

Union Council

Minutes from the meeting on Wednesday 25th January 2012 at 13:00 held in W115

Persons Present

Chairs

Amy Coughlan (Chair)
Matthew Vaux (Deputy Chair)

Councillors

Adam White	(Photography)	Sam Lawson	(Sports & Exrs Science)
Carly Whiting	(Internal Design)	Ami Birrell	(Events Management)
Cara Moran	(English)	Kimberley Birch	(Business Mgmt)
David Sullivan	(CGD)	Nicola Berncastel	(Business Mgmt)
Glenn Selway	(History)	Robert Roue	(NCT)
Jemma Chatten	(English)	Jack Nkala	(Social Work)
Philippa Maju	(Photography)	Jon Bruce	(Psychology)
Shannon Cowan	(History)	Katherine Mills	(Social Work)
Emmet Todd	(Radiography)	Mitchell Cook	(ECS)
Jeffrey Obieze	(All Sciences)	Nathan Kempster	(Youth Studies)
Martika McNamara	(Nutrition & H Health)	Sian Mortimer	(CYPP)
Pride Mukungurutse	(Radiography)	Amanda Goldsmith	(CCLD)

Executive

Jonathan Wright (President)
Sam Bennett (Vice President)
Ben Buck (SOBLAE)
Zoe Porter Watson (SOAAH)

In Attendance

Lee Pugh (UCS Union General Manager)
Matt King (Democracy & Representation Co-ordinator)
Polly Bridgman (Director of External Relations)
Jennie Hutchinson (Head of Marketing and Communications)

Apologies

Christina Wise (SOSTAH)
Sophie Millard (SOASS)
Shelley Symonds (Early Learning)
Siobhan Clapson (ECS)
Jennifer Wise (Animal Science and Welfare)
Rachel Selmes (Health & Wellbeing)
Hazel Warden (Psychology)
Carly Whiting (Interior Design)
Athina Britton (Wildlife Management and Conservation)
Dean Knights (Criminology)
Selina Leeks (CCLD)
Alexander Osborne (Fine Art)

Section A: Reporting Back

1) Welcome and Announcements

AC asked course reps to fill out the contact form and also added that Sian Mortimer was attending Union Council via Webinar.

2) Minutes from the Previous Meeting

The minutes were checked and no alterations called for.

3) Matters Arising

- a) JW asked students to sign up for Dr Emma Bond's research forums on the student learning experience.
- b) JW reminded course reps that those who attend Union Council this month will be put on the Guest List for the Tony Lee event in February.

4) Update on Action Points

Laptops JW fed back, and updated on his work with regards to a policy on Laptop use.

Safeguarding Policy JW is meeting with Jen Mackness to co-ordinate a focus group.

Students as consumers UCS Union's Executive Committee is to co-ordinate a forum on this issue.

Post graduate funding JW met with the Head of Student Support and Academic Services. Student Support will include information on this on the new Intranet as part of their stronger presence online.

Bursaries vs Fee Waivers JW, SM, CW, LP and MK met with Ben Gummer MP on 16th December who agreed to lobby ministers and to write to UCS' Provost. No questions were asked about the in

5) Executive Officer Reports

JW fed back on his report and highlighted the representation difficulties for UCS Union to students in the School of Nursing and Midwifery as well as students in the Learning Network Centres. JW also highlighted that letters had been written to Ben Gummer MP regarding bursaries and voter registration in halls for public elections.

SB fed back about her report and highlighted Refresher's Week, urging students to attend Refresher's fayre in particular. SB mentioned the UCS Union road show and explained its purpose. SB also spoke about her work setting a volunteers scheme.

6) Course Rep Reports

No Course Rep had anything that they wished to feedback to Union Council.

7) Elections Update

MK fed back that elections preparations were well underway and that students would see the details about the elections by the end of the month. All Executive Committee positions are being elected at once this year. MK added that work is being done on the Elections and Appointments Committee, which is to be a committee of Union Council. Elections for this will be taking place in February's Union Council meeting.

Section B: Action

8) Group discussions on the Student Charter

Union Council split into three groups to discuss the three sections of the Student Charter: UCS' responsibilities; Students' responsibilities; UCS Union's responsibilities.

a) UCS' Responsibilities

Assessed work returned to students (NK)

A What

Student Charter currently states that students will receive feedback on their assessed work in a 'timely manner'.

A Why

The word 'timely' is too ambiguous.

An Action

To call for the Student charter to clarify the term "timely" in regard to receiving results and feedback and state a set time period for which this could be expected by and therefore by which UCS can be held to account by.

Motion passed

Lecture Alternatives (NK)

A What

Lecture alternatives are not being provided

A Why

The definition of what constitutes as an alternative to a lecture should be better defined

An Action

UCS Union's Executive Committee is to draw up a motion on the definition of what students want as alternatives to lectures when they are cancelled.

Motion Passed

Referencing Procedure (NK)

A What

There is no standardised referencing procedure

An Action

To have a standard method of referencing for each course (with only necessary exceptions)

Motion Passed

b) Students' Responsibilities

Attendance (SC)

A What

Student attendance at timetabled sessions is an issue

An Action

The language about attendance at timetabled sessions should be stronger

Motion fell

Specific learning needs (SC)

A What

Students might feel pressured and uncomfortable about reporting any specific learning needs.

An Action

To change the wording so that students have an 'optional undertaking' to declare any specific learning needs

Motion passed

c) UCS Union's responsibilities

Transport for Sports Clubs (ZPW)

A What

The Union should provide sports clubs with transport provision for training

An Action

To refer this matter to a sports forum

Motion Passed

Definition of Welfare and Academic problems (ZPW)

A What

Students don't know what qualifies as a welfare or an academic problem.

A Why

Students could be potentially missing out on support from the Union

An Action

To better define what qualifies as 'welfare' and 'academic' issues.

Motion Passed

ZPW presented the following action points for UCS Union to undertake:

- To get outside organisations in to promote clubs/societies to help get student clubs/societies set up.
- Encourage car sharing and better public transport

- Union needs to promote its opportunities and services, especially to long distant learners better.
- Union to have freshers' talks at the beginning of freshers' week.
- Union needs to promote better that all students are members of the union and that the union is there to serve them.
- Union needs to promote its students job opportunities in a wider range of sources

Union Council decided: To refer the matters above to UCS Union Executive Committee.

Section C: Discussion

9) Guest Speakers

Jennie Hutchinson and Polly Bridgman introduced the changes to Wolsey.

- The VLE side of Wolsey is staying the same.
- A new intranet is being set up, to be launched in the week of 20th February.
- The intranet will be tailored to the different locations of UCS, and tailored to suit students.
- It will be the homepage when students use the internet on UCS Workstations
- The homepage of the intranet is to be an online one-stop-shop.
- Course reps are to use the test URL and to feedback any recommendations of any changes.
- PB highlighted that there will be the availability for students to continually give feedback on the new intranet so that it could continually be updated to students' needs.
- After the new intranet is launched students should only have to sign in once to a UCS source (e.g. Wolsey), on UCS networked computers. The sign in difficulties should be reduced for home users.
- MV suggested that a sample larger than Union Council should be used for the testing period.
- NK suggested that course reps collate round 1 PC with members of their course and send feedback in bulk.
- PB is to look into whether it is viable to have a larger sample size than just Union Council.

A point about UCS' social media being disjointed was raised, and discussion was had about UCS uses its Facebook groups. Information should be identical on Facebook and Wolsey.

10) Any other business

a) Accreditation and Passport Submission in March

JW announced that all Union Council members that they must submit their passport and any other documents as evidence for the accreditation.

b) UCSU Awards Ceremony in April

JW announced that the UCS Union Awards night will be on the evening of the final Union Council meeting of the Academic Year.

11) Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 22nd February at 13:00 in W115