

## **AGENDA 21 MAY 2025**

1. 1.Introduction and welcome from Chair and approval of minutes
  - 1.1. Actions from previous meeting
  - 1.2. Approval of minutes from last meeting
  
2. President Reports;
  - 2.1. Canterbury - Verbal, not submitted
  - 2.2. Farnham - Verbal, not submitted
  
3. Campus Officer Reports
  - 3.1. Canterbury -
    - 3.1.1. Quinn Walker

## **SUMMARY**

Canterbury has been busy with end-of-year preparations. We've seen a lot of positive engagement through the Markets and Union Awards, both of which were really successful. There have also been several concerning developments that will likely be detrimental to the experience of students. These include the recent Supreme Court ruling on the definition of a woman and the green-lighting of UCA's Professional Services Review.

## **STUDENT FEEDBACK**

There is still a lot of concern in the air about the PSR. Students are decisively against the University's decision to move forward with it. There is concern about how these cuts will affect those who need to access professional services, and many students have asked if they can do anything to continue opposing the plans.

There has been student pushback against UCA's hosting of the 'Festival of Creative AI.' Some students do not feel like we are doing enough to oppose the university's promotion/utilization of AI.

Events have been very positively received. It seems like the more we can organize, the more we can increase engagement incrementally.

## **EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

**Spring Market:** A lot more engagement than Winter Market, multiple stalls earned hundreds of pounds, which is incredible to see. Students seemed less deterred by the table fee this time around, and it definitely looks like the open communication contributed to that.

**Union Awards:** Awards went really well, and we received lots of positive feedback. Great turnout from a variety of students, it was lovely to see so many different groups nominated! Moving it to individual campuses really enables us to cater it to our campus cultures, and from speaking with Charlie, it seems Farnham also had a great night.

**NUS Liberation Collective Trans Action Day:** Took place last week in Manchester. Cassie and I attended. It was really beneficial to see how other universities and unions are responding to the new guidance, and we received a ton of info on what we can do as an SU to push back. There's a lot we can be doing, but it definitely warrants further discussion given the urgency of the EHRC consultation.

## **CAMPAIGNS AND PROJECTS**

**Rework Campus Officer Role:** Campus Officers were introduced post-COVID, and as a result, not much time was given to figuring out how to utilize them. Over the summer, I'd like to work with the Union staff and SABs to revamp the role/make the requirements of the job more specific. This will (hopefully) reduce the workload on Presidents, who are already expected to do far too much, and will allow our new officer team the opportunity to make lasting change on campus.

**Canterbury Events:** Work with Hannah to establish a rough timetable for Canterbury events next year. It would still be good to reach out to students and ask for direct input on what they'd like to see. Cat and I will also be putting together the proposal for a Charity Ball to take place next May with Hannah's support.

**Student Rep Support:** Provide support to students assisting with course re-approval over the summer. These are key opportunities for students to directly shape the direction of their course, and as such, they should feel confident that they understand the systems in the same way course reps do.

**AI Stance:** Create Union policy that defines and prohibits the use of generative AI; publish a statement confirming our stance; and open discussions with the university about how they intend to use/promote/teach about AI.

**Course Reports:** Invite current course reps to complete an end-of-year course summary form. This will allow us to assess areas where courses are succeeding, but also areas that require improvement. If possible, this info could also be collected in person. Kind of like a penultimate course rep forum, but in smaller groups.

**Support for Trans Students:** Ensure the Union is doing everything it can to support transgender and non-binary students, via policy, resources, and formally protesting the Supreme Court decision. New motion attached to UC docs.

Remaining canterbury report: Verbal, not submitted

- 3.2. Epsom – Verbal, not submitted
- 3.3. Farnham – Verbal, not submitted

## **4. Motions and Ideas**

### **4.1. Support for Transgender and Non-binary students**

We note that:

1. Transgender rights have begun rapidly backpedalling over the past few years. The rise of right-wing politicians, notably within the USA and UK, has facilitated a culture war that uses Trans individuals as a

scapegoat to create a wider divide between political parties. This demonization of a marginalized community has put Transgender people at increased risk of hate crime and discrimination.

2. The Union has an existing policy which states *'transgender and non-binary students are disadvantaged and marginalised within society and the University for the Creative Arts, facing issues such as; harassment, misgendering, lack of access to adequate healthcare, lack of access to appropriate toilets, poorer employment prospects, lack of appropriate prefixes, lack of non-binary recognition, and difficulties in changing personal details on University records.'*

Within this policy, the Union resolves to commit to a number of initiatives to safeguard and improve the experience of Transgender and Non-Binary students. Many of these initiatives have not been put into place despite the policy originating in 2017. *Note: It is unclear whether this policy is still in place, as the most recent review date is 2021, however, it can still be found on the website easily.*

3. There is no LGBTQ+ category within the Knowledge Base on the SU website (<https://ucasu.com/ask/knowledgebase/>), however, the Union does provide an LGBTQ+ Education Pack (<https://ucasu.com/ask/resources-toolkits/lgbtqeducationpack/>). This document has not been updated since 2021, and as such, provides out-of-date information and/or terminology.

We believe that:

1. As a representative organization of a student body with a very high number of Trans and NB individuals, UCASU has an obligation to ensure these students are being safeguarded and supported as best as they can.
2. Given the ongoing concerns about Trans inclusion and safety, the Union should take swift action to ensure Trans and Non-Binary students have proper access to resources and clear information about any laws that concern gender identity or expression.
3. While there are large-scale actions the Union can take to support students (responding to the EHRC consultation, lobbying those who advise universities to stand against recent legislation, etc.), it is integral that we utilize and employ individual resources to help students across our campuses.

We resolve that:

1. UCASU's current Trans/Non-Binary policy should be reviewed and amended as needed. Following this, we should strive to conform to these policies and put into place the initiatives outlined within them.
2. Any outdated/inactive policies should be removed from the website to avoid misinformation.
3. The Union should, where possible, provide dedicated resources for Transgender and Non-Binary students, including but not limited to binding materials/binders and a fund for legal aid or gender-affirming care.
4. The Union should provide an up-to-date Transitioning Guide and/or document that provides information on legislation, transitioning processes, campus-area specific information, and access to appropriate resources and support systems. This information should be created with input from members of the Trans community, who should be compensated fairly for their contributions.

Resolutions cost:

Campaign budget TBD by UC.

5. Budget
  1. Proposals - none submitted
  2. Tracking - none submitted

6. AOB

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Minutes of the last meeting:

**Due to the topics discussed in this meeting, some areas have been redacted for public record.**

**In attendance:** *Charlie Skinner, Quinn Walker, Runchen Li, Shayaike Hassan, Alex Kosierkiewicz, Cassie De St Croix, Josh Singh-Hill, Maddy Truin*

*Apologies sent: Ethan Weir,*

1. **Minute From Last Meeting**
  - Unanimously Approved
2. **President Report**
  1. **Cassie's Report (Verbal)**
    - Apologises for never having a written report due to being busy
      - Potential for more feedback from CO's to see how the structure could be improved.
    - PSR: If the proposed restructure is implemented, it will have a detrimental impact on the student experience
      - 5<sup>th</sup> March: Union and staff see the structure that is being proposed. This was done in a confusing way, and the team have been working on how to respond, as well as what each role means.
      - [REDACTED]
      - Student ambassadors/staff have been able to access the structures
      - The University did not originally want to gain feedback, so UCASU took on the responsibility.
        - Share it please
          - Almost at 1000 responses
        - Talks about key areas of risks for students such as support and access
      - Cassie supports protests and action from students, though the current demonstrations are not linked directly to the Union
        - Many are about AI as this is a common theme throughout the PSR
      - We should be talking about AI

- COO, Mark Ellul has invited the SU to talk about the use of AI at the University, including students opinions and frustrations.
  - The Vice-Chancellor thinks that students do not understand AI and is undermining students' intelligence by making these remarks.
- The responses are long so collating Feedback may be a longer process
- Requested an impact assessment from the University.
- CEO has also been conversing with the Union about this
- Other Universities are experiencing similar issues, but not at the same level
- Cassie is working with Union staff about communications to students surrounding safe protest, code of conduct, protesting and support.
- The University have requested that the Union tell the University ahead of any planned action- which was shot down as it defeats the purpose of the Union.
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Unanimous approval for Cassies report.

### 3.2. Charlies Report

- Apologises for no written report, on leave for elections period
- Working alongside Cassie for PSR Review
  - Students at Farnham protested with chalk writing and lots of graffiti, which Charlie cleared up
  - [REDACTED]
  - AI-centric again
  - Students got an email from the University recommending they talk to the SU but clarified they will not get too much information from the University.
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
    - [REDACTED]
  - Students are scared at the lack of support
  - Trying to find the right timing to give feedback to ensure it is enacted
  - [REDACTED]
- With remaining time in office, Charlie wants to get as much done as possible and tie up loose ends.

One abstention from Shayaike, as he did not clarify his stance when asked by Chair

## 3. Campus Officer Reports

### 1. Farnham

#### 1. Alex

- Lots of feedback has already been mentioned
- Staff have been scaremongering students about not receiving sufficient support, or any mental health support.
- Elections were good

- Illustration course has not got lots of materials and students are buying them themselves

- This has been raised in course rep meetings with no solution

## 2. **Maddie**

- Protests are now happening in bathrooms across campus
- All students want from the University is communication
  - They want to know the knock-on effect this will have on academic staff as well as technical staff
  - Cassie does not believe that there will be academic staff redundancies following the MARS scheme last year
- Technical staff losing their jobs is adding more work to lecturing staff
- Students want a policy around AI for teaching materials as well as for assessments
- Editing and sound studios are open for students over Easter break

## 2. **Canterbury**

### 1. **Quinn**

- Canterbury has been well engaged the last few days
- Good elections turnout
- Running regular events in the lounge
  - Sip and Paint was well attended
  - Feels like a regular social scene is starting to form
- Hopefully we can action things they've said they care about so we can show that we can make a difference and gain trust
- Same feedback about PSR as officers
  - Try and get students as much information as possible when allowed to stop misinformation
    - Charlie says that the Union is still trying to figure out what we can and cannot say
  - Students have been approaching Quinn about talking to KentOnline
  - 120 students came to 'Woke Picnic' which was essentially a peaceful protest
  - Quinn loves Canterbury students, they rule and it's great that they showed up
- Elections turnout was great!
  - Next year's team should be good for Canterbury
- PSR survey has such strong AI feedback, we should use to inform the Union AI policy that Quinn has previously proposed
  - Once the policy is ready, we should put this on social media

### 2. **Josh**

- Discussions about the Lounge space with Cassie and Jackie
  - Wait to get student feedback before making changes as it feels like bad optics given the current climate

## 3. **Epsom**

### 1. **Runchen**

- Canterbury campus has lots of artwork around by students, we should do a similar thing at Epsom.

- Jade clarified this is in the works, and the Union have been working on it for the past few months
- 2. **Shayaike**
- Feedback from Fashion school:
  - Not allowed to use resources during Easter break, though their deadlines are only a few weeks afterwards
    - Cassie will follow this up with Epsom Estates

All campus officer reports were approved.

4. **Motions and Ideas**

Nothing has been submitted.

5. **Budget**

- No tracking
- No submissions

6. **AOB**

1. **Elections Stats**

- Quinn raised queries regarding the statistics, Taylor has confirmed since that the statistics are correct