

The Students' Union Executive Committee

Minutes Wednesday 26 November



Chair: Asad Zarif Awan (SU President)
Secretary: Em Harvey (Representation Manager)
Minute Secretary: Han Morgan (Representation Coordinator)

Location: MR2, Students' Union Building, Frenchay Campus
Date: Wednesday 26 November 2025
Time: 17:30-19:30

1) Welcome, Apologies & Housekeeping

The Chair will welcome members to the meeting, make apologies from any members who are not present, and go through any necessary housekeeping for the meeting.

Apologies

Jack Priestley- Sustainability Officer
Jason Budd- City Campus Officer
Logan Smith- International Students' Officer
Anya Brentnall- Vice President Sports and Health

Absent

Harper Leigh- Trans Welfare Officer

Present

Asad Zarif Awan- SU President and Chair of the Executive Committee
Khadiza Hossain- Vice President Education
Umar Abbasi- Vice President Societies and Communications
Bonnie Evergreen- LGBT+ Students' Officer
Saliha Sadaf- Postgraduate Students' Officer
Zarabel Turgut-Cox: Women's Welfare Officer
Swizel Afonso- Glenside Campus Officer
Mo Ebengo- Black and Minority Ethnic Students' Officer
Celina Tomas- Disabled Students' Officer

Also Present

Han Morgan- Representation Coordinator
Finlay Stevenson- Representation Coordinator

2) Actions from Previous Meeting

Suggestion to close actions if they remain without progression for two monthly meetings, not including the meeting at which the action is given. Agenda will give time for a vote next time we're quorate.

(Note: Some members of the executive arrived a few minutes late, hence the Executive was not quorate at the point this was raised.)

Actions related to members not in attendance were not discussed, will be rolled over to the December 2025 meeting.

- Han Morgan: Voter data across campuses

Accessed elections data from the SU website, but not raw data from MSL. There was a lot of uncategorised votes when sorted by campus

Election Voter Demographics report as a percentage of votes cast:

(Blank): 29.61%

- *Unclear what proportion of (blank) votes are from each campus.*

When Asad cast his vote, he was not asked which campus he's from. Umar mentioning you have to tick to vote for specific posts, eg only Glenside Students voting for Glenside Officer.

- **Han Morgan:** Research Student Life-

Questions Jason is asking include: where are the areas the SU overlaps with Student Life, should we be working together here/sharing good practice. Where do Student Life get their money from. What does 'for students, by students' mean. Do the Centre for Sport and the Centre for Music come under Student life and how long has this been the case. Han was able to find out: Yes the CFM and CFS are under student life, this has been the case since the transformation project when the university underwent a restructuring. We sit on Partnership Board along with Student life, so we are already working together with them.

- **Han Morgan:** talk to Lara Gardiner (Reception team) about whiteboard. *Han gave Lara the feedback from Logan: Thank you for doing the whiteboard, it is really valuable and appreciated, especially amongst International Students. Action closed*

- **Jason Budd and Swizel Afonso:** have a conversation about collaboration in their roles.

Not able to collaborate with Jason because working on other manifesto points that have been more immediate, eg Glenside relocation consultation. Other updates given later in minutes (PTO updates)

- **Jason Budd and Celina Tomas:** Connect about office hours video

(note: office hours video will need to be created by SU Marketing staff- Han will suggest closing this action at next meeting)

- **Han Morgan:** Put Saliha Sadaf in touch with LSRs in SOAS- **Closed**

- **Han Morgan:** Send Anya Brentnall Asics Undropped Kit- **closed.**

Actions carried over from previous meeting

- **Mo Ebengho and Umar Abbasi:** follow up on how to support societies with high number of BME students Chatted about African Caribbean Society, working collaboratively to organise diversity week, support societies with BME members. Khadiza wants to collaborate. All welcome to contribute.

- **Umar Abbasi:** share calendar with Jason Budd, Mo Ebengho and Logan Smith, look at how he can introduce relevant societies to PTOs

Shared calendar including Glenside and Bower dates. Meeting with Logan Smith completed too. **Closed**

- **Umar Abbasi:** have a slide with PTOs at Societies Conference, share emails of PTOs so the onus is not on PTOs to contact societies with no reply.

Shared emails, names and posts. Shared that PTOs are keen to work with societies, please approach them and be receptive to contact from PTOs. **Closed**

- **Umar Abbasi:** put Mo Ebengho in touch with International Office and Tamil Society

Introduce in the meeting for diversity week- **in progress.** We know that Tamil society was inactive for a period,

but now is back with new faces.

- **Umar Abbasi and Logan Smith:** meet to discuss how sober socials are embedded into societies to make international students feel more welcome.

Met and decided to organise over both manifesto points. Holding the first week of February for Sober Socials. Give Societies ideas for activities to organise, need to get more details and confirmation from Rosa Mumford-Turner (Community Manager) to work with Becky Risley (UWE Specialist Drugs and Alcohol Practitioner) too. Meeting scheduled tomorrow (27/11/2025) with all involved. **Closed.**

3) NUS feedback

Those who went to NUS conference England to feed back to the Executive on their experiences/participation/conversations/learning.

Khadiza: Felt there were problems with the structure of the conference. Organised over two days: Day 1 was discursive sessions and the following day was action sessions. These action sessions weren't what they expected, lack of specific and practical actions. Using flip chart paper, filling in blank sentences: attendees are creating these resources but it's not clear what that will be used for. Not satisfied with the conference.

Attended International students white paper session, Day 1 session for trans students, and a Solidarity with Palestine session which people walked out of. There was a clash between Sabbatical Officers and NUS Presidents at this session. Someone gave a speech in support of Palestine, and was asked to be more mindful of their language, in regard to ideological statements, Sabbatical officer in question said "Israel is a Zionist state." Open letter to NUS was deemed antisemitic. There was a perception at the conference that NUS was not talking about the actual situation. Leadership change in July, students protested and were told they weren't representing.

Bonnie: Agree with the above, hasn't been to a conference like this before but expected more out of it. LGBT+ liberation and trans liberation workshops were her focus, in both, there was mostly social discussion, no NUS representatives there to take perspectives out of the session and beyond.

Khadiza: Can echo this: no NUS staff in first trans+ session, Democratic Procedures Officer was meant to show slides, but it seemed like they hadn't seen the slides before. Meant to represent and advocate but discussion wasn't recorded or actioned, it's not clear what the next steps following the session will be, if any.

Bonnie: LGBT+ session: the slide deck was presented by a Sabbatical Officer. The presentation of the slides was a bit odd, felt like a mandatory thing. Not a lot of discursive space. The session felt like an empty gesture, and replaced LGBTQ+ voices being heard.

Mo: Holds the same view. Went to NUS as a student in Ireland, but this was their first time at an NUS England event. Found it to be chaotic and inaccessible. Attended Neurodiversity and Education session, no lift, 3 flights of stairs. Session unproductive, reflecting on good and bad practice, but no actions.

Attended immigration session, object of this was decorating a casket and making placards, saying goodbye to the future. Didn't want to engage with this, thinking of students from cultures where death is incredibly serious and not to be recreated or trivialised. Attended "what are BME students saying" session. Attendance included International and BME officers, no Presidents. Let by a DPO, didn't feel they led the session with confidence or direction. Ideas coming out of the session weren't strong, and would be difficult to effectively lobby.

Next day there was another neurodiversity session, session leaders didn't seem to know how to effectively deliver the session. Mo not provided with a pre-arranged hearing loop at any point during conference, had to ask for repetition to engage in the conversations. Voting for each other's ideas, but delegates weren't told what their vote

was for, or what the outcome of the vote would be.

Went to LGBT and women session, 7 students present. Met LGBTQ+ Officer from London Met. Discussed working together on an event that travels, focus on the experiences of POC, trans, LGBT, women. NUS Staff came in and went onto the balcony, then returned and challenged the group: said downstairs was being disturbed by their volume. Confusing, as they weren't being loud or disruptive. Later found that staff was recording the accountability session downstairs from the balcony. On the coach back to the train station, Mo asked if they would do a statement of what happened in the room, they did this on video, video was deleted. Underperforming at every level.

Khadiza: Would like to add, regarding the Accountability session. Sense from delegates of cherry-picking. Delegates were asking questions about Gaza, but none of these were answered: that's not being fully accountable. Delegates were specifically asked not to record, but then NUS Staff were recording, and needlessly challenging Students in the process.

There were some positive discussions: tuition fee payment flexibility, Cost Of Living Crisis, the Immigration white paper. Concern is that these issues were discussed and discussed but there were no actions taken away from the meeting.

UMAR: Was there discussion on NUS' own objectives for the year, they're working to reduce prices in Student Halls laundries for example, did they discuss anything like that?

Mo: No.

Asad: Attended the Cost Of Living session, presented some UK-wide data:

71% of students report COL has had major or moderate impact on their studies

28% have no money left after utilities

40% have applied for financial support

34% have cut back on heating, 54% have cut back on food to reduce their costs

32% working more than 20 hrs per week

Proposed actions: about 3 shortlisted. Lobbying for free transport, working for rent controls, adjustment to maintenance loans so students can actually live on them. Sharing same sentiment as other delegates, didn't feel the conference was worth the amount of time allocated to it, 1 day conference could have covered the same areas. No tangible actions out of it. Is it possible that NUS is going to take our contributions and opinions back, then come out with their actions/priorities for the year ahead?

Opening plenary included address from Palestinian Ambassador, this was a good thing. Don't know how much success he had through the rest of the conference.

Attended international session and contributed a placard: "Stop treating us like cash cows." Attended LGBTQ Remembrance event, stories of deceased were shared. Session very valuable, greatly impacted his understanding of the challenges LGBTQ+ students are facing. Overall experience was of making connections, more of a networking event than an action plan. Felt like a consultation event.

Mo: Met some very active VPS, Presidents and DPOS who want to build connection. In a new group to map universities and plan a meeting on teams to talk about what the details of the project are.

Zarabel: How did we find out about NUS conference?

Asad: through our affiliation with NUS.

Umar: In previous meetings with NUS, they say there's an agenda for the year and they only work on what's covered in the agenda. Inviting delegates from across the UK, so the meeting might have been planning for next year's agenda?

Khadiza: Went through restructuring, maybe this is gathering all the ideas to make actions after the conference. Feeling amongst attendees that Palestinian ambassador was just for show. Bringing in a person who's sharing their experience, but when students repeat their ideas, they're challenged.

Asad: Presidents are struggling to find a balance when they're talking about the Palestine conflict. This came up at student council, lots of questions about Israel and Palestine, proposed the IHRA should be changed: that would have to go to referendum, we would support that if it's what students want to do. There's no clear stance from the presidents of NUS. They want to condemn genocide, without being Antisemitic.

Mo: Didn't think about accessibility in the rooms, even for delegates without disabilities. The casket room was uncomfortably cold, sound was bouncing around and it was difficult to hear others speaking.

Action: Han to make a complaint to NUS on accessibility.

4) Presidents Updates

The Chair and Vice Presidents will give an update on their manifesto points and update group on how they can support in their role. 5 minutes for each President.

Asad Zarif Awan- Students' Union President

Led the Fair Deal petition campaign at UWE. UWE was #20 and climbed to #3 of the participating institutions. Khadiza emailed student reps, Anya to sports clubs, Umar to societies. Big team effort from Presidents, thank you to all.

Local Business Discount Campaign- visited 50+ local businesses and secured discount agreements with 14. Workshop programme for IT skills raised directly with VC, Head of Library Services is now working out the logistics of a workshop programme.

Anya Brentnall- Vice President Sports and Health

(Updates delivered in her absence)

Sports Executive Committee launched

Sports Coverage and Livestreaming on Wednesday Afternoons

Movember, 24% increase in fundraisers, 17 UWE teams joining in Varsity 2026 with University of South Wales, include a warm-up series.

Khadiza Hossain- Vice President Education

272 Reps at Student Rep Conference!

Starting Block, identifying that it's different for new students vs returning. Khadiza is part of an enhancement group for starting block. Main issue: students and staff saying 2 weeks is too long, students and staff losing momentum, not enough content, paying rent to be here and not feeling it's worthwhile. Initiated a conversation about accommodation, does UWE make revenue from starting block? Response given was it's for student experience.

Delayed feedback: ongoing, decided to do standardised templates. 2 school directors working on that and it's mostly done. Not all members of staff happy, a DLT says that their students don't want it, and it's not applicable to their school. Asked about student consultation, was there a conversation with the Lead School Representative? NSS data suggests that students are not happy with marking/assessment in this school, so it seems odd that students would reject a new approach. Unsatisfied that thorough/meaningful student consultation has happened.

Deputy Registrar is going to open the strategy working group.

Question: why isn't Khadiza in the operational group?

Khadiza: Suggestion was that I'm not a good fit, planning a different group still advocating and pushing, but also waiting and being diplomatic.

Degree apprenticeships; student voice structure and representation- done work on PGR students but need to give attention to degree apprenticeships. Board meetings that KH can't contribute to, doesn't have any feedback from apprenticeship students. Told them this needs to be looked at, need to restructure and get some feedback,. Best practice from around the sector, staff receptive to this in the meeting, sending contacts to work with.

Career fair: date confirmed. Consulted with LSRs about recommendation of employers, not inviting those who invest in oil, gas, or arms conflict, highlighting ethical careers. Response rate pretty low, sending more invites, thank you to Fin for doing the admin work.

Date is 10/2/2025 11-4. Pizza. First 500 students get free pizza. PTOs please promote this.

Action: Reminder of Careers Fair, PTOs please promote.

Mo: Suggest Common Ambition, meeting with them soon. Interested in potentially having a stall, work in sexual health with a BME background focus. Employers should offer something genuine: Volunteering, vacancies, something for students to gain.

Celina: Suggest UWE student and Coach Alice Hasty, expert in getting people access to work, various support that disabled people can get going into employment. Meeting to go through what Celina wants her to talk about, thinking of doing a film night as well.

Umar Abbasi- Vice President Societies and Communications

Student experience fund is open. Any student can apply for it. Objective to make centralized societies event platform- **completed**.

Diversity week- working group for this, invited some of the PTOs, all welcome to be part of the working group. Initial date is 16-19 February. Looking to organise an event with international office.

ACTION: approach international office for collaboration, will come with ideas and suggestions from PTOS

Next Societies conference there'll be a session on leading socs and managing conflict. Discuss how to lead successful societies. Interpersonal conflicts, different priorities, managing disagreements.

PTO Objectives and Updates

The Part Time Officers will give an update on their projects. New Part Time Officers (who do not have any action points) are invited to share their manifesto points.

Saliha Sadaf- Postgraduate Officer

Gaining feedback from postgraduates and LSRs. Talked to them, one said their main concern was students not replying to their forms.

General feedback, CBAL LSR emailed saying course is intense, a lot of work, issues with wellbeing and burnout, overlapping commitments and demand of the course is too much for students to handle.

Students who couldn't pay fees on time were blocked from blackboard on Friday, when they have an exam on Monday, now they have to retake it in summer and pay for the module again.

Timetable problem: students told they'd be on campus 2 days a week, have made other commitments, work etc.

Now it's changed-up to 5 days a week, and it's bitty, 1hr lectures here and there. Changes from week to week, students travelling from hours away. TB2 timetables coming out, large gaps here too. Rep raised it with program leader, been 2 weeks, hasn't had an outcome yet.

Good feedback too: overlapping assignment issues resolved.

PGR Lead Rep had feedback: PGR, PGT and MRES students need office space to work on research. Lab spaces all

taken up by PHD students.

Umar: is there social space for postgrad students

Saliha: no. lack of community, different supervision experiences, sometimes one supervisor is amazing and the other one isn't. Impact on their UWE experience. Not enough lectures, don't have introductions with staff or students, everyone in their own labs. Not enough clear guidance on deadlines and dates because induction week is so heavy.

SOAS Students feel they don't belong. Mercy (SAAE), asking how to start a postgrad society.

Action: Saliha, Khadiza and Asad discuss post-grad experience in more detail.

Action: Saliha connect PGT SAAE Students with Umar to start a society

Khadiza will ask again about timetabling at academic board, need to be strategic in how we approach it.

Mo Ebengho- Black Minority Ethnic Officer

Mo: Black History Month successful! Unveiling of Hall Of Fame was great. Some nominees were just +1s last year. African Cultural showcase, hectic, had to remind staff that food needs to be halal. Mo now joined African staff network. Speaking to Students of colour, also affected by timetabling, UG as well as PG and PHD. Staff complained, in final year there's modules been opened to more students, consequently changed the room, then changed the timing to accommodate new room.

There are still modules over capacity. Seminar sessions are meant to be for supporting students on assignments, but there's not enough staff time. Celebrated Diwali, lots of turnout, race equity team and widening participation.. Asad and Khadiza joined. Musical chairs, students really enjoyed it, great feedback.

Consulting with staff and students what can we do better.

Some suggestions affirm members of staff but don't benefit students. Creating more cultural events, using SU space to hold masquerade party. Space confirmed but still organising money, need to figure out the food.

Question in relation to food for the event.

ACTION: Mo send risk assessment to Han, and provide Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate.

Student ventures involved with society stuff. Societies eligible to apply for funding. Diversity week, working with Jane regarding a Ballroom event

Bonnie Evergreen- LGBT+ Officer

Last month, focused on LGBT+ society. They've been in discussion with UWE about worries on application of the EHRC guidelines. LGBT society wants to start a petition or possibly even protest. NUS was not as active as Bonnie expected. Group chat for inter-university discussions. Potentially form a network of communication between UK universities, from there to start a series of petitions- petitioning the UK government directly. LGBTQ+ rights, extended into POC and women's rights too. In the process of gathering contact information of the 136 other universities in the UK. What's Executives perspective on supporting that initiative?

Khadiza: what are the plans to expand the group?

Bonnie: 7 now, UWE included.

Khadiza: Is the membership of that group going to be only Sabbatical Officers, any student, any rep from any

union? How will that be managed?

Bonnie: original group chat was PTO officers, the idea is they will speak to Sabbatical Officers at their own Executive meetings, including those not affiliated with NUS. NUS petitions some ministers but it's unclear how long it would take to lobby NUS to begin lobbying someone else. Start with LGBT PTOs, then having their executive committees on board.

ASAD: First step is going to be bringing all the people together, if that's successful then you'll have some actions, we're here to support with those actions, let us know how you want to be supported by the Exec as it becomes clearer.

Khadiza: What will happen when you're done with your role? Remember to think about the future of the group and how it is managed.

Umar: Have to be clear about your actions and when you're going to achieve them by.

Bonnie: Mo and Bonnie are passionate, when they leave their roles, they want there to be a network between unions and universities that lives beyond their position in the role. Needs to be continuously maintained. Needs to be future candidates that keep it going.

Khadiza: concern about the admin work.

Mo: Mo is already in the LGBT coalition for business in Bristol, and BAME network too. Going to speak to those people because they would support, by taking it out of the Students' Union in a way, but still having PTOs involved, it could run beyond someone's term. Mapping out the coalitions and partnership groups that already exist to support smaller organisations. Because those bigger groups already exist it could be maintained.

Bonnie: Would probably ask for SU to create a campaign to give information to students about the petition that might be created. Sharing how the petition would support trans individuals and encouraging signatures.

Asad: If the petition is decided, where it's going to go? Exec could promote it but it needs to come under our organisational values.

Bonnie: it would be an official petition to have a debate regarding the content of the petition, would need to abide by parliamentary guidelines, would fit in with what is acceptable.

Zarabel Turgut-Cox- Women's Welfare Officer

Zarabel: White ribbon day and 16 days started yesterday (25/11/25), giving out ribbons, engaging students. Now going to work with external charities and MJ. Meeting with Anya: women's history month. Unfiltered women's voices: welcome back session planned for January on Bower. Meeting planned with Opportunities Team about increasing diversity in societies and clubs.

Umar: societies self-organizing, might be able to collaborate.

Mo: Agree, inviting pride of women to student ventures. Pitches happen for funding. Apprentice contestant came last year and a UWE Alumni, also planning a dinner with women in business.

ACTION: Zarabel tell Umar what she's planning for Women's History Month.

Saliha: Posters put out today, for PG and MRES students. Please share this and encourage students to join. No response from Espresso. Muslim women's sport kit, **action closed**. Planning to organize with new MRES LSR when they're in post.

Action: Saliha contact Mo in their race equity capacity.

Action: Saliha send poster to Han to distribute.

Umar: PTOs are working so nicely together, really collaborative.

Swizel Afonso- Glenside Campus Officer

Swizel: Working on career service at Glenside- Lloyd Williams, Alora.. Having a meeting on 10/12. Relocation project: Filming with Holly, gathering student feedback , changes students want to see. Reviewing Rosa's draft together.

Disabled Students' Officer left meeting .

Mo: event that student ventures are doing, want to involve SU

ACTION: Mo send the poster to Han

5) Vote on Student Ideas

- **Bower Ashton Library Open 24/7 – 2***
- **Better Mats in the Centre for Sport -0***
- **More Halal food options on campus required -2***

Ideas did not reach required rating to bring to a vote, discussion on how to support elements of the idea could not be facilitated due to timings.

6) AOB

No other business

7) Date of the next meeting

The Chair will confirm to members the dates of the next meetings:

- Executive Committee – 18 December