

## Education and Community Officer - Kit

- . I have engaged with local and national politicians such as Max Wilkinson and Alex McIntyre to feed SV into things like the Renters Bill.
- . Emailed local NHS boards to see if I can represent students (who are generally an oversight) with colleagues like Amabel. (MH campaign)
- . Met with charities such as Young Gloucestershire to see if there is scope to offset students charities when there are no appointments available.
- . Reached out to Exclusive clubs and charities to little avail due to the nicheness of the funding request
- . I now represent student interests in wider settings/meetings/boards – including VAWG (or VIAWG to some) and Gloucestershire VCS alliance.
- . Met with Anna Hay to discuss data from counselling including success/satisfaction rates.
- . Surveys have been given a provisional date of Accountability Surveys of December and April just before the students leave so it can go forward, finally awaiting putting it into university systems.
- . Prominent role in Voice it to the VC where students came and connected with me after and hold meetings to discuss what we can do to ensure the sustainability of affordable housing in the university.
- . Circle 2 Success – I have been in communication with this group to discuss the companies currently working with them and how they link to students careers, linking into some wider work on how we can get students to stay in Gloucestershire which has been a consistent theme in conversations with the local council.
- . Attending SMT meetings with schools such as creative to build relationships.
- . Building relationships with Student Futures from passing feedback from our SVAs (Student Voice Assistants)
- . Working on SHAG week and contacted multiple charities and working with both the Art and Stitch society on the art they can pull together.
- . Events like Leading well and NUS which has lead to broader work with other sabbs and collaborations
- . Leading well the event from our external support which was great!
- . Supported students in raising issues with their academic lecturers and also supporting campaigns on Clare's Law.
- . HUGE CTP (Curriculum Transformation Project) involvement with some tangible wins. On top of my wins on Alumni access to library spaces and the formalisation of the EC policy.

- . Collected feedback from Hardwick for estates.
- . Engaging with the community in the FCH liaison groups.
- . Engagement with the local council – Gloucester Guild hall and embedding students into cafes
- . Assisting students in raising complaints/navigating tricky conversations with lecturers.
- . City Campus Tour.
- . Engagement with Students' Mind
- . engaged with media training and pushing for MH training for Officers and staff.
- . Promoting equity via the awarding gap steering group

<b>Paper Number</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Officer Report
<b>Author</b>	Vanessa Garratt
<b>Audience</b>	Student Council
<b>Date</b>	19/11/2024

Ness has been working on her campaign #kNOwmore, breaking the stigma, shifting the conversation around drink and drugs and has made progress with the university moving to a harm reduction approach. Some projects she has been working on for this campaign have been, guest speaker events, well-being events, surveys and Code of Conduct working groups.

Ness has been working with an individual student who reached out, inspired by the campaign and wants to share their story with addiction. Appropriate staff teams at the university, such as the well-being team and the SU advisor have agreed to be in attendance of the event due to the sensitivity of the subject. Other events related to the campaign are still in the planning stages, however, plans for a Christmas mocktails and activities event are underway.

Ness signed up as the representative of the university for Students Organising for Sustainability's UK (SOSUK) Drug and Alcohol Impact Survey which commences 18<sup>th</sup> November – 8<sup>th</sup> December. This survey enables the university with institutional specific anonymised data, so long as the institution meets the 100-participant threshold. She believes that understanding our student body will enable her to make further progress with the campaign specific to the institution's needs. SOSUK has provided all the marketing materials for this and promote participation by awarding a prize of £100. This prize is accessible to all participants in the country. Ness has been able to negotiate awards for UoG students only with the Director of Student Experience, who has agreed to £250 in prize money. To encourage as many UoG students to take part in the survey and have a widely felt impact for UoG students, she has decided to use the £250 and award 5 UoG students with £50 each.

Ness has also begun with plans to putting together a working group with the Director of Student Experience and other colleagues to review the Student Code of Conduct, which has not been amended since 2021. This working group has been put together in response to the campaign but will also review the whole Code of Conduct, rather than solely focussing on moving away from zero-tolerance language and moving towards a harm reduction approach. This working group will draft a new and updated version of the Student Code of Conduct to be reviewed by the Academic Board and the Student Council.

Ness has also been a part of the shortlisting process and an interview panel member for the role of Student Communities Coordinator, which saw about 11 applicants for the role. Ness found this experience worthwhile and applied some of the experience she had from the first round of interviews she sat in as part of the interview panel for the Activities and Communities Manager role.

In the interim of appointing the new Communities Coordinator role, Ness has regularly been in contact with societies, arranged meetings with the committees of those societies and has been guiding students on event planning for events such as fundraisers. To continue building relationships and actively seeking feedback she has instigated monthly online sessions for all committees to attend. These sessions have proved useful to those students to understand what the SU do, how best we can support them and what's new. Before the sessions, Ness asks the SU staff if there is anything that they'd like to be included in the session too.

Standard items are:

- What we spoke about last time and the actions that followed
- Ness' campaign
- SU spaces
- What is on in the month ahead

Ness has also been working closely with the Activities and Communities teams liaising with Worcester SU and colleagues to begin initial plans for varsity. Varsity is set to have a reduced programme again but over a longer period to help with engagement. We are continuing with plans to make the Varsity events grow but financial limitations and poor engagement in sports make it difficult to accommodate for all sports.

Ness is working with Bobola on a joint campaign 'Think Before You Ink'. This campaign has a message of 'Too many students rush into signing housing contracts for next year without fully understanding what they are agreeing to. Landlords and letting agents often pressure students to sign early, making you feel like you will miss the best places. But here is the truth: you have time. The best decision is an informed decision!' This is the same message that the

accommodation is sharing, and University executives are on board with making accommodation for students a more pleasant experience.

## **Welfare and Diversity Officer - Bobola Update**

I attended the NUS Lead and Change 2024 in Birmingham, which significantly broadened my knowledge of being a student leader and provided valuable opportunities to network with other officers from Student Unions from other universities. This event allowed us to meet officers from different universities and share useful ideas, which enhanced our understanding of student leadership challenges and solutions. The training and sessions organized by the NUS were insightful. They will be invaluable as we transition into our roles as full-time officers, providing us with the skills and strategies needed to represent and advocate for our student body effectively.

I've been working to address student complaints about their marks and the potential implications on their visas, as well as ensuring students have sufficient time with lecturers for their modules. These issues are being given careful attention to ensure proper support for all affected students.

Kit and I are collaborating with Kathy on securing accommodation and exploring the possibility of an accommodation bursary for students.

Ness and I are working on the "Think Before You Ink" initiative, which encourages students to thoroughly view their accommodation and carefully read the contract before signing. It's aimed at ensuring students make informed decisions about their housing.

I'm currently working with the Sports and Activities staff to increase global student involvement in sports. To better understand how we can support this, I've conducted a survey to gather students' views on what more can be done to encourage their participation.

I've been actively involved in the induction sessions during Welcome Week, addressing students and providing information about the Students' Union. I've shared details about what we do, how they can get involved in sports and societies, and the various support services available to them.

I took part in the Welcome Fayre on September 18th, distributing free flags featuring the University logo and promoting my #WeBelong campaign at the FTO stalls. I engaged with new students, explaining the role of the Students' Union and highlighting the campaign. The sunny weather contributed to great student engagement throughout the event.

Diversity Night 3.0, held on September 19th, was an event aimed at promoting diversity and inclusivity among both home and international students. The event had a great turnout, with students enjoying impressive performances and some even showcasing their talents. Representatives from the Chaplaincy were present to speak about the Sanctuary space and their work, while FTOs also highlighted their campaigns and shared more information about the Students' Union.

On September 27, Kit, Lou, and I received MP Max during his visit to Park campus. We engaged in a productive discussion about how we could strengthen collaboration with him to address key student issues. I raised several concerns impacting our student community, including immigration rules affecting international students, challenges around student

accommodation and housing, and issues with some Cheltenham employers who are reluctant to hire international students due to their length of stay in the UK. Other student-related concerns were also discussed, and Max committed to following up on these issues.

On October 22, I, along with other Full-Time Officers (FTOs), organized the "Voice It with the VC" event to facilitate direct engagement between students and the Vice-Chancellor. This event provided an invaluable opportunity for students to ask questions, gain insights into the university's ongoing initiatives, and learn about available support resources. Through this forum, students could openly express their views, address concerns, and connect with university leadership, fostering a more transparent and supportive campus environment.

On October 31, I organized a Black History Movie Night at FCH Campus as part of the Black History Month commemorations. The chosen film centered on the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., highlighting his pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement and his efforts in liberating African Americans and other marginalized communities from systemic racism and inequality. Through his leadership, he helped secure voting rights, desegregate public spaces, and promote equal opportunities for Black Americans and others facing discrimination. The event was well attended by students, and the film served as an inspiring reminder of the power everyone has to drive social change and make a difference.

On October 16, Josh and I from the Students' Union met with the International Recruitment Team and the International Services Team to discuss plans for an annual Global Celebration. This event aims to showcase the university's strong commitment to diversity and its dedication to celebrating our international community. The ongoing discussions align with the Connected University initiative and highlight the importance of fostering an inclusive and globally-minded campus. I believe that such an event would not only strengthen our community connections but also make the university more attractive to prospective international students.

From November 4 to November 15, I initiated classroom visits to engage directly with students about the Awarding Gap. During these sessions, I explained what the Awarding Gap is and conducted a survey to gather students' thoughts and experiences on this issue. I also invited students to participate in voluntary interviews, aiming to collect their ideas and suggestions on how we can work together to close the gap.

This campaign is designed to ensure that the data we collect reflects students' real experiences and insights, rather than assumptions. So far, these visits have been productive, providing valuable data on student performance and perspectives. The information gathered will be crucial for making informed recommendations to effectively bridge the Awarding Gap.