



Date: 28/01/2020
Time: 18:00 – 20:00
Venue: 110, Roberts Building

**Education Zone
Minutes**

Chair: Ashley Slanina-Davies, Education Officer

Members:	P	AP	AB
Adrita Kabir, Population Health Sciences Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep	✓		
Ahina Ip, Brain Sciences Undergraduate Faculty Rep (Job share)			✓
Alexia Koch, Built Environment Undergraduate Faculty Rep		✓	
Ashley Slanina-Davies, Education Officer, Chair	✓		
Baneen Almoud, Population Health Sciences Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep	✓		
Brittany Eldridge, Arts & Humanities Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep (Job share)			✓
Dory Ghanem, Medical Sciences Undergraduate Faculty Rep	✓		
Emer O'Driscoll-Paton, Arts & Humanities Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep	✓		
Faisal Ali, Institute of Education Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep			✓
Fei (Sophie) Yuan, Built Environment Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep			✓
Frank Gatheru, Engineering Sciences Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep		✓	
Georgia Constantinou, Medical Sciences Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep			✓
Graham van Goffrier, Mathematical & Physical Sciences Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep			✓
Habiba Diab, Brain Sciences Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep			✓
Haiying Liang, Institute of Education Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep			✓
Honghao Zhang, Built Environment Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep	✓		
Izabella Wodzka, Arts & Humanities Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep (Job share)			✓
Jameela Nagri, Population Health Sciences Undergraduate Faculty Rep	✓		
Jiaqi (Kitty) Guo, Institute of Education Undergraduate Faculty Rep	✓		
Jim Onyemenam, Postgraduate Students' Officer	✓		
Jin Li, Social and Historical Sciences Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep			✓
Julian Laufs, Engineering Sciences Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep	✓		
Katherine Forster, Arts & Humanities Undergraduate Rep	✓		
Khush Thakur, Mathematical & Physical Sciences Undergraduate Faculty Rep			✓
Lina Algurashi, Laws Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep	✓		
Lorenzo Faggiano, Social & Historical Sciences Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep (Job share)	✓		
Maria Silva Abreu Lopes Feio, Brain Sciences Undergraduate Faculty Rep (Job share)			✓
Max Tscheltzoff, Trans Officer			
Nikita Joji, Medical Sciences Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep			✓
Nilisha Vashist, Women's Officer			
Philippa Harding, Brain Sciences Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep	✓		
Samuel Barnes, Social & Historical Sciences Undergraduate Faculty Rep		✓	
Sandra Ogundele, Black & Minority Ethnic Students' Officer	✓		
Sepehr Sharafi, Social & Historical Sciences Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep (Job share)	✓		
Shail Bhatt, Life Sciences Undergraduate Faculty Rep			✓
Sonam Gordhan, Laws Postgraduate Research Rep (Job share)			✓
Tom Höbold, Mathematical & Physical Sciences Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep	✓		
Trevor Clark, Laws Postgraduate Research Rep (Job share)			✓

Umang Pandey, Laws Undergraduate Faculty Rep			✓
Valentina Spiteri, Life Sciences Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep			✓
Xuyi Wang, LBGQ+ Officer			
Zohar Mendzelenski-Steinberg, Disabled Students' Officer			
Zvezdin Besarabov, Engineering Sciences Undergraduate Faculty Rep	✓		

In Attendance:
Aimee Connolly, Research and Evaluation Assistant, minutes
Alexandre Marion, NUS Conference Delegate
Danielle Swanson, Advice and Advocacy Manager
Simon To, Leadership, Development and Change Manager

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcome everyone.

2. Minutes and Action Points

The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously approved.

The Chair updated members on action points from the previous meeting:

- Delegates were elected for NUS Conference.
- A review started today, which will be related to the Extenuating Circumstances policy and changes that could be made to this.
- The costing of a medical certificate from Ridgmount Practice has been carried to EZ1904.
- The library card issue was raised with library staff, who had reservations about the security aspect of this in central London. There was also a concern about encouraging a culture of students forgetting their cards. The Postgraduate Students' Officer said they would continue to work on this issue.

3. Leadership Race

The Chair notified members that nominations for the Leadership Race are open until March 4th and encouraged people to reach out to the current officers if they want to speak to them. Information can be found at: <https://studentsunionucl.org/leadership-race>

4. NUS Conference – Elections and Motions

The chair reminded members that NUS Conference is upcoming and that delegates have now been elected. They informed the Zone that they may stand for national officer and more information can be found about this online. The BME Students' Officer confirmed that Students' Union UCL is allowed to submit one policy proposal to NUS Conference and that delegates also vote for eight priority areas that they believe are important.

5. Student Experience Project

The Chair discussed a new ongoing project that is focusing on understanding the taught student experience. Focus groups will be run with different areas of the student population,

looking at what institutional wide projects can be set up to support the student experience. The Chair asked any members interested to contact them.

Action: Members to contact the Education Officer if they would like to be involved in a focus group about the taught student experience.

6. Policy Proposal: Postgraduate Application Fee

The Arts & Humanities Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep introduced the proposal, which had been deferred from the last Education Zone meeting. They mentioned that the Postgraduate Students' Officer had been in contact with UCL about some of the questions members had and UCL confirmed that this fee was in place to deter applications that weren't serious. The Arts & Humanities Postgraduate Taught Faculty Rep said that they understood the desire for a middle ground, but that application fee systems wouldn't work the same for PGT students in how they work for UG students. Student Finance England is not in place for PGT students in the same way that it is for UG students and there would be an unnecessary administrative burden put on administrative staff and students alike. They concluded that the proposal isn't put forward to detail a fully costed plan, but that its aim is to hold a strong student stance on the issue and on removing barriers to education.

The Chair called for a vote and members voted on the policy.

Vote	Number
For	14
Against	0
Abstain	2

Decision: The policy was carried.

7. Policy Proposal: SSCC Remote Participation

The Chair noted that the Union cannot make it compulsory for SSCC administrative staff to ensure every meeting is in a room that allows for remote participation, but that it can give guidance and strongly encourage this. The Arts & Humanities Undergraduate Rep agreed that it would be nice to have this option, however many rooms where these meetings are held are not set up to allow for remote participation and so this could cause some difficulty. The Engineering Sciences Postgraduate Research Faculty Rep said that they felt it was distracting to have members join via Skype in their meetings as delays often occurred and recommended that if a student cannot attend, they could send someone in their place.

The BME Students' Officer questioned if there is guidance for Academic Reps on what to do if they cannot attend a meeting. The Leadership, Development and Change Manager confirmed that there is no formal guidance, however students should speak to their department if they cannot make a meeting.

The Institute of Education Undergraduate Faculty Rep stated that it is helpful to dial in

remotely for the student, even if they are just listening, or they can participate by typing.

It was suggested by members that the policy should be amended to state that the Union should give guidance and guidelines about remote participation. The Chair put this amendment to the members and this passed.

The Chair called for a vote on the amended policy.

Vote	Number
For	16
Against	0
Abstain	0

Decision: The amended policy was carried.

8. Matters for Discussion

The members split up into smaller groups to discuss each matter in depth. The attendance monitoring discussion was led by the Postgraduate Students' Officer, regulatory reform was led by the Education Officer, international fees was led by the Advice and Advocacy Manager and the introduction of a PGTA Rep was led by the Leadership Development and Change Manager.

9. Attendance Monitoring

The members discussed the arguments for and against attendance monitoring. Members agreed that the advantages are that staff can check up on students' health and wellbeing through monitoring their attendance and that students are held accountable. Arguments against attendance monitoring were that students should be treated as adults and should be able to make their own decisions. It was noted that attendance checking is required for the Home Office regulations for Tier 4 students. Students discussed the balance between the duty of care of the university and the degree of autonomy students need. Attendance does not necessarily mean engagement and these variables depend on the type of course being studied.

The inconsistencies between faculties was also noted. Questions over thresholds for automatic notifications, whether watching a Lecturecast recording should count as attendance, and how much power students have over declaring/self-certifying their attendance was also talked about.

10. Regulatory Reform

Members addressed a number of areas where they believed could be reformed, including attendance monitoring, Lecturecast, module selection and expenses policies. Regarding attendance monitoring, members discussed the 70% attendance rule. Regarding Lecturecast, members discussed the possibility of an opt-out service, rather than an opt-in one. They addressed the issue of confidentiality regarding using Lecturecast in some classes also.

Regarding module selection, members discussed the need for more guidance on module selection, both through their Personal Tutor and online. Some departments run module fairs and create videos about modules, which support students in their decisions. Regarding expenses policy, a discussion occurred about the payment period being too long for students and the other methods which could be used in place of the current system.

11. International Fees

Members discussed a range of issues related to international student fees including Brexit, scholarships and funding. Students felt that more transparency was needed regarding who determines tuition fee amounts and why. The idea of loan provisions and bursaries for international students was suggested, as well as the idea of lowering fees. Students agreed that we want to encourage opportunities for those from low income backgrounds and this is an important area for reducing inequality. Recommendations were also made about reducing the cost of other necessities, such as accommodation.

12. PGTA Rep

Members felt that the duties of such a Rep are covered by the PGR Faculty Reps currently and there could be duplication of work. There was a recommendation to make this aspect of the role clearer in the role descriptions of PGR Reps and to provide PGR Reps with training on PGTA issues. Members felt that the role could be possibly needed if in the future none of the PGR Reps were a PGTA.

Discussions also focused on PGTAs in general, namely issues regarding pay and the benefits that PGTAs provide. PGTAs may help to diversify the staff in a department and they have a strong investment in the topic if they are doing their research on it.

13. Disabled Students' Network Report

The Chair introduced the report, mentioning that it is based on testimonials from disabled students about their experience in UCL. They have produced a number of recommendations to improve the student experience of disabled students across campus. Several members of the zone had read the report.

Action: Members to read the Disabled Students' Network Report.

14. Briefing on Students' View of the Augar Review

The Leadership, Development and Change Manager stated that the Augar Review took place under Theresa May's government, however the current government has yet to respond to it. The review is related to education for those aged 16+ and this briefing looks at the views of students across the UK in response to the review.

15. Outcomes from Education Committee

The Chair notified members of the Learning Opportunities Fund, which is in place for students who were affected by the strike action in the first semester. Students can claim up

to £250 for the fund for books, travel, online courses, journals and other resources that could be used to replace the learning opportunities lost from the strike action and the deadline is February 9th. Several members mentioned that they had not received information from their faculty about the fund and the Chair reinforced that Reps should mention to their department or faculty to circulate information to students. The Union have also sent out this information via newsletter to students.

Other issues raised at Education Committee were the student experience transformation project, research misconduct and the possibility of changing exam durations, so that students only leave on the hour – no decision has been made on this yet.

16. Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee

There was a conversation about the prospectus, which will now be online and contain one page summaries of each course, with links to other related information. There was also a discussion about the creation of a Masters in Arts and Sciences, alongside the current BASc programme.

17. Input to Committees

A student queried if the previous discussion item about the library card could be trialled, so that the library can assess if it is a success or what issues would arise.

Another member asked if either of the policies passed at the Zone meeting today will be raised at any of these upcoming committees. The Chair confirmed that these policies do not need to be brought to these meetings.

18. Questions to Officers

There were no questions for the Postgraduate Students’ Officer or the Education Officer.

19. Any Other Business

A member queried what information NUS delegates will receive before going. The Leadership, Development and Change Manager confirmed there will be a briefing held for all delegates.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	Ashley Slanina-Davies, Education Officer
Signature:	
Date:	