

Democracy Review

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Union Notes:

1. Policy is currently put forward and debated through submitting motions to su.democracy@ucl.ac.uk and is either put forward to a General Assembly, Union Council Meeting or a Referendum.
2. Many unions across the county are moving towards a system where they make use of digital democracy to implement a form of representative democracy rather than interpretive.
3. A piece of NUS research into the future of democracies in Student Unions found that students want to be able to elect officers who are passionate about their job, and be given a means of telling them what they should work on rather than officers running on a manifesto. This is achieved through involving them more in prioritising issues and creating means of submitting ideas easily.
4. Last year, the majority of motions submitted to council came from 2 elected officers. Elected officers are not the only students on campus who have ideas as to how to make change at UCL.

Union Believes:

1. A functional and easily accessible democracy is at the centre of what a Students' Union does.
2. Students don't submit motions to Union Council, GAs or Referendums because the process is difficult to understand, and it is coached in language that is not accessible.
3. Online votes make issues accessible for students to share their opinion on issues that are important to them as meetings are often time consuming and students have busy schedules.

Union Resolves:

1. To dissolve Union Council into policy zones that are made up of relevant officers and a staff observer.
2. To carry out five campus-wide, online opinion polls a year in place of Union Council to gauge public interest in policy. If a policy has 0.5% of the SU membership (half of GA quoracy) expressing an interest in it, it goes up to a General Assembly. If not, then it is delegated to a policy zone to debate and implement.
3. This would eliminate the process of writing a motion and emailing it to su.democracy@ucl.ac.uk and deciding which body it goes to (Union Council, General Assembly or Referendum). Any student who has an "idea" of something they wish to change in their union, university or community can submit an idea and students will express interest on the 5 yearly online polls. This will feed it into the appropriate place for it to be discussed and makes the process easier to understand.
4. No new networks/working groups will be created as a result of this, they will simply be grouped into 5 zones (Activities, Welfare, Education, Union Development, Liberation).
5. To do this, the following changes to bye-laws are to be implemented:

4.4.a Union Council **Zones** shall meet at least twice in each of the first and second terms, and at least once in the third term, not including meetings triggered by an inquorate General Assembly.

- i. Additional meetings may be called by a petition, submitted to the Chair **of the zone**, of the **number of quorum for the zone**, or by act of the Chair.
- ii. Quorum shall be 25% plus one of the elected voting members.
- iii. Union Council members who fail to attend two consecutive Union Council meetings without offering apologies shall be ignored in the calculation of quorum until they resume attendance. The **Chair of the zone** shall contact the Union Council member to notify them within one working day of the second meeting. If the Union Council member fails to attend a third consecutive meeting without offering apologies, the Chair shall notify Union Council and the Union Council member's constituents.

4.4.h There should be a **meeting of the relevant zone** scheduled to follow each General Assembly to be able to consider any business which has not been dealt with at the General Assembly, and that Union Council is empowered to deal with. Any business dealt with shall take the time of submission to the General Assembly to be the time of submission for the meeting of Union Council. If there is no business to consider, the meeting shall not occur.

4.5.g Each Union Council Zone has the responsibility to elect a chair in the first meeting from the elected officers that form the zone.

4.6 Union Council Zones

- a) Union Council shall consist of five policy zones. These are:
 - a. Activities
 - b. Welfare
 - c. Education
 - d. Union Development
 - e. Liberation
- b) Each zone shall elect their own chair at the first meeting of the zone.

7.7.b Should an attendance of 0.5% of Members not be reached within thirty minutes of the published start time, the agenda items shall **be delegated to be dealt with by the relevant Union Council Policy Zone**, or the next scheduled General Assembly, whichever is soonest.

Bye Law 17 – Online Polls

1. There shall be 5 polls conducted on the Union's website on issues submitted by members to gauge interest in policy areas.
2. If an issue has 0.5% of members voting on it, it is added to the agenda of the next General Assembly. If lower than this, it is added to the agenda of the relevant policy zone.
3. Issues that affect liberation groups are automatically submitted to the relevant network/zone unless the member wishes to submit it to an Online Poll.