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# **Union Council**

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| **Date:**  | 09.05.24 |
| **Time:** | 5.00pm |
| **Location:** | S3.01 and Online |

## **Minutes**

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| 1.0 | 1.1 | Present: Lucy Ryan, Will Deeley, Brandon Tester (BTe), Jess Hughes (JH), Kelly Wiles (KW), Amy Pile (AP), Sruthi Subhash (SKS), Jess Bradbury (JB), Tristan Tipping (TT), Sarah Jackson, Ana Timoteo (AT, Chair), Markus Elezi, Maya Sidhu, Ebenezer Olowokere, Inmaculada Martinez Del Rio, Angela Agyei Boakye, Nadi Dimitrova-Smilenska, Olivia Stocco, Gloria Penn, Ishia Jack, Grace Paisley, Benedicta Duhoe, Dipak Kandel, Habeeb Adegoke, Bianca Epuras, Eleanor Lee, Rushabh Chauhan, Adaeze Ubah, Om Dhadwal, Lilli Aldis, Bethany Jackson, Isham Constance, Pardeep Jain, Monica Mattoo, Susie Green, Eva Dzyubenko, Reece Newey, Jasmine Young, Felix Swallow, Harry Copeland , Will Johnson, Jacob Hosanee, Tricia Glassborrow, Luca Annibale,Wren Sell, Esther Stephenson, Stacey Baxter, Kristen Clarke, Vytautas Kravcenka, Marissa Leyden |  |
|  | 1.2 | **In attendance:** Sarah Nawaz |  |
|  | 1.3 | **Apologies for Absence (Union Officers only):**  |  |
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| 2.0 |  | **Opening and Key Dates** | **AT**  |
|  |  | * SU Student Staff Recruitment Day: 10th May
* Union Awards: 16th May
* Pride Celebration: 1st June
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| 3.0 |  | **Updates** | **Officers** |
|  |  | BTe:* Attended WhatUni Awards
* Officer reflection: officers have been reflecting on their time, looking at achievements and contributions they have made to making students’ lives better at BNU
* Attended a university governance review. Was able to give honest feedback which hopefully the university will take on board.

JB:* Worked at Festiball
* Completed papers for the university’s EDI and Sustainability Committees
* Planning Welcome Week 2024
* Completing final bits for union awards
* Took part in the beach clean
* Worked on completing the SU’s green impact accreditation
* Planning Pride 2024
* Have beaten our RAG fundraising target – target was £14,000, current total is over £17,000

SKS:* Preparing for Senate and Student Experience Forum
* Working on union awards speech and preparation
* Hone away from campaign: still ongoing
* Alumni Network: would like to put in alumni network. This would help current students as they would be able to ask previous students about their experience and would allow former students to stay connected.
* Would like to hear from students on their thoughts an alumni network.
* Attendees were asked to submit their responses via Mentimeter to a brief survey she had put together:
* ‘Do you believe that we should have a strong BNU community?’ – 21 responded yes with 0 votes for no
* ‘Why do you think we should have an alumni network? – responses included: share experiences, to connect with work opportunities, create potential industry, alumni events.
* ‘Would you like to join our BNU alumni network after completing your course?’ – 21 yes responses and 1 no response.
* ‘If answered yes, what kind of involvement or engagement would you prefer to have with the network?’ – responses included: networking events, mentoring, reunion events, social events.

AP:* Current projects she is working on: Placement booklets, placement travel paper, protected learning time, Medilingo, sunflower campaign.
* Interprofessional learning: working on connecting health and social care groups
* Attended apprenticeship and student nursing times awards
* Starting the process of the officer handover.
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| 4.0 |  | **Ratification of New Lay Trustee** | **TT** |
|  |  | * Students’ Union (SU) is a registered charity and as part of this needs to abide by the constitution agreed with the Charity’s Commission
* The SU has a trustee board who ensure that the SU is doing what it has set out to do.
* The trustee board is made up of the elected officers, 4 elected student trustees and appointed lay trustees.
* The SU set out to recruit a new lay trustee, looking for someone who is an expert in governance and legal matters
* One candidate was interviewed and agreed to be appointed by the board
* As part of the appointment process, the union council has to be asked if they approve of the decision.
* The candidate is Brandy Collins. She is a corporate attorney with 20 years’ experience. She is currently working in hospitality and is part of a government think tank that looks at the hospitality industry. She has high level commercial skills which the board believe would be useful to the SU.
* Attendees were asked if they had any questions.
* Via a show of hands and written response from those online, attendees were asked if they approve of appointment of Brandy Collins as lay trustee: Approved unanimously.
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| 5.0 |  | **NUS Conference Update** | **AP** |
|  |  | * Attended the NUS conference in Blackpool alongside students who are NUS delegates
* Wanted to update students on what was discussed
* International student equality was discussed with talk on bringing back the international officer role and how international students can be supported more by the NUS.
* Future reform of NUS was looked at. In the future it will include Scotland, Wales and NI, with annual conferences happening separately in each country.
* The current cost of living crisis and its effect on students was discussed, with the need for the government to be held accountable
* There is a need to increase further education representation within the NUS
* Solidarity with the Palestine movement was discussed and the need to ensure that all students are represented and supported.
* Question has been raised as to the benefit of Bucks SU attending the NUS conference, with event expectations not being met. This will be discussed at some point.
* Will put more information from the conference with links to policy on the SU website.
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| 6.0 |  | **Guest Speaker/Discussion – Jess Hughes (Training and Development Coordinator) and Kelly Wiles (Student Activities Coordinator – Volunteering)** |  |
|  |  | * JH and KW introduced themselves and their roles within the SU
* They are here to speak about opportunities available over the summer.
* Student development ambassador: involves working within your school to support students. The SU will also work with ambassadors to help boost their employability skills and CV. It is a rewarded role and students can apply via the SU website – students will need a reference.
* Leadership academy: students are able to apply for next year. This involves working with staff 1:1 on employability and goals a student has. Students are able to attend training courses and can apply via the website.
* Volunteer ambassador: roles are open and can be applied for via the website. Ambassadors work on promoting and raising money for RAG, helping with green impact and sustainability, helping with events and with promoting volunteering with the SU.
* The SU will still be putting on activities over the summer for students including a treasure hunt, singing lessons, visiting an alpaca farm, attending comic con. The website contains all the details and if there are any activities a student wants to do, please come and speak to them.
* With deadlines and exams coming up, would like to remind students to look after themselves and engage with self-care. Support is available including the Advice centre, Student Minds or speaking to staff.
* Next week is Mental Health Awareness Week, during which there will be prizes being given away.
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| 7.0 |  | **Sabb Hot Seat** |  |
|  |  | February cohort feel left out of activities* The union is aware, and this is being looked in. Looking to hold union council over the summer and if there is anything you would like to do, please come and speak to staff.

For Freshers this year will there be a more inclusive programme rather than clubbing?* There are lots of non-alcohol and non-clubbing events held by the SU, it is an inclusive programme, please look on the What’s On page.

What was the idea behind the alumni network?* The idea was so current students can receive support from alumni, for alumni to revisit their experiences at BNU and talk about their careers

 What are some things you are putting that will make the SU better next year?* SKS: ensuring that new officers are fully trained
* JB: to continue EDI work
* TT: looking to refurbish the venue, have put in bids to the university for funding for minibuses. Lots of small things happening once funding for the university is confirmed.

Will union council over summer be different from regular? * Not sure yet how the meetings will run as it will be the first time doing them over summer, wait and see

With more sober events could they start earlier, wouldn’t have to walk back, then come back and there would be less waiting?* Events start at 7pm so student staff can finish their lectures before starting work. Sometimes the venue is used for teaching. Students are welcome to wait in the lounge, but JB will speak to the events team

What can be done to integrate the SU with external young mature adults who are interested in joining societies?* Non-students are not able to join societies. The only external people who can attend are speakers or teachers, but these have to be booked.

What is happening with Lata Lata?* The university has made an offer to buy the site with the contract being worked on. The SU has made a pitch to run the site, but the university has their own plans. Will have to wait and see.

Could we be more involved in union council, for example by holding segments?* If you are interested, please email the Rep team. The role of chair will be available next year.

Possible to shuffle the days of events around the week, not having the events run on Tuesday only?* JB will speak to the events team which is currently undergoing a restructure but need to let staff know by feedbacking to us.

What’s happening next to place next to the dance studios (beats refurbishment)?* Its on the estates plan, students can use it at the moment, there is a ping pong table available. Students need to keep using it so it remains a student space.

For those who live locally and go out but can’t afford Uber, it is possible for there to be transport to surrounding areas of High Wycombe? Like Great Missenden* Would need to discuss with the events team, may be possible to book taxis.

How much student feedback needed to request Beats to become another dance hall?* If students really want it, as much as possible.

In Beats space, is it possible to get a pool table?* As it is still not clear what the space would be used for, it would be difficult to purchase as there would be nowhere for the SU to store if it asked to leave Beats.

Can there be more hot food at Uxbridge?* Gather and Gather run the catering so student would need to speak to them. As it is a small campus, it is difficult to have lots of options available.

How do we give feedback or contact Gather and Gather?* QR codes were initially made available in Beeches and feedback can be given via the app, JB will ask them to relaunch their feedback campaign.
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| 8.0 |  | **Any Other Business** |  |
|  |  | * Student were reminded to check they are registered to vote, QR code made available
* Buckinghamshire Council are looking to speak to students about their experiences and barriers they face with accessing jobs in the area. This takes place on Monday for 30 mins with a maximum of 15 student able to attend. Attending students will receive a £10 Tesco voucher and sign up is via the What’s On page.
* Student Obafemi Ogunde, known to friends as Femi, sadly passed away. He was a member of the rugby club, and the team are putting on a memorial game on 29th May, with tickets being made available on the website. A fundraiser towards funeral costs has also been set up, current total is £800, thank you to all who have donated. If anyone needs support, please speak to staff.
* AT would like to say thank you for having her as union council chair.
* Looking to put on union council over the summer, keep an eye on the What’s On page.
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| 9.0 |  | **Date and time of subsequent meetings:**  |  |
|  |  | TBA |  |