AGM Part 2: Officer Report

**Name & Role:** Lewis Marriott, Vice President: Campaigns & Communications

**Progress on Manifesto Pledges:**

When I ran to be VP Campaigns & Communications, my four key aims were to increase the visibility of:

* **The Students’ Union**
* **Student media**
* **Under-represented sports**
* **Local areas**

I believe that I have managed to make some great progress to my original aims in the 8 months that I have been in office and will continue to work towards these aims in my remaining months.

**Manifesto Pledge One: Improve Union in-person communication:**

* Improve personal communication, dedicating a day for full-time officers to stand in Alexandra Square for a few hours.
* Alex square is the centre of campus, making it the perfect place for FTO’s to engage with the students they represent, on a direct level.
* Increase transparency between the Union and Students throughout the year.

I have ran a weekly ‘SU on Tour’ campaign with my fellow officers. This campaign was launched with weekly pop-up union events in Alexandra Square for the last five weeks of Michaelmas Term. Each week had a different theme from ‘What is the Students’ Union?’ to ‘Elections and Why You Should Vote’. These events provided us with a great opportunity to interact with the students we represent and hear your thoughts, feedback and opinions on the Students’ Union. For Lent term, I made the decision to change the weekly stall in Alex Square to individual officer drop in’s around campus, where students could meet their elected officers in a comfortable space around campus. I co-ordinated and organised this with the other officers to find a time and location that was suitable to them. This was targeted towards those thinking of nominating themselves to be Full Time or Part Time Officers, so they could get some 1-1 time with the officer they were hoping to replace and talk through potential policies and campaigns. Next term, I am planning on returning to Alex Square and focusing on different student groups each week such as JCRs, Student Media & Academic Reps to give students more of an insight into who these students are and what they do to improve the student experience here at Lancaster.

**Manifesto Pledge Two: Increase transparency of the Union:**

• Regarding communication, the union already do an excellent job broadcasting competitions and upcoming events. However, important issues such as the white t-shirt scandal and referendum turnout are ignored based on their less-than positive consequences.

A second campaign I have ran this year aimed at increasing communication and transparency is the fortnightly ‘Ask the Officers’ live broadcast. Students can submit their questions to the livestream or ask them in advance using a Qualtrics form I created. The aim of this campaign was to keep students informed of what their officer team was up to and improve communication between the officers and students. I decided to change the ‘Ask The Officers’ livestream to pre-recorded videos of our current officer team talking about their roles, to hopefully get more students interested in running in the elections, as the livestreams were starting to get slightly repetitive. However, I am planning on returning back to the live Q&A format as I believe this worked better and will potentially be done with our Part Time Officers and the incoming 2020/21 Full Time Officers.

I have made communicating with students one of my main priorities this year and is something that I personally believe I have excelled at. I have been posting on my Officer Instagram ([@LUSUComms](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Flusucomms%2F&data=02%7C01%7Csu.vp.campaignsandcomms%40lancaster.ac.uk%7C62bf8cfd84284c9ef35008d7bfd879fc%7C9c9bcd11977a4e9ca9a0bc734090164a%7C1%7C0%7C637188808784129768&sdata=OSnRzDLky%2F5qnJlgQrqyUDqVjJl4jXD5WNM%2BxGCkCVo%3D&reserved=0)) daily, live tweeted meetings, using Instagram stories to show what’s happening in meetings, appearing on the LA1TV monthly catch-up show and using the [Discussion Board](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F1817175635030845%2F%3Fsource_id%3D203862499623904&data=02%7C01%7Csu.vp.campaignsandcomms%40lancaster.ac.uk%7C62bf8cfd84284c9ef35008d7bfd879fc%7C9c9bcd11977a4e9ca9a0bc734090164a%7C1%7C0%7C637188808784139768&sdata=GiBJsXeb6yBx5Eop4ARrwOPDM2gkYMWcuSPHaTh5cBE%3D&reserved=0) to involve students. When I came into office, I was really keen on getting the discussion board active again. I have been very active on this platform by giving our members the chance to be involved in polls, conversations and debates about the union, university and student life. I have used the discussion board to influence my decisions as an Officer such as letting members choose the film screening I organised to celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month.

As minutes for previous Trustee Boards get approved at the next Trustee Board (which will be in April) I organised and made a summary video of what was discussed at board with George and Graeme, the Vice Chair of Trustee Board, in the hope of improving transparency of our Trustee Board and communication with our members. I am planning on doing this after every Trustee Board in the future, since board voted against having our meetings live-streamed.

Finally, to increase communication and transparency I have filmed and edited a ‘Understanding Your SU’ video series – focusing on University Council, Executive Committee and Trustee Board – I am planning on doing this with other committees that the Full Time Officers sit on, to show how we represent students to the university.

**Manifesto Pledge Three: Better promote student media**

Being an English Literature and Theatre student, media-based societies are something I would have loved to have been more involved with from early on in my degree. As VP Campaigns and Communications, I would aim to run a campaign during Michaelmas term ensuring the exposure of student media opportunities are boosted and better advertised on campus.

* I would create billboards and posters to explain the benefits of getting involved in student media.
* Utilise large platforms like the screen in Alexandra Square.

Before Welcome Week, I ordered the flyers for Bailirgg FM and LA1TV, and gave copies of SCAN to the JCRs so they could be placed in colleges and introduce student media to incoming students. For the Student Media Summit, I created posters advertising the event and put them up around campus and had the event advertised on the E-screens. I have sent the graphic of the Roses Media Summit to be put up on the big screen and the E-screens around campus.

I have tried to share the work of our four student media teams on any social media platforms I have access to and the Students’ Union social media accounts to document the amazing work produced. Additionally, I have tried to show my support for student media by attending many of the events that they are organised and executed. Examples of this have been the ‘Student Radio Association’ Training Day organised by Thomas, the station manager of Bailrigg FM and LA1TV’s ‘First Dates’ Premier.

• Implement cross-over advertisement for each student media throughout SCAN, Bailrigg,

LA1TV and Take2 cinema, introducing a new way for the societies to collaborate.

When I first started in my role, the student media execs made the decision to stop their joint membership, in favour of individual ones. I have worked hard this year to encourage collaboration within student media and specifically make Take2 Cinema part of the Lancaster Student Media community. This year they have been included in Roses for the first time and will invited to the end of year celebration event, as opposed to last year where they were not. I have started conversations with the Student Media Heads that are looking into the future and potentially having them collaborate in some form of joint network rather than four individual ones.

• Build on work from the media summit held in first term, and give students another chance

to find out more during refreshers.

I did this by hosting the first ‘Student Media Mingle’ Event at the start of Lent Term. This event was something that I was really proud of as it provided a fun and informal opportunity for those interested in getting involved in media the chance to meet the current execs and talk about potential projects and ideas.

Students have another chance to get involved in student media with the upcoming Roses Media Summit. To advertise this, I have been round sports teams with our VP Activities, Victoria to encourage people to attend and potentially document the sports they play for with student media at Roses.

**Manifesto Pledge Four: Make student media more accessible:**

* Tying in with better promotion of student media, I would like to increase its accessibility.
* I would co-operate with ISS, creating a student media-based tile to give easy access from the iLancaster app to the latest articles, podcasts and shows.

I have worked hard this year to better support and promote our four student media teams. Achievements have included having an ‘SU Media’ button added the iLancaster app; so students can catch up on the latest articles, podcasts and shows from any of our four student media teams. Additionally, I collaborated with the Student Media Heads to write a bid for Lancaster to host the Student Publication Association National Conference. Although we were not chosen to host the conference, I am really proud of the work we produced. I have used my own officer account and the Students’ Union accounts to promote the work of our amazing volunteers whenever possible.

**Manifesto Pledge Five: Utilise local media stations:**

* Corroborate with local and widespread media companies, including Lancaster Guardian, Beyond Radio and Fat Media Ltd.
* Invite speakers to the ‘Working in the Media’ conference, allowing students to gain insight into careers within the media sector.

This was a project I worked hard to organise during summer so it could be done in first term as I believed that students’ would find it most beneficial then. However, due to the Sugarhouse dominating much of first term, I could not find a date that most of the people I had been in contact with about speaking could attend, so the idea was parked.

Instead I arranged a trip to media city for our student media execs and college Media and Communication officers so they could take a tour of the BBC in order to provide them with a fun day out with an employability focus.

**When running to be VP Campaigns & Communications, there were two main campaigns that I wanted to enforce. These were…**

**Manifesto Pledge Six: Community Expansion Campaign**

* ‘Bursting the Bubble’ in which Lancaster students live. This would be a two-term campaign focussing on getting students out of Lancaster and visiting areas nearby.
* Organise subsidised trips to areas like the Lake District, Kendal Castle, and Cumbria - taking a different approach from the usual JCR night-out events, and giving students (particularly those who are international) the chance to explore other areas of the UK that aren’t populated cities.

When I came into office, I decided to broaden this campaign so that it had a mental health & wellbeing focus. Last term, I launched my ‘Don’t Lose Your Cool’ campaign with the aim of providing students with easy and practical ways to integrate creativity and mindfulness into their day-to-day lives, in order to relive stress and improve mental well-being. Last term, activity included a launch with free ice cream, art and crafts and massages, ‘Mood and Movies’ film screenings and giving away free lunches and self-care calendars to prevent those end of term blues. This term, I have hosted a ‘Winter Warmer’ giveaway to make sure students keep warm in frosty Lancaster. Additionally, I have put up over 100 stickers with quotes around campus to hopefully inspire, educate and even motivate some students and given out ‘Little pick me up’ packs (filled with fruit, chocolate, sweets and a couple of treats) on Valentine’s Day to encourage people to participate in random acts of kindness. In Week 20, I am planning on doing another giveaway with free food in the library for students to take a break during a busy coursework week. In advance of summer term, I have made self-care calendars, revision timetables, revision checklist to promote exam wellbeing and importance of being prepared for exams and looking after yourself during this time. These will be available on the website shortly.

In Term 3, I am planning on working with Living to provide meditation and mindfulness sessions activities each week of term and trips to the Lake District and Cheshire oaks (one at the start of term and the other at the end). I have also been in contact with library about setting up a ‘Zen Zone’ in the library for students to take a break and relax, with some books on mindfulness and motivation.

I am also currently writing ‘Mood & Food’ recipe cards – these are healthy and cheap meals to cook on busy exam / coursework days that will keep you energised and ready to study. I am working with Central to hopefully get different weekly discounts on these meals so they can be cooked by any student on a budget.

Summer Destresstival - Late May. A week-long event giving students the opportunity to have some fun and de-stress by taking part in some exciting activities. Some of the activities I have already started to organised have been a ‘Canine Calming’ day with a local dog shelter and a pool party event at the sports centre.

**Manifesto Pledge Seven: Roses campaign**

* Shining a light on underrepresented sports and teams - I would boost the presence of sports such as korfball, sailing and underwater hockey. This promotion will hopefully result in a larger crowd at their matches and reduce the stigma that surrounds sports, encouraging more people to get involved.

I got the opportunity to help out with the 2020 Roses video and tried to use that opportunity to shine a light on underrepresented sports and teams by pushing for more of them to be featured in the video.

For the Refreshers Fair in January - I took over the Lancaster SU Instagram stories and used this large platform to show smaller or newly affiliated societies such as Lancaster Marrow Society, Folk society and board game society just to name a few.

I am aiming to work with student media to ensure that sports teams that are often over looked get featured more during Roses 2020. If anyone from those sports would like to get involved and have their work broadcast by student media, then come along to the Roses Media Summit on Tuesday 17th March to find out more.

**Other Projects I Have Been Working On:**

**General Election Campaign** – Myself and George took the lead to promote the 2019 General Election. We decided to give it a Christmas theme, so that students could ‘tick something off your Christmas list early.’ For this we stood in the library wearing tinsel and Santa hats and on the day of the general election we gave out free mince pies as an incentive to voters.

I’m really proud of the work I’ve done with JCRs this year. At the start of the academic year, I set up a **JCR central Facebook group**, which has proved a really useful tool to communicating with our JCRs. I also took the lead in organising the **JCR Awards** which was held in December. For which I created a Qualtrics form for people to submit their nominations, designed the certificates, picked the winners of each of the categories with our VP Union Development and booked the venue.

I made a **Media & Communications Guidebook** for our incoming JCR Media & Communications Officers. This was 25 page document page to help these newly elected officers throughout their time in the role. I tried to include everything that I would have wanted to have known when I was on the JCR, so it includes everything for creating content to the best websites to buy Extrav wristbands from.

**Redesign Your Varsity Sign** – Worked with the Media & Communications Officers and Sports Officers from County College and Fylde College to rebrand their varsity.

**Projects for the Rest of the Year:**

Building on from the success of the JCR Awards, I organised in December. I am working with SU staff members to organise an awards evening for all our student leaders. This will be the Union’s opportunity to celebrate the students of Lancaster and all of the hard work they do to improve the student experience here at Lancaster.

I am planning on changing the annual Student Media awards this year to a Student Media Showcase - to highlight and showcase all the amazing work our student media teams have done this year. I am hoping to work with the schools team at the Students’ Union to invite local schools to attend to show them a career sector they may not have yet experienced and give them more of an insight into university.