

MINUTES:

Union Council Meeting – 01/02/2024

Attendees

Cassie de St. Croix (Chair)
Rajon Voumick
Ioana Miron
Maddy Truin
Erin Hodson Kilroy
Mariana Gonçalves Silva
Mahyar Moshiri

Apologies not received

Kongphat Phaiboonnukulkij

In attendance

Kara Nutley
Yinka Ikubuwaje

1. CdSC welcomed new Epsom Campus Officers, Mariana and Mahyar. Also gave thanks and a goodbye to Yinka, Hetvi and Bhumi as they have now finished their course.

2. Approval of Minutes from last meeting (15th November)

CdSC asked members to approve the minutes from the last meeting.

EHK had one amendment under Point 8, amended by KN.

Members voted on whether to approve, not approve or abstain from approving the previous minutes:

Approve - 5

Not approve - 0

Abstain - 2

15th November minutes approved.

3. Actions from previous meeting:

Action	Status	Responsible?
Consider what representation we should have and how we can bring communities together. Look at researching other SU's.	Pending	ALL
Arrange distribution of Rochester society funds.	Done	KN

Review Transgender & Non Binary Student policy with Union Development Manager and bring back to Union Council.	Pending (in the diary)	KN, CdSC
Sustainability Policy - read and come back with edits.	Pending	ALL
Support sabbatical officers in setting up monthly meetings with the Campus Officers.	Incomplete	KN
Remove Appendix A - Complaints & Disciplinary section from the Byelaws	Done	KN
Inform the Epsom Campus Officer Co-optees and train them before the next Union Council meeting.	Done	KN
Put EHK and CdSC in touch with Scott Keiller, UCA Sustainability, to discuss recycling bins, including soft plastic bin.	Done	KN
How can we increase exposure of Union Council? Look into ways to do this.	Pending	CdSC
Include a Maidstone officer with the new officer proposal	Done	CdSC

Pending / Incomplete Actions:

- Consider what representation we should have and how we can bring communities together. Look at researching other SU's.
 - CdSC suggested student leaders attending Union Council to improve representation. YI reiterated the importance of testimonials through reels, stories; sharing their experiences and wins.
 - ***ACTION: KN suggested this was a separate conversation that UC would be best placed to discuss after the strategic research has been conducted. Remove from Actions.***
- Sustainability Policy - read and come back with edits.
 - It was agreed that with the current SU resources, enacting all areas of a Sustainability Policy may not be possible. CdSC suggested waiting for the strategic research to finish and see if sustainability was a priority for students.
 - ***ACTION: KN remove Sustainability Policy from Actions.***
- How can we increase exposure of Union Council? Look into ways to do this.
 - Agreed that it's best to wait for research and then look at this as a separate matter.

4. Sabbatical Officer Reports

Report by: Rajon Voumick

University or Union Committees attended since last Union Council meeting:

- TAs(BSCI,Epsom) Supporting Project-20/11/2023
- Academic Regulation & Policies Committee -11/12/2023
- UCASU Board of Trustees-24/01/2024
- Annual Staff briefing Meeting with UCA Staff-24/01/24
- I have done Surrey C-card sexual Health training -28/01/24

Update on projects since last Union Council meeting:

Canteen Survey Campaign: We have successfully finished our canteen survey. We prepared and discussed the survey report with the Assistant Director of Estates and Epsom Campus Manager for Further Change and Development. Focusing on this report they might be able to change student experience at the canteen.

Annual leave taken since last Union Council meeting: N/A

Members voted on RV Sabb Report from 1st February 2024.

Approved: 6

Not approve: 0

Abstain: 0

RV 01/02/24 Sabb Report approved

Report by: Cassie de St. Croix

University or Union Committees attended since last Union Council meeting:

- Fees and Charges Working Group x2
- Student Participation, Achievement and Retention Committee (SPARC) x2
- UCASU Projects, Initiatives and Campaigns Committee (PICC) x4
- UCASU Turnaround Board x4
- Board of Governors
- Staff Pride Network
- Campus Accessibility Working Group x2
- UCASU Board of Trustees
- Campus Strategy Group

Update on projects since last Union Council meeting:

- Course Reps
 - attending bi-weekly meetings with Canterbury Fine Art course reps and Programme Director "Let's Have a Kiki"

- meeting with DCE, UDM and CD (Change Director) about how to progress the Campaign
- plans to do an in person course rep catch up
- building surveys for course reps and non-rep students
- preparing to do two working groups with reps and non-reps
- looking to get anonymised data from the university about achievement, retention and graduate outcomes of course reps
- Trans Awareness Week Forum
 - held an in person and online session to discuss UCASU's Transitioning Guide and gather feedback from students
 - very low uptake, this will need a more targeted approach with marketing
 - work on this project has slowed down dramatically after the departure of our previous A&W coordinator and M&C manager

Annual leave taken since last Union Council meeting: 0 days

Members voted on CdSC Sabb Report from 1st February 2024

Approved: 6

Not approve: 0

Abstain: 0

CdSC 01/02/24 Sabb Report approved

5. Expired Policies (to note)

CdSC noted the following Students' Union policies expired on 27th January, 2024 and have been removed from the UCASU website:

- Boycott Prevent
- Exec. Committee Awareness
- Improving the Quality of Food & Value at UCA
- No Platform

All expired policies are kept as saved documents.

6. Union Awards and Summer Ball / End of Year Party proposals.

CdSC and KN asked Union Council to consider the options that had been provisionally agreed at PICC (Projects, Initiatives and Campaigns Committee). See Appendix 1.

IM cited the need to promote the Awards X Ball in advance.

EHK said that Canterbury students were really disappointed to not be graduating from Canterbury Cathedral and had spoken about an end of year party so this proposal has come at a good time. KN suggested that Canterbury students may want to provide input for the Canterbury event.

- ***ACTION: KN to let Hannah know that Canterbury students may want to help with idea generation for the Canterbury event. CdSC to liaise with Hannah on finding students.***

MGS enjoyed last year's Awards X Ball event and noted that Epsom students are difficult to engage but she offered to get student input on another joint event. IM students got really tired towards the end of the Awards X Ball. Discussion ensued around having an earlier coach for those travelling.

- **ACTION: KN to send Canterbury proposal to EHK.**
- **ACTION: ALL members of Union Council to get feedback from students on their campus about the joint Awards X Ball and send to the Teams group.**

7. Any other business

KN mentioned the importance of Elections 2024!

RV brought up Union Council hoodies, can we do this? YI agreed and said the visibility would be great. MT suggested the Varsity jackets but at a subsidised rate, and the Union Council lanyards. CdSC agreed on lanyards and suggested a contribution for the Varsity jackets to make them affordable.

- **ACTION: KN to look at budget to support Varsity jackets.**
- **ACTION: CdSC to talk to Erin (Graphic Designer) about cost and design of a lanyard.**

EHK said that students would like a pool table in Canterbury.

- **ACTION: KN to speak to Kossway about the cost of a pool table rental.**

The next meeting is Wednesday 28th February, 1pm, on Teams.

Appendix 1 - Union Awards and Summer Ball proposals

Each year the Students' Union holds Union Awards which are open to all students on all campuses. The Awards celebrate student achievement across clubs, societies, Course Reps and events, as well as accolades for university staff. The event comprises of an Awards ceremony followed by a party. Prior to 2020, the Awards were held in Farnham and students from the other three campuses made their way across via car or public transport, at their own expense. In 2022, the Union funded a coach from Canterbury, Rochester and Epsom so students could attend at a more affordable rate and stay beyond the last train time. The uptake was around 30 students.

The Summer Ball in Farnham was previously only advertised to Farnham students (although students from other campuses were always welcome) and was typically the final event of the Glasshouse calendar. There had been conversations for a few years about combining Awards and the Ball into one major event in an attempt to share resources and staff time; both events required staff to give up their weekends due to the set-up required. There has

also been feedback from Epsom and Canterbury students that they would like to attend the Ball, so in 2023, the decision was made to combine both events and charge a higher ticket price so that students from all campuses could experience both Awards and the Summer Ball in the same evening. Funding was secured from UCA to erect a marquee on the Quad and to significantly reduce the ticket price from a £35-£40 ticket to £20-£25. The event itself was deemed a success going on student feedback and from staff who ran and supported the event, it also brought in close to £10k ticket income and £5k on the bar, making it a profitable event. However, due to separate reasons, the planning for the event was left to a single person which put significant strain on them and the team around who were supporting delivery of the event, particularly from a marketing and comms perspective. There was also conflicting feedback from Canterbury students on their experience, with some citing they thought it was brilliant and had a great time, while others reported that they felt forgotten about as they had to sit at the back of the marquee and weren't reserved seats.

As with all projects and initiatives, Union staff have to propose new ideas or ones that require significant Union resources (finances and staffing). This is done through a committee called PICC (Projects, Initiatives, Campaigns Committee). At a recent PICC, the combined Awards X Ball event was discussed and some on the committee felt that not enough was being done to expand events away from Farnham; that it wasn't right to make such an event Farnham-centric at the expense of Canterbury and Epsom students having to travel such a long way. Having separate events on each campus was discussed but due to staff and financial resources, it was felt that this wouldn't be possible right now, however it was proposed that Canterbury could have a standalone event and Epsom students could attend the Ball in Farnham. The outcome was for a three-event proposal:

- 1 x Union Awards for all campuses in Farnham (Saturday 11th May)
- 1 x Canterbury Summer Ball (earlier in May)
- 1 x Summer Ball for Epsom and Farnham in Farnham (Saturday 18th May)

These proposals are being discussed at PICC on Thursday 1st February, 10am. What we need from Union Council is your thoughts on the three different events from a student perspective, consider the following:

- Would students prefer a combined Union Awards and Summer Ball or two separate events to attend? Would students want to attend two big events in close proximity, particularly Epsom students travelling on subsequent weekends to Farnham?
- How would Canterbury students feel about having their own event but not having the option of Summer Ball (Glasshouse, Farnham) attendance but Epsom students do?
- Would the draw of Union Awards and an after-party be enough for Canterbury students to attend?

- Is a standalone event in Canterbury something that the students would pay for and attend?
- The Glasshouse events calendar for May would be reduced because of set-up for 2 major events and budget being shared with the Canterbury event and supporting coach travel for Epsom students.

You can also think about the resources on Union staff and finances but it's the student impact that we want your thoughts on.