



LEICESTER  
STUDENTS'  
UNION



**2024/25** | Leicester Students' Union

# IMPACT REPORT



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# HELLO!

We're looking back at what has been a fantastic year for the Students' Union with a multitude of developments and successes. We are proud to present our 2024/25 Impact Report to help give some insight into the work we do, our achievements, and what drives us.

The incredible work delivered by the Students' Union is testament to the hard work of our members, our amazing student leaders, our course, school and college reps, our full time and part-time officers and our brilliant staff team – all working together to ensure students have the best university experience possible.

This year, we embarked on implementing the outcomes of our governance review. For this, we successfully delivered the *Union 2.0* project, where we introduced significant and truly transformative changes to our governance, including the structure of our officer team- creating a raft of paid part-time jobs for students, ready for the 2025/26 academic year. We hit the ground running and brought forward the introduction of the Leicester 100 – the new model of our Student Council which enables students to discuss key issues affecting them, pass policy and put forward and vote on meaningful recommendations. We also reviewed our board effectiveness and have since restructured it to ensure we create additional opportunities for students to take on roles on the Trustee Board alongside their studies.

We're wrapping up the year on an exciting note by putting the finishing touches to our new Students' Union strategy (25-28). This marks the beginning of a new forward-thinking approach which will guide our work and help us focus on how we empower our students to thrive in their environments, feel a true sense of belonging on campus and succeed during their studies and beyond.

We'd like to thank everyone; students and staff, who have made the accomplishments outlined in this report possible.

Kind Regards,



**Joshitha Venkataraman**  
SU President 2024/25



**Liam Davis**  
Chief Executive Officer

# ADVICE



The Advice Service offers free, confidential academic guidance to help students thrive during their time at university. It provides support on university processes and regulations, connects students with relevant internal and external services, and offers housing advice for those in need.

## 1034

**STUDENTS SUPPORTED  
THROUGH CASEWORK**

## 81%

**WOULD RECOMMEND THE ADVICE  
SERVICE TO A FRIEND OR PEER**

## 9049

**EMAILS SENT AND RECEIVED  
AS PART OF CASEWORK  
THROUGH THE YEAR**

## OVER 300

**STUDENTS REVISIT FOR ADDITIONAL  
SUPPORT FROM THEIR FIRST CONTACT**

## THROUGH RECEPTION

## 65%

**SIGNPOSTED TO  
SU DEPARTMENTS**

## 8%

**SIGNPOSTED TO  
UNIVERSITY TEAMS**

## 2353

**STUDENTS SIGNPOSTED**

**APPEALS 47%**  
**HOUSING 11%**  
**MISCONDUCT 13%**  
**COMPLAINTS 10%**  
**MITIGATING  
CIRCUMSTANCES 9%**  
**ACADEMIC 10%**



Throughout the academic year, the Advice Team has supported students by answering queries relating to appeals, complaints, mitigating circumstances, misconduct and housing- each area holding a significant contribution to their academic success. This work has been carried out in close collaboration with university teams, schools and departments.

# EXEC OFFICERS

For the 2024/25 Academic Year, four Executive Officers worked with the University to engage with change of policy and promote the student voice. Here are some of their achievements:

## JOSHITHA VENKATARAMAN

### SU President 2024/25

#### FEES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Successfully lobbied the University to revise its policy on fees associated with re-sits and dissertation extensions for International PGT students.

#### BLACK STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Supported the University's work on the Black Student Experience and the building of strong foundations between the Union and the University's new Black Students' Projects Officer.



## AJAY REDDY

### Sports & Societies Officer 2024/25

#### INTRODUCED JANUARY INTAKE GYM MEMBERSHIPS

Launched early bird gym memberships for January intake students, improving access and affordability.

#### COMMUNITY BUILDING THROUGH SPORT

Organised the Diwali Sports Festival, blending cultural celebration with sport. Led the Global Fusion Fest for International Students' Day, drawing 150+ attendees and promoting cultural diversity.

#### MY UOL APP ENHANCEMENTS

Improved the My UoL app by introducing a dedicated Sports section and a "What's On" page, centralising event and sports information for easier student access.

#### FIRST AID TRAINING FOR SPORTS CLUBS

Delivered First Aid training to sports clubs and societies, equipping members with basic emergency and injury response skills to enhance safety.

#### WELL-BEING SUPPORT – EXAM DE-STRESS ACTIVITIES

Helped organise arts workshops as part of the Exam De-Stress initiative, supporting students' mental well-being during the exam period.



# AISHWARYA KOTE

## Liberation Officer 2024/25



### ESTABLISHED LIBERATION COUNCIL

Successfully launched the Liberation Council, with 9 active members; 5 Part Time Officers and 4 appointed students, holding bi-weekly meetings to review student submitted ideas.

### PROJECT INCLUSISHIELD

Developed to educate students on how to report harassment, using tools like SafeZone and the Report & Support system.

### LAUNCH OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH: RECLAIMING NARRATIVES

This project led to the formation of the Black Lived Experience Steering Group, co-created with the University, to lead on shaping the theme, events and messaging of Black History Month.

### GLOBAL FUSION FEST

Brought together 150 students and hosted 10 cultural stalls sharing food, traditions and stories from different parts of the world.

### NEURODIVERSITY CELEBRATION WEEK

Aimed to promote understanding and raise awareness about neurodiversity across the University community.

# REED JAMES

## Community & Wellbeing Officer 2024/25



### SUSTAINABILITY

Introduced the Students' Union's first LEAP - Local Environmental Action Plan. Which outlines how the Union will become more sustainable.

### LOWERED STUDENT HOUSING COSTS

Convinced the university to introduce more support for students without guarantors by forming a partnership with the guarantor provider Housing Hand.

### MADE CAMPUS MORE STUDENT FRIENDLY

With the help of Leicester Food and Drink and The Library Team, I launched a new self-service station in the David Wilson Library Cafe. Ensuring that all students can access a microwave, kettle and toaster 24 hours a day, fulfilling a key student want.

### INTRODUCED FOODBANK PROVISION

Launched a new foodbank hub inside the Students' Union with support from Leicester South Foodbank, in which any student in need can collect a foodbank parcel.

### LOWERED FOOD PRICING

Worked with the Leicester 100 Task and Finish Group and Leicester Food and Drink to lower food prices at the university. This resulted in many key wins, from food prices being lowered to the large redevelopment of Starbucks into the Square Cafe, offering more affordable food and drink options.



# PART TIME OFFICERS



## DISTANCE LEARNING

*Natalie Hayward*

Hosted of 22 events to build a sense of community amongst the Distance Learners, including the Distance Learning Day.

Raised the number of members of the LSU DL Facebook Group from 36 to 162.

Trialled Peer Mentoring with a group of UG DL students.

Influenced the PGTR Review Board on how proposed changes could impact Distance Learning Students.

## TRANS & NON-BINARY

*Jamie Hyland*

Held a vigil for Trans Remembrance Day, from which Attenborough tower was lit up to commemorate lives lost.

Completed a Trans and Non-binary student-friendly hairdresser and barber list, and updated the Trans Student Resource booklet, building on the work of our last Trans and Non-Binary Officer.

## SUSTAINABILITY

*James Chick*

Developed and presented a proposal to Leicester 100 with regard to Sustainable Banking.

Held Sustainability focussed events, such as Mock Cop and Go Green Day.

## ACCESSIBILITY

*Aneesah Dhillon*

Introduced sunflower pin badges that enables students to choose when they want to disclose their disability easily, and created complimentary support packages for community members.

Ran online campaigns surrounding Disability History Month and Neurodiversity Celebration Week. Also supported at the University's International Day of Disabled People open event.

Successfully ran a prize-draw survey for disabled and neurodiverse students, fed back on the SU's provisions for students with additional needs.

## INTERNATIONAL

*Dhriti Bardhan*

Held Beyond Freshers events informing students about University facilities and support available .

Ran community building events such as International Student Day, International Student Mixers, Global Fusion Festival, New year and valentines events.

**Leicester Students' Union**

## WOMEN'S, LGBT+, ETHNIC EQUITY

*Keerthana Gajjala, Alex Burt, Baruch Patrick Paul*

Attended bridging the gap conversations for the Black Student Excellence Programme.

Brought on-campus HIV testing for HIV Awareness Week with Trade Sexual Health.

Successfully managed the setting up of a Women's Self-Defence class, and worked in collaboration with Let's Do Leicester.



# PEER MENTORING

**STUDENTS WHO ENGAGED WITH THEIR MENTOR ARE 11.2% MORE LIKELY TO PROCEED TO THEIR SECOND YEAR OF STUDIES**

The Peer Mentoring scheme is designed to help undergraduate students settle into life at the university through peer-to-peer support. Returning students in their second year or beyond act as mentors - being a friendly source of information, offering hints and tips to help new students thrive during their studies.



## 4,618

**STUDENTS MATCHED WITH A MENTOR**

**OUR HIGHEST EVER NUMBER!**

## 456

**PEER MENTORS RECRUITED**

## 243

**MEET YOUR MENTOR EVENTS HELD**

# ACADEMIC REPS



Each year, our School Reps are partnered with key staff to identify, create and work on projects looking at improving student experience within their schools. These varied projects address the unique challenges faced by students, allowing them to thrive, in each School and across the University.

## COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, ARTS & HUMANITIES

- Ensuring that the reading lists provided to students are as diverse working closely with staff to improve the reading lists to better reflect the student cohort.
- Working closely with staff on introducing a transition to university module.
- Developing a comprehensive guide for dissertations inclusive of Distance Learning students.
- Championing improvements to teaching for neurodiverse students.
- Improving the system for choosing optional modules.
- Work closely with staff to ensure that reading lists are improved, diverse and reflective of our student cohort.

## COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

- Gathering feedback on students understanding of the University's AI policy.
- Gathering and presenting feedback on why students choose not to engage in teaching sessions.
- Creating a designated space within the SU for students from those schools within the buildings that were closed for maintenance.
- Improving communication including a monthly newsletter detailing key events, support services and career events.
- Improving the consistency of tutorials across the school.

## COLLEGE OF LIFE SCIENCES

- Held a module selection fair enabling students to feel empowered to understand their choices.
- Enhancing the sense of community including the organisation of a highly successful Healthcare Ball.
- Improving communication highlighting events and successes including the setting up of a Shadow Marketing Committee.
- Developed proposal to change how group allocations worked for group projects.

## COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

- Increasing the visibility and awareness of Academic Reps.
- Looking at improving behaviour of students within lecturers.
- Planning and delivery of Financial Literacy workshops.
- Improving students' knowledge of the support systems and services available within the school.
- Running events to enhance the sense of community within schools including the establishment of relevant societies.

# COLLEGE REPS



## COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, ARTS & HUMANITIES

### GRACE LEWIS-BETTISON

Grace's work this year has been focused on three main areas:

- Reducing food prices on campus.
- Building college alumni links to prepare students for their future career.
- Working closely with Schools to streamline optional module choices.
- Improving the experience of introverted students by holding events.

From the creation of the new Square Cafe in the Percy Gee Building, to massively improving the experience of final year Law students in picking their optional modules, Grace's successes have been wide ranging. Working with the Careers Service and our own Student Communities Activator, Grace's projects around Alumni and introverted students will hit the ground running in the new academic year!

## COLLEGE OF SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

### JOSH SOETAN

Josh's main project this academic year has been the Scholars' Hub (previously known as the Academic Resource Hub) a space where students can share peer-to-peer resources, support and guidance. Working closely with the Digital Learning Environment Team to build this resource from scratch in Teams, Josh has held several trials with School Reps and students to fine-tune for maximum student benefit, with a hope to launch fully in the new academic year!

Alongside this, Josh has also been working hard with his School Reps to tackle a perennial problem in the College – lack of attendance and meaningful attendance. Taking a data-based approach, Josh has been hard at work behind the scenes identifying trends and issues in order to form a targeted approach to improving attendance.

## COLLEGE OF LIFE SCIENCES

### AYO AKINSINMIDE

Ayo has been hard at work on a number of projects, ranging from empowering students to give feedback through an anonymous online platform, to enhance awareness of sustainability, to holding focus groups to look at improving engagement with volunteering. Ayo's main focus has been on the creation of a college-wide Study Buddies Programme, and has spent this year putting down the ground work for a tailored system for study group matching, and we'll hopefully see the outcomes of this next year!

## COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

### DIMASHA MANNAPPERUMA

Dimasha's focus this year has been on ensuring that the Business Campus at Brookfield is more aligned with student needs. Building from strong student feedback, and her own work as School Rep last year, Dimasha identified several areas of improvement with Brookfield's offering – and has made sure these issues are a distant memory! From helping to extend the café hours to ensure students have access after later lectures, to working with staff to highlight bookable study spaces for group work, to liaising with the library to improve their presence (and helping to get a Library Book return scheme up and running at Brookfield), Dimasha has definitely improved student experience for the better!

# NSS RESULTS 2024/25

WE RETAINED OUR

**TOP 20**

STATUS IN BOTH STUDENT VOICE  
THEME AND FOR SAYING THAT  
WE REPRESENTED STUDENTS IN  
THEIR ACADEMIC INTERESTS

WE IMPROVED OUR  
STUDENT VOICE SCORE IN

**17**  
**SUBJECT AREAS**

WE IMPROVED OUR SU  
QUESTION SCORE IN

**15**  
**SUBJECT AREAS**

WE ARE RANKED AS

**2ND BEST  
IN STUDENT VOICE**

COMPARED TO RUSSELL  
GROUP UNIVERSITIES



"THE STUDENT UNION IS  
REALLY GOOD. INCLUSIVITY  
WITHIN THE SOCIETIES IS  
REALLY GOOD"



"THE STUDENT UNION  
ALWAYS HOLDS A WIDE  
RANGE OF FUN ACTIVITIES  
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR..."



WE ALSO CAME IN AS  
**2ND BEST  
IN STUDENT VOICE**

IN THE EAST MIDLANDS!

"...OUTSTANDING SUPPORT  
FROM THE STUDENTS'  
UNION AS WELL..."



A HUGE SHOUT OUT TO OUR STUDENT  
VOICE TEAM FOR ALL THEIR HARD  
WORK AND DEDICATION ENSURING  
STUDENT VOICE IS REPRESENTED.

# OPPORTUNITIES

**STUDENTS WHO ARE A MEMBER OF A SOCIETY ARE 15.2% MORE LIKELY TO PROGRESS TO THEIR NEXT YEAR OF STUDY -AND- 10.6% MORE LIKELY TO GRADUATE WITH A GOOD HONOUR'S DEGREE (A 1ST OR A 2:1)**

The Opportunities department is dedicated to helping students feel a sense of belonging by creating spaces where students can come together, build friendships, and explore shared interests. In addition to supporting the organisation and running of student societies, the team also leads on key events throughout the year — includingv Freshers, which welcomes new students to campus each September.

## 5,519

MEMBERS OF A SOCIETY

## 1,534

MEMBERS OF A SPORTS CLUB

## 44

AFFILIATED NEW SOCIETIES  
CREATED FOR 2024/25

## 2,686

ROOM BOOKINGS MADE  
ACROSS THE YEAR

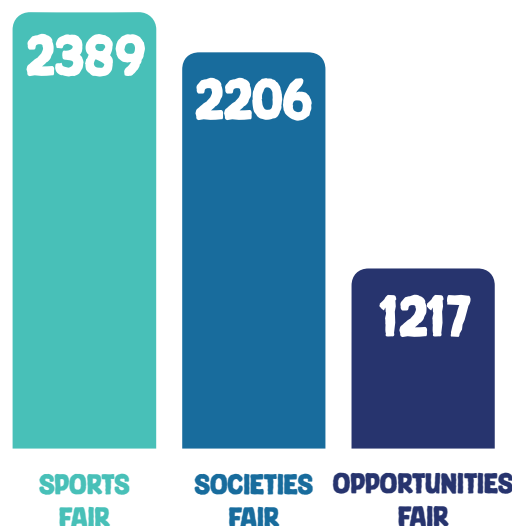
## FRESHERS

## 5,812

STUDENTS ATTENDED  
FRESHERS 2024

## 41%

OF THOSE JOINED A  
SOCIETY OR SPORTS CLUB



## VOLUNTEERING

## 64

EXTERNAL PARTNERS  
REGISTERS

## 583

STUDENTS REGISTERED  
AS ACTIVE



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

## £54K

### FRESHERS 2024

12.5% INCREASE FROM 2023

## £8.5K

### RE-FRESHERS 25

240% INCREASE FROM 2023

## £1.6K

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WELCOME

(PART OF FRESHERS WEEK)

During Freshers Week in September, and Refreshers Week in January, the Students' Union invited stall holders to interact and engage with students.

## £1.4K

### WELLBEING FAIR

(SPONSORED BY SULETS/STUDENT ROOST)

## £3.3K

### CAREERS ACTIVATIONS

(COLLAB WITH UNIVERSITY CAREERS TEAM)

## £750

### WINTER FETE

## £14.1K

### HOUSING FAIR

143% INCREASE FROM 2023

## £750

### SU TRIPS

The SU Trips collaboration created opportunities for students to visit Bath, Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, and Europe. These enabled students to build their own communities by spending time with their friends whilst also making connections with new people.

## £61.5K

### GRADUATION PHOTOGRAPHY

(IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TEMPEST)

## £450

### GRADUATION FLOWERS

(NEW INITIATIVE)

Graduation celebrates the success of students at the University, with the Students' Union providing services for flowers and photography.



# MARKETING & COMMS



**80.1% OF RESPONDENTS CONFIRMED THAT OUR COMMUNICATIONS MEET THEIR NEEDS, REFLECTING STRONG PROGRESS IN OUR OUTREACH EFFORTS**

## DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Transitioned to a new platform for our newsletters, resulting in improved engagement. The updated newsletters are clearer, visually on-brand, and more accessible, aligning with current communication standards. We now have access to enhanced analytic capabilities which provide valuable insight into student interests, enabling us to tailor content more effectively to develop and continue to boost engagement.

**26%**

**LAST NEWSLETTER OPEN RATE ON OLD SYSTEM**

**39%**

**FIRST NEWSLETTER OPEN RATE ON NEW SYSTEM**

**93%**

**OPEN RATE ON THE ELECTIONS NEWSLETTER!**



**10.1K**

**FOLLOWERS**

**1,230 INCREASE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR**



**855**

**FOLLOWERS**

**225 INCREASE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR**

## GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Supported the development of communications and launch of the Governance Review by creating clear, student-focused messaging. Released coordinated multi-channel rollout that increased student awareness of the upcoming changes to the Union's structure and governance processes.

## WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT

Led the website redevelopment project to make our site more accessible, user-friendly, and mobile compatible. The refreshed design aligns with our updated branding, enabling users to find information quickly and enhancing overall engagement and ease of access to service information across all devices.

# DATA & INSIGHT



Within our strategy, we have committed to becoming truly data-led in our decision making across the organisation and making student feedback and insight at the heart of everything we do.

## LEICSCHAT

LeicsChat is the SU's annual survey which collects feedback on academic experiences, Students' Union services and life at University in general. This year's response rate, of 1,207 responses, surpassed last year's total by 58. There was a significant increase in responses from Foundation year students, PGT students and Undergraduate Year Two students. Below are a few key takeaways from the survey:

**WHEN STUDENTS ARE AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE SU (PART OF A SOCIETY, SPORTS CLUB, ACADEMIC REP)**

**90%**

**CONSIDER THEMSELVES TO HAVE TRUE FRIENDS AT UNIVERSITY**

**80% WHEN NOT AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE SU**

**72.9%**

**OF STUDENTS BELIEVE THE SU EFFECTIVELY REPRESENTS THEIR ACADEMIC INTEREST**

**A 13% INCREASE FROM 2023**

**83%**

**OF RESPONDENTS HAVE A LARGE, OR SMALL, GROUP OF FRIENDS AT UNIVERSITY**

**90%**

**OF RESPONDENTS FEEL SAFE ON CAMPUS**

**40%**

**OF RESPONDENTS NEVER FEEL LONELY AT UNIVERSITY**

**LONELINESS LIKELY TO AFFECT MEMBERS OF THE LGBT+ COMMUNITY**

**72%**

**FEEL LONELY ON A DAILY, WEEKLY OR MONTHLY BASIS  
75% FOR DISABLED STUDENTS**

# ELECTIONS

**4,912**

**STUDENTS VOTED**

38% INCREASE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

**25,943**

**TOTAL VOTES CAST**

45% INCREASE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

**6,471**

**STUDENTS VOTED IN  
AT LEAST 1 ELECTION**

37% INCREASE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

This year saw, once again, a record number of students engaging in our democratic process, across a number of our diverse communities, to elect the 3 full time officers and the 12 part time officers, who will serve during the 2025/26 academic year.

## 3 FULL TIME OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT**



**10**

**CANDIDATES  
ENGAGED**

**EDUCATION**



**8**

**CANDIDATES  
ENGAGED**

**COMMUNITIES**



**8**

**CANDIDATES  
ENGAGED**

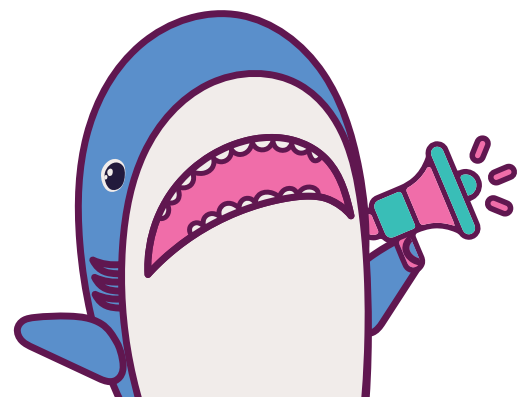
## 12 PART TIME OFFICERS

**SOCIETIES • ACCESSIBILITY • SUSTAINABILITY • LGBT+  
INTERNATIONAL • ETHNIC EQUITY • SPORTS • WOMEN'S  
DISTANCE LEARNING • TRANS & NON-BINARY • PGR • ARTS**



**46**

**CANDIDATES  
SHORTLISTED**



# GOVERNANCE REVIEW

In 24/25 we completed the final stages of our governance review. From 25/26 we are now set to better serve our members and make meaningful change on campus. Our structural changes include:

## 3 FULL TIME OFFICERS (REDUCED FROM 5)

We have changed the officer structure, which will increase the number of paid Part Time Officers, who will undertake project work throughout the academic year aiming to boost our student community and gives more opportunity for students to be in paid employment.

**PRESIDENT • EDUCATION • COMMUNITIES**

## 12 PART TIME OFFICERS

**SOCIETIES • ACCESSIBILITY • SUSTAINABILITY  
LGBT+ • INTERNATIONAL • ETHNIC EQUITY  
DISTANCE LEARNING • SPORTS • WOMEN'S  
TRANS & NON-BINARY • PGR • ARTS**

## 4 NEW COUNCILS

We rearranged the number of Councils, to better cater to the diverse interests and needs of our student body and each dedicated on focussing on specific areas crucial to student life.

**SPORTS • LIBERATION • SOCIETIES • ACADEMIC**

## LEICESTER 100

The Leicester 100 is a representative panel that will sit at the heart of decision-making within our Students' Union. They will be voting on student policies, determining whether they are to be passed. As we are led by students, it is crucial we aim for the voices we hear to be reflective of our wider student population.

At Leicester, we have a vastly diverse student body, and as a Students' Union, we have an established commitment to reflect this diversity. As part of this commitment, we are establishing the Leicester 100 to centre this across our policy voting system.

The '100' are selected to proportionally represent the wider student population, measured against the protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

Representation of these characteristics is key, particularly in positions of policy regulation and approval, to work as a safeguard against monopolising, marginalising views, and to operate on behalf of our students as a whole.

We are at the start of ever-evolving, forward-thinking, and future-creating change, led by the Leicester 100.

