

The background features a collage of two photographs. The top photograph shows three young men with dark hair, smiling and looking towards the camera. The bottom photograph shows a woman with glasses, smiling and looking down at her work. She is wearing a white t-shirt that is splattered with various colors of paint. The entire image is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent teal shape that contains the text.

WU **WORCESTER**
STUDENTS' UNION
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
2023 - 2028



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Worcester Students' Union is a registered charity, independent of the University of Worcester, devoted to the interests and welfare of all students at the University. Every student studying at Worcester and on a University of Worcester registered course is automatically a member of the Students' Union (SU). Our charitable objectives encompass:

Representation

The SU acts as the representative channel between students, the University, and other external bodies. We listen to what our students have to say and make sure that it's heard by the right people. Our three Full Time Officers, President, Vice President Education, and Vice President Student Activities, are elected by students via an annual cross-campus vote to represent them and ensure the student experience is the very best it can be.

Support

The welfare of our students is one of our top priorities and we're here to support and advise our students on the issues that matter most to them. We run campaigns and events that champion the rights, welfare, and diversity of our student body.

Student Groups and Opportunities

We provide a wide range of opportunities for our students to engage with social, cultural, volunteering, and sporting events and activities. We provide support to our clubs, societies, representative Networks, and our Raise and Give (RAG) team, as well as help students start up new groups. Our aim is to get as many students as possible involved in what we do and to make the most of all the opportunities that university life has to offer.

How we are funded

The majority of our funding comes through an annual block grant from the University, as part of the duties given to universities towards SUs under the Education Act 1994. We also achieve income through our bar and venue, The Hangar, through sponsorship and advertising, and local partnerships. As a charity, we must not make excessive profit and any profit we make is reinvested back into the student experience and ensuring we are a financially stable organisation. We file our accounts each year with the Charity Commission.

Why Have a Strategic Framework?

The SU had a five-year strategic plan, which started in June 2016 and took us up to July 2021. As this plan was coming to an end, we were still emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic and life was very uncertain for our students in many respects, including socially, financially, and environmentally. To reflect what was happening at the time, we implemented a short-term operational plan, rather than devise a new strategic plan straight away. At the beginning of the 2022-23 academic year, we felt we were in a position to work towards creating a new strategic framework to reflect the changing needs and priorities of our members.

How Have We Done It?

We wanted to gain as much student input as possible and so undertook an extensive student consultation with the aim of getting as much insight as possible on every aspect of students' lives. We wanted students to provide us with honest feedback, both positive and negative, with this feedback helping to shape our priorities going forward.



During the 2022-23 academic year, we launched our insights survey, using the theme of ‘Tell Us How You Really Feel’, alongside creative pop-ups asking more targeted questions, aimed at capturing feedback from more underrepresented student groups. Over 900 responses were received from students, with much of this coming from in-person promotion and direct conversations, providing us with information on a wide range of experiences and concerns.

Using the expertise of Marianne Melsen, Student Voice and Insights Manager at Queen Mary Students’ Union, the feedback was compiled and analysed, resulting in a comprehensive report on where our key strategic challenges lay. The insight Marianne provided was invaluable and we are incredibly grateful for her expertise and support.

The SU staff team and Officers held workshops to identify how to meet these challenges and, ultimately, provide the best possible experience for our students. Conversations were lively and constructive, and resulted in fantastic ideas and suggestions from across all areas of the SU.

Utilising all of this information, analysis, and creative thinking, we produced our new strategic framework, alongside our new vision, mission, values, and enablers. We hope you like it and are always keen to hear your feedback.





Delivering excellence, uniting diversity, and enriching student lives.

OUR VISION





To support, represent, and empower our students.

OUR MISSION



Encouraging and supporting students to prioritise their wellbeing

Key aims:

- i We will be proactive in finding out what is worrying or concerning our students, without overburdening them
- ii We will support students to access help and advice
- iii We will facilitate extra-curricular opportunities that enhance students wellbeing

How we will do this:

- Deliver an impactful and accessible Help & Advice service.
- Review the way we collate student feedback and gather intelligence to best effect positive change to students' experience and wellbeing.
- Run campaigns and events that support health, wellbeing, and safety.
- Run competitive sport through BUCS and other organisations and champion recreational sport programmes.
- Support our student groups and their committees to be effective, and to grow and develop.
- Provide opportunities for students to volunteer on and off campus and to fundraise for good causes.
- Encourage collaborative working between different student groups.
- Have a bar and venue where students feel safe and welcome.



Understanding students' financial realities and reflecting that in what we do

Key aims:

- i** We will keep the cost to students of getting involved with our activities and services to a minimum wherever and however we can
- ii** We will support students in their efforts towards employability and make it clear how getting involved with the SU develops them as people and as leaders
- iii** We will work with the University to ensure value for money across their services and facilities

How we will do this:

- Continue to develop and deliver campaigns around the cost of living.
- Have a bespoke SU student loyalty card.
- Continuously review our entertainment offer to ensure it is what students want.
- Develop our commercial income streams where we are able.
- Benchmark our prices against other Students' Unions and local businesses.
- Employ students wherever we can.
- Provide guidance and information for students on the world of work and getting jobs.
- To meet our green obligations, balancing the environmental impact of what we buy and offer against the cost to our members.



Empowering students to have their say

Key aims:

- i We will support students to engage in things that affect them and wider society
- ii We will go out to where students are and not wait for them to come to us, being present and listening to their experiences
- iii We will emphasise our independence from the University, ensuring we challenge them based on our students' feedback and experiences, whilst continually demonstrating to our students how and where we will represent them.

How we will do this:

- Facilitate an effective Academic Representation system in partnership with the University.
- Support and grow our Student Networks to represent students.
- Provide simple and accessible platforms for students' feedback and ideas that create positive change.
- Deliver regular in-person outreach across all campuses.
- Support and encourage students with their campaigns and ideas.
- Facilitate effective and engaging student meetings, including our councils, sub-councils, and other forums and feed back to the student body on what happens at those meetings.
- Provide helpful information on how students can engage with local and national politics.



Making sure our diverse student body is represented.

Key aims:

- i** We will understand and learn about the diversity of our students so we can support and represent them
- ii** We will ensure Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is central to all we do, working to an informed action plan each year and keeping our members updated
- iii** We will deliver activities and events that are accessible and that appeal to different students

How we will do this:

- Support and grow our Student Networks to be influential groups on campus.
- Host a full programme of diverse events in The Hangar.
- Provide different platforms for ongoing feedback from students.
- Continuously develop our Academic Representation system to reflect our student body
- Inform our students about our progress against our EDI Action Plan.
- Provide regular updates on what we're doing and why we're doing it.



Building connected student communities where students feel they belong.

Key aims:

- i** We will be highly visible to our student body and be a 'home from home' through physical and online spaces
- ii** We will help and enable students to build communities that benefit them and their University experience
- iii** We will provide environments for students to have positive interactions with each other and learn new things

How we will do this :

- Deliver relevant, engaging, and responsive social media and digital content.
- Ensure physical promotion of our opportunities and student groups across the University campuses.
- Facilitate and support our Student Networks to thrive and grow.
- Provide regular updates to the University staffing community about what we are doing so they can refer students to us.
- Facilitate a diverse range of student-led events.
- Enable students to engage in sustainability and activities that help to protect our environment.
- Have a work environment where staff enjoy their jobs, get job satisfaction, and will do their best for students.



Being Bold

We will try new things, be adaptable, and speak out when we need to. We will provide opportunities and activities that are worth students spending their time doing (if they're not, we won't do them!). We will create a great place for people to work, where they can see ideas become reality.

Honest communication

We will be open about what we can and can't achieve and what we do and don't do. And we will tell students what we are doing and keep them updated. We will make it clear to our students what we offer and that we are there for all of them.

Keeping it simple

We will avoid having unnecessary bureaucracy or barriers to students getting involved with us.



Developing people

This is hugely important to us. We will shape experiences and develop everyone who is involved in the SU – students and staff alike – so they try new things and gain new skills.

Representative

We will work very hard to ensure that all students at the University feel valued and represented by us.

Inclusive and Accessible

We will ensure that we think about our diverse student body in providing services, activities, and events. We will work to remove barriers and challenge ourselves not to make assumptions about students' wants and needs.



Culture

One that is positive, open, honest, and inclusive. Our staff will be welcoming to students, regardless of their role in the organisation, to enable widespread conversations. We will ensure we create safe spaces for debate and challenge and a great working environment for our staff.

Partnerships

Including the University (and its range of services and departments), the local community, our sponsors, and the wider Higher Education sector and community (including with other Students' Unions and national organisations).

Feedback and Insight

We will ensure we have ways to efficiently and effectively collate and act on students' feedback and information, and to monitor how we respond.



Environmentally sustainable practices

We will learn from developments in sustainable practice to ensure we work together to protect the environment and the world we live in.

Financial prudence

We will be financially responsible, ensuring appropriate use of our charitable funds, forecasting and future proofing, and working with our partners to ensure value for money for our students and a good wage for our employees.



GLOSSARY

Academic Representation

Gathering student feedback via Course and Department Reps, and feeding this back to staff at the University to bring about positive change. We work in partnership with the University to deliver the Academic Representation system. We also call this Student Voice.

BUCS

British Universities and Colleges Sport, the national governing body for higher education sport in the UK.

Clubs

Sports clubs at the University of Worcester, facilitated by the SU and led by student-run committees.

Committees

Democratically elected student members of clubs and societies responsible for the running of their club or society.

Course Reps

Students elected by their peers to represent their cohort's academic views and ensure feedback is actioned by the SU or University.

Department Reps

Students appointed via an application process, who provide a link between Course Reps and senior members of University staff within their School. They liaise with the Vice President Education to ensure the SU is informed of academic issues affecting students.

Education Council

A forum for Department Reps and academic society Chairs to discuss, debate, and respond to the academic issues facing students.

The Hangar

Bar and events venue run by the SU and located in the SU building.

Help & Advice

The SU's independent, confidential, and impartial advice service, available to all University of Worcester students.

Members

Students at the University represented by the SU. All University of Worcester students automatically become members of the SU upon enrolment.

Networks

Student-led groups, supported by the SU, that represent and provide a voice for under-represented areas of the student population.

President

The lead elected representative of the SU. Champions the rights, welfare, and diversity of students.

RAG

Raise and Give (RAG), a student-led service to support fundraising events and activities for nominated charities, supported by the SU.

Societies

General interest groups at the University, led by student-run committees and supported by the SU.

Student Council

The highest student representative body in the SU. Ensures students have a say on policy and how the SU is run.

Students' Union

An independent charity dedicated to the educational interests and welfare of students at the University of Worcester.

TeamWorc Action

Our volunteering offering for students, providing volunteering opportunities in the SU and local community.

TeamWorc Council

A forum for committee members of clubs and societies to discuss how they are run and provide feedback on the student experience.

Vice President Education

The elected representative of the SU who takes a lead on educational quality issues.

Vice President Student Activities

The elected representative of the SU who takes a lead on sports, societies, fundraising, and volunteering.

Welfare and Inclusion Council

A forum for Network and faith and cultural society chairs to discuss welfare, inclusion, equity, and sustainable development



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