

# Minutes



<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Union Council</b>
<b>Date</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> of May 2025
<b>Location</b>	Lecture Theatre 3
<b>Status</b>	For Approval

**Chair:** Chanel Munroe

**Attending:** Liz Bigalke (Governance and Democracy Coordinator), Elsa Mounayer (Democracy and Representation Coordinator), Magda de Soissons-Page (Democracy and Representation Coordinator), Kyle Callaghan (Student Communities Coordinator), Matthew Cullum (Equality and Inclusion Coordinator), Jumara Stone (Chief Executive Officer) Yusra Khan (Director of Engagement), Ayane Hida-Stringer (Head of Voice and Representation)

**Voting members present:** Forest Agreda, Faiqa Ansari, Louisa Arends, Lily Attah-Wegbe, Josefina Gayan Avalos, Talitha Bader, Harvey Banks, Fergus Barber, Lizzie Bartlett, Joshua Beecroft, Taylor Bernard, Aron Binu, Oliver Basboll Bogstrand, Hayley Brown, Finley Browne, Eleanor Bryant, Joel Burbedge, Oliver Cameron, Elise Carpenter, Kirill Chetin, Flora Child, Isla Clarke, Nicholas Constantinou, Gaia Cousin, Sophie Cox, Ioan Cox, Kiran Crooks, Oliver Cromptey, Amjad Daher, Hannah Daniels, Lewis Deal Deal, Trish Debicka, Wendy Elkington, Teagan Evans, Alexandraeia Ewart-Malcolm, Nadia Eweiss, Martha Fallon, Sean Faria, Sophie Field, Anna Freeman, Paris Fryer-Petridis, Kimon Fryer-Petridis, Zoe Galgavolgyi, Jess Gardiner, Alex Gibbs, Miles Gibson, Klara Glodowska, Thea Glover, Ella Goodman, Max Gowers, Kritaggya Gurung, Sam Hale, Jake Hallam, Matthew Hannigan, Ellie Hannigan, Jessica Harald, Chloe Harding, Melati Harris, Dimitrii Hird-Lewis, Tamsin Jones, Claramae Jones, Seerat Kaur, Oliver Kaye, Chris Kershaw, Mariam Khalid, Alan Khoshnaw, Alicia Khuttan, Lucas Klimas-Benavidez, Sophie Knapp, Abhiram Kuchibhotla, Maita Kusotera, Nathan Lavery, Christopher Lee, Rebecca Macdonald, Adam Madejczyk, Skye Manning-Dutton, Freddie Marlowe, Able Manivayalil Mathew, Gabriel May, Emily Mcmillan, Juwairiyah Mohammad, Salem Mohammed, Rebecca Ndlovu, Sam Newman, Taylor Niblett, Eamon O'Boyle, Chidimma Olivia Oguachuba, Niamh O'Neill, Agata Ostapowicz, Mitchell Palmer, Finn Pargeter, James Parks, Maariyah Patel, Amy Patterson, Joshua Perry, Lois Perry, Reanne Peters, Skye Phillips, Christina Phokou, Alex Platt, Isaac Ponnidam, Eloise Potel, Lucy Potter, Charlotte Preston, Maggie Read, Stefanie Reginold, Mia Richardson, Ryan Rodgerson, Harvey Rose, Filip Roszak, Thomas Russell, Kornelia Ryfa, Naomi Sabel, Ameera Sadiq, Omar Saeed, Zahra Shaker, Hari Sharma, Grace Shaw, Mohammed Shirwa, Sruthy Shivaleelan, Bhaskar Bukkanahalli Shivanna, Emma Simpson, Priyanka Singh, Emma Smith, Alasdair Smith, Esa Sohoeye, Joshua Speller, Robyn Srikandan, Oscar Stanley, Elsie Steane, Patryk Szalanski, Tahiya Tahiya, Rebekah Temple-Fielder, Sofiiia Todorenko, Bithena Tom, Stacey Trutzenbach, Anisah Tufal, Thomas Waddington, Alexander Walters, Jared Webb, Sun Weiming, Manon Memmi Weir, Oscar Welchman, Jay Wharton, Rory White, Ben Wildey, Zak Williams, Dylan Williamson, Joziiah

Williamson, Anna Wills, Nathan Wyatt, Naa Yarley Yartey, Kyle Yeoh, Amber Yucebas, Amelia Zabicka

**Non-voting members present:** Bellona Agyei, Daemon Barry, Sarah Bindschedler, Eloise Blakey, Jaz Brook, Priscilla Bruce, Lily Bygrave, Joseph Connolly, Felicity Cook-Allen, Isabelle Copley, Cian Donovan, Amara Eriogun, Kudzi Garikayi, Olivia Gifford, Arthur Hacopian, Emily Koomson, Tobias Lambe, Chimdi Ofokansi, Ololade Olokun, Niles Parmar, Aaleyna Reece, Olivia Schneider, Luke Scott, Tom Watkins

### Quoracy check

## Section A - Housekeeping

### **UC 086      Statements from the Chair**

The Chair opened the meeting and asked everyone to fill in the quoracy check.

The Chair also reminded those present that this meeting is made up of Union Council and the Annual General Meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

### **UC 089      Matters arising**

Nothing was brought up.

**The Chair rearranged the agenda**

## Section D – Policy Making

The Council voted whether James Coe should be allowed to speak.

The Council approved for James Coe to speak.

### Voting stats

### **UC 098      Amendments to the Byelaws**

Olivia introduced the motion and asked James to give his presentation.

James presented the project and opened the floor to any questions.

Question

How much did the consultancy cost?

Answer

The entire project including the rewriting of the Byelaw, Articles of Association, Democracy Review and Governance Review cost around £26K.

Question

What does the UEA50 do and how does it hold officers accountable?

Answer

The system increases failsafes, randomly selected student groups will make decisions in the interest of students, the annual general meeting will also act as a failsafe if the new system doesn't work.

Question

How are you going to make sure the UEA50 selected students will turn up?

Answer

Other universities use similar models which has shown to be successful. The positions for the UEA50 will also be filled until enough willing students are chosen and agree.

Question

Can you volunteer to be a member of the UEA50?

Answer

No, the selection is strictly random.

Question

If you're getting 50 random members, how can you guarantee that the issues mentioned will relate to the students chosen? If it doesn't affect them, how will we make sure they make decisions in the interest of the students that it does?

Answer

Part time officer roles remain which have the specific identity roles, the articles will have a failsafe and has some requirements embedded.

Question

How will we be going about doing referendums?

Answer

The referendum will be very similar to our current system.

Question

what other sus have had this system put in place and does it work?

Answer

Liverpool guild of students has had it for 10 years that james did when he was an officer - it engages students that usually don't engage. Leicester have also moved to this system and are very happy with it.

Question

Union Council has been a good place to represent issues in political crises such as Palestine and Israel. How will you make sure the student communities are well represented within the UEA50.

Answer

The fact that the members are random doesn't mean you won't have an opportunity to present an argument to the panel.

Question

Why is a randomly selected group of people more representative than having an open meeting?

Answer

People don't turn up in the current system. having the annual meeting will drive engagement. Someone mentioned they have read the minutes of the last five years, and the union council is not a kind and welcoming space - changing this system will hopefully do so.

Question

How is the UEA50 different to volunteers?

Answer

Students attending the UEA50 will be getting paid for their roles.

Question

Will it be the same 50 students each time?

Answer

No, the UEA50 will be changes every term. Being paid for the role means people turn up, giving you more spaces.

Question

Does the new system mean clubs and societies no longer have an elected union council rep?

Answer

Union Council won't exist so no Union Council reps will be needed.

Question

Considering the very people who have been spearheading this review have also been very vocal in the faculty job cuts, is spending 26k on something that may fail anyways irresponsible

and were ethical considerations taken into account, considering this value is just below the average UK salary?

#### Answer

The current Byelaws are causing serious trouble for staff to do their job, the trustee board are unable to work with the system, the value is up to the students not up to James.

#### Speech For

Olivia argues that the current Union Council system is dysfunctional, undemocratic, and inaccessible, with outdated byelaws and a structure that excludes meaningful student participation. The Officer Team advocate for a new, simpler model that decentralizes decision-making, empowering students directly involved in various areas to shape the outcomes — creating a more democratic, inclusive, and effective Union.

#### Speech Against

Patryk criticizes the proposed system for lacking transparency and relying on random selection, which he argues risks appointing inexperienced students and centralizing power in the hands of a few officers. He warns that this concentration of authority could lead to authoritarianism and believes that cultural change, not just structural reform, is needed to address the Union's issues.

#### Speech For

Olivia argues that Union Council is in crisis, frequently failing to meet quorum, and that reform is urgent, especially given the financial strain of paying the UEA50 during a cost of living crisis. She emphasizes that students still hold officers accountable and that past reform attempts failed due to internal limitations, which is why bringing in external expertise was necessary to move forward effectively.

#### Speech Against

Mark raises concerns about the significant power held by the UEA50 and the potential for officers to reject proposals, highlighting issues with transparency and accountability. He notes that while removal requirements for officers are lower than the current system, they remain high, making referendums the only realistic option — a demanding process. He questions why such a major decision wasn't put to a student-wide referendum as previously promised.

#### Speech For

Olivia reassures that the new byelaws have been reviewed by legal experts and are legitimate. She emphasizes that officers remain accountable through mechanisms like the AGM, and that the four new groups will have real decision-making power, reducing reliance on the UEA50 and streamlining governance while still allowing for effective student representation.

### Speech Against

Lois argues that the Students' Union should act as a force for activism, not bureaucracy, but the proposed UEA50 model shifts it toward administrative control and away from student pressure and influence. She links this loss of power to broader systemic issues in higher education, including capitalism, university debt, and the need for working-class organization and mass participation — something she believes neither the current nor proposed SU systems adequately support.

### Summation Speech

Olivia emphasizes that Union Council is ineffective, with low attendance and unpassed motions negatively impacting students. She argues that the new proposal is a logical and empowering solution, giving decision-making power to students directly involved in each area. While acknowledging that change can be daunting, she insists that maintaining a broken system is more harmful than taking the risk to improve it.

The Council moved to a vote.

The motion was approved with 69%.

### Voting stats

## **UC 099**

### **Amendments to the Articles of Association**

Olivia and James presented the motion and opened the floor to any questions.

#### Question

How big are the changes to the new articles of association - based on the NUS model articles?

#### Answer

It is what we used for the last articles but building on previous changes. its building on the last ones.

#### Question

If the Board of trustees can change the byelaws, why are we embedding them?

#### Answer

This power already exists. The ability for the board to edit these is because of legal compliance.

#### Question

How will the articles bring in minority voices?

#### Answer

The responsibility of the officers but the practices have been embedded in the process so it should retain your voices.

The Council moved to a vote.

The motion was passed with 77%.

#### [Voting stats](#)

**The Chair rearranged the agenda**

## **Section A – Housekeeping**

**UC 090      Approval of Society and Peer Groups**  
All Student groups were approved.

#### [Voting stats](#)

## **Section B – Reports**

**UC 091      Student Officer Committee Report**  
The report was taken as read and no questions were asked.

**UC 092      Trustee Board Report**  
The report was taken as read and no questions were asked.

**UC 093      Student Officer Reports**

**UC 094      Election of 2 NUS representatives 2025/26**  
Nathan introduced and explained what the NUS is and the role description on the NUS representatives.  
8 students came forward and gave a 1-minute-long speech to their fellow students.

Chanel Munroe and Jaz Brooke were elected as the NUS representatives 2025/26.

#### [Voting stats](#)

## **Section C – Open Discussion**

**UC 095      Open Discussion**  
The Chair reminded all to please fill in the Microsoft Form to gather feedback on how the SU has done this past academic year and how it can be improved.

<https://forms.office.com/e/49hfjizGKV>

## **Section E – Any Other Business**

**UC 100      Any Other Business**  
No other business was raised.

**UC 101      Next Meeting**  
No further meetings are scheduled.