

SU Executive Minutes

Time:	18:00
Date:	06/10/2014
Location:	G50
Trustees Present:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgie Robertson – CP Campaigns & Welfare [GR] Chair • Kabir Joshi – CP Activities & Events [KJ] • Manuella Schwarz – Black Officer [MS] • Ruman Hasan – Anti Racist Officer [RH] • Karmel Carey – Disabilities Officer [KC] • Roisin Crowley – Disabilities Officer [RC] • Nate Reidy – LGBTQ Officer [NR] • Phoebe Fisher – Environment Officer [PF] • Harriet White – Environment Officer [HW] • Grace Wilcocks – Campaigns Officer [GW] • Mollie Hanley – Womens Officer [MH] • Hannah Slydel – Womens Officer [HS] • Max Lohnert – Academic Affairs Officer [ML] • Mohamed Taha – Post Graduate Research [MT]
Others Present:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vic Casambros – Governance & Communications Coordinator [VC]
Apologies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simon Campbell – Academic Affairs Officer [SC] • Ana-Luiza Olanescu – International Officer [AO] • Luna Cottis – Entertainments Officer [LC] • David Suber – CP Democracy & Education [DS] • Tom King – LGBTQ Officer [TK]
Absent:	

Action/Discussion	Who	When
1) How to operate as an Exec GR – Introduced the idea of consensus and coming		

up with ground rules for exec.

HS – supported the idea of consensus

GW – Suggested the idea of raising hands to speaks.

The group came to the consensus to use consensus

GR and **Exec** developed the following ground rules:

- No interpreting each other, put hands up and use certain hand signals (to be explained at beginnings of meetings) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2yYiULZ0hA>
- Officers can raise points to be added to the minutes after meetings if did not want to raise the point in the meeting itself or forgot to raise it.
- There is no such thing as silly questions.
- No prejudicial language i.e. language that is discriminatory along the lines of age, carers, class, disability, gender identity and trans, nationality, pregnancy and student parents, part-time students, race and ethnicity, religion or belief (or lack of belief), sexuality (<- alphabetical order)
- Being aware of how we use language
- Not asking liberation officers to explain themselves and not asking any officers to justify their officer positions and their place in Exec.
- Apologising if use language that offends another person, do not deny them or not believe them or dismiss their experiences.
- Not using accusatory language: if someone uses language that offends you, explain why what they said has made you feel this way, remembering that there are no silly questions and that we are here to learn from each other. Can have these conversations separately / privately rather than publicly. People can also get upset / angry, we should not attempt to police emotions.
- This is an environment to learn from each

<p>other, a process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A space for debate and disagreement but in a constructive and respectful way. Don't feel that you can't disagree with someone. <p>Exec to evaluate these rules at start of Term 2</p>	All	Term 2
<p>2) Residents Council</p> <p>KC spoke to exec about issues within dinwiddy including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cockroaches • Mice (<i>this one is a rumour</i>) • Room Requests • Lift in wheelchair accessible flats broken since move in day • Staff attitudes (<i>they are mean and don't respect students</i>) • 4x Senior residents aren't treated properly and feel they can't complain. They are not properly trained. <p>NR – Asked who owns/runs Dinwiddy and Paul Robeson House. Who is accountable for this behaviour in law?</p> <p>GR – SOAS used to own them but sold them off in early 90s. They are now owned by Sanctuary under condition they only rent to SOAS Students. This deal is coming to an end. SOAS doesn't have control over contract to "threaten to end contract".</p> <p>HS – It would be good to have a "know your rights" sessions about accommodation. Should the union support these Senior Residents more? Can we get good night out training for the staff.</p> <p>KC – Most staffing is outsourced – Security & Deep Cleaning</p> <p>GR – We will look into this and feedback. We</p>		

<p>can try and get them to pressure Sanctuary over student welfare.</p> <p>MH – The law over what landlords need to do is quite high, they should be meeting this.</p> <p>HS – Look at other uni’s who have halls from Sanctury and work together on a campaign</p> <p>NR – There is always watchdog. We can scare parents to send their children there.</p> <p>KC – The big problem is no one makes official complaints so these are all hard to follow these up.</p> <p>MH – Depending on space we should organise a Dinwiddy General Assembly.</p> <p>GW – Maybe hold it elsewhere as students may feel intimidated there.</p> <p>GR will meet with KC to get as much of his written down as possible and meet with David Christmas</p>	<p>GR + KC</p>	<p>Before next exec</p>
<p>3) Hong Kong statement</p> <p>GR – people have asked if the union will write a statement on the Hong Kong Protests.</p> <p>GR – has written a draft and asks for feedback from EXEC.</p>	<p>Exec</p>	<p>Wed – 8/10/14</p>
<p>4) Students' Union priorities</p> <p>GR told exec these have been sent out to exec and asks for feedback. They will be going to the UGM this Friday.</p> <p>There was discussion about #2 – Exams making up to 50% of a course grade. This included the merits of exams vs coursework with regards to</p>	<p>Exec</p>	<p>Wed – 8/10/14</p>

<p>stress.</p>		
<p>5) Boycott Divestment and Sanctions referendum</p> <p>KJ updated EXEC about a meeting with London Palestine Action, and wanting to reinforce a BDS Campaign as SOAS. Whilst SOAS doesn't have link like Veolia and G4S, the School doesn't links to a Hebrew University.</p> <p>There will be a motion going to the UGM about getting the school to enforce a BDS Policy of its own.</p> <p>GR – The union has practiced BDS for around 10 years. This motion would reaffirm this. Its about not working with Israeli institutions that support war crimes, NOT boycotting Israeli academics.</p> <p>HS – ISS who employ our cleaners do work in illegal Israeli settlements.</p> <p>GW – This conversation makes me feel very uncomfortable; I've spoken to many Israeli and Jewish students who already feel very marginalised. We talk about Anti-Semitism a lot but don't practice this. There is lots of grassroots discriminations at SOAS.</p> <p>HS – we can counter this by not conflating Judaism and Israel, they are no the same thing. Pro-Palestine is not anti-Semitism.</p> <p>RH – There are lots of Jewish academics who support BDS.</p> <p>MT – It's important to position ourselves to define the union's political position and moral position. The bullying is no acceptable.</p>		

<p>GW – Lots of students will feel too intimidated to turn up at a UGM and speak against BDS. This is a very difficult situation.</p> <p>HS – We need to send a survey to Jewish students and see how they fell. Many Jewish students aren't from Israel.</p> <p>VC – Asks is the referendum will include online voting.</p> <p>GR – Says it's hoped to.</p> <p>KJ – Its aimed to run this referendum in January</p>		
<p>6) UGM The first UGM of the year is this Friday at 5:30pm Motion Deadline is tomorrow evening.</p> <p>MS – Can we monitor who goes to the UGM?</p> <p>HS – Maybe give people forms and collect that at the end. It would be problematic if we start defining people.</p> <p>GR – We are looking at filming and posting the UGM online.</p> <p>HS – filming the UGM might make some people less likely to speak at UGM's</p> <p>RC agreed that filming would be off putting for many people and suggested we could voice record the discussion of one motion and putting it online to give an idea of what it's like and encourage more people to attend.</p> <p>GR suggested that we arrange for one of the motions on Friday to be voice recorded, and ask people at the UGM itself if they are happy with the discussion of that motion being recorded.</p>		



<p>KJ – Depending on the gravity of the motion, some huge motions shouldn't be decided by just 60 students.</p> <p>There was a discussion over online vs offline voting & campaigning and also filming UGMs</p>		
<p>7) Elections GR updated EXEC on the different elections going on.</p>		
<p>8) NUS Zones Conferences</p> <p>The Student' Union will pay all costs for anyone going to conferences.</p> <p>NUS Zone Conference – http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/ents/event/1075/</p> <p>Women in Leadership – http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/ents/event/1078/</p>		
<p>9) World Mental Health Day</p> <p>GR gave EXEC an update of the events going on this Friday for world mental health day.</p>		
<p>10) Dignity Policy & Complaints Policy</p> <p>GR Explained the updates to the complaints policy and the new Dignity Policy and asks EXEC for feedback.</p>	exec	Next exec
<p>11) Mitigating Circumstances</p> <p>HS spoke about the new reporting and harassment form being developed in light of recent issues over Mitigating Circumstances. Looking at creating a group to go over the current Mitigating Circumstances procedures.</p> <p>There is going to be event next Wednesday to collect feedback.</p> <p>MS – Asks if there was any update on the case</p>		

that was in the spirit

GR – None yet, but meeting with Nimla. Will provide exec with updates once this has happen.

Any Other Business

GW – Meat Free Mondays isn't happening.

Exec - Need to get the school to stop selling Coca-Cola Products

MS – promoted Black History Month

GR – There has been a drop in black student satisfaction according the NSS. This forms more evidence of the black student attainment gap.

NR – asked some questions about memberships of society and who has access to lists.

VC – There is will be training for Officers and Societies Committees for the website. In the mean time just email Vic and come see him in 394.

Next Meeting

Monday 13th October – 6PM – G51