



Lancaster University Students' Union

Emergency Meeting of Union Assembly

2pm – 3:30pm, Monday 11th September via Microsoft Teams
su.governance@lancaster.ac.uk

Minutes

Agenda Item 1. Introductions & Apologies

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Attendance</i>
Cerys Evans	President	In attendance
Sam Hedges	VP Education	In attendance
Santi Siabato Trujillo	VP Societies & Media	In attendance
Jack Watson	VP Sport	In attendance
Harrison Stewart	VP Union Development	In attendance
Josh Newsham	VP Welfare	In attendance
Annika Budhrani	International Students' Officer	In attendance
Thomas Cross	LGBTQ+ Students Officer	In attendance
Molly O-Reilly-Kime	Mature Students Officer	In attendance
Aminah Mann	Racial & Ethnic Minority Officer	Apologies
Rowan Birch	Students with Disabilities Officer	In attendance
Luke Halpin	Students with Disabilities Officer	Apologies
Hana Dodsworth	Women+ Officer	In attendance
Harry Wrench	Union Assembly Delegate	Absent
Amy Stanning	Union Assembly Delegate	Apologies
Kinga Kupi	Union Assembly Delegate	In attendance
Matthew Lamb	Union Assembly Delegate	Apologies

Frank Longdon, LUSU Student Insight & Voice Manager was in attendance as administrative support.

Harrison Stewart introduced the meeting and invited attendees to introduce themselves.

Agenda Item 2. For Approval: Development and Evolution – Union Assembly, Revitalised (Harrison Stewart, VP Union Development 23/24)

Harrison Stewart introduced the motion and summarised its contents.

Amendment 1: 3 additional non-portfolio delegates (Thomas Cross, LGBTQ+ Officer 23/24)

Thomas Cross introduced the amendment and articulated their support of the overall motion. They explained they thought it would be a mistake to remove the non-portfolio posts as not all students engaged in Academic Reps, Societies, Sports,



and Colleges. Election turnout is a wider issue, than just UA Delegate post. As we have 4 still, there is still some appetite for the post.

Sam Hedges – non-portfolio posts not in there to see how it would work during 23/24 year. We are looking to put in UA delegates in over the next 3 years, on the basis of increased engagement in elections in the future. I would be supportive of a motion to re-introduce them in the future but not now.

Hana Dodsworth – if we aren't going to do now, we need a review date. We need to have smaller roles to allow some people to get involved in SU. I don't think you should have to be pushed to take on big roles like College Presidents. We have to have accessibility for all levels of leadership roles.

Josh Newsham – I agree with Hana. I understand the potential reasoning behind not having UA delegates. If there is appetite for the role we should have them. We need to give more people more support to get involved, this could be reducing workload of other roles. I would like to propose a compromise – pass the motion in principle: elect UA Delegates in Michaelmas Term to have in from January. We have the opportunity to trial this year.

Thomas Cross – are you suggesting we pass the motion so that we have delegates elected this term if it doesn't work without them.

Josh Newsham – we park this conversation to gauge student opinion on this. Keep current UA Delegates – we have a contract with them. I would like the opinion of current UA Delegates.

Harrison Stewart – current UA Delegates will stay-in until their term ends. We would still have non-portfolio posts.

Hana Dodsworth – when does term end?

Harrison Stewart – will end at the end of the year.

Hana Dodsworth – we have delegates in Term 1 so can test then, and look to elect once current ones have finished.

Thomas Cross – I want to hear others' opinions. I can amend my amendment so that Assembly will review at the end of Term 1.

Harrison Stewart – whole thing needs to be continually reviewed.

Rowan Birch – if 2 people would be running for role, but cannot, that is a big loss. Big concern, something we should be avoiding. Presidents can be the representatives, a big role. Issue of not having capacity to do UA responsibilities. We shouldn't be putting more barriers in-place.

Josh Newsham – I completely agree with you. We are very flexible, and welcome Tom's suggestion. Proposal is based on attendance and discussion from last year.

Harrison Stewart – main reason we want to remove UA Delegates is lack of knowledge and engagement in UA – College Presidents and others allow more



discussion about UA activity and decisions. Could put us in stronger position to recruit UA Delegates in the future.

Sam Hedges – I agree we should review in January. Give sus time to work out issue sin system.

Harrison Stewart moved meeting to next amendment.

Amendment 2: election of Chair (Thomas Cross, LGBTQ+ Officer 23/24)

Thomas Cross introduced the amendment. Having an internal chair makes a more relaxed environment, they are one of you. I don't think arguments hold up for appointed chair – everyone has internal biases, elected chair is able to removed. Chairing gives you skills that are very useful. Many proposed positions have chairing skills through their role. The idea that the chair would lose their point of view, also some roles have duplicates (ie societies). It is normal procedure to have a member of a meeting act as chair.

Harrison Stewart – it is not my view that anyone is incapable of chairing.

Josh Newsham – in previous years, you could not hold some roles and act as Chair. It's important that we don't alienate people. If we widen UA up, is it only delegates who can do it? Appointed chair can be more impartial.

Thomas Cross – there would be a drawback. I don't think my forum exec would be unhappy if I ran to be chair of UA as well as LCO. New model has a massive wealth of talent, we don't need to go outside the meeting and pay someone to do the chairing.

Josh Newsham – I wasn't saying volunteers take away anything. In a cost of living crisis, we should be looking for way to employ students. Same argument for delegates applies here, why does someone have to go through other UA roles. I think Colleges would be very upset if Presidents went for Chair role. I agree with original proposal.

Sam Hedges – chair will be appointed by panel, decided by UA. I like this model. We looked at how FTOs can be held to account whilst everyone can do their role. I started from position of: should President be Chair? UA is there for us all to be held accountable. I like that we are paying them for their labour. Good way to give a student skills.

Hana Dodsworth – I am against the idea of paying the chair. It will start the debate around not paying other roles on Union Assembly. I like having someone external, just not payment when everyone else is volunteers.

Sam Hedges – can I explain legality of this, if elected by student body and paid you can only hold post for 2 years. If elected and paid as an LCO, you could only run for one year as an FTO.

Hana Dodsworth – I wasn't saying I wanted to be paid. I am happy with my hoodie. Who is deciding who is going to be impartial? There is no insurance that the person will be impartial. How are we deciding and avoiding biases in recruitment process?



Rowan Birch – on payment for LCOs, we are adults. People can run with knowledge that they are limiting their opportunities. I understand difficulties around it. Some of the arguments don't feel very respectful that nominees for posts are adults – not for us to decide.

Josh Newsham – payment for LCOs is a separate debate and one UA should have. I would argue that the chair would be accountable in the staffing structure of the SU. I don't want to continue discussion on assumption that there is no accountability.

Thomas Cross – I think there needs to be more work in-place on how we hold them to account and what happens if they step down, and who fills-in.

Cerys Evans – Could you summarise points in discussion, original proposal, and submitted amendments.

Harrison Stewart – summarises the amendment 2a. and outcomes of discussion on the amendment.

Vote to keep motion as-is and review in January before election cycle.

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

Approved. Amendment falls. Union Assembly commits to review need for non-portfolio positions in January.

Thomas Cross – summarises the amendment 2b. Harrison Stewart – summarised outcomes of discussion on the amendment.

Thomas Cross withdraws the amendment.

Vote on proposed changes to Union Assembly:

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

Approved.

Hana Dodsworth asked that UA be provided with purple little hands for future voting.

For Approval: Sports Committee (Jack Watson, VP Sport 23/24)

Jack Watson introduced the motion, and takes it as read.

Vote on motion:

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

Approved.



For Approval: Appointment of External Trustee – Amanda Chetwynd (Harrison Stewart, VP Union Development 23/24)

Harrison Stewart introduced the paper.

Josh Newsham – she is an excellent Trustee. I have full trust in Appointments Committee.

Sam Hedges – Amanda is my external guidance and has done excellent things for the SU.

Vote on appointment:

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

Approved.

Any Other Business

Payment of LCOs

Josh Newsham – I think we should discuss payment for student volunteers. Given financial position of the SU, we can't pay everyone. The FTOs should take back into internal discussions so that the SU has a valid reason to pay/not pay.

Cerys Evans – I enjoy this conversation. As a former LCO, now FTO, Rowan's point about an informed choice is really interesting. It might have stopped me being an LCO and work felt like I should have been paid for it. There is the risk we are removing politically motivated people for LCO positions. Work of many volunteers is absolutely valued, if not for law everyone should be paid loads. Choosing between LCOs and FTOs in the future, is an interesting problem. Doesn't sit ethically well for me.

Molly O'Reilly-Kime – could we have a grant? Instead of an hourly paid role. £1000-£2000 payment for fulfilling role. You are asking people to put in a lot of work for nothing but the pleasure of building a community. Doesn't have to be paid in the conventional sense.

Josh Newsham – from the grants perspective I completely agree, this happens elsewhere. The work I am doing is looking at student leaders programme and LCOs around payment and integration into Uni processes. Something I will definitely take away to discuss with Uni. SU may not have money, but there is space for Uni to provide grants. We could be doing a lot more benefits, beyond payment as well. Things to translate into meaningful benefits for student leaders.

Thomas Cross – definitely needs to be discussed with a wider UA and gives us time to research sector and legality. I agree with Rowan, you are an adult – choice may put some people off. As does non-payment for LCO, that will put people off now. Argument for chair's payment and cost of living, works for LCOs too. In recent years most FTOs have held role for 1 year.

Sam Hedges – we should be discussing this with wider UA. We could action FTOs to create a "student leaders benefits" paper for a future UA and/or Trustee Board meeting.

Harrison Stewart – go to UA first, then Trustees.



ACTION: FTOs to create “student leaders’ benefit” paper and bring to next meeting.

Hana Dodsworth – I worked alongside being an LCO last year. Non-payment is cutting off access for a lot of people. There hasn’t been demand for the roles in recent years. Payment gives people more incentives and gives more people the opportunity. Can I have a mug?

Josh Newsham – none of us are saying we don’t want to pay student leaders. We are trying to find pragmatic solutions. Our roles work before COVID and the cost of living crises. We need solutions that work now. People aren’t running. We also need a standardised approach.

Santi Siabato Trujillo – FTOs do acknowledge that we all didn’t get paid as volunteers in the SU and understand experiences. We are having the conversations. We didn’t get any appreciation too. It should not be happening, Student leaders should be recognised and celebrated.

Sam Hedges – can we action FTOs to do paper.

Josh Newsham – we can include updates in our FTO updates in each meeting. I will put mugs in LCO tote bags.

Other matters

Cerys Evans – I am really excited to work with you all. We love you and appreciate you. If there is any small way that you would like to be appreciated, please let us know.