

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

Role: Student Officer Welfare

Name: Jess Hindley

Period Covered: March 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

- **Housing Co-Op Meeting** – the President, SO Campaigns and Engagement and I met with academic Andrew Grounds regarding our plans for co-operative housing to discuss how best to achieve our objectives
- **UCU-SU Meeting** – Met with representatives of the UCU to discuss current staffing concerns and how they connect with student concerns
- **VAWG** – Collated an SU response to an university query on our work on tackling VAWG
- **Period Products on Campus** – Working with the SO Equality and Diversity on improving the provision of period products around campus
- **NUS-USI Membership Meeting**- Attended NUS-USI Membership meeting where we discussed upcoming meetings with minister, policy consultations and the NUS-USI Democracy Event
- **Dublin Road Health and Safety Subgroup** – Learned more information about the upcoming Dublin Road Accommodation and asked questions regarding the wellbeing of students in the accommodation and plans for if there are delays in construction
- **Interview Prep regarding PIP cuts** – worked with the SU Advice Manager to collate a response for the media regarding the impact of the upcoming cuts to PIP on students
- **BT2 Renovation queries** – following on from concerns raised by students in BT2 who will have to move out of their accommodation due to planned renovations to the building, the SO Postgraduate and I met with members of the accommodation team. We learnt about the support plans in place for students and communicated these with students who expressed concerns

Drug and Alcohol Impact programme

- **Steering group meeting** – Chaired a meeting of the drug and alcohol steering group where we further discussed plans for the upcoming alcohol awareness event before St Patrick's Day, the ASCERT Substance Misuse Awareness Training, and changes to the proposed student drug use policy.
- **Co-ran an event with the University in the SU Foyer** a few days before St Patrick's Day to promote alcohol alternatives, make students aware of their own drinking habits, promote student safety and engagement with the community through volunteering.

- QUB Drug and Alcohol Impact Support Call with SOS-UK – Queried some criteria, discussed the upcoming conference and upcoming audit day, comparing the national student survey data with QUB data to see how we compare to other institutions across the UK and Ireland
- Alcohol IBA Monthly Cohort Meeting – Final Alcohol IBA Meeting where we compared our student drink-checker data with the national data and discussed access to resources after the end of the programme
- Worked on editing the draft of the new proposed university policy on student drug and alcohol use after it has undergone the first round of consultation. Preparing for the second round of consultation.

Events

- **International Women's Day Panel**– I sat on a, IWD panel where I discussed the issues faced by women students and how the government, universities, and students' unions can tackle these issues
- **Tackling VAWG SU Charter Launch** – Attended the UUSU Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls SU Charter Launch and signed the charter alongside the SO Postgraduate Education on behalf of QSU. This charter demonstrates our commitment to tackling VAWG within an SU setting.