



BRISTOL SU
the best student life

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

2015 - 2020

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Executive Summary

Bristol SU has come to the end of a strategic cycle which was established in 2010. The focus of the plan reflected the need to stabilise a financially dysfunctional organisation together with re-establishing operational competence in the context of a major refurbishment and significant resource constraints.

We achieved the goals that were set and now have a financially stable organisation and over the period have achieved a wide range of external awards including Investors in people, Investors in Diversity, Bronze SUEI (Student Union Evaluation award) and Gold Green Impact accreditation.

The transformation in the quality and significant increase in student participation in our core services has not translated into a positive score in the recently introduced Q23 of the National Student Survey and the evidence suggests that there remains a significant gap between the perception of student satisfaction in the distinct activities and services we provide and their perception of the Bristol SU (UBU) brand. We recognise that the refurbishment and the ongoing location of the building are significant factors that are not in our direct control however we are clear that the focus of our next strategic cycle must be to redress the perception disconnect as best we can and to re-engage the membership through focusing on an offer where we can clearly demonstrate the unique value that their union brings to their student experience

The Trustees and Management Team have reviewed the strategic planning process and together with external consultants have developed an innovative strategic planning model that is best suited to the requirements of a students' union i.e. a model that provides directional stability and consistency whilst having the capacity to absorb the changing annual aspirations of the elected leadership.

As part of the strategic planning process we have refreshed our vision, mission and values in order that they reflect the findings of the brand review. They are:

Vision: The Best Student Life

Mission: Students drive and are at the heart of everything we do

- we are the collective voice of University of Bristol students
- we support activities so students can try new things and develop skills
- we advise, support and empower students to make change
- we are a vibrant social hub
- we provide quality services for the benefit of students

Values: Representation, Equality and diversity, Collaboration, Sustainability, Fun

The Trustees and Management Team of the union have identified a strategic vision for 2015-2020 **'Developing pride in the Union'** and 4 strategic themes that have emerged from analysis of a range of data sets including NSS, the Student Barometer, NUS sector surveys and internal union surveys including a recent brand research survey of over 1600 students and stakeholders. We have taken into consideration the latest information available from the sector and consulted with the University to ensure that our strategic themes and direction add tangible value to the University's strategic ambitions. The themes are

- Representation
- Development
- Social Activity
- Social Enterprise

We will underpin the achievement of these strategic themes with the following:

- A brand review and revised communication strategy
- An operational restructure and rearticulating of our values framework
- Strategic partnership working with UoB, local SU's, the City and other key stakeholders
- Extended impact measurement

Strategic themes

Theme	Vision/rationale	Annual SU Plan 2015 - 2016	Medium term KPI	Long Term KPI	ROI
Overall goal	Developing pride in the union	Increase student satisfaction by 10% by July 2016 Achieve NUS Quality Student Unions and an external Work Place accreditation by July 2016 Improve the student experience by undertaking a full systems review, in partnership with the University, by July 2016	Short listed for NUS Union of the Year by 2018	80% NSS student satisfaction 2020 80% all UG and PG satisfaction using Your Bristol survey	Improved recruitment and retention
Representation. Creating a network of respected experts in all aspects of the student experience <i>Brand survey 2014- 80% of students want their union to represent students' views to the university and improve students' educational experience</i>	To harness the collective voice of all students and create an improved student experience that improves satisfaction with both the union and UoB through empowered representatives	Increase recognition of Bristol SU's role, with 40% of students agreeing that Bristol SU helps represent student views, by July 2016 Improve support for our representatives with 60% agreeing that Bristol SU has helped them fulfil their role by July 2016	40% of students voting in any one Bristol SU online election during the year Evidence of making 25 changes that significantly improve the student experience	80% of students agree that Bristol SU helps represent student views	Improved union and UoB satisfaction ratings Delivery of Student Partnership Strategy Supporting compliance with student engagement QAA B5
Development Inspiring students to discover and develop their skills and strengths and empowering student groups and communities <i>Brand survey 2014- 89% come to university to make a better life themselves and to grow and develop with 70% seeing the union as helping them to gain skills and experiences that will make them more employable</i>	Developing outstanding citizens and the ability for Bristol graduates to better articulate a distinct offer in the employment market and wider community	Ensure students recognise development through Bristol SU activities with 40% of students saying Bristol SU helped them either improve their skills, or wellbeing, or undertake new experiences by July 2016 Improve support for our student group leaders with 60% agreeing that Bristol SU has helped them fulfil their role.	Ensure that a framework exists for students to be able to reflect and articulate the skills that they have developed through their engagement with their union.	60% of students agree that they have developed themselves through Bristol SU 80% of students recognise that Bristol SU activities have helped them to feel part of the student community.	Improved recruitment and retention Improved satisfaction ratings for UoB and union Added value of Bristol graduate for employers Supporting delivery of QAA B4 by enabling student development and achievement
Social Activity Enabling an exciting and diverse range of activities in and beyond the Richmond Building <i>Brand survey 2014- 83% see the union as existing to provide opportunities to socialise and provide events and entertainments</i>	The union being recognised as being central to a vibrant student social life and a gateway to safe social activities within the city	Improve student led events with 50% of students attending at least one by July 2016. Deliver an exciting programme of 350 diverse and accessible events including at least 10 Bristol SU branded flagship events by July 2016 Work to secure Bristol SU social presence on precinct by July 2016.	Facilitate 500 open events per academic year	Every student participating in at least 1 social activity or opportunity that has been facilitated by the union. 80% of UGs engaging in 3 or more per year	Improved community relations Increased footfall and engagement with Richmond building justifying 30 million investment Value added to distributed campus strategy
Social Enterprise Delivering products and services that directly improve the lives of students as well as making a financial	Creating a sustainable and relevant business model that increases the number of potential union touch-points with students.	Generate a total of £1 million of direct benefits to students, through new and existing enterprise activity. Ensure our financial security by achieving our budgeted income (£2.88million) through existing and new income streams by July 2016	£2 million of direct benefits to students created per year by 2018 20% of students agree that Bristol SU supported them through their life at University	£5 million of direct benefits to students created per year by 2020 50% of students engaging in 2 or more	Providing evidence of student ROI offsetting total cost of Uni life as well as tangibly improving their quality of life

<p>contribution to their union</p> <p><i>Brand survey 2014-89% see union as providing support and advice and 63% want the union to develop student focused innovative products</i></p>				<p>Bristol SU services by 2020</p>	<p>Ability to develop new income streams and increased touch-points</p>
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Conclusion

Our research has informed our belief that we will foster a sense of pride amongst our membership in their union through creating a relevant and forward thinking organisation. We will do this by: ensuring that their voice is represented in the University decision making processes; ensuring that they are able to develop and articulate skills and experiences that will improve their student life and beyond; and ensuring that their union is a vibrant hub where they can socialise and feel welcome. Whether we deliver services directly or commission services on behalf of our members, we will ensure that we do in line with our vision**the Best Student Life.**