



## ACTIVITIES OFFICER (C) REPORT

<b>For the attention of:</b>	Executive Committee	<b>Taking place on:</b>	28/06/17
<b>Name:</b>	Jamie Smith	<b>Action:</b>	To note

**Summary:** *This paper provides an update on the work of the Executive Committee member*

### Priority campaign(s) and objective(s)

1. Team: Let's Be Honest
2. Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free
3. Women's Friendly Hour (Gym)
4. Up Your Grants
5. Save Our Space

### Progress on priority campaign(s)

#### Let's Be Honest –

As part of the officer teams mental health campaign I have been focusing on ensuring equal opportunities for students to be involved in activities with my Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free and Women's Only Hour campaigns. I want to ensure that students are able to gain more than their degree should they wish, whether it be sports, societies, volunteering, representation roles or anything else!

**UPDATED VIA Priority Campaign Update**

#### Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free -

I want to make Wednesday afternoons free from lectures to give **all** students the opportunity to take part in extra/co-curricular activities, catch up on their studies or to just generally practise self-care.

There is already a policy put in place for students who compete in BUCS to have Wednesday afternoons free to attend fixtures (with Active Anglia). I believe that this opportunity for free time for extra/co-curricular activities should be available for all students.

I have received a large amount of support for this policy but have decided to bring this to council to gather more feedback and support to increase my case to the university.

This campaign is linked to the mental health campaign as I believe that all students should have the opportunity to be involved in extra/co-curricular activities and practise self-care.

I have researched other unions and universities who currently have this policy such as UWE, Coventry and Sheffield Greenwich and they have seen a rise in participation

I submitted a policy to council at the beginning of this year which was passed and from this I have worked with the university to ensure we champion this campaign annually.

After reviewing the current Wednesday timetable it was shown that only 49 lectures took place after 1pm on a Wednesday with some being only for first semester and others being one off compulsory tutorials, etc.

I am now in the process of working through the remaining courses and contacting their course reps to discuss the move of their lessons to a different timetabled day.

I have also create a pledge which the VC of the university and president of the students' union will sign annually to ensure that this agenda item is a focus for the union continuously. This will be signed at our next meeting.

### 31/05/17 UPDATE

I have now had the pledge signed! This means that the university has now agreed that they will endeavour to ensure Wednesday Afternoons are free for undergraduates where possible. I'm intending to discuss with postgraduate reps how we can best support them if they feel Wednesday Afternoons Free isn't applicable to them.

### **Women's Friendly Hour (Gym) –**

As part of the Women Only Hour at the gym we are currently on week 4 of the trial with the number of attendees doubling since week 1 and a large pool of really positive feedback!

The current event takes place once a week on Tuesdays 8pm-9pm with the general feedback so far being that this isn't enough time for a full workout and/or the hours being unsociable.

If the trial continues to be successful I will then use this data to continue to develop our relationship with Active Anglia and the accessibility of their facilities.

### 31/05/17 UPDATE

Women Only Hour proved to be a success! We tripled our starting membership by week 4 with the majority of feedback showing that this type of session is desired. I'm now in the process of creating a data spreadsheet, a report and a working group to discuss how we can develop these types of sessions further.

### **Up Your Grants –**

Policy update – see resubmission

### **Save Our Space –**

Resubmission of original policy – I will continue to lobby the university to consult students on all decisions regarding new space. I am currently working on getting student feedback into the discussion about the optometry building and its effectiveness as a teaching environment.

### **Day to day life –**

This has probably been the most intense few months of my life!

I've been meeting with clubs and societies and have begun weekly training drop ins to ensure that regardless of a society start up time, they are trained as soon as possible to ensure their sustainability. As well as the usual society 1-1's, meetings, catch ups, promotions, etc. (You're all smashing it)

We've also welcomed a number of new societies that have been working very hard to gain memberships! We've launched our committee member of the month award the year which is amazing and I'm so pleased that we are continuing to develop our reward schemes for all of our volunteers! They all deserve it.

I've been going on Give It a Go's and working hard to get as many student suggestions into the mix as possible. I've also been attending conferences and away days!

I've been meeting 1-1 with the reps to discuss their manifestos among other things. I helped Dhruvi (Community and Environment Rep) run a very successful carbon monoxide awareness event where she gave away free note books, pens, leaflets and carbon monoxide detectors.

All in all it's been hectic and I've learnt a lot about the union, university, students and myself.

31/05/17 UPDATE

### **Committee Elections**

Since our last executive committee the activities team had their clubs and societies elections which moved fully online this year. It wasn't without its technical issues but I'm proud to announce that we have elected our society committees for next year which is really exciting!

### **DeStress Fest**

I recently got to help out with Thea's (Environmental and Community Rep, Chelmsford) DeStress Fest week which was a great success! Student and university staff were all very positive that the union was engaging in such a thoughtful campaign. It was ironically potentially the most stressful week of my term but it was so worth it!

My general day to day things have changed quite dramatically! I'm now in the process of setting up our first MEGA FORUM with the activities team; this will be a casual setting for committee members, new and outgoing to meet the activities team, share best practice, meet the new officers and get any details communicated quickly and questions answered rather than via emails over the summer.

I'm also starting handover process with Leigh which has been really cool and interesting. As well as starting to get to know the new team and take a look at their manifestos, etc. So I'm extremely excited to get going!

I've also been on various training courses such as Level 3 First Aid, Mental Health First Aid and Train the Trainer which have all been really beneficial already in my role as Activities Officer and in my personal life.