



## **ULaw SU Annual General Meeting**

**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

**18.00-19.30 via MS Teams**

Attendees from the Students' Union

- Kiyala Matanga- London Moorgate Vice-President (Chair) **[KM]**
- Gary Knight- Student Voice Co-ordinator (Secretary) **[GK]**
- Uche Adika- Co-President Union Development **[UA]**
- Peter Bolaji- Co-President Academic Affairs **[PB]**
- Emma Beenham- Students' Union Manager **[EB]**
- Sammia Amir- Student Communities Co-ordinator **[SA]**
- Laura Trussell-Academic Representation Co-ordinator **[LT]**
- Chris Parry-Communications and Marketing Co-ordinator **[CP]**

### **1. SU Co-Presidents' update**

GK thanked everyone for coming and KM opened the meeting by inviting the Co-Presidents to present their item.

UA reported that he and PB attended in person misconduct hearings, offered guidance to clubs and societies, and held the 15<sup>th</sup> ISVC meeting to discuss student payment plans, deregistration and feedback for departments dealing with international student issues. He also reported the success of the Mooting competition, two BizCon events, and the TedX event recently, which was a good opportunity for students with positive feedback.

PB reported on their successes in implementing a new concessions policy which improved the current circumstances around offering mitigating circumstances, which has reduced the volume of complaints from the previous December. They have also offered assessment workshops which were well attended, and begun a new student leader of the month incentive for student reps.

A student asked about certain recent cases, specifically at Bloomsbury, which had gone unattended by the SU. PB and EB recommended getting in touch with the Student Advice Centre to redress these issues. Another student asked about communication to the student body and GK responded he was in touch with University colleagues responsible.

### **2. SU Finances**

EB introduced the management accounts, an executive summary of the SU's financial year. The year is split into four areas-management, communities, societies and groups, and student voice.

EB reported a slight overspend in the travel budget it is near the end of the year, as well as advocacy, and NUS affiliation and then detailed staff expenditure like people and culture. There is an underspend in community and connection but that is due to the relatively high budget. EB detailed the



operational budget which has remained broadly in line, and explained an overspend in the Awards budget.

Overall, three quarters of the budget has been spent and is on track to be spent by end of the financial year.

A student asked about professional fees and EB explained this was earmarked for services on the journey to becoming an independent SU like finance training and opening a bank account as this process will be at different stages of the financial year, so having some reserve funds aside for this would smoothen this journey.

A student asked where the difference in expenditure was, and EB responded this was for staff salaries and oncosts associated with that. She added this could be communicated to the student body as they are the membership.

A student asked where the rep and club and society budgets were located and if this could be communicated to societies. EB responded the rep budget comes from the voice and changemaking line, and society funding requests go through the Student Communities Co-ordinator. She reminded society leaders to get funding requests in as early in advance before the next financial year.

### **3. SU Strategy Update**

EB reported an impact report will be available by the end of May, detailing the progress of the annual plan and strategy.

A student asked about the formation of a society process. SA replied she is working over a backlog after coming back from leave and will address society requests in due course.

### **4. Independence Update**

EB reported, that after the Oct 2023 referendum, the SU has set up a development working group to iron out issues towards operational independence. A student asked about reasons to become independent, and CP and EB pointed students towards the website page with information.

A student asked about Online campus events, and GK responded while it is logistically more difficult, the SI usually takes the lead from Online campus staff and student reps, and indicated students contact the latter if they have any ideas or questions.

A student asked about societies progressing year on year. GK responded previously the SU hadn't had a generation strategy for clubs and societies as the majority of students are postgrads. However GK and SA have been working on societies being able to be adopted or archived for future students to lead and join them.

### **5. Contribute to our Democracy and Brand Reviews**

GK introduced the item. As the SU is in the first year, a data and research gathering activity is undergoing two external consultations around democracy and brand reviews. The first is looking at the rep structures and democracy, not how elections at the SU are run.



He asked students to use and disseminate a form which would sign them up for some focus groups, based on the Online and southern campuses, led by the external consultancy Counterculture.

CP reported the brand review was on more early stages as they are still yet to undergo interview, but this will assess the SU's colour, branding, logos, and website. It is not a big issue that needs fixing, however the brand is becoming more stale and needs a review. A student asked where the democratic component of this review was. CP and GK responded the Co-Presidents are involved, so the students have representatives in this process.

A student asked if there was any way they could engage in the SU with three weeks left of their course. GK replied being in the meeting was a good use of time, and the most immediate thing they could do was engage in the Counterculture focus group.

A student asked about female football groups. SA said if they could fill out a society proposal she could be in touch with them. A student asked why there should be segregated spaces. SA replied she would look at it on a case by case basis and if it is justified. A student queried if this was in breach of the Equality Act and SA replied it would be based on a case by case basis on the principle of mitigating risk.

A student asked about communications to committee members. CP replied he is working on training for committee members on GDPR responsibilities, as well as creating an overall spreadsheet in order to standardise communications.

A student asked about employability opportunities. GK responded that the SU runs the Skills Development Programme which teaches students soft skills, including employability skills. For part time job opportunities, GK and CP directed them to the website where part time student worker opportunities are advertised.

## **6. Student Raised Business**

GK said no student queries had been raised about the SU's strategy, finances or independently outside the meeting so opened the meeting to wider student questions.

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A student asked about clubs and societies on the Online campus, and SA replied a process was in place to enable students to more easily join Online clubs, or set them up.

A student asked about increasing class reps' awareness of being part of the SU. LT replied they are an important part of the communications loop on campuses, but said more needed to be done to educate them about their responsibilities especially as they are volunteers.

A student asked about the delay last year in recruiting for the clubs and societies co-ordinator role. GK replied the role's duties needed overhauling to better fit with the SU's strategic goals in the next three years.

A student asked about the legitimacy of SU courses, and several students raised concerns about the finance department of the university, such as being chased for non-existent payments, lack of ability to access course content and lack of communication from the finance team. LT replied she would look into it and advised students to email their Programme Student Leads.

GK closed by thanking everyone for attending.

**Close**