

UGM AGENDA

Time:	17:00-18:00
Date:	16th November 2017
Location:	JCR
<p>Agenda</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome 2. Minutes & Matters Arising 3. Reports from officers 4. Discussion about Restructuring 5. Open Access to Education 6. Emergency Motions 	

UGM MOTIONS – 16th November 2017

REF	ACTION/ DISCUSSION	NOTES
1	<p>The chair (Nuz Fatima, Goldsmiths Students' Union Democracy Coordinator) - didn't arrive, so Nisha Phillipps [NP - Co-President Democracy & Education] acted as chair.</p> <p>She introduced herself and gave an overview of how the meeting would proceed.</p> <p>One emergency motion put forward and accepted</p>	
2	<p style="text-align: center;">Co-President Reports</p> <p>NP gave an overview of progress – Student rep training has been successful, she has been working with Student Advice & Well-being and organised settling-in week, and has been working on an Access Agreement to widen participation among students</p> <p>Halimo Hussain [HH], Co-President Equality & Liberation gave an overview of progress – she has been dealing with lots of firefighting in relation to restructuring, there has been progress with Decolonising SOAS campaign, positionality workshops are being looked into, and the BME mentorship scheme is going to be launched next week</p> <p>Mehdi Baraka [MB] co-president Activities & Events gave an overview of progress – there have been meetings with the school in relation to Brunei Gallery as the school looking to increase student engagement with Brunei</p>	<p>90 second speeches</p> <p>– no questions asked</p>

	<p>gallery, which exhibitions every 3 months, trying to integrate more with students, MB wants to work for more S.U. space</p> <p>Dimitri Cautain [DC] co-president Welfare & Campaigns gave an overview of progress – Restructuring going on, which is changing admin and making things complicated, there have been changes with PHD students & the S.U. wants to support them more, next week is the Community Week of Action to link up campaigns at SOAS</p>	
3	<p style="text-align: center;">Executive Committee Reports</p> <p>Max Gleissner [MG] – co-officer Campaigns, outlined Community Week of Action coming up to showcase campaigns & create strategizing + networking opportunities, Tuesday - Solidarity & Fundraising stall – send an email to campaigns@soas.ac.uk to get involved, Friday lunchtime rally focussed on Restructuring & attendance for international PHD students</p> <p>Hamish Anderson [HA] & Blanca Serrano [BS] Academic Affairs co-officer – office hours drop-in Mondays in Room 238 11:00-12:30, currently circulating a survey on mitigating circumstances, thinking about looking into alternative assessments, workshop tomorrow on how to keep on top of your essays</p> <p>Lavinya [LS] – Working Class Students co-officer, outlined plans to look into setting up a bursary for students, community breakfasts will be happening every week</p> <p>Pauline Ankunda [PA] – Entertainment officer, working to get more live acts into SOAS, wants to set up a weekly netflix series in a room</p> <p>Tom Ana [TA] – LGBTQ officer, currently working on events that will take place in December, such as World Aids day, there will also be lots of events happening in January too, has been going to lots of meetings, and will be looking more into developing Mental Health support</p> <p>Jess Barnes [JB] - Trans & Gender Identity Officer, working to set up an informal library, Trans Day of Remembrance on Monday - crafternoon in the Russell Room 12-4PM & going to the vigil in the evening, wants to set up a Queer & Trans-only space within SOAS</p> <p>Anna Gretton [AG] – Environment Officer, is going to carry out canteen & food-related surveys, introduced the SOAS Spirit Section 'SOAS @ 1 degree'</p> <p>Amy Joce [AJ] – Mature Students' Officer, wants to hold croissant mornings for Mature students, & did a call out to mature students to contact her</p>	60 second speeches
4	<p>DC & NP outlined the Restructuring situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No students have been involved in the process put forward by the school despite all changes that have been suggested are identified as being 'to improve the student experience' 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals disrespectful towards staff and students • Changes are all top-down • We need to push back • UNISON are angry as lots of these changes affect admin staff, we as students should support them • We need to make it clear what we actually want as students • We released a petition on student in the all-students email on Tuesday • There is a plan to release staff - make £3 million 'staff saving costs' - i.e. getting rid of staff, however new managers are being created at lots of different levels • Students encouraged to come to the whole-school walk-out next Friday as part of Community Week of Action - students encouraged to do a walk-out of classes at 1PM so that staff can walk-out too • All the data that is being talked about <p>Q: Is any of this info public?</p> <p>DC: Only a late email sent round late on a friday night</p> <p>HA: Academic Senate was told that admin staff location doesn't concern them, and they therefore shouldn't have any say</p> <p>Q: What's the deadline for all of this?</p> <p>DC: Formal consultation has a deadline of December</p> <p>NP outlined that there are no recordings, either video or audio, of UGMs</p>	
5	<p style="text-align: center;">Access to Education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Speech For: Mohamoud Hassan</p> <p>Outlined motion related to allowing course content to remain online following the completion of a crouse</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Question to read out the resolutions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Speech against:</p> <p>Suggestion to not include lecture slides, and limit the scope to pertain only to current students free of charge</p> <p>Suggestion to keep archives of reading lists of courses that have been taught</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Question about alumni and whether or not they actually want this</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Motion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Passed</p>

	<p>Copyrighting issues - lots of legitimate issues in relation to staff not wanting their content to go beyond the institution</p> <p>Vote on amendment – amendment passes</p> <p>New motion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That learning materials such as tutorial handouts, course readings of all courses should be made available online to current students free of charge and without licensing restrictions. 2. The creation of an Open Access campaign under the auspices of the Co-President for Democracy and Education to take this case forward to SOAS. <p>Vote on motion</p> <p>Motion Passed</p>	
6	<p style="text-align: center;">EMERGENCY MOTION</p> <p>Doctoral school students told they would have to check in every 3 weeks, and they have to apply to leave the country, not in the spirit of SOAS, demeaning scenario for students,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immediate suspension • demand a full consultation • support research students with direct action if deemed necessary <p>Q: Is the motion simply opposing this policy? Yes, and asking for a consultation</p> <p>Q: What kind of protection do we have while boycotting it? We are getting advice about this</p> <p>Motion says if such actions are deemed necessary</p> <p>Q: What's staff reaction? There seems to be support for an RSA policy - other staff are concerned, but still trying to find out more e.g. requirements of the Home office</p> <p>No amendments or speeches against</p> <p>Vote on motion</p> <p>Motion passed</p>	Motion passed

Emergency Motion – Opposing the new School Attendance Policy for Tier 4 Research Students

Proposer: Kathryn Nash

Seconder: Dimitri Cautian

This Union notes:

- The School informed research students earlier this week of a new Attendance policy that greatly impacts research students on Tier 4 visas.
- The Attendance policy requires Tier 4 visa research students to check in with the Doctoral School in person every three weeks (each student will have a specific day they are to check in).
- The Attendance policy requires Tier 4 Students to seek approval from the Doctoral School when leaving the country (regardless of length of time to be out of the country).
- These are not specific UKVI (Home Office) requirements and have been developed unilaterally by SOAS Management without consultation with the affected student body.
- In comparison to other UK Universities the SOAS Attendance Policy for research students is particularly inflexible and burdensome for all parties involved.
- There has been no transparency around methodology or rationale for developing this policy.
- Despite the policy being date August 17, 2017, students were first made aware of its existence on November 14, 2017.
- There has been poor communication on this new policy with students and many serious questions around implementation and non-compliance.
- The Doctoral School is already failing to respond to research student requests and is unable to complete administrative tasks within an acceptable timeframe. As such, research students are greatly concerned how this additional work load will further deteriorate the student experience.
- The introduction of the policy adds to the amount of stress and exacerbation of mental health issues the School already causes research students.

This Union believes:

- The School needs to consult students on any and all substantive policy and regulation change which affects them.
- Taking decisions without full consultation works against the interest of staff and students.
- The School needs to be transparent about the methodology and rationale behind proposed policy and regulation change.
- School policy needs to be in line with what is the sector norm within the UK.
- SOAS should seek to facilitate the inclusion of international students and resist efforts to place ever more restrictions on students from abroad studying in the UK. As such, the School needs to be as flexible as the Home Office allows and not impose further burdens on students.
- The policy is demeaning and creates a scenario where students are tracked. This policy has negative financial implications for students needing to travel into central specifically to check-in and negative freedom of movement implications for students who need to travel abroad for things like academic conferences or to see family.



This Union resolves:

- To lobby for the immediate suspension of the new Tier 4 research student Attendance Policy.
- To demand a full consultation with students on any proposed changes to the Schools Attendance Policy for Tier 4 research students'.
- To support research students with direct action if such action is deemed necessary (i.e. boycotting adherence to the policy, protests, going public with grievances, etc.).