**Vice President Student Activities Report
Student Council April 2015**

With a number of events happening in the last few months of term, we have been very busy.Since the last council the final touches have been put into place for Varsity 2015, we are also looking to finalise Celebration Week promotional material so that we can send it out before Students start to approach their last hand ins.

Spotlight Society have been working hard to keep up momentum with their Arts Festival – “D!versity”. Applications to perform in the show close on 1st May.We are hoping this will become an annual event in the SU calendar.

As this is the last student council, I have bought my manifesto in order to review my term in office. Please find my manifesto below. The points in red are how I believe I have worked towards achieving my aims. I will admit that some of my manifesto has not been achieved in full but I believe I have made an attempt in every point and have had some big successes in certain areas.

**Abi Clarke, Sports Coaching Science and Development, Manifesto 2014-15**

University is about academic achievement and so much more. I believe that every student deserves the right to gain confidence, independence and opportunities that will lead to an experience that will change their life. I consider every student experience as individual; however all students should have the chance to take advantage of University life inside and out of the lecture theatre.

**My aims:**

* **ALL** students should have access to sporting, social and voluntary opportunities within the University.
* Increase the amount of recreational sports, activities and events available to **ALL** students, including **more flexible sessions for placement students** and partner colleges.
* **Increased opportunities for students off campus** – sporting, social and volunteering events made more accessible to **ALL** students on and off campus.
* Introduction of **intramural games** within halls and societies

This year we have pushed our societies and sports clubs to be as approachable and welcoming as possible and to not merely focus on Freshers’ Activities Fair to target new recruits and members. We have also encouraged semester memberships and pay as you go events (where events and sessions are added to the system individually) so that students can attend more flexibly, this is to help those students who cannot commit to full year memberships but still want to get involved with extra-curricular activities. During induction talks and during the induction period I tried to encourage as many students as possible to broaden their university experience by getting involved in extra-curricular activities, including voluntary options. Our systems show that we have more registered volunteers, more society and sports members than in previous years. We also have a more diverse group of students joining our teams, with a marked increase in the number of mature students joining our clubs.

At the start of my term in office I tried to identify barriers to participation. One of these barriers was identified as financial. Through various meetings with the University, I secured funding which enabled us to remove the #TeamWorc insurance payment (previously £5 for societies and £10 for sport) this was worked out as an estimated saving of £20,000 for our students.
We have also encouraged our clubs to challenge other students in different competitions which has led to an increase in recreational activity. So although a formal structure of intra-mural sport was not achieved, we have been able to offer more recreational opportunities, and more chance for teams to compete between each other, mainly through charity fundraisers.

* **YOUR VOICE** – students should have increased influence on decisions that affect them. Drop in sessions and suggestion boxes will be introduced to increase communication and allow the student voice to be heard.

Within my role, I have created various formal and informal subcommittees of students to discuss key issues that affect them. I have also introduced open forums where committee members are invited to discuss matters relevant to them.

At the start of the year I invited every society to meet with me to discuss their aims for the year and how the SU can facilitate them to achieve this. Now we are coming to the end of the year each committee will be sent a review of the year form to see if we achieved these aims and what can be improved for next year.

I have had an open door policy during my time in office and have spoken to hundreds of students about their issues and supported them where possible or pointed them in the right direction when necessary. I admit that more could have been done to get out and talk to those that don’t actively engage, and this will be something I discuss with my successor as an area we all need to improve in.

* Increased support and help for **ALL** clubs and societies, not merely a chosen few.
* More opportunities for **ALL** to feel part of a **collective identity** within the University

This year we have made an active effort to try and give our societies more time and more chance to have their say. As in previous years societies have always felt overshadowed by sport. With the SU staff we have worked to try and bring the societies under the #TeamWorc umbrella and really put emphasis on the collective identity. The introduction of an Arts Festival this year and a brand new Society’s ball (separating them from volunteering in VOSCAS) has shown that improvements are being made, but still more could be done, and this is something that will take more than a year to see through. The introduction of society’s coordinator will facilitate this change and hopefully societies will start to see how important they are to us. I believe I have started to create a positive change in the way that societies are overseen and hope my successor will continue this.

* **OUR ARENA** - Increasing the opportunities for **ALL** (including non-sporting students and societies) to take advantage of the Worcester Arena as a facility for training, events, meetings and activities.

More societies and sports clubs train and use the arena than ever, with increased amounts of strength and conditioning provision, increased training allocations and more student use of the classrooms we are getting more ownership of the Arena.

* **Welfare** – weekly surgery for students to voice their issues and access support. More campaigns and events for mental health and welfare issues.

We work with the mental health team and student services to discuss mental health support and student wellbeing. Various campaigns have occurred throughout the year within the University and Students’ union. However, this is something we feel should have greater emphasis placed on it and potentially be seen more in the Presidential manifesto, as opposed to an addition within the busy Activities portfolio.