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2019/20
**IMPACT
REPORT**

CHARITY NUMBER: 1158523



rusutweets



rusuphotos



rusuevents



rusunews



rusu.activities

MESSAGE FROM YOUR STUDENT OFFICERS 19/20

Welcome to our 2019/20 Impact Report!

In this report we will highlight some of our best moments as a Students' Union as well as showing you our income and expenditure as a charity. We are your five Full-time Student Officers elected for this academic year and we have worked hard to ensure that you are represented and supported throughout your time at University of Reading (UoR).

This has been an extremely unpredictable year due to COVID-19, and RUSU has been impacted in many ways. For example, we were devastated that we were unable to put on our incredible Summer Ball, but nonetheless we haven't compromised on the amount of support we offer students. From our Advice Service continuing to provide free, confidential, professional advice, to a whole host of online student activities, we have continued to thrive as a Students' Union and offer the best support possible.

Collating students' feedback has allowed us to effectively campaign for student rights by ensuring your concerns have been heard at the highest levels of the university. We might not have been able to work together in person as much as we would have liked, but we are proud to have shifted much of our work online and we have continued to collectively work with students to fight for a better deal during the pandemic.

Our doors are always open, albeit virtual, and we are always here to listen. We'd like to thank you for being a member of our community. Without you this would have never been possible.

Your Student Officers 2020/21

Visit our website for up to date information on how we are reacting to COVID-19. www.rusu.co.uk/covid-19/latest-updates/



RACHEL WATES
DIVERSITY OFFICER



BANDY KARKI
WELFARE OFFICER



RACHEL OSBORNE
PRESIDENT



GEORGE INGRAM
EDUCATION OFFICER



ALEX ROSE
ACTIVITIES OFFICER

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ROLL CALL 2019 / 20

OUR 20,000+ MEMBERSHIP

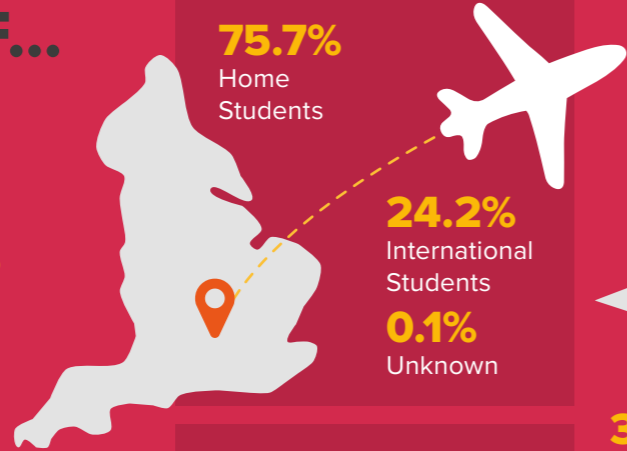
IS MADE UP OF...



53.7%
Female Students

46.2%
Male Students

0.1%
Other



35.1%
BME Students



13.7%
Mature Undergraduate Students

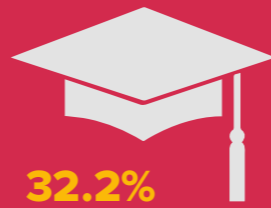


75.8%
Mature Postgraduate Students

6.1%
Self-defined LGBTQ+ Students



13.8%
Self-defined Disabled Students



32.2%
Postgraduate Taught Students

8.4%
Postgraduate Research Students

59.4%
Undergraduate Students

ABOUT RUSU

Reading University Students' Union (RUSU) is a democratic, student-led organisation, here to guide and help you make the most of your student experience whilst studying at the University of Reading (UoR) by providing opportunities, facilities and entertainment. As a student at UoR you are automatically a member of RUSU, entitling you to have a say in directing the organisation. Students elect five Full-time Officers each February to represent them and lead RUSU for the following academic year. As members of the University's decision-making committees, Student Officers have the power to campaign and lobby UoR on your behalf.

Various elections take place during the Autumn and Spring terms. These are a variety of Full-time paid and Part-time voluntary roles that you can put yourself forward for or vote for. This is your chance as a student at UoR to get involved and decide the future leadership of RUSU.

www.rusu.co.uk/elections

MISSION / AMBITION

RUSU's purpose is to improve student life at the UoR. We are an independent charity and relentlessly focused on delivering impactful changes for you, our members. RUSU's ambition is to deliver what our 20,000+ members want in an accountable, inclusive and forward-thinking way, with inclusivity at our core.

www.rusu.co.uk

ADVICE

When the first lockdown was announced in March 2020, the Advice Service responded quickly, by moving the support it offers to students from the existing face-to-face provision to a virtual service. In a virtual capacity, the Advice team have been able to continue to advise students via the phone, email or on Teams and have provided support to help navigate the changes which have occurred as a result of the pandemic – be it from an academic, housing or financial point of view. In fact, the advisers have supported more students in the 2019/20 academic year than they did in the previous year!

The Advice Service is continuing to build on the lessons it has learnt from the experience during the pandemic, by planning to offer advice as best suits the needs of the individual, whether this is in person or virtually.



WE SUPPORTED

587

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

218

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

AFTER SEEING THE ADVICE SERVICE, STUDENTS WERE BETTER OFF BY

£79,773

872

STUDENTS WERE SEEN BY OUR INDEPENDENT ADVICE TEAM

HOW WE HELPED

WE RESPONDED TO

891

EMAILS AND ONLINE FORMS



GAVE ADVICE ON HOUSING CONTRACTS TO **83** STUDENTS

GUIDED

132

STUDENTS THROUGH THE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES PROCESS



SUPPORTED **59** STUDENTS WITH COUNCIL TAX ISSUES

SUSTAINABILITY

Last year saw RUSU make great strides towards becoming a more sustainable organisation.



RATED EXCELLENT ON NUS' GREEN IMPACT SCHEME

We were awarded 'Excellent (Gold)' in the 2019/20 NUS Green Impact scheme. The scheme recognises dedication to sustainability. The auditors were impressed by our efforts to reduce waste, the work done by our sustainability-focused societies and our partnership with Maya's Refillables.

Students also donated ten crates worth of food and toiletries to Readifood, Reading's Food Bank, before moving out of halls and a sustainable book swap was introduced in our Relaxation room.



FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT

2020 marked a crucial year in our fight to save the planet with the University committing to divest from fossil fuel investment. This decision came after years of lobbying from various teams of RUSU Full-time Officers, We now look forward to seeing the University's future investments into more sustainable industries.



SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

A RUSU Sustainability Committee was set up to get all staff more involved with the 'greening' of our organisation. Also attended by RUSU's Environment and Ethics Officer, the committee is now overseeing the implementation of our new policy, our annual audits, and our continued work to become more sustainable.



NEW POLICY

We now have a new and comprehensive Sustainability Policy covering every aspect of the organisation's environmental impact. This is the first policy to exist on this scale, and we believe implementing this demonstrates our real commitment to sustainability alongside our Strategic Operating Plan. The policy will continue to evolve over time to help take the organisation forward, and has helped us to quantify all the great things we already do for the environment.



THE UNIVERSITY COMMITS TO GO SWEATSHOP FREE

The RUSU President and Environment & Ethics Officer spent time lobbying the University to ensure their electronics supply chain was sweatshop free by affiliating to Electronics Watch. The mission of Electronics Watch is to help public sector organisations work together, and collaborate with civil society monitors in production regions to protect the rights of workers in their electronics supply chains.

RUSU REPRESENTATIVES

MAIN ELECTIONS

THERE WERE
83 CANDIDATES

FOR THE ROLES OF FULL-TIME OFFICERS, STUDENT TRUSTEES, PART-TIME OFFICERS & UG SENIOR REPS



22.9%
CANDIDATES WERE
BAME
STUDENTS



59.0%
CANDIDATES WERE
FEMALE
STUDENTS



20.5%
CANDIDATES WERE
INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS

3-DAY VOTING PERIOD

2,484 STUDENTS VOTED

16,629 VOTES IN 3 DAYS

621
AVERAGE NUMBER
OF VOTERS PER DAY

6.69 HIGHEST AVERAGE NUMBER
OF VOTES PER VOTER IN
THE PAST 6 YEARS



YOU ELECTED
1,900

STUDENTS TO
REPRESENT
YOUR INTERESTS
THROUGHOUT
THE YEAR

NUS CONFERENCE DELEGATES



9

STUDENTS WERE CANDIDATES
FOR 5 DIFFERENT ROLES IN THE
NUS DELEGATE ELECTIONS

MALE 44.4%
CANDIDATES

FEMALE 55.6%
CANDIDATES



STUDENT VOICE MEMBER ELECTIONS

60
CANDIDATES
NOMINATED
FOR 13 STUDENT
VOICE POSITIONS **↑ 57.9% INCREASE
IN CANDIDATES**



SPORTS & SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

613
SPORTS
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

704
SOCIETIES & MEDIA
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

76
VOLUNTEERING
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

UG & PG ACADEMIC REP ELECTIONS

626
POSITIONS AVAILABLE IN THE
UG AND PG ELECTIONS

1,438
VOTERS OVER A
4-DAY PERIOD

13 OUT OF
16 PG SENIOR REPS WERE
INTERNATIONAL

WINS FROM

FULL-TIME OFFICERS

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

Over 100 students attended the Mental Wellness Fayre on World Mental Health Day to find out more about suicide prevention. It also saw the launch of the Mental Health Report which has since been used to show the university the need for improved mental health services.

5 YEARS OF CAMPAIGNING

In January the University finally made the commitment to completely withdraw from fossil fuel investments. Nearly five years of lobbying from RUSU Officers and direct involvement in recruiting someone who would secure the university portfolio with no fossil fuel investment as the new Investment Manager, led to this tremendous win.

NEARLY 200 STUDENTS

September and January saw the launches of the Buddy Scheme to increase participation in sport, particularly for students who felt they didn't "fit in" with the sport they wanted to try. 193 students signed up in total and joined a new group.

ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

After the start of the Assessment Feedback campaign the University not only launched 'Focus On Feedback' but also have begun to review the feedback policy, taking into account RUSU's asks.

OVER 100 TICKETS SOLD

The annual Cultural Show was a roaring success with dancing and singing performances which embraced and celebrated different cultures from across the globe. 3sixty was adorned with flags from different nations, giving it an international atmosphere.

4 EPISODES OF A PODCAST

We branched into the latest trend with the #1in4 (You're Not Alone) Podcast. Welfare Officer Gemma, joined in with four episodes to give some top tips for looking after your mental health and how to find positive coping strategies.

RELAX WITH RUSU REBRAND

The well-loved Relax with RUSU programme was back this year although with a new name and a new look! This time it brought a calendar with daily challenges on how to take a break and relax efficiently.

WINS FROM

PART-TIME OFFICERS

PTOs represent and liberate the rights of students who are underrepresented or discriminated against.

DISABILITY HISTORY MONTH

RUSU's Disabled Students' Officer organised and hosted a series of events to celebrate Disability History Month, including a talk from an autism charity, a British Sign Language (BSL) taster session and an evening of board games and biscuits. The month also included an initiative called 'Think First', aimed at making people more aware of microaggressions towards the disabled students' community.

SINK THE PINK

The LGBTQ+ Officer invited Sink the Pink to perform in 3sixty as part of LGBT+ History Month 2020. The group's energy made for an exciting evening and helped to provide a welcoming space for more LGBT+ students to express themselves.

SWEATSHOP FREE & FOSSIL FREE

Alongside the Full-time Officers, the Environment and Ethics Officer helped to support the campaign in making the University commit to the sweatshop free initiative, as well to divest from fossil fuel investment.

YOU CAN'T SPELL EMPOWERMENT WITHOUT WOMEN!

RUSU's Women's Officer chaired an event alongside the careers team called 'You Can't Spell Empowerment without Women! BAME professionals panel discussion'. The panel consisted of female BAME professionals who shared their career journeys, the barriers they overcame and how they have achieved success.

WINS IN ACCESSIBILITY

The Disabled Students' Officer worked hard to ensure RUSU is made as accessible as possible, resulting in a new hearing loop in 3sixty as well as new guidelines on accessible social media. The Disabled Students' Officer began powerful conversations about the importance of accessibility, both on campus and beyond.

ACADEMIC REPS

IN STATS

94%

OF STUDENT REPS would recommend the role to a friend.

82%

OF STUDENT REPS were satisfied with the training and guidance they received in 2019/20.

83%

OF STUDENT REPS say their personal development has increased since becoming a Rep.

THIS YEAR REPS ACHIEVED:

“Ensured my course mates were better prepared for an exam as a result of a class study group I initiated with the other Course Reps in my department.”

“Managed to improve current module teaching within the Meteorology Department. Normally feedback is expected to help future years so it was good to see changes helping the current set of students.”

“Jointly founded Life Tools for Law Students. I later learnt that the school is now making module amendments to the Legal Skills module to make it part of the welcome week programme.”

“I mobilised the student body to write letters to three national newspapers, getting around 70 signatures to stop the closure of the MLES department and scrapping of many modules.”

BENEFITS TO BEING A REP

Driving democratic processes and creating positive change

Exploring ideas around diversity, inclusion and representing students.

Taking part in team-building to enhance leadership and communication skills.

Building a community of like-minded volunteers and working in partnership with UoR and RUSU staff.

CHANGE IT IDEA WINS

Change It is an online platform which allows the voices of you, the students, to be heard and makes it quick and easy to put forward ideas which help RUSU set priorities and make the changes you want to see.

CAMPAIGNS PASSED LAST YEAR:

- RUSU to campaign for the University to introduce a security text service.
- RUSU to campaign for the University to make parking on campus more accessible for students.
- RUSU to campaign for the University to adopt a no detriment policy including a grade safety net.
- RUSU to lobby the University for free graduation gown hire in 2020.
- RUSU to lobby for the University for compensation to all students for UCU strike action.

TRIGGER WARNINGS

The RUSU Education Officer wrote a policy on trigger warnings and submitted it to DELT (Subcommittee for the Development and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching). The policy was approved at the University Board for Teaching, Learning and Student Experience, and is now a University policy.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

298



STUDENTS INVOLVED IN VOLUNTEERING

2,695



STUDENTS INVOLVED IN SPORT

3,588



STUDENTS INVOLVED IN SOCIETIES

217



STUDENTS INVOLVED IN STUDENT MEDIA

COVID IMPACT – HOW IT HAS HIT OUR INCOME

COMMERCIAL AREAS



TOTAL OVERALL COMMERCIAL PROFIT

↓ **£290,000** vs 2018–19



BAR SALES

↓ **32%**



CATERING SALES

↓ **49%**



EXTERNAL HIRE INCOME

↓ **25%**

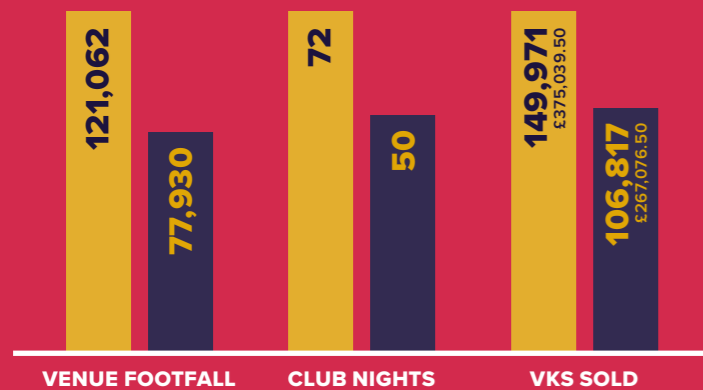


NO SUMMER BALL

£177,000
POTENTIAL TICKET SALES LOST

£69,000
POTENTIAL BAR INCOME

2018–19 vs 2019–20

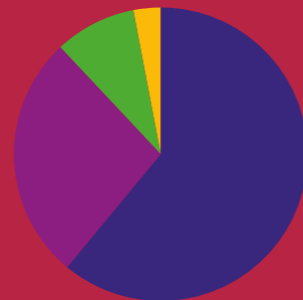


Little Learners NURSERY

Over the last year, RUSU's Little Learners Nursery has re-branded with a new look, business strategy and website littlelearnersnurseryreading.com to increase profitability. The Nursery is now open to the local community.

67 CHILDREN REGISTERED WITH RUSU'S NURSERY

- 61% CHILDREN OF STAFF
- 27% CHILDREN OF STUDENTS
- 9% CHILDREN OF RUSU STAFF
- 3% CHILDREN OF PARENTS IN THE COMMUNITY



A 21 LANGUAGES WITHIN THE NURSERY

20th APRIL – 13th JUNE 2020

ONLINE EVENTS



1 LIVE STREAMED GIG



8 ONLINE RETRO GAMES NIGHTS



7 ONLINE QUIZ NIGHTS



1 ONLINE ACOUSTIC NIGHT
WITH 4 PERFORMANCES FROM STUDENT MUSICIANS



1 VIRTUAL COCKTAIL AND JAZZ NIGHT



9 VIRTUAL UNION NIGHTS WITH LIVE STREAMED DJs



1 ONLINE COMEDY NIGHT



1 VIRTUAL WINE & CHEESE NIGHT



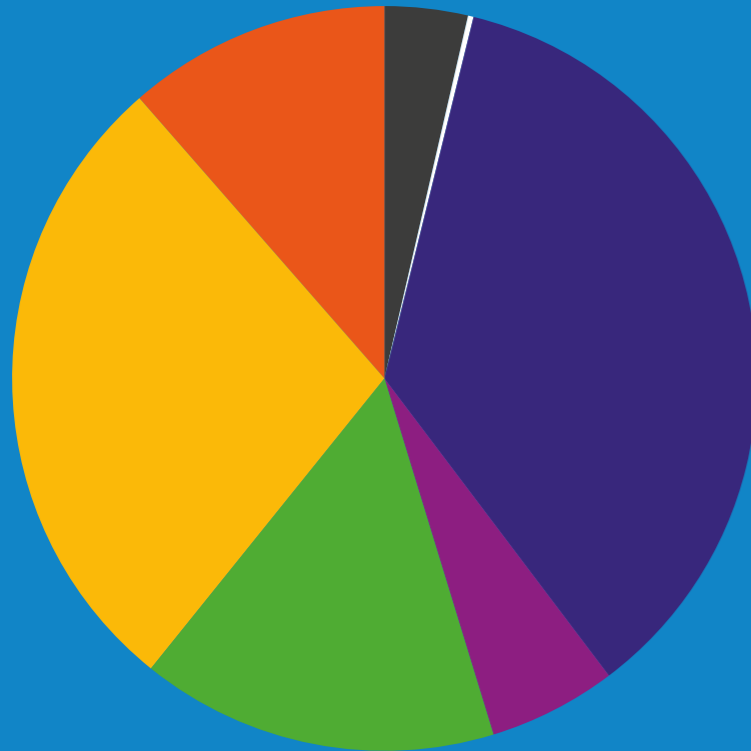
1 VIRTUAL SUMMER BALL
WITH 5 SEPARATE DJ SETS FROM RESIDENT DJs

INCOME

A large proportion of our income comes from a block grant from UoR, the rest we raise through our commercial services and student activities.

TOTAL INCOME

£4,382,278 | 100% | **↑ 19.06%**



OTHER INCOME

£158,190 | 3.6% | **↑ 456.8%**

INTEREST RECEIVABLE

£10,572 | 0.2% | **↑ 5.1%**

GRANT INCOME

£1,571,568 | 35.9% | **↑ 0.39%**
Money provided from the UoR.

MARKETING, SPONSORSHIP & FRANCHISED SPACE

£243,890 | 5.6% | **↑ 40.7%**
This is money raised from Freshers' Fayre and the sale of student discount cards.

This also includes rental income from RUSU's franchisees.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

£500,691 | 11.4% | **↑ 32.8%**
Income from membership fees, the sale of Sports Federation Insurance and club photographs.

SOCIAL VENUES & EVENTS

£1,217,490 | 27.8% | **↑ 38.7%**
Income from Mojo's Bar and Kitchen, Café Mondial, 3sixty nightclub and events including the Summer Ball.

NURSERY | LITTLE LEARNERS'

£679,877 | 15.5% | **↑ 1.8%**
Income from fees paid to Little Learners Nursery.

EXPENDITURE

As a charitable organisation, our profits are re-invested into the student experience.

*In addition there was a transfer of £515,208 to the pension deficit (10.3% of total expenditure)

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

£4,940,256 | 100% | **↑ 4.7%**



SOCIAL VENUES & EVENTS

£1,486,760 | 30.1% | **↑ 21.9%**
Costs of running Events, Bars and the Summer Ball.

DEMOCRACY & REPRESENTATION

£396,102 | 8.0% | **↑ 15.5%**
Elections, Student Reps, Campaigns, Student Voice, Student Officer pay, Change It!

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

£1,025,329 | 20.8% | **↑ 20.8%**
Sports Clubs, Societies & Student Media.

ADVICE SERVICES

£350,246 | 7.1% | **↑ 11.6%**
Free, professional advice including: Money, Accommodation and Academic issues.

MARKETING, SPONSORSHIP & FRANCHISED SPACE

£456,181 | 9.2% | **↑ 15.8%**
Promoting facilities and events to students.

NURSERY | LITTLE LEARNERS'

£710,430 | 14.4% | **↑ 5.2%**
Money spent on caring for children.



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