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The details in this report reflect progress made since the last meeting of Union Senate, which took place on Tuesday 12 February 2019 (#2 of 2018/19 AY).

*Minutes of previous meetings can be found on our website here:
<https://www.susu.org/representation/minutes/committees/1298>*

Leading the Union	
Goal 1: Improving Union representation	<p>Work on securing SUSU’s Academic Representation systems before the end of my time in office continues in earnest, with a particular highlight being the restart of our examination into PG representation. Alongside Emily Harrison (SUSU VP Student Communities) we are planning for the launch of PGT Representatives (similar to our current PGR Representatives) in Autumn 2019, with the launch of a representation structure with three distinct strands (one for each level of study) by Autumn 2020. I’m doing as much planning as I am able to do now (including a revision to the Education Zone By-Law in preparation for this) with a view to handing this over to Jo come June 2019 in a secure state. On a related note we are looking to shift the PGR Representative election to Summer 2019 (as opposed to Autumn 2019) as this will bring it into line with the vast majority of elections for education-related roles. A stronger brand for the Summer elections is something we have aspired towards and this represents a good move towards that.</p> <p>The continual training programme which we set out to offer say around 64 Academic Representatives attend training events across the year, and a sudden surge in co-options has seen us break the 400 mark and reach 403. This is an incredibly good result, especially considering the disruption to community caused by the University restructure. I am also pleased to confirm that the SUSU</p>
Progress: 0/1/2/3	

	<p>representation systems are now up-to-date, allowing the team to effectively administrate the day-to-day activity of all of our Academic Reps.</p> <p>As part of redistribution of work following the departure of the VP Engagement I've also picked up a larger part of the volunteer reward and recognition portfolio, and am therefore pleased to confirm that a limited trial of a volunteer discount card is due to begin by the end of the Easter vacation. This will be fairly small (250 cards) but will act as a proof-of-concept for a larger recognition scheme in the 2019-20 academic year.</p>
<p>Goal 2: <i>Strengthening our Postgraduate representation</i></p>	<p>Our three PGR Representatives remain some of our most engaged representatives, and recently joined staff and Sabbaticals from the Union for a review of the <i>Humanising the PhD</i> report released by the Doctoral College. We have also secured a commitment from the University that a member of SUSU full-time staff will be involved in their review of grassroots PGR representation at the University, ensuring that this work continues in a sustainable manner for the benefit of PGR students.</p> <p>I've spoken more about the introduction of PGT Representatives above, but I hope that once elected these will mark the final stages of SUSU's push to offer comprehensive representation to students across all levels of study. This is a logical time to undergo this process especially with the Postgrad remit moving to the new VP Education & Democracy role, and while I can foresee the next academic year being one of transition, but this will ultimately be for the benefit of the rep structure.</p>
<p>Progress: 0/1/2/3</p>	
<p>Goal 3: <i>Encouraging a culture of consultation at the University of Southampton</i></p>	<p>This has been a tricky one over the year – local events have meant that the Student Forums never took off in the same way that they did last year. This is very much in the front of my mind and I am disappointed that we haven't been able to deliver on this, but with the arrival of a new Vice-Chancellor in a few months there is hope that the next Sabbatical Team may be able to deliver on this.</p> <p>What I will say, however, is that there have been ample opportunities for students to get involved with lower-key conversations at the University as elements of the long-term strategy get underway. We have representatives involved with a number of projects across the portfolio on everything from <i>Learning Spaces</i> to the <i>Transition to Higher Education</i>, and with work such as the University's new Access & Participation Plan underway the University will be required to go out and engage with students directly on the content. This is something which is mandated by Office for Students (the new regulatory body for Higher Education) and is good to see from our perspective also.</p>
<p>Progress: 0/1/2/3</p>	
<p>Additional Comments: Though the Student Forums did not make a reappearance again during this academic year I remain pleased with the overall progress in this area. We now have a more definite timeline for the launch of our new representation structure, dedicated PGT representation is due to arrive in time for the SUSU Autumn Elections and our reps remain some of the most highly engaged</p>	

across all areas of the Union’s work. Projects here have either been completed or are in a good state to be handed over to the next team for completion in the coming years.

New Ideas

Goal 1: *Improving the availability and design of study spaces within the Students' Union*

The Students’ Union continue their search for space to be converted specifically for study, but with the constraints that we have placed on us in Building 42 it is always a challenge. There are currently conversations around a corner of the Café being converted to a permanent *Chill-out space* (similar to the one we roll out as part of You Are More Than), and we have been hard at work making infrastructure improvements around the Union to improve the general quality-of-life. Perhaps the most significant victory of late was the installation of a hot water dispenser in Bar 3, with a view to possibly installing similar units across other hot water devices throughout the Union buildings depending on demand. Small steps, but the basics are definitely ready to go so all we need now is a fixed space.

We also remain involved in attempts to improve the quality of our study spaces, with a particular emphasis on forward planning in preparation for the ambitious building plan which is on the horizon. Evie Reilly (SUSU VP Democracy & Creative Industries) and I both sit on the Learning Spaces Subcommittee as of the last few months, and will use our time remaining in office to lobby for improvements to the quality of study spaces across all of our campuses. We are also keen to push for improvement to the availability of spaces outside of core hours, particularly since a large number of our clubs and societies make use of them for many of their activities. We recent met with University Security and have agreed an approach going forward, which will see us audit current usage and requirements before aiming to “cluster” student groups into a number of central, well-equipped spaces. South Gower/Centenary will form a large part of this, especially since it contains a massive quantity of truly flexible space.

Extended Library hours for Medical students are awaiting final confirmation from the Library, following conversations with MedSoc and a number of our SUSU Academic Reps based in Medicine.

Progress: 0/1/2/3

<p>Goal 2: <i>Expanding the University's digital resources to improve access to information</i></p>	<p>The good news is that the Student Amenities layer is now live over on maps.soton.ac.uk, and has been well received so far. This currently maps (among other things) spaces suitable for breastfeeding, water dispensers and the location of some microwaves across all campuses. We do have a bit of a data issue with the map at the moment (as all locations need to be manually plotted), but are working with Estates & Facilities to see if any of this data could instead be imported from PlanOn directly.</p> <p>The FSS Student Hub that I mentioned last time continues to be an example to many parts of the institution, and a proposal is currently making its way through various parts of the University's governance to roll this out across a number of Faculties by the start of next academic year. I have been reassured to hear, however, that this has already been rolled out in the School of Humanities as HumsHub!</p> <p>The reason that I have put this as a 2 is that there has been no real progress with regards to making more digital resources available online. With mention of the VDI in particular this is primarily down to a lack of demand – the University isn't keen to invest in potentially expensive products until there has been a demonstration of student demand. I'd therefore encourage all of you to let iSolutions know (via. Serviceline) if there are products that you would like to see make their way onto the VDI.</p>
<p>Progress: 0/1/2/3</p>	
<p>Goal 3: <i>Unpacking printing costs, and creating a system which is fair for all</i></p>	<p>The revised cost of printing has been in place for just under a year, and remains one of the things that I am proudest to have achieved as a Sabbatical Officer. In fact, progress has been so good that we have been providing advice to a few other Students' Unions about how they can lower printing costs also, putting tangible money back into the pockets of students. Conversation(s) around Printt have dwindled across the sector, although if someone can make a compelling case for a service then we remain interested.</p>
<p>Progress: 0/1/2/3</p>	
<p>Additional Comments: Throughout this year this section of my Sabb Report has been one of small pockets of progress, all of which adds up to a greater whole. Small improvements to the study experience both within the Union and University have set the stage for wider improvements going forward, and the lower cost of printing continues to be well received across all of our campuses. The lack of investment in digital resources is disappointing, but I'm reassured that this is included as part of the University's strategy going forward and will therefore almost certainly be picked up one way or another.</p> <p>There is also a significant package of work making its way through the University's governance which provides some direct improvements based on the feedback from the NSS 2018. This includes some improvements to Library resources, developments to lecture spaces (including some of our most complained about spaces) and a few other projects also. I'm not in a position as of the time of writing to say what is happening with these, but my fingers remain firmly crossed!</p>	

Building on the Union's Work

Goal 1: *Create an Education Zone driven by student issues*

Conversations at the Education Zone continue to be useful, and indeed it remains one of the most well-attended and active Zones at SUSU. The devolved nature of representation into Faculties means that there are actually surprisingly few areas of overlap, but I'd like to thank the Zone for their input on a number of key issues in the past few year. Of particular significance is the proposal they recently presented to Democracy Zone surrounding engagement in key SUSU democratic events, asking the Zone to explore the promotion and timing of these events in order to ensure that as many students as possible are able to engage with these. The Zone have also been instrumental in encouraging change within the SUSU Academic representation structure, and we will be taking the new proposed Education Zone By-law back to the Zone for final approval during Term 3 of this academic year.

Plans were made to move the Zone's last meeting to Avenue Campus, but due to the poor weather we were forced to rearrange at the last moment. With the Sabbatical team currently dedicating considerable time to reimagining the Zone structure going forward this might be a lot easier for the next team to do.

Progress: 0/1/2/3

Goal 2: *Celebrating our Academic reps*

The third Academic Rep social event took place just before Easter, with around 30 Academic Reps attending. This is a bit of a dip in numbers from the last two but reflects the same trends as last year, and regardless of numbers we were able to undertake some significant consultation around the upcoming review of the Academic Rep structure. We have one more social to come – our Summer BBQ which was incredibly well received last year. We are also planning on inviting along a range of representatives from across the Students' Union, so if you are one of those then please keep an eye out for an invite before too much longer.

The Academic Awards have seen a surge in popularity, with 449 nominations (up from ~250 last year) across a wide range of categories. This is incredibly positive, and there are plans to take the nominations data to provide some "best practice" guidance for the University to help improve teaching quality.

Progress: 0/1/2/3

I also mentioned the upcoming volunteer discount card trial a little earlier – this is pencilled to take place just after Easter with around 250 cards. We are looking for volunteers from across the Union's areas of work so please have a chat to your relevant Sabb or Coordinator if you want to find out more. These will be eligible for a 10% discount in The Bridge and The Stags, and should it be successfully will hopefully lead to a more thorough rollout of this scheme (or a similar one) for the next academic year.

Goal 3: *Promoting the work of our Clubs & Societies*

Round three of SUSU grants was a relatively quiet one for the Education Zone with a relatively small amount applied for, but it was nice to see some of the projects that our clubs and societies have planned for the remainder of the academic year. We are grateful to a number of our societies who have been in touch recently with details of their recent events, which we have passed on to the SUSU MarComms team for sharing and promotion. A special mention goes

Progress: 0/1/2/3	<p>to the UoS Natural History Society for their recent involvement in our Reptile Workshop event as part of our <i>You Are More Than Your Studies</i> series. It was certainly a unique event and had the best feedback of any SUSU event this year!</p> <p>External Engagement was a bit more active in terms of grant funding, with some significant amounts made available to member clubs and societies. This has utilised a fair amount of the available funds, ensuring that they go towards valuable student projects and plans.</p>
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Additional Comments: Lots of my work this year could be classed as *Building on the Union's Work*, hence the somewhat mixed bag in terms of progress. I'm glad that we have been able to organise three Academic Rep socials and have been able to start using these as a consultation technique, and look forward to the final one of this academic year. There is still work to be done on improving engagement with all Zones and in representing out clubs and societies better, but with the arrival of our first VP Activities in a few months and an overhaul of the Zones structure looming I'm confident that this will cease to be a problem going forward.

Conclusion/AOB

We're now onto the quiet phase of the Sabbatical year, giving the whole team an opportunity to catch up with a large amount of project and administrative work. However I remain proud of the progress that I have made this year, and honestly feel that any unfinished projects are in a state where they can be easily handed over to the new team arriving soon.

Much like last time I'd like to provide a quick update on You Are More Than Your Studies (hence YAMT) as it doesn't fit neatly anywhere else. We are incredibly proud of the YAMT Summer offer that we have put together this year, with the **Reptile Handling Workshop** marking the start of the season just before Easter. The **Hearing Dogs** will be making an appearance soon, and we have **Mini Golf** and the **Petting Zoo** due to appear between now (at time of writing) and the exam period. We'll also be out-and-about across sites and halls running a series of events, handing out smoothies and running BBQs all with the aim of encouraging students to take a break from their studies. We now have a central resource on the SUSU website which features all of these events – head over to www.susu.org/yamt to find that.

There are a few items that I would like to cover on a personal note. First of all I would like to thank Union Senate for their speed in approving the principle of me taking up a role with the Office for Students following the last meeting. I am pleased to confirm that I was successful at interview (in a field of around 150 individuals), and met with the panel for the first time at the start of April. Just as a quick reminder – this role sits alongside my work as VP Education and I will be taking leave to cover any commitments required.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank the SUSU Representation staff and volunteers who make up the Zone for their support, passion and input. They all play a key part in ensuring that the Union's work representing the academic interests of students at Southampton goes from strength-to-strength, and am certain that they will continue to do so going into the new academic year and Sabbatical team.

The end of my time in office may be in sight, but I remain more than happy to meet to discuss my plans, ideas and things that I could be incorporating into them. My details are at the top of this form, or please come and find me in the Sabb Office in person!

	What is the idea?	What do you hope to achieve?	Who will you be working with?	When do you expect to be finished (term)?
Leading the Union	Improving Union representation	A new representation structure which provides comprehensive representation to all students	SUSU Representation staff, SUSU SLT, University leadership, Wellington WG	June 2019 (with the new Course Rep structure to go live in Autumn 2018)
	Strengthening our Postgraduate representation	A dedicated Postgraduate representation structure tailored to their needs INCLUDING Course Rep coverage for PGRs and PGTs (or equivalent)	SUSU Representation staff, SUSU PG Committee, University Doctoral College	June 2019 (with the first PGR structure to go live in Autumn 2018)
	Encouraging a culture of consultation at the University of Southampton	The development of SUSU "Faculty Forums" into regular well-promoted events with University support	SUSU Representation staff, Academic Reps (esp. Faculty Officers) Education Strategy WG, Student Forum WG (?)	May 2019 (by which time two Forums should have taken place)
New ideas	Improving the availability and design of study spaces within the Students' Union	The redevelopment of the SUSU Café space as a properly-equipped study space.	SUSU SLT, SUSU Facilities, SUSU Representation staff	June 2019 (though maybe sooner if resource/funding allows)
	Expanding the University's digital resources to improve access to information	More software packages available on the VDI AND Improved MySouthampton experience AND Review into SUSSED integration	iSolutions, Library staff	December 2018 (dependent on iSolutions engagement)
	Unpacking printing costs, and creating a system which is fair for all	A lower cost of printing to students AND Possible reductions in binding costs AND Possible Union printing service	iSolutions, SUSU SLT	December 2018 (much sooner for core cost-of-printing strategy)
Building on the Union's work	Create an Education Zone driven by student issues	Six quorate Education Zone meetings across the year, across a range of Campuses and solving issues raised by students (e.g. YMC)	SUSU Representation staff	N/A (will be throughout the year instead)
	Celebrating our Academic reps	4 Academic Rep Celebration events, expanding on the scale and uptake of those this year AND A comprehensive Academic Rep training programme across a number of months AND A revised Course Rep Handbook	SUSU Representation staff (esp. CR Co-ordinator)	May 2019 (following 4 successful events)
	Promoting the work of our Clubs & Societies	Improved involvement of Zone Clubs & Socs in activities of the Zone AND A review into Club & Soc "value", especially for IM teams	SUSU Representation staff (esp. Ed Co-ordinator), Sabbatical Officers	N/A (will be throughout the year instead)