



Aston_su

1 Building 15000 Members 1300 Volunteers

Aston Students' Union
The official Manifesto for 2022-2025




**ASTON SU
@s YOU**

**TO BE
AN SU FOR
EVERYONE**

DELIVERING SERVICES FOR YOU



YOU ARE THE



OF EVERYTHING WE DO

**AN EXPERIENCE
YOU'LL NEVER FORGET**



**THE POTENTIAL
TO CREATE CHANGE**



**SUPPORTING
YOU**



**THROUGHOUT
YOUR JOURNEY**

**GROWING
COMMUNITIES
DIVERSE AND
INCLUSIVE
FOR ALL**

MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT

- EQUIPPING YOU FOR YOUR FUTURE
- REPRESENTING ALL OF YOU
- STRONGER WORKING TOGETHER

**DIGITAL SPACES AND
CLEAR COMMUNICATION**



**YOUR
SUCCESS
IS OUR SUCCESS**



ADD YOURS



*Subject to change Jan 2022

Vision

To be an SU for everyone.

Everyone should know the SU is for them and can make a positive difference to their time at Aston.

Mission

Giving students an experience, they'll never forget.

As we transition back into a new way of life, we want you to have the student experience you deserve.

Values

Enhancing student leadership and the potential to create change.

Equality is core to our services and opportunities, making them diverse and inclusive for all.

Empowering students' voices at the heart of everything we do.

Supporting students throughout their Aston journeys.

Student Engagement

We want students to get involved in the students' union, our research informs us that the more you engage in the SU the more fulfilling time you will have at university. It is vitally important we deliver exceptional opportunities and services for student engagement & support.

You Told Us

1. You like the fact you can access student information advice and guidance, both online and in person.
2. The pandemic has taken its toll on your mental health and wellbeing.
3. You like the fact the SU can be flexible and respond to students' needs.

We know

1. Getting involved in the SU mean you appreciate and value your student experience more.
2. We have a building that is welcoming and the best place to spend time on campus
3. Not everyone gets involved in the SU, we need to do more to be an SU for everyone.

Strategic Goals

- a) Develop the Advice and Representation Centre as one of the best services for students.
- b) Provide the best accommodation information, advice, and guidance.
- c) Support elected student officers and leaders to effectively represent students.
- d) Monitor and evaluate the impact of our work on students, their sense of belonging, health and well being
- e) “Welcome to the Students’ Union” – the SU becomes a place for student communities to thrive

By 2024 you union will have increased support for international students, increased our student advice work to accommodate over 700 students each year, brokered positive working relationships with all the major accommodation providers, support each officer team to be the best version of themselves and deliver amazing student and officer-led opportunities, created a better way to listen to your views and ideas so we can Listen>Act>Review>Refine what and how we do things.

Academic Interests

A quality academic experience is central to all student's time at Aston, and a core part of our charitable aims is to represent all aspects of students' academic interests. We want to make sure you get a Teaching and Learning experience that exceeds your expectations.

You Told us

1. You have valued the University's flexibility during the pandemic and lockdown.
2. Consistency of experience across colleges is important to you.
3. Access to personal tutors is not as consistent as it should be.

We know

1. Course Reps should hold the University to account, and we need to do more to support them.
2. We should do more to digitise the student voice.
3. For the Union to increase its legitimacy as the voice of students on campus, we need to increase the number of students engaging with our democratic processes.

Strategic Goals

- f) Ensure the student reps framework is successful in the eyes of students, university and SU
- g) Establish academic societies for all relevant programmes.
- h) Create a digital student voice feedback mechanism
- i) Support the university National Student Survey Campaign

By 2024 your Union will have ensured every student has an academic society they are able to join, our training for student reps will have achieved a +4* rating, Union Senate will regularly have over 60 attendees, 70% of our reps will be trained and supported, our NSS score will exceed 60% satisfaction rating and our student reps will represent and be representative of the diverse students at Aston.

Student Communities

Being part of something at university, having a sense of belonging is critical to individual success at university. The students' union aims to do all it can to help grow, create and develop student-led communities.

You Told us

1. It can be hard to make friends when first starting University.
2. Membership of Clubs and Societies is a great way to make friends.
3. You want to take part in more events and want to know when they are being organised.

We know

1. Organising Clubs and societies takes time and often lots of money.
2. Not all students get involved in Clubs and Societies, and we should support them to be more inclusive.
3. We provide the best value student accommodation in the city.

Strategic Goals

- j) Support student-led clubs and societies to thrive at Aston.
- k) Work to tackle and educate students on relevant health and wellbeing issues.
- l) A thriving Community at The Green
- m) Create clear guidelines and resources for dealing with incidents of harassment and discrimination on campus
- n) Supporting new and existing student communities

By 2024 your Union will have regular partnerships with organisation who support students, saved our students residents over £2m in rent compared to other accommodation providers, over seen continued growth of our clubs and societies, have sector leading polices and process for dealing with harassment and discrimination on campus. We will have supported over 2000 CEGH students as valued member of the students' union and established a Intra Mural Sports League.

Ambitious Futures

Aston students are incredibly ambitious and see their time at university as a steppingstone to a successful career. We want to help students for their ambitious futures.

You Told us

1. Not getting a placement is a genuine concern for many students.
2. Final year students often tell us they wish 'they got involved' earlier.
3. Finding a graduate job remains a key concern for Aston student.

We know

1. 80% of students go on a placement, and in the second year the SU is competing against a need to get a placement for students' time.
2. The experiences of SU led extracurricular activity is invaluable to student's CVs and help them stand out from the crowd.
3. Students are more likely to remain and succeed at university when they engage with the students' union.

Strategic Goals

- o) Support on campus and online Careers and Placement activities.
- p) Develop a well-trained and support student staff team.
- q) Be better at articulating how getting involved in the SU will improve graduate outcomes.
- r) We want to celebrate our members and all the things they achieve throughout their time at Aston.

By 2024 we will have established a strong partnership with University Careers and Placements, ensure our student staff team is reflective of the diverse membership, have grown our Linked-In community to celebrate students and alumni achievements, created new ways to celebrate student success such as monthly awards and an improved Aston SU Awards experience.

Amplified Aston Life

We want our students to feel at home in the students' union and have a great time with their friends. We also want the SU to be the best place to get a bite to eat on and around the campus and the automatic choice as a place to spend a few hours socialising each week.

You told us

1. The social spaces in the SU building are an important part of what the SU offers.
2. Money is tight. You want quality and value for money across all our outlets.
3. You would like more information about events, opportunities and activities taking place in the students' union.

We know

1. It's incredibly hard to create profit from the SU commercial services.
2. Meeting the social, eating and drinking needs of Aston's diverse student population can be challenging at times.
3. The eating and drinking habits of students are changing all the time, and we need to respond to the latest trends.

Strategic Goals

- Developing sustainable commercial services to amplify your Aston life.
- The Lounge is a popular, well used and loved student hangout.
- The Shop and Good Place drive footfall and activity on the ground floor of the SU.
- To organise key large-scale event through the academic calendar that student want and enjoy.
- To provide late night event and opportunities for student via 3rd parties.

By 2024 our building will be busier than ever, the commercial services will provide a small and steady income stream, we will have student-centred and beneficial relationships with external providers, continue to run large scale events through the year that students want and love such as the AU Ball and Graduation Ball.

People and Resources

Our people, our finances, our space, and our governance will be managed sustainably and effectively to allow everyone to make a positive impact.

You told us

1. Clubs and Societies value the digital student expenses system.
2. You want to be involved at decision making at all levels of the SU.
3. Sustainability is incredibly important to you personally. You want to build a better planet.

We know

1. Strong governance is vital to any charity's success.
2. The wellbeing and performance of all our staff, as teams and individuals, are equally important.
3. The University are our only funder and its imperative that have confidence in our ability to be well-run and run things well.

Strategic Goals

- To deliver strong and effective governance at all levels.
- Monitor expenditure and income closely with timely management accounts to enable effective decision making.
- Meet our obligations under the charities act and Education act, and any local legislative requirements.
- To adopt a 'continuous improvement' methodology for sustainable activity.

By 2024 we will have completed the external Governance Review by implementing all the recommendations, responded positively to external review and audit of our financial systems and processes, achieved a 75% completion rate for our annual staff engagement survey and a 90% engagement score, maintained our clean bill of health from the auditors, have 100% of staff involved in personal development activity, our Block Grant will be over £2.1m, we will have received our 3rd Green Impact Excellent Award

Communications and Digital

Our communication will be clear, and our digital spaces will be a key part of our service delivery.

You Told Us

1. You get too many emails.
2. You want to know what events are being organised by the SU. and its student groups
3. You love social media.

We know

1. Most students access our digital content via their phones.
2. Video and student-centred content drives engagement.
3. What we do online is as important as what we do in the building and face to face.

Strategic Goals

- Create digital resources to allow membership and commercial services to thrive.
- Develop systems to support staff and officers to maximise their online presence.
- Continue to develop strong growth and engagement across all social media platforms.
- Cocreation and collaboration with different students to showcase a variety of perspectives.

By 2024 we will have a new website that meets the needs of the organisation and student users, continue to monitor trends, and react accordingly, (students are often at the forefront of digital technology, and we need to be where they are), improved how we both promote our activities, and deliver our activities digitally.

Partnerships and Collaboration

The Union is stronger and achieves more for students when working with others.

You Told Us

- 1 You trust the Union to work with the right organisations for students
- 2 You want to access services online and face to face
- 3 You love a freebie!

We know

- 1 There are lots of different student services on campus, sometimes it can be hard to navigate which is the right one for you
- 2 We are not the experts in all matters relating to being a student
- 3 There are many organisations offering information, advice, and guidance to students on all kinds of subjects

Strategic Goals

- Work at actively building relationships and connections, as part of the Covid recovery, across key departments across campus.
- Active programme to encouraging staff and officers to engage with local and national networks (NUS and NUS Charity).
- Beyond the campus: Establishing relationships with new organisation that offer benefit to students.

By 2024 we will have mapped and understand what makes a beneficial partnership on campus, established strong connections and partnerships with key organisations, had over 50% of staffing using our volunteering policy, will always sign post students onto other organisations when it is relevant, had one Aston student stand for a NUS Full Time officer position.

Monitor and Evaluation, measuring our success

The Students' Union has established a set of nine Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Strategic Objective	KPI	2022	2025
Student Engagement	Voter Turnout	21%	30%
Academic Interests	NSS Q23 Score	60%	64%
Student Communities	Casework & appointments	600	700
Ambitious Futures	Student Satisfaction with SU	4.5/5.0	4.8/5.0
Amplified Aston Life	Commercial Bottom Line	Breakeven	Surplus
People and Resources	Block Grant	£1.8m	£2.1m
People and Resources	Staff Engagement Score	85%	90%
Communications and Digital	What Uni Student Choice League Table	-	Top Ten
Partnership and Collaborations	Positive Feedback	-	