



Union General Meeting Minutes

24th October 2019 (rescheduled)

2pm – 4pm

JCR

Chair: May Gabriel (Rethink Mental Illness)

Agenda

1. Ground Rules and Introduction
2. Executive Committee Report
3. Motion: Mandatory Environmental Education Workshops
4. Motion: Introducing Online Voting System for UGMs
5. Motion: Proposal for SOAS Students' Union to become the first Earth Protector institution
6. AOB



Discussions and Actions

1. Ground Rules and Introduction

May ran through the UGM agenda, ground rules, and explained the UGM process for clarity.

2. Executive Committee Report

Peadar, Maxine, Youssra and Valeria summarised what they have been up to recently. Short reports from members of the exec team who provided them were displayed on the screen. The floor was opened to questions – none were raised.

3. Motion: Mandatory Environmental Education Workshops

Proposer summary:

There is no background environmental education for everyone
Workshops on consent work well
Want to run 2 hour, student led workshops based on input by various groups

Amendments:

None

From previous meeting, amendment:

“To investigate potential finance options while lobbying the university”

For: School should follow through with climate emergency declaration
Against: None

Questions:

Question: Will SU funding change next year, as the school's will?
Answer: Not likely as SU budget increases with inflation.

Vote:

Amendment passes

From previous meeting, amendment:

“To pilot workshop in line with previous UGM motion on climate emergency”

A discussion was had on the wording of the amendment, however decided that we will link the previous UGM motion to the amendment to ensure correct detail given



Vote:

Amendment passes

Against:

None

For/against:

None

Questions:

Question: How will environmental societies be involved?

Answer: A new society is being established who will help. Others will also be involved in curriculum design.

Question: Will academic staff be involved?

Answer: Their attendance isn't compulsory

Vote:

Motion passes

4. Motion: Introducing Online Voting System for UGMs

Proposer summary:

UGMs have issues meeting quora or people getting to campus to vote

Looking to trial electronic online voting – in line with elections

Will host 2 focus groups

More effective, inclusive and safeguarding

Amendments:

Amendment 1:

“Steps will be taken to raise awareness of the new voting system prior to UGMs”

No against

No for/against

No questions

Vote:

Amendment passes

Amendment 2:

“Reviewing and amending the SU constitution so voting system is in line with regulations “

Against:

We could just provisionally change, don't need to formally change



Questions:

A discussion was had for clarification on this amendment. Answer: The constitution mentions voting by hands so we need to change it in order to do the trials.

Vote:

Amendment passes

Amendment 3:

“3.3. [Add] Option to increase trial period to 2 academic years”

No against

No for/against

No questions

Vote:

Amendment passes

Against:

None

For/against:

None

Vote:

Motions passes

5. Motion: Proposal for SOAS Students' Union to become the first Earth Protector institution

Proposer summary:

SOAS has declared a climate emergency
Signing up as an Earth Protector allows us to set out points and policies – a statement of intent
Addresses climate crisis, not green washing

Amendments:

None

Against:

None

For/against:

None

Questions:

Discussions around the link between ECOCIDE and XR. Answer: They are separate organisations.
Discussions around what “legal duty of care” means. Answer: It’s not “legal”, just suggestion.



Against re-opened:

Against: Uncomfortable signing up to a law that isn't yet legal

For/against re-opened:

For: Signing up applies pressure for us to act

Against: Green washing

Vote:

Motion falls

6. AOB

Q: What happened to the emergency Kashmir motion raised at the previous UGM that was rescheduled?

A: Went to exec and was partially passed. As a charity the SU is not entitled to no platform, in line with charity commission regulations.