

**Durham Students' Union
Assembly Agenda**

Tuesday 12 March 2019 – 18:30, PCL048

Time	Subject	Who	Paper
18:30	A. Welcome	Chair	
18:30 18:33	B. Minutes of the meeting on January 31	Chair	UA/1819/26
18:33 18:35	C. Apologies for absence and conflicts of interest	Chair	

Routine Business

18:35 18:45	D. Policy Making Presentation	George Walker	
18:45 19:05	E. Officer Updates	Officers	UA/1819/27
19:05 19:15	F. Association Updates	Association Presidents	

Items for Discussion

19:15 19:20	G. Sexual Violence (Core SU Position)	Meg Haskins	UA/1819/28
19:20 19:25	H. Equality & Diversity (Core SU Position)	Meg Haskins	UA/1819/29
19:25 19:30	I. Accessibility (Core SU Position)	Meg Haskins	UA/1819/30

****Access Break****

19:40 19:50	J. Association Elections	Sam Johnson- Audini	UA/1819/31
19:50 20:00	K. Association Ratification	Luke Armitage	UA/1819/32
20:00 20:10	L. Support access to free, safe and legal abortions	Chelsea Lowden	UA/1819/33
20:10 20:20	M. International Tuition Fees	Phoebe Archbell	UA/1819/34
20:20 20:30	N. Leadership & Management Training	Sam Thomas	UA/1819/35

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Assembly minutes: 31 January 2019

Item A: Welcome

AB opened third assembly meeting and explained that procedural motions are now in effect (as was proposed in the November 2018 Assembly meeting)

Item B: Minutes of the meeting on 4 December

AB asks for amendments to minutes from last meeting. No amendments. Minutes approved.

Item C: Apologies for absence and conflicts of interest

AB stated that there are no apologies and asked for any conflicts of interest to be declared. No conflicts of interest were declared.

Item D: Governance Review

GW introduced governance review and explained its purpose. GW handed over to GH and Emma Moody from Womble Bond Dickinson Law Firm.

GH explained tidy-up amendments to Durham SU's Articles of Association:

- Gendered language
- Categories of membership refined
- Moving assembly to standing orders
- Categories of standing orders (A and B)

GH explained more significant amendments:

- Making DUCK Chair an ex officio trustee
 - Change the role of referendums in the articles
- A member asked for more clarification around the percentage of students required to vote in a referendum for that referendum to pass. GH clarifies that 5% is the threshold for referendum to be legitimate and all referendums require 5%. Referendums to remove trustee - 5% to sign up to referendum and then doesn't matter how many people vote. Referendums can be called by Assembly and other bodies by 2 thirds majority.

GH explained that Assembly is being informed as a courtesy and that there is a consultation process which is ending COB on 1st February. Next week Trustees consider proposals. Then it will go to referendum at same time as officer elections. GH shows question for referendum to Assembly and asked for any questions.

SL asked whether any active members will be removed due to changes. GH said no.

EM clarified previous question on referendum and threshold. 5% of student members required for valid call for referendum and then simple majority required to pass it.

A member asked whether all items will be voted on together rather than individually. GH explained that they come as a package and are to be considered in one referendum. Students are able to propose otherwise until COB tomorrow.

EM clarified that individual changes could have knock on effects to other changes.

SL asked whether DUCK would be able to opt out of closer relationship with the SU at a later date. GH explained DUCK relationship already exists and that there isn't really an option to opt out currently or in the future.

A member asked for examples of things in category A vs category B of the Standing Orders. GH clarified that things in category A would be things that are integral to running of the SU i.e. sacking of chief exec or taking out an emergency loan. Category B is everything else that students have an interest such as elections, student groups etc.

A member asked about whether removing the necessity to have a referendum will have an effect on low participation.

GH says no - students want us to talk to them about things that matter to them.

GW clarified the right to call a referendum if students were unhappy about changes that were being proposed.

A member voiced concerns about Assembly and accountability and worries over the board being able to do things without Assembly's involvement.

GH explained that Assembly is free to govern the way things run e.g. like the introduction of procedural motions in November.

EM clarifies things in category A would be things that incur legal risks and that in category B would be things that affect students and that key stakeholders would always be involved in conversations.

Item E: Officer updates

GW gave update on his work in community engagement, student workers, Rippedoff campaign, Library wish tree, UCU strike fund which got over 1000 responses. Things that came top were MHFA training.

MH gave update on her work in consistent and quality student support, BAME diversity within the counselling service, looking into porter training and MHFA training for porters, pincident materials being made clearer, SMVOG culture assessment, active bystander bespoke Durham training programme, housing survey report and rent guarantor scheme.

SC gave update on liberating curriculum work, study spaces and library usage report - no difference in use between regular and extended hours - NSS statement, toilet usage paper and Academic Adviser task and finish group.

DE gave update on PG pay, casuals working group, supervision work, being elected to NEC as postgraduate representative, postgraduate forum.

CW gave update on campaign for affordability, training with Citizens UK, activism around getting the living wage adopted, paper on living wage going to UEC in Feb, project awesome update on University challenge and student media. Common room development hasn't progressed massively since last Assembly. Review of DSO framework happening soon.

Item F: Student Group Governance

CW introduced student group governance motion. Explained consultation process and what will happen next. In response to consultation, either an amendment has been made, a question answered or an explanation given for why an amendment couldn't be made. CW explained that if this passes the SU will have until June to sit down with groups and get any issues ironed out.

TC asked what else is being done to mitigate risks. CW explained things were going outside of these documents to mitigate risk such as work with GDPR, the kinds of data groups are using and how they are using it.

A member asked what we will do if things go wrong with a group. CW explained that there will be more internal mitigation and reporting going on to make sure relevant staff members know about it and that it will enable us to make sure things like this don't happen multiple times.

**No more questions. AB moved to a vote.
Motion passes. No votes against, no abstentions.**

Item G: NUS Motion: Power to make our universities pay all workers the Living Wage

KM proposed motion to take to NUS National Conference to call for NUS to support students in lobbying their universities to pay staff the Living Wage

A member asked whether the motion refers to the real or national living wage

KM clarified that it is the living wage as specified by the Living Wage Foundation and that it's the real living wage.

A member asked what KM's opinion is on the NUS and Durham SU being too politicised.

KM clarified that this is something that everyone should care about at Durham as in College, cleaners etc. aren't current paid the real living wage.

A member asked whether it would include students who have part-time jobs whilst studying

KM clarified that yes it's all staff

A member asked if it is possible to enable universities to pay living wage without causing mass redundancies.

KM clarified that universities can afford to pay staff living wage and it makes complete economic sense.

DE clarified the amount of surplus the University made last year.

No more questions. AB moved to a vote.

Motion passes. No votes against, no abstentions

Item H: NUS Motion: Rent Strikes

TC proposed a motion to take NUS National Conference to provide an update to the rent strike policy that is due to expire this year.

A member asked what it is materially that NUS can do to help with rent strikes.

TC explains that NUS can help with resources, training and in supporting students.

A member asked for clarification on what a rent strike aims to do.

TC explained that the aim would vary based on the student campaign and that at UCL the aim was to cut rent

No more questions. AB moved to a vote.

Motion passes. No votes against, 1 abstention.

Item I: NUS Motion: Creating a Platform for Discussion: Sports, Music and Outreach

MB proposed a motion on creating a platform for student leaders to be able to communicate with each other on a national level.

MH asked why theatre was left out of the motion

MB clarified that theatre at Durham were asked but didn't want to take part.

No more questions. AB moved to a vote.

Motion passes. No votes against, 4 abstentions.

Item J: NUS Motion: Working 9 til 5 not a way to make a living (alongside a degree)

SJA proposed a motion for NUS National Conference to provide resources and support for SUs to support students who are working.

No questions. AB moved to a vote.

Motion passes. No votes against, no abstentions.

Item K: Support the fight for marriage equality in Northern Ireland

SJA proposed policy for the SU to support marriage equality in NI. SJA explained that the full of the UK doesn't have full marriage equality rights.

A member asks why this is not already just SU policy

SJA explained that this would be the SU taking a stance as there currently isn't a position on this

SL asked whether a group would be unable to be ratified based on this being SU policy

AB asked for procedural advice from GH. GH clarified that it wouldn't stop a Student Group being ratified but might have implications.

A member asked why they should support this political motion.

SJA explained that SUs are political and that this is an important thing for students to care about in terms of LGBT+ individuals and their rights.

A member asked about people who disagree with these views and how this impacts on Assembly's decision making in terms of representing all students.

SJA explained that...

A member asked whether all positions that the Union takes go to Assembly

AB asked GH for procedural advice. GH explained that they do not.

DE clarified that officers are elected into position and are able to take positions based on their position.

No more questions. AB moved to a vote.

Motion passes. No votes against, no abstentions.

Item L: Support for direct action against rising accommodation fees

KM proposed a motion for the SU to be in a position to support people who want to take forms of direct action towards rising accommodation fees

A member asked what the legal status of rent strikes is

KM explained that rent strikes are legal and they've worked at other Universities

DE suggested that just if this policy passes that doesn't mean there will be rent strikes.

KM clarified that all direct action that happens wouldn't be automatically be supported by SU because of this policy

A member asked for clarification on the term rent strike

KM explained that the basic principle is that you don't pay your rent in protest and that the threat of not paying rent often achieves the intended outcome anyway

MB asked whether the aim of a rent strike is to cap rent amount or reduce it

KM explained that again this would be down to individual campaigns

SL asked whether Assembly passing this policy would retrospectively result in the SU supporting the Labour Clubs occupation of the palatine center

KM clarified that it would not

A member asked whether the support and research would include independent colleges as well

KM stated yes definitely

No more questions. AB moved to a vote.

Motion passes, 1 vote against, 1 abstention.

TO: Assembly
FROM: George Walker, President
RE: President Report
DATE: 12 March 2019

Update on priorities:

Community Engagement

Having spoken with a variety of stakeholders in the City and visited other Students' Unions who are sector-leading in this area, we have now begun to pull together our vision for the strategy. This is an initial draft vision that we'll be developing and fleshing out through a number of conversations and stages of consultation.

Vision: We'll live well together, sharing space and interests, shaping our collective future.

Goal 1: We'll love Durham

Rationale: We think there's something about what students give to Durham (goal 2) but there's also something about what any reasonable person should expect to see/feel/experience/get from the place they live. We think that might mean:

- Good public services (doctors, dentists, buses, schools, waste management etc).
- Good private services (provision of night-time economy, mixed retail).
- Freedom from threat and reality of crime (safety, sexual violence etc).
- Cultural assets (enjoying the things Durham has to offer – Theatre, Miners' Gala, Lumiere, Beamish etc)

Goal 2: We'll contribute our best to the City

Rationale: This goal will contribute to the Durham SU Stronger Communities Strategy Goals (social impact of students, and change Durham for the better).

This goal should also outline our 'good neighbours' activity. Durham SU policy in this space is being developed currently and builds on years of 'practical' policy: but we should actually align actions and expectations of success against this work, or purposefully state our intention to not invest much in this space. Many community/Uni partners will consider this the main reason for our community work/priority for them. There are some great models to learn from: <https://lovesellyoak.com/> for example.

Goal 3: We'll live in a good home



Rationale: This goal will contribute to the Durham SU Everyday Life Strategy Goal (wellbeing is good); specifically, part 2 of the Everyday Life Strategy is also framed as 'every student will live in a good home'. In many ways, we think this may be a copy and paste job of the private rented sector work of the Everyday Life Strategy Group, considered in light of the other goals of this community strategy.

This seems to be about value, quality, and supply. There'll be commercial options for Durham SU here but while a market intervention seems possible, there are no current views on a potential conflict of interest.

Goal 4: We'll be represented by people who champion our interests

Rationale: This goal will contribute to the Durham SU Trusted and Respected Strategy Goal (partners will understand and support Durham SU, and join us in our work); specifically, part 2 of the Trusted and Respected Strategy is framed as 'community leaders will support Durham SU's priorities'. We're deliberately stepping into a public affairs arena here and seeking to influence the manifestos, policies, actions of people who represent students.

Student Workers

Casuals Working Group: We have now had the first meeting of this group. The group's scope does address many issues we have raised (remuneration, hours etc.) but I will also seek that the group's report makes recommendations for continued work in this area (training, free student labour etc.). I have been invited to join the group's workstream on Colleges and Professional Services and David has been invited to join the stream on academic departments. UCU have decided not to take up their seat on the group and we will continue to be clear about the importance of meaningful engagement with the recognised Trade Unions as part of this process.

National Student Employment Week, TUC 'Heart Unions' Week and Student

Employment Awards: Ran online quiz and interactive quiz in the SU throughout the week. Aim was to increase awareness of students' rights at work with a different question each day. I did a live video and social media posts for Heart Unions week to raise awareness of the benefits of joining Trade Unions for student workers. We are also working with careers to promote the Student Employee of the Year Awards, with a box for nominations in Riverside and other locations around the University.

General updates:

#RippedOff Campaign: A National Day of Action took place on Wednesday 6th March against spiralling rents at Universities across the UK. We partnered with the fantastic Aidan's RippedOff Society to do a banner-drop at the Students' Union.

NUS Update: I attended a meet-up event in Sheffield for Presidents and CEOs at North East Students' Unions. We received a presentation from the NUS CEO and had chance to discuss the future of NUS with colleagues. I also met today with our delegation to National



Conference to brief them ahead of Conference, with a view to holding further discussion, particularly on the motion containing proposed NUS reforms.

PVC Colleges and WSE Recruitment

I took part in, alongside four Common Room Presidents, the recruitment process for the new Pro-Vice Chancellor for Colleges & the wider student experience. By the time of Assembly, I should be able to report on the appointment that has been made.



TO: Assembly
FROM: Meg Haskins, Welfare and Liberation Officer
RE: Welfare and Liberation Report
DATE: 12 March 2019

Update on priorities:

Consistent and quality student support

In October I established a task and finish group to create a programme of standardised training for College Welfare Officers, Association Welfare Officers and Common Room Presidents. I now have the go ahead from the University on this and a programme of training for College and Association Welfare Officers, which includes Mental Health First Aid Training, has been provisionally agreed. I'm currently in discussions with the University about what training Common Room Presidents will receive.

I held another Student Feedback Forum regarding the University Health Centre and am continuing to collate student's experiences and thoughts to feedback to the centre.

Having presented my research on the importance of BAME diversity within the University Counselling Service staff to the University, they have now advertised the 2 new Mental Health Advisor posts with an explicit reference encouraging BAME or male applicants.

I have also been in talks with the Counselling Service around the use of the strike money, following the results of the poll. Proposals for Mental Health First Aid Training for students and academics, as well as for a new counsellor and psychological wellbeing practitioner for the counselling service have been sent to the University.

Student safety

Pincident: Following consultation with the Associations, I have now finalised the clearer and more direct messaging for new Pincident materials. This will be launched in the next month.

At the most recent Sexual Misconduct and Violence Operations Group meeting we discussed and agreed scoping out the creation of a Durham specific Active Bystander training programme. The hope is that this will be rolled out to student leaders across the University (SU, Experience Durham, Colleges) before Freshers' week, with the ability to run additional one-off sessions for groups of students throughout the rest of the year, upon request.

Quality, affordable housing

Following my housing survey I am currently in the process of writing a student facing report on our findings, which will include recommendations for work going forward.

In order to better understand the pros and cons of a Landlord Rating Scheme, I am going to Leeds University Union tomorrow to talk them about theirs!

General updates:

- ★ I attended: the Respect Commission group; City Safety Group; Student Support and Wider Experience Subcommittee; the Faith and Chaplaincy Steering Group; the Food Allergen Task and Finish Group; Sexual Misconduct and Violence Operations Group; the Religion and Race Based Hate Crime Steering Group; and Wider Student Experience Committee.
- ★ I attended a Westminster Briefing in Manchester on 'Mental Health in Universities: Developing a New Approach to Outcomes for Students'.
- ★ I attended a meeting with the Disability Service regarding the lifts in the SU, following receiving a report which laid out 4 different options going forward.
- ★ The University are in the process of writing a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The first stage of this is conducting a Health Needs Analysis and I have been involved in the writing of this survey. The survey, which will inform the strategy, is planned to be launched at the end of March.
- ★ I attended another Citizens UK suicide roundtable discussion where we spoke about out-of-hours signposting, suicide postvention work and what the Counselling Service's plans are.
- ★ I held another Welfare Forum where I updated Welfare Officers on the training plans and SwDA, LGBT+ Association and the Trans Association spoke.
- ★ I went along to a workshop on the University's new Widening Participation Plan where we emphasised to the University their new to focus on recruitment and retention of Low Participation Neighbourhood students from the local (North East) area, BAME students, and mature students.
- ★ I went on a visit to Edinburgh Students' Association (SU) where I spoke to them about their mental health strategy, mental health and wellbeing week, and other exciting stuff.
- ★ I held the second Association Working Group where we discussed what should be included in a practical guidance framework for Associations.
- ★ I have emailed the University again about the rent guarantor scheme to find out what is going on. Once again, in the meantime, if students are experiencing hardship or expect to experience financial difficulty due to not having a rent guarantor, I urge them to contact the University Hardship Fund as soon as possible.
- ★ I organised and held my Mental Health and Wellbeing Week in collaboration with other Student Groups. Thank you to everyone who ran events or came along and got involved in any way!

Gavin, the University coordinating chaplain and I have been planning a student consultation for the proposed 'quiet / multi-faith' space in the new Teaching and Learning Centre. All



students (regardless of their religion/ lack of religion) are encouraged to get involved in the feedback sessions that we'll be holding at the start of 3rd term.

TO: Assembly
FROM: Saul Cahill, Undergraduate Academic Officer
RE: Undergraduate Academic Officer Report
DATE: 12 March 2019

Update on priorities:

Liberating the Curriculum

- Attended “Dismantling Race in HE” event hosted by DU BAME network.
- Developing guidance for departments on liberating their curriculum using insights gained from conversations with associations
- Chasing Alan Houston on how departments are consulting students around the curriculum review – will provide a verbal update

Spaces for Students

- 100 new library spaces are now open on the ground floor, along with 4 disability support study spaces, as well as a new café with that all exciting hot water tap. We also confirmed that students will be able to stay in the café and work without being moved on. We also estimated there were around 100 spaces in this space as well.
- I attended the initial meeting of the Learning Space working group which discussed how the university can trial new innovative teaching spaces, with hopes that the lessons learned from these can inform the redevelopment of Elvet Riverside.
- As part of our visit to KCL, we were able to view the results of their study space survey which further reinforced the need for better plug socket provision across campus.

Academic Societies

- We’ve started discussions around the creation of an “Insights Grant” to support academic societies to run great events and projects.
- We’re planning for a forum aimed at academic societies to discuss what good departments do in terms of working in partnership with their societies as well as to discuss potential issues and opportunities arising from my manifesto pledge to move from membership fees towards a membership grant for academic societies.

General updates:

Access

- Agreed our priorities for lobbying the university on its Access and Participation Plan.
- Will attend an access workshop before assembly and provide a verbal update.
- Access and Admissions Subcommittee
 - Scrutinised financial returns provided to the Office for Fair Access to ensure they are following through on their commitments
 - Supported expansion of contextual offers scheme.

Timetable

- Attended the Timetable Co-ordinators Meeting and gained assurances that, provided the Teaching and Learning Centre opens on time, there will be no repeat of the 8am fiasco from last year
- They are also hoping to better account for travel times between lectures in the future

Visits

- Edinburgh – discussed their work on decolonising the curriculum, particularly how they engage with individual departments to carry out this work. Also discussed their broader department engagement strategy which includes producing yearly reports on student feedback.
- LSE – discussed their course rep engagement strategy, which includes regular town hall style meetings with members of the University's senior leadership team.
- KCL – discussed their "Academic Associations", largely autonomous student groups which serve a representation role within departments.

Meetings

- Senate – raised concerns with their proposals for a Maths School which they claimed would serve a Widening Participation purpose, but would also require an entrance exam and interview which all literature suggests as benefitting middle class students. We also spoke in favour of offering concessions for students taking place in activities related to Music and Theatre, the paper for which Charlie has worked on developing for quite some time now.
- Quality and Standards Sub-committee – the new UK Quality Code, Student Progression and Anglican Accreditations.

TO: Assembly
FROM: David Evans, Postgraduate Academic Officer
RE: Postgraduate Academic Officer Report
DATE: 12 March 2019

Update on priorities:

Postgraduate Teachers' Pay and Conditions

The University has agreed to a review of the casual workforce at Durham, including PGs who teach, through the mechanism of a Working Group. It is clear from documents considered at the first meeting of the Group that the University has lost track of guidance and conditions concerning PGs who teach over an extended period of time; for instance guidance to heads of departments on engaging such teachers, last updated in 2013, refers to 'grades' of staff despite the hourly rate being completely detached from any grading structure, and reference to a 'Durham Induction Programme' which does not exist.

After much wrangling the University have finally allowed my request for membership of this group given it is likely key to completion of my work for students. However, University and Colleges Union who represent many of the affected staff do not have faith in this group and have declined their offer to join. Despite the many issues raised here regarding the University and the Group's conduct, I will now sit on the workstream specifically regarding Academic casual contracts which will consider the conditions of PGs who teach. We will see what can be done through this group to secure better conditions for PGs who teach, but alternative action to further this priority will be considered if appropriate.

Best Practice in Supervision

The work of a Task and Finish Group concerning research supervision and participation in research culture has been progressing steadily. Principal outputs from this should include creating more coherent central standards for supervision to be included in all departmental handbooks, creating resources for supervisors to ensure they have training and guidance on how to supervise (and in particular better manage issues that may arise), and a review of the avenues of support available to PGR students (both in terms of students being able to use them and their effectiveness once invoked).

A particular task we have taken ownership of at the SU is to investigate the experiences of part-time/distance learning students. We are in the final stages of the creation of survey for these students, seeking feedback on the operation of their supervision, their ability to participate in departmental activities, and their access to suitable researcher development opportunities. This will be circulated with the support of the University, and we will be able to follow-up indicative findings via focus groups with participants should they be willing.

Hopefully this will result in an outcome of us being able to better support what is an often overlooked section of the student populace.

General updates:

Re-election as PG Academic Officer: Those of you attuned with the small matter of the SU Officer and Trustee elections will have noticed that you have decided I'm decent enough in my job to stay for another year! I intend to see through the proposals on changes in the University I am working on through to actual implementation rather than just approval in principle, and extend their benefits to more students. This will be in addition to those manifesto points I raised on the campaign, largely on rep support. Watch this space!

More on Printing (and Inter-Library Loans): Revised cost estimates for providing free PGR printing have been received by Education Committee; the Committee has reaffirmed a proposal to move to free printing for PGR students aiming for AY19/20. I raised further issues on printing costs to PGTs and students more generally, in addition to disparities in the expectations of who pays for inter-library loans in different departments – these will now be considered at a future meeting, where I hope to drive more equitable standardisation.

Postgraduate Forum: Having initially set a date for a PG Forum on the topic of 'PG Funding' (including administration, part-time work, bursaries/other support funds, and cost of living) we have had to reschedule this due to speaker unavailability. The revised date is now set at 21 March from 7pm in Kingsgate. This will be a great chance to discuss your own experience of dealing with the cost of postgraduate study, and help shape work I can carry out to implement improvements for PGs based on your experiences. Also – free pizza!

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey: The PRES will be open and advertised to eligible students soon – as officers we've decided to promote completion of the survey, given the beneficial role the results play in driving the University's improvements in certain areas. It is worth noting that the setup of the PRES differs from the NSS in some key aspects, including in that institutional results are held confidentially and not used to compile league tables, and that it is driven by the academic professional body Advance HE, as opposed to the Government – therefore many of the reasons we chose not to promote the NSS do not apply to the PRES and we feel able to support it.

Best of the Rest:

- The new library café and study space has now opened!
- Positive moves were made at the Library's annual planning meeting I attended to provide funding for 24/7 opening of the Bill Bryson, in addition to extended vacation opening hours, this being of particular benefit to PGs. It is now pending funding approval from UEC, though this seems highly likely.
- Saul and I have been considering the University's high-level curriculum reform proposals at many, many meetings, and are continuing to shape them.



- Research Degrees Committee have begun monitoring the quality of PGR experience in departments in broad terms, which also highlighted a gap in completion times and success rates notably for disabled students and people of colour – I have requested the University investigate this further at institution-level.
- And lastly, though mentioned in my previous Assembly verbal update, I report in writing my successful election as NUS Postgraduate Research Rep to NUS' National Executive for the coming academic year, and the passing of my policies on National PG Representation and Pay for PGs Who Teach at NUS Sections Conference!

TO: Assembly

FROM: Charlie Walker, Opportunities Officer

RE: Opportunities Officer Report

DATE: 12 March 2019

Update on priorities:

Priority	Actions taken	Next steps
Campaign for Affordability	<p>'Costs Day': Lots of officer, SU and Common Room priorities relate to cost and many of them interact in a complex context of the Augar Review, the new Office for Students, and the university strategy. So the officer team have invited a former SU CEO and Wonkhe policy expert to facilitate a day of thinking on cost issues, so we can have an SU wide position and do work in this area that is sector-leading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qual research complete • Living Wage paper went to UEC; they asked a working group that George sits on to look into the issue • Arranging Citizens Listening Day • Speaking to other local institutions and partners about Living Wage • Citizens Durham Hub meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs Day • Share results of qualitative survey • Continue work with local partners • (This is a bit up in the air until we decide an SU-wide position so I am continuing to focus on the Living Wage)
Project Awesome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have shared some ideas on student media report with media groups • We have a plan for University Challenge • University is reviewing and consulting on Student Development work; I am engaging with this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take University Challenge thoughts to university • Share student media report • Continue to feed in to university's student development work
Common Room Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SU Leadership Group discussed Common Rooms with Chair of JCR PresComm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further meeting to develop ideas soon • Produce a 'Green Paper' on what we think the issues are

General updates:

- Fonteyn Ballroom work approved by UEC



- DUCFS and BloodSoc nominated for National Societies Awards!
- Our Uni Challenge team is doing very well
- Follow-up “Lessons from Auschwitz” event happened jointly with JSoc as part of their Holocaust Memorial Day work and we published a personal reflection by SJCR President Caragh
- Planning for Freshers’ Fair is starting already
- Student group reregistration planning
- Annual Awards planning
- Having been talking to Saul and SU colleagues about Academic Societies work and we will be consulting with Academic Societies soon
- Productive meeting with DU and DCC about future work on voter registration
- SU is going to be involved in the Matariki Network conference when it comes to Durham in July; I’ll be working on a session about making students powerful in education with Saul

TO: Assembly
FROM: Meg Haskins
RE: **Sexual Violence: Core SU Position**
DATE: 12 March 2019

The belief and its justification:

No student should have to experience, or fear sexual violence. We believe that a zero tolerance approach, backed by support and resources for prevention, reporting and helping those who have experienced sexual violence are essential. We also believe that parts of the Durham University culture normalise behaviours that contribute to or in fact are, sexual violence. Our whole community must tackle the cultural issues which underpin attitudes surrounding sexual violence, as well as continue to track incidents of sexual violence, advocate for specialised training to departmental and pastoral staff and support victims/survivors through effective and appropriate signposting. Sexual violence is an incredibly serious and wide-spread issue, which is not confined to one section of society. This means that sexual violence has the potential to affect all members of our University community, regardless of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, disability or any other protected characteristic.

Definition of a better future:

The culture of Durham University should be one of collective responsibility for ending sexual violence on campus, with a zero-tolerance attitude across the University and the Students' Union. Anyone who witnesses sexual violence should feel confident in challenging this, and witnesses and victims/survivors should always feel supported.

The barriers:

A culture which normalises, excuses and even condones sexual violence, as well as places blame upon victims/survivors, still exists in some parts of society. This can lead to victims/survivors not talking about, or reporting, their experiences and subsequently can lead to a distorted view of what sexual assault is. Whilst the aforementioned culture exists throughout all of society, research has shown that sexual harassment and violence is widespread in Universities in particular. Whilst recognising that sexual harassment can occur to any individual of any gender, often this culture referred to as 'lad culture', which reflects a form of gender-based discrimination, underpinned by historical power dynamics which typically privilege males and oppress females.

A reluctance to report incidents of sexual violence makes it difficult to fully understand the extent of the issue, and subsequently the ways in which sexual violence can be tackled. This reluctance to report exists within Universities, as well as across the wider population.

Belief about the change and the responsibilities:

The position of Durham Students' Union is:

That the Union should continue to empower students to be active bystanders in our community and confidently challenge any behaviour that enables a culture of sexual violence.

That a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence should be embedded throughout the Students' Union and the University.

That the underlying behaviours and beliefs which contribute to this culture should be challenged by all staff and students in our community to promote and enact culture change.

That the SU should promote a safe and supportive environment for all victims/survivors.

TO: Assembly

FROM: Meg Haskins

RE: Equality & Diversity: Core SU Position

DATE: 12 March 2019

The belief and its justification:

Durham should be inclusive and promote equal opportunity for all. Diversity should be celebrated, and Durham should be a welcoming environment where students, staff and visitors feel safe and can express themselves. Historically, under-represented groups have experienced exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination across all sectors in society, whilst traditional power structures have privileged white, cisgender, heterosexual males with no disability. Durham must continue to strive for the liberation of these groups and challenge the existing structural inequalities which could prevent, or limit, this liberation.

Definition of a better future:

Any practices or behaviours which directly, or indirectly, result in discrimination, injustice or social exclusion should be challenged. Equality and diversity should be embedded in decision making, practice and activity across the University community. The struggle for liberation, inclusion and social change is reliant upon effective, organised activism and the dismantling of systematic injustice. The Union should continue to campaign, lobby and support liberation work as well as offer representative functions for under-represented groups. Durham University should consider and develop with consideration of the needs and interests of all members of its student community, and actively seek out their voices. Ultimately, liberation should be embedded throughout the work of the Union, to ensure that the Union is the champion of **all** students.

The barriers:

There are currently small numbers of individuals from underrepresented groups within the Durham University community, and as such the Durham culture and environment tends to privilege those from groups which make up the larger proportions of the Durham student body. This homogeneity reinforces a negative culture of exclusion and marginalisation which is experienced by underrepresented groups.

As Durham pushes for diversification and continues to promote the recruitment of students and staff from underrepresented groups, the lack of specialised support and services presents an additional layer of exclusion which could affect the retention of staff and students from these groups.

Belief about the change and the responsibilities:

The position of Durham Students' Union is:

That, in the short term, Durham SU should promote a whole-University approach to mitigate the effects of oppression, disadvantage and discrimination.

That, in the long term, Durham SU should promote a whole-University approach to dismantle the existing structural inequalities and injustices which systematically oppress minority groups, to ensure that Durham is an inclusive, diverse and equal institution and city.

TO: Assembly
FROM: Meg Haskins
RE: Accessibility: Core SU Position
DATE: 12 March 2019

The belief and its justification:

Durham SU and the University should be striving for more than the minimum standard of accessibility. Minimum standards enable students to participate to an extent, but can equally fall short of what is necessary for full participation. This means that some students' access to equal opportunities and learning experiences are limited due to the structural barriers within both the University and wider society.

Definition of a better future:

What is understood to be an accessible university experience, and how to enable it, should be guided by the lived experiences of disabled individuals within Durham University and by research and innovation both within and beyond the higher education sector. Durham SU should promote best practice throughout the Union and University to ensure that disabled individuals can participate fully in all aspects of university life. Durham SU should advocate for awareness and acknowledgment of the barriers which these individuals face, as well as advocate for a proactive approach from the University in order to overcome barriers.

Accessibility should be a priority factor that is considered when planning any new buildings, or renovating existing buildings, in the delivery of teaching and assessment and in the creation of online learning and digital resources across the University community. Students who are affected by accessibility should be consulted during this process to ensure that appropriate measures are included during planning rather than only being recognised during implementation.

The barriers:

Durham's campus remains incredibly inaccessible for students and staff with disabilities. Online and learning resources are often inconsistent in their addressing of accessibility needs, and the decentralised nature of our student communities makes it challenging for all groups to understand and reflect in practice the need to make their activities as accessible as possible in different ways. While the cause of some of these, such as the age of the University estate, can be clearly identified, barriers to change are often a combination of a lack understanding of accessibility needs and a lack of resources prioritised to create solutions.

The University remains unaware of the extent of the issue across campus and consequently, disabled staff and students continue to experience significant disadvantages during their Durham experience.

Belief about change and responsibilities:

The position of Durham Students' Union is:

That Durham SU and the University should strive for best practice in accessibility, ensuring that no students' experience at Durham is limited by preventable inaccessibility.

That **all** students should have the opportunity to engage and participate fully in all areas of University.

That no student should ever face any form of discrimination, marginalisation or exclusion from a full student experience.

TO: Assembly
FROM: Sam Johnson-Audini
RE: Association Elections
DATE: 12 March 2019

Assembly Notes:

1. Durham SU has five ratified Associations: LGBT+, People of Colour, International, Students with Disabilities and Mature Students', as well as three further Associations working towards full ratification: Womens', Working Class Students' and Trans.
2. Durham SU's Associations are vital in providing representation to underrepresented groups on campus and within the Union, in the form of networks, events, campaigns and other activities.
3. Currently many of Durham SU's Associations elect their executive committees on an annual basis at an Annual General Meeting (AGM).
4. The Durham Womens' Association recently carried out elections for their executive committee using an online cross-campus ballot of self-defining members. DUCK also already elect their executive committee by cross-campus ballot.
5. Many Students' Unions elect their liberation leads via a cross-campus ballot of self-defining members.

Assembly Believes:

6. Electing Association Executive committees by a cross-campus ballot of all self-defining members would strengthen the mandate of those committees to represent students who self-define into those groups, allowing them to better represent those students to both the University and the Union and more effectively lobby for an inclusive and liberated campus.
7. Physical meetings such as AGMs can be inaccessible to students with disabilities, student workers and students with caring responsibilities, among others. Holding cross-campus ballots would make participation in democratic processes easier for such students who self-define into the groups Associations represent.
8. Holding cross-campus ballots of all self-defining members will give members of associations a clearer mechanism for holding accountable association executive committees. Currently the only clear mechanism of accountability for liberation work for those not in attendance at physical meetings, is through the Welfare & Liberation Officer.
9. Cross-campus ballots of self-defining members will enhance participation in Associations' democratic structures, which further has the potential to increase participation in Associations' activities more generally.
10. That enhancing participation in democratic structures, particularly among underrepresented groups, is vital to ensure that Durham SU fulfils its charitable objectives.
11. Holding cross-campus ballots has the potential to increase the visibility of Associations on campus, promoting a better understanding of their structures and activities.

Assembly Resolves:

12. To approve the following amendment to Standing Order G.

13. To work with the Executive Committees of all ratified Associations to make the necessary amendments to Association constitutions, such that elections with a cross-campus ballot of self-defining members may be carried out for Association executive committee elections this academic year.

“Associations

10. There shall be Associations which shall be responsible for providing representation and, where appropriate, support and social opportunities and activities, for students identifying with those Associations.

11. The recognised Associations shall be:

11.1. Students with Disabilities Association;

11.2. International Students’ Association;

11.3. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender + Association;

11.4. Mature Students’ Association;

11.5 People of Colour.

12. Each Association shall present to Assembly a constitution for approval which will comply with these Standing Orders and Union policies.

~~*13. Each Association shall elect a President on an annual basis.*~~

13. Each Association shall elect an executive committee on an annual basis, including a President or equivalent, by a cross-campus ballot of all self-defining members.

14. Each Association shall produce and present at the first Assembly meeting of the academic year, an annual work plan detailing how it intends to comply with its representation responsibilities and, if appropriate, its support and social responsibilities.

15. Each Association shall hold an open meeting once a term for anyone who self-defines as belonging to that Association. These will be chaired by the association President and will discuss issues that are currently affecting the membership.

16. Associations will not be subject to annual ratification by Assembly but any changes to an Association’s constitution must be approved by Assembly.”

TO: Assembly
FROM: Luke Armitage and Neve Ovenden
RE: Next steps to full ratification of new associations
DATE: 12 March 2019

Assembly notes:

1. The Trans Association, Working-Class Students' Association, and Women's Association have previously been approved for ratification by Assembly.
2. The new Student Group model constitution has also now been approved by Assembly.
3. The remaining step for full ratification of new Associations is approval of their constitutions by Assembly and the Board.

Assembly believes:

1. There is no need for assembly to vote on ratification of new Associations for a second time.

Assembly resolves:

1. To delegate one off power to Governance & Grants Committee for approval of the new constitutions of Trans Association, Working-Class Students' Association and Women's Association, and sending these to the Board.

TO: Assembly
FROM: Chelsea Lowden
RE: Support access to free, safe and legal abortions
DATE: 12 March 2019

Assembly notes:

1. An individual has the right to termination within the first 24 weeks of pregnancy in accordance with the Abortion Act of 1967 when given permission by two doctors¹
2. Within the UK, there is a clear pro-choice majority of between 75 and 80%²
3. Abortion is still not legal in Northern Ireland, and individuals seeking abortion still have to travel to England for access, putting their health and life in danger³

Assembly believes:

1. It is a human right to have control over one's body and this includes the right to decide whether to terminate a pregnancy or not
2. That safe, free and legal abortion should be available for all
3. Students should be aware of their legal right to termination and know how to go about obtaining one if they needed it
4. That it is our duty as a Students Union to fight for abortion access, not only on behalf of our Northern Irish student population, but also as a fundamental human right
5. An official pro-choice policy would not prevent students who disagree with termination on ethical grounds, or religious groups, from exercising their right not to seek a termination
6. Pro-choice policy encourages students to make well-informed decisions regarding their bodies and their futures

Assembly resolves:

1. To officially take a pro-choice stance on termination and support students' right to choose
2. To mandate the Opportunities Officer to inform students of any anti-choice campaigns and events run on campus in advance so that pro-choice campaigns can respond and have the opportunity to campaign at the same time

¹ <http://www.abortionrights.org.uk/the-current-situation-in-the-uk/>

² <http://www.abortionrights.org.uk/>

³ https://www.amnestyusa.org/reports/she-is-not-a-criminal-the-impact-of-irelands-abortion-law/?fbclid=IwAR1GfmFdSV_2EeApzTb7x0ZCpHrKff7Obsz-bpLCNcFzG0kbseqQToDnKRQ

TO: Assembly
FROM: Phoebe Archbell
RE: International Tuition Fees
DATE: 12 March 2019

Assembly Notes:

1. That tuition fees for Undergraduate non-EU international students at Durham for 2018/19 are £18,300 for classroom-based subject and £23,100 for laboratory-based subjects. The fees can rise to as high as £25,600 for Postgraduate Taught courses.¹
2. These fees are significantly higher than those paid by UK and EU students, which are capped at £9,250 for all Undergraduate degrees.
3. The ongoing Brexit process would also mean that EU students will have to pay the same level of fees as non-EU international students, from 2020/21 onwards.
4. Research has shown that 36% of international students have said they would be less likely to study in the UK post-Brexit.²

Assembly Believes:

5. That many international students currently feel unwelcome when coming to study in the UK. This is largely due to the hostile environment created created by the Government towards immigration, but is also due to the extortionate cost of international tuition fees.
6. That the level of international tuition fees can pose financial barriers to international students, making them less able to study at Durham and less able to partake fully in the wider student experience.
7. That the level of international fees could harm the University's ability to attract international students to Durham, something that will be particularly important for UK Universities post-Brexit and in light of the current post-18 funding review.
8. That the level of international fees is not matched by the quality of the tuition provided, and that by hiking fees further, Durham University risks offering courses that are of poor value in relation to competitors both domestically and internationally.

Assembly Resolves:

9. To mandate Students' Union Officers to work with the International Students' Association to lobby the University for a freeze in international tuition fees for a period of five years, across all programmes offered to international students by the University.

¹ <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/university-tuition-fees/reddin-survey-of-university-tuition-fees/>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/may/17/show-international-students-welcome-uk-teaching-quality>

TO: Assembly

FROM: Samuel Thomas – Castle, Union and Societies Officer

RE: Policy to introduce management and leadership training for select JCR executive and non-executive officers.

DATE: 12 March 2019

Assembly Notes:

1. That colleges are the centre of the university experience for most Durham students – especially with respect to Welfare, Balls and other services and events organised through JCRs.
2. That thousands of hours a year are volunteered by JCR members to provide world class social environments.
3. That some JCR members lead large teams and undertake very complex projects.
4. That whilst college life is all about jumping in at the deep end and trying your best, managerial and leadership failures from individuals and groups mean that the college experience is sometimes compromised at the expense of the student population.
5. That JCR Presidents/Senior Students already receive some training from the DSU.
6. That the Durham SU's '2018 – 2020' strategy document (P.12) states that by 2020, "We'll champion autonomous, successful student organisations...".
7. That college JCRs are autonomous, successful student organisations
8. That the strategy document also states that by 2022 (p.15) "We'll deliver meaningful development opportunities for all student leaders at Durham...".

Assembly Believes

1. That leadership and management training would be a 'meaningful development opportunity' which would benefit both the individual student leader volunteers and the JCRs they serve.
2. That it would be both possible and beneficial for a number of students from each college to take part in a leadership and management programme at the beginning of term 1.
3. That this could take the form of a day of seminars/lectures/workshops etc
4. That as spaces will inevitably JCRs could decide amongst themselves would benefit the most, both personally and for the JCR, from attending.
5. That the training should result in certification so that the recipients of the training have something to show for it.

6. That by operating through the Opportunities Officer's remit of 'Common Room Development', the SU currently has the framework and capacity to organise such an event for these student volunteers.
7. That this event would be a very good start for building better relations with common rooms across the university.
8. That if well publicised by the DSU and common rooms then this will be a coup for increasing the satisfaction that students feel towards the DSU at this common-room-dominated university.

Assembly Resolves

1. To mandate the Opportunities Officer to organise a leadership and management training session at the beginning of every year for students coming into executive and non-executive positions in their JCRs.
2. To mandate the Opportunities Officer to liaise with PresComm and SU reps to gauge how many students from each college should and could take part in this and when exactly the training should take place.
3. To mandate the Opportunities Officer to report back to the final Assembly of the year on the status of this project.