

working towards
Students' Union
Evaluation Initiative

Self Assessment Statements



www.huddersfieldstudent.com/suei



AI.2 What innovative methods have been used by the Sabbatical Team to ensure increased connections with the membership and what have been the outcomes?

UHSU recognises that new technology and innovative methods should be used to develop connections with our members. However, we recognise that thoughtfully applied traditional methods of face to face engagement with members are central to making and maintaining connections with our members. The Sabbatical team 2009/10 realise that in order to get and keep the students interested we have to get 'our hands dirty' and be involved ourselves. The Sabbatical team are aware that we can only help students if we truly listen to them and in order for us to keep doing this we have to find different ways in which students can express themselves at their level.

Innovative Face to Face Engagement

FISHing and GOATing

In addition to the Students' Union annual events and the Sabbatical teams active campaigns, this years ongoing initiative is FISH (Finding Issues Students Have); an interactive method of talking to our members on academic, housing, facilities, SU and various other subjects. The Sabbatical team actively promote this around all 3 campuses and it is proving popular with members who are enjoying the open interaction with the elected officers.

So what's changed?

- The Make your Mark Survey has encouraged better promotion of the Student Partnership Agreement, which details students' rights and responsibilities.
- Proposals to change class times were shelved in response to UHSU officers listening and articulating the student voice.

Induction Talks

Whilst not innovative, delivering a consistent message to new students about the Students' Union and systematically addressing every new cohort of students is a major piece of work that sets the tone for the Students' Unions ongoing engagement with members. For the last two years we have undertaken an informal welcome ballot with members, promoted in and at induction talks.

So what's changed?

- *New cohorts have been addressed and we have a better awareness of groups we need to reach out to*
- *Welcome Ballot outcomes have informed officer priorities and campaigns activities, for example in 2009 Feedback and Assessment; in 2010 Anonymous Marking.*

iZone

The creation of the iZone in September 2009 has provided a space for sports, societies, volunteering and student reps to access support. Open Monday to Friday, the iZone team works with the Sabbatical team to raise awareness of the opportunities for student involvement and provide support to those already involved. The VP Sports & Societies principally works from the iZone and other officers use the open plan space to meet with and support students.

So what's changed?

- Connections with course representatives. From only a handful of reps trained and supported in 2007/08 over 250 have been trained in 2009/10. Training standards have improved to create a more involved experience. The development of course reps email databases ensures continuity and provides information, ongoing support and regular

consultation with course reps. Course Reps were key to articulating the student voice in the University deliberations regarding class times.

- Connections with Sports and Societies: Regular Forums are now held with student activity groups and the VP Sports and Societies, alongside the iZone manager, this has focused 1-1 meetings with target groups.

Use of media and New Media

Student Newspaper

The newspaper has had a major makeover this academic year making it more appealing to students, the content revolves more around student life and the difficulties they face plus more up to date news coverage from all 3 campuses.

RadioHudd

RadioHudd, established in September 2009, plays from noon till 10.30pm Monday to Friday; Students can listen to student broadcasters inform members of current issues plus they have the opportunity to listen to a wide range of student sounds. Between September 2009 and February 2010 around 5700 log-ins have been recorded. Critically this new initiative has engaged 70 plus students as volunteers in a new student activity.

Emails and Portal Plus

We include regular updates on the University Portal Plus system, which is the part of the University site where students can access all their information (emails, file storage, course and university information). This is the major channel for University communication with members and UHSU is embedded within it.

Website and Social networking

The Students' Union website also received an overhaul this academic year making it cleaner, easier to navigate and fully up to date. We have incorporated several factors within it to ensure more interaction with the students e.g. photo galleries. Another aspect is our 'Virtual President'. Based on the homepage this is a live chat facility between the President, Junaid Ejaz, or the marketing department if he is unavailable. This has been a great tool for answering quick queries from our members and is proving quite popular. Our website is part of a pilot test of a mobile version of BAM websites, enabling student to access union news whilst on the go. Over 9739 students are registered on the SU website and receive regular e-newsletters.

Facebook is the dominant social networking site used by USHU students. The UHSU Group has 1425 members (18-03-2010) and daily postings ensure that UHSU priorities regularly feature in Students Facebook accounts. The President, Junaid Ejaz initiated a 'blog', accessible via the website (<http://preshud.wordpress.com/>). This gives a good insight into the daily workings of a Sabbatical officer, the work involved within Executive campaigns and the results derived from them.

Use of New Media in Elections

In March 2009 the election process migrated online. Candidates were supported to campaign with online video manifestoes. In 2010 Radio Hudd produced a pod-cast candidate debate. The UHSU marketing team twittered and posted Facebook comments through Hustings (Candidate Question Time) to generate involvement and interest

Innovative Campaigning

The “Keep the Cap campaign”, was the first for this academic year, and was one of the largest which the Students’ Union has done in recent years. The Sabbatical team devised activities to interact with students (e.g. wall of debt handprints) and organised a debate which was streamed live via our Students’ Union website, www.huddersfieldstudent.com. The debate gave the perfect platform for our students to voice their concerns regarding tuition fees and the proposed increase. A postcard was also produced which gave students the opportunity to personalise and sign which went directly into the hand of David Lammy, Minister for Higher Education, in Parliament via Students’ Union representatives – encouraging our students to make a positive stand against the raising of tuition fees.

The Sabbatical team also worked with the Advice Centre to promote welfare and safety issues. Sabbatical team members ‘jumped’ in a car, to be rescued by a fire fighting team (the idea behind this was to show students how they would be rescued if they were involved in a crash) as part of the annual Safety Week campaign organised by the Student Advice and Information Centre.

SUEI SA 2 - How are the Union and its leaders accountable?

Union Leaders:

The Board of Trustees, five executive officers and the three Senior Managers can be designated as the leaders of UHSU. The Accountability Matrix provides a summary of the formal, informal and practical ways in which people are held to account. The narrative text here provides examples of where the student voice, formal and informal accountabilities have influenced change in the organisation.

Venue to The Graduate Summer 2009:

The decision to invest in our social space shifting it from an entertainments venue to day time café bar was subjected to an extended deliberative process involving elected members and managers. Throughout this process UHSU was aware of the formal market research results which articulated dissatisfaction with the current offer, trading data and informal articulations of the student voice.

Meeting Dietary Requirements:

Within the above offer we sought to maximise the range of food offers that meet differing dietary requirements. However in Feb 2010, several Islamic student members expressed concerns regarding the risk that there could be cross contamination of Halal and non Halal products in preparation. This was considered at Executive and GPC and within a week adjustments had been made to accommodate individual needs and preferences.

Accountability at Union Council:

Investment in the iZone has enabled student reps and council members to be supported to use the accountability mechanisms set out in the constitution. However the informal processes before, after and around council provide an equally robust means of holding officers to account; for example in the last 3 years there has been 1 motion of censure moved and 3 sabbatical officers have resigned prior to motions of no confidence (2008). There is scope to improve accountability to Union council through ongoing training, and the provision of briefings on key Student's Union development and priorities.

Development of proposals and work-plans:

Where applicable a consultative and project based approach is taken to the development of activities and service offers. This informal process of drafting ideas asking elected officers, members and other stakeholders to comment on them means that proposals that emerge at committees will reflect a consensus view. A good example of this is the working group who stewarded constitutional changes, a broad consensus emerged which was endorsed at the AGM.

Complaints and Comments Process:

There is very limited use of the formal complaints process, Comments Postcards are collated monthly and reviewed by managers areas for improvement are identified. Students often will approach elected members with concerns and comments, which are passed on to service managers. Areas identified for improvement include food and service offer in The Graduate.

Accountability Matrix		Accountable Body			
		BOT	University	Members	Staff
BOT/ Corporate Accountability	Formal Process	BOT is ultimate accountable body for governance and management issues. Governance and meeting calendar sets out when critical matters will be considered by board	Memorandum of Co-operation sets out how UHSU and UoH will work together and specific reporting requirements. MoC provides permission for University to internally audit aspects of UHSU's work. Thematic Review in 2008 subjected UHSU to significant scrutiny.	Members have capacity to petition for referenda, call GM and propose motions Complaints Process has been made more accessible in Constitutional Review External Board members are subject to Union Council approval and can be removed by Union Council	Staff are accountable through line management structure. Executive – Staff Protocol exists to support line management structure
	Informal Practical Examples	Board has committed (Dec 2010) to undertake self evaluation Periodic informal briefings are arranged on topics for board members.	Extended discussion with Uni regarding premises investment summer 2009 Three meetings between University SMT and BoT annually		
Sabbatical Officers	Formal Process	Officers submit quarterly report to Board, which independent members scrutinise.	Attendance and scrutiny at meetings.	Council is principal body that holds officers to account. Questioning of officers by members is robust.	Officers are subject to the same employment T&C as all staff, though removal from office has membership involvement embedded within it.
	Informal Practical Examples		University staff are keen to support elected officer to improve and represent the student voice. A range of University staff offer informal mentoring and will offer constructive criticism.	Members emails Newspaper and Online Petitions Response to FaceBook	Executive Officers from 2009 have been allocated staff mentors. General Manager and President undertake termly reviews and 1:1 with each officer. President has review with BoT Chair and General Manager
Senior Management Team	Formal Process	Each SMT provides quarterly report to BoT on performance in departments allied to scorecard.	Via GM and Executive meetings with Executive Officers	Management Team report fortnightly to GPC on activities within their areas of work. All executive members are members of GPC. Financial Accounts are presented to GPC monthly and generate questions and actions. A full MIS system is accessible by officers providing background data Issues related to Halal food raised in Feb 2010 resulted in changes as a result of student views.	Most formal processes involve staff being accountable through line management. In contrast the newly established UHSU Safety Committee provides a forum for multiple accountabilities and responsibilities to be reflected. Reorganisations through 2008 and 2009 have involved formal consultation processes and GM maintains a running dialogue with Staff Trades Unions
	Informal Practical Examples	SMT seek to maintain regular contact with external trustees. BoT members will drop into events	Finance and Commercial Services Manager meets bi monthly with UoH director of finance to review management accounts. GM and Officers attend periodically.	SMT members seek to listen to the student voice informally through being attuned to the debates that happen within committees, but also use market research, demographic and other data to support decision making. The Student Newspaper has made requests to SMT for data and information about UHSU operations which have been responded to.	Informally SMT seek to be accessible to staff teams. SMT undertake management by walking around and make themselves available to staff informally. Staff Newsletter informs staff of important issues. All SMT members will periodically visit during non office but operating hours to be available to staff

Accountability Matrix		Accountable Body			
		BOT	University	Members	Staff
General Manager	Formal Process	<p>Annual review is led by Chair President and Further External Trustee.</p> <p>GM is accountable to board and prepares activity summary</p> <p>Scorecard provides topline summary of organisational performance.</p>	<p>GM prepares major compliance documents for committee approval prior to UoH scrutiny</p>	<p>GM and whole organisation is accountable via executive.</p> <p>GM briefs officers on key matters in advance of council</p> <p>GM will provide factual and technical information to council when requested.</p>	<p>See immediately above for SMT</p>
	Informal Practical Examples	<p>Regular meetings with chair and President review work and priorities.</p> <p>GM regularly meets with President to brief on key staffing and managerial issues within the organisation</p>	<p>GM meets monthly with PVC Teaching and Learning, to maintain open dialogue about strategic issues. President will attend dependent on issues.</p> <p>PVC is invited to comments on drafts of strategic documents.</p>	<p>GPC is forum where day-to-day accountability happens. Issues raised in GPC or exec are taken up by GM with view to reaching agreed workable solutions</p>	<p>See immediately above for SMT</p>

SUEI SA3 – What changes have been made by the University during the past year as a result of Union representation on: a) Academic Issues b) Academic related Issues c) Non-academic Issues?

Assessment and Feedback

The results of the National Student Survey 2008 highlighted assessment and feedback as a key concern for students across the country. Students have been less than satisfied with the timeliness and quality of the feedback they receive. UHSU decided to conduct further investigation into these areas in order to push for the necessary improvements to be made for our members.

We began by surveying the student body over a period of four weeks, with over 700 students participating in the survey. The results of the survey were then collated to identify any areas for concern, and a formal report was produced by the VP Education and Welfare.

The Student Partnership Agreement, which is a document outlining what students can expect from the University, promises to adhere to students receiving timely feedback. Research showed that many students found it very dissatisfying that they are receiving feedback five weeks later which left no room to acknowledge and reflect on the feedback to improve future assessments.

The report was taken and presented to the University Teaching and Learning Committee and resulting discussions, in which Schools compared best practice, led to the University changing its regulations to all students receiving feedback within 3 weeks during term time.

The VP Education and Welfare was also part of a Thematic Review of Assessment and Feedback; at the end of the consultation with students, senior members of University staff along with the President of the Students' Union went away for three days to discuss, debate and to come up with a document called the Assessment and Feedback Strategy.

Proposal to change Class Times

In November of 2009, the University announced it would begin consultation with staff and students regarding changing class times from quarter past the hour to on the hour. UHSU was alarmed at the potential impact of this on our members, particularly those from non-traditional backgrounds such as student parents, and immediately informed our network of Course Reps. The student newspaper set up an online poll in which over 400 students participated, with over 300 of them against the proposed time changes.

Within two weeks over 130 student reps gained feedback, with the majority against the University proposals. This resulted in a motion being developed by UHSU which was presented at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). Over 120 students turned up and voted for the motion against the University's proposal and a meeting followed the next day between the Pro-VC Learning and Teaching and the VP Education and Welfare. Further campaigning activity was planned but proved unnecessary; the University listened to the student voice and decided not to implement their proposal.

Anonymous Marking

The University previously had no policy for marking assessments anonymously. The VP Education and Welfare decided after attending the NUS Black Students Conference that anonymous marking should be implemented at our institution. Anonymous marking is instrumental in ensuring that students are treated fairly and removes any scope of bias marking, as it has been shown at other institutions that where anonymous marking has been implemented, marks for certain cohorts of students have increased.

The University welcomed this proposal at the Teaching and Learning Committee and a sub-committee has been developed this year to ensure this process can be implemented across the institution for certain assessments. The committee panel is made up of 3 members of University staff and the VP Education and Welfare. The meetings have been going well and we have come up with a method that could be used to adopt this proposal, but are awaiting consultation from other Universities as to how effective this method could be. UHSU believes Anonymous marking will be live in the next academic year; this will go a long way to ensure we stay in line with the Equal Opportunities Policy and widening participation at our institution.

Tutor availability on Blackboard

Over the past year, many students complained that they were not aware of their tutor's availability. UHSU investigated this and found that different approaches were taken across the seven different Schools at the University. Course Reps were consulted via email and asked if they felt that Blackboard would be an ideal tool for communicating tutor availability. Many student reps were strongly in favour of this option. The idea was proposed to University Teaching and Learning Committee, which agreed that Blackboard should be used to communicate tutor availability.

Increased number of Course Reps Trained

The transition from hardly any student reps being trained two years ago to over 250 reps trained this year demonstrates a huge improvement in the joint-working between University and UHSU. In April 2009 UHSU recruited a full-time Democratic and Student Representation Co-ordinator, who, along with the VP Education and Welfare, held meetings with a large number of University staff to discuss improvements in the ways Course Reps are recruited and trained. This resulted in the production of a 'Staff Handbook' for Course Reps, and resulting improvements have seen reps get involved in student campaigns, AGM and promoting events to the student body. The VP Education and Welfare was also able to secure extra funding from the University for the Course Rep programme.

Student Partnership Agreement 'Credit Card'

As part of the process of gathering student opinion for the QAA Audit Student Written Submission, UHSU undertook a survey called 'Leave Your Mark' which questioned students specifically on the questions asked by the QAA, such as accuracy of information provided by the institution. The major discovery from this survey was that students had virtually no awareness of the Student Partnership Agreement. As a result of this, UHSU raised the issue with the University at the Quality Standards Advisory Group, and came up with the idea of producing a credit card sized summary of the key factors contained in the Student Partnership Agreement to be distributed to students. This will be developed in the year ahead alongside the revised student partnership statement.

Student Voice Conference

UHSU had a strong influence over the planning of the Voice 09 conference for student reps. The theme, assessment and feedback, was identified jointly by the University and UHSU as a key issue for students. UHSU pushed for the conference to be held in a venue larger than the one proposed by the University – this request was granted, 27 students attended and the result was a vibrant conference.

University Student Council

A Thematic Review of the University Student Council was undertaken in September 2009, which was led by the VP Education and Welfare and the School Manager of the Business School. The aim of the thematic review was to assess how effective the Student Council was at meeting its aims, and indeed whether its aims were clear. The Students' Union had a number of concerns about the

remit and operation of the University Student Council, and these were communicated during the thematic review process. As a result, the University has agreed the following changes:

- Terms of reference to be made clearer to students
- Better representation of the student community eg inclusion of PGR student rep
- Quoracy rules made clearer, and to include a minimum number of student reps
- Meetings to be held once a term, and across all 3 campuses

SUEI SA4 - How are the unions decisions scrutinised, listing any decisions that have been changed by such scrutiny?

The University of Huddersfield Students' Union is structured in a way in which decisions can be scrutinised and overturned. Below are some of the examples of the committees and democratic procedures with responsibility for such scrutiny. In addition to these formal structures, minutes and supporting documents of Executive Committee and Union Council meetings are made available for members to view on the website and on notice boards, and the Huddersfield Student newspaper regularly reports on Union Council decisions.

The Executive Committee

The executive committee is a formal fortnightly meeting which comprises of the Sabbatical officers with the General Manager in attendance. Formal reports from each sabbatical officer are presented to the committee, which can question, discuss, and hold officers to account. The committee also notes any minutes from internal university meetings and external site committee meetings. The committee may propose motions and policies. There are a number of ways in which decisions made by the executive committee can be overturned, including Union Council and AGM.

AGM

At a recent Annual General Meeting, a new Constitution was proposed, containing significant changes to the structure of the Union Council and the job descriptions of the officers. This was passed by the members in attendance.

Union Council

Union Council comprises the 5 sabbatical officers, all the non-sabbatical officers and Union Councillors elected specifically to carry out this role. Non-voting attendance at Union Council is open to all members of UHSU, and membership has recently been expanded to include specific representatives from each School in the University. The minutes of Executive and General Purposes Committee are attached and included as an item of the union council agenda. Reports are formally presented to the council by all sabbatical and non sabbatical officers. The council then allows for questions to the officers. The council discuss any motions and policies that have been proposed and has the power to overrule any proposal that may have been passed by the executive committee. The UHSU Strategic Plan was approved by Union Council

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for overseeing the management and administration of the Students' Union and (subject to the Education Act, the Constitution, and Bylaws) may exercise all the powers of the Union.

The Board of Trustees may override any decisions made by the members in Annual General Meetings or Referenda or by the Students' Union Council which the trustees consider has or may have financial implications for the union, is or may be in breach of charity or education law or any other legal requirements and is not in the best interest of the Union. By carefully adhering to committee terms of reference and seeking to develop well thought through proposals there have not been any incidents of this since the inception of the board.

Evidence of scrutiny and change

Halal Food Jan / Feb 2010: whilst developing the ground floor café bar changes it was decided that a range of Halal options would be included on the menu. In late January 2010 executive officers presented concerns to management regarding the perceived risks of cross contamination in a mixed kitchen. The matter was quickly investigated and considered by the management team.

A paper exploring the issue and presenting solutions was presented to GPC on 15-02-10. Extra measures were put in place to further reduce the risks of cross contamination and menu labelling was made clearer.

Newspaper and Apple Mac: The newspaper team were unhappy with their access to resources to produce the paper this was considered at council resulting in the matter being resolved to their satisfaction.

NUS Extra: UHSU exec in Feb 2007 adopted a policy to not actively promote NUS extra, to only allow online access to the product and to develop a local discount card (Student Plus). This decision was initially reviewed by the GPC 19/01/10. Executive members took a decision to present a revised policy to Union Council (01/02/2010). Council adopted the revised policy and NUS Extra will be promoted as the discount card from Sept 2010.

RadioHudd Change of Constitution: Union Council recently amended part of the byelaws of the new constitution that had just been passed by the AGM. The decision was taken to remove the position of RadioHudd coordinator from cross-campus ballot as the radio station is at an early developmental stage and the council felt that it was too soon to open the position for a cross campus ballot.

Early Consultation, Scrutiny and Development of Ideas:

As ideas for substantive change are developed, ongoing consultation occurs with a range of stakeholders, including the elected executive, staff team, Board and where appropriate University stakeholders. We are also aware of the views of members expressed in market research. This early consultative process means consensus is developed and reduces the occasions when subsequent scrutiny changes or challenges pre-existing decisions. A good example of this is the decision to make strategic changes to the organisation:

Service Change Staffing and Development of iZone	Service Changes Catering and Bar to Café bar and Coffee Shop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan articulated board direction of travel • Position papers related to staffing developed in staffing committee. Executive Officers confidentially briefed on these matters and views taken into consideration • Staffing Committee: Details of re-organisation and proposals approved by SC. Consultation outcomes considered by SC. Final decisions endorsed by SC • Executive involved in appeal processes • Executive Officer involved in recruitment of new staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan articulated board direction of travel • Ideas brief developed - shared with Board members for comment • Consultation with University • Appointment of designers and working group of Exec and Officers' to sign off design concept • Budget and design concept formally agreed with Board and University • Implementation by Project Manager and staff team

A further example of the consultative and reflective approach is the setting up of the working group to develop the revised Constitution and the working group that is considering our strategic response to reduced funding in HE, anticipated in future years.

SUEI SA5 - What is the Process and timetable for future strategic reviews including obtaining student opinion?

Development of Current Strategic Plan

Prior to the development of the current strategic plan UHSU developed a series of annual plans that were designated as Strategic Plans. There was not a clearly articulated and overarching strategy. This absence of strategy was addressed over summer 2008 when the current plan was developed involving the Sabbatical Officers and Senior Management Team. The developed plans were presented to both the Union Council and Board of Trustees for approval. The University was also consulted in its development.

UHSU acknowledges that during the development of the current plan there was limited opportunity for wide member consultation. However we would note that there was an imperative to quickly develop a robust and credible plan that would provide assurance to stakeholders, following a period of extensive scrutiny.

In the absence of wide member consultation UHSU sought to draw on a number of information sources that would ensure that the plan was congruent with members' preferences. This included:

- Involvement of executive and non sabbatical officers
- Checking and seeking alignment with university strategy
- Reviewing existing research and trends in HE, society and the youth market.

During November 2008 we commenced our first substantial market research activities. The congruence of the findings was checked against the direction of travel set out within the Strategic Plan. No substantive adjustments came forward to the strategic plan, however annual operating plans reflected the articulated views of students – e.g. improvement of bar facilities and food offer were a clear desire of members.

Monitoring of Plan

The plan has informed annual operating plans and has set KPI's contained within the organisational scorecard. An annual review of progress against the plan is presented to the Board in September each year and a traffic light approach is adopted. The scorecard and exceptions from annual operating plans are reported quarterly.

Plans and Timetable for future review

A review of the initial plan was scheduled to commence in Jan 2011, providing approximately 8 months to September 2011 to generate ideas, consult upon and develop the plan. Board (08/03/10) considered this in the light of the anticipated changes in HE funding and opted to bring the review forward in order that a meaningful strategic response can be developed to whatever challenges lay ahead. In effect a review of the plan will commence in September 2010, though preliminary work is commencing with scenario planning from March 2010.

Considering the financial challenges the revised plan is likely to be a shorter, more focused strategic plan.

Provisional Time Table for review and development of revised strategic plan

Key Dates	Activity	Involvement	Lead
Late March	Notification of HEFCE Grant Letter		MM
March – April 2010	Scenario Planning and Development of responses to range of PESTLE Analyses	2 Officers elect 2 incumbent officers 2 SMT members	MM
May 2010	Development of Operational Plans and Budgets for FY10/11 with assumed 5% reduction in block grant funding	Managers and Exec	SMT
May 2010	General Election		
June 2010	Revised Budget or greater certainly regarding political and economic outlook		
07 June 2010	Update to Board of Trustees – Scenario plans and emerging responses. “What will successful SU look like in 5 years”	Working Group	MM
March – June 2010	Desk Review of existing research and trends: NUS Surfing the Wave etc UUK publications Student Research (Unite, NUSSL etc)	iZone Team	MM
July 2010	Introduction of New Officers to Strategic Plan and Challenges		MM / JG
06 September 2010	Draft of Revised Strategic Plan and Options Document to Board of Trustees		MM
Sept-Dec 2010	Member Consultation on Plans and Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Consideration Welcome Ballot / Referenda on key issues 	Executive	
Jan 2011	Adjustment of Plans in light of member consultation	Exec and SMT	MM Pres
Feb 2011	Staff Consultation on Plans		MM
07 March 2011	Revised Plan to be Approved at Board		MM Pres
March 2011	Strategic plan to be put to referenda of membership at main elections.	Exec	Pres
March – June 2011	Revised Plan to accommodate into operational plans and budgets.	Staff Project Teams	MM & Pres

Format of Strategic Plan. We will seek to produce the strategic plan in a format that is accessible to stakeholders; additionally we will give consideration to using an operational format that parallels the University Strategy Map.

Stakeholder Opinion

Opportunities for consultation with students, the University and staff are built into the above timetable. Additionally our market research findings from Dec 2008 and February 2010 will be considered as plans are formulated.

Desk Based Research will comprise an important aspect of the review. In addition to garnering current data, it will seek to look at forecasts of future trends and student demographics to ensure that the strategic plan we develop is relevant to both current and future students needs. The work undertaken by NUS (Wave of Change), the University forward plans and organisations such as MORI, UUK will be central to future proofing our plans.

SUEI SA6 - How has the Union acted effectively on feedback from its members on services / activities and what change has resulted?

The University of Huddersfield Students' Union has seen a great period of change during the last two academic years. Changes have been both physical and organisational, and all of them striving to improve the services and activities we provide for our members and meet their needs.

We have sought to hear and understand our members needs by:

- Using formal market research
- Having an effective feedback, comments and complaints system
- Fishing and Goating
- Having staff responsive to direct customer feedback

Market Research

In November 08, a comprehensive market research exercise was carried out, highlighting some specific issues and areas of feedback that students had. Key findings from the research included:

- Relatively low awareness, be this of staff offers, staff, the sabbatical officers, or activities and events that students could get involved in.
- 87% of students felt that representing students' interests to the University was important
- UHSU was not well recognised or acknowledged at UCO/UCB

UHSU response

- Officers have used FISHING to raise their profile and be closer to members. We have systematically sought to address all new students at induction sessions.
- The November 2008 staffing restructure created the iZone which is focussed on student involvement and activities. Three new roles were created, overseeing the provision of student activities and engagement (including course reps, Union democracy and outreach to campuses at Oldham and Barnsley). The new roles and the iZone facility have provided a focus for involvement and Sabbatical officers use the space to maximise their accessibility.
- Jointly with the Students' Union President, PVC Tim Thornton has held open forums with students; this joint outreach has enabled direct consideration of student finance issues and resolution of case work matters.

Significant dissatisfaction with the day time and evening licensed trade offer. We received particularly adverse comments about the space, music, atmosphere, furnishings and comfort.

UHSU Response:

- We felt this was an area where we could make some real physical changes to reinvigorate the student body. We therefore carried out a full refurbishment of our bar and café areas over the summer vacation in 2009, brought about directly as a result of member feedback regarding the existing catering facilities through this survey and associated forums. There have also been some changes to opening hours following feedback in the market research.

Feedback, Comments and Complaints

The marketing team on a weekly basis collate and distribute to managers the results of comments forms. Managers are responsible for considering the feedback and taking appropriate action. Where contact details have been left, it is the Managers' responsibility to contact the member and respond.

In the most recent period the focus of comments have been related to food service provision.

UHSU response:

- We have trailed a number of methods and in January 2010 established fixed table numbers to improve the speed of service
- After the first term of operation the menu has been refocused on popular dishes that we prepare and delivery quickly. Additionally we always intended to offer a wider range of seasonal dishes; from Feb 2010 daily specials have been provided to augment the standard menu.

UHSU has generally received commendation for the changes we have made to the ground floor, although we have received a number of adverse comments relating to the changes which ended the first floor canteen service and the development of our principal food offer within the Graduate. The substance of these complaints would appear to be:

- My religious beliefs prevent me to going into a environment where liquor is served.
- We want the old service back; we preferred the canteen food offer.
- I don't want to eat my breakfast in a bar

Additionally UHSU is aware that 76 Students have signed the Huddersfield Student online "Save our Bacon" petition. (<http://hslive.co.uk/saveourbacon>)

UHSU response:

- The planned investment that we made was in response to the expressed views of members. It is not financially viable to run two full catering offers, and should students want a canteen offer "Café on Third" offers a suitable alternative on campus.
- Financial constraints and a phased approach means that we have not fully invested in the first floor offer, and decisions on this are postponed until there is greater certainty with regard to long term finances.
- We have broadened the food offer on the first floor to include hot breakfast rolls that people can take with a drink as well as a range of light snacks, such as baked potatoes.
- The first floor offer is in a non-alcoholic environment and it serves pre-prepared vegetarian and halal food that meets some of our members' dietary requirements.

FISHing and GOATING

Fishing activities have raised the following issues:

- the SU should be open at weekends
- members wanted more food choice
- members wanted more space to relax
- students wanted more variety in the entertainment
- students wanted it to be easier to join clubs and societies
- members wanted a radio station
- students wanted more campaigns

UHSU response :

We undertook a full refurbishment over summer 2009 which linked together many of the suggested improvements that our members raised during the FISHing process. Our new commercial outlets are open at weekends, and have been redeveloped to ensure a greater food choice and space to relax. Entertainment has been developed to create regular comedy nights, live bands, and DJ nights. The SU made a commitment to create a radio station; RadioHUDD began broadcasting in September 2009 and now is one of our largest student involvement groups. The creation of the iZone has made it easier to join clubs and societies, with staff and officers present to guide students through the process of online membership. Campaigns in this academic year (2009/2010) have been varied and numerous, ranging from issues such as student funding and lobbying against a proposed change to class times, to an environmental campaign and a sexual health and guidance week.

Staff responsiveness

We hope that our staff are responsive to our members as customers and will seek to meet their needs.

We have used the “FISH” customer training programme to support the delivery of positive and responsive customer service. Examples of comments made directly to staff and the adjustments we have made include:

- Reception – Following comments received from students about who to contact outside Reception opening times, new signage was produced informing visitors of the Reception opening times and directing any enquiries to the bar staff at other times.
- SAIC – Students commented that they had difficulty contacting Student Finance England (SFE) given the length of time on hold, the cost of calls from a mobile phone and that appointments were not immediately available to call with an adviser. In response to this a phone in the SAIC was made more widely available to our members to contact SFE without the need to book an appointment with an adviser.
- iZone – at a Sports & Societies forum, club captains noted to the VP Sports & Societies and the Activities, Involvement and Engagement Manager that they hold their training on Monday evenings. We had, in the past, sent notice of Thursday training events and forums out on a Tuesday so as to not leave enough time for the students to forget. In doing so, however, we had not given them enough time to speak to their members about delegating attendance to another player. Following this feedback, we agreed with our club captains that we would remind them of important training sessions one week in advance, thus giving them a chance to meet with other members to discuss attendance.

SUEI - SA7 - How is equality and diversity promoted in the provision of service and activities, particularly in the operation of clubs and societies?

Introduction

In this assessment we will look at where the Union was before the SUEI process and how SUEI has altered the way in which we look at the promotion of equality and diversity, with a particular focus on how we do this in the remit of clubs and societies.

Where were we?

Diversity and equality has been an underlying principle within the Union structures and this is apparent through looking at the Union's Equal Opportunities Policy. An example of this in operation is in the club and society model constitution which states: 'Membership of the (add club name) is open to all members of the Students' Union.' Deviation from this element of the model constitution is not permitted by clubs and societies.

We are of the view that, prior to embarking upon the SUEI process, it would be fair to assess that the Union had met its legal requirements in making sure we had provision and documentation to demonstrate that the organisation believed in equality and diversity.

Where we are now

The SUEI process has made us consider going beyond defining and dealing with issues related to equality and diversity, and to look at how we can positively promote equality and diversity.

Staffing

2009 staff training and induction for student staff looked at how, as an organisation, we treat people. This is of vital importance as we want the Union to be a place where all its' members can feel safe and respected. Staff behaviour is crucial to supporting this. We have embedded a programme of staff training on customer service, and a way of getting across the message of our Equal Opportunities Policy to all staff, whether they are front-line or 'behind the scenes'. This is contained in the induction presentation when we discuss the Students' Union values, including diversity. We recognise the importance of managers and key staff leading by example; our recruitment and selection activities explore candidates approach and understanding of equal opportunities.

Student Activities

Sports & Societies Forums have been taking place in the Union for many years. This year, with extra staff support, these forums are being held at least monthly during term time. The staff member and officer leading these have promoted ideas of how sports and societies can look to increase their membership by being more open and diverse. We have tried to get across to student activity leaders that this can be done with simple considerations such as making sure these meetings are accessible to all potential members. We have impressed upon them that they should also develop an understanding that, for example, just because someone is perhaps not physically able to play a sport, they may still have an interest in the organising and management of an event, or even using their course skills, such as a journalist student using their media skills to promote and comment on a society's activities.

This theme will continue in the Student Training and Recognition Scheme (STARS), a new training programme which commenced in the 2009/2010 academic year. This will include a session on equality and diversity issues, to embed these concepts into the thinking of student activity leaders, and to promote creative thinking in how to address equality and diversity within their group.

There are a number of active societies within the Union which have at their core issues of promoting the interests of minority groups, cultures and faiths. These include Journey to the East (promoting traditional Chinese culture), Islamic Society, Christian Union, Afro-Caribbean Society, and the LGBT Society. There are also volunteering opportunities within organisations that promote a more diverse local community, such as Kirklees Faith Forum, to which we signpost students who are interested in volunteering.

The creation of RadioHudd in September 2009 has allowed another avenue for different groups within the Union to express themselves. As a new activity, there hasn't been an established network of prescribed radio interests. This provided a diverse and interesting output where listeners can move from an hour of traditional African music to discussions of what's going on in the Big Brother house.

Governance and Representative Structures

The governance of the Union has been changed to comply with requirements of the Charities Act and improve our representative structures. A major area of change will be to Union Council. Its membership will increase due to the creation of new positions within the Council, but also with the establishment of forums. These are to be a positive tool for communities of students to discuss issues they may have. The Chairs/Convenors of these committees will then sit on Union Council and have the same voting rights as any sabbatical officer. The newly-created forums are:

- LGBT forum
- Students with Disabilities forum
- Postgraduate & Mature Students forum
- Part-Time Students forum
- International Students forum
- Women's forum
- BME Students forum
- Ethics and Environment form
- Inter Faith Forum
- Education forum
- Welfare forum
- Students Activities forum

Commercial Services

We provided food in both a licensed and unlicensed environment. Halal food has been built into our offer from May 2008 and more extensively from September 2009, flexible staff who make reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities and where appropriate will arrange an at table service.

Membership Services

Student Advice & Information services are accessible on the ground floor and staff are aware of the types of adjustment they need to make to ensure there service is accessible.

UHSU website is available as a text only site as well as a site for accessing via mobile browsers. Our web provider, BAM, have provided us with confirmation that the BAM standard interface complies with DDA requirements using standard compliance, appropriate visual design, and recommended access keys.

Where we want to be

We see the future of the promotion of equality and diversity as doing what we are doing now but better and on a bigger scale. The new forums will come into play from July 2010, and will give the chairs/convenors of each forum the support and training in order to allow them to be successful. They will then ensure that information feeds back to what we do as a Union and how we represent our members.

In the provision of sports and societies, we feel this is two-fold. Firstly, we will look at what provision we have in our societies and sports teams and then promote and support ones that

allow for a more rounded Union, and develop those whose skills in this area are lacking, through one-on-one discussions with club and society leaders and through the STARS programme. Secondly, we will look at which Societies are being run and consider the culture of the organisation, training our committees to empower members to create and strengthen supportive networks of diverse students.

Concluding statement

In this assessment we hope that you feel we have been honest at the position we have come from and where we know as a Union we want to be. There is room for improvement in the way we train our clubs and societies to recognise and deal with equality and diversity issues, though this is being addressed through training and staff support. Given the Union's history of fairly low participation, we are of the view that boosting participation across the board at the outset remains a priority. We then need to build on that towards more quality opportunities to develop our diverse student base, ensuring the focus is not on what divides us, but on creating an inclusive and welcoming Union.

SUEI SA8 - How have the Sabbatical Team increased outcomes to members during the last twelve months?

Anonymous Marking will be rolled out next year on certain assessments

Since the start of the last academic year, the VP Education and Welfare has been lobbying the University to introduce anonymous marking by submitting a report to the University Teaching and Learning committee. After the Students' Union surveyed the student body and addressed this issue, the University set up a committee to look at the introduction of anonymous marking. The outcome of this is the development of a paper which is now waiting for approval from the Schools across campus. If all goes well anonymous marking will be introduced in the next academic year and this will reinforce our widening participation initiative.

Sabbatical Officers actively participated in and influenced the Assessment and Feedback strategy

The Students' Union worked alongside the University in developing a strategy which was led by Mike Russ (Dean of Music, Humanities and Media). The strategy now contains the regulations that the Students' Union fought for in 2009 for students receiving feedback within three weeks and the report which was published by the NUS called "Feedback Amnesty" was also influential. The Students' Union President attended an event called 'Change Academy' along with senior University figures, where this strategy was developed.

Each School has thoroughly looked at its own internal processes and is trying to ensure students were not subjected to the same learning outcomes in more than one module and this in return saved time and effort, ensuring academics could use their time more efficiently.

Officers successfully campaigned against proposed class time changes

The University recently proposed to change class times from quarter past the hour to on the hour. The immediate reaction of the VP Education and Welfare was one of concern. Course Reps were immediately contacted and a survey was launched on the Huddersfield Student website. The reaction was astounding and the majority of students were against the proposal; over 100 email responses were received within a week and over 300 students participated in the survey. An Emergency General Meeting was called to pass a motion that we campaign against this potential change in the 2nd semester, but two weeks before the campaign was due to launch the University announced its decision not to change the class times, based in part on the reaction of the student body that was instigated through the work of the sabbatical officers. This outcome reflects the ongoing dialogue with students, ensuring we can continue to represent and campaign for the necessary changes to improve the student experience. We also appreciate the University for listening to the Students' Union on this issue, especially the effective working relationship that we have with the Pro Vice Chancellor for Learning and Teaching.

Tuition Fees awareness campaign in 08/09 and 09/10

Higher Education Funding has been an issue all year and sabbatical officers ran campaigns on all three University campuses. Students were reminded that voting in the upcoming general election will be vital to ensure that students are not marginalised when it comes to funding higher education. We visited Parliament and Michael Meacher, MP for Oldham, signed the pledge that he is against tuition fees rising above the estimated current rate of £3000 a year.

Debates with parliamentary candidates were also arranged on each campus by the Sabbatical Team, giving students the opportunity to directly question their potential representatives that they may not have otherwise had.

Over 100 students signed up to the Volunteering Campaign

The Students' Union President and the VP Education and Welfare in the last academic year campaigned for students to volunteer and make the most of an opportunity which would benefit both themselves and society. The campaign began in the library foyer where students were persuaded to participate as this will reflect positively on their CV and allow them to make a difference by sacrificing their time. We also participated by spending an afternoon at a nursery near the University where we painted, dug up and re-laid the grass. It felt amazing that a few hours of hard work would benefit that nursery.

SUEI SA9 - How does the Union try to address the needs of all students, particularly hard to reach and non involved students?

Establishing Students Needs

The Students' Union constantly tries to address the needs and wants of all students using a number of different mechanisms and methods of engagement. Within this we have particular focus towards certain cohorts of students that may be classified as harder to reach. For our Union these groups include students studying at our satellite campuses, part-time students, mature students, international students, postgraduate students and liberation groups.

The Communications Strategy Group has adapted the Teesside Matrix to map, understand and plan our engagement with our diverse student community.

Engagement with the Students' Union by student types and activity

Activity	Type of Engagement	Students' Union Focus Areas									
		18-25 UK/EU undergrad and taught post grad	18-25 local undergrad and taught post grad	Mature (26+)	International (Non EU)	Part time	Oldham and Barnsley Students	Post grad (research)	Distance Learners and Collaborative Provision	Vocational and Professional Learners	
Daytime safe social space	Enhancement	h	h	m	l	m	m	l	l	l	
Daytime food/drink provision	Enhancement	h	h	m	m	l	l	l	l	l	
Evening events/club nights	Enhancement	m	m	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	
Employment (student staff)	Enhancement	h	h	m	l	l	l	l	l	l	
Sporting opportunities	Enhancement	h	h	l	m	l	m	l	l	l	
Social groups (societies)	Enhancement	h	h	l	m	l	m	l	l	l	
Student Dev / Training	Enhancement	m	m	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	
Democratic opportunities	Enhancement	h	m	m	l	l	l	l	l	l	
Volunteering opportunities	Enhancement	m	m	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	
Accommodation advice	Help and support	h	h	m	h	l	m	m	l	l	
Money advice and advocacy	Help and support	h	h	h	h	h	h	m	l	l	
Academic advice and advocacy	Help and support	h	h	h	h	m	m	l	l	l	
Course representation involvement	Help and support	h	h	h	h	m	m	l	l	l	
Overall impact on student experience		m	m	l	m	l	m	l	l	l	

The grid shows that we have still work to do to effectively engage all groups of students, though we are mindful of feedback from members in our 2008 Market research which does show that some members have a transactional relationship with the Students' Union and University and are not looking for extensive engagement, but will access help and support when needed.

- As a mature, part time student who is at UCO evenings only, I do not usually see anyone from SU. I also feel that I personally have no need for the SU.
- Difficult as being part time & a mature student, I do not use the Student Union representative at all. Main reason due to there being no need to.
- Look after the youngster because mature students have life commitments.

Reaching Hard To Reach

Doing basics well

Induction Talks & Welcome Ballot

During the induction period sabbatical officers carry out induction talks in which students are introduced to the core functions of the Students' Union and briefed on the many services and facilities that it provides for its members. During the September induction talks students are handed a survey known as the 'Welcome Ballot'. The purpose of this survey is to get students engaged at the outset and to find out their concerns and priorities for the year ahead. This way the Students' Union can ensure that it meets the needs of its members by campaigning on issues that matter to them.

Market Research

During Nov/Dec 2008 and Jan 2010 we surveyed 1600 and 775 students as part of our rolling programme of market research. These surveys help us understand our members needs to undertake representational activities and develop services that meet these needs.

Surveys and Fishing

The more substantive research is supported by a rolling programme of surveys and consultations. The Campus Survey focused on local issues in Oldham and Barnsley. It considered what the students wanted from their Students' Union and the factors that act as a barrier to engagement. UHSU also promotes participation in the NSS, moreover we pay close attention to the results and use the evidence to support our representative activities. NSS results have driven representational work related to feedback and assessment. FISHing – has been undertaken in a systematic way to reach out to students' who would not normally engage with the Students' Union.

On a more informal basis elected officers are alert to student needs at a range of forums they participate in. Course Reps provide a “ready made” consultative and wide ranging group of students. Sabbatical officers have worked with the Postgraduate Society and Res4Res to ensure the student voice is heard. The Adopt a Dean scheme and attendance at school boards means that Sabbatical officers are well known by student representatives in each school.

Outreach to Oldham and Barnsley

Investment in an outreach worker with a development brief at Oldham and Barnsley has significantly improved our connections with both students and staff at each site. Examples of the impact this has had include:

- Growth in societies at each site
- Site committees that are more active in articulating local students voices

Connecting with members through structures and services designed to meet their needs

Alongside the five full time sabbatical officers there are a number of part time officers elected each year. The role of the part time officers involves representation for a specific cohort of student. As there is such a diverse group of students at the University the UHSU aims to provide representation for all its members, regardless of their ethnicity, race, gender or ability. The union part time officers include; Disabilities officer, International and European officer, LGBT officer, Mature and Postgraduate officer and Multi-cultural and Faith officer. It is their responsibility to ensure that provisions are made where necessary and create relevant working groups where appropriate.

We endeavour to develop and design our services to meet our members' needs. The investment in the iZone is a good example of this. The iZone supports 60 clubs and societies which represent a diverse range of students with similar interests. This provides them with the opportunity to self-organise, network, socialise and campaign on issues that affect them. This provision provides opportunities to students that wouldn't ordinarily get involved with the Union through representational and political pathways. Society groups can often provide a support network among students for liberation groups and cohorts such as part time and mature students. Some of the currently active sports and societies include; Afro Caribbean Society, Badminton Club, Football Club, International Research Society, Islamic Society, LGBT society and Postgraduate Society.

The Student Advice and Information Centre is considered one of the core services of the Students' Union providing free, impartial and confidential advice and information from qualified advisors on a wide range of issues which include: academic, financial, accommodation and health and wellbeing. This service provides case work support to around 1800 student each year as well as leading many awareness campaigns. Many student hope that they don't need this service, but rely on it when they do.

SUEI SA10 - What initiatives and strategy has the Union adopted to ensure it has had impact in the Community?

Community Strategy Development

Whilst both our members and our staff already undertake a lot of work in the local community, there has not previously been a formal written UHSU Community Strategy to allow us to co-ordinate the ways in which we link in with our local communities. To address this, we have set up a working group involving both members of the Executive team and staff who are in the process of developing a Community Strategy. We aim to have this in place by the end of this academic year. The draft strategy will incorporate the following five broad themes:

- Housing – supporting students to obtain better housing and an awareness of their housing rights and responsibilities.
- Safety and security – establishing and developing links with our community in order to improve student safety and empower students to build safer communities.
- Volunteering – building links to strengthen our volunteering provision both for the benefit of our members and our local communities.
- Students as employees – supporting students working in the community and making them aware of their rights as workers and their positive contribution to the local economy.
- Community cohesion – promoting good community relationships and how these can be developed in the future.

We hope that by establishing this strategy it will provide the Students' Union with a clear direction and allow us to co-ordinate the ways in which we link into the community, build bridges using staff and students to engage with our local community and external partners, evaluate our success in these areas and identify ways in which we can improve.

Sabbatical Outreach to Community

In the current year sabbatical officers have met with a range of local politicians. Cllr Mehboob Khan, leader of Kirklees MBC, visited our Students' Union with his team earlier this academic year. Outcomes from this meeting include:

- Invitation to attend the Kirklees Council Area Committee meetings
- Agreed to promote the 'Use your Vote' campaign for the local and general elections to our members
- To continue building our links with our local councils to assist with campaigns in the longer term

Additionally a sabbatical officer and a part time officer have started to attend the Kirklees Council Area Committee meetings and are in the process of establishing similar links in Barnsley and Oldham. These Committees can access resources focused on community safety and cohesion; going forward we will continue to ensure that the student voice is heard at these meetings and articulated in the funding priorities.

Members of the local council have been invited to, and participated in, debates. For example, the tuition fees debate which took place during the first term of the academic year 2009/2010 and included representatives from all the major political parties. A general election debate in February 2010 attracted PPCs and the incumbent MPs in Barnsley, Oldham and Huddersfield.

In Barnsley staff and officers have been involved with the police led Prevent Agenda and its work. This work has sought to engage and introduce the police to students as an agency they could turn to if they or fellow students were being targeted by extremist groups.

Partnerships for Our Students

We also seek to work with a number of community partners to benefit our members. Earlier this academic year, the University of Huddersfield Students' Union entered into a partnership agreement with the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service. One of the objectives of the agreement is to promote fire safety messages to students thereby improving student safety and help students to build safer communities.

Unit 14:21 funded by the local PCT promotes responsible drinking. Additionally the Student Advice and Information Centre liaise with the local PCT to raise awareness on a range of health related matters; the current year has seen Chlamydia testing during our Sexual Health Awareness week. Liaison with the local police has enabled a number of self defence classes to be provided as part of our student safety weeks.

Our Freshers' Fayre provides a launch pad for a range of public sector and charitable organisations to engage with students. These organisations are provided with free or discounted stalls as we recognise the member benefit they bring. Stall holders have included the Environment Agency, NHS Kirklees, Police, Fire Service, Amnesty International, National Blood Service, Mothers' Union and the Gideon's.

Student Volunteering and Charitable Fundraising

Volunteering forms a key area of our community strategy as it provides our members with the opportunity to engage with the local community and is of benefit to the community. Following the restructure of our services, volunteering opportunities continue to be developed through the iZone and new projects have been identified. An example of this is **Communities United Project** which is a project that allows our volunteers to get involved with their local community by using sport to engage young people in positive activities. They have a wide variety of projects that students can get involved with ranging from regular football coaching to helping out at a one off event.

We have 62 registered volunteers working on 26 projects. These include Communities United Project, Evolve, Newsome Panthers JARLFC, Paddock Community Forum, PSD Nepal, Read Book Project, The Refugee Council, Teach-To-Travel, Barnardo's, Oxfam Huddersfield, and Cool2Care.

RAG activities at UHSU are limited. Ad hoc groups of students seek to get involved in fundraising when motivated by particular events. Chinese Students organised collections in response to the earthquake in China, other groups of students have responded to the Haiti disaster and collections to the DEC have been arranged. One of our most popular fundraising events is the annual battle of the bands, a knockout series of evening ents, organised by our students. Proceeds from these events are distributed to charities. During the academic year 2008/09 £1622.25 was collected.

Ad hoc charitable donations raised during this academic year have amounted to £375.94 and were distributed to the Kirklees Mayors Charity, Terrence Higgins Trust and Read International.

SA 11- How does the Union know it is providing a range of improving services and activities in line with current/future member's expectations?

Evaluation of Current Services

A range of information used to assess the performance of current services and how they are meeting members' needs:

Management Information System Data: This captures information daily statistics from trading services. A system is in development for monitoring membership services.

Complaints and Feedback: A limited number of official complaints are made (none since April 2008). Feedback forms are regularly compiled and circulated to managers and sabbatical officers' to take action to improve service.

Elected Officer Input: Officers' are well known on campus and receive feedback from members on services. An example of feedback being acted upon promptly to improve occurred in Feb 2010; within a week of matters being raised about Halal food, adjustments were made.

Organisational Scorecard: 34 KPIs are reported within the Organisational scorecard that is presented to the Board and monitored by the management team.

Annual Student Survey: Our annual survey asks members for their views on the Students' Union and services. Importantly in 2010 it asked students if we are making a positive difference to their lives whilst at University. In 2009 we asked how satisfied members were with the Students' Union. The results are tabulated below and a full report of findings is currently being prepared. Due to the difference in questions they do not lend themselves to longitudinal comparison; however the 2010 question will provide a benchmark for future years.

2009 How Satisfied are you with the Students' Union		2010 Is the Students' Union having a positive impact on your life whilst at University	
Very Satisfied	17.5%	Strongly Agree	5.4%
Moderately Satisfied	38.1%	Agree	25.5%
Neutral	31.8%	Neutral / Don't Know	50.6%
Moderately Dissatisfied	9.6%	Disagree	11.2%
Very Dissatisfied	2.9%	Strongly Disagree	7.4%

Areas where we have seen demonstrable improvement include:

	2007/8	2008/09	Target 2009/10	YT Date 2009/10	Action Taken to improve performance
Safety Bus	-	2788	Not Set	2460 to 31-12-09	Employment of permanent driver and hourly departures to improve consistency
% Waste Recycled	-	50%	75%	100%	Change of supplier to improve amount recycled and income. Focus is now to move to further reductions in total waste
Number of Course Reps	0	140	400	270 to 10.04.10	Investment in IZone. Also qualitative improvement in training and support offered through joint sabbatical and staff support.
Turnout in Elections TBC	1398 5.83%	1567 7.06%	2000 9.0%	2211 8.99%	Strong uplift in voting figures
Student Advice Centre Users	1521	1746	1800	1309 to 31.03.10	Marginal increase in advisor hours 2008/9
Number of Website Users and Visitors	-	4753	5228 (+10%)	9739 (+41%) to 15-02-10	Investment on 0.5 Digital Media Coordinator Summer 2009

Additionally qualitative data is used to make an assessment of improvement. Quality marks such as SUEI, BBN and Sound Impact provide support the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of continuous improvement.

Positively we have seen an increase in the total number of Clubs and Societies. Disappointingly we have seen a decline in registered members of clubs and societies. We believe this reflects under registration by C&S members using a newly introduced web based membership system and that actual membership and participation is higher than that registered online. The iZone staff and officers are now working to address and understand this under registration. Term 3 of 2009/10 will enable the iZone team to work closely with C&S leaders on qualitative matters that will improve the C&S experience.

Alignment of Services for the Future

UHSU's Strategic Plan runs from Sept 2009-Sept 2011. The broad goals and commitments have driven service change to respond to current and anticipate future student needs. For example summer 2009 saw "The Venue" our ground floor bar and entertainments venue which served very limited food, transformed to a café bar serving food from 8am -8pm. This change was informed by a range of factors:

- Analysis of current and forecast student demographic data
- Evaluation of national trends in the licensed trade, student market and within Students' Unions
- Market research feedback conducted in November 2008.
- Historically poor trading performance.

In particular we sought to put a range of "student types" at the heart of the space we were creating. Approaching 60% of students are from Kirklees or neighbouring local authorities, who are principally on campus during the day time and want to have space in which they can refuel, socialise and engage in social learning. The provision of hot food through to 8pm meets the needs of evening students and provides a relaxed place to socialise, in contrast to a dark entertainments venue.

Allied to this change was a major re-organisation of resources prioritising representation, involvement, activities and outreach to UCO/UCB through the creation of the iZone. 3 FTE posts have been created to support these core priorities. The particular focus of the Democratic and Representation Coordinator to support officers and ensure the student voice is accurately heard and represented helps to ensure we are aligned with current student priorities.

The following activities support us in anticipating future student needs:

- Annual Market Research and other listening activities e.g. FISHing led by executive, ad hoc focus groups
- Survey of National Market research results e.g. THES, NSS, Unite Reports and NUSSL surveys
- Staff and Officer participate and attend in external events that have a focus on future thinking eg Wave of Change, NUSSL events, SUEI conference
- Visits to other Students' Unions
- Staff and Sabbaticals Officers' review the external environment. For example the General Manager reviews the THES weekly; Surfing the Wave of Change has informed strategic papers to the Board.
- An ongoing and open dialogue with the University on their future strategy and change informs UHSU strategy

The Board is currently considering whether to bring forward the strategic planning process to respond to likely reductions in funding. Strategic priorities may be revisited as early as September

2010 and will provide an opportunity for extensive consultations with stakeholders. We are already aware of future needs which we will need to develop responses to include:

- Planned growth in Post Graduate and International students
- A potential reduction in UK 18-21 undergraduates
- Reductions in University funding
- The need to focus on core representation activities to ensure the student voice is heard in a challenging funding environment.

SA12 - What evidence is there of increased union services/activities during the SUEI period?

The themes in the UHSU strategic plan all demand that we increase involvement and participation. Since commencing SUEI we have increased the range of services and increased participation.

Student Activities & Student Media

The need to better resource and support student activities, involvement and representation was recognised in the Strategic Plan and scheduled to come online in September 2010. However, due to its importance, the iZone, which is a one stop shop for Union run activities, was brought online in September 2009 and the VP Sports and Societies is based in the area to maximise accessibility. This has meant that all sports and societies, volunteering and student representative training is organised and run from the student activities centre.

The iZone is not just a physical space in the Huddersfield Students' Union. The creation of an outreach staff member post whose role it is to promote the Union and support and involve students' in the Union and its activities on the two satellite campuses at Oldham and Barnsley, has had marked success. At the Oldham campus in particular, we have seen the creation of three new student societies and a men's football team which will hopefully in 2010-11 move into the competitive field of BUCS.

The staffing level in the iZone has allowed for better support for the existing societies and clubs. This support comes in different ways. Firstly the physical space which allows them to advertise their events, advice and attention from a permanent staff administrator, visible access to the VP Sports & Societies and staff support for the elected officer in post. Sports and Societies forums held regularly each term allow for discussion of any issues the officers of these groups may have.

For the first time this year we have been running the STARS programme (Student Training and Recognition Scheme). This has formalised the support that we can offer into specifically designed training sessions which not only provide key skills, but guide committee members into improving and growing their own clubs and societies, whilst recognising the personal commitment they give.

Student Activities Membership trends:

Chart 1

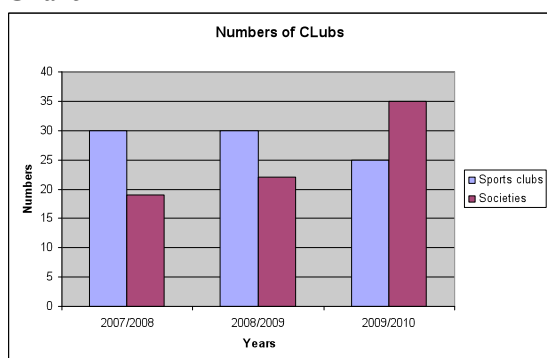


Chart 2

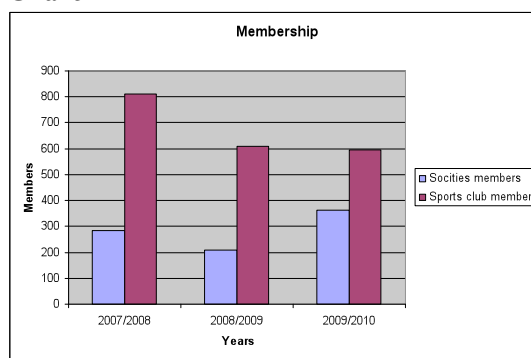


Chart 2 shows a decline in the 2008-09 numbers of sports club members from the 2007/2008 season. However, in the current academic year the figure appears to have levelled out and this is because we have reached the limits of capacity that the University of Huddersfield sports facilities can offer. When the BUCS season finishes in April 2010, it is the intention to use any spare capacity in facilities in the third term to promote intramural sports and encourage students and staff to become engaged in recreational sporting activities.

Societies have been a success story where we have seen a growth not just in the number of members but also in the number of different societies that we can offer to our members; this allows us to offer more opportunities for people to become involved with the Union.

The University commitment to sport over the past few years has been in decline; its outdoor facilities have been sold and the indoor sports hall is in urgent need of refurbishment. The Sports Centre is the next University capital project. We have this year established a sports strategy group which has brought together Union and University sports stakeholders. This group has allowed for frank discussion of where we are as a University with the current and future provision of sport. The planned development of new sports facilities will provide a springboard for greater participation in sport and we are seeking to ensure that the facilities reflect current needs and future growth areas.

We will continue to promote involvement in Union activities from the iZone. A focus of attention in term 3 will be to encourage clubs and societies to start their 2010/11 development plans in the third term and to identify budget requirements, taking into account their financial history.

The development of RadioHudd, the student radio station, in September 2009 has extended our services. Over 70 students are participating in the production of RadioHudd output as well as providing a new service for our students.

Membership Services

Our re-organisation in November 2008 supported major changes such as the creation of the iZone, but also enabled the provision of 6 extra advisor hours in the SAIC each term time week. The results of these extra resources are not initially demonstrable through extra cases, however as we have sought to improve our awareness and community involvement work and anecdotal feedback from advisors indicates increased complexity and length of cases. This same re-organisation brought about increasing the range of our student employment opportunities as we shifted to using student staff for our reception service.

The Safety Bus service has benefited from the employment of a permanent driver which has improved the consistency of the service through hourly departures and reduced cancellations. In 2008/9 2788 students' took a safe ride home. From September 2009 to March 2010, 4317 students had used the service securing a safe ride home.

Re-fuelling and Social Space

The change in our social and food service space during the period has been dramatic. The ground floor venue / bar space saw very limited day time use; this has been transformed and the space is now well used from 8am through to 11pm. The peak trading usage is now from 12 noon-to 2pm 2009/10 in contrast to 8pm-11pm in 2008/9. We would note that this is, in part, resultant from the removal of a canteen offer from the first floor, though the space upstairs allied to the iZone is well used for students getting a light snack and coffee. Overall our food and catering turnover is in line with 2008/9 levels, but with lower operating costs. We are further aware that turnover is not a sole indicator of usage as many students choose to come and use the space and don't use the trading services. Visibly the levels of usage are up and our evening foot fall figures for the Graduate show an increase.

Developments in Retail

Within the shop we continue to revise and renew our ranges to meet member needs. In the current year we have widened the range of greeting cards and had a number of seasonal promotions. At the end of Term 2 in 2009/10 turnover was 7.5% ahead of 2008/9.

SUEI SA 13 – Reflecting on the SUEI process as a learning experience, what have been the main learning outcomes for the Union?

As a small Students' Union initially the SUEI process felt to be quite a daunting prospect. The fact that the process is sabbatical officer led didn't inspire staff, as when we embarked upon the process there were only two sabbatical officers out of five still in office. UHSU staff were reeling from a poor experience and saw the SUEI process as additional work. The general reflection of staff members on these initial thoughts however, are that once you develop an understanding around the jargon and wording of SUEI it is a good way of checking and directing the way we as staff are engaging with both our sabbatical officers and our members.

One of the main learning outcomes of the student union has to be that the development of a culture of working with and helping the sabbatical officers, has led to an improvement in the service we are providing to our members. As a Union, prior to the SUEI process, staff were quite autonomous from the officers and the members services were led by staff. We believed that we were working with the officers but in reality it wasn't the case. As a direct result of the SUEI process we created staff posts to directly work with officers, launched our iZone and made our officers more forward facing. There are still improvements to be made, but the idea is there and, as with any change of culture, in time it will become embedded.

The second major learning outcome for UHSU that can be directly attributed to SUEI process is that as a Union we were not working as a whole, but as separate departments. SUEI has helped us to develop an improved way of sharing what others do within the organisation. In general we now have formal way of reviewing how we achieve in relation to our members expectations.

The SUEI process “has been on the whole a positive experience. I feel that for our members it allows us to review and change for their benefit and also allows us to ensure we are meeting their needs.” (Ruth Brook, Venues Manager).

The third major learning outcome for the students' union has to be that many staff thought everything was done correctly and all the necessary documents etc were in place, when in reality we had a lot of work to do. SUEI pointed out to us that certain tasks, such as risk registers had to be done. Of course we knew this, but SUEI made us do it. We thought we were organised, but SUEI made us realise we could be so much better. As the process has developed, a lot of work has been done to improve our policies and procedures and we are now beginning to reap the rewards of this. There are still things to do, for example, we have not developed our HR strategy yet, but at least we know when we will do this.

Our early involvement with the SUEI process led to the creation of three membership services posts the staff in these posts have been asked to provide their reflections on how their posts have developed.

Matt Short, Outreach and Development worker.

“Since starting my role within the SU SUEI has been a great learning experience and a chance to reflect on the work and developments that have been made, where we are up to at the moment and the direction we are heading in the future...”

SUEI has given both staff and officers a holistic view of who we are, what we do, and more importantly what we should be doing. It also gives the Union a great opportunity to engage students in our development and essentially find out if we are making a positive difference to student life at University...

The Officers kicked started information gathering through their Find Issues Students Have (FISH) campaign which has continued with a SUEI road show around all 3 University Campuses. Weekly SUEI Friday meeting has ensured all staff and officers are involved and up to date with where we currently are with various targets and deadlines.”

John Goodwin – Democratic & Student Rep Co-ordinator

“I have found SUEI to be one of the most valuable learning experiences I have undertaken since commencing employment with the Students' Union almost a year ago. When I first took up my role, SUEI was a mystical being, something I had heard mentioned but was somewhat shrouded in mystery. However once I took responsibility for gathering evidence for one of the themes, everything became clear and I realised how I could apply my current and past knowledge of the Union to contribute to the SUEI process. I believe that the same applies for anyone involved in the Union - in terms of what you can learn about the Union, particularly areas you may not be directly involved in, you can get out as much as you put in. The process has also been very useful for raising awareness of the differences between what we think we do, and what we actually do, and working out how to bridge that gap...”

While most of our members would not know exactly what SUEI is, our participation has led to many positive changes for them, mainly through the focus on ensuring that our work reflects what our members want. For sabbatical officers, SUEI has also encouraged a formalisation of reporting their activities back to the membership as well as focusing their efforts on finding out issues that students have. I also think that the way we have gone about preparing for the SUEI process in this Union, with sabbatical officers and staff from all departments meeting on a weekly basis and sharing work, has been very useful for the officers. For the Union in general, it is clear to see that many of the long term targets formulated through participating in SUEI have been incorporated into the strategic plan, giving us a clear path for continual improvement over the next few years.”

Sarah Harris – Student Activities Centre Manager

“As a relatively new member of staff, who joined the organisation part way through the SUEI process, I have found it a really useful tool for getting to know more about the organisation, and to reflect upon some of its work... I think the main learning outcomes for the Union have been to formalise and codify some of its existing practices, but also to work on some development ideas and opportunities... One of those development ideas was the creation of the Student Activities Centre, of which I am the manager. All members of full-time staff in my department have made an active commitment to being part of the SUEI process, and have, I believe, enjoyed being pivotal in taking UHSU to the next level of Students' Union development.”

Becki Scott – Graphic Designer

“The SUEI process, to me, has shown that we do ‘it’, we just don’t always record and report it... SUEI has given us the opportunity to tighten up some procedures, to ensure we continue doing what we do, but with more transparency / supporting documents – which as the student market becomes more demanding will be vital.”

Jenny Butterworth - UCO Administrator

“I feel this is very difficult for me to do as I have had no involvement with SUEI and what it is about, and prior to the iZone Meeting I attended recently I knew very little about SUEI. However, following that meeting, where John Goodwin, filled us all in on how SUEI was progressing and updated me on what SUEI was aiming to accomplish, I have managed to put together the following statement:

“Knowing that SUEI focuses on evaluating its services to students for their experience of student life and promoting good practise across the board, I feel that the SU is taking this very seriously

and are successful in its aims so far. The SU are definitely looking at the bigger picture and the experiences of students and staff alike... The SU have provided literature for the students here at UCO, and I feel that with the up-coming road shows, this will definitely help promote the aims of SUEI and find out more about UCO students and their wants and how this compares to that of UCB and Queensgate. I feel that this will tie all 3 campuses together with a common purpose, and that is the need of our students.”

SA14 – Reflecting on the SUEI process generally what have been the main outcomes for a) the members? b) the Sabbatical Officers? c) the Students’ Union as an organisation?

Embarking on the SUEI process coincided with and supported a range of planned changes and developments within the Students’ Union that have been focused on being closer to our members, through providing services and activities that make a positive difference to their student life. SUEI has not always been the driver of the change, but it has supported us to be close to our members, which is the prime driver of change and improvement.

It has embedded within the whole team a questioning and critical approach; the question “so what does this do for our members?” is a frequently heard question. It has engendered a self critical and evaluative approach, which was missing at the start of the process. Shop Manager, Jane Hirst, powerfully sums up the change of Union focus:

“The main learning outcome of SUEI for me is that the members have a voice; we all need to move forward and make sure this voice is heard. With regards to the Sabbatical officers, SUEI means they have had a direction and a focus for their work; they can be in tune with their members. While for the Union as a whole it means we can all pull together and work as a team rather than in separate departments, ensuring the voice of the members is heard.”

Impact on Members

The member voice is stronger and resonates through the students’ union decision making and representation. Since SUEI commenced we have conducted two substantive rounds of market research, which has enabled us to listen to students concerns and want, plus garner their views on our services. Additionally officers have been in the vanguard of getting closer to members through GOATING and FISHING. The student voice has informed:

- Our campaigning position on class times – Students spoke, UHSU articulated that voice, and the University listened and changed its position.
- Our 2010 Student Written Submission to the QAA
- Our work to influence the university to improve feedback and assessment
- Changes to our services and space to provide better social space and an improved day time offer
- The creation of the iZone to support activity, involvement and representation

The focus of SUEI has allowed officers and staff to see the bigger picture and concentrate on outputs. We have gained more members for sports clubs and societies, trained more course reps and have a wider range of the student body on the council. Securing outcomes for students and increasing involvement are important elements of our KPI Scorecard.

Impact on Sabbatical officers

SUEI has tested the sabbatical officers on the five themes it covers; it has identified our strong areas such as representation, participation and vision. Officers have been involved in reviewing HR practise and the staffing structure. Sabbaticals have been central to the development of the community strategy and communication strategy.

The sabbatical officers have enjoyed working with people in the union with whom they may not normally have interacted with on a day-to-day basis for example cleaning staff who now have a broader understanding of their role in making student life better. Working with them on SUEI has allowed us to understand their different roles better and vice versa. We think for them to

understand what sabbatical officers do and how what they do feeds into what we do as a union, in our opinion, this has led to a greater sense of teamwork. The allocation of themes to work towards has meant that sabbatical officers have had to come out of their personal comfort zone and we feel that this has made us better officers as we understand the Union better.

Impact on the Union

Over the last year, the sabbatical team and staff members throughout the union from Finance to the Advice Centre have met regularly once a week on Fridays (SUEI Friday). One of the positive points of this process has been working closely with **all** our colleagues and personally identifying the successes we have gained and the areas that need improving. We are now beginning to see the rewards of entering it.

The Union organisation is diverse and complex with many different arms - commercial, membership, advice centre, marketing and representation. Though we are one Union, we do not always come together as an organisation because we each have different tasks and goals. By having a union wide project, it has given us a common purpose and task that we can all feel part of as an organisation. We feel that this is important.

SUEI has enabled us to complete the jigsaw, or at least find all the edges and turnover the pieces and start becoming a better union. We would acknowledge there is still work to do, but SUEI has supported the development of the following:

- Strategic and Annual Operational Plans
- Improved Risk management through risk register
- Revised H&S policy
- Communications strategy
- A restructured staff team focused on involvement, outreach and representation in the iZone
- GOAT activity
- Improved HR practices via regular supervisions and appraisals for all staff.

However perhaps more importantly it has cascaded an evaluative, critical approach beyond the SMT and enabled us to develop take an initial steps to becoming an effective learning organisation.

This self-evaluation is important. It makes us question why we do things in a certain way which can lead to better practises and improved procedures and services. The adage 'no pain, no gain' can be applied to the process of SUEI! SUEI is a journey, sometimes frustrating, sometimes tiresome but also pleasurable when tasks are achieved and themes are completed. The end of the first stage is in sight and whatever the outcome, it has certainly opened our eyes, made us listen, think and realise not only personal achievement, but also achievement which benefits our student members is critical.