

THE FALMOUTH AND EXETER STUDENTS' UNION IMPACT REPORT 2024



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Welcome to Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union. We are a charity organisation separate to Falmouth University and the University of Exeter. Everything we do is about empowering and championing you, the students.

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Connecting students to build friendships and communities to tackle loneliness and make sure they feel they belong here.

3. Wellbeing

Supporting students' wellbeing and welfare so students know we care about them, and they can get the support they need.

4. Diversity

Increasing the diversity of students' voices and views that are heard within the students' union and universities so more students feel represented and listened to.

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Developing our approach to sustainability through organisation practices.

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Deliver a comprehensive approach to EDI training for all staff, trustees, and student leaders.

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Sabbatical Officers

The students' union is led by four students elected into roles that make strategic decisions for the union. The sabbatical officers take a year out of studying to work full-time in the students' union to represent you and your interests to the universities, FX Plus, and the wider community. They make promises on what changes they will deliver for you throughout their term in the role.

As a membership organisation, The Students' Union exists to benefit members. Anyone studying with Falmouth University, or the University of Exeter in Cornwall is a member of the union. Every member of the union has access to the support of the students' union.

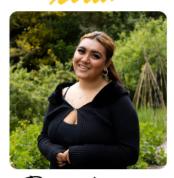
We're part of a bigger student movement that gets your voice heard and makes change happen on a local, regional, and national level.

President Exeter



CONNIE CHILCOTT

President Falmouth



TAPELLE LUCKMAN

Vice President



FINA DAY

Vice President



MARKETA CARRUTHERS



Communities

Sports & Societies

"Tremough FC has, without a doubt, shaped my university experience and I cannot even begin to imagine what it would have been like without it. The success I've shared on the pitch each year has been incredible, but the moments shared off it with such amazing people has made the experience so much more."

- Thomas Marshall, Tremough FC 23/24

"Being a member of the Tang Soo Do society has been the best part of university for me. It is a great way to let off steam after long days of essays and assignments and is a club that is full of kind, funny, and like-minded people. I could easily write 1000 more words about how amazing our club is and all the benefits you can get from it, but I think you should find that out for yourself. Come join us - you won't regret it!"

- Georgia Allen, President 23/24

"Expedition Society has been an integral part of my time here at university. Not only has it been an avenue to explore Cornwall, get out in nature and make lots of great friends, but an opportunity to develop myself too through roles in the committee: being 1 of 3 who led hikes last year, to being at the forefront of it as President this year."

- Owen Davies, Expedition Society 23/24









Members - 3,167 Events - 724 Sports teams - 53 Societies - 70

Student Project FundConnecting students

Part of the Communities team, the Student Project Fund enables any student member or members to propose an event, project or idea and receive support and funding to make it happen.

The main remit of the fund is to build community and reduce student loneliness, especially for students who are not members of a club or society.

Students used the fund this year for smaller, wellbeing-themed events that got students into the local community and exploring the beautiful places and activities that are on their doorstep.

From using the fund to create a final year project to create welcoming and accessible spaces for our marginalised communities, the Project Fund has been used to support students' academic progression, their wellbeing, and build community.





44 students attended, split across two walks. The maximum number that could be included to cover a hot drink and a cake for all attendees.

The first walk welcomed **21 Falmouth University** students and **1 University of Exeter** student.

The second walk welcome 22 Falmouth University students.

The walks focused on getting outside to achieve a short walk by the coast for your wellbeing, coined from the popular social media trend of "Hot Girl Walks".

From the events, students who attended felt that the walks needed to continue and are in the process of setting up a Hot Girl Walks society.





"As a University Student, I felt in my experience – especially in first year – I lacked a lot of social socialisation. I found myself in a toxic cycle of going out to socialise with friends, being hungover all day, only to recover just in time for the next night out.

Don't get me wrong, I love an occasional night out as much as the next person! But I remember so desperately wishing there were more opportunities for daytime socialisation. Because whether you like it or not, the "Uni Culture" we've created in the UK has a terrible drinking problem!

I was also incredibly lucky to have been introduced to the 'Student Project Fund' with the Student Union, something I never knew existed. I collaborated with Gylly Beach Café and arranged for the Student Union to fund the group's coffee and cakes.

I organised for two walks, and due to budget, there were 22 tickets for each day available. Incredibly, all 44 free tickets 'sold out' within the day." - **Alicia Vickery**



Gareth the Goat, Pottery class

14 students attended:

12 Falmouth University students, 2 University of Exeter students.

The pottery workshop gave attendees the chance to make pinch pots in a studio in Penryn.

The students leading the event chose to run the session during the summer to bring together those students who were staying in Falmouth or Penryn over the summer and looking to find others who would be doing the same.

Mature students' pottery painting!

17 Mature Students attended:

13 Falmouth University students, 4 University of Exeter students.

The event was planned and led by three mature students who invited Star Glazers, a local Falmouth-based business, to deliver the pottery painting workshop.

All students painted a mug while they chatted with mature students from a range of courses.

Networks

The SU's Here Together strategy highlighted the need for diversity of voices in students' union democracy to bring a variety of lived experiences and opinions to students' lives.

Networks were piloted this year to create community spaces where anyone who associated with the selected demographics could meet other students like them, make friends, and discuss their experiences.

We hosted four networks throughout the academic year, with monthly meetings for each group, including:

Mature students
ADHD students
Disabled students
International students

Networks also had a corresponding WhatsApp group for ongoing conversations, questions, and the ability to meet up outside of the scheduled meetings.

After the winter break, a member of student staff suggested we introduce a Trans network for trans and non-binary students, which we added to the rotation of monthly networks.



Transgender Network

"I work in the student crew at the Students Union.

As I have met quite a few transgender/ nonbinary students during my time at University I suggested to the SU the idea to start a Transgender Network. This will be a place where people can connect and talk about their experiences.

Discovering who you are can be an intense process, it is great to have others who can support you on your journey."

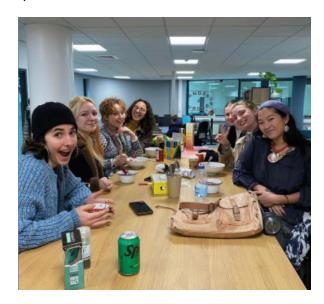
- Rory Cooper, SU crew



Soup Fridays

As part of the SU's Right to Food Campaign President Exeter 23/24, Connie and Vice President 23/24, Phil, organised the cooking and serving students some delicious cuisine. The first SU Soup Kitchen was a huge success with over 40 students stopping by!

The Soup kitchen started in January and has been carried through for the academic year. Every Friday between 1:30 – 3pm. The Sabbatical officers serve students free homemade soup using local organic seasonal produce wherever possible, bringing you a tasty and nutritious meal to fill your belly and fuel your mind in the Su space. Everyone is welcome, no questions asked!







Welcome! The event not to Miss!

With everything we do being about students, you can find a place where you belong with the students' union. From our student trustees deciding on the future of the union to our course representatives, every part of the students' union is created to benefit you, our students and members

From learning to surf to knitting, our sports clubs and societies are a great place to start when you come to university. You could even create your own and lead a committee to build your skills for your future career.

The best way to meet new people and get settled at university is to explore the range of opportunities available to you. At The SU, you are the centre of everything we do, if students are interested in it, so are we!

Over 120 teams and groups ready for students to try!









Wellbeing

Gender expression fund

In November 2023 The Gender Expression Fund was set up by our Vice President Orestis Collins-Alamanos.

A Gender Expression Fund within our student union serves as an important and inclusive resource for supporting students' diverse gender identities and expressions. The fund has been used to purchase gender affirming products such as clothing, binders, packers and beauty products.

It can also be used towards travel to medical or therapy/counselling appointments, but we are not able to provide funding for treatment or other medical procedures.

To ensure as many students as possible can access the fund, there is a £50 cap on the amount of funding each student can receive within an academic year, but in exceptional circumstances we can review this.

The SU has designated a total of £1500 for this fund in 2023/24

A Gender Expression Fund within our student union serves as an important and inclusive resource for supporting students' diverse gender identities and expressions.

Here are several reasons why I wanted this fund to be accessible for you!

Promoting Inclusivity and Diversity
Financial Accessibility
Reducing Stigma
Mental Health and Well-being
Advocacy and Visibility
Peer Support
Campus Culture
Raising Awareness!

"Here's to rebellion, inclusivity, and making a world of difference right here in Falmouth. We're just getting started, and together, we'll keep pushing those boundaries, tearing down walls, and building a more accepting, vibrant community for everyone!"

- Orestis Collins-Alamanos





Advice guides

Our friendly, approachable team of experts provide advice on Finance, including hardship support, budgeting and student funding entitlement; Accommodation and Housing, irrespective of whether you're living in university halls or renting in the private sector; Academic-related Support, covering academic appeals, academic misconduct, disciplinaries, complaints, Consumer Rights, Employment Rights and more.

Number of SU Advice Cases for the Academic year 23/24: 827

Number of case interactions (including meetings, emails, communication with involved parties etc): 7221

Highest caseload category - Academic, with Academic Appeals still the highest caseload category





Website traffic regarding SU Advice pages from Jan 2024 - July 2024

Overall estimate usage for Advice pages:

6167 users 8952 views

Highest volume of traffic for Academic Misconduct:

2960 users 4055 views

Advice - 1383 users. 1553 views

Appeal - 1041 users. 1764 views

Academic Misconduct - 2960 users. 4055 views

Accommodation/Housing - 386 users. 832 views

Complaint - 220 users. 507 views

Financial/money - 145 users. 208 views

Consumer - 32 users. 33 views







Advice Testimonials

"Thank you so much for speaking with me last week. You really helped to calm my nerves and with reassurance. I will proceed as advised and the links were are helpful!"

"Thank you for seeing us today and hearing our case. Your advice was gratefully received and we had no idea about the appeals process so probably would have missed the opportunity. We will keep you appraised on how we get on."

"Your support over the year has made me feel more empowered and confident to deal with things more directly."

"Thank you so much for all your help, you've been a superstar! Many Many thanks"

"I am very grateful to you for being so supportive. I thought you might like to hear the good news!"

"I just want to say a thank you for everything you do to help me- I find your support invaluable. Thanks for bearing with me even when I have to go through so many things at once."

"Your support is helping me get through all these difficult things and I find your advice is always really helpful"

"Thank you so much. Your advice here has been really helpful. It's greatly appreciated, as I'd been struggling to find any answers or suggestions elsewhere."

"Thank you so much for your academic advice last week! It was truly invaluable and has helped me to make the best decision with regard to withdrawing from my studies."



Penryn Produce

25 Veg bags a week!70 MembersVeg for soup Fridays

Penryn Produce is a student led society aiming to make organic, local, seasonal veg as accessible to the student population as possible.

We distribute veg from outside of the library every Thursday in term time. Half of students on Penryn campus are food insecure so we subsidise veg bags to make organic, nutritious, planet-loving food, more affordable.

Penryn produce has been running for over 7 years and distributed thousands of bags of veg. We hope in this time it's educated students about the importance of buying good healthy food!







Democracy Pilot

Through student consultation, The SU established that our democratic processes could be easier for students to understand and more transparency was needed to encourage participation from a wider range of students.

Inspired by the recent student-led People's Assemblies on our campuses and in Falmouth, we built a democratic model that would allow students to represent themselves, engage with union democracy in a way that worked for them, and gave opportunities for more students to lead and get involved in projects that improve their university experience.

2023/24 was a transition year from a representative model to an assembly model. Students were elected into part-time officer roles at the start of the academic year and these students were the team who tested, trialled and gave feedback on the new model.

From this group of elected students, we recruited two co-chairs to plan and lead the assembly-style meetings with support from the Engagement team.

Attendance waned towards the end of the academic year, leading to Forum to extending the pilot for another academic year to have a full year of trialling and testing possible approaches.

The union hosted two full Forum meetings with union priorities set that related to:

Increased availability of using cash on campus.

Extending the democracy pilot into the next academic year

In previous meetings, part-time officers met and agreed to support and lead on the following work:

Plant-based Universities

Declaring a climate emergency and resulting actions

Supporting Palestinian youth and workers

Sleeping pods and rest spaces on campuses

SU commitment to Mature student enrichment

SU endorsement for Ecosia to be used as default search engine



Rolling forward: Wheelchair Campaign Student voices heard

This campaign is to amplify the voices of disabled students and highlighting the need for better support.



"As Vice President, I've had eye-opening conversations with wheelchair users facing challenges studying in Cornwall. Their stories of frustration and longing for full inclusion on our campuses have deeply impacted me.

These students emphasise the importance of being treated equally within our community. They want their voices heard, advocating for greater transparency and support from our universities.

This campaign isn't about pointing fingers but amplifying the voices of disabled students and calling for better support. Our aim is clear:

Ensure transparent communication on accessibility issues for incoming students with disabilities.

Set realistic expectations for life in Cornwall for the individuals with disabilities.

Provide regular updates on accessibility projects from the estates team.

Ensure all staff know evacuation chair and fire exit locations.

Timetabling team making sure lecture rooms are accessible" - Orestis Collins-Alamanos



Academic Representation

We provide representation for all of our students, with student voice at the heart of everything we do. Your elected Presidents, Part-time Officers, Student Reps and Committees are here to ensure your voice is represented and supported at every level

Academic Reps

Reps gather feedback from their course mates about their course and university experience, work on projects that foster academic community, and even scrutinise and inform university policy to make your academic experience the best it can be!

Reps take students' feedback to meetings with lecturers and staff to discuss any concerns and the actions that staff will take in response. Reps will then feed this information back to students and hold the university accountable to any decisions made in these meetings.

Student Forum

Student Forum is a new, engaging and open way of doing student democracy. This approach moves away from a traditional Student Council and consists of an open meeting that is overseen by two Co-Chairs. Forum allows for students to come together and take part in collective decision-making through debate and discussion.

Presidents

Your elected SU Presidents are here to listen to you and speak on your behalf to the University and other institutional bodies. They work hard to represent all students and ensure your voice is heard!

Make a Change

Make A Change is a powerful tool which enables you to submit ideas to the Student Forum & the Executive Committee to be voted and acted upon. If other students vote in favour of your suggestion, we will work towards implementing it!

Collectives

Collectives exist to allow you to share your experiences with like-minded individuals, work on submitting Make A Change proposals and building your confidence to attend our Student Forum meetings. We want to empower you to make positive change and give you the tools to do so! Our collectives have a programme of events to help you meet new people, learn new skills and engage with Union Democracy.



Reps

A great representative listens to you and helps make change happen. Course reps work with university staff to improve the academic experience at your university, according to what the students want to see.

351 Falmouth reps
12 Department Reps

103 Exeter Reps17 Subject chairs12 EDI Reps

Big Rep Meeting

The Big Rep Meeting is a bi-annual chance for elected reps to get together and look at wider themes around student and academic experience and engage in solution-focused discussions with the SU and senior staff from FXPlus and the Universities.

Reps that attended Big Rep Meeting 2023/24

- 22 Exeter & 48 Falmouth



SABB Elections Candidates and voters

Sabbatical officers (Presidents and Vice Presidents) lead the political direction of the Students' Union.

Any student member can nominate themselves for a position and campaign for student votes to win the election and their position. Sabbatical Officers are paid to work at The SU and have the opportunity to work with high-level staff at the Universities and FXPlus.

2024 - Total voters: 1043

2024 - Total candidates: 10





Sustainability

Green impact

Green Impact Students' Unions is a national programme to support sustainability activity in all unions.

In February 2024, a Climate and Nature crisis motion was passed by elected part-time officers at what we now call Forum This survey is to gather student views in informing SU priorities for responding to this motion.

Green student groups - Get involved!

Beesoc

The place to bee if you're a fan of our fuzzy little pollinator friends! You need no particular knowledge or beekeeping experience to join- just a love for bees!

Green Living

For Nature Lovers, Green Activists, Foraging Fanatics and all kinds of Gardeners. No experience required. If you would like to learn about sustainable living, foraging, gardening and natural crafts such as spoon carving, this is the society for you!

Penryn Produce

Penryn Produce is a student led Veg-Box scheme that's rooting for local veg! We provide local, seasonal and minimally packaged produce every week during term time. To find out more about our mission and ethos, check out our website here.

Vegan soc

The SU Vegan Society is all about good people, good food, and positive activism. We're hoping to run lots of events this year so everyone can hang out in a likeminded community and feel positive and inspired about being vegan in Falmouth. We have a strong focus on positive, inclusive activism; this includes outreach events, peaceful demonstrations, and generally maintaining an active voice on campus for issues relating to food and social justice.

"The Falmouth Exeter Student's Union have done an amazing amount of work on GISU, their focus on food and food waste is inspiring and sustainable. I was really impressed with their dedication to support and work with students to create change. I look forward to hearing them achieve even more!"

- Auditor for the GISU



Some of the highlights from this year!

Right to Food campaign – supporting students to be able to afford and access nutritious food especially during the cost of living crisis.

The notCOP programme of events ran by the SU to engage students on core themes such as democratise, demilitarise, decolonise

People's assemblies – engaging staff, students and local community on issues relating to climate and nature.

InclusivityAfrican Caribbean Society Blog

"Our Exeter and Falmouth ACS, like most others around the country, aims to create a strong community between students of African and Caribbean heritage, and include students from different backgrounds who want to celebrate with us, and support us. We are truly open to everyone, not just those who feel represented by this community, but those who want to educate themselves and show allyship towards their Black peers. As well as representing those of different racial backgrounds, who also share these cultures and traditions within their heritage. We hope to enrich everyone's university experience, from activities including sports, parties, non-alcoholic socials, quiet study spaces, and educational sessions. Collaborating with other culture based societies, activity based societies, and local establishments in order to make this experience one of a kind.

Especially at campuses like ours, ACS gives its members a chance to enter spaces and see people who look like themselves, and share culture that might almost feel a bit lost during their studies, through food, discussion, media etc. Like most students, leaving home and coming to university can be a difficult experience, and a society like this can make that transition easier and give members a place to feel safe, understood, as well as give them a community to relate to. Although some members may be from different locations in the UK, international students from different places around the world, of African or Caribbean heritage, or from different financial backgrounds, this sense of community allows for deeper discussion to be had, how our experiences can be so universal yet so different depending on factors like these. It gives us a space to listen and grow, to support each other and share positive news or opportunities.

Going to university is such an achievement in itself, and everyone has a different story to how they got there. To follow a creative path at Falmouth University, or to follow an academic path at the University of Exeter is something all of our members should be immensely proud of, and we hope to give some support and backing to make sure everyone can get to their graduation day. Although we definitely do not have all of the answers, we hope to encourage people to work hard



during their studies, to have a work life balance, to point them in the direction of any support that may be beneficial for them.

The Vice President, Lordina Yiadom, and myself as President, Emily Farquharson, have been working since March 2023 with goals of building on the foundations of this society, and adding structure so that it can continue on after our committee with ease, and allow future committees to have the time to focus on more ambitious goals for the society and it's members. To create more of a connection between students of both universities, and give the students who attend Falmouth more opportunities to put towards their portfolios. Our committee members have put in so much time and effort towards these goals also, and their support and hard work has already began to pay off!" - Emily Farquharson, President 23/24

Asian Soc

"This year we have seen the steepest rise in non-asian ethnic participation which is a truly beautiful thing to see as we celebrate our differences and encourage an inclusive, warm environment to all, regardless of background!

We have had events to cater for a range of people - Bollywood night for the lively party-goers to chat with chai for those wanting to unwind and seek quieter ambiance. ASOC buffet and Special Vegan lunch for the food enthusiasts to screenings of cricket for the sport lovers!

By collaborating with a variety of societies on campus such as ACS, international soc and vegan soc to external organisations such as our partner, Balti Curries and 'food and drink on campus', we have expanded our network and message, that we strongly believe in!

Our Vice President, Aleisha Braich, says 'Asian Society has been a great way to get more culturally invested as well as celebrating who we are! The society is for everyone not just those of Asian heritage but anyone who wants to learn more or appreciate the culture'.

Post-pandemic, Asian Society was a neglected society with no activity. A dedicated committee last year, led by President Parvati Phakey allowed Asian Society to regain momentum, celebrating Holi for the first time ever on Penryn Campus and winning Event of the Year, Society of the Year and the Inclusivity Award in the SU Award 2023/24. Adding to this, the society also won the 'Opportunity for All' award in the National Volunteering and Societies Awards 2024. This year's Asian Society has kept this rhythm going by celebrating Diwali for the first time on campus, as recognised by ITV News!

I am very confident that next year's elected committee will maintain this strong uptrend towards Asian representation and continue to foster a safe space for the new intake of freshers, students and post-grads!" - Zack Islam, President of Asian Society 2023/24



Student Testimonials



"My favourite SU event I attended was the animal therapy session they held in the students' union, I got to meet an adorable sausage dog, and it was exactly the kind of thing I needed during the middle of a stressful exam season."

What was your first experience with the SU and how did this come about?

"My first experience engaging with the SU was actually before I started my degree in Cornwall, engaging with the website and social media pages as a prospective student really reassured me regarding the student experience I could expect when I joined the University. Hearing about all the sports, societies and events being held made me super excited to become part of the student community."

What have you been involved with?

"I have been a member of Falclimb climbing society throughout my first two years at university, opportunities they offer such as trips, transport and subsidised entry to climbing walls have allowed me to continue to pursue my hobby whilst studying."



How has the impact of the Su had on your university experience?

"I feel like the SU helps my voice get heard through the student rep program that they facilitate, I know that I can raise any issue with my rep and that info will reach senior staff."

Do you feel a part of a community with the Su?

"Participating in societies and clubs really builds a sense of community and allows for friendships to form across degrees, universities and year groups which I believe is an essential part of the university experience."

What skills have you gained that will help you with life after university?

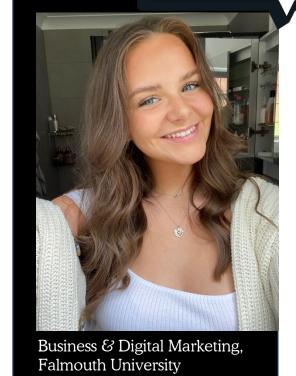
"My involvement in societies and mixing with diverse groups of people really helped me develop my interpersonal skills which I will continue to use post-graduation."

What have you been involved with?

"Make the most of the service the SU have on offer, they can support almost every aspect of university life, from the advice sessions to the events and societies, students should engage as much as they can to maximise their university experience."



Alicia Vickery



"The SU are a really lovely and welcoming community, my only complaint is that I only truly discovered them in my final year at the University!"

What was your first experience with the SU and how did this come about?

"I first walked into the SU as I wanted to start a girls walking society, called "Hot Girl Walks Falmouth", as a part of my 'Social Action' module within my Business and Digital Marketing course. Unfortunately, due to time constraints this wasn't possible, however instead of turning me away, which of course is what I expected, the SU introduced me to the student project fund!"

What have you been involved with?

"The Student Project Fund, I was able to run a walking group for the Falmouth & Exeter Students, with a lovely post-walk chat, coffee & a cake at Gylly Beach Cafe- funded by the Student Union."



How has the impact of the Su had on your university experience?

"The SU are so integral to the student's university experience, without the SU there would be no fun or socialisation- only assignments and exams!"

What's the best SU event you have been to?

"Probably something as simple as the society fair right at the beginning of first year. I met people there that were became friends for life and got introduced to societies I never would've known existed otherwise."

What skills have you gained that will help you with life after university?

"The SU team helped me navigate project management which has been such a valuable skill that you can only truly learn through doing it for real. They guided me throughout the whole process."

What would be your TOP TIP be for new students?

"Join those Facebook group chat's for your year of freshers, I met my (then) future housemate in one! Message the new people you just met briefly to meet up, it will feel unnatural because you don't know them, but chances are they're probably also sat in their new dorm room alone hoping someone will text them to hang out! Finally, do not miss the society fair!!"





Definitely make the most of the societies, they are there to create a community outside of your course, help you find your people and maybe try something new you may learn to love! These communities are here as a reminder that university life does not have to be lonely or isolating!

What was your first experience with the SU and how did this come about?

My first experience with the SU was my first year Welcome fayre talking to the various societies as well as getting to know what the SU do with a visit by the Sabbatical team at the time to my course meeting at the beginning of that year where they spoke about what they do and where to find them for support.

What have you been involved with?

I am part of the Falmouth Exeter Asian Society committee as the current President for 2024/25 as well as Vice-President last year (2023/24).

How has the impact of the Su had on your university experience?



The SU has enhanced my experience by allowing me to socialise beyond my course as well as campus allowing me to gain new experiences and expand my horizons.

Do you feel a part of a community with the Su?

I feel that there is a community within the SU through collaborations of societies however, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done to make sure that all voices are heard within minority communities such as Asian Society and ACS for example in terms of help from the SU to publicise we are there to create a community too to help people find their people. The SU community is now beginning to recognise this which is a step in the right direction!

What skills have you gained that will help you with life after university?

By being on the committee I've developed delegation skills as well as leadership which is a key asset to teamwork and life. It's taught me that there is always a way forward and through an issue or a compromise.

What's the best SU event you have been to?

I would say the SU Welcome Fayre especially for 2023 was a huge success with more societies being present it's a key event to showcase what university life can offer.