

**YORK ST JOHN  
STUDENTS' UNION**



# **Annual Trustees' Report and Accounts**

**Financial Year Ending 31 July 2024**

**Charity No: 1136905**

**Company No: 07250320**



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# Administrative Information





### Legal Status:

York St John Students' Union Limited (YSJSU) is a charity registered in England and Wales and is incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG).

Charity Registration Number: 1136905

Company Registration Number: 07250320

### Principal Office:

The principal office of YSJSU is at York St John Students' Union, York St John University, Lord Mayor's Walk, York YO31 7EX.

The Students' Union also has an office at the University London Campus: York St John University, Floor 6, Export Building, 1 Clove Crescent, London E14 2BA.

### Charity Trustees and Company Directors:

Position	Name	Term Dates
Sabbatical Trustee (President of the Students' Union)	Matthew Blackstock	01/07/2023 to 30/06/2024
Sabbatical Trustee (President of Education)	Kamil Lawal	01/07/2023 to Present
Sabbatical Trustee (President of Wellbeing & Diversity)	Mario Owiriwa	01/07/2023 to Present
Sabbatical Trustee (President of the Students' Union)	Abinash Chaudhary	01/07/2024 to Present
External Trustee	Tiffany Burnett	01/07/2021 to 30/06/2024
External Trustee	Matthew Hunnybun	01/07/2022 to Present
External Trustee	Simon Crack	01/09/2022 to Present
External Trustee	Charlotte Burke	01/07/2023 to Present
External Trustee	Daniel Tinkler	01/07/2023 to Present
External Trustee	Robert Linton	01/07/2024 to Present
Student Trustee	Patric Mewse	01/07/2024 to Present
Student Trustee	Koen Torinski-Groves	01/07/2024 to Present

### Other Company Officers:

Position	Name	Term Dates
Company Secretary	Donna Smith	28/01/2019 to Present

**Auditor:**

BHP LLP, Rievaulx House, 1 St Mary's Court, Blossom Street, York, YO24 1AH

**Bankers:**

HSBC plc, PO Box 26, 13 Parliament Street, York, YO1 8XS

**Management Personnel:**

York St John Students' Union (YSJSU) employs a Chief Executive Officer to work closely with the Sabbatical Trustees, other elected representatives, and the staff team to ensure effective management of the charity. The Trustees delegate the day to day running of YSJSU to the Chief Executive Officer and to the Management Team.

During the 2023/24 financial year the Senior Management Team were as follows:

Position	Name	Term Dates
Chief Executive Officer	Donna Smith	28/01/2019 to Present
Head of Operations and Business Development	David Tait	01/02/2018 to Present
Head of Finance and Resources	David Green	01/03/2016 to Present

# Introduction from the President of the Students' Union and Chair of the Trustee Board



***Matthew Blackstock***  
***President of the Students' Union***  
***Chair of the Board of Trustees***  
***2023-2024***



***Abinash Chaudhary***  
***President of the Students' Union***  
***Chair of the Board of Trustees***  
***2024-2025***



The 2023/24 year was a year filled with success with continued growth in our student numbers, now over 11,000 students. There has been an increase seen on both campuses with York increasing by 1250 students and London by 700 students. We have begun trending in a positive direction which can be seen through our student engagement levels particularly with our Sports and Societies, bar/coffee lounge purchases, and events despite another year within the cost-of-living crisis. Along with the cost-of-living crisis, we have seen challenges with increasing immigration restrictions posing a threat to our international cohorts seeking to study at York St. John.

Our Presidential team sought to prioritise the Student Experience ensuring we represented as many of our students as possible. This included events and representation for Black History Month, International Men's Day, International Women's Day, LGBTQ+ History Month, Pride Month and more! In partnership with the University, our Presidential team were included within 15+ boards, committees and groups, fostering strong relationships with university personnel. This was to ensure the student voice was heard from Education Committee and Academic Board, to People Committee and the Board of Governors.

To aid with the continued cost-of-living crisis, the university continued subsidies for both sports and societies whilst ensuring the student support fund remained plentiful for students to be able to access. The larder cupboard unfortunately could not continue in its current form due to finances however continued with the use of direct student access to the student support fund with food assistance as part of that scheme.

Our advice service once again proved to be a real tool and asset to our students, increasing in use by students once again from last year, and continued positive feedback was received. The soft launch of our mediation services began this academic year, integrating our students to become mediators for sports and society disputes.

Overall, we feel as a team, our positive impact as presidents has been felt by students especially when it comes to student retention. This was something echoed through boards and committees at the beginning of the year and the 6-month snapshot shows that student retention levels are almost equal to the best they have been in the last 5 years (non-retention of 2.9% 2023/24).

It is with great heartache that my time as President of the Students' Union has come to the end. However, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time and I would like to thank all of those who contributed to an incredibly successful year including our SU staff team, Trustee Board and Part-Time Officers. I also would like to wish a warm welcome to Abinash Chaudhary as upcoming President of the Students' Union and our continuing offices of Wellbeing and Diversity, Mario Owiriwa and President of Education, Kamil Lawal.

I can definitely say that I am proud of the work we have achieved over my time as President of the Students' Union and Chair of the Board of Trustees.

**Matthew Blackstock**  
**President of the Students' Union / Chair of the Board of Trustees 2023-2024**

It gives me great pleasure to carry on our outgoing president, Matthew Blackstock's, successful and devoted legacy as the new president of the Students' Union. Impressive growth and student engagement were observed in the 2023–2024 academic year, despite a number of difficulties related to living expenses, budget cuts, service interruptions, and modifications to international cohort policy.

The Students' Union performed admirably in improving and developing services and activities for our students. We will continue to put an emphasis on expanding our university partnerships, promoting diverse events, and improving the student experience. To make sure that our Students' Union thrives going forward, I am thrilled to collaborate with our committed staff team and our continuing officers, Mario Owiriwa and Kamil Lawal.

Thank you to everyone for their hard work and commitment; together, we will achieve even greater heights.

***Abinash Chaudhary***

***President of the Students' Union / Chair of the Board of Trustees 2024-25***



# Strategy and Objectives



## Strategy during 2023/24

The 2020 strategic plan: '*students first*' came to an end in August 2024. During 2023/24, the Students' Union worked towards the following priorities:

### MISSION

We aim to empower students at York St John University to challenge and change the world around us.

### VISION

By 2024, York St John Students' Union will play a major part in the life and transformation of students by being the central hub of social activity, representation, and opportunity.

### VALUES

**INCLUSIVE** Provide activities and spaces that make students feel that they belong.

**TRANSFORMATIVE** Ensure that the Students' Union provides opportunities and experiences that positively change lives.

**CHALLENGING** Constantly critique and question what we and our partners do to ensure that we are always striving to act in the best interests of students.

**EMPOWERING** Equip students with the skills, opportunities, and experiences to enable their success.

**FUN** Make student life at York St John University enjoyable and rewarding.

### OUR PRIORITIES

Provide independent advice services that help students to stay and enjoy life at university.

Offer spaces and opportunities to enhance belonging and student communities.

Engage with the university, city and wider community to ensure that students get the best experience - on campus and beyond.

Be recognised as a change-making organisation.

Provide activities and opportunities that aid students to gain employability skills and become active citizens.

## **OUR ENABLERS**

Utilisation of Spaces

Communication, Insight and Analysis

People and Relationships

Governance, Finance and Risk Management

Ethics and Environmental Sustainability

## **OUR PROJECTS**

Beyond a 9-5 Campus

Advice, Support and Advocacy

Students as Partners

Digital Transformation

## **OUR MEASURES OF SUCCESS (KPIs)**

80% satisfaction regarding questions 21, 25 and 26 in the National Student Survey

60% of income from non-subvention means

70% of student body engaging with the Students' Union

85% staff satisfaction

National recognition for being an effective and impactful Students' Union

Performance against the Strategic Plan's Key Performance Indicators is detailed in the *Overview of Activities and Performance* section on page 14 of this document.

The full YSJSU Strategic Plan 2020-24 can be downloaded from the *Documents* section of the YSJSU website ([www.ysjsu.com](http://www.ysjsu.com)).

## External Affiliations

There are several organisations that YSJSU formally affiliates with during each year. Affiliated bodies are recommended by the staff team based on operational need and agreement is sought via Student Council. The affiliations are approved by members at the Annual Members and Annual General Meetings. The following were External Affiliated Bodies for 2023/24:

Archery GB	National Union of Students NCVO Northern Universities Boulderling Series North Riding County Football Association North Riding Football League
Badminton England Basketball England British American Football Association (BAFA) BCA Cheer and Dance British Mountaineering Council British Rowing British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS)	Legacy Cheer and Dance
England Athletics England Boxing England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) England Hockey England Netball England Squash	Sport Cheer England Students' Rugby Football Union Swim England
Future Cheer	Volleyball England
Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)	Yorkshire Federation of Referees Societies Yorkshire and Northeast Powerlifting Federation York Minster Engineering League



## Public Benefit

YSJSU achieves public benefit via the ***advancement of the education*** for the students at York St John University by:

### **Promoting the interests and welfare of Students at York St John University during their course of study and representing, supporting, and advising Members**

The Students' Union provides a range of support and advice from individual one to one advice and advocacy for students, via online consultation, and via the website (self-help information and chat-bot). YSJSU coordinates welfare campaigns throughout the year based on health, wellbeing, liberation, and student rights, and provides course-based representation via Course Reps, and student representation via elected part time School Chairs and Liberation Officers.

The President of Education and the Advice Service work with students facing academic related issues such as academic misconduct or appeals, and increasingly, advice regarding external factors such as housing. YSJSU continues to work with the university to provide the best support and advice possible for students who require support.

### **Being the recognised representative channel between Students and York St John University and any other external bodies**

YSJSU's elected officers attend university meetings and external council meetings such as York Anti-racism forum and meetings with the local MP. At these meetings, representatives are responsible for highlighting student views to achieve positive change for students.

YSJSU supports students to act as representatives on their courses, providing lecturers and university management with feedback on how the courses can be improved.

YSJSU hosts a range of student forums, where students can voice opinions and feedback about elements of student life relating to study, activities, and well-being. Topics of discussion include academic study, timetabling, food provision, accommodation and sports and societies experiences.

### **Providing social, cultural, sporting, and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its members**

During 2022/23, YSJSU and the ~University department - YSJ Active, entered a partnership to deliver student sport and created the 'YSJ Sport Union'. The Sport Union has over 30 different sports clubs encompassing a various range of activities and interests from Basketball to Cheerleading. The committees of these groups are provided with support via the Sport Union regarding operational activities and are also given autonomy to direct and lead their activities, allowing students to gain experience within positions of responsibility.

YSJSU provides societies for students including cultural, religious and course related societies. YSJSU engages with the local community to help build links and relationships that are mutually beneficial to the University, local community and beyond.

YSJSU also builds marketing and sponsorship links with local independent businesses, mutually benefiting students and the local economy. YSJSU liaises with the local police and residents to ensure that York remains a safe, pleasant place for students and residents to live and work together.

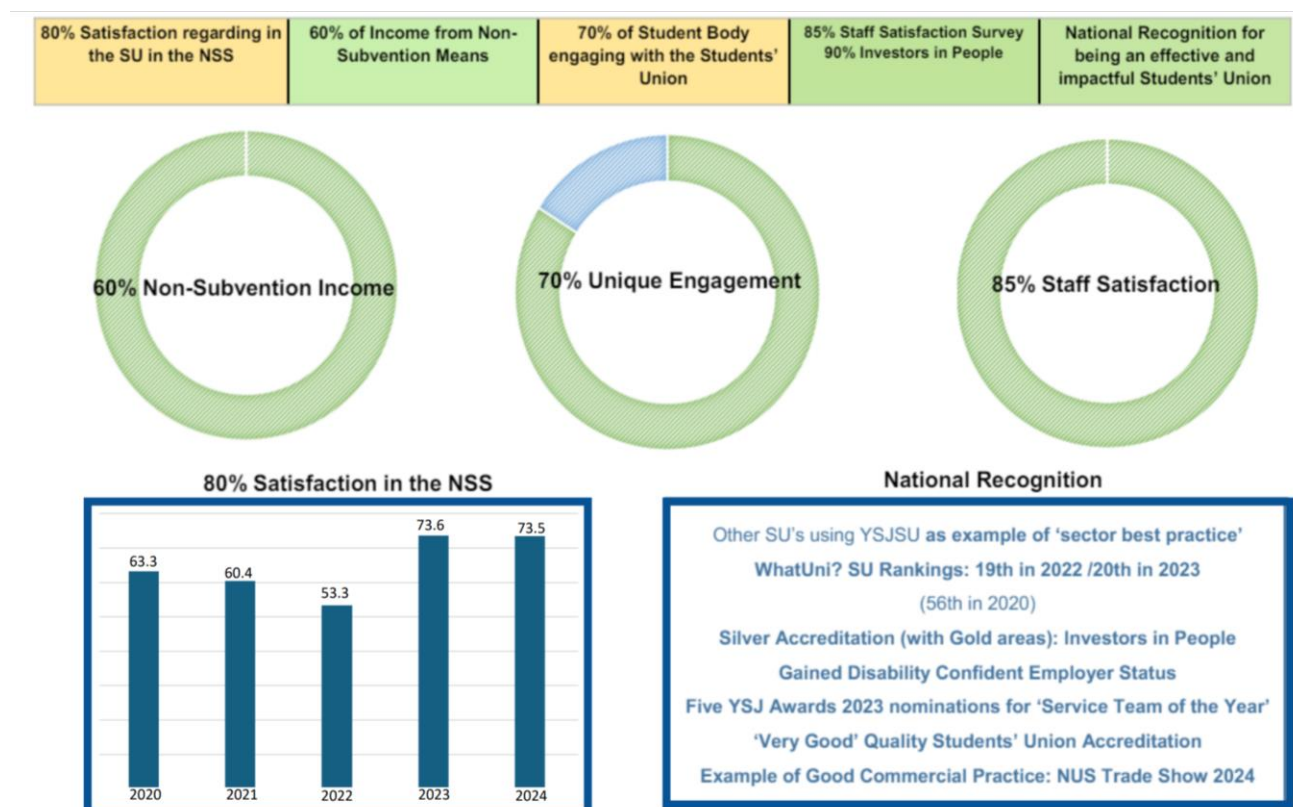
# Overview of Activities, Achievements and Performance



## Overview of 2023/24

The 2023/24 academic year was the fourth and final year of the 2020-24 Strategic Plan. The Plan is focused on a 'students first' approach; ensuring that everything that YSJSU does has students' best interests, student development, and student empowerment at its heart.

YSJSU continued to work towards the achievement of its strategic key performance indicators and reports to the Trustee Board on progress at least twice per year. Correct at 31 July 2024, the KPI dashboard showed the following results:



Within the National Student Survey for 2024, YSJSU achieved 73% (target 80%) satisfaction regarding question 25 and was once again, above the sector average. Student engagement has seen a huge increase in multi-engagements and rose to approximately 63% of the University population by July 2024. Once again, engagement increased with mature, international, and London campus students during 2023/24.

Non-subvention income rose above 56% during 2023/24, demonstrating that YSJSU services are doing well despite the challenges of the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

Staff satisfaction increased again in the Employee Experience Survey to an incredible 97%, raising the average satisfaction percentage well above the KPI threshold. YSJSU were awarded 'Silver' Investors in People Accreditation in November 2022, and retains the standard.



During 2023/24, many other Students' Unions visited YSJSU to gain insight on projects and to share best practice. This included general day visits from Stirling SU, Teesside SU, and York University SU, to gain best practice approaches. Once again, YSJSU was placed in the top 20 best SU's in the country according to the 'WhatUni?' welcome survey (up from 56<sup>th</sup> in 2019/20).

YSJSU received seven nominations by students for 'Service Team of the Year' in the 2024 YSJ Awards, evidencing the impact that YSJSU has had on the lives of students.

## Our Impact

An overview of our impact during 2023/24 is as follows:

- YSJSU provided **50 student jobs**, aiding students to undertake paid employment, gain employability skills and increase their professional experiences.
- The SU **supported over 350 student volunteers to run sport clubs and societies** – enhancing student leadership and management skills, and providing frameworks to enable them to provide activities for over 2000 student sport club and society members.
- The SU has **supported over 330 students with advice** since the inception of the advice service. **Over 50% of these students have said that engagement with the Advice Service has had a direct impact on them being able to stay at university.**
- **Supported 450 Course Reps throughout 2023/24 to be the voice of the students on their academic programmes.** Course Reps help to aid the development of programmes and the resolution of academic issues that students may face.
- Gained agreement from the university to **make changes to visa and registration processes** to ensure that students have fully completed all essential components before receiving their ID cards/documentation. During 2023/24, some international students had received their ID's and completion letters before undertaking the full enrolment process, causing distress to students who were advised later that they missed enrolment deadlines.
- Collaborated with the university to **review the time to lodge Academic Complaints to ensure international students can fully undertake the process**, as in some circumstances, student visa's expired before the full process was completed.
- The university agreeing to **clearer information regarding summer vacation periods** for international students, as some students were mis-informed and began vacation periods coinciding with Home-UG vacation periods, causing some concern about visa obligations.
- **Staff at YSJSU articulated that they were 'highly satisfied'** (97%), showing that the SU is a professional, fun, transformative and safe place to work.



# What students and partners say about us...

*'Let the SU keep doing what they know best to support the students.'* (Advice Survey 2024)

*(Regarding digital communications) 'I didn't expect any better than this' 'continue what you're doing' 'not required to amend anything'* (Welcome Week Survey 2023)

**'The Freshers' Fair really helped me integrate with student groups. It was the best day in Welcome Week'.**

(Welcome Week Survey 2023)

*'I got more clarity and it boosted my confidence.'* (Advice Survey 2024)

*'The SU events are very well advertised. There is always plenty to choose from as well as accessible events and things for mature students too.'* (Welcome Week Survey 2023)

*The guidance which provided to fill the appeal form was impressive for the success of my appeal. Thanks for this outcome.'* (Advice Survey 2024)

*'YSJSU's primary role is to support students, organise events, and enable students to access services—you do this really well.'* (Stakeholder Survey 2023)

*'The visit to SU gave me a lot of confidence during the panel, eliminated fear and I was happy with the decision given.'* (Advice Survey 2024)

**'The SU are efficient and effective. They are a delight to deal with'**

(Stakeholder Survey 2023)

**'Good Vibes, low lighting but bright enough to work in—it's perfect'**

(Coffee Survey 2023)

***I found the SU helpful because it opened my eyes to many rules and regulations in school.*** (Advice Service 2024)

# What students and partners say about us...

'I'm a regular volunteer at YSJSU with The Pets as Therapy Charity. My relationship has always been very positive—Jaffa and I always love to visit.'

( Partner Feedback 2024)

**'The SU is always a very warm environment. You can be yourself and express who you are in a safe space'** (Student Experience Survey 2023)

**'You can always talk to someone about issues concerning anything.'** (Student Experience Survey 2023)

*'SU societies are a fundamental part of my university life. Without them, it would essentially be just a private school experience, which would mean a very boring university experience'* (Society Feedback 2024)

*'The SU is a large part of my student experience and I believe that it is one of the main reasons why I felt integrated into student life more smoothly than if I was left to go it alone.'* (Student Leadership Team Feedback 2024)

**'The SU has helped me make so many friends. The events hosted by the SU has made me many memories that I will never forget. It has been an important part of my university experience'** (Graduation 2023)

*'Every staff member of the organisation has a genuine passion for improving the student experience and genuinely cares about the students who regularly seek our services. Although that should be normal for an SU environment, I think that our SU's overall ethos goes beyond that and for most staff it is more than just a 9-5 job which makes YSJSU a really special organisation to be part of.'* (Staff Experience Survey 2024 - student staff feedback)

By 2024, YSJSU aims to create a 'Beyond 9-5 Campus' ensuring that students have a student experience beyond the normal working day. This includes access to university services, communications, and Students' Union provision after 5pm and at the weekends. The strategic project encompasses both the physical and digital aspects of university life.

In relation to this strategic project, YSJSU has achieved the following:

## Living Lab

During 2023/24, YSJSU staff and officers joined the 'Living Lab': a collective of students and staff across the university looking at ways to create a more sustainable community. The SU has agreed to support a student project, providing operational space and business plan expertise to create a 'Garden Café'. The first external Garden Café occurred on 1 February 2024 at St Crux in York City Centre. The event saw students and staff from across the university and Students' Union providing food, drinks and serving the public of York to showcase the best of sustainability projects at YSJ.

## RAG and fundraising for charities

Sports Clubs and Societies partnered with charities throughout 2023/24 to raise awareness and funds for important causes. A total of £7,732 was raised throughout the year for charities such as York Mind, the Snappy Trust, Parkinson's UK, the Teenage Cancer Trust and MacMillan UK. Sport Union Clubs coordinated the 'Snowball' and 'Spring Fling' events to raise money for important causes. YSJSU also supports MacMillan every year by engaging in the 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning' and raised £288 for the charity.

## York Pride 2024

YSJSU joined colleagues across the university to plan the university's involvement in York Pride 2024. YSJSU took the lead to recruit volunteers to marshal during the parade and attend the YSJ Pride Stall, coordinate parade participants, provide a space for parade participants to meet previous to the parade, providing refreshments, face paints, decorations and costuming, and marketing and communications throughout the day. Over 60 students participated in the York Pride Parade, where an estimated 6000 people participated overall.

## Sport Union

2023/24 was the second year of the implementation of the YSJ Sport Union. During its second year of inception, the Sport Union has collaboratively:

- Created a partnership agreement for the implementation of the Sport Union between YSJSU and YSJ Active.
- Introduced new policies and procedures for student sport including financial procedures, disciplinary policies, and operational aids.
- Created a new Sport Union Conference to train and develop committees.
- Created the Sport Union Board to govern student sport and create/implement strategy.
- Worked with the university to subsidise memberships by 40% as a Cost-of-Living initiative.



- Reviewed and created new criteria for the Sport Union Awards.
- Created new weekly session plans for clubs including training, strategy and game planning, strength, conditioning and fitness and CPD for members.

#### **During 2023/24 the Sport Union realised the following successes:**

- The Dance Club won 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places in the Northumbria, York and Liverpool Dance Championships.
- Men's Tennis were 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Fast4 Northern Tier 2 (league)
- Women's Tennis were 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Fast4 Northern Tier 3 (league)
- Women's Volleyball won their league
- YSJ Sport Union won both Varsities (Sunderland and Leeds Trinity) which were hosted at York St John University. The Sunderland Varsity was the first time YSJSU worked with the Academic Media team, where students and staff created coverage (both live and recorded) of the action throughout the day.

### **Student Societies**

YSJSU provides members with a wide range of activities via academic, cultural, and social societies. Student-led societies lead their own volunteering initiatives, fundraise for charity via Raising and Giving, and most importantly, provide activities to enhance the student experience.

2023/24 was a fantastic year for student activities within the Students' Union. Some highlights of the 2023/24 year include:

- 17 new societies created
- Societies Strategy created with the first stage being rolled out at the beginning of the 2024/25 academic year
- There were 24 Society led events hosted within the SU building (Queer Prom, Disabled Student Network Coffee Morning, Japanese Society and Korean Culture Society Karaoke night).
- Societies Training Conference 2024: It was the second year that the Students' Union hosted the Societies Conference for new committee members. The conference ensures that society committees are equipped with career enhancing opportunities and leadership skills. Sessions included finances, EDI and inclusive activities, creating your unique brand, marketing & communications, conflict resolution and governance.

#### **Individual Society successes during 2023/24:**

##### **Dead Poets Society**

Dead Poets Society was established in September 2023 and they have been incredibly impactful over the academic year. They have taken their love of literature and films to a whole new level, engaging with over 100 members. They hold engaging sessions, acting on any feedback they receive from their members. The society has been successful with utilizing their social media platforms to engage with other societies and sports clubs. DPS were nominated in every category for this year's Societies Awards and were the winners of 'New Society of the Year', with each nomination received mentioning the sense of community that the society has formed and how it is a truly welcoming and fun environment.



### **Disabled Students' Network**

The Disabled Students' Network (DSN) have had a fantastic year. They run a neurodivergent study group on a weekly basis for those who attend the network, ensuring that members' triggers are taken into consideration and that the room is equipped with fidget toys and any other self-soothing items their members may require. The DSN organises regular coffee mornings with 'Blue' the therapy dog and a member of the disability practitioners' team for members to drop in and out of in a relaxed, informal setting. The society also has 'quiet time sessions' weekly in the SU lounge, where the music is switched off to not overstimulate members, so they can use the facilities in a way that suits their needs.

The DSN in collaboration with SWAN Network (Students with Autism and Neurodivergence) are producing a documentary surrounding autism awareness. The committee have also worked closely with the disability department and other departments within the university to discuss how the work they do can be more accessible to students. The Students' Union would like to take a moment to thank the disability department and other individuals within the university who have made the network such an impactful force for change.

### **Nigerian Students Society**

Nigerian Students Society are another new society this academic year and they have been incredibly active both in York and in London. They were integral in supporting the SU with Black History Month. Their main event for the year was working in partnership with the university and the SU for Nigerian Independence Day. There was a canteen takeover, where the catering team provided a special Nigerian themed menu for the day. This was accommodated by a social in the SU lounge with music native to their culture (DJ'd by our President of Wellbeing & Diversity). They worked closely with the university for the Black History Month Celebration in the Creative Centre and hosted a film night in partnership with our African Caribbean Society.

### **Gaming and E-sports Society**

Gaming and E-sports have had a fantastic year. They have worked closely with the Students' Union to actively increase engagement on campus and their membership numbers. Their annual livestream saw them raise a whopping £420 for York Foodbank, their charity of choice.

### **Islamic Society**

YSJ's Islamic Society (ISOC) officially formed as a society during 2023/24 and have been incredibly active thanks to support from the Chaplaincy Team and their faith advisors. They worked in collaboration with the university to host Eid celebrations for their members. The society ran their first 'Discover Islam' week which took place on campus from 29 April – 3 May. ISOC have also worked closely with staff members across the university and the SU team to create clarity for their members surrounding suitable prayer space and facilities for them to use on campus to ensure that YSJ is accessible and inclusive.

### **Musical Production Society**

The Musical Production Society received nominations in all applicable categories in the Society Awards 2024 and won 'Society of the Year'. Nominations highlighted the supportive, welcoming and creative environment created by the society. The society has undertaken several fundraising opportunities for charity and to assist with the costs of their annual theatre production. MPS were able to sell out three of their four performances of 'Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief' at the Joseph Rowntree Theatre.

## Students Against Social Injustice Society

Students Against Social Injustice is a newly established society that seeks to provide a safe space for students to discuss and explore topics and current affairs they are passionate about. The society works closely with academics to facilitate discussions on social class within modern society, environmental issues, disability in education etc. The society will be hosting their first fundraiser in October 2024 - a sleepout on campus to raise funds for a local homeless charity. The society has been an excellent example of using education and informed debate to lobby for a fairer society.

2023/24 saw an increase in members and number of activities available compared to 2022/23 with the breakdown of engagement since the 2022-24 strategy was implemented below:

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Overall Memberships	2,059	890	1,692	2,159	2280
Sport Club Memberships	1,126	439	990	1,099	1095
Society Memberships	933	451	702	1,060	1,185
Number of Sport Clubs	24	24	26	25	25
Number of Societies	43	30	23	32	43

## Commercial Activities

The Students' Union generates income via commercial services, whilst also providing students with a safe environment to socialise in its spaces. The Students' Union can offer students products at a lower cost (compared to market competitors in the city centre) due to the partnership with the NUS Trading consortium and no rent or utility charges as these are covered by the University.

### Licensed Trade

2023/24 saw the Bar performing well, with cost savings made on student staff wages (compared to 2022/23), and increased income (5% increase) compared to the previous year. Income continues to be bolstered by the food service keeping people in the venue for longer. Competition from the city centre continued to be an issue as city centre venues offer more deals for students, particularly with the launch of Roxy Ballroom which offers competitive gaming which national research indicates is what students are wanting more of on social occasions. Moving into 2024/25, prices have stabilised and it's past inflationary pressures have now abated.

### Food and Coffee

Food income increased by 5% compared to last year. The cost of food items has finally stabilised with a few products decreasing in cost, if only marginally. The Coffee offer is no longer Starbucks from 2023/24 and more local, 'value for money' suppliers have been very well received by students.

### Merchandise

Into 2024/25, the hoodie offer was consolidated, concentrating on those colours that have high demand, as well as making hoodies available to order online towards the end of the academic year so those students studying at the London campus could order them directly to their home.

## Loyalty Programme

Loyalty continues to perform well. From 2023/24 the SU reports loyalty interactions on a 3-month rolling basis to better understand the engagement with the programme. Comparison with the first year of implementation (2022) is below:

Year	2022	2023	2024
Number of users	1,554	3,661	4,733

## Welcome and Induction

The Welcome Week Survey reported 94% of students responded being “very satisfied” or ‘satisfied’. The Freshers Fair had the highest number of attendees recorded with over 3000 students engaging in the event, with the 2023 event beating the 2022 engagement (see below).

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023
Welcome Fair attendees	-	2000 (approx.)	2500 (approx.)	3000 (approx.)
% of satisfied / very satisfied	46%	74%	89%	94%

- The Students’ Union expanded the welcome programme to include more daytime activities that benefited key ‘hard to reach’ groups (such as mature, part-time, international students), and introduced more special events throughout the year such as mature students’ coffee catch ups, disabled students’ forums, and student social events at the London Campus. The responses to the Welcome Survey 2023 included:
  - 84% were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with the information received about students’ academic course before arrival
  - 79.5% were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with the information received regarding the Students’ Union’s events before arrival
  - 74% responded that they feel more prepared for studying at YSJ after welcome week 2023 / 17% responded ‘not sure’
  - 91% responded they felt welcomed by the SU and University
  - 89% responded they were satisfied overall with their WW experience
- YSJSU worked harder on creating links with partners within the city, to ensure that students have the best student experience on and off campus. The External Stakeholder Survey results were exceptionally positive, with 90% of responses to all answers within the survey being ‘extremely satisfied’.
- YSJSU engaged with university partners to welcome students who attended the Early Start Programme by providing discussions, sessions and social activities. The programme is designed for students who may have anxiety disorders, disabilities or are worried about beginning university life. The SU received very positive feedback about its involvement in the programme from both staff and students.

# Strategic Project 2: Advice, Support and Advocacy





YSJSU are committed to providing students with independent advice services and during 2023/24, we achieved the following in relation to this project:

## Rate Your Landlord Scheme

YSJSU has been working on a partnership with Unipol Student Homes, the university, the University of York, York University SU and the City of York Council to introduce a 'Rate Your Landlord' Scheme. 'Rate Your Landlord' is a platform which gives students the opportunity to 'rate' their landlord. This feedback covers multiple categories like 'value for money' to 'feels like a home'. YSJSU hosted the first York 'Rate Your Landlord' Awards which also celebrated the official launch of the website. The Awards gave recognition to those landlords who are doing the most for their tenants with award categories such as 'Officers Pick' and 'Most Caring Landlord'. The event and scheme launch received positive reviews within the local press.

## Cost of Living Support Package

The Students' Union consulted with the university on continued support for students throughout the Cost-of-Living (COL) Crisis. The following COL support was continued throughout 2023/24:

- YSJ Larder (food bank).
- Subsidised accommodation (university owned/managed).
- Increases to the Student Support Fund.
- 40% subsidies on Sport Union memberships (50% in 2022/23).
- £10 membership fees for societies (£5 in 2022/23).
- Subsidised food and drink in the university Dining Hall.

## Campaigns

YSJSU coordinated and hosted many wellbeing and diversity related campaigns during the 2023/24 academic year including:

- The President of Wellbeing and Diversity led on a Drink Spiking Awareness campaign to spread awareness and increase safety provisions (especially for women) on nights out.
- The Students' Union collaborated with the university on a campaign on Hate Crime Awareness Week, asking students to pledge to help stop Hate Crime in York.
- YSJSU celebrated Black History Month. This was led by the BAME Students Officer who liaised with the university to create a programme of guest lectures, texts in spotlight, digital campaign assets and on campus displays.
- YSJSU celebrated Pride Month, LGBTQ+ History Month Trans Day of Visibility and Lesbian Day of Visibility. YSJSU launched digital campaign messages to help educate students around the issues that members of these community's face.

- The Housing campaign aided students in understanding their contracts and legal rights, top tips when house hunting, and organising household finances. A new Student Housing Guide was introduced and YSJSU implemented the 'Find a Housemate' session, with over 30 students finding new housemates.
- International Women's Day (IWD) celebrated women across the university and YSJSU partnered with the local charity 'Changing Lives' who provide support packages for women fleeing dangerous domestic situations. YSJSU produced video content featuring women from across the organisation and coordinated a series of fun activities celebrating women including a special IWD Quiz.
- International Men's Day – YSJSU collaborated with staff members across the university to support International Men's Day. This focussed on highlighting the effects of 'toxic masculinity' and YSJSU worked with many local organisations to aid men's mental health by opening up discussions about the subject in a safe and supported way. YSJSU partnered with the local charity 'Menfulness' and podcasts were produced to discuss this important subject.
- Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2024 provided students with top tips for mental wellbeing, promoted services that can help support students, and provided students with activities to help promote healthy minds and bodies.
- #WeAreYSJ Campaign showcased the best of YSJSU's student leaders with the aim of encouraging students to engage in SU activities and services.
- Stress Awareness Week aided students to relieve anxieties around exams and assessment deadlines leading into the Christmas period. YSJSU produced top tips to combat stress and burnout, held wellbeing breakfasts (with Jaffa the wellbeing dog!), and promoted the importance of self-care.
- YSJSU promoted the key campaign 'Plan Safe, Drink Safe, Home Safe' throughout the year, collaborating with university support services and key organisations across the city, such as the City Council, Fire Brigade, Lifeboats (York), Night-time economy partners and university support services.

## Advice Service

During 2023/24, the Advice Service engaged with 186 cases (139 in 2022/23). Out of all of the cases, **62 students articulated the service aided them to remain at the university or graduate successfully.**

The Advice Service received 100% positive feedback regarding professionalism, listening and understanding, and appropriate advice. **98% of students who engaged with the survey were highly satisfied with the service.**

The Advice Service continues to work with support services, the Law Clinic and Counselling courses to create an effective advice pathway for students. The Advice Coordinator is continuously utilised as a consultant on multiple complex cases across the university. These partnerships have strengthened throughout 2023/24.

The Advice Service saw an increase in students seeking advice and guidance around external housing queries and complaints. The Advice Service continued its professional relationship with the YSJ School of Law to provide students with free services including housing, family, employment, and financial law advice. YSJSU and the School of Law are collaborating on offering students housing contract advice, especially around utility bills amidst the current cost of living crisis. The Advice Coordinator has also undertaken professional development hosted by Shelter to develop housing advice within the service.

The Advice Coordinator worked closely with Academic Registrar and Casework Team on academic and student disciplinary policy renewals. The SU used advice data and student stories to influence university policy on academic misconduct procedures, late penalties, and academic misconduct penalties.

During 2023/24, the Advice Service implemented a peer mediation service, after an increase in student-on-student complaints, especially within clubs and societies and households. The Advice Coordinator has received further training from Essential Mediation Solutions, and has created new policy and procedures around mediation services. Two new student mediators have been trained and completed assessment. A cross-university review group has been established to monitor and support the mediation service.

# Strategic Project 3: Students as Partners





Students are fundamental to everything we do, and we are working towards a university environment where students are partners in learning, decision making, and university culture. During 2023/24 YSJSU achieved the following:

## Students as Partners within the City

The Presidents had the opportunity of a meeting with York Central MP: Rachael Maskell where the need to improve night-time safety, student accommodation prices, bus travel services and possible future projects and collaborations were discussed. The discussion was well received and YSJSU has established an ongoing relationship with the York Central MP.

## Representation Review

Since October 2023, the Students' Union has been undertaking a review of representation at YSJ. YSJSU has visited other SU's, attended conference sessions on representation, listened to students and gained information from university partners. In March 2024, YSJSU and York St John University engaged with Alchemy to undertake a review of Student Representation and report back on findings. The consultation period occurred from mid-April to the end of May 2024, with the release of the final report on 11 June 2024.

During the strategy consultation, clear feedback came from students and university colleagues that the representative system at York St John needs to address the following critical questions for students:

- How am I represented?
- How can I connect with other students?
- How can I give my feedback/views and see change as a result?

Similar themes emerged throughout the Alchemy report, where students fed back that they did not always see the benefit of their engagement with representative systems, and that there was a growing concern that some students felt that SU representatives did not fully represent them.

YSJSU has created a proposal that is currently within the consultation phase. It is anticipated that the Trustee Board will approve the new representation system ready for the 2025 elections.

## Student Council

During 2023/24 YSJSU re-focused the Council, moving away from rubber-stamping and bureaucratic processes to discussing real student issues and actioning change. Attendance at Council has remained positive. Each meeting agenda focuses on headline topics (Cost of Living, Student Safety, Housing) to encourage discussion and a 'co-creation' approach amongst Student Officers, Sabbatical Officers, and the SU. At each meeting, recommendations are agreed to be made to the university.

Council was also utilised as a facilitator for Consultations with Senior Members of the University such as Richard Bourne, the Pro-Vice Chancellor, and Mia Bryden, Head of Governance and Compliance, seeking the Council's views on the new University Strategy and key policy updates. Throughout the Students' Union Representation Review, Council has provided excellent feedback and comments which have been incorporated into the

current Representation Proposal and informed the new Strategy. Council has also been incredibly beneficial in opening up a channel for communication and collaboration of Campaigns across the Officer Team which has resulted in excellent events such as International Women's Day and Stress Awareness Week. This space for communication among Officers is something that we have recognised as essential for empowering our Officers and going forward we are introducing monthly meetings with the Student Leadership Team.

## Freedom of Speech

In 2023, the UK government passed the 'Freedom of Speech Act 2023 (HE)', with the intention that full implementation and enforcement would commence under the authority of the Office for Students in August 2024. The Students' Union worked very closely with university partners to create a shared Code of Practice for Freedom of Speech at York St John University. The Code of Practice details policy and process around how students and staff can exercise their right to Freedom of Speech including with academic settings, visitors to the university and external speakers, societies processes and guidance around the right to protest. Although the Office for Students enforcement of the Act did not occur, the Students' Union and university amended the documentation and have adopted a joint approach to freedom of speech from August 2024.

## Access and Participation Plan - Student Submission

YSJSU took the lead on the Student Submission to the Office for Students relating to the University's revised Access and Participation Plan. The submission commented on the plans put in place by the university relating to how the university plans to support students from underrepresented backgrounds and how the university has identified its greatest risks to equality and opportunity. The student submission includes a range of evidence based commentary including three years' worth of data, focus groups with students, feedback via surveys and feedback mechanisms, and sector comparative information.

## Representation on University Committees

The Officer Team, along with the members of the Student Council, represented all students at YSJ via attending over 40 university committees and groups. These include Board of Governors, Education Committee, Academic Board, and Finance and Capital Development Committee. Students' Union representatives are also members of various working groups throughout the university, and the CEO, BAME Students Officer and President of Wellbeing and Diversity were invited to be members of the Race Equality Charter Group.

The Students' Union representatives ensure that decisions made at all levels of the university are for the benefit of students.

## Academic Representative System

The Academic Representative System is a university-wide framework which places student voice at the centre of the partnership between the university, students and YSJSU. Reps represent and gather student opinion and feedback on course content, quality, and

academic experiences. Throughout the year, Reps attend Programme Panels & Student/Staff Liaison Committees to articulate their feedback.

The SU coordinates the recruitment of (Academic) Course Reps, from setting election and training dates, to supporting academics in running elections during teaching sessions. For 2023/24, 453 (366 in 2022/23) Reps were elected, with engagement in the Academic Representative System surpassing pre-pandemic levels. YSJSU liaised with London campus colleagues to coordinate and support the Rep system in London.

YSJSU delivered in-person Rep training by School to accommodate various programme pathways and student experiences. YSJSU collaborated with the university Careers Team to provide employability sessions to Reps which continued into Semester 2 with the release of the Skills Audit: a traffic light tracker document for Reps to recognise the skills acquired in their role and highlight opportunities for development.

There was a significant amount of feedback received from Course Reps surrounding the lack of communication around placements. This lack of communication created particular problems for students with caring responsibilities who found out very late that their placement was a long commute and made it difficult for childcare arrangements. Following this feedback, Matt, the President of the SU organised a campaign which worked with the University's Placement Team to raise these issues and seek a better communication system.

A large amount of feedback from a specific school reported a lack of sensitivity around certain topics that made some students feel uncomfortable or brought up negative topics such as images of self-harm and racial abuse. This feedback was raised to the Pro Vice Chancellor and has been raised as a topic to Education Committee advocating the need for more formal guidance on the use of content warnings.

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of Course Reps	351	262	283	366	453

To connect student voice practices to other SU activity, the Rep System was launched on the Student Dashboard for registered volunteers to access resources (training, handbook, room bookings). A new function '*Coursemates*' allows Reps to upload any feedback collected from their peers or discussions raised at Programme Panels. The SU is notified when feedback is submitted, with the ability to assign actions to Reps or a Chair of School for following up. There have been over 100 submissions to date, feedback ranging from availability of resources, accessibility of course content and timetabling).

During 2022/23, the SU awarded 'Rep of the Month', announced monthly in the 'Voice' newsletter to shine a spotlight on a Rep who helped contribute to change on their programme. YSJSU introduced more social opportunities for Reps to come together, with the SU hosting various social events including in person forums (with pizza)..

## Elections

YSJSU received a 21.6% voter turnout (17% national average), in the Annual Election. 76.9% of Academic Representatives voted, highlighting a sense of belonging from the Academic Rep community. For the first time, all Sabbatical Officer positions were filled by

International, Post-graduate students, with 2 out the three officers being from the London Campus. Below is a breakdown of voter turnout since the 2020/24 strategy was launched:

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Overall Population turnout %	17.8 %	23.8 %	14.6 %	22.6 %	20.1%
UK % of turnout	42.9 %	57.4 %	70.0 %	51.0 %	41%
International % of turnout	3.4 %	22.2 %	27.9 %	49.0 %	59%
York Campus % of overall turnout	100 %	93.0 %	90.0 %	64.9 %	60%
London Campus % of overall turnout	0 %	7.0 %	10.0 %	35.1 %	40%

## Student Officers (Chairs of School & Liberation Officers)

Chairs of School are elected annually by students to represent students at the local School level and by community groups. Liberation Officers assist with campaigns and sit on various university Committees to ensure that student feedback is relayed and considered when the university review policies and implement new initiatives.

During 2023/24, YSJSU reviewed the responsibilities of Student Officers to allow for student-led initiatives and ownership of the role, re-introducing Chairs of School forums, and supporting university projects and SU campaigns. Chairs of School have created forums to collect student feedback and some Liberation Officers have worked with the SU MarComms team to plan and deliver a series of forums for their community groups,

Student Officers have supported and promoted SU and Sabbatical Officer campaigns, including the *Black History Month*, *International Women's Day*, *Hate Crime Awareness* and *Student Safety*.

Liberation Officers are also members of working groups (such as the university Disability Forum) to discuss EDI issues to help make changes to facilities, such as accessibility, improving resources, such as introducing accessible learning technologies.

## General Student Voice and Feedback Collection

Throughout the year, YSJSU collected student views via a variety of ways to ensure that the Students' Union are continuously understanding student needs. Feedback came in the form of: Employee Engagement Survey, University Pulse Survey, National Student Survey, Question of the Month, SU Council, Sports Union and Societies Councils and Focus Groups.

YSJSU staff and Trustee Board visited the London Campus in January to meet staff and students, to further understand the experience of students and the concerns that London & international students face.

YSJSU held Sports Union and Societies Councils throughout the year to understand the needs of our clubs and societies members more effectively, and to ensure students are part of decision-making processes around activities.



During 2023/24, YSJSU worked alongside colleagues within the university to review and implement policy changes to benefit students regarding their academic studies. Some of the policy changes implemented for the 2023/24 academic year include:

- Changes to visa and registration processes to ensure that students have fully completed all essential components before receiving their ID cards/documentation.
- Reducing the time to lodge Academic Complaints to ensure international students can fully undertake the process.
- The university agreeing to clearer information regarding summer vacation periods for international students.
- Creation of Freedom of Speech policy and procedures.
- Creation of the Sexual Violence and Harassment policy and procedures.

## Placements Project

The President of the Students' Union led on a project to research and analyse the way students are supported and their sense of belonging to the university whilst they are on placements.

YSJSU worked with colleagues and students from across the university to understand where developments are required, good practice that could be shared, and to create a support toolkit for students. The University's Student Success Team have agreed to create a document so that students, providers and the university are clear on expectations and responsibilities regarding student placements in the future.

## YSJ Awards

Once again, YSJSU took the lead on the coordination of the YSJ Awards (2024) which celebrate the achievements of students and staff at YSJ. YSJSU collaborated with colleagues across the university to create a way to recognise students and staff across the YSJ community. **YSJSU were nominated 7 times for 'Service Team of the Year'**, and the nominations showcased the benefit that the SU brings to the university community.

# Strategic Project 4: Digital Transformation



To ensure that we are providing a student experience that is fit for purpose, we have to look at ways to digitally transform what we do. Creating opportunities where students can engage with the SU digitally, means that they can access our services and activities wherever they are in the world. Here's what we did in 2023/24:

#### Website Statistics (1 month leading up to and including Welcome Week vs 2022)

Homepage sessions – 11,594 (+5%)

Events page sessions – 5,566 (+63%)

Activities page sessions – 2997 (-38%)

#### Facebook Statistics (September 2023 vs. September 2022)

Page Visits – 5200 (+12%)

Page Likes – 90 (+45%)

Post Reach- 12,248 (+9.2%)

#### Instagram Statistics (September 2023 vs. September 2022):

Follower growth – 635 (-2%), 608 followers gained since September 2023.

Reach 7,766 (-20%) Although down from 2022, brands with under 10,000 followers are expected to reach 34% of their audience, whereas we still over-performed by reaching 65% of our audience in September 2023.

Profile Visits 6900 (+7%)

During 2023/24, YSJSU reviewed its social media strategies with the following results:

- YSJSU changed how the SU gathers feedback - moving away from annual survey feedback to real time and instant feedback via social media platforms monthly.
- The Student Dashboard was further updated to enable more effective membership and financial reporting for sports clubs and societies committees.
- YSJSU began to utilise data in a much more sophisticated way, breaking down engagement data and creating student profiles to better understand who/who doesn't engage. YSJSU used this data analysis to understand BAME student leadership profiles across the organisation as part of YSJSU's ongoing work with the University's Race Equality Charter Group.
- The SU implemented Teams areas for Sport Union, and project groups to enable effective and quick communications, document consultation and discussion forums.
- 84% were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the digital communications received prior to Welcome Week 2023.



# Structure, Governance and Management





The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of Company Law, present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of York St John's Students' Union for the period 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024.

The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the charity comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), relevant to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard, applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Since the Union qualifies as small under section 383 of the Companies Act 2006, the strategic report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

## Organisational Structure and Decision Making

York St John Students' Union is a Company Limited by Guarantee and does not have a Share Capital as defined by the Companies Act 2006. YSJSU registered as a charity in the UK on 1 August 2010. YSJSU is a Students' Union as defined by the Education Act 1994 whose activities are devoted to the educational interests and welfare of its members.

YSJSU's principal governing document is the Articles of Association, agreed by the Company Members of the Union in a General Meeting and reviewed by YSJSU and York St John University at least every 5 years. Copies of the Articles of Association are available from the offices of YSJSU and via the *Documents* section of our website ([www.ysjsu.com](http://www.ysjsu.com)). In September 2020, YSJSU adopted the revised Articles of Association via an Extraordinary General Meeting. The Articles of Association are supported by the YSJSU Byelaws which were fully reviewed and approved by the Trustee Board in June 2021.

The Trustee Board of YSJSU is made up of three Officer Trustees, up to two Student Trustees, and up to five External Trustees. Officer Trustees are elected by a ballot of all members of YSJSU and serve for one academic year. To stand for election as an Officer Trustee, candidates must be full members of YSJSU (see Articles of Association for definition). Student Trustees and External Trustees are appointed by a selection and interview process led by the Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee then makes formal recommendations to the Board for approval of the appointment of Trustees.

The experiences and expertise held by the External Trustees are in the areas of law, higher education policy, governance, financial management and strategic planning. This provides YSJSU with the opportunity to develop its activities and services, and provides risk management and continuity. The Trustee Board structure also includes two Student Trustees to improve the voice of students on the board.

Officer Trustees are required to take a sabbatical year away from their studies (or alternatively, have just finished their final year of study) and are remunerated by YSJSU during this period. Officer Trustees are in post for one year and may stand for re-election for one year (maximum of two years in total). Student Trustees may remain in office for a term of two years and External Trustees for three years. Both can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Officer Trustees undergo a formal process of induction and training on taking up their post. This is organised by the permanent staff of YSJSU and utilises

external training providers as well as the National Union of Students (NUS) and staff from York St John University.

Responsibility is delegated from the Trustee Board and committee structure of YSJSU to the Chief Executive Officer and staff team of YSJSU and documented via the organisations' Scheme of Delegated Authority' document. YSJSU employs a team of full-time staff to ensure effective management of its many activities and to implement the policy decisions made by the Trustees and/or Student Council. The Scheme of Delegated Authority document outlines clear levels of responsibility for areas of decision making and delegates authority for the day-to-day operational management and decision making of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer and staff team of YSJSU.

The Trustee Board delegates responsibility to six committees: Finance, Audit and Risk; Health, Safety and Wellbeing; People and Culture; Elections; Nominations; and Service Development to ensure effective governance and decision making.

The Student Council is made up of elected part-time officers, representatives of student groups and the Officer Trustees, who receive and discuss reports including financial information, policy issues and information from staff as required. The Council meets at least three times per year.

When reviewing objectives and planning activities, YSJSU has given due consideration to the Charity Commission's general and relevant supplementary guidance on public benefit, which is detailed on page 13 of this document.

## Relationship with York St John University

The Students' Union receives a block grant (subvention) from the University, and by means of a formal lease, occupies a building owned by the University. This support is intrinsic to the relationship between the University and YSJSU. Although YSJSU engages in various trading activities, it has financial dependence on the University for resourcing its charitable activities. There is no reason to believe that financial support will not continue for the foreseeable future and the Students' Union and University agreed a revised Memorandum of Understanding in June 2020. The document articulates agreement to continue to pay YSJSU a subvention in line with annual financial planning frameworks and support the Students' Union with the SUSS pension deficit. A ten-year lease agreement was confirmed in 2018 with donation from the university (no cash charge) regarding lease and utilities fees. This is to be renegotiated after this period.

The Education Act 1994 requires that the University is notified of any changes in the governance of YSJSU. YSJSU and York St John University have a well-established relationship that involves both formal committees and informal meetings where issues are discussed and ideas for future work formulated. The formal structures include regular reports on the activities, management, and financial situation of YSJSU. The President of YSJSU is a member of York St John University's Board of Governors and the Sabbatical Officer Team and Chief Executive Officer have monthly one to one meetings with members of the university Executive Board. The YSJSU Officer Trustees and the whole Executive Board of the university meet once every 6 weeks via the Students' Union and Executive Board Consultative Committee.

## Risk Management

A comprehensive risk management process is in operation by YSJSU to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to manage and mitigate governance, external, operational, legal/regulatory, and financial risks. This is overseen and monitored by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (regarding financial risk), Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (regarding safety and health risk) and People and Culture (regarding HR related risk) on behalf of the Trustee Board.

The process includes the identification of the risks that YSJSU may face, evaluating the potential impact and likelihood of occurrence, taking consideration to YSJSU's risk appetite, and identifying means whereby the risks can be mitigated and managed.

A formal Risk Register has been established and is reviewed at meetings of the Trustee Board and Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, with the latest version approved in September 2024. The Risk Register currently highlights the following as major risks to YSJSU:

- Digital/cyber security
- GDPR compliance
- The event of a decrease in university grant (Subvention)
- The event of a decrease in commercial income
- Pension scheme deficit liabilities increasing quicker than the agreed recovery plan
- Effects of the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

Major Incident Plans are also in place in partnership with York St John University to aid response and recovery regarding any major incident the organisation might face. These plans are regularly reviewed, and the Chief Executive Officer is a member of the university's Major Incident Team. YSJSU has a Major Incident and Business Continuity Plan in place that has been tested by the staff team and is reviewed by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee at least bi-annually.

In November 2020, the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee approved a proposal to engage with the company Croner to supply YSJSU with Health and Safety and Human Resources support, consultation, insurance, advice, training, and administration platforms. YSJSU receives communication from Croner weekly about changes in legislation, hot topics and new approaches, has regular 'check ins', policy reviews, H&S visits, and customer feedback opportunities. In January 2024, a Croner representative visited the YSJSU premises, and a Health and Safety Audit was undertaken. YSJSU was found to be sufficient in Health and Safety practices and a short action plan was created to enhance provision. The action plan has been monitored by the Health and Safety Committee.

Appropriate financial systems and procedures have been established to manage the identified risks documented within the Risk Register. Budgetary and accounting risks are minimised by the implementation of robust procedures as documented in the organisational Finance Manual, which was reviewed in March 2024. Monthly Management Accounts are produced to enable control of departmental and organisational budgets areas, and are scrutinised by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.



# Financial Review





## Overview

York St John Students' Union's gross income from all sources including revenue generating commercial services this year totalled £1256,196 (2023: £1,152,595). Total expenditure of £1,173,996 (2023: £1,108,375) was used to resource services, activities, and staffing, resulting in a net income from operations of £82,200 (2023: £44,220). Total net expenditure for the year was (£8,906) which includes a remeasurement of the SUSS Pension Scheme of £91,106. (2023: income of £104,208). This loss does not impact the free reserves of the Union.

The Trustees recognise YSJSU's share of the pension liability for the Students' Union Superannuation Scheme (SUSS) in the annual accounts. This has resulted in an overall net liability position for YSJSU of £333,996 (2023: £325,090). As this deficit relates to the pension scheme liability and was expected, the Trustees are comfortable with the situation.

Unrestricted funds excluding the pension funding deficit liability stands at £305,906 (2023: £242,500), the pension scheme reserve deficit stands at £639,900 (2023: £567,590) and restricted reserves stands at £nil (2023: £nil).

The pension scheme liability of £639,900 (2023: £567,590) is a projected long-term liability and does not represent an immediate cash liability to YSJSU. The immediate cash liability of the pension deficit being the agreed payments due in 2023/24, which equate to £20,834 (2023: £30,312). These contributions are wholly funded by the Subvention (Block Grant) from the university and as such, even though the pension scheme liability results in the balance sheet showing a deficit in funds, this is not an indicator of any issues in YSJSU being able to meet its cash obligations in the foreseeable future. The University and Students' Union reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding in June 2020 and agreed the following:

*'The University agrees to support the Students' Union to mitigate any major liabilities, including the Students' Union Superannuation Scheme (SUSS) ongoing liability'. MoU 2020*

We undertake no fundraising activities within the scope of the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016.

## York St John Students' Union Reserves Policy

### Introduction

As a member led organisation, York St John Students' Union (YSJSU hereafter) believes it is important that as a charitable organisation, that most of the income generated should be returned to the membership in the form of the representation, services and personal development opportunities. However, YSJSU recognises that it is important to mitigate financial risk by maintaining an unrestricted cash reserve (general fund).

York St John Students' Union is a registered charitable company whose charitable objects are the advancement of education of students at York St John University for the public benefit by:

- 1) Promoting the interests and welfare of students at York St John University during their course of study and representing, supporting and advising Members;

- 2) Being the recognised representative channel between students and York St John University and any other external bodies;
- 3) Providing social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its members.

Historically, the Students' Union has relied on two main sources of funding; subvention (or block grant) funding from York St John University, and income generated via commercial and trading activities. Neither of these funding sources are guaranteed, and so it is imperative that the Students' Union holds an appropriate level of financial reserves to ensure business continuity, should funding sources be detrimentally impacted or reduced into the future.

## SWOT Analysis

It is important to understand an organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and the effects of external influences (such as political, environmental, technological, legal and economical) when planning for and creating a sustainable organisation. With this in mind, YSJSU has identified key elements which may have major impact on the charity's success.

**Strengths:** Commercial sales, communication with members, engagement with members, resource effectiveness and efficiency, efficient financial processes, training programme for officers and staff, Trustee Board and committee governance and effectiveness, adaptability and change management, agility.

**Weaknesses:** Small team, limited financial resource, current limited access to external funding.

**Opportunities:** Diversify and increase marketing and commercial revenue, good working relationships with suppliers and university, new student markets for commercial services and activities.

**Threats:** Cost of living crisis, pension increases/extension, decrease in access to student funding, decrease in student disposable income and time availability, rising expectations of students in relation to service provision and experience.

## Level of Reserves

Given the multifaceted and intricate nature of the services, activities, projects and events delivered by YSJSU, the Senior Management Team has recommended to the Trustees that the following areas be considered when identifying the level of reserves necessary:

- i. Wind up of activities – It is possible, though highly unlikely, that YSJSU may need to cease operating. If this were to happen then a level of funds would need to be available to allow HMRC, legal costs, staff redundancy, and creditors to be compensated appropriately.
- ii. Trading income collapse – Given the variety of trading activities there is always a risk that they may not perform as anticipated; it would therefore be wise to hold buffer funds to compensate for this if the situation occurs.
- iii. Summer period – Through the summer period (June to August inclusive) the Students' Union trading activities diminish significantly; short term funds are therefore

required to ensure a positive cash flow and then stock purchases ahead of all activities fully reopening in September.

iv. Medium term business continuity – An allowance should be held to enable the Students' Union to fund a short period of temporary relocation (3 months), should the current Students' Union building not be serviceable for whatever reason.

v. Future projects – There are activities and projects that the Students' Union may wish to invest in in the future, be these commercial diversification, further expansion of sports and activities projects, or seeking research/consultancy advice; and so, funds should be available to do this.

The Table below shows the levels of funds recommended in order to be able to provide security against the aforementioned areas.

i. Wind up of activities	£180,000
ii. Trading income collapse	£100,000
iii. Summer period	£100,000
iv. Medium term business continuity	£70,000
v. Future projects	£50,000

The total funds that have been identified are £500,000. However, there would not be a situation when all these funds would be required simultaneously. For example, if in the event of occurrence 'wind up of activities' then other funds would not be required as the Students' Union would no longer be operating. Alternatively, there may be a situation when occurrences 'ii' to 'iv' inclusive occur, and so a total of all the funds may need to be drawn upon. There may also be situations, where a 'winding down of activities' occurs, when extra (unexpected) costs may be incurred (such as employment litigation by employees) and an extra £20,000 (buffer) has been introduced to the lower limit to accommodate such circumstances.

Therefore, YSJSU identifies that there is a minimum level of reserves that should be retained as follows:

Minimum level of reserves: £200,000

YSJSU may also use reserves to invest in the organisation such as capital investment and resourcing. YSJSU may hold monies above the minimum level of reserves for this reason, and therefore, it is recommended that a maximum level of reserve is as follows:

Maximum level of reserves: £325,000

The Students' Union Trustee Board should therefore seek to achieve the minimum level and aspire to hold the maximum level. The Trustee Board may wish to utilise the financial reserve at any time should investment be required in infrastructure, resource etc to enable the ongoing success of the organisation.

### **How will the Students' Union achieve our maximum level target?**

At 31st July 2024 the Students' Union held £300,704 (2023: £233,337) in free reserves. This means £100,704 above the minimum however a further £24,296 in additional reserve funds are required to meet the maximum target. The Students' Union will endeavour to achieve this by operating at a surplus in each financial year with future budgets set accordingly to

achieve a minimum of 1% of core activity turnover i.e., total turnover excluding the university subvention grant.

## Future Funding

York St John University have confirmed via the University's Finance and Capital Development Committee that the Block Grant for 2024/24 will be £414,000 (2023/24: £438,000).

## Going Concern

The Trustees confirm that the Students' Union has sufficient funds to meet its ongoing annual obligations. The Block Grant for 2024/245 has been confirmed at £414,000 and the commercial activities are expected to generate funds (surplus).

York St John University has agreed to continue to provide financial support to YSJSU in future years to ensure that it has sufficient funds to continue to operate effectively for the foreseeable future. The University and Students' Union reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding during the 2020 and it was agreed:

- 1. The University shall, subject to the terms of this Memorandum, pay to the Union the Subvention (Block Grant) approved by the Governing Body's Finance and Capital Development Committee as a contribution to the annual budget of the Union. The Subvention will be paid to the Union to support activity relating to the Union's core charitable objectives, including but not limited to representation, advice, support and advocacy, democratic activities, and student social and professional enhancement.*
- 2. The Subvention will be agreed in line with the University planning cycle and following consideration by the University of the Union's annual planning documents.*
- 3. The University agrees to support the Students' Union to mitigate any major liabilities, including the Students' Union Superannuation Scheme (SUSS) ongoing liability. (MoU 2020)*

Although there are many challenges for the HE sector, York St John University continues to recruit on target. York St John University has increased recruitment in all areas, especially internationally and in post-graduate study.

## Funds held as Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others

The Students' Union actively encourages the activities of clubs and societies to be organised by the students themselves. To be recognised, a club or society must comply with the objectives of the Students' Union and follow administrative rules set up to protect the interests of its members and the Students' Union. As well as direct financial support, clubs and societies are encouraged to collect and spend their own money for activities. Sums collected in this way are kept for safekeeping by the Students' Union. On 31st July 2024, £66,057 (2023: £58,150) was being held under this arrangement, which is included in Note 19, of the Statement of Financial Accounts within this document. This amount is identified as belonging to the members of the clubs and societies and not the Students' Union.



## Pay Policy for Senior Staff

The Board of Trustees consider the Officer Trustees and the Management Team to be the key management personnel of YSJSU; in charge of directing, controlling and operating the Union on a day-to-day basis. All External Trustees and Student Trustees give of their time freely and did not receive remuneration in the year. Officer Trustees received an annual salary of £23,362 for their work as Full-time Elected Officers. Details of Trustees' expenses are disclosed in note 14 of the Statement of Financial Accounts.

The Heads of Service are appraised annually by the Chief Executive Officer and receive an incremental uplift if they have successfully achieved their objectives for the year. Heads of Service who have reached the top of their grade do not receive any further incremental uplifts.

The current Chief Executive came into post full time on 28 January 2019 and is the most senior member of the York St John Students' Union staff team. The Chief Executive is contractually line managed by the SU President and Deputy Chair of the Trustee Board on behalf of the Trustee Board.

The Chief Executive meets formally and informally with the SU President and Deputy Chair of the Trustee Board to provide an update on productivity, priorities, and objective delivery; the SU President (Chair) and Deputy Chair of the Trustee Board then communicate as necessary regarding the performance of the Chief Executive with the full Trustee Board. To ensure that formal appraisals are carried out and that the Chief Executive is properly supported, formal appraisal meetings should take place every six months as follows:

Yearly Appraisal (June)	6-month Review (January)
<p><b>To include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Report from Chief Executive</li><li>▪ Feedback from the Sabbatical Trustees and staff team gathered by the President.</li><li>▪ 360-degree feedback survey conducted by an external agency (bi-annually)</li></ul> <p><b>Conducted by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Current and incoming Presidents and Deputy Chair of Trustee Board</li></ul>	<p><b>To include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Review of Appraisal Report and meeting record from June meeting</li><li>▪ Feedback from the Sabbatical Trustees and staff team gathered by the President.</li></ul> <p><b>Conducted by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Current President and Deputy Chair of Trustee Board</li></ul>

The June yearly appraisal is also the opportunity for the President(s) and Deputy Chair(s) of the Trustee Board to agree whether an incremental salary increase should be given, and their decisions are documented and then noted by the Board of Trustees.

# Future Plans



2024/25 is an exciting time for York St John Students' Union. We have created and implemented a new strategy for 2024-27, that builds upon the foundations of the 2020-24 strategy. Below are our priorities and plans for the next three years.

The Students' Union initiated consultation with stakeholders in August 2023 with completion of this process in June 2024. As part of the consultation, students gave feedback via workshops, focus groups, online surveys and forums. We have collated and reviewed strategic plans and documents from within the sector and beyond. YSJSU has carefully analysed data from national and internal surveys, carefully considered sector trends, and have interviewed staff from across the SU, university and sector.

## Priority 1

Make students feel like they belong and are 'at home' at York St John University.

We'll do this by:

- Working with the university, communities, and national partners to make university life more accessible and inclusive.
- Raising further awareness and understanding of the Students' Union – what we offer.
- Creating opportunities that tailor to different student needs.

### Key Projects:

- Societies Strategy
- Engagement and Belonging Strategy
- York and London City Engagement Projects
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
- University Mental Health Charter

## Priority 2

Ensure all students have a voice, are heard, and see that they can have an impact on the student experience.

We'll do this by:

- Creating student representative systems that work within the university, within the local communities of York and East London, and nationally.
- Continuing to develop our academic advice service and advocacy support.
- Working with the university to ensure that academic policies and procedures are fair, inclusive and student focused.

### Key Projects:

- Student Representation Project
- Advice Service Review
- Work Related Experiential Learning Framework
- Closer links with NUS – NUS opportunities

## Priority 3

Increase opportunities that enable students to become more employable.

We'll do this by:

- Creating more student employment and volunteering opportunities within the Students' Union
- Developing and utilising frameworks for student leaders, volunteers and staff to enable students to gain confidence, experience and better graduate outcomes
- Implementing ways to recognise and reward students for the incredible extra-curricular work that they do

### Key Projects:

- Investing in Volunteers Framework
- YSJSU Awards Review
- Work Related Experiential Learning Framework
- Graduate employability impact project

## Enablers

- Develop and empower our staff and volunteers to deliver the best possible experience
- Find innovative ways to ensure that we are relevant to students' needs and interests
- Be data informed to ensure we understand our students, trends, and social change
- Make student focused, well-informed decisions around governance, finance, risk management and operations
- Find ways to increase student engagement across all areas of the SU
- Always consider ethical and sustainable practices

### Key Projects:

- Articles of Association Review
- Bye-laws Review
- Financial Systems Review
- Investors in People Accreditation
- Quality Students' Union Assessment
- Space Utilisation / Commercial Services Expansion Project

## What Success Looks Like

- Multiple and/or reoccurring student engagement increases to 60% of the student population
- As a result of engagement with the Students' Union, student retention improves
- SU opportunities for student employment and volunteering increase, with evidence of impact on graduate employability
- Financial sustainability of YSJSU



**To help us to be successful in achieving our aims, we ask the university to:**

- Commit to working in partnership with the Students' Union and provide resources to enable us to really make a difference across both campuses.
- Work with us to extend support for, and the influence of, YSJSU's Student Leadership Team and our network of representatives to play a role in all major decision making.
- Be an advocate for what we do within the university, city and nationally.

# Responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Auditors Report



The Trustees (who are also the directors of York St John Students' Union Limited for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report from the Board of Trustees and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### **Statement of disclosure to the auditor**

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

### **Auditor**

The auditor, BHP LLP, have indicated their willingness to continue in office, subject to the approval of the Trustee Board.

Signed by the SU President and Chair of the Board of Trustees:



Signer ID: LGBQ4BM5YH...

**Abinash Chaudhary**

***President of the Students' Union / Chair of the Board of Trustees 2024/25***

**21 January 2025**

# Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of York St John Students' Union

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of York St John Students' Union (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 July 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 July 2023, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual trustees' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual trustees' report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.



## **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Annual Trustees' Report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

## **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 32, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with management and trustees, and from our knowledge and experience of this organisation;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the charitable company, including the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, data protection, health and safety legislation and employment law;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and trustees;
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit of the charitable company.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by;

- making enquiries of management and trustees as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risks of fraud through management bias and override controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected variances;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgments and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in note 1.18 were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- reviewing legal expenses;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the FRC's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditors/audit-assurance/auditor-s-responsibilitiesfor-the-audit-of-the-fi/description-of-the-auditor%E2%80%99s-responsibilities-for>. This This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Laura Masheder

Signer ID: CRZCVPKXXZ...

**Laura Masheder (Senior Statutory Auditor)**

*For and on behalf of*

*BHP LLP,*

*Chartered Accountants*

*Statutory Auditor*

Rievaulx House  
1 St Mary's Court  
Blossom Street  
York  
YO24 1AH

Date: 29/01/2025 GMT

BHP LLP are eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of Companies Act 2006.

# Financial Accounts



**YORK ST JOHN  
STUDENTS' UNION**





## YORK ST JOHN STUDENTS' UNION LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2024

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
		2024	2024	2024	2023
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income from:					
Grants, donations and legacies	2	417,946	-	417,946	442,207
Facilities in Kind	3	310,859	-	310,859	235,604
Other trading activities	4	48,875	-	48,875	55,560
Investment income	5	10,819	-	10,819	4,452
Charitable activities	6	467,697	-	467,697	414,772
Other income		-	-	-	-
Total income		<u>1,256,196</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,256,196</u>	<u>1,152,595</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	52,988	-	52,988	48,149
Charitable activities	8	1,121,008	-	1,121,008	1,060,226
Total expenditure	9	<u>1,173,996</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,173,996</u>	<u>1,108,375</u>
Net Income / (expenditure)		82,200	-	82,200	44,220
Remeasurement of pension scheme	25	(91,106)	-	(91,106)	59,988
Net (expenditure) / Income and movement in funds		<u>(8,906)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(8,906)</u>	<u>104,208</u>
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds at 1 August 2023		(325,090)	-	(325,090)	(429,298)
Net movement in funds		(8,906)	-	(8,906)	104,208
Total funds at 31 July 2024	21	<u>(333,996)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(333,996)</u>	<u>(325,090)</u>

The Statement of Financial Activities complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006 and includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All activities relate to continuing operations.

All funds in the current and previous year are unrestricted.

The notes on pages 57 to 77 form part of these financial statements.


YORK ST JOHN STUDENTS' UNION LIMITED

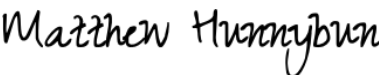
BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 JULY 2024

			2024	2023
	Note	£	£	£
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	16	5,200	9,163	
		<u>5,200</u>	<u>9,163</u>	
Current assets				
Stocks	17	7,504	4,291	
Debtors	18	10,934	7,817	
Cash at bank and in hand		414,917	345,805	
		<u>433,355</u>	<u>357,913</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	<u>(153,486)</u>	<u>(154,888)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>279,869</u>	<u>203,025</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>285,069</u>	<u>212,188</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	20	(619,065)	(537,278)	
Net liabilities	21	<u>(333,996)</u>	<u>(325,090)</u>	
Charity funds				
Restricted funds	21	-	-	
Unrestricted funds	21	(333,996)	(325,090)	
Total funds		<u>(333,996)</u>	<u>(325,090)</u>	

The Financial Statements were approved by the Trustees on 21st January 2025 and signed for on their behalf, by:

  
Signer ID: LGBQ4BM5YH...  
  
Abinash Chaudhary, President

  
Signer ID: LTKJ6GNPDD...  
  
Matthew Hunnybun, External Trustee

The notes on pages 57 to 77 form part of these financial statements.

YORK ST JOHN STUDENTS' UNION LIMITED

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2024

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	Note	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash provided by operating activities:	23	<u>62,415</u>	<u>57,664</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Purchase of tangible assets		(4,120)	-
Bank interest received		10,819	4,452
Net cash provided by Investing activities		<u>6,699</u>	<u>4,452</u>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities:</b>			
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		69,114	62,116
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward		345,805	283,689
Cash and cash equivalents carried forward	24	<u>414,919</u>	<u>345,805</u>

## 1. Accounting policies

### 1.1. Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

York St John Students' Union Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

### 1.2. Going concern

Notwithstanding the balance sheet showing net liabilities of £333,996, the Trustees are of the opinion that there are no material going concern uncertainties. This assessment is based upon:

The Union having net current assets of £279,869.

The Union having free reserves not including the pension scheme funding deficit liability of £300,704.

Only £20,834 of the future pension funding deficit liability of £639,899 being due as a cash obligation to 31 July 2025.

This demonstrates that whilst the pension obligation presents a net liability position on the balance sheet it does not represent a cash obligation that the Union cannot meet through its available free reserves.

The University shall, subject to the terms of this Memorandum, pay to the Union the Subvention (Block Grant) approved by the Governing Body's Finance and Capital Development Committee as a contribution to the annual budget of the Union. The Subvention will be paid to the Union to support activity relating to the Union's core charitable objectives, including but not limited to representation, advice, support and advocacy, democratic activities, and student social and professional enhancement. The Subvention will be agreed in line with the University planning cycle and following consideration by the University of the Union's annual planning documents. The University agrees to support the Students' Union to mitigate any major liabilities, including the Students' Union Superannuation Scheme (SUSS) ongoing liability. (MoU 2020)

In light of this, management forecasts and budgets reflect a deficit for the period to 31 July 2025 with surpluses from 1 August 2025 to 30 November 2025. These have been considered in light of sensitivities around key judgements such as current economic situation, salary costs and we are satisfied these forecasts are achievable.

Therefore the trustees believe it is appropriate to prepare the accounts on the going concern basis.

### 1.3. Company status

The company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 4. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.



#### 1.4. Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

#### 1.5. Income

All income is recognised once the company has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the company has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the company of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the company which is the amount the company would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

#### 1.6. Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classed by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the assets use.

Expenditure on raising funds are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated to their applicable expenditure headings.

#### 1.7. Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Assets are capitalised if they cost more than £2,500 and expected to last more than one year and any provision for impairment.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives. Depreciation is provided on the following bases Equipment - 3 years straight line.

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

#### 1.8. Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Union; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

### 1.9. Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

### 1.10. Stocks and work in progress

Stocks and work in progress are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks. Cost includes all direct costs and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

### 1.11. Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount repaid net of any trade discounts due.

### 1.12. Cash at Bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

### 1.13. Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the company has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

### 1.14. Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

### 1.15. Taxation

The company is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

### 1.16. Pensions

The Union participates in the Students' Union Superannuation Scheme (SUSS), a defined benefit scheme which is externally funded and contracted out of the State Second Pension. The fund is valued at least every three years by a professionally qualified independent actuary with rates of contribution payable being determined by the trustees on advice of the actuary. The scheme operates as a pooled arrangement, with contributions paid at a centrally agreed rate. As a consequence, no share of the underlying assets and liabilities can be attributed to the Union. In these circumstances contributions are accounted for as if the scheme were a defined contribution scheme based on actual contributions paid through the year. The present value of the union's share of the deficit is recognised as a liability in accordance with SORP (FRS 102).

The Union also participates in Aegon and NEST pension schemes, both of which are defined contribution schemes. The assets of the schemes are held separately from those of the Union in independently administered funds. The pension charge represents the amounts payable by the company to the fund in respect of the year.

1.17. Grants

The recurrent block grant is receivable from York St John University. The grant is credited to the income and expenditure account in the year to which it relates.

Project support grants are project based and include grants which are receivable from the University and other funding bodies

1.18. Critical accounting estimates and areas and judgement

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed below:

(i) Pension deficit contribution

The charity has entered into a commitment to provide deficit funding to the Students' Union Superannuation Pension Scheme, of which it is a contributing employer. Under FRS 102, the present value of the commitment is recognised. The calculation of the present value of the commitment is subject to an assumption of the discount rate. The discount rate is determined by reference to market yields at the reporting date on high quality corporate bonds.

Under FRS 102, the fair value of the commitment is recognised. The calculation of the fair value of the commitment is subject to an assumption of the discount rate. The discount rate is in line with HM Treasury Guidance found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

(ii) Donation of facilities by York St John University

In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS 102, the union has valued the benefit it receives from occupying facilities owned by the University on a rent-free basis, at the University's estimate of market value of £310,859.

(iii) Support costs

Many of the costs incurred by the Union such as support staff costs and service costs are shared between activities. The Union's policy is to allocate these costs on a basis of assessed consumption.

1.19. Employee benefits

The cost of short-term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense, unless those costs are required to be recognised as par of the cost of stock or fixed assets.

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the company is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

2. Income from grants, donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
University block grant	417,946	-	417,946	442,207
	<u>417,946</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>417,946</u>	<u>442,207</u>

**3. Facilities in Kind**

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	2024	2024	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Facilities in Kind	310,859	-	310,859	235,604
	<u>310,859</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>310,859</u>	<u>235,604</u>

**4. Other trading activities**

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	2024	2024	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Marketing and communication	48,875	-	48,875	53,792
Clawback and insurance	-	-	-	1,768
	<u>48,875</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>48,875</u>	<u>55,560</u>

**5. Investment income**

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	2024	2024	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Bank interest	10,819	-	10,819	4,452

**6. Income from charitable activities**

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	2024	2024	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Student opportunities	70,156	-	70,156	46,686
Bar	270,291	-	270,291	254,630
Retail	16,382	-	16,382	15,565
Coffee	55,826	-	55,826	46,308
Catering	45,839	-	45,839	43,783
Events	9,203	-	9,203	7,800
	<u>467,697</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>467,697</u>	<u>414,772</u>



## 7. Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	2024	2024	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Marketing and communication	17,919	-	17,919	14,474
Marketing and communication wages	35,069	-	35,069	33,675
	<u>52,988</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>52,988</u>	<u>48,149</u>

## 8. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	2024	2024	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities :				
Student voice	154,980	-	154,980	176,300
Student opportunities	58,055	-	58,055	66,912
Bar	148,557	-	148,557	148,436
Retail	10,718	-	10,718	9,740
Coffee	33,800	-	33,800	31,864
Catering	40,881	-	40,881	42,554
Events	12,513	-	12,513	11,101
Central services	178,156	-	178,156	182,831
Operations	161,562	-	161,562	143,886
Facilities in kind	310,859	-	310,859	235,604
	<u>1,110,081</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,110,081</u>	<u>1,049,228</u>

### Governance costs :

Audit fees	9,170	-	9,170	9,385
Other costs	1,757	-	1,757	1,613
	<u>1,121,008</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,121,008</u>	<u>1,060,226</u>

## 9. Analysis of expenditure type

	Staff costs 2024 £	Other costs 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Marketing and communication	35,069	17,919	52,988	48,149
Raising funds	35,069	17,919	52,988	48,149
Student voice	138,215	48,746	186,961	200,808
Student opportunities	28,150	61,886	90,036	91,420
Bar	50,514	248,098	298,612	260,548
Retail	6,018	20,244	26,262	21,521
Coffee	13,379	20,421	33,800	31,864
Catering	11,972	28,909	40,881	42,554
Events	-	12,513	12,513	11,101
Central services	119,291	92,638	211,929	209,237
Operations	154,806	54,281	209,087	180,175
Charitable activities	522,345	587,736	1,110,081	1,049,228
Expenditure on governance	-	10,927	10,927	10,998
	557,414	616,582	1,173,996	1,108,375

## 10. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Student voice	150,323	36,638	186,961	200,808
Student opportunities	53,395	36,641	90,036	91,420
Bar	142,344	156,268	298,612	260,548
Retail	9,165	17,097	26,262	21,521
Coffee	33,800	-	33,800	31,864
Catering	40,881	-	40,881	42,554
Events	-	12,513	12,513	11,101
Central services	170,389	41,540	211,929	209,237
Operations	172,445	36,642	209,087	180,175
	772,742	337,339	1,110,081	1,049,228

### 11. Net income / (expenditure)

This is stated after charging:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditor's remuneration	9,170	8,735
Depreciation of owned assets	<u>8,083</u>	<u>7,854</u>

### 12. Trustees' Expenses

12 trustees received reimbursement of expenses for travel and accommodation of £1,757 (2023: - 6 trustees - £1,613).

### 13. Staff costs

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	508,391	515,463
Social security costs	34,973	35,373
Defined contribution pension costs (Note 25)	<u>14,050</u>	<u>14,336</u>
	<u>557,414</u>	<u>565,172</u>

Total redundancy/termination payments amounted to £0 (2023: £0).

During the year key management personnel received remuneration (including Employer's NI and pension) totalling £245,427 (2023: £258,481). The union considers its key management personnel to comprise of the Trustees and those individuals detailed in the administrative information on page 5.

The average monthly number of employees was 38 (2023: 40) and the average monthly number of Full Time Equivalent employees during the year was as follows (including casual and part-time staff):

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Permanent staff	14	15
Student staff	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

14. Trustees' remuneration

The three sabbatical roles each incurred a salary charge as authorised in the Students' union governing document, for the representation, campaigning and support work they undertake as distinct from their trustee responsibilities. This work includes voicing student opinion with the University and local community, defending and extending the rights of students through petitions, discussions with MPs and also organising and supporting student volunteers and service provision for them.

Remuneration is paid to each sabbatical trustee for an annual term which runs to the 30 June. For the year to 31 July 2024 each received £23,363 and for the year to 31 July 2023 each received £23,462. The aggregate amount payable under such contracts is shown below:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	72,934	70,385
Defined contribution pension costs	643	2,449
	<u>73,577</u>	<u>72,834</u>



# 15. SOFA prior year comparatives

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:			
Grants, donations and legacies	442,207	-	442,207
Facilities in kind	235,604	-	235,604
Other trading activities	55,560	-	55,560
Investments	4,452	-	4,452
Charitable activities	414,772	-	414,772
Other income	-	-	-
Total income	<u>1,152,595</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,152,595</u>
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	48,149	-	48,149
Charitable activities	1,060,226	-	1,060,226
Other expenditure	-	-	-
Total expenditure	<u>1,108,375</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,108,375</u>
Other recognised gains / (losses)			
Remeasurement of pension scheme	59,988	-	59,988
Net Income and movement in funds	<u>104,208</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>104,208</u>
Reconciliation of Funds			
Funds brought forward	(429,298)	-	(429,298)
Funds carried forward	<u>(325,090)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(325,090)</u>

16. Tangible fixed assets

	2024
	£
	Equipment
Cost	
Balance as at 1st August 2023	23,562
Additions	4,120
Balance as at 31st July 2024	27,682
Depreciation	
Balance as at 1st August 2023	14,399
Charge for the Year	8,083
Balance as at 31st July 2024	22,482
Net Book Value:-	
At 31st July 2023	9,163
At 31st July 2024	5,200

These assets include refurbishments to the Bar, Shop, Catering facilities and social areas within the building.

17. Stocks

	2024	2023
	£	£
Retail	3,745	2,396
Bar	2,726	1,514
Coffee	340	79
Catering	693	302
	7,504	4,291

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YORK ST JOHN STUDENTS' UNION LIMITED  
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2024

18. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade Debtors	4,542	4,797
Prepayments and accrued income	6,392	3,020
	<u>10,934</u>	<u>7,817</u>

19. Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Clubs and societies	66,057	58,150
Trade creditors	39,403	45,191
VAT	3,534	4,978
Other creditors	2,408	413
Accruals and deferred income	21,250	15,844
Defined benefit scheme funding deficit liability (Note 25)	20,834	30,312
	<u>153,486</u>	<u>154,888</u>

20. Creditors over one year

Amounts falling due after more than one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Defined benefit scheme funding deficit liability (Note 25)	619,066	537,278
	<u>619,066</u>	<u>537,278</u>

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## 21. Statement of funds

Current year	Brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains/(losses) £	Transfer £	Carried forward £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>						
General funds	242,500	1,256,196	(1,142,930)	-	(49,862)	305,904
Pension deficit	(567,590)	-	(31,066)	(91,106)	49,862	(639,900)
	<u>(325,090)</u>	<u>1,256,196</u>	<u>(1,173,996)</u>	<u>(91,106)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(333,996)</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>						
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total of funds</b>	<u>(325,090)</u>	<u>1,256,196</u>	<u>(1,173,996)</u>	<u>(91,106)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(333,996)</u>
<b>Prior year</b>	<b>Brought forward £</b>	<b>Income £</b>	<b>Expenditure £</b>	<b>Gains/(losses) £</b>	<b>Transfer £</b>	<b>Carried forward £</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>						
General funds	226,344	1,152,595	(1,088,952)	-	(47,487)	242,500
Pension deficit	(655,642)	-	(19,423)	59,988	47,487	(567,590)
	<u>(429,298)</u>	<u>1,152,595</u>	<u>(1,108,375)</u>	<u>59,988</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(325,090)</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>						
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total of funds</b>	<u>(429,298)</u>	<u>1,152,595</u>	<u>(1,108,375)</u>	<u>59,988</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(325,090)</u>

Transfers in the year of £49,862 relate to repayments of the pension deficit liability.



## 22. Analysis of net assets between funds

Current year	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible Fixed assets	5,200	-	5,200
Current assets	433,357	-	433,357
Creditors due within one year	(153,486)	-	(153,486)
Creditors due after one year	(619,065)	-	(619,065)
	<u>(333,994)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(333,994)</u>
Prior year	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Tangible Fixed assets	9,163	-	9,163
Current assets	357,913	-	357,913
Creditors due within one year	(154,888)	-	(154,888)
Creditors due after one year	(537,278)	-	(537,278)
	<u>(325,090)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(325,090)</u>

**23. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	82,200	44,220
Adjustment for:		
Depreciation	8,083	7,854
Bank interest received	(10,819)	(4,452)
Pension finance charge	31,067	19,423
Decrease in stocks	(3,213)	2,315
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	(3,117)	29,403
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	8,076	6,388
SUSS pension contribution paid	(49,862)	(47,487)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by operating activities	62,415	57,664

**24. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	414,919	345,805
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	414,919	345,805

25. Pension commitments

The Union participates in the Students' Union Superannuation Scheme, which is a defined benefit scheme whose membership consists of employees of students' unions and related bodies throughout the country. Benefits in respect of service up to 30 September 2003 are accrued on a "final salary" basis, with benefits in respect of service from 1 October 2003 onwards accruing on a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) basis. With effect from 30 September 2011 the scheme closed to future accrual.

The most recent valuation of the scheme was carried out on 30 June 2022 and showed that the market value of the scheme's assets was £106,700,000 with assets representing 44% of the value of benefits that had accrued to members after allowing for expected future increases in earnings. The deficit on an ongoing funding basis amounted to £136,600,000

Valuations are conducted every three years based upon assumptions agreed by the Trustees, and is used to set the contributions payable by the participating employers.

The outcome in financial terms is set out in the table below:

	30 June 2019 £m	30 June 2022 £m
Assets	119.1	106.7
Liabilities	260.0	240.3
Expense reserve		3
Deficit	£140.9	(£136.6)
Funding Level	46%	44%

The decrease shown in the deficit since 2019 is in line with the changes previously reported, following annual reviews, but makes allowance for the impact of the 7% pension increase issue. This has increased the deficit in SUSS but its impact has been mitigated by the member consent exercise.

Whilst the assets have performed well rising by over 17% over the three years, the liabilities have increased by a similar percentage. The sustained low yield on government bonds has continued to affect the liabilities, but the increase was driven in large part by the pension increase issue. The Trustees have concluded that the level of contributions to clear the deficit will have to rise above the planned 5% annual increase in order to address this. However, in order to allow time for the unions to make necessary arrangements the increase in contributions have come into effect from October 2021.

The increase of 5% due in October 2024 proceeded as planned, and these contributions formed part of the plan to remove the funding deficit in SUSS.

Following the 2020 increase, and in order to attribute the further increase in costs as fairly as possible, the Trustees have allocated the additional liabilities arising from the 7% pension increase issue to those unions whose members are directly affected by it. This means that a union with many affected members may see a substantial increase in their contributions to SUSS from October 2021, while a union with no members affected by the issue would see a much smaller increase.

The Trustees also considered whether the costs of carrying out the member consent exercise should be borne only by those unions whose members are directly affected by the pension increase issue. After careful consideration, and keeping in mind the principle collectivism, they concluded that a significant proportion of the costs incurred were justifiable expenses of running SUSS as a whole (because benefits needed to be adjusted, and members written to, whether or not the compromise offer was made). What remained, once allocated to the many affected unions and reclaimed over a reasonable period of time, was not material in the context of the overall level of payments being made to the SUSS by the unions, and so no additional charges will be made in respect of this.

The existing recovery plan, based on the results of the 2016 valuation, was due to end in 2033. One option considered by the Trustees was to retain this target end date, in line with the Pensions Regulator's guidance that funding deficits should be addressed over as short a period as possible. However, given the already substantial level of contributions being made to SUSS by the employers, the Trustees concluded that extending the recovery period, and hence reducing the initial increase in contributions that unions would be required to make, struck an appropriate balance between removing the deficit as quickly as possible while remaining affordable.

In summary, the 2022 valuation recommended a monthly contribution requirement by each Union expressed in monetary terms intended to clear the ongoing funding deficit over a period of 14 years and 10 months ending May 2037 and has increased by 5% through to 2037 an extension of 20 months. These contributions also include an allowance for the cost of the ongoing administrative and operational expenses of running the scheme. These rates applied with effect from 1 October 2022 and will be formally reviewed following completion of the next valuation due with an effective date of 30 June 2025. Surpluses or deficits which arise at future valuations will also impact on the Union's future contribution commitment. In addition to the above contributions, the Union also pays its share of the scheme's levy to the Pension Protection Fund.

25. Pension commitments - continued

Under FRS102 the Union is required to recognise as a liability the present value of its agreed share of future deficit contributions. Finance costs are recognised as the present value unwinds.

Total contributions paid into the scheme by York St John Students' Union in respect of eligible employees for the year ended 31 July 2024 amounted to £nil (2024 £nil). At the balance sheet date, the Union's pension deficit was £639,900 (2023: £567,589), split by amounts due within 1 year £20,834 (2023: £30,312) and amounts due after 1 year £619,066 (2023: £537,277). The deficit payment to the scheme is £49,862 (2023: £47,487).

The company also operates two defined contribution pension schemes. The assets of the schemes are held separately from those of the company in independently administered funds. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the company to the funds and amounted to £14,050 (2023: £14,336). Contributions totalling £2,541 (2023: £2,496) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date and are included in creditors.

The full reconciliation of this present value is as follows:

Present value of provision	2024	2023
	£	£
Student's Union Superannuation Scheme	639,900	567,589
Present value of provision:		
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 19)	20,834	30,312
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year (Note 20)	619,066	537,278
	<u>639,900</u>	<u>567,590</u>
Reconciliation of opening and closing provisions:		
Opening Provision	567,590	655,642
Unwinding of discount factor	31,066	19,423
Deficit contribution paid	(49,862)	(47,487)
Movement in net present value calculation	91,106	(59,988)
Closing Provision	<u>639,900</u>	<u>567,590</u>
Assumptions:		
	2024	2023
	%	%
Rate of discount	<u>5.00</u>	<u>5.00</u>

The discount rates shown above are the equivalent single discount rates when used to discount the future recovery plan contributions due, would give the same results using a full AA corporate bond yield curve to discount the same recovery plan contributions.

## 26. Operating lease commitments

At 31 July 2024 the company had no annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

Excluding the formal lease with the University agreed 2018 for 10 year period regarding donation for lease and utilities fees (page 7 of TAR)

## 27. Related party transactions

The Union is in receipt of a recurrent grant from York St John University of £417,946 (2023: £442,207) and other paid items £8,498 primarily for events held on behalf of international students whilst the prior year (2023: £8,986) was £7,585 to reimburse transactions made on Aspire cards, this will include memberships and retail sales and £1,401 for i2i mini bus hire for men's football and taxi fares for both hockey and rugby league for training, and £3,999 (2023: £12,083) various reimbursements of stock items shown in sales or costs incurred by YSJ SU on behalf of the Uni.

In addition the Student Union occupies its building on a rent free basis and York St John University provides support services. In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS102, the trustees have estimated that the provision of space and associated services is worth £310,859 (2023: £235,604) to the Union and have recognised this amount in the financial statements.

Other related parties are the Sabbatical Officers and Trustees as detailed in the Trustees' report. Details of remuneration received by these individuals are shown in Note 14 and Trustees' expenses in Note 12.