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| Sabbatical Officer Name: | Micaela Panes |
| Sabbatical Officer Role: | VP Postgraduate Students (Education & Welfare) |

**Section 1: Sabbatical Officer Report**

*This section is to be completed by the Sabbatical Officer prior to the accountability session.*

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| **General Report**  *(Written by the Sabbatical Officer this report is aimed at providing insight into their work/activity since the last accountability session or the start of their term in office)* | |
| I have highlighted some of the aspects of my role since I took position in July 2023. This list is not exhaustive, and I have left out the regular meetings I have with University leadership, college deans, and professional services. I have also not listed the committees I sit on, but I am happy to answer any questions regarding these!  **July 2023**   * This was my first month in office which meant much of my time was spent in training, inductions, and getting set-up. * Went to NUS Lead and Change in Leeds for several days. This consisted of training, workshops, and networking with other sabbatical officers in UK Students’ Unions. * Met with NUS Wales and NUS Wales President to discuss wider plans for the year ahead. * Began Postgrad Welcome Week planning. * Began planning for PGRs: Know your Rights Campaign and met with University HR to discuss the implementation of contracts from August 2023. * Worked with the University Survey Group to promote Cardiff University Postgraduate Taught dissertation survey. * Lobbied the University to work with UCU and UCEA to bring industrial action to an end. Began a petition to the VC to demand this.   **August 2023**   * Training and induction continued throughout August. * Continued planning for Postgrad Welcome Week and Freshers. * Held two Postgrad summer events. * Finished planning PGRs: Know Your Rights campaign and began surveying PGR tutors and demonstrators regarding contract implementation. * Met with Postgrad Officers across UK Students’ Unions for networking and knowledge sharing. * Planning campaigns for the year ahead. * Began campaign to encourage all students impacted by industrial action to submit a complaint for compensation.   **September 2023**   * Welcomed new students with the SU’s Welcome Team. * Held two weeks of Postgrad Welcome events. * Rolled out part one of the PGRs: Know Your Rights campaign and visited PGR officers across campus to speak to students and distribute literature. * Interviewed candidates for Student Voice co-ordinator position. * Hosted and attended the Russell Group Students’ Unions Residential. * Presented at induction talks for new students. * Met with societies to discuss implementation of a PG Officer on committees.   **October 2023**   * Continued planning and delivering Postgrad activities and events. * Promoted Autumn Elections and spaces on the Postgraduate Executive Committee. * Ensured Schools were implementing contracts – caught some Schools avoiding this and forced them to put their Demonstrators and Tutors on contracts. I also lobbied for the University to introduce a central way of auditing Schools and Colleges implementation. * Held a housing fair and invited Cathays Councillors to begin holding surgeries at the SU. * Lobbied the University to improve their residences strategy – including discussing with consultants the potential for Postgrad-only halls of residence. * Advocated for a PGR student on an exclusion panel. * Applied for HEFCW funding for PG wellbeing and community activities and events.   **November 2023**   * Prepared for AGM and run a proxy vote campaign to encourage participation. * Planned and held Carers’ Rights Week. * Chaired the first PGR Cross-College Forum of the academic year. * Held a Big Conversation event at the SU and brought PGs together to network and pose PG specific questions. * Supported in running the first Feed your Flat of the academic year. * Held more PG specific events. * Worked with Libraries to increase book loan limit from 35 to 50 for all students and staff from Spring Semester. * Began holding PG Executive Committee meetings. * Planning for PG Mental Health Campaign. | |
| **Manifesto Update**  *(Written by the Sabbatical Officer this section is aimed at tracking their progress against manifesto commitments made by them during their successful officer election)* | |
| **Support for applying and transitioning from UG to PG study, involving creating PG mentors and honest information for applicants.** | * Organising ‘Thinking of doing a PhD/Masters’ events. This will include current students talking about their experiences and what they wish they knew before applying. Tentative dates for early next year. Call for volunteers to be sent in December newsletter. * Emailed University Mentor Team about establishing PG mentors. – waiting on response. * Sit on the PGR Recruitment Committee which is changing and improving the way people apply to PGR programmes at Cardiff University. – Working on making the process easier and more accessible. |
| **Make PG study more accessible, including lobbying for more funding and bursaries.** | * Had a meeting with Amy Close [Manager of xxx] regarding PG bursaries, particularly for self-funded students. Positive meeting, research being done on how bursaries may be allocated and on what conditions etc. * Lobbied the Doctoral Academy to ringfence 70% of the Development Fund for self-funded students – successful. * Creating a survey to collect information regarding mental and physical health, living conditions, finances etc of PGR students to lobby the Welsh Government and University for further support for Research Students. – This is due to be released Dec/Jan. |
| **Extend Alumni Discount to PG Research degrees for self-funded students.** | * Contacted PG recruitment for extending alumni discount – awaiting response. |
| **Fair and clear contracts and rights for Postgrads who teach.** | * Graduate Tutor and Demonstrator contracts went live in August 2023. * Planned and in process of running a ‘PGRs: Know your Rights’ campaign.   + This including creating a new webpage to outline new rights and changes associated with teaching. Sending signposting emails and created physical pamphlets which I delivered to PGR offices around Campus.   + Initial survey which received 57 responses asking PGRs what they knew about the contracts and how they felt they were implemented in their schools.   + Caught 3 schools attempting to avoid implementing the contracts – two schools now implemented, and one will implement from next semester.   + Online statement produced.   + Continuously informing students of updates. * Working on ensuring that Schools are properly implementing the contracts and lobbying for a way for the University to centrally audit all Schools to ensure that they are implemented correctly. |
| **Improve and promote PG study-space and extend its opening hours.** | * Establishing a wellbeing area in the PG study zone – including providing board games, colouring books and pens, Libraries are due to provide plants. * HEFCW funding to continue with free teas and coffees in the PG Zone. * Promoted area in PG induction talks. * Spoken to Libraries about extending hours – libraries are working on installing CCTV so this is possible. * Spoken to Libraries about creating a garden area behind the PG Study Zone for a Postgraduate Gardening/Allotment Group to maintain. |
| **PG community building, including greater PG inclusion in societies and sport.** | * Worked with the VP Societies and VP Sports to include ‘PG Officer’ into the tier system to encourage membership.   + Shared and supported societies in advertising PG Officer elections. * Supported societies who want to run PG specific events. * Run two postgrad events throughout the summer for those still in Cardiff, including a coffee morning and an unwind colouring session. * Run a very successful ‘Postgraduate Welcome Week’.   + Events included:     - PG Meet and Mingle (with mini golf) – Sold out, over 100 attended.     - PG Meet and Mingle (with board games) – Sold out, 30 attended.     - PG Brunch – Sold out, 60 attended.     - AU Fair Meet Up – Sold out.     - PG City Tour – Sold out, 40 attended.     - PG Societies Meet Up – Sold out.     - PG SU Tour – Sold out, 11 attended.     - PG and Mature Students Quiz – 98/120 tickets sold, 67 attended. * Continued to run PG specific events throughout the year.   + Events include:     - International PG Students Coffee Morning – Sold out, 20 attended.     - PG Students Evening in the Museum, followed by interactive darts – Sold out, 30 attended.     - The Big Postgrad Unwind – 67/75 tickets sold, 20 attended.     - PG Ice Skating will be held on 12/12/23. * Encouraged PG involvement in SU democracy. More students run for PG Exec than any other position in the Autumn Elections – 27 people run for 10 places.   + 50/50 PGT and PGR. * Removed PGT from UG college forums – established PGT cross-college forums so students have their own platform. * Successfully applied for HEFCW funding for more PG activities and events – including three heavily subsidised (£5) Give it a Go trips for second semester. * Meetings with the Doctoral Academy on how to make it a ‘hub’ for PhD students at Cardiff and how it may build on community building for PGRs. |
| **‘The Big PG Unwind’ – Events for fighting imposter syndrome and looking after PG mental health.** | * First ‘PG Big Unwind’ held on 26/11/23. Event was successful – 67 tickets sold, around 20 attended. * Successfully applied for HEFCW funding to run further PG mental health campaigns/events. |
| **Demand tuition fee refunds for all lost contact/teaching hours due to strike action.** | * Lobbied the University throughout the summer for refunding/reimbursing students who had been impacted by MAB/industrial action. * Heavily promoted and encouraged all students impacted to make a complaint with the University – those students should have received an interim payment while the complaint was in process and then a payment as a result of their complaint. |
| **Lobby for greater housing and cost-of-living support from the University and Welsh/National Governments.** | * Meet with Cathays Councillors regarding housing cost/conditions/availability in Cardiff, in addition to wider community issues.   + Organised Councillor Surgeries to be held in the SU – first was during housing fair in October. * Met with University Leadership regarding availability of housing in Cardiff – including student accommodation. * Was part of a consultation for improving current and creating new student accommodation. |
| **Policy Update**  *(Written by the Sabbatical Officer this section report is aimed at tracking their progress against any relevant policy passed by Student Senate or AGM)* | |
| 1. **UCU Industrial Action (passed at AGM 2022).**   Signposted and encouraged PGR membership to UCU through social media, website, and Know Your Rights Campaign.  Lobbied the University to reimburse fees to students for impact of industrial action.  Highlighted well-being and advice support services.  Published statement in support of UCU and lobbied UEB to work with UCEA and UCU to bring industrial action to an end.  Submitted a petition to the VC in July outlining the above.   1. **Cardiff Students’ Union and Graduation 2023 (passed at Senate June 2023).**   Supporting in producing a statement condemning Cardiff University’s 50-100% deductions for participating in MAB.  In solidarity with striking staff, I did not attend the Graduation dinners, Graduation speeches or ceremonies as called for in the motion.   1. **Carers’ Awareness Week (passed at senate June 2023).**   Run a Carers’ Rights Week campaign in November which included awareness stalls held in the CSL, Welcome Centre, and Heath, an online quiz which collected data on what more the SU and University can do for carers, and an online coffee morning with Lena Smith (University dedicated contact for carers) and the Policy Officer for Carers Wales. | |

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| Chair of the Accountability Session: | Serena Rattu & Darshan Sheth (Co-chairs) |
| Vice Chair of the Accountability Session: |  |
| Additional Members of the Accountability Session: | Sastivel Preetham B.R. |
| Date of the Accountability Session: | 11/12/2023 |

**Section 2: Accountability Session**

*This section is to be completed by the accountability session members prior to speaking to the Sabbatical Officer. This section should then be used to aid discussion with the Sabbatical Officer and information added where relevant.*

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| **Areas Working Well**  *(Written by the accountability session members this section should detail areas the members think is working well and what they believe the Sabbatical Officer should keep doing)*  *Note for the accountability session members: Don’t forget to ask the Sabbatical Officer their opinion on what is working well.* | |
| * Getting funding – consistently getting available funding, good at finding it. Not just for postgrads. Reimbursement * PGR contracts * Postgrad events selling out * Networking with lots of different groups – communicating with everyone as much as possible | |
| **Areas For Improvement**  *(Written by the accountability session members this section should detail areas the members think could do with additional focus).*  *Note for the accountability session members: Don’t forget to ask the Sabbatical Officer their opinion on what could be improved.* | |
| * Postgrad events – a lot of tickets sold but fewer attended – could organise at a more convenient time for postgrad students – more advertisement, reminders. More notice needed. Could get a committee member as part of PR team – to help promote, help organise * People not showing up to exec – could track * Communication with exec - create a WhatsApp group * More to promote mental health for postgeads | |
| **Accountability Session Questions**  *(Written by the accountability session members this section should outline the key questions the session have for the Sabbatical Officer, a notes of the answers should then be provided in the next box).* | |
| **Q1.** Reasons for postgrad drop off at events | **A1.**   * Quite normal to have drop off at events. Especially with free tickets, people might be interested in going but not necessarily actually go * Assignments – people might think they will be done but turn out not to be, and will therefore not attend * Weather affects attendance * Tend to put more tickets than have capacity for * Advertise on social media, newsletter, SU events newsletter * Exec could help to get word out * Overall find quite difficult – exhaust all the means available. PR person (on postgrad association) really good idea |
| **Q2.** Do you have an update on events coming up in future months? Can the committee help to organise in any way? | **A2.**   * Between now and Christmas – running Jingle Mingle – a lot of people who may not have gone home for Christmas * In the new year – another unwind – craft event. 3 postgrad trips away – subsidised - £5 a ticket – Stone Henge, Oxford, Waterfall walks * Other ideas e.g. open mic night * Working with societies – idea of bake your PhD – decorate a cake on the theme of your thesis/dissertation |
| **Q3.** What are you doing about people not attending (executive committee/accountability) sessions? | **A3.** Taking action, sent emails, asked to supply reasoning, committee will vote |

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| **Does the accountability session wish to consider any of the following notices?**  *If Yes, please provide details of the reasons for such motion or notice in the box provided.* | |
| **Motion of Censure**  *Motions of Censure shall be considered when the committee believes the elected officer has committed a serious offence against their office or democratic responsibilities as outlined in the bye-law appendices. Note: When motions of Censure are considered the elected officer shall be provided with at least 48 hours-notice in order to be able to provide a fair and accurate response to the reasons for the censure.* | Yes / No |
| **Notice of Requires Improvement**  *Notices of Requires Improvement shall be considered when the committee is dissatisfied in an elected officers work or conduct in relation to their role, responsibilities and manifesto commitments. Note: When notices of Requires Improvement are considered the elected officer shall be provided with at least 48 hours-notice in order to be able to provide a fair and accurate response to the reasons for the notice.* | Yes / No |
| **Notice of Satisfaction**  *Notices of Satisfaction shall be considered when the committee wishes to formally recognise an elected officer for outstanding work in relation to their role, responsibilities and manifesto committee. Note: Prior warning for a Notice of Satisfaction is not required.* | Yes / No |

**Section 3: Accountability Session Outcomes**

*This section is to be completed by the accountability session members following their meeting*

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| Is the session satisfied with the discussion held with the Sabbatical Officer? | Yes / No |
| If the answer to the above question is **no** please provide additional details below. | |
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| Is there anything the session wishes to make Student Senate aware of as a result of the meeting? | Yes / No |
| If the answer to the above question is **yes** please provide additional details below. | |
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| **Following consideration did the accountability session apply any of the following motions or notices?**  *If Yes, please provide details of the reasons for such motion or notice in the box provided.* | |
| **Motion of Censure**  *Motions of Censure shall be considered when the committee believes the elected officer has committed a serious offence against their office or democratic responsibilities as outlined in the bye-law appendices.* | Yes / No |
| **Notice of Requires Improvement**  *Notices of Requires Improvement shall be considered when the committee is dissatisfied in an elected officers work or conduct in relation to their role, responsibilities and manifesto commitments.* | Yes / No |
| **Notice of Satisfaction**  *Notices of Satisfaction shall be considered when the committee wishes to formally recognise an elected officer for outstanding work in relation to their role, responsibilities and manifesto committee.* | Yes / No |