

# LANCASTER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION

## Union Assembly Agenda

Agenda for the meeting held **Monday 20 February 2023**

Present:

<b>Full-time Officers</b>		
Callum Slater	VP Union Development	He/Him
Noah Katz	VP Education	They/Them
Danny Goodwin	VP Societies	He/Him
Megan Homburg	VP Sport	She/Her
India Ellis	President	She/Her
Vic Phillips	VP Welfare	She/Her
<b>Liberation-campaign Officers</b>		
Alvin Ngo	Racial & Ethnic Minority Officer	He/Him
Josh Newsham	LGBTQ+ Students Officer	He/Him
Cerys Evans	Students With Disabilities Officer	She/Her
Hana Dodsworth	Women+ Officer	She/Her
<b>Union Assembly Delegate</b>		
Amy Stanning	-	She/Her
Thomas Cross	-	He/They
Eabha Lynn	-	She/Her
Becca Knott	-	She/Her
<b>Observers</b>		
Frank Longdon	Student Insight & Voice Manager	He/Him
Josh Wynn	Democracy & Governance Assistant	He/Him

Apologies: n/a

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### Agenda Item 1 | Introductions

Welcomes from the chair.

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### Agenda Item 2 | For Approval of Union position on buses Motion | India Ellis

Fortnightly meetings are had with stagecoach and research is being done on full buses passing people. Stagecoach reported that this was not the case, we are looking for approval from UA to improve buses and develop an action plan. EDI has been considered, and it is noted that it will impact students with disabilities more. The issue is not just limited to students, and Stagecoach does

not update their data to improve information. To resolve the issue, there is a suggestion to launch a campaign for formal complaints directly to Stagecoach.

**ALL IN FAVOUR | For Approval of Union position on buses Motion**

**ALL IN FAVOUR | India To Lead**

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### **Agenda Item 3 | For Approval JCR Exec Byelaw Amendments | Callum Slater**

For people that aren't aware that this group approve this groups Terms of References. We should give student groups the autonomy to make their own decisions, rejecting only if there is a substantial issue, and the Democracy Committee will clean them up if necessary. The Pendle group has changed "welfare" to "wellbeing" due to clinical connotations, and better engagement in wellbeing events. There is also a mention of working on gender representation in the future, and it will be added to the Democracy Committee's agenda.

**ALL IN FAVOUR | Cartmel College ToRs**

**ALL IN FAVOUR | Furness College ToRs**

**ALL IN FAVOUR | Pendle College ToRs**

**ACTION | Add Looking At Gender Representation To DC Agenda**

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### **Agenda Item 4 | For Discussion Students' Union Policy Review**

#### **Block Grant Policy**

This doesn't represent the working relationship between the FTO and the University, noting that unlike previous years, there is now a much better understanding between the two parties. The FTO has been given more security over the next few years, which is a welcome development. The future of block grants is also discussed.

There is an update on the financial situation, mentioning that there was an uplift of 450k last year in light of the pandemic, but it has not cleared the union's deficit. However, there is a longer-term commitment from the University, which has agreed to increase funding in line with an inflation measure. This is seen as a positive development for the FTO, as it ensures a level of financial security going forward.

It is raised the point that the University has been very open to all the cost-of-living funding requests put forward, which is reassuring. The council also sees the FTO as a body that can do good, which is a testament to the work that has been done by the team. The transition of officers should be smooth, with the council fully supportive of the FTO's work.

Overall, the minutes suggest that there is a positive relationship between the FTO and the University, with both parties working together to achieve their goals. While there are still financial challenges to overcome, the longer-term commitment from the University provides some much-needed stability.

#### **VOTE TO REJECT**

10 FOR | 1 AGAINST

#### **POLICY REJECTED**

#### **Safe Space Policy**

The general sentiment is positive, but there are concerns that the policy is too narrow and could be more damaging as it is. The LCO team will consider rewriting the policy.

It is emphasized the importance of a zero-tolerance policy and believes there should be more emphasis on it. They suggest that there needs to be more open discussion on what values should be upheld when running groups and events, and that there should be policies around student behavior. The general agreement is that something should be in place to ensure that the values of the group are upheld.

**VOTE TO DEFER | ALL IN FAVOUR**

**Vic To Lead | ALL IN FAVOUR**

### **The Return of Students: The Unfair Blame Game**

It is not relevant anymore, whilst the gov have not done anything for students in a very long time they aren't actively blaming us for covid. It is a very good policy.

**VOTE TO REJECT**

**ALL IN FAVOUR**

### **Student Number Growth vs Student Experience**

The minutes discuss a policy related to open days, with concerns raised about the Executive contradicting the policy by un-boycotting open days. There is general agreement that the Union should have a position on this issue, especially given the increasing recruitment of students by the university. There is some discussion about how the university allocates accommodation to students, with some clarification provided on the process. The Executive position to re-engage with open days is also discussed, with some context provided on why this decision was made. It is suggested that the policy should be deferred and reconsidered in light of the changing circumstances.

**Vote To Defer | ALL IN FAVOUR**

**India To Lead | ALL IN FAVOUR**

### **Accessibility Principles**

The language in the policy is out of date and it is not being adhered to, but it does more good than harm so it should exist and be reviewed. There is a discussion about whether to defer or not, with some suggesting that the principles should be more specific and provide instructions on how to act. Others argue that deferring the policy will only result in it being put off indefinitely. Ultimately, there is agreement that the policy should exist but be reviewed and revised to make it more effective.

Vic, I am happy to put myself forward as sponsor

**Accessibility Principles Policy | ALL IN FAVOUR**

**Vic to lead the review | ALL IN FAVOUR**

### **Religious Advertisements Policy**

The policy was created due to a group with values not in line with the SU buying ad space during Freshers' Fair Live. There was discussion about where religious-based charities would fit in and concern about advertising religion to a specific group. There was also a suggestion to clarify the use of the term "external" and to potentially change the policy's title.

**Approve & Change Title | ALL IN FAVOUR**

## **Danny To Lead | ALL IN FAVOUR**

### **GENERAL**

The need to improve the existing SU policy which is outdated and not implemented. They plan to start on a clean slate basis and update the policy bylaw, where all policies must be sponsored by an FTO who will take accountability. Follow-up actions will depend on stakeholders.

**Vote on reviewing | ALL in favour**

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### **Agenda Item 5 | For Information Officer Reports | Full-Time Officers**

Callum reported on the success of the PG pizza party, which was attended by over 40 people and received positive feedback. There was a discussion about how to continue similar activities and improve communication with PG students. The cost of living was briefly discussed, with Cal drafting a policy for a 20% reduction in gown hire and a grad access fund. There was also a discussion about the LCO ToR and how it would work for forums without an LCO. This will be addressed after the exec elections.

Noah updated the group on the rep scheme and appointment timeline, and the group also discussed anonymous marking and the need for better communication about the ASK platform. They also talked about the need for study spaces and support for the cost of living crisis. The group discussed automatic extensions and the need for clarity across different faculties. Finally, India informed the group that resources for future strike action have been prepared and are available.

Danny mentioned that two main resources, a spreadsheet and guidance, were provided to the voice team for the campaign and will be available on the website. There was a discussion about including forums in society awards, but it was suggested that forums should be separate. The speaker is actively looking for representatives for every federation in the societies committee. There was also a mention of a follow-up meeting about EDI champions, and all LCOs will be involved in the discussion. Lastly, Cal reminded the group that LCOs will be required to report in the next meeting, and people's characteristics are being monitored as part of the nominations process.

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### **Agenda Item 6 | For Information NUS National Conference Policy | Callum Slater**

The minutes of the meeting include discussions about Union's inclusion going forward. The NUS Policy was explained, where every SU can submit one policy, grouped into key themes, and then voted on by all SU's in a priority ballot. A shortlist is taken to a conference to speak about in break-out rooms. It was noted that where assembly is involved, a ballot will come up soon, and members can instruct how it is done. There was also a reminder that nominations are still open, and questions on the paper were written by NUS. Members requested to include Q+ and to note that the questions also include "black\*" that could exclude some members.

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### **Agenda Item 7 | Any Other Business**

The meeting minutes show that there will not be any by-elections to fill the last positions, which caused dissatisfaction among some members. The board had requested that these elections not take place, as they wanted to give themselves time to get the assembly off the ground before updating. One member pointed out that pushing the problem down the line was not acceptable and that they should have been consulted on this matter. Another member suggested bringing this up in the

future, emphasizing that everyone should be seen as equals. It was noted that the articles allowed people who had not previously been part of JCRs to have a chance to speak, which was important.