

London South Bank University Students' Union Union Council Meeting



UC26012022

26th January 2022 Minutes

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Date: 26/01/22

Time: 17:00-19:00

Location: K2-V404

Agenda

- 1.0 Welcome (chair), introductions & apologies
- 2.0 Approval of minutes
- 3.0 Sabbatical Officer reports
- 4.0 Part time officer & forum chair updates
- 5.0 Sabbatical officer & part time officer support planning
- 6.0 Any other business

Minutes

For approval

Minutes of the Union Council meeting (24 November 2021)



1. Welcome, Apologies and Declarations

1.1. Voting members in attendance:

- Max Smith (SU President)
- Ruchika Kumar (Chair of Union Council)
- Md Fazle Rabbi (Students' Union Deputy President and Vice President of Education)
- Jannatul Ferdous (Students' Union Vice President Welfare and Equalities)
- Joel Langston (Students' Union Vice President Activities and Employability)
- Orsi Itoya (BAME Students' Officer)

- Sabrina Popescu (EU Students' Officer)
- Ruchika Kumar (Chair of Union Council)
- Alexander Prelea (Course Representative Forum Chair)
- Amber Sams (RAG Chair)
- Md Yousha Adib (Postgraduate Students' Officer)
- Fatema Rabbi (Women's Officer)
- Shah Naeef (International Student's Officer)
- Charlotte Adams (Disabled Student's Officer)
- Mature & Part-Time Student's Officer (Anna Okerefor)

1.2. In attendance:

- Sam Mujunga (Head of Membership)
- Yvonne Quartey-Papafio (Student Experience Coordinator)
- Cristopher Monaf (Student Network Assistant)

1.3. Apologies:

- Ella Isaac (LGBTQ+ Officer)

1.4. The Chair brought the meeting to order. All attendees introduced themselves and their role.

1.5. No conflicts of interest were declared.

1.6. Matters arising were introduced by the Chair.

2. Approval of minutes

2.1. Previous minutes were approved.

3. Sabbatical Officer reports

3.1. The full-time officers were invited by the Chair to give updates to Council as to their work on behalf of the union since the beginning of term.

3.1. Max gave an overview of his previous update and explained that returning from the new year has been a busy period. The full-time officers have been doing speeches for the graduation ceremonies which have been taking place over the last few weeks. The full-time officers have also been busy working on the welcome talks as 600/800 new students have joined the university in January. Max explained that has also been working on the NSS and helping to improve student's engagement with the NSS by delivering talks across different schools. Max explained that he has been working on planning projects which he cannot share at the moment.

3.2. Rabbi explained that the course rep recruitment has been run successfully. We now have more than 260 course reps who have received training. The SU has put a lot of effort into ensuring that student voices are heard. Rabbi has also been involved in graduation ceremonies, attended equality standards quality meetings, and has recently returned from the student experience committee. During the committee, Rabbi raised many issues that students are experiencing eg: the heating not working in the university. Rabbi has also been attending welcome talks and NSS talks as well as working with the SU team to ensure that we get more academic societies. Rabbi has been having discussions with Xander to explore how the course rep forum can be improved to increase attendance. More than 360 international students joined the university in January, Rabbi has been working with Shah to support the new international students.

3.3. Ferdous Has been working on VP mental health illness. Ferdous explained what this is and how it works to raise awareness and provide mental health support. The decolonising the curriculum website has now been launched by the university which she has been working on since the last academic year so this is a huge achievement. Ferdous has also been working with the EDI team around LGBTQ policies, has attended the international student's talks and will also be attending the LSBU graduation and NSS talks. Ferdous ran two campaigns last semester which were Black history month & stammer awareness. Ferdous has also been attending the student experience committee.

3.4. Joel explained that he has been involved in varsity in partnership with Greenwich university. Joel has been in contact with Ferdous and the LGBTQ officer to start making plans for LGBTQ month. Joel has also been working on a student group event collaboration and is approaching student groups to find out what their plans are for the year and finding ways the SU can help to improve this.

3.5. Questions from PTO's- Yousha asked whether there will be any improvements on employment opportunities. Rabbi responded and stated that they are in conversations with the university to ensure that academics are communicating and improve opportunities and academic policies. There will also be some changes on the VLE- Rabbi has proposed that the university brings all academic policies to one place to make it more accessible. Yousha asked about the IT issues- Rabbi responded that he has discussed this with the university to make sure that they are doing enough to protect student's data.

4. Part time officer & forum chair updates

- 4.1. The part-time officers were invited by the Chair to give updates to Council as to their work on behalf of the union since the beginning of term.
- 4.2. Xander stated that given the time frame he does not have a lot of updates. Xander attended the Christmas course rep forum just before the Christmas break where he was able to get feedback from the students. Has been discussing the issue tracker with Rabbi but has no updates on what is happening with the tracker or if any issues have been resolved. (Response from Rabbi) Rabbi explained that the team has been working hard to work through the data from the issue tracker and that it will be ready soon to be passed onto the university and that discussions are being had about how the process can be improved. Xander asked if all of the services that the issue tracker provides to students can be documented on the monthly course rep newsletter. Rabbi and Sam agreed and explained that the feedback form is being de-centralised and will be made available to all students to report any issues they have. Issues affecting large cohorts are being processed through the issue tracker. General issues can still be documented on the issue tracker to find resolutions.
- 4.3. Amber has been researching what other universities do for RAG and still wants to set up a food bank. Amber has also been contacted by cancer research to find ways for money to be raised. Would like to do cake sales and a pyjama day.
- 4.4. Sabrina would like to know how her events can be funded. Sabrina explained that she has received complaints from non-EU students who wanted to set up a Russian speaking society but they were not permitted. Joel explained that there are windows for societies to be started. The window will be opened again soon and they will be able to apply again. Sabrina stated that she has been speaking to students from LAC and UCL and would like to arrange a meeting with them as they have a more developed EU network and Sabrina feels that this will help to promote the EU network at LSBSU. Rabbi responded and stated that Sabrina should make a plan.
- 4.5. Orsi- Does not have many updates and has not had any events since the last meeting. Orsi explained that she has been attending the race equality charter meetings and reviewed the universities applications so that issues relating to decolonising the curriculum and general issues can be addressed. Orsi also took part in a campaign for the SU (NSS campaign).
- 4.6. Yousha explained that he is the go-to person for the whole postgrad community. Has been going to Rabbi and Ferdous for support relating to the issues that students are experiencing. Yousha has noticed that there are a large number of the students who come from Asia and are facing mental health problems. Yousha also has concerns about employability opportunities as the university does have resources but 50% of postgrad students do not know about this. Yousha Feels that we need to do more work to promote these resources earlier on. New students also feel really overwhelmed when they first start, Yousha would therefore like a start-up pack to be set up to help new students get started. Ruchika explained that there is the employability and Careers hub in the university. Rabbi explained that in the university about 60-80 percent of students are international students. Rabbi explained that the SU asked the international team to conduct a session where support for international students is made available during the session. Rabbi explained that at all university events, there is always a careers hub stall. But Rabbi stated that we do need to do more work on this.
- 4.7. Charlotte- Explained that there are resources for the disabled students but this is not promoted to make students aware of it. Her motivation is to improve this and make sure that everyone has the same opportunities.
- 4.8. Fatema- Cultural difference between the UK and Bangladesh is quite large. Her motivation was that she did not feel able to represent women in Bangladesh, so wanted to have a voice here.

- 4.9. Shah- Cas letter- It took a long time to receive his cas letter which caused a lot of issues for him. This motivated him to take on the role. Rabbi explained that this is something officers have raised with the university.
- 4.10. Anna- Unable to provide an update due to technical issues.
- 4.11. Ruchika- Attended a meeting with the board of governors and they have created a program to allow all help that students require to be available in one place. Ruchika also attended the research board of study meeting and a learning and teaching conference. Also attended her graduation. Ruchika has been chosen as a Rethink mental health facilitator which she is finding really interesting as this is work she has been wanting to for a long time.

5. Sabbatical officer & part time officer support planning

- 5.1. Ferdous asked all officers to state their manifesto points.
- 5.2. Fatema explained that her manifesto is to increase awareness around issues affecting women.
- 5.3. Charlotte explained that her manifesto is to create a network for disabled students. Ferdous stated that the university has a disabled student's support group which would be good for Charlotte to attend.
- 5.4. Shah explained that his manifesto relates to issues around placements. Spoke to Rabbi about this as students are still waiting to get onto placements.
- 5.5. Xander requested for a group chat to be set up between PTO's and FTO's
- 5.6. Sam asked for any issues that have been shared with PTO's to be shared with the SU so that they can be resolved through the issue tracker.
- 5.7. Sam explained which PTO is assigned to which FTO.

6. Matters arising

No matters arising from any previous meeting.

7. Any other business

- 7.1. Max wanted to remind all PTO's that they are the representatives for their network. They have full support from the SU and that they should not be afraid to make their voice heard. They should use their role.
- 7.2. Joel explained that this space is for PTO's to hold FTO's accountable.
- 7.3. Ferdous explained to liberation officers that they will get a lot of university staff reaching out to them and that they should not be afraid to ask her for help or advice from the SU.
- 7.4. Ruchika shared that we are the voice for students and that we need to work together as a team to help students.