



# Union General Meeting Minutes

Friday 21st May 2021

11am - 12:30pm

Zoom

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

## Agenda

1. Introduction & Ground Rules
2. **Motion 1:** Introduce an 'Inclusion Officer' as a mandatory role in SOAS SU society and club committees
3. **Motion 2:** Introduce a 'Welfare Officer' as a mandatory role in SOAS SU society and club committees
4. **Motion 3:** To reaffirm commitment to BDS and pressure SOAS to divest from and boycott Israeli Apartheid
5. Executive Committee Reports
6. Ratifying the Minutes of the Previous UGM
7. AOB

# 1. Ground Rules & Introduction

*Sara: Briefly ran through the Agenda and Ground Rules of the meeting*

## 2. Motion 1: Introduce an 'Inclusion Officer' as a mandatory role in SOAS SU society and club committees

### Proposer Introduction

**Hasan:** Some student groups are more likely to face barriers in joining SU clubs and societies (e.g. disabled students, mature students). Barriers include evening only events, no alcohol free events, etc. SOAS SU is beholden to its Equality & Diversity policy and the Activities & Events Co-President is responsible for ensuring we run inline with this policy. Other SUs have introduced similar roles. Actions of this role could include ensuring all digital material is accessible, organising alcohol free events, etc. If the society doesn't elect an inclusion officer then another committee member must take this role up.

### Questions

N/A

### Amendments

N/A

### Speech Against

N/A

### Speeches For / Against

N/A

### Proposer Summary

**Hasan:** Introducing this role would be a trial. I encourage you all to vote even if you're not bothered about this motion.

## 3. Motion 2: Introduce a 'Welfare Officer' as a mandatory role in SOAS SU society and club committees

### Proposer Introduction

**Hasan:** Other Unions have similar roles to this. This role recognises university can be a struggle for students and many students don't know the support available to them. Welfare issues can also exist within societies/clubs. All people who enter SU spaces need to abide by the Safer Spaces policy and this role could work to educate people on this policy and enforce it. This role would be a point of contact between Welfare & Campaigns Co-President and societies/clubs to disseminate information. All students in societies/clubs should have someone they can go to to speak about welfare support services. A society committee should be equipped with the tools and knowledge to enforce the Safer Spaces policy.

#### Questions

N/A

#### Amendments

N/A

#### Speech Against

N/A

#### Speeches For / Against

N/A

#### Proposer Summary

**Hasan:** Just want to encourage everyone to vote and get your friends to vote!

## 4. Motion 3: To reaffirm commitment to BDS and pressure SOAS to divest from and boycott Israeli Apartheid

#### Proposer Introduction

**Yara:** We're proposing a motion to reaffirm commitment to BDS and pressure SOAS to divest from and boycott Israeli Apartheid. 6 years ago there was a referendum at SOAS where 73% voted in favour of supporting the BDS motion. SOAS are currently investing over £4.7 million in companies explicit in Israeli Apartheid. SOAS are also in violation of the academic boycott. They also have a tender which allows students to study for their degree while also learning how to be soldiers. They're not committing to either of the components of BDS. As an academic institution that marks itself as decolonial they should no longer align themselves with colonisers. They should protect free speech and Palestinian academic freedom. They must support student led BDS campaigning and support the components of the 2015 BDS campaign.

#### Questions

N/A

#### Amendments

N/A

#### Speech Against

N/A

#### Speeches For / Against

N/A

#### Proposer Summary

**Jana:** We're asking SOAS to uphold the BDS motion and we're urging them to cut ties that fund apartheid. We're also asking them to divest the £4.7 million they have in complicit companies.

## 5. Executive Committee Reports

**Sara:** Does anyone have any questions for the Sabbatical Officers based on the Officer Reports circulated via SU email?  
No questions were raised.

## 6. Ratifying the Minutes of the Previous UGM

Roza Atac volunteered to ratify.

## 7. AOB

**Yasmin:** 4pm vigil on the SOAS steps to honour the lives lost in Palestine and everywhere in the world to colonial violence. If you can come in for this please do.

**Sara:** Voting will open 12:30pm today until 12:30pm Saturday, where we will also re-open voting on two motions from the last UGM:

- Sabbatical Role for Black African, Black Caribbean and Black Students of the Diaspora
- Introduce a QTIBPOC Officer to SOAS SU