Emergency Union Council Agenda

# **Meeting Information**

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| **Date:** | **Monday 20th May 2024** |
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| **Time:** | **16:00 – 18:00** |
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| **Location:** | **SU 1st Floor Activities Hall & Microsoft Teams** |

# **Meeting Agenda**

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| **Agenda Item** | **Papers** | **Description** |
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| **1.** |  | **Welcome** |
| **2.** |  | **Apologies for Absence** |
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| **3.** |  | **Motions for debate from student members** |
|  | **Demonstrating Solidarity with Palestinian Students*** **Presented by Kwan Yuet Adora Wong [KYAW] (VPE) on behalf of the motion nominators**
 | **KYAW read out the motion details.****Question from the floor – Currently the President is the deputy chair of the Trustee Board. With this proposed change, which option would take on that role?****Answer from KYAW – We have a full structure for this it will still stay the same. So fundamentally the role remake doesn’t actually change but the change is very clear with the role name. The remit is strict so there should be no stepping on toes when it comes to doing the role.****Question online – I wondered what were the thoughts of the president in this? I didn’t see the current President’s name included among those who had proposed the motion “Proposal for Reform of Officer Titles and Role Remits”.****Answer from KYAW – We have consulted the president, however for anymore information about their throughs, please email the president** **president@union.aston.ac.uk****.****Question online – Would the motion ‘Proposal for Reform of Officer Titles and Role Remits’ mean that there is no longer one leader of the SU? Would this effect how things are decided?****Answer from KYAW - According to the bye-law the full-time officer is on a flat structure already, so there were no one leader at all. Because of it is a flat structure and decision is made as a team, this role name changes will be very important, as there will create no more confusion.****Response online – Was this bye-lae from last meeting? If so it is understandable that there is some confusion. Thank you.****Response KYAW – It was about 2 years ago****Response online – My apologies I misunderstood ‘last rewriting of the byelaws’ as last meeting.****Response KYAW – No worries at all. Don’t need to apologise. I hope this clarifies.****End of online discussion** |
| **4.** |  | **Motions for debate from Executive committee** |
|  | **Proposal for Reform of Officer Titles and Role Remits*** **Presented by Batoul Abu Affar [BAA]**
 | **BAA read out the motion details. BAA noted that the points and proposal are to be directed to the University. This doesn’t mean they will take action but as an SU with the motion vote can try and make the University follow the points.****Question from the floor – Have these points been made to the University before?****Answer from BAA – This is the first time.****Question from the floor – How much effect will these types of motions have?****Answer from Jude Install [JI] (Chairperson) – The Students’ Union represents interests of students. We can’t be confused with the University; we are 2 completely different organisations. This motion is us as students putting forward our motion to the university for them to take into consideration. Motions have previously passed here and they have directly affected university decision making processes. JI handed over to JC for an update following his longer conversations with the university.****Answer from Juan Carlos Garcia Belza [JCGB] (VPSA) – Putting this motion forward and evidence being presented to university of what our demands are. Whether they take action is their decision. From my side, I’ve attended a meeting with the university executive this morning. Presented contents of motion with Max (SU CEO) and they have agreed to schedule a meeting within the next 2 weeks with club and society leaders to further inform and have discussion. But with that there is still no guarantee they will act on anything we’re asking.****If the first motion gets approved we can guarantee changes happen because it is within the SU but with the second motion it is within the university, so it’s the university that decides to act or not. They may act on some points or not, or maybe not.** **Question from the floor – Is the meeting a negotiation?****Answer from JCGB – Just a meeting with the university executive as nothing has been voted on yet.****Question from the floor – Do you have experience with negotiation with university executive?****Answer from JCGB – Yes we are constantly, the whole team here, we have been elected and throughout the whole year we have in situations met with university executive. For example I have been demanding things for the sports clubs. In the last Union Council, the sports clubs were here demanding stuff, same thing we vote, and we restructure the sports.** **As far as this morning, the university executives have no idea about any of this. They have only seen stuff here and there, nothing concrete which sats this is what the students want. This motion should help open their eyes for them to start acting.****Question from the floor – If we vote on this motion, how will we be involved later on?****Answer from JCGB – The university executive has already agreed on a scheduled meeting so from that conversation, if you’re not happy then at next Council put something else forward.** **Question from the floor – How quickly can this motion be approved by the university?****Answer from JI – This can’t be approved by the university. It can be approved by us as the SU, we can then present it to the university. We are like a pressure group to the university. We represent interests of students who are our members. So, if this motion gets passed, it’s basically a message to the university that they have to take these things into account. This will be an ongoing process with the university.****Question from the floor – Once the motion is taken to the university, do they have to do anything, or can they just ignore it?****Answer from JI – They could ignore it but they won’t. Technically they can ignore it, but I think the conversation is already in motion with JCGB and all of our officers. I would suggest that they won’t ignore but if they do ignore it then the best course of action would be to come straight back here and put an even stronger motion forward. We could pass another one saying that these demands haven’t been met and perhaps suggest some alternative ones.****Question from the floor – Is there a precedence for setting a deadline forward for a motion like this? So, the university must respond in a timely manner?****Answer from JI – This was something we discussed in a Council recently and we do want to look into. The university will be sent this straight away and we want a response as fast as possible Ideally they would respond straight away but it is an ongoing process. Pass to JCGB for more insight.****Answer from JCGB - University don’t have a department that handles this directly but what we can say is we can demand for more resources, quicker action, more response, more communication. For example, they may be trying to communicate with us what they’re doing and nobody’s receiving it. That’s why I’m sharing my meetings, I would say if I don’t hear about it then no students going to hear about it. That’s the kind of thing we need to push forward. University staff are human, and it takes them time to do these things. Within the next few weeks to have the conversation with the executive leaders to understand how they are acting, what's going on, are they communicating, what are they trying to push forward?****Answer from BAA – Your vote counts because we can show the university how many students voted and what they wanted. You voice makes a difference, with the motion and making changes show intent and voice to the university to pressure them to act and reply. Give us feedback and a reply, it could be positive or negative but it shows the student voice counts. The university need to consider students wants and needs and students voice is important to pressure the university.****Question from the floor – How are we supposed to hear updates?****Answer from BAA – We do hold other Council meetings and we will inform the students of the outcome of the motions. It will go online.****Question from the floor – Will we receive an email?****Answer from JI – It will go straight onto the SU website when the vote for the motion has passed. We have another Council coming up on the 4th June. If the will of the students, we can provide an update and from many of our officers for an update on where the motion is going.****Question from the floor – Where the motion notes a ‘disclosure of all investment’, does this include the SU?****Answer from JI – That would have to be submitted in a different motion but is that’s something that you’d like to see, we do have a Council meeting coming up on the 4th June. So that is something that could be explored. If you want to submit a motion, if you just drop an email to** **union.voice@aston.ac.uk****. they’ll send you the motion template and stuff like that. So, anything you want to add can be added, just not in this Council. It will be the next one. It’s a separate motion.****Response from JCGB – Have the current motion and depending on how the university decides to act on this, review it again on the 6th of June. I think that’s the best.****Response from JI - There has been a lot that has gone into this motion. This has been a conversation with BAA and other student groups. I think this is the motion that we’ve got now; put together quite carefully and making sure that everything’s included. But if there is stuff that any of you in this room deems that there’s not enough; it’s not going far enough or there’s other things that you want included. Definitely drop a motion into the next council. I think that’s the best way forward.****Question from the floor – Does the university have to respond?****Answer from JI – Technically not but this is pressure to the university. I would suggest that they will respond to it because conversations are in motion with the university. Technically, legally no they don’t need to respond.****Question from the floor – is the vote open for 2 days?****Answer from JI – Yes, the voting is open and will stay open tomorrow. We ask that you do vote in council now as often people end up leaving and forget to vote.****Response from BAA – We need to hit quoracy for the motion to go through. We have lots of people here today, if you vote we can hit quoracy. Encourage your friends to vote, thank you.****Response from JCGB – We are asking you to vote because we have a full room of you here now and we don’t want anyone to forget. Please make sure you vote.****Response from JI – Voting is open until 4pm on Wednesday you have until then but preferably vote now.****Call from JI – any other questions or remarks?****Question from the floor – It’s not part of the motion but I request that if the motion passes officers call university to be clear and transparent so updates and information can be displayed by SU in a timely manner for students to know what is happening.****Response from JI – Yes, something we discussed at the last SU Exec Committee meeting, if the motion gets passed, is whether a university staff member be invited to next council. That is something we’re going to explore. If there is something you would all like to see, then I would be happy to invite the university in here to have a Q&A session for updates.****Question online – How many votes are needed for this motion to pass?****Answer from KYAW – Based on the bye-law, as it is emergency council, for the motion to pass it is 13 people.****Question online – Is the more students that vote the better the chances?****Answer from KYAW – For passing the motion yes, and the more students vote means more students’ case. Which means we can take a bigger data set to the university.****Question online – Am I correct in saying that there are additional resolves included here to vote on? I didn’t see the last 2 of these points in the motion sent out?****Answer from KYAW – Full detailed motion can be found here** [**https://www.astonsu.com/events/6013/2637/**](https://www.astonsu.com/events/6013/2637/)**Question online – So the voting link will remain active till tomorrow at what time?****Answer from KYAW – 4pm on Wednesday.****JI asked whether there were any further questions from the floor or online. There weren’t.****JI notes that the barcode to vote was visible now in the presentation. JI noted for students to scan the barcode and it takes them to the place where they can vote. JI noted that there are 2 separate motions to vote on.****JI noted that the vote button was not currently visible but that it would go live as soon as possible.****JI confirmed the vote option was visible and the vote option was live.****JI confirmed next Council meeting on the 4th June.**  |
| **5.** |  | **Other Business Approved by the Chair** |
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# **Next SU Council Meeting Information**

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| **Date:** | **Tuesday 4th June** |
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| **Time:** | **15:00 – 17:00** |
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| **Location:** | **Upstairs Activity Hall, Students’ Union**  |