



IMPACT

REPORT 2025/26

REPRESENTING, SUPPORTING AND
CONNECTING STUDENTS





President
Emily Roberts



As President of Ulster University Students' Union, I am incredibly proud to reflect on what has been a truly momentous year for UUSU. This year has been defined by progress, transformation, and an unwavering commitment to ensuring that students remain at the heart of everything we do.

Across our campuses, we have continued to strengthen the visibility and impact of the Students' Union. From the introduction of bilingual signage throughout our SU spaces, to major internal developments that have modernised and strengthened our organisation, this has been a year of meaningful change. We have embraced the evolving needs of our student community while continuing to create spaces where every student feels represented, welcomed, and empowered.

Our influence has also grown far beyond our campuses. This year, we strengthened relationships with external partners, national student organisations, and fellow Students' Unions across Europe, helping to amplify the collective student voice at a time when higher education faces increasing uncertainty and challenge. Together, we have continued to advocate for a stronger, fairer future for students.

At both Ulster University and UUSU, we are in a significant season of change. Difficult decisions continue to shape the future direction of our institution and the wider higher education sector. Throughout these conversations, UUSU has remained committed to protecting and championing the student experience, from academic representation on issues such as timetabling and artificial intelligence, to ensuring students are supported and represented through complaints and disciplinary processes.

We have also continued to lead the way socially and culturally, challenging stereotypes, breaking barriers, and pushing back against traditional societal norms. Through campaigns, advocacy, and student-led initiatives, we have worked to build a more inclusive, progressive, and student-centred university community.

At a time when the sector is facing an engagement crisis, we have taken the opportunity this year to reflect, research, and plan for the future. As students change, so must we. This year has been about laying the foundations for a stronger and more innovative Students' Union that can continue to meet the needs of future generations of students.

All of this work, a year of milestone achievements, transformational advocacy, and impactful representation culminated in one of our proudest moments yet: being recognised as the Best Large Students' Union on the island of Ireland. This achievement reflects the passion, dedication, and hard work of our students, staff, officers, and wider community.

I am immensely proud of the direction UUSU has taken this year, and I am excited to see the Union continue to grow, evolve, and lead in the years ahead.

To discover more about this year's journey and the impact we have made together, keep reading.

We're here to **Represent** **Support** and **Connect** you while you are studying at UU. This year we have been working tirelessly for positive change for all our students and creating spaces for students to engage and get involved.



Emily Roberts
President



Favour Okpohs
VP Belfast



Chris Murray
VP Coleraine



Lee Doran
VP Magee



Rebekah Robinson
VP Education



Catherine Mailey
VP Equality & Belonging



Caoimhín Heaney
VP Sport & Wellbeing

Let's give you a snapshot of what your Students' Union has been doing for students this year.





CEO Foreword
David Longstaff



UUSU is a Students' Union for our student members and the work we have undertaken over the past twelve months reflects this. We are blessed to have such a diverse body of members which allows us to represent, support and connect in so many different ways. It is this collection of views, opinions and perspectives that make us so relevant at a time where students need a voice more than ever.



This Impact Report aims to provide a snapshot of where we feel we have added value to the student experience. This might be through how we have represented students to the University or external agencies through our elected officials. It ensures that the student voice continues to be amplified, heard and in many cases acted upon. The mantra of stronger together has never been more accurate and important. We also continue to have in place ways in which our members can interact with one another, with more events, societies and opportunities to come together than ever. Support for students remains a core need and something that, be it through advice, campaigns or lobbying, we continue to have at the heart of everything we do.



At its heart UUSU is member led and relies on our membership to make up much of the leadership of UUSU. This might be through the academic representatives we have in place, our Student Council that shapes policy and holds Officers to account or specifically as a Student Officer which allows a leadership voice in the direction and development of UUSU. Filling these positions with students from our membership is where our impact and outputs can most clearly be seen. This year has seen great success and through our Officer Team UUSU were named as the AMLÉ Large Students' Union of the Year, as a reflection of the excellent work undertaken throughout 2025-26.



As we go into 2026-27, we remain committed to shaping our priorities to be where students need us, when they need us there. We are looking forward to working on current and fresh priorities over the forthcoming year, with incoming and returning student representatives, to continue to improve the experience of our membership. We will continue to offer more opportunities to work with us and would urge anyone interested in the work that we do to get involved. We look forward keenly to being able to continue to support our membership throughout the next 12 months.





AIB Student Impact Awards - AMLÉ 2026



Brought to you by **AMLÉ**
Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn

We are over the moon to have been recognised in the The AIB Student Impact Awards, organised by AMLÉ, Ireland's national student movement body.

These awards are the annual opportunity for the student movement in Ireland to recognise the outstanding work of students and celebrate their contributions to the experience of their fellow students, and to wider society.

Awards Won

- Large Students' Union of The Year**
- Gaeilge Project of The Year**
- Student Social Change Award**



Emily Roberts (UUSU President) and Caoimhin Heaney (VP Sports & Wellbeing) are presented with Gaeilge Project of The Year Award



Emily Roberts (UUSU President) and Favour Okpohs (VP Belfast) are presented with the Student Social Change Award



No1. Students' Union in Ireland!

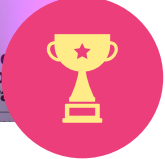
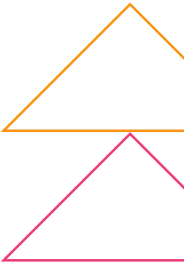
After years of striving we are officially the SU of the Year. The award represents a year of real transformation by tearing up old foundations. building trust, strengthening governance and creating a Union that truly listens, delivers and puts students first.

From stronger relationships across our campuses to a renewed sense of energy, visibility & action, this is more than a title, it's proof that change is possible when students are at the heart of everything we do.

Cheers to being the Large Students' Union of the Year!



UUSU Officers are presented with the Large Students' Union of the Year!





**Favour Okpohs -
Rising Star Award 2026**

As VP Belfast, Favour has been deeply committed to representing, supporting, connecting and empowering students through their entire university journey from arrival to graduation.

Favour works on raising awareness of the Students' Union, encouraging student involvement and engagement by inducting them as they arrive, while helping them build strong networks through societies.



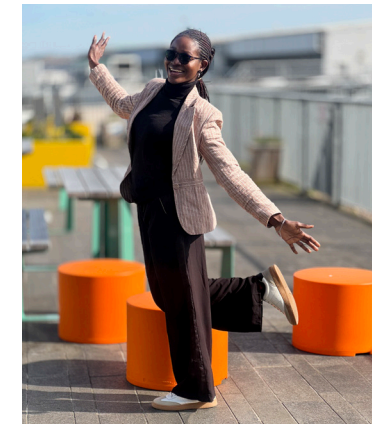
She actively promotes sustainability across campus by championing reusable items over disposables and leading initiatives such as the Belfast Wellbeing Garden.

Favour has successfully lobbied for additional food options on campus menus, student discounts and the introduction of the student pantry in collaboration with the University in Semester one to support those affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

Favour also supported Project Pink to promote the safety of women and girls, and actively promotes unity against racism.

Through advocacy, collaboration and leadership, she is consistently working to improve student wellbeing, inclusion and the overall student experience.

Favour is widely recognised for making students feel welcome, included and supported. She has established strong working relationships with students and staff and is always keen to get involved and support university initiatives.





Student Voice in Action

Representing and lobbying on your behalf across the most important and influential University committees and working groups responsible for delivering a quality student experience, such as:-

Academic standards

Student support & well-being

University governance

Campus experience

Learning & teaching

Equality & belonging

In October we held our course reps and student council elections. The election of the student council is particularly important time of the year for UUSU because of the central role of Student Council in reflecting the views of our membership through the creation of UUSU policies.

19,343
VOTES CAST!

This year we've had a fantastic level of academic representation with over 800 students taking up the course, school, and faculty rep roles. These students have dedicated over 24,000 hours to their roles, which is fantastic.

In March we held our leadership elections for the 2026-7 academic year. We had the highest ever turnout for our online elections. 19,343 votes cast! Your full-time student officers, faculty and school reps were also elected by you for the forthcoming academic year.

More students had their say in 2026

4,208
Individual voters

19,343
Votes cast

17%
Overall turnout

Democratic engagement increased year-on-year

+10%
Individual voters compared with 2025

+15%
Votes cast compared with 2025

21 Officer Candidates
Overall turnout

+61.5%
Increase in Officer candidates

Student representation across Ulster University

800+
Course, School and Faculty Representatives

24,000
Hours contributed to academic representation

From elections to academic representation, students played an active role in shaping UUSU priorities and raising the issues that matter across learning, teaching, support, wellbeing and campus experience.

Elected Student Executive Team 26/27



Lee Doran
President



Callum Crumney
VP Belfast



Benjamin Smyth
VP Coleraine



Catherine Mailey
VP Equity & Inclusion



Caoimhin Heaney
VP Sport



Rebekah Robinson
VP Education



Shauna Whyte
VP Magee



Meet Your 2026-27 Representatives

Alongside the Officer Team, students elected a new cohort of Faculty, School and Sport Representatives to strengthen student voice across academic life, sport, wellbeing and the wider student experience.

Faculty Representatives

Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences:

Darcee O'Neill

Faculty of Computing, Engineering & Built Environment:

Amy Cairns

Faculty of Life & Health Sciences:

Natalia Lara-Nesbitt

Ulster University Business School:

Leo Foster



School Representatives

School of Architecture & Built Environment:

Ria Adeyinka

Department of Global Business & Enterprise:

Caitlin Lowry

School of Engineering:

Eoghan Grehan

Department of Management, Leadership & Marketing:

Chiedoziem Onuka

School of Applied Social & Policy Sciences (Belfast):

Karis Nicole Donnelly

School of Communication & Media (Belfast):

Dillon McDonagh

School of Computing:

Alex Graham

School of Law (Belfast):

Jeb-Jeb

School of Law (Magee):

Charles Kerr

School of Medicine (Magee):

Chelsea Ryan

School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences:

Cara Graham

School of Psychology:

Jasmine Rollo

This year's elections also saw the election of the first cohort of Sport Representatives, strengthening the voice of students involved in sport and physical activity across the University.

Sport Representatives

Sport Representative Belfast:

Oisín McCann & Rufi Shaikh

Sport Representative Coleraine:

Lewis Clarke

These representatives will play a key role in raising student issues, shaping priorities and improving the student experience across Ulster University.



Student Voice Creating Change

Student Council

How many policies lapsed this year?

 **16**

How many new policies were passed?

 **7**



What key issues were discussed?



- Approval of Trustees.
- The retention and lapsing of policy.
- New policies covered issues including Magee campus naming and Ending Violence Against Women and Girls.
- Changes to our governance procedures, including updates to our Bye-Laws and articles of association.

Which policies or stances were approved?



- Accommodation
- Cost of Living
- Don't be a DICK
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls
- Irish Language
- Magee Campus Naming
- Mental Health and Wellbeing

What governance reforms were agreed or progressed?



We agreed changes to our Democratic Procedures, Articles of Association (the largest review of such since its creation) as well as changes to Bye-Law Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven and Eight. This involved the creation of whole new Bye-Laws on Sport and Networks as well as substantial changes in other areas. We have recently progressed the implementation of Stances, a new democratic mandate with additional changes to our articles and other Bye-Laws required.

How Student Council held Officers to account?



Student Officers were held to account through verbal and written questions and the approval by Council of written reports as well as further engagement outside of the Council chamber.

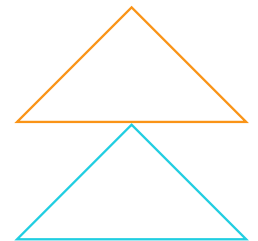


Student Representation & National Engagement

In April, UUSU Student Officers attended Comhdháil, the national student congress, which brings together over 200 student representatives from across the island of Ireland.

The event serves as a key platform for collaboration, enabling students to discuss, debate, and shape policy on the issues that matter most to the student community.

As part of the congress, the AMLÉ elections were held, where UUSU officers actively participated in the democratic process by casting votes to elect the incoming AMLÉ officer team. This engagement underscores UUSU's continued commitment to representing student interests at a national level and contributing to the broader student movement.





Bilingual Signage

This year, UUSU delivered new bilingual signage in English and Irish across our Students' Union spaces, marking the culmination of an eight-year student-led campaign for greater visibility and recognition of the Irish language.



8 Years

of student campaigning



94%

of surveyed students supported bilingual signage



3 Campuses

with new bilingual signage across Belfast, Magee and Coleraine

An eight-year student campaign became visible change on campus

The signage reflects sustained student advocacy and UUSU's commitment to inclusion, equality, culture and language rights.

"Seeing bilingual signage become a reality across our spaces is a landmark moment for our Students' Union, our university and the wider direction of Northern Ireland."

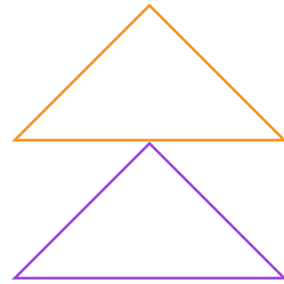




Students told us what needs to change.

Through the Empower Your Education survey, students shared clear feedback on the issues affecting their learning experience, wellbeing and ability to balance study with life outside university.

These findings are helping UUSU advocate for clearer guidance, more student-centred systems and a learning experience that better reflects students' real lives.



The strongest themes were:

AI Use and Academic Confidence

- Students asked for clearer, more consistent guidance on the use of AI in assignments, including concerns around AI detection, false accusations and academic misconduct processes.

Timetabling and Flexibility

- Students highlighted the impact of long gaps, early starts, late finishes and irregular schedules, particularly for commuters, students in paid work and those with caring responsibilities.

90%+

- Of students said early access to timetables was important or extremely important.

SEAtS and Attendance Monitoring

- Only 25% of students felt SEAtS was accurate, with students reporting check-in issues, incorrect absences and stress linked to how attendance is monitored.

Reasonable Adjustments

- Students said reasonable adjustments were essential but not always applied consistently across courses.

Cost of Living and Commuting

- Students told us that rising rent, food and travel costs continue to affect their ability to participate fully in university life.

Mental Health and Academic Support

- Students raised concerns around access to timely support, clustered deadlines, slow feedback and the pressure of managing multiple systems and platforms.





Campaigns, Support and Solidarity

Supporting Palestinian students affected by the Gaza crisis



In Semester 1, UUSU worked alongside Students' Unions across the UK to call for urgent government action for Palestinian students who had secured places at UK universities but were unable to travel due to the closure of the Visa Application Centre in Gaza.

Three students with offers to study at Ulster University were directly affected. UUSU lobbied local MPs and MLAs to raise the issue with the Home Office and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, calling for safe passage so students could take up their places.

Once the students arrived, UUSU worked with Ulster University to support them as they settled into life on campus.

SHAG Week



Led by Catherine Mailey, VP Equality & Belonging, SHAG Week gave students access to non-judgemental information about sexual health, healthy relationships, consent and support services.

SHAG Week also created space for open, engaging conversations about sex, relationships and consent in student-friendly settings. Events such as Tinder Live and Sex Toy Bingo helped make important topics feel more accessible, while keeping consent, safety and wellbeing at the centre of the conversation.

The programme included sexual health fayres, PositiviTEA Brew Days, Blind Date with a Book, and student-facing events designed to make important conversations more accessible.



Black History Month



UUSU marked Black History Month with a programme of free student events designed to celebrate Black culture, creativity and representation.

Activities included quizzes, a student-voted film screening, an Afro-Caribbean Pizza & Paint session, and a roundtable on BAME+ representation in academic studies.



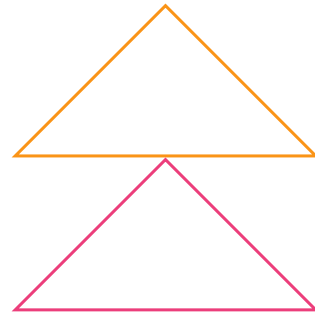


Culture, Language
and Sustainability

Championing the Irish Language

UUSU continued to promote Irish language engagement across the student body, building on three consecutive years of recognition at the AMLÉ Student Impact Awards for Irish language campaigning.

Through Seachtain na Gaeilge, students were invited to celebrate Irish language, heritage and culture in a welcoming and accessible way.



This year's activity included:

Pop-up Gaeltacht Brew Days

Informal opportunities for students to use and experience Gaeilge

Seachtain na Gaeilge Fairs

Campus-based events increasing visibility and cultural engagement

Inclusive Language Activity

Supporting fluent speakers, learners, students with a cúpla focal and complete beginners

Sustainability in Action

UUSU continued to work with Ulster University on sustainability programmes delivered through SOS-UK, including Responsible Futures and Green Impact.

Responsible Futures accreditation awarded

January 2025

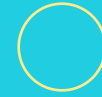
Green Impact audit completed

May 2026

Next Responsible Futures submission

October / November 2026

These programmes help embed sustainability, partnership and student voice into the University experience.



Responsible Futures recognises partnership work between the University and Students' Union to embed sustainability into learning and teaching.

Green Impact supports staff and students to take practical action on sustainability through a structured workbook and audit process.



UUSU in conjunction with the University has been promoting Net Zero Challenge

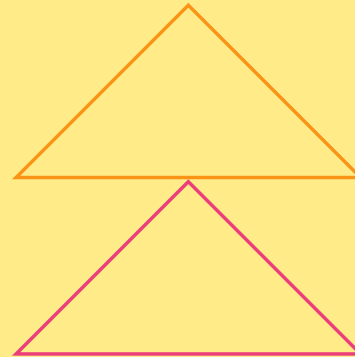


What Students Told Us



1,476

Students shared their views



UUSU's end-of-year survey gave students the opportunity to tell us how they engage with the Union, what gets in the way, and what they want UUSU to prioritise next.

The findings will help shape future activity, communications and support.



Key Findings

Students value UUSU support

Among students who accessed UUSU support, satisfaction was high across undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research respondents.

Belonging is affected by practical barriers

Students who did not feel a sense of belonging with UUSU most commonly pointed to commuting, limited time on campus, lack of awareness, timetable pressures, paid work, cost and caring responsibilities.

Students want more accessible opportunities to connect

Students asked for better communication, more social events, daytime and commuter-friendly activity, online opportunities and greater visibility on campus.

Engagement is moderate to low across campuses

Most students described themselves as either fairly engaged or not very engaged with UUSU. Online, distance and other-location students reported the lowest levels of engagement.

Academic representation needs clearer communication

Full-time students were more likely to understand academic representation, while part-time students showed lower awareness and understanding.

Student email remains the preferred communication channel

Both students who were aware and unaware of their UUSU membership preferred to be contacted by student email, followed by Instagram, on-campus screens and posters.

How we'll use this insight

The survey will help UUSU improve how we communicate, plan activity, reach less-engaged students and create more accessible opportunities for students to get involved.



Learning & Teaching Awards

Congratulations to those recognised at the recent UUSU Learning & Teaching Awards! It was a fantastic evening at the Hilton Hotel Belfast celebrating our outstanding staff and academic reps supporting the student journey at UU.

380
student nominations received

Student-led
nominations, shortlisting and judging

11
award categories celebrating teaching, support and representation

A special thanks to Rebekah Robinson (VP Education & President Elect) and Caitlin Rose Lowry (UUSU Student Councillor) who hosted the evening. What makes these awards stand out is they are completely student-led, organised, and managed through UUSU. Nominations come from students, with staff only eligible to submit in the Academic Rep category.

We received 380 nominations this year showing the impact of hundreds of individual staff members, teams and reps. The judging and shortlisting panel was made up of student reps from across Faculties and the Doctoral College. Thanks to all the students and staff who made nominations and to our student shortlisting panel.



PRESENTERS OF LTAS 2026
L-R Caitlin Rose Lowry (UUSU Student Councillor), Emily Roberts (UUSU President) and Rebekah Robinson (VP Education & President)



EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR (AHSS)
Dr Gail Neill - School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences
Dr Denise MacDermott - School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences



EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR (CEBE)
Simon Fraser - School of Computing



EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR (JUBS)
Dr Marc Duffy - Business Engagement Unit



PHD SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR
Professor Sandra Moffett - School of Global Business & Enterprise



STAFF TEAM OF THE YEAR
School of Engineering Office Team - (School of Engineering)



HIDDEN HERO AWARD
Nuala McCaffrey - Belfast School of Art

2026 Award Winners



STUDENT CHOICE AWARDS
Dr Jordan Bertuccelli (right) - School of Arts and Humanities



ACADEMIC REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR
Falana Oluwakaryinsola - School of Nursing and Paramedic Science



IGNITING STUDENT AMBITION
Dr Muhammad Usman Hadi - School of Engineering





**Student Voice in
the Future of Magee**

**Representing current
students through
campus expansion.**

UUSU President Emily Roberts and VP Magee Lee Doran represented students through the Magee Taskforce this year, ensuring the views and experiences of current Magee students were part of conversations about the campus's future.

The Taskforce report identified progress, challenges and next steps around issues including accommodation, transport and the wider student experience.



700
Magee students surveyed by
VP Magee Lee Doran

Student priorities raised
including commuting, housing, campus
life and support for expansion

Current student experience protected
through UUSU representation on the
Magee Taskforce

Lee also hosted an event bringing first-year Business School students together with senior leaders and Taskforce members, giving students the opportunity to ask questions directly and contribute to discussions about Magee's future.

UUSU will continue to seek assurance that current Magee students are supported and that their experience is not overlooked as the campus grows.





Supporting Students When It Matters



Building Belonging and Supporting Wellbeing

We know that isolation and loneliness can have a major impact on student mental health. Through UBelong, wellbeing activity and student-led campaigns, UUSU created opportunities for students to connect, take a break and access support.

UBelong

UBelong events help students build community, meet others and feel part of university life through societies, sports teams, Freshers, Refreshers and campus activity.



Mental Health Campaign

As part of our Stress Less activity, UUSU ran Brew Monday sessions across campuses, offering students free tea, coffee and hot chocolate outside the library during busy study periods.

UUSU also supported student-led wellbeing activity through campaign bursaries awarded to:

- **LGBT+**
- **Juggling Society**
- **Womens' Empowerment Network**
- **Mind the Gap Mental Health Project**

These bursaries helped student groups deliver activity focused on improving or supporting student mental health and wellbeing.



Recognition for Wellbeing and Leadership

UUSU President Emily Roberts, VP Belfast Favour Okpohs and Mandy Mulholland, Head of Student Representation, were recognised at the Ulster Excellence Awards for their contribution to wellbeing, belonging and student leadership.





Advice Bureau

Specialist advice when students need it most

UUSU's Advice Bureau provides free, independent and confidential advice to students across all Ulster University campuses.



Between 1 May 2025 and 30 April 2026, the team supported:

591 student cases

212 general advice queries

The main issues students brought to the Advice Bureau included:

- academic appeals and course matters;
- housing and tenancy issues;
- cost of living;
- student finance and fees;
- international student issues;
- university complaints;
- disciplinaries, plagiarism and academic integrity cases.

Practical impact for students

Through UUSU Advice intervention, a University Early Exam Board was secured in December 2024, saving 28 Ulster University Business School students a visa extension and NHS healthcare surcharge of approximately £700-£800 per person.

Building stronger support routes

This year, the Advice Bureau also strengthened working relationships with key University teams and external partners, including Fees, International and Global Affairs, Student Academic Affairs, Student Administration, the Doctoral College, the School of Medicine, Advice NI and relevant University policy review groups.

Student Feedback

"I would like to thank you so unbelievably much for all of your help, advice and support throughout the whole situation! I have really appreciated it!"

"I want to say how much I appreciated your help this semester, because at the start of the year I was uncertain if my finances were going to allow me to continue with my fine art course. I submitted the final essay for year two yesterday and just want to say a BIG thanks for your advice and guidance."

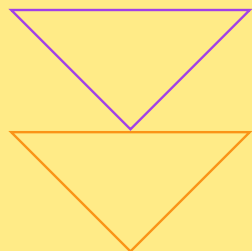
"Want to let you know that I've been granted a resit by the AROW Board. Thank you so much for your support throughout this process I really appreciate it."





**Student Networks
Driving Change**

Our networks empower students to lobby for meaningful change, represent and uphold equality and advocate for student issues.



DEN



Active in
Belfast



68
Members total



Belfast DEN Network hosted its first Disability Fayre, bringing together students, university services, and staff networks to celebrate disability empowerment, share valuable resources, and showcase the strength of collective action across the university community.

WEN



Active in
**Coleraine, Magee
and Belfast**



79
Members total



**Disability
Empowerment
Network**



**UUSU
DISABILITY
EMPOWERMENT
NETWORK**

The Disability Empowerment Network (DEN) is a vibrant, student-led community for Ulster University students with disabilities who are passionate about advocating for change and challenging disability inequality.

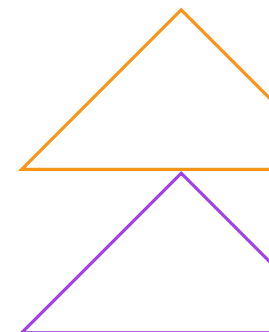


**Women
Empowerment
Network**



**Women
Empowerment
Network**

The Women's Empowerment Network (WEN) is a community for our students who have a passion for gender equality, addressing misogyny and lobbying for issues raised by the membership.





The Pledge to End Violence Against Women and Girls

UUSU along with Ulster University has confirmed its commitment to creating a safer, more inclusive society by officially taking The Pledge to End Violence Against Women and Girls as part of its ongoing partnership with Nexus, Northern Ireland's leading charity supporting people impacted by sexual abuse and abusive relationships.

The pledge offers a specialist training and development programme to help organisations create safer environments to prevent violence against women and girls. This marks a significant milestone in Ulster University's leadership on gender equality and its dedication to tackling domestic abuse, sexual violence, and harassment across Northern Ireland.



Reclaim the Night

In November as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, student officers along with students attended the 'Reclaim the Night' event at Writers Square, with UUSU President, Emily Roberts speaking at the event.



Cara Hunter MLA & UUSU event



We ran an inspiring event with Cara Hunter, MLA at Ulster University Students' Union in Coleraine, discussing Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls, the role of AI and its damaging affects, and the urgent need for better childcare facilities at university. The event was chaired

Brilliantly chaired by Emily Roberts, UUSU President and Lee Doran VP Magee. We are proud to see student voices leading such important conversations.

This year UUSU has sat on a Department of Justice working group to implement recommendations for the Gillen Review, taking the student voice to Stormont.

The Gillen Review seeks to improve outcomes for survivors of sexual violence, and put in place interventions to prevent this violence.



Connection, Community and Giving Back

Volunteering Fair

Ulster University's Coleraine campus hosted this year's Volunteering Fair on 16 October 2025, which was attended by over 35 charity and community organisations.

The Volunteering Fair held in Coleraine in October was a collaboration between the Employability and Graduate Futures team and UUSU offering volunteering opportunities to students who are keen to make a difference while gaining valuable real-world experience.



Wellbeing Garden

This year, we launched students' Wellbeing Garden Committees and opened the Belfast Wellbeing Garden, meaning every Ulster campus now has its own dedicated wellbeing space.

These gardens were created to offer students a calm, restorative environment and to promote relaxation, connection, and mental wellness. The UUSU Wellbeing Gardens welcomed students of all skill sets and backgrounds – not just growers. By volunteering, students not only supported



biodiversity on campus and helped grow fresh produce, but also benefited from improved physical wellbeing, reduced stress, and the social connection that comes from spending time outdoors with others.

UUSU Charity of the Year - Cash for Kids



Cash for Kids is dedicated to giving disadvantaged children and young people across the UK the chance to thrive.

They provide year-round grant funding and make Christmas magical with gifts for children who might otherwise go without.

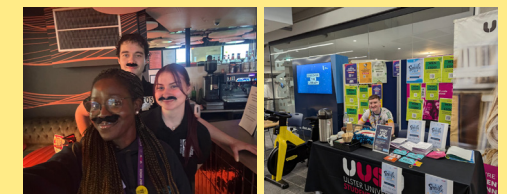
Over the years UUSU staff and students have proudly supported Cash for Kids Mission Christmas appeal.

We were delighted to commit all our fundraising efforts throughout 2026 to this important cause. We delivered fun activities to help raise money for the charity as well as raising awareness for the work Cash for Kids does in communities across the UK.



November

Caoimhín Heaney, VP Sport and Wellbeing organised and ran a number of awareness and fundraising events in Semester 1 for November.



Buddy Scheme

It can take some time for students to build friendships & settle in. Our Buddy Scheme runs to ensure that there is a friendly face ready and waiting to help students settle into Semester 1 of student life.





Connecting with Students Online

Social media continues to be one of UUSU's most effective ways to reach, inform and engage students across campuses.

This year, our content reached more students, generated stronger interaction and helped students connect with key moments in Union life - from elections and campaigns to campus events and student representation.

What formats worked best

The strongest-performing content tended to be:

People-led posts

Students engaged with posts that featured Officers, students, public figures or recognisable campus faces.

Timely updates

Election results, campaign moments and high-profile visits performed well because they were relevant and time-sensitive.



4.75M Views

212.4K Reach

59.4K Interactions

8,850 Instagram Followers

+1,421 Instagram Follower Growth

Campaign-led content

Posts linked to safety, equality, belonging and social change generated strong interest, showing students respond to content with a clear purpose.

Visual-first content

Image-led and short-form content helped make key updates easier to understand and share.

Short-form video / Reels

Video content helped increase reach by making UUSU activity more visible, immediate and engaging.

What students engaged with most



1. Student democracy and leadership

Top Post: New Elected Officers
46.4k views

This post performed strongly because it gave students a clear, timely update on who had been elected to represent them. It shows that students engage with content that is relevant, people-focused and linked to democratic moments that affect their university experience.



2. Campaigns and social issues

Top Post: TVAWAG with Cara Hunter
23.4k views

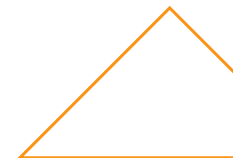
This post shows strong engagement with content connected to safety, equality and wider social issues. Students responded to content that positioned UUSU as active, values-led and involved in conversations that matter beyond campus.



3. High-profile university moments

Top Post: President of Ireland comes to UU
16.5k views

This post performed well because it connected students to a high-profile moment for the University and created a sense of shared campus pride, visibility and occasion.





Building Student Communities

Through our clubs and societies students can make friends and connect with their fellow students.

122 active societies.

522 registered committee members

5066 members signed up

275 payments processed since September

Events - 39 weekly events ran across all 3 campuses from different societies & have had 193 one off events planned and ran to date across the 3 campuses.

Activities and Societies

Throughout the academic year the Student Activities team hosted a variety of events for students to enjoy in addition to supporting societies. Societies have gone from strength to strength, leading on key events throughout the year including Freshers, Halloween, and Christmas.

Campaign Events

We've co-hosted campaign events and ensured that our student spaces are safe and inclusive areas where you can kick back, learn new skills, embrace new interests, celebrate faith and share in cultural celebrations.

Being a part of a society really helped me expand my social circle. I got to mix with people on my course outside of class time and chatting to people with similar ideas really helps to flesh out what I'm looking to do with my career.



Cumann Gaelach



Marketing Society

Women in Stem



Musical in Theatre

I joined the juggling club which is really cool! It's a really nice group of students to belong to.



Irish Dancing



Juggling Society



Medsoc



Biosoc

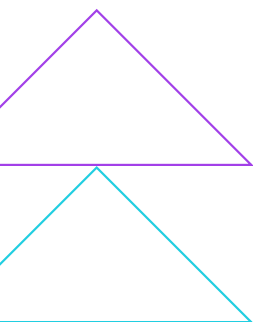


 Student-Led Events
with Real Impact

Teddy Bear Hospital

The Child Health society partnered up with the Altnagelvin parents group and Western Health and Social trust for their annual Teddy Bear Hospital.

The day was a massive success with children arriving with their 'sick' teddy bears to help them get better at the hospital. The students are passionate about paediatrics and wanted to help alleviate the fears of children who spend time a lot of time in hospital.



CASS Musical Show

Coleraine Arts and Stage Society's annual celebration of music theatre and community spirit took place in Coleraine Town Hall.

This year's variety show was an enchanting evening filled with captivating musical numbers and beloved popular songs showcasing a blend of timeless classics and modern musical hits.



**'Come Alive'
Musical Theatre
Society Show**

Audiences in the Playhouse enjoyed a vibrant mix of pieces all performed by talented local students from Magee dedicated to bringing the magic of the stage to life.





Celebrating Student Leadership



We recently held our SU Awards for 2026 to acknowledge and celebrate the fantastic efforts our students have put in the past year - running societies, organising events, supporting their peers and giving so much of their time to creating our student community.



Society Member of the Year -
Winner Chevron Malone, LGBTQIA (Belfast)

SU Awards '26



Most Impressive Online Presence -
Film Society (Belfast)



Most Improved Society -
Musical Theatre Society (Magee)



New Society of the Year -
Alternative Society (Magee)



Course Based Society of the Year -
History Society (Coleraine)



Student Voice Legend -
Katie Hagan (Belfast)



Best Society Activity or Event -
Child Health Society, Teddy Bear Hospital (Magee)



Outstanding Society -
Cumann Gaelach (Magee)



Society Rep of the Year -
Aoife Kerr (Belfast)



Creating Spaces to Belong

We run Freshers, Halloween, Christmas, Refreshers and Campaign events. We ensure our SU spaces across our campuses are safe and inclusive, promoting a culture of respect and support.

We want our students to know students' voices are heard and they know the SU is here for them.

5,000 UUSU Lanyards
given out at Freshers fayres

5,000 UUSU Tote Bags
given out at Freshers fayres

2,500 Competition Entry Cards
given out at Freshers fayres

1,500 Reusable Cups
given out at Freshers fayres



Brew Monday

Our regular Brew Mondays have been run by our student officers across our three campuses.

These social events allow students to grab a free hot drink whilst chatting to their student reps.

Our student officers are keeping in touch with our members in an informal social way, finding out what is happening to students on the ground on a weekly basis.





Celebrating Sporting Achievement

Congratulations to the students and clubs for their achievements and success this year.



2025-26 Champions



Lottie Cullen	Swimming	British Universities 50m and 100m Backstroke Golds
Shay Delaney	Judo	Irish Varsity Men's U90kg Gold
Niamh Rouse	Judo	Irish Varsity Women U78kg Gold
Quinn Armstrong	Judo	NI Open Men's Junior U90kg Gold
Shane Gallagher	Judo	NI Judo Open Men's Junior U73kg Gold
Eoin McTaggart	Judo	Irish Varsity Mens U73kg Novices Gold
Madison Rodgers	Judo	Irish Varsity Womens U63kg Novices Gold
Cormac Kernaghan	Judo	Irish Varsity Mens U7kg Middle Kyu Gold
Josh Muckian	Boxing	Irish Varsity Men's Elite 80kg Gold
Zach Nicholl	Boxing	Irish Varsity Mens Intermediate 71kg Gold
Conall Irvine	Boxing	Irish Varsity Mens Novice 63kg Gold
Billy Carroll	Boxing	Irish Varsity Mens Intermediate 63.5kg Gold
Jon McConnell	Boxing	Irish Senior Elite Mens 70kg Champion & Tammer International Tournament Winner
Nick Griggs	Athletics	European U23 Mens Cross country Champion and Armagh International 5km Road Race Winner
Jamie Paul	Athletics	Irish Indoor and Outdoor Varsity Pole Vault Gold

Chloe Wilson	Lawn Bowls	World Indoor Mixed Pairs Champions
Lara Reaney	Lawn Bowls	World Indoor Junior Womens Singles Champion
Kathryn Morton	Archery	Irish Varsity Indoor Womens Elite Barebow Gold
Elena Wallace	Cycling	Irish Varsity Senior Womens Road Race Gold
Niamh McElwain	GAA Handball	Irish Varsity Womens B 40x20 Gold
HannahRose Grady	Karate	Northern Ireland International Open Womens Senior Kata Gold and North East England Open Senior Kata Gold
Coleraine Camogie		Colleges Div5 league Winners and Aisling Murphy Cup Champions
Coleraine Ladies Gaelic Football		Colleges Div 6 League Winners
Coleraine American Football		Glass Bowl Champions
Magee Mens Gaelic		Colleges Div 3 League Winners
Magee Mens Football		IUFU Mens Duggan Cup Champions
Magee Coleraine Hurling		Colleges Div 3 League Winners & Fergal Maher Cup Champions
Coleraine Dance		Ulster Fusion Championship Winners
Belfast Cheerleading		Stunt City Champions
Belfast Mens Gaelic Football		Colleges Freshers A Div 1 League Winners
Coleraine Magee Mens Rugby		Ulster Provincial Northern Phase 1 and 2 League Champions
Belfast Mens Basketball		NBCC Div 2 league winners and NBCC Irish Div 2 Varsity Champions

