

Report on official motions discussed at LSE Branch

Motion title: Management of PGR funding

Date and type of General Meeting / Session: Annual General Meeting, 12 June 2024

Status: Passed

Motion text:

LSE UCU notes:

1. There has been a systematic gross mismanagement of PGR funding for at least a decade, resulting in additional uncertainty and precarity for PGRs in a cost-of-living crisis.
2. PGR stipends are consistently transferred with delays, fully or partially withheld, with lack of transparency about upcoming annual increases and size of term instalments.
3. Change of circumstances due to research visits, sick or maternity leave are processed with delays and relevant records are misplaced, resulting in erroneous calculations of stipends and submission deadlines.
4. Criteria for granting fieldwork and conference funding are not transparent.
5. Stipend rules and regulations are not clear, with limited and selective responsiveness in communication with PGRs, and limited integrity with respect to protecting PGR interests and the importance of funding for PGR livelihoods and of financial predictability for PGR wellbeing.
6. PGRs must often defend their funding, clarify funding rules and regulations via alternative routes, resubmit relevant information multiple times, and depend on the support of supervisors, DPDs, HoDs, departmental PhD leads, PhD Academy Directors and staff to get queries processed and errors corrected.
7. Corrections of errors might take months, which is particularly concerning in case of withheld stipends and fieldwork and conference funding that are necessary to cover daily cost, do research and promote it.
8. PGR's have repeatedly received apologies and assurances that the School is working on a solution, but have not yet seen much improvement in funding management.

LSE UCU believes:

1. Effective and efficient management of PGR funding is essential for PGR research progress and wellbeing.
2. The School has a duty to show care and ensure that due processes and practices are in place.

LSE UCU resolves:

1. For the School to take responsibility for delivering the funding management processes from beginning to end.
2. For the School to ensure that these processes are transparent and accountable.
3. For the UCU to bring this motion to the Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee, act in coordination with the PhD Action Network to collect evidence and discuss next steps, and formally negotiate with the School on grounds of this motion.

Proposing group/individuals:

Submitted on: 12 June 2024

Amended: No

Total votes:

- In favour: 34
- Abstained: 1
- Against: 0

Notes: (if any)