



## **Agenda of a Meeting of the Graduate Union Council**

*To be held at 7pm on Wednesday 23 January 2019, in Seminar Room 1, Newnham Terrace, Darwin College, Cambridge CB39EX*

Note emergency motions will be accepted up to the point the meeting is called to order by emailing [vice-president@gradunion.cam.ac.uk](mailto:vice-president@gradunion.cam.ac.uk)

### **Agenda (Council)**

#### **1. Approval of the minutes of the previous Council meeting**

The unconfirmed minutes of the last Council meeting, held on 3 December 2018, are circulated for approval.

#### **2. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous Council meeting**

#### **3. Reports from Sabbatical Officers and Officers of the Executive Committee**

- A. President's report (*Verbal*)
- B. Vice-President's report (*Verbal*)
- C. Welfare and Rights' report (*Verbal*)

#### **4. Motions to council**

- a) Gender-Neutral Policy
- b) Fair pay and supporting the UCU strikes
- c) To support St. Edmund's CR on Toby Jackman Newton Trust JRF appointment
- d) Bylaw amendment on balloting
- e) Campaigns Committee (*verbal*)

## **5. GU Lent Elections 2019**

- a) President
- b) Welfare and Rights Officer
- c) Faculty Liaison Officer
- d) Disability Officer
- e) Open Portfolio Officer

## **6. Brexit Working Group update**

### **7. Discussion on self-care and welfare provisions for MCR Officers and Student Unions' Officers** *(initiated by Tamsin, Murray Edwards MCR President)*

## **8. Emergency Motions**

The Council will consider any emergency motions submitted between the circulation of the Agenda and the start of the meeting.

## **9. Dates of upcoming meetings**

Lent Term: (15 Jan to 15 March)

- 11 March 2019

Easter Term (23 April to 14 June)

- 30 April 2019 (No change of time)
- 03 June 2019

Long Vacation

- 08 July 2019
- 02 September 2019

The next GU Council meeting will be held at the Murray Edwards College MCR.

## **10. Any other business**

Training sessions run during the Easter term 2018

# 1. GU Council Minutes

**3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018**

## Welcome

The chair welcomes members to the last council of the calendar year, it was noted the Vice-President had sent apologies due to ill health.

## 3. Reports from Sabbatical Officers and Officers of the Executive Committee

### D. President's report

Council received a report from the President

The mental health survey had received 1100 people responses, she hopes to get 1200 by the end of the week. She notes that is a good response rate, and the University may be willing to provide some support in to looking at the data. Further she had held two well attended mental health, which was attended by University college staff, director of trust, funding etc

She has also been working on PG Widening Participation – which she hopes to make an important part of the university's Student Support Initiative. She has also been working with the University on preparing for the UK's exit from the European Union

A short discussion was had about what support Graduate Tutor. It was felt that there was not enough support. It was noted that as this relationship was not grown, students turned to college once things had turned sour in the departments. It was noted that this was similar to a discussion that was had the previous year.

President notes she is working on making Graduate Tutors Committee more active in improving support for graduates.

### E. Vice-President's report

Council received a written report from the Vice-President

### F. Welfare and Rights' report

Council received a verbal report from the Welfare and Rights Officer  
She noted that she was working with the University's Sexual Assault and Health Adviser on training officers. She had also been working closely with the BME campaign on unconscious bias. She had produced winter holiday guide, and was organising some events going over the holiday.

She was also working on a project called Our Streets, and was looking to produce a map, where students could share experiences of where they felt safe, has informed their activism. Kettles yard have agreed to supply some space for an exhibition.

### **1. Approval of the minutes of the previous Council meeting**

The unconfirmed minutes of the last Council meeting, held on 15 October 2018, were approved.

### **2. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous Council meeting**

n/a

### **4. Motions to council**

#### **a) Approve amended motions from the last meeting**

##### i. Campaigns Committee Motion

This was approved with the amendments from the last meeting

##### ii. Campaigning Fund

This was approved with the amendments from the last meeting

##### iii. Brexit Working Group Motion

This was approved with the amendments from the last meeting

##### iv. Memorandum of Understanding between CUCU, CUSU and CUGU

This was approved with the amendments from the last meeting

### **7. Campaigns committee election**

One candidate put themselves forward, council held a vote, and approve Tamzin Byrne (Murray Edwards) as the Council representative of the Campaigns Committee

#### **b) Prevent motion:**

The President presented a motion to endorse the Executive Committee signing the below letter and to adopt the following motion accordingly

Open letter signed by GU Executive Committee:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nomsortgTDKS8NGwRvtOF7IIQASqcpN9-tK34Z4MJA/edit>

More information: <https://www.cusu.co.uk/2018/11/28/opposing-prevent-in-your-college/>

**The CUGU resolves:**

- a. To oppose the implementation of the Prevent Duty through the following measures.
- b. To discuss Prevent Duty implications at college level with MCRs.
- c. To work to reform the University's Prevent training.
- d. Not to implement the Prevent Duty in our capacity as a Students' Union, which it legally does not have to comply, nor will it voluntarily share data to this end.
- e. To work to ensure as few students as possible are affected by Prevent.

After presenting an introduction for those who may not be familiar with the Government's Anti-terror Strategy, "Prevent" strand. She noted that the lack of Policy means that the Exec could not act for the GU as a whole. A representative asked that if the Prevent duty was legal duty, weather the purpose of position was purely symbolic. After some discussion it was noted that this duty does not apply to Students' Unions, and that the letter specifically targets extra data the Officer for Students wants on welfare. This is beyond the powers of the governments legal powers. Some colleges councils had reacted by reporting all data, as opposed to singling out certain ethnicities.

It was decided to clarify point d. noting the Union does not have a legal duty to implement it, but the GU would not share data voluntarily. It was noted that the Union has legal duty to report illegal activity, but would not unnecessarily infringe the rights of students.

The chair moves to a vote with amendments,

Motion passed with amendments

### **5. GU – CUSU – UCU joint project – 'fair allocation of teaching hours'**

A graduate representative of the Universities and College Union (UCU) attended to discuss a joint project, and to ask about our members experience of teaching. They also asked for feedback on a questionnaire they wished to circulate. It was noted that many members found the system informal, and relied on relationships, as opposed to any formal form of application. It was felt that the training was also lacking, as well as mentoring. Some of the training was also felt to be a little suspect as it was sometime used to develop new educational products.

It was suggest that guidelines for employment in Colleges and departments from the Graduate Union would be useful.

#### **c) President contract (c.031218 .E )**

Council received the Presidents contract from the trustee board. There was question whether it was "Brexit" proof, which it was noted that we have a long history of employing non British/EU sabbaticals. It was further noted that we use the University payroll, so would have access to the assistance the University has promised.

Clause 7 & 5 – the legality of them were questioned, so council gave provisional approval, but asked the board to double check the above clauses.

**d) Widening participation strategy update (verbal)**

The President noted that after feedback from council, she was looking to embed what WP for PG should look like and what it means. As we are somewhat ahead of the national curve, having reached out to the Office for Students, she is looking to develop a network. The strategy is to reach out to alumni, but there are a range of factors why funding is not immediately available. She noted that a conference on WP PG will be held at Cambridge in March, with some national experts attending.

**6. Returning officer's report (MT Elections)** The President, who acted as Returning Officer provided a verbal update. Noting that 7 positions were filled in the election, with the remaining position filled by co-option

**8. Emergency motions**

Non were received

**9. Dates of upcoming meetings**

Council received the dates of the upcoming meeting

Meeting closes 20:25

## 4 a) Motion on Gender Neutral Policy

**Proposer:** Alessandro Ceccarelli, GU LGBTQ+ Officer

**Seconded:** Sofia Ropek-Hewson, President, Graduate Union

**Motion:** To promote gender neutral spaces and practices

GU Council notes:

1. That in the 2018 Big Cambridge LGBT+ Survey organised by CUSU LGBT+, out of 400 respondents, 71 identified as trans or non-binary
2. That gender-neutral bathrooms are not widely available in University and college buildings
3. That when applying for graduate study, applicants are not able to record that they are non-binary, and administrative processes rarely allow for non-binary gender options
4. That some members feel uncomfortable attending formal halls and graduations due to gendered dress codes

GU Council believes:

1. That the University should be a welcoming place for our trans and non-binary members

GU Council resolves:

1. To support students when they encounter gendered policies
2. To update and circulate maps of gender-neutral bathrooms (see Blaxter 2018)
3. To gather more information about gender-neutral provisions across departments, institutes and colleges
4. To campaign for gender-neutral provisions in all University and college buildings
5. To promote opportunities for gender-neutral sport
6. To request gender-neutral titles at the point of application
7. To work with the University to develop gender-neutral policies

### Bibliography

CUSU, 2018. Guide for the Implementation of Gender-Neutral Admin. Accessed on 22/01/2019. Online at <https://www.lgbt.cusu.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/GN-Admin-Guide.pdf>

Blaxter, T., 2018. Gender Neutral Bathrooms map. Accessed on 22/01/2019. Online at: <http://www.icge.co.uk/bathroommap/>

## 4 b) Motion on Fair Pay and Supporting UCU Strikes

**Proposer:** Mrittunjoy Guha Majumdar

**Seconder:** Sofia Ropek-Hewson

**Motion:**

GU Council Notes:

1. The University and College Union (UCU) is conducting a ballot of its members on industrial action, which opened on 15th January and will close on 22nd February 2019;
2. The ballot relates to a claim jointly lodged by the five higher education trade unions (Unison, Unite, GMB, EIS and UCU) in March 2018 on the issues of pay, equality, workload and precarious contracts;
3. Staff across the UK HE sector have suffered a cumulative real terms pay cut of over 17% since 2009;
4. There are large and persistent gender pay gaps across UK universities, with disparities in excess of 15% across Russell Group institutions;
5. A 2016 survey of UCU members found that academic staff work an average of 50.9 hours FTE per week;
6. Early career academics and postgraduate research students are often employed on hourly-paid contracts which limit their rights as workers and provide little security of employment;
7. UCU members engaged in industrial action over a dispute on the USS pension scheme during Lent Term 2018 with strong student support, including from CUSU;
8. Many staff are also students and GU members;
9. At the Michaelmas I 2018 Council, GU Council resolved to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding with CUSU and Cambridge UCU, which said:

*The unions' interests are aligned: staff working conditions are the conditions in which students learn. They also represent the current and future working conditions of many students: postgraduate students in particular are often both staff and students. A university education is a collaborative relationship*

*between staff and students and each benefits from the advancement of the other's interest.*

GU Council believes:

1. Staff have a right to fair pay and fair treatment;
2. Many of the issues at stake in the dispute, including precarious contracts, disproportionately affect postgraduate research students who are GU members;
3. Students benefit from working with and being taught by staff who are fairly paid, have job security, and are not forced to take on an excessive workload;
4. Student support for the 2018 UCU industrial action on pensions had a significant
5. Impact on both the success and impact of those strike, and the increased collaboration between GU, CUSU and Cambridge UCU that followed it has benefitted all three unions;
6. The decline in staff pay and conditions is directly linked to the marketisation of higher education, as the current funding system dis-incentivises universities from adequately funding their staff.

GU Council resolves:

1. In the event that the ballot is successful, to fully and publicly support staff in their upcoming strike action and action short of a strike;
2. To lobby the university to provide fair pay and conditions to its employees;
3. To educate and inform students about the ballot, any subsequent industrial action, and GU's stance;
4. To support the ongoing ballot by sharing materials relating to UCU's Get Out the Vote effort on GU's social media and the GU bulletin;
5. To mandate the GU executive to engage with Cambridge UCU and other trade unions during the period of the ballot and potential future industrial action on this dispute, and to support those trades unions as the executive see fit;
6. And, should the ballot result in industrial action:

- a) To make provisions to mitigate the negative impact of disruption on GU members while not undermining industrial action;
  - b) To encourage students to show solidarity by where possible not attending lectures, seminars or other university-organised activity still in operation on strike days.
7. Should the ballot not result in industrial action, the GU council empowers the GU Executive Committee to look at ways to take steps to address the issue of fair pay and employment in the University. This may include having consultation with UCU on action just short of a strike as well as awareness building and knowledge dissemination steps.

## Background Paper

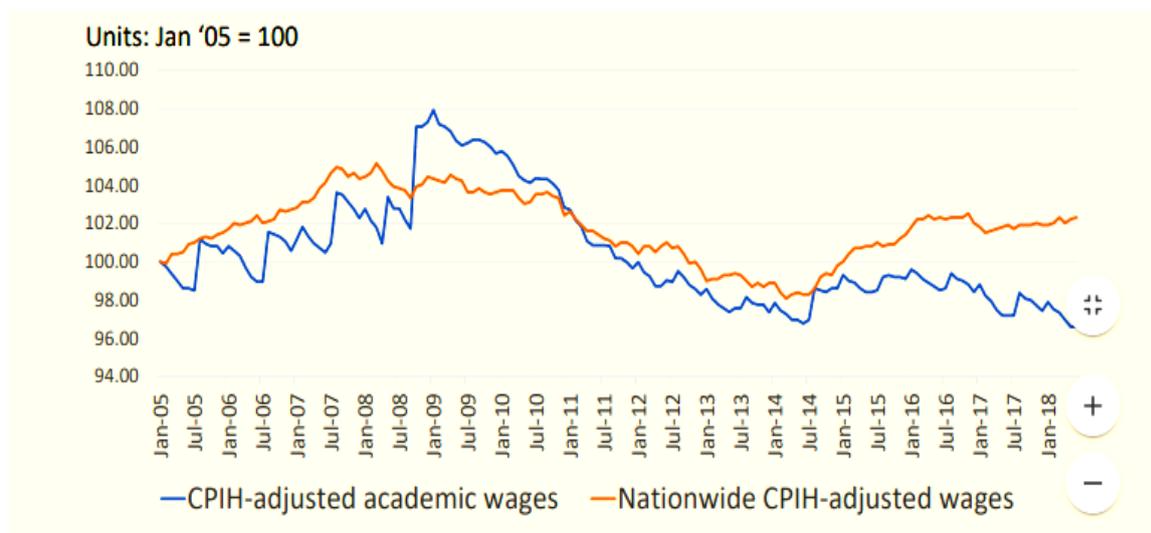
### *Mrittunjoy*

Good teachers (and staff) are crucial for a good education of students. They are essential cogs in the wheel of higher education today, diversified and demanding as it is, and therefore their satisfaction with pay and benefits is important for the advancement of the education of students. In the UK, the student population almost doubled, growing from 984,000 to 1.87 million, between 1992 and 2016 [1]. To tackle these burgeoning numbers, higher education has become a large employer in the United Kingdom, with British universities employing 131,136 people in 1999, which rose to 270,000 in 2016. As per Higher Education Statistics Agency, there were 284,060 staff-members in 2016/17 employed on full-time contracts, while there were 135,650 in part-time contracts in 2016/17 [2].

The Cambridge branch of the University and College Union (UCU) recently released a report<sup>1</sup> criticising the increased casualisation of employment at the University [3]. The report highlights two key issues: the lack of fair-pay in hourly-paid teaching and the insecurity of those employed through the Temporary Employment Service (TES), which has employed 2573 staff in the last three years. While TES workers are usually temporary workers, their work does not reflect the temporariness of the employment, with even cases of nine-ten months' employment reported. Added to this are lower levels of legal rights and protection, a lack of opportunity for career progression and an adverse impact on mental health and the quality of life. Interestingly 65% of TES workers are women and 15% are BME, making it also a cause of concern, with regard to the attainment of equality [4].

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<sup>1</sup> This report is the product of three surveys carried out by Cambridge UCU: a 2018 survey of 108 Temporary Employment Service workers, a 2018 survey of 140 hourly-paid staff and a 2017 survey of 513 grad students. It also makes use of information obtained through Freedom of Information requests, and was produced with support from two other Cambridge University trade union branches: Unite and Unison.



*HE Wages.*

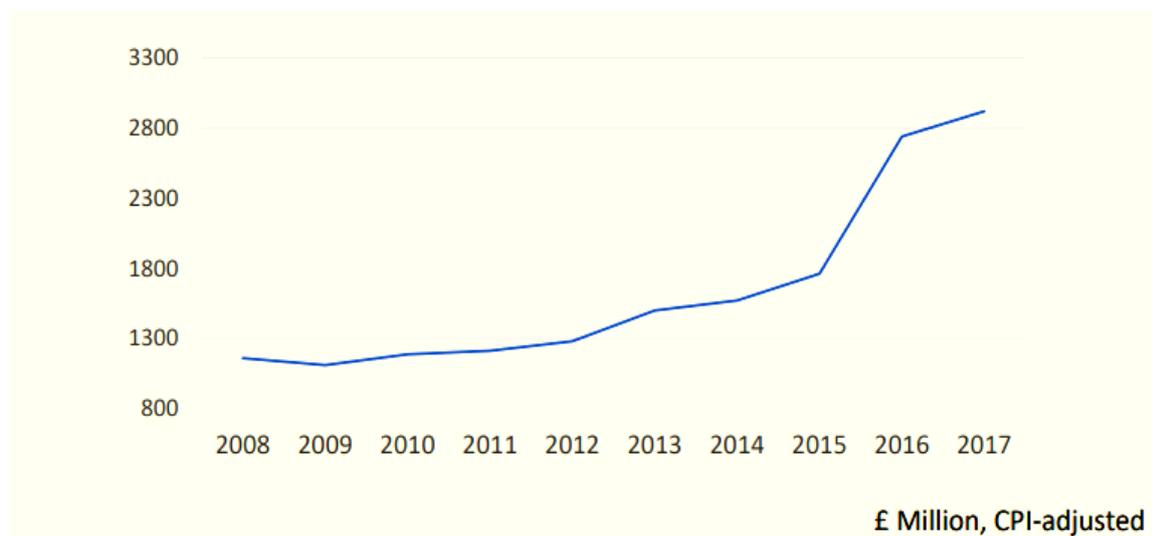
**Source:** Office for National Statistics

Hourly paid teaching is ubiquitous across the various departments and Faculties of the University. This includes supervisions, lectures and laboratory demonstrations, some of which are undertaken by members of the Graduate Union. The current pay-structure disregards the time spent in preparing for the task at hand or aspects such as correction of student reports. In the 2017 UCU survey of graduate students, supervisors for the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS), Architecture, Classics and Music required an average of 4-5 hours of preparation for each hour of supervision, whilst Psychology, Education and Engineering required an average of 2 hours. In 2018, 56% of staff performing assessment and examination work and 39% of supervisors highlighted that their effective hourly rate after taking into account preparation time, was less than the 2017/2018 Real Living Wage<sup>2</sup> of £8.45. As per the 2016 UCU Survey and the 2018 THE Survey, 38% academics work over five hours at the weekend [5, 6]. According to these surveys, staff who are on 0.3 Full Time Employment (FTE) and under contracts work 190% of contracted hours. College supervision rates have also fallen behind inflation, with the average pay for university staff dropping in real terms by 11.8% (CPI) and 17.8% (RPI) since 2009.

It is interesting to note that Cambridge University has had soaring capital expenditure in projects such as the North-West Cambridge Development project [7]. Currently it has about £1 billion in bond debts, part of which it seeks to pay off with the North-West 'Affordable' housing solution that has no long-term cap on rent, as it stands. The university has been providing Market-Pay Supplements (MPSs) but to a very few people: only 180 men and 70 women in 2017. There seems to be an over-reliance on this kind of pay due to depreciation

<sup>2</sup> The Real Living Wage, calculated by the Living Wage Foundation, is higher than the National Living Wage, which is calculated by the UK government.

in real wages. As per the UCAM Gender Pay Reports, there was a 20% gender pay gap at Cambridge [8].



*Financial Reserves.*

**Source:** UCAM Annual Financial Reports (The Reporter)

The response by the University has been encouraging but still needs to be backed up by clearer positions and associated actions. In their letter to Professor Stephen Toope, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, the University and College Union (UCU) and Unison Union highlighted that in his email to staff on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018, Professor Toope acknowledged the concerns of Cambridge University staff over the deterioration of their pay, noting that he have agreed to implement the 2% increase in salaries proposed by Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA), but also stated that he recommended and continued to support a higher increase in basic pay than the 2% currently on the table [9]. The Unions felt that this needed to be backed up by better implementation. The important point of interest was that in real terms, the 2% pay 'increase' was just another pay cut and that since 2009, wages for staff at the University of Cambridge had risen by only 9.5%, while

1. Cumulative inflation in the Consumer Price Index had been 24.6%
2. Average house prices in Cambridge had risen by nearly 90%
3. University of Cambridge workplace nursery fees had risen by 35%
4. Pension provision had been eroded in most HE schemes

Across the Higher Education sector nationally, the Unions noted that the real-terms pay (by CPI) has dropped more than 12% since 2009. To recover some of this, in this pay round the Higher Education (HE) trade unions called for an increase for all staff of 7.5%, and at least £1500. They also called for action to address the spread of precarious contracts and pay inequalities. However the ballot for industrial action by UCU narrowly fell through last year. On the national scale, the Joint Expert Panel (JEP) was set up by the University and College

Union (UCU) and Universities UK (UUK) following industrial dispute over the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), which is a pension scheme in the United Kingdom with over £50 billion under management. In their report, the JEP gave four definite areas where change was needed [10]:

1. A re-evaluation of the employers' attitude to risk.
2. Adopting a greater consistency of approach between valuations across years for the pension scheme.
3. Ensuring fairness and equality between generations of scheme members by smoothing future service contributions.
4. Ensuring the valuation uses the most recently available information and factors such as market improvements and new investment considerations.

Universities UK (UUK) came out firmly against the increased Deficit Recovery Contributions (DRCs), which came at a cost of cost of 3.9% of total salaries, that the USS Trustee demanded recently, after their November valuation. All of these contributions have been supported by cuts in salaries and benefits of staff.

## References:

[1] Office for National Statistics, "*How Has the Student Population Changed,*" 20 September 2016.

[2] Higher Education Statistics Agency. *Higher Education Staff Statistics: UK, 2016/17*.

[3] University and College Union. '*Stamp out Casualisation in Cambridge*'. Report, 2018.

[4] Kiran Khanom. '*Cambridge UCU calls for end to Cambridge's 'gig economy' contracts and unfair pay*'. Varsity (News Report), 2018.

[5] University and College Union. '*UCU Workload Survey 2016*'. Survey, 2016.

[6] The Times Higher Education. '*THE Student Experience Survey 2018*'. Survey, 2018.

[7] University and College Union (Cambridge). '*Pay and Equality Meeting*'. Presentation, 2018.

[8] University of Cambridge. '*Gender Pay Gap Report 2017*'. Report, 2017.

[9] University and College Union (UCU) and Unison Union. '*Joint UCU and UNISON letter to the VC on Pay and Equality*'. Letter, 2018.

[10] Joint Expert Panel. '*Joint Expert Panel Report*'. Report, 2018.

## 4 c) Motion to support St. Edmund's College CR on the matter of the Toby Jackman Newton Trust JRF

**Proposer:** Aastha Dahal, CR Vice President of St. Edmund's College

**Seconded:** Benjamin Schönfuß, CR President of St. Edmund's College

### **Motion:**

#### GU Council Notes:

1. That in a hiring process with over 1000 applicants, St. Edmund's College selected Dr. Noah Carl for the Toby Jackman Newton Trust JRF;
2. That Dr. Carl has published articles in the discredited race sciences, linking genetics and intelligence (exemplary <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs40806-018-0152-x>);
3. That the works of Dr. Carl are publicly accessible by all members of the university on his research gate ([https://www.researchgate.net/scientific-contributions/2047758092\\_Noah\\_Carl](https://www.researchgate.net/scientific-contributions/2047758092_Noah_Carl));
4. That Dr. Carl participated in the London Conference of Eugenics, hosted at UCL;
5. That Dr. Carl published a major part of his work in the non peer-reviewed journal "open psych";
6. That there was an open letter initiated and signed by hundreds of senior academics, that supports the view that Dr. Carl's research is unethical and flawed, and that calls for an investigation into the matter by the college (<https://medium.com/@racescienceopenletter/open-letter-no-to-racist-pseudoscience-at-cambridge-472e1a7c6dca>);
7. That St. Edmund's College has initiated an HR process to investigate into the works of Dr. Carl
8. That the college has only done so after repeated requests from a major part of the college's student body;
9. That the panel chosen to conduct the investigation is not representative (no person of colour, no social scientist on the panel), and that there is no evidence provided to show that the panel is credible to conduct the investigation in a fair and balanced way.

GU Council Believes:

1. That the open letter signed by hundreds of senior academics is a reliable evaluation of the works of Dr. Carl;
2. That research in the discredited race sciences, that can be used as foundational arguments for racist policy making should not be supported by a Cambridge College;
3. That students of all Cambridge colleges should support the students of St. Edmund's College in their endeavour to prevent this University from becoming a safe haven for race sciences.

GU Council Resolves:

1. To support the students of St. Edmund's College in any way necessary to achieve a fair and balanced investigation into the current holder of the JRF, as well as into the processes that lead to this selection;
2. To lobby the University to take a clear stance on the matter;
3. To raise public awareness about the perceived comeback of race sciences in Cambridge.

## 4 d) By-law amendment

**Proposer:** Mrittunjoy Guha Majumdar, Vice-President, Graduate Union

**Seconder:** Sofia Ropek-Hewson, President, Graduate Union

**Motion:**

GU Council notes:

1. That currently Schedule E, paragraph 6 includes a clause that states that the Lent Term elections will be held by both paper and electronic ballot.

*“The GU cross-campus elections held in Lent Term for sabbatical positions shall be conducted by both online and paper balloting. All other cross-campus elections or by-elections shall be conducted by online ballot only unless directed otherwise 73 74 Constitution of Cambridge University Graduate Union by a resolution of the Council. The conduct of the election may be delegated to CUSU, and will then be governed by CUSU electoral rules and procedures. The Graduate Union Returning Officer shall be a member of the CUSU Elections Committee for this purpose.”*

2. That numerous elections committees have requested this change.

GU Council resolves

1. To remove the requirement of paper ballots and for the text to read :

~~*“The GU cross-campus elections held in Lent Term for sabbatical positions shall be conducted by both online and paper balloting. All other cross-campus elections or by-elections shall be conducted by online ballot only unless directed otherwise by a resolution of the Council. The conduct of the election may be delegated to CUSU, and will then be governed by CUSU electoral rules and procedures. The Graduate Union Returning Officer shall be a member of the CUSU Elections Committee for this purpose.”*~~

## 5. Lent Term Elections

**Schedule E** of the by-laws states that the President, as well as the Welfare and Rights Officer shall usually be delegated to the CUSU elections committee. Council may also delegate other elections to the CUSU elections committee, provided that the GU President (or other person acting as Returning Officer) have some form of vote on the committee. Council is asked to delegate the running of the election to the Cambridge University Students' Union Election Committee, and asks the President, acting as Returning Officer is a member.

### Dates for the Election

<b>Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February</b>	9:00	Nominations Open
<b>Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> February</b>	12:00	Nominations Close
	18:00	Candidates Briefing (location tbc)
<b>Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February</b>	9:00	Campaigning Opens
<b>Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March</b>	18:00	Hustings (location tbc)
<b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March</b>	9:00	Colleges are sent materials
<b>Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March</b>	9:00	Voting Opens
<b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March</b>	17:00	Voting Closes
	19:00	Provisional Results Announced
<b>Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10:00	Official Results Announced

### Graduate Union positions during this election will be:

1. President (start date of 1<sup>st</sup> July)
2. Welfare and Rights Officer (start date of 1<sup>st</sup> July)
3. Disabled Students Officer (from Easter Term)
4. Faculty Liaison Officer (from Easter Term)
5. Open Portfolio Officer (from Easter Term)

### Student Trustee

Further to the above, the executive committee will open nominations for student trustees at the March meeting (11<sup>th</sup>) for co-option at the April meeting 30<sup>th</sup> April. The Executive committee currently suggests 2 students to fill the student trustee position, for 1 year from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.