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**Union Council**

**09/02/21**

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| **Present, Apologies and Quoracy** |
| Chair of UC,no voting rights | Robert Nutkins |
| Part-time Officers, full voting rights | Academic Officer – Katherine Collins Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Officer – Takudzwa MaweraEnvironment & Sustainability Officer – Neve PeatInternational Students Officer - Gem EvelynLesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender + (LGBT+) Officer – Sam PrichardPostgraduate Officer – Will Styles Students with Disabilities Officer - Will RobinsonTransgender and Non-Binary Officer – Jonah ZalickWelfare Officer – Owain Gullam**Vacant Roles**Mature Students Officer Partner Institutions Officer  |
| School Reps, full voting rights | Institute of Education – Jenna Johnson (co-opted during meeting) Peninsula Medical School – Emily SchenkPlymouth Business School – Charlie Atkinson (co-opted during meeting)School of Biological & Marine Sciences – Georgia SmallSchool of Biomedical Sciences – Libby MSchool of Engineering, Computing, & Mathematics – Vivian HockingSchool of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences – Izzy HainesSchool of Health Professions – Simrandeep KaurSchool of Humanities & Performing Arts – Bethany Hensman (co-opted during meeting)School of Psychology – Tafadzwa NyambuyaSchool of Law, Criminology & Government Representative – India EllisSchool of Nursing and Midwifery – Maeve HoeySchool of  Art, Design & Architecture – Cat Dodd |
| Sabbatical Officers, full voting rights | VP Wellbeing and Diversity – Fawziyyah Ahmed VP Activities – Verity Lemm VP Education - Emi Dowse  |
| Other attendees, without voting rights  | Chair of Accountability Board - Alex Jobling UPSU Interim Chief Executive – Antony BlackshawDirector of Student Experience – Oliver Horne Representation and Democracy Manager – Tracy Priestman (Minute Taker)Representation and Democracy Co-ordinator – Steph MartinRepresentation and Democracy Co-ordinator – Emma Quinn**Vacant Roles**Accountability Board Members |
| Apologies  | UPSU President – Chukwudi Ezenyi (KC) |
| Not present at the meeting and did not send apologies  | Peninsula Dental School – Alastair CampbellWomen’s Officer – Jessica Andrews SmithFaith & Belief Officer – Alex Butters |
| Quoracy | In order for a motion to be passed 75% of the elected voting members need to be present, quoracy was 20 and was reached  |

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| **Minutes** |
| Welcome  | The Chair welcomed everyone in attendance.  |
| Matters from the Last meetingAccuracy of minutes  | There were no matters arising from the previous meeting. The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting  |
| Notice of Any Other Business | Vivian Hocking and Verity Lemm gave notice of one item each  |
| Matters to Discuss | Co-option of vacant positions  |
| Jenna Johnson – Plymouth Institute of Education Rep Charlie Atkinson – Plymouth business School Rep Bethany Hensman – School of Arts and Humanities School Rep All students seeking co-option gave a short speech outlining why they should be co-opted. They were then asked to leave whilst voting took place. Voting for the co-option of Jenna For: Unanimous Against: 0Abstentions: 0Voting for the co-option of Charlie For: 20Against: 0Abstentions: 1Voting for the co-option of Bethany For: 20Against: 0Abstentions: 2Jenna Johnson – Plymouth Institute of Education Rep, Charlie Atkinson – Plymouth business School Rep and Bethany Hensman – School of Arts and Humanities School Rep were co-opted to Union Council. |
| Election to Student Life Committee  |
| There were no candidates for co-option to this role. Interested members can speak to the Student Voice Team if they are interested in being co-opted to this role. Terms of Reference were circulated with the agenda ahead of the meeting  |
| Signature Requirements Policy Proposal – Appendix 1  |
| William Styles, Part-time Postgraduate Officer gave an overview of the proposal. Will explained that UPSU By-laws were changed without discussion with Union Council and the number of signatures needed to call a referendum or revisit a matter previously discussed was increased to 400 from 200. Will added that the proposal seeks to reinstate the lower figure to remove some of the barriers to students participating in democratic processes.Antony Blackshaw, UPSU CEO noted that the number of signatures is stated in the Memorandum and Articles of Association which was set at the time that UPSU incorporated in 2017. Antony explained that changes to the M&A’s need to be changed by the Board of Trustees unlike a simple change to the By-law which would be approved at Union Council and ratified by the Board. Antony also added that the figure of 200 signatures is in line with sector practice for these democratic activities. He further noted that there may be other things needing updating in the M&A’s and it would make sense to change all things at the same time. India Ellis, School of Law, Criminology and Government Rep queried that 200 is only 1% of the student population and in her opinion that felt a little low but agreed with making the process digital. Verity Lemm, VP Activities added that the current estimate of student of UoP was 16,000. Will commented that 1% of 16,000 is 186Takudzwa Mawera, Part-time BAME Officer also agreed that 200 seems too low, however, as the figures are part of legally binding documents and he did not agree with the fact that students were not consulted. Taku expressed concern about the effectiveness of the Union Council if policy that positively impacts on the student body. The SU is not looked upon favourably by students. Will Styles added that the 200 signatures does not pass policy, it only re-raises an issue at Council or prompts a referendum, it does not circumvent democratic process. Viv Hocking School of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics reminded Council that not all students are engaged with the SU and it was unrealistic to expect that the number of students engaging with democratic process to be on par with the number of students at the university. Owain Gullam, Part-time Welfare Officer noted that all this is doing is reducing the minimum that is not to say that you will only ever speak to 200 students as the more students that are engaged the better in terms of a campaign.Sam Pritchard, Part-time LGBT+ Rep agreed that students should never be deterred from engaging in democratic process and agreed it should be reduced.Will Styles noted that KC, SU President and seconder of the motion suggested 100 signatures which does feel too few but if that was agreed to be an appropriate figure then he would accept that amendment. Viv Hocking suggested that the figure be changed to 1%, Will accepted this suggested amendment.Verity Lemm agreed that all processes would need to be managed and 1% seems reasonable, as elected representatives Union Council are here to represent the minority as well as the majority.The Chair called for a vote on the amendmentFor: 21Against: 2Abstentions: 1 The amendment was passed and accepted by the Proposer. Chair called for a vote on the proposal as a wholeFor: 21Against: 1Abstention: 2The policy proposal to reduce the number of signatures need to raise matter for discussion at Union Council or to call for a referendum was passed.Antony Blackshaw, UPSU CEO added that 3% of the student body do need to vote in the referendum for it to pass. He noted that the changes needed to amend the M&A’s will be taken to Board of Trustees, summarised with other necessary changes and taken to All Student Meeting for agreement, final approval will then be needed from the University Board of Governors.  |
|  | Accommodation Sponsorship Proposal – Appendix 2  |
| Will Styles, Part-time Postgraduate Rep summarised previous discussions, including the fact that students expressed dissatisfaction with Clever Student Lets and how they have dealt with issues, both before and after lockdown and with COVID restrictions.Will Styles gave an overview of the policy proposal.The Chair noted that it was not appropriate to refer to members of staff in a Policy Proposal. Either by name or position as they do not have the right of reply. Will apologised.The Chair also pointed out that, as has been mentioned at this meeting previously, Union Council does not have the executive power in relation to the resolves in this policy proposal. Will acknowledged that he understood and is only asking for it to be considered.Emi Dowse, VP Education explained that it was not the remit of any Part-time Officers or School Reps but she suggested that an amendment be made so that the Sabbatical Officers be given the responsibility to feed into those decisions on behalf of the students they represent. Verity Lemm, VP Sport agreed with the suggestion of that amendment and added there have been things that Officers have wanted to change about this decision making Viv Hocking School of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics Rep agreed with the amendment as a seconder, Will contacted all other seconders to ask their view. Takudzwa Mawera, Part-time BAME Officer also agreed that it is important for high level representatives to have oversight of this issue and its one that needs to be rectified immediately. However, Takudzwa questioned if terminating the contract would be helpful to students. Emi Dowse explained that this has been an ongoing issue and she had met with the previous CEO of Clever Student Lets, along with the UPSU CEO to discuss students concerns. Then in December Emi and Antony Blackshaw, Interim CEO, met with the new CEO of CSL and mutually agreed to pause advertising and payments until January whilst the contract was reviewed. Emi Dowse then updated that UPSU have mutually agreed with Clever Student Lets to abandon the contract, so they will not require that UPSU to promote them and UPSU would not pursue CSL for payment. This is confidential information until the point at which it is formally signed off and announced.Emi Dowse also added that UPSU would like to keep dialogue open with CSL to continue supporting students that are still with them that are experiencing problems. Will Styles noted that all seconders supported the friendly amendment which will read;Ensuring discussion amongst the ~~Union Council~~ Sabbatical Officers regarding potential UPSU advertorials in which Students are the product, where UPSU would be entering into a long term promotional contract.Verity Lemm suggested that the remit of the Officers could be more than a discussion. Will asked if the Officers would have the authority to have more authority in that situation. Verity noted that in previous years contracts did go through the Executive Groups which does include the Sabbatical Officers. It was left hat further amendments could be made in future, if necessary. Owain, Gullam, Part-time Welfare Officer noted that Sabbatical Officers will be able to respond a lot quicker than Union Council but if things do slip through the net and are not favourable to students. Owain questioned if could it be added that the decision is brought to Union Council for feedback afterwardsWill Styles pointed out the policy proposal seeks that the Sabbatical Officers are notified so they would not miss it and felt that amendment to be unnecessary Takudzwa Mawera questioned that as it is passed over to Officers now, if Part-time officers will be kept in the loop whilst the decision making process is happening and not have information withheld from them.Verity Lemm pointed out that Sabbatical Officers do report and update this meeting and are transparent with work, if students do think they are not being given information they need, then they are well within their rights to ask about it.Viv Hocking acknowledged that, in his opinion Sabbatical Officers never seek to intentionally mislead or withhold information and staff and Officers have been forthcoming with information in his experience. Emi Dowse asked for clarification of what a long-term contract was in the context of the policy resolves. Will Styles noted in the context of the rest of the motion that would be one year.Union Council voted for the policy proposal, including the friendly amendment For: 20Against: 2Abstentions: 3The policy proposal regarding Accommodation Sponsorship was passed. |
|  | Tuition Fee Policy Proposal – Appendix 3 |
| Fawziyyah Ahmed , VP Wellbeing and Diversity gave an overview of the policy proposal and explained that as result of student feedback the Sabbatical Officer team are asking for Union Council’s agreement to join the national [Students United Against Fees campaign launched by LSE](https://www.lsesu.com/suaf/about/).The policy will also give UPSU a formal stance on the matter which will be binding of the next two years. The campaign recognises that it is not possible for universities to give fee refunds or reductions without creating financial instability so is seeking to build a coalition between students, universities and unions to make sure that the Government takes responsibility for compensating students and supporting the sector.Emi Dowse, VP Education added that she attended a meeting with the group and they are putting international students and both postgrad taught and research at the centre of the campaign. They want for everyone to get equitable refunds if they can so no students would be left out. Viv Hocking, School of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics commented that tuition fees don’t just pay for course materials and contact time, they also pay for the block grant that funds the SU and student services such as mental health and disability support services. The university has already reduced funding to the SU. Viv queried if the student body then asks for lower fees what is to say the university would not respond by cutting support to student services and the block grant.Emi Dowse responded that the campaign acknowledges that and seeks to lobby the Government to get universities to lobby Government also. It is also aimed at educating students in the arguments they can use for lobbying, that’s it not just the same old argument of paying more for what is seen to be an Open University (OU) course.Takudzwa Mawera Part-time BAME Officer liked the idea but was concerned that Sussex University are in the middle of a vote of no confidence because of an indiscriminate immigration policy. This campaign supposedly recognises and helps international students but there is a concern that any shortfall to university finances may end up being detrimental to international students whose fees may increase. Emi Dowse explained that the campaign would not put anyone in a position where that would happen. It would be hoped that if UPSU join the campaign it would be with the university on side. The university have said the Government have told them that they will not be giving out refunds and the campaign seeks to join universities and unions to collectively influence Government. Alex Jobling, Accountability Board Chair agreed with Viv Hocking that the amount paid in fees is not just for academic teaching and that costs are still subsidised on top of that amount. Alex noted that there has been a sizable reduction in staff over recent years and he would also be concerned about cutbacks as a consequence of refunds. The money does not exist, it is the promise of debt to be repaid in the future. Emi Dowse noted it is a new campaign and not all details have been finalised yet but if the campaign can’t secure refunds, they would be asking for free repeats of courses if students fail or a percentage of next year’s fees if that applies. Will Styles, Part-time Postgrad Officer suggested that it sounded like it is not really expected at a refund would happen but that agreeing the policy would make a point and support broader action.Emi Dowse noted that the Officer team do want a refund to happen but it is unclear if it would at this time. The university do not expect the Government to help so that is why a national campaign is needed to bring everyone together, universities and unions. Viv Hocking pointed out that UPSU has disaffiliated from the NUS which exists to lobby at a high level of behalf of individual and collective affiliated unions, this then goes against to grain of that decision making and is a point of opposition.Viv Hocking added that regarding the Open University (OU) as point of comparison is not realistic as the OU is not a traditional university with all the support mechanisms that a physical university has, for example, contact time is limited and extenuating circumstances etc are not the same, they are not comparable and not like for like services. Emi Dowse clarified that it is not an NUS campaign. Libby M School of Biomedical Sciences Rep noted that students studying practical courses need physical access to labs etc. because of COVID they have not have access so it is comparable. Viv Hocking responded that the OU does not pay significant block grant to an SU, it does not have the same level of support services, onsite library etc. Just because they are online it does not make them the same. Gem Evelyn, Part-time International Students Officer noted that he would love a refund and supports the call for one but did not see how it was really viable. British students have loans that could be reduced but that would reduce the money invested in grants. Fees are subsidised by international students and he could not see how that would be viable without an either impact on international fees or on the grants they fund. Owain Gullum, Part-time Welfare Officer noted that he does not want to see money back but he would like to have his debt reduced to compensate for the experience that he has not received but has been promised. Owain explained that he had been working for the university marketing department and the script for applicants is still the same, it has not been amended due to COVID and it was not changed last year for clearing. Owain thought it was unfair to pay for the next 30 years for something that is out of student’s control. India Ellis, School of Law, Criminology and Government Rep supported the motion and agreed that debt should be reduced. India noted she understood the comparison with the OU and agreed that practical elements of courses should be refunded as students have not received the practical element they have paid for. India noted she would support refunds on a course by course basis. Many students would benefit from the reduction but India believed that the bigger issue was rents for accommodation that people cannot access. Takudzwa Mawera noted that that the OU is a different culture but the consensus is that you get more bang for your buck and with the marketization of HE, students are being misled as to what they will receive. This is why people compare with the OU as students receive what they have been promised. Students are questioning what the rest of their money is being spent on. Takuzwa agreed with India that rent is the more important issue and that tuition fees are secondary. Will Robinson, Part-time Students with Disabilities Officer explained that this is not the same experience for students with disabilities and many have worked extremely hard to overcome barriers to get to university in the first place and to not have that grow into fruition will impact on the rest of their life. Not being able to develop key skills learned at university like socialisation, not having the ability to network with other students, and not having peer assisted learning is really difficult. You do not really make friends for life in breakout rooms. Everyone is missing something and it does make logical sense to propose there is some level of compensation. It’s a national issue with national l responsibility, not that of the individual. If it is already subsidised by the government then they have recognise that they do have that obligation to support students to study at a tertiary level. Viv Hocking noted that the proposal makes no mention of the Open University and acknowledged that despite of personal feeling they will be voting on behalf of the students they represent.For: 23Against: 0Abstentions: 2The policy proposal regarding a Tuition Fee Campaign was passed. |
| Reports  | UPSU update  |
| Antony Blackshaw, Interim CEO gave a update of UPSU activitiesAntony noted that most things have been covered in the Sabbatical Officer reports which have been very thorough. The SU is working with the university COVID response groups at all levels. There was a proposal that the university make a global statement about return dates which was rejected in favour of a staggered return from 8th March focusing on final year and PG students first.All other regulations and restrictions that apply to commercial operations still remain and there is no sign that they are going to be relaxed any time soon. The SU will not be able to open and there is concern about loneliness and isolation increasing again as students return to campus. As furlough has been made available to more members of staff and costs have been less, such as BUCS not restarting as initially predicted, the most up to date figures for the deficit at the end of the year is -£400K as a worst case scenario. There were no questions for Antony.  |
| AOB’s | Refreshers Fair  |
| Viv Hocking, School of Computing, Engineering and Mathematics Rep thanked the Sabbatical Officers for acting swiftly to remove an unsuitable advert form the fair. Viv Hocking explained that of 22 interactive widgets at the refreshers fair only 7 were student focused and 15 were adverts. It was difficult to navigate and find the student focused information and the adverts are the easiest things to access. Viv Hocking thought that the SU is becoming more advert focused and less emphasis is on students. For example, each department ran their own recognition scheme which celebrated and showcased student achievements and as a specific number of hours were achieved, the student was invited in for a photo which was then shared on social media. That is not happening anymore and the SU recognition scheme is not promoted to volunteers. If students do hit waypoints on it, it is not followed up so that whole process of recognising students and celebrating what they are up to has fallen by the wayside.Viv Hocking explained that the item that was removed was an advert for a party holiday in the summer, which was completely inappropriate and unrealistic. There are global travel restrictions and for UPSU to encourage that student’s spend their money on that is abhorrent. Viv added that there is currently a sports club that is advertising and selling tickets for a skiing trip that also is not going to happen. The SU really needs to consider how it promotes the work of the students as it currently is not representing that on its communication channels or freshers fair, it is primarily adverts. Viv Hocking added that expression of interest is an important way for students to contact students groups and the digital refreshers widget does not have that function so clubs and societies cannot reach out to interested students. Verity Lemm, VP Activities noted that the recognition scheme is currently being reviewed and the SU are very much aware that it’s fallen below par below the past few years. It is being revaluated to better meet the needs of students and Verity is part of the team looking at that. Verity Lemm agreed about the holiday being advertised. The staff member that deals with the marketing agreements asked Verity to promote the event to student group earlier in the year and Verity did decline and said that it was not appropriate, it was absolutely something that should not be promoted. Concerning the Snowriders trip, Verity Lemm and Nadine Jeffery, Sports Manager met with Snowriders and requested that they be open with members in that is likely that will not go ahead. Verity and Nadine looked at the policy which is fully refundable if the trip is cancelled. Viv noted that Snowriders did post today that it is likely to go ahead. Verity will follow up with both of these points. |
| Charity Fundraising Challenge  |
| Verity Lemm, VP Activities noted that the SU would like to get involved in a charity fundraising opportunity, the [Brit Challenge](https://www.britishinspirationtrust.org.uk/brit-2021-challenge) which would see teams of students covering 2021 miles by exercising in whatever way they like. As May is Student Mind Week and Mental Health Foundation week from 10th - 18th May it makes sense to run it them, it also coincides with exam stress. If council like to get involved please get in touch with Verity.  |
| Next Meeting | Next meeting 18th March 2021SSTAR Awards nominations currently openRepresentation refresh events  |

**Appendix 1 - Signature Requirements Policy Proposal**

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| **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) | Chukwudi Ezenyi (KC) |
| Seconder’s email | chukwudi.ezenyi@su.plymouth.ac.uk |

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| **Student Impact**  |
| Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how. | Members of Union Council and a students known to have set out to gather signatures though abandoned the effort. |
| How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students? | It will increase democratic engagement by making the barrier to entry less formidable. |

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| **Policy Proposal**  |
| **The Union Notes** (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible. |
| 1. The Student’s Union is Democratic.
2. The Student’s Union is Student Led.
3. The Student’s Union facilitates policy creation.
4. The existing physical signatory count needed to trigger a student referendum or to resubmit a motion is 400.This was raised from 200 without Union Council input.
5. The UPSU website requires 250 upvotes (digital signatures) on the “platform for change” page with 75 more upvotes than downvotes before “action” is taken. (This platform is currently out of service)
6. A new platform has been launched aimed at collecting feedback.

**The Student U** |
| **The Union Believes** (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in ‘The Union Notes’ |
| 1. That democracy requires significant participation.
2. That the policies mentioned above are underutilised and largely unknown and this is a detriment to the resilience of our democracy.
3. That a lower threshold for physical signatures would promote greater engagement.
4. That physical signatures (which require face to face communication and interaction) are more informed and valuable than digital ones due to the greater activation energy required.
5. Student feedback and input into the democratic process is now more valuable than ever.
 |
| **The Union Resolves** (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific. |
| 1. That the threshold for physical signatures is to be ~~returned to 200~~ set at 1% of the student population to trigger a student referendum or to resubmit a policy to Union Council.
2. That the new feedback tool is to be actively advertised and promoted.
 |
| **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 |
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**Appendix 2 – Accommodation Sponsorship Policy Proposal**

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| **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) | Vivian Hocking, Katherine Collins, India Ellis, Jean-Michel Evelyn, Owain Gullam |
| Seconder’s email | vivian.hocking@students.plymouth.ac.uk katherine.colling-7@students.plymouth.ac.uk indiaellis12@gmail.comjean-michel.evelyn@students.plymouth.ac.uk owain.gullam@students.plymouth.ac.uk  |

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| **Student Impact**  |
| Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how. | Union Council and a large amount of student feedback has been considered at the UC meeting and throughout the motion creation. |
| How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students? | It will clearly signify that Students are heard and their wishes are acted upon and signify to companies that Students cannot be exploited without consequence. |

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| **Policy Proposal**  |
| **The Union Notes** (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible. |
| 1. The Student’s Union is Democratic.
2. The Student’s Union is Student Led.
3. Clever Student Lets (CSL) has been the focal point of student outrage regarding letting agencies particularly during the lockdowns and ensuing COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Feedback given to Students thus far on progress relating to the matter has shown a dissatisfaction within the Student body.
5. That there is an existing 3-year contract between CSL and the SU involving (in part) the exchange of funds for promotion.
6. That reputation with other sponsors has been highlighted in discussions ~~with the SU CEO~~ as a primary reason not to terminate this contract before its term.
7. “The University of Plymouth Students’ Union” (A Private Limited Company by Guarantee **no.10676070**) is facing financial hardship.

**The Student U** |
| **The Union Believes** (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in ‘The Union Notes’ |
| 1. That Students should feel heard by their Union.
2. That the purpose of a Union is to stand together against exploitative forces.
3. That CSL has shown itself in recent years to be partly, if not largely, exploitative.
4. That trespass against our members and their rights cannot be tolerated and must illicit a consequence.
 |
| **The Union Resolves** (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific. |
| As Union Council has been reminded that policy is considered from the Union Council by the Board of Trustees and is not automatically approved, the Union Council resolves to “request and advise our Union” to;1. **Terminate the existing contract with CSL effective immediately.**
2. Not engage in marketing contracts which extend for a period greater than 1 year.
3. Ensuring discussion amongst the ~~Union Council~~ Sabbatical Officers regarding potential UPSU advertorials in which Students are the product, where UPSU would be entering into a long term promotional contract.
 |
| **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 |
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**Appendix 3 – Tuition Fee Campaign**

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| **Contact details**  |
| Your name (Proposer of the policy) | Fawziyyah Ahmed  |
| Your email | Fawziyyah.ahmed@su.plymouth.ac.uk  |
| The name of a person who supports the policy (Seconder of the policy) | Chukwudi Ezenyi Emi DowseVerity Lemm  |
| Seconder’s email | chukwudi.ezenyi@su.plymouth.ac.uk emilia.dowse@su.plymouth.ac.uk verity.lemm@su.plymouth.ac.uk  |

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| **Student Impact**  |
| Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how. | Numerous students have contacted the Sabbatical Officer team directly or through the union to express their dissatisfaction and to call for a fee reduction for the academic year 2020/21 |
| How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students? | The impact of COVID on the student experience of 2020/21 has been significant and students have not received what they have paid for. A reduction in fees will go some way towards compensating students who have not received the university experience they were anticipating and have paid for  |

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| **Policy Proposal**  |
| **The Union Notes** (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible. |
| 1. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, “Most teaching, learning and assessment for taught courses with the exception of some essential courses has and may continue to be conducted remotely for the duration of the term, including for those still in residence in Plymouth.”
2. In addition, the work of graduate students pursuing teaching and study courses at the University of Plymouth has been influenced to a varying degree by the limited availability or lack of resources available and the inaccessibility of facilities. It is currently uncertain when, under normal circumstances, graduate students will be able to return to school.
 |
| **The Union Believes** (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in ‘The Union Notes’ |
| 1. Although the University of Plymouth has taken measures to alleviate these conditions, the continued challenge faced by many students to their education and experience is significant. For many students, this is reflected in a decrease in the number of contact hours and severe decline in mental health.
2. Some aspects of studying at universities in general and, in particular, at the University of Plymouth, including a wealth of cultural, literary, social and sporting activities, cannot be adequately replaced by alternatives that are socially distant.
3. As a consequence, charging full university fees to students for the 2020/2021 academic year is unfair and does not sufficiently account for the altered experience of many students.
 |
| **The Union Resolves** (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific. |
| 1. Clearly express their view that university fees for all students impacted by the above circumstances should be reduced for the academic year 2020/2021.
2. Endorse the Sabbatical team to express this belief to the University of Plymouth in writing.
3. Endorse the Sabbatical team and the representatives of the University of Plymouth Students’ Union to vote for any university policy aimed at lowering university fees for the 2020/2021 academic year.
 |
| **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 |
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**Appendix 4 – Part-time Officer Updates**



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| **Part-time Welfare Officer– Owain Gullam**  |
| **My manifesto points** |
| * **I will lobby UPSU to review its relationship with letting agencies**
	+ UPSU needs to evaluate the way it advertises student letting companies that may not have student interests at heart.
	+ Seek to establish a student focus group that reviews student opinions on letting agencies and publish the results publically.
* **I will endeavour to ensure that the UPSU creates campaigns incentivising participation in them.**
	+ Students need to be made aware of the support that is available and made to feel that they can take control.
* **I hope to encourage social interaction.**
	+ Academic societies need to be allowed and encouraged to work directly with their courses to give new students as much of a university experience as possible. (This will make it easier for some societies to run as they'd be given additional support.)
* **I will lobby UPSU to improve the resources for Clubs & Societies.**
	+ Being a committee member now is hard, if our committees are happy and successful, their members will feel the full benefit.
	+ Committees should be given a resource hub, with risk assessments, templates for events and collaborative ideas to ensure that our societies and clubs are making the most of being in the Union.
	+ The creation of a wellbeing toolkit to equip committee members with the resources they need for themselves and their members, encouraging the signposting of essential services in the university and around Plymouth.
 |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| * **Letting Agency Partnership Review**
	+ I’m seconding a policy paper that will be voted on in the next UC meeting.
	+ The paper will show our trustees our need to evaluate our partnership with CSL, terminate their existing contract and consult students before going into contracts in the future.
* **Social Interaction**
	+ Having used my invite to the Welfare Strand of the Semester 1+ meetings to emphasise the need for communication between staff and students as well as students with their own cohort (now more than ever).
	+ Some staff agreed but found it concerning that when coffee mornings & other extra curriculum activities had been put on that attendance had been poor/non-existent.
 |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| * **Semester 1+ Wellbeing Strand**
	+ Alongside Wellbeing & Diversity VP, Fawziyyah Ahmed, I attend fortnightly meetings with the Wellbeing Strand which is mostly made up of Student Services and some academic staff.
	+ The meetings invite many academic staff who are passionate about the wellbeing of not just students but colleagues too.
	+ I have argued for ideas including the partnering on data collection to see how best to support students and address their specific needs, as well as for success stories to be shared to increase motivation and
 |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| * My overdue essays.
* Contact school reps about “success stories” on a school level to celebrate and motivate students and staff in a draining time.
* To contact societies, clubs and volunteering about changing the resources to make them accessible.
* To ensure that the current policy proposal is just the start of scrutiny on letting agencies and not the end by working with others to create a feedback collation system (in whatever form) to evaluate all major letting agencies.
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| **Part-time Students with Disabilities Officer – Will Robinson**  |
| **My manifesto points** |
| Improving the experience of those with invisible disabilities through campus-wideawareness training, in genuinely meaningful and fruitful ways.Improving physical access to the university and addressing existing accessibility issues.Proactive, networked support for students suffering with Anxiety. |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
|  Working with Neil Gillett from student services. He has oversight of Disability Services team and is looking for ways to engage with disabled students about how they are supported by the University, including by University infrastructure which the Estates team is looking at. I suggested that although here in Plymouth a substantial portion of our students have SEND and receive DSA support, there are very few if any networking opportunities for them to benefit from sharing advice and the support strategies they are developing with their mentors. Inter-year interactions are something I strongly suggested would be beneficial to fostered, as students nearing the end of their university journey will have developed effective strategies over many years that if shared with students in their initial years could hasten their own strategy development, reaching their goals and exceeding their previously-thought potential far sooner than if left to learn it all the 'hard way'. Facilitating an open platform for conversation regarding the university's disability provision is also definitely in the best interest of our students with SEND, as there are often inconsistencies in support and guidance between faculties and courses that result in preventable difficulties. This was taken on board and a meeting with Faculties is in the process of being arranged. |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| They had recently had these two comments from students in a student focus group:“Discussion around additional needs – students with learning difficulties or disabilities need to be given more ‘air-time’ in order to get the support and adjustments that really help.” “We need a DSA student working group to make sure these students needs are represented” |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| A meeting regarding the aforementioned is in the process of being arranged, between Faculties, Neil Gillett, and possibly Estates. |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| Continue to gather feedback from students on their needs for this workspace.  |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| Worked with Suzanne Veitch, Outreach Coordinator for the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, to network with Plymouth students with disabilities for a student discussion group in about the additional challenges they often face. They want to explore how COVID-19 has impacted on disabled students’ higher education experiences and what students are most concerned about looking ahead to the next academic year.Worked with Annie Muyang, careers coordinator for the Royal College of Psychiatrists, to promote their 2021Psychiatry Foundation Fellowships. These two-year Fellowships will last for the duration of the foundation programme and provides an unrivalled opportunity for current final year medical students commencing foundation training in August 2021, providing a range of benefits for any medical students interested in mental health.Fellows will access…* weekly psychiatric supervision
* attendance at reflective Balint groups,
* assigned a psychiatry supervisor, who will deliver weekly psychiatric supervision.
* a mentor, chosen by the Royal College of Psychiatrists
* International Congress in 2022 and 2023
* RCPsych journals
* a travel and CPD fund, worth £1500.

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| Although not related to students with disabilities, it still looked good so I forwarded it onto Emma Q 😊 |

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| **PART-TIME FAITH & BELIEF OFFICER – Alex Butters**  |
| **My manifesto points** |
| **Work with societies to host taster sessions / forums to give people the chance to explore a faith****Work with other elected members to promote the speak up reporting tool for people subject to racist abusive due to their religion.****Hold a forum to debate what the SU could do to better cater for people’s beliefs.** |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| I have emailed or tried to contact every society that is faith based. I have spoken to and pitched a project idea to promote the speak up tool to the part time officer for: transgender and non-binary, LGBT +, woman, disabilities and international students. The project is still in an early stage but would include each PTO recording a short clip of how the student they represent face prejudice  |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| The only feedback I have had is from other PTO’s with no society replying to my email. |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| Spoken to a range of PTO’s as set out above |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
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| **Part-time Environment and Sustainability Officer – Neve Peat** |
| **My manifesto points** |
| * I will endeavour to improve engagement with Environmental Societies.
	+ Incorporate student led sustainability into UPSU policy
	+ This would be achieved through a monthly meeting with all the societies to have their input
	+ Plus meetings and regular engagement with individual societies and their committees
* I will lobby the University and UPSU to reduce food wastage on campus.
	+ Increase cooperation with local charities and food banks
	+ Initiate a scheme similar to [‘Too Good to Go’](https://toogoodtogo.co.uk/en-gb)  for students
	+ This scheme would allow students to purchase mystery bag from the cafes on campus of food that would otherwise be wasted at a discounted price
* I will endeavour to build upon the progress made by previous SU officers.
	+ Seek to introduce COVID-Secure mechanisms to enable the continuation of projects such as the Swap Shop
	+ This would involve moving it to an online shop, where students can purchase donated clothes for £1 a piece
* I will try to promote sustainable living by incentivizing students to adopt sustainable living habits
	+ Organise engagement through digital workshops
	+ Increase engagement of sustainability through social media
 |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| - Setting up a podcast and social media page to encourage student engagement and easy access to representative - Working with students to look at food wastage in halls- Found out what is currently in place at the university regarding food wastage |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| * Concerns over ethical technology association
* Students want to increase biodiversity and introduce a greenhouse on campus
* Moving current food market from the sustainability hub to the UPSU rooftop
 |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| * Attended the Sustainability Advisory Group meeting to voice student concerns to staff (10/12/20)
* First environment and sustainability forum gained student’s feedback (25/11/20)
* Attend Environmental Society: Ethical electronics forum (27/11/20)
 |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| * Plan and set up social media pages
* Start on podcast
 |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| * Kelsey Parsons has been elected as Deputy
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| **Part-time Transgender & Non-binary Officer – Jonah Zalick** |
| **My manifesto points** |
| 1. I will lobby to the university about changing how they address trans and non-binary students. Being misgendered and deadnamed is profoundly distressing and I will try my hardest to see to it so that trans and non-binary students will experience this less.
2. I will proudly elevate our trans and non-binary voices by relating them to the student union with no hesitance on being heard.
3. I will endeavour to link students with supportive resources (if requested), whether that be other faculty members or organisations.
4. I will make it a definite point to engage in online contact with trans and non-binary students whether that be for casual chats or more in-depth discussions. Webcams/microphones will never be mandatory for conversation; I personally know that can be dysphoria-inducing. If I am scheduled on-campus that day, we can try to arrange a meeting. If the coronavirus threat level decreases I will become more flexible with arranging in-person meetings.
 |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| 1. Been in contact with John Hudswell who writes and looks after the generation of zoom meetings for timetabled teaching activities, because I have experience being deadnamed on Zoom when joining class. He has said this:

I have yet to see this in action and will follow up on any feedback I receive.**In addition to this**, I have also been back in contact with Student Complaints after the lack of an adequate response to my complaint in September regarding deadnaming during enrolment and on the IT generated credentials. In this, I cited the Equality Act, and explicitly explained how the current process are unlawful in accordance with the Equality Act. This time the Complaints Team have hopefully seemed to realise the severity of these processes on trans students, and responded to me that I will receive updates as this discussion progresses. I have since received a response in late December that my complaint was being discussed among the relevant progress groups. I am going to contact the team soon and request an update as it has been a month since our last correspondence. 1. These are not explicitly related to my role or trans and non-binary students in particular, but I have raised the voices of the Plymouth Uni rent strike group in the recent meeting about the safety net. I am in their Discord server and am a point of casual contact between them and the Student Council.

3 & 4 – Beau, the secretary of the LGBT+ Society, has contacted me about setting up a semi-casual group with regular meetings for trans students. I brought forward that Discord may be the best application, as your display name can be whichever you wish (Facebook and Teams may display students’ deadnames as opposed to the name they use) and it is a casual setting with the ability for voice channels. I have not chased this up due to the holiday season, but once I begin my second semester in February, I will be in contact with Beau about this chat community. One thing I intend on being absolutely rigorous on is the boundaries and rules we will establish, as well as how we will explain to any newcomers to Discord on how to use the application.  |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| * John Hudswell has told me about the change he has proposed and should currently be in action (see 1 above).
* The response from student complaints (see 1 above).
 |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| Not related to my position as Trans and Non-Binary Officer, but as mentioned above in point 2 I raised concerns and questions from the Plymouth Uni rent strike group in our latest emergency meeting. |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| I plan to keep discussing with Beau about the creation of a trans student chat community, discussing boundaries, rules and instructions on how to use Discord.I will be updating John Hudswell on how the Zoom name change goes.I will be in contact with Student Complaints on updates on what is being done to change the enrolment process and the IT credential generation process.I also want to begin compiling a series of the achievements/changes I have been enacting since beginning my position. The next Union Council meeting will occur before I finish this, but I hope to contact the UPSU page to arrange a post about my position and what I have done for the students in the past year to express that progress is being made and to produce awareness of the situations that trans and non-binary students find themselves in, as well as update students on university goings-on. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| N/A |

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| **Accountability Board Chair**  |
| **My manifesto points** |
| 1. I will endeavour to bring transparency to the Accountability Board and aim to resolve any issues brought forward in a timely manner.
	* Ensuring clear and concise student representation.
2. I will lobby UPSU to create an accountability board reporting tool so that students can more easily raise their concerns.
	* Increasing accessibility and visibility of the Accountability Board.
3. I will lobby UPSU to ensure that election campaign regulations are enforced and seek to prevent sabbatical campaigning in student accommodation blocks and in University open access study environments.
	* Students should feel freedom to vote, not harassed into voting.
 |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| * With regards to my first manifesto point I am currently in communication with the UPSU communications team organise a takeover of the Instagram to introduce the accountability board to the rest of the student population. Also, I have had meetings with other elected members of Union Council to introduced myself, the board and what are aims are, and to see if there’s anything that we can help with.
* As from my previous UC report there is to be an option on the new SU reporting button to send issues to the AC
* With regards to the third point of my manifesto, I have had discussions with the Student Voice team about the election rules, procedures and FAQ’s, to see if there are any changes or amendments that need to be proposed and made, and will take part in the democratic review
 |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| Strong feedback from other elected officials about how they’re coping with their new roles and in communicating with the officials that they need to communicate with. Strong feedback from the other members of the board and from the Student Voice team has enabled me to help the other elected officials.  |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| **Attending meetings with the other member of the Accountability Board and the Student Voice team. I have also held meetings one to one with other elected members of Union Council to communicate them the aim and purpose of the accountability board and if there’s anything that we can do to help them. I plan on holding more meetings with the elected students to help to figure out how they are coping with there role**  |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| **I plan to continue to have my meetings with other elected officials and to have another meeting of the accountably board** |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| The Accountability Board would also like to recognize the outstanding work that is being undertaken by all the elected officials. Everyone has gone over and above and has put in a level of work that has gone over and above what would be required. The extra stress and responsibility that Covid has given has meant that the elected officials have had more on their plate then they have had in that past or were expecting to have when they ran for the role, and so the commitment and effort put in by the elected officials is exemplary and should be commended on the highest level. The Accountability Board is here to support you all through this trying time and would seek to support students in any way that they need.  |

**Reports not received from;**

**Gem Evelyn –Part-time International students Officer**

**Will Styles – Part-time Postgraduate Officer**

**Takudzwa Mawera – Part-time BAME Officer**

**Katherine Collins – Part-time Academic Officer**

**Samuel Pritchard – Part-time LGBT+ Officer**

**Vacant Roles**

**Part-time Mature Students Officer**

**Part-time Partner Institutions Officer**

**Please contact** **studentvoice@su.plymouth.ac.uk** **if you are interested in these roles**

**Appendix 5 – School Rep Updates**



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| **Art, Design and Architecture School Rep – Catriona Dodd** |
| **My manifesto points** |
| 1. Contacting course reps regularly about positives and negatives experienced in their course; this better connects the school and enables advice to be shared across courses, whilst celebrating where things are going well.
2. Making sure reps are confident in raising issues between SSLMS, and able to reassert their position come SSLMs.
3. Implementing a transparent process documenting points raised and action taken; this ensures the feedback loop is closed and the cohort are able to see what is happening, and facilitates a better degree of accountability to prevent the same issues reoccurring without a new resolution.
 |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| 1. a) Gathered a lot of feedback about safety net, very encouraging to see so many reps coming forward to have their voices heard

b) Looking into the possibility of having staff who have gone above and beyond celebrated in the staff newsletterc) Made contact with an additional reps who weren’t listed initially1. a) SSLMs have largely taken place, students seem to be doing well and feel comfortable reaching out if they need support in the interim
2. Raised the suggestion of course reps being listed on DLE pages at the FAF and FTLQC, was agreed this would be beneficial but no further progress made
 |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| Students are in desperate need of more support, ideally a new safety net.Lots of staff have gone above and beyond to support students, and this should be celebrated.ADA students are really struggling with the lack of campus access: deadlines are being pushed back as they simply can’t do their coursework. Students need dark rooms, workshop access and equipment hire. |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| **FoAHB Teaching Learning Quality Committee**: Lots of discussion around how zoom teaching is working and sharing the names of courses who have not had access to face-to-face teaching with the faculty.**Faculty Advisory Forum**Sharing what has gone well for students, what could be improved, offering feedback on projects for student benefits.**Focus group for Study and Wellbeing Policy**Addressed the style of the interventions as not supportive or student orientated, and why framing them as ‘wellbeing’ would be misleading. **Union Council**Many discussions about the safety net and concerning support from the university. |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| Arrange drop in zoom for course reps to catch up and ask questions.Follow up on rep listings on DLE, consider whether this needs to be addressed at a course level rather than faculty. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| Have addressed the need for a statement about campus access for creative courses with the VPs.Upcoming Democratic Review meeting with Union Council Chair. |

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| **Dental School Representative - Alastair Campbell** |
| **My manifesto points** |
| * Encourage greater contact between the students and senior staff, so that students can ask questions about administrative decisions. In my manifesto this was promised via introducing a form where students could post.
* To encourage contact between the years of the course. This would be done both academically and clinically.
* To ask for COVID-19 testing as there is currently no system in place. Due to the high amount of clinical time the dental students are exposed to this would be very useful.
 |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| * Have managed to secure testing before Christmas for all the fifth-year students who would not have been able to access it beforehand.
* Had a meeting with the course representatives regarding encouraging students to contact senior staff.
 |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| The feedback I have received is that the system of course representatives is already a very good one for getting answers from senior staff. The best way to improve this would not be to introduce a new forum but rather to improve the system currently in place. This would best be done by improving the signposting and awareness of the course representatives and their role.  |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| * Staff and Student Liaison Committee
* Course representative meeting
 |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| * Contact my year lead to discuss what can be done to encourage greater contact throughout the years.
* Ask for greater levels of COVID-19 testing moving forward into the new year.
 |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
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| **Representative for SoGEE’s – Izzy Haines** |
| **My manifesto points** |
| Encouraging the course communities to stay vibrant in this uncertain time. Although lectures are online, keep people engaged and passionate in their studies and listen to suggestions of ways to make this new type of learning more attractive. Ensure that through this distant learning people continue to feel supported by the faculty.  |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| I chaired a meeting on the 21st January available to all course representatives within my school. We discussed the content brought up in the emergency Union Council meeting such as ideas for a safety net alternative and the amount of support students from our school are receiving from the University. During this meeting I also got to know individual course representatives better and encouraged them all to report any feedback/ ideas/ questions that they may have. We also addressed the problems brought up by Emi about tutor support and feedback.  |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| * Some people's timetables still say that they will be having practical's at the beginning of February even though we are in a nationwide lock down. People do not know whether they must return to Uni for these practical's, so they do not miss content or stay where they are.
* Many people said themselves and their peers do not mind if there isn't a safety net policy they just want to be acknowledged and kept within the loop as they feel they do not know what is going on.
* Since the last review tutor support has increased dramatically within the school. The only people who raised problems regarding tutor support were those completing their dissertations.
* A few concerns arose regarding group coursework as people are struggling to get all members of groups to participate. There were suggestions about maybe reducing the weight of group work.
 |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| * SoGEE’s Staff and Student liaison meeting- attended to give feedback on areas in which the school could be improved.
* Student course representative review- A meeting chaired by myself to ensure that course representatives from my school feel they have been given a platform to share any feedback they have. Hopefully help to put those with questions at ease and ensure these questions get answered.
 |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| Follow up the issues raised by members of the school, ensure that the school and module leads have not forgotten the current problem at hand. By the next Union council meeting I hope to have sent out a plan for another course representative review to ensure all issues raised in the previous meeting have been solved/ answered. Possibly send out a survey to members of my school to ensure that all people, including those that do not want to come onto a zoom call, can give their feedback. Although we are in a very uncertain time at the moment and most societies are not meeting frequently, I hope to promote societies such as Geogsoc and Envirosoc that are holding zoom calls etc, encouraging further learning in a social environment in their chosen field. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
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| **School of Nursing and Midwifery Rep – Maeve Hoey**  |
| **My manifesto points** |
| * Engaging in committee meetings and being a student voice.
* Ensuring communication between students and the faculty.
* Making the school more inclusive.
* Staying informed on any current issues.
 |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| I have been attending the TL&Q meetings for the faculty and the whole school of health regularly. I have been holding regular meetings with course reps so they can have consistent communication with myself, and then passing any concerns onto relevant staff straight away. I have been part of panels for faculty held Q+A meetings to stay informed with any issues and to keep up to date on the ever-changing circumstances within my school. The school have recently called out for Diversity and Inclusion Champions, and I have applied for this position as well as asking the relevant staff to include me in any of their future projects.  |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| * Communication is getting better between the faculty and its students; this may because of the regular webinars held by staff for students to ask questions and voice their concerns.
* Worries over the Safety Net, I have asked my students to pass on their thoughts and feedback to our VP of Education.
* Concerns over placement, still ongoing issues with safety and not being able to go onto placement.
* Just a lot of anxiety and worries surrounding the pandemic and how it is going to affect our learning. Many 3rd students considering going into paid placements, many 1st year students disappointed as they cannot attend placement due to risk.
* Worries from many nursing and midwifery students with learning difficulties and accessible exams and teaching, deputy and myself have aimed to address this a few times. But this is a continuing issue that I myself am trying to address in future meetings.
* Some modules could have more workbooks to compliment students learning, addressed this in School TL&Q but staff said that workbooks “only blend to specific modules”.
 |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| * 02/12/2020 – School of Health TL+Q – attended to stay up to date with the issues at the time, questions asked on how many Course Reps had been trained in nursing faculty, passed this onto Student Voice for advice.
* 06/12/2020 – met with two first year students who are passionate about caring for those with learning difficulties. We had a long discussion on how important it is for future nurses to be able to recognise LD’s and how to care for those who have them. We had sent a large emailing to the faculty suggesting that they incorporate more teaching on LD’s in our learning. Suggested how this could be done.
* 09/12/2020 – met with Plymouth Reps and faculty staff. Students were able to discuss their feedback and concerns openly and I went onto to address those concerns with relevant staff and helped assist with some solutions to student issues.
* 10/12/20 – met with Truro Reps and faculty staff. Students again were able to put forward their concerns and feedback directly to staff and I was able to hear any upcoming issues and concerns. Made sure to address these with staff.
* 06/01/2021 – part of a Second Year Webinar, where I was on the panel. Students were asked how they were all feeling, and staff wanted to know if they had any concerns. I address second year personally and encouraged them to speak to their course reps, and also to be kind to themselves and look after their mental health. Overall, very successful meeting and many students felt listened to.
* 06/01/2021 – part of a Third Year webinar with the faculty, where I was again on the panel. Very successful as students were able to voice their concerns and ask questions directly. Again, I made students aware of the support services around them and reminded them to pass on any feedback to their course reps.
* 11/01/2021 – held a meeting with the third-year course reps so they could personally tell me their concerns or feedback – was really successful and I was able to collect a lot of information to feedback to staff at the School TL&Q.
* 12/01/2021 – School TL&Q Meeting, voiced student concerns and asked staff to consider holding regular webinars to allow students to ask questions and voice their concerns directly, where I myself can be part of the panel. Students agreed that they’d appreciate this communication with staff more regularly considering the circumstances we are in.
* 13/01/2021 – Emergency Union Council on Safety Net – joined this meeting with Course Rep, Hannah Spiller, and addressed our faculty’s concerns as best as we could.
 |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| I am currently meant to be on my first placement, however that has been postponed. So while I await to go back onto placement, I will be there for my newly elected deputies to help them adjust to their roles. I’ll also be here for student feedback, will be sending out an email this week to let students know of my availability.  |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| I have two deputies, Nicolas Carne (2nd Year Nursing Student at KSPA) and also Rhi Ward (midwifery student). |

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| **School of Health Professions – Simrandeep Kaur** |
| **My manifesto points** |
| 1. find a safe way for students to practice clinical techniques and communication.
2. Arrange feedback sessions and update students accordingly.
3. Discuss the possibilities of a safety net for this academic year.
 |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
|  Emailed all SOHP course reps with a survey, survey included different modes of engagement students found useful for online lectures, how satisfied students were with the quality of teaching, and any concerns they had regarding lockdown. The survey received 140 responses. Some feedback was presented in the teaching and learning meeting on 13/01/2021 the remaining was discussed on a one-to-one basis with Daniela Oehring, who is going to go through feedback and send to the appropriate programme leads. Still waiting to receive detailed feedback from the SOHP programme leads regarding the survey responses, which I will then communicate to SOHP school reps. |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
| 13/01/2021- discussed appropriate methods in which students would be able to voice concern e.g arranging drop-in sessions, personal tutor. |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
| 3/12/2020 Faculty of health teaching, learning and quality committee meeting11/12/2020 Teaching and learning meeting- student business14/12/2020 relationship between course and placement provider and how the course is going- Paramedics13/01/2021 Teaching and learning meeting- survey response feedback15/01/2021 one to one meeting to go through survey feedback collected |
| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
| Update students with feedback from the teaching and learning meetings |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
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| **School of Biomedical Sciences Rep – Libby M** |
| **My manifesto points** |
| • Create awareness about students’ rights. • Work closely with Faculty to ensure that students are aware of hidden course costs such as travel expenses whilst doing an optional year. • Allow students to anonymously contact all members of the UC on an online platform about any improvements/ideas that we could implement.  |
| **Progress on my manifesto points** |
| • Regularly remind students to use the Student Voice app when students contact me (especially if the SU can help with their concerns). • Emailed Faculty about putting more detailed information about travel costs on the website.  |
| **Key feedback I have received** |
|  Students have contacted me about: • Not being able to access library facilities during national lockdown • Wanting to bring back the safety net, which was previously implemented in 2020 (top 60 credits) during the COVID-19 pandemic • Wanting a reduction in tuition fees due to little/no face-to-face teaching time • Concerns regarding little/no laboratory practical sessions (especially final year and MSc students) and the implications of this on their future careers/further studies. • Alternative solutions to the safety net if the top 60 credits idea is rejected by the Execs/VC due to issues with whether the degree obtained will be just as valid.  |
| **Meetings I have attended and my contribution to these** |
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| * Organised course rep group chat meetings via Zoom to discuss any issues in more detail and inform of them of any updates every 2-3 weeks.

• FTQLC – issues with EC policy. For example, only knowing whether the EC will be approved or not after the assignment deadline. • STQLC – spoke about issues regarding access to library facilities such as physical books during national lockdown and lack of asymptomatic testing for students training in hospitals. • SSLC – Chaired the meeting. Course reps spoke about how students want a reduction in tuition fees due to little/no face-to-face teaching and/or laboratory practical sessions. • Arranged a meeting with the head of school (Gail) and associate head of school (Simon) with two final year students to discuss specific issues affecting final year students. For example, lack of support for students with young children (childcare), concerns about the originality of dissertations if students have not been able to conduct their own laboratory experiments and students worrying about the effect of COVID-19 on their grades without the safety net and/or approvals of EC before the submission deadline. • UC – discussed alternatives to the safety net and student concerns regarding COVID-19 with other members of the UC.  |
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| **What I plan to do before the next Union Council meeting**  |
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| * Contact Emi (Sabbs officer) about potentially re-weighting grades achieved this academic year if the same safety net implemented in 2020 is not used for this academic year.
* Hold a course rep meeting in early February to inform them of any relevant updates.
* Contact Lynn to ask about whether essential key students will be able to receive asymptomatic testing/COVID-19 vaccinations at the hospital like other members of staff.
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| **Other updates** (see above) |
| * I sent a very detailed letter outlining all the concerns/issues students studying BMS+ have had over this academic year and potential solutions to these problems to both the head of school (Gail) and associate head of school (Simon). The letter contains quoted messages from students who have contacted me and/or the course reps. The response was positive and both more than willing to help students out. Further discussions with the Exec group and VC are required to progress further.
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**Reports not received**

**India Ellis – School of Law, Criminology and Government Rep**

**Tafadzwa Nyambuya – School of Psychology Rep**

**Emily Schenk – Peninsula Medical School Rep**

**Georgia Small – School of Biological and Marine Sciences Rep**

**Vivian Hocking – School of Engineering, Computing and Maths Rep**

**Vacant**

**Humanities and Performing Arts School Rep**

**Plymouth Institute of Education Rep**

**Plymouth Business School Rep**

**Please contact** **studentvoice@su.plymouth.ac.uk** **if you are interested in this role**

**Appendix 6 – Sabbatical Officers Updates**

President Update

*KC*

Happy new year we hope!

The month of January has been one with a number of challenges for the students. The lockdown has made the academic and non-academic experiences a very difficult one for students and this has led to students needing additional supports and thoughts in these areas. As a sabbatical team, we have been attending various meetings to ensure that the students voices are being heard and that they are properly supported as much as possible.

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| **Manifesto Point**  | **Update**  |
| **Inclusivity**: Endeavour to make the university more inclusive for students from minority groups such as postgraduate and nursing students. I will lobby for full representation for these groups by ensuring student events fit within their timetable |   I have channeled my main focus of this point to currently be on postgraduates and international students. This is because we have had very little engagement with these student groups in particular, since the beginning of the new session and even more since the lockdown this year. With regards to international students, I have been in communications with the International Students Advice centre(ISA) to find out if they have been hearing from international students. ISA have constantly come back saying that they have not heard much from international students and noting that not all international students are currently in the country. This has had me concerned that international students may be going through various challenges as well but might not feel comfortable enough to come out to say, due to varied reasons. As a result of this, myself and Fawzy (VP Wellbeing & Diversity) will be hosting an international student open forum where we can find out from them, what challenges they might be facing, tell them what challenges other students are facing, answer questions that they might have, and find out how we can improve communication with them.With regards to postgrads, I am looking to arrange a meeting with Emi (VP Education) and Will (Postgraduate officer) to discuss ideas on how we can support postgrads more as an SU, and see how we can improves communication with them. |
| **Democracy**: Ensure that there is more student representation on university committees in order to get wider student views and participation by using the likes of our part time officers, course reps, members of our sports clubs and societies. | Referendum policy & democratic review:In order to improve democratic engagement in the SU, Will and I will be looking to propose a policy at the next union council meeting. This policy will look to reduce the amount of signatory for motions submission and referendum calling from 400 back to 200. Will and I agreed that it has been really difficult to use this policy and has not been used since being mandated. We also explored the option of having it as low as a 100 signatories needed but we thought it would be making it too easy to process, and the sabb team agreed with that in the team meeting.In addition to the improvement of our democratic processes, we (senior leadership team) are looking to start a democratic review discussions soon, in set for next academic session. |
| **Sustainability**: I will create student led initiatives where students with more sustainability knowledge are being empowered to educate others. My long-term goal is to create a university where all students have the foundational knowledge of sustainability. |  Sustainability forum (sustainability podcasts), sustainability embedded modules to be added to uni curriculum.Help shape uk guidance on sustainable education.I attended the last sustainability forum chaired by Neve (sustainability part-time officer) where we discussed on how sustainability could be improved in the university from students point of view. I was also delighted to my experience with regards to sustainability which led to my manifesto point. We recognised that it may not work exactly how I thought of it due to the current situation of things, but we also explored various means which we could achieve this of which one was having a sustainability podcast series. Following that forum, Neve and I attended the last sustainability advisory group meeting where we did make them aware of these concerns that students have with regards to sustainability. We also shared our ideas from the sustainability forum, of which they were delighted with and showed interest in wanting to work with us to help achieve them. We were also informed at this meeting that there were plans to include sustainability modules to the syllabus for students to create more sustainability awareness amongst students.  |
|  |  |

**OTHER UPDATES**

**MEETING WITH THE VICE-CHANCELLOR**

The sabbatical team met with the VC earlier this month where we raised the burning concerns of students around the need to reinstate the safety net policy and rent challenges due to the lockdown. Below are links to the VP education’s update on safety net and VP wellbeing’s update on rent, following our meeting with the VC.

<https://www.upsu.com/news/article/upsu/An-update-on-the-Safety-Net-from-your-VP-Education/>

[https://www.upsu.com/news/article/upsu/An-update-on-accommodation-from-your-VP-Wellbeing-amp-Diversity/](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.upsu.com%2Fnews%2Farticle%2Fupsu%2FAn-update-on-accommodation-from-your-VP-Wellbeing-amp-Diversity%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cchukwudi.ezenyi%40su.plymouth.ac.uk%7Cb09c8a13bf8c47f15e8808d8bf07beee%7C5437e7eb83fb4d1abfd3bb247e061bf1%7C1%7C0%7C637469388337875581%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=fJRcx4oXTOAJWMjFd6bRlgx9%2FgU%2FMIjn%2FOjAmAEXMYk%3D&reserved=0)

**UPIC MEETING AND NEW STUDENTS Q&A SESSION**

I raised concerns in one of leadership meetings about the University of Plymouth International College engagement with the students’ union and the need for us to extend support to their students as they are full members of the SU. Following that, Oli set up a meeting for us (myself and Oli) to meet with the head of UPIC and the student engagement coordinator from UPIC. This meeting ran successfully as we did discuss ideas to improve their students’ student experience, especially from a non-academic point as well. We agreed to take on more of the social side of things for them for the benefit of the students.

**TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING**

We recently had a trustee board meeting where we had an external auditor with us to tell us the feedback from auditing our accounts, which were positive.

**SAFEGUARDING WORKING GROUP**

I recently attended the safeguarding working group meeting (previously known as prevent) where we had a guest police officer tell us about the kind of issues that are becoming common amongst students and younger adults, but he specified that most of these things were not common in the southwest. It was also mentioned at this meeting that they were working with the SU to ensure our policies are aligned.

**STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE**

We had the student life meeting which I chaired just recently. It was a success because the sabbatical had the opportunity to raise urgent student concerns ranging from inclusivity, rent issues, to need for physical and mental wellbeing spaces on campus, which were all very well received by members of this committee and got actioned on. We also discuss the membership of this committee and the need for a sub working group, and the membership of that. We would be looking to vote on who would be members of these committees at union council for more student representation.

**Think of running session**

Vice President Education Update

*Emilia Dowse*

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| **Manifesto Point**  | **Update**  |
| **Extenuating Circumstances**I will endeavour to amend the extenuating circumstances policy, making it more inclusive of the underrepresented issues students face. To make these adjustments, I aim to create a tool for students to report difficulties when applying for extenuating circumstances. | * Met with Anna Sendall, she has given me advice on how to start on this point.
* I have used the appeals and complaints training sessions to learn more about the extenuating circumstances.
* Have attended UTLQC, where we have had discussions about whether students should still receive extenuating circumstances in light of COVID in 20/21.
* I advocated that students should still receive the 10-day extension, but they should have to submit a form and self-certify.
* The 20/21 academic year will allow all students to self-certify for a 10-day extension, or to non-submit.
* I attended the Quality and Standards subcommittee and have asked to be on the subgroup for the reviewal of the extenuating circumstances policy. I am now waiting for the committees to be set up.
* On the 9th of November I attended my first meeting for the Extenuating Circumstances Policy review. We discussed the current policy and the improvements which need to be made in light of an external audit the university had made or the policy. I mentioned my manifesto goals of making the document more accessible and easier to navigate for students. I also highlighted the need to include mention to some of the underrepresented issues students are facing.
* On the 26th of November I attended an Extenuating circumstance review meeting. We spoke about not requiring evidence for sensitive extenuating circumstances requests such as bereavements and sexual assults etc. We also spoke about expanding the circumstances students can submit to include natural disasters, and terror attacks etc. We also discussed the fit to sit policy and how students who become ill during an assessments can be supported and not penalised.
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| **Life Skills Seminars**I will lobby to incorporate life skills seminars into induction week to help students to adjust smoothly to student life. Students with the relevant life experience will deliver sessions such as ‘how to student’, presenting, budgeting etc.  | * Briefly discussed with advice that they may be able to help me with this manifesto point
* Met with student voice and planned out a timeline for when these seminars will take place.
* I will try and adapt the seminars to the COVID period by making some around digital learning and how best to manage fatigue.
* I took part in a Student Life podcast about digital fatigue and how students can manage the increase in screen time.
 |
| **Accessibility**I will inform academic staff about how the presentation of their lecture materials can hinder learning abilities. I will encourage providing the option of coloured paper for handouts and advise against the use of black text on white backgrounds. Many students are unaware of how colours and presentation influence their ability to process information; I hope to improve this by breaking down learning barriers. | * Met with Jennie Winter head of Educational Development.
* We discussed how they might help me with this manifesto point, hopefully by including it in their training sessions for new staff.
* Met with Jennie Winter to plan the creation a of talking head video in which I educate staff members about the SU, Sabbatical team and my role as VP Education. I will also include a segment on accessibility and how they can improve their lecture materials to make them more accessible to students.
* I filmed the video for digital educations teaching courses. The video included how academics can improve accessibility through making simple changes to their materials such as changing the colour of their backgrounds and handouts and about how lecturers at the University should be thinking of ways they can make their lectures accessible by design and not just as a response to individual needs.
 |
| **Lecture Capture**Following on from the work Millie did around lecture capture last year. | * I attended the AV-refresh board, where we discussed the introduction of hybrid teaching rooms.
* These would allow for lecturers to teach live sessions with students both physically and virtually attending
* I have made a strong case as to why this should be introduced, with the main focus on students with disabilities and improving the sense of belonging.
* I am hoping that with the blended learning approach we can move to having all lectures (where possible) captured and uploaded on to the DLE
* The lecture capture policy was approved at UTLQC.
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| **Buddy Scheme**I am working with the VP-Wellbeing to implement a new buddy scheme, where 1st year students will be paired with a 2nd year student to give them advice and friendship throughout the year. | * I had a meeting with Fawzy and advice to discuss a similar scheme they had in the past.
* Decided that we would implement a very basic scheme, which would act as a trial for future years.
* Researched into similar schemes and how they were run at other Student Unions.
* The buddy scheme was delegated to the Volunteering department. The scheme is now up and running with over 50 students signed up to be buddies and over 50 to have a buddy.
 |

**Other updates**

**Safety Net**

* I initially raised the topic of implementing a new safety net at the University Teaching and Learning Quality Committee (UTLQC) on the 11th of November following students requests for one. I was told that the University would not be reintroducing one because many of the amendments had been kept from the previous year and the University had prepared for blended learning it wasn’t needed.
* I went away and collated student feedback on why a safety net was needed and raised it again at UTLQC on the 23rd of November. At this meeting the student petition was also spoken about and the committee noted that there was confusion of what students wanted from a safety net. They also said that they still would not be implementing it due to the above reasons.
* I followed this up by consulting with students and Union Council to work out what they wanted from a safety net and I presented this to the chair of UTLQC who told me to write a paper on it.
* I began writing the paper, however when we returned from annual leave after Christmas it was clear to see that with lockdown 3, more measures would need to be put in place.
* I raised this at UTLQC on the 12th of January and the committee agreed that additional measures would need to be put in place to supports students, but it might not be the best of 60 credit approach students are asking for. The University will be making decisions about a safety net within the coming weeks, ensuring that they maintain academic integrity.
* We also bought this to the attention of the Vice Chancellor in our meeting on the 13th of January.
* On the 25th of January UTLQC signed off on automatically validating EC’s, allowing students who fail an assessment to re-sit at first attempt. They are still looking into what more they can do to support students and I will be involved in that discussion and decision making.

**Digital Q&A**

The SU has been working with the University to put on digital Q&A sessions to address students' questions on important issues such as the safety net, student mental health, fees and refunds etc. The idea of the sessions is to give a face to the University and to help students feel heard and responded to in a direct way. It is our hope that these will become regular sessions with the University and will continue into the new academic year.

* Our first Q&A was on the topic of the safety net. We launched the question submissions on the 18th of January and closed them after 24 hours. After submissions were closed, I worked with student voice and the comms team to collate and narrow down the answer submissions to send to the University.
* On the 21st of January I interviewed Julian Chaudhuri and Adele Hill in our first Q&A. The interview will be released to students and staff on the 26th of January.

**University Comms Group**

* Following on from the Student communication sent out on the 8th of January and the response it received on social media, the university set up a new emergency communication group to address students' frustrations and concerns.
* The group is currently focused on addressing four main topics. 1. the safety net 2. the rent strike 3. Fee refunds/reduction and 4. hardship fund, however this may evolve in the future.
* They are working to not only address the surface level issues such as the social media response, but also the core issues such as support staff, comms teams and lecturers not having the knowledge or understanding to respond to students.
* The group currently meets every week and I asked to sit on it to ensure they were considering the student voice.

**Personal Tutoring Policy Review**

* I am sitting on the working group for the personal tutoring and academic support review. We are reviewing the current personal tutoring policy and working to improve it to ensure better support for students.
* Some of the changes to the policy include having a required amount tutor sessions per academic year, introducing pastoral tutors to provide an additional support person for wellbeing and pastoral needs, and encouraging group tutorials. This should ensure that all UG students are supported throughout their entire time at the University.
* The updated personal tutoring policy went to UTLQC on the 25/01/21 for its first draft and will be voted upon within the coming months. Once voted in the policy will be implemented in 21/22.

**Clever Student Lets**

* I approached the SU’s leadership group with concerns that students have shared with UPSU about Clever Student Lets.
* We provided CSL with a document of the themes of topics students were raising with our SU Advice Team, as well as forwarding them an open access document of over 50 student’s experiences with CSL.
* The CEO, one of our Directors and I met with Clever Student Lets and I outlined the complaints students had raised. We then gave them a two week period to respond to our concerns.
* I created a video outlining the Sabbatical Offices response to students concerns and what CSL has promised to do in light of hearing them.
* There was mixed response to the video. Some students were happy that the SU was seen to be acting on their feedback, others understood that we are in a fixed contract with CSL, but do not want the SU to work with them in the future and some want the SU to break the contract now.
* I fed back students responses to the video at our leadership meeting. We then followed this up by meeting with the incoming CEO of CSL to readdress the complaints by students.
* I am meeting with the CEO of CSL on the 26/01/21 to discuss things going forward.

**Meetings and Other**

* I met with Lesley Castens and Stephanie Brunell from the Library. I raised the issue of students not being able to access e-resources. They advised me to signpost students to their IT specialists, or to them at the library. They raised the issue of students not complying with the rules in the library.
* Other meetings I attended include the Attended the AV refresh board meeting, Student Life Committee, and the Quality and Standards Committee.
* The officer team wrote a Graduation speech, which we will deliver at the online Graduations in February.
* I attended a digital strategy focus group with two of our School Reps. I found this meeting very positive and have suggested they run the focus group with Union Council.
* I sat on the panel of a major misconduct hearing.
* I attended the School Rep drop ins put on by student voice. I supported the reps by giving advice or signposting them to relevant people or services.

**Media**

Due to everything being online this year, I feel it is more important than ever to keep students up to date with the work we are doing and get their feedback on it as soon as possible. I have been using social media and videos to do this.

* Safety Net Updates

<https://www.upsu.com/news/article/upsu/University-Safety-Net-update/>

<https://www.upsu.com/news/article/upsu/An-update-on-the-Safety-Net-from-your-VP-Education/>

[https://www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/17879655116029066/](https://www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/17879655116029066/?fbclid=IwAR3exfRx1Fpxi8PpJRIxrG8SccY3SA05g3RgM_pNzULbe5AXSFqL3Ql_iSs)

* Library Update Video:

<https://www.upsu.com/news/article/upsu/An-update-from-your-Sabbatical-Officers-Using-the-Library/>

Vice President Wellbeing & Diversity Update

*Fawzy Ahmed*

January was an interesting term with a lot of challenges ranging from Safety net policy to Rent rebates. It has been good to see Students continuously provide us with feedback as it helps keeps us informed of what students are facing. Looking forward to the coming months!

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| **Manifesto Point**  | **Update**  |
| Make Wellbeing forums as regular as sports and society forums, this would create a platform that would break the stigma surrounding mental health, and give students the opportunity to have their voices heard and for students to give feedback on student support services. |  * I had a meeting with student voice on how I can begin to achieve this goal. The discussion was largely focused on the fact that there are many support services available for students, but many students are not aware of these services and how to access them. There is a disconnect with what is available and the information that is out there.
* The forums will essentially be a platform for students to find out information about the support services available for them. It will serve as a feedback session to find out what works for them and what does not work.
* I hosted another wellbeing forum on the 11th of November, the session focused on Tips for wellbeing and University experience for students. The turnout was low, however a few students reached out to let me know that they wanted to attend but they could not, they asked if notes can be shared afterwards. I will be sharing of the notes of the forums on social media so all students will be able to access all the information.
* I hosted another Wellbeing forum on the 18th of December which focused on sharing tips on how to take care of your wellbeing and support services and places that were open in Plymouth over the Christman holiday.
* I am looking to host another Wellbeing forum at the beginning of new term. I will be looking to get feedback from students on how they can be better supported by the University.
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| Work alongside the University Equality and Diversity team to champion equality and diversity using promotional videos and posters to tackle issues relating to racism, islamophobia, homophobia, or any other form of prejudice thus making campus a welcoming environment for all.  | * I had a discussion with student Voice on how to move this forward.
* November is the month that has a few dates in the diversity calendar. November is month for Movember, Disability History month, and Islamophobia Awareness month.
* For movember, I put out a statement on social media to create awareness of the importance of movember and why it is important.
* Disability History Awareness month starts on the 18th of November. The University Equality and Diversity team has some plans for the month. I will be catching up with them to see how I ca support their plans. I also intend to work with Disability officer and the Vice President education to work on some plans for the month.
* For islamophobia awareness month, I have contacted the Islamic society to ask if they have any plans for the month, I will be putting out a social media post to create awareness of the month and what islamophobia is about.
* **#BeAnAlly Campaign:** Putting plans to launch this new campaign. This campaign is set to launch in a few weeks’ time. It will focus on sharing tips and creating awareness of some microaggressions faced by some marginalized groups such as BAME, People with Disabilities, LGBTQ+, Muslim and Women. The main aim is to create awareness of some of the prejudice that people face in our community such as Ableism, Homophobia etc. I will be working with the University’s EDI committee to create awareness of this campaign, so it is shared across the University.
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| Work alongside the Student Support Services to orientate international students to be knowledgeable about mental health, thereby enabling them to support themselves as well as their peers. Using the welcome week and social media as a platform to engage the students.  | * I am in regular contact with the international student advice team to find out how international students are coping and if they require support.
* I will be sharing posts on social media to try and engage all students including international students on how they can care for their wellbeing during this unprecedented time.
* The SU president and I are hosting an international student open forum on the 3rd of February 2021, where international students can come along to provide feedback and to be signposted on a range of topics such as Wellbeing, COVID hardship fund and more. The international student advice team will also be attending the session to provide information/answer questions relating to immigration/visa.
* I am looking to compile an Interntional student mental health guide after being aspired by other unions. I have reached out to some of these other unions asking them some for some tips and information that will be helpful for international students in Plymouth.
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**OTHER UPDATES**

**Inclusivity and Diversity**

The University is undertaking an Access and Participation Plan to improve the access and participation of underrepresented groups in the University in line with the Office for students' requirements. I had a meeting with Julian True who is the APP manager at the University. The meeting was focused on how we can involve students in the work of the APP. In the coming weeks, I will begin to form groups of students that identify as any of the underrepresented groups, so the University will have a better understanding of the experiences and barriers that these students face. Thus, this will ensure that students voice is involved. I will be working alongside with Course reps and school reps to try and get any interested students involved.

Following from this discussion, I raised the topic of Inclusivity and Diversity at the Student Life Committee. I provided some feedback I had received from some students that they do not engage well in the University because they do not feel included and supported. This issue was also raised in the Wellbeing Management group, where the conversation of how they can make the support services they provide more inclusive and diverse for all students. Moving forward, I will be working with Oli to try and collate this feedback from some of our student societies that identify as being part of Underrepresented groups. This feedback will then be fed back to the University and used to shape the University’s policy moving forward. I will also be link with the University EDI committee to discuss how we can strategically work our way through this.

**#Talkaboutsex week**

Week commencing 16th November, the University launched its Sexual Violence Misconduct Policy. During this week, I arranged an interview with the UPSU President, KC and head of student services, Alice Ludgate to introduce the week. The interview consisted of aims and importance of the week, what is the SVM policy, what's on during the week and lastly where students can access both internal and external support. During the week, I am scheduled to chair a debate on topics relating to sexual violence such as sugar dating. I will be chairing the debate alongside the part-time Welfare Officer.

**Housing Campaign**

I hosted a know your rights session with the student advice team to inform students to their rights as tenants staying in a student accommodation. The session was very formative and highlighted the rights of students as well as the rights of landlords. The session ended with me and the advice students to stop and think before signing any tenancy agreements for the 2021 session and informing students that the advice team carries out free tenancy checks for all students, and are free, independent and confidential, so it would be a good idea to pass their tenancies to advice to go through before signing it off. The session was good as the students that attended were happy with the session and had a few questions, we had about 20 minutes of question time.

**Rent Rebates and Reduction**

I raised this issue in several University meetings such as student life committee. I also raised this on behalf of the sabbatical team in our meeting with the Vice-chancellor on the 13th of January where she informed us that the University were in active talks with the 3rd party company that manages the University Halls. On behalf of the Sabbatical team, I wrote a letter to the Plymouth MPs which all the officers signed urging them to lobby the University as well as Private landlords to offer students some financial relief during this ongoing situation. I put together a private landlord toolkit for students renting with private landlords which contains tips and information on how to rent during this pandemic. I raised this issue in several University meetings such as student life committee. On behalf of the Sabbatical team, I wrote a letter to the Plymouth MPs urging them to lobby the University as well as Private landlords to offer students some financial relief during this ongoing situation. I put together a private landlord toolkit for students renting with private landlords which contains tips and information on how to rent during this pandemic. I will continue to raise students growing concerns with regards to rent and accommodation and ensure that their voices are heard. .I will continue to raise students growing concerns with regards to rent and accommodation and ensure that their voices are heard.

**Policy proposal for joining national campaign for fees reduction**

Based on some feedback I received, I raised the topic of fees reduction. I raised the topic of what is our stance as a Union on Tuition fee reduction for the Academic year 2020/2021. I have put together the basic outline of a motion which proposes that we take a stance on this national campaign.

Vice-President Activities Update

*Verity Lemm*

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| **Manifesto Point**  | **Update**  |
| **Sustainability**: Promote environmental sustainability, embed environmental action points into icons (student group recognition scheme) to reward student groups for their efforts. Work with student groups to help them become more finically sustainable moving forward. Ensuring long term sustainability of student groups by helping them target all student demographics, this will help with inclusivity and diversity.  | * Continuing discussions on how we can incorporate sustainability into ICONS, if not this year then for the years to come.
* Have managed to have a discussion with Sam Davies, from the university, regarding how we can include our students groups in sustainability projects across the campus. We discussed the idea of sustainability champions, where we could have individuals representing our student groups. Sam is looking to get funding for a staff member to look after this initiative. Hopefully we will touch base soon, but this is exciting.
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| **Mental well-being and support**: Continue to develop mental health support within student groups. Introduce well-being advocates into societies and volunteering groups and continue to enhance within sports clubs. Make sure the mental well-being related courses are readily available by demonstrating their importance to the University. |

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| * Am in discussions with the University and the advice centre about running further information session and look after your mate training for the student group members. I will hopefully get this to coincide with the elections o new committees. This will help students be trained up and ready for the start of the next academic year.
* Have been re sharing all university advice and support and SU services within the student network for them to share with their members to hopefully increase the reach.
* Please see section below re campus master plan and well-being spaces
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| **Appropriate facilities and funding**: Continue to lobby the University into providing appropriate room space and facilities for all students, so they can achieve the most out of their extra-curricular activities. Support student groups with sponsorships and partnerships to help with long term financial sustainability. Follow through the newly passed sports strategy to ensure the University is working towards developing sports at UoP.  |

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| * Have had meetings with the university to discuss council funding with regards to life centre closing – on going.
* Have had meetings on how to pursue the sports strategy this year and whether it is viable to bring in a member of staff to oversee this within the university. Have spoke with Antony about what we provide and how we can progress strategy from our end.
* Have been involved in discussions surrounding covid-19 testing on campus and how this will effect the students going forward.
* Raised at SLC about the campus masterplans and the lack of both physical and mental well-being spaces on campus within the new developments. This is important to me as this is heavily included in the sports strategy. This was received really well and I will now be liaising with estates and facilities with the backing of the committee. Hopefully this will have positive progress.
* Have been working closely with SU staff surrounding refunds for our students who have had limited experience for their money. Working on a bigger project to see if we can refund our students, but allow them to still be member e.g. fund their memberships, as we do not want covid-19 or money to be a barrier in the current circumstances.
* Spent time with jack going over the societies term 2 funding allocations. Still have money left over from semester 1 o we are looking into what this can be used on to help the socs out!
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| **Recognition and Celebration**: Continue to build on #TeamPlymouth by using this platform to celebrate all student groups. Continue to spotlight student groups monthly for outstanding achievements. Evaluate the icons scheme (student group recognition), based on student feedback and current student trends.  |

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| * Delighted that the SU takeovers are happening again now - Helped the continuation of the main SU take overs on Instagram as we had lots of groups that wanted to do it before, so we had a bit of a waiting list. Have also been using the team Plymouth social media to celebrate.
* Ongoing - Have had initial discussions about the SU awards and how they might look this year. It was generally decided that they need to be different to reflect the difficulties faced this year. We also agreed it was important to celebrate everyone no matter how small!
* Will be sharing the ICONS plans with the forums, we hope students will recognize the fact that ICONS has been adapted this year to recognise any achievements during this year.
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| **BUCS Student chair role** | * Had a BUCS advisory in January, which was a chance to catch up with the national staff and institutions since the cancelling of BUCS. The most important things to note are that BUCS have released a survey to see what/ if institutions want some competition in semester 3. they are not currently looking as far as next year. We are still waiting for an update re affiliations. I was able to raise my concerns that in semester 3 students are normally academically focused, also might not be safe since students have been out of sport for so long.
* Had a follow up regional meeting, as a region we were able to discuss our institutional changes due to covid e.g. UWE extending their term and Bath cutting theirs short. Good to communicate about organizing friendlies if possible. Also asked the staff to encourage their sabbs to come to the next meeting so students could feed into these meetings and I could have their view for the advisory meetings.

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| **Student group forums, FTLQC, Union council.**  |

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| * We have had a couple of emergency Union Councils where we have had the opportunity to discuss Clever Students lets and the Safety Net. This was valuable feedback that the sabbatical team can take forward.
* Have been in touch with the FoH school reps at the drop in sessions to discuss their concerns regarding their schools. I have been passing this information onto Adele and Emi where we can work together. Have got another FTLQC (informal) this week, where we can raise some of these themes.
* Will be sitting on webcam policy working group moving into this semester. This s a theme especially within the FoH due to professionalism.
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| **Varsity 2021** | * Met with Marjon regarding varsity. After my meeting with the other student officers from across the country it was good to go into this meeting with some ideas. The vast majority of other institutions want to provide some kind of varsity, but everyone knows the main issues will be the viability of the sport and the spectators. Most are going to try and organize behind closed doors fixtures, with the possibility of live streaming. Marjon were also keen for this, and since then we have had a catch up with our digital and comms department to pitch the ideas. We also spoke to the varsity captains and asked them to consider a few things:
	+ How can we still raise money for charity
	+ Where can you play your fixture that is safe and secure (not on marjon campus as it will cause issues for spectators)
	+ When could your fixture take place? With BUCS potentially back to back, when can you play? Weekend? Evening? Before or after easter?

UPDATE: Have met the committee again in January to touch base. We went over the constitution and myself as chair made amendments as necessary. * Looking ahead this month we will work towards organizing a virtual varsity, so we have something ready if a physical varsity cannot go ahead.
* Decided as a committee if we can do a physical varsity we will be doing it directly after Easter break before exams and dissy deadlines
* Have spoken to Marjon President regarding some societies taking part in varsity g. Esports or gaming.
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**OTHER UPDATES**

* Have met with the TPTO women’s officer to discuss her plans for the year and where I can support. A lengthy discussion about international women's day. Plans to involved some student groups and potentially link up with the university.
* Have provided some resources for the university holocaust Memorial Day, will be sharing the resources provided within the university through the student networks on the day.
* Have been attending the school rep drop in session with student voice, to help support the concerns our school reps have. Mostly regarding uni comms and safety net. Was able to take the feedback away.
* Have supported Emi where needed with the safety net discussions by attending UTLCQ. I have also been invited to sit on the University covid response group, which will be great for student voice and feedback moving forward.
* I met with the new co-chairs of RAG committee and I was able to chat with them about their plans for the year. We discussed the challenges and money raising plans for the selected charities.
* Have been attending the ‘thinking of running’ sessions, hosted by student voice, this is for the upcoming sabbatical elections. We also did a specific session for VP Activities based on feedback from forum.
* Met with a couple of societies surrounding their concerns about engagement and AGMS etc. Was nice to chat and reassure them that they’re not alone. Gave advice on what they can try In the meantime, and also that the SU will be working on how we can support AGMS and committees into the coming year.
* Have been working with the sabbatical team on a couple of projects – graduation speeches, hardship fund video, and library face masks video. In our team meetings we have also discussed our approach for the meetings with the VC and DVC and the Board of Governors.
* Normal trustee meetings have been taking place and we were given a review from the auditors. Antony is also looking at changing how we run our SU sub committees and their membership.