

agenda

Meeting:	Student Officer Committee
Date:	Thursday 12 March 2015
Time:	5.00 pm
Location:	Committee Room 1, the Council House
Code	SOC 1393

- 1393 Statements from the Chair**
- 1394 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2015**
(See pages 2-8)
- 1395 Matters Arising**
- 1396 Action Log**
(See page 9-10)
- 1397 Part Time Officer Handover**
A discussion topic from the Chair.
- 1398 Budget Setting Exercise**
Group exercise.
- 1399 Decisions made by Union Council**
(See pages 11-17 for policies passed on 5 March)
Please note Council voted to send the BEM Officer resolution
- 1400 Officer Go Around/Reports**
- 1401 Reports on Priority Campaigns/Projects**
Any Other Business
- 1402 Management Committee Minutes**
(Please note minutes will be made available before the meeting)
- 1403 Time, Date and Place of Next Meeting**
To note the next meeting will be held at 5.00 pm on 26 March in
Committee Room 1, the Council House.

Minutes

Subject:	Student Officer Committee Minutes
Date:	Thursday, 26 February 2015
Paper:	SOC 1394

Key Discussions

- Unavailability of Management Committee minutes
- Campaign Budgets
- Media Centre Consultation
- Implementation of new policies passed by Council

Key Actions

- Management Committee minutes be provided in future and that older minutes be made available through a web link
- Future campaign funding requests to be made to the Head of Education and Engagement
- Updated set of campaign budgets to be brought to future meeting
- Chair to design a budget priority setting exercise
- Agreed retrospective funding request for Palestine Solidarity Campaign events
- Chair to convene meeting with the Media Executive concerning the closure of the Media Centre
- Chair and L McCafferty would meet to work out the staff support for implementation of specific new policies
- Officers to submit short written reports on policy implementation to be included in the SOC agenda papers
- Signage in the Shop to display information on product boycotts.

Union of UEA Students Purpose:

"To enrich the life of every UEA student"

Minutes of the Student Officer Committee

26 February 2015

Voting Members present:

Dolly Ogunrinde (Women's Officer), Max Levene (Students with Disabilities Officer), Josh Wilson (Ethical issues Officer), Liam McCafferty (PG Education Officer), Chris Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy Officer), Tom Etheridge (Non Portfolio Officer), Theo Antoniou Phillips (Non Portfolio Officer), Dan Wrigglesworth (LGBT+ Officer), Connor Rand (UG Education Officer), Tom Southerden (Non Portfolio Officer), Liz Cody (Non Portfolio Officer).

Chair

Holly Staynor (Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer)

In attendance:

Tony Moore (Democracy and Governance Coordinator), Toby Cunningham (Deputy Chief Executive).

Apologies:

Freddie Redfern (Ethnic Minorities Officer), Yinbo Yu (Activities and Opportunities Officer), S Glakousaki (International Officer), Iain Goddard (Environment Officer), Josh Clare (Head of Student Engagement), Jim Dickinson (Chief Executive), John Taylor (Mature Students' Officer), David Hall (Postgraduate Officer).

Departmental Presentation: Engagement and Education

Chair noted that the Head of Education and Engagement was absent due to DRO duties and this item would be postponed.

1380 Statements from the Chair

Chair reported that several Officers had queried the absence of Management Committee minutes from SOC agendas. Chair apologised and noted that this matter had been brought to the Chief Executive's attention.

SOC asked that Management Committee minutes be provided in future and that older minutes be made available through a web link.

1381 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2014

The delayed minutes of this meeting were approved.

1382 Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2015

The minutes were approved.

1383 Matters Arising

There were none.

1384 Action Log

- Chair reported trying to contact NUA and City College Officers about the DSA letter without success and would go ahead with the letter anyway and they could endorse it at a later date;
- Chair noted the trans exclusion issue would be taken to LGBT+ Conference;
- Chair reported no 'wish list' budget proposals had been received
- Chair noted there was a brief campaigns budget outline later in the agenda papers but that the Chief Executive had been asked to provide a more thorough breakdown and this would be provided at a future meeting.

SOC agreed that a compilation of funding requests for campaign budget spending would be made through an examination of previous minutes.

SOC agreed that future campaign funding requests would be made to the Head of Education and Engagement who would authorise and record them.

1385 Financial Estimates 15-16 Proposal

T Cunningham made a detailed presentation of the financial situation and noted that for the current year the SU was £100, 000 off budget.

T Cunningham noted the key area of charitable activity:

- Student support
- Student Media
- Opportunities and activities
- Sports

T Cunningham advised that, if there were not adequate funds to go forward in the above areas, a political decision would have to be made as to allocation of resources. T Cunningham noted that management would need to know which would be the Officers' key priority areas of activities.

C Jarvis questioned the characterisation of rising utility costs as beyond the SU's control as there was a substantial number of energy efficient measures that the SU was currently not undertaking which, if implemented, would drastically reduce costs.

T Cunningham noted significant savings had been made and that this issue would continue to be addressed.

C Jarvis questioned what impact any move for the University to take over safety and security would have on VMS as a huge part of VMS' contract involved these services.

T Cunningham advised that the proposal would be for the University to provide expert support to enable SU staff to undertake these tasks in the 'daytime' economy whilst VMS provided a similar level of support for the 'night-time' economy.

Chair wondered as to the timescale for budget formulation.

T Cunningham advised the FTOs would be attending a meeting with the University in the near future and at that meeting they would get an indication of the University's position as to negotiations and this would then enabled the process to be started.

Chair asked if management would need a steer from SOC at the present meeting as to essential areas of activity for setting the budget priorities.

T Cunningham advised that Officers should work at the next SOC meeting to set their priorities to allow the Board to make an informed decision if there were to be any need for any cuts.

SOC agreed the Chair would design a priority setting exercise for the next meeting.

C Jarvis wondered whether management had factored in any move to impose a minimum price on alcohol after the General Election and any effect this might have on wet sales.

T Cunningham advised that management believed because of the likely price level there would be little impact and that, as to wet sales, the focus would be to dramatically improve service and consequent spend per head.

1386 Campaigns Budgets Update

Chair noted that, in general, there were significant funds left in both the Priority and General Campaigns budgets but that the figures were somewhat out of date and overstated how much remained. Chair noted that, as mentioned earlier, management were aware of the problem with the presentation of the budgets and updated versions would be produced.

C Jarvis noted that most of the delay in updating the figures had been due to the Finance Department not having been given receipts and invoices for spending that had been approved at SOC. He believed that figures should be presented on a weekly basis.

SOC noted that an updated set of campaign budgets would be brought to a future meeting.

1387 Funding for the UEA Palestine Solidarity Campaign

C Jarvis noted that this was a request to reimburse the campaign for the spending on a series of events the previous week. C Jarvis noted the original request had been on the agenda of the inquorate meeting of 12 February. C Jarvis reported that the Campaign's events had been well attended.

SOC agreed the retrospective funding request without comment.

1388 Media Centre Consultation

Chair drew SOC's attention to T Etheridge's written paper. Chair noted that a major refurbishment of the building would be starting in the near future and that a portion of the building that included the Media Centre would be out of use for several months. Chair noted the matter had been under discussion at Management Committee for some time.

T Etheridge clarified that the media societies had only discovered what was proposed when they went online a very short time before the scheduled closure. T Etheridge noted what had disturbed the societies had been the lack of prior information, notice or even any consultation about what the new media space would look like. T Etheridge believed that decisions had been made after consultation with just one person and that this was not the way decisions concerning three societies should be made in a democratic organisation. T Etheridge noted the problems the societies would have with room booking.

L McCafferty noted that the timeline for the refurbishment had been, very much, driven by the University and the need for contractors to clear asbestos from the building; and further noted that the FTOs had been unaware of the timing for a long period. L McCafferty acknowledged that once the FTOs had known, then, communications with the societies could have been better.

C Jarvis noted there had been no flexibility over the commencement of the work; only as to which part of the building where work would, initially, begin.

T Etheridge noted the difficulties but expressed extreme disappointment with the lack of consultation. T Etheridge noted that, as the societies were unaware of the timescale, volunteers had been setting up equipment a previous weekend and that, because of the lack of communication, all the volunteers' work would go to waste. T Etheridge noted Concrete's disquiet, as to safeguarding their editorial independence, at the proposed move to the main office.

In summary, T Etheridge noted the societies' concerns about where the decisions had been made and the total lack of communication.

L McCafferty apologised for any perceived lack of consultation and wondered whether there had been a problem as to the SU's communication with the media collective.

T Cunningham advised that the SU should have made much clearer that from around Easter time the part of the building containing the Media Centre's would be out of use. T Cunningham believed the lack of clarity had been caused by the SU having such short notice from the contractors as to dates.

T Cunningham apologised that there had, apparently, been no communication about the closing off of bookable spaces.

Chair asked if T Etheridge believed all the societies' concerns had been addressed in the discussion.

T Etheridge believed it would be helpful for SU management and the Media Executive to have a meeting to discuss and try to resolve the issues that the media societies had raised.

SOC agreed that the Chair and L McCafferty, the Chair of Management Committee would arrange to meet with the Media Executive as soon as possible.

Chair noted that communication on this matter had not been good and apologised on behalf of Management Committee.

1389 Decisions made by Union Council

Officers divided into groups to work on policy implementation.

SOC agreed that Chair and L McCafferty would meet to work out the staff support for implementation of specific policies.

SOC agreed that C Jarvis and J Wilson would form a sub-group to work on the Fairtrade University and Dodgy Sugar policy that would report back to SOC.

SOC agreed that Officers would, in future, submit short written reports on policy implementation to be included in the SOC agenda papers.

SOC agreed to C Jarvis's request that, in these reports, FTOs should not include activities that were part of their job specific duties and should focus on hard policy implementation.

Officers discussed implementation of the 12 February policies.

C Jarvis reported that a student who believed that product boycotts should be sent to referendum had started a petition to this effect concerning the recent boycott of the Star, Tate and Lyle and Starbucks. C Jarvis noted that, now that petitions could be submitted via the website, there was a need to decide how long a web based petition was regarded as 'live'.

SOC agreed that C Jarvis would bring a proposed amendment on the Referendum Bye-Laws to Council.

Chair noted as to the product boycotts that there should be some publicity to the boycotts and communication as to why they were in place.

SOC agreed that there would be some signage in the Shop as to information on the boycotts.

Chair noted the results of the group suggestions would be written up and circulated to Officers.

1390 Officer Go Round/Reports

Chair asked that Officers email any actions they wished to be included in the Report to Council.

1391 Reports on Priority Campaigns/Projects/AOB

C Jarvis reported that the Unison Living Wage Campaign was going strong and had 700 signatures on the postcards to the VC and that a big event was planned for 14 April.

1392 Time, Date and Place

5. 00 pm, 12 March in Committee Room 1, the Council Chamber.

SOC Action Log for 12 March 15

Date Commissioned	Action Required	Status	Assigned To:	Date to be actioned by:
16 October 14	Letter to be send to NUS concerning trans-exclusion in election regulations	Liaising with NUS	Holly, Dan, Dolly	Nov 14
16 October 14	Public statement to be made on DSA Cuts in collaboration with NUA and City College	Liaising with University over joint declaration with NUA/City	Holly, Max, Chris	Nov 14
5 February 15	Cost benefit analysis on club and society activities to be made	To inform budget estimates for Council	Jim	April 15
5 February 15	Officers to feed in to a wish list for budget setting	To be emailed to Chair	All	19 Feb 15
26 February 15	Management Committee minutes be provided in future; older minutes be made available through a web link.	To be circulated before the meeting	Jim/Tony	12 Mar 15
26 February 15	Chair to design a budget priority setting exercise for the next meeting.	Agenda item	Holly	12 Mar 15
26 February 15	Updated set of campaign budgets to be brought to a future meeting.	To be agenda item at 26 March meeting	Josh	12 Mar 15
26 February 15	Meeting to be arranged with Media Executive to discuss closure of the Media Centre	Invitations sent for meeting	Holly	6 Mar 15
26 February 15	Chair and L McCafferty would meet to work out the staff support for implementation of specific policies.	Actioned	Holly/Liam	12 Mar 15
26 February 15	Proposed amendment on the Referendum Bye-Laws to be brought Council.	To be brought to Council	Chris	16 Apr 15
26 February 15	Some signage in the Shop as to information on product boycotts.	Signs to be in position	Chris/Alex	End of March
26 February 15	Group suggestions on Policy implementation to be written up and circulated to Officers.	Actioned	Holly	6 Mar 15

Ongoing Actions

Date Commissioned	Action Required	Status	Assigned To:	Date to be actioned by:
5 June 14/2 October/23 Oct	Constitutionality of reserved places on Union Council for Rep Organisers to be investigated	Proposal to brought to SOC from Student Engagement	Chris	Jan 15

16 October 14	University to be lobbied over student accommodation in city centre	Lobbying continuing	Holly	Nov 14
15 January 15	PTOs to be asked to stay on during exam period to support successors	Ongoing	All	April 15
26 February 15	Officers to, in future, submit short written reports on policy implementation to be included in the SOC agenda papers	Ongoing	All	

1688 It's Time to make the Sports Association a Reality

Passed 5 March 15

Proposer: Yinbo Yu, Activities and Opportunities Officer

Seconder: Ella Gilbert, Boxing Club

Union Notes

1. That this year the Union has been working with the University on how to develop sport in the future

Union Believes

1. That many of the changes the Union has introduced this year to Sport have been accompanied by insufficient consultation
2. That many Sports Clubs feel that they do not have enough control over Sports matters
3. That the people who pay for a SAM card do not have enough influence over where their money is spent and over Union Sports provision in general
4. For things like student media and our work for postgrads we have been discussing setting up new autonomous structures within the union umbrella overall that allow much more direct student influence over things that affect that activity.
5. The "Sports Association" at the moment is just a card- but it could do more
6. That in any structure it's really important that we keep the union council link- ultimately Union Council decides on how we spend the profit from the LCR and Sports Clubs should have a say in that as course reps and societies do.

Union Resolves

1. To resolve in principle to make the "Sports Association" that is implied by the SAM card an actual thing.
2. To develop the constitutional changes necessary in collaboration with Sports Clubs in the next few weeks to make it a reality and to form a working group to that end.
3. That any structure should elect its own committee to handle and lead on sport within the union.
4. That any structure should meet regularly as a body to feedback and discuss big issues
5. That any structure should be delegated authority within the union to decide on things like membership on website, handover period etc.

1689 Ending Unfair Assessments

Passed 5 March 15

Proposer: Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

Seconder: Theodore Antoniou-Phillips (Non-Portfolio Officer)

Union notes:

1. Currently, especially in the Humanities faculty, many autumn semester modules are assessed by examination in the summer
2. This issue is frequently brought up in student surveys and consultations, such as 'What If..' and the National Student Survey, as a matter of unfairness
3. The University is committed to reducing the number of exams under the New Academic Model, from a six week exam period to a four week exam period
4. That the number of exams has been reduced for the exam period in summer 2015
5. That nonetheless progress has been limited and the University has postponed its ambition of a four week exam period to the exam period 2016
6. Course tests have often been used to replace exams when exams have been cut
7. That course tests are far less regulated than exams

Union believes:

1. It is vital for the Student's Union to support students and campaign on educational issues that matter to them, as and when such issues are raised
2. Exams have only limited value in assessing students
3. A continued reduction in the number of exams that students are set is desirable
4. All assessments that students are set should have clear educational merit
5. Assessing students in the summer on content they learnt and discussed in the autumn does not demonstrate any such merit
6. Course tests should not be used to bypass regulatory frameworks and replace exams, to continue to assess students in the same stale way whilst meeting University commitments around the number of exams
7. A key role of the Student's Union should be to protect students during assessment
8. Course tests, being much less regulated than exams, are open to unfair practises, to the detriment of our members

Union resolves:

1. To continue to support a reduction in the number of exams that students are set
2. To work with the University to ensure there is an end to summer exams for autumn semester modules by the exam period 2016
3. To at the same time campaign to protect existing University commitments that benefit our members, on exam timetables and the number of exams students can be set on one day
4. To monitor the number of University course tests to ensure there is no dramatic rise as the number of exams is reduced
5. To present a paper to the University suggesting activities benefitting our members that could take place in the extra two weeks gained in the academic year

1690 It's time for Student Union to adopt sponsored status to employ international students after graduating

Passed 5 March 15

Proposed: Yinbo Yu, Activities and Opportunities Officer

Seconded: Stela Glakousaki, International Student Officer

Union Notes:

1. International students, amongst other migrants, are facing more and more difficulties due to the anti-immigration rhetoric of the political establishment.
2. With the government scrapping the Post-Study Work visa in 2012, which allowed International students to work freely in the UK for two years after graduating, it has become almost impossible for these students to find jobs and gain experience after finishing their degrees.
3. The new immigration bill has made it clear that the situation is only getting worse.
4. These difficulties include, but are not limited to, high visa processing fees, complications with living in privately rented accommodation due to the lack of UK based guarantors, lack of Post-Study Work visa, having to pay for access to the NHS before entering the country, being constantly monitored by institutions and the Home Office and many more.
5. There are not enough provisions in place to give International students the opportunity to gain work experience in the UK after finishing their studies.
6. Union of UEA Students currently does not hold a Tier 2 licence to recruit skilled workers.
7. Currently only 4 unions throughout the UK have the ability to sponsor non-UK/EU students and migrants to work in their union: Coventry, UEL Westminster and UAL.
8. There are misconceptions regarding how obtaining this sponsorship requires organisations to go through the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT), which would lead to slower and more complicated recruitment processes.
(<https://www.ukcisa.org/International-Students/The-next-stage/Working-after-your-studies/Employment-Tier-2/Resident-Labour-Market-Test-and-exemptions/>)

Union Believes:

1. Staff profile of the union is not representative of the student body as it is not allowed or recruit and sponsor non-UK/EU applicants.
2. Like home student, international students have expectations and hopes of working in the UK after their studies.
3. As a Student Union, we have a responsibility to support all our members to the best of our ability, regardless of their background and nationality.
4. By obtaining a Tier2/Tier5 sponsorship from the UKVI, our Union would have the ability to recruit international students and other migrants.

5. This sponsorship would make our Union a more fair and accessible employer and would ensure that everyone would have a right to apply for jobs at the union, regardless of nationality and immigration status.
6. Actions from Student Union to promote equality of opportunity to jobs for international students can lead more equality of opportunity within our members.

Union Resolves:

1. The union should look into Tier 2 and Tier 5 sponsorships and choose the more appropriate option.
2. Obtain the desired sponsorship which would cost £536 for organisations with less than 50 employees and with a turnover of less than £6.5m.
3. Actively advertise positions that become available at the SU to the international student body by clearly stating if a non-UK/EU individual is recruited, they will be sponsored to remain in the UK.
4. A member of the Union's senior management team should be delegated to take the aforementioned steps and report the progress to the relevant officer/Management Committee/Council/Trustee Board.
5. To ask HR Sub-Committee to undertake the following changes to its human resources policies and practices, reporting the outcome to the relevant officer/Management Committee/Council/Trustee Board
 - a. To include nationality in UUEAS' equality monitoring systems to allow for more evidence-based policies promoting equality of opportunity to UUEAS jobs.
 - b. To remove the visa requirement section of UUEAS job application from the view for those short-listing candidates to protect nationality as a protected characteristic under equality law.
 - c. To undertake a review of UUEAS jobs to identify which are eligible for Tier 5 or Tier 2 visas and to state on job postings if the job advert qualifies for a Tier 2 or Tier 5 visa.
6. Encourage other unions in the region to implement the same policy to broaden the options for international students.

1691 Scrap NHS Fees for International Students

Passed 5 March 15

Proposer: Styliani (Stela) Glakousaki, International Student Officer

Seconder: Yinbo Yu, Activities and Opportunities Officer

Union Notes:

1. The immigration Act of 2014 introduced, along with other things, NHS fees for migrants. As it stands now, International students should have to pay £150 to have access to NHS. A discounted fee, from £200. Again, as it stands now, students will have to pay when they apply for their visas.
2. It has not yet been clarified if current students that re-apply for visas, or apply for extensions whether they will have to pay the fee or not.
3. The motion to 'Scrap the NHS fees' was passed in the NUS International Conference.

Union Beliefs:

1. The NHS fees introduced with the Immigration Act of 2014 should not be pushed on International students.
2. No International student should have to pay the NHS fees. In particular, current International students as they decided to study in this country under different conditions.
3. The Universities recruiting International students, under their Internalisation strategy should take the responsibility to provide healthcare to their students.
4. Students are less likely to need access to healthcare on a recurrent basis and not likely to abuse the healthcare system.
5. All students within any University and College should have equal access to healthcare and other services to have equal access to a successful education.
6. If all universities and colleges came together to create a Health insurance scheme, it would be cheaper than the current NHS charge for International students.

Union Resolves:

1. To campaign for the University to provide free healthcare to International students until the NHS fees are removed completely either through:
 - a. Paying the fees for NHS, initially
 - b. Or to create a Health insurance scheme for International students created in partnership with other UK Universities and colleges, in which if a healthcare emergency exists then students have direct access to healthcare.
2. To work together with University to scrap the NHS fees for International students to ensure the equality within the University, by and keep promoting the diversity within their University.

3. To campaign to make the University to input in their Internalisation strategy that they will make sure that comprehensive healthcare will be equally accessible for all their students and provide it too!

1693 Why is there no 'no gluten'?

Passed 5 March 15

Proposer: Vraj Patel (PHA UG Other YR)

Seconder: Holly Staynor (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer)

Union Notes

1. That many people who keep a gluten-free diet do so out of necessity rather than choice.
2. Though there are a few small gluten-free snacks available across campus, there is almost nothing substantial.
3. Some days, there is only one gluten-free option in Zest.
4. There are only a couple of gluten-free sandwiches/wraps available in The Shop.

Union Believes

1. That every catering outlet on campus should seek to provide a range of products for all dietary needs wherever possible.

Union Resolves

1. To mandate the Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer to investigate providing more gluten-free options in union outlets.
2. To mandate the Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer to lobby the university to provide more gluten free products in their catering outlets.
3. To educate students about the importance of making gluten free products available.