



# UNION ASSEMBLY

## Union Assembly Minutes

Agenda for the meeting held: **TUESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026, 3PM – 6PM**

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### Agenda Item 1 | Introductions

*Minutes of the meeting 03/02/25:* [Minutes](#)

*In attendance:* Rory O’Ceallaigh, Emily Houston-Woods, Leah Buttery, Henry Carter, Siven Howard, Sonny Remmer-Riley, Emily Smith, Yasir Shahbaz, Lena Szafraniec, Haneef Shittu & Suhaani Hardikar, Kate Bracewell, Sam Dosanjh, Finn Van Breugel, John Ray, Alex Cooper, Ninoshka D’Costa, Sam Burgess, Isaac Harrison, Lucas Abbott, Georgie Johansen, Henry Pollard, Daniela Deighton, Samuel Clark, Anna Muchardt, Kit Smith, Emily Kynaston, Akshaya Ghotekar, David Gott, Olivia Speed, Paddy McLean, James Taylor.

*Proxies:* Naill Barlow (for Jess Thorpe).

*Apologies:* Liz Gillett, Ifaz Younus, Niamh McAuley.

*Absent:* Victoria Nyoni, Erica Grecu, Navyah Vasihisth, Zenwin Yang, Emad Nouraldeen.

The Chair (Carys Smith) opened the meeting and noted apologies and proxy arrangements.

The minutes of the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026 were approved.

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### Agenda Item 2 | For Discussion | Full-Time Officer Report

Full-Time Officer team

*Report:* [FTO Union Assembly Report 10/03/26](#)

Rory O’Ceallaigh presented the **President Report**.

Rory spoke about increases to rent for on-campus accommodation and provided updates on other manifesto pledges. Rory explained the scrapping of LU Future and recent workshops on College Re-design. Rory noted project plans due for Professional Re-Design projects. Rory noted that the Union is still unable to account for where College membership fees goes within the University. Rory provided an update on industrial action and the conditions for PGR students and staff in FHASS. Rory also updated Union Assembly on car parking, busses and bikes, and circuit laundry (including the NUS’ campaign). Rory raised concerns about the NUS’ tactics in their campaign. Rory was pleased to hear the incoming Officers’ ideas about student engagement within University change projects. Rory and Leah are attending parliament tomorrow to lobby the government on tuition fees and student debt. Rory congratulated all candidates in the 2026 Students’ Union elections.

No questions.

Emily Houston-Woods presented the **Activities Officer Report**.

Emily provided an update on the Sports Review. Emily has met the University about arrangements for the Sports Access Fund, it is going to be for Societies too. On student leader training, work continues to standardise the offering for different volunteers. Emily updated Union Assembly on progress on the experience of women+ students in leadership, including an upcoming video to help raise awareness. The majority of Emily's time is spent on Roses, every team has met the Union and the fixture timetable is being finalised. CALM is the charity for this year. The BUCS Neurodiversity Committee will meet soon and trans+ inclusion is already on the agenda. Societies Committee is going to present ideas for increased access to flat-floor space to the University.

James Taylor – will the Access Fund, when split over 5 years, account for interest?

Emily Houston-Woods – the account the Fund is stored in does accrue interest.

Rory O'Ceallaigh presented the **Education Officer report** on behalf of Liz Gillett.

Semesterisation is going to be delayed and the new curriculum will go ahead. There are concerns about content and assessment bunching. Noticeboard and lockers have been installed in the PGR Hub, though progress is slow.

David Gott – I have reached to students and encouraged them to share their views.

Rory continued with Liz's report. Work continues to scope out PG study space in the city centre.

No questions.

Leah Buttery presented the **Wellbeing Officer Report**.

There has been limited progress on student mental wellbeing, though Leah is meeting University senior leaders to consider future measures. Leah noted the five recent student deaths and noted that a member of staff within the University is focused on drugs as a leading cause of death. Leah is preparing a report for the Council on streetlighting, most locations identified in the research were fairly well-lit or green spaces unsuitable to additional lighting. More work is needed to understand feelings on unsafety in town, in collaboration with the Council. Leah has written a proposal for the University on free period products for the University, this will be circulated soon. The University gave a provisional timeline for launching the free period products, which will happen before the end of the academic year. Leah offered repeat training for new JCR Officers to encourage more student-led wellbeing initiatives. Leah is working with a student campaign to distribute menstrual cups to students, along with work to destigmatise menstruation.

Siven Howard provided an update on EHRC guidance on trans+ inclusion. Siven noted Good Law Project's case in the High Court, which resulted in a ruling that the EHRC guidance was legal but not correct. This means, that the University cannot force a trans+ student to use facilities that do not align with their lived gender. It is unclear if this impacts student groups. Siven updated on their work to keep campus trans+ inclusive. Siven explained that LGBTQ+ Accommodation seems to have been approved and in-action, though they were unaware of when. On Gender Affirmation Fund, Siven explained that a lack of staffing resource within the Union had meant it had not been operationalised. The

LGBTQ+ Community asked the Vice-Chancellor for £5000 and that the University are interested in running the Fund as a part of Widening Participation work.

James Taylor – I don't understand how students and staff are treated differently in the EHRC guidance.

Siven Howard – for the University, the difference is between service-users and staff. I don't understand either.

James Taylor – do we know where PGRs sit?

Siven Howard – we don't know. That is something we are trying to work out.

Leah Buttery continued her report. On sexual misconduct, Leah is arranging regular meetings with the University. Leah updated Union Assembly on the low participation rate in consent training during induction and the need for peer-to-peer training delivery.

Sam Burgess – on Wellbeing Services, you noted that many students do not know how to access them.

Leah Buttery – the University have created a single point of entry for referrals and self-referral. They are also rolling out tiered training for staff to empower them to handle disclosures and direct students into the Wellbeing Service. I am trying to work on the pre-conceptions students may have.

James Taylor – could Mental Health 1<sup>st</sup> Aid Training be offered to JCR Wellbeing Officers?

Leah Buttery – I think that could be great. The University have put on training in partnership with Lancashire Mind, I did it and found it very valuable.

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### **Agenda Item 3 | For Discussion | Price of Drinks at The Sugarhouse**

Misbah Ashraf, LUSU Chief Executive

*Paper:* [The Sugarhouse Drinks Prices](#) [RESTRICTED]

Rory O'Ceallaigh introduced the paper.

Rory explained that the paper is intended to provide transparency and explained that the fact that prices have gone up is not restricted. However, other aspects of the paper are commercially sensitive. Rory explained the need for price increases and noted the contentiousness of price increases. Rory explained the importance of The Sugarhouse as a nightclub in town and an income stream for student activity within the Union. Rory noted that entry prices have not increased and that the increases to the price of soft drink has been managed to be minimal.

James Taylor – what other cost-cutting strategies have been explored?

Misbah Ashraf – we tender the security contract, the company we use are due to increase their costs. Lancaster has minimal security companies on offer, we actively pursue complaints against FGH from students. We did consider moving security in-house, we also investigated the value of recruiting staff through the University's ERS system. We don't want to change that system or the wage we pay staff and the shift length we offer our student staff. We have made changes to The Sugarhouse management team, which was a huge cost saving. We get scrutiny internally and at Trustee Board on costs.

James Taylor – could you share the security costs?

Misbah Ashraf – I could but I don't have it on me. It changes dependent on the event or number of people in the venue. The Sugarhouse has a lot more security in comparison to

other venues, based upon its capacity. The Union use FGH for other events at the same rate.

Student – is there a potential to use competitors, for instance where Red Bull have increased by 30p?

Misbah Ashraf – we have done. A year ago we replaced our soft drink supplier which meant we could maintain the price of soft drinks. We stock the cheapest options through the NUS Consortium. For some suppliers, if we hit certain targets, we can get a payout from the Consortium. With this money, we are looking at an investment in the sound system and re-opening the closed bar ready for Roses. We are a glass-free venue, to buy products in plastic is more expensive. Therefore we can't match competitors' deals on triple shots, it is also against our policies.

Sonny Remmer-Riley – you mentioned the NUS Consortium. How much would it cost us to do this locally?

Rory O'Ceallaigh - leaving the Consortium would be different to leaving NUS UK. We have a deal with the bars on-campus, which allows them to buy through the Consortium under our name.

Misbah Ashraf – the University buys all the alcohol through the NUS Consortium.

Rory O'Ceallaigh - the Consortium's buying power is linked to the number of Unions within it. Recently, some suppliers to the Consortium have been a problem and have raised their prices. It is a big mess, and we can look at the cost implications. We can leave the Consortium without leaving the political arm of NUS.

Sam Burgess – are there any other ways in which we are restricted by the Consortium?

Misbah Ashraf – we only buy drinks through the Consortium. It doesn't affect other purchases.

James Taylor – since the closure of LA1, have you seen a greater footfall?

Misbah Ashraf – we have seen a small increase in footfall. There has been a decline post-COVID in the number of people drinking in venues. The average footfall is around 1000; we are now entering a quiet period ahead of Roses weekend.

Rory O'Ceallaigh - we go through the numbers after every night. It is quite healthy to have a few competitors to encourage people to go out. It isn't in students' or the Union's interest to not have other venues open in town.

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#### **Agenda Item 4 | For Approval | Trans+ Inclusion to Sport Statements**

Siven Howard, LGBTQ+ Officer

Emily Houston-Woods, LUSU Activities Officer

Leah Buttery, LUSU Wellbeing Officer

Nyxon Rockliffe-Fidler, President of Women+ in Sport Society

*Motion:* [Trans+ Inclusion to Sport Statements](#)

Siven Howard presented the motion.

Siven provided an update on the on-going trans+ inclusion campaign. Siven explained the complexity involved related to the individual governing body (NGB) of each sport setting their own policy on trans+ inclusion.

Emily Houston-Woods explained the gender eligibility rules set by NGBs that direct the policies of BUCS and student groups. Emily noted the changes made by NGBs following the EHRC guidance. BUCS created a spreadsheet outlining the rules for each individual sport. Emily reassured attendees on the confusing nature of trans+ inclusion in sport.

Siven Howard explained the intention of the motion to encourage student groups to provide a statement on how they are trans+ inclusive, where they are, and why they are not. This should outline which activities are/are not trans+ inclusive. Siven explained the need to provide greater clarity to students and put some additional pressure on NGBs. Siven explained that this would be part of re-affiliation for sports clubs and that the Union would run workshops to support groups to produce their statement.

Emily Houston-Woods explained that the intention is to move the blame off club executives and on to the governing bodies on their sports. The EHRC guidance has produced a lot of problems for students. Emily explained the need for action to demonstrate support for students.

Rory O’Ceallaigh - this particularly asks groups for a couple of sentences available for students to read.

Emily Houston-Woods - yes

Student – is the onus on clubs to find the information?

Emily – I have the information and will share with clubs.

Vote on the motion:

For: 32

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Union Assembly approved the motion.

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### **Agenda Item 5 | For Information | Student Leader Uniform Proposal**

Rory O’Ceallaigh, LUSU President

*Paper:* [Student Leader Uniform Proposal](#)

Rory O’Ceallaigh presented the paper.

Rory explained that the policy is already happening due to work of Sports Committee and JCR Executives. Rory explained the intention to provide clarity for all student leaders that the Union will provide funding and give leaders as much optionality as is feasible. Rory explained that suppliers are being investigated to ensure we are getting ethical clothing.

No questions.

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### **Agenda Item 6 | For Approval | Proposal to Install an Air-Supported Tennis Dome for University Outdoor Tennis Courts**

Emily Houston-Woods, LUSU Activities Officer

Janick Arm, Lancaster University Tennis Club Men’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Captain

*Paper:* [Proposal to Install an Air-Supporting Tennis Dome for University Outdoor Tennis Courts](#)

Janick Arm presented the proposal and introduced themselves.

Janick explained the need for cover for the tennis courts to avoid cancellations in the future.

Janick explained that a typical sport loses less than 10% of sessions. The Social and Development Squad had to cancel 63% of their sessions due to the weather. Janick

presented the air-supported tennis dome as the solution to avoid cancellations in the future.

Janick explained that there are no indoor tennis court elsewhere in Lancaster. Lancaster already has courts, as most of the expense is associated with developing the courts

themselves. The estimated cost would be £200,000-330,000 and that this would be viable within the Sports Centre's budget. The LTA predicts a 164% increase in revenue potential. Janick outlined other revenue streams available. Janick explained the potential impact on other sports, including Netball, and the potential for use during holiday periods by the local community. Janick provided case studies from Reading and York where air-supported tennis domes have been a success.

Emily Houston-Woods clarified that the intention is that Union Assembly would vote to action her to lobby the University to secure the dome. Emily explained her belief that it is important to support College sport.

Georgie Johansen – from a College sport perspective, we agree. We can't use the indoor courts as they are too expensive. I would love a dome over the outdoor courts. But, how expensive would this become for court hire? This could price-out College sport.

Janick Arm – I envisioned both the availability of indoor and outdoor courts. As a viable alternative when the weather requires it. The more backing this has, the more I can speak to the Sports Centre and other stakeholders. At the moment, it is a one-man mission.

Rory O'Ceallaigh - the University has a rolling budget for sport. If in budget, it should not impact the cost of court hire. They have invested in the 3G and that did not affect hire fees. The capital investment plan includes a lot of things including the Ruskin.

Janick Arm – people just come down and use the courts. They will have more bookings and that should off-set the additional costs.

Yasir Shahbaz – regarding prices, would there be a difference in price between indoor and outdoor courts?

Janick Arm – the goal is for the price to remain the same. At York, they have outdoor and indoor courts. On how it is built, I cannot guarantee that there would be outdoor space, though that is the goal.

Olivia Speed – with the quote you found, it was for 2-4 courts. Are you concerned that including Netball would increase the price?

Janick Arm – the prices I have provided are for 4 tennis courts. We could do half tennis courts and netball courts instead.

Emily Houston-Woods – the University has money every year to invest in the campus. We are just trying to direct where it is spent.

Emily Kynaston – there would be an issue with indoor and outdoor courts. The netball courts flood when it rains and there is a lot of demand.

Janick Arm – these are all details that need to be addressed but that I cannot answer right now. With more backing, I can secure more serious conversations with the University and key decision-makers.

Emily Kynaston – how long do these things take to construct? We have 9 College teams and 2 University teams.

Janick Arm – I always assumed this would be built between academic years, over Summer would be best.

James Taylor – the dome lasts 10 years. Have you considered a more long-term option?

Janick Arm – who read the LTA guidelines attached into the paper? The price rises exponentially dependent on the different built options. I presume that this option that this is the solution the University is most likely to go for.

James Taylor - £200,000 for 10 years is a significant cost.

Janick Arm displayed LTA guidance on Low Cost Indoor Structures on the screen.

Janick Arm – I am going for the most viable option. The best course of action is to talk it through with people with more expertise.

Siven Howard – as this a motion to action Emily, I don't see an issue with approving it. As long as this won't impact money for other things and prices don't raise for sports teams.

Janick Arm – this is the first stepping stone.

Vote on the proposal:

For: 32  
Against: 0  
Abstain: 0

Union Assembly approved the proposal.

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### **Agenda Item 7 | For Discussion | Reps for NUS Elections 2026**

Rory O'Ceallaigh, LUSU President

*More Information:* [NUS Elections](#)

*Rep Entitlements:* [Democracy at NUS](#)

Rory O'Ceallaigh explained the NUS Elections and the need for recognised NUS Reps.

Siven Howard – we have many Reps to cover LGBTQ+ and Trans.

Rory O'Ceallaigh - I propose that we use our Liberation Forums.

Union Assembly approved the use of Liberation Officers as Liberation Reps for the election of NUS Vice President Liberation & Equality.

Rory O'Ceallaigh - we could go with the FTOs and 3 other people.

Union Assembly voted to open nominations to members of Union Assembly.

The following members of Union Assembly nominated themselves: Alex Cooper, Finn Van Breugel, Yasir Shahbaz, Sonny Remmer-Riley, Sam Burgess.

Nominees each gave a short speech. Voting took place via an online form.

Alex Cooper, Finn Van Breugel & Sam Burgess were elected at LUSU NUS Reps 2026.

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### **Agenda Item 8 | For Discussion | Renaming Meeting Rooms in LUSU**

Rory O'Ceallaigh, LUSU President

*Paper:* [Renaming Meeting Rooms in LUSU](#)

Rory O'Ceallaigh presented the paper and provided background on the two spaces.

Siven Howard – I would like to call the Board room, the “Bored Room”.

Finn - “Roomy McRoom Face”

Leah – the “Carys Smith room”

Henry Carter – can we have an LCO room?

James Taylor – Conference Room A and Conference Room B

David Gott – how about LUSU but spelt backwards?

Olivia Speed – that is a great idea

Siven Howard – we should have a contest to see who gets to choose the names.  
Finn Van Breugel – Mr Beast style, whoever removed their hand last wins.  
Haneef Shittu – do a raffle, whoever wins gets to name it.  
Rory O’Ceallaigh - what has been agreed?  
James Taylor – what's wrong with leaving it as it is?  
Emily Houston-Woods – we will do a democratic process.

Union Assembly did not agree an approach to renaming the new meeting rooms in LUSU.

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## **Agenda Item 9 | Any Other Business**

### **Accessibility Community Terms of Reference**

The amended draft of the Terms of Reference were shared by Henry Carter via Teams to members of Union Assembly on 9<sup>th</sup> March.

Henry Carter presented the amended Terms of Reference for Accessibility Community for ratification by Union Assembly.

Vote to ratify the Accessibility Community Terms of Reference:

For:	32
Against:	0
Abstain:	0

Union Assembly ratify the Acessibility Community Terms of Reference.

### **JCR Review**

Sonny Remmer-Riley – will the report after the JCR Review be shared?

Rory O’Ceallaigh - yes, we will bring it to Union Assembly