

MINUTES:

Union Council Meeting – 15/11/2023

Attendees

Cassie de St. Croix (Chair)
Rajon Voumick
Hetvi Desai
Ioana Miron
Kongphat Phaiboonnukulkij
Maddy Truin
Yinka Ikubuwaje
Erin Hodson Kilroy

Apologies not received

Bhumi Thakor

In attendance

Kara Nutley
Andy Morwood

CdSC welcomed everyone and confirmed quoracy.

1. Approval of Minutes from last meeting (11th October)

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

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

Approve - 5

Not approve - 0

Abstain - 0

11th October minutes approved.

2. Actions from previous meeting:

Action	Status	Responsible?
Publish the minutes as read, but unapproved.	Done	KN
Consider how Rochester Societies money could be spent.	Done	ALL
Consider what representation we should have and how we can bring communities together. Look at researching other SU's.	Pending	ALL
Publish final two sets of minutes from 2022/23 on UCASU website.	Done	KN

Arrange distribution of Rochester society funds.	Pending	KN
Remove Alfiya and Atikur from any Union Council comms or wording, both internal and external.	Done	KN
Implement an Epsom Campus Officer co-opt for two officers before next meeting.	Done	KN
Inform Applicant B that they have been co-opted and invite to next Union Council meeting.	Done	KN
Email Farnham and Epsom applicants to thank them for their submissions and that they will be considered after Christmas.	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
Sustainability Policy - carry over to next meeting.	Done	KN
Add AM's presentation for November meeting.	Done	KN

Pending Actions:

- **Consider how Rochester Societies money could be spent.**
 - ***ACTION: KN to work with Vanessa Silva, Activities Manager to arrange the distribution of funds to relevant societies in Canterbury, Epsom and Farnham.***

3. Sabbatical Officer Reports

Report by: Rajon Voumick, SU President

Committees attended since last Union Council meeting:

Sustainability strategy Group-30 Oct 2023

Board of Trustees Meeting -01 Nov.

Academic Board Meeting-02 Nov.

Update on projects since last Union Council meeting:

1. I have been working on introducing a language club for non-native speakers to support international students at our Epsom campus. I initially thought the admission fee would be 30 pounds per student and the rest of the money we will continue with the help of the Student Union. Before starting the project I wanted to get feedback from the students, by directly asking the students I got to know that they were not willing to do the course by paying the admission fees. I have found three people who are willing to do the courses through payment and the rest have negative reactions. They want the course free, but it is not possible for us to make this course free as we need to hire a native speaker. To make my project a reality I want to address the project in a slightly different way. I have one student who is willing to take up the project under Clubs and Societies. I have decided to work with her full-time for the smooth running of the project she will soon contact our activity manager for registration
2. **Canteen Survey Campaign:** We have successfully launched our canteen survey. It will continue till 1 Dec. I have visited our Canterbury and Farnham campuses for my canteen survey campaign.

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

Members voted on RV Sabb Report from 15th November 2023

Approved: 6

Not approve: 0

Abstain: 0

RV 15/11/23 Sabb Report approved

Report by: Cassie de St. Croix, SU President

Committees attended since last Union Council meeting:

Canterbury Campus Strategy Group

Board of Governors

Cost of Living Working Group

UCASU Turnaround Board meetings

Update on projects since last Union Council meeting:

- Course Reps and improving the Feedback loop, working with Union Development Manager on this.
- Trans Guide - setting up forums for Trans Awareness week, getting student-led feedback to support with the guide.
- Disability History Month - setting up student-led forums both in person and online to aid UCA's accessibility audit to understand physical or other barriers to learning.

Annual leave taken since last Union Council meeting: 6 days

Members voted on CdSC Sabb Report from 15th November 2023

Approved: 6

Not approve: 0

Abstain: 0

CdSC 15/11/23 Sabb Report approved

4. Andy Morwood - Change Director Presentation

AM gave an update on the Turnaround Board, his role and the process for turnaround following UCASU's Organisational Health Assessment (OHA). He spoke about the key areas of concern and what he would be focusing on for the next 9-10 months.

RV asked about Campus Officer engagement and how can they meet? KN mentioned that this was discussed at the start of the sabb year as something that sabbs should be organising on a regular basis. RV asked for AM/KN to meet with Campus Officer's. AM said we could help with this.

- ***ACTION: KN to help sabbatical officers set-up monthly meetings with the Campus Officers.***

5. UCU Update

KN gave a verbal update to inform Union Council that no further industrial action will be taking place after UCU missed the required 50% threshold for turnout of voting members. There was a 43% turnout with 68% of those members voting to continue the strikes over pay and working conditions.

6. Byelaw Change: Removal of Appendix A - Complaints & Disciplinary section from Byelaws

CdSC introduced the proposal, seconded by RV, and KN explained why this section should be a standalone policy / guidance document within UCASU. Reasons included:

- Appendix A - Complaints & Disciplinary is currently part of the Union's Byelaws. This means any changes that need to be made to it must go through Union Council for approval.
- The Byelaws would typically be amended once a year, with changes first going to Union Council and then Turnaround Board / Board of Trustees for final approval. The whole document would need to be revised (something which will be done in the coming months).
- UCASU's Complaints & Disciplinary procedures don't support the initial stages of complaint handling and request the support of NUS or other SU staff members; which may make convening a Complaints or Disciplinary panel unnecessarily difficult.
- A standalone item provides flexibility to make amendments and allows staff members to propose needed changes.

Members to vote if they are in favour of remove Appendix A - Complaints & Disciplinary section from UCASU Byelaws:

Approve - 7, No - 0, Abstain - 0

Appendix A voted to be removed from the UCASU Byelaws.

- ***ACTION: KN to remove Appendix A - Complaints & Disciplinary section from the Byelaws***

7. Epsom Campus Officer Co-opt x 2

CdSC presented the paper with the Epsom Campus Officer candidates and asked officers to put their preferred choices in the Teams chat. Each officer had a choice of two.

Candidates 'D' and 'E' were chosen.

- ***ACTION: KN to inform the Epsom Campus Officer Co-optees and train them before the next Union Council meeting.***

8. Sustainability Policy Draft

CdSC raised concerns around how the policy would be implemented and lacked confidence in its implementation They highlighted the club and societies action points and asked how this would be measured.

KN suggested including points as part of actions plans for staff.

EHK spoke about recycling and having more recycling bins in studios. Additionally, she suggested installing a specific soft plastic recycling bin on campus, there is one located in Waitrose but students shop in Aldi.

- ***ACTION: KN to put EHK and CdSC in touch with Scott Keiller, UCA Sustainability, to discuss recycling bins, including soft plastic bin.***

9. Any other business

MT asked about making Union Council more identifiable. RV has suggested hoodies. CdSC said hoodies wouldn't be a cost effective way to spend money and suggested lanyards.

RV had ideas on how to improve awareness of UC, including Weekly What's On, posters outside offices and hoodies. MT mentioned that Maidstone students are part of Farnham.

- ***ACTION: CdSC to look into ways to increase exposure of Union Council.***
- ***ACTION: CdSC to look into having Maidstone officers with new officer proposal***

YI raised the issue that UC don't seem like a community or team. Would like to see better communication. CdSC suggested a group chat which was welcomed.

The next meeting is Wednesday 13th December, 1.30pm, on Teams.