

President – January Report

Name: Mary McHarg

Section 1: General Update

I attended COP28 with a team of researchers and academics from UCL, using various student concerns and ideas to shape my schedule and represent the student body. I am now helping develop a Climate/Sustainability Leaders program between UCL and the union, to equip more students with the skills and opportunities to influence climate and sustainability policy.

UCL Estate's Students & Campus Experience Board have agreed to fund RIBA Stage 1 of the Union Building project, which will set out in full detail the brief and preparation needed for a purpose-built Students' Union in the heart of campus, which will take 12 weeks.

Section 2: Sabbatical Officer Priorities

1) Students are proud of Students' Union UCL, which represents their interests and continues to work for future students.

I have picked up my predecessor's work linking the SU's Volunteering Service and the UCL's Innovation & Enterprise, with the aim to host a joint event to showcase both departments' opportunities for students and raise their respective profiles.

We will be hosting the first Student Staff Forum, to help create dialogue between our student staff in cafes and bars and our Union staff, and ensure we are able to meet their needs

2) Students will have a new home for the future, where they feel part of a vibrant and inclusive community.

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Brodie, the Head of Arts, has secured an extra week in the Bloomsbury Theatre and 9 weeks in the Studio for ArtsUCL, and is working with our societies and sabbs on a strategy to

develop a cohesive Bloomsbury Show program.

3) Students are developed and accredited for the skills that they develop co-curricularly, so that they can achieve their dreams.

A joint SU-university working group is being formed to develop a framework for skills development at UCL, to align with other work happening regarding personal tutors and program excellence and ensure that co-curricular activity is structurally unavoidable, properly credited, and equitable.

A Departmental Societies working group has been set up which will report into the Student Life Committee, to help drive cross-institutional work in that area and lead a pilot in a few departments using our Departmental Hub model

4) Students have influence nationally on the matters that affect them.

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I have continued to attend and engage with the Russell Group Students' Unions in developing our student manifesto, and will be attending and bringing a policy to the upcoming NUS conference

I have opened conversation with Charlie Clinton, a former UCL sabbatical officer who is running to be an MP in our constituency, about how we can drive voter registration and engagement at UCL

5) Any other priority updates?

I have been hosting Student Sustainability Forums with the Sustainable UCL team, to gather student opinion and ideas on my agenda at COP28 and recently on the university's new Sustainability strategy.

Section 3: Attendance at important Union meetings and events

1) Union meetings attended and main outcomes

I've been meeting regularly with Brodie to develop a direction of travel for ArtsUCL and Bloomsbury Theatre shows, some of which have already been piloted like our new

relationship with the Royal Opera House.

I've been meeting with students from Climate Action Society regarding my COP28 trip as well as my positions on the Finance and Investments Committees, to ensure that student voice is being reflected in those arenas.

I've had catch ups with most of our student trustees, ensuring that they are comfortable in trustee meetings, where I've been aiming to foster a collaborative and welcoming environment.

Section 4: Attendance at important UCL meetings and events

1) UCL meetings attended and main outcomes

With Bal and Guy, we presented our Vision for Student Union collaboration at UCL East to stakeholders at UCL, and shared a vision for how we can centre student experience on the East Bank through partnership with other groups in the area like the BBC, V&A, LCF, and Sadler's Wells.

The Union hosted UCL Council for lunch, and we were able to show them our current facilities and stress the need for immediate investment in student experience and facilities, particularly in sports, arts, and social space. The immediate effect was stark- the urgent need for better student facilities was highlighted multiple times by different members at the following Council meeting.

I've been ensuring that University Management keep in mind the importance of student experience in estates development and strategy, and the crucial role it will play in student recruitment and retainment in the coming years if UCL wish to keep its global position.

Section 5: What progress have you made on your assigned policy proposals?

Policy: Sustainability Training

Alongside our 'Sustainability Leaders' conference (name subject to change), I'm working with the Sustainable UCL team to reinvigorate their current training and make it more applicable and useful, with the goal of being used as a mandatory training for all students. We are working with Nicola Walsh in the IOE, a leading academic in sustainability education, to develop the training.

Policy: Use of Amazon Vouchers and Products

No update.

Policy: The Union should bring all outsourced support staff at UCL in-house

No update.

Policy: Plant based food policy

Policy has been shared with commercial teams for implementation.

Policy: Good Night Out Training

Policy has been shared with our commercial team for implementation.