



Welfare and Community Zone
Minutes

Date: Tuesday, 25 February 2020
Time: 18:00-20:00
Venue: Lewis's Building 2.06

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		✓	
Hanna Jepps, Halls Representative – St Pancras Way and Beaumont Court		✓	
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	✓		
Sandy Ogundele, BME Students' Officer			✓
Sara Javadian, Halls Representative – New Hall (Caledonian Road)	✓		
Saskia Ackermann, Halls Representative – Campbell House East and West	✓		
Sinem Gorucu, Halls Representative - Stapleton House		✓	
Sophie Nagasinghe, Halls Representative – Ifor Evans Hall/Max Rayne House/Ann Stephenson and Neil Sharp Houses	✓		
Tyler Leli, Halls Representative - Hawkridge	✓		

In Attendance:
Danielle Swanson, Advice and Advocacy Manager
Duncan Palmer, UCL Director of Campus and Accommodation Services
Emer O'Driscoll, Policy Zone Assistant, Minutes
Melissa Browne, UCL Operations Manager
Simon To, Leadership, Development and Change Manager

1 Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chair asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the last meeting. There were no objections and the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

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

- “DOCO to speak to Head of Security about personnel attitudes”:
It was confirmed that the DOC Officer has met with the Head of Security about these issues and they were working towards a new accreditation system for security staff. The Women’s Officer noted that they had also met with Sophie Bimson, Crime Prevention and Personal Safety Advisor, to raise these concerns.
- “Investigation of emails sent out under Hall Reps names without permission”:
The Chair and the DOC Officer confirmed that they had met with UCL Accommodation staff and confirmed that this would not happen again. They also noted that Duncan Palmer would follow up on this in the second half of the meeting.
- “Implementation of proposal about blood donations”
The Chair confirmed that they are liaising with the proposer and the NHS to put this in place.
- “Implementation of proposal about inspirational messages”
The Chair confirmed that they are in talks with UCL Estates about implementing this.
- “Policy proposal about solidarity with trans students”
The Women’s Officer informed members that this is in progress but has not been written yet.
- “Chair to bring up issue of accommodation costs and hall security with UCL staff”
The Chair confirmed that they have brought this up in meetings and that UCL Accommodation staff would be in attendance for the second half of the meeting to discuss accommodation issues.

2 **Announcements**

The Chair announced that nominations for the Leadership Race 2020 are still open until March 4th 2020. All members were encouraged to consider running for an Officer role and to share information about the Leadership Race with their constituents.

Action: Members to consider running in the Leadership Race:

<https://studentsunionucl.org/leadership-race>

The Women’s Officer invited members to contribute ideas for student engagement to UCL’s Full Stop to Racial Harassment campaign. Any ideas or feedback should be sent to reportandsupport@ucl.ac.uk.

Action: Members to think about ways to engage students with the Full Stop to Racial Harassment campaign

The Women’s Officer announced that UCL will be holding a Town Hall meeting on Friday 28th February in the Cruciform Building about the final results of the Eugenics Inquiry. The Leadership Development and Change Manager noted that the Students’ Union will be releasing a statement on Friday in response to the Eugenics Inquiry report.

The Chair reminded members that nominations for the Student Choice Awards are open until 27 March 2020.

Action: Members to promote the Student Choice Awards to constituents.

3 Policy Proposal: Space for Drying Clothes and Towels

The Chair introduced the policy proposal and referred members to the briefing paper that was circulated.

The DOC Officer noted that the Union does not currently have any cycle facilities; all cycle spaces on campus are managed by UCL. They suggested that the Union could lobby UCL to add drying provision to their cycle spaces.

The Community Relations Officer felt that this idea would be valuable for students who cycle to campus, as it would allow them to cycle more often and in worse weather. This could have a positive environmental impact.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer asked if there might be a security risk to consider.

The Women's Officer noted that they have been working on a similar project with Transport for London, which could possibly link in.

The DOC Officer reiterated that, as the Union has no bike space and limited space overall, this would be a difficult issue to work on.

A Hall Rep asked whether the lockers in the Student Centre could be used for this purpose, or if similar space could be found. The Postgraduate Students' Officer said that they thought there was a two hour time limit on the Student Centre lockers, but that they could speak to Library Services about it.

Action: The Chair to speak to Student Centre staff about possible locker use.

The Chair decided that, as there was no clear path to implementing the proposal, it would be taken forward as an action point but not as a Union policy. There were no objections.

4 Policy Proposal – A UCL-wide policy for more welcoming and inclusive environment for student parents

The Officer for Students with Caring Responsibilities introduced the policy. They explained that the proposal came from a Students with Caring Responsibilities Network event. They identified a clear problem in the lack of guidance in bringing children to university spaces – something which is often necessary for student parents, especially in emergencies. They also noted that there is a disparity in practice across different departments. The policy should be given to students and staff across UCL and should help to make student parents feel more welcome.

The Officer for Students with Caring Responsibilities also noted that it might be useful to look into similar proposals from previous officers and see what happened to them.

Action: The Chair to investigate previous policies regarding student parents.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer commented that they are in full support of the proposal and encouraged members to vote for it. They noted that a lot of work is already being done in this area but that a policy would help reinforce the mandate for that work. They mentioned that they are currently working with Library Services on producing a set of guidelines for student parents.

The Women's Officer agreed that this policy would have a positive impact, as lack of communication is often an issue at UCL.

The Advice and Advocacy Manager noted that knowing the rules empowers students to enforce the rules by advocating for their own rights.

The Chair moved to a vote.

Vote	Number
For	16
Against	0
Abstain	0

Decision: The motion was CARRIED.**5 Matter for Discussion: Hot Water and Speakers**

The Chair introduced the matter and asked for feedback.

The DOC Officer commented that they have been looking into hot water provision this year but that progress is slow because of UCL's health and safety concerns. However, they have ensured that all Union cafes will provide hot water free of charge when students bring their own reusable cups.

A Rep asked whether the Union could lobby UCL to provide hot water in departmental common rooms and social spaces. It was noted that this already happens in some areas but differs greatly across departments. The DOC Officer announced that they were working to make this standard practice.

The DOC Officer noted that they had reservations about the idea of putting speakers in communal areas as they felt it could lead to disturbance and intimidation to those trying to study or relax.

A Rep asked if Union spaces could be used for music, when booked by students.

The DOC Officer responded that this was not possible, as rooms can only be booked by clubs and societies and are not free for individual students. A discussion ensued about the clubs and societies room booking system.

Members were encouraged to attend the next meeting of the Activities Zone and raise their concerns there.

6 **Matter for Discussion: Support for Part-time and Mature Students**

The Postgraduate Students' Officer introduced the matter for discussion and asked for feedback.

The DOC Officer clarified that the position of Part-time and Mature Students' Officer is currently vacant, as the previous role-holder resigned due to non-engagement. They noted that the Union often struggles to fill this role, due to the challenging nature of being a part-time and/or mature student.

The Officer for Students with Caring Responsibilities noted that many of their constituents are part-time and/or mature students. They suggested the possibility of linking the Networks in order to make students feel less isolated.

Action: The Chair to follow up with the Officer for Students with Caring Responsibilities about extending support to part-time and mature students

7 **Matter for Discussion: More Prayer Space**

The Chair introduced the matter for discussion. They noted that they have already been in talks with Student Registry Services about it and feel that it is a very serious issue.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer added that they have spoken to Library Services about it as well.

A Rep asked what had happened to the 'hut' prayer spaces near the Student Centre.

The Chair responded that those spaces were temporary and have now been removed, which is part of the reason for the discussion.

The DOC Officer added that the location of current prayer space is not ideal as they are concentrated in a small area, which is inconvenient for students not based near the Student Centre. They explained that the IOE prayer room only has capacity for nine people. They reiterated that it is never okay for students to have to observe their faith in corridors and UCL should be providing adequate prayer space.

The Chair echoed these feelings and noted that UCL is aware of this issue but needs to take it much more seriously.

8 **Matter for Information: Attendance Monitoring**

The Postgraduate Students' Officer informed members that UCL is looking into introducing a more systematic approach to attendance monitoring, in line with Home Office regulations. This new approach would link attendance strongly with engagement and could potentially involve students' photos being linked with their attendance records on an online system. They asked for feedback on this idea.

The International Students' Officer commented that the Union should be strongly opposed to these new measures. They felt that the measures would be introduced under the false pretext of welfare and wellbeing but would have a discriminatory effect on international students on Tier 4 visas.

The Chair commented that they were personally uncomfortable with the proposed new system.

The Community Relations Officer asked whether the proposal would be in addition to the current system, i.e. the 70% attendance rule.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer responded that the 70% attendance rule would be removed for the next academic year and that the new system would replace it UCL-wide.

The International Students' Officer asked if it was true that UCL's new policy for assessment mitigation during the strike stipulates that students choosing not to cross the picket line for assessments will receive a grade of zero.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer confirmed that this is the case. The Advice and Advocacy Manager added that the Education Officer will be having meetings about this and to contact them at e.officer@ucl.ac.uk with any questions.

9 **Questions to Officers**

There were no questions to officers.

10 **Any Other Business**

The DOC Officer asked for student feedback on the idea of 'community fridges'. They explained that this was an idea for a food-waste reduction initiative from the Sustainable Food Working Group, which would involve students sharing unwanted food so it didn't go to waste. They suggested that halls of residence could be a good place to trial this.

Action: Any interested students to contact doc.officer@ucl.ac.uk to discuss the idea further.

11 **Student Accommodation**

The Director of Campus and Accommodation Services (DCAS) and the Operations Manager introduced themselves and asked members to give them feedback on issues from their halls.

The DOC Officer asked whether there was further information on the emails that had been sent out under the Hall Reps' names without their permission.

The DCAS apologised for the situation and said it would not happen again. They explained that the emails had been sent in an attempt to help Hall Reps promote their events, but they should not have gone out in their names. They clarified that in future the emails will say "sent on behalf of" and they will not count towards Hall Reps' allowance of hall-wide emails.

The Rep for New Hall (Caledonian Road) thanked the DCAS and the Operations Manager for their support on previous issues. They raised the issue of ongoing construction works in their Hall, which they have been informed will continue until the end of the summer. The works have been causing significant problems with noise and lack of privacy, which is impacting residents' wellbeing. Residents were not informed as to the extent of this construction work prior to moving in. They asked if there was the possibility of any financial compensation.

The DCAS thanked the Rep for raising this issue. They noted that residents should be informed when major foreseeable works will be occurring and so they would investigate what had happened in this case. The Operations Manager added that they had met with the contractors to ensure that noise was kept within council guidelines and scaffolding was moved around the building so as not to particularly affect any one group of students. The DCAS said they would look into whether compensation was possible.

The Rep for Ramsay Hall asked whether there was any progress on fixing their dishwasher.

The Operations Manager said they had met with Sodexo and were told that it should be fixed by 2 March. The delay was because the necessary part was out of stock and had to be shipped internationally.

The Rep for Campbell House East and West reported that there had been ongoing issues with Circuit Laundry, including machines taking money but not washing clothes. This has not been fixed several days after being reported.

The Operations Manager responded that they had not been aware of this and would look into it as soon as possible. The DCAS noted that dealing with Circuit Laundry is often problematic as they are a third party supplier. It was noted that Circuit Laundry is a national issue, not just at UCL. The DCAS and the Operations Manager reiterated that Hall Reps should not be afraid to escalate problems when necessary and meetings with Site Managers should always be minuted.

The Rep for Campbell House East and West reported that there had been persistent issues of phone theft on the streets outside their accommodation. They asked if there was anything that could be done to help.

The DCAS responded that this isn't an accommodation issue but it is a campus issue. They noted that they are currently working with an external company to look at improving student safety. They have been looking into enhancing security on all Halls' buildings, but especially Campbell as it currently does not have a secondary door. Progress on installing this has been slow as it is a listed building. Work is also being done on installing CCTV cameras in Halls and there are two out-of-hours security officers specifically dealing with accommodation issues.

A Rep asked how students should contact these officers. The DCAS responded that students should contact the main UCL security team who would send the Accommodation Security Officers. The DOC Officer reminded students that the phone number for UCL Security is on the backs of the their student cards.

The Advice and Advocacy Manager reported that issues have been raised at previous Zone meetings about delivery entrances as a security risk. The Operations Manager responded that their team works with Site Managers and SRAs to perform security checks. They noted that students need to contact SRAs as soon as they notice a potential security risk. They also noted that all doors which can be propped open have alarm systems linked back to security teams.

The Rep for Goldsmid House asked whether SRAs are trained on dealing with security issues, as they don't always seem to know what to do.

The DCAS acknowledged that this is an issue, as SRAs do not work for UCL Accommodation. They felt the priority should be on hiring more 24/7 security staff.

The Rep for Ifor Evans Hall, Max Rayne House, Ann Stephenson and Neil Sharp Houses reported that there have been ongoing issues with residents stealing food from communal fridges.

The DCAS commented that this issue comes up every year and there is no easy solution. The Operations Manager asked if the SRAs had held any mediation meetings. The Rep for Ifor Evans said that they had not. The Rep for Campbell House reported that they had had mediation meetings in their Hall for this issue but they had not been effective. The Operations Manager responded that students should continue to escalate the situation by talking to the warden.

The Rep for Astor College reported that residents had not been informed that building work on their Hall would not be completed prior to moving in. The Hall had been advertised as having facilities, such as music rehearsal space and a cinema screening room, that are not currently available.

The DCAS apologised for this and reported that they are working hard to resolve these issues. The firm contracted to do this work went into administration which caused the delays.

The Rep for Astor College also asked for clarification of the rules regarding overnight guests. They reported that there had been confusion and lack of consistency over the policy.

The Operations Manager clarified that residents are allowed overnight guests for three nights per month and that should be the same across all halls of residence. The DCAS confirmed that the rules as laid out in the general regulations should still apply.

The Rep for Goldsmid House asked when construction would be finished on Goldsmid House.

The DCAS confirmed that it should be complete by the first week of March.

The Rep for New Hall (Caledonian Road) reported that the attitudes of security staff are often unfriendly and asked what could be done.

The Operations Manager requested that Reps email them specific examples of this happening so that they can deal with problems directly.

The Rep for Ramsay Hall noted that in previous years there has been a Ramsay Ball, which was popular with students. They asked if this is something that still happens and, if so, if they should arrange anything.

The DCAS responded that they had looked into putting on these large-scale events but weren't sure about the budget. They recommended students contact Ken Mathew, UCL Head of Marketing, Communication & Student Experience, for more information. It was confirmed that Reps would be interested in running a joint-Hall event.

The DOC Officer noted that the Students' Union had previously run a Summer Ball but had discontinued it as it was not financially sustainable.

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

