



Welfare and Community Zone
Minutes

Date: Thursday, 24 October 2019
Time: 18:00-20:00
Venue: Chadwick G07

Chair: Aatikah Malik, Welfare and International Officer

Members:	P	AP	AB
Aatikah Malik, Welfare and International Officer, Chair	✓		
Ahsana Parammal Vatteri, Officer for Students with Caring Responsibilities	✓		
Alia Husain, Halls Representative – John Dodgson House			✓
Amelie Clark, Halls Representative – Ramsay Hall/Ian Baker House	✓		
Andrew Mok Yuan, International Students' Officer (Job Share)	✓		
Anna Golova, Halls Representative – Prankerd and Schafer House	✓		
Carol Paige, Democracy, Operations and Community Officer	✓		
Chenchen Zhao, Halls Representative – Langton Close/Frances Gardner House		✓	
Chun Cho, Halls Representative – Astor College	✓		
Clarissa Westwood, External Accommodation Officer		✓	
Florentyna Syperek, Halls Representative – Endsleigh Gardens/John Adams Hall		✓	
Guendalina Bonifacio, Mature & Part-time Students' Officer			✓
Hattie Palmer, Halls Representative – James Lighthill House	✓		
Jim Onyemenam, Postgraduate Students' Officer	✓		
Johanna Robinson, Halls Representative – Bernard Johnson House	✓		
Maë Faugère, Sustainability Officer			✓
Matthew Lee, Halls Accommodation Representative	✓		
Ming Teh, Halls Representative – Arthur Tattersall House/John Tovell House	✓		
Molly Hartill, Community Relations Officer	✓		
Morgan Stoner, Halls Representative – Goldsmid House	✓		
Nilisha Vashist, Women's Officer	✓		
Pietro Sambuy, International Students' Officer (Job Share)	✓		
Sandy Ogundele, BME Students' Officer	✓		
Sara Javadian, Halls Representative – New Hall (Caledonian Road)	✓		
Saskia Ackermann, Halls Representative – Campbell House East and West	✓		
Sophie Nagasinghe, Halls Representative – Ifor Evans Hall/Max Rayne House/Ann Stephenson and Neil Sharp Houses	✓		
Tyler Leli, Halls Representative - Hawkridge	✓		

In Attendance:
Simon To, Leadership, Development and Change Manager
Danielle Swanson, Advice and Advocacy Manager
Diana Hawk, Leadership Development Manager
Emer O'Driscoll, Policy Zone Assistant

1 Introductions

The Chair instructed all members to log into Zeetings to participate in the meeting and encouraged everyone to review the online training previously circulated.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

2 **Guest Speaker/New to UCL Survey**

The Leadership, Development and Change Manager introduced the New to UCL survey. Handouts were circulated with survey results from 2018 survey and first year students were encouraged to take the upcoming survey.

Action: All first year students to take the upcoming New to UCL survey.

3 **UCL Committees and Board Vacancies**

The Chair explained that there are vacant positions on several UCL committees (Academic Board, Student Experience Committee, Research Degrees Committee, Education Committee) and Board of Trustees subcommittees (Finance Committee, Risk and Audit Committee, Governance Committee).

They encouraged students to read more about the positions on the SU website and, if interested, to apply by 31.10.2019.

Action: All members to consider joining a UCL or SU committee.

4 **Elect one person to Union Executive**

The Chair explained what Union Executive is and that there is one position available for an elected member of the Welfare and Community Zone. The Halls Accommodation Officer and the Community Relations Officer put themselves forward and each gave a short speech explaining why they want the role.

An election was carried out via Zeetings, with voting members ranking by preference. 22 votes were received and the Community Relations Officer won the position.

The Democracy, Operations and Community Officer (DOCO) emphasised that any member of the Union is welcome to attend Union Executive, even if they are not a voting member.

Decision: The Community Relations Officer was elected to Union Executive.

5 **Policy Proposal – Tumble Dryers in the Union**

The Chair introduced the policy. The policy briefing (circulated beforehand) was displayed for members to read.

Officers discussed whether it would be inconvenient for students to bring wet laundry onto campus and asked if policy could be amended to request a laundrette on campus instead. The DOCO noted that a laundrette on campus wouldn't solve the problem of students in private rented accommodation having to bring in their laundry.

Hall Reps discussed that local laundrettes would be cheaper than ones near UCL and some halls, such as Campbell House East/West, do not have enough laundry facilities. The Chair clarified that this policy is specifically about students in private rented accommodation, not halls.

Students discussed whether non-halls students could use halls laundry facilities. The DOCO pointed out that this would put too much pressure on halls laundry facilities, especially due to ongoing problems with Circuit Laundry.

Student Officers suggested providing students with more information and support about how to approach private landlords with issues about tumble dryers and damp. The Advice and Advocacy Manager explained that there is legislation with regards to landlords' responsibilities in dealing with maintenance and repairs, for example keeping in working order all gas and water pipes, electrical wiring, boilers, water tanks and radiators. However, this statutory duty does not extend to items such as washing machines, tumble dryers or electric heaters. These may be covered by the individual tenancy agreement if they were originally provided in the accommodation, but a landlord is not obligated to provide these by law..

Officers noted that it is often hard to know how to properly ventilate student accommodation and that more information on this would be helpful. They also noted that finding a space on campus for laundry facilities would be difficult.

The Chair concluded that there was a consensus to amend the proposal. The amendment stated that, instead of providing tumble dryers, the Union resolved to improve communications to students about how to better deal with laundry and subsequent problems with damp and landlords.

Members then voted on the amended policy.

Vote	Number
For	20
Against	0
Abstain	0

Decision: The amended policy was carried.

6 **Agree priorities for the year**

The Chair split the members into small groups and asked them to discuss their general priorities for the year. The priorities shared included:

- How and where students live
- Sustainability
- Supporting students generally, e.g. with mental health, finance, etc.
- Decreasing or freezing rent prices
- Prices of laundry, especially equality of laundry prices in different halls.
- Buy/sell exchange of furniture and personal items in halls (e.g. when students leave at the end of the year).
- Better communication of existing structures. E.g. CP pointed out that there is an existing buy/sell forum online but few students have heard of it.

- Better support for students with children, e.g. emergency childcare solutions on campus.
- Student parent social network
- Better furniture in rooms in halls (e.g. study lamps), furniture should be the same as what was shown in photos
- More information and support about the Union in general
- Brexit – clarity and support for EU students about their status after Brexit (e.g. loans and fees)
- Safety and security in halls
- Better support for families
- Allowing for collective complaints in accommodation, not just individual
- Supporting campaign for outsourced staff at UCL
- Looking at the monitoring of students on Tier 4 visas
- Inclusivity and accessibility
- Better support re: bullying/harassment/discrimination
- Better promotion of mental health support in halls
- How students interact with London and the UK in general -> the wider community

Members then voted on Zeetings, ranking these issues in terms of importance. The top five were agreed as the Zone's priorities for the year, to be presented at Union Executive. The top five were as follows:

- Decreasing accommodation prices
- Sustainability
- Student safety and security
- Hall furnishing/hall maintenance
- Brexit/EU student status

Action: The Chair will present these at Union Executive

7 **Transition/Welcome/Cultural Awareness/Sensitivities**

These two matters were condensed into one for time. The Chair asked the forum how they felt about the Welcome period and about issues of cultural awareness at UCL.

Hall Reps felt that the Welcome Fair was very crowded and overwhelming, disruptive for non-attendees wishing to access university facilities, and that the one-way system was not well signposted.

The DOCO noted that the SU were aware of the issues with the one-way system and that plans were in place for better signposting next year. The Community Relations Officer noted that the Welcome Fair had improved greatly since they started at UCL. Hall Reps also noted that the Accommodation Welcome was very good.

Hall Reps discussed the issue of sustainability at Welcome and the amount of flyers given out during the week. It was noted that this issue will be discussed at the upcoming Activities Zone meeting. The Advice and Advocacy Manager noted that the Volunteering Service are actively

trying to reduce printing because of this, but that many students want physical handouts.

The Halls Accommodation Officer suggested that there should be an induction session for students on knowing their rights as a tenant.

Hall Reps discussed the fact that many students at other universities find out who their flatmates are before moving in and asked if that could be put in place at UCL. Officers clarified that this would not be possible due to GDPR regulations and the issues of monitoring and moderating social media groups for incoming students.

The Chair prompted members for issues regarding cultural sensitivity. Hall Reps suggested that more information be made available pre-arrival about cultural sensitivity in halls, as some students have been making intolerant comments. The Women's Officer noted that any bullying or harassment should be reported and dealt with and that cultural sensitivity was a question of ally-ship. Officers suggested that specific training did not seem necessary.

8 **Local Consultations – Eugenics Inquiry**

The BME Students' Officer and the Women's Officer explained the history of eugenics at UCL and introduced the Eugenics Inquiry. They encouraged members to fill out the survey and tell others about it. Officers reminded students that this survey has important implications for the present day and the future of UCL. Hall reps asked how the results of the survey will be used and the BME Students' Officer clarified that the results will be incorporated into a repost, which will inform the actions of the Provost.

Officers then informed members about the current consultation on Phineas. They encouraged members to get involved and give feedback on the Phineas mascot.

Action: Students to respond to the Eugenics Inquiry and the Phineas Consultation

9 **Input into Student Experience Committee (19/11/19)**

The Chair explained what the Student Experience Committee is. The Chair noted that they would take some of the issues raised to the committee. Members were encouraged to email the sabbatical officers with any additional issues to be taken to StEC.

Action: The Chair to take issues raised to StEC. Members to email sabbatical officers with any additional issues.

10 **Questions to Officers and Officer Reports**

The Chair ran through their current areas of focus. These included: attendance monitoring, nap rooms, the Heads Up campaign about mental health, preparing for University Mental Health Day.

The BME Students' Officer ran through their current areas of focus. These included: fighting for crisis accommodation for students in need, International Students Forum, fighting for better

pastoral care, especially for BME and international students, undertaking a Race Audit on the Union, supporting the LGBTQ+ and Trans Officers with liberation causes

The Officer for Students With Caring Responsibilities posed a question to the Postgraduate Students' Officer.

Question: For the benefit of all representatives, could you please explain the work (plan and current status) you are doing on improving childcare facilities for student parents at UCL? I am the officer for students with caring responsibilities, it would be helpful for me to plan my activities and set goals in relation to common objectives we may have.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer responded that the Union has invited a business consultant to do a scoping of this issue, funded by UCL. They are also investigating other institutions in London to learn how they deal with similar issues. The Postgraduate Students' Officer noted that they would be happy to talk with the Officer for Students with Caring Responsibilities about this in more detail.

Action: The Postgraduate Students' Officer and the Officer for Students with Caring Responsibilities to discuss plans for improving childcare facilities.

11 Any Other Business

The Chair asked members how they felt about compulsory consent training.

The DOCO clarified that it would be in addition to current Active Bystander workshops, and that the Union was working to make Active Bystander training compulsory. The Women's Officer noted that consent training would be online and take approximately ten minutes.

Hall Reps thought it was a good idea but the training shouldn't be too long, as students already have a lot to do at the beginning of the year.

The Advice and Advocacy Manager advised that making something compulsory does not mean that people necessarily take in the information. The DOCO suggested adding a compulsory pass mark and/or a compulsory written element, to encourage higher engagement from participants.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	Aatikah Malik, Welfare and International Officer
Signature:	
Date:	