**MINUTES:**

**Union Council Meeting – 27/04/2022**

**Attendees**
Gaebriel Min
Sol Gjøines
Julia Pentz
Bianca Radoslav
Fee Hobbs

Amanda Francis

**Apologies**
None

**No Apologies**

Emily Screen

1. **Kara** ran through Action updates from meeting on 15th March:
* *Action: Kara to organise a meeting with Andy Squire, Presidents and Maria Radakin to discuss how the SU will show support for striking lecturers.*

Update: Meeting was had and outcomes were to:

* Put out a statement on SU solidarity with UCU
* Weekly Digest intro
* Let the University know the SU will be supporting the strikes
* Let students know what they can do to further support those striking e.g. picket line
* *Action: Gaeb to send out a letter template to Union Council members on how to contact lecturers.*

 Update: Gaeb emailed UC on 15th March

1. Update on UCU’s strike action from UCA’s UCU Representatives - Smin Smith and James Trafford, a PhD researcher in the Epsom Business School and a Reader in Philosophy, respectively.

Smin and James made their introductions and explained who UCU primarily represents; academic and teaching staff, in particular graduate teaching assistants (GTA), PhD students and lecturers.

UCU’s campaign is built on the Four Fights; Pay (improving hourly rates), Workload (35 hour working week, unpaid hours), Equality (closing gender and ethnic pay gaps) and Casualisation (ending zero-hour contracts, poor job security and short term contracts).

At UCA specifically, UCU reported that the disestablished Course Leader role in 2019 led to work being disseminated to Programme Directors and Year Leaders and increased workloads. In addition with the Curriculum Transformation a large reduction in face to face contact with students was being seen, i.e. less tutorials, cross-taught modules notably in the Business School where up to 800 students could be cross-taught resulting in increased marking.

The casualisation of contracts is cited as another problem with 30% of teaching at UCA delivered by staff on “precarious contracts”. This can lead to problems with students contacting staff outside of working hours and it not being on staff’s paid time. Associate lecturers and GTA’s have same working conditions as someone on a Zero Hours contract.

GTAs are being reportedly used in place of lecturers and asked to mark with no prior training.

As of 21st March, industrial action will resume.

**Amanda** asked how students can help show solidarity. Smin responded:

* Message the Vice Chancellor
* Message the Students’ Union
* NUS Letter which students can sign
* Stand on the picket line with those striking
1. In light of the UCU industrial action. **Amanda** proposed a motion to decide whether the Students’ Union should support the strike action. **Sol** seconded the motion.

The paper was present, questions were asked and a vote took place on whether the SU should support the industrial action. It was a unanimous **Yes**, 6 votes to 0.

This means that the Students’ Union will actively show support for the industrial action. **Fee** suggested putting out a statement from the SU.

***Action: Kara to organise a meeting with Andy Squire, Presidents and Maria Radakin to discuss how the SU will show support for striking lecturers.***

***Action: Gaeb to send out a letter template to Union Council members on how to contact lecturers.***

**AOB**

To be noted that Tripti and Albert have now finished their time on Union Council and on behalf of the SU, we would like to thank them for their ideas, passion and work over the past 9 months.

**The next meeting will be on 26/04/2022 at 3:30pm.**