

UGM Officer Reports

25th November 2021

Sabbatical Officers

Khadijah Ankunda | Activities & Events

This term has really been about adjusting to on campus and online activities after 18 months, understanding the frameworks that have already been existing in the role and what changes can be introduced. Especially with a governance review coming along...

Concrete things this term:

- Supporting students with society, queries, signposting them to already existing sports and societies
- Run the training for all incoming, new and existing Sports and Societies
- Organised the first Afrikan Student Social in which I was able to gauge and figure out ways to effectively mobilise, organise and form communities with the resources of this role - looking forward to Term 2
- Not being involved with the restorative justice/investigation process and outcomes of the sham investigation into the directors unapologetic use of the n word and SOAS's lack of care towards countering Afriphobia in reality, not paper/plotting and scheming tho
- Liaising with SOAS Radio Manager on how to best collaborate for students involvement/engagement
- Create Conscious Workshop
- Have made a roster of performers. Poets, musicians, artists and now working on venues for second term outside of SOAS depending on Budgets
- Organised the first three late licenses - fundraised for the Justice4Workers and Student Inquiry Process into Afriphobia at the last one and raised a total of £475 in 2 days

All a learning process, lots of things to prep for Term 2 and the rest of the year.
peace

Lucia Reodriguez-Pedroso | Democracy & Education

No report submitted

Hisham Pryce-Parchment | Equality & Liberation

No report submitted

Ella Spencer | Welfare & Campaigns

My priority since the start of term has been recruiting new members for campaigns after a hard year of organising online during the pandemic reduced most campaigns to depending on a few core members. I'm happy to say that this has been really successful. All the campaigns have had new members coming consistently to meetings, beginning to take more ownership and actively participating. Doing organising meetings in person again, meeting new people and working on new ideas has been the highlight of my role so far.

The Justice For Workers campaign had a victory earlier in the term when the demand for the cleaners' version of the rota (which splits up shift patterns) was finally implemented by the management team after a year of campaigning and the threat of strike action. We celebrated this victory as a reminder that collective power & strike action work! SASS (SOAS Against Surveillance & Securitisation) held a 'Cookies Against Cages' stall that encouraged students to fill out an objection for a new prison planned in Essex as part of the government's New Prisons Programme which will hugely expand incarceration in the UK. Over 50 objections were filed & students were excited to join the campaign and mobilise around abolition on campaign beyond. We recently began having meetings with senior management and the Palestine Society to continue the conversation around academic boycott which was started with last year's sabbs, with the intention of getting SOAS to commit to a boycott of the settler-colonial Israeli state in response to the call of Palestinian civil society for BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) reaffirmed by the SOAS community in the 2015 referendum which voted in favour of BDS by overwhelming majority, and this year's UGM motion.

Over the last month, myself and the other sabbs have been working closely with the two unions on campus, the UCU & UNISON, to stay updated on the strike action which has now been confirmed for three days next week (1st-3rd December), alongside Action Short of a Strike (working exclusively to contract) and the possibility of escalation in term 2. We have held regular 'strike forums' online and in person, hosted by the SU with the two unions as a chance for students and workers to come together and hear about the reasons workers are striking and how these issues are connected to students - their working conditions are our learning conditions! Since the strike days were confirmed, we have been working hard alongside students & staff to organise the logistics of the picket line, start planning teach-outs and put together resources for students which explain the reasons for the strike, how students can support it and what academic support measures are being put in place by the school. It has been an honour to work alongside such passionate and dedicated students and staff and I can't wait to learn more together on the picket line. Hope to see you there!

Executive Officers

Mahek Arora | Academic Affairs

No report submitted

Neelam Aslam | Anti-Racism

I am planning an event which I'll give the name 'Friends Reunion'.

It's about asking everyone to bring their cultural or regional music with them and we'll play those songs and ask everyone to dance on these different songs.

It will create an understanding and respect for each other's music and culture and would result in a meetup of people of different ethnicities and backgrounds.

I just want to start from this and then in the coming days with the collaboration of the British Red Cross Society I'll organize events about what Racism is and how we can discourage that. I am planning my first event in January or in an ideal case before Christmas.

Lena Koch | Campaigns

No report submitted

Felix Henson | Disabled Students' & Carers

No report submitted

Ayat El-Naili | Entertainment

No report submitted

Jacynthe Roesch | Environment

Since October I've been in contact with many people and been involved in a couple of groups; the Economics Sustainability Action Group organised by Yannis Dafermos and the student led SOAS Climate Justice (CJ) Group (student led). The CJ group is a newly formed group of a dozen students who are looking to do three things: 1) small actions around SOAS 2) providing information on environmental issues 3) connecting with wider campaigns to join in marches and protests. If you would like to join, here is the whatsapp link for the main group - there are subgroup for different actions, see description in whatsapp

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/EdnrCQvsm1DBjBLjAYwcYB>

- Supported the CJ Group in requesting some funding from the green community fund (from Solar SOAS) for implementing a 3 part e-waste scheme on campus. 'Repair' - To subsidise electronic repairs for SOAS students (laptops, phones etc.), 'Reuse' - to provide students with information on donation platforms that would reuse their electronics and subsidise shipping costs and finally 'Recycle' - A voluntary disposal service for students' electronics and electrical goods in the form of a recycling collection point in the SU - to deposit anything from broken headphones, tablets or toasters!

- Organised a circular economy clothes swap last week in collaboration with the Open Economics Forum society. I will support the students in the CJ group to hold regular clothes swaps events in the future.
- Helped organise an anti consumerist + black friday screening on Tuesday 23rd after the screening of the film 'tomorrow' by the SOAS Development Society. The CJ group will show a short clip raising awareness of the environmental and social impacts of Black Friday, which is this Friday 26th November.
- Connected with other environmental student societies like Creative Cafe to support and promote their activities.
- Met with Jack Di Francesco, the Governance, communication & Sustainability Coordinator at SOAS who explained the structure and history of environmental groups and societies at SOAS. Among many other things I learned that the disposable plastic cups currently used in the bar during late licenses are a short-term issue due to some building works happening behind the bar. I have contacted Khaled, the Commercial Services Manager who is responsible for the bar, to consider some paper cups instead, as a better short-term option until full access to the dishwashers can be had again.

Julia Soldrzynski | International

No report submitted

Krizzel Mapaye | LGBTQIA+

No report submitted

Anna L fstrand | Mature Students

Hi All!

I'm happy and excited to be representing all the mature students here at SOAS. Since the election, I've been working hard to get to grips with the role and find the best ways to be your advocate and your conduit on Campus. If you haven't already, drop me a message at mature@soas.ac.uk and join the Mature Students Microsoft Teams Channel so that we can connect (link:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/team/19%3avcr23RaSFcJIWqFzMmrsCMWq87Fle37IKCNAY_8s7F01%40thread.tacv2/conversations?groupId=77e0ff00-dad8-42fa-bed2-23aaff1da214&tenantId=674dd0a1-ae62-42c7-a39f-69ee199537a8).

I will be doing a hand off with Sara Lloyd-Knibbs, the former Mature Students Officer, in the coming weeks so I can continue the work she started around better support for learning and access on campus. Please reach out if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas about how SOAS can work better for you! Also, I want to start holding some events next term, and I'd love to know the kind of things you'd like to do!

Arianna Simonette | Part-Time Students

No report submitted

Anika Chauhan | People of Colour

No report submitted

Vasundhara Pandey | Postgraduate Taught

No report submitted

Valentine Godard & Grace Weston | Sports

No report submitted

Alfie Makepeace | Trans* & Gender Identity

The last week has been trans week of visibility in which a couple of events took place. Along with Krizzel we organised a film screening of Seahorse for trans & non-binary students. There was also a candlelit vigil held on the SOAS steps for a chance for trans students & allies to reflect and remember the trans lives we have lost. Finally, I wrote a piece for the SOAS blog around transphobia within academia and how transphobia manifests within the uk. - Alf :)

Ellora Singh & Rbeeza Mobeen | Womxns

No report submitted

Maxine Mallon | Working Class Students

No report submitted