

**GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS PLANS.**

Why make a communications plan?

When publicising events, especially larger ones for which you need a big turnout, a communications plan helps make sure you leave no publicity stone unturned. With a bit of pre-planning you can reach a wider audience more strategically and effectively.

**ASK YOURSELF…**

Who is your target audience?

*e.g. freshers, current members, all students, postgraduates, wider community, staff*

What are your key messages?

*e.g. buy tickets, when an event is on, follow our Facebook*

What publicity channels do you have?

*e.g. social media, website, email, your hosted website on durhamsu.com, posters*

What Durham SU publicity can you use?

*Please see below for options*

What University publicity can you use?

*Please below for suggestions*

What wider publicity could you try?

*Please see below for suggestions*

**TIME TO MAKE A PLAN.**

Using these thoughts, fill out the table below with each action you need to do to publicise the event / group. You might also want to add which committee member will be responsible for each action, and make a note of how successful each action is, so that you know where to target your efforts next time.

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| **PROJECT:** |  |
| **CHANNEL** | **ACTION** | **DEADLINE** | **DONE?** |
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**HOW DURHAM SU CAN HELP PUBLICISE YOUR GROUP:**

* **Co-hosting your Facebook events**

When you make a Facebook event, you can add Durham Students’ Union as a co-host and it will be included on our Facebook page. You need to make sure the event is public for this option to be available. Be sure to do this whilst making the event, as you cannot alter an event’s privacy settings once it is made. Events within closed groups do not count as public, so consider where you decide to make your event.

* **Photography** (this option may be unavailable during Covid-19)

You can request a Durham SU photographer to attend your event and take photographs, which we will then share on our social media and also provide you with copies afterwards to use in your own publicity.

To request a photographer, fill in the form [here](https://durhamsu.ml/engagement/avo/photography-request-form/69/).

* **Tag us in things**

Tag Durham SU in your social media posts, so that we can see what you’re up to and give you a like or share them.

* **Blogs**

Publicise your event or group with a blog post on our website. We then share these across our social media channels, so it’s a great way to get exposure for your group. Blog posts are usually around 400-600 words and can be on a variety of topics. Just contact Ellie (details below) with your ideas.

* **Post in the Freshers’ or Postgraduate Facebook Group**

You’re welcome to post about events/groups in the [2021 Durham Freshers’ Group](https://www.facebook.com/groups/durhamfreshers21/) or the [Durham Postgraduates Group](https://www.facebook.com/groups/250576565752200/). Posts are moderated, but we’ll be sure to approve yours! Please note this means your post may not be published straight away, especially as our social media isn’t checked on weekends and evenings. Try adding the date to your posts rather than ‘tonight’ or ‘tomorrow’, to make sure it remains accurate.

* **Academic Insights blog series**

This is a new project we’re working on for academic societies, providing a space for them to publish academic blog posts. Find out more [here](https://www.durhamsu.com/student-group-resources/activity-planning/marketing-support).

* **Student media**

Durham has a range of quality student media outlets you can use to get your message out to students.

Try these contacts as a starting place, or find more specific contacts on their websites:

Palatinate: editor@palatinate.org.uk

The Bubble: editor@thebubble.org.uk

Purple Radio: production@purpleradio.co.uk

The Tab: durhameditor@thetab.com

**WHAT UNIVERSITY CHANNELS CAN YOU USE?**

* **Dialogue**

This is a staff and student print magazine published every two months. If you’ve held a particularly big event or won an award, you might want to consider submitting a content suggestion to Dialogue. You can find out more [here](https://www.dur.ac.uk/marketingandcommunications/marketing/internal.comms/dialogue/).

* **Dialogue Signposts**

This is a weekly e-bulletin which comes in two versions: one for staff and one for students. You can no longer submit events to the email (these are selected from the above What’s On by the University), but if you have some form of announcement or opportunity it may be appropriate to include. Just fill in the [online submission form](https://www.dur.ac.uk/dialogue/signposts/submission/) to add announcements to the email.

* **Student Blogs**

The University are always looking for blogs for their [student blogs website](http://community.dur.ac.uk/blogs/). If you have an idea for a blog, get in touch with Ellie (details below) who will help you work on it and submit it to the University.

* **Social media**

If you tag the University in your posts, they’re more likely to notice them and potentially retweet/like/share. The University’s social media channels have plenty of followers, so this can be really effective!

* **Departments**

If you’re an academic society, you might find using channels within your department an effective way of advertising. Build strong links with your department’s secretary, and see if you can be added to weekly emails and include posters on noticeboards.

**HOW CAN YOU REACH THE WIDER DURHAM COMMUNITY?**

* **Press release**

The local press often publish feel-good stories about volunteering in the community, exciting events etc. The marketing team at Durham SU has lots of experience in this area and have an up-to-date list of press contacts we can send your press release to. Please get in touch (contact below) if you are considering this option, and we will support you to make it as successful as possible.

* **Community newsletter**

The University has an email newsletter that members of the public can sign up to. It’s published monthly, so be sure to submit your items in advance. Find out more [here](https://www.dur.ac.uk/community/).

* **Posters in shops**

Some shops in Durham will be happy to put up posters of your events. Just make sure to respect their response if they say no. Aim for shops which already have posters in!

If you would like any help with the above ideas, or have other publicity suggestions to discuss, please contact Ellie at eleanor.m.scorah@durham.ac.uk.