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**Union Council**

**15/02/22**

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| **Present, Apologies and Quoracy** | |
| Chair of UC,  no voting rights | Robert Nutkins |
| Part-time Officers, full voting rights | **Present at this meeting**  Part-time International Students Officer – Al-Ameen Taiwo  Part-time Welfare Officer – Daniella Marley  Part-time Men’s Welfare Officer – Will Styles  Part-time Women’s Officer – Saffron Deemer  **Co-opted at this meeting**  Part-time BAME Officer – Isobel Saxby  **Vacant Roles**   * Part-time Sports Officer * Part-time Faith and Belief Officer * Part-time Mature Students Officer * Part-time LGBT+ Officer * Partner Institutions Officer |
| School Reps, full voting rights | Peninsula Medical School – Emily Schenk  School of Society & Culture – Lucy Metaj  School of Biomedical and Healthcare Services – Rimsha Bashir  Plymouth Business School – Antonia-Roxana Vrabie  School of Art, Design & Architecture – Wendy Villalba Pillajo  School of Psychology – Joyita Ashton-Simon  School of Biological & Marine Sciences – Freya Rose  School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences – Morgan Davies  School of Engineering, Computing, & Mathematics – Michael Riley-Wallace  **Co-opted at this meeting**  None  **Vacant Roles**   * School of Health Professions * School of Nursing and Midwifery Rep |
| Sabbatical Officers, full voting rights | VP Wellbeing and Diversity – Fawziyyah Ahmed  VP Activities – Mads Morton  VP Education – Charlie Atkinson  UPSU President – Emi Dowse |
| Other attendees, without voting rights | Representation and Democracy Manager – Tracy Priestman (Minute Taker)  Representation and Democracy Co-ordinator – Emma Quinn  **Vacant Roles**  Accountability Board Members |
| Apologies | Part-time Postgrad Taught Officer – Tonari Arikekpar  Part-time Students with Disabilities Officer – Kenza Kadri  Part-time Academic Officer – Leah Gray  Plymouth Institute of Education – Medb O’Kane  Peninsula Dental School – Ruby-May Allen |
| Not present at the meeting and did not send apologies | Part-time Environmental & Sustainability Officer – Will Jones  Part-time Societies Officer – Owain Gullam  Chair of Accountability Board - Alex Butters |
| Quoracy | In order for a motion to be passed 75% of the elected voting members need to be present, quoracy was 18. |

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| **Minutes** | |
| Welcome | The Chair welcomed everyone in attendance  This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the SU Safe Space Policy, the M&A’s, Bye-laws and policies of the Union.  The Chair explained that the meeting was not quorate and it was agreed that additional votes from absent members could be collected by email after the meeting. |
| Matters from the Last meeting  Accuracy of minutes | There were no matters arsing  The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting |
| Notice of Any Other Business | Will Styles gave notice of two items |
| Matters To Discuss | Co-option |
| The Chair explained that the process of co-option is that the Union Council will vote, as elected members, rather than a cross campus ballot.  Each candidate for each role will give a short speech and then be placed in a breakout room with a staff member from Student Voice whilst the vote takes place.  **Part-time BAME Officer**  Isobel Saxby  For: 14  RON: 0  **Isobel Saxby was elected, although this was not quorate so additional votes will be sought via email**  There were four additional votes by email following the meeting, thus quoracy was met  **For: 18**  **RON: 0** |
|  | Chair and Deputy Chair of ASM |
| The Chair explained that the Annual All Student Meeting is held to fulfil the legal requirement to present the accounts to students and to vote on any changes to bye-laws or M&A’s.  Isobel Saxby stood as Chair and Will styles as Deputy  **For: Unanimous, although this was not quorate so additional votes will be sought via email**  There were four additional votes by email following the meeting, all were in favour, therfore quoracy was met |
| Reports | Sub-Committees |
| Academic Sub-committee   * Careers received feedback about the offer for finalists * Careers are continuing with the phone calls to offer support for final year students * Discussed issues around lack of engagement with in person teaching and activities and accessibility benefits of online – this is ongoing research with a number of schools, notability the School of Computing, Engineering and Maths.   Michael Riley-Wallace SCEaM Rep explained that he is working with academics on this and a survey will be circulated to students. Michael added that the school have said that Zoom will be discontinued in September with Panopto being re-instated for lecture capture.  Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee   * The University are setting up a focus group for international students to feedback about their welcome experience, there is also a survey going out. * Careers and staff involved in the Access and Participation Plan will be attending the next meeting to explain what support is available to those students from under-represented Groups.   Wellbeing and Student Experience Sub-committee   * Shelter attended to explain about the ‘Renters Rights’ campaign they have been running and to collect feedback. VP Wellbeing and Diversity is liaising with Shelter to deliver some workshops for students in March. * Drink Spiking Update - Drink covers and testing kits are now in place, Sabbatical Officers have met with partner nightclubs to discuss their safety measures. * Weekly Wellbeing Wednesday with Part-time Welfare Officer and students covering a different topic each week. * The Winter buddies programme is continuing but has been rebranded Student Social Community   Environment and Sustainability Sub-Committee   * Looking at dates for forthcoming committee meetings and Green Week which is provisionally booked for w/c 28th March, please feedback with ideas for the week * Progressing conversations about take away cups and if it is better to go back to the older style cups which contain plastic but are recyclable, as opposed to the vegware currently used which is not. |
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| President   * Sitting on the Plymouth City Council Violence Against Women and Girls Commission which has allowed them to build key relationships eg Police and local councillors. * Giving feedback on behalf of students about street lighting * The SU has set up a Green Team which will focus on sustainability including updating SU strategy in this area * Met with local MP and local councillors to discuss student safety, including drink spiking and lighting in central park. * Met with nightclubs to discuss student safety and are planning a forum for students to raise concerns directly with them.   VP Activities   * Student individual/group of the month has been launched, please do consider nominating. * Progressing with idea to better identify recycling bins by involving students in designing more eye-catching stickers for recycling bins * Give it a go sessions work well and there are plans for a whole day of activities to promote the scheme   VP Education   * Progressing with a ‘where are they now’ project for past students to celebrate student successes. * Planning more Postgrad networking events with the Part-time Postgrad taught Officer * Ongoing discussions around exams/assessments at university meetings   VP Wellbeing and Diversity   * Progressing more student involvement at university EDI committee * Looking at how to address accommodation concerns – survey to get feedback going out in April * Red cords are being tied up which is a safety concern - working with Part-time Officers to address this and make the issue more visible. * Diversity festival – name change from showcase due to student feedback. 9th March in the SU with student groups putting on a wide rage of events.   Other reports   * Michael Riley-Wallace School of Computing, Engineering and Maths Rep, highlighted that fire safety needs to be redressed, following an incident in the Smeaton building. They covered the work they have been doing on engagement under the Academic Sub-Committee update.   Michael added that the university are looking to stop Discord recognising university emails thereby creating local communities. This is due to poor behaviour and the anonymity associated with the platform.   * Joyita Ashton-Simon, School of Psychology Rep is organising a Psych Walk around one of the parks in Plymouth encouraging conversation and communing with others in the outdoors. Joyita is also attending the Faculty EDI Committee and Decolonisation Committee. * Will Styles, PT Men’s Welfare Officer explained that they have written to the Board of Trustees regarding a statement that was made by the previous Board in relation to men and the Equality Act.   Will is also looking at a soft launch of the Men’s Support Group in the next few weeks  Will added that they have also been supporting a student that was experiencing a situation that necessitated emergency housing, however the university does not provide that currently. Emi Dowse suggested that this could be raised at the Student Life Committee Ops Group.  Emi Dowse, President acknowledged that the students’ information has been passed no to the Sabb team who have raised this with the university.  **Action: TP to help promote the Men’s Group, WS to send TP the information**   * Lucy Metaj, School of Society and Culture Rep currently has a mental health survey circulating and is proposing a knowledge exchange for their school - any of those who can help should get in touch. * Daniella Marley Part-time Welfare Officer highlighted that signposting to the student hub and student advice needs to be streamlined and more collaborative. |
| AOB |  |
| SU linktree  Will Styles, Part-time Men’s Welfare Officer noted that it was a mess but has now been categorised.  Will’s other item has already been covered elsewhere in the meeting |
| Dates for the Diary |  |
| Deadline for papers for the next meeting 17th March |
| Next Meeting | 31st March 2022 |



**Part-time Officers Updates February**

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| **Welfare Officer – Daniella Marley** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| Several students reached out about the Winter Buddies scheme, participated actively and have requested for further social events. I had lots of positive feedback about the winter buddies scheme and the range of activities offered. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| 1. Open Communication with members   I have been drafting an email to all clubs, societies, and course representatives to pass onto students with an introduction of who I am, what my role entails and how to contact me. I plan to include a welfare survey which I am currently working with the Men’s Welfare Officer on which will provide an opportunity to anonymously share student experiences and raise any concerns, queries, or suggestions.   1. Welfare/Well-being Wednesdays   I have a weekly takeover of the UPSU social media, titled welfare Wednesday, which will have a theme each week tackling key areas for students. Welfare themes I have included are topical issues like spiking and exam stress, as well as financial advices, accommodation, mental health, physical health, policing within the city, travel, and practical services such as food services (access to food banks, details of local communal fridges, food parcel delivery services and community hubs). I aim to work with any other officers who would like to contribute to the plan. Resources shared on the UPSU Instagram would primarily be signposting based infographics. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| -I am being reached out to by students; I hope to improve this engagement through the social media takeovers and the introductory emails. |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| N/A |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
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| **Women’s Officer - Saffron Deemer** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| I have written a survey, but it hasn’t been released yet. I have also been talking to students and using that information to direct my efforts. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| I created an email account for the Women's Officer position. The email address has been added to the website and I have included it in some messages to student groups. The emails have a labelling system to keep the inbox organised and to enable a smooth transition to new women's officers in the future.  A facebook and instagram account has been created for the Women's Officer position. The facebook account has 21 follows and the instagram has 55. These pages currently focus on increasing awareness of services offered by the university and SU. The safe taxi scheme, speak up and ask for Angela are examples of what has been posted about. I also want to post skills resources to these pages, focusing on skills that my survey will hopefully highlight. I have advertised these pages verbally in some society events and will continue to do so, I have also agreed with Steph that the links for these pages will be added to the Women's Offer website page.  I am currently in discussions regarding the potential purchase of period underwear to offer to students in extreme period poverty. I emailed Marks and Spencer, Wuka, Tomboy X, The bamboo house and Modi Bodi, who all make period underwear, asking for donations or a discount code. I had emails back from Wuka, Tomboy and Modi Bodi saying they will forward my email to the right people and Wuka have followed this up with an offer to sell underwear to the SU are wholesale rates and/or to offer a 20% one-time discount to UP students. I am currently in discussions with Steph about the purchase of some underwear. I also plan to contact companies that sell mooncups to ask for donations/ a discount code for students.  I have written a survey that will soon be released via the SU website which includes questions on whether students feel safe on campus at night, if there is anywhere in particular that does not feel safe and giving options on what would increase a feeling of safety. I have also emailed the Safer Streets Project officers confirming that I would like to work with them on the project and am awaiting a meeting date with them.  My survey also asks about involvement with campus security as I have heard some complaints about their conduct. My plan is to use survey responses and in person investigation (by asking students outside halls) to establish whether there are any substantial issues with campus security to bring to the university.  I want to have an inspiring woman campaign across the university and SU, so my survey asks students to identify women who they find inspiring. I have asked some other part time officers and Fawziyyah to help me go through the survey and chose a diverse selection of women to create informative posters about. I have also had conversations with Melissa Hawkins, a student who runs a the women's magazine Disgraceful, about having an article that the posters link to via QR code that goes into more depth on some of the women on the posters. Melissa and I have also discussed having a feminist literature/ books written by prominent women poster campaign in the library that links to book reviews in the magazine.  With Steph's help I hope to aid in the creation of an unsafe situation SOP. Steph has spoken to the relevant person within the university and is going to put me in direct contact so that I can work along-side them to make this happen.  I am currently reaching out to students who are parents, focusing on mothers, to discuss any barriers they are facing and the practicality of at home exams. I haven't had many students come back to me but I have briefly mentioned to Lucy Metaj the possibility of her involvement, which she seemed keen on and would enable me to reach out to more students. If I get enough feedback, I hope to lobby the university to take student's care responsibilities into account and allow extra time for these students, who I believe are currently at a disadvantage. I will also use my platform as chair of the Plymatures to help gather data. In addition to this I have spoken to Emi about a team effort with Charlie and Kenza to tackle the inadequate exam provisions for students with additional needs or care responsibilities.  Also included in the survey are questions regarding women's health, such as awareness of checking breasts for lumps and contraceptive options. If the responses indicate a need for more education on these issues I plan on reaching out to charities such as coppafeel and also to sexual health services and GPs. I personally know a GP so would ask her to either deliver a talk or if she knows anyone who would be willing to do so. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| **Nothing massive yet but the ball is rolling!** |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| As mentioned in what I’ve been working on, I would like to work with Emi, Charlie and Kenza to lobby the university about at home exams. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| I wanted to start the process of installing emergency/blue light pillars on campus but after researching their effectiveness and cost in US universities (where they are common place) revealed that these pillars are expensive to install and also expensive to maintain. I also found research that suggests that the pillars are largely unused and that the majority of use was hoax calls. I have decided that given these findings, it would not be worth pursuing with the university |

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| **Part time International Student Officer - Al Ameen Taiwo** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| On the 25th of January 2022, I hosted my first international student catch-up in the SU lounge. There were a couple of international students in attendance. The following is some of the key feedback I received:  -UPIC students feel isolated from the University and do not feel like they belong  -International students' welcome week was not communicated to UPIC students  -More activities for international students to participate in  -Some students are having difficulty finding housing  At the catch-up, the Vice President of Wellbeing and Diversity, as well as the Representative and Engagement Co-ordinator, were present, and we are trying to schedule a meeting to explore how we can bring it up at relevant university meetings. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| I've put in place monthly catch ups with international students with the help of the student voice team to serve as a place for them to meet and interact with other students and ask questions so they can be appropriately directed to the right places and give feedback on how their experience can be improved. I plan to promote the event to international students so that they can have a safe venue to discuss anything. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| I'm hoping to engage with the Vice President of Wellbeing and Diversity to bring some of the feedback I got during the catch up to the attention of relevant University departments. |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| I've contacted the VP of Wellbeing and Diversity to express my interest in assisting with the planning and execution of the March diversity showcase. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
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| **Postgraduate Taught Part-time Officer – Tonari Arikekpar** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| Apart from the previously submitted feedback, there has been no new progress as we have been on holidays.  Before the vacation, several postgrad meet and greet hosted by VP education helped to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for PG students in the university. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| Actively reducing the feeling of isolation amongst postgraduate taught students by finding ways to support postgraduate taught students to meet up and network.  Mental health support for PGT students: in the newsletter addressed to postgraduate students, I was excited to see this column was included.  Providing an academic support system for PGT students especially considering International PGT students – I have seen an intentional effort by the SU to make PG students feel more included but more can ve done. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| Providing a welcoming inclusive environment all through their stay |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| Planning and hosting a postgrad taught meet and greet. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| I would like support with visibility using social media to connect with the postgrad taught students, I have recently requested for a social media take over.  As well as support with surveys to get the current opinions of PG students |

**Updates not received from**

* Academic Officer – Leah Gray
* Societies Officer – Owain Gullam
* Men’s Welfare Officer – Will Styles
* Environment & Sustainability Officer – Will Jones
* Kenza Kadri – Students with Disabilities Officer

**Vacant Roles**

* Postgrad Research Officer
* Faith & Belief Officer
* Mature Students Officer
* Sport Officer
* Volunteering Officer
* BAME Officer
* LGBT+ Officer
* Trans and Non-Binary Officer
* Partner Institutions Officer



**School Representative Reports February**

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| **School of Society and Culture Representative – Lucy Metaj** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| I received valuable feedback from students about how they have felt during the return to Face to Face teaching.  Most of the feedback raised by Course Reps within the School was overwhelmingly positive, with only a couple of minor issues which have been dealt with.  Some students have raised the issue of there not being any content warnings in lectures and this is something I have passed on to the appropriate members of staff. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| I have sent out my survey on Student Mental Health through the Course Reps and plan to use this feedback to gain an idea on what students think of the services provided by the University.  Last semester I held the Staff Student Liaison Forum (SSLF) and managed to gather really useful feedback relating to the topics we had selected beforehand. I plan to host another SSLF this semester with different themes to discuss. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| **Students will have their issues heard, improving overall student satisfaction.** |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| Nothing at the moment. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
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| **Business School Representative - Antonia-Roxana Vrabie** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| The feedback received from a MSC student stated that more introductory activities would be beneficial between students, as well as a more detailed introduction for the modules prior to their start.  Career service was helpful for this group of students, within MSC Finance, with mentoring opportunities and internships, which is valuable.    The feedback will be progressed through the student liaison meeting, run by myself and Danielle B. It is a yearly meeting that is based on student feedback and discussion of certain issues, as well as finding solutions. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| I have been initiating contact with Anette from the careers service, as well as Charlotte and another student representative, Lucy, to increase career opportunities for students as well as increase engagement.    I am working on offering student across the Business School and Law School, hopefully extending across multiple Schools, more direct links between them and their dream career. To do this, we have been discussing certain issues and planning together more future meetings where we can develop the careers service and make it as effective as possible for the students. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| By working with the careers service, I am offering the students more opportunities to increase their employability and discover what they want to do in the future, as well as be prepared for any career they are going to choose by focusing on transferable skills.    Also, having the student liaison meeting means I can gain valuable feedback that I can report back on, meaning that the business school can keep improving for current and future students, so they can achieve outstanding results. |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| I would like to keep supporting the career service as well as my initiative for increasing student engagement with the focus on increasing opportunities for building highly employable skills, so that the students are ready when they finish their degree in competitive environments. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| More meetings are planned with the careers service for February, so we can focus on the student engagement aspect, as well as listening to the students’ concerns and reporting the feedback so we can make tangible changes. |

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| **SECaM School Rep – Michael Riley-Wallace** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| * Lecture and Seminar engagement dropped faster last Semester than in previous years (undergoing study) * The number of Non-Submissions by percentage of students increased last Semester (undergoing study) * The structure of hybridization in its current state does not support students fully and leads to anxiety (correlation with engagement and NS’s)   Currently, the research has only been done in the Computing degrees section, but having spoken to module leaders including Dr. Swen Gaudl, there is statistical evidence that shows a higher percentage of Non-Submissions in the previous semester than seen for years. On a more opinionated side, the lecturers have combinedly agreed that the level of engagement in lectures and seminars dropped much quicker than acceptable standards (in relation to expected decline) as well as their proportioned attendance. When this data is correlated with the students who are attending remotely, there is evidence to suggest that the current structure of hybridized learning has left students more vulnerable to receiving less content and engaging less when they need help.  I aim to assess the truths of this data in a broader field, starting with the School.   * Conversation with Stephanie Martin and Charlie Atkinson regarding the origin of the hypothesis and the data received * An update to Asiya Khan and Matthew Craven as part of our rapport   All the above parties have allowed me to progress this further   * Student Survey to be completed and checked it follows guidelines by SM and CA * Organising the dissemination of information and survey to the other School Reps via Leah Gray |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| Priorities:   * Surveying students * Discussions with teachers, especially module leaders who have access to data   Issues:   * Where to go next with the information, how to advocate change |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| Acknowledgement that hybridized learning in its current state is not preparing students for life after graduation  Either a re-evaluation on how remote learning is approached and what support is provided or a medium to allow remote learners to be able to have access to study/support sessions. |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| The biggest support required is to disseminate the surveys once they have the all clear. The more data and feedback that can be received is vital to ensuring the University acknowledges how wide this problem is. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
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| **SoGEES School Representative - Morgan Davies** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| Feedback from Stephen Grimes – would like to see further acceptance of preferred names and pronouns within the University system and in the upcoming S4 system without the need for lengthy debacles, which was furthered by outlining ideas to SG for promoting this to go forward.  Still awaiting feedback from the SoGEES cohort through online forms and subject representatives respectively. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| Working on giving students who would otherwise not be able to “bring their full selves” to their study environment a chance and a platform to speak out on issues that have personally affected them or others on their course by running an anonymous online form for feedback, along with drop-in Zoom calls to speak personally with their Rep. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| Highlighted the importance of the feedback of students who would otherwise not have had a chance to vocalise their concerns and thoughts, along with working closely with the associate head of School to see changes both within the school and campus-wide to increase the acceptance of those with differing identities. |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| Seeing the implantation of the names and pronouns on the S4 system as outlined. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| Nothing to report – yet! |

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| **School Rep for Biological and Marine Sciences - Freya Rose** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| * Students wanting to keep online instead of in-person exams, survey sent out to Zoology yr 1 students and course reps within MBS asked to get feedback on this issue for our course rep meeting on the 2nd of feb.   Results from this will be helpful for FTLQC   * Some students finding issues with deadlines moving, no issues within zoology yr 1 have been brought up, results of this issue will be brought up and discussed during meeting on the 2nd of feb |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| Survey sent out asking whether a direct feedback platform should be implemented.  Vocaleyes doesn’t seem to fit the issue, currently researching other platforms for example Your voice to be used within the school of MBS.  Students reported good response times from lecturers but having feedback sent to lecturers straight after each lecture may be beneficial over end of module feedback forms most students seem to ignore |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| **N/A** |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| N/A |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| N/A |

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| **School Representative of Art, Design and Architecture - Wendy Villalba Pillajo** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| I received a response from one of the course reps stating that during a course rep meeting it was noticed that there was a lack of hand sanitisers in the studio areas.  I have asked if this issue was solved and if it hadn’t how many studio areas had this problem. I have yet to receive a response. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| In my manifesto I stated that I would like to increase diversity within the union council. I have been involved in the march fashion week that will involve a fashion show with clothing of different countries alongside possible food stations. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| **This show will allow students to see different cultural events and learn more about other ethnic backgrounds. This show will also benefit those who want to be more integrated with their own people and perhaps develop new friendships.** |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| I would like to help out reach societies and help collaborate with them for this day. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| I am currently working on adding neutral gender toilets in the Levinsky building by changing the logo on disabled toilets to a gender-neutral toilets. |

**Reports not received from**

* Medb O’Kane – Plymouth Institute of Education
* Joyita Ashton-Simon - Psychology
* Emily Schenk – Peninsula Medical School
* Ruby-May Allen – Peninsula Dental School
* Rimsha Bashir – Biomedical Sciences

**Vacant Roles**

* Health Professions
* Nursing and Midwifery

President Update

*Emi Dowse*

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 of Activities Update

*Madeleine Morton*

**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 Wellbeing & Diversity Update

*Fawzy Ahmed*

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 go 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.

Vice President Education Update

*Charlie Atkinson*

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.