



rgu:union

# IMPACTREPORT

2017/18











# OUR YEAR 2017/18

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# OUR TEAM

## 2017/18

**Michael Ife**  
President (Communication & Democracy)

**Kerry Harrison**  
President (Education & Welfare)

**Eilidh Paterson**  
President (Sport & Physical Activity)

**Jennifer Ritchie**  
Vice President (Wellbeing & Equal Opps)

**Gonzalo Lara De Leyva**  
Vice President (Environment & Ethics)

**Gavin Rittoo**  
Vice President (Sport)

**Martha Gilmore**  
Vice President (Societies)

**Martin Thomson**  
Vice President (Entertainment & Events)

**Maddy Travis**  
RAG Chair

**Michele Collie**  
General Manager

**Stephen Fiddes**  
Advice & Administration Co-ordinator

**Euan Walker**  
Student Development & Volunteering Co-ordinator

**Gregor Mailer**  
Design & Marketing Manager

**Naomi Walker**  
Climate Change Project Team  
& Graphic Designer

**Maria Popescu**  
Graphic Designer

**Jo Taylor**  
Union Administrator

**Nancy Taylor**  
Finance Co-ordinator

**Graeme Clark**  
Finance Co-ordinator

**Debbie Booth**  
PA / Admin

**David Nicolson**  
Climate Change Manager

**Dimo Peev**  
Climate Change Project Team

**Layla Sawford**  
Climate Change Project Team

**Caroline Gausden**  
Climate Change Project Team

**Kim Norrie**  
Climate Change Project Team

**Norma Polson**  
Deeview Student Store Supervisor

**Lynne Fraser**  
Deeview Student Store Supervisor



# WELCOME

On behalf of the RGU Union team it is our pleasure to present the 2017/18 Impact Report. As we are approaching the third year of our strategic plan, we have continued to focus on our strategic promise: "to make your student experience the focus of everything we do". Although there has been some challenges, the Union produced a significant surplus which has allowed us to invest in initiatives, services and improvements to Union facilities. One of our investment priorities was to develop Union Way and our social spaces into areas that are more attractive and comfortable for students to congregate in and have ownership over. To this end, we invested in a large screen video wall for film screenings, gaming events and communicating Union news. We also installed new signage on Union Way to highlight the opportunities the Union has to enhance the student journey from becoming a Fresher, to taking part in extracurricular opportunities, to finally graduating and continuing to be a part of the University community as an alumni. Furthermore, we have invested and created student areas for meeting and holding events, such as the Meeting Room. We have styled this room to recognise the history of the Union and the achievements it has made since its earliest days. We have also introduced the Student Hub in the Sir Ian Wood Building as a bookable space for students to work on their many extracurricular projects.

Another of our key aims for this year was to work and strengthen the partnership with the University on many vital issues facing students. A major achievement of this partnership was the creation of a new Mental Health Agreement, signed by Union and University stakeholders. This will inform the approach the Union and the

University take to supporting mental wellbeing amongst our student body. This approach will also be guided by findings from a national survey of student mental health, the largest to be undertaken in the UK, which the Union participated in and made a significant financial investment towards.

In addition to investing in services and facilities, this year saw us strengthen the democratic structure of the Union, by holding our first referendum vote to approve a restructure of the Executive Committee. This received a positive response over just 2 days of voting. This has resulted in a new Executive structure being introduced for the elections in the coming year, which we anticipate will strengthen representation and enhance the student voice.

Over the last 5 years we have been fortunate to benefit from funding from the Scottish Government's Climate Change Fund. This has given us the opportunity to advance sustainable initiatives and promote environmentally-friendly projects amongst the student body. Although we did not receive funding for 2018, the legacy of these projects will be continued by our student-led Go Green group. Another successful student-run initiative is the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, for which we received our license at a ceremony at Holyrood Palace. At this event we were very proud to see two RGU students receive their Gold awards.

At the end of the academic term we celebrated with a record number of our graduates attending the Graduation Balls. Over 950 attended over two nights at the Beach Ballroom.

Going forward, we will be introducing a student-led peer support group, a Leadership Programme to enhance student employability, and supporting student campaigns and initiatives.

We hope you enjoy reading our Impact Report. We would like to take the opportunity to thank the Union staff, elected officers and student volunteers for all their hard work in making this another successful year!



Michael Ife  
President  
(Communication &  
Democracy)

**MICHAEL IFE**

PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATION  
& DEMOCRACY 2017/18

**MICHELE COLLIE**

STUDENTS' UNION  
GENERAL MANAGER

# YOUR VOICE

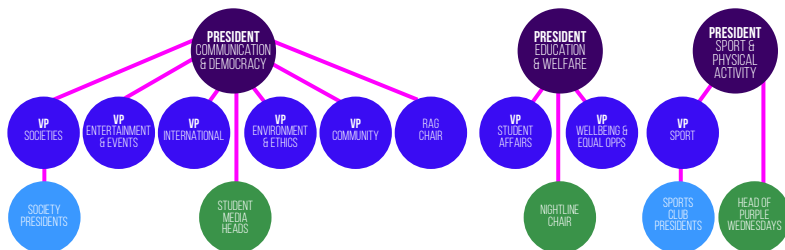
## EXECUTIVE RESTRUCTURE REFERENDUM

As the Union has grown and developed over the past few years, we have come to realise that our structure is no longer fit for purpose, and that it doesn't fully allow us to focus our resources on representing the needs of RGU students effectively. In order to address this, the Union Executive Committee redeveloped the structure to reflect the changes the Union has gone through recently which resulted in an all-student referendum taking place in January 2018 to approve these changes.

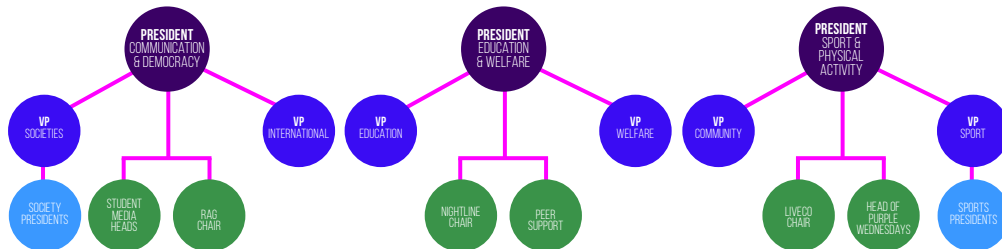
Over 1100 members cast votes during a two day polling window, however the Union's regulations stipulate that a minimum of 1300 students must participate and therefore the result could not be ratified at that time.

However, at our Annual General Meeting the following month, it was noted that the overwhelming majority of votes cast in the referendum were in agreement with the proposed structure, and the AGM voted to uphold the result which will see the amended Executive Committee setup implemented from 2019/20.

### EXISTING STRUCTURE



### PROPOSED NEW STRUCTURE







# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We saw 114 members attend and participate in this year's Annual General Meeting, which again was held in the Amphitheatre of the Sir Ian Wood Building. Six motions were submitted and passed by our members, which will help to set out a number of the Union's priority campaigns and projects for the coming academic year.

**INTRODUCE FREE CONDOMS IN TOILETS**  
**IN PROGRESS** APPROVED BY UNIVERSITY

**INSTALL PHONE CHARGING LOCKERS**  
**IN PROGRESS** LOCATIONS AND SUPPLIERS ARE BEING RESEARCHED

**IMPROVE THE LOCKER SITUATION ACROSS THE CAMPUS**  
**IN PROGRESS** DISCUSSIONS WITH UNIVERSITY TAKING PLACE

**EXTENDED ACCESS TO MACS**  
**IN PROGRESS** DISCUSSIONS WITH UNIVERSITY TAKING PLACE

**MANDATORY TRAINING FOR STUDENT SOCIETIES AND SPORTS CLUBS ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND OTHER KINDS OF VIOLENCE**  
**ACHIEVED** 4 SOCIETIES TRAINED, BEING ROLLED OUT TO ALL GROUPS IN 18/19

**IMPROVE EXISTING SYSTEMS OF EDUROAM, CAMPUS MOODLE AND INTERNET SERVICES IN UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION**  
**ACHIEVED** FUNDS FOR IMPROVEMENT APPROVED, WORKS ONGOING

## STUDENT VOICE FORUM

The Student Voice forum was held 3 times throughout the term. Updates from members of the Executive Committee on motions passed at the previous AGM were given, and students were invited to raise other issues they wished to see addressed.

### Executive Committee Restructure

The Student Voice approved the proposed restructuring of the Executive Committee, and approved holding a referendum for the student body to ratify the new structure.

### Microwave Options

The Student Voice approved a proposal to introduce more microwaves in the Aberdeen Business School and the Ishbel Gordon Building. This was achieved, with a microwave being installed in ABS in November 2017, and in the Ishbel Gordon Building in July 2018.

### Public Transport Improvements

The Student Voice mandated the Union to lobby for a reduction in the cost of an Academic Term bus pass. This was successfully achieved. A Grasshopper ticket was also introduced, allowing students to use both First and Stagecoach buses with the same ticket.

# YOUR VOICE

## STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES & SCHOOL OFFICERS

This year we appointed 389 Student Representatives, with 214 receiving training through newly introduced face-to-face school-based sessions, and 33 completing online training modules. We have also trained research students for the first time, with 7 attending a dedicated training session in May. This is something we would like to build upon in the coming years.

Both 'Partnership In Action' meetings were very well attended, with discussion topics being chosen by the reps prior to the meetings. These included issues such as placement, IT, catering and study spaces.

In addition, our Student Rep Connect event ran for the second year in February and saw 4 workshop sessions held with a focus on wellbeing, the student voice and employability. These sessions featured a number of invited external speakers, including employers and the mental health charity 'See Me Scotland'.

Every school across the University was provided with a Student School Officer this year, with a total of 14 students recruited across 11 schools, all fully trained. Throughout the course of the year, these school officers logged a combined 429 hours. They have been heavily engaged in institutional projects such as the development of the employability hub, and the enhancement theme.

389

NUMBER OF  
REGISTERED CLASS  
REPRESENTATIVES

247

REPRESENTATIVES  
FULLY TRAINED  
BY THE UNION & SPARQS

14

NUMBER OF  
SCHOOL OFFICERS  
APPOINTED

429

HOURS LOGGED  
BY SCHOOL  
OFFICERS



## WINNERS



MICHAEL  
IFE  
PRESIDENT COMMUNICATION  
& DEMOCRACY



ADAM JAMES  
JOHNSTON  
PRESIDENT EDUCATION  
& WELFARE



GAVIN  
RITTO  
PRESIDENT SPORT  
& PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



MARTHA  
GILMORE  
VICE PRESIDENT  
SOCIETIES



SAM  
THIESEN  
VICE PRESIDENT  
WELLBEING & EQUAL OPPS



OTTO  
JUTILA  
VICE PRESIDENT  
ENVIRONMENT & ETHICS



DUGBATEY  
TEYE  
VICE PRESIDENT  
INTERNATIONAL



7687

TOTAL NUMBER OF  
VOTES CAST IN THIS  
YEAR'S ELECTION

1988

NUMBER OF  
INDIVIDUAL VOTERS

14

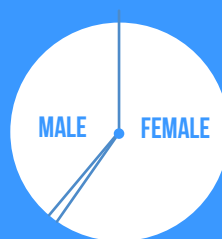
NUMBER OF CANDIDATES  
RUNNING ACROSS ALL  
FULL TIME AND PART  
TIME POSITIONS

14.6%

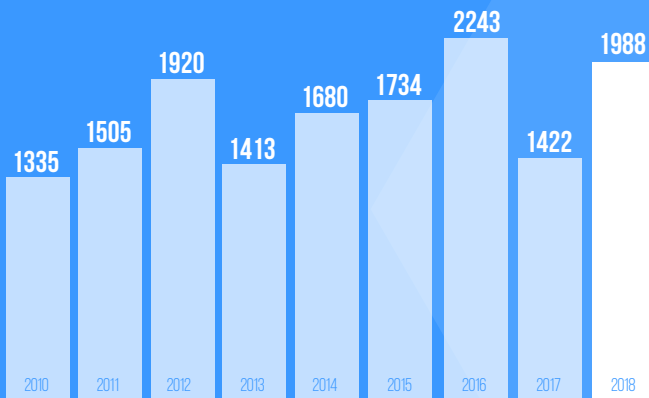
VOTER  
TURNOUT  
PERCENTAGE



VOTER BREAKDOWN:  
YEAR OF STUDY



VOTER BREAKDOWN:  
GENDER



STUDENT ELECTION TURNOUT FIGURES SINCE 2010

# WHERE THE VOTES CAME FROM

## SCHOOL

Aberdeen Business School	16.85 %
School of Creative and Cultural Business	14.24 %
School of Pharmacy & Life Sciences	13.08 %
School of Health Sciences	10.41 %
Gray's School of Art	9.46 %
School of Engineering	9.36 %
Law School	7.04 %
School of Nursing and Midwifery	5.73 %
School of Computing Science and Digital Media	4.83 %
School of Applied Social Studies	4.58 %
Scott Sutherland School of Architecture & Built Env	4.12 %

## COURSE

Pharmacy	6.94 %
Accounting and Finance	5.03 %
Applied Sport and Exercise Science	3.67 %
International Business Management	3.22 %
Communication Design	3.07 %
LLB	2.97 %
Nursing (Adult Nursing)	2.72 %
Fashion Management	2.67 %
Applied Social Sciences	2.52 %
Management	2.52 %
Physiotherapy	2.36 %
Journalism	2.36 %
Media	2.26 %
Fashion and Textile Design	2.06 %
Social Work	2.01 %
Painting	1.96 %
Occupational Therapy	1.96 %
Management with Marketing	1.86 %
Mechanical Engineering	1.81 %
Events Management	1.71 %

*\*top 20 schools displayed*

## STUDENT TYPE

Undergraduate	86.17 %
Postgraduate	13.68 %

# YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

## STUDENT MEDIA

**radar**

NEWS AND CONTENT UPLOADED DAILY TO  
**RGURADAR.CO.UK** ONLINE PLATFORM

WEB ARTICLES AND FEATURES HAVE BEEN READ  
**OVER 100,000** TIMES SINCE LAUNCH IN 2017

WON **MEDIA GROUP OF THE YEAR** AT STUDENT  
ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS BALL 2018

 **PURPLE  
WEDNESDAYS**

**ONLY** DEDICATED UNIVERSITY SPORTS  
BROADCAST IN THE COUNTRY

RELEASED WEEKLY ON YOUTUBE WITH AN  
AVERAGE OF **1000 VIEWS PER EPISODE**

WON **VOLUNTEERING PROJECT OF THE YEAR** AT  
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS BALL 2018

 **RGU RADIO**  
.CO.UK

BUILT **LINKS WITH SOCIETIES** TO PRODUCE  
SHOWS SUCH AS 'WHAT THE FEMINISM'

WORKED WITH THE UNION TO BRING **BBC RADIO 1**  
EVENTS & WORKSHOPS ONTO THE RGU CAMPUS

 **rgu.tv**

WORKED WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS TO  
BEGIN DEVELOPING **STUDENT SAFETY VIDEOS**

CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP WITH **POLICE SCOTLAND**  
WITH WORK ON THE 'ASK FOR ANGELA' SCHEME

**3039**

TOTAL NUMBER OF  
VOLUNTEERING HOURS  
CONTRIBUTED BY STUDENT  
MEDIA TEAMS IN 2017/18





# RAISING AND GIVING



RGU:RAG focused the 2017/18 year on developing and supporting fundraising activities within student societies. With the Society Quality Mark putting an increased emphasis on collaborating with RAG we saw a record number of societies lean on RAG's fundraising expertise and a huge increase in unique events such as a bungee jump, 6 Nations rugby ticket raffle and a 'sponge a lecturer' afternoon being promoted by groups across the campus.

£4041.38

FUNDRAISING FOR OTHERS BY SOCIETIES, SPORTS CLUBS AND STUDENT GROUPS IN 2016/17

£6325.68

FUNDRAISING FOR OTHERS BY SOCIETIES, SPORTS CLUBS AND STUDENT GROUPS IN 2017/18

56.5

EXTERNAL FUNDRAISING INCREASE (%)

£20,181

INTERNAL FUNDRAISING BY SPORTS CLUBS

## FRESHERS TEAM VOLUNTEERS 2018

38

FRESHERS TEAM VOLUNTEERS

10

FRESHERS TEAM VOLUNTEERS

6847

OVER 1500 HOURS VOLUNTEERED IN 15 DAYS DURING FRESHERS



# YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

## DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

Having introduced the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme in 2017/18, we were delighted to have our licence renewed and presented by Prince Edward at a ceremony during the summer months.

The award involves students undertaking a series of activities including volunteering, skill development, fitness training and planning and undertaking an expedition. The aim is to develop skills which will prepare young individuals for the work place, as well as enhancing confidence, resilience and team working.

RGU:Union is the primary provider of extra-curricular activities at RGU, and annually engages thousands of students in projects and activities aimed at improving their experience and skills development while at university.



## VOLUNTEERING



240

NUMBER OF REGISTERED  
VOLUNTEERS

1856

VOLUNTEERING HOURS  
SUBMITTED BY RGU GO GREEN

1593

VOLUNTEERING HOURS  
SUBMITTED BY RGU NIGHTLINE





# SPORTING SUCCESS

THERE ARE SOME 40 VOLUNTEERING ROLES AT INCHGARTH COMMUNITY CENTRE WITH THE ADDITION OF PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH THE VARIOUS STUDENT COURSES PEOPLE ARE STUDYING AT RGU.

ALL IN, IT'S A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE FOR THE STUDENTS, A TREMENDOUS ASSISTANCE TO OUR COMMUNITY AND PEOPLE, AND STRENGTHENS THE VITAL AND VALUED PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY OF GARTHDEE AND THE UNIVERSITY.

TOGETHER WE MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE FOR ALL.

PAUL O'CONNOR MBE  
MANAGER, INCHGARTH COMMUNITY CENTRE

# 28,666

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERING  
HOURS SUBMITTED BY RGU STUDENTS 2017/18



- MEN'S FOOTBALL **WINNERS** OF THE BUCS BRITISH TROPHY
- 2018 ABERDEEN UNIVERSITIES **BOAT RACE WINNERS**
- COLIN DALGLEISH (SCOTLAND TABLE TENNIS) AND IZZY TOLOMETTI (CAPTAIN OF SCOTTISH GYMNASTICS TEAM), BOTH **COMMONWEALTH GAMES REPRESENTATIVES** AND SPORT SCHOLARS
- TRAMPOLINING NAMED SSS **CLUB OF THE YEAR** AND CAME HOME WITH A BRONZE MEDAL IN THE IRISH OPEN
- MEN'S RUGBY 1ST AND MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAMS BOTH REACHED THE **CONFERENCE CUP FINALS**, COMING HOME WITH SILVER
- WINNER OF **BEST FIGHTER** IN THE SCOTTISH UNIVERSITY BOXING CHAMPIONSHIP



# YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

## SOCIETY QUALITY MARK

Our new Societies Quality Mark scheme was set up to reward all student societies and recognise their hard work and dedication. Rather than being additional work, the scheme is designed to recognise work already happening and to provide a guide for running a successful society.

By meeting the criteria set out in each section, societies gain points. When a certain number of points is reached, the society will gain a Bronze, Silver or Gold award which is then presented at the Student Achievement Awards Ball.

12

SOCIETIES REWARDED  
WITH QUALITY MARK  
RECOGNITION



**Bronze Award**

Winner 2017/18

FEEL GOOD SOCIETY  
DRAMA SOCIETY  
GENDER EQUALITY & FEMINISM SOCIETY  
ABERDEEN INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION  
PHYSIOTHERAPY SOCIETY  
PHOTOGRAPHY SOCIETY  
LEAGUE OF ANIME



**Silver Award**

Winner 2017/18

FILM SOCIETY  
IHI PATIENT SAFETY CHAPTER  
DUMBLEDORE'S ARMY  
CREATIVE & CULTURAL BUSINESS SOCIETY  
57'10 ARCHITECTURE SOCIETY

10,180

TOTAL VOLUNTEERING HOURS SUBMITTED  
BY SOCIETY MEMBERS IN 2017/18

1830

TOTAL NUMBER OF SOCIETY MEMBERS  
REGISTERED WITH THE UNION



# AWARD WINNERS 2018



## Full Scarlet Award

Calhounnah Bain  
Craig Robertson  
Harmeet Aulak  
Siobhan Carty

## Half Scarlet Award with Distinction

Adam Johnston  
Artemis Giatra  
Danny Whitelaw  
Kristian Karban  
Sophie Houston  
Thomas Perritt

## Half Scarlet Award with Continued Excellence

Andreea Alexa  
Corina Andrian

## Half Scarlet Award

Alessandro Favaro  
Barbara Kellie  
Eilis Cusack  
Irina Bogdan  
Jaimie Allan  
Jennifer Ritchie  
Katie Alcock  
Lauren Taylor  
Lotte Helm  
Lucy Ritchie  
Lynn Lukiyanova  
Mark Dunphy  
Craig Osborne (Hon)  
Martin O'Donnell  
Michele Kee  
Neil Taylor  
Otto Jutila  
Rebecca Anderson  
Ross Leven  
Saffron Hickey  
Sergey Sedounov

## Recognition Award (Societies)

Aileen Walsh  
Aimee Hynd  
Alexander Campbell  
Caitlin Baxter  
Charlotte Little  
Christie Breen  
Emma Smith-Hunter  
Evgenii Zorin  
Genavieve Jones-Purdie  
Gillian Barron  
Kai Rough  
Katie Rice  
Laura Cheyne  
Lottie Hirons  
Mary Dimitrov  
Mhairi Black

Nikhil Mair  
Philip Tremmel  
Stephanie Cullen  
Stephannie Mather  
Jennifer Robertson

## Full Blue Award

Aaron Moran  
Adam Hobson  
Alex Ward  
Cian Clinton  
Ciara Donlevy  
Douglas Green  
Eilidh De Klerk  
Hannah Cameron  
Isabella Tolometti  
Jack Collister  
Jade O'Donnell  
Lucy Scott

## Half Blue Award

Donald Macrae  
Ethan Rerbert  
Keana Thomas  
Kristen Stavridis  
Oliver Milton  
Peter Shepherd  
Rebecca Matheson  
Robin Shand  
Victor Eduoyemiekemo

## Recognition Award (Sport)

Alex McMahon  
Andrew Clark  
Ashkan Fathi  
Cameron Eeles  
Charlotte Blair  
Chelsey Mitchell  
Emily Clough  
Evie Harkins  
Gabriel Antoniazzi  
Gavin Kinnear  
Gavin Rittoo  
Grant Learmonth  
Jamie Duncan  
Jill McLachlan  
Joshua Thakur  
Katie McBrierty  
Kieran Matthews  
Melissa Gordon  
Mhairi Webster  
Niall Young  
Nikki Pettitt  
Randall Egger  
Ross Forrest  
Sam Howard  
Scott Davie  
Scott Murray

## Society of the Year RGU Film

## Academic Society of the Year IPE Society

## New Society of the Year Creative & Cultural Business

## Most Improved Society Computing Society

## Most Improved Academic Society Physiotherapy Society

## Volunteering Project of the Year Purple Wednesdays

## Media Group of the Year Radar Magazine

## Student Leadership Award Duke of Edinburgh's Award

## Student Engagement Award 57'10

## Student Voice Award Gender Equality & Feminism

## Community Ambassador Award LivEco / RGU Go Green

## Continued Excellence and Consistency IHI Patient Safety Chapter

## Most Improved Sports Club Trampolining

## Sports Person of the Year Colin Dalgelish

## Volunteer of the Year (Societies and Student Groups) Ross Leven

## Volunteer of the Year (Sport) Scott Wittman

## Society Person of the Year Jaimie Allan

## Sports Team of the Year Men's Football 1st Team

## Sports Club of the Year Football

## Sports Club President's Performance of the Year Men's Rugby 1st Team

## SAA Certificates

Abbie Stewart  
Alana More  
Andrew Knox Watson  
Andrew Pacitti  
Annika Mozer  
Chris Naughton  
David McAuley  
Diana Nitu  
Dugbatey Hoese Teye  
Emily Glencorse  
Farah Tahir  
Gemma Henderson  
Hollie Smith  
Idowu Adewusi  
Jack Stephen  
Joanna Robertson  
Karen Morgan  
Kris Kelso  
Matthieu McRae  
Michaela Harmes  
Niamh Bunyan  
Nick McIntyre  
Nicole Crane  
Robyn Cockroft  
Rory Barclay  
Ryan Johnson  
Scott Christie  
Sean Murray  
Kristin Tait  
Sarah Millar



# YOUR WELLBEING

## STUDENT ADVICE SERVICE

Advice was provided to students on approximately 525 occasions this academic year, with academic appeals (37% of cases - increase on 30% last year) and student misconduct (24% of cases) being the most common issues.

According to The Big Union Survey 2018:

- 65% of students are aware of the Advice & Support service
- 85% of students agree RGU:Union supports students and has helpful services which create an inclusive and safe community.

The Advice service has received positive feedback from the survey which is distributed 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.

“

THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE IS  
OUTSTANDING

”

“

QUICK RESPONSE TO EMAIL QUERY,  
ALWAYS CONTACTABLE WHEN I CALL,  
PATIENT ON THE PHONE TO UNDERSTAND  
MY PROBLEM AND PROVIDED CONCISE AND  
HELPFUL DIRECTIONS. VERY HELPFUL AND  
WILL LOVE TO USE THE SERVICE ANY TIME.  
I WOULD ADVISE EVERY STUDENT TO USE  
THIS SERVICE.

”

“

AMAZING RESOURCE PROVIDED  
BY THE UNION

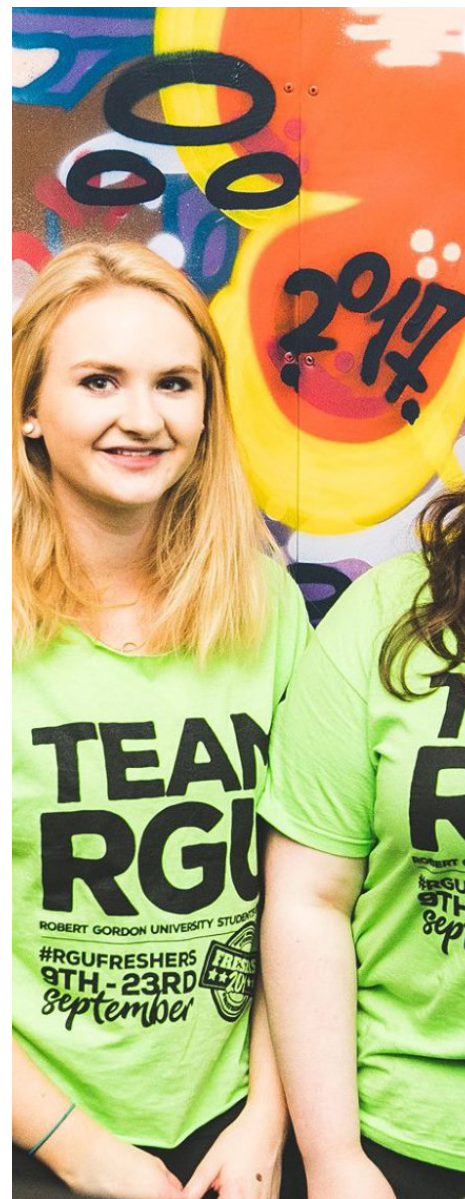
”

100%

PERCENTAGE OF USERS WHO  
STATED THAT THE ADVICE  
SERVICE WAS ABLE TO  
HELP WITH THEIR ISSUE, OR  
SUCCESSFULLY REFER TO  
ANOTHER SERVICE

92%

PERCENTAGE OF  
STUDENTS WHO RATE  
THEIR INTERACTION  
WITH THE UNION ADVICE  
SERVICE AS "VERY  
HELPFUL"



# WELFARE SQUAD & SAFE TAXI SCHEME

The Freshers Welfare Squad operated successfully again in the second year of the scheme. 8 students were recruited to look after the welfare of students in the night-time venues used during the 2-week Freshers period.

Here, they ran a stall distributing water, condoms, Freshers Guides, and keyrings with the contact details for Nightline and the Advice & Support service. They also helped make sure students were safe in these venues, publicised the Safe Taxi Scheme and helped students who were alone get home safely.

# EIGHT

TOTAL NUMBER OF  
WELFARE SQUAD  
VOLUNTEERS DURING  
FRESHERS 2017



## SANITARY PRODUCTS

With 44 participants, RGU:Union was the only university to take part in the Access to Sanitary Products Pilot with CFINE and the Scottish Government.

The pilot distributed free single-use and reusable sanitary products to anyone, no proof of status was necessary. The Scottish Government announced all schools, colleges and universities would be required to provide free sanitary products year-round from August 2018, and the data we gathered from the initial questionnaire and final survey enabled RGU to shape their provision.

The wider pilot scheme has encouraged the Scottish Government to roll out free sanitary products across Scotland in foodbanks and community centres.

## GUARANTOR SCHEME

The Union is in the process of lobbying the University to implement a Rent Guarantor Scheme for students. Feedback has been gathered and will be used to assess all aspects of the project, which will be of particular benefit to our international and EU students. We expect to see this campaign develop further in the coming academic year.



# YOUR WELLBEING



## STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AGREEMENT

In November 2017, RGU:Union commissioned a survey by research company Alterline, exploring the wellbeing of students. The survey contained questions relating to habits, personal circumstances and experiences, academic life and extra-curricular activity. It has provided RGU and the Union with evidence to shape campaigns around what is impacting student mental health at university.

In partnership with the University, and using the Alterline survey results, we redeveloped a Student Mental Health Agreement. This outlines the University and Union's commitment to improving the mental wellbeing of all students through activities and initiatives. With the guidance of NUS Scotland, we have mapped this effort through the following five main objectives:

- Create opportunities to normalise conversations around mental health in the RGU community and embed this in the culture
- Explore mechanisms to identify students at risk of poor mental health and put in place early intervention strategies and identify pathways to appropriate support.
- Actively encourage groups and activities to increase a sense of belonging among students
- Design and deliver sessions which facilitate staff and students to become more confident in addressing their own and others' mental health
- Increase the promotion of internal and external support services for greater student awareness of mental health issues and access to wider information on appropriate professional and self-help





# YOUR COMMUNITY



## GRADUATION BALL

The Graduation Ball again proved to be our most in-demand event of the year, with students queuing from the early hours of the morning in an attempt to secure tickets for one of the events. Almost 1000 tickets were snapped up in just under 2 hours, and extra tables were laid on to accommodate demand.

Both the Friday and Saturday night events consist of identical line-ups, with a four course meal followed by live ceilidh band and DJ entertainment.

## STAR AWARDS

STAR Awards is the Union's student-led staff award scheme which seeks to celebrate Support and Teaching staff with Appreciation and Recognition.

The awards are a chance for students to thank the staff members who work so hard to support them and for staff to get recognition from their students. The awards are open to teaching staff and support staff all across the university from lecturers, tutors, technicians, cleaners, library staff, and many more.

This year we saw staff members recognised from all across the university, with 23 nominations received from the School of Computing, 19 from each of Aberdeen Business School and PALS, plus many from our other schools and also a number of nominations for valued non-teaching staff members.

In total, 24 awards were presented, alongside a number of certificates.

# YOUR COMMUNITY



## RGU'S GOT TALENT

The Union received a total of 48 applications for our RGU's Got Talent series of events in early 2018. After weeks of auditions, five students took to the stage in the final round, with a team of staff and student judges crowning the winners as Oribe Edmund (1st), Sarah Farragher (2nd), and Margherita Baggio (3rd).

The event will return again next year, with auditions being held on Union Way in the beginning of March, and the final taking place on later that month.

## LIVE RIGHT HOUSING FAIR

The Live Right Housing Fair was held for the third time in March 2018. Holding it in the foyer area of the Sir Ian Wood Building allowed for significant student exposure, and holding it in March benefitted students by displaying different accommodation options 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.

With the event now in its third year, it has become established within the Union calendar and this is being reflected in footfall throughout the day, and also in interest from advertisers.

## ONE RGU, MANY NATIONS

One RGU Many Nations once again took place in the Sir Ian Wood Building to celebrate the wide range of different cultures and nationalities across the university, with 23 societies and groups from the Union in attendance alongside stalls from the wider community, such as Aberdeen Multicultural Centre. The event will return again in 2018, being held in November.





26

COMMERCIAL  
FRESHERS FAYRE  
EXHIBITORS

45

NON-COMMERCIAL  
FRESHERS FAYRE  
EXHIBITORS



# FRESHERS FAYRE

The Freshers period also saw another successful and well-attended Freshers Fayre, with the non-commercial areas of the fayre featuring 45 different stalls from RGU departments, charities and external support services held stalls on Union Way and in the Aberdeen Business School.

As ever, this was a valuable opportunity to make the greatest possible number of new students aware of services that exist to support them at university and in the community, especially at a time that is amongst the most daunting a student will experience.

The main hall again saw around 100 stalls consisting of the Union's societies, student groups and sports clubs, plus a large number of commercial exhibitors, including restaurants, bars, shops, clubs, banks and many other businesses looking to advertise to our students.

Feedback about the fayre remains ever-positive from students and stall-holders alike, and we continue to investigate new and exciting ways to expand the event each year.



# FRESHFEST 2017

Our annual FreshFest event took place at the Beach Ballroom for the second year as we aim to provide headline-level Freshers Week events which are open to all ages, including students under 18.

This year's event saw comedian Chris Ramsey as the main room headline act, performing alongside local music and comedy talent. Our sell-out Freshers big student quiz also took place during the event, along with a traditional Scottish ceilidh and silent disco.

The event has quickly become one of the highlights of our Freshers events schedule, with plans already in place for our 2018 installment.



# YOUR FUTURE

## RGU GO GREEN SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

RGU GoGreen have enjoyed great success in delivering sustainability projects over a number of years, helping to create a sustainable campus and community, and this was no different with their most recent project Revolve. Revolve sought to reduce the RGU community's carbon waste through a series of initiatives:

### Clothing & Textiles

Tonnes of items destined for landfill that could easily be put to better use are seen on the streets of Aberdeen each June. Whilst some items undoubtedly make it to local charity shops there is still a need for a service that is easily accessible, practical and efficient to use. With this in mind GoGreen instigated a collections service at handy drop-off points around campus, and organised a clear-out of some of the RGU operated Halls of Residence. To redistribute these items, Kaim Co-op was created as a means to facilitate re-use of clothes, encouraging community members to donate unwanted items, find new items to cherish within the previously donated items, or borrow for a one-time occasion. In order to interact with as wide an audience as possible, an avid group of volunteers assisted staff members in staging a series of pop-up shops around campus to promote the new space and give out clothing.

### Household Swapshop

RGU hosts a renowned Fashion & Textile Design course, and previous RGU:Union projects have included popular fashion upcycle workshops, highlighting the possibilities for pre-loved clothing. To take this to the next level, GoGreen opened up a boutique outlet with surplus items collected from the RGU community, with additional workshops demonstrating simple repair and repurpose techniques.

Kaim Co-op, dovetailing with the clothing and textiles swapshop, became a beacon for re-use amongst the consumer-led retail alternatives, offering a plethora of items for customers to take away, ranging from kitchen utensils to robot hoovers, crockery and cookware to household electricals.

### Bike Workshop

Building on an initial trial from 2016, GoGreen established a bike workshop on campus, fully stocked with tools, spare parts, and importantly, a mechanic, and christened it Bike Pad. This fantastic facility quickly established itself as a firm favourite amongst volunteers and community members, with regular maintenance sessions seeing over 100 cycles owned by community members coming through the workshop, with an impressive 87% being made roadworthy after being serviced.

Bike Pad was always designed to be more than a drop-off service centre, and every participant was encouraged to learn the skills that would enable them to fix similar problems in the future, prolonging the use of their equipment instead of scrapping and buying new. Over the course of the year, the Revolve project ran a series of ten workshops, covering a variety of skills. These workshops allowed GoGreen to provide more in-depth guidance, empowering even complete novices to look after their bikes, whatever the condition of their equipment.

Volunteer mechanics played an important part in assisting GoGreen in fixing over 50 rescued bikes. In order to maximise their impact and reward them for their efforts, GoGreen placed 13 of them on a one day mechanics training course. Volunteers then put these new skills to good use, logging over 300 hours in Bike Pad over the year.

### Partnership and Transition Between Go Green and LivEco

We recognise the importance of actively involving our volunteer base in order to ensure the legacy of projects and to create a beneficial, inclusive programme of events. GoGreen's many spaces and initiatives require coordination, staffing, promotion and management, which with a lack of funding can be a tricky task to fulfill. Luckily, we have seen a committed group of volunteers assist with many projects, and it is to them that we look to pass the baton. Volunteers played a huge role in all aspects of GoGreen, and in return GoGreen looked to provide the best opportunities for them to grow in confidence and develop skills, as well as feel at home in the spaces they initiate.

The final months of the Revolve project saw GoGreen begin the transition of ownership and responsibility being passed from staff to student volunteers, involving them more in the decision making process and encouraging them to think about the future. GoGreen also looked to partner Revolve's volunteers with an established student group - LivEco - who have successfully operated projects from GoGreen's 2016/17 CCF project. GoGreen's Engagement Co-ordinator in Legacy & Reporting ran a number of sessions to build a cohesive team, discussing organisational and communication structures within the group so that they can work towards their common goals in the future. RGU Business Management students also had significant involvement in Bike Pad processes, which served as a mutual benefit for the students as well as GoGreen, providing the students with experience and assistance for Bike Pad volunteers.

# UNION FINANCE SUMMARY

2017/18 was expected to be a challenging year ahead, but pleasingly we recorded a good result despite the downturn within the local economy. All Union operations produced a positive contribution during the year. We persist unwaveringly in the development of commercial partnership opportunities, coupled with the introduction of new events to accelerate income into the charity.

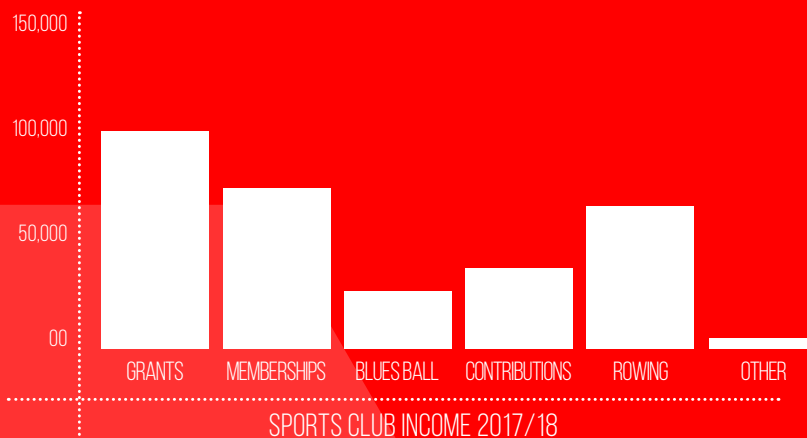
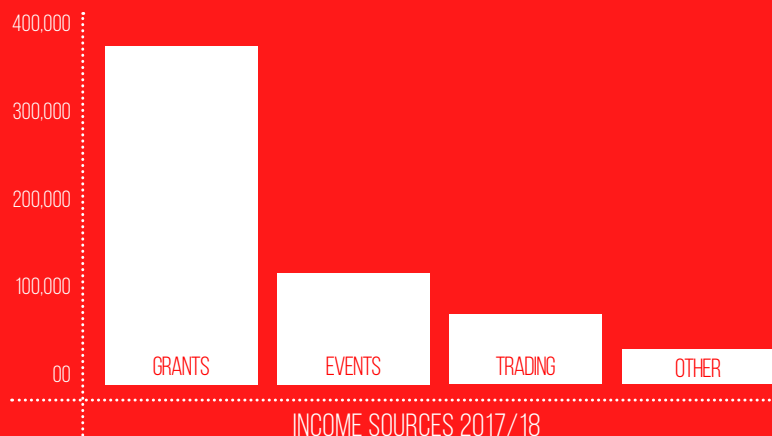
To view our published accounts for 2016-17, visit [www.rguunion.co.uk](http://www.rguunion.co.uk)

## FORECAST INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 JULY 2018

The total income generated by the Union is £881,912 including 33% from RGU Sport and 9% from trading activities. Go Green project ceased at end of March, but we hope to be successful in being awarded new funding next year.

The total expenditure amounted to £819,193 and the net surplus will be integrated into the existing available funds to create more projects for students' welfare.

Continuing the recent accounting legislation the Union is required to project pension deficits. Nevertheless the overall governance and aim of the Trustees is to uphold and sustain the smooth flow of the operation and to create more favourable projects for the welfare and meaningful interests of the University students.



rgu:union

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