

General Meeting

14th March
5:15-7pm

C.LTA4 / MS TEAMS

Annual General Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and Attendance
- Annual Report 2023/24
 - Sabbatical Teams Final Comments
- Questions
- Date of Next Annual General Meeting: Semester 2 of Academic Year 2024/25

Break

General Meeting Agenda

- Minutes Ratification
- Challenges to Order Paper
- Dates to Note
- Elections & Resignations
- Reports ([Paper A](#))
 - Union President
 - Sports Union President
 - Vice President Communities
 - Vice President Education
- Motions
 - Sustainability Policy Updates ([Paper B](#) and [Appendix 1](#))
 - Hedgehogs over Squirrels Referendum ([Paper C](#))
 - Student Union Declares a Boycott of University Commercial Services ([Paper D](#))
 - Alteration to Election and Referendum Regulations ([Paper E](#))
 - No More Drug Disciplinarys ([Paper F](#))
 - Save Our NUS Delegation ([Paper G](#))
 - Students' Union Starbucks Affiliation ([Paper H](#))
- Any Other Business
- Date of Next Meeting: Academic Year 2024/25

Paper A: Reports

Union President Sabbatical Report, Leen Ali

Hi Guys, I am Leen Ali and I am the Union President for 2023/24. As President, I am the overall representative, spokesperson and ambassador of the Union. My work also revolves around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, aiming to support equality-related campaigns. I chair the Equalities Zone, a space where all underrepresented voices are uplifted.

- **Diversity and interculturalist awareness strategies:** There has been effective conversations taking place with different members at the University. A meeting with University HR and other members of senior management was cancelled on several occasions due to the fact that “a lot more info was needed to be gathered for the meeting”.
- **Equalities Zone and Inclusion:** Exploring options to improve Equalities Zone, including introducing Coffee Mornings and other events to increase members' participation. I'm also organising an outreach event to gather people's opinions on what they would like to see from the Equalities Zone going forward.
- **Asking, listening and acting:** I have completed last semester's Go Out And Talk sessions. I have gathered valuable feedback, some of which has been raised in recent University meetings. I am also considering alternative methods of gathering feedback to optimise its reliability and facilitate reporting, this is to be considered for the coming sabbatical terms.
- **INTO:** I regularly meet with INTO, constantly looking at and reviewing strategies to help integrate their community into the broader campus community. An update in regards to that there has been a considerable increase when it comes to their student participation/engagement in societies, sports clubs, volunteer opportunities as well as even going running for officer positions!
- **Digital screens:** I have reached out and been in some discussions with members of the Communications and Marketing team at the University reviewing policies and procedures to create space for student voice content, there will be a meeting this month to finalise aspects of the digital screen policy groups hence an opportunity to agree on a suitable amount of slides that are solely available for student voice content (i.e. from societies, etc..)
- Other than that, I have attended the NUS education rally, met with multiple different sabbs and learnt more about campaigns and great stuff happening all around, fought back against rent, working with the advice service to review cases of international students facing issues with their fees, academic integrity and other issues. Preparing for the coming year.

You can contact me at president.union@stir.ac.uk or my official Instagram (@stir_president).

Sports Union President Sabbatical Report, Murray Bushell

As Sports President, I look after all 54 of our Sports Clubs.

- Planning is well underway for key events that will take place throughout the second semester. This will include sports ball, club photos, big BUCS Wednesday and Clubs Academy.
- Conference cup finals were a major success with 11 teams qualifying for their finals and 8 winning on the day.

- Continue to work with the university to increase promotion of clubs.
- Cost of Living survey is out across the country. We will promote this very soon.
- Collaborating with UoS Sport on the Kit Tender.
- Collaborating with UoS Sport on financial provisions for competitions.

You can contact me at sports.union@stir.ac.uk. Make sure to also follow us on Instagram, @stirlingsportsunion, to keep up to date on all things sport!

Vice President Communities Sabbatical Report, Zoë Crosher

As Vice President Communities, I work on many things including societies, sustainability, volunteering, housing and transport.

- Since the last general meeting, I've completed the Transport guide, which is now available on the website.
- I've also completed a short signposting guide about student sex workers, guiding students to support should they need it. This is following a motion passed in 2023.
- Fought back against rising rent prices.
- Attended NUS education rally.
- Supported international festival of culture.
- Restocked the community fridge weekly.
- Societies Ball tickets sold out, with awards shortlist decided.

You can contact me at communities.union@stir.ac.uk or my official social media channels @stir_communities.

Vice President Education, Katie Gethings

Hey, I am Katie, your Vice President for Education and I take care of all things academics and education. I chair the Education Zone and take care of the Academic Representatives at the University. I am here to represent and advocate on behalf of anything academic so I am the person to go to if you have any questions or issues regarding your education

Academic Reps:

- 441 Academic Reps representing all our modules, years and programmes at Undergraduate and Postgraduate level.
- Ran 2 in person training sessions with 60 Academic Reps - sessions were more interactive based on feedback
- Planning the Academic Rep Symposium to celebrate the amazing work Academic Reps do throughout the year and provide opportunities for skill and personal development - Wednesday 20th March 2-5pm.
- Have been publishing a weekly newsletter to Academic Reps with information with opportunities and tips for being an Academic Rep.

- Ran a Sustainability Workshop in Academics for Academic Reps that was well received and will look to continue this in future.

Consent education:

- Creating a report with testimonials and testimonials from other universities to present examples of good practice for Stirling to consider.
- Working with Reclaim Stirling to investigate support from White Ribbon Campaign.

Life Skills workshops:

- Finance Fair, Tuesday 19th March - take place in the Atrium and will have organisations like Citizen's Advice Bureau, Student Money Team and Global Justice Society.
- Give student resources and information about personal finances so they can be well informed.

Other:

- RATE Awards nominations close on Friday 15th March - get your nominations for University Faculty staff and support staff in quickly to recognise those that have made your experience at Stirling better.
- Inspirational Women's Awards on the Thursday 21st March to recognise the women in your life that have made amazing contribution to your time at Stirling.
- Attended Education Rally in Holyrood against the Scottish Governments recent announcement to cuts in Education funding.
- Supported Student Voice Week and helped give away hundreds of prizes to those that filled in the NSS and SES.

You can contact me at education.union@stir.ac.uk or my official social media channel on Instagram @stir_education.

Paper B: Sustainability Policy Updates

Proposer: Zoë Crosher (Vice President Communities) | Seconder: Katie Gethings (Vice President Education)

Motion Resolves

1. This motion resolves to update the Students' Union's Sustainability Policy to reflect current practice and bring it up to date with guidance published since the 2019 policy was passed. The updated policy can be found in Appendix 1.
 - a. This includes updating job roles named in the Sustainability Policy to be in line with their current state.
 - b. This updated policy adjusts the approach towards reducing the Students' Union carbon footprint from carbon offsetting to carbon insetting.

Motion Notes

The Students' Union's Sustainability Policy requires a renewal to reflect changes that have occurred within the Union since it was published in 2019.

Motion Believes

Updating the 2019 Sustainability Policy will increase its accuracy, make it relevant for the future and bring it up to date with new Scottish Government public bodies and climate change duties guidance¹. This includes the guidance that investment in insetting projects should be prioritised ahead of the purchase of carbon offsets.

¹ ['Public Bodies and Climate Change Duties – Guidance on nature-based carbon reduction projects \(insetting and offsetting\) and annual public bodies duties reporting' \(2023\) Scottish Government \[Preprint\]](#)

Paper C: Hedgehogs over Squirrels Referendum

Proposer: Aaron Caulfield | Seconder: Luna Larkin (NUS Delegate)

Motion Resolves

THAT THIS UNION REGARDS THIS ISSUE AS OF UPMOST IMPORTANCE, AND THEREFORE USING THE PROVISIONS OF THE STANDING ORDERS AND SECTION 6 of ELECTION AND REFERENDA REGULATIONS:-

THIS MOTION INSTRUCTS THIS UNION THAT UPON ADOPTION THERE SHALL BE A REFERENDA ON THE QUESTION:

'Should this Union petition the University to adopt the Hedgehog over the Squirrel as the mascot of this University?'

the choices shall be YES, NO and ABSTAIN.

If the vote returns YES, this Union shall do as instructed in the question.

Motion Notes

It is an inherit fact that hedgehogs are indeed cuter than squirrels.

Motion Believes

THIS UNION regards this issue as one of the upmost important to the campus.

Paper D: Student Union Declares a Boycott of University Commercial Services

Proposer: Ben Alker | Seconder: Luna Larkin (NUS Delegate)

Please note: Should this motion pass, it would require external legal support to qualify its legality as well as ratification by the charity's Trustee Board.

Motion Resolves

This General Meeting resolves to take boycott action (in order to better the state of housing) starting on the 29th of March until the university commits to a rent freeze of student accommodation effective immediately. (2023/24 levels).

The outlets to be boycotted are as follows;

- Scran,
- Sup,
- Refresh,
- University Court eatery,
- University owned cafes such as the food truck in Queens Court and the cafe at the entrance to Cottrell from the bus hub.
- Haldanes.

The following outlets will not be covered by the boycott;

- The University Gym,
- Outlets within the sports centre,
- Macroberts,
- All Students' Union outlets,
- The Nisa,
- The Pharmacy,
- The University Court Hotel.

The actions below will be followed:

1. A statement calling for students, sabbatical officers, and student union staff to participate in the boycott which is readable directly on all social media platforms, not just by following a link or instructions to the website.
2. All Student Union Officers and Staff Members to participate in the boycott.
3. The Student Union to ensure that alternatives are provided and accessible to students, ideally by advertising the community food initiative and the Student Union Venue.
4. The Student Union to organise a rally at the start of the boycott.
5. The Student Union will contact major news outlets with a press release detailing why the boycott is taking place and what the demands are.
6. The Student Union will contact all students and alumni (if possible) with information about the boycott (in the email itself, not in a link or with instructions to the website).

7. The Student Union will request support from NUS Scotland as part of its "fighting for students" campaign.
8. The Student Union will advertise the boycott on the campus screens and in the Student Union Venue.

Motion Notes

On the 13th of April 2023, the Student Union passed the motion "Support of actions for better housing" in which the student union resolved that "[any] boycott of university services taken by students to encourage the University to better the state of housing shall be supported by the Students Union. This should come in the form of, but would not be limited to, supporting students through the action with kind words and advice, and publicly stating that the Union supports the action by advertising it and releasing official statements of support."

Motion Believes

The University of Stirling Students' Union must be committed to fighting the student housing crisis and student homelessness by actively participating in any boycott called by students.

That the University of Stirling should reverse the rent increase of 2023.

That the University of Stirling must establish new affordable accommodation before increasing its intake of students.

Direct action from the Students Union will encourage more students to get involved, ultimately resulting in a higher chance of winning actions taken by students.

Housing affects all of us and we should be supported to make a difference.

Paper E: Alteration to Election and Referendum Regulations

Proposer: Aaron Caulfield | Seconder: Joeseeph Roach (Equalities (LGBT+) Volunteer Officer)

Motion Resolves

1. THAT the Union's Election and Referenda schedule be reverted to such a point that it is the same as if the motion presented by 2022/23 Vice President Communities in re: this Schedule removing nominations was never passed - and;
2. THAT therefore such motion be repealed insofar as it relates to nominations - and;
3. THEREFORE this motion be adopted as policy for this Union.

Motion Notes

THAT Union turnout is as a trend, increasing and;

THAT, given such trend, the safeguard against positions not being filled by virtue of nominations hindering candidates being on the ballot is redundant, and;

THAT, therefore, while turnout is increasing this means that voting for positions which one is not familiar with can become randomised, so some protection is needed to ensure candidates are fit for positions that they are nominated to and;

THEREFORE - Securing 50 nominations for Sabbatical roles, and 15 for Volunteer positions ensure that there is faith within the student community that person(s) are fit for the role if election.

Motion Believes

THAT the Union Elections removed a vital protection, that being nominations, from Elections in a rushed manner, and failed to account for the implications thereof.

THAT therefore while turnout is increasing this means that voting for positions which one is not familiar with can become randomised, so some protection is needed to ensure candidates are fit for positions that they are nominated to.

Paper F: No More Drug Disciplinaries

Proposer: Aaron Caulfield | Seconder: Luna Larkin (NUS Delegate)

Motion Resolves

THAT THE MEMBERS OF STIRLING STUDENTS UNION AT ITS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024 DO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO THE DISCIPLINARY SCHEDULE OF THIS UNION

WE repeal from the section entitled 'OFFENCES' - Use of illegal drugs'

WE ALSO INSTRUCT THAT - For the purpose of ascertaining offences, the following section may not be construed to include the personal use of drugs: 'Anti-social or inappropriate behaviour which causes, or could cause distress, concern or disruption to others and to Union activities'.

SIMILARLY WE INSTRUCT - That no other offence in this schedule, nor any administrative guidance on this schedule, may allow for an offence to arise alone from the simple possession, or personal use, of a reasonable amount of an unlawful substance. A reasonable amount is to be determined by a test of reasonableness akin to those used in common law courts.

Motion Notes

THEREFORE, Given the above - this Union must take a stance it's wish to use such a power for personal use amounts of substances - and it should be in the negative.

Motion Believes

THAT inherently, the use of drugs is a public health issue, and must be treated as such, and;

THAT this Union has already adopted such approach in it's partial adoption of 'Help Not Harm' as a policy - HOWEVER;

THIS Union has kept on it's books the powers to discipline students for Drug offences, and this is at the highest level of offence.

Paper G: Save Our NUS Delegation

Proposer: Aaron Caulfield | Seconder: Joeseoph Roach (Equalities (LGBT+) Volunteer Officer)

Motion Resolves

THAT the following word be deleted in the Election and Referenda schedule;

'which shall be reserved for the Union President as ex-officio delegate leader'

AND THEREFORE any other reference with similar affect shall similarly be repealed;

SIMILARLY, therefore the section below be repealed;

'If the President cannot fill their role as the NUS Delegate Leader, it will fall to one of the other Sabbatical Officers to fulfil this role as agreed by the Executive Council. '

THAT it be held, and implemented in the schedules, that a fair and democratic way of electing a leader of a delegation should be ascertained;

THAT this current 2024 NUS delegation be given such power as to select their own delegation leader - and recommend a election system to be used in such further delegations.

Motion Notes

N/A

Motion Believes

THAT it is inherently undemocratic to give the lead of the NUS delegation to the Union President ex officio when all members are equally elected democratically.

THAT therefore this change will make the delegation democratic, electing a leader from amongst themselves.

Paper H: Students' Union Starbucks Affiliation

Proposer: Joeseeph Roach (Equalities (LGBT+) Volunteer Officer) | Seconder: Luna Larkin (NUS Delegate)

Motion Resolves

1. Get rid of the Starbucks franchise from the underground area of the students union.
2. Cease all trading with Starbucks as soon as is practicable.

Motion Notes

Starbucks has been found to be a 'hated brand' in France.²

Motion Believes

Starbucks coffee has a net negative impact on students.

Starbucks coffee tastes bad.

Starbucks coffee is expensive and overpriced.

That there are better options for the Students' Union than Starbucks and that switching to a different provider would benefit all students.

² [Bryson, D. and Atwal, G., 2019. Brand hate: the case of Starbucks in France. British Food Journal, 121\(1\), pp.172-182.](#)

Appendix 1

Sustainability Policy



The University of Stirling Students' Union

1. Introduction

The University of Stirling Students' Union, hereinafter referred to as 'the Union', is committed to equality for all. We will demonstrate this by being a signatory of the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), by taking a pro-active and inclusive approach to sustainable development and by participating in external sustainability standards such as Green Impact Students' Unions.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy covers all members of the Union, as defined in Section 6 of the Union's Constitution, as well as Union staff, volunteers and Trustees. It is the responsibility of all to acquaint themselves with this policy and its principles. This policy will extend to all aspects of our operational activity. It will also apply to all those engaging with the Union, beyond those already listed, including clients, contractors, consultants and partners.

3. Purpose

This policy is to ensure that sustainable development is a priority for the Union. We will be working to guarantee that the Union and the University's activities have minimal impact on the environment.

4. Policy Statement

This policy is informed by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2016-2030 and the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report (2018). Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 commits Scotland to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050. The UN SDGs are a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice. The seventeen goals interconnect and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve each Goal and target by 2030. The seventeen interconnected goals are;

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. No Poverty | 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. |
| 2. Zero Hunger | 10. Reduced Inequalities |
| 3. Good Health and Well-Being | 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities |
| 4. Quality Education | 12. Responsible Consumption and Production |
| 5. Gender Equality | 13. Climate Action |
| 6. Clean Water and Sanitation | 14. Life Below Water |
| 7. Affordable and Clean Energy | |
| 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth | |

15. Life on Land
16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
17. Partnerships for the Goals

The IPCC Special Report (2018) sets out that, globally, we need to limit global warming to 1.5°C to prevent forecast widespread catastrophic consequences to society and the natural environment from 2°C of warming. The report highlights that the world is already experiencing the consequences of 1°C of global warming for example through more extreme weather, rising sea levels and diminishing Arctic Sea ice. To limit warming to 1.5°C will require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society.

5. General Principals

5.1 This policy reflects the Union's core values and exists to:

- i. Ensure that the Union carries out its activities within a framework that complies with legislative requirements;
- ii. Ensure that the Union is pro-active in promoting sustainability development;
- iii. Commit the Union to monitoring the implementation of this policy and the evaluation of its effectiveness.

5.2 Our commitment

We will work to embed positive, lifelong environmental, ethical, and sustainable practices into Union operations, the University and wider community. We'll provide opportunities for students to get involved in our projects and activities which focus on environmental and sustainability issues. By doing so, we'll create positive impacts to student health and wellbeing and contribute to changing and challenging community attitudes and behaviours to the impacts of socio-economic development and climate change.

6. Roles & Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for implementation of this policy lies with all Union staff. Day-to-day implementation of the policy will be the responsibility of the Sustainability Development Coordinator and VP Communities, with support from the Sustainability Officer.

7. Provision

The Union will provide information sessions and workshops as and when required for new staff and relevant student officer positions or future policy changes.

8. Monitoring and Review

The Sustainability Development Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring the day-to-day implementation of the policy. There will be a Sustainability Working Group, which will consist of the President, VP Communities, Chief Executive, Student Voice Manager, Sustainability Development Coordinator and the Sustainability Officer. The Working Group will meet at least once every semester to assess and assist with implementation of the policy. The Working Group will consult with relevant people and organisations to help inform their implementation of Union policy to meet best practices.

8.1 Promotion & Publicity

- i. The Students' Union will ensure transparent annual reports are published online.

9. Areas of work

In line with the Union's overall Strategic Plan (2018-2021), the Union will address five core aspects of sustainability:

9.1 Embedding sustainability within the Union

We will embed sustainability within all organizational activities and ensure best practices are followed by utilizing the Green Impact Award as a framework. We will also work with the University to achieve Fairtrade University accreditation and engage with Green Impact Universities.

9.2 Minimising our environmental footprint

We acknowledge that many of our activities have the potential to cause significant damage to environment, both locally and globally. We will continue to minimize our environmental footprint through operational changes, investments and campaigns, explicitly linking the benefits of strong corporate social responsibility leadership to enhancing the student experience and building a strong community.

More specifically, we aim to:

- Establish a Union carbon footprint incorporating all Scope 1 and 2 emissions, and several Scope 3 emissions³;
- Reduce our operational carbon, water and waste footprint through infrastructural investments and behavioural change;
- Help increase the carbon savings generated through the Green and Blue Space to offset the Union's negative carbon footprint;
- Continue to reduce organisational carbon emissions through carbon insetting initiatives.

9.3 Campaigning for sustainability

The UN SDGs demonstrate that sustainable development is not solely about carbon reductions but involves creating an equitable society. Using student feedback, and supporting the UN SDGs, we will look to expand our current range of sustainable development projects and campaigns, providing meaningful opportunities for students to develop new skills, social networks and contribute to creative wider societal change.

In addition to adapting future campaigns to a changing socio-environmental landscape, we will focus on:

- Advocating for the removal of University fossil fuel investments as part of its Socially Responsible Investment Policy;

³ Scope 1 and 2 emissions are direct emission sources from an organisation; for the Union these include the emissions arising from use of electricity and heating. Scope 3 emissions are indirect emissions sources from an organisation; for the Union these include the emissions arising from travel (business, sports, clubs and societies, staff commuting), procurement and waste disposal. For more information view www.carbontrust.com/resources/faqs/services/scope-3-indirect-carbon-emissions/

- Working with the University to create biodiverse spaces on campus and provide learning and research opportunities for students to develop surveying and monitoring skills;
- Calling for the University to match sector-leading commitments and set an ambitious time-frame for becoming carbon neutral;
- Pressing the University for further reductions of single-use waste on campus whilst improving waste management facilities.

9.4 Embedding sustainability in the curriculum

To face the interdisciplinary challenges of the present and future, students and graduates must be able to place the work they will do in the context of addressing wide-ranging and often inter-related societal issues. To support this, the University curriculum should play an active role in framing subject matter in the context of sustainable development issues and demonstrate how the knowledge and skills graduates are equipped with can support a more equitable and sustainable society.

To achieve this, we will work to:

- Advocate the embedding of subject-specific sustainability in the curriculum across all degree programmes;
- Increase the use of the University campus's natural and human capital as a resource for student learning and research;
- Implement paperless dissertation submissions across all bachelor programmes;
- Advocate the inclusion of "sustainability" where appropriate in grading of research

9.5 Improving sustainable travel

Transport contributed to 34% of UK CO₂ emissions in 2017⁴. Despite UK carbon dioxide emissions were 43% lower in 2017 than in 1990, emissions from transport decreased by only 1% over the same period. Given the local geography, strong local partnerships and established local cycling services, the city centre of Stirling and the University are exceptionally well placed to embed sustainable travel within the local community. However, local and national investment in sustainable travels remains low.

To address this, we aim to:

- Through advocacy, improve the accessibility and quality of sustainable travel options within the University and wider community, highlighting their benefits to physical, environmental and economic wellbeing;
- Seek external funding to improve infrastructure and services to better support students walking and cycling to and from the University;
- Continue discussions with public transport providers to improve service provision and value as based on student feedback.

⁴ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2018) 2017 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Provisional Figures.