

UNIVERSITY OF WEST LONDON STUDENTS' UNION

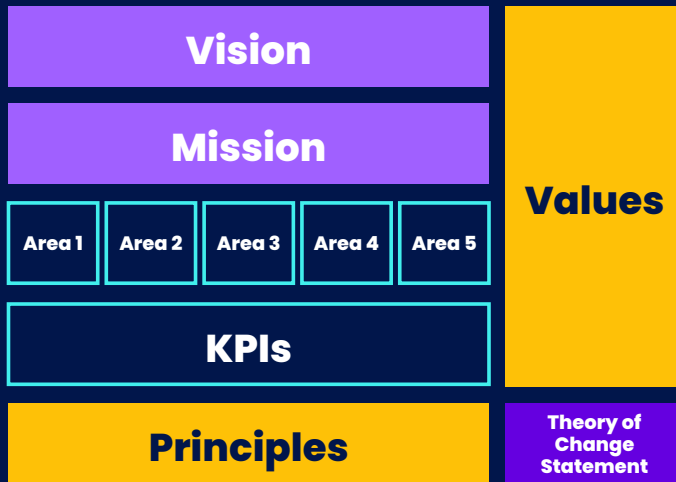
# Strategy

## 2024-2028



OUR 2024-2028

# Strategy



## VISION STATEMENT:

To shape our Students' Union to be a truly memorable and inclusive home where we have had a positive impact on every students' journey with us

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

**To deliver an inclusive and transformational student experience that equips students with skills, networks and confidence to determine their futures and fulfil their life goals**



# OUR Objectives and KPIs

---

## AREA 1

# Attainment

This was a strong, persistent theme which consultations found to be one of the most important aspects for students at university. This has also been a consistent strength within the Students' Union work in relation to student voice and advice.

The importance of supporting students to obtain a strong degree has been a focus of students' unions for some time, including providing 1-1 academic advice, student voice programmes, and representation initiatives such as elections. UWLSU recognise that many other factors contribute to strong attainment, which are present in our other areas of focus (for example, high engagement, wellbeing, strong communities)

Our focus will be to ensure that UWL's pedagogy is centred on co-creation with students, since many studies have strongly supported this approach. We want to ensure that each student feels able to communicate their views, feedback and ideas as to what they need to obtain better outcomes in assessments. This will involve continued collaboration with UWL's academic schools; academic quality departments; Vice Chancellors Executive and key support services such as the Library.

To achieve this, UWLSU strives for representation across each of our academic courses and at all major academic boards and committees in UWL. This allows strong lobbying and collaborative potential, in addition to supporting our confidential advice service for students with academic challenges.

# KPIs



## PLACED IN THE TOP 3 STUDENTS' UNIONS

each year in the NSS scores for the SU question

# 90%

of students accessing the SU Advice service report that they valued the support received



## MAINTAIN STRONG STUDENT VOICE

through ensuring 95% of all UWL courses have student representation



# Engagement

A consistent theme during the consultation phase emphasised our continued engagement with students. In particular, this tended to link back to how we can support students' success throughout their journeys at UWL, with a focus on our visibility to students and how we can continue to improve this.

UWLSU's engagement strategy has been at the forefront of our approach to our identity as a students' union. We engaged approximately 70% of our student population this last academic year, which we believe is reflected in our high NSS satisfaction rates. The more engaged students are with a SU, the more they are able to know what support is available, involve themselves with retention-focused activities, and develop their social circles.

All our activities and programmes contribute to engagement statistics, from becoming student-elected leaders all the way through to attending a wellbeing retreat activity. They are designed to measure how many students we reach through our programmes; however, we plan to develop this into assessing the number of students with whom we are meaningfully engaging.

Presence at all campuses was a strong theme in our consultations, particularly with students at our Paragon and Reading campuses. This is therefore reflected in our KPIs, along with a continued effort to achieve representative engagement – ensuring that international students, student-parents, disabled students and other key demographics are equally engaged with the SU.

# KPIs

**85%** **ACHIEVE AT LEAST 85% STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**  
with the Students' Union



**ACHIEVE REPRESENTATIVE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**  
across all demographic groups +/- 5%



**PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION**  
in SU activities across all UWL teaching locations



# Wellbeing

A sector-informed area of focus, wellbeing has been a consistent and vital focus for universities and Students Unions alike, with organisations such as the Office for Students and Universities UK mandating universities to have actionable plans to support it. Students and staff within this consultation process additionally noted its high importance, and commented that the Students' Union should develop its responsibilities and resources to further support this.

We aim to approach this area holistically, with a focus on how we can embed wellbeing into all programmes and initiatives for students. This does require specific interventions in addition, however, which our wellbeing strategy will formulate and focus on delivering.

The goal is to enable all students to feel healthy – physically, mentally and socially, and to feel that they are able to easily access UWL and UWLSU services should their health decline. This will require significant collaboration with UWL's wellbeing department, and require us to build upon existing, strong relationships in order to continue to meet students, requirements for health support.

This area of work will also require a review of existing programmes that can be attributed to student wellbeing primarily, giving UWLSU an indication of how engaged students are in supporting their own wellbeing. For example, our low-commitment sports programme is a strong intervention that has many wellbeing benefits physically, mentally and socially.



# KPIs



## **CREATE A WELLBEING STRATEGY**

and deliver all parts of the strategy in full

**90%**

of student staff and volunteers report that **UWLSU SUPPORTS THEIR WELLBEING AT WORK**



UWLSU deliver an annual programme of events and activities that primarily **ENHANCE WELLBEING**



# Employability

This was another strong theme in consultations and aligns well with UWL's 'Career University' mission. This was particularly well supported with regards to developing 'life skills' for students, which is regularly discussed within university and student-centric spaces.

As a Students' Union, our key employability outcomes for students relate to them developing skills for future use; opportunities to engage with industry contacts or networks to learn key sector skills; and developing confidence and resilience in unique student challenges such as imposter syndrome.

UWLSU will strive to maintain many activities that already support this area of work which include employing 80+ student staff across our commercial operations to build practical work skills; electing

approximately 700 volunteers across our course rep programme and committee programme to support leadership qualities; and connecting students on courses to build professional relationships. This also underpins the CounterCulture research that strongly advises the sector to consider cost-of-living support for students.

Our focus on employability also links with UWL's Career and Volunteering operations, a department that prepares students for life after University and gives them tangible skills to apply to the job market. They have recently developed an employability strategy which looks to embed career-enhancing skills into the curriculum and provide further opportunities to connect with industry, including alumni networks.

# KPIs

**90%**

of students in their final year of study are provided with an opportunity to take part in a **COMMUNITY, COURSE OR CAREER-ENHANCING ACTIVITY**

**90%**

of student staff and volunteers report that working with the SU has enhanced their **CONFIDENCE AND SKILLS FOR THEIR FUTURE CAREERS**

**500**

**STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY OR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS WORKSHOPS** delivered by UWLSU each year



# Community

A newer theme within higher education research, the building of community as a concept has been linked to improving student outcomes, particularly in progression and satisfaction at university. This theme came through strongly within the consultation phase, with several links to the impact of Covid and the unique challenges our students have, such as increased commuting times, lack of university accommodation, and socialisation skills.

As a new measure of success, we are defining the positive outcomes for students related to how we can effectively build student communities. This includes developing our clubs and societies programme; ensuring that liberation, cultural, religious and nationality are positively and actively represented; and growing our online communities continue to grow as technological reliance on these platforms also increases.

As outcomes, we want students to feel that UWL is home. We want students, through their own communities, develop a sense of belonging and obtaining lifelong friends who they can continue to develop relationships with post university. We also strive to ensure that each student's own identity is celebrated, understood and recognised by UWLSU and their university.

There is a new project with UWL to support this objective: we will work closely with UWL's new Student Experience department along with Marketing and Facilities to create a university space that students feel excited about and comfortable in attending.

# KPIs

**20%**

of the student population  
are part of a  
**STUDENT GROUP, SPORTS  
CLUB OR SOCIETY**



All liberation groups are  
represented  
**THROUGH A STUDENT  
GROUP AND STUDENT  
LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**

**20%**

**INCREASE IN ENGAGEMENT**  
on UWLSU online and  
social media platforms  
from 2023 levels

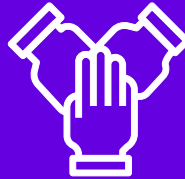


# UWLSU Values

**WE ARE....**



**Inclusive**



**Collaborative**



**Informed**



**Committed**  
(new)



**Empowering**  
(new)



**Innovative**  
(new)

# UWLSU Principles

## WE WILL BE....

- ✓ **Advocates for embedding Equity and Diversity in all activities**
- ✓ **Guided by Student and Sector Insights**
- ✓ **Effective with Finance and Governance**
- ✓ **Accessible to all Student Study Locations**
- ✓ **Creators of Community and Social Opportunities**
- ✓ **Partners with UWL**
- ✓ **Supportive of Elected Officers' Priorities**

# Theory of Change statement

Underpinning all our strategic areas, KPIs, values and principles, it was important to consider the accountability through which we enact and deliver this strategy for students. The Theory of Change derives from planning tools to create strong developments, social change and programme evaluation. It is designed to create a mapping tool of how each of the strategic priorities intends to solve problems or create opportunities for new ideas to flourish.

This model can be utilised to set out a mapping structure to analyse the progress of KPIs; in addition to identifying how many factors are involved in strategically meeting targets such as stakeholders, resource allocation, risk identification and more. Our Theory of Change statement specifically references how students will be put at the forefront of firstly identifying what their issues are and then how we will strategically map out how we will best tackle these issues as a Students' Union.

**Our Theory of change statement:** UWLSU will adopt a Theory of Change model to maximise the impact that our initiatives, activities and support will have on student lives. This approach will ensure that we are strategically aligned to our objectives and that the voices of all our students enact long-term, sustainable success.



# What our students say

“ The SU helped me when I needed advice and resources to help me bounce back mentally.

**ALADIN, AIRLINE + AIRPORT MANAGEMENT**

“ Here I feel supported and taken care of by lecturers and the SU, it really feels like a second family to me.

**LUCA, AIRLINE + AIRPORT MANAGEMENT**

“ I love being a course rep because I can use my voice for the good of other people.

**CASSIE, BA(HONS) MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH FOUNDATION**

“ Being part of a team with students and the SU has been one of my best experiences.

**TOUKA, CIVIL + ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING**

“ I feel supported by the SU as all their facilities are accessible and everyone is so friendly.

**NOREEN, BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE**

“ Being in Aviation Society helps me to meet new friends and engage with industry experts.

**MARCELL, BSC(HONS) AIR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT - AIRLINE AND AIRPORT SPECIALIST WITH FOUNDATION**

**UWL|SU**



uwl.su@uwl.ac.uk  
020 8231 2276