

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

The eighth ordinary meeting of the Union Council

The meeting of Union Council was held remotely on Tuesday 9th June 12:00pm

**Present**

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| **Role** | **Name** |
| Union Council Chair | Lloyd James (LJ/Chair/THE CHAIR) |
| Union President | Abhijay Sood (AS) |
| Deputy President (Welfare) | Shervin Sabeghi (SS) |
| Deputy President (Education) | Ashley Brooks (AB) |
| Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) | Thomas Fernandez Debets (TFD) |
| Deputy President (Finance and Services) | Fi-Fi Henry (FH) |
| BME Officer | Deborah Adegoke (DA |
| CGCU President | Fatima Khan (FK) |
| CGCU Vice President (Education) | Poppy Oldroyd (PO) |
| Disabilities Officer | Hilliam Tung (HT) |
| Felix Editor | Henry Alman |
| GSU President | Mohit Devgan (MD) |
| GSU Vice President (Representation) | Milia Hasbani (MH) |
| GSU PGR Academic & Welfare Officer (Engineering) | Raya El Laham (REL) |
| ICSMSU President | Benjamin Russell (BR) |
| Interfaith Officer | Amna Ahmed (AAh) |
| International Officer | Amr Alwishah (AAl) |
| LGBT Officer | Freya Hepworth Lloyd (FHL) |
| PG FoE Council Rep | Igor Gawron (IG) |
| PG FoE Council Rep | Xiaoran Liu (XL) |
| RCSU President | Alex Auyang (AAu) |
| RCSU Vice President (Education) | Michaela Flegrova (MF) |
| RSMSU President | Christopher Carter (CC) |
| RSMSU Vice President (Education) | Alexandre de Saint Germain (ASG) |
| UG FoE Council Rep | Hayley Wong (HW) |
| UG FoE Council Rep | Douglas Adams (DA) |
| PG FoM Council Rep | Jaye Sahota (JS) |
| PG FoNS Council Rep | Adrian LaMoury (AM) |
| UG FoNS Council Rep | Aishwarya Chidambaram (AC) |
| UG FoNS Council Rep | Zhidong Zuo (ZZ) |
| UG FoNS Council Rep | Grace Fisher (GF) |

**Observers:**

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| Governance Officer | Victoria Agbontaen (VA) |
| Incoming DPFS | Sam Lee (SL) |

**Apologies:**

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| ICSMSU Academic Chair | Waseem Hasan (WH) |
| RCSU Welfare Officer | Peter Hull (PH) |
| Sports Sector Chair | Ross Unwin (RU) |
| UG FoM Council Rep | Bartosz Szyszka (BS) |

**Absent:**

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| Arts and Entertainment Sector Chair | Joseph O’Connell Danes (JOD) |
| CGCU Vice President (Wellbeing) | Miles Gulliford (MG) |
| Community and Faith Sector Chair | Jack Lee (JL) |
| Culture Sector Chair | Shuning Xu (SX) |
| Ethics and Environment Officer | Francesca Siracusa (FS) |
| Gender Equality Officer | Vinzenz Freigassner (VF) |
| GSU PGT Academic & Welfare Officer Engineering | Clementine Ewins (CE) |
| ICSMSU Welfare Officer | Jack Hall (JH) |
| Knowledge Sector Chair | *Vacant* |
| Mental Health Officer | Ambika Bharadwaj (AB) |
| PG FoE Council Rep | Luke Jamieson (LJ) |
| PG NF Council Rep | Rahul Jugnarain (RJ) |
| PG NF Council Rep | Eoin O’Kane (EOK) |
| Recreation Sector Chair | Christopher Turner (CT) |
| RSMU Welfare Officer | Arman Sarjou (AS) |
| Silwood Park President | Conor Nicoll (CN) |
| UG FoE Council Rep | Ioannis Ioannidis-Karatsivoulis (IIK) |
| UG FoM Council Rep | Pylin Parkes (PP) |

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| **Item** | **Actions** |
| 1. **Chair’s welcome** **and Chair’s business**    1. Chair welcomed the Council to the eighth meeting of the 2019/20 session. |  |
| 1. **Apologies:**     1. Apologies from:   Waseem Hasan (WH)  Peter Hull (PH)  Ross Unwin (RU)  Bartosz Szyszka (BS) |  |
| 1. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**    1. Chair confirmed with Council if there were any changes required to be made to the minutes.    2. No dissensions were put forward    3. Chair confirmed the minutes as accepted. |  |
| 1. **Action Tracker**    1. **Publicity Policy & Elections working group** – Chair stated this was on hold due to the exam period. As exams are now over, Chair will co-ordinate with interested Council members to create a separate group.    2. **Services and Sustainability Board** - Resolved and to be removed from action tracker.    3. **CSP Training** – HT explained, due to exams not much progress has been made but will take action before the next Council meeting. | Chair to create elections working group by end of June.  HT/TFD to provide update on CSP training at next Council meeting. |
| **Matters for Decision** |  |
| 1. **DPFS Role Review**     1. FH introduced the paper, highlighting that the DPFS role has not functioned well for many years and has been a contentious point in the Union due to external conflicts. There have been misunderstandings within the role in terms of the operational vs strategic objectives for the position and the modifications to the role will enable the DPFS to focus on higher level strategic parts of the role and less on the day-to-day.    2. FH explained that the modifications proposed for the role will allow for a better use of time for the DPFS and allow for a more effective Sabbatical Officer.    3. Chair requested for comments/questions for FH’s paper and confirmed with members if there was any uncertainty in agreement of the proposal.    4. SS requested for the Chair to share the voting numbers of each proposal in future.    5. AB questioned what the feedback was from SSB, the incoming DPFS and Leadership around modifying the role. FH stated that everyone was happy agreed with the proposed changes and confirmed there had been discussions with those members of staff who will be taking on the workload.    6. As there were no disagreements or opposition to the paper, Chair confirmed the paper was unanimously accepted without requirement for a vote. |  |
| 1. **PG Membership in CU’s**     1. AAu highlighted that currently, Post-Graduates cannot run for committee positions or vote in the elections as they are deemed as ‘social members’ only as their membership was revoked in 2012.    2. AAu stated that given the recurring them for increasing levels of PG engagement, it is sensible for PG’s to be able to allow PG’s to run for roles in the Faculty Union as there a significant benefits to be gained from taking this approach.    3. Chair requested for feedback and comments from Council members.    4. AB agreed that this is a positive move and questioned what GSU’s thoughts were during discussions.    5. MD responded by saying that although GSU agreed that this is going in the right direction, however, the conclusion was there had been no clear effect from the changes since previous years. MD added that the GSU felt that this change would similarly not have much effect.    6. MD added that there was an agreement that it does need to be addressed but on a larger scale.    7. SS questioned what work is required to happen to change the CU’s so it is a worthwhile place for the PG’s or whether PG’s will solely now just be included in correspondence.    8. SS added that the paper does not offer clear resolutions but potentially looks as if the problem is being move elsewhere and questioned what PG consultation has happened other than with current members of Council.    9. AAu explained the paper is not a one-fix cure to all PG’s issues and should not be viewed as that. AAu highlighted that as we cannot have PG’s on committee, we are unable to be clear on their needs and therefore cannot efficiently cater to them.    10. MH stated that it is important to consider how the CU’s collaborate with the GSU as there are no PG’s on the CU committees.    11. MH questioned whether any changes can be made in getting PG reps for next year, i.e. adding new roles for the Autumn elections.    12. AS agreed it is important to address these things now and not put it off for future discussions. Further stating that although this change may not be perfect, it is helpful to achieve the ends AAu has described.    13. SS advised it may be a better approach to conduct a GSU review first, learning the outcomes and then moving forward with PG’s and CU’s.    14. BR said that he was in agreeance with SS and MH, as it is sensible to firstly speak to the PG’s and learn what they want. BR disagreed with point 2 of the Union resolves and does not believe we should mandate the CU’s to go ahead with things that are not in their best interests. BR explained this would be very difficult to do and would reduce effectiveness as a whole and the faculty to do their jobs.    15. AAu responded to the feedback stating that although these are valid and reasonable concerns, this was a normal way of operation until 2012. Further adding that although the GSU is important, Faculty Unions provide a different type of integration, i.e. Science Union and Engineering Union.    16. Chair clarified that all PG’s are already members of their faculty CU’s and just have a classification of ‘social members’ meaning there are able to participate in events but not stand or vote for positions. It is therefore not about changing things but changing the parameters of the membership.    17. Chair put the paper to members of Council to vote on via menti-meter.    18. Results were 12 accept, 5 reject and 10 abstentions.    19. Paper was passed. | MD and MH to conduct GSU review with AS.  MH and AS to discuss how CU’s and GSU can collaborate on provision of PG Community. |
| 1. **Union Awards**     1. Chair highlighted that the paper describes how the process worked this year which was slightly different as it is based on the revised Union Awards Policy.    2. Chair explained the recommendations of the Union Awards Committee were outlined in the paper and require approval by Council to accept those recommendations.    3. FH stated that nominations cannot be shared as when they are submitted, they are done so anonymously.    4. Chair outlined that Council approval is a formal process and advised members should trust the recommendations put forward by the awards committee.    5. AS added that the process has been similar over the years and put forward for members to present any specific objectives to process or nominations.    6. FH agreed the process was fine, but she was disappointed in there not being a CGCU Rep on the awards panel. Chair advised that the awards were based on the text of the nominations and there was intentional disregard for basing awards of personal knowledge which would imply bias favour.    7. AAl added that he felt it was superfluous to approve a list of names without any further context and would like a report/paper from the awards committee as to the reasoning behind their decision-making. AS clarified that the process was approved by Council at the last meeting and the purpose of the paper was for Council to cross check the committees process and to have oversight.    8. Chair put the paper to members of Council to vote on via menti-meter.    9. Results were 19 accept, 3 reject and 4 abstentions.    10. Paper was passed |  |
| 1. **Sabbatical Officer Honorary Life Memberships**     1. Chair gave a brief background of the HLM, explaining that sabbatical or full-time officers are entitled to Union awards recognition as full-time employees of the Union.    2. Chair requested Council to go through each sabbatical officer where there would be a short discussion followed by a vote.    3. Results were as follows:   Abhijay Sood, Union President - Awarded  Shervin Sabeghi, DPW - Awarded  Ashley Brooks, DPE - Not Awarded  Thomas Fernandez Debets, DPCS - Awarded  Fifi Henry, DPFS - Awarded  Ben Russell, ICSMSU President - Awarded  Henry Alman, Felix Editor – Awarded  *Recording was stopped due to confidential business.* |  |
| **Matters for Report** |  |
| 1. **Policy Review Updates**    1. Chair stated written reports about the summarising of amendments to each policy were expected to come to this Council, however several sub-committee meetings are happening over the coming weeks so full updates should be provided at the next meeting.    2. Chair put forward any feedback/comments on the GIB policy amendments – none.    3. AB gave a brief update on ERB, highlighting that the major changes have already been made. However, it was felt that with the limited time for discussion and not being quorate, there was an allowance made for extra time for feedback and comments following a vote taken by email.    4. AB explained the new changes on the representation policy was the addition of the academic representation forum and the work around liberation and community officers will be moved to a separate policy.    5. SS and TFD confirmed they will provide an updated written report after the next sub-committee meetings.    6. FH gave an update on SSB, outlining that all policies except the transport policy had been reviewed. All policies have been approved by SSB and the current advertising policy is being widened to encompass more relevant aspects within the Union. | Sub-committees Chairs to provide summary paper of amendments to each policy by next Council meeting.  AS/LJ to put together one-central report for all policy updates for each sub-committee by next Council meeting. |
| 1. **Suggested additional Council Meeting**     1. AS explained there is a number of ongoing matters due to covid-19 and otherwise (changes to byelaws, constitution, modification of the DPFS Role, appointment of student trustee etc.) and in light of this it would be necessary for there to be an additional Council meeting prior to the end of the current year.    2. AS proposed tentative dates for the additional meeting for either the 30th June or 14th July.    3. MH agreed another meeting would be helpful.    4. Chair questioned whether having a 30th June meeting would provide enough time to bring required topics to be discussed. AS agreed that date would be challenging and therefore a meeting would likely to be called for mid-July. |  |
| **11. President Report**  **11.1.** AS outlined that there had been a lot of changes within the College in a relatively short space of time and required Council’s input and views on a few points including College Council, MD Induction or College guidance and announcements.  **11.2.** AS highlighted the structure of College meetings around education is now conducted daily and will raise the concern of whether departments would consider videoconferencing i.e. a Townhall.  **11.3.** AS briefly discussed furlough within the Union explaining that College were apprehensive as to whether it could be used in certain areas. However, Leadership at within the Union has taken the position to maximise the number of people on the furlough scheme so there is flexibility to bring staff back part-time if needed. AS added that there will be consequences in the Union’s ability over the next few weeks, but it is necessary as the crisis is navigated.  **11.4.** FK expressed concerns around the timelines of refunds for CSP’s and how furloughing the Union staff members would affect this. AS confirmed that refund processes and timelines should not be affected. |  |
| **12. DPE Report**  **12.1.**  AB briefly highlighted that the recommendations were approved by PRQC. AB mentioned the SCA’s is planned for the 18th June and it was good to see the variety of nominations for staff. |  |
| **13. DPW Report**  **13.1** SS took the paper as tabled and welcomed any questions from Council regarding ongoing College meetings – none. |  |
| **14.DPCS Report**  **14.1.** TFD took the paper as tabled and welcomed any questions or feedback from Council members - none. |  |
| **15. DPFS Report**  **15.1.** FH took the paper as tabled and welcomed any questions or feedback from Council members – none. |  |
| **16. RCSU Report**  **16.1.** AAu was not present during this point in the meeting. Chair requested for any feedback or comments on RSCU Report - none. |  |
| **17. CGCU Report**  **17.1.**  FK took the paper as tabled and welcomed any questions or feedback from Council members - none. |  |
| **18. RSMU Report**  **18.1.**  CC highlighted that the committee has approved the renaming of one of the depsocs to remove any association with De La Beche.  **18.2.** Chair welcome questions or comments on CC report – none. |  |
| **19. ICSMSU Report**  **19.1.** Chair noted he was not able to share BR’s report and agreed it should be discussed on the agenda at the next meeting. | BR to present his report at the next Council meeting. |
| **20. GSU Report**  **20.1.** MD stated the GSU has been busy with a lot of events going on during this period. MD highlighted there has been a lot of online community building within the GSU which has resulted in higher levels of engagement.  **20.2**. Secondly, MD highlighted the ongoing work around covid-19 and expressed the hard work that MH has been putting in.  **20.3.** MH explained that she had been invited to high-level College meetings and thanked the Union for pushing for the GSU to be involved.  **20.4.** AAl questioned the development of the safety net policy and the issue of the discrepancies between departments. MH said the inconsistencies between the departments which has been raised at Faculty levels with the Vice-Deans being keen on making sure it is implemented in the right way. |  |
| **21. Felix Report**  **21.1.** HA noted there has been ongoing work building up the temporary online website where there has also been the opportunity to evaluate Felix’s online presence.  **21.2.** HA stated there is hopes to use the remaining print budget to recruit an external agency to rebuild the Felix website. HA also explained he has been focusing on developing online workflows so the team can still contribute.  **21.3.** Chair requested feedback or questions for HA – none. |  |
| **Any Other Business**   1. DA expressed that following on from the incidents in the USA and UK and relating to the Black Lives Matter movement she has had students’ express concerns that they have not received any correspondence from departmental level. 2. DA also explained that a survey was taken where over 200 students participated and the outcome of the results were that very few departments have commented on the issues. DA noted that several students do not feel comfortable expressing this to Department Heads. 3. DA encouraged Council members to push their departments to start communicating with students regarding the Black Lives Matter issues and it is not enough to just make a statement on the via media pages. 4. DA said the President of the Latin American Society asked what the Union/College response is so they can work together with other societies to bring more awareness to this issue. | DAd/AS to provide Council with update on College working groups regarding BLM. |