

Siân Hampson – Vice President Community and Welfare: Student Council Report April 2018

Welfare Awards

One of The Students' Union's Values, articulated in the Strategic Plan, is that "we celebrate together". In order to demonstrate this value and contribute to a culture showcasing the amazing work of our students and staff, I created the inaugural Welfare Awards. This has been a main focus for me over the last few weeks to ensure a successful launch to this new reward mechanism.

We had a great amount of nominations across the 7 awards, highlighting how passionate the UWE community is about supporting one another and creating change. We enjoyed a lovely evening celebrating the achievements of students and staff, and were grateful to our key note speaker Helen Richardson-Walsh MBE, and Olympic Gold Medallist, for providing context of how crucial support mechanisms can be for all. Helen spoke about the people who have helped her throughout her life, and coping strategies she uses when her mental health is suffering. The event was alcohol free to ensure an inclusive event for all, the mocktails received great feedback.

Key members of University staff attended and were able to acknowledge and understand the amazing work done by UWE students and The Students' Union, very warm words were spoken by our Pro Vice Chancellor, Jo Midgley and Helen Richardson-Walsh to this affect. It was a great opportunity to consolidate these strategic and operational relationships and show that welfare is truly embedded into what The Students' Union does.

Mental Health Strategy

I have been working closely with the University to ensure that the student voice in central to UWE's Mental Health Strategy. We have been gathering feedback by asking students what they would do if they were in certain University staff roles, for example Vice Chancellor or Director of Student Support. This has reflected the different strands of the strategy: leadership, communication, prevention, support and data.

The feedback is being fed into the strategy whilst the action points are being made.

Mental Health Accreditation

Earlier this year we launched The Students' Union Mental Health Accreditation for societies and sports clubs, so far we have had 3 societies complete the accreditation

and have others who are almost ready to complete it. I will be working with Erin to try and get the Sports Teams to complete the accreditation. I feel like this is a great way to truly embed mental health into all that we do as a SU.

Faith and Mental Health

Zain and I worked together on a Faith and Mental Health event in March. For this we had two speakers, a Christian Chaplain for the Welsh female netball team and a PhD student studying Muslim women's engagement in counselling services.

The event was the first one of its kind run by The Students' Union, and it is something I hope will be built on next year, bringing in voices from other faith groups. Attendance was good, and the feedback was positive. A fantastic discussion took place and it enabled further understanding of the barriers students of faith have when accessing mental health services. I raised these concerns at Equality and Diversity Forum, which the Vice Chancellor referenced in the launch of the Mental Health Strategy.

Mental Health Survey

Since the last Student Council, I have presented the Mental Health Survey to LTSEC, which was well received. A working group is getting set up with members from across the university and at least 3 student representatives. It was also agreed that this survey will be getting rerun at least once every other year.

I also presented the survey responses to The Students' Union staff, and got their ideas of how they can embed student wellbeing into their work.

In addition the following changes have been agreed:

1. Additional funding to be considered as priority for this budget and planning round for another Wellbeing/Mental Health Practitioner in the student health and wellbeing service
2. Appointment of a dedicated substance misuse support worker to work across all campuses to offer support to students in relation to drugs and alcohol misuse and to ensure effective campaigns and education around safe use
3. Additional capacity in the student communications team dedicated to communications and campaigns in relation to student wellbeing and mental health with focus from pre-entry through to graduation
4. Increased access funding in support of UWE Cares, supporting some of our most vulnerable students

5. Development of toolkit for APTs to support student mental health and pre-entry module to more effectively prepare students for their university experience
6. Work in partnership with SU on a project to look at improved induction and transitions – not just on arrival but at each stage of the student journey, including leaving the University
7. Establishment of the new out of hours service which will provide support for students from 8pm to 8am every week day and 24 hours a day at weekend. This team will be co-located in the Farmhouse with the Nightline team.
8. Working with Centre for Appearance Research on a body image intervention project

Nightline:

There has been a short period of closure whilst we reinforce our policies and procedures. I am working with the Nightline committee to reopen Nightline as soon as possible.

Outside of this I have also been working with the university to relocate the Nightline office from its current space, which is too small. Our new location will be much larger, light and airy (which I am sure will please the volunteers!)

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the committee and volunteers for all their hard work this year to set up Nightline, and to take our students calls. You are a credit to The Students' Union and University.

Rent Prices on Campus

After extensive lobbying of the University, we have managed to get the university to agree a rent freeze for next year's rent process. The universities that UWE compare themselves to are all looking at a 2-3% increase in rent. The fact that we managed to get the University to freeze their rents in the current uncertain financial climate is a huge achievement. This decision was ratified at the Rent Setting Board earlier this year.

Degree Shows

Jamie and I have been working on the cost of Degree Shows. At present we are still facing resistance to achieve this aim. We have generated a level of support from the university to cover the cost of ACE degree shows. We are hoping to resolve this before the end of our term in office.

NUS Conferences

In the last month I have attended NUS National Conference and NUS Women's Conference. For National Conference, alongside the normal duties of a delegate, myself and Zain worked to ensure the welfare of our delegation, and made sure the first time delegates knew what was happening during some unforeseen circumstances.

Meningitis Awareness

Following a student idea that was submitted, Erin and I have been working on raising awareness about Meningitis and its symptoms. We presented a paper to the Healthy University Group with various recommendations for consideration. These included:

- More social media posts (from both The Students' Union and UWE Bristol about Meningitis)
- The Students' Union marking Meningitis Awareness Week each year
- The Students' Union holding a charity quiz night about Meningitis
- Making the page about Meningitis more prominent on the University website
- Adding content about Meningitis to The Students' Union website

These recommendations were all accepted and we are currently working on them with the University.

International Women's Week:

This year we ran the biggest International Women's Week at UWE in recent history. For this I coordinated the 'Herstory' Gallery, which looked at women throughout History who have achievements amazing feats. Each of the women profiled were also part of another liberation group. We profiled women like Vicky Beaching (a Christian worship leader who is lesbian), Fridaws Kediri (a victim of the Grenfell Tower fire), Laverne Cox (a transgender actress) and Ethel Payne (first black woman in the White House Press Crops).

A collaborative partnership formed, linking The Students' Union Green Team, The Green Team Coordinator, The Students' Union Sustainability Officer, UWE's Sustainability Coordinator, The Students' Union Liberations Campaign International Women's Week coordinators with the UWE Feminist Society and No More Taboo - a Bristol based social enterprise aiming to tackle the taboos surrounding menstruation and sanitation. This is an innovative approach to project creation, ensuring it crosses a wide range of interests.

No More Taboo: “We hope to empower women and girls to manage their menstruation more effectively. Firstly, raising awareness of the environmental issues, by selling sustainable menstrual hygiene products in the UK. Secondly, by investing these profits into charitable projects both in developing countries and here in the UK working with homeless and refugee women and girls.” Through a close partnership between UWE, SU, the Feminist Society and No More Taboo our campaign emerged in a number of creative and innovative ways.

As a result of this partnership, we launched our student engagement campaign at International Women’s Week: The New Period.

The launch events took place over International Women’s Week (4-10th of March 2018). The Feminist Society hosted The Big Period Quiz at The Students’ Union bar, with questions that broke down myths about menstruation, highlighting different cultures relationships to menstruation and period poverty issues. In order to be as inclusive as possible all questions were framed using the term ‘menstrually active individuals – MAI’s’ - rather than women. This was important to because not all women menstruate, and we wanted to ensure we are trans and non-binary inclusive. This event, which Amy our Sustainability Officer supported by baking and selling vegan vulva cupcakes (pictured), raised £99.62 in total for for No More Taboo.

Another event we ran, which was very successful was the Vulva Cake Decorating. This aimed at tackling the taboos around the vulva. As well as this we ran a ‘No More Taboo’ stall looking at the stigma that surrounds periods, and encourages menstrually active people to use sustainable products.

International Students:

Jamie and I have long been in discussions with the International Student Experience Group about the new Global Centre which is going to act as a hub for support for our international students who are transitioning to UWE, as well as promoting international opportunities to our students. This is a really exciting move forward in this long term piece of work in supporting our international students.

I have also been in meetings with the University and Bristol Airport looking at how we handle our international student arrivals, and making sure they get the best support possible here. As part of this they will be installing a more consistent airport meet and greets at Heathrow and Bristol Airport for our new arrivals, maximising the support they get.

NUS Alcohol Impact Accreditation

NUS' Alcohol Impact is a whole-institution approach to transformative change for responsible consumption of alcohol by students. It is a strategic framework and supported accreditation mark designed to bring students' unions and their partner institutions together, supporting the partnership to take a social change theory approach to tackling binge drinking, with the aim of:

- Ultimately reducing harm to students
- Improving the student experience
- Enhancing academic achievement
- Reducing reputational risk from alcohol-related incidents
- Embedding social norms of responsible drinking on our campuses
- Changing attitudes towards alcohol
- Building healthier, safer and more productive student communities.

The partnership works through a bank of 50 criteria, creating action plans, KPIs and interventions. All Alcohol Impact partnerships have a two-day audit. The purpose of the audit is to determine the partnership's accreditation level. NUS train teams of student auditors at each institution. A documentary review of evidence to verify scores takes place alongside question and answer sessions with lead contacts and more in-depth structured interviews led by the student auditors. Students determine scores with guidance from the programme manager.

The partnership achieved accreditation in December 2017, valid for two years until December 2019.

Results and Feedback

'The partnership have taken bold steps working on a tough issue through the progress made on the Alcohol Impact accreditation. It highlights they are going above and beyond to provide the best services for their students.' UWE Bristol student auditor.

UWE Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE have gained the Alcohol Impact Accreditation with a score of 282. The score threshold is 192/360 overall possible points.

Key Findings from NUS

It is incredibly clear that UWE Bristol and The Students' Union at UWE have taken a strategic whole-institution approach to responsible consumption of alcohol. Through this audit, the partnership has demonstrated the extent of their work and have shown the past efforts that enabled them to reach this stage. Below you can find feedback from the student auditors and NUS on each section of the criteria.

Later in the report you will find a 'key recommendations' list to help support you in maintaining your accreditation. Firstly, here are some highlights:

- The dedication of those involved really shines through in the number of criteria completed, the wealth of evidence provided and the high standard of the submission.
- There has been a pronounced advantage of acquiring dedicated staff to support work on the programme who are able to view the criteria with academic insight.
- Comprehensive engagement with students over multiple years through the work of the Late Night Do It Right campaign. It's great to see that the campaign has continued, a brand has been built around it which is recognisable to other students and work on Alcohol Impact has been integrated into this.
- Central survey response rates were really high and a range of different methods were used to promote this.
- Gaining the accreditation mark has highlighted the wealth of pre-existing responsible alcohol related work conducted on campus alongside some new and exciting, innovative interventions.
- There is a good pre-existing relationship between the students' union and institution which has allowed for more in-depth action to be taken on the criteria. Having a dedicated academic staff position to support work on Alcohol Impact has meant criteria have been met fully and ensures work is evidence led. Where this has occurred nationally across partnerships the quality of submission has been of a much higher standard than where it hasn't. To be able to continue to track significant cultural change, an academic resource should be invested in.
- There is senior support within the institution for Alcohol Impact which has helped to keep the programme on the agenda and action change at this level.

As a result of our positive partnership working approach, UWE Bristol has funded the next phase of Alcohol Impact – including our registration fees for the next three years, activity costs, salary for research consultancy and a 'Late Night, Do it Right' intern.

Meetings I have attended:

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| - Bristol Airport Arrivals | - Halls Life Steering Group |
| - Centre of Appearance Research and The Students' Union joint work | - Healthy University Group |
| - Community Team Meetings | - HR Induction |
| - DSA Modernisation Task and Finish Group | - Inclusion and Diversity in HR |
| - Equality and Diversity Forum | - LTSEC |
| - Executive Meeting | - Marks out of Tenancy |
| - Fair Trade event – speaking | - Meningitis Meeting with Student |
| - Faith and Mental Health Meetings | - Mental Health App development: Expert Self Care |
| - Finance and General Purposes | - Mental Wealth Strategy Café |
| - Halley Nursery Board | - Mental Wealth Strategy Launch |
| | - Nightline Committee |
| | - NUS National Conference |
| | - NUS Women's Conference |

- Out of Hours Student Support Meetings
- Rent Setting Meeting
- Round up to RAG meeting
- Shadowing in run up to elections
- SHAPE Visit Planning
- Staff Committee
- Students and Alcohol Conference
- Team Meetings
- Terrance Higgins Trust – HIV Fast Test
- Welfare Awards Meetings
- Wellbeing Catch Up