



# Extraordinary UGM Minutes

Friday 26th March 2021

3pm - 5pm

Zoom

**Chair:** Sara Bafo (Goldsmiths SU)

## Agenda

1. Introduction & Ground Rules
2. **Motion 1:** Remove Adam Habib as Director
3. AOB



## 1. Ground Rules & Introduction

Sara introduced themselves and the Extraordinary UGM.

Sara ran through the UGM Ground Rules, and explained the UGM motion process.

## 2. Motion 1: Remove Adam Habib as Director

### Proposer Introduction

**Ret'sepile:** Thank you all for coming to support us. This motion proposes to remove Adam Habib as Director of SOAS. He justified the use of the N word on multiple platforms. Stripped a black student of his blackness by calling himself Black. Habib has caused harm, trauma and hurt for Black students and staff. He has shown no leadership, and SOAS have traumatised black students by centralised Habib instead of students. We are calling for Habib to leave by April 12th. We want help for the student, mitigating circumstances for black students, compensation for students, and if the board thinks Adam needs education, for him to enrol as a student and not as a Director. We've had confusing silence and messages over the last 2 weeks. We believe Adam Habib to be harmful and that he cannot lead us.

### Questions

**Q1:** What type of compensation are you looking for, and how can you value the compensation process that you're trying to promote?

**A1 (Pauline):** The student is studying BA African studies and is in third year. Due to this incident will be deferring his year and coming back next year. That's 1 year of studies gone. He did not come to SOAS to ask a valid question about why SOAS has defunded its BA African studies graduate programme and why the use of racial slurs was not being dealt with. He should not have to pay the £9,250 for the year to be coming to the end of his degree with such an incident.

**A1.2 (Ret'sepile):** The compensation can never be enough. The student in question has still not been offered any mental health help by the SOAS community. Compensation and an apology is the least the university can do.

**Q2:** Don't you think the idea of compensating the student only (instead of class action) will undermine the values of this incident?

**A2 (Ret'sepile):** We don't believe this would undermine the values of this incident.

**A2.2 (Pauline):** We've said in the resolutions '*the student in question and all BA African students and students of african heritage*'.

**Q3:** [A statement was made about the need to centre the welfare of the student involved]



**Q4:** What is the long term agenda for this? Removing Adam Habib doesn't solve the systemic racism issue at SOAS, so how do we make sure the school doesn't use this to think everything's been solved?

**A4 (Ret'sepile):** The long term fixtures to the problems at SOAS is firstly for all black student complaints about racism to be dealt with. This problem has been going on since 2008, as evidenced in the SU 2008 report. Black staff at SOAS also have their own issues that have to be dealt with. We need programmes and conversations for ALL students about anti-Black racism.

**A4.2 (Pauline):** The Board of Trustees hired Adam Habib, and we are calling into question that decision as we don't agree with it. We're calling for his removal as a clear step of solidarity with black students and staff who say this behaviour cannot be accepted at this institution. A clear mark to remove someone from office once they've caused offence. We've put in the resolutions for SOAS to work with a member of SAaW and knows organisation and groups that can offer the anti-Black.anti-racist training for staff, which will work towards anti-racism at SOAS.

#### Amendments

N/A

#### Argument Against

N/A

#### Arguments For & Against

N/A

#### Proposer Summary

**Pauline:** Thank you all for being here. This is a moment in which we can bridge together any campaigns (e.g. FFFP, J4W, WTFeesSOAS), where we can start the steps of changing and building an institution that we deserve and that reflects its staff and students.

#### Vote

To be held online

### 3. AOB

**Yasmin & Pauline** highlighted upcoming screenings taking place that would be of interest to people to attend.

**Samantar** noted this UGM as a milestone for all SOAS students, '*taking a stance and understanding and accepting what we're worth and what we're due in higher education*'.