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**Union Council**

**17/05/22**

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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 Societies Officer – Owain Gullam  Part-time Environmental & Sustainability Officer – Will Jones  Part-time Welfare Officer – Daniella Marley  Part-time Men’s Welfare Officer – Will Styles  Part-time International Students Officer – Al-Ameen Taiwo  Part-time Postgrad Taught Officer – Tonari Arikekpar  **Co-opted at this meeting**  None  **Vacant Roles**   * Part-time Sports Officer * Part-time Faith and Belief Officer * Part-time Mature Students Officer * Part-time LGBT+ Officer * Partner Institutions Officer * Part-time Academic Officer |
| School Reps, full voting rights | School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences – Fae Alexandria  School of Art, Design & Architecture – Wendy Villalba Pillajo  School of Psychology – Joyita Ashton-Simon  **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 – Stephanie Martin  Part-time Officers Elect  Radhika Dave  Samuel Alao  Josh Borokinni -VP Wellbeing and Diversity elect  **Vacant Roles**  Accountability Board Members |
| Apologies | School of Society & Culture – Lucy Metaj  Plymouth Business School – Antonia-Roxana Vrabie  Part-time BAME Officer – Isobel Saxby |
| Not present at the meeting and did not send apologies | Part-time Students with Disabilities Officer – Kenza Kadri  Peninsula Medical School – Emily Schenk  School of Biomedical and Healthcare Services – Rimsha Bashir  School of Biological & Marine Sciences – Freya Rose  School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences – Morgan Davies  Peninsula Dental School – Ruby-May Allen  Chair of Accountability Board - Alex Butters  School of Engineering, Computing, & Mathematics – Michael Riley-Wallace  Plymouth Institute of Education – Medb O’Kane |
| 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 and noted that the meeting was not quorate. However, there were no policy proposals on the agenda, only co-options |
| 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 | None |
| Matters To Discuss | Co-option of Senate members |
| See appendix 1.  Mays Naser and Jed Abrahams gave speeches in support of their self nomination to the role of Student Senate Member  Mays Naser  For: 8  Against: 0  Abstentions: 2  Jed Abrahams  For: 11  Against: 0  Abstentions: 2  Both Mays and Jed were elected |
| Second Governor Role |
| See appendix 2  Tonari Arikekpar and Josh Borokinni, VP Education elect and VP Wellbeing and Diversity elect respectively, gave a short speech  For Tonari: 6  For Josh: 5  Abstentions: 0  Tonari was elected to the second governor role |
| Reports |  |
| See appendices 3 and 4. |
| AOB |  |
| None |
| Dates for the Diary |  |
| None |
| Next Meeting | October 22 TBC |

**Appendix 1 Senate Candidates Statements**

**Mays Naser**

With prior experiences and increasing interest in decision-making to improve students’ academic experience, I believe my skills and personality are well tailored for this role.

I have presented my research project at a public conference, during my Masters. Engaging in public speaking events allowed me to develop my verbal skills and my ability to communicate in a clear, concise, and confident way in front of an audience, a key skill I believe a successful senate Rep must have. I was also elected to be a student representative during my course where I was able to demonstrate my leadership skills alongside my caring trait allowing other fellow students to confide in me. It was a rewarding position of responsibility where I was able to improve my communication and listening skills.

During my undergraduate studies, I became a peer assisted learning leader, where I passed on my previous academic experience to support students with their understanding of module content. This role enhanced my confidence and improved my technical knowledge and one-to-one teaching.

In early 2022, I became a student representative at the university of Plymouth. Through this I am able to set a connection within the university, between the students and the governing body. Relaying the students’ first-hand experiences and ideas is a vital part of the role. To fulfil this duty, I garnered people’s trust and ensured that they can rely on me to represent them.

As a member of the community, I believe that this role is essential to establish a bridge between the students and the university. Due to my experiences, I believe that this is the natural next step for me as I’m confident that I will be able to utilise my skills and capabilities to the fullest and in the interest of the university as a whole.

**Jed Abrahams**

From the role description, I interpret the Senate Rep to be representative of the whole student body who can provide strategic insight into the interests and concerns of the matters they face. To provide this, the Rep must be experienced in how teaching and assessment has been delivered and how it has changed since COVID.

Joining the university pre-COVID, allows me to provide insights into how the delivery of teaching has changed and draw upon my experience first-hand to evidence positive changes which can help shape the delivery of the academic programme in years to come. I can provide evidence based informed opinion to support or challenge decisions made because over the years of being a medical student I have developed the ability to use logic, reason, and rationale, whether this has been working with Dean of the Medical School addressing issues for localities in Taunton or Torquay or demonstrating this in difficult to make decisions for patients.

In addition to my experience of lateral thinking whilst working within a law firm, I have a further 2 years of experience of conducting myself in an unbiased, professional manner building working relationships with colleagues. I believe due to this experience, I can provide maturity above other candidates because I already understand and value the importance of confidentiality, integrity, and accountability.

I already accept the Nolan Principles as core values I hold myself. These help me to apply another core value of balance to my actions. This year in SSLC meetings I have communicated with the business manager of the school demonstrating impartial opinions regarding funding. I can intuitively incorporate this when challenging and being challenged on issues, recognising the importance of evidence, not opinion for my decisions.

**Appendix 2 Second Governor Role**

**Tonari Arikekpar**

Hello, my name is Tonari Sophia Arikekpar, a current M.Sc. Biomedical science student and incoming VP Education.

I was raised by hardworking disciplined parents who instilled honesty, integrity, determination, and transparency in me from a tender age and these values have formed the core of the person I am today. The University’s vision of ‘transforming lives through knowledge’ rings true for me as I am determined to not just talk about change but rather step out to be the agent of change.

I served as vice-president and President of my department during my B.Sc. program, and I am currently the post-graduate part-time officer at UoP. All these experiences have enabled me to connect with the struggles of the general student body with regards to finding that thriving school-life balance which now motivates my present involvement in the student union. I believe that in addition to my experiences as an international postgrad student, serving as VP education this coming school year would equip me with a rich unique perspective that will be a positive contribution to the board of governors.

As the Board of Governors is ultimately responsible for all the University’s activities, but specifically its educational character and missions amongst others, it would provide the perfect opportunity to learn and contribute to maintaining the high standard of educational experience at the university of Plymouth.

**Joshua Borokinni**

Representation: I believe student representation is key in making high-level decisions about students, especially when it comes to their learning experience and overall academic performance. As I commence my role as the Vice-President of Wellbeing and Diversity, I will work directly with many groups including those who are underrepresented. In doing so, I hope to get an understanding of their views, concerns, and concerns. As a member of the board, I believe that I will have the opportunity to communicate these concerns to the highest decision-making body of the school, directly. Consequently, creating a positive communication loop between the students and the school management.

Delivery of Manifesto: I believe that working with the board of governors will provide me with the opportunity to directly relay my executive plans to the highest level of decision-makers in the university. As VP of Well-being and Diversity, I will be working with the Mental Health Support Service of the university to contribute to the improvement of the mental health and well-being of all students. My approach to solving this issue will be to identify, communicate, and solve issues that are limiting students from having a wholesome learning experience, such as housing issues, environmental challenges, and school-life balance. The Board of Governors is a major stakeholder in solving these issues. I hope to use this position to develop actionable resolutions in the best interest of all parties concerned.

Personal and professional development: If I were to be appointed as the second Governor, I will use this opportunity to grow my network, professionalism, and work ethic. I would also be grateful for the professional mentorship that the Board of Governors has to offer. Furthermore, I hope to take advantage of this program and employ the knowledge and skills gained to support, lead, and empower students.

**Appendix 3 Part-time Officers Updates.**

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| **Postgraduate part-time officer – Tonari Arikekpar** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| There has been no recent feedback directly from the postgrads since the last update as students have been engaged in Examination preparations and dissertation, before and after the Easter break. |
| **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  Helping to provide an academic support system for PGT students especially considering International PGT students. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| The postgraduate hangouts were an enormous success as we received a lot of feedback from the postgrads about how to structure these meets to have their highest impact.  The postgrads are starting to feel more involved in the SU as they have been engaged by the VP (Vice President) Education as well and would like this to continue.  The Postgraduate Survey (PGS) for this academic year has recently been carried out – I am hoping that the next PGT part-time officer would use this to evaluate current progress so far and future steps |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| None, the Instagram take-over with the VP Education has been successfully carried out. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| None |

Updates not received from

* Societies Officer – Owain Gullam
* Men’s Welfare Officer – Will Styles
* Environment & Sustainability Officer – Will Jones
* Kenza Kadri – Students with Disabilities Officer
* Welfare Officer – Daniella Marley
* Women’s Officer – Saffron Deemer
* International Students Officer -Al-Ameen Taiwo

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
* Academic Officer

**Appendix 4 Sabbatical Officer Updates**

President Update

*Emilia Dowse*

March was a busy month with lots of meetings and campaigns. It was great to be involved more student facing activities such as the Elections, Green week and Varsity.

* **Elections**

The beginning of March saw the end of the Sabbatical Officer elections. I continued to support candidates and the candidate lunches. I also hosted the results evening, presenting the results for the incoming VP Education and President. I also presented the Part time election results alongside the VP Education.

* **Green Week**

A lot of March was spent planning and running green week. Activities included a David Attenborough day, a tour of the Waste from energy facilitator, and drop-in sessions from the University sustainability hub, Biffa and Borrow Don't Buy.

* **Governors**

The March Board of Governors meetings consisted of a formal meeting, the Governor's dinner with poster presentations from each Faculty on sustainability and a talk about degree apprenticeships. The topics discussed on the away day included Student Mental Health, sustainability and TEF.

I also attended the honorary awards committee, a sub-committee of BOG.

* **Partner forum**

I attended the partner forum. This allowed me to raise issues with engaging the partner college's reps and the opportunity to work with some of the new partner colleges.

* **Housing campaign**

I have been working with the VP Wellbeing and Diversity on a housing campaign. We put together a survey to go out to students to gain insight into what factors impact students' housing experience, and the quality of service different landlords provide.

We also met with Unipol, a student housing charity, which has set up a housing code for students and landlords. We discussed how we can set up our own housing charter, how we set up Unipol in Plymouth and the issues with some of our local housing companies.

* **Plymouth Violence against Women Commission**

The Violence against Women commission held an evidence review session to go through all the written and verbal evidence we received and to start collating the recommendations. We then had another meeting to review the recommendations. In this meeting, we decided to extend the commission to ensure that we could adequately go over all the evidence and seek more input.

* **Budget scrutiny meetings**

I was involved with the budget scrutiny meetings for all departments within the SU. We went through the budgets submitted by each department and set the overall budget for next year.

* **Diversity Festival**

I helped out with the Diversity Festival, which the VP Wellbeing and Diversity ran. It was great to see the hard work of the VP Wellbeing and Diversity paid off and students having a great time.

* **Meeting with Gavin**

The team met with the new Registrar and Secretary. We discussed the student housing issue, physical wellbeing, and mental health.

* **Environment and sustainability**

Unfortunately, no students (apart from the part-time Sustainability Officer) attended the forum. Members from the University sustainability team attended, so we discussed the use of plastic cups in the SU café, plans for Green Week and the university's sustainability accreditation.

* **VC Awards**

I attended the VC awards, which is a ceremony that recognises the staff's contributions and achievements at the University. It was lovely to hear about the incredible work some of the staff have been doing to support students.

* **VC Meeting**

Following talks at the Board of Governors we spoke about the University needing to take a strategic approach to tackle and imbed mental health into what they do. We pointed out the importance of this due to the current mental health crisis, lack of appointments with the NHS and potential loss of teaching hours going forward. I plan to continue raising this with the University, as I believe student mental health needs more resources put into it.

The VP Wellbeing and Diversity raised the issues with international students, especially those with families getting housing in Plymouth and the increase in homelessness amongst students. The VC said she would raise this with the relevant departments and that they would try to do more to prevent this from happening again.

We discussed how the University can better support Ukrainian and Russian students going forward. She said that they have been in touch with all of the students and have signposted them to relevant support services, and they were currently in discussions with the Government about what more they can do.

* **Varsity**

I had a great time getting out and supporting our sports teams at Varsity this year, all the teams played really well and our VP Activities did an excellent job organising everything.

* **Other updates:**

Student life pre-meeting, UEG advisory, Sustainability advisory committee, catch up with student voice, meeting with the CEO, and the Deputy cair of the trustee board, officer team meeting, officer 1-1's, meeting with the Uni sustainability team, governance and appointments.

**April Update:**

I was away for most of April so it was a quiet month for me.

* **Exam Support**

I have continued my manifesto campaign to support students during the exam season. I have booked out the main hall to put on sessions where students can come and practise past papers and get an idea of the layout and format of in person exams.

* **DVC Informal discussion group**

I attended one of the informal discussion group sessions for the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education and Student Experience interviews.

* **Meeting with the Vice-Chancellor**

The Officer Team met with the VC at the end of the month. As most people had time off and students were on holiday there wasn't as much for us to raise in this meeting. The VP Wellbeing and Diversity raised the housing issues for international students again, and we spoke about the potential housing issues which the rise in energy prices will cause. I updated her about the progress of our strategy research and asked whether we could survey key University staff for their input. Finally, the VP Education and VP Activities updated her on the SU and STTAR awards and our Varsity win.

* **Meeting with the Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning for the FOH**

I met with the Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning for the Faculty of Health to discuss how the SU can work more collaboratively with the Faculty next year.

* **Term 2 Wrap up and handover planning.**

The officer team met to discuss what we thought went well and what needed improvements or changes from term two. We then planned the handover documents for the incoming officer team.

* **Officer Handover Planning**

I met with the CEO, Director of Student Experience and representation manager to plan the officer's induction and handover period.

* **Student Life**

I co-chaired the third Sudent Life Committee of the academic year. We had discussions about Togetherall, International student's housing, BARS, and student engagement.

* **Other meetings:**

Finance and staffing, Weekly 1-1's with the CEO, 1-1's with each of the officers, meeting with the CEO & Deputy Chair of the Trustee Board, Mentoring

Vice President of Activities Update

*Madeleine Morton*

March has been a very busy month. We have been juggling our Varsity event, with planning the SU Awards as well as launching a campaign competition and still doing the day-to-day meetings. Overall, it has been a very productive month.

* **Celebration and Inclusion**
* International Women’s Day – we did a lot of social media on the 8th of March around the #breakthebias movement.
* We celebrated 7 of our sports teams getting through to the cup finals.
* Student Group of the Month is on going and we rewarded our first winners – Plymouth Night Patrol and Caitlin McAndry (Choir)
* **Mental Health and Wellbeing**
  + - This is an area I will need to put more focus into going into May and June, I have not done as much work as I would like in this area.
* **Sustainability**
  + - More work took place to enable us to launch the bin mural competition.
    - We hosted as an SU our Green Week which had various activities on that promoted sustainability.

**Other Updates:**

* **Meeting with the VC**
* **SU Award presentation** – we were shown 3 prototypes of awards by 3 different students in the Faculty of Arts, all 3 designs were brilliant, but we decided on one design, that all 3 students will work to produce collaboratively.
* **Candidate lunches** – The Student Voice team put on free food for candidates running in the election and invited them to come and have a chat and a break from campaigning.
* **Health and Safety Sub-committee**
* **Emily 1-2-1 (PMS)**
* **Catch up with Nadine (sport)**
* **1-2-1 with Jamie (coole insight)**
* **Election results night** – This was a good night, and we were able to celebrate all the candidate’s hard work throughout the last week. We now have 4 new sabbatical officers to take their position in July.
* **Disciplinaries** – Unfortunately March saw 2 separate incidences of poor behaviour from 2 separate student groups. However, we have since seen an improvement in behaviour
* **Varsity committee meetings** – The committee consists of myself, Nadine, and a student, the same for Marjon.
* **Lee 1-2-1 (SNaM)** - My first meeting with Lee, the new school rep for Nursing and Midwifery. Lee was very keen to get started and it is nice to see someone in the position.
* **Varsity captains meeting** - We had a meeting with the Marjon and Uni captains ahead of the big Varsity week, it was mainly housekeeping and making sure everyone had all the information they needed.
* **ASM** - The Annual Student Meeting of 2022 didn’t go as well as planned. We are trying, as an SU, to make sure we are clearer with what the ASM is about and how we can make this better next year.
* **Rugby cup final** – I went to watch our men’s rugby team play in the cup final against Exeter at Ivybridge. It was an amazing game to watch, and they came home with the win.
* **Diversity Showcase** – Fawzy hosted an incredible day of culture and diversity with many different societies partaking. There was dancing, food and music, a brilliant day for our SU.
* **UEG** – Advisory group with the University and the SU, this was a meeting that focused on strategy and our relationship going forward.
* **Honorary Awards Committee** – A sub committee of the board that decides who will be awarded an honorary fellowship or doctorate, to be presented at the 2022 graduation ceremonies.
* **Sports forum ­**– Our penultimate forum which focused on SU awards, part-time elections, varsity and sports department updates.
* **Meeting with Gavin (New University Registrar and Secretary)** – Our first meeting with the Universities new registrar and secretary was very successful. We feel he will be a good Ally to the SU and help us form relationships with the University.
* **Awards Catch up**
* **VARSITY 2022** - An amazing week, all the teams did us proud and even with the football matches pending, we have already won!
* **Societies forum** – We had a lot of technical issues, and I am hoping that next forum will run smoothly and be accessible to everyone.
* **SVM prevention meeting** – our penultimate meeting before we sign off on next year’s plan.
* **Board of Governors**
* **Part-Time elections** – Part-time election results were announced and although we had a lot of strong candidates there are still positions that haven’t been filled but hopefully, with us bringing forward the elections we will have more time to co-opt roles.
* **Catch up with Nadine (sport)**
* **Half colours panel** – This is where we were able to go through the nominations and whittle them down to the best nominations, who will be given half colours at the awards.
* **Meeting with the VC**
* **1-2-1 with Jamie (coole insight)**
* **Green team meeting** – We had discussions about the ongoing need to have sustainability imbedded into the SU’s values.
* **SU Awards shortlisting to winner’s panel** – After another panel shortlisted the awards, this panel was able to pick out the winners based on the nominations provided.
* **Union council**

Vice President Education Update

*Charlie Atkinson*

March began with the end of the Full-Time Elections, covered the entirety of the Part-Time Elections, and ended with Union Council. In between, I have helped with a Post Grad Open Evening, had multiple one to one’s with Part-Time Officers, several meetings with a variety of university staff, took part in some of the Green Week events, as well as assisting with the panels for the SSTAR Awards! As such, March has been a very full and busy month!

**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.**

* The impact of Covid is continuously raised and discussed within meetings with the University. This has included the issues around blended or hybrid learning, and the methods and format of exams. In meetings such as UTLQC, I have raised the student view on this, and have had discussions on how the university can best support students.

**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.**

* Work has continued with the ‘Where are they now?’ campaign, with the gathering of names of people who would be interested in taking part. The next step is to get in contact with these individuals.
* Student development has continued to be discussed within the Students’ Union, including new ways in which the SU can work with students to develop their skills.

**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.**

* This month, we held a Postgraduate Lunch in the Lounge of the Students’ Union. The event was well attended, and we had a diverse students come from a wide range of courses and focuses of study.
* Attending the most recent Postgraduate Open Evening was a great opportunity to meet prospective Postgraduate students, and to explain how the Students’ Union can support them while studying here in Plymouth.

**Other Updates:**

* Sabbs meeting with University Registrar – As a Sabbatical Officer team, we had our first of our monthly meetings with the university’s new Registrar. In this meeting we discussed some of the issues that have arisen over the past academic year, such as student safety, housing and hybrid teaching.
* NSS Steering Groups – As VP Education, I sit on the NSS Steering Group, where I work with the University’s Comms team and Faculty leads on how to support the NSS and gather responses. If you qualify for the NSS, go fill it in if you haven’t already!
* WonkHE Belonging briefings – I have been attending online briefing from WonkHE and Pearson, on understanding the links between belonging and success at university, and how we at the SU can better support students while members of the SU.
* ASM – We held our Annual Student Meeting, in which I updated on some of the work that I have been doing over the past year. It was great to see so many students in attendance!
* University Meetings – I have continued to represent the student voice across all of the meetings and committees that I sit on, such as UTLQC, meeting with the VC and FTLQC.
* SSTAR Awards Panels – We have started to shortlist winner for the SSTAR Awards! With the help of our Course Reps, we should have a great group of winners!
* Green Week – I have, alongside the other Sabbatical Officers, taken part and supported the delivery of Green Week! My highlight of Green Week was visiting the Devonport Energy from Waste Plant, finding out how our waste is disposed of!
* Union Council – March ended with Union Council, which was a great opportunity to feedback some of the work that has been going on, and my work on my manifesto!

Vice President of Wellbeing and Diversity Update

*Fawziyyah Ahmed*

March was a busy month with elections and the Diversity Festival, while April was very quiet, due to the Easter holidays and Annual leave.

Manifesto Updates

* 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.

Updates

* Working on putting together a mental health framework for the SU, a system that will support student’s mental health. I am working with Oli and Julie to assess the current processes in the SU. We are currently RAG rating the SU’s processes with recommendations from Student minds- Ongoing

TW \*mentions suicide

* Following my previous update on turbo teach, the training material to create awareness of suicide for students, student reps and student societies. The training is ready and will be rolled in the next academic year at different points of the year. My action is to pass on all the information to the incoming VP Wellbeing and Diversity, so they can be well informed to support the training.
* 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.

Updates

Meeting with Unipol: Emi and I had a productive meeting with Unipol, which is a company that supports students with accommodation. In the meeting, we focused on the following.

* Housing Survey
* Rate my landlord scheme/housing charter
* Plymouth joining Unipol

Following on the meeting, we decided it would be useful to keep having discussions with Unipol in the incoming academic year

* Accommodation Survey: The accommodation survey was conducted between the 1st of April to the 30th of April, the questions focused on factors that influence students’ accommodation choices such as location, costs, etc. We also asked students to rate their current accommodation. The data from the survey will be analysed and presented in a form of a housing charter.
* Renters Workshop: I held a renter's workshop at the end of April, I collaborated with Shelter and one of the SU advisers was in attendance. The aim of the workshop was to educate students about their rights as tenants and focused on themes such as Evictions, Deposits, and Guarantor. Turnout was very low, but we were able to support some students and have useful discussions with Shelter about accommodation.
* 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

Updates

* Diversity Festival: The Diversity Festival took place on the 9th of March. It was a very exciting event. It was very lovely to see students from different parts of the world come together to celebrate their culture and cheer their peers. We had poetry readings, which were focused on African folklore, we had dance performances from three different societies, and a fashion show. There was a short break for food with different foods from different parts of the world, which was very popular. The feedback was very positive with many students requesting more events like the festival and making it a yearly event.

Other Updates

* Varsity: I had the opportunity to attend the Rugby varsity matches in March and the football matches in April. It was great to see students cheering each other and supporting team Plymouth.
* Meeting with the VC: In the months of April and May, the Sabbatical team had our meeting with the Vice chancellor. In both meetings, I raised International Student accommodation. I gave instances where students have students have been homeless on arrival in Plymouth. I also raised the issue of students with families struggling to find accommodation especially those with children. The VC acknowledged that these issues particularly students with families was a nationwide problem, but the University is currently working on supporting these students and ensuring that they have the right information before arriving in Plymouth.
* ASM: The SU held its Annual Student Meeting in March, the sabbs were given the chance to report on the work we were doing. Although we had some technical difficulties and some confusion about the purpose of the meeting, there was a good student turnout.
* International Guarantor Scheme: I presented a paper to UIG at the end of March about a Guarantor scheme that was discussed in 2016/2017. The paper highlighted a survey that was carried out in 2017 about students needing guarantors and a comparison of guarantor schemes in different institutions. Unfortunately, I was told during the meeting that the University decided back then not to implement a guarantor scheme as they felt there was not a need for it. On the bright side, UIG has said this is something that can be revisited if the need is evidenced. I will be presenting another paper at UIG at the end of May.
* International Student Experience group (ISEG): I have monthly meetings with ISEG to discuss how international students can be better supported. I raised accommodation issues that international students are facing, International Student Advice updated that they are working on web pages and information to be sent out to international students pre-arrival. The group is also working on a festival in May (Freedom Festival)

* Student life: In April, we had Student life committee, I updated on the Student Life Opps meeting we had earlier in the year, and I presented a paper about the ongoing issues students are facing with accommodation
* Access, Participation and Progression group: The SU and the APP are in the process of putting together a survey to be sent out to students, this survey is to understand how to better support students from underrepresented groups and which APP activities students engage with.