

Sheffield Students'
Union Strategy



Sheffield Students' Union has embarked on a journey to deliver a long term aspiration of ensuring our members have the best university experience. There is a strong focus on removing barriers for students, and taking a long term view to ensure we are relentlessly pursuing our ambitious plans. This document outlines the high level plans we will be working on. For each theme, we have articulated clear goals for the next 3-5 years. For each enabler, we have identified actions for the next 2-3 years. Beneath these are detailed plans and projects which will ensure we are delivering our aspirations. We are developing a comprehensive set of performance indicators and measures to help focus and monitor our work.

Jaki Booth
Chief Executive of Sheffield Students' Union

Dom Trendall
President of Sheffield Students' Union 2016-17

Our Purpose

Representing, supporting, and enhancing the lives of University of Sheffield students

Our Vision

Our challenge is for the student who is born today - what promise can we make to them for their time when they come to Sheffield? In 2034:

We promise our students the best university experience: top quality education, life-changing opportunities and experiences that liberate and support them for the best possible future. All within a strong Students' Union run by and for students.

Our Values

Our aspirations are about transforming lives. We care about each other and the world around us, and as we work to achieve transformation we make sure all we do is underpinned by our values:

- **We are Owned by Students**
Student decisions shape our Students' Union. Student leadership shapes our future. Student actions shape our world.
- **We are Empowered through Inclusion**
We afford everyone equal opportunities; ensuring everyone is valued, included and supported in our diverse communities.
- **We are Committed to Sustainability**
We embrace the responsibility of ensuring that we are sustainable in all we do, conducting ourselves and our business for the long term gain of the Students' Union, our members and the world.
- **We are Ambitious**
We are confident and creative, with a willingness to do things in new ways; we 'make things happen'.

Our Themes, their Impacts and Short Term Goals:

Theme 1 – My Academic Life – Transforming Education

We partner with the University to transform students' HE experience: curriculum development and co-creation, peer support, and national representation. We support students through their academic life: collectively and individually, providing advice, advocacy and representation. In short, we make sure every student feels engaged with their education, part of a learning community and supported to fulfil their individual potential.

By 2034 - Our students will be recognised as equal partners in the academic community: transforming the curriculum, learning together and influencing education policy.

Goal 1 - Representation: Our students create, shape and influence their education at every level

Goal 2 - Communities: The Students' Union fosters intellectual communities - supporting students to develop and feel part of vibrant learning communities

Goal 3 - Equality: We champion an education that is equal for all; our diverse student body is celebrated, feels supported and well represented

Theme 2 – My Social Life – Friendship & Communities

All students have an important life beyond the formal curriculum. We want to help them all discover, engage in and lead activities about which they are passionate and inquisitive. They will work collaboratively to support communities. We want them to have fun. We want to make sure they find their place in this large and friendly community.

By 2034 - Our students will all feel at home in a place where they can develop, and cherish friendships & great memories: with more students running projects and groups, developing amazing activity for others (whether that is community volunteering, sport, theatre productions, debating, activism and more), and enjoying life in Sheffield.

Goal 1 - Knowing our students and what they need; in the building and externally

Goal 2 - The building/services adapts to the needs of our members

Goal 3 - Create a 52 week wrap around experience of Sheffield for our members

Theme 3 – My Place in the World – Global Citizens

This theme is about helping students see and take their place in the world. Sheffield is informally known as "the largest village in England"; our students have a place in their city, country and the world. They will make global connections and champion worldwide causes, whether that is learning a new language, making friends from around the world, celebrating together, or campaigning for social, political and environmental justice.

By 2034 – Our students will be connected to the whole world they live in: they will be culturally aware, travel abroad during their time with us, take part in their local Sheffield community as active and equal citizens and learn about the world from others.

Goal 1 - Feeling part of the wider world... through meeting others, learning about their cultures, and making global connections

Goal 2 - Feeling part of the wider world... through working towards an inclusive Sheffield community

Goal 3 - Feeling part of the world through... taking action for environmental sustainability and climate justice

Theme 4 - My Everyday Life - Better Lives

This theme will focus on improving the everyday lives of all our members; our actions will help make life better on a day to day basis, be that through resolving financial barriers, improving housing, help with settling into Sheffield, better health or other welfare focussed activity.

By 2034 – Our students will have less to worry about: lower debt & less hardship, happier in their housing, improved transport and cheaper living expenses; a greater sense of control over their own life.

Goal 1 - Every student will live in their choice of quality, secure and affordable home

Goal 2 - Every student will feel part of the Sheffield community

Goal 3 - Every student will feel good, happy and healthy

Goal 4 - All financial barriers and pressures will be eradicated

Goal 5 - Every student can get to where they need and want to be, safely and easily

Theme 5 - The Rest of My Life - Getting ready for the future

Our students want to leave university with the confidence, resilience and experience to be successful in their future life. We will deliver opportunities and develop support and services which ensure all of our students can have clarity over what their future might be like and how they will get there, with access to information, training, support and development to help.



By 2034 – Our students will feel ready for their chosen future: our graduate employment rates will be higher, our students will make confident decisions about their future choices and our alumni will articulate the impact the SU has had on their lives, they will be ready to flourish in the world ahead of them.



Goal 1 - Your personal effectiveness - have the confidence to have healthy social interactions and relationships, taking care of your body and mind

Goal 2 - Your independence - have the practical life skills to be self-sufficient

Goal 3 - Your development - opportunities to learn and develop relevant skills to support your future aspirations

Goal 4 - Your achievements - have the ability to confidently articulate your skills and experiences

Goal 5 - You in society - have the passion and confidence to actively participate in society and make a positive contribution

Our Enablers – How we change the way we work

There will be difficult decisions ahead to ensure we are reaching towards our vision. The Enablers will be carefully planned to ensure all of our practices are aligned to the ambitions stated within the themes and to guide those decisions.

Student leadership and democracy

Our activities, services and campaigns adapt and develop because our student leaders are fully engaged with our decision-making structures. The way we make decisions ensures we are nimble to reflect the constantly changing make up and needs of our membership.

- **Student Leadership Actions:**

1. Develop a strong student leadership culture
2. Improve access to leadership roles

- **Democracy Actions**

1. Align student democracy with services, activities and resources
Create new ways to organise and decide
2. Develop a marketing and communications strategy to increase participation, awareness and understanding of democratic activity and its impact

- **Campaigns Actions**

1. Broaden the appeal of campaigning for change
2. Improve support to help students effect change
3. Increase engagement with campaigning

Strong relationships

When delivering our work we connect with our members first and foremost. We also connect our members with each other to build networks. Our other relationships are important: the University, the local community, alumni, the student movement, local & national decision makers and the rest of the world.

- **Connecting Our Members Actions**

1. Review
2. Understand
3. Engage

- **Strong Relationships Actions**

1. Identify
2. Engage
3. Influence

Resources

We allocate our resources to ensure we deliver our Vision and support our Themes. In particular this relates to funding, space and technology and to the talent of our staff and volunteers.

- **Finance Actions**

1. Secure sufficient income
2. Manage expenditure to deliver the strategy and achieve value for money

- **Facilities Actions**

1. Develop new or improved environments for SU services and staff/student led activity
2. Ensure high quality, safe and efficient facility management systems are in place.

- **People Actions**

1. Learning and Development
2. Lifecycle
3. Engagement

Digital and Data

Through clever use of digital technology and data, developing neat communication systems and channels will facilitate our partnerships and relationships.

- **Digital Actions**

1. Improving digital functionality in membership participation and other SU services
2. Improve sales and marketing impact based on data and fresh content
3. Improve User Experience - for staff and members

- **Data Actions**

1. Gathering Data
2. Analysing Data
3. Acting on Data



**Ours
for life**