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# Annual Report 2021/22

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# Foreword

As we continue to bounce back from the unprecedented times experienced due to the pandemic, as a Union we remain optimistic and excited by new possibilities and a new way of thinking.

We have faced a number of challenges including losing Jack Tymon, Students' Union President, relatively early on in the year, recruiting a new CEO, engaging in research to underpin the strategic plan for 2022-25 but each of these situations has galvanised us:

- ▶ *As the remaining Officer Trustees we collectively shared the work of the President, continuing to ensure that students were integral to our decisions – and subsequently within the University's decision making*
- ▶ *A new CEO has commenced her role and is keen to support the amazing work we have achieved, whilst working with the Trustee Board to use the strategic research to define the next steps for the Union*
- ▶ *We have opened Basecamp and are so proud of the versatility of this space for both students and staff*

Everyone involved within the Union, students and staff, continue to inspire us. We constantly challenge each other to ensure that we are working to provide transformative experiences. We hope you enjoy reading about our success and achievements this year.

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**Beth, Nina, and Owen,**  
*Officer Trustees 2021/22*



# Student Community

Our aim has always been to bring our students' communities together and the desire to feel part of a wider community started at day one, during Freshers, where we sold over 1,000 Freshers Wristbands, allowing new students to experience the city together and to meet new friends and likeminded peers in safe, vetted, venues.

The success of last year's **Freshers Village** was also expanded on, where we welcomed thousands of students over the first week of intake. Our Commercial team also led on **Welcomefest/Intake Day** where we saw over a thousand new students come to enjoy some music, food, and drink on their first day in the city.

Continuing that tradition of community building through socialising – our weekly student night, **Mukky Duck**, totalled over 18,000 attendees over the course of this academic year, strengthening both our student community as well as our commercial and brand partnerships with Stonegate and various city centre venues.

This sense of community was also shown through our activities provision; with over 2,100 students involved in our sports, societies, and student-led services throughout this academic year.

With over 1,200 members joining our sports clubs, it was an amazing increase over last year's total of 734 and proof that despite the impact of COVID-19 and any lingering health worries, our students are, at heart, social beings and still want to come together as a community.

Our Union Societies weren't hit so hard during the pandemic, and with the resilience of the Activities staff and the student committees we have seen over 1,040 total members across 58 separate societies this year showing not only the desire for student community but also the breadth and diversity of communities here at Derby.



## Celebrating our communities

We love to celebrate student achievements and this year we returned to in-person events for our three **Union Award ceremonies**; We saw the Activities Awards split back into the Sports Awards and the Community Awards as well as the return of the Education Awards - celebrating achievements of both students and staff at the University of Derby.

We fit 100 of our society and student-led service members into the club at Popworld - unrecognisably transformed by our Activities team and the University's SLEET students into a sophisticated round-tabled awards venue - where, again, they experienced some great food and celebrated their peers through 12 awards categories.

Our **Sports Council** have worked really hard this year ensuring they support our clubs; championing what they do and actively working with and supporting us - culminating in them having an official Sports Council Award at the **Sports Awards**. Speaking of which, we had over 300 sporty students cram themselves into the venue at Bustler Market to enjoy amazing food and celebrate the achievements of their friends and teammates across 15 different awards.

Back with a bang from two years online this year's **Education Awards** saw 230 students and staff come together at the Museum of Making to celebrate the successes of 2021/22 - of which there were more than enough to generate the 344 nominations for staff and students. A change of format and venue didn't phase our Voice team with 100% of the attendees rating the evening as 'good' or 'excellent' (compared to 76% for last year's online event).





## Being there, not square

The cornerstone of our community building is all the unique and amazing events run by both our own Union staff as well as the student groups and representatives we work with – and this year has been no exception. Fully embracing the return to in-person events while learning lessons from lockdown, this year has been a great mix of in-person, online, and hybrid events working to bring our students together.

### ► eSports MEMES event

*Our eSports society created and hosted an inter-university midlands eSports tournament*

### ► End of Year Balls

*History, Occupational Therapy, and Law each held their own end of year external balls – History sold over 80 tickets, Law sold over 90 and Occupational Therapy over 60*

### ► First Midwifery Conference

*The brand-new Midwifery Society organised external speakers and created a new annual networking event*

### ► Musical Theatre's Seussical

*This was also Musical Theatre's first time using an external venue*

### ► Chinese New Year

*The Chinese New Year celebration won 'Best event' at the Union Education Awards*

### ► Indian Society's Holi

*Our Indian Society planned and hosted the first face-to-face Holi event in two years which even had BBC Radio Derby in attendance*



► **A Very British Picnic**

*The Union and our International Society, Derby Worldwide, hosted an International Students' welcome event in the Atrium for those students who were travelling from restricted access countries and who may have been isolating whilst the Union delivered Freshers' Fair*

► **Phantom Radio**

*Our very own Phantom Radio hosted and supported several events during Freshers Fair and recruited six committee members through their involvement (they also helped with 19 graduation ceremonies, Basecamp's opening, and the University's Christmas carol service)*

► **RAG Week 1**

*The first RAG Week raised £1,500 and won an award for the Blorange Wednesday event*

► **RAG Week 2**

*The second RAG Week saw another successful Blorange Wednesday and raised a further £500*

► **Student Volunteering Week**

*We hosted five charity fairs in five days and recruited 55 new charities for the Union's volunteering platform*

► **Phantom Radio**

*Phantom Radio returned from lockdown to their studio to host 80 successful live shows throughout the year*



## Home is where the Herts is

Varsity 2022 celebrated the return to in-person sports this year in style. While some clubs like Taekwon-Do, Dance, and Equine managed to keep virtual training up online - the rest of our students were waiting to get back into action and after eight months of fixtures and training we went head-to-head with Hertfordshire for the first time in two years...

We had around 800 students participating as spectators or competitors across the 21 games and three showcases. With 63 points up for grabs over the course of the day a Men's Football draw left the event hinging on the final game of the evening - after a hard battle fought on the Futsal pitch, both sides came away with a 31 Varsity-point draw and a deep hunger for next year.

- *We sold around 1,300 pints on Varsity day - that's about a pint every 20 seconds for the duration of the day!*





## Sports, Societies, and Student-Led Services

Building communities within the wider Activities provision the Union has celebrated our student-led groups in many ways on top of those already mentioned.

- ▶ **Sport Club Team Photos**  
*Over 30 of our sport clubs engaged with this opportunity*
- ▶ **Successful Committee Training**  
*For all our Sports/Societies and SLs*
- ▶ **Phantom Socialwear**  
*All of Phantom have branded socialwear for their committees to help with visibility of Phantom to the student population*
- ▶ **Phantom Newspaper**  
*After a slow start, Phantom Newspaper released seven issues online this year and have boosted engagement in readers*
- ▶ **Raise And Give**  
*RAG have raised over £13,000*
- ▶ **Expanded Community Awards**  
*SLs were well represented at the community awards*



# Wellbeing and Support

The Union Advice team are available to provide a helping hand all year round and this year the team have challenged themselves to become more accessible than ever.

## Events

During **Freshers** the Advice Service hosted two Freshers stands, where advisors invited students to take part in a lucky dip activity allowing the opportunity to chat to students about what the service can offer – ‘if they need it.’ Students were informed about the C-Scheme, which saw 93 students sign up on the day.

This year the service planned an Alice in Wonderland themed event, building on the momentum of previous **Advice Tea Party** events and taking the opportunity to be more ambitious – the event ran from 11.00am–6.00pm, and offered students a safe space to meet like-minded students over hot drinks and plenty of cake. The event engaged over 200 students and received positive feedback from its attendees.

## Campaigns

The Advice Service has led on two campaigns this year Consent Is... and Suspected Academic Offences, both campaigns were created and delivered based on the cases seen by the service.

The Advice team worked with Marketing to deliver the campaigns both in-person and via social media and have created evergreen assets that can be used again at strategically placed moments throughout the academic year.



## Training

Advisors have delivered Consent training to over 100 students. In addition, monthly **Look After Your Mate** sessions have been delivered to students, with a new bespoke version of this being created to deliver to an FE audience. Remedi, one of the local partnership agencies, has offered monthly workshops to students regarding domestic violence.

## Enhancements to provision

The Advice team appointed two new Information and Advice Assistants (IAAs), this has allowed the Union to make efficiencies within the advisor team to ensure more appointment availability for our membership whilst also offering a more effective and supportive first point of call. In addition to the support the IAAs have offered to the Advice team, they have been able to support the wider Union teams.







The Union has invested in training two advice staff who are qualified to support students who have been affected by sexual violence. Next academic year the team will be working to promote the service and working with the University to enhance this provision further.

The Advice team have worked with stakeholders in the city to offer on campus specialist support to our membership, this has included Samaritans, Remedi, and SV2.

## Buxton and Leek College

With the appointment of a newly created Union role; Further Education Coordinator, the Union has been able to offer a programme of engaging campaigns, championed the student voice, and offered safe and comfortable social spaces for our Buxton and Leek College learners.

The FE Coordinator has successfully facilitated Course Rep meetings, allowing students to share the opinions and suggestions of their peers directly to the curriculum leaders. There have been some great wins for these students:

You Said	You said	You said	You said	You said	You said
You wanted more activities at BLC	You wanted a varied range of sanitary products	Students were unaware that we offer free condoms	You wanted a confidential space to talk to your progress coach Jack at Leek campus	You needed more Health and Social Care text books in the library	Students do not always have 50p for the pool table
					
<b>We did</b>	<b>We did</b>	<b>We did</b>	<b>We did</b>	<b>We did</b>	<b>We did</b>
We set up an LGBTQIA+ Society and a pool team	We ordered and regularly check that a variety of sized sanitary products are available	Made C Scheme posters more visible around both campuses. Condoms are now available in the Social Space	Jack now shares an office with Alice where you can speak to him in confidence	We informed the library and they ordered the text books needed	Set up a pool team where the table is free for an hour

This year the Support and Inclusion Manager and Vice President (Welfare) began attending the University's Skills Committee meetings, this has provided an opportunity to report and present on the work undertaken with our Buxton and Leek College membership. It has been received positively by the committee and we believe this to be a contributing factor to the College agreeing to fund the role for next year.



## Buxton and Leek College Events

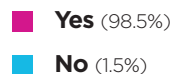
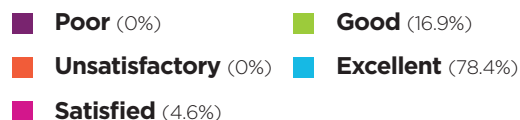
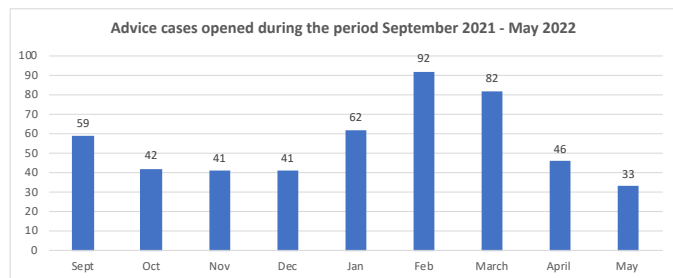
- ▶ **Brew Monday**  
*Supporting the Samaritans and the opening of the social spaces at Buxton and Leek Campuses. 30 students attended in Buxton and 25 in Leek*
- ▶ **Voting stand**  
*To find out which clubs and societies students would like to see offered*
- ▶ **Fairtrade Pancake Day**  
*Decorating pancakes with Fairtrade chocolate spread, bananas and sugar*
- ▶ **Careers Fayre**  
*Union course rep stand*
- ▶ **International Women's Day**  
*A cake sale raising money for Charis House*
- ▶ **Ambassador Recruitment**  
*Recruited five students who are now Wellbeing Ambassadors and attracted five who were interested in joining the LGBTQIA+ Society*
- ▶ **Destresstival**  
*An igloo was set up with face masks, yoga mats, fairy lights, foot spas, magazines, and refreshments. 70 students attended in Buxton and around 20 at Leek*
- ▶ **Mental Health Awareness Week**  
*Stress Brain Challenge, de-stress activities - engaging with over 20 students*
- ▶ **Look After Your Mate Training**
- ▶ **BLC Student Safety Day**



## Advice Service Statistics

Some statistics and feedback from our Advice Service for this academic year

Case Outcome	Count Number of Cases
Appeal Successful	13
Appeal Unsuccessful	7
Case Concluded Successfully	2
Complaint Partially Upheld	2
Complaint upheld	5
Debt Managed	1
EEC upheld	13
Fee Waiver	2
Financial gain other	1
Housing Financial gain/improvement	2
Mediation successful	1
Other financial gain - estimate (annual amount)	1
Other outcome - non-financial	3
PCPS - Case dismissed	4
PCPS - proven, advisory note	17
Procedure undertaken by client upheld	1
Reinstated to Course	5
SAO - Not proven, dismissed	14
SFE issue resolved successfully	1
Signpost	7
Student satisfied with outcome	29
Tenant dispute resolved successfully	1
Tuition Fee Refund	2





## Do you have any suggestions or comments for how we can improve the Union Advice Service?

*I would like to give special thanks to my advisor she really helps and supports me. I really appreciate time on my case.*

*Keep up the good work!*

*Just wanted to say a massive thank you to my advisor, who went above and beyond to help me with my rental contract dispute, even when I thought it was at a loss. It was only by chance that I thought of contacting the Union, if one suggestion possibly just to raise awareness that they offer such services, I couldn't fault it at all.*

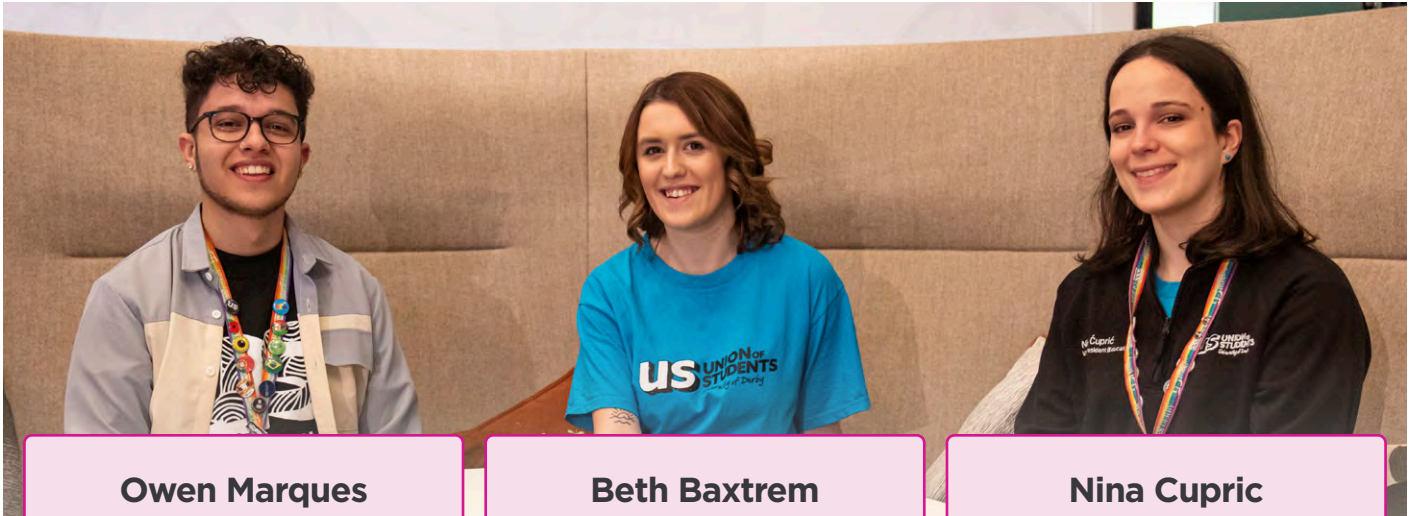
*I was so upset when I came to the SU and everyone was busy and I didn't have an appointment, but an advisor made time for me and sat with me for a long time and made some calls to make sure my issue was resolved. I felt that she went above and beyond to help me when I was in a really difficult position. I am so grateful to my advisor for what she did to help me as I felt listened to which is not always the experience I have had.*

*The Union Advice Service is 100% excellent!*

*I would like to say a massive thank you my advisor for all her help and continued support whilst I attempted to solve the situation.*

# Officer Impact

As ever, our full-time Officer Trustees balance the day-to-day student-led work of the Union alongside their own manifesto pledges and campaigns. Held to account at our Scrutiny Panels through the year some highlights from our team include:



## Owen Marques

We have managed to get services such as Samaritans, Remedi, SV2, and Derbyshire LBGTQ+ on site providing support to students

Introduction of 'tackling loneliness' workshops to Union staff and students

Worked with Team Derby to promote sport and the benefits to mental health

## Beth Baxtrem

We saw seven teams become BUCS league winners and many teams become runners-up, which is a great success for us as a Union and University

12 students across sports, societies, and student led services have received Mental Health First Aid training

Men's Football partnered with HUMEN to support men's mental health, they have raised awareness and funds throughout the year. Our Men's and Women's Rugby team have also partnered with Balls for Brains, a charity that focuses on mental health specifically in rugby

## Nina Cupric

Go Green Week was successful, 57 stalls booked with 52 charities at Kedleston Road, Markeaton Street, and One Friar Gate Square. 51 stalls taken with 46 charities across all campuses

Pushed for disinvestment from fossil fuel at the University's Governing Council

Secured verbal agreement on the location of allotments, to be run by ENACTUS

24-hour library during assessment periods was reinstated for another year

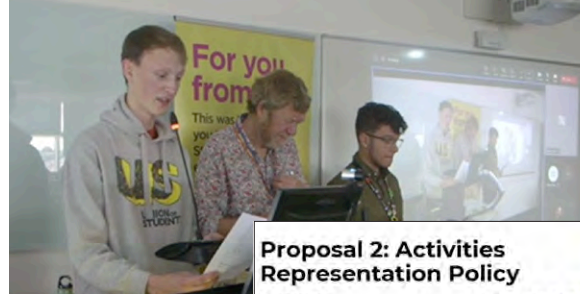
# Student Voice and Feedback

Student voice is at the heart of everything we do and it has never been more important that we channel representative and effective student voice. We are led by students for students and we would like to take this opportunity to thank every single student. Whether they are a Student Rep, a member of a sport or society, or voted in the elections, your voice matters and it is listened to.

In order to ensure student voice continues to be heard and channelled effectively, this year we have implemented the new institution-wide Academic Representation Policy and innovative **Student Voice Portal**. The Student Voice Portal has seen over 600 Reps register and submit over 900 pieces of individual student feedback. This has given us an unprecedented ability to track trends of student voice in real-time with our Officers and affect change quickly and efficiently.

We held our first hybrid **Annual General Meeting** this year, chaired by the Trustee Board, and saw a turnout of 65 voting members. Between them they cast 552 votes in two hours to make changes to our policies and governance structure which will take effect for the upcoming academic year.

We played a lead role in ensuring that the virtual induction was vibrant and student-led providing new and returning students with details of how the Union effectively represents their academic interests. Full and part-time Officers filmed induction videos and, combined, these were viewed 7,583 times in the first few weeks.



**Trustee Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31.07.21**

Vote to approve the report



**Proposal 2: Activities Representation Policy**

Why: This proposal to introduce Activities Representation Policy. This policy will embed the activities that we currently do within the Union and its committees.

Vote to approve, against or abstain



Throughout the year we have consistently gone out for the most dynamic and up-to-date student voice through our Instagram poll **'Thursday Thoughts'**. This year we've had a total of 17,089 responses which is an average of 610 students per post! And we have used these on a variety of topics; from how comfortable students feel about the safety measures on site to how they want to see the Virtual Learning Environment develop and change.

This year students studying a UDOL course were invited to join Ian Whitehead (Academic Head of Online Learning) and other academic leads at a **Student Forum**, in an opportunity to provide feedback regarding their courses and to have any questions answered directly.

In our Officer elections we increased the voter turnout by 111 voters, casting 12,510 individual votes between them.

Positive stats from our Student Officer team this year:

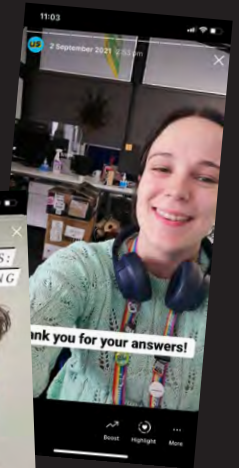
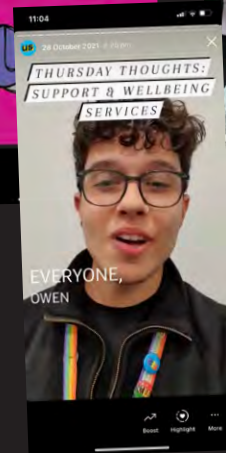
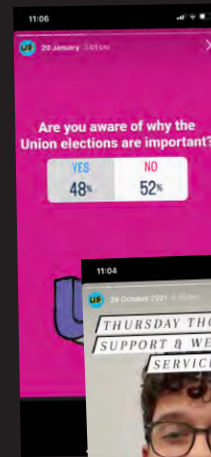
- ▶ 100% felt more employable as a result of undertaking their role
- ▶ 86% felt part of a community as a result of undertaking their role

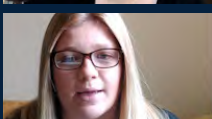
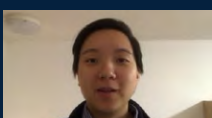
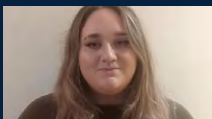
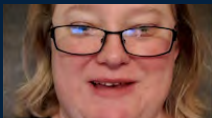
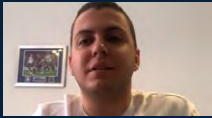
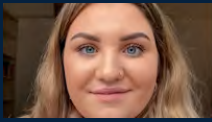
We have continued to produce our bimonthly **'Trend Reports'** to categorise 1,000+ forms of student voice feedback. These have become a key standing agenda item across the Universities deliberative structure and have come integral to providing updates on student voice through an informed, data driven approach.





Results Night is now over!  
go to [derbyunion.co.uk](http://derbyunion.co.uk)  
for the full list of winners





## Peer Assisted Learning

The Union's Peer Assisted Learning scheme has gone from strength to strength since it was launched last year. We've worked collaboratively with the University to allow this to be an 'opt-out' scheme, meaning that all first-year students are now automatically added onto our PAL Teams sites, giving us unprecedented ability to support them from day one.

A survey of PAL Learners identified the following positive results from the programme:

- ▶ 77% said that PAL improved their academic confidence
- ▶ 92% said that attending PAL sessions have aided their understanding in their subject area
- ▶ 85% rated their overall experience with the PAL scheme as good or excellent
- ▶ 69% said that PAL made them feel part of their discipline and school community
- ▶ 85% would recommend PAL to a friend

Quotes from the survey:

*"When I've needed support on a subject they made huge effort to create documents and signpost myself and my cohort"*

*"Really helped me gain more skills and achieve better in my university course"*

*"Approachable and responsive... This was greatly appreciated and I felt supported"*

*"Great way to experience advanced levels of research in an easy-to-learn manner"*

A survey of PAL Leaders identified the following positive results:

- ▶ 100% said that being a PAL leader has made them more employable
- ▶ 100% rated their experience of being a PAL Leader as good or excellent





# Life on Campus

Coming out of a global pandemic, online teaching, and addressing the changing needs of our students means life around campus has embraced a 'new normal' – and as a Union we have remained student-led on the needs and wants of our membership.

The Venues team improved and expanded our offering over the last year, with new outlets opening, and some of our spaces getting re-purposed. We now currently employ 34 student staff, assisting them in their development and allowing them to finance their time at Univerity

Notably this year; Markeaton Street got its own **Blends Coffee Shop**, with a trailer going into the building just before Christmas allowing students (and staff) at this site to enjoy barista-made hot drinks, something which has not been available previously, with the University caterers providing a lesser bean-to-cup offer.

Further to this, our biggest footprint – the Academy space – has been re-purposed and turned into **Basecamp** with a sit-in Blends outlet at its centre. The old, and tired, looking Academy bar has now been replaced with a new and fresh feeling venue which has sustainability at its heart. Waste has been reduced significantly with not having a disposable cup option, food waste is recycled, and drinks/jams/spreads etc. are all served in glass to reduce plastic waste. The build was also as carbon neutral as possible, with carpets and upholstered seating made from recycled polyester and recycled plastic bottles. Even our new outdoor furniture saved 24,000 plastic milk bottles from going to landfill!

We also took the opportunity presented from the new Blends outlets to rebrand all of our coffee outlets, so they come together under one consistent Blends brand. This helps build brand familiarity, customer retention, and improve the student experience across multiple sites. It also means the student staff can work under a modern, well-designed, brand that they can be proud to champion.



## Awards

All our venues currently hold a Five Star Environmental Health Score, and after getting 100% on our mystery shop/customer service report and also 100% on our Health and Safety/ Procedures audit we are the current holder of the NUS **Best Bar None** award; after being runner-up for several years this is something we are really proud to achieve (with the Academy closing due its metamorphosis into Basecamp we are not eligible for this moving forward so it's been good to go out on a high)



## Green Initiatives and Accessibility

The Commercial Services department successfully applied for two sets of funding from Semble/Molson Coors totalling £4,330. This meant that we could purchase equipment and infrastructure to improve the biodiversity of campus, and also purchase some sports wheelchairs to improve our accessibility into sports activities.

Our honey sales from our very own Union hives have generated over £300 to put back into the biodiversity of the campus.

We also made the decision to reinvest the profits from our 15p surcharge on Blends disposable cups into a funding pot for students to access for sustainability and green initiatives. We hope to see proposals from students beginning with the September intake.

