

Present:

Scrutiny Panel Members: Jack Bowen (JB), Jingke Lin (JL), Lucy Shapley (LS), Shaun Keen (SK)

Officers: Danielle Murinas (DM, Postgraduate Officer), Jules Singh (JS, Education Officer), Adam Dorey (AD, Campaigns Officer)

In Attendance:

Staff: Rozena Nadeem (RN, Democracy Coordinator, Minute-Taker), Houmaa Chaudhry (HC, Senior Representation Coordinator)

Apologies:

Scrutiny Panel Member: Eloise Watkin (EW)*

**the Panel asked EW's questions for the Officers to them on EW's behalf*

Absent Without Apologies:

Officers: Rachel Boucher (RB, Ethical & Environmental Officer), Eleanor Thomas (ET, LGBTQ+ Students Officer), Louisa Martin (LM, Womens' Officer)

Trigger Warnings:

Wellbeing, welfare, Disabled Students' Allowance, awarding gaps, extenuating circumstances

Item No.	Item Title	Meeting Notes
Start		
1	Panel De-Brief 4:00pm- 4:05pm	RN briefed the Scrutiny Panel before they met with the Officers.

2	Postgraduate Officer Questions 4:05pm- 4:20pm	<p>DM provided their updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing section on report – I have had various other meetings regarding wellbeing – I will have a meeting next week with a University staff member, and a Westmere Scholar • PG Careers accessibility and advice – I’m creating a comms plan with this, and prepared for my meeting with the Director of Employability. I’m able to feed into University comms too. • Research – I found a pre-existing plan from the University, and plan on using this <p>SK: You talked about PG welfare in your report, which is great, but it doesn’t break out in terms of PGT and PGR students – please could you talk about how you will break this support down?</p> <p>DM: There are some similarities with accessibility barriers between PGR and PGT students. PGTs have issues that are more specific to PGTs, and similar to UGs too (e.g. clustering of assignments during peak times). For PGRs, I’ve talked to Westmere about this.</p> <p>SK: We do love student-led policy! The PG Mixers look successful, and I can say this as I’ve been to one of them. Is there likely to be more variation in the timings of future events for PG events though, as the current events are at fixed times?</p> <p>DM: For the PG Mixer, this is at an established time now, and I feel like changing the time would make it difficult for the students who currently attend. We’re looking to do more separate events though that are PG-specific. This is the first year where we don’t have a PG Society. Future events are looking more towards Semester 2. We</p>
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are going to do events with the Graduate School too, and these are at different times naturally (as we don't want overlap).

LS: With the Disabled Students Officer (DSO) yesterday, something that came up was Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), and how this wasn't readily available for PGs. Would you be happy to work with the DSO on this?

DM: There is a wider accessibility issue on this, I talked to Disability Services about for example, what do PGs do if they are disabled and are teaching? When the Disabled Students Commission is published, I would like University staff to look at this and identify gaps in support.

LS: Thank-you for this, it all sounds good! My second question is about the PG Mixers. I see that they are weekly, and I'm wondering how they are promoted? I know PGs who don't know about them.

DM: I promote them on my social media. One challenge that I have is that it's just me running them, so I'm limited in what I can do in terms of promotion. I'm thinking about putting posters around campus, I didn't do this originally due to not knowing how many PGs would be on campus. I feel that we also need to find balance, since sometimes we have feedback from students that we're bombarded with emails.

LS: Thank-you for this feedback, it all sounds great!

JB: I'd like to thank you on promoting mental health and wellbeing support for PG students. I'm wondering if you're reaching out to wellbeing services about PG wellbeing?

DM: A few years ago, we reached out to Graduate School, and ensure they are receiving training on this. I've reached out to Wellbeing Services and UB Heard too. In my meeting next week, I'm going to talk about PG-specific support.

JL: I have a suggestion. The International Officer (IO) mentioned yesterday that he is looking into international student support. I'm wondering if you're working with the IO to look at support for international PG students.

DM: I have talked to the IO about this. I've been talking to the Careers Network about international PGs, employment law, right to work etc. I'd like to ensure we're being inclusive.

SK asked DM if they had any questions.

DM: Not really. I'm glad that people are interested in PG wellbeing though, because there's not usually a lot of interest in this.

DM and the Panel thanked each other, and DM left the meeting.

<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Education Officer Questions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:20pm- 4:30pm</p>	<p>JS entered the meeting.</p> <p>JS provided updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog posts – last year, I wasn't updating students as much as I could, I'm hoping to do this more this year though • University comms – I recently attended a steering group at the University, and asked the University to gain student input • Inclusivity/accessibility – raised awarding gaps in University Education Committee • Doing research on consent training, and what other Russell Group (RG) universities are doing on this <p>JL: The progress on your priorities looks fantastic so far.</p> <p>JS: Last year, there was feedback that the extenuating circumstances process was too long, as it took up to 60 minutes to submit a claim. In the second semester, this process will be changed so that it only takes 5-10 minutes to complete a form. The aim is also that the extenuating circumstances to be school-administered.</p> <p>JL asked a question about the extensions process</p> <p>JS: There was a fair assessment policy last year. This year, guidance will be clearer on what is an extenuating circumstance (e.g. is a students' laptop breaking classed as an extenuating circumstance?)</p> <p>LS: I wonder if you have worked with the DSO at all about DSA?</p> <p>JS: We're both in our 2nd years (as Officers) now, so we've worked closely together, particularly on the Disabled Students Commission.</p>
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The Disabled Students Commission (DSC) will be published soon. With DSA, we haven't worked on this together, but I can help the DSO with this if needed.

LS: In your report, you mentioned that you would like to make the Zoom room available in the library. I can see that it is going really well!

JS: Thank-you for raising this, I haven't had a chance to check in on this!

LS: It's been very busy around there, it seems to have gone well.

JS: I'm glad that it is going well and is popular.

JB: It's expected that Reps will raise issues important to students – how will you ensure that they receive training needed (e.g. on student mental health issues).

JS: Student Reps predominately raise academic issues, although there's nothing stopping them from looking at other issues too. The Reps Team in the Guild are dedicated to ensuring that Reps are training in areas that they need to be trained in.

JB: I would like to thank-you for your dedication to writing a policy on the awarding gap. How will you ensure that marginalised groups are not affected by the awarding gap?

JS: I'm trying to encourage a cultural shift e.g. making buildings accessible for everyone, rather than training people on accessibility. This work may continue after I leave my role. I'm also pushing for

		<p>refugee scholarships to be included on the University's Widening Participation and Access Plan.</p> <p>SK: Will changes to the EC process be implemented fully in Schools/Courses with PSRB requirements? Similarly, have the conversations around changes to the EC process included support for students who are being assessed as part of their placement?</p> <p>JS: The DSC is a set of recommendations. The Commission addresses that there should be guidance there. It must be a bigger issue at UoB if it's happening to students on professional courses. We may need to escalate it to NUS.</p> <p>SK: I would like to go back to talking about extenuating circumstances. Is there going to be information in your video specific to students on professional courses? As some University staff who teach on these courses aren't aware of this?</p>
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<p>4</p>	<p>Campaigns Officer Questions</p> <p>4:30pm- 4:45pm</p>	<p>AD entered the meeting.</p> <p>AD provided updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on letter campaign • Meeting with Trans & Non-Binary Students Officer tomorrow about transphobia • Everything else going well <p>JL: With increasing tension around the UK and the world, are there any plans to support students involved with activism?</p> <p>AD: I've not thought about this, but we can look into it, particularly with the Activist Network</p> <p>JB: I'm impressed with your determination to work alongside the FTOs. I noticed a lot of candidates didn't have manifestos as part of their election campaigns, and it's difficult for students when trying to decide who to elect - is this something that you can encourage?</p> <p>AD: Sometimes students apply for a position in elections, and don't submit a manifesto. It's something we can be more proactive in, and happy to talk to RN about this.</p> <p>LS: We spoke to the President yesterday about the Activist Network, and heard that the engagement on this decreased rapidly. Do you have any ideas for comms on this? I particularly saw that you would like to invite guest speakers?</p> <p>AD: Yes, I think guest speakers is a good idea. What kind of causes do you think students would be most interested in?</p>
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	<p>SK: I think there are lots of causes – we’ll have different perspectives, and we’re not necessarily representative of all students. You could gather feedback on this at the All Student Meeting?</p> <p>AD: We have Campaigns Committee next week too, which could be a useful platform.</p> <p>SK: The metrics on your social media look good – how are you measuring and judging how successful your work in that area is though?</p> <p>AD: I think I need to do some work on this.</p> <p>SK: I would like to ask about the Guild website – a lot of students will use this platform, for example, to submit an idea. What do you think about the content about campaigns on there?</p> <p>AD: I think it needs a lot of work, I will arrange a meeting with the Web Coordinator on this.</p> <p>SK asked AD if he had any questions.</p> <p>AD: I’m interested in what your opinion is on the Scrutiny Panel in general? What do you think could be changed at the Guild?</p> <p>SK asked the other Panel members to answer AD’s question first.</p> <p>JB mentioned that as they are still a first year, they are still observing things, and how things work, at UoB.</p>
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		<p>JB: There are a few Officers who haven't submitted a report for the Scrutiny Panel, so this made our job slightly harder. All of the Officers that we've spoke to though seem very passionate about what they do.</p> <p>LS: I've seen a few Officer Teams now, and this team is strong, particularly MB. We've not had a President like MB before. Unfortunately we haven't had many Officers attending Scrutiny Panel this time, and we don't just want to be seen as a tick box exercise.</p> <p>JL: My main feedback is on transparency, and information on the Guild website could be improved.</p> <p>SF: Officers not coming to these meetings is not good</p> <p>JL posted the following text in the meeting chat: "Especially when transparency is a part of their manifestos yet they are blocking transparency process!"</p> <p>RN noted that the Panel will provide feedback after the meeting, and AD can gain some more insight into the Panels' feedback following this.</p> <p>AD and the Panel thanked each other and AD left the meeting.</p>
5	Panel De- brief 4:45pm- 4:50pm	<p>The Panel received a short debrief.</p> <p>RN, HC and the Panel thanked each other and the meeting closed.</p>