



Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

19th February 2021
2pm - 4pm

Chair: Hasan Zakria

Agenda

1. Officer Check In
2. Internal Comms
3. Elections Drop-In
4. Rent Strike Update
5. AOB

Apologies: Sohane Yahya, Felix Henson,

In attendance: Ella Spencer, Lucia Pedroso, Oscar Ward, Katie Saunders, Yasmin Elsouda, Felix Henson, Roza Atac, Sabrina

1. Officer Check In

Ella: Mostly working around the fee strikes. Also been organising a meeting between trans* dignity, Spectra, and SOAS.

Lucia: I've been attending lots of mitigating circumstances meetings, and SOAS will be sending an email out on Monday with updates to the process (e.g. scrapping the 28 day limit for extensions). I've also been working with the SOAS WTFEES campaign.

Oscar: I've been dealing with issues around the rent strike, and also attended the SU Blind Date event at the weekend which was fun!

Katie: No updates

Yasmin: Last week was very intense. Fee Strike's work is going well, but it's becoming clear that most of the work is falling to a small number of students and they're likely to burn out. I'm thinking about the need for a Campaign 101 training to make sure this campaign work is sustainable. It's also positive to see how the conversations about fee strikes have evolved. I've been working with the SOAS Palestine Society on Israeli Apartheid Week which is happening w/c 15th March - keep a look out for more information soon!

There's also been lots of complaints about how the SOAS Hardship Fund is being distributed, and questions about whether or not students know SOAS have an extra £50k of funds available.

Finally, students in Urbanest are looking at having a rent strike, and I'm providing support but it's difficult as they're intercollegiate halls.

AP: Invite Yasmin and Tom (rent strike people) to help take accommodation issues to SOAS

Felix: I've been trying to organise LGBTQIA+ History Month events; one has been cancelled but one is happening next week, a discussion on being LGBT and disabled.

I've been doing a lot of work on the Disabled Students Society, and reviewing my manifesto with Amber to see what we can achieve before our term is over.

I'm also going to be delivering training on disability awareness soon in Urbanest.

Roza: The past 2 weeks have been very hard. Enough is Enough (EiE) workshops finished last week, and the administrators are working on a report. SOAS agreed to fund EiE for 5 years but that runs out this year so we need to ask for more money. We're looking to create a SU/SOAS steering group for EiE, so the School can lead on the admin and students can continue to lead on content and delivery. We need to identify who we need in this group (e.g. data, registry) and I think the Equality & Liberation Co-President should Chair this group so we can ensure a handover and continuity. I'd like to get any feedback from you all on EiE and let me know if you want to be on the steering group. We also started the survivor led EiE workshops this week and they'll be running over the next few weeks.

I've also got the Report & Support working group next week; let me know if you're interested.

Sabrina: Mitigating circumstances have taken up most of my time.

I've been working on the Fee Strikes, supporting other officers.

We've also managed to confirm a UGM Chair for our UGM next week, after we had issues with confirming the first Chair. Myself and Jack met them earlier this week and trained them on the UGM process and gave them context into SOAS. They seem really good for the role!

Dide: I've been having issues with the Research Students Association and their/my role's budget.

A discussion was had around SU budgets and how the RSA fits in to the SU structures.

Victor: Me and Lizzy were happy with how our film screening went for LGBTQIA+ History Month.

Sara: I've had lots of deadlines so have taken a step back recently from SU work. Last week myself, Sabrina and Lucia attended a meeting about making teaching and assessments more accessible.

I'm still pushing for student parents.

Hopefully something will be happening with the Careers team soon.

I've also been running mini 40 minute mature students socials, and have set up a flip grid.

Hasan: I ran a Blind Dates event over the weekend, which despite technical difficulties had really good feedback. The LGBTQIA+ History Month events I organised have started; they've had good attendance so far and it's been nice to give a platform to people who wouldn't normally have that platform. I'm now just preparing for the upcoming LGBTQIA+ History Month events.

2. Internal Comms

Felix: I sometimes feel that communication within the Union isn't the best. I tend to find out about things after they've happened. It would be good to have a centralised google calendar.

Lucia: If you put people's emails into Google calendar you can see their schedules (e.g. Sabbs or SOAS management)

Lucia ran through how to see someone's calendar on gmail.

Yasmin: You can also see SOAS SU events on the BLE calendar or SU calendar.

Hasan: If there's anything you're doing as an individual that you'd like everyone to know about you can always send an email out to each other.

3. Election Drop-In

Jack: Nominations are open for the SU Spring Election and I want to organise a drop in session for students to come and talk directly to some of our current officers; Friday 26th February, 11am - 1pm. This would be a chance for students to come and ask questions

about your roles, the election process, and what the SU does. Would anyone be interested in getting involved? Please let me know and I'll organise! Also a reminder that if you're rerunning you still need to give students helpful advice, and as Officers you can't make decisions on the election process so please pass any questions about the election process on to me.

AP: Organise an Election Drop-In session for students

4. Rent Strike Update

Oscar: The SOAS Rent Strike is a bit disorganised right now. The biggest problem is we're lacking the natural organising momentum. There's a lot of national movement on it right now. If SOAS controlled their own accommodation we probably would've had success with them by now, but they use outside contractors for their halls. I've got a rent strike UGM motion going through on Monday to show SU solidarity with the rent strike and housing emergency at SOAS. I'm going to create an email to go out next week with more information on the rent strike and housing emergency for students.

5. AOB

Sara: I've proposed 2 UGM motions about introducing a Student Parents Officer and Part-Time Students Officer to the Executive Committee. Both of these student groups have specific issues and I think these officers would help raise those issues.

I've set up a Flipgrid in case anyone would like to record a short video expanding on their officer report as part of the UGM.

A discussion was had around introducing new officer roles; what does the constitution say, what roles should we have, should we take action on officers who do not engage, etc.

AP: Jack to find out if an officer is removed how does this affect quora for Exec and Trustees

AP: Continued conversation about officer roles going forward

Jack: The NUS Liberation Conference is happening online March 23-25 online. We have 1 LGBT Delegate place available, would anyone like to attend in this place?