

STRATEGIC PLAN //

2023-24 //

**YOUR
STUDENTS'
UNION**

Keele **SU**



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WELCOME TO KEELE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION //

To ensure that Keele SU remains relevant to students and the situation happening around us, we update our student facing strategic plan each year. This year, you told us what worried you most about being students. Whilst varied, the issues mainly centred around:

- The cost of living and their finances in general.
- Concerns around passing their degree.
- Finding a job when leaving University.
- Making friends and being able to participate in and sustain a social life.
- The stress and mental illness surrounding all these worries.

Keele students also told us that some of the key points that Keele SU could advocate for making positive changes at Keele are:

- Improvement to campus facilities, whether that was modernising the campus, making it more accessible, or improving safety with lighting (and having a swimming pool!).
- Improvements to transport to and from campus, whether that was more parking for students, cheaper parking, or increased bus services.
- The ability and opportunity to engage in more social events whether night-time, day-time, society, general student gatherings, free or paid.
- Having exam and course work deadlines more spread out throughout the year.

With all the points above, we will do our utmost to integrate you into our strategic priorities for the year. Whilst we don't have a magic wand - we do have a loud and passionate voice, and a group of dedicated officers and staff whose roles centre around making your student experience the best it can be.

Whilst we update our strategic plan each year, something that doesn't change is our broader personality; our vision, mission and values.

OUR VISION...

Empower every student to be who they want to be and make a difference to the world.

OUR MISSION //

Through the delivery of our quality support, activity, representation, entertainment, and value for money services, we will ensure that you are a part of a community which is inclusive, where you can grow in confidence and simply, be students.

OUR VALUES //



SUPPORTIVE

We will support you through your entire student journey, both through the good times and not so good times.



FRIENDLY

We will make you feel welcome when engaging with us and ensure we are approachable. Whether you engage with us every day or once a year, we'll be there.



CREATIVE

We want you to be creative, inspired to try new things with us, and become who you want to be. We also want our staff to be creative, trialling new ideas, to ensure we can keep up to date with what you need.



PUTTING STUDENTS' FIRST

It goes without saying, we're a Students' Union, we exist because of you, we'll change and flex as you need us to so we can stay relevant to you.

2023-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN //

Our vision, values and mission are **WHY** we do things.

This strategic plan is **HOW** we will do it.

WHAT we will do is delivered via our internal departmental plans and objectives.

**“Every year, Keele Students elect peers to represent the views of Keele students.”
This year, your Elected Officers are:**



Jade Cioffi (She/her)
Development & Democracy Officer



Sam Hackney (They/Them)
Education Officer



Tom Robinson (He/Him)
Wellbeing Officer



Maisie Glock (She/Her)
Experience & Community Officer



OUR PRIORITY AREAS //

Whilst the Elected Officers have their individual aims, each year they work together to create 4 collaborative key aims. These collaborative aims are designed to ensure that you have the best student experience possible. The Elected Officers are supported by staff to achieve these aims, which are:

Elevating your Voice //

Whilst it's our job to represent you, this year we want to do more to ensure that students are centred in all University and Students' Union decisions. We're going to review and refresh all student meetings like UGMs, work in partnership to improve the experience of Student Voice Representatives and will strengthen and empower our student networks.

Embracing Diversity //

Our students are all unique, facing our own challenges and struggles, passions and aspirations. As Officers, we want to celebrate the differences of our members and embrace the diversity at the heart of the Keele bubble. We'll do this by hosting more inclusive and diverse events, ensure that your diverse health and wellbeing needs are being met and improve accessibility. In particular, we'll focus on the experience of our growing international student community.

Developing your Employability //

We know how important employability is to students. For many, kick-starting a career is the primary reason for attending university. We also know how many students rely on the wages

and experience provided by part time work. We will ensure you know your rights as a worker and are able to use the skills you gain while working, volunteering, and studying to further your employability. We will work to support students gain new skills, advocate for students working alongside their studies, and work with the university to boost student careers.

Helping you through the Cost-of-Living Crisis //

The cost of living disproportionately impacts students. Whether it's through travelling to campus, paying rent, buying food and participating in activities; life has become more expensive than ever. We will continue to work as a team, and collaboratively with the University to ensure students are supported through tough financial times. We'll build on provisions secured last year such as increased grants and bursaries and will continue to fight for an affordable and fulfilling student experience.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES //

We take our values seriously and base our strategic priorities on them.



How will we **SUPPORT** you this year?

- Continued provision of high quality, independent, impartial advice through ASK (Advice & Support at Keele SU), in whichever way you prefer to engage.
- You told us it isn't always easy being a student, so we'll promote the mental health and advice services that are available to you, so you know how to get help.
- We know that financial wellbeing is central to your studies and that it impacts on every part of your life, particularly during the cost-of-living crisis, so we will work to embed financial literacy into all areas of our work, from our skills development during recruitment to Elected Officer campaigns.
- Working with the Elected Officers, ASK will continue to speak up for your rights and look to resolve the common problems you tell us about. We'll also offer support navigating new legislation such as the Renters Reform Bill.
- We are here to support your educational journey, from helping you navigate the university's systems and processes, to supporting you having a say in the academic content, delivery and deadlines on your course.
- We will support you to reflect on, and make sense of the skills you learn with us as part of a broad range of co-curricular activities. The self-knowledge gained is a key attribute for employment. It is valued by employers and will improve graduates' success when seeking employment after Keele.
- We will work to ensure that the recommendations made from research into the lived experiences of international students are actioned.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES //



How will we create a **FRIENDLY** environment?

- Societies and Sports Clubs are one of the best ways to meet new people and form friendships at university. We will work to build the profile of Keele SU societies and Sports Clubs, detailing how much they can offer you from a social and developmental perspective.
- We will empower student leaders by designing and launching a new suite of online and in person training that prioritises their professional and personal development and meets the needs of diverse student groups.
- All Keele SU staff work alongside a behavioural framework, where they strive to be supportive, empowering and communicating well at all levels.
- Through a diverse and inclusive programme of entertainment, with a range of prices starting with free events, we'll do our utmost to ensure there is something for everybody.
- We will continue with our commitment to non-alcoholic social and study spaces in the Keele SU building so you'll have more space to dwell with friends.
- You don't have to spend money to come into the building. We want to create a space you can easily access and use with your friends, where you can bring your own food and be safe and warm.
- We will provide more low commitment, free activities such as crafting, games nights and animal therapy.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES //



How will we let **CREATIVITY** triumph?

● We would rather try something new, and it not work than to simply not try. We have to work within the objectives of our charitable status but we're here to guide you through that, so don't let that stifle your ideas.

● We don't know everything. We cannot do everything, nor can we afford to do everything. We are not perfect, but, if you have ideas for a campaign or want support with something we don't or can't deliver, or are financially constrained to do so, we will help you find charities, organisations or people in the community that can!

● We are building a culture in Keele SU where staff and officers are free to be creative and try new ideas, we hope that you benefit from this and in turn feel able to be creative when engaging with Keele SU.

● We know the cost of living can impact on your ability to engage in creative activities such as societies and sport clubs; working with Keele University, we provide access to a 'Cost of Living Engagement Fund' to help remove cost as a barrier to participation.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES //



How will we **PUT STUDENTS FIRST**?

- We will support the Elected Officers to be the best officers they can be. You elected them to represent your views and they can only do this effectively with the support of the students' union.
- Sustainability is extremely important to us, so we will commit to environmentally friendly policies and practices, working with the university and national organisations to the best of our abilities.
- We will put you first by seeking your opinion at every opportunity. This includes ensuring better representation of students who aren't always on the main campus, and those on professional courses.
- We will uphold Keele SU's democratic principles, ensuring they are robust and understandable. We will support you to engage in activities like Union General Meetings by reviewing how they function to ensure they are accessible, and meaningful.
- We will attend university meetings, feed into their structures, embed students in those meetings wherever possible, and ensure that we are representing your needs when we are there; for example, voicing the need for an accessible and fit for purpose campus.
- We're committed to making the Keele Community and the wider world a fairer place. We will continue to work hard for the liberation of underrepresented student groups through campaigns, representation, and training.

We hope this plan effectively represents your needs.

This is just an overarching view of what we'll be doing, it isn't an exhaustive list and you can let us know if our priorities need to change.

We are your Student's Union.

| **Keele SU Elected Officers & Staff Team.**



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