



Making More Happen

Strategy 2024 - 29

U STUDENTS'
UNION UCL





Contents

Introduction	2
Putting Students First Since 1893	4
The Union in Numbers	8
About our Student Community	10
Vision, Mission & Values	12
Strategic Themes & Objectives	14
1. Effective Influence	16
2. Amazing Experience	20
3. Vibrant & Inclusive Community	24
4. Excellent Union	28
Implementing this Strategy	32

Students' Union UCL has been at the centre of student life at UCL since 1893. **Making More Happen** is our plan for the next chapter of the Union's journey, a journey that has involved generations of UCL students leading the way in improving university life and developing one of the most diverse and inclusive student communities in the world.

In Making More Happen we are setting out our ambitions for the future of the Union, how we intend to continue to develop and improve as an organisation and how we aim to work with UCL to make the student experience the best it can be.

This strategy was first published in 2022, but we have updated and refreshed the strategy in 2024, to take account of changing circumstances and the priorities of our new team of elected student leaders.

From the Chair of the Board of Trustees and Chief Executive

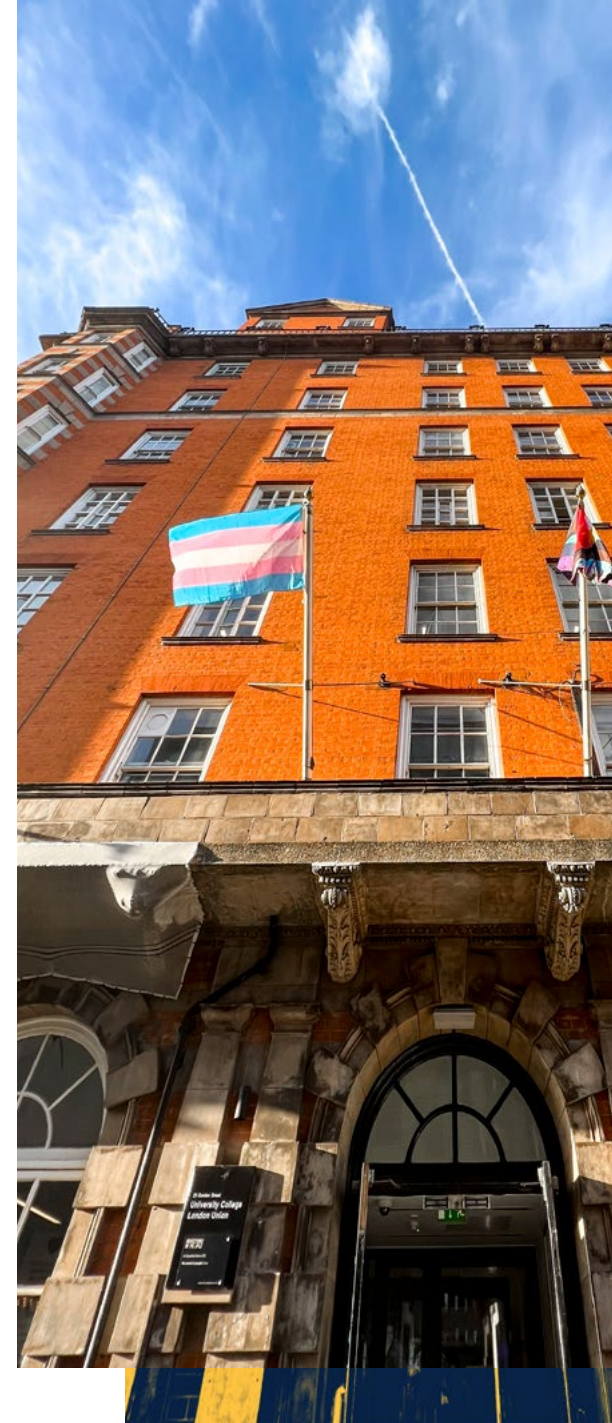
At Students' Union UCL, we share a vision to achieve an outstanding experience for our members during their time at university and to be one of the best student organisations in the world. The priorities set out in the document have been formulated jointly by our elected Sabbatical Officers and our staff team. The strategy has been developed following extensive consultation with our students, together with major commitments made in our officers' election campaigns, and key areas we need to develop in order to ensure that we are an effective, growing and well-run charity that is sustainable for the future. We originally published the strategy in 2022, but have updated it in 2023 and again in 2024 to take account of the progress we have made, changing circumstances and the priorities of our new team of Sabbatical Officers.

This strategy sets bold ambitions to ensure that the Union has effective influence; provides an amazing experience for our members; builds a vibrant and inclusive student community; and that we operate as an excellent organisation. We want to use our influence to ensure that UCL delivers an excellent educational experience for all our students. We want students to be full partners in the development of the University, with a real say in how the institution is run and develops for the future. We also want our students to be able to have genuine influence across London and nationally. We want to continue to develop and improve our services so that students have even more opportunities for pursuing their interests and passions; developing friendships across our diverse community; building the skills and confidence they need to be future leaders and decisionmakers; and above all enabling them to have fun and enjoy their time at university. UCL is ranked in the top ten universities in the world for the quality of its research. We want it to be rated as highly for the quality of its student experience both within the formal curriculum and in all elements of wider student life.

To achieve this, we will need to grow and expand our social spaces and facilities for students; our extracurricular programme in areas like sports, the arts, intercultural engagement, departmental societies and volunteering; our advice and advocacy support; and our programme of student events and social activities. Our biggest priority remains securing a new building for the Students' Union and new sports facilities to provide world class spaces for our members and a genuine home for our student community at the heart of UCL.

To achieve our vision, will require us to attract more funding and grow our income significantly so that we can better meet our members needs and expectations. In 2023 we secured agreement of the new Student Life Strategy which is delivering a significant rise in funding from UCL to enable the expansion of our extracurricular activities programme. But we also know that to succeed, we need to also generate more of our own resources to deliver the range and quality of services our members need. This will mean continuing to grow and develop our commercial services and expand our ability to fundraise and attract other forms of funding across all areas of our work.

As we look to the future, we need to ensure that we continue to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of the Students' Union, so that we pass it on to the next generation in strong shape for the future. So, whilst we develop, we must ensure that we invest wisely and seek to grow the Union's assets for the future. We will also need to continue to develop our internal systems and processes to ensure that we operate as a top performing, professional and well-run charity, and of course we will continue to support our staff and maintain our ambition to be an ethical, empowering and caring employer.





This strategy also sets a clear commitment for the Union on environmental sustainability. After listening to student feedback, we have incorporated sustainability as a core value for the Students' Union. We have an ambition to be the most sustainable students' union in the UK become a net-zero organisation as fast as we can. Our members expect us to be an exemplary organisation for sustainability and we have a moral imperative to do all we can to tackle the climate emergency, which is one of the great challenges of our time. We need to deliver on a triple bottom line of 1. happy and engaged students, 2. financial stability and growth, and 3. outstanding environmental sustainability.

This organisation has come a long way over the past few years. We have been one of the most improved students' unions in the country and the most improved for student satisfaction in the Russell Group. This has created a strong foundation on which to build. Over the next few years, we will be looking to stretch our ambitions further to ensure excellence in every area of our work, and aim to make our Union one of the very best. The improvements we are aiming to achieve will be transformational for the experience of students at UCL, making a huge difference to their lives and also supporting the success of the whole university.

We're proud to introduce this strategy on behalf of Students' Union UCL.

Goksu Danaci President of the Students' Union 2024-25

John Dubber Chief Executive



Putting Students First Since 1893

We've changed the game, got there first and set the standard for others to follow since 1893.

This is the journey that has taken us from our founding to today, and our ambition to make Students' Union UCL one of the best student organisations in the world.

1893

The Men's Union Society was established under the leadership of Professor Edward Schafer. Schafer discovered the hormone adrenaline in 1894. The Union's goal was "the promotion of social intercourse and of the means of recreation, physical and mental, of the students of University College, and the financial successes of students' clubs". It was one of the first Unions of its kind. A year's membership cost £1 and 1 shilling.

1900

The wooden Phineas statue is stolen from a local tobacconists as students celebrate the lifting of siege of Ladysmith in the Boar War, later to be adopted as the UCL student mascot.

1903

The Union elects its first student president; John Farcombe.

1897

The Union is given its first spaces on campus with three rooms in the North Cloisters including what's now known as the Haldane Room.

1905

The Union persuades UCL Council to suspend lectures on Wednesday afternoons to enable students to participate in sport and other activities.

1906

The Union's first drama production takes place – The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde, raising £25 for the New Union Athletic Ground Fund.



1897

The Women's Union is formed, with Rosa Morison, the Superintendent of Women Students at its head.

The Men's Union acquires a sportsground at Acton, securing a ground had been a key founding aim of the Men's Union.



1907

The Union buys new sportsgrounds for both men and women in Perivale.



1938

The Union moves its sportsground to a much larger site at Shenley.

1940

Destruction of UCL's Great Hall and associated rooms in the Blitz means the Union loses its main space for student performances, activities and social events.

1945

The Union starts the Student Healthcare Association, which, until the birth of the NHS, ensured all students received free health care. The first university initiative of its kind.

1946

The Union Society and the Women's Union combine. The Union, as it is today, is formed.

The first edition of Pi, at the time, a student newspaper rather than the magazine it is today. It was named Pi in reference to Dr David Pye, UCL's Provost 1943-51 who supported its development. Famous editors include Bel Mooney and Jonathan Dimbleby.

1947

The first Union bar is opened.

1948

The Union's Film Society is founded.

1951

UCL student opera is formed, the start of the most successful student opera group in the country.

1958

Shenley Pavilion is opened with The Foundation Games. They're played in a blizzard, but UCL beat Kings 15-9.



1959

The Union moves into 25 Gordon Street on a temporary basis whilst plans for a new Students' Union were to be developed.



1965

The Union elects Nelson Mandela as its Honorary President and founded the South African Scholarship Appeal, whereby UCL would waive tuition fees for one Black South African student per year. The Union, in turn, raised funds to cover the student's living costs.

Clement Attlee, Prime Minister 1945-51 speaks at the Union's Foundation Week debate.

1968

Union President John Shipley secures places for two student representatives on UCL Council.

Putting Students First Since 1893

1969

In protest of the Conservative Association inviting Enoch Powell as guest of honour to their annual dinner, the Union and the College devote the day's events and lectures to the study of racism.

The 'Central Collegiate Building' home of the Bloomsbury Theatre opens with space for Union activities in the floors above the theatre. Students are disappointed when the plans that had originally been for a Students' Union building were amended to build a theatre and rowing tank. Two further buildings on Gordon Street were planned with new Union sports and social facilities, but these were not completed due to lack of funds.



1972

Formation of The Lesbian and Gay Society, our first form of representation for LGBT students. They successfully lobbied the National Union of Students to run a Gay Rights Campaign.



1971

UCL students are among the 20,000 protesters to bring West End traffic to a standstill demonstrating against the Government's proposals on students' unions. Thatcher's proposal would have significantly restricted students' union's autonomy and finances. After huge student support for the campaign, the proposal was dropped.

1974

Students persuade UCL to give them representation on the Academic Board of the university.

The position of Union President is abolished to make way for a new elected officer structure.

1979

The Union leads the way on calling for UCL to take more responsibility for students' safety. After a spate of assaults on campus, the Union demands that male and female security guards be put on key parts of campus; a first for UK universities.

1989

Plans are drawn up for a new Students' Union building between 25 Gordon Street and the Bloomsbury Theatre. But the project is not prioritised for UCL capital funding due to the proximity of the University of London Union and the idea is shelved again.

1990

The Union secures additional space in 25 Gordon Street, opening Gordon's Café on the ground floor of the building.

1991

The Union secures an entertainments venue and bar in UCL's Windeyer Building, this was demolished in 2011 with the Union losing its only large events space.

1998

The Union funds a large proportion of the costs of building a new sports hall shared between UCL students, pupils at South Camden Community School (now Regent High School) and the local community.

2003

Students and staff campaign strongly in opposition to the proposed merger between UCL and Imperial College. The merger was later abandoned.



2007

Students campaign for UCL to divest in the arms trade placed fake tombstones in the main quad with the words '1,000 people every day are killed by arms'. UCL would later form an ethical investment committee and divest from arms.

2011

The Union moves into the lower floors of the Lewis's Building with the opening of the George Farha Café, Richard Mully's Basement Bar and Huntley Pub as new student facilities.

2012

UCL reveals plans to knock down social housing in East London to make way for a new campus. Students work with the Union to mount a campaign against the proposal and successfully save the Carpenter's Estate.

2013

The Union elects its first BME Students' Officer.

2019

The Union plays a key role in UCL's decision to divest from fossil fuels and in UCL's Eugenics Inquiry leading to the de-naming of UCL buildings linked to Eugenecists.

2020

The Union successfully moves to digital service provision during the Coronavirus pandemic, with thousands of students still able to access services online.

The Union persuades UCL to provide space for it to open a new student convenience store near the centre of the campus.



2021

The Union runs it's the largest ever Welcome programme and the UK's largest student election, and reaches 19,000 members of its clubs and societies.

The UCL Volunteering Service is officially integrated into the Union.

2022

UCL's consultation for its new strategy include the option for major investment in a Students' Union building and sports facilities....

2023

The Students' Union celebrates its 130 anniversary with the announcement of the new UCL Student Life Strategy, the biggest ever expansion of extracurricular activity at the University

The Union in Numbers



400+

Clubs and Societies

21,524

club and society members

7,199

students engaged in our Arts Programme

11,224

students engaged with TeamUCL

500+

students competing in TeamUCL Intramural Leagues

11,177

students voting in our Leadership Race



6

Sabbatical Officers

15

Student Officers

2,000+

Academic Representatives

50,000+

members

6,977

events hosted this year

5

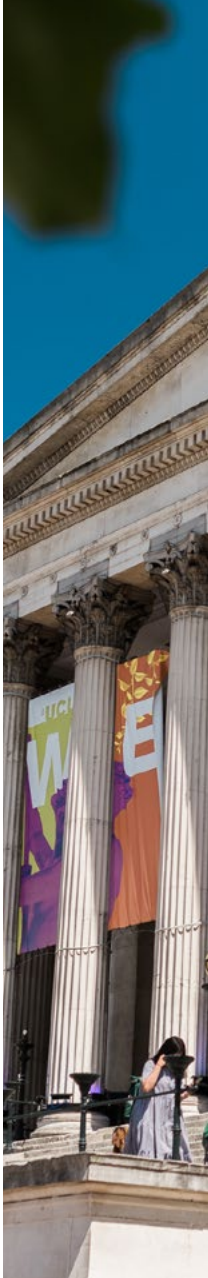
cafés

4

bars

2

shops



Data accurate in summer 2024 for the academic year 2023-24



2
fitness centres

250+
students employed
in our services

10.5m
website page views

6,130
students trained
as Active Bystanders

2,282
students actively volunteering
in the local community

800+
opportunities each year for
students to volunteer in the
local community

64,000+
hours of volunteering time
given by our members



30
Elite Athletes supported
each year

2,391
students participating in our
Project Active programme

700+
students involved with 26
major performances at the
Bloomsbury Theatre as part of
our Arts programme

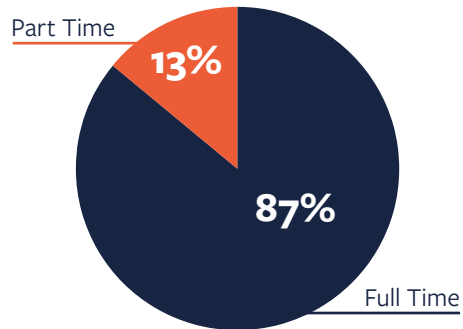
38,571
82% (38,571) of all students
booked a ticket to an event
through the Students' Union
website

2,020+
students supported through
our Advice Service annually

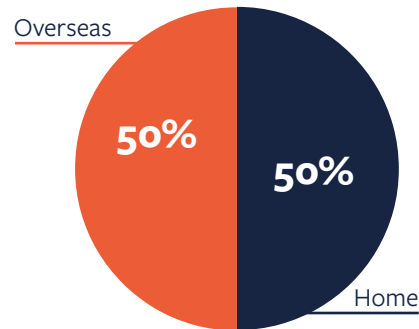
About our Student Community

We are proud of our diverse student community. However, we are also very aware of our responsibility to understand the broad range of student needs that come with a membership comprised of over 150 nationalities and ages ranging from 16 - 60 studying at different levels.

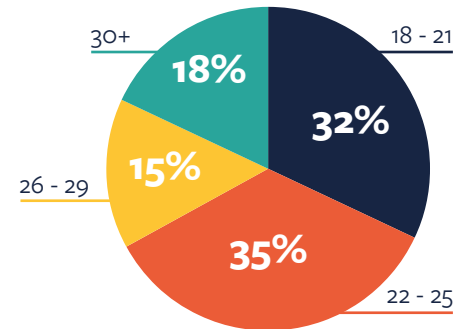
Mode of Study



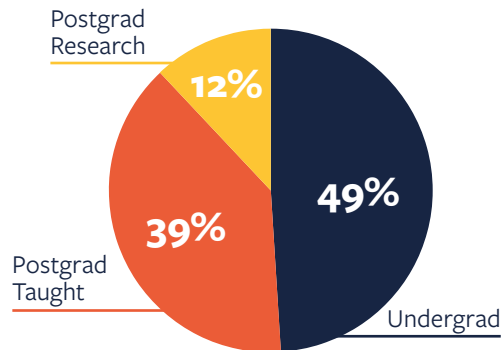
Student Type



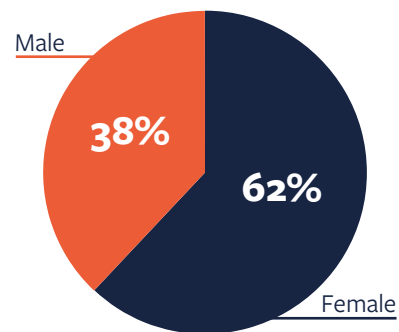
Age



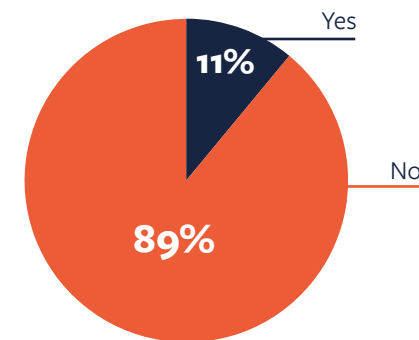
Study Level



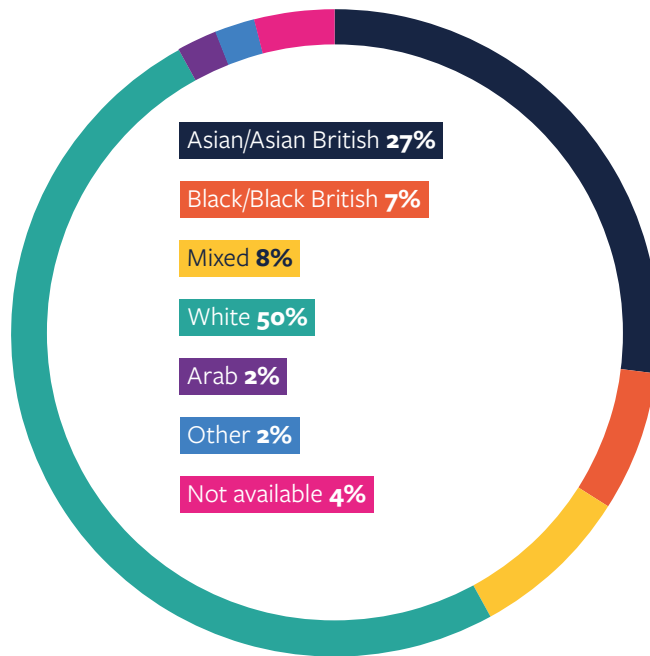
Gender



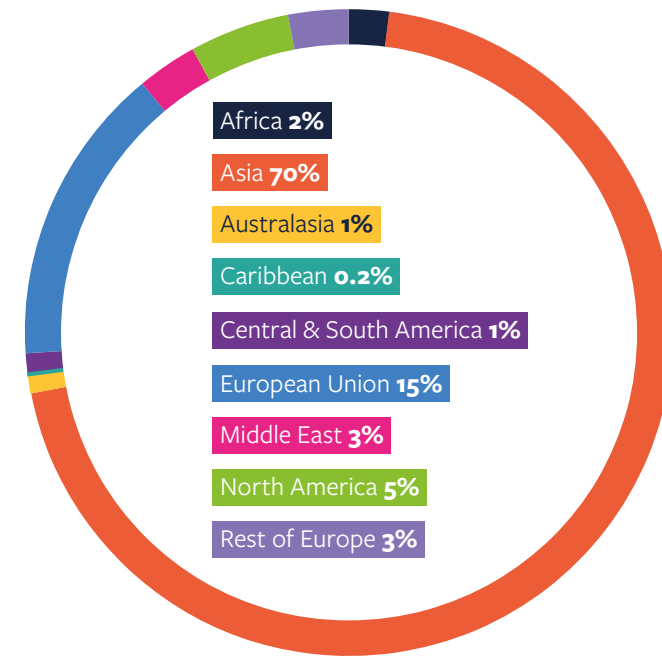
Reporting a Disability to UCL



Ethnicity of UK Students



Domicile of Overseas Students



Faculties

Arts and Humanities 8%

Brain Sciences 8%

Built Environment 8%

Engineering 16%

Institute of Education 12%

Laws 3%

Life Sciences 8%

Mathematical and Physical Sciences 11%

Medical Sciences 8%

Population Health Sciences 4%

School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies 1%

Social and Historical Sciences 13%

Vision, Mission & Values

Our Purpose

The objects of the Union are the advancement of education of students at UCL for the public benefit by:

- ▶ promoting the interests and welfare of students at UCL during their course of study and representing, supporting and advising students;
- ▶ being the recognised representative channel between students and UCL and any other external bodies; and
- ▶ providing social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its students.

Vision

An outstanding experience for all UCL students and to be one of the best students' unions in the UK and the world.

Mission

We build a vibrant and empowered student community with real influence in UCL and beyond, that enables students to enjoy their time at university; pursue their interests and passions; see the world in new ways; and develop the skills and experience to change the world for the better.



Values

Community

- ▶ We aim to build a strong community for all our students
- ▶ We want students to feel they belong and feel pride in being UCL students
- ▶ We support and encourage all members of our diverse student community to feel part of the wider London community

Bold

- ▶ We are innovative and ambitious
- ▶ We want to be one of the best student organisations anywhere in the world
- ▶ Bold thinking is part of our DNA. We are part of a diverse, exciting city and a radical university which has welcomed imaginative thinkers and entrepreneurs for centuries

Democracy

- ▶ We believe in representative democracy and work to empower and support our elected officers to help them to be effective leaders of the Students' Union and ambassadors for our members
- ▶ We cherish our democratic structures and want as many students participating in them as possible
- ▶ We encourage our officers to listen to a broad range of student viewpoints and seek to ensure that they consider the breadth of student opinion before taking important decisions

Sustainable

- ▶ We want to be the most sustainable students' union in the UK
- ▶ We want to minimise our environmental footprint in every way possible
- ▶ We want to hand the Union on to the next generation of student leaders and staff in better shape than we found it, protecting its assets and services for the future

Empowering

- ▶ We support and empower our students to develop their skills and confidence to change to the world for the better
- ▶ We help students to pursue their passions, discover new interests, and do more than they thought possible
- ▶ We provide support when students need it, helping them to access information, advice and support that enables them to overcome barriers and achieve their potential

Fun

- ▶ We want to make university life fun, distinctive and memorable
- ▶ We want all our students to enjoy their time at UCL and are committed to doing all we can to achieve that
- ▶ We embrace a positive, fun and inspiring working culture for our staff and officers

Inclusive

- ▶ We are a diverse and vibrant community with many different opinions, viewpoints, needs and experiences
- ▶ We value every member of our community and always try to ensure that our services enable everyone to play a full role in student life
- ▶ We believe that everyone has a right to express their views and to be listened to and respected as a member of our community

Strategic Themes & Objectives

Our Vision and Mission will be achieved through delivering four strategic objectives:

Effective Influence

Amazing Experience

Vibrant & Inclusive Community

Excellent Union





1. Effective Influence

The Union is the representative body for all UCL students, we have one of the largest collective student voices in the UK. We want to support our Officers and Academic Representatives to help shape the future of UCL and achieve positive change for our students across London and at national level. We also want to continue to develop our elections, communication, and engagement with our members, to ensure a healthy and vibrant democracy, with all our students having influence on our decision making.

Our Current Strengths

- ▶ We have amazing student leaders at all levels of the Union.
- ▶ We have effective democratic structures with a high level of participation in our elections.
- ▶ We have an effective partnership between our elected student leaders and our senior management team, with a strong culture of our Sabbatical Officers providing clear and effective leadership on the Union's strategy and priorities.
- ▶ We have developed an influential and constructive relationship with UCL that has significantly increased student's role in decision making, providing a strong basis on which to influence the future of UCL.
- ▶ We have a large and effective Academic Representation Network across all Faculties and Departments of UCL.
- ▶ We have significant policy and research expertise and experience within the Union to support our Officers.



Objectives

1.1 Influencing the Future of UCL

Ensure that students are full partners in the future of UCL, with our Sabbatical Officers making an effective and visible contribution to securing policy priorities for our students including:

- ▶ Aiming for a consistently outstanding student experience for all, with teaching quality, and student satisfaction and support levelled up to the same standard as UCL's world leading research.
- ▶ Ensuring that a UCL Education is rich in global content and perspectives.
- ▶ Prioritising the importance of co-curricular and extra-curricular development for students as well as the formal academic curriculum, working to develop formal recognition or academic credit for student extracurricular activities and leadership.
- ▶ Ensuring clear action is taken to address key awarding gaps and that all students have a fair and equal chance to succeed at UCL.
- ▶ Provision of excellent services to support student mental health.
- ▶ Working with UCL to help reform the structure of the academic year and module selection process to improve the experience of students.
- ▶ Ensuring UCL operates to the highest standards of environmental sustainability.

1.2 Elections

Ensure that our elections continue to be high-profile and engaging, attract a diverse pool of candidates, are well-contested and achieve a high turnout of students, with a long-term aim to increase turnout to 30%+ in our annual Leadership Race.

1.3 Officer Communication and Consultation

Develop improved sabbatical officer communication and consultation with our members, with all students receiving regular updates about the work of the Union's officers and how this is affecting their lives as students, ensuring the ways that students can influence the Union are clear, transparent, and effective.

1.4 Officer and Academic Representative Development and Support

Develop a more extensive development programme for our elected Officers and Academic Representatives to support them in their roles, enabling them to effectively represent our members, and be skilful ambassadors and influencers, and developing more systematic ways of gathering feedback from Academic Reps.

1.5 Policy and Research

Develop and implement a proactive policy and research programme to provide more research and policy analysis to support the priorities of our officers and establish the Union as the 'go to place' for understanding the student experience at UCL, including developing an Annual Members Survey to track student opinion on key issues affecting student life.

1.6 EDI Strategy

Undertake research to better understand the needs, challenges, successes and goals of marginalised groups across our diverse student community and use this to develop a clear and comprehensive strategy to work with UCL to address these issues.

1.7 National Influence

Develop a national influence plan and commit to playing a leading role in the Russell Group Students' Union network and other national and regional groups, to help achieve effective influence for our members on national policies that impact our members.

Measures

- ▶ Percentage of students who agree that the Union effectively represents their academic interests.
- ▶ Percentage turnout in the Leadership Race.
- ▶ Percentage of uncontested Officer positions.
- ▶ Percentage of students who feel that they are kept regularly updated on Sabbatical Officer achievements and work.
- ▶ Percentage of Academic Reps who feel that the Union provides them with effective support.
- ▶ Number of Union research reports that successfully influence UCL's decision making.
- ▶ Number of national policy changes achieved via our national influencing work.





UCL Asks

To help us achieve these aims, we ask for further support from UCL to:

1. Commit to working in partnership with the Students' Union and support the Union's Sabbatical Officers to play a role in all major decision making, including extending Sabbatical Officer representation on UCL Committees – especially University Management Committee, and full membership of UCL's Finance and Investment Committees.
2. Provide clear institutional support for our elections, making our Leadership Race elections 'UCL Vote Week', including timetabling time for students to vote and providing more support for campaigning.
3. Work with us to improve the support for, and influence of, our Academic Reps, helping to ensure that every student is aware of their Academic Rep.
4. Commit real energy and resources to closing the awarding gaps affecting our students, especially those affecting BAME and Disabled students, working closely with the Students' Union and our student networks.
5. Work closely with the Students' Union in the development of UCL's Public Affairs work to support our Sabbatical Officers in influencing Higher Education policy nationally.

2. Amazing Experience

Involvement in extra and co-curricular activity is transformative in developing well-rounded individuals, equipped with the soft skills to empower them to excel in their formal education, throughout their time at UCL and beyond. We want all our students to have an amazing experience at UCL with the best extra-curricular offer in the UK. To achieve this, we will focus on delivering the ambitious new projects set out in UCL's Student Life Strategy. This will enable us to create thousands more opportunities for students to try new activities, develop their skills, feel a stronger sense of belonging, and immerse themselves in exceptional experiences tailored to their needs. Building on our successful model of student led activity underpinned by high quality professional staff support, student volunteers sit at that heart of our programme as they deliver amazing activities for their peers that are central to a wholistic UCL education. Over the next five years we will raise the bar for student experience in sport, arts, volunteering, departmental societies, and events, ensuring that all students can truly make the most out of their time at UCL. We will be guided by our commitment to provide opportunities for all level of commitment and skill, improving mental and physical wellbeing and recognising the diversity of our student body as we work towards achieving equity for our diverse and growing student body.

Our Current Strengths

- ▶ We have worked with UCL to develop and launch a new Student Life Strategy that will see a major expansion in extracurricular activities.
- ▶ We run the largest extracurricular programmes in the UK, with high levels of participation.
- ▶ We have a strong base of robust structures, systems and processes in place to support student led community and peer to peer volunteering.
- ▶ We provide a huge choice of opportunities with over 400 student clubs and societies and hundreds of volunteering placements.
- ▶ We run UCL's volunteering, sports and arts programmes, meaning these are student-led and responsive to the needs of our members. We have the opportunity to make a huge difference for our members by further developing and expanding this activity.
- ▶ We are ranked in the top 20 universities in the UK for competitive university sport
- ▶ We have won national awards for our commitment to diversity and inclusion in sport and physical activity.
- ▶ We have the makings of a unique student led arts programme with a thriving artsUCL community.



Objectives

2.1 Sport and Physical Activity

We want to build an active campus for UCL, where every student has the opportunity to take part in sport and physical activity, in a way that works for them. We want to:

- ▶ Create an active campus: increase the number of students engaging with regular physical activity with a particular focus on ensuring that our gym is a fantastic place for students to be active, developing and growing our disability sport provision, increasing the reach of Project Active and delivering the most vibrant and largest intra-mural leagues in the UK.
- ▶ Build our TeamUCL Community: growing the numbers of students participating in sport, creating new TeamUCL Sports Hubs that combines improved facilities, coaching provision for our students and embed sport in the local community.
- ▶ Secure a significant improvement in sports facilities for students: including a new home for TeamUCL and additional gym sites across campus.

By 2028 we want 50% of students to engage with our sport and physical activity offering.

2.2 Performing and Creative Arts

From entry level to expert, the arts should be accessible to everyone, allowing all students to benefit from creative education and expression, building a greater sense of belonging and community within UCL, whilst increasing opportunities to engage with the wider arts community in London and beyond. We want to:

- ▶ Open the arts to all: launching a major new programme of large-scale, low commitment participation workshops and classes to develop creative confidence and incubate new talent.
- ▶ Increase the accessibility of creative education: expanding our existing music, drama, dance and student media programme to enable increased levels of participation at all levels.
- ▶ Develop an artsUCL strategy: developing strong partnerships across the arts sector and increasing opportunities to showcase talent.
- ▶ Maximise the benefits of the Bloomsbury Theatre and Studio Theatre for our student community.

By 2028 we want 12,500 students each year to participate in our artsUCL activity.

2.3 Community Volunteering

At its core, student volunteering is about building bonds – between students and people in other communities, between students and voluntary and community sector organisations, and between students themselves. We want every UCL student to be inspired and empowered to take part in rewarding, well-organised community volunteering that makes a difference in the wider world. We want to:

- ▶ Make it easier to volunteer: substantially expanding our programme and growing the number of students engaged by embedding community volunteering activity across more of our clubs and societies, developing more one off volunteering opportunities and supporting community partners to develop new placements for UCL students.
- ▶ Expand high impact volunteering opportunities: increasing the scale and reach of our successful Social Hackathon and Charity Consultancy Challenge programmes.
- ▶ Grow the Community Research Initiative for Students (CRIS): enabling this to support more students to undertake their dissertations in partnership with local community organisations so they can collaborate on research projects to solve real world challenges.

By 2028 we want to have engaged over 5000 students each year with community volunteering.

2.4 Departmental Societies

Departmental societies deepen students' sense of belonging in their department, are a conduit for insight into the student experience and add incalculable value to the UCL learning community. By evolving our work in this area, we will enable departmental societies to become pioneering hubs for student life delivering a personalised and tailored experience within every department at UCL. We want to:

- ▶ Standardise support and resources for departmental societies: affiliating and supporting groups to fulfil a vital community building role across UCL that bridges the academic and non-academic spheres.
- ▶ Roll out a departmental societies development programme: investing in the training and development of our student leaders, ensuring they are empowered to excel in their vital roles.
- ▶ Enhance relationships between departmental societies and Academic Reps: to strengthen the student voice, invigorate discussions on how departments can improve student experience in the round, to provide the best opportunities to their learning community.
- ▶ Enhance the relationships between departmental societies and Academic Reps, invigorating discussions on how departments can improve student experience and provide the best opportunities to their learning community.

By 2028 we want there to be more than 10,000 members of departmental societies.

2.5 Volunteer Journey and Skills Development

Foster a culture of volunteering across all our activities ensuring student leaders in all our student groups receive an amazing experience and support in their roles through improved understanding of their leadership journey, enhanced training, and the Union achieving Investors in Volunteers accreditation. Working with partners across UCL we will develop a coherent approach to experiential learning that enables our volunteers to reflect, articulate and gain recognition for the skills they have gained.

Measures

- ▶ Total number of students participating in sport and physical activity through the Students' Union.
- ▶ Total number of students participating in our arts programme.
- ▶ Total number of students engaged with community volunteering.
- ▶ Total number of students who are members of an SU Departmental Society.
- ▶ Number of students joining one or more club or society.
- ▶ Percentage of students who believe that the Students' Union has helped them develop useful life skills.
- ▶ Percentage of students who believe that the Students' Union has had a positive impact on the local community.
- ▶ We will focus on measuring the impact of our programme based on the themes identified by the Student Life Strategy:
 - Equity and Inclusion
 - Mental and physical health
 - Skills and attainment
 - Community and sense of belonging
 - Contribution to London community
 - Reputation and reach of UCL and the Union





UCL Asks

To help us achieve these aims, we ask for further support from UCL to:

1. Work with us to support the implementation of the new Student Life Strategy.
2. Invest in new fit for purpose sports facilities for the Union, including a new multi-sport facility at UCL East, a new sports ground and expanded gym within a new SU building.
3. Enable the return and refurbishment of the Astor College Sports Hall to the Students' Union at the earliest opportunity.
4. Continue to support the expansion of support for Departmental Societies via encouraging all departmental societies to affiliate to the Students' Union, working with us to create an equitable system of funding for these groups across the university channelled via the Students' Union and establish new societies in departments where none currently exist.
5. Continue to protect Wednesday afternoons from undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and learning to enable students to continue with extra-curricular activities.
6. Support the development of a Music and Arts Centre as part of the new Students' Union building.
7. Continue to recognise the challenges facing dual-career athletes and their time requirements in academic policies and the requirement for flexibility in their studies.

3. Vibrant & Inclusive Community

UCL is a diverse community of students from all corners of the world, in an amazing city, doing amazing things. We believe that we are uniquely placed to build, support and energise this community, making it stronger and foster a greater sense of belonging for every student. We want our spaces to be the centre of the student community at UCL, places where our members feel genuinely at home, spend time with their friends, and importantly, somewhere where they can access support and advice when they are in need. As London's Global University, we want to be a global students' union, where all our students have opportunities to see and experience the world in new ways by engaging across our diverse student community. We want to support our students to get the most out of living and studying in London, with opportunities to visit and engage in the best of the city and nation's cultural opportunities.

Our Current Strengths

- ▶ We have well run commercial services that provide great spaces for students to relax and meet friends.
- ▶ We have a truly global student community with the largest international student body in the UK.
- ▶ We are a majority Postgraduate university, with the largest postgraduate student community in the UK.
- ▶ We are in London with all the opportunities and possibilities that offers.
- ▶ We provide excellent programmes and initiatives to support all members of our community, such as our vibrant Women's, LGBTQ+, Trans, BAME, Disabled Students, Parents and Carers, and Mature Students' networks.
- ▶ We run a fantastic Welcome and a wide range of student events that bring our students together and help them feel part of a community at UCL.
- ▶ We have developed a sector leading Global Engagement Strategy and started a fantastic programme of international and intercultural events and projects.
- ▶ We run the largest programme of student financial support of any SU as well as our new Gender Expression Fund to support our Trans Community.
- ▶ We stock a fantastic range of popular merchandise that helps to build pride and a common sense of identity across the student community.



Objectives

3.1 Community Spaces for Students:

Work with UCL to expand our social spaces for students, aiming to grow the number and size of Students' Union run cafés, bars and social spaces, whilst also developing a stronger sense of community in our spaces, providing students with a place where they can feel at home, study, relax and meet friends.

3.2 Cafés, Bars and Shops that are Popular with Students, Financially Strong and Ethically Run

Deliver our Commercial Strategy that sets out how we will run our cafés, bars and shops in a community-focused and sustainable way, whilst being financially successful, and delivering our four promises to our members: **1. We put every penny of profit back into your community; 2. We choose planet over profit; 3. Always better value than the high street; 4. The centre of your campus community.**

3.3 Vibrant Campus Events

As outlined in the Student Life Strategy we will deliver a comprehensive events programme in line with our shared ambition to create an inclusive, exciting campus and build a sense of community at UCL. We will establish number of high-profile showpiece events designed to bring the campus community together, enabling students to actively shape and enjoy the most vibrant campus in London. We will further seek out new partnerships across the city to curate a regular programme of activity that engages students with the very best that London has to offer in arts, culture, sport, food and entertainment. By 2028 we are aiming for half of all students to attend at least one major on campus celebration each year.

3.4 Advice and Support

Seek ways to increase the support available in our Advice Service allowing us to help more students and deliver a programme of proactive advice and information to support student wellbeing, including launching a new money and budgeting support programme.

3.5 Intercultural Engagement

As outlined in the Student Life Strategy, we will expand our Intercultural engagement activities to enable all our students to have a genuinely intercultural and international experience, develop cross-cultural friendships and connections and continue to improve the support we provide to our international members. We will expand our International Festival and UCL wide cultural celebrations. We will develop a new Language and Cultural Discovery Programme, and we will create opportunities for students to interact with their international peers, enabling them to develop global citizenship skills, broadening their horizons and increasing their confidence and ability to communicate in a globalised world. By 2027 we want at least 750 students to be engaged in international volunteering.

3.6 Disagreeing Well at a Global University

Continue to develop our reflective learning skills development programme designed to equip students to tackle the contentious issues of an uncertain world, building on our rich tradition of freedom of speech to build resilient and reflective leaders able to disagree well at UCL and beyond.

3.7 UCL East

Ensure the Union builds a strong sense of community and belonging at UCL East, via delivering a full range of services and opportunities to students at the new campus, as well as considering new and innovative ways of supporting the student experience in partnership with the local community in East London and partner organisations on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

3.8 Welcome

Continue to deliver and grow our Welcome programme for new students across our campuses, ensuring students are properly introduced to the Union, UCL and London.

3.9 Student Financial Support

Deliver an excellent programme of student money and budgeting advice, including continuing to effectively promote the Sarah Douglas Hardship Fund, Participation Fund and Gender Expression Funds to our students, and develop a comprehensive fundraising action plan to support these funds, to enable them to support more students in the future.

3.10 Celebrating, Belonging, and Pride

Aim to develop a stronger sense of belonging and identity for the UCL student community by providing a fantastic range of UCL merchandise for students, playing a key role in planning for UCL's bicentenary celebrations, developing the 'Generation UCL' project in partnership with the IoE, to connect our students with the rich history of student achievement across 200 years of student life at UCL, and being proactive in celebrating the success of our members in all their achievements.

3.11 Postgraduate Students' Involvement in the Union

Deliver the new Postgraduate Engagement Framework, effectively increasing postgraduate engagement in the Students' Union.

3.12 The Best Experience for International Students

We will ensure that we do all we can to ensure that Union caters to the needs of all of our international student community, including developing and implementing a specific action plan to ensure that we are doing all we can to consider the needs and interests of our East Asian students and that we are providing a wide range of activities, social spaces and opportunities which meet their needs and interests. We will also launch a new Discover the UK Programme to enable our international students to explore the best of UK culture and heritage.

3.13 Prioritise Equity and Inclusion

Develop plans to ensure that the diversity of the student body is reflected across the Union's activities, taking a data driven approach and developing new activities to target underrepresented groups.

Measures

- ▶ Percentage of students who feel part of a strong community of students at UCL.
- ▶ Total surplus generated by our commercial services.
- ▶ Net promotor score for our commercial services.
- ▶ Students supported by the Advice Service and their satisfaction with the support received.
- ▶ Student financial savings due to the work of the Advice Service.
- ▶ Total value of the Sarah Douglas Hardship Fund and Participation Fund and the total value of grants given each year by both funds.
- ▶ Satisfaction of students with Welcome as measured in the New to UCL survey.
- ▶ Engagement with UCL East students.
- ▶ Number of community building events run in our spaces.
- ▶ Total number of tickets purchased and student satisfaction with our events programme.
- ▶ Percentage of students who feel that the Students' Union has had a positive impact on their sense of belonging to UCL.
- ▶ Percentage of students who feel they have had plenty of opportunities to interact socially with other students.
- ▶ Percentage of students who are satisfied with the range of entertainment and social events on offer.



UCL Asks

To help us achieve these aims, we ask for further support from UCL to:

1. Provide more opportunities for the Union to develop additional café and social facilities for students across UCL's campuses, recognising our unique community building role.
2. Continue to work closely with us to ensure an excellent Welcome period, with continuing support for our events programme.
3. Support us to scope and develop major events on and off campus that form key parts of the UCL student journey, including working with us to further develop and expand our Welcome Programme and International Cultural Events, and other major events
4. Provide resources to enable the expansion of our Advice Service and promote access to the service in all student disciplinary cases.
5. Including our Sabbatical Officers in work to make UCL more inclusive and to improve the university-wide approach to mental health and wellbeing.
6. Provide us with fundraising support to enable us to raise more money for our Hardship Fund and Activities Participation Fund.

4. Excellent Union

We want to be a fantastic, efficient, well-governed and effective charity, that is one of the best student organisations anywhere in the world, so that we can effectively represent and provide fantastic services for all our members. We want to work with UCL to gain their support in significantly improving and expanding the Union's building and facilities, including our sports facilities; we know that we can provide better services and experiences for our members with better spaces. We want to be the best possible employer of staff ensuring we invest in the staff experience recognising that's how we will be able to provide amazing services to our members. We also want to be a great partner for other organisations and play a positive role in the wider voluntary and community sector in London and nationally. If we do all this, then we will have built the foundations of a Union that can go on to achieve our ambition of being one of the best students' unions in the world.

Our Current Strengths

- ▶ We have a great team of staff who are highly engaged and feel the organisation is a great place to work.
- ▶ We are one of oldest students' unions in the country, with a rich history of achievement for our members.
- ▶ We have an excellent digital presence, with great in-house web development and systems capabilities.
- ▶ We have balanced the Union's budget after a decade of losses.
- ▶ We now have effective governance, data protection, facilities and health and safety management in place.
- ▶ Our members are increasingly informed about our work, with positive feedback on our communications approach.



Objectives

4.1 Secure a New Students' Union Building

Work to influence UCL to invest in a modern, spacious, fit-for-purpose Students' Union building that enables our students to have social and extra-curricular facilities that are amongst the best in the UK and the world.

4.2 Improve Our Current Buildings & Facilities

Whilst we wait for a new building, develop our existing buildings and facilities as much as we can, so that they are modern, vibrant spaces for our students and staff.

4.3 Financial Management

Ensure excellent stewardship of our assets and financial resources, with balanced budgets and a stable financial surplus to enable us to safeguard the Union for future generations of students and start to build up funds to support the growth of our facilities and services.

4.4 Income Generation

We will consider how to generate increased revenue across all departments, helping diversify our income streams and deliver more for our members.

4.5 Digital Strategy

Continue to develop our services to our members, our staff and our community so they are digital first, mobile first and easy to use, based around our effective and secure website and membership management system, and emphasising personalised digital services that make it easier to discover, engage with and manage every aspect of Union life.

4.6 User Experience and Process Improvement

To deliver UCL's student life strategy we must continue to grow participation across all our student led activities. To enable this growth, we will make it easier for student groups to get things done. We will review our processes, making sure they are easy, intuitive, transparent, and consistent – removing unnecessary barriers or steps wherever we can.

4.7 Flexible Ways of Working

We will continue to embrace flexible working and ensure our staff and Sabbatical Officers have excellent and fit-for-purpose IT hardware and software to enable agile and efficient Union operations and working practices across all UCL campuses and work locations.

4.8 People and Culture

We will continue to ensure high levels of staff engagement, with an effective People Plan, excellent training and development opportunities, improved internal communications, increased support for staff progression and career pathways, and building management capacity across the organisation.

4.9 Sustainability

Become the most sustainable students' union in the UK, by updating and delivering our ambitious Sustainability Strategy, including aiming to become a net zero-carbon organisation by 2030.

4.10 Health and Safety

Continue to ensure the highest standards of health and safety management across our operations and services to keep our members and staff safe.

4.11 Communications

Continue to develop and strengthen our brand to ensure all students are aware of when they are engaging in Students' Union activity, and improve communications with our members, staff, partners, alumni and prospective students, so that they are informed about our work and services and can participate in and support our work, including investigating more personalised communications with our members.

4.12 Evaluation

We are committed to enhancing the evaluation of our services and projects to ensure we maximise impact for students. We will ensure our services have robust evaluation plans in place so that we are able to measure our impact on the lives of students and feed back learning into the development of our future strategy.

4.12 Governance

Ensure excellent governance with full compliance with all relevant legislation and the best practice with the Charity Governance Code.

4.13 Alumni and Fundraising

Establish a Students' Union alumni network and fundraising plan to support the Union's facilities and services.

4.14 Measuring and Communicating Impact

We will develop a new framework for evaluating and reporting on our performance against the objectives defined in our strategies, helping us understand where we should focus our resources to achieve the greatest engagement and impact.

Measures

- ▶ Student satisfaction with our buildings and facilities.
- ▶ Financial surplus achieved.
- ▶ Total website impressions.
- ▶ Student satisfaction with our website.
- ▶ Percentage of staff who say the organisation is a great place to work.
- ▶ Number of accidents within the Union and our activities.
- ▶ Percentage of students who feel well informed about our work.
- ▶ Total net carbon emission arising from our activities.
- ▶ Percentage compliance with the Charity Governance Code.





UCL Asks

To help us achieve these aims, we ask for further support from UCL to:

1. Invest in a new Union building with high quality facilities for our existing activities as well as new expanded facilities for music and performing arts; larger café, bar and social spaces; social study and collaboration space for students; prayer space; and child friendly study space.
2. Provide advice and support from Sustainable UCL to support the implementation of our Sustainability Strategy, helping us become an exemplar organisation for sustainability.
3. Provide high-quality support from UCL's ISD, Estates and HR Services.
4. Continue to develop a close relationship between the Union and UCL Communications and Marketing, including more support for the Union to enable us to better support UCL's communication with prospective students including a high-profile role for the Union in Open Days and more Students' Union content in pre-arrival communication.
5. Provide increased support from the Office of the Vice-President Advancement, to help us develop a Students' Union alumni network and develop an alumni fundraising plan to support the development of the Union's facilities and services.

Implementing this Strategy

This strategy will be updated and refreshed on an annual basis to reflect the latest developments within UCL and the Students' Union, the outcomes of our research programme, and the priorities of our newly elected officer teams. A full review will be undertaken after five years.

The strategy will be used as a basis for the Union's annual departmental planning process. Each department will prepare a detailed work plan for the year to set out the actions that they will take to deliver the commitments made by the strategy. These plans will be reviewed by the Union's Senior Management Team and then presented for information to the Union's Board of Trustees. The detailed objectives, actions and performance measures set out in departmental plans will form the focus of objectives for each member of staff, set via the annual appraisal cycle.

Progress reports on delivering the Union Operating Plan will be provided to the Board on a six-monthly basis and an Annual Impact Report will be prepared each summer to summarise the Union's overall achievements. This will also be presented to UCL Council. The Strategy includes requests for additional support from UCL.

MONTH	STRATEGY	DEPARTMENTAL PLANNING	STAFF APPRAISALS	FINANCIAL PLANNING	REPORTS TO THE BOARD
JUL	Annual strategy review	Departmental planning process	Manager appraisals		
AUG					
SEP			Staff appraisals	Annual audit	Board receives Annual Impact Strategy Board approves any updates to the Strategy
OCT					
NOV					
DEC					Board approves annual accounts
JAN				Forecast	
FEB					Board receives report on Union Operating Plan Board approves Forecast
MAR					
APR					
MAY				Budget planning	
JUN	Annual members survey		SMT appraisals		Board receives report on Union Operating Plan Board approves annual Budget



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