

Union Council Minutes

Chair: Laura Taylor

Deputy Chair: Jude Beckett

DPC: Serene Shibli, Sophie Atherton, Kate Adler

Attendance: 44 councillors present at start of meeting

Key Summary:

- New societies approved: BBQ Society, Go Club, Motorsport, Asian Medical Students' Association, Radiology, Language Exchange Society, HKPASS
- Motion: "Amendment to "Policy to Establish a 'Quiet Space' in the former Nap Nook" passed
- Motion: "High Time for Harm Reduction" passed
- Motion: "Fund the Menstruation Station, Fight Period Poverty On Our Campus" passed

Housekeeping

The Chair noted the code of conduct, expenses process and linked to the articles & bye-laws.

Statements from the Chair

Chair noted that the agenda has been rearranged slightly to try and get voting content finished earlier in the meeting for anyone who may need to leave early for Ramadan. The Chair reminded councillors about behaviour in meeting and treating other representatives with consideration and respect.

The Chair noted that The Deputy Chair, Jude Beckett, will be chairing the society and peer support group constitutions to approve and the motion Amendment to "Policy to Establish a 'Quiet Space' in the former Nap Nook". Chair reminded attendees that the next meeting would be the final one of the year so all motions should be submitted before 19th May. The Chair noted that Student Trustees will be elected at the May meeting.

Approval of minutes from the last meeting

The meeting voted to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held in March 2022. 40 votes were cast and 90% voted to approve and 10% to abstain. View minutes here:

<https://www.uea.su/democracy/unioncouncil/councildocumentsandnotices/>

Society and peer support group constitutions- to approve

Deputy Chair of Council Jude Beckett took over as Chair and Laura Taylor, Chair of Council, stood down for the duration of this and the following item.

The Deputy Chair took the societies recommended for approval in a block vote.

Society	Constitution	Recommendation	Council Vote
BBQ Society	Provide a safe society in which students can socialise and share techniques for barbecuing meats and vegan and vegetarian substitutes. Host social BBQ by the lake by hiring out the available BBQ stations.	Approve - Execs thought the idea was appropriate and in line with union policy	Approved (42 votes, 93% approve, 2% reject and 5% abstain)
Go Club	To have weekly in-person meetings to play the board game of Go in a safe, friendly social environment for fun and to improve members' playing quality. We will also hold in-house tournaments and take group trips to national tournaments where we will compete individually or as a team against players from other Go Clubs.	Approve - Execs thought the idea was appropriate and in line with union policy	Approved (42 votes, 93% approve, 2% reject and 5% abstain)
Motorsport	To provide a friendly, welcoming, and inclusive environment for fans or aspiring fans of professional motorsport (primarily the Formula 1 World Championship) to meet each other and to share their passion through social platforms and events. The group will provide opportunities to meet likeminded students and the chance to participate in events relevant to the nature of the group.	Approve - Execs thought the idea was appropriate and in line with union policy	Approved (42 votes, 93% approve, 2% reject and 5% abstain)
Asian Medical Students' Association	Connect Asian medical students in UEA through socials and academic events. Create safe spaces for new and existing medical students to	Approve - Execs thought the idea was appropriate	Approved (42 votes, 93% approve, 2% reject and 5% abstain)

	<p>come to for pastoral and academic support (e.g., Mock OSCEs, revision sessions). Network with other Asian medical students from other UK universities and beyond. Network with Asian doctors in NNUH/ Norfolk (as guest speakers and shadowing opportunities)</p>	<p>and in line with union policy.</p>	
Radiology	<p>A society to provide radiology teaching, revision resources and OSCE tips which will help significantly whilst on placement and also aid the understanding of data interpretation images. These skills are encountered in all medicine modules, meaning the society is beneficial to medical students of all years. Radiology and Interventional Radiology are up-and-coming specialities with new technology and reducing the need for more invasive surgeries. We hope to host conferences with various speakers to explore their career pathways within radiology and seminars on practical sessions on ultrasound and image guided interventions.</p>	<p>Approve - Execs thought the idea was appropriate and in line with union policy, providing a slight amendment of the constitution to remove the idea of the society providing the teaching of radiology.</p>	<p>Approved (42 votes, 93% approve, 2% reject and 5% abstain)</p>
Language Exchange Society	<p>Promote shared knowledge surrounding new languages. Welcome and celebrate diversity of cultures and nationalities at UEA. Empower international students and all/any students with an interest in learning new languages and learning about various cultures. Hold language sharing events each week to learn the basics of a new language</p>	<p>Rejection – Execs thought there was a conflict of interest with International Students’ Society. International Students’ Society constitution is ‘to</p>	<p>Sophie (Sustainability Soc) spoke against this recommendation and argued that international students aren’t all foreign language speakers and this rejection conflates international issues and language exchange.</p> <p>Lizzie (A&O Officer) spoke in favour of the recommendation</p>

	<p>as well as celebrate and teach any culturally related topics connected to that language such as traditional food, dances, music, etc. Help encourage positive, space and inclusive social spaces for students of all ethnicities, languages, cultures and family roots.</p>	<p>celebrate diversity, discovering new cultures and languages’</p>	<p>and noted that socs exec felt the society could be in contradiction with the bye-laws for the international societies.</p> <p>Ayane (PG Officer) asked whether the international students society would have to amend their constitution for this to pass.</p> <p>Serene (Politics Soc) noted that lots of socs have overlapping mandates and conflicts can be taken to the SU to resolve.</p> <p>Approved (41 votes, 68% to approve, 17% to reject and 15% abstain)</p>
<p>Hong Kong Public Affairs and Social Services (HKPASS)</p>	<p>We are a student lead group form by Hong Kong students from UEA. We aim to enrich our members’ university life by holding academic activities with universities around the UK. We will reach out to the HKPASS of other universities nationwide to organize joint-university events, such as joint-university quizzes, academic forums, and charity balls. We will organize outreach social services via volunteering opportunities and charity sales, as well as career support for our members. We will also provide academic support and regular HK and UK news updates to members.</p>	<p>Rejection – Execs thought there was a conflict of interest with Hong Kong Society.</p> <p>Hong Kong Society’s constitution is ‘to provide support for Hong Kong students helping them settle, experience and enjoy life in UEA. Also to promote the Hong Kong Culture’</p>	<p>Students representing the society presented a presentation on what the society plans to do and how this is different to Hong Kong Society, noting a focus on charity work, academic interests, and public affairs and careers. They proposed accepting the society and rejecting the recommendation.</p> <p>Emily (Media Society) argued against this proposal noting that both societies have very similar constitutions and might present a conflict of interest. Noted that HKPASS could instead have a rep within the Hong Kong Society.</p> <p>The proposers summated noting that HKPASS mostly focuses on academic and external issues.</p> <p>Approved</p>

			(43 votes, 63% approved, 19% rejected and 19% abstained)
Food and Socials	The main aims of the group is to get students socials in a safe space and learn about different cultures.	Rejection – Execs thought there was a conflict of interest with Cooking and Tasting Society.	Rejected (42 votes, 10% approved, 76% rejected and 14% abstained)

Policy proposals & motion votes

Motion 1: Amendment to “Policy to Establish a ‘Quiet Space’ in the former Nap Nook”

Motion debate:

Laura Taylor (Disability Peer Support Group) proposed the motion and spoke in favour.

- Laura noted that the nap nook was originally designed to give students a space a space to rest. The motion “Policy to Establish a ‘Quiet Space’ in the former Nap Nook” changed this proposal to change the nap nook into a quiet space. The proposer questioned why the motion had not been enacted by the Trustee Board. The proposer noted that 6 months have passed since the original motion was passed, and proposed that the nap nook should remain in the former Union House space while an alternative space is sought. Noted that the room is now vacant and there are no reasons why it can’t be turned back into a Nap Nook.

There were no speeches against the motion.

Motion vote:

Motion approved

(39 votes, 95% approved, 0% rejected, 5% abstain)

Motion 2: High Time for Harm Reduction

Motion debate:

Hamish Williams (C&D Officer) presented the motion and spoke in favour.

- Proposer noted that uea(su) needs to do more to mitigate the harms of taking drugs. Students should be informed and able to make safe choices. Noted that there is a policy precedent to work in line with a harm reduction principle around drugs. Noted that the motion mandates the introduction of drug testing kits and that the motion is in line with policies and campaigns at other students' unions.

There were no speeches against the motion.

Motion vote:

Motion approved

(37 votes, 97% approved, 0% rejected, 3% abstain)

Motion 3: Fund the Menstruation Station, Fight Period Poverty On Our Campus

Motion debate:

Patrycja Poplawska (Women's Officer) proposed the motion and spoke in favour.

- The proposer noted that period poverty is still an issue and there are steps the SU can take in order to mitigate the impacts on students. Noted that the station in the library has been positive and students often refer each other to use it. The motion ensures the long term survival of the stations and builds the service into long term financial plans. Without long term funding the serve won't be sustainable and shouldn't rely on the constant work and lobbying of students and the Women's Officer.

Procedural motion from Lizzie Payne (A&O Officer) to delay the motion to the next council

- Proposer argued for and noted that they are supportive of the motion but the fact that no numbers are attached to the motion and the SU would need to know how much it costs before committing and UC is able to make an informed decision.
- Patrycja spoke against the procedural motion and noted that a specific number wasn't included because its important to delegate that job to the SU to figure out after the motion passes. SU should continue to lobby university but in the meantime the funding should be guaranteed to fund existing station.
- Proposer noted that the SU has to produce financial budgets and unaccounted money is reserved for unexpected events. Numbers need to be sought before committing to the motion.
- Emily (Media Soc) spoke against the procedural motion. Once numbers are attached it becomes a finite commitment and if the demand is greater then it will prevent effective delivery.

- Chair clarified that the Trustee Board can veto motions which might put the Union in financial difficulty
- Proposer summated

Vote on procedural motion:

Rejected

(29 votes, 31% approved, 65% rejected, 3% abstain)

Motion vote:

Motion approved

(30 votes, 86% approved, 6% rejected, 6% abstain)

Presentation and Q+A from UEA Vice Chancellor, David Richardson (DR)

The meeting voted to approve the Vice Chancellor addressing Council.

- Noted that Times Higher Education ranked UEA in the top 50 of the world for the impact of UN sustainability goals
- DR noted that he'd been at UEA for 31 years and VC for 8 years. Noted that the Board of Trustees appoint and manage the VC which 2 student officers sit on. In process of writing new 5 year plan and working with student body. Covid has hit University hard financially and in human resources.
- Noted that tackling harassment was a personal priority. Approached UUK and was a founding member of the Changing the Culture group. This group brought in Report and Support and worked with lawyers to change legal side of how complaints were handled legally, and have been working with ICO and EHRC to work out ways of making outcomes of complaints more transparent without breaking GDPR.
- Noted work on tackling racism and racist harassment, which included setting up a taskforce on anti-racism in partnership with the Students Union. DR listed other bodies and organisations he is working with in the area of anti-racism and harassment.
- On mental health and wellbeing, DR noted that there has been 18 streams of investment into mental health across the university, and this work is still ongoing.
- Noted the cost of living crisis and the failure of govt to increase loans in line with inflation
- Noted the Campus Development Plan and the legacy issues including carbon inefficiency. Campus needs serious refurbishment structurally and to meet net zero carbon commitment.

Emma Sutton (PVC for Student Experience and Education) addressed Union Council

- Noted the importance of partnership working with the SU around mental health and Changing the Culture
- Noted the review of the disciplinary and misconduct process
- Noted the implementation of the pulse surveys as well as other taskforce initiatives on MH
- Noted that UEA is one of the first HEI's to be working with Student Minds
- Working on 4 priority areas in the strategy formation process, addressing issues around the curriculum and inclusive education. Focuses on importance of graduate success and revisits commitment to innovation in teaching and learning and excellent pedagogy.

Questions:

Q - "Would you be happy to commit to UEA cutting ties with Barclays given it's the top funder of fossil fuels"

A – Exploring alternative banking options and making moves towards taking investments out of Barclays. Will continue to invite Barclays to careers fairs for wider UEA population. As it stands, UEA still banks with Barclays.

Q - "Can you give us an update on how discussions with UCU are going especially around the topic of industrial action"

A – Limiting impact of action on students. Trying to help and reward staff with good pay but it has to be affordable for UEA as well which has taken a big hit. Pay is negotiated nationally, and DR isn't a representative at those meeting. Looking at a pay settlement which will give more to the lower paid and pay will be weighted. UEA is a real Living Wage employer and that goes up with cost of inflation and this is still being honoured.

Q - "Are you committed to divesting from Barclays completely"

A – DR noted this was discussed at Finance Committee and at the moment UEA is disinvested from Barclays but still banks with them. If it costs a lot of money to transfer to another bank this has to be weighed up.

Q - "Why does it take big emergencies like Covid to make a big shift on mental health. Is this the way that other issues will be treated such as global catastrophes"

A – VC taskforce on MH was in place well before the pandemic started. ES noted that covid has helped society wide with talking about mental health but UEA was doing work before this.

Q – "Noted a lack of mention of the disabled community at UEA. Would you be willing to take on movements as significant such as those for racial justice but to support disabled students"

A – DR didn't mean to omit the disabled community in presentation. Set up an Access for All group including students with a range of disabilities and fed into the design of the new science building. Should be the way UEA goes forward especially with the Campus Development Plan. ES noted inclusive education policy means UEA is always looking through lens of inclusivity.

Q – “Powerchair users aren't able to use lifts in lecture theatres. Also can faculty members receive information about accessibility and supporting disabled students”

A – Neither of the examples given are acceptable behaviour and faculty members should not be being ableist. Welcome to speaking to the student about the individual mentioned. DR noted that everyone should be educated on harassment in all its forms”

Q – “Are there any plans to review the Never OK campaign”

A – If there are instances where the zero tolerance policy isn't being implemented then UEA needs to be informed. Policy is clear and there are robust processes and if they aren't working or operating properly then this will be investigated and followed up on.

Q – “How is the University responding to the TEF and what are your thoughts on it”

A – Consultation has gone out and UEA has responded. Concerns about how it might operate and the tight timeframe. Welcome the student submission.

Annual finance report - Lizzie Payne, Activities and Opportunities Officer

Lizzie Payne delivered an update on the annual finances which can be viewed on our website here: [Agendas and Minutes \(uea.su\)](#) (Document named 'Estimates for Council').

Lizzie delivered a presentation to explain how the SU makes money, what it can do with that money and what position the SU is currently.

The meeting voted to approve the finance report (22 votes for and 2 abstentions).

Reports

Trustee board report

AH gave an update from the Trustee Board. Noted that the Board has been working on the Union's strategy, and mentioned that Student Trustee elections are coming up and will be elected at the next Council.

Student officer committee (SOC) report

No report given by the agenda deadline.

Full-time Officer reports

Lizzie Payne, Activities and Opportunities Officer

Meetings attended

- University Finance Committee
- Welcome Week 2022 Implementation Group
- Derby Day Management Group
- Employability and Opportunities Senior Leadership Team - Discussion of Academic socs partnership meeting with University partners
- Sports operations
- Exec and Presidents meetings (Clubs and societies)
- Trustee Board Strategy Day

Manifesto Updates/what I'm working on:

- Continuing work on financial transparency of UEA Sport.
- Graduation events (LCR, daytime, nighttime) - Survey sent out in Alumni Newsletter collating insight in what 2020 and 2021 grads would like
- Planning a Spring Showcase for Clubs who train in the Spring Gymnastics Centre
- Working on a partnership document for Academic Socs and respective schools to ensure a co-relationship between the two partners
- Held a meeting with Cllr Alan Waters to discuss support for students in light of the increasing cost of living and the lack of support from the government for students
- Discussions with the University surrounding the staffing situation in Unio

Upcoming activities:

- Spring Showcase 1st May
- Derby Day 27th April
- Societies and Volunteering Awards night - date 19th May (get your nominations in!)
- Sports Awards 6th May

Ivo Garnham, Undergraduate Education Officer

- Attended PPL Fest, a series of evening events put on by the Philosophy, Politics and Languages and Communications Studies school, in which various speakers gave talks and interviews.
- Sat on interview panel for Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for Education and Curriculum role.
- Attended NUS conference.

- IT forum: the regular meeting where any recurring IT issues are raised and academic staff are updated on the university’s digital transformation programme.
- Humanities Faculty Learning and Teaching Quality Committee: the regular meeting of representatives from each school within the humanities faculty. We discussed several issues including the timing of assessments and reading weeks in the Spring semester and how we could balance the workload better for students whilst also making sure academic staff are not overloading with marking whilst also trying to deliver quality teaching.
- Digital Transformation Steering Committee: the team in charge of planning how the university invests in digital technology. We discussed issues including cyber security and how we can ensure all university staff are competent in using modern technology.
- Chaired SU Management Committee: the meeting where we ensure effective day-to-day running of the SU.
- Meeting with Cllr Alan Waters where the officers discussed the cost of living crisis and how the city council can potentially support students.
- Capture Technology Steering Group: I attended the introductory meeting of the group in charge of ensure the effective rollout of capture technology, which will ensure that lectures can be automatically recorded and uploaded for student access at any time.
- Blended Learning Phase 2: the team have been receiving demonstrations of online assessment software from multiple potential providers. We intend to choose software based on which will be most suitable for the assessments likely to be completed by UEA students, and which will be most accessible to students with a range of learning needs.
- Annual leave for Easter break!
- Trustee Board strategy day: the current board members and incoming full time officers completed several activities to make the SU’s values and strategy for the next academic year clear.
- Sat on interview panel for Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for Recruitment and Admissions role.

Ayane Hida, Postgraduate Officer

Item	Update
Meetings	Employability and Opportunity Catch up/Board preparation/Board Strategy day/UKRI Tackling Bullying and Harassment Forum/BAME Staff Network/HUM GSSF/DEV PG SSLC/AURORA WP3.2.1 meeting/Meeting with APVC Doctoral College/Code of Conduct Panel/Aurora Student Council/UKAT Annual Conference/Management Committee/Trustee Board/Meeting Cllr Alan Waters/Aurora Biannual Catch up/HUM LTQC/VC Taskforce on Tackling Racism/Earlham Hall Building meeting/NUS Conference/SCI PGR Committee/UDIPP meeting/Postgraduate Committee/UKRI Consultation

AOB	<p>Regular catch ups with PGTs and PGRs to see what they are feeling and issues in their course</p> <p>More opportunities/supports for PGs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PG Yoga every Wednesday at 6pm - PG badminton every Thursday at 6pm - PG Mixed football every Friday at 6pm <p>For further detail, contact me at: a.hida@uea.ac.uk</p>
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Aaron Campbell, Welfare, Community, and Diversity Officer

Hi, all hope everyone is well and had a good easter break, like most people I took some time off and so my updates will be rather short.

- Working on some of my projects including the inclusive language, beyond the binary, supporting international students and trans campaign (feel free to ask me about any of these).
- Attended tackling racism task force.
- Islamic prayer space working group.
- Dealing with various student requests,
- Attended Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion committee – working to support students.
- Met with Norwich Council regarding supporting students with the cost-of-living crisis.
- Attended Honorary Graduates committee.
- Began working with the Race Equality Charter team.
- Did 2 days of SU board strategy with current and future trustees.

Hamish Williams, Campaigns and Democracy Officer

No report given by the agenda deadline.

Any other business/ open discussion

AOB 1 – Serene (Politics Soc) mentioned that on 7th May there is an event on campus called Open Space and invited councillors to attend.

Details of next meeting

26th May 2022, 6pm, Lecture Theatre 1

Deadline for item submission: 3pm on Thursday 19th May 2022.

If you will be unable to attend in person, please email su.voice@uea.ac.uk so we can arrange a meeting link.