

AGM Report For: Postgraduate and Mature Students' Officer

Name:

Amy Louise Stanning

Role:

Postgraduate and Mature Students' Officer

Progress on Manifesto Pledges:

A survey has been run to collect Student feedback on the support they receive as PG & M Students coming to Lancaster. This looked at all aspects of Students' circumstances including support for partners and families. Also included was academic support for students' return to study after time away from education. The responses will be collated shortly and shared via LUSU media and used in discussions with the University and to inform future campaigns.

I have attended every LUSU Exec meeting to ensure the voice of PG and M Students has been heard within the Union. I proposed successful motions on electoral reform and Free Speech at the Exec to help the Union respond to the 'RON fiasco' and the Government's proposed changes to Free Speech on campus which could have significant implications for the Union and the safety of some marginal student communities.

The Forum has been re-established (with new name- see below) and an Exec team elected. I'd like to thank Charlotte, Beth, Amanda and Ruth for their support and commitment. We have run a varied programme of events via Teams, including 2 'Cook-Alongs', with YH, quizzes, a talk on the US election and crafting. Attendance hasn't been as many as we would hope, but as the Forum is newly established and 'digital fatigue' is a factor for Students, we don't measure our success in numbers!

Other Projects I Have Been Working On:

Discussions within the Forum quickly identified that the Mature Students' role title and Forum name wasn't wasn't fully descriptive of the constituency as it made no reference to PG students – who had no other LUSU Officer representation. LUSU Exec and the Forum both voted to adopt the new Postgraduate and Mature Student's label for the role and Forum.

Lent term saw a huge focus on the needs of Parent and Carer students, encouraged by the experience of several students which had been pretty poor with the University bureaucracy showing a lack of flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of some students. A major gap is the absence of any defined University policy for student maternity and paternity and a lack of information on the support available to new student parents. We are starting to make good progress.

The LUSU Exec unanimously approved my policy motion committing the Union to ensuring a comprehensive support policy is put in place to help Parent and Carer students get the best from their time at Lancaster. Meetings with University management have been positive, and we are working collaboratively to identify the specific issues the policy will address and to ensure all relevant forms of support available are easily to find and clear. A separate stream is working with the University to develop specific support policies for student maternity and paternity. Again, the University is supportive, and we expect to jointly hold focus groups for impacted students later in the term.

I welcome the proposed creation of a Parent and Carer Students' Officer this term to ensure there is specific representation for these vulnerable and too-often ignored students.

Priorities for the remainder of the year:

For the remainder of my term, my priorities are to:

- *Analyse the PG & M Students' survey results and communicate the findings*
- *Work with the University to define the needs of Parent and Carer Students and design a support policy in response*
- *Work with the University to develop paternity and maternity policies for students*
- *Encourage great candidates to apply for the role in a byelection this term*
- *Hand the Forum over to my successor in great shape*

Officer Budget Expenditure:

Spend to date : nil although approx. £20 in claims for competition prizes are to be submitted.

Finally:

It's been a strange year – for all the reasons we know but I have loved having the opportunity to serve PG & M Students as their officer and to work with the amazing Officer team. Thank you for the opportunity!

AS

19/4/21