faculties and departments to help minimise the impact on students. This impact will continue to be reviewed ahead of graduations.

4. Follow up on action points from previous meeting

- HA updated on the previous action point regarding a shuttle bus service for PhD students at the Space Science Lab. HA raised this with the Operations Team at UCL, however there is no further update at this time due to a new COO being recruited two/three weeks ago. He said that he will continue to follow up on this with the COO and will report back to Zone members as and when he receives a response.
 - o Action: HA to follow up with the new COO and update Zone members.

5. Matters for Discussion – Assessment Experience

- HA asked for feedback from Zone members regarding their assessment experience this year. HA said that he has been made aware of some issues with exam papers at the Excel Centre which has been dealt with.
- There was no further feedback from Zone members.
- HA asked that if any Zone members had any feedback they would like to share with him outside of the Zone then to send him an email at e.officer@ucl.ac.uk or to raise it directly with their faculties.

6. Matters for Discussion – Policy Zone Feedback

- HA and Rhiannon Ellis (RE) asked Zone members to complete the anonymous feedback survey, in addition to having a discussion in the Zone regarding how they feel their experience in the Zones has been this year.
- Comments from Abdulaziz Abdulhadi (AA):
 - o Prefers the in-person zone compared to online as it is nice to see faculty reps and HA in person.
 - HA responded and said that he decided Education Zone should be online for Term 3 due to exams, however he agreed that Zones should be in person next year and he will advise the next Education Officer to do so.
 - o Regarding the impact of the Zone, AA expressed that when initially joining the Zones they came with lots of ideas and thought that this was the place where UCL

- gathers feedback and makes change, however they said that this is not how it works because of how big UCL is and the varying levels of policy and procedure.
- AA shared that it would be helpful if there was a continuation sheet so that new Faculty Reps can see what previous Faculty Reps have achieved and raised in the Zones. AA suggested that in the first Education Zone meeting, if there is anything that has been worked on this year that can be continued into the next academic year, it can be discussed at that meeting and Faculty Reps can work with the Education Officer to make it happen.
 - HA also agreed and said that it would be good if all topics of conversation and action points could be collated from all of the Education Zones this year and then brought to the first Education Zone to make new Zone members aware of what has previously been discussed and what work needs to be continued in the next academic year
 - Action: to collate action points and topics of conversation for the next academic year.
 - AA finished by saying that overall, it has been a great experience and they thanked HA.
 - Comments from Harriet Israel (HI):
 - HI found the meetings really helpful and they liked that there has been so many meetings as they were able to meet with Zone members more than they did with faculty members in the IOE.
 - HI raised that if they were to change one thing it would be to have one standard suggested way of feeding back the conversations held in the Zones to the Lead Department Reps and Course Reps so that feedback loop can be closed. They shared that when starting the Faculty Rep role, as you are so new and the role involves a lot of learning it would be nice to have a clear way of how to feedback the information down to the wider student body more effectively.
 - HA thanked HI and agreed that this should be taken into consideration for the next academic year.

- Action: Develop training for Faculty Reps around feeding back information from Zones to LDRs/Course Reps.
- Comments from George Ponodath (GP):
 - o GP said that in regard to handover, Academic Reps will complete the handover document, but when it comes to actually starting the roles there isn't much of an onboarding process or an opportunity to explicitly go through the previous issues, and therefore it doesn't complete the cycle when the new Faculty Reps start. GP suggested that there should be an opportunity in either the initial training sessions or in the first Zone meeting to go through what the past issues were and find ways to move forward.
 - HA responded and agreed that this should be done in the first Zone.
 - Action: Review this for the next academic year
 - o GP also shared that as a Faculty Rep in their second year they were still unclear on the structure of UCLs committee structures and where/how decisions are made. They also added that for PGT/PGR Reps that are only here for a year it would be good to include more information about this in the initial training.
 - HA agreed that the committee structure and decision making is confusing and challenging for reps to understand, but potentially having an illustrative structure in the training outlining the main committees would be useful and something we should take forward.
 - Action: Develop an illustrative UCL committee structure and include it in initial Faculty Rep Training
 - o GP also raised that if we want to engage more cross zone partnerships, having all the Zones in a week makes it challenging for people to attend. GP suggested that if the Zones could be more spread out it would be easier for people to attend multiple Zones.
 - HA responded and explained that one of the reason Zones are together is because it can also make it easier for some people if they are all in the space of a week, however we can look to review this.

- Action: Review this as part of Policy Zone feedback analysis
- Comments from Emma Francis (EF):
 - EF said that they prefer a hybrid approach to meetings, and it is important for inclusion to have both options.
 - EF explained that one of the major issues with the Zones is the lack of PGR representation, and whilst they have been the Research Students' Officer this year, it would have been good if there were more PGR students present such as PGR Faculty Reps. EF also raised that due to the limited amount of PGR students, it has been difficult to get policies passed through. EF provided an example of when they brought a policy forward at the beginning of the academic year, however it was difficult to get people to vote when it affected PhD students due to a general lack of awareness from UG/PGT students which is a wider issue with the Zones. EF suggested that there should either be a separate Policy Zone for PGRs or ensure that there is more representation from PGR students in the Zones.
 - EF also said that there should be clear expectations of Faculty Rep when they have been elected into their positions and they should be attending these Zone meetings and answering emails for example.
 - HA agreed that attendance has been low from PGR students and suggested doing targeted emails ahead of the Zone to encourage them to come to the meetings.
 - Action: Review attendance from Zones and investigate arranging targeted emails ahead of Zones to PGR members.
 - Action: Review Faculty Rep role expectations and include this more clearly within initial training.
- Comments from Tianyi Yao (TY):
 - TY said that they think it is nice to have the meetings online, especially near holidays, when people may have gone back home abroad.
 - TY suggested that the type of rooms used for in person meetings should be changed from a lecture theatre to a classroom style with tables as it will help with

the communication and interaction. TY also shared that they felt like there hasn't been many opportunities to have bigger discussions and network with members.

- HA agreed that we should look to book different rooms such as those in the IOE
 - **Action: Book classrooms rather than lecture theatres for Policy Zones in the next academic year.**
- TY said that in regard to the impact of the Zones as the issues tend to be quite broad i.e. strikes/marking boycott it is hard to see the changes. However, they said that Zones are a good opportunity to hear about what the issues are in other faculties and together members can find ways to deal with the problems.
- TY also mentioned that even though zones are regular they did not feel connected to other Faculty Reps because the Zones are the only time where they can sit together and discuss feedback. TY suggested that there should be more opportunities to meet with Faculty Reps outside of the meeting.
- TY said that they have a Padlet in the IOE where they can put ideas surrounding a topic of discussion ahead of meeting and they can gather preliminary thoughts and opinions. TY suggested that this could be introduced for the Zones as well.
 - HA agreed that this could be a good idea for Zones.
 - **Action: Review this ahead of the next academic year**
- Comments from Yasmin Abdu (YA):
 - YA said that they did not feel connected to other Zone members and that it would be benefit the Zones if there were opportunities for Faculty Reps to collaborate with one another, either in the Zone or outside the Zone, especially when issues are likely to be arising in more than one department. They also said that this could help with solving wider problems as they could come together as a collective to improve an issue and provide feedback in UCL committees.
 - HA suggested that there should be more opportunities for Faculty Reps to collaborate and discuss issues with one another more regularly and this could potentially be embedded into the Zones.

- Action: Develop more collaboration and discussion opportunities for Faculty Reps.
- Comments from Denis Yegon (DY):
 - DY shared that they did not feel the social aspect had been achieved and they did not feel connected with other zone members. They explained that this could be attributed to the rooms always being in lecture theatres rather than a classroom style, as well as a lack of opportunity within the meetings to have discussions.
 - DY suggested that there should be time allocated before, after or during the Zone where members could speak to one another about issues they are facing, or on a particular topic that they could work together on. DY also said that it may be challenging to have a social element after the Zones if they continue to end at 20:00.
 - DY also asked whether PGR Faculty Reps can allocate a proxy to attend the meeting on their behalf to improve the attendance issues EF raised.
 - RE explained that said that some Zone members are allowed to have proxy i.e. Liberation Student Officers, however PGR Faculty Reps currently do not have that ability. RE said that they would review this as part of the Zone feedback.
 - HA added that if someone has been elected then they should try to attend as there are only 5 meetings a year, however targeted emails to those that have not been attending should be done as part of the Zone feedback, to understand why they have been unable to attend.
 - Action: Review these points ahead of the next academic year.
- HA thanked everyone for their feedback and reminded them to complete the anonymous survey. The survey can be accessed here: <https://studentsunionucl.org/webform/policy-zone-feedback>

7. Matters for approval – Minutes from last meeting

- HA approved the minutes.

8. Officer Updates and Questions

- EF raised that they had worked closely with Seyi (Equity and Inclusion Officer) this year around an issue with disability services for PhD students, but they did not get the opportunity to work with other Sabbatical Officers. EF said that full-time Sabbatical Officers should reach out and work with the part-time Student Officers more as they felt that it would be beneficial to have worked closer together with HA to support PhD students. EF also added that because there was no Postgraduate Sabbatical Officer this year she did not feel supported and if this ever happens again where a Sabbatical Officer does not take their position then there needs to be provisions in place to ensure the Student Officers are supported.
 - o HA responded and agreed that EF had not received enough support from the Sabbatical Officer Team due to the lack of the Postgraduate Officer and the fact their responsibilities were split amongst the Sabbatical Officer Team.
 - o HA also agreed that it is important that Student Officers are feeling supported and that additional provisions should be in place, and this should be actioned for next year. HA Thanked EF for their contributions.
 - **Action: Develop stronger support mechanisms to ensure that the Sabbatical Officers can support the Student Officers.**
- Greg Koc (GK) raised that they had an exam recently but as the content was taught two months before and then the exam was held students struggled because they also had to prepare for other exams. GK suggested that maths exams should be held at the end of the modules so that it is fresh in their minds when they take the exams.
 - o HA highlighted that this points to a wider issue at UCL with the assessment timing, however, unfortunately there has been a lot of pushback from academics where they prefer for all exams to be in the summer period, and this has been raised as an issue by HA and other previous officers.
 - o HA also spoke about another issue relating to the abrupt change from online exams to in person exams even though students were initially told that it was all

online. HA has raised this to Vice Provost Education, and they also want to change when assessments are held and the assessment format.

9. Any Other Business

- TY raised an issue that is impacting PG students from IOE and final year UG students. UCL no longer provides electronic degree certificates, and they just provide a paper version but for international students this may take several months to arrive. Recently there has been a change in the Chinese government where they now require to see the degree certificate to issue the authentication of the degree which then allows students to find jobs or pursue higher education.
 - o HA responded and said that he is aware of this, and he has raised this directly with the Provost who is currently looking into this situation further. HA said that he will follow up on this and update TY.
 - **Action: HA to follow up with the Provost and update TY**
- HA ended the meeting by thanking all of the Zone members for their contributions this year and for being part of the Zones. HA said that he had found them very helpful and all of the feedback raised will be taken forward.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	Hamza Ahmed, Education Officer
Signature:	Hamza Ahmed
Date:	1 June 2023