

Societies Training & Rewards Scheme

We now have 13 Gold Societies and 47 Silver Societies. From this I've been building up a stock of development reports and plans – which are now available to view on the UMSU website. Good examples of best practice for other societies to follow.

Societies Training

Various Tuesday Trainings have been going on. In fact there's one going on right now (same time as this Council meeting). If I've learned anything it's that the demand for accredited first aid training is the most prevalent. I've been in contact with the University First Aid coordinator, and she has been pointing me in the directions of training possibilities. Unfortunately, most of these are non-accredited. I'm still looking out for qualified skills training at reasonable rates, which seems to be what most students wanting first aid training are after. The University Careers Service provides some course slots, and provides them free, but these are immensely over-subscribed as the demand outstrips the supply. I'm currently in contact with a trainer and I think this one is promising. Hopefully we'll have it soon – will be first-come-first-served though. Keep a weather eye out.

Facilitating Events

Biko Live, Just Jam, the Manchester In Fringe Drama Festival, and many others... they aren't going to support themselves.

UMSU AGM 2011

It's all about building for the Annual General Meeting now. We've got a lot of motions in, I've been working on motions such as reaffirming our (now-expired) Free Wednesday Afternoons stance, offering Steve Biko his rightful place among our membership, and pushing groups like RAG to put in motions too. Since it's the last one, the big one, we're going to try to build the hype as much as possible. Hopefully there'll be free food, lots of talking points, plenty of quorum, and we'll make it a really good AGM.

Senior Management Team

I've been on the interview panel for our new Commercial Services Director, and I've given tours for and scrutinised presentations for our new Membership Services Director. These new staff members will start working at the Union soon, (mid-May, I believe).

Societies Stock-Take / Development Briefing

In the rare situation where I've had a free moment, I've been working on a complete stock-take of all of our Union resources, provisions, and regulations for societies. It'll be a big comprehensive document. I'll be able to use it to introduce new staff and sabbatical officers to the exact issues we face, with plans and strategy for development. How we do stuff, how we've done stuff, what the demand is, and what we can do long term to make our provisions better.

Societies Democracy

At the behest of Societies Committee, and with help from Dom (Societies Rep), I've created a general handover document which can apply to all societies, explaining what it means for a society to be democratically led, and how they can perform this practically.

Accreditation for Student Activities

An area being piloted by the University, HEAR (the Higher Education Achievement Record) are planning to allow for proper recording of accredited activities students do whilst they are at university, to be on their degree transcripts on graduation from 2012. We've started the process of outlining a framework where the Students' Union can measure the extra curricular activities (democratic engagement, societies, volunteering etc) it supports for individual students, and create a database of information that the University can then use to verify what people have gotten up to whilst at uni, and the skills they have learned. The upshot is that for future students, their activities at uni will not go unnoticed and, hopefully, their employability will be affected positively by their exploits, much more so than at present. This project is very much in the planning stage at the moment – I'm busy attempting to set it up for the new Membership Services staff to hopefully take over and implement.

Pangaea Festival 9th June

Plans are in motion. Theme is 'Gone Wild'. Artwork & details launched. Line-up still a massive secret. Permanent website created. Tickets on sale. We hope you like epic summer BBQ picnics with Jungle Book musical theatre...

Check out the video: www.tinyurl.com/pangaeateaser