Qq qqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqq =

**Union Council**

**31/03/22**

|  |
| --- |
| **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 TaiwoPart-time Welfare Officer – Daniella Marley Part-time Men’s Welfare Officer – Will StylesPart-time Women’s Officer – Saffron DeemerPart-time Societies Officer – Owain Gullam **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 Society & Culture – Lucy MetajPlymouth Business School – Antonia-Roxana VrabieSchool of Psychology – Joyita Ashton-SimonSchool of Engineering, Computing, & Mathematics – Michael Riley-WallacePlymouth Institute of Education – Medb O’Kane**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 MortonVP Education – Charlie Atkinson |
| Other attendees, without voting rights  | Representation and Democracy Manager – Tracy Priestman (Minute Taker)Representation and Democracy Co-ordinator – Stephanie MartinRichard Stanton Part-time Officers ElectTina HuntRadhika DaveMarjolein Hewlett Esther Obayomi Ahmed Hammad **Vacant Roles**Accountability Board Members |
| Apologies  | UPSU President – Emi DowsePart-time BAME Officer – Isobel SaxbyPart-time Environmental & Sustainability Officer – Will Jones  |
| Not present at the meeting and did not send apologies | Part-time Postgrad Taught Officer – Tonari ArikekparPart-time Students with Disabilities Officer – Kenza Kadri Peninsula Medical School – Emily SchenkSchool of Biomedical and Healthcare Services – Rimsha BashirSchool of Art, Design & Architecture – Wendy Villalba PillajoSchool of Biological & Marine Sciences – Freya RoseSchool of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences – Morgan Davies Peninsula Dental School – Ruby-May AllenChair 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. |

|  |
| --- |
| **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 meetingAccuracy of minutes  | There were no matters arsingThe minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting  |
| Notice of Any Other Business | Michael Riley-Wallace gave notice of one item  |
| Matters To Discuss  | Emergency Accommodation Proposal  |
| Will Styles, PT Men’s Welfare Officer gave an overview of the proposal Saffron Deemer - PT Women’s Officer, proposed an amendment to change Union Resolves Point 3 to read ‘treat all students that request it, as refugees’ as not all Russian and Ukrainian students will identify as being refugees. Everyone should be treated with compassion and supported but being a refugee is a specific thing. Will accepted the amendment so no vote was necessary.Charlie Atkinson - VP Education, noted that the hardship fund is available and does encompass things like this. Charlie also pointed to the phrasing of refugees, those students are not here as refugees, they are here on visas. That’s not to say that they cannot be supported but, as Saffron noted, the word refugee means something very specific. Charlie proposed removing the refugee from Union Resolves Point 3 entirely.Charlie explained that the President - Emi Dowse, has been in contact with students who are impacted by the war in Ukraine. They say they are okay for now, but of course they can ask for more support in the future.The Chair asked seconders to the motion if they agree to the amendment.Saffron suggested the wording of ‘the Union shall treat Russian and Ukrainian students in need as displaced’ instead of refugees as there needed to be some acknowledgment of the severity of the situation they are in.Charlie disagreed that there needed to be any terminology like refugee or displaced used to describe the students in question. They are students in the UK studying on visas, they are not currently displaced. Of course, the focus needs to be on support them and making sure they are alright. Saffron asked if the visas are year-round or only for term time. Charlie noted it would depend on the individual and that any conversations about that needed to happen on a case by case basis rather than blanket terms being used. Daniella Marley – PT Welfare Officer did some research ahead of this and spoke to every Ukrainian student. General feedback was that they wanted quite generalised help which was for all students, not just Ukrainian students and from the vibe Daniella had, they did not need any specific terms as long as it was a generalised offer of support. For example, they wanted emergency accommodation to be available, if they needed it at a later date. Saffron was happy to remove the words refugee and displaced as Daniella has spoken to the students in question about it. All proposers and seconders accepted the amendment Joyita Aston-Simon – School of Psychology Rep, acknowledged the situation in Ukraine and the need for support for students but queried if there was going to be another proposal to support those other international students that are also struggling. Daniella explained that she has been working with quite a few international students on accommodation concerns, however, much of it is not emergency based and is more in relation to guarantors and longer-term issues which the SU is already looking at. Emergency accommodation would be applicable to all students, including international students. It would be for any situation which is an emergency. Will Styles agreed with what Daniella said.Charlie added that if there is need for lobbying the university for emergency accommodation, it doesn’t have to be a policy, if there is need then it can be progressed as Union Council or by Officers aside from policy. Joyita noted that she understood that this situation is an emergency but looking longer-term, something does need to be done to improve accommodation for international students. There will be other situations in the future that will be emergencies also. Owain Gullam - PT Societies Officer, suggested if it would not be better, on the basis that anyone should have access to emergency accommodation, to remove reference to Russian and Ukrainian students particularly as everyone should have equal access in an emergency situation.Saffron added that Russian and Ukrainian students are experiencing a lot of media which could be really distressing, yes there are other people in need, but this is a war and there is going to be students that are deeply affected. Having some declaration to be held responsible against is really important.Joyita countered that no-one is arguing that its not important, but on the topic of equality and diversity, there are other students who are facing issues, it is important to all students. Saffron explained that they were not suggesting exclusion but thought there was value to having specific reference to students impacted by the war in Ukraine as an accountability measure and so that those students feel supported, even if they do not need to use that support. Daniella noted that the policy applied to all students and Owain is right that the SU does support all students, but Daniella also agreed with Saffron that it needs to acknowledge Ukrainian and Russian students specifically. The conversation that Daniella has had with Ukrainian students is that they don’t feel that the SU is doing enough, that the support they have had hasn’t been what they wanted and that is a sperate conversation to have. Charlie asked what feedback Daniella had received from Ukrainian students regarding the support from the SU.Daniella explained that the main thing is fundraising, they have been organising weekly fundraisers and the SU has refused to promote them. Daniella was not sure if that was because the event was not in the SU but they were also not offered to host it in the SU. Daniella wants to speak about this with Sabbs today. They were also not impressed with the vigil, they said it wasn’t harmful having it but it was disappointing that there were not more fundraisers led by themselves. They appreciate the things the SU has done but would have liked more support with things they have been doing. Mads Morton, - VP Activities, expressed her confusion as when Emi has spoken to the Ukrainian students, they said they are quite happy with the support they have received. Mads questioned whether they are just saying that. Mads noted she was not aware of the fundraising issue but there are systems in place regarding advertising outside of the SU and there is legislation nationally governing charities fundraising for other charities and that it has to be done officially through RAG. They are all things that can be discussed. Daniella noted she hoped to do that at the end of the meeting.Michael-Riley Wallace, School of Engineering, Computing and Maths Rep, asked in the chat “What is the ongoing future of this proposal in regard to those graduating in September who won’t be able to fly home, but also won’t be classed as students anymore and therefore not be liable to emergency accommodation from the university? we will provide help, or default them back to their embassy? (should the war be ongoing at that time)”Will noted that unfortunately as they would no longer be students the SU would lack the ability to do anything for them. Charlie added that whilst they are still students the SU can lobby for what does happen moving forward. Whilst Charlie did not know what that might look like, that is part of what is up for discussion. Michael queried if there is a responsibility for the university to protect its alumni's in emergency situations? Charlie was not aware of any university policy but acknowledged that it is something that can be looked into**Action: Sabbs to look into the situation with regards to the university responsibility** Tracy Priestman – note taker for the meeting, asked for clarification of the final wording of resolves point 3 prior to the voteWill clarified Union Resolves Point 3 reads;“The Union recognises Russian and Ukraine students in the UK as in need of help and lobby for all support as is required and necessary on their behalf, if requested.”All other wording of the policy proposal remained the same The Chair called for a vote on the policy proposal and noted that as the meeting is not quorate then email votes will be collected from absent members following the meetingFor: 11Against: 0 Abstentions: 1 Email results to follow Final Voting numbers, including email votes For: 17Against: 1Abstentions: 1 |
| Men’s Officer Proposal  |
| Will Styles – PT Men’ Welfare Officer, gave an overview of the proposal The Chair clarified the UWE is University of the West of England Owain Gullam – PT Societies Officer, noted he was on Union Council last year and one of the reasons that he voted for the role was because it was a Men’s Welfare Officer role. Having looked at the position in UWE, which came under a lot of criticism, in 2018, the second year of its existence, no-one stood for the role. In the second year of the existence of the Men’s Welfare role at Plymouth, no-one has stood for it. The current role is Men’s’ Welfare Officer and that position protects the post holder from the abuse that the Men’s Officer suffered at UWE.Will questioned if the concern was that the post holder would be abused.Owain replied that is what previous experience has shown. There is no previous experience at Plymouth but elsewhere has shown that. Plymouth does not need a Men’s Officer but does need a Men’s Welfare Officer, there is an important distinction to make between the roles.Saffron Deemer – PT Women’s Officer pointed out that every other group has an officer, the only group not represented by a part-time officer technically is heterosexual, CIS gendered men under the age of 25. That’s quite a lot of the population of the university. There is the Men’s Welfare Officer but there should be representation in a non-exclusionary way.Mads Morton – VP Activities, questioned Will Styles, current post holder of the Men’s Welfare Officer role, as to what work they have done since the start of the year and asked how would changing the name make a difference to what can be achieved. Will commented that he had been told that the remit is only welfare and they are not permitted to pursue anything outside of that remit. So things like students being sexually harassed on nursing placement and it not being dealt with, that is an issue of discrimination and not welfare. Mads asked if there had been any students approach them with specific welfare issues as they haven’t seen any campaigns. Will noted that the work is detailed on the [Mens Welfare Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/upsumensofficer/) page Joyita Ashton-Simon – School of Psychology Rep noted that it was not so easy to hear online but asked for clarification on their understanding that the change in name is to boost engagement with students.Will clarified that that was not entirely correct, that it was not about engagement, it was about broadening the role so that they can cover everything. Mads reiterated the question about which campaigns have been done. Will noted that they could not help but feel that the question felt like an attack on what they have been doing this year. Mads explained that it was not attack, it was just a question about what has been done this year and what might that look like next year if the role changed. Will acknowledge that it is not for them to say what might happen next year. Will continued to explain that the student at UWE got the support they needed and that in their opinion the backlash was against it being the first nationally. Whereas Plymouth created the Men’s Welfare role first. If any of the Part-time Officers experienced abuse there are systems and support in place to deal with that. Lucy Metaj – School of Society and Culture Rep asked how the title of Men’s Welfare Officer limited the role and asked what the change would mean.Daniella Marley – PT Welfare Officer, noted that the main things are that the use of the Men’s Welfare title has led to a lot of confusion and students have been calling it Men’s Health Officer, Deputy Welfare Officer and a lot of male students still don’t feel represented because the role is not clear in what it is doing. The role is not currently representing men, its representing men’s welfare which is something different and it doesn’t feel as inclusive or representing to the men whom have given feedback. Daniella also add that the remit is much smaller than it could be, as Men’s Officer you can deal with discrimination against men whilst as Men’s Welfare Officer, you can only deal with welfare concerns which whilst important, does limit what can be worked on. Mads questioned why the role can’t help with other issues impacting men. Will explained that the remit boundaries are that they are not allowed, they can help welfare but not other issues. Mads asked how they could then help if the role was Men’s Officer. Will responded that they could then lobby and work with a students’ course, for example.Charlie Atkinson – VP Education highlighted that the proposal is not just seeking to change the name of the role, it is also calling that the role is eligible for self-identifying males only. Also in the union notes, it says that the last time students were consulted about this was 2020, Charlie questioned where the feedback for the policy proposal came from. Will explained that in 2020 they discussed the matter with 250 students face to face whilst collecting signatures for a petition.Charlie highlighted that a significant proportion of student body has changed since then and asked where the feedback about the role being misnamed had come from. Will acknowledged that this was only this year. Mads added that as the argument of misnaming is being used as evidence, it should be more evidential than anecdotal, they added that they have never heard of the role being misnamed. Daniella explained that Will was being vague as the feedback came from the Welfare Wednesday, led by the Welfare Officer. There was a takeover in collaboration with the Men’s Welfare Officer, there were 20 students that came into the SU and a few online. It was through that that students asked what the Men’s Officer is. It was not formal feedback but is it from this year and it is recent. Owain Gullam – PT Societies Officer, commented that there was no reason why school reps and other people in other positions could not lead on those campaigns and in some ways they would be better equipped to do so. For example, the situation of a male nursing student could be dealt with by the relevant School Rep. Also, the point about not having representation for heterosexual, CIS gendered, males under the age of 25. Owain noted that as someone who identifies with every single one of those categories, they did not feel the need for the role because the issues highlighted are represented elsewhere. Owain added that the UWE role has gone back to being a Men’s Welfare role after the abuse they suffered. Will commented that all the UWE roles are called xxx Welfare Officer, so Men’s Welfare Officer, Women’s Welfare Officer etc. and they are all liberation roles. So their Men’s Welfare Officer would be the equivalent of what our Men’s Officer would be.Owain pointed out that the proposal seeks to give an equalities mandate so that it is protected from people who are not self-identifying as being male from running. Protecting it from what happened last year when someone that did not identify as being male stood for the role. This created a considerable backlash, more than would have been expected for a role created last year for a role that has not been filled this year. Owain added that in their opinion, the need for this role has so many question marks over it.Will questioned what the point of that comment was. Owain responded that the point was that the role has not been filled, this conversation is now about a role with no-one in the seat that has already suffered backlash.Will added that the role would not start until next year and it is rare for all roles to be filled at this juncture. Owain pointed out that Part-time Elections happened last week. Will explained that they were going to run but did not in the end. Will noted that they believe there is a structural issue as to where the role belongs as it does not belong with the demographic roles but it is does not technically belong with the Welfare role either because that suggests that there are other roles within the welfare catergory. Will added that with the person that ran last year, they spoke against the proposal at Union Council and quite clearly ran as a protest campaign, doing the role a dis-service. Will felt, if anything, that is a strong reason for why it needs to be protected to prevent anything harmful happening to the role.Mads questioned if Will thought that person would do that. Will said they have evidence to suggest that is the case. Owain noted that was not the point they were making, if it was the case that that person did run a protest campaign, they did not receive no votes, the votes they received were then people that joined them on their protest which is fair enough. Now the role has not been filled so that is a good reason not to open the role to more abuse and not self-define it.Will commented that the proposal is to remove one word from the post name, its not a big deal. Mads questioned why its being done if it’s ‘not a big deal’. Will clarified that it is not a big a deal as a structural change that allows the role to do more. Will questioned if that is not what everyone wants from the roles. Daniella suggested that the protest vote could be seen as a protest vote but they joined the university this year and saw the two manifestos and they were both great manifestos and if they did not know the other candidate personally and did not know they were running as a protest, the manifesto was written as if it was a legitimate manifesto and so that is why they would have voted for it. So a lot of people were not protest voting. The abuse cannot be measured as if the protest votes were protest votes, based on how the candidate ran their campaign. Daniella also added that they did not think the name should be kept as Welfare based on the abuse that they may receive. You could say that about any role, the SU do protect the roles against abuse. Charlie reiterated that it is not just one word that is being changed, there are other changes as part of the policy. Charlie questioned what the reason for the third clause was and why have students asked for it (The role to be “self-identified male” only with all members being eligible to vote.)Will responded that it is very odd to think of a men’s role where there is not a male in it. As a student interacting with the role, you would expect a man to be talking about men’s issues. This is recognised in therapy when assigning individuals to speak to, so it definitely has value Mads noted that there are things in place to support students already, course and school reps as well as other officers. Mads asked what a part-time Men’s Officer would do that is not already being doneWill explained that it was mentioned in training that no single issue is addressed by one single role, there is always collaboration, including the Sabbs who collaborate on everything, so this is just another thing to collaborate on. There are things that they are not able to collaborate on. Owain pointed out that there was nothing in the mandate that said they could not collaborate on. Will noted that they had received an email from Tracy (Representation and Democracy Manager) about it. Lucy Metaj suggested that where it was noted that there is confusion for students and after looking at the instgram mentioned, it may be helpful to have a resource included to explain the remit and the role. Richard Stanton commented that the issue with the role as it currently is are the niche pockets that are not covered, like the one which they found themselves in. Richard noted that Will had helped as much as they could but then reached the end of their remit. The uni helped as much as they could but they reached the end of their remit . There are areas where there are overlap but there are bubbles missed entirely. Richard added that by extending the remit of Men’s Welfare Officer to Men’s Officer, it would cover those bubbles. This would help protect all of the students from all of the issues, other than being welfare based. Tracy Priestman clarified that she has discussed with Will about the appropriateness of activities undertaken by a Part-time Officer, as opposed to giving advice and approaching support services on behalf of students. Will noted that was a recent conversation, there was another conversation that took place either at the very start of this year or at the end of last year. Tracy added that everyone has a remit to the role they hold and everyone is expected to run campaigns and carry out activity in line with a manifesto. Tracy explained that there is also a degree of collaboration between roles. Tracy was unsure of the conversation Will was referring to.Daniella acknowledged that there is a remit for each role and that there are appropriate places to go for each role but there is no one to go for male discrimination. Women can go to the Women’s Officer about discrimination Charlie highlighted that if there are issues of discrimination, for any role, the best thing to do is to signpost to the relevant services. Please do not give advice, there are experts who are insured and qualified, this protects both reps and students. There is a [speak up tool](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/services/student-services/speak-up#:~:text=Use%20our%20Speak%20Up%20repor,relationship%20or%20domestic%20abuse) within the university and the SU Advice Centre can always support.Owain referred to Charlie’s comment and suggested that Will could quite easily have signposted any of the issues they were unable to deal with to professionals, who are paid for their expertise. There is always a bigger fish to deal with the issues where the Part-time Officer mandate ends.Will noted that he can, and has, signposted but then did reach brick walls which is why the role needs to step in and run campaigns to fix those structural issues. By changing the role, it can be more, and Will wanted the role to be more so that more can be done. Will added that there is no harm in a role that can do more. Charlie acknowledged what Will said about wanting to do more with the role but it is making a role that fewer people can stand for, thereby limiting the life experience and approach taken being brought to the role. The self-identifying clause was of concern to them personally. Charlie proposed that Union Resolves point 3 was removed 1. The role to be “self-identified male” only with all members being eligible to vote.

As the amendment was not accepted by the proposer, a vote was requiredThe Chair asked for votes to remove Union Resolves point 3 only For: 7Against: 3Abstention: 0It was noted that Saffron had left at the point of voting As the meeting was not quorate, votes from absent members would need to be sought before the votes for the motion in its entirety are sought, this will be via email Final voting numbers for the amendment, including email votes For: 13Against: 4Abstentions: 1The amendment passed and voting on the amended proposal took place via email. At the close of voting the votes were tied with 10 for and 10 against, therefore, as per the Union Council Bye-law the Chair had the casting vote.Final voting numbers for the amended policy were;For: 11Against: 10Abstentions: 0 |
| Union Equalities Stance Proposal  |
| Will Styles – PT Men’ Welfare Officer, gave an overview of the proposal Owain Gullam – PT Societies Officer pointed out that the letter to the Board of Trustees and their response are not included as appendices to the proposal. Will noted that they are currently on the [Men’s Welfare Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/UPSUMensOfficer). Owain added that as they have not been submitted, they cannot be assumed to be facts. Will asked Tracy Priestman – Representation and Democracy Manager, to confirm that the Union Notes points are true, as they have seen those correspondences. Tracy responded that, as a supporting staff member to the meeting, they not able to verify the legitimacy of the evidence presented. Will reiterated that the letter can be found on the Facebook page Owain pointed out that the page has the letter which Will wrote to the UPSU Board of Trustees but that the response is not included so it cannot be assumed that it is factually correct. Daniella Marley - Part-time Welfare Officer confirmed that they had seen the letter and response and that the quote in the proposal was factually accurate.Owain added that there was no detail around the response. Will explained that the response was that the comment was factually accurate, no reason was given. Daniella added that there was more context than that but in terms of an answer, that was what was said. Will quoted; “Dear Will, with reference to your letter sent to the Board of Trustees on 7 February 2022, I can confirm that Board considered your request at their recent meeting. To set the record straight, the Board would like to point out that the quotation you reference was part of a letter written to you rather than a public statement. The Board discussed your request but agreed that since the content of the quoted paragraph remains factually accurate, it will not be issuing a retraction.” Will suggested that it was perhaps a conflict of interest that members of the Board were present at the meeting. Mads Morton - VP Activities explained that the Sabbs did not attend Union Council as Trustees but as Sabbatical Officers.Owain clarified that Will wanted a statement from Union Council, not the SU, to say that Union Council supports equal treatment under the law and recognise and support the applicability of the Equality Act to male students. Owain suggested that that might be inappropriate, in certain instances, following the debate that was just had regarding the Men’s Officer role. However, it can be taken from what is said in the original statement to Will, not publicly, that the roles that are in place to protect individuals that might be more prone to suffering discrimination and are designed as they are historically prone to suffering in certain areas in higher education. Men are not prone to suffering in higher education, men are prone to suffering in education and healthcare. Will thought that was an interesting stance and wanted to clarify why the statement that ‘’we believe in equality under the law and that it applies to males’’, would be bad to say. Owain questioned why this proposal specifically mentions men and why it does not mention everybody. Will noted that it was men that were the subject of the conversation with Board. Owain pointed out that was in a correspondence directly with Will, it was not a public statement.Will commented that it was trending story nationally. Owain clarified that it was the letter Will sent several years ago, had a response to and then more recently there was another response saying that the previous response was a statement made to Will in a letter. So, the public outrage and subsequent articles came about as Will shared the letter and statement. Will agreed that was the case. Owain suggested that it could be argued that Will sharing the letters in question with the public, could have brought the SU into disrepute. Will responded that that was not the issue in question.Owain added that he did not see the need for the proposal and if there is an issue, it was one created by Will. Owain added that if Will would like Union Council to recognise and support the applicability of the Equalities Act, it should be for everyone. Will suggested that Owain might like to suggest an amendment. Owain declined an amendment as, in his view, to amend it to that, rendered the whole statement toothless and pointless because everyone, he hoped, believes in equality. Will noted that if that was the case then there would be no problem stating it but that it was important, in this context to say that that included men. Owain thought that this context is only being discussed as Will brought it up. That the letter was sent to Will personally and no-one else.Will queried what point Owain was making, Owain suggested that it would not have been in the national spotlight if it had not been shared and now Will was asking for the SU to redact the statement. Will questioned if Owain was blaming the whistle-blower, Owain said he was. Owain continued that in the past few years there have been campaigns about women’s safety, since this year started, in the city of Plymouth there has been a commission started for the protection of women and girls. That Will is asking Union Council to make a statement on behalf of students talking about the equality of men. Owain queried why that can’t that be about the equality of everyone’s rights. Will agreed that is can be about everyone rights and welcomed the opportunity to clarify that Michael Riley- Wallace – School of Computing, Engineering and Maths Rep, noted that the quote that is currently in the UPSU constitution regarding equal opportunities says that it is designed to address equal opportunities for groups which have suffered historic and ongoing discrimination. Unless you are a man, there have been numerous case throughout history of there being discrimination in some way, shape or form. Equal opportunities stems from the need to give everyone the equal opportunities that have been given to men. Therefore, Michael did not consider that there was a need to suggest that there is not equal opportunity for men because they have not been discriminated against in a derogatory sense in that they suffer with their opportunities. Michael added that if looked at in the same way as independence days, countries have independence days from us [the British empire/Commonwealth], that does not give us the right to have our own days for the days that they became independent from us. Under this notion, there is no need for men to be considered as not having equal opportunities. They exist because everyone was not getting them except men. The term equal opportunities exists because there had to be a baseline and that was the opportunities that men were getting, that none else was. Michael asked for clarification on where there is disproportionate inequality for men, what is the need for the constitution to be changed to include men. Will clarified that it is not the constitution that is being discussed. Will noted that this is not an argument of whether male equality is an issue and whether or not the Board statement is or is not true. The latest figures suggest that domestic abuse rates are 40/60% in terms of victims where there is single shelter for men and close to 400 for women. Michael noted that there is not enough information about things like that within the proposal. What the proposal implies is that men are still here, why are we not included. Michael added that that comment was not intended to sound comedic and suggested that perhaps an amendment could be included to better demonstrate what inequality men are actually suffering from. Will reiterated that the policy is only seeking to make statement that the equalities act is applicable to all, including men.Charlie Atkinson -VP Education questioned what consultation was undertaken with students recently. Will responded that students have been consulted throughout and invited all to read to comment on the Herald, Huffpost, the Mail Online, the Telegraph, the Guardian, ?? student chat room. Will reported that students are shocked and outraged.Owain pointed out that the example Will gave was not an example of an inequality that men face within the SU, that it is not an issue that the SU has a stake in. The issues that the SU has a stake in are historically issues where men are not discriminated against and in the areas where they are, there are people that try and stop it, for example, the School Reps for education and health. Owain reiterated that the SU made that statement to Will in the context of the work that the SU does, i.e. representing students and men are not historically underrepresented in that arena. Will commented that men have been underrepresented at the University of Plymouth since 1982 with a 60/40 split. Owain replied to say that not being 50/50 is not being underrepresented.Owain added that if the discussion was regarding the teaching profession, it would be accurate to say but in a university setting the balance is quite liberal and has been since it has been the university started.Will noted that it is not true to say that the equality act does not apply to men. Owain argued that it is true as the equality acts applies to places where people aren’t equal, men do not need a leg up at university, that is the context in which the SU made the statement. Will commented that it is fine to make a statement in context but is not okay to say that the act does not apply. Whether or not the SU choose to apply it is up to them, whether or not it does or does not apply is a statement of fact. Owain pointed out that the SU is not going to talk about something that it does not have a stake in. That the paragraph in question has been taken out of a wider letter that was sent to an individual and only that paragraph was shared. Within the context that the statement was made, it is factually correct as it was made about students at university. Will concluded by saying that the Board has said something that has upset many students, not just those at the University of Plymouth. What was then the collective liberation Officers wrote a letter to try and clarify this and were told that, no, that it not their stance so now this proposal is going forward from the expanded group of liberation reps to say that no, we disagree and that the Equality Act is applicable to all persons, including men and that they would like to make a stand and clarify that. This should be clarified so that students don’t feel that their union is against them.For: 3Against:1 Abstentions: 6*Lucy Metaj left the meeting* Final voting numbers, including email votes For: 7Against: 4Abstentions: 8  |
| Union Council Bye-law update Proposal  |
| Owain Gullam – PT Societies Officer gave on overview of the proposal and noted that a tracked changes document outlining all the suggested amendments to the current bye-law was shared with the papers The Chair asked for a seconder, Will Styles, Part-time Welfare Officer agreed to second the proposal For: 9Against: 0Abstentions:0Final voting numbers, including mail votesFor: 16Against: 0 Abstentions: 2 |
| Reports  |  |
| Due to the numbers of items on the agenda needing lengthy debate it was not possible to discuss reports at this meeting. Please contact any rep directly to discuss their work.  |
| AOB |  |
| Incoming Officers Michal Riley-Wallace – School of Computing, Engineering and Maths Rep asked what was happening about the handover to the incoming school reps and part-time Officers. [Part-time Election results](https://www.upsu.com/news/article/upsu/The-PT-Results/) The Student Voice team encouraged eps to invite their successor to any meetings and to make any relevant introductions. Student Voice will be messaging about handover documents and meetings.  |
| Dates for the Diary  |  |
| Deadline for papers for the next meeting 3rd May  |
| Next Meeting | Tuesday 17th May 31st March 2022 |



**Emergency Accommodation Proposal**

|  |
| --- |
| **Contact details**  |
| Your name (Proposer of the policy) | William Styles |
| Your email | william.styles@students.plymouth.ac.uk |
| The name of a person who supports the policy (Seconder of the policy) | Saffron DeemerDaniella MarleyIsabel Saxby |
| Seconder’s email | philippa.deemer@students.plymouth.ac.ukdaniella.marley@students.plymouth.ac.ukisable.saxby@students.plymouth.ac.uk |

|  |
| --- |
| **Student Impact**  |
| Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how. | Motion began in response to feedback from a single student with dangerous house mates who found that emergency accommodation was no longer available. Following the war in the Ukraine speaking to our Ukrainian and Russian students it is clear they will become stranded and homeless this summer. |
| How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students? | -Prevent student homelessness and associated vulnerability.-Provide housing security so students can focus on food and other issues affecting them during the conflict.-Provide lasting safety for students whose housing situation has become untenable because of violence, threats, abuse and other circumstances. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Policy Proposal**  |
| **The Union Notes** (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible. |
| 1. The University has previously, though no longer provides emergency accommodation to students.
2. The war in the Ukraine prevents Ukrainian students from returning home, receiving financial support from home, and has placed immeasurable stresses upon them.
3. The war in the Ukraine prevents Russian students from returning home, accessing their funds, receiving financial support from home, and has placed immeasurable stresses upon them.
4. Outside of the conflict, there is a need for emergency accommodation to insure student safety alongside the ability and freedom to escape harmful living arrangements in immediate and unplanned ways.
 |
| **The Union Believes** (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in ‘The Union Notes’ |
| 1. In supporting and safeguarding all students.
2. That housing is a fundamental human need.
 |
| **The Union Resolves** (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific. |
| 1. To lobby the University to once again provide emergency accommodation alongside legal assistance in escaping former contracts.
2. To lobby the University to provide a support fund for students stranded as a result of the war in the Ukraine.

1. The Union shall recognise both Russian and Ukrainian students in the UK as refugees and lobby for all support as is required and necessary on their behalf.
2. To Union shall lobby with the goal to ensure any agreed emergency housing provision is sufficient, apt and non-discriminatory.
 |
| **Appendices/supporting information** Please include any supporting information relevant to your motion, this could include; consideration of how you would achieve any points in ‘The Union Resolves’, links to news articles or online publications |
|  |



**Men’s Officer Proposal**

|  |
| --- |
| **Contact details**  |
| Your name (Proposer of the policy) | William Styles |
| Your email | william.styles@students.plymouth.ac.uk  |
| The name of a person who supports the policy (Seconder of the policy) | Saffron DeemerDaniella MarleyIsabel Saxby |
| Seconder’s email | philippa.deemer@students.plymouth.ac.ukdaniella.marley@students.plymouth.ac.ukisabel.saxby@students.plymouth.ac.uk |

|  |
| --- |
| **Student Impact**  |
| Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how. | All original consultations around this role’s creation were relevant and pertain to this motion, that being 202 sample students 2020 113 self-identified male students 2019 |
| How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students? | -Strengthens existing designated role for issues and campaigns-Be an unambiguous signpost for male issues-Allow simple groupings and collaborations |

|  |
| --- |
| **Policy Proposal**  |
| **The Union Notes** (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible. |
| 1. The existing Men’s Welfare Part Time Officer is not a mandated, designated role within any sub committees with other demographic roles due to lack of an equalities mandate and not belonging to the group operating within the category known as liberation as established by the NUS before UPSU became disaffiliated.
2. The identification as a “Welfare” role without comparison suggest it is a sub-category of the Welfare role creating disjointed thinking and broken collaboration between other demographic roles.
3. There has been much confusion among Students around the name of this role with such misnaming as “Men’s Health Officer”, “Deputy Welfare Officer” and “Men’s Mental Wellbeing Officer”.
4. Where “Men’s” roles exist in other universities, there is no distinction between them and the other roles with the UWE Men’s Welfare Officer being a liberation category role.
 |
| **The Union Believes** (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in ‘The Union Notes’ |
| 1. Our Part-Time roles need to be clear, and transparent in their objectives and structure for ease of understanding and ease of locating the correct contact point.
2. It would be beneficial to mandate the engagement of the men’s role in the equalities, diversity and inclusion sub-committee to support and deliver the objectives therein for all students.
3. As with UWE, it would be beneficial to have a clear structuring to our Part-Time Officer roles.
 |
| **The Union Resolves** (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific. |
| 1. A name change of the “Part-Time Men’s Welfare Officer” role to become “Part-Time Men’s Officer” to be identified within 2.1.3 of UPSU Governing Documents Union Council Bye Law.
2. The role to include an equalities mandate.
3. The role to be “self-identified male” only with all members being eligible to vote.
4. To be mandated to run all campaign for its first year of existence under this new name in collaboration with at least 1 of the following: the Part-Time Transgender & Non-Binary Officer, Part-Time Women’s Officer or Part-Time LGBT+ Officer. This is to promote a high standard and set a precedent year of collaborative action.
 |
| **Appendices/supporting information** Please include any supporting information relevant to your motion, this could include; consideration of how you would achieve any points in ‘The Union Resolves’, links to news articles or online publications |
|  |



**Union Equalities Stance Proposal**

|  |
| --- |
| **Contact details**  |
| Your name (Proposer of the policy) | William Styles |
| Your email | william.styles@students.plymouth.ac.uk |
| The name of a person who supports the policy (Seconder of the policy) | Saffron DeemerDaniella MarleyIsabel Saxby |
| Seconder’s email | philippa.deemer@students.plymouth.ac.ukdaniella.marley@students.plymouth.ac.ukisabel.saxby@students.plymouth.ac.uk |

|  |
| --- |
| **Student Impact**  |
| Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how. | -Feedback from a Herald survey showed ~80% of ~6,000 people were opposed to the Unions stance (though not necessarily all students).-Verbal consultations took place in 2019 while gathering ~200 signatures showing a clear disgust at the stance. |
| How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students? | Bring about a renewed campus landscape which would recognise Men’s applicability for equal treatment under the law would make a world of difference to Men’s Welfare and bring in an awareness to Men that their issues matter to their SU. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Policy Proposal**  |
| **The Union Notes** (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible. |
| 1. In 2017, it was highlighted to the Board of Trustees that the provision of a Part-Time men’s role was required under the UPSU Equal Opportunities Policy and Equality Act (2010) upon which it is based.
2. The response gave “*The UPSU Trustee Board noted that references in the UPSU Constitution to equal opportunities and the UPSU Equal Opportunities policy must be read in the context of the relevant equal opportunities legislation. That legislation, both in its initial form and as subsequently amended is specifically designed to address equal opportunities for groups which have suffered historic and ongoing discrimination. Those groups did not, and do not, include men (other than in the context of equal pay, which is a qualitatively different issue.)*” as the reasoning why this was not the case.
3. The suggestion that the Equality Act is not applicable to male(s) (students) caused national and cross campus outrage.
4. In 2022, the Women’s Officer, Men’s Welfare Officer, and Welfare Officer supported a letter to the Board of Trustees requesting a redaction of this stance.
5. The CEO issued a response clarifying the original statement was “factually accurate” and would therefore not be redacted. This was refuted immediately by the Men’s Welfare Officer.
 |
| **The Union Believes** (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in ‘The Union Notes’ |
| 1. In equality under the law.
2. In supporting and representing all students.
3. In being a champion for equality and representation.
 |
| **The Union Resolves** (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific. |
| 1. To issue an independent statement outlining that the Union Council does support equal treatment under the law.

-and does recognise and support the applicability of the Equality Act to male students. |
| **Appendices/supporting information** Please include any supporting information relevant to your motion, this could include; consideration of how you would achieve any points in ‘The Union Resolves’, links to news articles or online publications |
|  |



**Union Council Bye-law Update**

|  |
| --- |
| **Contact details**  |
| Your name (Proposer of the policy) | Owain Gullam |
| Your email | Owain.gullam@students.plymouth.ac.uk |
| The name of a person who supports the policy (Seconder of the policy) | William Styles |
| Seconder’s email |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Student Impact**  |
| Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how. | Students attempted to engage with UPSU in the ASM, and vote for our candidates annually on two major occasions. Otherwise, there are often limits to the amount of engagement representatives get.  |
| How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students? | Changes made to the bye-law will make the democratic processes of UPSU more accessible, and streamline immediate change at meetings that operate more frequently.  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Policy Proposal**  |
| **The Union Notes** (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible. |
| 1. That Union Council operates within the bye-law in which guidance and rules are stipulated.
 |
| **The Union Believes** (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in ‘The Union Notes’ |
| 1. That the spirit of the bye-law can be adhered to without the overabundant detail given in it.
 |
| **The Union Resolves** (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific. |
| 1. Changes to the Union Council Bye-Law to be amended as outlined.
 |
| **Appendices/supporting information** Please include any supporting information relevant to your motion, this could include; consideration of how you would achieve any points in ‘The Union Resolves’, links to news articles or online publications |
| Revised Union Council Bye-Law changes.  |



**Part-time Officers Updates March**

|  |
| --- |
| **Postgraduate part-time officer – Tonari Arikekpar**  |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed**  |
|  Postgraduates want more opportunities to interact not just to socialize but to learn about things they struggle with. Highlighting places where postgrads can study and relax Hosting a postgrad taught meet and greet.    |
| **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.  |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with**  |
| University of Plymouth Postgrad survey  |
| **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



**School Representative Reports March**

|  |
| --- |
| **Role – Medb O’Kane. School of Education.** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed**  |
| Most feedback that I have received has been quite positive. The year seems to be running smoothly for most students and they are happy with timely responses from lecturers. Students have agreed that they would like to have a yearly overview of the module timetables and assessment schedule so that they can be fully prepared for the year/term ahead. Localised issues with individual students and staff members have been dealt with appropriately.  |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| Student attendance. Ed School TLQC highlighted an update in the attendance and extenuating circumstance policies. They are reintroducing the attendance warning letters and providing more input for staff to be able to spot negative patterns in attendance. They are aiming to reframe this policy as a ‘wellbeing’ check in and encouraging staff to look at the reason behind absence rather than jump straight to sanctions. These updates have been passed onto course reps to be filtered down into each cohort.  |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| Still struggling to gain much feedback from course representatives so have changed my tactic to now deal with programme leads and arrange to sit in on the course rep meetings. Most programme leads then share the meeting minutes with me so that I can be made aware of any issues that need to be escalated to the faculty.  |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with**  |
| None at the minute.  |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| N/A. |

|  |
| --- |
| **SoGEES Rep – Morgan Davies** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed**  |
| Contact registry – as below. To send tailored feedback platforms for the course reps to precisely state and acknowledge issues or concerns either they or their cohorts have noticed with potential further action. Awaiting feedback.  |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| Working on promoting inclusivity through making the process of changing preferred names and pronouns through registry and (at a later date) the S4 system. Awaiting to hear back from registry in regard to the logistics of implementing said idea into the university database. Working on encouraging the engagement of the course reps and the wider student body by adopting an open-door policy wherein said groups are given a platform to communicate any feedback or concerns directly to their representative, whilst taking their visions of outcomes and solutions (if applicable) into account for further action. Also awaiting feedback in regard to the university’s wider inclusivity and diversity plan over a long term period.  |
| **‘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 |

|  |
| --- |
| **Antonia-Roxana Vrabie Student Rep for Business School**  |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed**  |
| There have been a few issues with gathering feedback, as many course reps do not reply to their emails at all, making it difficult for us to receive answers. However, there were a few issues with lecture recordings, which I am still waiting an update for. Any other feedback / issues from the last’s semester have been resolved.  |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| I have been working on with the careers service to develop student engagement and develop new careers events, which will support students in their progression after university. We are having meetings to discuss any feedback we receive and create plans for increasing the employability of students.  |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| By working with the careers service, we are able to support the students in their employability. I am always striving to gain feedback, in order to increase the student’s positive experiences within their courses and solve any issues as soon as possible.  |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with**  |
| I would like to carry on supporting the career service, as I believe it is such an important service that provides amazing opportunities, and students do not use it to the extent they should.  |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| I think the issue regarding feedback from course reps and just simple emails replies is highly important. There are a maximum of three out of thirty four course reps that have been replying to some emails, meaning that the majority of them do not take their roles seriously, which is why the Business school’s engagement rate in feedback and surveys is one of the lowest.  |

|  |
| --- |
| **School of Society and Culture Representative – Lucy Metaj** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed**  |
| I have not received any key pieces of feedback as of yet, but I will be hosting another Staff/ Student Liaison Forum on March 23rd for Course Reps to attend and provide their feedback. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| I plan to send out my Mental Health survey again through the Course Reps.As mentioned above, based on the success of the previous SSLF I will be hosting another one on the 23rd, and the feedback will be circulated back to Reps once I have sorted through it.  |
| **‘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) |
| I have been working with Business Rep Roxana on collating feedback for the Career’s Service to help improve knowledge exchange opportunities within both our respective Schools. I will be collecting feedback on this topic at the SSLF. |

**Reports not received from**

* Joyita Ashton-Simon - Psychology
* Emily Schenk – Peninsula Medical School
* Ruby-May Allen – Peninsula Dental School
* Rimsha Bashir – Biomedical Sciences
* Michael Riley-Wallace
* Freya Rose – Biological and Marine Sciences
* Wendy Villalba Pillajo – Plymouth Business School

**Vacant Roles**

* Health Professions
* Nursing and Midwifery – recently stepped up from Deputy Role

**Sabbatical Officer Updates February**

President Update

*Emi Dowse*

February was a busy month with the Sabbatical Officer elections taking place at the end of it. It was great to see candidates being able to campaign back on campus after an entirely virtual elections last year.

* **Elections**

I supported with the elections by doing daily Instagram takeovers, supporting candidates throughout the week and hosting the election results night.

* **Thinking of running sessions**

I attended the Sabbatical officer Elections thinking of running sessions. I was able to answer potential candidate questions and advise them on which positions would be suited to their ideas.

* **VAWG Evidence gathering sessions**

I continue to be involved with the Council's violence against women and girls commission. I have sat on two full days of evidence gathering sessions, hearing feedback from over 14 different speakers. As well as this, myself and three other commissions did a walk through central park to see which areas needed additional street lighting – with the main focus on ensuring those paths which already had lights were sufficiently lit. We then fed this back into the commission. Prior to this I asked the VP Activities to create a map of which entrances our sports clubs use for their training sessions, which I was also able to feed in.

* **Ukraine response**

I was involved in ensuring the SU and the University responded quickly to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. I held a drop-in session for Ukrainian students and have followed up with all of our Ukrainian and Russian students to offer the SU's support. I have also lobbied the University to ensure they provided sufficient support to students.

* **Meeting with the Vice-Chancellor**

We raised:

* Students' concerns around in-person exams, and she said that the University has no intention of providing online exams. We will continue to raise this in other committees and meetings.
* Taking forward the joint sports strategy forward. The VP activities will pursue this when a member of stall gets back from leave.
* How the University can ensure UPIC students are better integrated into the wider student body.
* **Trustee Board away day**

I attended the board of trustee's away day. We focussed on the role of a trustee, the goals our trustee board want to achieve and ensuring we were effectively monitoring the SU's performance.

* **Meeting with Charlotte Holloway**

I met with Charlotte Holloway, a local campaigner, to talk about the big issues students are facing at the minute. We discussed student safety, including drink spiking and street lighting and accommodation.

* **Green Team**

I attended UPSU's Green Team meeting. We decided that we are going to focus on improving our energy rating and creating a student recycling scheme at the end of the year.

* **Other:**

CEO probation meeting, 1-1 with the Deputy Chair of the trustee board, weekly 1-1s with the CEO, Officer 1-1s, Trustee Chair training mentoring, Awayday with CEO, Stonewall Workplace Equality Index celebration event, Green week planning.

Vice President Education Update

*Charlie Atkinson*

February has been a shorter month for me, due to the impact of the SU elections. Despite this, I have been able to make positive progress on my manifesto points, as well as other projects that I have been working on in the role.

**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.**

* Through conversations with School Reps and Part-Time Officers, online assessment and Zoom lectures have been a major talking point, for both sides of the argument. I will continue to represent the student voice on this in any of the relevant meetings!

**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.
* Discussions around how the Students’ Union can actively engage with Student Development have also continued, so please watch this space!

**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.**

* I attended the Doctoral College Board, as a student representative. Alongside the Faculty PGR reps, within the meeting is a section for student led business. I spoke about how PGR students are members of the Students’ Union, and can engage in all our offers, including running and voting in the SU Elections.
* The Postgrad networking sessions have continued in February, with the return of in-person meet ups! Sadly, due to the elections I was/am unable to attend, but these will continue.

**Other Updates:**

* Part-Time Officer 1-2-1’s – Again, 1-2-1’s have continued, and again it’s been great hearing about the work everyone has been doing! As always, please get in contact if there’s anything I can help with!
* Trustee Board – As Sabbatical Officers, we are members of the Trustee Board for the charity. This month, we took part in a Board Away day, as well as a Trustee Board meeting.
* Senate – The second senate of the academic year took place in February. I wrote the report and spoke to the floor, raising the focus on the SU’s work on belonging at University, as well as re-iterating the want of the SU to work together more with the University on projects.
* Meeting with the VC – The Sabbatical Officer team has continued to meet with the VC. We raised about online exams and assessments for the summer period.

Vice President of Activities Update

*Madeleine Morton*

February has been a very busy month in the run up to Varsity. I have also made a lot of progress with my manifesto points and have had a very productive month.

* **Celebration and Inclusion**
	+ I ran a poll asking societies if they are happy with the work being done to include them on Team Plymouth IG and although there wasn’t a huge response, those that did respond said they were happy.
	+ Student / Student Group of the Month campaign was launched!! The winner for February will be announced in March.
* **Mental Health and Wellbeing**
	+ I have very briefly started plans to host an all-day GIAG activity which will include different sports and physical activities being free for all students to attend and see the different things they can do. I am also hoping to have Demos around campus from the sports groups we already have. This will be put in for before exams as a de-stressor event.
* **Sustainability**
	+ Following on from conversations with Matthew in the Sustainability hub, the bin mural campaign has made some progress, we are currently working out the logistics before we launch the competition.

**Other Updates:**

* **Meeting with the VC**
* **Emi 1-2-1 (president)**
* **Sports forum** - Spoke about any relevant updates and it was raised that we would investigate different options for a kit supplier, this has moved forward significantly and will be finalised at forum in March.
* **Catch up with Sports (Nadine)**
* **Varsity Captain Photoshoot** - This took place on the Hoe with the Marjon and Plymouth captains. The results were not what we had hoped for so we will make sure this is more organised next year.
* **Disciplinary procedures in the SU –** There have been a few incidences concerning people's behaviours which is ongoing.
* **Board of Trustees Away Day** - This was the first trustee away day and took place in the Box, Plymouth. There was a discussion around how we will monitor our performances and the need to make an action plan.
* **FoH course rep catch up** - Joyita (SoP rep) showed up so we had a discussion around how we can help her increase engagement with course reps.
* **Catch up with societies (Louise)**
* **Bin Mural conversation with Matthew –** This conversation kickstarted the operational start to the bin mural design campaign and efforts are ongoing to make sure this can be done by the end of June.
* **Budget for scholarships** -I had a meeting with Oli (Director of Student Services) and Jayne (Interim Director of Finance) to discuss any possibilities of having a scholarship fund that students could use to help them pay for competition entry and travel fees. They confirmed this was not possible from the SU but to speak to Patricia Merchie in the University which has been done. The outcome is that nothing can happen until next year when they look at the budgets so this will be passed on to the next VP Activities.
* **Saffron 1-2-1 –** We discussed the logistics of how was best to order and give out period pants for those that would really need it.
* **Union council**
* **FTLQC**
* **Senate** - Senate focussed mainly on the new TEF and B3 measures that will be brought in to place and how the University may manage it. There was also conversations about the Carbon and sustainability report.
* **SU Awards catch up** - This was a very productive meeting where everyone was assigned their tasks to be done in order to progress in the next meeting.
* **Varsity captains meeting** – Nadine and I spoke to the varsity captains and updated them on the logistics for varsity and the important rules that they need to share with their members.
* **Varsity Captains Interviews** - With thanks to comms, we were able to film all interviews for each captain and take their photos that will be used for promo before each match.
* **PDR follow up –** Our Sabb team had a catch up after we all received our PDR reviews where we could air out any thoughts or issues we had. This went very well and was a positive experience for me personally.
* **UPSU Board of Trustees meeting** - We were joined by Jim for WonkHE, who explained TEF and B3 and how it affects us as a SU. The agenda consisted 3 parts focussing on an Introduction, Strategy and Governance and operations.
* **All staff catch up** - The CEO, directors and sabbs updated as well as the relevent departments.
* **Staff Dodgeball** - This was an activity brought to us from our wellbeing champions which was incredibly fun and enjoyable, it definitely helped with my personal wellbeing.
* **Societies Forum** - This was a busy forum due to the candidates for election coming in to do their ‘minute to win it’. We then did our usual updates.
* **Society Drop in –** I booked out my day and invited all members of societies to come in and see me in the Hive. Whether it was a complaint, help with an event or just a general chit chat, I was about for any help they needed. I had 5 people show from different societies with questions and queries, which I was over the moon about. I really enjoyed having some one on one time with different societies and I will be looking to do another drop in after the Easter break.

Vice President of Wellbeing and Diversity Update

*Fawziyyah Ahmed*

The month of February was very busy with elections, plans for the diversity festival. I made good progress on some of my manifesto points and other campaigns.

 Manifesto Updates

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:

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:

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.

Updates

Diversity Festival: I spent majority of February putting plans for the festival. I had meetings with the different societies to ensure that they had all the information and everything they needed for the event. I had a meeting with the SU events team

Other Updates

International Student Experience group: I attend this monthly meeting with the Student hub and the international student advice office to discuss how we can improve international student experience. I raised the support for international student accommodation issues and that not enough information is provided to these students before they arrive.

We held the focus group for international student arrival that was discussed in my last update. We had a total of 6 students who were then divided into two groups. Each group was tasked with discussing the pros and cons of a pick-up service at Heathrow and A meet and greet at Plymouth stations. The feedback and discussion were collated and will be presented to UEG.

Elections: I supported the elections this year by taking over the SU Instagram for the candidate question of the day, I attended the candidate lunches and delivered the result for my role on results night.

University Mental Health Day Event: I received an email from a staff member in Student services regarding a “wellbeing festival” for university mental health day. We set up a catch up to discuss how the event would look like and what activities. We agreed to use the SU little room, we booked a yoga class for the morning and free smoothies were given on the day.

Access, Participation and Progression Opps group: I had a meeting the Julian True and Siwan from the APP group. We discussed them coming to the SU EDI subcommittee to speak to student representatives about what the APP is all about and how it benefits students. We also discussed the possibility of having a list of all the different activities that the APP have, so the reps can have a handy list that they can signpost the students they represent.

Julian and Siwan attended the EDI subcommittee. They delivered a presentation to the reps that were present during the session. Although few students attended the session, the session was useful to those students who attended. Student voice also asked for a copy of the slides so it can be shared to the students who were not present.

FOAHB FTLQC: I attended the Faculty Teaching and Learning Quality committee alongside the school reps for the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Business. As reps, we did not receive much feedback from students, so we did not have much to raise at that meeting

Board Away day: We had our first face-to-face away day with the trustee board. We discussed how we could be more strategic as a board and how we could monitor the SU’s performance.

Meeting with the Vice chancellor: The Sabbatical team met with the VC for our monthly meeting. In this meeting, I raised the support for international students with accommodation following the influx of feedback we have received from international students struggling to find accommodation. The VC said the University could work on the message that gets out to students before they arrive in Plymouth.