

STRATEGIC PLAN //

2024-25 //

**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, more study spaces, more water fountains 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 and more inclusive nights & events.
- Having exam and course work deadlines more spread out throughout the year, reviewing lecture length and timetabling issues.
- More variety of food across campus (healthy, vegetarian, vegan and gluten free).

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.

2024-2025 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:



Tom Robinson
Development & Democracy Officer



Matt Kemp
Education Officer



Zoe Garnett
Wellbeing Officer



Sophie Borman
Experience & Community Officer

OUR PRIORITY AREAS //

Whilst the Elected Officers have their individual aims, each year they work together to create 3 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:

Building Communities //

We know university life is more than just lectures—it's about belonging. Building communities helps to do just that – creating a sense of purpose and belonging in our students. We recognise this as key to student life and strive to create a student experience where everyone feels connected, supported, and valued. We're committed to offering spaces and opportunities for students to form these communities—whether that's through clubs, societies, events, or simply by giving students a place to talk.

We aim to foster an environment where lifelong friendships can flourish, all voices are heard, and everyone has a place that feels like their home. Building these valuable connections will help you thrive both inside and outside your education.

Tackling Loneliness //

We are dedicated to creating a supportive environment where your health and wellbeing come first. To combat loneliness, we foster a culture of kinship, prioritising the development of an interconnected university experience by encouraging genuine friendships. Keele SU is your home away from home — a place where you'll find support, connect with others, and have the opportunity to thrive. To achieve this, we engage in open, ongoing dialogue with you. We listen to your needs and do our utmost to meet them. It's important

to us that you never feel alone — we are a vital part of your ongoing support throughout your time at Keele. By addressing loneliness, we aim to improve your overall wellbeing, enabling you to excel academically while enjoying a fulfilling and rewarding university experience..

An Experience Worth Your Money //

We understand that you are significantly affected by the cost-of-living crisis. Financial struggles can be challenging, especially as the cost of higher education continues to rise. We strive to ensure that you receive a consistent, rewarding student experience that meets your expectations, providing real value for both your time and money.

We believe in transparency regarding the true costs of education, so you'll always know what you're expected to pay for. We are committed to helping you navigate university life with minimal financial stress.

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

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES //

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.
- We will work in partnership with students and the University to implement the new OfS condition of registration on tackling harassment and sexual misconduct .
- 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 Cost of Living initiatives to help reduce cost being 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.
- 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 Have Your Say Days by reviewing how they function to ensure they are accessible, and meaningful.
- 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 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 our networks, 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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