

Union of UEA Students Purpose:
"To enrich the life of every UEA student"



Student Officer Committee Meeting

5 pm, Thursday, 3 April 2014 in the Council Chamber, the Registry

Agenda

FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS

- 1185 Welcome to newly elected Officers**
- 1186 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March** (See pages 2-6)
- 1187 Matters Arising**
- 1188 Action Log** (See page 7)
- 1189 By-Election Timetable**
A proposed timetable for the by-elections to be held for the International Officer, Black and Ethnic Minorities Officer and Democratic Procedures Committee posts. (See page 8)
- 1190 UCU Industrial Action: Marking Boycott Update**
An update from the Communications Officer.
- 1191 Budget Ideas 2014-15**
Suggestions from Officers as requested at the last meeting.
- 1192 UUEAS Annual Survey** (See Appendix A and B)
Discussion of the members' comments and responses.
- 1193 Management Committee Minutes**
The minutes from the meeting of 27 March. (See pages 9-10)
- 1194 Officer Go Round**
Officers to detail their activities for inclusion in the SOC Report.
- 1195 Any Other Business**
- 1196 Time, Date and Place of Next Meeting**

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Minutes of the Student Officer Committee
27 March 2014
Summary

Key Discussions

- UCU Marking Boycott
- Budget for 2014-15

Key Actions

- Exit interviews to be conducted with the PTOs
- FAQs on marking boycott to be circulated to students and a template letter to the VC would be drafted for circulation
- Officers asked to identify how any extra money could be spent to improve services to their constituents

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Voting Members present:

Eunice Opare-Addo (Black & Ethnic Minorities Officer), Tu An Ngo (International Officer), Rachel Knott (Women's Officer), Ella Gilbert (Non Portfolio Officer), Rosie Rawle (Communications Officer), Sebastian Bachelier (Non Portfolio Officer), Joe Levell (Finance Officer), Emma Silk (Environment Officer), L Withers Green (Academic Officer), Freddie Meade (Non Portfolio Officer), Bintu Foday (Community and Student Rights Officer), D Delargy (Students' with Disabilities Officer).

Chair

Joe Raynes (Non Portfolio Officer).

Voting Members present:

J Dickinson (Chief Executive).

In attendance:

Tony Moore (Representation Support Worker).

Apologies:

Sebastian Bachelier (Non Portfolio Officer), Holly Staynor (LGBT+ Officer), Kimberley Hirst-Jones (Postgraduate Officer).

1174 Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2014

The minutes were agreed.

1175 Matters Arising

There were none.

1176 Action Log

R Rawle noted she had conducted the exit interview with the Mature Students' Officer who had raised concerns about Officer induction and training; she believed this information should be used to inform next year's training.

SOC agreed that exit interviews or a group interview would be held before the end of the exam period for the current PTOs.

1177 Officers on Livewire Union Show

To appear next week: J Raynes, J Levell and L Withers Green.

1178 UCU Industrial Action: Marking Boycott

R Rawle circulated the FAQs, she had drawn up, for circulation to members explaining the reasons behind UCU's action and UUEAS' support. She noted that the University had commented that it would understand that students could be disappointed with UUEAS' point of view. She noted the focus group had looked at practical points to help students as follows:

UCU members to work with SOC on joint campaigning

Facilitating open lectures by UCU members

Preparatory work with the Advice Centre workers

Updates on the UCU/employers negotiations to be published on the Blog

A gradual introduction of posters and flyers, pop-up stands in the Hive

Getting the message out through course reps

Template letters to be sent to the VC and letters to be provided for academic staff to explain to students the reason for the action.

R Rawle noted that information would be available for postgraduate students who might be asked to mark papers thus undermining their UCU colleagues.

R Rawle noted to an inquiry from the Chair that the University had not shown any indications of when they would start to communicate with students about the boycott.

SOC agreed the text of the FAQs and its circulation to students and that a template letter to the VC would be drafted for circulation. SOC agreed that it would be made clear that the dispute was national and not local. It was further agreed that the issues of UCU staff having their pay cut would be addressed and that student reps on University committees would be asked to raise the issue of the boycott in meetings.

SOC noted that graduation at UEAS was a lot earlier than across the sector thus the potential for disruption of student progression was significantly greater.

T A Ngo noted that her constituents would be hit disproportionately by any disruption as their travel plans would be affected drastically.

R Rawle noted the importance of explaining UUEAS' support for the action in terms of an emphasis on the responsibility of the employers and the need to channel the members' anger against those responsible: the University and not the lecturers. She believed the key argument to make to members was that the boycott would go ahead anyway without UUEAS' support and that UUEAS would try to help resolve it before it began.

1179 Block Grant Funding 2014-15

J Dickinson advised that the new Democratic Procedures Committee would be responsible for drafting a process for SOC and Council to input into the Budget formulation. He noted, however, that the DPC had not met and, therefore, and he would like to ask the present PTOs as to their ideas as to the detailed Budget for the charity. He noted that there would probably be a 2-3% staff pay rise which would have a significant impact; as would, also, the rise in utilities prices and increased pensions' costs. He noted that there would be a review of insurance which he believed would mean a rise in costs.

He advised, however, that there were areas where spending could be significantly reduced; one such was building maintenance which could be drastically reduced in the run-up to the total refurbishment of Union House. He advised that these reductions would release some money to meet some of the desires expressed by Officers for staff support or campaigns and projects funding.

J Levell asked in view of the above advice for Officers to consider where, if they had it, they could spend money on to improve services for their constituents. He asked Officers to email him their responses before the following meeting.

1180 Policies Passed by Union Council on 20 March

1547: B Foday noted that a new Equal Opportunities framework was being planned for staff and that the Equal Opportunities Committee was looking at how to train the EO champions for Clubs and Societies. She noted she would be liaising with the University's Equality and Diversity Committee over the new policy.

1552: J Levell noted conversations had already started with the University on bursaries and he would be leading on liaison with Outreach as to working with local schools.

1553: B Foday noted she would work with the Advice Centre on advertising the dangers of loan shark lending.

1554: SOC noted no progress had been made so far and appointed B Foday and J Levell to raise awareness of the NASMA petition.

1555: J Levell noted it would be for his successor to ensure that, working along with the EOC, that adequate Equal Ops training was in place.

1556: L Withers Green noted she would write the open letter to the University in support of the OFT ruling.

1157: R Rawle noted that there had been some obfuscation by the University over Electronics Watch but that she would be talking to the Procurement Manager and she hoped for some progress on this issue during the coming year.

1160: J Levell noted he would be working to set up a joint committee with the University on sport after Easter.

1161: B Foday noted that the proposer how now been able to provide a definition for "sub-culture" which would be used in interpretation of the policy.

Chair noted that B Foday had circulated her DRO report prior to the meeting. B Foday noted that no candidates had come forward for the International Officer and Black and Ethnic Minorities positions. She noted her statement in the report that the vote represented what the members had voted for.

SOC noted the policy that mandated it to encourage more women to stand as candidates.

B Foday noted that she would bring a timetable for the By-Elections to SOC at its next meeting.

1181 Officer Go Round

L Withers Green: 100 things the VC could change, What If your course was better and working with the Faculty Convenors as to their handovers

R Rawle: marking boycott, the new Defend Education campaign which had evolved from Stop The Sell Off, Union Awards and preparing for the DPC

E Gilbert: Stop The Sell Off, UCU action. Elections

F Meade: marking boycott

E Silk: Stop The Sell Off and meetings with the University over Fossil Free investment

J Levell: discussions over Officers' roles at University Council, Union Awards, pre-meetings for NUS Conference

J Raynes: Union Awards which had led to a bizarre concatenation of events in his personal life

D Delargy: Stop The Sell Off and handover with his successor

E Opare-Addo: Union Awards and EOC.

TA Ngo: supporting and campaigning for UEA London students

B Foday: EOC, running the elections, Union Awards, the Access agreement for the May deadline and the Time to Change campaign

1182 Management Committee

SOC received the minutes of the meeting of 11 March without comment.

1183 Any Other Business

J Raynes reported that the government had ended ATOS's contract for disability tests and he noted this was a big victory for the disability rights campaign which UUEAS had been part of.

J Levell noted that some Officers might have missed the news of the grant from the Alumni Annual Fund towards a student media hub. He noted the funding would provide a large number of Macs with top of the range editing software.

1184 Time, Date and Place

5 pm, Thursday, 3 April in a venue to be confirmed.

SOC agreed that the new Officer team would be invited and the Annual Student Survey would be an agenda item.



SOC ACTION LOG (Internal Process)

Date Commissioned	Action Required	Status	Assigned To:	Date to be actioned by:
16 Jan 14	informal committee to support mature students/ exit interview with Mature Students Officer to be held	Actioned	Rosie/Bintu	End of January
27 Feb 14	University Rents	To be updated at next meeting	Bintu	March
27 Feb 14	Annual Survey Results to be considered by SOC	Agenda item	Tony	March/April
13 Mar 14	UCU Marking Boycott Group	Actioned	Ella/Rosie	March
13 Mar 14	FTOs elect to be invited to future meetings	To actioned after Easter	Tony	March
27 Mar 14	Exit interviews or a group interview would be held before the end of the exam period for the current PTOs.	Interviews to be conducted	Joe	End of May
27 Mar 14	FAQs on Marking Boycott to be circulated to students, template letter to the VC to be drafted for circulation.	FAQs circulated/template drafted	Rosie	3 April

Proposed by-election timeline:

Nominations Open	9am 28/04/2014 (first Monday back after Easter)
Nominations Close	12noon 07/05/2014
Candidate Training	08/05/2014
Manifesto Deadline	12noon 09/05/2014
Campaigning starts	9am 12/05/2014
Voting opens	9am 14/05/2014
Voting closes	12noon 16/05/2014
Expenses submission deadline	11am 16/05/2014
Deadline for complaints	1pm 16/05/2014

Management Committee Minutes 27th March 2014

Apologies: Alex

Operational Updates

- Bintu- Elections, Time to Change Launch
- Joe- Elections, Awards, 50k for Media, Derby Day, Trustee Recruitment
- Toby- Finance Manager Recruitment (interviews next week), Student Staff Recruitment, Lots of 121s for restructure and VR applications processed. HR consultants are doing a policy plan. Framework for poor performance being developed. IT- union migration will happen Friday 4th April. Data Protection moving along. Data Sharing agreement also moving along well. Student staff recruitment on.
- Jim- See other parts of agenda
- Louise- 100 things David Richardson should change, SEC agenda setting, Module Feedback
- Rosie- Defend education campaign, stunt, interviews for officer assistants, UCU marking boycott, block grant committee

Relationship Updates

- Rosie: Neil Ward Fossil Free- meeting was short so new meeting arranged.
- Louise- Agenda setting meeting for SEC, nothing controversial
- Rosie- Met chair of uni council with a view to students on council sub committees
- Jim- Islamic Centre closure meetings ongoing. Scheme to refurbish interfaith centre is being examined. Interfaith consultative group also has now met, we added in religious symbols, food, timetabling etc as issues to it. Cong Hall also being looked at for Friday Prayers.
- Bintu- Access agreements- we have required more consultation with students in accordance with OFFA guidance. Bursaries and Scholarships may well get cut as there is little research they impact on applications (admissions/acceptances not really monitored by OFFA)

Restructure

Redacted- see paper to Trustee Board

Equality and Diversity

See note below

Next Meeting

Mid way through next week re restructure

UUEAS

Equality and Diversity issues- management response

Broadly Equality & Diversity does not feature directly in the improvement plan, largely because it relates directly to the HR function which is addressed in other ways.

In theory our HR function should address these issues where they relate to staff, but given the changes and lack of confidence in the function to date this was not an option. Thus of our options was to "buy in" E&D consultancy and then attempt to implement recommendations, but having seen NUS do this twice without any management capacity to actually implement any recommendations, my recommendation was that doing so would just be a waste of money at this end of the year.

Thus it is proposed that mid way through the year we carry out two reviews.

One will focus on us as employer, forming part of the work that the incoming HR consultant will be asked to carry out, and indeed this set of issues formed part of the selection process that we went through a couple of weeks ago. It will look at current data, gaps in policies and recommendations for management and recruitment practice going forward.

The second should be led by officers (but supported by managers) on our democracy and involvement structures. This should examine forthcoming research (April) from NUS on E&D issues in relation to Democracy and involve the new DPC.

The employer and involvement/democracy issues are of course linked but again having watched unions and NUS grapple with these issues over the years the assumption is that any review too wide would fail, hence the need to separate.

On the question of an EIA over the restructure the recommendation is sound in principle but at this stage we do not even have robust E&D data on existing or at risk staff with which to carry out the assessment- something that will be addressed in the future.