

STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT 24/25 – FEBRUARY 2025

VP SPORTS AND HEALTH REPORT

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HIGHLIGHTS SINCE LAST STUDENT COUNCIL:

National lobby day NUS Update

Last year, the Presidents of the UWE Students' Union, alongside other SU representatives from across the UK and members of the NUS, had the opportunity to meet with MPs in their respective regions. For us, this meant engaging with MPs Karin Smyth, Carla Denyer, and Claire Hazelgrove in Westminster during the NUS National Lobby Day. This was a fantastic chance to advocate for crucial changes aimed at enhancing student welfare.

We also supported Alex Sobel MP's proposed amendment to the Renters' Rights Bill, designed to provide greater security and protection for renters. With rental costs rising and student accommodation options becoming increasingly limited, this amendment plays a vital role in safeguarding students' rights in the rental market.

I'm thrilled to announce that, thanks to the collective efforts of the NUS, we secured a major victory—the Renters' Rights Bill now prohibits landlords from demanding multiple months of rent upfront. Additionally, our advocacy led to an amendment preventing students from being locked into rental agreements more than six months in advance. This change offers greater flexibility and alleviates the stress of planning for the following academic year.

Overall, NUS National Lobby Day was a significant opportunity for us to engage directly with policymakers and push for positive changes that benefit students both now and in the future. It was incredibly empowering to witness how our collective action brought us closer to creating a fairer, more supportive, and inclusive environment for all students.

Attend BUCS Southwest Regional Meeting 2

The BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) Regional Meeting 2 at the University of Bath aimed to foster collaboration among regional institutions. The meeting provided a platform for representatives to share ideas, discuss best practices, and plan for future initiatives in university sports. Such gatherings are instrumental in enhancing the quality and experience of university sports across the region.

Refreshers' Week Events

At the recent Refreshers' Event, we had the wonderful opportunity to meet and connect with a large number of the new students. The Sports Club set up an engaging stall, where we introduced students to various sports activities and opportunities on campus.

Additionally, we introduced the MOW Program, explaining its benefits and how students can get involved. Throughout the event, I actively approached many students to raise awareness about the importance of sports and fitness in student life

MANIFESTO UPDATE:

Objectives of my manifesto

1. Inclusive sporting events.
2. Awareness about the sports clubs and university.
3. Promoting physical and mental wellness.
4. Enhancing sports facilities and programs.

Inclusive Sporting Events

- *"Sports should be for everyone. I will work towards organizing inclusive events where students of all skill levels and backgrounds can participate. Whether you're a beginner or a pro, there will be a place for you to enjoy and compete."*

Awareness About Sports Clubs & University Opportunities

- *"Many students don't know about the great sports clubs and facilities available to them. I will improve communication through social media, newsletters, and interactive events to ensure that everyone is aware of and can join these opportunities."*

Promoting Physical & Mental Wellness

- *"Sports are not just about competition—they are also about well-being. I will introduce more fitness and mental health programs, such as yoga sessions, fitness challenges, and workshops on maintaining a balanced lifestyle."*

Enhancing Sports Facilities & Programs

- *"To perform at our best, we need top-quality facilities. I will advocate for better-maintained sports grounds, improved gym equipment, and more training programs for athletes and casual players."*

One of the central pillars of my manifesto was increasing awareness among students about sports clubs and other extracurricular activities available on campus. Recognizing that many students were unaware of the rich variety of opportunities offered, I focused on an awareness campaign that reached a large number of students across all Campus sites. This report details the initiatives I implemented, including social media outreach, in-person engagement, and Freshers' Week events, which significantly increased participation and visibility of campus activities.

1. Objective

The objective of my awareness campaign was to ensure that a substantial majority of students were well-informed about:

- Available sports clubs and other recreational activities.

- The benefits of joining these clubs for personal growth, networking, and community building.
- How to get involved, including where and when activities took place.

2. Campaign Strategies and Execution

Social Media Outreach

To meet students where they are most active, I launched a targeted social media campaign:

- Instagram Campaign: Created regular posts, stories, and reels highlighting different sports clubs and events. This content included visuals, testimonials from club members, and club-specific information to engage viewers effectively.

Face-to-Face Engagement

Personal connection can make a lasting impression, so I made a conscious effort to approach students in person:

- Campus Walkthroughs and Open Days: I spent several times across all campuses, engaging students in high-traffic areas such as libraries, cafeterias, and common rooms. I distributed informational leaflets, answered questions, and provided guidance on how to join specific clubs.

This direct approach allowed me to reach students personally, particularly those who may not follow social media.

Mental Wellness

The Mental Wellness Initiative is a collaborative effort between Vice President Welfare and myself, Me Both, to promote mental health awareness and provide support resources to our student body. This report outlines our proposed plan to address mental wellness concerns through workshops and counselling services.

Increase Awareness About Mental Health

The Issue: Many students feel alone in their struggles and hesitate to seek help due to stigma.

My approach:

- Run awareness campaigns to educate students on mental health.
- Organize talks with mental health professionals to break myths about seeking support.
- Use social media & student forums to share tips, resources, and personal stories.

Impact: More students will feel comfortable seeking help and supporting one another.

Provide Support Through Accessible Counselling

The Issue: Many students don't know where to get help or feel counseling services are hard to access.

My Approach:

- Ensure that counselling services are well-advertised, so students know where to go.
- Advocate for more counselors and flexible appointment times to meet demand.
- Provide anonymous support options, such as online chats or peer support groups.

Impact: Students will have easier access to professional help without fear of judgment.

Promote Well-being Through Workshops & Programs

The Issue: Students face high stress levels but don't always have the tools to manage it.

My Approach: Host practical and engaging workshops covering:

- Stress Management: Learn strategies to handle academic and personal pressures.
- Mindfulness & Meditation: Techniques for reducing anxiety and improving focus.
- Sleep Hygiene: Tips for maintaining healthy sleep patterns for better performance.
- Healthy Relationships: Building strong and supportive connections.
- Time Management: Strategies for balancing school, work, and personal life effectively.

Impact: Students will gain skills to manage stress, improve focus, and maintain well-being

Enhancing Sports Facilities and Programs.

As part of my manifesto, I pledged to improve sports facilities and programs on campus. This report outlines the initial steps taken and future plans to achieve this goal.

Current Initiatives

- Glenside Campus: We are currently working on installing a new basketball hoop pole to provide students with an additional sports facility.
- Bowar Ashton Campus: We are exploring the possibility of establishing partnerships with gym facilities to cater to the fitness needs of students on this campus.
- Sports Clubs: We are actively engaging with various sports clubs on campus to understand their needs and identify areas where we can provide support and resources.

Organized healthy food event during Bucs events

I believe that a healthy lifestyle extends beyond physical activity—it includes proper nutrition as well. To promote awareness about healthy eating, I organized a Healthy Food Event, where participants learned about the benefits of nutritious meals, balanced diets, and mindful eating habits. The event featured interactive sessions, expert talks, and healthy food tastings, encouraging everyone to make informed food choices. By integrating health and wellness initiatives, I aim to inspire a holistic approach to fitness among students and the community."

Future plans

- Facility Upgrades: Continue to explore upgrades to existing sports facilities, such as repairing damaged equipment and improving court surfaces.
- Equipment Procurement: Explore opportunities for funding for the purchase of new sports equipment to enhance the overall sports experience for students.
- Inter-Campus Competitions: We will organize inter-campus sports competitions to foster a sense of camaraderie and healthy competition among students from different campuses.
- Collaborations with Local Sports Organizations: We will explore partnerships with local sports organizations to offer specialized training programs and opportunities for students.

- Accessibility Upgrades: Ensure that all sports facilities are accessible to people with disabilities by installing ramps, elevators, and other necessary accommodations.

Organize a workshop about stress Management, emotional regulation.

- Stress Management: Helping athletes remain composed during high-pressure moments, such as crucial matches or competitions.
- Emotional Regulation: Supporting them in handling setbacks, like losing a game, or maintaining balance during moments of joy and victory.
- Mental Toughness: Encouraging perseverance and patience to navigate difficult times and stay committed to their goals.