

Queen's Students' Union: Full-Time Student Officer Report

Role: Student Officer Welfare

Name: Jess Hindley

Period Covered: January 2025

Introduction

As the Welfare Officer, my role is to represent the interests of students in all matters related to their welfare. This is a broad remit which includes improving issues related to housing, accommodation, student safety, physical health, sexual health, mental health, and wellbeing. To achieve this, I lobby relevant departments and people within the university and government; engage with external and internal groups; and lead the Drug and Alcohol Impact (DAI) programme

My main priorities this year are drug and alcohol harm reduction, the Belfast Student Housing Co-Operative, and improving student safety. Due to the intensity of running the DAI programme, I have listed all of its related activities under a separate section of these reports.

General meetings and activities

- **Strategic Plan** – Working with the rest of the SO team to brainstorm for the 2025-2030 SU Strategic Plan
- **#QUBeWell Management Group** – Meeting to discuss the new term's wellbeing initiatives across the university, changes to accommodation contracts, updates to the Inspire programme
- **Immigration Support Service info session** – “Lunch time learn” session to learn more about the work of the Immigration Support Service and about the recent changes to the Visa system
- **VAWG SU Charter** – meeting with Ulster University Students' Union Education Officer to discuss QSU's involvement in a newly developing SU Charter on tackling Violence Against Women and Girls
- **Staff forum** – Attended the SU staff forum to discuss issues facing the SU team
- **Student council** – Attended student council where we listened to Student ideas on the strategic plan and promoted the upcoming elections

Drug and Alcohol Impact programme

- Meeting with the DAI SU team to discuss our plans for the new year and how we will work through criteria
- Steering group meeting – Chaired a meeting of the drug and alcohol steering group to discuss the results of the survey, annual fund successes, the group support day, and the alcohol IBA programme
- Healthtalks meeting – discussion with Healthtalks about a training programme which could offer an alternative to fines for students who have been found to have broken QUB regulations relating to drug use
- I wrote the first draft of the potential new policy on student drug and alcohol use, redesigning it into a harm reduction policy, focused on student support while recognising legal restrictions
- Alcohol use within the LGBTQ+ Community – attended a special alcohol IBA session about research into the differences between the alcohol use of people who are members of the LGBTQ+ community and those who aren't

- Alcohol IBA monthly cohort meeting – discussing how alcohol use may change over term 2, identifying pinch points and how we can respond to them
- Monthly support call with SOS-UK to discuss survey analysis and plans for innovative interventions

Events

- **Chinese New Year** – Participated in/attended multiple events celebrating Chinese New Year including traditional craft sessions, the opening ceremony, dragon dance, and year of the snake fair
- **Refreshers Fair** – Meeting to discuss wellbeing initiatives across the university and plan activity for the new year
- **Russell Group SU Conference** – Participated in the Russell Group Students' Union conference, discussing future plans with officers from other Russell Group Students' Unions
- **SU Volunteer Homework Clubs event** – Assisted at the SU Volunteer Homework Clubs event