

rgu:union

IMPACTREPORT

2018/19

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OUR TEAM 2018/19

Michael Ife
President (Communication & Democracy)

Adam Johnston
President (Education & Welfare)

Gavin Rittoo
President (Sport & Physical Activity)

Emmanuel Akerele
Vice President (Community)

Osama Irfan
Vice President (Entertainment & Events)

Otto Jutila
Vice President (Environment & Ethics)

Dugabtey Teye
Vice President (International)

Martha Gilmore
Vice President (Societies)

Kieran Matthews
Vice President (Sport)

Ivan Okoli-Ojike
Vice President (Student Affairs)

Sam Thiesen
Vice President (Wellbeing & Equal Opps)

Kai Rough
RAG Chair

Michele Collie
General Manager

Stephen Fiddes
Advice & Administration Co-ordinator

Euan Walker
Student Development & Volunteering Co-ordinator

Jo Taylor
Union Administrator

Graeme Clark
Finance Co-ordinator

Debbie Booth
PA / Admin

Gregor Mailer
Design & Marketing Manager

Polina Lukiyanova
Design & Marketing Assistant

Charley Jamieson
Meida Placement

Norma Polson
Deeview Student Store Supervisor

Lynne Fraser
Deeview Student Store Supervisor

WELCOME

Welcome to the RGU Students' Union Impact Report for 2018/19. It is our pleasure to present this document on behalf of the entire team at the Union, as we continue work to achieve our strategic aims and enhance the student experience for our members at Robert Gordon University

This has been a challenging year for the organisation as we worked to deliver a balanced budget against a backdrop of instability in the local economy and financial uncertainty in the sector which, alongside the loss of vital Government funding, provided us with a number of significant obstacles to overcome. However, in spite of this, we have continued to see encouraging growth and development across a number of our key strategic themes, and have enabled investment where possible towards our extra-curricular student opportunities as well as our welfare initiatives.

Following on from our January 2018 referendum, this year's Student Elections were the first to feature the Union's new look Executive Committee structure, which aims to better support our volunteer Student Vice Presidents by simplifying the reporting structure and closely aligning them with a relevant Student President. However, prior to the implementation of this amendment, we were delighted to complete the final year under our former structure with a fully occupied Executive Committee. This was made especially pleasing as we also achieved a record-breaking turnout of 826 voters during our November 2018 Student By-election, which for the first time included a number of Academic Council Representative positions. These newly introduced roles act on behalf of a specific cross-section of the student community (Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Research, and Union Sabbatical) and provide additional representation on one of the University's highest committees, further strengthening the student voice across all levels.

As we move towards the conclusion of our current Strategic Plan, the coming months will focus on working with our team to lay the foundations for the development of a new plan, which will set the organisation's direction for the next three to five years. In line

with this, we began a series of student feedback projects, with the first focusing on the topic of social space. We were pleased to receive over one thousand responses from student members as well as staff from across the RGU community, which has provided us with a constructive and clear picture of current opinions alongside desires and suggestions regarding a future home for the Students' Union. We are enthusiastic about the ongoing development of the charity and continue to invest in our current spaces on the University campus. Most recently this saw a redecoration project undertaken in our meeting space on Union Way and in our Student Hub in the Sir Ian Wood Building. This has allowed us to introduce signage which outlines the history of our organisation, highlights former Student President and Vice Presidents and their headline achievements, and most importantly provides a student-friendly setting for meetings, group work and team collaboration.

We continued to focus on welfare initiatives throughout the year and are proud to have introduced an in-house mental health first aider, which will allow us to deliver vital training sessions on a regular basis to our staff and student team, and also to society members, sports clubs and student groups. This compliments the introduction of our new student-led Peer Support Group, which provides our members with a safe platform to normalise the conversation around mental health with their fellow students. The group's committee, alongside members of the Union management, have received training in the Oxford model regarding peer support, which will enable them to provide a strong and trustworthy service to users of the group.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the development of the Peer Support Group, which we hope will compliment our existing Nightline out-of-hours service, and also our own Advice & Support Department, allowing us to offer a wide range of student listening and welfare services across the University. On the representation side, we aim to focus on the strengthening of the Class Rep structure across the campus and are hopeful that the introduction of a new Vice President (Education) role on our Executive Committee will assist with this. At board level, we have recently welcomed a new External Trustee, David Strachan, who as a former Governor at Robert Gordon University brings with him a vast array of experience and knowledge, and we look forward to working with him and the rest of the board members to set a positive future direction for our organisation.

Finally, we would like to use this opportunity to thank our team of staff, elected officers and student volunteers for their continued efforts and hard work in making this another successful year for the Students' Union at RGU!



MICHAEL IFE
PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATION
& DEMOCRACY 2018/19

MICHELE COLLIE
STUDENTS' UNION
GENERAL MANAGER

BIG WINS

2018/19

REGISTERED OVER
FOURTY THOUSAND
VOLUNTEERING HOURS



INTRODUCED
PEER SUPPORT
FOR MENTAL HEALTH

HIGHEST NUMBER EVER OF
EQUALITY CHAMPIONS



INTRODUCED THE FIRST
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

CREATED THE FREE-TO-JOIN
LGBT+ STUDENT NETWORK




GRADUATION
FEEES
CANCELLED
FROM JULY 2019 ONWARDS



24H AVAILABILITY ON
iMACS
DURING EXAM TIME



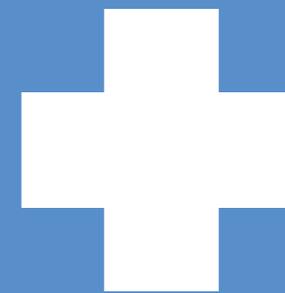

NUS SCOTLAND NOMINEES FOR
CAMPAIGN, STUDENT, & UNION OF THE YEAR



INCREASED
LATE NIGHT
BUS SERVICE



IN-HOUSE
MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER
TRAINED & INTRODUCED




LAUNCHED A NEW SYSTEM
REPORT & SUPPORT
AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

rgu:union



RAISED OVER
EIGHT THOUSAND

POUNDS FOR THE
MOVEMBER
FOUNDATION



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Union's AGM took place in February and was attended by 79 members. Business included the screening of video to give members an update on the activity of the Executive Committee in the 2018/19 term. The following motions were also passed:

IMPROVE STUDENT PREPARATION FOR STUDY ABROAD
IN PROGRESS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE UNIVERSITY TAKEN PLACE

ROLL LECTURE CAPTURE OUT ACROSS ALL SCHOOLS, ON A FORMAT ACCESSIBLE TO ALL
IN PROGRESS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE UNIVERSITY TAKEN PLACE

MORE COURSE OPTIONS FOR 4TH YEAR STUDENTS
IN PROGRESS DISCUSSIONS WITH RELEVANT HEAD OF SCHOOL TAKEN PLACE

RELEASE EXAM DATES EARLIER
IN PROGRESS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE UNIVERSITY TAKEN PLACE

MAKE FIRST SEMESTER ONE WEEK LONGER
IN PROGRESS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE UNIVERSITY TAKEN PLACE

FREE TO PEE! (REPLACEMENT OF CURRENT SIGNAGE ON DISABLED TOILETS TO READ 'ACCESSIBLE TOILET' OR 'NOT EVERY DISABILITY IS VISIBLE')
IN PROGRESS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE UNIVERSITY TAKEN PLACE WITH ESTATES AND PROPERTY SERVICES

NEED FOR AN AFFORDABLE TIMETABLING MOBILE APPLICATION, WITH ALERTS INTRODUCED DURING DEVELOPMENT
ACHIEVED TO BE RELEASED IN SEPTEMBER

VOTING



CARD

STUDENT VOICE FORUM

The Student Voice Forum is our primary student feedback event. Held four times throughout the academic year the forum provides our members with an opportunity to discuss a number of developments and projects taking place throughout the Union and University, and also to present any issues which they feel the Union could provide support with.

This year we were delighted to see a number of senior University officials attend forums and engage directly with the student body, including Mike Fleming, Chair of the Board of Governors, and John Harper, RGU Principal.

Topics of discussion this year have included:

- Student-facing support services
- Counselling service appointment times
- Enhancement of the Student Partnership Agreement
- Car parking permit allocations
- On campus catering options

24H LIBRARY, MAC ACCESS, & BUS SERVICE

The University once again operated a 24 hour library service during peak study times close to December and May assessments, this year with the addition of extended access to Mac machines and specialist software.

This positive change was triggered by student feedback, originally raised at our Annual General Meeting in 2018 and followed up by the Union. To compliment this, First Bus repeated their late night bus service for the duration of the extended library hours.

This free bus offering ensured that students spending time on campus throughout the night could safely make their way back to the city centre.

INTRODUCTION OF NETWORKS

This year saw the introduction of the Network system to be used as an extension of the Equality Champion roles to further the representation of those who self-identify with a protected characteristic.

The Networks differ from our Societies as they have no membership fee and no formal membership list, students can engage with a Network as often or as little as they choose with a focus on socials and campaigns.

SCHOOL OFFICERS, STUDENT REPS & EQUALITY CHAMPIONS

This year we have re-designed the Class Rep and School Officer training packages, based on feedback from previous reps to focus more on the key areas of the role.

Key achievements from our School Officers in 2018/19 have included gathering feedback from class reps and students on matters concerning the 'online submission and marking of feedback', and the 'academic calendar' adjustment. The results show that 94% of 160 respondents showed positive attitude toward the online marking, and 73% of 160 respondents were in favour of the new calendar change.

Our Equality Champions initiative expanded this year, increasing from 3 registered champions to over 17. It was also the first year multiple students could occupy the same role, to recognise the different approaches and backgrounds our students had. Both our 'Sexual Orientation', and 'Trans' Champions worked to set up a new free-to-join LGBT+ Student Network, and ran several events throughout the year

Our 'Disability and Inclusion' Champions have worked closely with the Union, and the Inclusion centre, to ensure all steps around campus are fitted with the high-visibility yellow strip for those with visual impairments, as well as reaching out to our student body with posters and social media pages.

Also this year, we introduced the role of 'Mental Health' Champions, recognising that everyone can suffer from poor mental health, and to give more focus to depression, anxiety, and other disorders that are protected under the Equality Act of 2010.

Our most contested role, the Mental Health Champions assisted with the development of the new Peer Support Group, helped organise a Hopewalk on World Mental Health Day, and more.



NUMBER OF REGISTERED CLASS REPRESENTATIVES



REPRESENTATIVES FULLY TRAINED BY THE UNION & SPAROS



NUMBER OF SCHOOL OFFICERS APPOINTED



WINNERS



URSULA OJJI
PRESIDENT COMMUNICATION & DEMOCRACY



EMMANUEL AKERELE
PRESIDENT EDUCATION & WELFARE



KIERAN MATTHEWS
PRESIDENT SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



MEGAN KERR
VICE PRESIDENT SOCIETIES



DAMI YUSUF
VICE PRESIDENT INTERNATIONAL



ROSS LEVEN
VICE PRESIDENT EDUCATION



EMMANUELA JENUWARI
VICE PRESIDENT WELFARE



JORDAN MOORE
VICE PRESIDENT SPORT



TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES CAST IN THIS YEAR'S ELECTION



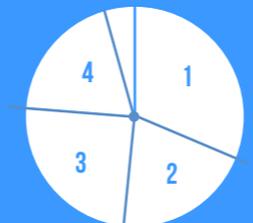
NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL VOTERS



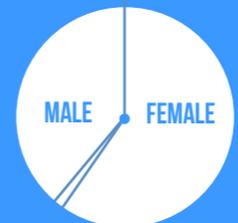
NUMBER OF CANDIDATES RUNNING ACROSS ALL FULL TIME AND PART TIME POSITIONS



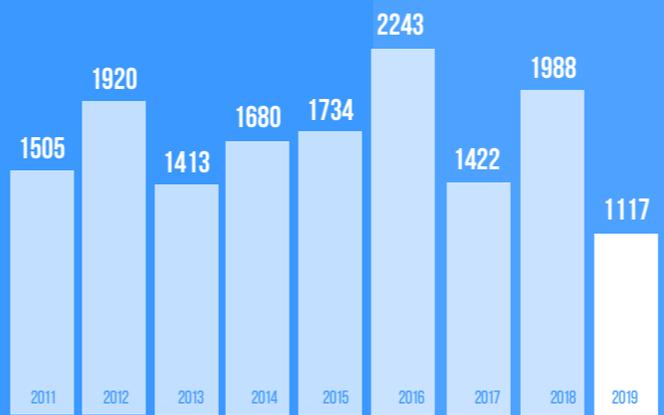
VOTER TURNOUT PERCENTAGE



VOTER BREAKDOWN: YEAR OF STUDY



VOTER BREAKDOWN: GENDER



STUDENT ELECTION TURNOUT FIGURES SINCE 2011

WHERE THE VOTES CAME FROM

SCHOOL

Aberdeen Business School	21.1 %
School of Pharmacy & Life Sciences	12.4 %
School of Creative & Cultural Business	10.4 %
School of Engineering	9.9 %
School of Health Sciences	9.4 %
School of Computing Science & Digital Media	8.3 %
Law School	7.8 %
Scott Sutherland School of Architecture & Built Env	6.1 %
Gray's School of Art	5.7 %
School of Nursing & Midwifery	4.3 %
School of Applied Social Studies	3.9 %

COURSE

Pharmacy	7.25 %
Accounting and Finance	5.19 %
International Business Management	3.67 %
LLB	3.67 %
Architecture	3.13 %
Management with Marketing	2.60 %
Management	2.24 %
Events Management	2.06 %
Painting	1.97 %
Oil and Gas Engineering	1.88 %
Journalism	1.88 %
Computer Science	1.79 %
Architectural Technology	1.79 %
Social Work	1.79 %
Nursing (Adult Nursing)	1.79 %
Applied Social Sciences	1.79 %
Occupational Therapy	1.70 %
Media	1.70 %
Mechanical Engineering	1.70 %
Occupational Therapy	1.61 %

*top 20 schools displayed

STUDENT TYPE

Undergraduate	80.5 %
Postgraduate	19.5 %

YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

GO GREEN

It was another productive year for the Union's Go Green initiatives, with the LivEco Community Café, Kaim Shop, Organic VegBag Scheme and BikePad Hire & Maintenance Workshop operating thanks to the hard work and commitment of a dedicated team of volunteers.

Steps were taken to improve the accessibility of both the bike hire and vegbag schemes, with online bookings introduced for both through the Union's website. Around 20 bikes were refurbished and hired to RGU students throughout the year, with the vegbag online ordering system operating for the duration of the second semester.

The LivEco Café continued its run of providing weekly organic, vegan, and waste-free meals for students and community members, and hosted a number of collaborative and themed events, including Halloween Café nights and working with the Creative & Cultural Business Society to promote an International Food Night and movie screenings.

On campus, the team from Kaim Shop arranged a number of workshops throughout the year, including denim décor and jewellery making, and arranged pop-up events in Aberdeen Business School and at halls of residence sites.

STUDENT MEDIA

Our student media outlets continued to develop and expand their offerings throughout the academic year. Radar Magazine became the first team to win back-to-back awards as, for the second year running, they were presented with the trophy for Media Group of the Year at our Student Achievement Awards Ball, while the weekly Purple Wednesdays sports club update show consistently clocks up hundreds of views across RGU TV online. The team at RGU Radio continue their move to a more podcast-focused product by making more on-demand content available through the Union website, allowing listeners to engage at a time convenient to them.



WELFARE SQUAD

The Freshers Welfare Squad operated successfully again for a third year. This was the first year in which the Welfare Squad members were paid rather than being volunteers, reflecting the important and delicate role they have in the Freshers Week experience. 6 students were recruited for the Squad, allowing for a team of 3 to be on duty at our partner nightclub each night of Freshers Week. In the venue they ran a stall distributing water, condoms, Freshers Guides, keyrings and details of Nightline, the Advice & Support service and the Safe Taxi Scheme. They also looked after Freshers until they could receive specialist attention, helped others get home safely, and made sure no Freshers were stranded at the end of the night.



FRESHERS TEAM & WELFARE SQUAD

26

FRESHERS TEAM
VOLUNTEERS

6

WELFARE SQUAD
TEAM MEMBERS

80

OVER 80 EVENTS
TOOK PLACE DURING
FRESHERS WEEK

SPORTING SUCCESS

- 4 RGU Sports Clubs represented the university at Scottish Conference Cup Finals Day held at St Andrews in March 2019. Tennis, Women's Football, Badminton, and Women's Volleyball all reached the national final of their respective sports.
- Both the GAA (Gaelic Football) men's and women's team won the premier division in Scotland and were British Cup runners-up.
- Women's Hockey won division 3A. Men's Football second team won division 3A.
- Cheerleading achieved 1st place at Scottish Cheerleading Championships and 1st place at level 2 British Cheerleading Association University Nationals.
- Dance has been crowned Scottish Intermediate Hip Hop Champions
- Most improved club: RGU Boxing, which doubled their membership numbers from 35 in 17/18 to 71 in 18/19.

1132

TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS

473

MALE MEMBERS

657

FEMALE MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE TRAINING

The students who were elected to President and Vice President positions in March 2019 and who will form the Executive Committee in 2019/20 received their training and induction to the Union at the end of May.

As part of this, they worked with Union staff and incumbent Presidents to develop action plans for achieving their manifesto objectives, and they presented these plans to RGU senior management. The training week also involved a road trip to other student unions to learn how their elected officers had achieved their objectives, share ideas with incoming officers teams, and see how each union used their social space.

As part of this, the team visited Aberdeen University Students' Association, Edinburgh Napier Students' Association, Heriot-Watt University Student Union, Stirling University Students' Union, NUS Scotland and spargqs (Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland).

THE TRAINING WEEK WAS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AND GET TO KNOW THE INCOMING EXEC TEAM AND UNION STAFF.

WE LEARNED ABOUT HOW THE UNION OPERATES, ITS ROLE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY AND THE RELATIONSHIP IT HAS WITH THE UNIVERSITY'S SENIOR MANAGEMENT.

IT ALSO GAVE US A CHANCE TO DEVELOP OUR MANIFESTO PROMISES INTO ACHIEVABLE OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR AND UNDERSTAND HOW THE EXEC CAN WORK TOGETHER TO REPRESENT THE WIDER STUDENT BODY.

ROSS LEVEN
INCOMING VICE PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)



VOLUNTEERING

384

TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOLUNTEERS

2454

VOLUNTEERING HOURS SUBMITTED BY RGU GO GREEN

2012

VOLUNTEERING HOURS SUBMITTED BY STUDENT REPS

47,965

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERING HOURS SUBMITTED BY RGU STUDENTS 2018/19



RAISING AND GIVING



Our Raising And Giving group again continued to assist societies and sports clubs with their fundraising activities throughout the year. After a highly successful Movember campaign, which saw a combined total of over £8000 raised by students and staff from across the university, a newly elected RAG Chair joined the team in late November as part of our Student By-election and worked with the Union to assemble and structure a new committee, laying the foundations for a number of exciting activities in the 2019/20 academic year.

£17,571

INTERNAL FUNDRAISING BY SPORTS CLUBS

£14,254

TOTAL RAISED BY SOCIETIES

SOCIETY QUALITY MARK



Society members receive their Student Achievement Awards from John Barr (RGU:Union Trustee Board Chair) and John Harper (RGU Principal)



PHYSIOTHERAPY SOCIETY



LAW SOCIETY
 FILM SOCIETY
 PHOTOGRAPHY SOCIETY
 IPE SOCIETY
 IHI SOCIETY
 RGU GO GREEN
 FEEL GOOD SOCIETY
 DUMBLEDORE'S ARMY
 DRAMA SOCIETY
 CREATIVE & CULTURAL BUSINESS SOCIETY
 COMPUTING SOCIETY
 57'10 SOCIETY



ICE SKATING SOCIETY
 GENDER EQUALITY & FEMINISM SOCIETY
 CREATIVE WRITING & POETRY SOCIETY
 CHRISTIAN UNION

Full Scarlet Award

Kristian Karban
 Charlotte Little
 Mark Dunphy

Half Scarlet Award

with Distinction

Christie Bren
 Eilidh Southren
 Zainab Olatunji
 Michele Kee
 Eilis Cusack
 Barbara Kellie
 Maria Popescu
 Lauren Taylor
 Irina-Cristina Bogdan
 Laura Watchman

Half Scarlet Award with

Continued Excellence

Alessandro Favaro
 Rebecca Anderson

Half Scarlet Award

Iona Grant
 Laura McMillan
 Sarah Jack
 Kirstin Tait
 Kai Rough
 Ifechukwu Okwuosa
 Philip Tremmel
 Emily Glencorse
 Jamie McGovern
 Fabio Rondina
 Ryan Johnson
 Kyle Henderson
 Evgenii Zorin
 Stephanie Cullen
 Shona Elder
 Mhairi Black
 Sin Ping Choy
 Victoria Saint
 Katrine Knudsen
 Rebecca Noble
 Kelsey Drummond
 Mhairi McLellan
 Matthieu O'Reilly
 Sam Thiesen
 Stephannie Mather
 Iona Proud
 Erin Gilmour
 Genavieve Jones-Purdie
 Stuart Campbell

Hugh Fish
 Dale Leith
 Erin Wyness
 Rebecca Hewison
 Lauren Kyle
 Jonathan May (Honorary)

Recognition Award

(Societies)

Amartya Yadav
 Antoine Sebert
 Celeste Saji Kallookalam
 Jolan Hegedus
 Kene Okafor
 Ben McFarlane
 Fionnghal Caldwell
 Bibo Keeley
 Chloe Spence
 Jamie Henderson
 Katherine Ronning
 Nina Dave
 Gemma Henderson
 Laura Simons
 Raya Kovacheva
 Tom Paterson
 Chloe Carberry
 Areej Rahmani
 Sarah Millar
 Nyameye Otoo
 Jennifer Laffan
 Ross Leven
 Rasmus Tolonen
 Annalisa Brigo
 Niamh Bunyan
 Saoirse Brennan
 Sara Torre
 Helena Paterson
 Jai Yi Nerissa Leong
 Gabi Uzunova
 Linzi Reekie
 Kerrie Johnston
 Cameron Taylor
 Hollie Smith
 Amberley Greensmith
 Edvard Enekes
 Megan Kerr
 Monika Lis
 Val Forbes
 Rory Barclay
 Kiera Johns
 Vivien Yu
 Tom Tie-Gill (Honorary)

AWARD WINNERS 2019

Full Blue Award

Robbie Farquhar
 Ewan Davidson
 Hamish Macleod
 Abigael McBeath
 Chris Knowles
 Ester Laiho
 Erin Moore
 David Mcauley
 Robin Shand
 Ethan Rebert
 Gregor Pittendreigh
 Mairi Stewart
 Laura Pilkington
 Zhangda Luo

Half Blue Award

Hannah Goldie
 Lisa Aspel
 Marcus Archer
 Ellen O'Brien
 Eilidh Sinclair
 Christopher Johnson
 Jill McLachlan
 Anna Forbes
 Samantha Thomson

Recognition Award

(Sport)

Hannah Cameron
 Sarah Brady
 Holly Bourne
 Andy Harrison
 Holly Robertson
 Cian Clinton
 Beth Lauder
 Craig Mitchell
 Erin Cornwell
 Cara Low
 Chloe Nicolson
 Andrew Davies
 Chloe Hannant
 Maedbh Smyth
 Joanne Kennedy
 Ruth Horkan
 Ali Crichton
 Stuart Adams
 Lindsey Williamson

Pride in Partnership Award

Eilidh Southren
 Irina-Cristina Bogdan
 Kim Brodie

Engagement Award

Niklas Bals
 Nicola Goodall
 Zainab Olatunji
 Chloe Pearson

Society of the Year

57'10 Society

Academic Society

of the Year

Physiotherpahy Society

Student Group of the Year

RGU:Nightline

Special Recognition Award

RGU Go Green

New Society of the Year

EngON Society

Most Improved Society

Ice Skating Society

Most Improved Student

Group

RGU:Radio

Volunteering Project of the

Year

Physiotherapy Conference

Media Group of the Year

Radar Magazine

Student Leadership Award

Computing Society

Student Engagement Award

Midwifery Society

Student Voice Award

Chinese New Year

Community Ambassador Award

RGU:Film Society

Award for Continued

Excellence and Consistency

IPE Society

Society Person of the Year

Eilidh Southren

Volunteer of the Year

(Societies and

Student Groups)

Maria Popescu

Freshers Team Member of

the Year

Laura McMillan

Duke of Edinburgh's Gold

Award

Kirstin Tait

Club of the Year

Netball

Team of the Year

Ladies Gaelic Football

Most Improved Club

Boxing

Performance of the Year

Cheerleading Level 2 British Champs

Fresher of the Year (Sport)

Robbie Farquhar

Volunteer of the Year

(Sport)

Jamie Duncan

Sports Person of the Year

Douglas Green

SAA Certificates

Becky Fidock
 Caitlin Reid
 Emily Heron
 Katherine Jarvis
 Luke Rodgers
 Rose Wakeman
 Shannon McManus
 Ella May Carter
 Sanna Rafiq
 Joanna Ross
 Rachel McLaughlin
 Madlena Uzunova
 Bernadett Sike
 Joy Kennedy
 Kiran Sandhu
 Anca Elena Tomescu
 Rose Ross
 Gioia Brogioni
 Diana Halifa
 Nicola Will
 Megan Wilson
 Maciej Rembiasz
 Claire Vigot
 Rebecca Carnegie
 Federica Vitale
 Sani Kempainen
 Shun Wong
 Patryk Switaj
 Beth Lauder
 Erin Cornwell
 Emmanuel Obasi Ogar
 Lizzie Buchan

YOUR WELLBEING



ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The service experienced another busy year, providing advice and support to students on approximately 530 occasions, an increase of 14% on 2017/18

The most common issues that advice was given on were Academic Appeals (41% of cases - up from 37% last year), Student Misconduct (19% of cases) and Coursework Extension/Deferral Request (15%).

The Advice service has received positive feedback from the survey given out to students who have accessed it:

100% stated the Advice service was able to provide help or advice regarding their issue, or was able to refer to another service for help. 92% rated their interaction with the Advice service as "Very helpful". 100% of users would use the service again or recommend it to other students.

“ I WASN'T EXPECTING MUCH WHEN I APPROACHED RGU UNION FOR THE FIRST TIME. HOWEVER, THE STUDENT ADVICE COORDINATOR WAS AMAZING IN HIS ABILITY TO LISTEN, UNDERSTAND AND FORMULATE HIS VERY HELPFUL ADVICE IN A WAY THAT IS UNDERSTANDABLE FOR ME. A BIG THANK YOU! ”

“ QUICK RESPONSE, WHEN I NEEDED THE SUPPORT THE MOST IT WAS THERE FOR ME. THANKS TO THE ADVICE & SUPPORT SERVICE MY UNIVERSITY LIFE HAS IMPROVED TENFOLD ”

“ THE STUDENT ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE WAS OF IMMENSE HELP AT A TIME WHEN I WAS UNSURE IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO CONTINUE MY STUDIES AT RGU. AN INVALUABLE SERVICE FOR STUDENTS THAT I FEEL ASSURED THAT I CAN TURN TO IF I EVER NEED TO IN THE FUTURE. THE ADVICE PROVIDED A 'LIGHT AT THE END OF A TUNNEL' AND I AM NOW ABLE TO CONTINUE WITH MY STUDIES AT RGU ”



SPEAK UP SPEAK OUT & REPORT AND SUPPORT

The campaign was proposed by the President of Education & Welfare during his election campaign, and upon taking office it went forward 'In Partnership' with the University and Union, and 'Speak Up Speak Out' was born. The campaign promotes our zero tolerance policy towards sexual violence, and all forms of Gender-Based Violence, as well as promoted our new online support/reporting system 'Report and Support'. Under this umbrella campaign, we also had Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis deliver 'GBV First Responders' training for 19 staff, which is soon to be delivered to 150 Personal Tutors.

In November, the Union invited NUS Women's Officer to deliver GBV training to Societies and Sport's Clubs.

Since the campaigns launch, more than half of our students are now aware of the campaign, and 71% of respondents said they would be comfortable reporting a case of GBV through the University.

70% OF STUDENTS ARE NOW COMFORTABLE REPORTING A CASE OF GBV TO THE UNIVERSITY

WELLBEING FAYRE

Our first ever RGU Wellbeing Fayre was held during Freshers at Woolmanhill Flats, where information and representatives from all our student support services could be found, to ensure all new students know they're supported at RGU. There was also plenty of free water, fruit, pizza, and giveaways from the various groups.

Services including Nightline, Reslife, Counselling, Study Skills, Mental Wellbeing Society, the developing Peer Support Group, and more all attended.

MENTAL HEALTH AGREEMENT

The first 'Wellbeing Action Group' was founded by our President of Education and Welfare, and Student Life. This group houses different departments such as Sport, Union, Counselling, Nursing and Midwifery School, Reslife, and more, all to share their work on wellbeing, and collectively progress the work done around 'Healthy Universities', our 'Student Mental Health Agreement' and welfare related projects.



SPEAK UP SPEAK OUT
You will be supported.
Let's report and eliminate unacceptable behaviour.



ANTI-INITIATION TRAINING

All RGU Sports clubs undertook GoodLAD training - aimed at tackling and eradicating stereotypical lad culture within sports clubs. The training covered a wide variety of important topics including gender based violence, mental health, gender equality, positive attitudes and behaviours - all aimed at changing the culture within universities. All 32 clubs had at least one representative on the training.

RGU Rugby club took part in BUCS new initiative: CHANGES intervention training. This training addressed the stigma behind initiation and hazing behaviour and the effects that it can have on students.

The training encouraged our sports clubs to be more inclusive and change their attitudes towards welcome events - in order to be more inclusive and welcoming to new students.

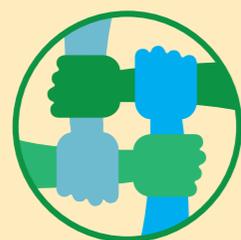
PEER SUPPORT GROUP

This is our new student-led group, soon to be offering group sessions for those experiencing low-wellbeing and poor mental health. These 'Peer-to-Peer' sessions, along with workshops on self-help, aim to normalise the conversation around mental health, act as early intervention, and create a confidential, causal, and safe environment for those in need.

Whilst not a replacement for counselling, it helps to tackle all 5 strands of our Student Mental Health Agreement, and assist other services by filling a much-needed gap.

So far, we have 90+ Students on the mailing list, with more being gathered by the newly elected committee. They will work alongside staff to engrain Peer Support in the Universities strategy, and promote it across campus.

This year, Peer Support helped run the Therapets events, and held their first recruitment event after launching on University Mental Health Day.



rgu:union
RGU PEER SUPPORT



LGBT NETWORK

The first group to implement the new Network format was the former LGBT+ Society, with a leadership committee containing both the Orientation Champions and the Trans Champions. This transition was achieved with support from the VP of Wellbeing and Equal Opportunities who volunteered countless hours to the constitutional developments needed to run the group effectively.

The LGBT+ Network has worked closely with the staff equivalent and have joined them for multiple events since their inception including Grampian Pride in May.



NIGHTLINE

In the academic year of 2018-2019, RGU: Nightline continued to provide students with a valuable 'out of hours' peer-to-peer, listening service. Using active listening techniques, RGU: Nightline offered students a person to talk to about their issues and anonymously and without judgement through the platforms of online messenger, email and telephone.

Due to a substantial recruitment drive, there was a fourfold increase in volunteers from 12 active members in September 2018 to 32 by April 2019. The increase in volunteer numbers allowed for the completion of 6080 volunteering hours, a rise of 4008 volunteering hours from 2018, allowing RGU: Nightline to open for 86 nights from 8pm-8am.

A primary focus for 2018-19 was increasing the quality and variety of volunteering training. The training officers provided training to all current volunteers and recruits, both in the first and second semester, allowing for 150 calls, emails and online messages to be answered since September 2018.

Furthermore, RGU: Nightline were able to provide their volunteers with the opportunity to attend the regional Nightline Association conference in Dundee and the national Nightline Association conference in Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire. Our volunteers gained insight and training in a variety of areas such as setting boundaries and dealing with distressing calls to assist in listening to issues faced by students at RGU.



SAFE TAXI SCHEME



YOUR COMMUNITY



BBC RADIO 1

As part of our Freshers Week 2018 events line-up we had the opportunity to work with BBC Radio 1 to bring a day of activities to the University campus as part of their annual 'Student Tour'. Daytime activities saw the introduction of the BBC Radio 1 tour bus to the Sir Ian Wood Building's external plaza space, giving students the opportunity to win tickets to the station's flagship Big Weekend music festival, plus an exclusive live Q&A with DJ Charlie Sloth in the building's Amphitheatre. Later that evening we teamed up with local venue, Revolution, to host a special live RGU Freshers edition of Sloth's daily show 'The 8th', which was broadcast live on BBC Radio 1.



RGU'S GOT TALENT

Our RGU's Got Talent series of events took place once again, providing students from across the campus with a platform to showcase their talents to a live audience and a team of student and staff judges. This year's finalists, musicians El Duetto, The Flat Three, and dance act Cherry Bomb all received cash prizes and an invitation to perform live for attendees at the Student Achievement Awards Ball.



22

COMMERCIAL
FRESHERS FAYRE
EXHIBITORS

3000

OVER 3000 STUDENTS
ATTENDED THIS YEAR'S
FRESHERS FAYRE EVENT

THIRD

THIS YEAR WE HELD
THE THIRD ANNUAL
FRESHFEST EVENT

FRESHFEST

For the third year running we arranged and promoted a FreshFest event, taking place at the city's famous Beach Ballroom. This has become a fixture in our annual Freshers Week line-ups, and sees the Union provide a high profile variety event which is open to all ages, allowing our under 18 students the opportunity to socialise

Stand-up comedy once again proved successful with the audience, as the notorious Lee Nelson headlined, and Beric Livingston from the popular 'HQ Trivia' quizzing app entertained as he hosted the Big Student Pub Quiz, both packing out the main ballroom. Live traditional band Iron Broo hosted a ceilidh room with dancing throughout the night, and live DJs performed as part of a silent disco elsewhere throughout the venue.



FRESHERS FAYRE

Our annual Freshers Fayre continues to see impressive growth, and we once again welcomed well over 100 exhibitors to the University campus, including student societies, clubs, groups, affiliated organisations, plus many local and national businesses.

Non-commercial exhibitors once again made use of Union Way and the Aberdeen Business School to advertise RGU departments, external support services, volunteering opportunities and other third sector organisations to a large number of new and returning students. It is particularly important that support services, such as RGU's Student Life department, are amongst those represented at the Freshers Fayre so that as many aspects of the Freshers experience - which can sometimes be daunting as well as fun - are supported as much as possible.



GRADUATION BALL

Our ever-popular Graduation Ball event once again took place during July at the city's Beach Ballroom. Demand for tickets was strong, with students camping out from sunrise to ensure they secured their space at the prestigious event. Once again two identical nights were hosted, as we attempt to deal with the challenge of allowing as many students as possible to attend the event(s), with a four course meal provided and entertainment from live local musicians, DJ and a traditional Scottish ceilidh with live band Iron Broo.

LIVE RIGHT HOUSING FAIR

The Live Right Housing Fair was held for the fourth time in March 2019. The Fair allowed students to peruse offerings from a variety of private student accommodation providers and leasing agents, to find somewhere to securely store their belongings over the summer, and to learn more about safe deposit schemes.

Holding it in March in the foyer area of the Sir Ian Wood Building allowed for significant student exposure at a time when many would be coming to the end of their leases and beginning to think about accommodation for the next academic year.



STAR AWARDS

The annual student-led awards for staff was held in SIWB amphitheatre on May 14th. Here we recognised the valuable contribution our staff make, from lecturers to support staff. All awards were based on your nominations, so thank you to all who ensured their staff members received the appreciation they deserved.

“ IT IS MY OPINION THAT IN ORDER TO BE A GOOD TEACHER YOU MUST **BE ABLE TO INSPIRE YOUR PUPILS TO WANT TO LEARN AND TO DO BETTER**. THESE ARE QUALITIES THAT THEY HAVE DEMONSTRATED IN EVERY ONE OF THEIR CLASSES. ”

“ SHE IS A **FANTASTIC TEACHER AND MENTOR** AND HER COMBINED KNOWLEDGE AND COMMITMENT **MAKE HER A REAL TREASURE WITHIN RGU** AND I THINK IT WOULD BE GREAT IF THAT COULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED. ”

“ HE IS **ALWAYS WILLING TO LISTEN** AND HELP WHEREVER POSSIBLE AND HAS THE BEST INTEREST OF THE STUDENTS AT HEART. HE HAS BEEN **COMPASSIONATE, UNDERSTANDING AND JUST SO SUPPORTIVE**. AND IT IS THANKS SO HIM I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OVERCOME THE OBSTACLES I WAS FACED WITH. ”

SOCIAL SPACE SURVEY

The topic of student social space has been raised with the Union on many occasions in recent years through a number of different channels, including Student Voice forums, Society forums, and at our Annual General Meeting. This was followed up by members of our Student Executive Committee, who initiated a Social Space Survey, which ran throughout the second semester of the 2018/19 academic year. Responses were gathered from over 1000 students and staff members across the campus, and a series of discussions are currently underway between the Union and the University.



GRADUATION FEES

As part of the National Union of Students' "Free To Graduate" campaign, which revealed that some students across Scotland could be out of pocket by up to £225 for attending their graduation ceremony, the Union lobbied Senior Management at the University to review the policy on graduation fees at RGU.

After positive discussions, it was agreed that from Summer 2019 onwards, Robert Gordon University would abolish all graduation fees, resulting in a significant win for the student voice at RGU and reinforcing the importance of a positive partnership between Union and University.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

We continue to take steps towards the creation of our Leadership Programme, which will provide new and existing volunteers with a platform to log and track additional activities and development opportunities with the aim of enhancing skill sets and boosting employability.

The recent launch of the University's online eHub platform as part of the RGU Employability and Professional Enrichment Department has introduced a number of collaboration opportunities which are currently being explored as we work to develop a robust and comprehensive system which will provide further incentive for students to engage with the Union as a volunteer.

PLACEMENT STUDENTS

We continue to provide a variety of development opportunities to students across the campus, including through the University's placement programme.

Working with the School of Creative and Cultural Business we annually recruit a student from the BA Media course to work full-time with our team, assisting with video production and the creation of content for social media. This is particularly helpful towards the beginning of the second semester, which is a peak time for the Union with the Student Election process, Annual General Meeting and Student Achievement Awards Ball taking place.

The addition of a student placement to the team allows us to build on the strong partnership between the Union and the University, whilst providing opportunities for students to gain on-the-job experience and also further engaging our members with the Union's democratic processes.

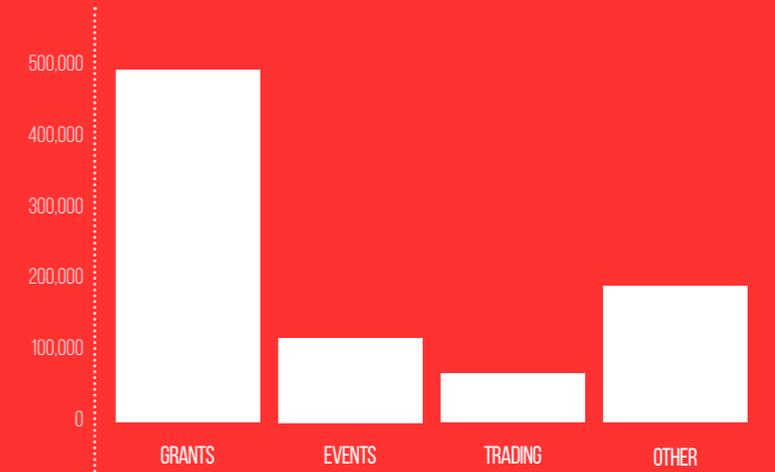
UNION FINANCE SUMMARY

The Union has enjoyed a good year with all operations returning a positive result, despite the local economic challenges. In addition to the continuing increase of the pension obligations year by year which is having an adverse effect on the overall Union expenditure. To this end a robust management of Union finances will remain a top priority in the coming years ahead.

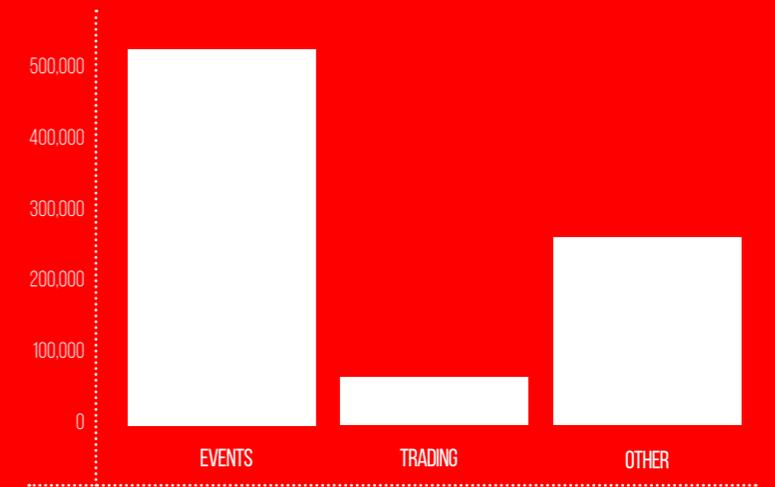
The total income generated by the Union for the year 18/19 was £871k and this includes £493k of a grant from the university. The Union experienced a drop in income following the end of the Go Green project in March 2018, however other sources of revenue received by trading activities included 23% from RGU Sport and 8% from Deevview Shop.

Overall total expenditure amounted to £850k in 18/19 which was in line with budgetary projections and the resultant surplus of £21k surpassed the Budgeted break even figure as approved by the Trustees and the Board of Governors. These monies will be utilised to further develop the Student Union through projects and initiatives.

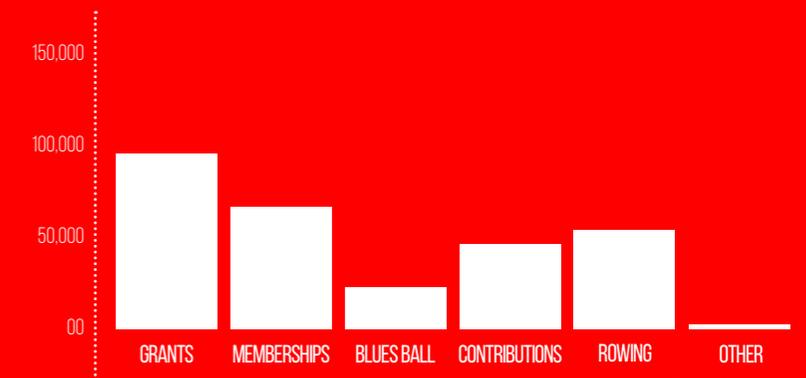
The Student Union continues to pursue new commercial opportunities and develop more new events in order to maximise revenues for the charity. To view our most recent published accounts, visit www.rguunion.co.uk



UNION INCOME SOURCES 2018/19



UNION EXPENDITURE 2018/19



SPORTS CLUB INCOME 2018/19

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