



Sabbatical Officer Semester 1 Updates 2021/22

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President Update June and July

Emi Dowse

These past two months have been incredibly busy but also very rewarding. In June I was finishing off my role as VP Education, while also handing over to Charlie and starting my role as President. I have been enjoying my time as President. I think we have a great team and I am excited for the year ahead.

Manifesto Points

- Empower Students
- Increase Engagement
- Covid Recovery

Final VP Education Updates

SSTAR Awards

During the months of June and July I hosted 8 SSTAR award ceremonies. This was a great opportunity to recognise the hard work of the staff and students at the University. It was great to see the reactions of all the winners and to hear more about the differences they have made in students' lives.

COVID Vaccine Q&A

On the 9th of June I hosted a student Q and A to cut through the myths around COVID-19 vaccine. This event was organised by the council, in partnership with all the Universities in Plymouth and the panel consisted of Ruth Harrell, Director of Public Health for Plymouth, Dr Alex Degan, the Medical Director for Primary Care for Devon and Sue Wilkins, Associate Chief Nurse and Director of Mass Vaccination, Flu and Testing at University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust. Despite the small student turnout I believe this event was incredibly important to run to provide students with a safe space to ask their questions and those who attended found it useful.

Student Trustee Interviews

Alongside one of our student trustees, I was on the interview panel for our new student trustees. It was great to see so many individuals interested in the role and I found this experience to be helpful in preparing me for the CEO interviews later that month.

CEO Interviews

Over the past few months I have had the pleasure of being involved in the recruitment of our new CEO. I was involved in the longlisting process, and then in the final CEO interviews. I chaired the interview and decision panel and am pleased to say that we have now recruited Nicky Goldthorpe who will start on September 8th. This was such a unique and important opportunity for my personal development but also for being able to select a CEO who will be best for our SU.

Handover

During the final two weeks of June I handed over the role of VP Education to Charlie. We met multiple times throughout this period for me to pass on key information and to answer all of his questions. I also got him to attend key VP Education meetings during this period so he would be prepared for when he was supposed to attend.

President Updates:

Student life

I have been working with the deputy vice chancellor for education and student experience to improve the student life committee.

I had my first meeting as co-chair on the 14th. Despite it only being an hour we discussed the meetings format change, vision for the year and had our first informal discussion slot where we discussed the reintroduction of students to campus. The format change had positive feedback from the committee members.

Board of Governors

I had my first Board of Governors meeting on the 15/06. Prior to the meeting the VP Activities and I met with two of the board members to go through the papers and to ask any questions. I found that the board meeting was interesting and I am looking forward to being able to attend in person and contributing more at the next one.

Graduation

I have continued to work with the Graduation manager to try and get the 2020 graduates a formal graduation. I have also worked with him on the planning 2021 graduation and have reviewed any communications they have sent to students.

Introductions

As a team we spent a lot of July meeting with key people from the SU and the University. I had met most of these people before but it was good to see them again and learn about their plans for the year ahead.

We also met with the Sabbatical officers from Marjon SU. I would like to work much more closely with Marjon and PCA this year, so this was a good opportunity to build up a relationship with them.

External training:

At the beginning of the month the team attended a residential where which focused on team building and learning more about the role. We agreed team priorities for the year and planned out what we wanted to get done and when that would take place. This was a great way for me to get to know the team and learn more about how I could support them throughout the year.

We have also had training from WONKHE and I was able to attend Lead and Change where I could meet other Sabbatical officers and learn more about how to effect change.

President Update August

August has been a relatively quiet month for me. I was off for two weeks on annual leave and then off again due to my covid vaccine. Despite this I still managed to get stuff done.

Manifesto Points

- Empower Students

I have begun to put together a plan of how this manifesto point will play out.

- Increase Engagement

I have split this manifesto goal into two parts. 1. Increasing the understanding and awareness of officers for 21/22 and 2. The officer communication strategy.

- The officer team have met to discuss the use of their social media accounts to increase awareness and we will be doing regular Instagram takeovers on the UPSU account.
- The team have organised “uniform” with our names and roles so that students know who we are when we are out of the office.

- **Covid Recovery**

My covid recovery manifesto goal has been my main priority due to the time sensitivity of it.

- I raised my manifesto goal in meetings with the deputy vice-chancellor student experience and we agreed that it would be a good topic to raise at student life.
- We raised this as a discussion point at student life and I plan to follow this up with the DPV in September.
- We raised concerns about transparency to the vice chancellor in our team meeting with her (see below).
- The student union has signed up to the student minds SU, so that we are able to have an SU approach to mental health, instead of just sign posting to the SU services. The VP Wellbeing and Diversity will lead on this.

Meeting with the VC

I had a 1-1 with the Vice Chancellor to discuss how we could work together this year.

Graduation Speech

The Officer Team and student voice wrote the vote of thanks speech that the Sabbaticals will be delivering at the Graduation ceremonies in September.

Lead and Change Networking

I attended networking sessions with other Sabbatical Officers, this was a great opportunity to see how other SU's were handling topics such as student engagement and covid recovery.

Officer 1-1's

I met with each of the officers to discuss how they were finding their new roles, their campaigns for the year ahead and if there were any ways that I could support them.

Filming

The officer team were involved in filming a welcome video which will be played during induction. I also filmed our graduation speech as a backup in case the team are unable to attend in person due to covid.

Campaign training

The team attended training about how to plan and carry out campaigns. We used the session to plan the covid come back plan.

Sabbatical Meeting with the Vice-Chancellor

- We discussed concerns around international students in private accommodation who need to self-isolate before term starting. The Vice-Chancellor said that the university would not be providing any financial support for students from red-list countries. She explained that

students in halls of residence could isolate in their halls of residence, however those in private accommodation will need to sort out their isolation themselves. She said she would raise our concerns with the international office though.

- We raised the need for a document or an email explaining to students what the university will do if the country enters into another lockdown. The vice-chancellor was against this idea and will not be doing it.
- The Vice-chancellor raised concerns about an increase in student dropouts this year. We explained that the student union will continue to support students through our activities and services.

Keyham shooting response

- Unfortunately while I was on leave there was the tragic shooting which took place in Keyham. The following morning I worked with the University to ensure the SU and the Uni were putting out consistent messaging and I also worked with the Su communications team to put out an SU statement to students, which was then shared on our social media.
- The week following the shooting was the referral exam period. I advocated to the Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education and student experience that the University should put out a message for students explaining what their options were if they felt they couldn't take the exams because of the current circumstances however was told that students should just go to their students if they were concerned. I explained that some student may not know that they have options so an email should be sent out however I didn't get a response.

President Update September

Manifesto Points

Empower Students

- I have begun to put together a plan of how this manifesto point will play out.

Increase Engagement

- I have split this manifesto goal into two parts. 1. Increasing the understanding and awareness of officers for 21/22 and 2. The officer communication strategy.
- The officer team met to discuss the use of their social media accounts to increase awareness, and we will be doing regular Instagram takeovers on the UPSU account.
- The team have organised "uniform" with our names and roles so that students know who we are when we are out of the office.
- Throughout Freshers week the team, all did Instagram takeovers to get our faces out there. I have had positive feedback from students about the takeovers, and many have reported recognising us from the social media presence.
- The team also took the opportunity of freshers to talk to students around campus; this was an excellent opportunity to see how people were settling back into campus and finding it after covid.

Covid Recovery

- My covid recovery manifesto goal has been my main priority due to the time-sensitivity of it.

- I raised my manifesto goal in meetings with the vice-chancellor student experience, and we agreed that it would be a good topic to raise at student life.
- We raised this as a discussion point at student life, and I plan to follow this up with the DPV in September.
- We raised concerns about transparency to the Vice-Chancellor in our team meeting with her (see below).
- The student union has signed up to the student minds SU so that we are able to have an SU approach to mental health instead of just signposting to the SU services. The VP Wellbeing and Diversity will lead on this.
- As a team, we have been receiving reports from students about safety concerns for them returning to campus. We have raised this in relevant committees and meetings and have been told that the University will try to accommodate these concerns through study and wellbeing review.

Monthly Updates

Graduation Speech

The Officer Team had the privilege of delivering the Vote of Thanks at the Graduation ceremonies this year. I delivered five speeches across the week and was able to give the speech to my own school.

2020 Graduation

I am continuing the work I did last year to lobby the University for a Graduation Ceremony. This month I focused my efforts on addressing the class of 2020 through Instagram stories and a blog post as many felt forgotten and left out. As an SU, we launched a survey to understand how many 2020 Graduates would attend an Official ceremony if offered it. The responses will be used in our lobbying of the University.

Trustee Board Chair Training

Throughout the month, I attended four Trustee chair training webinars. The sessions covered the history of charities and trustee boards, engaging the trustees, running board meetings and tips on being a good trustee board chair.

WONKHE Public Speaking Training

The team had public speaking training with Jim from WonkHE. This addressed effective introductions, speaking in committees and speech writing.

Finance and Staffing

I attended my first finance and staffing meeting. This is a sub-committee to the board of trustees.

Essay Mills

The VP Education and I are planning on running a campaign to address student usage of Essay Mills. The campaign aims to identify why students use essay mills and address the issues that essay mills can cause to students.

Policy catch up

We met with the Head of Student Administration and Academic Policy and Quality Manager to discuss all the policy changes to be implemented in 2021/22.

International welcome

The Officer team delivered a "Welcome to the SU" talk for international students. The talk covered who we were, the role of a Students Union and how they can be involved. Following this, we helped out at the international fish and chips evening and were able to sit and talk with the students about how they found the previous year learning and how they felt about returning to campus.

Pub Quiz

The officer team hosted the first Sunday pub quiz of the year. It was a great success, with over 600 students showing up and approximately 200 who were able to take part.

Careers meeting

The officer team met with the careers services to discuss how we could work together over the next year. This was a valuable meeting and will become a regular thing.

Freshers

It was great that the students union was able to offer an in person fresher's experience this year alongside virtual events.

Lead and Change Networking

I attended networking sessions with other Sabbatical Officers; this was an excellent opportunity to see how other SU's were handling topics such as student engagement and covid recovery.

Officer 1-1's

I met with each of the officers to discuss how they were finding their new roles, their campaigns for the year ahead and how I could support them.

President Update October

October was a busy month for me, filled with lots of meetings and papers to read. The team has had to work hard and fast to address the concerns around drink spiking in Plymouth, which is still something that remains ongoing. Unfortunately, this meant I was unable to progress much on my manifesto goals.

Manifesto Points

Increase Engagement

Empower Students

Covid Recovery

Other:

Drink Spiking:

One of our main priorities as a Sabbatical Team this month has been to address students concerns around drink spiking. As a team, we have been working with our commercial director to put measures in place to protect students within our venue. I also worked with the other Sabbatical officers and our comms team to release a statement about the SU's response. Alongside this, the team has been working on gathering resources to launch a campaign around drink spiking.

The sabbatical team, our head of security, the President and the manager of PCA met with the Police and a representative from Best Bar None Plymouth to discuss spiking and Student Safety in Plymouth.

UCU meeting:

The VP Education and I met with representatives from University and College Union (UCU) to discuss the upcoming ballot. A representative from UCU was then invited to the first Education subcommittee to get students feedback.

Board of Governors:

I attended my first in-person board of governors meeting. This was followed by a tour at the box and a speech from their new CEO. The following day we had the board away day at The Box. I had positive feedback about my contribution at the meetings.

USCP meeting:

I attended the University Catering Sustainability Group. They updated about the new coffee drink cup bins on campus. I was actioned to get student feedback about the new traffic light system in loafers. However, I was unable to do this, as it was not there.

Sustainability advisory meeting:

I attended the sustainability advisory meeting. Some of the discussed topics were the climate emergency response, the Universities Green Gown Submission and student and staff sustainability town hall meetings.

Meeting with estates:

The team had an introductory meeting with the Head of the University Estates Team. This allowed us to raise issues with the lift in Rolle being restricted to set times and student groups not being able to get into booked rooms in the evening.

Fitness to Practise:

I sat on the panel for a fitness to practise in the faculty of health. Fitness to practice determines whether a student is still fit to study on professional courses.

Sabbatical Officer 1-1s:

I meet with each of the officers monthly to check in on how they are finding the role, how their manifesto goals are progressing and whether they need any additional support.

VC Meeting:

The sabbatical officers met with the Vice-Chancellor: We raised the following subjects:

How she felt the return to campus went, 2020 Graduations, Black History Month, freedom of speech legislation, student loan repayments and the recruitment of the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education and Student Experience.

Rich Avery meeting:

Following the meeting with the VC, where she agreed to holding a formal graduation for the 2020 graduates. I met with the graduation manager to discuss the plans for the 2020 Graduates. We decided to send out a survey so that the Graduates could state what they wanted from the ceremony. We discussed the issue that not all students would have shared their email with the university, and I agreed to share it with graduates through the SU social media. I raised that they would need a way that graduates could get a reminder of their student number, as not all of them would remember it.

Student Life committee:

I co-chaired our first Student Life Committee of the academic year. Some of the key discussions included: Open Access facilities on campus, postgraduate engagement, digital skills training, suicide safety strategy and prevention of violence and sexual misconduct strategy.

Student life magazine:

I did a Q&A for the Student Life Magazine, which will be sent out to applicants. Some of the questions include: What's the difference between studying at school and uni, what advice would I offer any incoming students and what support can the SU offer new students.

Other meetings attended:

Finance and Staffing, University Student comms meeting, 1-1's with the SU CEO, UEG Advisory meeting, Meeting with the VC, Meeting with the Dean of Science and Engineering, 1-1 with the Deputy Chair of the Trustee Board, meeting to set the officer budgets, academic registry meeting, freshers, wash up, student life sub-committee planning, wonkHE meeting.

President Update November

Manifesto Points

Increase Engagement

- Met with our communications and digital manager to discuss my manifesto goal about officer communication.

Empower Students

Covid Recovery

- Raise about covid plans with the VC, and the VP Education also raised about them in relevant academic meetings.

Other:

VC Meeting

We asked about her views on sports and whether the uni would fund a new sports pitch

- She said that there is a sports strategy
- They won't fund it
- Invited her to varsity

Asked about who from the University oversees PGT students

- She said the University needs to focus on PGT recruitment and getting more PGT students before we can have someone who focuses on them

We spoke about the DVC recruitment and who would have central oversight

- They won't get anyone before July

- She said that the new academic registrar should cover everything

In our second meeting with the vice chancellor. We spoke about what plans there would be if covid cases rise again, PGT loneliness, funding for the counselling services and student safety within the city.

Sustainability meeting with Amy

I met with Amy from the University's sustainability team to go through the different sustainability standards and awards that the University applies for to see which ones students value the most. I encouraged her to bring them to the first environment and sustainability subcommittee.

Finance training

The officers had finance training which I found incredibly helpful to understand UPSU's and the University's financial accounts in more depth.

Accommodation meeting

Alongside the VP wellbeing and diversity, a group of SU senior leadership and advice members met to discuss the SU's approach to accommodation in the future.

Trustee:

This month I chaired my first trustee board meeting. The meeting was held over zoom, and I have had positive feedback on my chairing.

Other trustee related work this month:

I had a trustee chair mentoring session with Nick Smith, who went through tips and tools to chair the meeting well. I found this session to be helpful, and I credit it for helping with my first Trustee Board Meeting. I also attended the Audit close meeting with the auditors.

During trustee week, I attended two trustee webinars about strengthening board relations in times of uncertainty and leading on equality diversity.

Comms photo shoot

The officer team took photos for marketing and communications going forward and advertising in the shop and coffee shop.

Board of governors

I attended the board of governors meeting. This meeting required a lot of reading, and it, combined with the Board of Trustees, meant I spent a whole week reading papers.

SU strategic plan setting

A group of SU staff members and I met to start working on the new SU strategic plan. The current strategy will become outdated in July, so we will need a new one before the new academic year.

Other meetings:

Tuition fee policy working group, 1-2 with the CEO, and Deputy Chair of the trustee board, Officer 1-1s, UPIC Operational meeting, partner colleges, Team building activity, weekly drink spiking meetings

President Update December

Due to annual leave and needing to take time off due to covid, December was a short month for me. Unfortunately, this meant that I was off sick during the time I had dedicated to my manifesto goals so I was unable to progress them this month. Unfortunately,

Other Meetings:

- **SU Green Team (Sustainability working group)**

We had our first meeting of the Student Union Sustainability Working Group. We discussed the actions taken by the student Union in regards to sustainability in the past and agreed that before we created a sustainability strategy or operational plan, we would need to benchmark the SU. This was actioned for our meeting in January.

- **Exams catch up w/ Leah**

I had a meeting with the part-time academic officer and the VP Education to discuss the plan for the January exams. We explained that we had asked the VC about exams, and Charlie was lobbying in the academic committees for online exams. I supported the VP Education in his continued lobbying for online exams.

- **Postgrad bingo**

I Supported the Vice President of Education in his postgraduate bingo session. I was glad to see it well attended and that everyone was having a good time.

- **Postgraduate Graduation**

I delivered a speech at the postgraduate graduations. This involved attending the graduation rehearsal the day before and re-writing the speech with the officer team to make it more applicable to the postgraduate experience.

- **Student Safety.**

The team continued to work on drink spiking during December but decided to broaden the campaign to focus on student safety in general.

- Switch, Air and Walkabout meetings

The Officer Team met with the owner from Air and Switch and the team from Walkabout to discuss their response to vulnerable students and drink spiking in their venues. I thought the meetings were positive and that the venues were reportedly doing good work. However, there does seem to be a disconnect between what they are telling us and what students are feeding back. As an SU we would like to organise a forum with the nightclubs so that students can directly feedback their experiences. A full update will be posted on the SU website in due course.

Durham statement

I Wrote a statement in support of the sabbatical team at Durham Student Union.

Other meetings: Sustainability advisory group, Meeting with the deputy chair of the trustee board and the CEO, academic subcommittee, Equality Sub-committee, Officer 1-1's, All staff catch up, weekly 1-1's with the CEO, Mentoring, weekly Officer team meeting, monthly Instagram update.

President Update January

January was another short month due to annual leave and illness. My main focus this month was student safety within the city and the stress less campaign. It was also exciting to be apart of the elections from a staff perspective and to be able to support anyone thinking of running.

Other updates:

- **Violence against Women and Girls Commission**

- This month, I joined the Plymouth's Violence against Women and Girls commission panel. This is a unique opportunity to make sure the voice of students and young women across Plymouth is represented.
- In January, we had two meetings to discuss the purpose of the commission and plan how it was going to work and then we had a full day of evidence gathering.
- The commission has a survey open to gather residence thoughts about violence against women and girls in Plymouth. It is open to anyone regardless of gender, and it is open until 15/02/22.
- You can fill it in here:
<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/newsroom/plymouthnews/violenceagainstwomenandgirls>

- **VC Meeting**

The team met with the VC at the beginning of January and raised the following points:

- We asked about having a vaccination centre on campus for booster jabs

The VC said that wasn't necessary as you can now get boosters across the road from campus. She assured us that there was still an ample supply of lateral flows.

- We raised concerns about the lack of open access spaces going into exams

She said she would raise t in their strategy meeting

- We raised concerns about the SU building having an energy rating of G

She said she would look into it and see if any other SU's had any good sustainability initiatives.

- **Mental Health First Aid Training**

I attended a two-day mental health first aid training course.

- **Meeting with Luke Pollard**

I met with Luke Pollard (Local MP) to discuss current issues affecting students. We spoke about students' safety concerns, focussing on street lighting, drink spiking and the police. He suggested a focus be placed on the University's safety infrastructure. During the meeting, he also commended Plymouth Night Patrol's work.

- **Student Life**

- I co-chaired the second student life committee of the year. During the meeting, we discussed the Pregnancy, Adoption or Becoming a Parent (including Fostering) whilst Studying policy, the sport and physical wellbeing strategy and how the University can better support minority groups.
- We still need four student representatives to join the committee.

- **Student life operational group**

- I met with the VP Wellbeing and Diversity and Steph Burrell from the Library to plan the Student Life Operating group meeting.
- We still need two student representatives to join the committee.

- **Stress Less**

Led by the VP Wellbeing and Diversity, the team ran a Stress Less campaign where we handed out fruit and sweets in the Library to students during the exam period. This was well received by students and it was nice for us to be able to get out and talk to students.

- **People and Planet**

I met with Amy from the University's sustainability to discuss the People and Planet accreditation and how the SU can be more involved.

- **Honorary Awards Committee**

I attended the Board of Governors honorary committee. This committee reviews applications for honorary doctorates and fellowships to be given by the University at their graduations.

- **Elections FAQ**

I worked with the Student Voice Team to create an Instagram, true or false, for the elections. This idea was to simplify the election information and make it easier to engage those who do not want to read the website.

- **Reading papers for BOG**

I spend a couple of days reading papers for the Board of Governors. Unfortunately, I was ill on the day of the meeting, but I equipped the VP Activities to do my update.

- **Thinking of running**

I attended the elections thinking of running sessions to advise anyone attending and answer any questions.

- **Green Team (Sustainability group)**

We had the second SU Green team meeting. We benchmarked where the SU is currently at with sustainability against the Green Impact criteria in this meeting. I have asked for the PTO environment and sustainability to join future meetings.

- **Other meetings:**

Finance and Staffing, mentoring, weekly team meeting, Officer 1-1's, weekly 1-1's with the CEO, Mid-year review with the officer team, completed E-learning, met with a local councillor to discuss how I could contribute more effectively to the VAWG commission.

Vice-President Activities June and July Update

Madeleine Morton

My first month in post as VP Activities has been brilliant and I have enjoyed finding out more about the SU and the students. I have found a passion for the prevention of SVM which I want to carry forward throughout my term and make a difference for students. I have attended a lot of training sessions which have helped me to realise my role as a Sabb. There has been a lot of communication with SU staff who have helped me immensely in learning how to get things done within the SU.

Manifesto points:

- **Celebration and Inclusion**

- Had talks with Nadine and Louise where I have floated the idea of possibly having a joint forum once a term between sports, societies and volunteering to gauge people's feelings towards each other and the barriers around inclusion.
- The appointment of the new logo for #TeamPlymouth is a great opportunity to open this platform to all student groups and not just sports.

- **Mental Well-being**

- Talks around SVM have enabled me to realise this is something I want to focus on, and help Fawzy in her campaign for #NeverOk and all the other training and campaigns that can come under this, e.g. Consent matters training.

- **Sustainability**

- Action planning with other Sabbs and SV to help vision what the waste management plan might look like. Given contacts surrounding sustainability to allow me to contact the best people and allies that might help to achieve this goal.

Other:

- Met with shortlisted **CEO** candidates.
- **Board of Trustees** meeting.
- Read and understood the **Torbay situation** within the Faculty of Health.
- Looked into **consent campaigns** around the UK.
- Helped allocate **Santander funding** to the Sports and Societies that applied. 10 successful student groups.
- Attended the **residential** with the other Sabbs where we learnt a lot about each other and talked about what we wish to achieve throughout the year.
- Been in talks with **Borrow Don't Buy Plymouth** - [Home - Borrow Don't Buy Plymouth \(borrowdontbuy.co.uk\)](http://Home - Borrow Don't Buy Plymouth (borrowdontbuy.co.uk)) – who are willing to offer a 10% discount to students with

membership the library. A focus on freshers and international students should be considered as these groups can probably make the most out of the library. This promotes sustainability through less waste and use of raw materials, as well as monetary savings for students.

- Recorded a **video for accommodation security team** which will hopefully be used to show students experiences during COVID and how it hasn't been an easy year.
- On going learning about SVM prevention and helping Fawzy where possible for the **#NeverOk campaign**.
- Attended my first **BOG** meeting.
- Attended **WonkHE training** with Jim
- Took part in **NUS Lead and Change** training with other VP activities around the UK.
- Been in talks with FoH to enable UPSU to **distribute funding** provided by the university to medical societies which enables a fairer process of fund distribution.
- **Catch ups** with Nadine and Lou who have constantly updated me on what is happening within sports and societies.
- Attended **Audit and Risk** meeting.

Vice President of Activities August Update

This has been a slow month due to having 2 months off for annual leave. The main updates are surrounding planning for manifesto campaigns and learning more about how to best approach and launch campaigns using the resources possible.

Manifesto points UPDATE:

- **Celebration and Inclusion**
 - Akuma have sent a mock-up of what the stash and kits will look like with the new logo and it has received all positive feedback so far.
 - Looking into how the new logo will be launched on the #TeamPlymouth IG and across the website around freshers / start of October.
- **Mental Well-being**
 - Spoken to Jack regarding what training can be offered to committee members to enable a more hands on approach to mental health first aid.
 - Did consent and by-Ostander training available to students and think it will be a good tool to use. The by-stander training could have had a few less videos as it was hard to stay engaged throughout.
 - Had consent catch ups with Fawzy, Tracy and Alice Ludgate.
- **Sustainability**
 - Emailed Suez, a waste management company to set up a meeting which will hopefully provide me with the data needed to start planning IG posts to increase awareness

- Emailed 'sustainability@plymouth.ac.uk' asking for a meeting to better understand how the recycling is managed on campus.

Other:

- **Graduation** – We, as Sabbs, and the student voice team have written the general speech needed for graduation week.
- **Content Creators** – Lauren Brickley and Rickie Taylor-Steer from comms and I spent 2 days interviewing candidates that were shortlisted for the content creator positions. The level of experience majority of the candidates had was very impressive and narrowing down the interviewees proved difficult.
- **Welcome filming** - The Sabbs participated in a welcome video which will be used by the university – introducing who we are and a brief overview of what we do.
- **Sport budget** – Nadine and I worked on how the clubs budget will be spent in regards to distribution of funds to each sport.
- **Student Hub filming** – Charlie and I helped Rickie and Lauren film a short video for the student hub team which will be used by the University to encourage students to use the services available.
- **Sports Committee Drop-in** – Nadine and I hosted a drop in session for any current committee members who had any queries regarding next year. The chair of Surf Lifesaving turned up to ask a few questions.
- **Meeting to VC** – overall I thought this meeting was successful, we managed to get our points across as a team and support one another, everyone was articulate in what they wanted to say and we got some positive outlooks on the year ahead.

Vice President of Activities September Update

September has been an incredibly busy month, with freshers returning to campus after near 2 years of being apart, graduations taking place and really trying to make progress on my manifesto. This month, things have really kick-started in terms of my manifesto and I have thoroughly enjoyed having students back on campus, sports playing again, societies meeting up again and volunteers getting back into the swing. I feel much more settled into my role now that we can interact with and help students.

Manifesto points UPDATE:

Celebration and Inclusion

- Akuma stash has been launched with the new logo on and is available to buy.
- Continued work on the Team.Plymouth Instagram where both sports and societies have been mentioning it in stories and tagging it in posts which has allowed me to repost and encourage engagement across the student led groups.

Mental Well-being

- Student services have offered to come into forums for timed business to give some mental health training or a Q&A.
- Look after your mate training has been circled round the societies and sport.
- By-stander training has been made available for all students but it needs a boost through the student lead groups.

Sustainability

- Set up a meeting with Matthew Tosdevin where we spoke about what he and the University sustainability team are doing to tackle problems with waste engagement:
 - New website area for students to access
 - Short videos (hoping to be helped by societies) explaining different types of waste
 - Quizzes on recycling

Other:

- **BoG Induction** – Led by Emma and Leeanne, we received more information on being a student governor and learnt more about the role
- **First Societies Forum** – Took place on zoom and had over 70 chairs/committee attend. There was loads of questions and suggestions which was really helpful for the next forum but there was also a lot of positivity and engagement around the new academic year.
- **Varsity 2022 meeting** – First meeting of the year was very successful got an idea for dates that would work for both sides and it was a very positive and forward thinking meeting.
- **BUCS Regional Meeting** – The first regional BUCS meeting went well. A new student chair and chair were elected.
- **First Sports Forum** – Took place in person and there was a lot of engagement throughout all the clubs. There was a very positive response around having more training on mental health and more awareness.
- **Back to BUCS** – Travelled to Nottingham for a Back to BUCS conference which took place all day and spoke about how we use BUCS play and other important information. There was also a brilliant panel on disability in BUCS which was very thought provoking.
- **Public Speaking Training** – Jim from WonkHE lead a brilliant session on how to speak in public, as well as the speech itself, a lot of techniques were learnt that were incredibly useful for graduation.
- **Pub Quiz** – The Sabbatical Officer team hosted the first SU Sunday quiz which was incredibly popular and we raised over £250 for charity.
- **Volunteering Fair** – Took place on the Monday of freshers' week in Rolle marquee.
- **Sports Fair** – Took place on the Wednesday of freshers' week in Rolle Marquee
- **Societies Fair** – Took place on the Thursday of freshers' week in Rolle Marquee, Main Hall and the SU marquee.
- **Sporting Excellence Scholarship** – 5 scholarships were given out for students who are competing at an international level in their sport.
- **Graduation** – It was an incredible experience to be a part of, especially giving speeches at not just my own graduation but also 3 others. It was a privilege and

something I will never forget, I was very proud of all the students graduating and seeing them all so happy.

- **Sicon** – Learnt how to use the SU's finance portal which I will use to raise purchase orders and approve PO's from other members.
- **Initiations** – A letter was sent to VC's across the country from BUCS and UUK which raised the issue of initiations happening in sports clubs. This was then addressed in sports forum and we made sure people understood there are serious consequences to some forms of initiations and that there are now anonymous reporting tools on BUCS which are sent to the respective Uni and action will be taken.
- **FTLQC** –
- **Student Services** – A meeting with student services was incredibly successful and there are definite partnerships to be had between us to mutually benefit each other in works regarding mental health and other things.

Vice President of Activities October Update

The start of October was largely taken up by Board of Governors, reading papers, meetings and away day. There was a lot more work being done with student-led groups this month which was very exciting. Little progress was made on my manifesto this month unfortunately, but plans are in place to work on this in November. The end of October was unprecedented with the spiking epidemic coming to the forefront, a lot of work was done around this.

Manifesto points UPDATE:

Celebration and Inclusion

- Continued use of Team.Plymouth Instagram to promote events from both sports and societies.
-

Mental Well-being

- Used the Facebook committee groups to promote active bystander training.

Sustainability

- Meeting with Matthew (University sustainability Team) to catch up on work he is doing with the university including a new webpage area that has helpful tips and advice and everything sustainable.
- Got in touch with relevant societies to put them in contact with Matthew to help him work on promoting waste management etc.

Other:

- **Board of Governors** - October board of governors meeting was followed by a dinner at the box and an away day in the Faulston room at the box the next day.
- **Societies funding** - Term 1 funding was allocated to all societies that applied. The funding allocations were passed at forum.
- **New societies** - The Hong Kong society was officially passed as a new society at forum, as well as 4 adopted societies back up and running.

- **Meeting with Dean of FoSE** - Meeting with Kevin to discuss how we may work together in the year and how we can help each other.
- **Freshers wash up** - As a sabb team we discussed how we thought freshers went as whole. It was agreed that it was brilliant to see students back on campus but there are some things we can improve on for next year.
- **Catch up with DVC E&SE** - Our monthly meeting with Julian was used to talk about ...
- **Sports forum** - This forum was used to approve funding allocations, discuss fresher's week, talk about initiations, updates from Nadine and I, and student elections
- **Societies forum** - This forum was used to approve funding, approve new societies, department updates, society updates and general information. There was also a big debate/discussion around drink spiking and what the SU is doing.
- **Student representative elections** - Elections for part-time roles took place this month, with majority of school rep roles being filled. There are still vacant roles for both school reps and PTOs which can be filled through co-option at Union council.
- **Union council** - My first union council meeting as a sabbatical officer was mainly taken up by voting in co-opted roles for the student representatives.
- **BUCS** - BUCS has made its return this month after 18 months of no games. Although our Plymouth sides saw a few losses over the first week, we have already gotten back into our stride and it has been amazing to be out seeing those blue jerseys on the field.
- **Drink Spiking** - One of the biggest arising issues this month has been the epidemic of drink spiking withing clubs and bars around the whole of the UK. The SU has released a statement regarding this issue which is available on the SU website. During this month we were involved in many meetings with the senior management team, as well as a meeting with the police and licencing in Plymouth to see how we can work together to combat the issue.

Vice President of Activities November Update

November has been a very busy month, with a lot of important meetings. During this month I have put plans in place to do a student group of the month campaign which will hopefully start in Jan/Feb, depending on when students come back. We also had #LetsTalkAboutSex week which was a great opportunity to be a part of. Again, there has been little overall progress on my campaigns which is something I am really looking at progressing December/January when it should be quieter with a lot of students going home.

Manifesto points UPDATE:

Celebration and Inclusion

- Continued use of Team.Plymouth Instagram to promote events from both sports and societies.

Mental Well-being

Sustainability

Other:

Fitness to Practice - I attended my first fitness to practice meeting as a panel member which was a new experience.

Meeting with VC #1 - There was a conversation around possible funding into Plymouth Albions new 3G pitch which could be used for a range of different sports. This was unsuccessful. I also invited the VC and DVCs to Varsity 2022.

Academic Partners TB - Fawzy and I attending the academic partners meeting for timed business to give partners an update about students and what the SU is doing. They were saddened and interested at the survey done by Oli Horne which showed a number of students who felt lonely. We also updated them on officer campaigns.

FTLQC

PG Graduation Speech - The officer team, along with student voice rewrote the Post Graduate graduation speech for the graduations in December.

Sports forum – The main point to take from November's sports forum was the conversation around spiking. Students were sign posted to resources that both the SU and the Uni supply. There was also a reminder that the PTO position for sports was still available, as were some school rep positions.

Varsity captains meeting - We had our first varsity 2022 captains meeting with all the captains of teams that will partake in varsity. It was a successful meeting and a good initial idea of how things will run.

Farewell to Julian - The team attended a farewell gathering for Julian Chaudhuri who was the DVC for Education and Student Experience, he was a good ally for the SU and we wish him all the best.

Student group training - Met with Jack Williamson to discuss student group training. There were discussions around e-learning possibilities for committee members so that they can go back and refresh after the initial training. We also hope to update the 'how to guides' on the SU page.

Comms Photoshoot - The lovely Rickie took some time out his day to take some photos of all the Sabbs that can be used for promotional purposes and help increase knowledge of who sabbatical officers are and how we can help.

Team Building - The Sabb team went to the Plymouth escape rooms as a team building exercise.

Societies Forum - This societies forum included introducing the PTO for societies and a continued conversation around drink spiking and advertising partner nightclubs.

Board of Trustees

Board of Governors – This BoG meeting was very heavy on the finance side and there was little for us as student governors to contribute.

Refresher's discussion - Nadine, Louise, Oli and I met to discuss how refreshers fair may look in Jan/Feb. We decided it would be best to do a separate fair for student groups and commercial. Societies, volunteering and sports will share this day and stands will be given predominantly to newly approved student groups and those struggling for members.

BUCS SW Divisional Meeting - This was the last meeting of the year for the South West Region of BUCS and was chaired by the new chair, Charlotte.

Meeting with VC #2 - COVID update from UUK was shared with us which stated to follow government guidance. PGRs isolation was brought up by VP Education and this has been passed on to Rob Yarwood. International support during the winter period was raised by VP Wellbeing and Diversity, a very important matter.

SVM Meeting with Jen - Fawzy and I met with Jen, who is doing a micro internship with Alice Ludgate (head of student services). She came to the meeting prepared with her notes of changes she thought should be made to the prevention of sexual violence and misconduct policy. Part of this was a discussion to add in 'check-ins' for after a student's case has finished to ensure the wellbeing of that student and accepting that mental health can change significantly.

Coole Insight Into – I met with other VP Activities Sabbs from around the UK that are part of the Coole insight programme. It was nice to hear that other SU's are having the same issues and it isn't just us.

Union Council - The month was concluded with Union council in the evening where there were some more co-options approved.

Vice President of Activities December Update

December was very busy at the start of the month and ended very quietly with students being home for Christmas. It consisted of PTO and school rep 1-2-1's, Varsity planning and the start of discussions around SU awards.

Manifesto points UPDATE:

Celebration and Inclusion

- Started the Society events list that is posted on a Friday for the following week on the Team.Plymouth account.
- Did a podcast with the Up; Student Life podcast team on sports and societies which can be found on Spotify.
- Made a start on SU Awards for 2022

Mental Well-being

Sustainability

Other:

- **FTLQC** – Faculty of Health: Students experiencing audio problems in hybrid lectures, needing to be fixed. Mask wearing regulations were covered. An issue was brought to light regarding lecturers marking work which has been submitted, only to find out they had EC's and had to completely remark the work. The committee was informed that the DVC ESE role would be absorbed by multiple different people.

- **SU Awards** – Our first discussion planning the SU awards with year and how they will look. It was decided that awards will take place early May in Rolle Marquee.
- **H&S Committee** – The subcommittee met and discussed a noise listening device on club nights that will display a traffic system, intended to tell staff when they need to wear their ear defenders. The wellbeing champions gave an update including the addition of dog day once a month in the SU.
- **Course rep catch up** – Coffee hour where course reps were invited to come and chat and discuss any issues they may have. 3 course reps from the School of Biomedicine showed up to talk to us.
- **All Staff catch up**
- **Helm Ticketing** – Met with Helm ticketing company, who are owned by a Plymouth alumnus, to look at an alternative ticketing platform for Varsity.
- **Partner nightclub meeting** – Met with the owner of Switch, Play and Air to discuss the issue of drink spiking. It was a very positive meeting. He was able to identify what they are doing to help combat student safety on a night out, including a welfare area and a step-by-step process for staff and security to follow if someone claims to have been spiked.
- **Fitness to Practice**
- **1-2-1 with Emily** – Catch up with Emily Schenk, School rep for Peninsula Medical School (PMS). The same repeating issues of accommodation in Torbay and issues with placement that need to be resolved. Another issue was diagnostic radiography not feeling as though they are part of PMS.
- **1-2-1 with Emi** – Midyear 1-2-1 with the president where we discussed my progress and areas for improvement, it was a positive meeting.
- **1-2-1 with Owain** – PTO Societies, Owain, expressed his opinion on the SU promoting nightclubs. We also discussed how forum would work and where Owain would update.
- **1-2-1 with Joyita** – Joyita, the School rep for psychology, expressed her interest to get more engaged with course reps to get a better insight over the school. We also spoke about steps on how to take action.
- **UoP: Student Life podcast** – I was given the opportunity to be part of an episode on the UoP Student Life podcast, talking about sports and societies, I was joined by the men's football captain, who was also part of TIS. It was a great opportunity, and I was very proud to be able to talk for an hour about how amazing our student led groups are.
- **Refreshers** – Refresher's fair will take place on the 2nd of February, with 40 stalls being occupied by both sports and activities. This will be an opportunity for the groups to get more engagement and gain more members.
- **Coole Insight** – I had my first 1-2-1 meeting with Jamie, our mentor from Coole Insight, which was great. I was able to chat about the job and the struggles I am having as well as the high points and how I can improve within my role.
- **Sports Co-ordinator interviews** – We shortlisted 4 candidates, of which 3 turned up for interview. After all interviews it was decided that we would offer the job to Amy Spink who will be in Post from January.

Vice President of Activities January Update

Manifesto points UPDATE:

Celebration and Inclusion

- Student group of the month plans are well under way and hoping to launch early Feb.

Mental Well-being

- Attended MHFA training

Sustainability

- Attended my first Green team meeting which will measure how the SU are doing on their sustainability targets

Other:

- **VC Meeting** – Spoke about safety in the city and possible COVID vaccination centre on campus which was rejected. PCA have had pop-up vaccine centres on campus a few times now.
- **MHFA course** – I completed a 2-day Mental Health First Aid course that qualifies me as a mental health first aider for 2 years.
- **Term 2 funding allocation** – Louise Mealand and I went through the term 2 funding applications and allocated societies with an amount from the budget, this was then approved at forum.
- **E-Learning** – All UPSU staff now should have completed E-Learning in the following subjects: Disability Awareness; Diversity in the workplace; GDPR and information security; Health and Safety in the workplace; Mental Health Awareness.
- **Meeting with Jay Stone** – I met with Jay Stone to discuss the possibility of photography for the captain's photoshoot for Varsity.
- **Student group of the month** – The form is ready to go live, just needing to do some bits for the website and then we can launch.
- **#Stressless** – Charlie and Fawzy headed up the stressless campaign which involved us handing out fruits to students between 12-2pm during exam week in the library.
- **Refresher's fair** – Plans for refreshers fair are finalised and there will be around 44 stalls with both societies, volunteering and sport all participating. The event will take place 2nd February 12-4pm in the SU.
- **Student Life Committee** – SLC went very well. There seemed to be much more engagement from the university side of things, especially around sport and the need for a sports / physical activity strategy.
- **Team midyears catch up** – Our Sabb team talked through the highs and lows of the first half of our term year and discussed what we want to achieve by the end of our terms.
- **Medical funding applications** – The Peninsula Medical School, Peninsula Dental School and the School of Biomedicine all have given £4000 for their specific societies. We have sent out an application form for these societies to fill in to allocate them a portion of this £12,000.
- **SU Awards criteria** – Awards criteria was finalised, and we got rid of any duplication in awards. The nominations will be live soon.
- **Honorary awards committee** – A subcommittee of the Board of Governors met to decide the honorary awards that should be given during the 2022 graduation ceremonies.
- **1-2-1 with Oli** – Director of Student Services (SU). We spoke about how my year has gone and my plans for next year.
- **1-2-1 with Joyita** – Psychology School Rep. Joyita had some questions for us on how to progress certain issues. She is still very keen to have a better relationship with course reps so she can continue her great work for the school.

- **1-2-1 with Nicky G** – CEO (SU). Me and Nicky had a chat about how I have found the year so far, any problems I have come across and what my plans are for the rest of the year.
- **1-2-1 with Jamie** - Coole Insight Mentor. Me and Jamie spoke about my future career and my plans for next year, he helped me to think with an unbiased view about my options for the next academic year.
- **Reading BOG papers** – Reading BOG papers for the BOG meeting which took place 27/01/22.
- **Varsity Committee meeting** – The agenda included the finalising of teams, facilities, times, and dates. As well as some of the issues we have encountered with some fixtures. Some of the issues are still ongoing.
- **Catch up with Nadine** – Sports Manager. Mer and Nadine had a catch up regarding what is happening in the sports department.
- **Societies Forum** – This forum took place on zoom and there was a lower number of attendees (probably due to exams). However, the engagement was good and the responses helpful.
- **Paramedicine Cohort meeting** – We had a meeting with the year 1 course rep for paramedicine who explained to us the issues they have had regarding exams changing from online to in person which has caused huge distress among the cohort. We are working to help these students.
- **Board of Governors** – Board of Governors took place 27/01/22 and focused on sustainability and finance.
- **1-2-1 with Saffron** – Women’s PTO. Saffron has made good progress in her campaign ideas. Me and Steph were able to direct her in what else she can be doing to get herself known among the student community as the women’s PTO.
- **Careers services catch up** – Catch up with the careers service who told us all about the work they have been getting up to. Very positive.
- **Green team meeting** – Attended my first green team meeting which was great. We have started to make an action plan to become a more sustainable SU.

Vice President Education June and July Update

Charlie Atkinson

This has been my first month in the role of VP Education, and as such, a significant amount of time has been spent communicating with both SU and University of Plymouth staff to understand who to talk to and who will be able to support me in achieving the aims of my manifesto. There has been a significant amount of training and learning about the role, but I have also begun to develop my manifesto points.

Returning from Covid: I will endeavour to ensure that students feel safe to return to campus, and I will also fight and lobby the university to ensure that those students who do not feel comfortable or ready to return to face-to-face teaching have alternate methods for teaching, as I understand the potential impact on student's mental health. If COVID-19 remains an issue next year, I will be aiming to ensure that the issues that have

arisen from Zoom lectures and that staff understand how to improve teaching, by working with student groups such as Course Reps to communicate feedback of the issues students face with Zoom straight to the university.

- I have spoken to Julian Chaudhuri through the series of inductions and welcome meetings about the points on my manifesto. I have raised this point specifically, and have found that the University, as it stands, will be taking an approach to try and 'return to normal', which runs the risk of potentially losing the benefits which have been gained through distance learning this year. It is worth noting that this is just the current stance and could still be up to change depending on government guidance and the Covid pandemic.

Student Development: I want to advocate and express the opportunities that are available to students to work and gain experience within the city, be that through placements, part time work or volunteering, with the aim of helping students to leave university with as wide a range of experiences as possible.

- I have had introductions with staff within the Membership department, which will be the area in which the SU will most likely be able to support student development.
- I have also met with Steve Gaskin, who is the head of Student Careers. As well as having an introductory meeting, we had also discussed how I as VP Education could work with the Careers Service. To this end, bi-monthly meeting with myself and Steve have been set up, in which we can discuss issues which relate to the student body and careers. Similarly, I have also joined the membership of the Employability Advisory Group, which will hopefully allow me to raise issues relating to students' experience with the careers service from a different angle. Also, during this meeting Steve raised some of the issues which the careers service is facing, which could offer further points of collaboration between the Students Union and the Careers Service, with the main being the low level of engagement from certain Schools and courses.

Postgraduate Engagement: As a postgraduate, I understand that postgrad students can feel isolated and unrepresented within the student union. I will raise awareness of the role that Course Reps play within the SU, as well assisting the Postgraduate Officer to cultivate an attitude of inclusivity between Postgraduate Students and the SU.

- Again, I have raised this issue within a large amount of the introductory meetings with staff both within the SU and within the University. This began during handover with a meeting with KC, the outgoing President about the work that he had undertaken in the past year to engage Postgrads.
- I also spoke to the Postgraduate Officer for the past academic year, Will Styles, to understand what they have found over being in post the last year. This will be helpful going forward, which will ensure that the information isn't lost.
- Specifically, I have had several meetings with Oli Horne about how the SU can engage Postgraduate Students. These meetings covered what has been done by the SU in the past to attempt to support Postgraduate students, as well as discussing potential outcomes for the upcoming year.

- Another meeting I have had over the past month was with Jerry Roberts in the Doctoral College. This was an introduction to his role, and how we could work together through the year to support PGR students, as well as hearing some of the issues that PGR students have raised.
- I have also attempted to engage with the PGR Faculty Reps, although I have not yet had a response from them. Jerry Roberts has agreed to check who the current reps are, to ensure that we have the most up to date information.

Other

- **Meeting with Ed Braund - School of Society and Culture:** I have had a meeting with Ed about the establishment of the new School of Society and Culture, of which I held a few issues. The issue of representation has come up, with more students potentially having fewer representatives. Following the meeting, the point was raised that it may be useful having the SU be present during their leadership away day, to refresh the leadership team on how the SU can support the student voice.
- **Sstar Awards:** At the beginning of the month, I was lucky enough to be able to support Emi in delivering the Sstar Awards, with the Schools of Humanities and Performing Arts, as well as Art, Design and Architecture. While not being involved in the program until late in the day, it was lovely to take part in the awards ceremony!
- **City Sabbs Catch-Up:** As a Sabb team, we had the opportunity to meet with the Officers from Marjon to understand what their aims are for the year ahead, and where there may be some potential for collaboration. Unfortunately, the team from PCA were not able to join us.
- **Student Life Committee:** Again, as a Sabb team we sat on the Student Life Committee. It was shorter than usual, but acted as a welcome to the new members, as offered a trial run of the new structure, which involves bringing a short presentation to support the point being discussed.
- **External Training:** This month as a team we have been taking part in a significant amount external training. At the start of the month, we had our residential at Buckfast Abbey. This consisted of developing our understanding of each other as a team, as well as establishing our hopes for the year ahead in the role. We also had a training day with Jim Dickinson, from WonkHE, which covered some of the issues which may arise during our year in the role, and some methods of working through these problems.
- **Training with Advice Team:** As a Sabbatical officer team, this month we have also had training from the Advice Team and the University to understand our roles within Academic Misconduct, Fitness to Practice, Appeals and Complaints. Through this, we will be best positioned to succeed in all the elements of our role.

Vice President Education August Update

August has been a relatively quiet month for updates, due to the fact of taking leave for two weeks from the 9th to the 23rd, to finish my MA Dissertation. Despite this, however, there has been some

progress on my manifesto points, as well as discussions about the upcoming academic year, and the issues which may arise.

Returning from Covid: I will endeavour to ensure that students feel safe to return to campus, and I will also fight and lobby the university to ensure that those students who do not feel comfortable or ready to return to face-to-face teaching have alternate methods for teaching, as I understand the potential impact on student's mental health. If COVID-19 remains an issue next year, I will be aiming to ensure that the issues that have arisen from Zoom lectures and that staff understand how to improve teaching, by working with student groups such as Course Reps to communicate feedback of the issues students face with Zoom straight to the university.

- There has not been too much progression on this issue this month, again due to personally being on leave, as well as other members of staff across the Students' Union and the University. However, as an officer team, this has been a regular topic for discussion, and will be treated with the utmost priority heading into September, in preparation for the return of students to campus.
- Again, conversations with Julian Chaudhuri, which took place on the 5th of August, were dominated by Covid issues, such as the removal of signs and floor panels marking out the need for social distancing and wearing masks. The University is following the Government guidelines with safety measures currently, and so is not making the wearing of masks or social distancing compulsory, and will follow Government guidelines going forward, such as if any further restrictions may be put into place.

Student Development: I want to advocate and express the opportunities that are available to students to work and gain experience within the city, be that through placements, part time work or volunteering, with the aim of helping students to leave university with as wide a range of experiences as possible.

- Progression has been more positive in regard to my second manifesto point. Before heading away on leave, I had a meeting with Jenny Wall, a relatively new member of the Careers Service at the University, who has been focusing on supporting graduates and finalists. Over the first two weeks of August, the Careers Service had run a 'Launch Your Graduate Career' program, which had some take up. Moving forward, Jenny, as well as the rest of the team at the Careers Service, are very much willing to work with the SU to raise awareness of what is being offered to help to develop students' employability.

Postgraduate Engagement: As a postgraduate, I understand that postgrad students can feel isolated and unrepresented within the student union. I will raise awareness of the role that Course Reps play within the SU, as well assisting the Postgraduate Officer to cultivate an attitude of inclusivity between Postgraduate Students and the SU.

- Again, there has been positive progress to achieving and developing greater Postgraduate Engagement within the Students' Union. At the beginning of the month, I had a meeting with Sarah Kearns, in which the former Postgraduate Society was discussed. In this meeting, the role of the Doctoral College in the former Postgrad Society was explained, as well as having a conversation on how the Students' Union could best support students studying a PGR course.
- As a response to this, myself, alongside the Advice Service agreed to film a video for the induction week of Postgraduate Students, explaining what the Students' Union can do to

support them, as well as explaining the kinds of Postgrad Issues the Advice team can support students with. The hope is to have this video accessible year-round on the Doctoral College website, to remind students of the SU's role, as well as engaging with students at the beginning of their PG study, to help to build relationships between the SU and the Postgrad body.

Other Updates:

- **Welcome Filming:** This week, the Officer team took part in filming for the New Student Welcome Film, in which we explained our roles, and how we can help support students during their time at the University. Similarly, myself and Mads, the VP Activities, supported the University in filming an introduction to the Student Hub, situated within the Library.
- **Lecture Timings Paper:** I have continued to support Viv Hocking, School Rep for the School of Engineering, Computing, & Mathematics to present the paper at UTLQC, which should take place within the Student Led business element of the committee, provided the paper is accepted by the chair.
- **Training:** This month, there has been further training with the Students' Union into running effective campaigns, as well as how to use Social Media effectively. This will hopefully ensure that the campaigns which will be undertaken this year will be as effective as possible, as well as allowing us as an Officer team to be able to communicate these wins with students clearly and successfully.
- **Meeting with the VC:** This was the first time that I had met the VC, and it gave me an opportunity to talk about my manifesto for the year ahead, as well as allowing us as a team to raise issues which had developed over the past month.

Vice President Education September Update

September has been dominated by Freshers' Week and International Welcome, and to that end it was great to see students back on campus and enjoying what we offered through the Students' Union. I really enjoyed being able to meet and talk to students and the various Societies and Sports Clubs in the fairs. As a Sabb team, we also got the chance to host the first SU Quiz Night of the year!

It has also been a positive week for developing my manifesto points, as especially at the start of the month, I had the opportunity to be a part of some high-level university meetings.

Returning from Covid: I will endeavour to ensure that students feel safe to return to campus, and I will also fight and lobby the university to ensure that those students who do not feel comfortable or ready to return to face-to-face teaching have alternate methods for teaching, as I understand the potential impact on student's mental health. If COVID-19 remains an issue next year, I will be aiming to ensure that the issues that have arisen from Zoom lectures and that staff understand how to improve teaching, by working with student groups such as Course Reps to communicate feedback of the issues students face with Zoom straight to the university.

- I have had the opportunity to raise the concerns of students about Covid and feeling safe on campus at both UTLQC and the FTLQC for the Faculty of Science and Engineering. In these meetings, there were also discussions on how students best access teaching this academic year.
- There has also been the shift from the University in the recommendation of wearing masks in communal areas, which currently do not include teaching areas.
-

Student Development: I want to advocate and express the opportunities that are available to students to work and gain experience within the city, be that through placements, part time work or volunteering, with the aim of helping students to leave university with as wide a range of experiences as possible.

- This month I have been in various meetings with several departments within the University. These include the Careers Service, the Student Hub and the Knowledge Exchange. These meetings offered me the opportunity to talk through my manifesto points and gain a better understanding of how we can work together to improve the Student Development offer both within the SU and at the University.
- Following these conversations, the focus of this manifesto point has shifted slightly. While initially I had envisioned the focus to be solely employability based, I now believe that would be better to also look and cover soft skills such as how to manage positive mental health and finding career happiness.
- The hope with this change is that these skills are just as important for being employable, as well assisting students to be as successful as possible following their time with the university.

Postgraduate Engagement: As a postgraduate, I understand that postgrad students can feel isolated and unrepresented within the student union. I will raise awareness of the role that Course Reps play within the SU, as well assisting the Postgraduate Officer to cultivate an attitude of inclusivity between Postgraduate Students and the SU.

- Following the update last month, the video with Advice has been film, and has been sent off to the Doctoral College.
- There is a Postgrad welcome and Coffee Morning in place in the Little Room of the SU on the 5TH of October. This will hopefully be an opportunity for Postgrad students to find out what we offer here at the SU, and I will be there to also answer questions and help out in raising interest in how can represent and work for Postgrad students.

Other Updates:

- Training: This month as a Sabb team we had training supported by WonkHe. This training was focused in improving our public speaking and speech writing skills. This will ideally help us to best raise the concerns of students to the University.
- International Welcome: Again, as a Sabb team we were able to take part in the Students' Union offers for the International Welcome for new students. We gave a talk about the offerings we have, and how we can best support students while in Plymouth.
- Freshers: Fresher's Week was an amazing opportunity to get out and meet so many of our Societies and Sports Clubs, as well as some of the amazing events what were put on through the week! It was great seeing campus more lively after the months away!

Vice President Education October Update

October has been a busy month. The first half of the month was filled up with introductory meetings with groups and departments within the University to focus on developing and working towards the aims of my manifesto. The second half of the month was re-focused to support the work being done by the Students' Union around drink spiking.

Returning from Covid: I will endeavour to ensure that students feel safe to return to campus, and I will also fight and lobby the university to ensure that those students who do not feel comfortable or ready to return to face-to-face teaching have alternate methods for teaching, as I understand the potential impact on student's mental health. If COVID-19 remains an issue next year, I will be aiming to ensure that the issues that have arisen from Zoom lectures and that staff understand how to improve teaching, by working with student groups such as Course Reps to communicate feedback of the issues students face with Zoom straight to the university.

- I have had the opportunity to raise the concerns of students about Covid and feeling safe on campus at both UTLQC and the FTLQC for the Faculty of Science and Engineering. In these meetings, there were also discussions on how students best access teaching this academic year.

Student Development: I want to advocate and express the opportunities that are available to students to work and gain experience within the city, be that through placements, part time work or volunteering, with the aim of helping students to leave university with as wide a range of experiences as possible.

- I have had a meeting with the Digital Champions team, to find out how the Students' Union can support the work that they do.
- I have also had an introductory meeting with the team at The Cube, to understand what they can offer to students, as well as to understand how what they do can work alongside the work of the Students' Union.

Postgraduate Engagement: As a postgraduate, I understand that postgrad students can feel isolated and unrepresented within the student union. I will raise awareness of the role that Course

Reps play within the SU, as well assisting the Postgraduate Officer to cultivate an attitude of inclusivity between Postgraduate Students and the SU.

- As the lead officer among the Sabbatical team for Postgraduate Students, I attended the Doctoral College Board on the 21st. This was the first time which I had attended this meeting, and I use the opportunity to raise the point that the Students' Union now has a Part-Time Postgraduate Research Officer, as well as raising about the events that the Students' Union is putting in place for Postgraduate students.
- The first of the online and in-person coffee mornings for Postgraduate Students took place. Run alongside the Doctoral College, these both had over fifty students attend, and was a great opportunity to explain what we offer, and how we can support students on a Postgraduate course. It also gave students the opportunity to let us know what they wanted, which we have begun to put into place, including running more of these networking events.

Other Updates:

- Academic Sub-Committee – Took place on the 1st of November, but I'm including it here. This was the first Academic Sub-Committee of the year, and the first to take place with the new structure of Union Council. There was timed business with the Careers Service as well as a representative of UCU. It was a good opportunity for students and representatives to raise issues regarding education and the academic side of university, as well as allowing the ground rules of the sub-committee to be set.
- QAA Quality Matters – This month, I was able to attend a virtual conference held by QAA, which was an 'annual student-focused event providing an introduction to student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement and preparing student representatives for the year ahead.' One of the most relevant seminars was focused on the importance of student engagement alongside the issue of Essay Mills.
- Fitness to Practice Video – Alongside the Advice Team at the SU, I took part in filming a video which covered the new Fitness to Practice policy, to try and explain the new aspects and changes from the previous policy.
- Undergraduate Open Day - On the 9th of October, I worked the Undergraduate Open Day, alongside a Student Ambassador, giving talks on Student Life in Plymouth as well as what we offer to students at the Students' Union.
- Postgraduate Open Evening – On the 13th of October, I also worked the Postgraduate Open Evening. With a table in the Rolle Marquee, we asked potential Postgraduate students what they would like to see from the Students' Union while they studied here.
- International Student Welcome Event – On the evening of the 19th, alongside the President and VP Diversity and Wellbeing, as well as Sports and Advice, we attended the international student welcome event. This was an opportunity to explain how the Students' Union can help international students while they are studying in Plymouth.
- Part Time Officer Training – I attended the Part-Time Officer training on the 25th of October, to explain the roles of Sabbatical Officers, and introduce the team and our objectives.

- Course Rep Training – I also attended the Course Rep Training for the Faculty of Science and Engineering. This was a great opportunity to talk to Course Reps within the Faculty in which I act as Faculty Rep.

Vice President Education December Update

December, despite the Students' Union closing for the winter break, was a productive month. Meetings continued around drink spiking, and including meeting with some of the partner nightclubs. Similarly, the Students' Union was also involved with the Postgraduate graduations, giving the Vote of Thanks.

Returning from Covid: I will endeavour to ensure that students feel safe to return to campus, and I will also fight and lobby the university to ensure that those students who do not feel comfortable or ready to return to face-to-face teaching have alternate methods for teaching, as I understand the potential impact on student's mental health. If COVID-19 remains an issue next year, I will be aiming to ensure that the issues that have arisen from Zoom lectures and that staff understand how to improve teaching, by working with student groups such as Course Reps to communicate feedback of the issues students face with Zoom straight to the university.

- Student concerns around Covid have been raised with the University in meetings which would be appropriate.
- Due to the impact of the new Omicron variant, the University has moved exams online for the January exam period. The Students' Union was involved with this, and have been kept up to date with the developments of Omicron.

Student Development: I want to advocate and express the opportunities that are available to students to work and gain experience within the city, be that through placements, part time work or volunteering, with the aim of helping students to leave university with as wide a range of experiences as possible.

- December was a slower month for working on this. However, this will be a focus for January!

Postgraduate Engagement: As a postgraduate, I understand that postgrad students can feel isolated and unrepresented within the student union. I will raise awareness of the role that Course Reps play within the SU, as well assisting the Postgraduate Officer to cultivate an attitude of inclusivity between Postgraduate Students and the SU.

- The Postgraduate networking and Coffee Mornings continued this month, although both events had to move online due to the impact of Omicron. Both events were still very well attended, however, and will continue to be put on into the new year.
- This month also had one of the first evening events facilitated by the Students' Union, with Rock and Roll Bingo. Again, this was decently attended, and there will be more evening events for Postgrads in 2022.
- I also attended a Doctoral College Board meeting this month, which focused on student numbers and the PRES.

Other Updates:

- Academic Sub-Committee – The second Academic Sub-Committee took place within the Hive at the Students' Union. This was attended by the Library Service, covering Student IT and Digital Support.
- Drink Spiking – As mentioned previously, the drink spiking meetings with the Sabbatical Officers and Part-Time Officers continued into December.
- Graduations – As above, the Students' Union was able to take part with the Postgraduate Graduations in the Guildhall, giving the Vote of Thanks. I was lucky enough to be able to give it at my own ceremony!
- DLE Steering Group – I attended the first meeting of the year of the DLE Steering Group, which will be involved with the steering of the work. Down the line, students will be involved in focus groups to raise issues with the DLE.
- Part-Time Officer 1-2-1's – These have continued into December as well and have included some of the Part-Time Officers who were co-opted at the most recent Union Council.
- Faculty of Science and Engineering Course Rep catch up – Organised and hosted by Student Voice in the Lounge at the Students' Union. I attended as the Faculty Rep for the Faculty of Science and Engineering.

Vice President Education January Update

Welcome back for 2022! January started steady, and it felt as if there was a slow return to campus with the shift to online assessments for some courses. However, this time towards the start of the month has allowed myself a lot of extra time to plan projects for the rest of the year! During the assessment period, we as an officer team gave out fruit in the name of #StressLess – Thank you to everyone who stopped for a chat!

Returning from Covid: I will endeavour to ensure that students feel safe to return to campus, and I will also fight and lobby the university to ensure that those students who do not feel comfortable or ready to return to face-to-face teaching have alternate methods for teaching, as I understand the potential impact on student's mental health. If COVID-19 remains an issue next year, I will be aiming to ensure that the issues that have arisen from Zoom lectures and that staff understand how to improve teaching, by working with student groups such as Course Reps to communicate feedback of the issues students face with Zoom straight to the university.

- 'Plan B' was still in effect through January. As such, the change to mostly online assessments were a response. My focus here has now shifted towards the assessment period in the summer, to ensure that student opinion is listened to when these decisions are made.

Student Development: I want to advocate and express the opportunities that are available to students to work and gain experience within the city, be that through placements, part time work or volunteering, with the aim of helping students to leave university with as wide a range of experiences as possible.

- In January, we met as an Officer team with the Careers Service, to cover what is planned for the coming semester, and how we could work together on projects.

I have begun work on a campaign focusing on what being involved with the Students' Union can do for students once they have graduated. This is currently taking shape as a 'Where are they now?'

Work has also continued into seeing if micro-internships could be suitable for the Students' Union.

Postgraduate Engagement: As a postgraduate, I understand that postgrad students can feel isolated and unrepresented within the student union. I will raise awareness of the role that Course Reps play within the SU, as well assisting the Postgraduate Officer to cultivate an attitude of inclusivity between Postgraduate Students and the SU.

The Postgraduate networking and Coffee Mornings continued once again this month, online only due to Omicron and Plan B. It was well attended, and it was great to see some new faces join us!

- I have been in discussions with students who would be interested in the return of the Postgraduate Society.

Other Updates:

- Part-Time Officer 1-2-1's – These have continued, and it has been great to hear what everybody has been working on. As always, if there is anything I can help with, please don't hesitate to get in contact!
- Stress Less Campaign – As previously mentioned, we have been working on the Stress Less Campaign, which has included sharing out fruit, and supporting students through the assessment period.
- VC Meetings – Through this period, we have had two meetings with the VC as an Officer Team. Topics we have covered have included online assessments, sustainability, and inclusion.
- UTLQC – I have also attended the first UTLQC meeting of 2022, raising online assessments, as well as the summer assessment period.

Vice President Wellbeing & Diversity June and July Update

Fawzy Ahmed

The last few months have been exciting. I carried on with my role as VP Wellbeing and Diversity for the next academic year. The Sabb team said bye to two of our own and welcomed two new officers. It has been exciting getting to know the new team and preparing for the next academic year. Exciting stuff coming soon!

Manifesto points:

- Call for better Wellbeing provisions
- Lobby for better housing provisions
- Empower Underrepresented groups

NeverOk Campaign: I carried on this campaign from last academic year. The campaign is set to be launched during fresher's week and the main objective is to create awareness of the University's sexual violence and misconduct strategy and the University Speak up tool. I and the VP Activities have had a few meetings where we have discussed what we want out of the campaign. The main strands for the campaign are Consent, Safe behaviour, Active Bystander, Inappropriate behaviour, myth-busting facts about consent. I am currently putting together the content for the page for the NeverOk campaign.

Decolonization of the Curriculum Campaign: I had a meeting with Rebecca Turner, who is the lead for the decolonization work within the University, and India Ellis who is the student intern. We discussed plans to launch a University and SU campaign about the decolonization of the curriculum. The campaign is set to be launched during Black History Month in October. The campaign will focus on creating awareness of the movement, why the movement is important and some students sharing their experiences in the University.

Race Equality Student Resource: I had a meeting with Anne Bentley, who is co-chair of the University Race Equality Charter and a dental student. We discussed putting together a student facing resource of some of the work that the REC (Race Equality Charter) has been up to.

Wellbeing Forum: I had a meeting with Student Voice (Tracy) to set up the dates for the Wellbeing forums for the entire year. The forums will be used as spaces where students can give their feedback on how their well-being can be improved.

Wellbeing Catch Up with Anne Bentley:

International Student Arrival Week: I have been involved with discussions with the International Student Advice team, the Hello project co-ordinators. The discussions have been focused on the activities for week beginning September 13th for International Students. In these discussions, I raised the need for the

Student Wellbeing Services (SPACE Café) Catch up:

Suicide Strategy Group:

Student Housing:

Access and Participation Plan:

External Training: In the past month, we have had some external training. We had NUS (National Union of Students) Lead & Change which was very exciting, I had the opportunity to meet other Wellbeing officers from other SU's. It was a valuable experience. I also had the opportunity to attend a FOSIS (Federation of Student Islamic Societies) retreat, which was a three-day retreat in Kingston specifically for Muslim Sabbatical Officers. The skills, the networking, and the experience were so valuable and I would love to experience it again.

Vice President Wellbeing & Diversity September Update

September has been the busiest month so far. In this month, we had freshers and Graduation. It was nice being back on campus and seeing campus being busy with both students and staff.

Manifesto updates

Better Wellbeing Provisions

- The dates for the Wellbeing forum have already been added to the calendar for every month. The Wellbeing forum for September had to be cancelled due to lack of promotions as well as busy schedule due to Freshers and graduation.
- I put plans to have a themed Wellbeing forum for black history for the month of October to talk about how students can be better supported by the wellbeing services especially people of colour. I will provide an update once this event has taken place
- The Sabbatical team had a meeting with the student services team. In this meeting, I raised my first manifesto meeting point regarding better wellbeing provisions. I raised the importance of having mental health training for all university staff to better support students. The team mentioned that mental health training is already being rolled out to staff, but is more about the application. I have been invited to speak to heads of schools to speak to them directly and to bring up a solution on how we can better support students.
- I also raised the discussion on how we can have more inclusive services for our diverse community. They updated me that they are in contact with some charities on how we can implement that at Plymouth. I will follow up on this

Better Accommodation

- This manifesto point has progressed a little since my last update
- As a team, we discussed our priorities for the academic year with the directors, managers, and student voice. In this meeting, I discussed how I want to introduce a rate my land lord scheme or a housing charter where students are better informed about which housing agencies work with the student needs at heart Due to the housing agreements, the SU has with housing agencies, it may be difficult to launch this scheme. However, we have started having discussions with the Senior leadership team on we can best support our students with regards to Accommodation
- I had a discussion with advice on the other half of this manifesto, which is to educate students on their rights as tenants. I passed on some useful contents to the Advice team that could be useful information for our students.

Empowering Underrepresented groups

- Decolonization of the curriculum video: I worked with the university intern for decolonization of the curriculum video. We filmed a few students talking about their experiences within their course. The aim of the video is to highlight the need for a more diverse/inclusive university. More updates will follow as these progresses.

- Black History Month: I spent some time this month planning Black History Month. I reached out to the library and a few societies to see how we can commemorate BHM

Other updates:

Graduation: The sabbatical had the amazing opportunity to give the vote of thanks at the 2021 graduation ceremonies. I had the pleasure of delivering the vote of thanks at 5 ceremonies. I would say this is one of my favourite memories of being a sabbatical officer. It was amazing graduates, staff and loved ones come together to celebrate the achievements of our students

Freshers: After a covid year, it was nice to clubs and societies and the SU itself being and busy and bubbly. I had the chance to speak some of the cultural societies to talk about how we can work together in the year.

Officer Pub quiz: The Officer team hosted the first pub quiz of the school year. We had about 600 students in attendance. The environment was fun and the students enjoyed the quiz. We raised a generous amount of money, in which half went to our chosen charity, first light which is one of the charities we are working with this year

International Student Welcome:

WonkHe Public speaking training:

Careers Team meeting:

Vice President Wellbeing & Diversity October Update

October was an exciting month. There was a calendar filled with Black History Month events, international students settling event, and much more. As a sabbatical officer team, we had to put together a drink spiking campaign to address the increase in spiking in the UK.

Manifesto Points

Better Wellbeing provisions

Wellbeing Subcommittee/Forum: I chaired the first wellbeing and student experience forum of the academic. In attendance, where some school reps and part time officers. On the agenda, we discussed the following: Mental health training of staff, feedback on support services and accommodation issues.

Based on the feedback we received as an SU last year. There was a lot of feedback on the support staff provided students. The general consensus was that although staff have undergone mental health training, there is a disconnect leaving some students feeling unsupported. The action was for me to enquire what type of training does the University provide to staff. We further discussed feedback on support services. Useful feedback was given on the services, which have been passed to the support services. It was thought that it

would be a useful to invite the head of student services for a Q/A and feedback session at the next EDI committee

Better Accommodation

Accommodation Fair: The SU put in dates for an accommodation fair for students for the 2022/2023 academic year. I raised at the team meeting and the Senior leadership on why the dates for the fairs were too early in the academic year. I raised concerns of students feeling pressurized to sign up to a new tenancy agreement so early in the academic year. We had a follow up meeting with Advice and the Senior leadership team on the way forward with having accommodation fairs in the SU.

Worked with the SU advice team on the day of the first fair on the 26th of October to ensure that students get the right information when looking for accommodation for 2022/2023. The advice team had a brochure promoting the stop and think before signing up to a new tenancy and the free tenancy check with advice

Right to Rent Workshop: As part of my manifesto point, I am putting together a right-to-rent workshop, which will be at next wellbeing forum. The SU has been contacted by Shelter, which is a charity, that campaigns for good housing in Britain. As an SU, we will be inviting the representative from Shelter to a wellbeing forum where students are invited to ask questions about Renting a house as a student.

Empowering Underrepresented Groups

Black History Month: Black History Month was a huge success. I worked closely with some of our student groups such as the Afro-Caribbean society. We had events such as film screenings, Karaoke night, a Debate night, Dance class. The events this year were aimed at education and celebrating the history and diversity of black people. The engagement for the majority of the events was very high in comparison to the virtual events from last year. I organized a BHM charity tournament which was the most engaged. The UPFC men's 1 and a group of Nigerian students battled it out for the spot of the winning team, with the Nigerian students winning the tournament. We raised £50 for the chosen charity: Black Minds Matter which is a UK-based based charity that provides mental health provisions for black people. The debate topics were interesting and sparked a lot of conversation including mental health discussion in the black community.

Decolonization of the curriculum campaign: Officially launched a campaign to decolonize the curriculum. The aim of the campaign is to educate and create awareness of the need for a decolonized curriculum. I am still putting in some plans to launch the video highlighting students' experiences.

Link to decolonization campaign article:

<https://www.upsu.com/news/article/upsu/Decolonising-the-Curriculum/>

Diversity Showcase: I had plans of hosting a diversity showcase that involved a celebration of our diversity at Plymouth. The plan was to have a fashion show, poetry in different languages,

food from around the world, and musical performances. As part of the showcase, I intend to launch the BeAnAlly campaign, which focuses on being an ally to underrepresented groups. Unfortunately, the event was postponed to allow time for more planning. I am working with Student Voice, Societies manager, and the Comms team to discuss a new date in the new year.

Student Representation on EDI committee: I raised the need for more student engagement in the University EDI committee to promote a more inclusive environment on campus in our monthly team meeting with the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Education and Student Experience. The DVC welcomed the idea and gave three suggestions. I went with the suggestion of having relevant part-time officers get involved with the subcommittees of the EDI. I have booked in a meeting with the chair of the EDI committee in the new year to discuss how we can have more students involved with matters they are passionate about.

Other Updates:

Drink Spiking Campaign: As an officer team, we had to put together a campaign to address the increased spiking incidents in Plymouth and the UK. As an SU, we put out a statement saying that we are aware of the current climate and taking a strong stance on it. We also put a statement updating changes to the venue to keep students safe in the SU.

We are in the process of creating a resource page as an officer team that highlights three areas; education, prevention, and communication. Each of the officers had the action point to research particular areas of the strands. We also had actions to share the resources with the societies managers to share with student groups

We had a meeting with the Police, the Best Bar None Plymouth representative and the Sabbatical officer from Plymouth College of Arts. In this meeting, the police gave us a through run down of the steps they are taking to keep people safe in the night time economy.

TalkAboutSex Week: I worked with the VP activities for talkaboutsex week in November. We were looking to host a debate night and were also looking to work with student groups. The debate will feature topics like sex education, healthy relationships, drunken sex, STIs and more.

International Student Settling event: I attended the international student settling event with the President and the VP of education. We made a short speech on what the SU is all about and how we can support international students. The Sports and Advice department also attended and gave small speeches about their departments. There were quite a few students who were interested in taking up sports following the speech. It was a nice networking event and we had the opportunity to speak to many international students who were enjoying their study in Plymouth so far.

Meeting with Careers (support for international students): I had a follow-up meeting with the careers team about support for international students and the Access, Progress, and Participation (APP) of underrepresented groups. In that meeting, we discussed the potential barriers international students may face when it comes to access and progression. I gave them an overview of my experience as an international student. We discussed that it may be worth changing the wording of some of the activities set out by the careers service, to make the wording more inclusive. We also discussed the possibility of having success stories of students who have utilized some of the activities to encourage other international students to engage with the services. An action point that arose from that meeting was for us to meet more regularly and for us to invite some representatives of the careers team to attend the SU EDI forum for feedback on support.

Vice President Wellbeing & Diversity January Update

The first month of the year! January was a good month but short due to annual leave. My focus was the stressless campaign and planning of the diversity showcase.

Better Wellbeing Provisions:

Call for better wellbeing provisions, including more resources for counselling and mental health training for staff so students feel secure and supported. Using forums and roundtables as a platform for students to feedback the changes they want in support services.

Update:

I co-chaired the 3rd Wellbeing subcommittee of the academic year. It was attended by a few representatives. We invited a representative from Shelter, Jack Spooner to give an overview of the work they were doing regarding housing and how it would benefit students. The representatives went on further to ask Jack specific accommodation questions. The feedback from the representatives was that they enjoyed the session and would like to have similar sessions.

Student Wellbeing and Experience group: The University is looking to implement a Student Minds Charter for Universities. In this meeting, I was actioned to speak to other student representatives on what areas they feel the University should focus on with the Charter. Student voice sent out a survey to representatives, although the responses were low.

Better Housing:

Campaign for better accommodation and raise awareness of student's rights in halls and private housing. I will launch a housing enquiry to understand issues faced by students, with the feedback, I will engage with housing agencies to tackle these issues.

Update: I had a couple of meetings with the senior leadership team and advice to discuss how to move forward with accommodation. We came up with the action plan to create a housing charter in the short term. We also concluded to launch an accommodation survey to better understand the accommodation issues students are facing and to inform the housing charter. I will be updating this as it progresses

Empowering underrepresented groups:

Empower under-represented groups by running campaigns that make students feel celebrated and allied with the aim of creating awareness of prejudice and decolonization of campus culture. Will be achieved by calling for student engagement in University's Equality and Diversity approach.

Update:

Diversity showcase: I am putting together a diversity showcase on the 9th of March 2022. The aim of this event is to educate and celebrate the diversity within our student community! This will be in line with BeAnAlly campaign which is a campaign and is focused on sharing tips that promote Allyship to underrepresented groups.

I have spoken to the societies and sports department and an email has been sent out to clubs and societies calling on them to volunteer for the activities which include fashion show, music performance, cultural food.

UPSU engagement with EDI: I had a meeting with the chair of the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. This meeting was to discuss how the SU and how students can be more involved with EDI matters in the University.

We discussed the possibility of having more student representation/involvement with the staff networks within the EDI as they are involved in activities that may benefit both staff and students. We discussed utilising both elected part time officers that represent specific students as well as relevant student groups. I confirmed that the elected part time officers and the student groups are willing to work and collaborate with the relevant staff networks. We concluded that I would raise this topic as an agenda item in the next UEDIC in March. I will provide an update after this meeting.

Other updates:

Stressless Campaign: As a sabbatical team, we ran a campaign called stressless campaign. The aim of this campaign was to promote good mental health and wellbeing over the assessment period. I put together a statement which featured the activities for the two-week period which included fruit and sweet give way in the library foyer and resources on stress management, procrastination, revision etc. The feedback we received from some students was quite positive.

Student life Operational Group: I co-chaired the first Student life opps group meeting with Stephanie. This subcommittee is a part of the main student life committee. We raised the following topics:

- The red cords in accessible toilets on campus: it was raised by the part-time disability officer and a student. The focus was the red cord in some toilets on campus were tied up, so we discussed as a group what can be done to address it.
- More healthy snacks in library vending machines: This was feedback from the SU website form. The staff members present said the issue with having healthy food options such as fruits would mean they could go to waste as they go out of date faster. We went further to

discuss what alternatives could be provided and the possibility of providing this during peak periods such as assessment period

- Automatic council tax letters: This item was raised by a student representative, and it was about the possibility of automatic council tax letters.

Speak up review- I am part of a working group that is reviewing the speak up tool. As part of this review, we are putting together a survey to both staff and students

International Students Experience Group: I sit on this group which has the purpose of ensuring international student experience is at its maximum. We had a meeting to discuss the possibility of having a focus group/survey to discuss international student arrivals. The aim of this is to better understand the needs of the students to make informed decisions for September 2022 arrivals.

Pastoral and Spiritual Steering Group: I had a meeting with the Pastor and Spiritual Coordinator with other members of staff. We discussed the possibility of having more student representation. Unfortunately, the part time faith and belief officer is vacant, but I suggested the use of some of our student groups that are faith based. In this meeting, I raised the topic of Ramadan 2022 and how Muslim students can be supported by the University.

VC meeting: In our monthly catch up with the vice chancellor, I raised an issue which was brought to my attention during an international student catch up. The issue was about UPIC students not feeling a part of the university and how the University can better support international students. The VC agreed that more support could be provided and said it will be raised with the deputy vice chancellor international

Mid-Year Catch up: As a team, we put in some time to discuss how the first half of the year went, we discussed how we work as a team, how we supported students and what could we have done better.

Welcome Talk for International Students: I was invited to give a welcome talk to new students at the University of Plymouth International College (UPIC) and the welcome talk for new international students entering the University directly. In the talk, I showed a presentation which highlighted the key areas of the SU including advice, representation, sports, societies, volunteering and the SU space.

