

## **Amendment to the Bye-Laws - An Officer for Black Students**

Proposer: Thai Braddick (Non-Portfolio Officer)

Seconder: Temi Ogunniyi-Adeleke (African-Caribbean Society)

**Summary:** This motion would create a new part-time officer role reserved for black students (students of African and Caribbean descent). It would amend the current Ethnic Minorities Officer role to be People of Colour Officer (Open Place), alongside the newly created People of Colour Officer (Black Students' Place).

### **Union notes:**

1. Black students have been underrepresented in the UEA Students' Union Officer team for years – of the 114 people to serve as SU Officers in 2012-20, just 7 (6.1%) were black. <sup>1</sup>
2. Black students traditionally face antiblackness not just from white students and staff members, but also non-black people of colour (Asian students, Latinx students, etc).
3. The current terminology of an 'Ethnic Minorities Officer' is outdated and behind other students' unions. Other students unions use BAME/BME Officer, <sup>2 3 4</sup> or People of Colour Officer. <sup>5</sup>
4. There has been a meteoric rise in racist and especially anti-black incidents on university campuses across the country. <sup>6 7</sup>

### **Union believes:**

1. The history of oppression for black people is a different struggle to that of non-black people of colour, and solidarity is important – however black students should be at the forefront of race liberation politics.

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[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/129n\\_4oYMsIAUTfiV0D69PEZukvXVZK7L9MzVLQJh2x8/edit#gid=1675125375](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/129n_4oYMsIAUTfiV0D69PEZukvXVZK7L9MzVLQJh2x8/edit#gid=1675125375)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.yusu.org/student-voice/your-officers/part-time-officers#bame>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.su.nottingham.ac.uk/make-change/your-officers/bme/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://studentsunionucl.org/make-change/representing-you/who-can-help-you/bme-students>

<sup>5</sup> <https://soasunion.org/democracy/unionexecutive2017-2018/people-of-colour-officer/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-46432710>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/racism-uk-university-students-campus-nus-incidents-a8390241.html>

2. A reserved officer position for black students would allow consistent representation for black students in future UEA SU Student Officer Committees.
3. The BAME Experience at UEA survey specifically explores incidences of anti-blackness and will further expand upon them when the data is compiled and released.

**Union resolves:**

1. To delete and replace Bye-Law 4.19 "The Ethnic Minorities Officer shall:" with the following:
  - a. **4.19** The People of Colour Officer (Open Place) shall:
    - i. **4.19.1** Represent the interests of students of colour (African, Asian, Caribbean, Latinx, and Indigenous) and be their voice on the issues they face as students of colour at university;
    - ii. **4.19.2** Engage with the University and other relevant organisations to achieve improvements for students of colour on the issues they face as students of colour at university;
    - iii. **4.19.3** Liaise with the members of the relevant clubs, societies, or peer support groups; and
    - iv. **4.19.4** Be the Union's delegate to the NUS Black Students' Conference.
2. To add in the following Bye-Law:
  - a. **4.20** The People of Colour Officer (Black Students' Place) shall:
    - i. **4.20.1** Represent the interests of black students and be their voice on the issues they face as black students at university;
    - ii. **4.20.2** Engage with the University and other relevant organisations to achieve improvements for black students on the issues they face as black students at university;
    - iii. **4.20.3** Liase with the members of relevant clubs, societies, or peer support groups; and
    - iv. **4.20.4** Be the Union's delegate to the NUS Black Students' Conference if the People of Colour Officer (Open Place) cannot or chooses not to attend. Otherwise, the People of Colour Officer (Black Students' Place) will attend as an observer with speaking rights.

3. To number subsequent Bye-Laws under "Bye-Law 4: Student Officer Job Descriptions" appropriately (Mature Students Officer will become **4.21** rather than **4.20** and so on).
4. To amend Bye-Law 4.24 "Election of Part-time Student Officers by self-defined constituencies" to the following:
  - a. **4.24** Election of Part Time Student Officers by Self-Defined Constituencies:
    - i. The LGBT+ Officer (Open Place), the LGBT+ Officer (Trans and Non-Binary Place), Women's Officer, Students With Disabilities Officer, People of Colour Officer (Open Place), People of Colour Officer (Black Students' Place), International Students Officers (Non-EU and EU), Mature Students Officer and Postgraduate Officer shall be considered Equal Opportunities Officers and shall be elected by ordinary members who self-define as members of the constituency that the Equal Opportunity Officer represents.
5. To add a new self-identification option on the SU website where students can self-identify as black (meaning being of African or Caribbean descent, in a rejection of the concept of political blackness) in order to be able to stand as Person of Colour Officer (Black Students' Place) or vote for candidates standing for the position.
6. To delete and replace any mention of the terms "BAME", "BME", or "Ethnic Minorities" in the Bye-Laws with the term "POC" where appropriate.
7. The Ethnic Minorities Officer elect for the 2019/20 Academic Year will remain the Ethnic Minorities Officer. In the 2020/21 Elections, the Ethnic Minorities Officer will become People of Colour Officer (Open Place). Elections will be held for the People of Colour Officer (Black Students' Place) in October 2019 who will serve for the 19/20 Academic Year.