

# A problem shared

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

Issue 5 (Sept 2019)



## A welcome from the President

Hi everyone, my name is Daniella and I am your Union President! I'd like to welcome and introduce all students both new and returning to your Union. When you enrol here at the University of Derby you are automatically a member of the Union of Students which means you can use our services and get involved in our extracurricular opportunities!

When students start university it's so important we let them know about the incredible opportunities that are available that are outside the classroom. When meeting new students I like to ask if they are interested in playing a sport? Maybe being part of a wider community through a society? Potentially they may have a passion for journalism, television and radio? Or finally maybe they just like to enjoy a cold, crisp pint alongside a burger after a long day of studying.

Whatever you study and whatever you like to do in your free time, the union can connect you to others who like the same thing. We have over 40 Sports Clubs and over 50 Societies who meet regularly to do what they love! Joining one of these clubs is a great opportunity to meet new people, challenge yourself and network with other students. If I haven't convinced you yet, how does hosting your own radio show, writing newspaper articles for our student media and making amazing videos with state of the art equipment sound? These platforms reach thousands of students and is a great way to build your CV.

Have I won you over yet? If not you can also visit all our Union outlets which we have over four sites on campus, which includes our marvellous Academy bar at Kedleston Road which will be hosting our Freshers



Events which are available with our Freshers Wristband which is only £25. Bargain!

The final part of the Union I wish to talk about, and the reason you're reading this newsletter, is our advice team. Many students don't know this, but they can get yearlong free help and support... yes free! Our advisors are professional, fully trained, and completely independent from the University and most importantly, absolutely lovely. They can help you with a number of things, from housing to complaints and they can even sign you up for a C-card so you can get free condoms and dams. Even if you are worried about something I haven't listed, they will do their best to help you or will find someone who can.

If you remember only one thing today remember the advice service, should there comes a day you or a friend should need us, they will always be here for you!



### Union Advice Tea Party

Thurs 26th September, 4.00pm–6.00pm

Do you need help with settling into student life in Derby? We know this can be solved over a good cuppa.

Come and enjoy some posivi-tea while you chat to our advisors about your student concerns.

Venue: Blends Coffee Shop, Kedleston Road



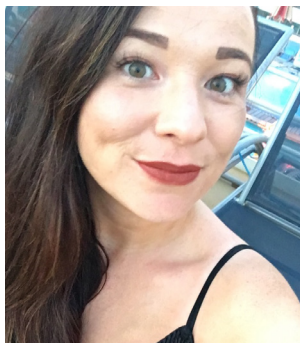
### Love Your Mind

Tue 12th November, 11.30am–1.00pm

Looking at how planning and organising can help reduce stress. And how having a healthy work/life balance is important for your wellbeing. Includes freebies and tips to reduce stress.

Venue: The Atrium, Kedleston Road

# Meet the team



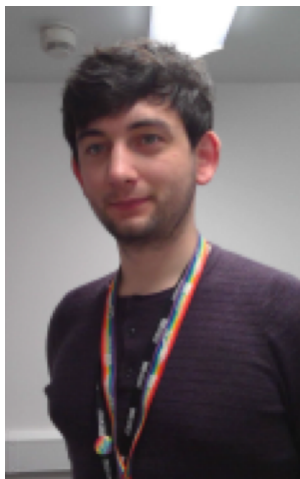
## Emma Taylor

Hi my name is Emma and I am the Support and Inclusion Manager for the Union of Students Advice team. This role includes managing the Advice service and taking a lead on the Equality and Diversity Strategy for the Union. I have worked for the Union for five years, four of which were predominantly spent at the Buxton campus as an advisor. I love working for the Union and being a part of the Advice Team. I enjoy meeting students and supporting them to achieve the best possible outcomes.



## Tom Wood

Hi, my name is Tom. I am one of the advisors based at Derby, but work across Buxton and Chesterfield too. I studied Geography at the University of Manchester, before going on to undertake a PGCE in Secondary Geography at MMU. Having worked at both the University and now the Union, I am eager to make a positive impact on your student experience so please share any concerns or issues you are having so we can look to make a change and help every student thrive.



## Cameron Glen

Hi! My name is Cameron. I am an advisor at the Union of Students, based at the Kedleston Road campus. Before being appointed Union Advisor, I achieved an MRes in Critical Psychology in the subject of Gender and Sexualities. I have also worked at the University as a Research Assistant and Associate Lecturer. I have always been keen to work in positions that are directed towards care and support, which is the primary reason that I took up an advisory position at the university. I will always put you, the student first above anything else, and promise to go above and beyond to provide the best support and advice if you encounter any issues or concerns arise during your time at University of Derby.



## Sam Bowman

Hi, my name is Sam. I am a Union Advisor based at Kedleston Road, having recently started in August 2019. However, I previously worked for the Union of Students within the Venues team at Blends and The Academy for just short of two years. I studied my Undergraduate Psychology degree as well as Applied Developmental Psychology Masters at the University of Derby also. As I was so lucky to be involved with the Union throughout my student experience, I am now enthusiastic within my role to assist other students in utilising the services that we provide, in order to make your student experiences more positive. Please do talk to me about any issues or worries you may be having and together we can work towards the best outcome.

# Advice Top Tips

## Tell someone if you're struggling

If you're finding it difficult to complete your work due to your personal circumstances try to let your lecturer or personal tutor know as soon as possible so that they can offer you support. You can also access support from Student Wellbeing and the Union Advice Service.

## Understand EECs and Late Submission Requests

If you are unable to meet a deadline because of the issues affecting you, you can apply for Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances (EECs) or you can request late submission, our Union Advisors can offer support in your applications for EECs and late submission.

## Get to know your course reps

Course reps are students on your course who have been elected to represent your academic interests to the staff in your department. They attend regular meetings where they are able to influence positive change based on student feedback.

## Understand Academic Appeals

If you want to appeal your mark then you should complete an appeal form within 10 working days of the formal publication of results. Our Union Advisors can support you in completing the form and throughout the appeals process.

## Avoid accidental plagiarism

Plagiarism is an Academic Offence which can easily be avoided by checking your turnitin report. If there are large chunks that are highlighted and aren't referenced you can change these before you submit your final draft. If you are invited to a suspected academic offence meeting then our Union Advisors can attend with you and support you throughout the process.

## Get Involved

The Union of Students has over 100 societies and clubs that you can join. You can also get involved with volunteering, fundraising and sports. To see the full range of activities you can take part in visit [derbyunion.co.uk/getinvolved/](http://derbyunion.co.uk/getinvolved/)

## Get your housing contract checked

The Union of Students Advisors can check your housing contract before you sign it to ensure that it is fair. Keep an eye on our social media for our Annual Housing Fair in November where you can help yourself to freebies, meet with loads of local landlords and get your contract checked.



# Homesickness

Whether you're in your first year or you're a returning student, coming to University after a long summer can be an overwhelming experience. While it can feel as though everyone is having a great time except for you, it's actually quite common for students to feel lonely and to miss home when they come to university in September. Homesickness is different for everyone, for some people it starts straight away, for others it happens after the excitement of Freshers is over.

Try not to be too hard on yourself for feeling this way, and, though it might feel easier sometimes, it's best to try to avoid isolating yourself. Make time for activities that can improve your sense of wellbeing, whether it's going for a walk, going to the gym, or cooking yourself a lovely meal. It's important to communicate and ask for help if you're struggling.

You can access a wide-range of support from the Union of Students. Our Student Led Service, Positive Minds can be there to offer support for all students (more information coming soon). You can also ask for guidance and information from our advice service and our VP Welfare, Samira Mensah.

Remember, every student is automatically a member of the Union of Students, and we have over 100 societies and clubs that you can join. You can also get involved with sports, volunteering and fundraising. To see the full range of activities you can take part in visit [derbyunion.co.uk/getinvolved/](http://derbyunion.co.uk/getinvolved/).

If your homesickness is becoming overwhelming, or it's starting to affect your ability to complete your work then you can access support from the University's Student Wellbeing Service.

T: 01332 593000

E: [studentwellbeing@derby.ac.uk](mailto:studentwellbeing@derby.ac.uk)



## Staying safe on a night out



1

### Stick Together

It's important to go out at night together in groups and that you stick together throughout the night. Keep an eye out for each other and never think about leaving a venue alone.

2

### Make a plan before you go out

In busy bars and clubs, it's only natural that staying together may not be practical. Make sure you always arrange to stay within view of each other and if you leave to go somewhere make sure everyone you came with knows.

3

### Watch your drinks

Remember to keep hold of your drinks at all time. It's only too easy for someone to slip something into your glass. You can avoid this by only drinking out of bottles and not leaving your drink unattended.

4

### Trust your Instincts

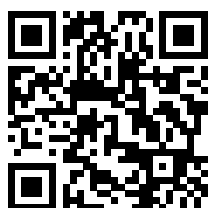
Remember that you are an adult, and your instincts at this point in your life will usually be accurate. If something doesn't feel right, even if you can't pinpoint why, walk away.

5

### Personal alarm

Consider purchasing a personal alarm. These are often very subtle and easy to store on a night out. Some come in key-ring form and there are even alarm apps you can download direct to your phone such as bSafe and React Mobile. This way, if something does go wrong or you are in danger, you can raise the alarm.

# Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Student at Derby



The University's academic regulations documents contain the academic policies, procedures and regulations about your rights and responsibilities as a student at the University of Derby. The information in the documents is critically important and governs everything from the way your assessments are marked, what happens if you miss a deadline and how to access support for your academic work if needed. Perhaps most importantly, the documents govern what happens if something goes wrong or if you are accused of a "suspected academic offence". The advice service are trained to support students in understanding and navigating these processes. All the documents can be found online: [derby.ac.uk/about/academic-regulations](http://derby.ac.uk/about/academic-regulations)

To access union advice guides to the regulations, please follow the QR code!

**Academic appeals**  
A Union self-help guide

Talk to **US**

Your Union of Students' Independent advice service  
01332 591507  
advice@derbyunion.co.uk  
derbyunion.co.uk/advice

**Making a complaint**  
A Union self-help guide

Talk to **US**

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**Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances**  
A Union self-help guide

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**Improve the advice service**

Any ideas on how to improve your advice service, we'd love to hear them. Either pop them onto the ideas forum via [derbyunion.co.uk/ideas/](http://derbyunion.co.uk/ideas/) or contact us directly using the contact details below.

**Free Condoms and Lube**

If you're 18-24 you're entitled to free condoms, dams, and lube with a C-Card from your Union!



**Your Union's independent advice service**

Contact us on **01332 591507** if you need advice or help or email [advice@derbyunion.co.uk](mailto:advice@derbyunion.co.uk)

[derbyunion.co.uk/advice](http://derbyunion.co.uk/advice)