



10th December 2024

Meeting Name	3 rd SU Council 2024
Date	10 th December 2024
Location	LTB4

Attending		
	Name	Role
Union Chair	ASHLEY PERRY	Union Chair
SU Leaders	IAN LAU	VP Student Experience
	LILY-MAY CAMERON	SU President
	NIFEMI WILSON-ADU	VP Welfare
	JOE HOLMES	VP Education
	SOPHIE WELCH	East 15 President
	MARIUM MASROOR	VP Southend
Student Officers	ORION RORA	Students with Disabilities Officer
	ARI SENTHIL	Trans+ Officer
	NOAH PANTANO	LGBTQ+ Officer
	EDEN TRAIBERG	Women's Officer
	CHARLOTTE GÉNIN	International Officer
	THOMAS NORTON	Postgraduate Taught Officer
Student Representatives	BIANCA RESSE-CARVALHO	Black Rep
	YU CHIH CHIU	Asian Rep
	EMMA CORP	Women's rep
	TOBY WARREN	UG Social Sciences
	HOLLY RAYNER	PG Social Sciences
	CARSON HARDSTAFF	PG Arts and Humanities Rep
	LUKE WHEELER	PG Science & Health Rep
	Marta Haba	Refugee Rep
	SALAM ERSHEAD	Minority Ethnic Rep
	ELENA FAIETA	International Rep
	SAIRAH VINU	International Rep
	ALEXANDER SABLICH IRAOLA	International Rep
	GRACE ELIZABTH MULLANE	LGTBQ+ Rep
	VIR SAXENA	Rebel Rep
	YURY KARUTIN	Rebel Rep
	SHUBHI YADAV	Societies Rep
	AADHYA MUTHAMMA THIRRODIRA MOHAN	Societies Rep
	AMELIA YEMAYÁ GARCÍA PEÑA	Living Off Campus Rep

	LUCA GUGOLZ	Sustainability Rep
	CHRISTINA BONNY	Southend SCO
	FATIMA CHOWDHURY	Southend SCO
	NICOLETA MAXIM	Colchester Chair
SU Staff	CRAIG STEPHENS	Chief Executive Officer
	JENNI DAY	Head of Student Engagement
	BERRY INDIA	Engagement Coordinator (Events & Democracy)
	KIRSTY MATTHEW	Union Manager (Southend)
	SANTIAGO CORTES CARVAJAL	Democracy and Representation Manager
	INGRID JONES	Democracy and Representation Assistant
Observers	HAMSIKA Pagadala	Palestinian Solidarity Society (PalSoc) Member
	Dominico Rivera	

Apologies	
Name	Role
MARYAM HOSSEINI	Women's rep
ELODIE GIBBY	Students with Disabilities Rep
MAIA BERREMILI	International Rep
SAN BAINS	Safety Rep
VISHNI NARAYANAN GIRISHBABU	Southend EBS Rep

Union Chair Welcome

- The Union Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were sent by Safety Rep, International Rep, Women's Rep, EBS Southend Rep, Students with disabilities rep.
- **Actions of previous meeting**

Action	Who	Progress
Ask University accommodation about the possibility of year-round accommodation	SU President	Discussed with the University. This is happening and work will be done to advertise it better.
Meet to discuss how to improve the experience of the community in Sub zero	LGBTQ+ Officer VP Community & Engagement	VP met with the SCO and discussed the feedback of the community. The SCO will look on specific things to improve.
Provide more details on One World Essex via email to the Black rep.	VP Community & Engagement	A meeting was set up, but not enough people attended, therefore a new meeting will need to be scheduled.

Follow up to ensure that the drink covers are being offered in SU Bar as well as Subzero.	VP Welfare	She worked with the staff of SU Bar and the drink covers are now available.
Reach to Palestinian Solidarity Society to ask if they would like to be involved in writing the BDS policy and support them linking up with the other students.	SU Council Team	Completed.
Write down/research any price discrepancies between accommodation laundry prices.	All Council members	UG Social Sciences Rep, Students with Disabilities Officer and Postgraduate Taught Officer reported how much laundry cost and it was clear that there was a discrepancy between the accommodations
Raise concerns regarding circuit laundry to the university (see minutes for details) and see what can be done prior to 2026	Student Leaders	This was raised to the Vice-Chancellor and will be brought up again in Student Experience Committee. University will look at the contracts and sharing that with the SU.

Student Leaders Q&A session

- **LGBTQ+ rep** asked whether student trustees that sit on Council can vote on policies?
 - **CEO** clarified that if a Council member who is also a Student Trustee decided to vote in Council in a certain way, then in the Trustee Board, they would have to declare a conflict of interest. If they decide to stay impartial in Council, they can then vote in Trustee Board. Essex SU allows for dual roles of being a council member and a Trustee Board member. This can cause some conflict of interest on certain topics from Council.
- **International rep:** For VP Education. On his blog, he states numerous recommendations, one of them is ensuring that deadlines are not bunched together and that no forms of assessment occur during the holiday periods. He has feedback from an international student that they did not find out the date of an in-person assessment (scheduled for the 2nd of January) until the 21st of November. This interferes with the international students plans to go home.
 - **VP Education** confirmed that this is something that he and the Education Team have been made aware of, and they managed to change the dates of an exam for a student. Please send all the feedback possible to the VP Education to talk to departments.
 - **Another question:** The International rep noted that they were happy to see that the Student Leaders are pursuing to bring back the guarantor scheme, why was this removed recently?
- **CEO:** the University does not have a guarantor scheme and have not done it in the past. As a result of the Renter's Rights Bill, a big guarantor has pulled out of the market. As a result of that, Lily-May has raised this issue with local MP's.
 - **SU President:** Student Leaders brought this to the Vice-chancellor's attention, who is going to research other universities doing this. This would also attract more international students. MPs are not interested in making us exempt essentially because they want to equalise the housing market.
- **UG Social Sciences** asked how the new Safety Buses worked.
 - **VP Welfare:** There are 3 different busses with different capacities. There are 3 routes: one to university accommodation, one to Wivenhoe, one to Greenstead. All three buses are running at the same time. The waiting time is around 15 minutes. So far there have not been any issues raised.
- **PGT SCO:** Dean of Undergraduate Education was consulted on Listen Again, was the Postgraduate Dean consulted as well?
 - **VP Education:** The Dean of Undergraduate Education was just amending the FAQs, but this consultation was not due to his role specific.

- **Black rep:** There have been a lot of complaints about exam dates, and many students just found out when those dates are, and the plane tickets for international students are very expensive to be back around those dates.
 - **VP Education** asked the rep to share that feedback as soon as they can so the Education Team can work on that.
- **Students with disabilities SCO:** Are the buses wheelchair friendly?
 - **CEO** explained that they are unfortunately not wheelchair accessible. Previously the SU had a wheelchair accessible minibus, however the cost of the replacement is very high, but it is something that can be looked at. Additionally, it could be possible to explore the possibility of working with a taxi company.

Big Plan update and Q&A session

- Student Leaders updated on each project within the Big Plan
- **Co-create diverse and appealing events**
 - Price competitions to get people involved in sports
 - Working with VTeam for volunteering week next term
 - Campus cat day: working on all the logistics and figuring out what will happen on that day.
- **Building online communities**
 - The Directors of the SU have talked about the risks of using WhatsApp as a tool. There will be a meeting with the Director of Strategy, Marketing and Engagement to discuss pros and cons.
 - Drafting guidelines on how moderators will be assigned to groups and what specific roles they will have, how the groups will be monitored and how the rules will be enforced.
- **Developing engagement with education**
 - Guidance has been sent about how to find your way around campus and social anxiety. Working with academics for them to consider the social anxiety from students. They have had good response from academics and students.
 - There are currently 329 student reps which is impressive for this time of year. The ratio is 40 student per rep.
 - Common rooms are something that VP Education would like to work with students to make recommendations for common rooms and he would like to hear feedback to know what could be done.
 - Preparing a document about student experience.
 - Working on reducing barriers and being clear on the expectation of the outcomes of the course.
 - Only 15% have interacted with their personal tutor, which is really low considering that over 4000 students have answered the survey.
 - There is a PG event on Thursday.
- **Increasing employability culture.**
 - First session of "become a boss" took place and was a huge success.
 - Skills café went really well.
 - They had 3 future planned sessions: build your own side hustle, Stand-out CVs, and Inside Marketing.
 - Looking at better career support for Post Graduate students.
- **Southend**
 - The idea of having a skills café in Southend like it happens in Colchester was well received by the Careers team and work will be done for this to happen.

Questions:

- **UG Social Sciences:** with the reduction of University budget, is there anything that the SU can do to engage to ensure that students will be supported?
 - **VP Education** clarified that it is voluntary severance and that it is not likely to be academic section, so in theory the teaching experience should not be affected by this. The sense is that the decisions will be made carefully.
 - **SU President:** The effects will be seen in April,
 - **Action for Council:** bring any feedback that Council members hear about the effect on student experience.
- **Black rep:** in Ivor Crew, there are not charging ports so students struggle using electronic devices. Could it be possible to have portable chargers?
 - **Action:** VP Education to look into the possibility of having charging ports in Ivor Crew.

- The process of selection of new trustees was long but we have successfully appointed 3 new student trustees.
- The year end accounts for 2023/24 have been signed following another Clean Audit by our Auditors Crowe. They were approved by the Trustee Board and signed by the SU President.
- Extraordinary board meeting to restructure the Union's trading activities between the Charity and its subsidiary. This result is the transferring of the Store, Everything Essex and the SU Bar's summer's trade into UESU Ltd. The Board approved this.
- The new proposed definition of membership was sent.
- The SU wants to know how the reduction of University budget affects student experience, so please get in contact to share any feedback related to this.

Vote on the change name of the VP Student Experience role – Nifemi Wilson-Adu

- VP Welfare is proposing the change of name to the role, it would not change anything on the role description, just the name of the role. She explained why she is proposing the change with the reasons provided in the document circulated.
- Voting then opened online.

State your name, campus and position.	Do you approve of the proposed name change to the VP Student Experience Role?
Vir Saxena Rebel rep	Yes
Alexander Sablich Iraola, Colchester Campus, International Rep	Yes
Fatima, Southend, SCO	Abstain
Theo Broderick, Colchester Campus, Trans Officer,	Yes
Vishnu Narayanan Girishbabu Southend Campus EBS Council Rep	Yes
Donna(Yu Chih Chiu), Colchester, Asian Rep	Yes
Alisha Asad, Colchester campus, UG Science & Health Rep	Yes
Sairah, Colchester, International Rep	Abstain
Maia Berremili, Colchester Campus	Yes
Amelia Yemaya Garcia Pena, Colchester, Rep Living Off-Campus	Yes
Holly Rayner, Colchester, PG Social Sciences	Yes
San Bains, Colchester, Safety Rep	Yes
Elodie, Colchester, disability Rep	No
Marta, Colchester , Refugee Rep	Yes
Elena Faieta, Colchester, International Students Rep	Yes
Thomas Norton, Colchester, PGT Officer	Yes
Yury Karutin, Colchester, Rebel Rep	Abstain
Salam Ershead, Colchester, Minority Ethnic Rep	Yes
Shubhi Yadav (Colchester campus) (Societies Representative)	Yes
Toby Warren, Colchester, Undergraduate Social Sciences Rep	Yes

Eden Traiberg, Colchester, Women's Officer	Yes
Aadhya, Colchester and Societies Rep	Yes
Luke Wheeler, C, PG S&H Edu Rep	Yes
Orion - Colchester - Disabled Students SCO	Yes
Gracie Mullane, Colchester, LGBTQ+ Rep	Yes
Carson Hardstaff	Yes
Christina Bonny, SCO-Southend, Southend campus	Yes
Noah Pantano, Colchester, LGBTQ+ SCO	Yes

This change hit quoracy, and it was approved.

Vote on the new proposed BDS policy

- The students who drafted this policy have been working with Palestine Solidarity Society.
- A member of the Palestine Solidarity Society introduced the discussion on the policy which was circulated. For their full speech please contact the Palestine Solidarity Society.
The Union chair passed to the CEO who explained to Council the legal responsibilities that the Trustee Board has, if the motion is passed by Council, then the Board would be taking legal advice. The CEO did highlight that other SU's Trustee Boards have not been able to accept a BDS policy from their Council following legal advice.
- One Council member had 3 comments:
 - Comment 1: The rep feels there has been a lack of transparency. Last academic year Council allowed the policy to lapse in a procedure perceived by some previous Council members as misleading. On the first Council of the 2024-2025 academic year, Council believed that Student Leaders would bring back the policy. On 2nd Council of the same academic year, students were told that they would need to bring back the policy.
 - Comment 2: Numerous members of Council are disappointed on how the Democratic processes are happening on the SU and the lack of transparency specifically relating to this policy.
 - Comment 3: The evening before the Council meeting, the reps received an email highlighting concerns around the legality of the policy which left very little time to prepare ahead of the meeting.
- Last academic year, the government at that time had placed before Parliament the Overseas Territories Bill, which following advice would have meant that the Union would not be able to uphold the policy as it was. However following the dissolving of the Conservative government this Bill fell and has not been brought back by the current government. X`
- Last SU President said that he would ensure it would be brought back, and therefore the Student Leaders thought that they had to write them. There was a confusion on who was supposed to write it, but not with ill intention.
- There was some confusion about who should rewrite the policy, following advice the student leaders placed the policy back to Council for Council members to rewrite.
- Going forward, in all policy matters, the SU will be producing a procedure to allow time for students to come together and write the policy with staff support so that policies can be written in a way that it gives the best possible chance to pass. This is part of the learning curve because of this policy.
- There was no ill intention behind the email sent the day before, it was a result of weekend research and the intent of being fully transparent with the legal situation, but unfortunately it happened late in the timeline.
- Question: Would the policy be fully adopted or fully rejected? Are there any parts that still could be implemented?
- Trustee Board cannot amend policies in any way; therefore, the Board of Trustees would have to reject or approve the whole policy.
- Frustration by the time that the email was sent as it did not allow enough time to work or engage in conversations. For future reference, please share the concerns with more time.

- **Action:** To seek legal advice if the policy passes and to offer support to rewrite the policy to become lawful.
- They would like to work with staff as soon as possible to resubmit the policy as soon as possible.
- The SU will look to share what it can regarding the legal advice.
- It was reminded of the possibility to call for an extraordinary meeting of the SU Council.
- Question - Have there been any procedural changes? Last SU President promised to bring it back as it was.
 - The last SU President promised to bring back the motion as it was because it was not his position to change the motion.
 - The officers have had impact on previous policies, if those motions are not challenged in law.
- It was noted that the Student Leadership Team believes that no civilian should be murdered. A rep iterated that we should not be using ambiguous language, we should be clearer with what is happening, which is genocide. This was noted however explained that the President cannot comment on other individuals' thoughts.
- Consistency and clarity on concepts.
- Build a process in the future to give the motions the best chance to pass.
- Is it possible for Council to get details on what would entail the staff or legal advice for Council to help make policy decisions?
- Question: Regarding the email sent last night, what were the suggestions if the NUS guideline and International Law were mentioned in multiple parts of the proposed policy?
 - There was no specific suggestion, just trying to point on what could be said by the legal advice.
- Question: Could information be shared on what has changed in the relationship between Council and Trustees? It seems to have been changes in processes between Council and Trustee Board.
 - There have not been changes between the roles of Council and Trustee Board. Student Leaders have two hats: they sit in Council as Sabbatical Officers and also as Trustees of the Charity. The Student Leaders have also to make decisions from their Trustee role. Ensure that all these things are included in the training for next academic year.
- **Action:** Meeting between student leaders, Pal Soc and Council members to talk about an initial campaign on education that should be made around BAE Systems campaign.

Who	What
SU President	To seek legal advice if the policy passes and to offer support to rewrite the policy to become lawful.
SU President	Schedule a meeting between student leaders, Pal Soc and Council members to talk about an initial campaign on education that should be made around BAE Systems campaign

This policy hit the required quota, and the SU Council approved it. This will be sent to the Trustee Board.

Discussion on Incident reporting – LGBTQ+ SCO

- **LGBTQ+ SCO:** Issue around the access of reporting. From feedback, it seems that there is more homophobic issues have been going on around campus. He asked the community, why students are not reporting these issues? Frustration because the community feels that they are isolated. He does not think that this problem is specific to his community only, he believes that this is a broader issue. Many students have experienced bad situations.
- **VP welfare** supports Noah is gathering this information and wants to know the barriers and also what information students want to know? VP Welfare and then would be able to see which data she would be able to share, however some data may be restricted.
- **VP Education:** the amount of reports has decreased but this does not necessarily mean that incidents have decreased.
- **Colchester chair:** a barrier is accessibility. QR codes around campus could improve this.
- **Report by LGBTQ+ rep:**
 - If you report anonymously, conduct team cannot follow up. **Action: VP Welfare to catch up with the LGBTQ+ rep**
- **Disabilities officer:** this not only affects the LGBTQ+, but students have also reported incidents with their crutches, wheelchairs
- **International rep. Alex:** There are barriers.
- **UG Social Sciences:** Would be useful more clarity on the process.

- **Nifemi:** Thank you for sharing feedback. Please contact her with more feedback to be able to act on it

Who	What
VP Welfare	Catch up with the LGBTQ+ rep about anonymous complaints to Student Conduct

Date of next meeting: 4th February 2025

Colchester Campus meeting

Campus Chair welcome

Action	Who	Updates
Contact estates regarding the shutting down lift to 4 th floor on Thursday Market Days.	Student Leader Team	The SU did not say yes to that decision. It was informed that if it would break one more time, the SU would be liable to pay the cost of the repair of the lift.

Community Updates

Campus Chair welcome

The Colchester Campus Chair welcomed all Council Members to the Colchester Campus Council Meeting.

Community Updates:

Women`s SCO Updates: The first women's mixer (collaborated with the black rep) had 10 attendees. This mixer was viewed as a starting point, as the mixer had hoped for a bigger turnout. The women's SCO is looking into resources on how to better schedule and advertise events for the future.

Introductory meetings have been organised with the student leaders on receiving feedback and connecting to women who are interested in or a member of:

- Women in STEM Roundtable Discussion
- Girls Night In (run by VP Welfare)
- Essex Startups (further aims to set up a separate meeting with)

The Women's SCO is currently collaborating with the LGBTQ+ Rep on how to be more inclusive with women and female identifying individuals within the LGBTQ+ community.

The Women`s Community Instagram account has also been accessed, and new content has been posted.

Trans+ SCO Updates: The Trans Day of Remembrance panel was a success, however the trans vigil in town received a smaller turnout (mainly due to accessibility issues for students travelling from campus to town).

Currently planning for LGBTQ+ history month in February (collaborating with LGBTQ+ SCO and Rep) as well as planning more allyship and educational workshops for students.

Postgraduate Taught SCO Updates: Recently received feedback from postgraduate students that they want more networking events. A discussion took place (2nd December) concerning issues facing postgraduates and clarifying shared interests and goals moving forward. A meeting with SU Engagement also took place regarding this, and how to support and engage with the postgraduate community.

Currently, the Postgraduate Community Instagram account has been accessed, and new content has been posted. Mixers for Spring term are currently being planned, with help from the VP Education and Postgraduate convener.

LGBTQ+ SCO Updates: The LGBTQ+ SCO, still being out-of-country, has continued providing background support through coordinating and event planning to the LGBTQ+ Reps. The LGBTQ+ SCO and Reps are in contact with the LGBTQ+ Society and a successful mixer has been held.

Currently, the LGBTQ+ SCO is further investigating hate incidences on campus and how to combat such issues (this is being discussed alongside student leaders).

Rough plans have also been made for LGBTQ+ history month, in February, with the main concern being having the funding to support events. There are no more events that are to be held this term (Winter term), so current work is going towards planning events for next term.

Issue Raised by Holly Rayner (PG Social Sciences Rep) - There are some cases, even in official SU content, where the Trans+ roles are being referred to as 'Trans' roles. This name change occurred during 2023-24

council with the aim to be as inclusive as possible to the trans community, and the Trans+ roles should be addressed in its full title everywhere.

Students with Disabilities SCO Updates: Due to illness, the Students with Disabilities SCO has struggled to engage with their community this past month (November-December).

Continuing on from the 2nd SU Council concerning the accessible bathroom being locked and inaccessible, the Students with Disabilities SCO is still providing attention to the issue and have maintained contact with estates on keeping assessable bathrooms unlocked.

The art exhibition and the sensory room has a good turnout and have been viewed as a success for Disability History month.

Currently, Students with Disabilities SCO and Rep are working to roll out a disability's poster campaign for January 2025.

Community Representatives Updates:

Rebel Rep (Vir) Updates: Current efforts are going towards planning the '50-hour rebellion' stream for Rebel Radio. This will take place at the end of volunteering week in Spring term. Its goal is to collaborate with as many members of the SU as possible.

Rebel Reps also aim to build a framework, alongside the SU, to support students in raising problems on campus. The goal of this framework is to increase articles published by Rebel Media.

- Close meeting

Southend Campus meeting

Attendees:

Ashley Perry – Union Chair

Christina Bonny – Southend SCO

Marium Masroor – VP Southend

Michelle Malone – Education Manager

Kirsty Matthew – Southend Manager

India Berry – Engagement Coordinator (Southend)

Campus Chair welcome

Actions and Updates

- Michelle had to cancel the Christmas event due to low attendance, with only five reps signing up.
- Marium discussed the successful meeting with the careers team for the skills cafe, mentioning a keen interest from Southend and collaborating with SCO Christina to help organise - Michelle recalls a previous skills cafe on extenuating circumstances and academic offenses, suggesting it could be part of the new skills cafe program.
- Marium talked about meeting with the EBS rep regarding lounge opening times is still yet to happen due to conflicts in schedule, with Kristy and Keith looking into the budget.
- Marium discussed with the SU team regarding JP badminton times, noting two badminton days and potential adjustments based on feedback. Kirsty clarified that going forward there will now be separate days for Badminton and Basketball to allow for more time during the sessions
- Marium is organizing SCO intros with SU Instagram, confirming the uploading of pictures on Instagram from the next term – Christina to send in a photo this week for this due the uniform issue when originally taking photos

Community Updates and Society Campaign

- Christina shared her plans for a full-fledged society campaign, promoting it during the Freshers Fair and discussing adding society benefits to the personal and career development module.
- There is a plan to be two phases of the campaign: promotion in the first phase and bi-weekly workshops in the second phase, including leadership training and guest speakers.

Department Collaboration

- Christina also raised concerns HSC students had about events being largely EBS-focused, which she had mentioned that previous events have been run for both E15 and HSC however there has been such low engagement at those events compared to EBS – Christina would like to look into events that could further connect the three departments
- Kirsty spoke to how the Southend Big Plan was to collaborate more closely with departments which has been done however there has been greater engagement with EBS and the department is always a more forthcoming to work with the SU than others, which tend to have more time-consuming schedules. There will be some future collaborative events which the SU can support Christina in terms of reaching out and helping organise.

Who	What	When
Christina	Look into events that would attract better engagement from HSC and E15 students and connect the departments	04/02/2025

Ashley closed the meeting

Date of next meeting 04/02/2025

Loughton Campus council

Attendees:

- Bryony Dougherty – **Loughton Executive**
- Lily-May Cameron – **SU President**
- Joe Holmes – **VP Education**
- Guilly Banhari – **VP Community Engagement**
- Jeni Andrews – **Head of Student Engagement**
- Chris Jakens – **Head of Education**
- Sophie Atherton – **Student Engagement Manager**
- Santiago Cortés – **Democracy & Representation Manager**

Actions previous meetings.

- Action – Santiago Cortés to move council to start at 1pm. The action was completed.
- Insights team to gain data for click rate. Sophie Atherton: Of the emails sent, the open rate is around 50%; marketing is impressed by the open rate.
- Sophie Atherton to follow up with Luke Caplin about water being restocked over fizzy drinks. Water bottles have not been replaced. **Action:** keep chasing Luke. Issue has been raised and might be new vending machines

- Sophie Atherton to see if there is budget for disposable cutlery. Chris Jakens to discuss further with the university.
 - Chris will follow up with University.

Loughton Executive on behalf of East15 President:

- Winter event went well, and will figure out the numbers of attendance. Sophie to ask Mei and figure out attendance.

Loughton Executive: Steady term, nothing has jumped out of the normal. She has email about

Head of Education: He met with Essex food. 2 things were the main focus of the meeting: cost of food and opening hours. Opening hours are short and the outlets close before students are out of lectures. There are talks of upgrading the vending machines.

Bryony: Next term there will be a meeting between students and Essex Food

SU President: Uni is doing many budget cuts, and its worth to be mindful that might be push back when doing petitions on expenses.

Sophie A: Going into term 2, with LGBTQ+ History month incoming, please share any feedback that students have around what they would like to see for the month.