



Date: Monday, 2 March 2020
Time: 18:00-20:00
Venue: 2.07, 25 Gordon Street

**Union Executive
Minutes**

Chair: Carol Paige,
Democracy, Operations and Community Officer

Members:	P	AP	AB
Aatikah Malik, Welfare and International Officer		✓	
Ashley Slanina-Davies, Education Officer	✓		
Carol Paige, Democracy, Operations and Community Officer, Chair	✓		
Clara Baltay/Laura Dell'Antonio, Sports Officer (Job Share), Elected Officer from Activities Zone	✓		
D'Arcy McGuinness, Activities Officer	✓		
Jiaqi Guo, Faculty Rep for the Institute of Education (Undergraduate), Elected Officer from Education Zone	✓		
Jim Onyemenam, Postgraduate Students' Officer	✓		
Maë Faugère, Sustainability Officer			✓
Max Tscheltzkoff, Trans Officer	✓		
Mihir Gupta, Union Chair	✓		
Molly Hartill, Community Relations Officer, Elected Officer from Welfare and Community Zone	✓		
Nilisha Vashist, Women's Officer	✓		
Sandy Ogundele, BME Students' Officer	✓		
Xuyi Wang, LGBTQ+ Students Officer	✓		
Zohar Mendzelevski-Steinberg, Disabled Students' Officer	✓		

In Attendance:
Alex McKee, Head of Student Engagement & Communication
Emer O'Driscoll, Policy Zone Assistant, minutes

1. Preliminary Matters

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chair noted that the minutes of the previous meeting had been amended to anonymise some sections of the discussion. They stated that none of the content had been altered but the changes were intended to prevent the targeted harassment of individuals by removing names and job titles from the debate.

The Chair asked if there were any objections or corrections to the meeting. There were none and so the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

The Chair followed up on the action points from previous meetings:

- “Campaign for more laundry facilities in halls, develop a map of local laundry facilities and a guide outlining tenancy rights.” – The Chair reported that the Advice and Advocacy Manager has done work on this but that it is still ongoing, as the map of laundry facilities

hasn't been produced yet.

Action: the Head of Student Engagement & Communication to update on this next time

- “Education Officer to liaise with digital education team at UCL to improve subtitling” – the Education Officer reported that this is an ongoing process but there have been no developments since the last Union Executive meeting.
- “DSO, WI Officer and Trans Officer to work on staff training” – It was reported that this has taken place within the Union, but that UCL has not agreed to work on staff training. The Disabled Students’ Officer also announced that the Disabled Students’ Network has published an open letter to the Provost on the Students’ Union website, addressing UCL’s response to their recently published report of disability discrimination.
- “Activities Officer to liaise with BME Students’ Officer about the society affiliation process” – This has not taken place yet and so is an ongoing action.
- “Education Officer to coordinate support for the Disabled Students’ Network – The Education Officer and the Disabled Students’ Officer confirmed that this has happened, and that the support is ongoing.
- “Chair to find more examples to add to the Hong Kong policy” – The Chair reported that this has not happened yet, as the deadline for the Policy Zones was missed. They asked any members who are happy to share relevant examples of infringements on freedom of speech to contact them.

Action: any members who are happy to share examples of infringements on freedom of speech to email doc.officer@ucl.ac.uk

- “Chair to follow up on changes to Phineas” – The Chair reported that a working group has been set up, including themselves, the Education Officer, and the BME Students’ Officer. This group will meet for the first time next week.

2. Officer Reports

The Chair invited all sabbatical officers present to give an update on any work they had done since the publication of their officer reports.

Activities Officer:

- Finalising criteria for Arts, Sports and Societies Awards
- Electing awards panels
- Getting ready for Varsity

Chair:

- Have secured two microwaves in the IOE
- Working on the Leadership Race

- Have made student spaces a priority in the UCL Estates Strategy
- Working on the first draft of a Students' Union Sustainability Strategy

Women's Officer:

- Working on upcoming Women's History Month events, including an Accountability Session with the Provost on 13 March
- Working on a Trans Solidarity policy, but would like to liaise with the Trans Officer and anyone else who is interested
- Collecting student submissions for the Full Stop to Racial Harassment campaign
- Will be looking at improving the way UCL deals with sexual harassment complaints

Action: The Women's Officer and the Trans Officer to collaborate on the new policy

Action: Members to send ideas for the Full Stop to Racial Harassment campaign to the Women's Officer and/or reportandsupport@ucl.ac.uk

BME Students' Officer:

- Have mostly been working on the Eugenics Inquiry
- Submitted a policy to NUS

Postgraduate Students' Officer:

- Working with UCL to change PhD stipends from quarterly to monthly
- Working on nap rooms
- Have published the Childcare Consultancy Report
- Working on the redesign on degree certificates

Education Officer:

- Mostly working on strike mitigation for students during and after the UCU industrial action
- Involved in UCL's coronavirus contingency planning
- Doing work within different faculties, e.g. working on language pathways in the Joint Faculties and course descriptions in the IOE

The Union Chair asked whether students will be compensated for the strikes.

The Education Officer explained that this is happening through the Learning Opportunities Fund, although it is money to help students purchase equivalent learning opportunities rather than compensation for missed teaching time.

The Community Relations Officer asked whether an equivalent fund will be put in place for the current round of strikes. The Education Officer confirmed that as far as they're aware there will be another fund and there may be a slight increase in the amount of money available.

The sabbatical officers reported that, among other projects, the Welfare & International Officer has been working on:

- Increasing and protecting prayer space on campus
- The Wellbeing Report

3. Announcements

Report from Activities Zone

The Activities Officer reported that the Activities Zone had confirmed some changes to the criteria for Arts and Sports Awards, including the establishment of the Louis Carr Memorial Award, a welfare award in memory of a member of Men's Football.

Report from Education Zone

The Education Officer reported that the Zone had a productive discussion with the UCL Careers service. They reported that, as the meeting had been inquorate, no policies were discussed but there had been small-group discussions about topics including contact hours, quality control, and personal tutoring.

Report from Welfare & Community Zone

The Policy Zone Assistant reported that two policies had been discussed at the Zone. One was about lobbying UCL for space to dry wet clothes and towels, which has been taken forward as an action point rather than a policy, and the other was about establishing clear guidelines for student parents. They reported that the Zone had discussed topics including support for mature and part-time students, hot water provision on campus, and attendance monitoring. The final hour of the meeting was a discussion forum between the Hall Reps and members of the UCL Accommodation team.

Attendance and Resignations

The Policy Zone Assistant reported that the following non-sabbatical officer positions are now vacant, as the role-holders have resigned in accordance with the Union's attendance and non-engagement policy:

- Mature and Part-time Students' Officer
- Societies Officer
- Societies Representative (Departmental).

They explained that under the current policy any non-sabbatical officer with two or more absences from Union meetings (i.e. without sending apologies) is considered to have demonstrated a lack of engagement with their position. This is increased to four absences for members of Union Executive. In this situation, the officer will be contacted by a staff member to let them know and given five working days to respond. If they have not responded within those five working days, they will be considered resigned by Union Executive.

It was noted that there have been cases this year where non-sabbatical officers have had two or more absences from Zone meetings but when contacted have been able to demonstrate their

engagement with their role and so have not been removed from their position.

The Chair pointed out that one issue with this system is that there is often not a gap of five working days between Policy Zone meetings and Union Executive, and so there can be a long wait time between members having resigned and their resignation being confirmed by Union Executive. They noted that potential solutions could be:

- Changing the bye-laws to decrease the window in which non-sabbatical officers can respond to staff about their engagement
- Postponing Union Executive meetings until at least five working days after the last Policy Zone meeting
- Allowing the Chair to make decisions about resignations, and consulting Union Executive only in difficult cases or where conflicts of interest arise.

The Chair asked members for feedback or questions about the attendance and non-engagement policy.

The Sports Officer (Job Share) suggested that decisions should be made by the Chair of Union Executive in consultation with the Chair of the relevant Policy Zone. There were no objections to this suggestion.

Decision: Rulings on resignations will be made by the Chair of Union Executive in consultation with the Chair of the relevant Policy Zone and only taken to Union Executive in complicated cases

The BME Students' Officer asked whether members of multiple Policy Zones, e.g. the Community Relations Officer, felt it was fair that they had the same attendance requirements (i.e. a two absence limit) as members of one Policy Zone.

The Community Relations Officer answered that they felt this was fair, as they did not feel it was difficult to send apologies to meetings they are unable to attend.

NUS Vote

The Chair announced that, as some NUS conference delegates had had to withdraw, there was a spare place available. The opportunity had been advertised to all elected officers of the Union and five candidates had put themselves forward. Members were invited to vote through the Students' Union website.

Decision: Jim Onyemenam was elected as an additional NUS Delegate.

4. Ratification of Policy Proposals

A UCL-wide policy for more welcoming and inclusive environment for student parents

The Chair introduced the policy and asked if there were any questions or feedback on the

proposal. They noted that Union Executive cannot amend policies that have been passed by Policy Zones, but they can refer them back to their originating Zone.

The Chair asked the Postgraduate Students’ Officer whether they or the Welfare & International Officer would lead on this policy. The Postgraduate Students’ Officer responded that either they or the W&I Officer could lead on the policy – it falls within the remit of the W&I Officer but it overlaps significantly with the work they are doing on childcare on campus.

The BME Students’ Officer asked whether there was a mechanism for having co-leads on Union policies. Members agreed this would be a good idea and help foster collaboration within the sabbatical officer team. The Policy Zone Assistant responded that this is not currently practice but can be implemented.

There were no further questions or comments. The Chair moved to a vote.

Vote	Number
For	13
Against	0
Abstain	0

Decision: The policy was RATIFIED

Decision: The Welfare & International Officer and the Postgraduate Students’ Officer will be co-leads on the policy

5. Matters for Discussion

Officer Accountability

The Chair asked members to look at an example of an officer report and give feedback on how it could be changed to be more engaging and accessible for students.

The Postgraduate Students’ Officer suggested that the ‘Meetings Attended’ section should be removed, as they attend too many meetings to list on the form. The Women’s Officer asked how sabbatical officers will be held accountable if there is no record of them attending meetings. The Postgraduate Students’ Officer responded that they felt attendance was not as helpful an indicator of engagement as project-based achievements. The BME Students’ Officer agreed and added that they fill out the ‘Meetings Attended’ section under project headings, rather than as an exhaustive list.

The Chair asked the non-sabbatical officers present whether they read the officer reports. The

officers responded that they did not.

The Sports Officers suggested that a short termly summary of each officer's work would be more helpful and students would be more likely to read it. The Community Relations Officer agreed and suggested this could be formatted in a similar way to the Marketing departments 'What we're talking about this week' updates. The Union Chair added that these should include more graphic content and fewer words, as this would boost engagement.

It was asked if the officer reports for the Board of Trustees were able to be changed or if there was a fixed template. The Head of Student Engagement & Communication clarified that the current template is not fixed and could be changed.

The Head of Student Engagement & Communication asked if this would be communication with all students or just with Union Executive members. Members felt it would be helpful if all students received this information. Suggestions for communication channels included using the digital screens around Union buildings and including updates in the all-student newsletter.

The BME Students' Officer suggested that every elected officer should be able to use the student newsletter to highlight their work, similar to the 'spotlight on...' feature. The Education Officer commented that this could work similarly to the 'Rep of the Month' feature.

The Policy Zone Assistant noted that new initiatives to promote officer accountability could be linked with the 'Questions to Officers' procedure, which is currently underused.

Honorary Life Membership

The Activities Officer explained that Honorary Life Memberships (HLMs) of the Union are decided by Union Executive, as recommended by the sports, arts, and societies awards panels.

The Chair noted that the next scheduled meeting of Union Executive will be too late to decide on the HLMs and so members should decide how to proceed. The options are to:

- Call an extra meeting of Union Executive during exam season
- Hold an online vote and/or make the decision via email
- Form a smaller group of Union Executive members to make the decision.

The Chair asked for feedback or suggestions.

Members stated that they would like to form a subgroup to make the decision. The Chair suggested that membership of the group should be no more than six.

The Activities Officer suggested that they and the Chair should be members of the subgroup, as the Officers most closely linked with the awards process. The Community Relations Officer suggested that there should be a representative of each Policy Zone on the panel. The Sports Officers and the Community Relations Officer volunteered to represent their respective Zones. The BME Students' Officer stated that they would attend the subgroup if possible, but not to

make the group contingent on their attendance as they were unsure as to scheduling commitments.

Decision: Union Executive will form a subgroup to decide Honorary Life Memberships, including the Chair, the Activities Officer, the Community Relations Officer, and the Sports Officers. The BME Students' Officer to attend if possible.

Action: Any other members interested in joining the subgroup to contact su.committees@ucl.ac.uk.

Feedback on new democratic structures

The Chair explained that the Policy Zones/Union Executive structure was new this year, as a result of the Union's democracy review. They asked members for feedback on the new democratic structures and any suggestions for improvement.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer suggested that the processes for Matters for Discussion should be re-evaluated, as they can sometimes be effective but often not.

The Activities Officer noted that Activities Zone is functioning well. The Community Relations Officer and the Sports Officers agreed and noted that the Zone is effective because it is relatively small and so can focus on specific issues. It was also noted that the Activities Zone is significantly smaller than the other two, as many of its positions are vacant, especially the Societies Representatives.

The Community Relations Officer and the Chair noted that Welfare & Community Zone often seems disproportionately focused on Halls issues, as the majority of its officers are Halls Representatives. Members agreed that this was a problem and that the balance needed to be redressed. It was suggested that the Halls Representatives could have their own separate committee, which could then send two or three representatives to sit on the Welfare & Community Zone. The BME Students' Officer suggested that the Zone should be recentred to focus on liberation and community based issues.

The Community Relations Officer added that it would be helpful if Hall Representatives were given more training, as the majority of them are first year undergraduates and are often unaware of the wider context of issues.

The Disabled Students' Officer suggested that Liberation Network committee members should be able to attend and vote at Policy Zone meetings. The Chair clarified that, as of the last Union Executive meeting, Liberation Network committee members have proxy voting rights at Policy Zones and Union Executive. The Disabled Students' Officer added that it might be helpful to have multiple ex officio positions for each Network on Policy Zones, which could be filled by different committee members throughout the year. They also noted that the Zones could be opened up to the wider student body.

The BME Students' Officer asked what the other liberation officers thought of this idea.

The Trans Officer stated that having one Trans Officer is not enough. They noted that they have been collecting signatures to affiliate a Trans Empowerment Society.

The BME Students' Officer asked whether they would prefer to start a society or a network. The Trans Officer responded that a Network would be better but they were worried about overlap with the LGBT+ Network. The Chair added that a Network could be established through an AGD, which would bypass the society affiliation process. The Head of Student Engagement & Communication noted that a Network could be established informally without an AGD first, as a trial, and then later formally added to the bye-laws. The Disabled Students' Officer added that they felt formal structures were helpful in these cases.

Action: the Trans Officer and the BME Students' Officer to discuss the possibility of setting up a Trans Network

The Education Officer noted that, although Education Zone has been going well, some topics discussed are very specific and can exclude certain groups of people. Feedback from Reps has been that the more confident Zone members find group discussion useless but the shyer members find it very helpful. They noted that, as the Zone is so large, there is wide variation in how it runs.

The Education Officer also noted that at the beginning of the year they were not aware how much ownership the Chair had of their Zone. They hoped that their successor would be able to be more proactive in shaping Zone procedure.

6. Matters for Information

Leadership Race

The Chair reminded members that nominations for this year's elections close on Wednesday, 4 March, and encouraged them to promote the elections to their constituents.

The LGBQ+ Officer asked if the nominations for the LGBQ+ and Trans Officers could be extended to the end of the week. The Chair explained that the elections schedule is fixed and there cannot be any extensions. The Head of Student Engagement & Communication clarified that nominations will only be reopened if there are no nominations for a position.

The Chair reminded members that the manifesto deadline is not until Wednesday, 11 March, and so potential candidates should submit their names as soon as possible and then would have another week to consider their manifesto.

NUS Motion

The BME Students' Officer introduced the motion and explained that, although it has already been submitted, they are planning to attach amendments at a later stage.

The Chair asked whether other Unions have submitted any similar motions. The BME Students' Officer responded that, as far as they are aware, NUS delegates will have access to all proposed motions by Tuesday, 3 March.

The Sports Officer (Job Share) asked how the amendments process works. The BME Students' Officer explained that all NUS delegates will have access to the motions and be able to submit amendments via the NUS website. They added that they will be running sessions for NUS delegates on the NUS and how to write and amend policy.

The Education Officer suggested an amendment clarifying what is meant by 'data' and outlining the ramifications of a potential data breach. The BME Students' Officer suggested that they discuss amendments after the meeting.

Action: The Education Officer and the BME Students' Officer to discuss amendments to the NUS motion

Action: Any members with questions or suggestions about the NUS motion to contact bmes.officer@ucl.ac.uk

8 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and engagement.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	Carol Paige , Democracy Operations and Community Officer
Signature:	
Date:	