Graduate Union Council

16/10/17
Graduate Union Lounge, 17 Mill Lane, 7pm

Members Representing Voting constituencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Representing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark Burrell</td>
<td>(Trinity College) BA Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Fraser</td>
<td>Sidney Sussex MCR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Driver</td>
<td>Robinson MCR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hugo Larose</td>
<td>Gonville and Caius MCR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alice Rees</td>
<td>Emmanuel MCR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia Ropek Hewson</td>
<td>Pembroke MCR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel Crosby</td>
<td>Newnham MCR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niamh Mulcahy</td>
<td>Kings’ College Graduate Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martyn Lugten</td>
<td>Clare MCR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Saunders-Wood</td>
<td>Jesus MCR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse Allardice</td>
<td>St John’s Samuel Butler Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daisy Eyre</td>
<td>Cambridge University Students’ Union</td>
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Members Representing Voting constituencies by Proxy

Claire Davies
Tim Coorens

Peterhouse MCR
Clare Hall – Graduate Student Body
Ex-officio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Darshana Joshi</td>
<td>President and Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellie Chan</td>
<td>Vice-President and secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micha Frazer-Carroll</td>
<td>Welfare and Rights Officer</td>
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Non-voting members present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reece Oosterbeek</td>
<td>Trinity College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quentin Peter</td>
<td>Queens College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egra Ceydun</td>
<td>Homerton College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Mcloghin</td>
<td>Homerton College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luis Nobre</td>
<td>Darwin College</td>
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In attendance:

Ali Chahine General manager and minute taker
1) Welcome
Darshana Joshi welcomes everyone to her first meeting as chair. As this is the last meeting to be attended by Mark Driver, after a long service to Robinson MCR and to the Graduate Union, he is thanked for his hard work and contributions.

2) Approval of the minutes of the previous council meeting
Council received the minutes of the last meeting. It is noted that there was a discussion of the new branding in the Vice-President's report at the last meeting, which is not reflected in the minutes.

**ACTION:** minute-taker to update
The minutes were approved with relevant amendments.

3) Matters arising from the minutes of the previous council meeting
**Update on the election**
The Vice-President, as Returning Officer, noted that nominations open on the day of the meeting. She noted the importance of getting members standing in the election, especially for the role of Vice-President. She noted that many in the room already had the experience required for the role, which attracted a pay of £21k. Since it is important for the stability of the GU that the role is filled or it was noted that the president would have to do the work of two officers. Members were asked to encourage likely candidates.

4) Reports
   a. President
The President has attended a large number of committees, sometimes twice in a day. There has been a lot of discussion around families, to which the new Vice-Chancellor seems to be very receptive. An interesting development from the Graduate Tutor committee was that BOGS data reflect that only 1% of international postgraduate applicants disclose during the application process that they will be bringing dependents. This can lead to additional stress, when they are not prepared in advance to bring dependents or have to leave them behind, and this is a barrier to transition. The Board is gathering data, as well as speaking to the colleges. With GU leading, this would become a priority for the university to provide better pastoral support for the students with families.

She has also been looking at graduate mental health – an important part of her manifesto. With the help of the VP and the WARO the president will be looking to talk to students, about issues and stigma facing mental health issues in the graduate community, and any feedback to support students. Generally looking to make the membership more aware about the issues and the support provisions in the university is her priority in the year at the office. They are also actively involved with providing feedback to the university about updates on the Cambridge student page.

On the Board of Graduate Studies, she has noted that many students are not sure of their rights. The code of practice is normally shown to students, with a number of other large documents.
Student should have access to a summary, or perhaps there should be a contract as noted by council, so students know what they should expect.

Apart from this, her priorities are the planning round, so as to secure money for her successor and a stable union.

b. Vice-President

The Vice-President had been successful in getting the Board of Graduate Studies office to take on the training she had actively participated in creating. This should lead one step closer to all supervisors being trained. From this, the next step would be in developing training for Postgraduates who teach or supervise Undergraduates at the university. As apart from some very basic information, graduate students are not prepared as much as they could be for teaching.

She noted that in the last council, members had asked about raising the idea of a formal contract for graduate students, suspect it will be well received by some. She has formally raised it with the Board of Graduate studies.

Progress continued on the alternative prospectus, with the able help of the Gates Scholars. She invited members in attendance to help themselves to a badge with our new brand.

Finally she noted she is working on a number of other projects, with the WARO and the CUSU Disabled Students Officer, as well as the motion to be discussed later in the meeting.

c. Welfare and Rights Officer

WARO noted that she sent apologies to the last meeting, as she was on annual leave.

She had restructured the welfare training, introducing additional optional sessions with an in-depth focus on different student welfare issues. These include reducing the risk of student suicide, supporting students with mental health problems and supporting mature and postgraduate students. She has already run introduction to welfare sessions, and sexual health training sessions in conjunction with DHIVERSE. In the feedback, attendees had rated the sessions mostly 5 out of 5, across facilitator knowledge, usefulness of training, and inclusivity.

A lot of time had been devoted to rewriting the welfare handbook, - where it had a lot more emphasis on inclusion and intersectionality. She had completed the sexual health scheme report, submitted it to the Welfare and Finance committee, and reported to the Colleges on how sexual health supplies had been distributed at the Graduate Tutors Committee. Of particular concern was that there was a fewer uptakes of supplies amongst the mature colleges. So she is hoping to make sure students are aware and are better able to access the supplies.

In addition, she had written paper for SUAS, recommending changes to student-facing information. She also attended NUS lead and Change conference, and had visited Oxford’s Student Union sabbatical team.
She asked attendees to promote a number of social groups, for disabled students. She also asked attendees to share two surveys, on postgraduate study space provision, and one on student experiences of support services.

5) Motions to be ratified

None needed to be ratified.

6) Discussions to council

   a. Cambridge University Endowment Fund

Council received a number of papers about the endowment fund introduced by the President. The paper noted that currently we have large reserves in the bank that could be invested. In what was considered a bad year the fund increased by 6% & 14% the year before. She noted that the Board of Trustees is seeking the opinion of Council. The Vice-President noted that the Union had a policy to support divestment, and it was important for Council to express if it thought investing in this fund would meet the requirements of that policy.

Members were in agreement that it seems like a good idea, especially as the funds would probably go towards campaigns and events, or other student facing activities.

The General Manager was asked to give an overview, noting that it would take up to 4 months to withdraw funds if needed. Profits from the fund paid half as dividend in cash, half an increase in the price of the stocks we had purchased in the fund.

A member noted that during the recession of 2007, the fund loss value of 20%, which members seem to think was acceptable for such an event.

When discussion how much to invest, it was noted that the trustees had no specific consensus, though it was noted there was a need to have enough to hand, of at least 3 months reserves, as opposed to 9 months which the University sees as us saving too much. It was noted that the GU trustees wanted to consult Council before consulting more widely.

It was noted that we will report back again, as we will be presenting a draft budget to council in the next meeting.

7) Ordinary Motions

   a. Workshops. – VP

The motion to hold workshops on ‘Know Your Rights: Making Cambridge Work for You’, ‘Negotiating Rents’ and ‘Defining your Membership’ was put to council.

The Vice-President presented that paper, noting she would like council’s support, and to make sure the workshops we are holding are the right ones. The CUSU president noted the motion with approval, especially negotiating rents
The motion was passed unanimously

b. Motion to Co-op Chad Allen, to executive committee,

The Vice-President noted that recently there had been a lot of institutional change, with a new President, General Manager, and her own time coming to an end. That continuity will be achieved by having Chad, a current student, who can be consulted - mainly on helping the continued induction of the new GM and constitutional change.

A question from council noted that this would apply to all Sabbatical officers, who continued their student status. In reply it was noted that this would not apply to Darshana or Ellie, as both have completed their Ph.Ds, but would instead formalise a probable informal relationship. The institutional memory is the most important aspect of this, so it is about them able to inform, but not deciding what should be done. The role will be called, the consultant to the executive committee.

It was further noted that the President could terminate the appointment if a conflict arises, but the motion would bring more transparency in operation.

Council voted unanimously for the motion.

8) Business

a. Affiliation fees (6 C)

Proposed affiliation fees were put to council.

It was noted that this should be the last year affiliation fees could be charged, as both Unions have asked for them to be replaced by a direct levy from the Colleges, instead of from ICRs and MCRs. This will be tied to SUAS and our sexual health services. This means that choice to disaffiliate would be a political and not a financial decision from the next academic year (2018-19). The fee for 2017-18 is roughly the same as the previous year, though as in the previous year, a discount is offered to disaffiliated Unions.

It was noted by some members that the proposed fee for the year did not correspond to the amount of students a college has. Consequently, the smaller the college, the more they have to pay per student. CUSU President on the other hand felt that the economy of scale for providing the central Unions, and the services provided. Hence should not be viewed as a MCR being put at a disadvantage. Though the members pointed out that disaffiliated college could still access these services.

It was noted that where CUSU charges very little for PG students, this was not the case with PGCEs, who were considered both UG and PG. It was noted that one MCR had lost money due to a large volume of PGCE attendees from other colleges. The members were encouraged to contact us or to submit a motion either on their welfare, or on the induction.
The affiliation fees were approved with some abstentions.

b. Report – President (16-17)

Council received the annual report from Chad Allan, President 2016-17, primarily the report GU submitted to the charity commission.

This was noted by council

c. Report - Welfare and Rights Officer (16-17)

Council received the Annual report of the previous WARO Sophie Buck.

This was noted by council

9) Emergency motions

No business.

10) Date of the next meeting

4 December 2017 – dates are fixed.

11) AOB

No business.