

**Part-time Officers Updates March**

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| **Postgraduate part-time officer – Tonari Arikekpar** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| Postgraduates want more opportunities to interact not just to socialize but to learn about things they struggle with.  Highlighting places where postgrads can study and relax  Hosting a postgrad taught meet and greet. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| Actively reducing the feeling of isolation amongst postgraduate taught students by finding ways to support postgraduate taught students to meet up and network.  Mental health support for PGT students  Helping to provide an academic support system for PGT students especially considering International PGT students. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| The postgraduate hangouts were an enormous success as we received a lot of feedback from the postgrads about how to structure these meets to have their highest impact.  The postgrads are starting to feel more involved in the SU as they have been engaged by the VP (Vice President) Education as well and would like this to continue. |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| University of Plymouth Postgrad survey |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| None |

**Updates not received from**

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

**Vacant Roles**

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



**School Representative Reports March**

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

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

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

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| **School of Society and Culture Representative – Lucy Metaj** |
| **Key feedback I have received and how it is being progressed** |
| I have not received any key pieces of feedback as of yet, but I will be hosting another Staff/ Student Liaison Forum on March 23rd for Course Reps to attend and provide their feedback. |
| **Manifesto points/Priorities I have been working on – key issues facing students represented by this role** |
| I plan to send out my Mental Health survey again through the Course Reps.  As mentioned above, based on the success of the previous SSLF I will be hosting another one on the 23rd, and the feedback will be circulated back to Reps once I have sorted through it. |
| **‘Wins’ or other outcomes for the students this role represents** |
| **Students will have their issues heard, improving overall student satisfaction.** |
| **Collaborative campaigns or things I would like support with** |
| Nothing at the moment. |
| **Other updates** (see above) |
| I have been working with Business Rep Roxana on collating feedback for the Career’s Service to help improve knowledge exchange opportunities within both our respective Schools. I will be collecting feedback on this topic at the SSLF. |

**Reports not received from**

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

**Vacant Roles**

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

**Sabbatical Officer  Updates** February

President Update

*Emi Dowse*

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

* **Elections**

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

* **Thinking of running sessions**

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

* **VAWG Evidence gathering sessions**

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

* **Ukraine response**

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

* **Meeting with the Vice-Chancellor**

We raised:

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

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

* **Meeting with Charlotte Holloway**

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

* **Green Team**

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

* **Other:**

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

Vice President Education Update

*Charlie Atkinson*

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

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

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

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

* Work has continued with the ‘Where are they now?’ campaign, with the gathering of names of people who would be interested in taking part. The next step is to get in contact with these individuals.
* Discussions around how the Students’ Union can actively engage with Student Development have also continued, so please watch this space!

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

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

**Other Updates:**

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

Vice President of Activities Update

*Madeleine Morton*

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

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

**Other Updates:**

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

Vice President of Wellbeing and Diversity Update

*Fawziyyah Ahmed*

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

Manifesto Updates

Better Wellbeing Provisions:

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

Update:

Better Housing:

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

Update:

Empowering underrepresented groups:

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

Updates

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

Other Updates

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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