

Student Union Report

Governance

- The SLA that was started last year is now in its final draft and should be completed within the next term.
- The MSU constitution is still under review. Amongst other things, external trustees will be brought in to introduce greater stability and consistency to the union. We hope that this will be finished by the end of the academic year.
- We are in the process of writing a new 5 year strategic plan for the union, including a union development plan.
- Several operational meetings have now been put in place with various university departments. These meetings will again ensure and encourage greater stability and consistency and create better communication systems between the union and the UC.

Officers

- We now have eight volunteer part time executive officers working for the MSU. They are;

Welfare – James Stalker

Diversity – Lee Griffiths

Mature – Anna Norman

International – Hossain Ahmed

Entertainment – Joe Benson

Media – Lyndsey Stephenson

Sports – Dan Coghlan

We are having regular MSU team meeting with these officers and hope that we can assist all eight of our officers in achieving their aims for the year.

Media Team

- Lyndsey (our media officer) now heads up our new media team. Including photographers, interviewers, columnists and journalist we hope to improve the communications coming from MSU.
- The media team plays a large part in creating our new SU magazine The Grapevine. The second edition is being written to be available for after Christmas.

NUS

- We feel it is essential to continue and develop good working relationships with the NUS.
- We have had two team building days and training days from NUS staff for our MSU team.
- Nicky Primavesi attended the South West regional NUS day in September. On these days unions can share common problems, and seek advice from NUS staff. It is a great networking opportunity and get UCP Marjon well known within the South West.
- Nicky Primavesi and Nikki Unwin attended a Guild HE and NUS event in London which was focused on Assessment and Feedback from students, the student experience in smaller institutions and student engagement.
- Nicky P and Nikki U attended a NUS South West two day training conference in Bournemouth to discuss the past 6 months and plans for the future including NSS, student feedback, engagement, campaigns and commercial income.

Facilities Update

- Since the move of the SUB into the dining hall we have had many successful events. It was a big change moving location of the student union bar. Fresher students seem to enjoy the new location and seem untroubled by the move. There was a fair amount of disregard for the move from second and third year students however, most now seem to have accepted the move.
- Several initial problems arose regarding sharing a space with catering. These all seem to have been sorted now, however we are working with the UC to review how this will work in the future and the possibility of changing the sense of arrival plans in light of this.
- The post room on campus was close this summer and post is now delivered directly into halls of residence. This seems to be acceptable to students, although it has been suggested that in the future, more secure post boxes should be provided.
- The laundry room has moved into this space where the post room was. This has caused many problems for students and the student unions have had over 30 complaints. These include the price increase, no ventilation in the room, the drying system changing, not enough machines, no disabled access, no space, machines getting blocked and not having clear instructions. On a positive note, the new dryers are much more effective than the old ones, and have now been changed to 50p minimum not £1 and a short eco wash is being considered for the machines. Hopefully these problems will be solved as soon as possible. The estates department have been exceptionally helpful and responsive to student complaints.
- The old laundry room is being transformed into a new alcohol free social space. This room will be 24/7, have internet access, TV with digital and DVD player, coffee machine, coffee tables, bean bags and sofas.
- The area where the old MSU office, behind the temporary fitness suite/old SUB is being transformed in to a games room with table tennis table and pool table.

Catering

- Nikki Unwin had worked closely with the catering department to come to agreements about weekend food on campus. Food is now available on a Saturday and Sunday in the dining hall between 11- 4. There is also food available at the quiz on a Sunday night.
- We are also working with the UC on a catering review which will revisit the entire catering function at UCP Marjon, looking at how it can be improved etc.
- Working with catering there will be a new menu in rendezvous this term.

Feedback Week

- Feedback week took place the week of Monday 9th November, and although slightly disrupted by an unexpected trip to London was a great success. Hundreds of students gave us their feedback on what they would keep/change at Marjon and the results will be released next term.
- This week also included SAC (students Affairs Council) which is now re-named as SEC (Student Experience Council). The first SEC of the year went well, with so much debate that it had to be cut short, so sure to be lots to discuss at the next council as well! It was great to see some enthusiastic student representatives and a good staff turnout to answer all their questions. We hope that this will continue for the next meeting.

Campaigns

- In conjunction with our new campaigns officer, we have designed a campaigns timetable.

For this term our main campaign was the against an increase in tuition fees. Several of the MSU team have been having meetings with Plymouth University SU to organise a Plymouth wide event to increase awareness of the situation and hold a Plymouth Town take-over planned for the 6th and 7th of February.

- Nicky Primavesi and Nikki Unwin also joined the NUS on their campaign “come clean on fees” in London on the 11th November. We joined SU sabbatical officers

from universities all over the country to protest against any increase of fees and trying to get Politicians to “come clean” on where they stood on the issue before the results of the independent review and the next election. We then went into parliament to lobby MP’s to sign a pledge to vote against any increase in fees.

- Campaigns planned for the rest of the year include responsible drinking, sexual health, campus safety and going green in halls and around campus.

RAG

- The MSU have now taken over SAG (Social Action Group) and renamed it RAG (Raising and giving). The RAG group has raised over £1000 already this year for various charities from small charity events.
- There will be a RAG week again this year which hopefully will raise lots more money for charities both local and national.

Future Plans

- Institutional Audit
- Picnic benches & BBQ areas
- Town takeover & other campaigns
- Union development plan
- Marjon for life/ Alumni event
- Pool competition
- Another feedback week to coincide with the next SEC.