



HUGHES HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

MCR Committee  
Wed, 17 June 2020, 4pm  
E-meeting

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Present:** A Entwistle-Thompson (President); A Vasileva (Secretary); K Bartsch (Treasurer); Z Rehman (Social Secretary); B Williams (Social Secretary); R Hosking (Female and Non-binary Welfare Officer); N Gorringe (Equality and LGBT+ Officer); E Mensah (Sports and Societies Officer); J Navani (Accommodation Officer); M Tang (IT and Infrastructure Officer); O Kranse (Green and Ethical Affairs Officer)

**Absent:** H Zhou (Vice President); B Low (Academic Affairs Officer)

### I. Introduction

#### Declaration of Members' Interest

No declaration was received.

### II. Standing Actions

### III. Items

#### III.A. 'BAME Town Hall' Update

##### III.A.1. Summary of 'Town Hall'

Ms A. Entwistle-Thompson began by summarizing the points discussed in the Town Hall meeting on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> of June.

- BAME students not feeling welcomed, supported and listened to at Hughes Hall.
- Providing harassment training for MCR members and College staff.
- Anti-racism needs to be engraved in the culture of Hughes hall.

- Support from the College is seen as performative and superficial.
- Statistics on proportion of BAME students in College accommodation on and off site to be requested from College.
- Effective racial harassment support and policies to be implemented. Ms Entwistle-Thompson highlighted that the College has acknowledged it is wrong that there isn't specific racial harassment policy and is working on changing that.
- Need for a BAME officer on the MCR committee.

### III.A.2. Follow up meeting between students and College staff

Ms Entwistle-Thompson informed the MCR committee that she has reported the concerns and demands of students from the Town Hall meeting to Dr C. Roughley, Deputy Senior Tutor. A meeting between students, Dr Roughley and Dr A. Freeling, President of Hughes Hall, is to take place during the week commencing on 22<sup>nd</sup> of June.

**Action:** A date and time for the meeting to be agreed on.

### III.A.3. MCR opt in training

Ms A. Vasileva asked about harassment opt in training made available to the MCR. Ms N. Gorrington said that in previous years, mental health and sexual harassment training had been offered to MCR members and College staff. Ms Entwistle-Thompson said that such trainings are going to become compulsory for MCR members.

**Action:** Racial harassment training to be added to MCR officers training. To be followed up with Dr Roughley.

### III.A.4. Prevent policy

Ms R. Hosking inquired about the prevent policy following from discussions about it in the 'Town Hall' meeting. Ms Entwistle-Thompson summarized the aims of the prevent policy and explained that it is a legal document that the university and colleges had to add to their constitution under government instructions. The MCR officers discussed the inappropriateness of the prevent policy being included in the "Equality and Diversity" section of the Hughes Hall website. Ms Z. Rehman told the committee that this article is being reviewed at a University level.

**Action:** Ms Entwistle-Thompson to discuss the prevent article being removed from the "Equality and Diversity" section on the Hughes Hall website with Dr Roughley.

### III.A.5. Financial resources for BAME students

Ms Entwistle-Thompson informed the MCR committee that the College and University is looking for donors to create a pot of money for grants to support BAME students.

### III.A.6. Tutors providing sufficient support to students

Ms Entwistle-Thompson recognized that not all students receive the same amount of support from their tutors. She informed the other MCR members that the College is looking into hiring more mentors, especially from BAME background, to provide sufficient support to all students.

**Action:** Ms Entwistle-Thompson is to create a chart to advise students on how to escalate different types of problems and to enquire with college on the hiring of mentors.

### III.A.7. BAME Champion

Mr M. Tang enquired about the role of the BAME champion and how this is meant to help BAME students. The MCR members agreed on the importance of clarifying this and introducing the BAME champion to the student body. There are worries that this could be seen as an example of the superficial support from College that was brought up during the Town Hall meeting. Ms Rehman said that having only one tutor of colour and giving him the title of a BAME champion, may reinforce racial discrimination within Hughes Hall.

**Action:** Ask the College to clarify the role of the BAME champion to the student body.

### III.A.8. Accommodation allocation

During the “Town Hall” meeting the students requested more transparency about how different students are allocated accommodation in College. Ms Entwistle-Thompson informed the other MCR members that accommodation this year is going to be allocated using an algorithm. Ms Gorringer highlighted the importance of releasing statistics on accommodation allocation and the factors taken into account by the algorithm to ensure there is no implicit bias in the selection process.

**Action:** Mr K. Bartsch to get in touch with Ms J. Fricker, Accommodation Manager and Ms K Smart, Head of Domestic Operations, to ask about the parameters of the algorithm to be released.

Ms Entwistle-Thompson urged everyone to attend and get involved in the following town hall meeting.

### III.B. MCR support for BAME community and improving communication between the MCR and student body

Ms Vasileva asked about improving our methods of getting feedback from students. Subcommittees have proven to be a very good method of getting feedback in the past. Implementation of those subcommittees is currently challenging.

Ms Hosking has started putting a BAME resource bank together and plans on creating a platform with resources to help students including grants and how to get support for different issues from College. Ms Hosking hopes to also create space on the platform for reporting racial discrimination incidents for Hughes Hall students.

There needs to be important distinction between giving feedback and seeking help from the MCR and reporting confidential information directly to College staff.

#### ***Actions:***

Subcommittees to be implemented as soon as possible.

Increasing visibility of MCR members by re-introducing ourselves.

Ms Hosking and Mr Tang to work on a BAME resource platform.

### III.C. Additional BAME matters

Ms Entwistle-Thompson informed the other MCR members that a student has come forward for the position of the Equality & BAME officer.

***Action:*** The student needs to submit a manifesto and take questions from the student body. Elections to occur as soon as possible.

**The next meeting will take place on 22 June 2020, at 2pm, as an e-meeting.**