

Guide for Student Council Chair 7th November

The Attendance list can be found at the end of the document

Introduction

Victoria, the chair, welcomed people into the meeting. Attendees filled the attendance form.

Victoria asked if anyone had any questions about the minutes from the previous meeting and if they were happy to proceed. No one had questions. Victoria outlined the agenda items then passed onto the Full-Time Officers to give their updates.

Jade gave two forms for students to fill out if they would like to get involved in the Black Excellence Gala Working Group and the Black student Experience Conference.

Proposal to rename BAME Officer to Ethnic Equality Officer

Victoria explained that there are a few proposals to vote on tonight. Victoria invited Jade Thomas to give a speech about their proposal. No one had any questions about the proposal so the vote commenced. 58 students voted for, 1 voted against and 5 abstained. The proposal passes.

Proposal to extend Gym hours

Victoria invited Jacob Thomas and James Crookes to come to the front to give a two-minute speech about the proposal. One attendee asked if the university doesn't want to work on the proposal, then what would the compromise be e.g., quiet times offered. The proposers responded by saying that there are already quiet times but usually by 10am the gym is full and busy. 68 students voted for the proposal and 5 abstained. The proposal passes.

Proposal to do annual Asian Heritage Month campaign

Haleigh Gregory was invited to speak about their proposal for two-minutes. One comment was made about the proposal saying the proposal is easy to implement as it will be Welcome Week. 60 students for the proposal, 2 voted against and 1 student abstained. The proposal passes.

Proposal to extend opening times for food outlets and reduce food costs

Victoria invited Alex Burt to speak about their proposal about food outlets for two minutes. No questions were asked. 67 students voted for the proposal, 2 voted against and 1 student abstained. The proposal passes.

Proposal to support Boycotts, Divestments and Sanctions

Next, Victoria invited Ahmed Soliman to give a speech about the BDS proposal. No questions were asked. 102 students voted for the proposal, 9 voted against and 11 abstained. The proposal passes. One student commented on the proposal by saying that

because the Students' Union put out a statement of neutrality and is continuing to fund companies that fund Israel, this contradicts their statement about neutrality.

Support

Victoria mentioned that some of the things discussed might be distressing, and signposted students to access support from the Advice by emailing advice@leicester.ac.uk or going to the website (<https://www.leicesterunion.com/support/advice/>). Victoria mentioned that the Advice service runs from 10am to 4pm Mon-Fri and you can also access out of office support should you need it. They also mentioned there are weekly Mental Health Matters sessions in the Students' Union on Mondays.

Scrutiny process

Victoria let attendees know that there were no more proposals and introduced the Scrutiny process that is ongoing. This is a process to hold your Executive Officers to account, it enables transparency within the Students' Union, ensures that students are being represented and rates Officers based on their manifesto promises. Victoria let students know that the reports are now live on the website.

Submit questions to your FTOs

Victoria invited students to submit questions that the Officers would answer in a written document and a video that is posted online. The form closes on the 8th November at 3pm.

Upcoming events: NUS Delegate elections

Victoria let students know about upcoming events. The first is the NUS Delegate elections which will run in November. These elections determine who will go to the NUS National Conference next semester. Being elected for this role and attending the Conference means you can debate the NUS' political direction, vote on which policies the NUS should endorse, meet other delegates and discover what other unions across the UK are doing to tackle large issues.

Nominations open on the 14th November so students can have time to decide whether if they would like to run. If students would like to get involved, they need to go on the Voice page of the Students' Union website and nominate themselves when the portal opens. There is a campaigning and voting period to be aware of. One student asked if one day to vote is enough. The voting period is shorter because there are less roles to fill compared to other elections. If there aren't enough votes there will be a by-election later in the year.

Networks meeting

The next Networks meeting is on Tuesday 14th November. It will be held in Room 2.04 in Sir Bob Burgess and in hybrid format. More information is on the What's On page of the SU website. The networks are places to discuss ideas with the Part-time Officers.

Annual Members Meeting

Victoria mentioned that the most important meeting of the year is in a few weeks. This meeting is where there will be a financial overview of the Students' Union as well as a look at the strategy and the Full-Time Officer's main updates. Students don't need to sign-up beforehand.

Hot Topic discussion

Jade facilitated the discussion and introduced the Hot Topic and questions. She divided the room into groups and they spent 10-15 minutes discussing ideas and nominated one person from the groups to relay their ideas.

One group said belonging is being a part of something such as a society or your course, and being involved with others who share similar values and being able to relate to them.

The group discussed that they don't want to go to the SU building often because of how packed it gets because of the food outlets and they don't like going to Brookfield because it's so far away.

Another group said they don't want to go to the cold rooms such as the library. Because the rooms are too cold, they had to leave to go somewhere warmer. They mentioned that lectures have had to be cancelled because it's too cold. They suggested having more money for societies can increase belonging. They also suggested having a more active Student Council would be valuable.

Another group mentioned that belonging is having a place to be such as a society and having somewhere you want to be. The things that they suggested improvements for is the SU involvement within societies because they know that societies complain that the budget is very low.

Another group discussed that for certain courses there are many Indians from different areas like for example, the South and West and that there should be more celebrations about South or East Indian festivals because they can be overlooked. They suggested there should be more awareness surrounding things such as a Diwali lunch, by sending out a weekly email, because some students only find out after it happens. They suggested that if not every student gets an email, course reps could email about it so they can share the events.

Another student suggested that people should wear lanyards and people should be allowed to sit in Gee's because the door is often shut and it's a space that students could use when the Students' Union is busy. They expressed a dislike for the layout of Charles Wilson and that they think there's a lack of awareness about the games room.

One group thought there are not enough plugs on campus which can be a struggle when you need to charge your laptops, especially in two-hour lectures. They mentioned they would avoid Fielding Johnson because it is cold, especially in the basement, and the wifi is terrible.

Another group remarked that the Games room isn't signposted well and not many students can use Percy Gee because it is very busy.

Another group said that belonging is making sure that Leicester makes you feel at home, having friends, restaurants and places to go to that make you happy. Improvements included signposting because from their experience as a peer mentor they find that students are left to read off a website for help, which isn't engaging. They mentioned that Students' Union activities often happen after lectures so people are left to choose between going to their society or getting home safe. They believe that lighting needs to be fixed. They highlighted that the girls' basketball ends late and lighting around Danielle Brown and outside Fielding Johnson is terrible. They also said that the library is too social and would think that getting security to go around to stop students being too loud would be helpful for those who are trying to focus.

The final in-person group noted that belonging is being comfortable by yourself or with people. To improve the campus, they suggested that there should be individual private study

spaces or more study pods, as well as more events to bring a large sense of community between city and village. They thought the bus service running more frequently would be good and they expressed a distaste for the Engineering building.

Online suggestions and comments included:

- There is a lack of charging spots especially in Fielding Johnson
- There is a separation between distance learners and campus-based students. They felt Distance Learning students aren't represented a lot on campus so maybe bridging the gap would be helpful.
- Mental health services need to be prioritised especially for distanced learners
- In response to food outlets closing early, Freemans is open until 11pm and stop serving food from 9pm, although there are now hot food vending machines in Charles Wilson and will be in the library soon which is cheaper than LSP food
- Maurice Shock Building LT2 is unfit for purpose as it is too hot and uncomfortable

Hot topic suggestions

Victoria introduced the fact that as a Students' Union, we want to talk about what students care about. Because of this, we would like students to send their ideas for hot topic discussions in future student council meetings. Victoria shared a form for future Hot Topic ideas. The Full Time Officers will decide which idea to work on in future Student Council meetings.

Victoria thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting drew to a close.

Minutes compiled by Lucille Gwati and Amelia Jones on 8th November 2023.

Attendance:

Jade Thomas

Jack McDonald

Joe Hyett

Prachi Bhatt

Haleigh Gregory

Raja, Mahnoor

Chadwick, Ella

Georgia Parsisson

Mulla, Aaminah

Chaudhry, Aaminah F.

Tutakhel, Arun

Sahaya Afra Johanna, Afra

Tesfamariam, Abel

Akinrinmade, Eri
Hassan, Abdulahi
Georgia Parsisson
Samra, Renee K.
Patel, Shiva
Neilson, Abigail R.
Roselle
Ralls, Molly
Ellis, Ryan
Boulton, Victoria
Manuel Paes, Jessica B.
Teixeira, Daniel
Edwards, Joshua J.
Ella Chadwick
Mensah, Caitlyn J.
Al-Safi, Eamon
Lok, Jenson Y.
Ong, Ansel M.J.
Newnham, Zoe F.
Taimoor, Muhammad A.
Kofi-Dhere, Amira
Barwell, Melissa
Platonos, Emili
Akinsinmide, Ayo
Brunning, Alice K.R.
Hayward, Natalie K.E.
Mather, Molly G.
Jagot, Aaisha
Neaupane, Cilla
Glanc, Sylwia
Wright, Charlotte-Lilly L.P.
Asad, Sheeba

Tayali, Chloe

Sylvester, Vanessa A.

latoya

Okono, Tami A.

Silveira, Roselle T.

Thornton, Mikaela G.

Ghorpade, Neha N.

Asmal, Hana

Nadhiri

Hassem, Zayba

Atwa, Amrou I.A.

Saini, Holly

Balakrishnan Saravanan, Stuti

Esakkah, Omar A.

Chandoo, Maryam-Fatema

Faiza, Lamia

Mahnoor Raja

Pala, Naisha

Lahreche, Ahmed

Jackson, Beatrice L.