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# **Union Council**

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| **Date:** | 17.10.24 |
| **Time:** | 5.00pm |
| **Location:** | S3.01 and Online |

## **Minutes**

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| 1.0 | 1.1 | Present: Lucy Ryan, Natasha Neal, Tristan Tipping, Sarah Jackson, Matthew Kitching, Harry Tomlinson (Chair), Amy Pile, Bethany Jackson, Gurman Singh, Laura Eustration, Lyla McBrearty, Adaeze Ubah, Vivian Owobu, Aliyah Rashid, Hana Tauseeque, Wahida Igheldene, Jaymie Pile, Sarah Squirrell, Tristan Martell, Adriana Karaszova, Donna Langston, Alisha Ali, Jim Capucho Amaro, Peter Ashaigbor, Madhav Jayalal, Vytautas Kravcenka, Dee Whyte, Phoebe Leonardi, Scout Boulting, Ayann Aamir, Tara-Lee Hollander, Charlotte Llewellyn, Kirsten Clarke, Ellie Lee, Reeya Rani Peenith, Aimee Dowe,  Keisha Russ, Emily Perry, Leon Cook, Onyema Beauty, Caoilinn Keane, Nadia Foquim,  Kristiyan Ivanov, Pip Williams, Zachary Worship, Con Macadam, Charles Gee, Daniel Charlton, Sambridhi Poudel, Kabiraj Bajaoain, Danyal Mehmood, Om Dhadwal, Emily Cox,  Julia Irvine, Fabian Moore, Alexander Mills, Oubie Lingon, Patrick Vinceta, Lauren Milne,  Iqra Yaqoob, Hassan Raza, Mubeen Mukhtar, Mamta Gautam, Diya Doshi |  |
|  | 1.2 | **In attendance:** Sarah Nawaz |  |
|  | 1.3 | **Apologies for Absence (Union Officers only):** Will Deeley, Wren Sell |  |
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| 2.0 |  | **Key Dates** | **HT** |
|  |  | * Monthly Monday Meals * Management Fest :21st – 25th Oct * RAG Week: 28th – 1st Nov * Netball 4 RAG: 21st Oct at 6pm * Union Council: 14th Nov at 5pm * Smile Campaign (HW): 18th Nov at 7.30am * Union Council: 5th Dec at 5pm |  |
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| 3.0 |  | **Union Council Chair nominations** | LR |
|  |  | * Nominations close tomorrow at noon * Key responsibilities are: * Represent all members fairly * Plan and decide the agenda * Chair meetings * Lead meaningful discussions * Communicate with staff and students * Will also develop key skills such as organisational skills, communication, leadership, teamwork |  |
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| 4.0 |  | **Updates** |  |
|  | 4.1 | **Elected Officers** |  |
|  |  | Amy Pile (President):   * Sunflower mural now completed at Aylesbury * Going to Westminster on 23rd Oct to discuss housing issues for students * ITV interview about the cost of living * VC appointment * Learner Hardship in Practice Learning Paper   Wren Sell (Vice President Achievement and Belonging):   * Student Leader Training * Freshers Week * Movember * Using preferred names   Harry Tomlinson (Vice President Education and Welfare HW):   * First Weeks have been busy, lots going on, great to meet students and get involved * Harold’s Hydration * World Mental Health Day   Bethany Jackson (Vice President Education and Welfare UXB/AYL):   * Student Leader Training * Freshers * What’s been done, plans and campaigns – World Mental Health Day, Breast Cancer Awareness, Wellbeing Kits * Uxbridge and Aylesbury |  |
|  | 4.2 | **Trustees** | **DW** |
|  |  | * Update given by Dee Whyte (student trustee) * First trustee board meeting was held this week * The annual financial audit of the students’ union was signed off * Officers and CEO gave updates on their plans. |  |
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| 5.0 |  | **‘Keys to Fair Housing’ discussion** | **AP** |
|  |  | * Will be going to Westminster on the 23rd October to discuss housing for students * A report will be written, and students’ views were needed * Post it notes and pens were provided for attendees to write their answers * Those attending online were given a Menti code to submit their views * Once the report is complete, it will be published on the website * Attendees were asked the following questions: * How satisfied are you with your current accommodation in terms of affordability and quality? What changes would improve your housing experience? * Have you faced any difficulties with securing student accommodation, such as guarantor requirements or upfront rent payments? How did these issues affect your ability to find housing? * For those living in private housing, what challenges have you encountered in terms of rent increases, repairs, or dealing with landlords? How have you handled these situations, and what support would be helpful? * International students: Have you found it more difficult to secure housing compared to local students? What specific barriers have you faced? What support services would help ease these challenges for future international students? * Have you experienced any issues related to the location of your housing (e.g., commuting distance, access to university resources, or safety concerns)? Would proximity to campus be a priority when choosing future accommodation? * What role do you think the university or students' union could play in improving the overall housing experience for students? What specific housing services or resources would you like to see offered? |  |
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| 6.0 |  | **Officer Hot Seat** |  |
|  |  | * Menti code given for attendees to submit their questions   What are you most looking forward to this term?  HT: building relationship between students and officer, helping people  AP: looking forward to making a seeing a change through campaigns  BJ: sitting down with students and chatting more  Where do you need student support?  HT: in terms of communication with campaigns, spreading the word would be helpful, it is important for student to be there for each other and check up on each other  AP: officers always need student support  BJ: students can come and talk to us and let us know what’s on their minds  What are the ways student union can help international student?  HT: the students’ union can provide support with course issues through the advice centre, there is also the international big deal, free meals and bucks new usage.  Are there any plans for student voice campaigns to run at Uxbridge, Aylesbury or online for students to suggest feedback or ideas?  BJ: there is a QR code available on these campuses where students can submit their ideas, or you can email any of the officers.  How do you balance representing the diverse interests of the students’ body while ensuing long-term strategic goals of the union are met, especially when there are conflicting priorities between students?  HT: it is important to listen to both students and the university’s needs. Communication is key along with sticking to the union’s strategic goals to ensure that students have the best experience. It can be difficult to balance, but the students’ union has adapted to the changes in student interests and characteristics  How do you ensure that the student union remains transparent and accountable to students, especially when making difficult decisions that may not be universally popular?  TT: Trustee board helps keep the students’ union accountable and transparent. Students can contact the union for more information. The union would like to hear from students if they don’t understand something and how it can be made more accessible.  Do we know if varsity will be here or at Roehampton?  Will be at Roehampton.  Will there be any collaborative events (sports, volunteering etc) across BNU campuses?  Yes, check what’s on page for all events. Breast cancer awareness is taking place across all campuses tomorrow (18th).  Harry, how are you planning on expanding your hydration campaign following on from the drinks at Freshers?  HT: will be handing out leaflets and putting up posters. This is a self-care campaign, ensuring students take steps to look after themselves.  What are the first things you are going to try and get the new Vice Chancellor to change?  Officers: firstly with set a good relationship with him and ensure he hears the student voice. Would like him to look at students resources and ensure that students have what they need. Will also continue to raise issues around accommodation and parking.  Are there any student union jobs still open? Like event hosts, security.  TT: there will be team leader roles for the bar advertised on the website soon. For any jobs, check the website  Can campus link timetable be changed back to the previous times?  The union are lobbying the university about this, there is a possibility it might be changed back – will keep students posted  What’s been more challenging: negotiating with university staff or surviving student elections?  Officers: Both have their challenges, but negotiating can be more challenging, trying to find that middle ground. |  |
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| 7.0 |  | **Any Other Business** |  |
|  | 7.1 | Peter Ashiagbor – Management Fest   * Starts next week with different sessions taking place over the week * Business experts will be coming in and student will get a chance to ask questions and get mentoring * Will also be talking about mental health wellness within the business environment * On the Wednesday, there will be a careers fair with over 40 organisations attending * At the end of the week a fundraiser will be taking place to raise money for RAG * Check the what’s on page for all details and please come along. |  |
|  | 7.2 | Sarah Jackson – Leadership Academy   * Has been running for 4 years * Applications are open and any student is eligible to apply * Students who apply will have a one-to-one session with Jess Hughes (Training and Development Coordinator) to put together a development plan towards a goal the student has * The plan will include things such as attending skills sessions, conferences – anything that helps the student achieve their goal * Students can also gain qualifications and receive certificates at the end, * It won’t take up too much time and meetings can be done both in person or online * Students can sign up via the employability pages on the website * Applications close next Friday (24th) with sessions starting in November |  |
|  | 7.3 | RAG Charity of the Year   * Announced by HT on behalf of Keleigh Brady (RAG Ambassador) * Wycombe Mind is the RAG charity for this year * Wycombe Mind believe no one should face mental health issues alone. They offer many services including counselling and support groups * RAG week begins on the 28th of October with many events already announced – please see the what’s on page |  |
|  |  | Prize draw   * This will take place at every union council * Attendees are given the chance to win a food voucher * The winner is selected at random * This weeks winner is: Reeya Rani Peenith |  |
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| 8.0 |  | **Date and time of subsequent meetings:** |  |
|  |  | Thursday 14th November 2024 at 5.00pm, Room S3.01 and Online |  |