

A problem shared



Your Union Advice newsletter – a little bit of help when you need it most

Issue 4 (April 2019)

Goodbye for now

As we head into the final weeks of teaching and the start of the summer assessment period it's time for a temporary break in the Union advice service's newsletter for the 2018-2019 academic year. As we look to the end of this academic year we're thinking about the stresses of assessment and exam period and what the Union can do to support students during this time so look out for a Union face during this time. In looking forward as well, the Union will have a very different look from 2019-2020 as your officer team will go from five to four. In this issue, Charlie, your Vice President (Community) gives us the low down on this change and it will benefit students.

Along this line of thinking ahead, by the time this issue goes to print, the Union elections will have been and gone, and you'll know which officers will be representing you for the next year. But before the new officers take up their posts, there's a lot to celebrate in the Union. May sees the return of the Community Awards (8th May) and the Education Awards (29th May) which celebrate the contribution of students and staff at the Union and university; so get involved either by nomination, voting or attending.

So for those of you leaving us this year, good luck for the future and we hope you can look back at your time in Derby with a great fondness. For those returning next academic year, make sure you check back in with our newsletters next year to find out what's going on. And finally, for those of you still here over summer don't forget the Union is here all year round to support any student at the University.

The Union Awards

Education Awards

29th May
Derby Theatre



Upcoming advice drop-ins

One Friar Gate in Blends

- Tuesday 14th May 2019
- Tuesday 11th June 2019

Markeaton Street in MS116b

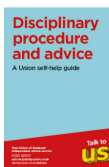
- Wednesday 15th May 2019
- Wednesday 12th June 2019

Britannia Mill by the Union Shop

- Thursday 16th May 2019
- Thursday 13th June 2019

NEW!

Check derbyunion.co.uk/ for all our advice for all our self-help guides



An update from Charlie, your Vice President (Community)

Hey guys, it's me, Charlie! I'm your Vice-President (Community), which means I'm here to oversee student fundraising, volunteering, student media and all things community!



Everything I do revolves around students committing their time and skills into improving the world around them, whether that be by helping out at the local old folks' home, writing an article sharing something exciting they learned in a lecture that week, or by raising some money for Cancer Research UK!

The majority of the work I do is with the Student-Led Services (or SLS for short). An SLS is similar, in some ways, to societies and sports clubs. They're run by a committee, and do what they do completely for students. There are however, some big differences. For example, while societies do all of their activities for their members, everything SLS' do is for the wider student body- for example, printing a student newspaper for all students to read. To make that work, the committees of SLS' are interviewed for their roles, rather than elected, to ensure those in leadership positions have the skills necessary to deliver that service at a high quality.

Haven't heard of a SLS before? I bet you have! Raise and Give (RAG) is a SLS, focussed on student fundraising for the chosen charities and more. Phantom Media are a SLS, with three different branches. Phantom Media produces a student radio, a student paper, and a 'TV' channel. Student Action are a SLS which are centred on student volunteering- these guys are new this year too! There's also Phantom Events, who set up light and sound for events like Freshers parties that happen at the beginning of the year in the Academy.

Often, but not always, the students who run these do courses that have similarities to the SLS. However, sometimes they're students who do courses that have nothing to do with the SLS, as a way to develop an interest or a separate skill set. Each one of them does incredible things, and has the potential to become even better. This is part of what fuelled the decision to change the officer structure next year, so that instead of an elected Vice President looking after them, an interviewed member of staff have this responsibility instead. It only make sense, as that's what happens in the Student-Led Services themselves.

That's a quick summary from me, have a good read of everything in this newsletter, the advice team are some of the most wonderful, most useful people you can find so everything in here is top quality.

Positive Minds training opportunity



The Positive Minds course has been designed to give students the skills they need to keep low mood at bay. The course has been developed using material from Students Against Depression which provides award-winning information and self-help resources

The theory behind this course goes something like this... When depression gets a foothold in your life, it can quickly take hold in the form of a series of mutually reinforcing habits. That is, when we let low mood hang around, it is easy to end up in a downward spiral. Depressed behaviour, in the form of avoidance and social withdrawal, reinforces depressed feelings and the lethargy that often accompanies depression. Whilst not a substitute for professional help, the strategies discussed on this course offer a starting point for doing what you can yourself to turn this spiral around or for preventing chronic stress or low mood from spiralling into depression.

We understand that students are often the first source of support for their peers and many students want to know how to appropriately support others. Since 2008 Student Minds have supported young people to offer encouragement to fellow students experiencing the challenges of university life, through structured peer support groups. Our groups are facilitated by trained student volunteers who ensure the conversations remain supportive and safe. These group facilitators are core to our organisation and by volunteering with Student Minds you'll be at the forefront of our work to help improve student mental health.

Volunteering as a group facilitator will give you a unique opportunity to develop your skills, make a difference at university, boost your CV and gain experience in the field of mental health. You will receive comprehensive training and ongoing support to ensure you feel knowledgeable, confident and skilled to deliver suitable and effective peer support on your campus.

We are looking to recruit facilitators for the Positive Minds Programme, at the University of Derby, that will be running throughout the year: studentminds.org.uk/peersupportgroups.html

This is a two day course and our next training dates are 22nd and 23rd May 9.00am - 5.00pm, at The University of Derby.

Please contact either Lynda Keir, L.Keir@derby.ac.uk, or Ruth Spencer, R.Spencer@derby.ac.uk if you have any queries.

An update from Dani, your Vice President (Activities)

Hi everyone, I'm Daniella Quill and I'm your current Vice President (Activities) which means with your Vice President (Community), we support all your recreational student activities at the Union! Within my role I focus on Sports and Societies, but my main passion within this role is inclusivity amongst our student activities. For most this is the busiest time of the year and we feel that! Easter is just around the corner, and for the Activities department this is when we start to get busy!

We started off 2019 with the Societies Varsity! We took seven societies away to Northampton for our annual event. Last year we took the trophy with a 6-0 win so this year we expected nothing less. We started the day with Board and Card Gaming and Esports going off to compete with a full day of games! Our first win came from Musical Theatre who took part in the Recycled Material Art challenge! As the day carried on the score was getting tight. We had 1 game left with the overall score 3-3. It was all to play for! Eventually Derby took the last point, and we were crowned the overall winners of Societies Varsity 2019!

Which Societies kicking off our Varsity celebrations, it was not time to look toward the Sport Varsity in April! For the past 5 years we have played against Northampton! Over the 5 years Northampton took the win up until last year! After wrapping up the celebrations of achieving Top 40 in BUCS, we walked into Varsity hungrier than ever for the win! The odds we're in our favour and we came away the champions, with a staggering score of 20-9!

But that was 2018, and this year it's all changed... Over the summer we parted ways with Northampton and warmly welcomed our new partnership with the University of Hertfordshire in November! This was an exciting change for Derby and we thoroughly looked forward to Varsity 2019. Ultimately, Herts won Varsity 45-21, but despite the loss Herts were great hosts and we look forward to continuing the partnership next year.

Lastly from me, I would like to touch upon the changes of the role Vice President (Activities). After the absorption of Vice President (Community), the role of Activities

will be representing Student Led Services alongside Sports and Societies. This change brings on an exciting challenge for the Vice President (Activities) 19/20 who I will get the pleasure of supporting next year! If you would like more information on these changes, do not hesitate contacting myself at vpactivities@derbyunion.co.uk or Charlie at vpcommunity@derbyunion.co.uk.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Faye Davis on being elected Vice President (Activities) 19/20! After working so closely with Faye this year in her role as Union Sport Chair, I have no worries that she will do an amazing job!



The Union Awards

Community Awards

The logo for the Union Awards, featuring the letters 'US' in a stylized font with stars.

