

**BROOKES
UNION**

20

**IMPACT
REPORT**

24

Brookes Union has provided me support, empowerment and most importantly community. I have been honoured to represent our members this past academic year with such an inspiring team.

The role of the Students' Union is to champion student experience and support our members to thrive while studying at Oxford Brookes. While a large part of this is representing academic interests, we recognise that university life is more than this alone - it is about belonging.

I have been able to work on a vast array of projects and campaigns, from sustainability to sexual health, however the work of the Union is beyond Officer manifestos. We boast a thriving students' union with: a valuable Advice Team who have provided students much needed support during times of need, a popular Community Team who carry our many societies and large scale Union events, a robust Finance Team that keeps the organisation healthy, and our Communications Team who lead on our social media, website, and organisational accountability.

Our strong relationship with the University has enabled us to deliver a great deal this year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank not only those students who have got involved with our work, but our teams of dedicated staff.

I look forward to seeing how the incoming Full-time and Part-time Officers approach their roles and responsibilities. I hope you find Brookes Union as rewarding as we have.



Jacob Callicott

Union President, 2023-24

Representation

515 course reps
this year

200 new reps trained



91% of reps
surveyed felt their
contributions were
valued



90% of reps
surveyed
recommended
becoming a rep

Course rep wins

Reps worked with the VP: Education & Advocacy to reschedule the resit exam timetable by the academic board, allowing thousands of international students to apply for the Post Study Work visa.

Successfully advocated for new buses to replace the old Brookes buses.

Addressed communication issues between students and dissertation supervisors, resulting in improved supervisor support.

Addressed Turnitin comparison ratings and inconsistencies in student support communications, enhancing a sense of support and employability through increased career talks.



Part-time officer wins

"The bar has been a fantastic addition to Harcourt and has really improved the opportunities to socialise!"

Harcourt first year

- Opening of Harcourt bar



- Lockers at Harcourt



- Optional pronouns on ID badges



After successful lobbying by the LGBTQ+ officers, students can now choose to have optional pronouns on their ID cards as of January 2024.

"Having the option of pronouns on ID cards increases the awareness and inclusion of students who otherwise may be left in uncomfortable situations."

2nd year, Economics, Finance and International Business

- Promoting black excellence and employability workshop

with Jessica Rogers for Black Students' Careers Week

"The Black Students' Careers Week was very insightful and encouraged me to embrace my differences as a black student when applying to jobs."

3rd year, Business and Marketing

"By speaking to the Black Students' Officer about my learning difficulties, I was able to receive the help I needed as she referred me to the Inclusive Support Services."

2nd year, Occupational Therapy

"Attending Black Students' Network events challenged me to think outside the box by encouraging me to be a more active participant in spaces where black excellence is encouraged."

2nd year, Law

Advice

The Advice Service currently offers advice on:

- Exceptional circumstances
- Academic appeal
- Academic misconduct
- Complaints
- Accommodation



Policy changes

- ✓ University to appoint an additional Student Money Adviser following SU feedback on financial literacy issues during Access and Participation Plan (APP) consultations.
- ✓ Financial literacy program launched to help students manage living costs, initiated from Students' Union feedback.
- ✓ University's APP policy now includes students under 25 without living parents.
- ✓ Influenced the University's upcoming Attendance and Engagement Policy to include employability relevance and clear Fitness to Study triggers.
- ✓ Shaping the Sexual Consent Education Strategy by defining staff training for managing disclosures and ensuring inclusion of key stakeholders.
- ✓ Substance misuse policy revised to prioritise educational support over punitive measures, while maintaining consequences for behavioural misconduct under influence.



Belonging

Cultural

Global Fest was a week of events & activities celebrating diversity in our student community at Brookes.

Engaged over

600

students across



Holi festival

Badge + postcard making

Language classes

Quiz night

Football tournament

International students mixer

Societies cultural fair

+ more



x x x x
x x x x

...

Cultural Ball

Showcased students in traditional attire with stage performances celebrating diverse cultures.

87 attendees



Brookes Colour Run to celebrate Holi

300 tickets issued
and brought together a wide community
of students.



All I Want For Christmas week

Our annual Christmas survey.

1,400
survey responses

1000+ 
hot chocolates
given out



Liberation

A number of campaigns and events were organised to promote change on campus for marginalised communities at Brookes:

LGBTQ+ History Month

LGBTQ+ Network collaborated with the Full-Time Officers to host engaging activities like badge making and pottery painting, attracting many new network



"History Month really helped educate me & furthered my understanding of the community"

2nd year Law

Menstrual Equity



Improved access to the on-campus "caring cupboard" and supported a campus map of free period products; represented the Students' Union at the first Menstrual Equity Fair.

Black History Month

During Black History Month, Erika (VP: Liberation and Community) relaunched the See Black campaign that celebrates the existence of black people and culture.



Health and Wellbeing

Sexual Health and Guidance (SHAG) Week



- Life drawing
- Bingo
- Quiz
- Give-aways
- STI testing + awareness



115

attendees across three core events

0% Events series

The 0% Events series offers alcohol-free socialising opportunities, enabling students to enjoy gatherings without the pressure of drinking.



60

events throughout the year



Film nights



Crafts events

Art workshops

Quizzes every week

Self defence class

Distillery tour

Pumpkin picking!

Educational events



Roller disco



Brookes Union X Brookes Active collaboration

The collaboration between the Union and Brookes Sport introduces recreational activities for all students, moving beyond solely competitive and elite sports.



"Brookes Active has provided a weekly opportunity to mix with course mates and enjoy some non competitive sport"

Brookes Active sessions at Harcourt introduced by the Harcourt Site Officer.



Weekly football kickaround
20-40 students each session.

Stress Less

Stress Less helps students with their mental health in exam season. The campaign supports students with freebies and calming experiences.



Alpacas on campus



"Fun and engaging"

Student feedback

"Cool & different"

Student feedback

200 
plants handed
out

400 
wellbeing bags given
to students

100 
porridge giveaways

76%

of students want it to happen in both semesters.

Community

Freshers' and Arrivals weekend

Freshers' Week welcomes new students, providing them with opportunities to connect, explore campus resources, and join student groups.

3,100

tote bags given away



714

students
attending Freshers
events in week 1

9 Network mixers

68

societies with stalls
at freshers' fair



250+

students joined us for
free breakfast at the
start of Freshers week.



Refreshers' Week

Refreshers Week re-engages students with a series of events and activities designed to energise and reintegrate them into university life.



57

Society &
Network stalls

17

Give-it-a-go
sessions

4

Evening
events

Brookes Fiesta

In collaboration with Residences, International Student Advice Team (ISAT), and Sport.

350+

students attended



Cost of Living

Our campaign to help students deal with the cost of living crisis.



200+



free soups given out to students.

70

food parcels sent to Swindon & Headington



2 jumble sale events



Awards



The Union Awards are a way for the Union to recognise and celebrate outstanding students and staff members at Brookes.



Teaching and Rep Awards:

350 
nominations

across 18 categories.

Community Awards:

80 
nominations

across 10 categories.

Society Awards:

316 
nominations

across 10 categories.

400
attendees
at the awards ceremony



Sustainability



"Working with the Green Team has been a fulfilling experience, I have developed my expertise and improved my confidence on sustainable issues."

"These opportunities have helped me learn first-hand how different approaches to sustainable issues are applied"

Jake Beer, Green Team President

Sustainability Exhibition

- Repair cafe 
- Smoothy-making bike 
- Charities 
- Live food preparation
- Student Networks 
- Student project exhibition
- Panel discussion on sustainable resilience



National Coffee Day Fair

- Launched Reusable cup campaign
- Promotion of oat milk alternatives







Veganuary fair

Delivered a record-breaking Veganuary to promote sustainable, tasty vegan options and raise awareness of animal agriculture's environmental impact.



Sales + pop-ups

- 7 x Vintage clothing sales 
- 7 x Poster sales 
- 3 days of plant sales 
- 2 x sales by Goose and Gander (a unisex sustainable clothing brand) 

£6600

Income for Brookes Union
from hall hire

Elections

Elections at the Union empower students by involving them in democratic processes to elect their representatives.

20%
voter turnout

↑ +5% increase on 2022

3125
students voted

↑ +33% increase on 2022

56
candidates

↑ +55% increase on 2022

350
doughnuts given away

12,365
votes cast



37%
of society
members
voted

38%
of course
reps voted



Societies + Networks

Society wins

Dance Society have seen amazing success and won multiple competitions.



The Biological Society have become affiliated with the prestigious Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS).



Oxford Brookes Musical Theatre Society had a hugely successful performance of *Spring Awakening*.



Filipino Society collaborated with many other societies to bring an amazing variety of events.



A Cappella Society fundraised enough to enable them to make their debut performance at Edinburgh Fringe Festival.



Formula Brookes: C team won the British Universities Karting Championship Intermediate League, and A team placed 9th in the Premier Clubman League.



performances and showcases by our societies, including Musical Theatre, Dance and Drama.

Paramedic Society ran a Post Mortem Live event where members got to take part in an immersive event to experience an autopsy to receive a 4-hour CPD certificate.



£819



raised by **Korean Hallyu** for Mental Health Research UK.

Networks

Our Networks are spaces where students with marginalised identities can build community and campaign for change. This year, we revived them, increasing membership by **540%** on average.

2022 membership

2023 membership

Disabled Students' Network



"The Disabled Students' Network made me feel more seen and understood than ever before!"

1st year Geography student

Black Students' Network



Race equality week campaign, which included a black hair and skin care giveaway, as well as a food and snacks give away to ease the cost of living.

"The Network has helped me come out of my shell and socialise more, I have been able to win prizes that have helped me save money and manage the increased cost of living as a student."

1st year undergraduate, Nursing

Intersectional Women's History Month hair braiding event

"I learnt more about braiding during Women's History month and myself and felt what it was like to be in a community, which sometimes can be very difficult when you're one of the only black people in the class. Thanks to everyone that created this safe space for me."

3rd year undergraduate, Business and Hospitality

Collaborative ball with African and Caribbean Society

"Being part of the Black Students Network has helped me get involved more in the University's community of students. The Black Students' Network made me aware of events like the Black Students' Ball which I really enjoyed."

2nd year, Law

LGBTQ+ Network



- LGBTQ+ History Month
- Transgender awareness week
- Fortnightly friendlies were set up.

"Expanded people's awareness of the different challenges that the community can face etc - but also making it a positive and encouraging place!!"

Postgrad, Law



"The Network events made me feel included and took action to make sure that everyone at Brookes is represented"

2nd year, Events Management

Organisational changes

Community elections on the website

With the aim to make student group elections as fair and democratic as possible, all elections were run successfully on the Brookes Union website.



Societies executive committee

Launched the Societies Executive Committee to gather feedback and improve group activities, approving a £5000 grant pot and over 20 new societies.



Advocating for change

Mitigating course cuts

Jazz Society helped mitigate course cuts by identifying the impacts on performance societies and student experience at Brookes, aiding in effective communication of issues to the University.



Employability

Employability portal

Phoebe, our VP Activities & Employability spearheaded the introduction of a new employability portal to enhance career resources and opportunities for students.

Student staff

"Such a dynamic and fun way to get involved with the University, while meeting new people across the campuses and building experience."

"Working as student staff for Brookes Union has enhanced my university experience, developing key skills and preparing me for future opportunities."



"Working for the Union has been flexible and rewarding, with supportive management that accommodates my university schedule and shift adjustments."

"Working with Brookes Union as student staff has enriched my university experience, fostering a sense of community and belonging. The welcoming environment promotes personal growth, enhances confidence, and develops key skills like communication and teamwork. This role offers a balance between academic responsibilities and work, positively impacting my well-being and future career prospects."



"Brookes Union is a fun, inclusive and happy environment to work in - enabling students to become more connected with each other and with what's going on at the Uni."

