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**Sabbatical Officers**

**Updates**

January 2019

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| **Alex Doyle - President** |
| The role of the president involves:* Leading the Sabbatical Officer Team
* Internal and External communications
* Representing Plymouth students in the local community, nationally and across the University, and developing community relations
* Leading on sustainability and key campaigns
* Working as a trustee of UPSU
 | AlexDoyle-Headshot |
| **Manifesto** | **update** |
| Students as Partners | Student Life Committee has been re-evaluated and will now consist of working groups which sit below it, to look at key issues and campaigns within student life to be worked on. Three areas this group will be looking at currently are the Keep Wednesday Afternoon Free campaign, A plan for a positive Plymouth campaign and a group exploring and communicating the student charter. |
| Democracy Development | I will be working with the relevant staff to ensure that our democratic processes are reviewed in all forms and so that the elected sabbatical officer team can be held to account This also extends to the development of our forums as they are not being fully utilised and need to change into a platform students’ can engage with. I will be working with the part-time officers once elected to make sure each forum works well for what the membership can engage with. |
| Executive Discussion Platform | Dates of the Sports Forum, and Societies Forum have been confirmed with the departments which include over 200 presidents and chairs of clubs and societies, representing thousands of students' views. Members of the university executive team will be attending for a short Q&A, much like last year where a bridge between the two for real dialogue.  |
| **Key role related activities** | **Update** |
| Environment & Sustainability | We have formed an internal working group to explore what UPSU is doing within our environment and sustainability policy, looking to bring this up to date to match the wants of the students. This policy will be long term and will be followed by key actions thought out in partnership with students and the university. |
| Green Week | Green Week will take place from the 4th – 8th of February. There will be a variety of activities happening during the week, including a clothing ‘swap shop’, beach cleans and bike repairs. UPSU will be running workshops on how budgeting can also help the environment, as part of a joint campaign with the Advice centre for student money week. UPSU will also host a ‘green conversation’ where student groups and local organisations can meet to discuss and debate sustainability. Students and staff can come to UPSU to pick up a free bamboo toothbrush, in effort to promote a plastic free lifestyle.  |

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| **Maja Smith – VP Education**  |
| The role of the VP Education involves:* Representing Students of the University of Plymouth regarding education at, postgraduate and undergraduate level.
* Working to improve student experience in all areas related to education (feedback, course costs, placements etc.)
* Supporting the consistent improvements to the quality of teaching and learning.
* Leading on the development and support of the academic representation system
* Working as a trustee of UPSU
 | MajaSmith-Headshot |
| **Manifesto** | **Update**  |
| Speak Week: A week for students to give their feedback on their course earlier in the year to ensure that real change can be made for the students, by the students, that will aim to make an impact in the same academic year. | HISTORY: Annually Students are asked to complete the NSS and SPQ, the rules around this are incredibly tight, and many of our students are not given guidance on how to appropriately give feedback, so that it can make a real impact. By ensuring that students know how to give appropriate and useful feedback will allow our staff to be able to make more constructive use of this. The university have invested in a programme called Evasy which is being used as the new module development team. UPDATE: The Evasy programme has been piloted across some schools and based on the feedback I will be looking at putting together any supporting documents for students. |
|  Transparent Fees: To lobby the university to transparently advertise where students fees go in a clear break down to ensure value for money for all students. Ensuring that Hidden Course Costs will be as transparent before confirming your place on a degree. | I am meeting with the CFO to be able to investigate how w  |
|  Education for all: Work in partnership with the university to ensure an easier and fairer Extenuating Circumstances process to make claiming for EC's a more manageable experience. | HISTORY: I have been working with the University of Plymouth to begin changing the way in which we look at Extenuating Circumstances and Self Certification for students at our institution. Several models have been looked at, but the chosen model relies a lot less heavily on evidence that GPs are not willing to provide, as in other years and should make it easier to ensure that students can easily access the Extenuating Circumstances when they most need it. The new EC’s policy will see it simpler to claim for EC’s when necessary, but also more robust systems to ensure that we are supporting our students when they are claiming. UPDATES: This has been communicated out to students, and this is being applied to all students. If there are any concerns then please ensure that you contact me maja.smith@su.plymouth.ac.uk |
| **Key role related activities** | **update** |
| Academic Representation white Paper  | HISTORY: There has been many conversations over iterations of the Vice President Education Role around the importance of Academic Representation. UPDATE: Although the paper that recently went to UTLQC was rejected, the Student Voice team and myself will be working together to look at how we can develop our understanding as well as sharing good practise and benchmarking each of the schools with regards to a sector benchmarking tool.  |
| Hidden Course Cost Paper |

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|  This is currently in draft form to look at going to Student Life Committee and other relevant committees. The paper will have a range of recommendations in to ensure the transparent nature of additional cost for studying at the University of Plymouth. |

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| **Ben Morris – VP Sport** |
| The role of the VP Sport involves:* Representing University of Plymouth International and Partner Institution students that fall within our membership
* Working to improve student experience in sport and physical activity
* Supporting the short and long term development of UPSU sports clubs
* Developing sporting strategies and opportunities in the university and local community
* Working as a trustee of UPSU
 | BenMorris-Headshot |
| **Manifesto** | **Update from Ben**  |
| Sports club promotion  | * I have had meeting with representatives in the student's union to ensure that there will be a sustainable and effective way of publishing positive news stories around sport! And looking for an effective way for students to report their positive events. This is now being done with some news stories even being shared with the student and staff bulletin.
* Creating a one-use hashtag of #TeamPlymouth so that all social media can be shared and highlighted by the UPSU and University.
* The results and fixtures will be published on the SU screens every week.
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|  Enhancing sport clubs | * Every sports club has had a committee member attend charity sec training and attend a treasurer role training which has been developed to include more information about external sponsorships.
* The launching of a player well-being advocates has begun after going to both forums the next steps have been discussed with the VP welfare and diversity and the advice service.
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| Make Wednesday evenings all about sport!  | * Full time scores and food are being accessed by BUCS teams on a Wednesday and a survey has gone out to catains and the results are being reviewed by the staff in the SU. This event will grow to contain more information around the other success we have had in sports clubs outside of the Wednesday afternoon.
* Look at making more people aware of where and when university teams are playing to encourage more people to attend and support by publishing the fixtures and results on the SU screens.
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| Continue full support for ‘Keep Wednesday Afternoon Free’ initiative with access to sport for all | * Plans have been discussed to put in a ‘Wednesday watch’ form on the UPSU website, this will be reporting tool for students to directly call out their courses for breaking a university of Plymouth Policy, this will be formed in a sub group of student life committee and lead by myself.
* The policy has been changed for the next academic year! Next years timetable will be built around this policy! Also, I have reviewed semester 2 timetable and the Wednesday afternoons are being completely reviewed by timetabling.
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| **Key role related activities** | **Update from Ben**  |
| Sports positioning paper  | * The sports positioning paper which has been written over the last two years outlines the state of the facilities and the state of sport in the university. In this paper it is outlined the need to improve facilities to aide with the wellbeing of students and improve the attractiveness of the university. This paper was due to go the UEG board in July but has been delayed many times. David rose (Head of Sport) and myself have been working on this with the university to try and push this through.
* I have discussed this with the VC, she has discontent over the time it has taken and is interested in improving well-being and knows that sports club memberships will grow with this.
* We have been given a working group to discuss the next steps regarding this. We have met once and there were major positive steps taking place, This will be reported to Board of governors in January and at this point I will eb able to report back to students
* I truly believe there will be a positive outcome this year and I know this isn't in my manifesto but will try my upmost to get some positive news this year.
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| **Tilda Fraser – VP Welfare & Diversity** |
| The role of the VP Welfare involves:* Representing University of Plymouth International and Partner Institution students that fall within our membership
* Improving student experience in all areas relating to welfare (Health and wellbeing, equality and diversity support services, housing, safety, student finance)
* Supporting mature students
* Working as a trustee of UPSU
 | TildaFraser-Headshot |
| **Manifesto** | **Updates** |
| **Students Supporting Students:****(Advice Volunteers)**  | The Advice Volunteer scheme is underway, with recruitment taking place right now. Currently we have 6 volunteers expressing interest. Training will take place in November, offering students the chance to gain a variety of valuable skills such as “engaging with others”, “confidentiality and knowing your boundaries” and “Look after you mate”. Volunteers will help shape the role and its responsibilities, with the role officially taking off next semester. Volunteers will roam campus, signposting students to resources for their mental, physical, and sexual wellbeing. Volunteers own wellbeing will be maintained with regular sessions and one-on-ones with myself and the UPSU advice centre.  |
| **Mental health:** | “Need a Drink? Or Need to Talk?” was launched at the start of September, in order to place posters with 24/7 confidential mental health hotlines in halls of residence. A poster was placed in every block, reaching hundreds of students during their first few weeks. The campaign is now on pause, as I work on how to progress it. Upcoming stages will involve society and sports club members, as well as input from our part time student staff behind the bar. The overall aim is to break down stigma, support students, and start to shift the culture. This campaign is in reaction to an increase in student suicides at universities, the link between substance abuse and mental distress, and the demand from students around the UK for less drinking and more social support. |
| **Liberation at the heart of UPSU:** | Unfortunately, we have not had much interest in our Liberation roles during our part time elections. With BAME, Women, and Disabled students not being ran for. However, there are several students expressing an interest in being co-opted during our next Union Council. Following this, I hope to meet with our Liberation officers and build a plan for the coming year, empowering them to collect feedback and create actions.  |
| **Key role related activities** | **Updates** |
| **Health & Wellbeing Strategy:** | I have had the opportunity to input on both the UPSU and University of Plymouth’s respective health and wellbeing strategies. This has ensured that both strategies work for the aims of the respective organisations, whilst allowing overlap and partnership work to happen. In general, there is agreement about the direction of health and wellbeing on campus, for both students and staff.  |
| **#NeverOk (Rape, Sexual assault and harrasment at UoP)** | The approach, policy, and campaign surrounding rape, sexual assault and harassment at UoP and UPSU needed a serious overhaul. #NeverOk will replace the outdated #Knowtheline campaign. This new campaign will consider liberation groups (BAME and LGBT) and move away from heteronormative assumptions about assault. The campaign will also be student led, with media arts students currently designing the first campaign materials and branding. A positioning paper has been developed and should be presented at UEG soon. The campaign will kick off later next year. With the development of an online disclosure tool being an integral part.  |

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| **Bitty Inyang – VP Communities** |
| The role of the VP International and Outreach involves:* Representing University of Plymouth International and Partner Institution students that fall within our membership and people within the community
* Working to improve international and partner institutions students experience
* Supporting the Plymouth Partner Institution network within our membership, ensuring that they receive sufficient support, representation and access to facilities
* Ensuring progression students are adequately supported through their transition
* Working as a trustee of UPSU
 | BittyWalterInyang-Headshot |
| **Manifesto** | **Updates** |
| Improving diversity on campus (community). There is little or no diversity in the university | With little or no diversity in the university, I have been finding ways to improve diversity in the university. I have contacted international societies, so we can have a forum and exchange ideas, although there have been delays from chairs of some societies to get back to me.I have been included in the University International group, where we have been discussing and bringing up ideas on ways, in which we can improve our number of international students there by improving diversity in the university. As diversity will improve if the number of international students is increased. |
| Accommodation: to make sure students have the best housing accommodation during the university | It is important that students have the best accommodation and avoid having issues all through their experience in the university. With recent developments, students tend to book their accommodations for the following year ahead of time. So, there was an accommodation fair earlier in November, that way students get to have their options earlier on.Just like the previous accommodation fair in November 2018, the SU will be organising another fair in February 2019. It will be like the last one, only with improved options for students, with more housing agencies being added.There is also a video to be made, to show students their rights and responsibilities when renting an accommodation. This is to help them avoid problems like fraud and ill treatment from landlords faced by students each year.  |
| Racism: A lot of students don’t realise when they are involved in casual racism, as they might find it normal. | Racism is a form of racism which involves negative stereotyping or prejudice around people, based on race, colour or ethnicity. Casual racism isn't often intended to cause harm. In the university there is a lot of casual racism and people don’t realise they are involved in the act. The campaign will help raise awareness of the types of casual racism, as it is most times clear people don’t realise when they are involved in such racial acts. The campaign will be led by myself and the Bame officer and we will kick this off by involving the societies and sports clubs.The campaign will be included with the upcoming positivity campaign. We have decided to include this to the positivity project just to make it a bigger and widespread campaign. |
| **Key role related activities** | Updates |
| International Students Week | There was a career week for majorly international student at the end of November, and this was organised by the careers and employability service. A career week at the end of November was organised by the careers and employability service majorly for international students and this involved a range of talks throughout the week ranging from Visa application and what sort of visa involved in getting a job. There were also talks on cv writing, interview skills and the labour market.There will be another international week during the semester, this won't only cover the employment and immigration classes, but also some cultural events, to enhance the knowledge of the different internationals represented. date to be confirmed |
| Publicity of events | There are different events organised by internationals each semester, but they are not properly publicised to involve home students. It has come to our notice that some home students, always want to participate in some events but just don’t know much about them. So, we are looking for ways in which these events can reach home students. Home students participating in these events would help improve the knowledge of both home and foreign students about the international community. so far we are working with the university and the students union media team to see how can we can improve with publicity.  |

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| The role of the VP Activities & Development involves:* Representing University of Plymouth International and Partner Institution students that fall within our membership
* Develop and support societies, volunteering, employability, comms and Media.
* Supporting staff at UPSU and the University in key activities including training, fairs and award ceremonies.
* Working as a trustee of UPSU
 | CharlottePanchaud-Headshot |
| **Manifesto** | **Updates** |
| **Funding** | OngoingA sponsorship and funding session was given to all societies at the committee training conference and best practice was shared to encourage such groups to gain financial support from local organisations to assist with development and become more sustainable.Currently organising a society sponsorship fair of local organisations. This will be held in April 2019 for the newly elected committees.I am working UPSU’s CEO and directors to assess the current funding allocation for societies, the current costs faced by these student groups and an appropriate action plan to support societies and their development going forward. |
| **External Speaker Policy** | A report was written to outline the current process of approval and to highlight where the issues lie. A new process has now been created and is being written up by the Academic Registrar, Anna Sendall, for approval by committee.Since the introduction of this new process, student groups have had no issues in gaining approval for their events with external speakers. |
| **Communications:*** **SU:Media**
* **Society event marketing**
* **Celebrating student successes**
 | OngoingSU:Media has been split into three separate societies in order to become more sustainable and affective.SU:Radio are operating really well with 5 committee members and approximately 20 members. They have a regular slot with a BBC radio station. SU:Video were approved at the October forum and have a full committee. They have started filming events for promotional material and are working closely with other societies to help develop their members’ skills.\_\_\_\_\_\_It was agreed at the societies forum that there was demand for an event marketing training for committee members. This will be arranged by myself in collaboration with the marketing and student development departments.\_\_\_\_\_\_I am working with the director of marketing and communications to map out the current process of celebrating student successes both within UPSU and UoP. |
| **Key role related activities** | **Updates** |
| **Positivity Campaign** | OngoingThrough Student Life committee, it was decided that DVC Julian Chaudhuri, David Alder, Gina Connolly and/or Sarah Davey and I will collaboratively lead on this campaign. An initial meeting is being set up and a working group will be created.I am speaking with Exeter regarding their ‘we are all Exeter’ campaign and am in contact with numerous officers across the UK to discuss how they tackle similar cultural issues and inspire positivity and inclusivity on their campus.I have met with several of UPSU’s part-time officers who are interested in working with the University and the working group to support this campaign, bringing in different areas, demographics and understandings. |
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| **Charlotte Panchaud – VP Activities & Development** |