

2024 - In Action

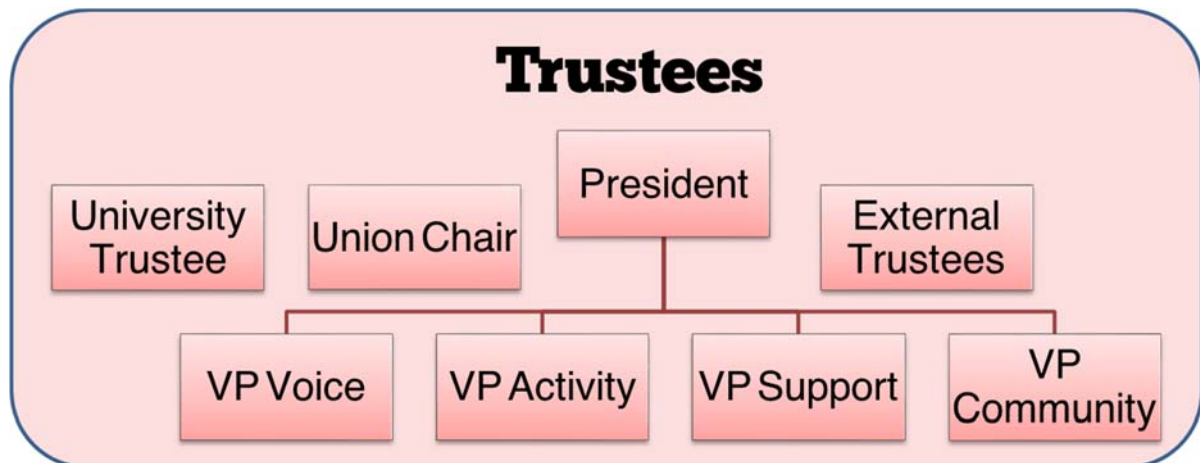
Introduction

Last year, Surrey students voted in favour of the '2024 Experience' a vision to create a leading Union fit for the next decade. Our new structure based around four themes is designed to *build a Union for all of your student life*. The detail we are proposing to put around this structure is designed to:

- Deliver **more** representation for students
- Create more **opportunities** for students to lead their Union and make a difference
- Put more **control** of the Students' Union in the hands of everyday students
- Direct the **resources** of the Union where students need them most
- Build a **flexible** environment able to respond to the ever changing student community

How it will work.

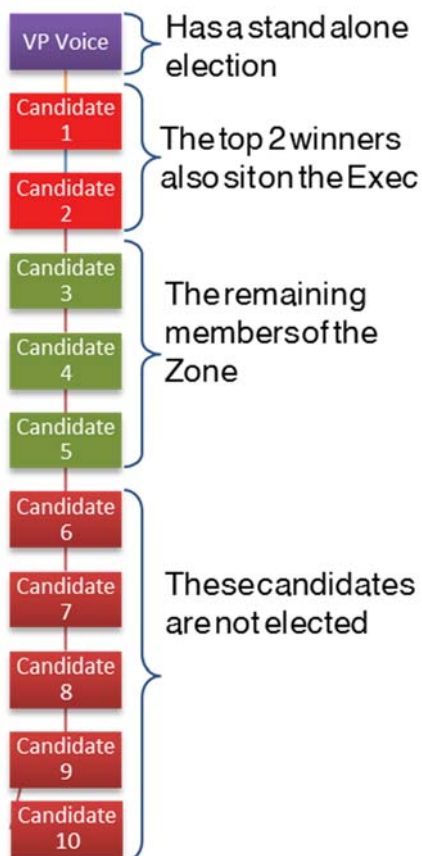
The Union will continue to elect a Student Trustee (the Union Chair) and five sabbatical officers. Combined with our four external trustees and one University trustee, this is our Board of Trustees who are in overall control of the Students' Union. The Board of Trustees continue to report directly to all students.



Zones

Each theme will be led by the respective Vice-President assisted by a committee of five students who are elected together and sit within a 'zone committee' (the five candidates with the highest votes will secure a position within the zone committee. Out of these five winners, the two candidates with the highest number of votes will also be members of the Union executive committee, the leading committee of elected students, leading the political direction of the Union. Students running for part time exec roles will choose the zone that they are passionate about, rather than choosing a restricted role. The Union will no longer have part time student roles with specific portfolios – instead, students will be able to take positions within a zone and be flexible to the issues that matter to them throughout their year in office. The focus of a zone can change as the work of the Union develops, but the overall theme of the zone remains the same.

So, for example, in a 10 candidate election ...



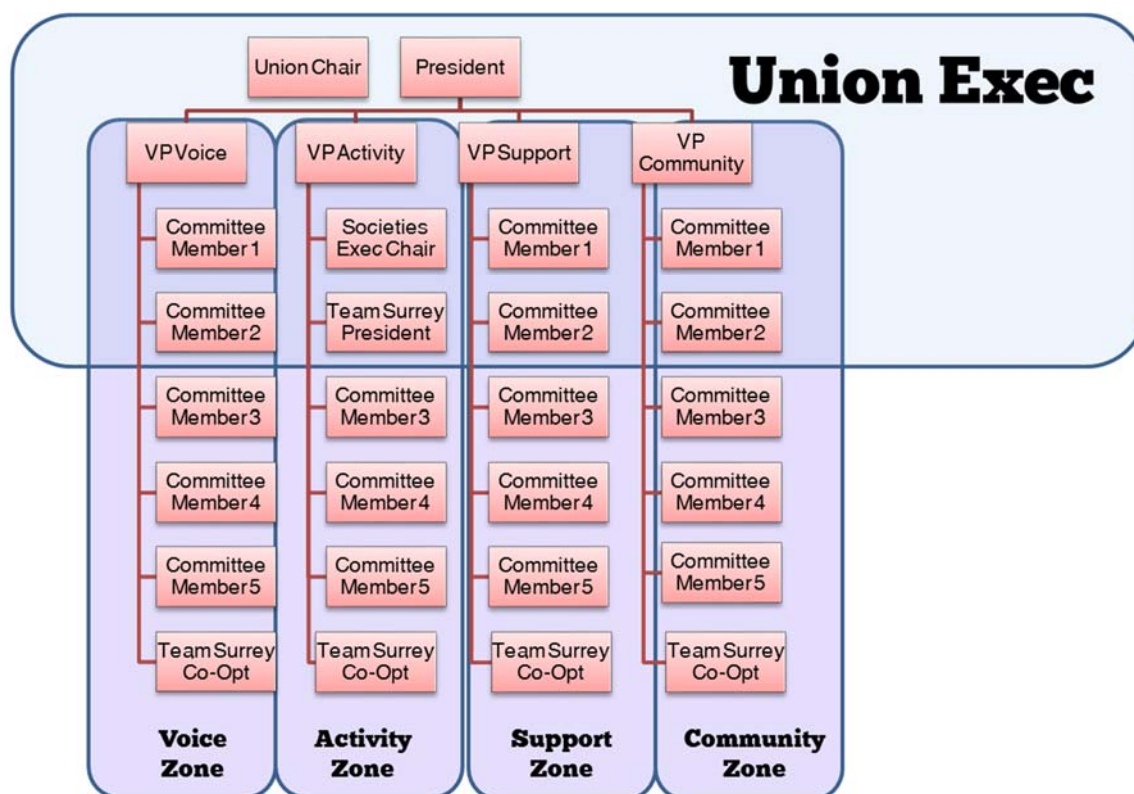
This puts **more students in control** of each zone, rather than a Vice-President on their own. This is an extension of the system which already works for Sports Clubs and Societies with their own executive committees. By extending this over all areas, it now gives **more opportunities** for students to get involved in leading their Union. Zone committees will feed into the Union Executive, referring decisions and policy to Executive where they affect the Union as a whole. However, Zones will be able to pass their own policy specific to their own theme. This widens the decision making powers of students throughout the Union.

Committees that work

A committee is only as good as the work it can do, and following on from the pledge in the 2024 proposal to properly resource our work, each zone committee will have at least one member of staff, to assist and take care of the operational work that the committee needs. Each zone committee will also have a budget, putting the **resources in direct control of students**. The annual budget will no longer be attributed to all areas, after running costs, the financial resources of the Union will be split between the four zone committees and the Union Executive. This will also be the first time some of the core activities of the Union such as advice and elections will have student representatives supporting the work of the VP, making the Union **more representative**.

The Four Zones

Together, the zones are designed to cover all of student life, however some issues transcend one particular zone and for this reason the Union Executive will remain the senior body for student representation. The Exec will have the ability to 'lift' issues from the zones, and each zone will be able to promote an issue for decision to the Exec committee. The Exec committee will also have the ability to 'refer back' to a zone any decision that they feel the zone needs to take another look at. Each zone will have a dedicated member of staff.





Voice

This is the zone for students who have something to say, listening to our members and making their voice heard. This is the zone that looks after the student opinion on the issues that have an impact on your student life. For example, this zone will promote the results of major student surveys, such as the NSS and 'Shape Your Surrey', and will lobby the University – through the course rep system, which will also be resourced by this zone, to create the changes students want to see at Surrey. This zone will also be responsive to national student political issues, such as tuition fees and government funding of Higher Education, and will be responsible for feeding the Union's executive with student views and opinions of these matters, so that policy can be driven from grassroots level. The Vice President within this zone will have overall responsibility for ensuring that all students are able to engage with Union democratic processes, from running in elections to taking part in AGMs for a club or society.

VP Voice - Role Outline

The Vice-President Voice is the officer who takes responsibility for making the student voice heard. This includes

- **Elections**
Taking responsibility for all annual elections – ensuring students are aware of the Union's key democratic processes, working with the VP Community to ensure that election events are promoted and fully accessible to all students. The VP Voice will take the lead on the Union's democratic key performance indicators concerning election turn out and candidate numbers. The VP Voice will work closely with the Union's full time staff team on democratic projects throughout the year.
- **Course Rep Elections**
Ensuring each cohort has a properly elected course rep, and supporting them through their year. The VP Voice will ensure that students have the opportunities to become course reps, that the role of course reps is promoted effectively, and that the quality and enhancement activities of the University fully incorporate the course representatives within their structures.

- **AGMs & EGMs**
The VP Voice will take the lead in the annual general meetings of all student groups, and extraordinary general meetings as they occur through the year – this role will be responsible for convening all Union officers in a coordinated and organised AGM process each year, and will work with the VP Activity to ensure that clubs and societies are fully aware of the processes and how they operate.
- **Surveys & Feedback**
The lead officer for 'Shape your Surrey', the NSS and any Union survey or feedback forum, ensuring that the University feeds outcomes back to students following survey results, and that the Voice Zone as a whole passes effective policy aimed at creating change that students want to see based on representative survey outcomes.
- **Feedback to external groups**
This VP takes the student voice to external companies and third parties that deal with students such as the NHS, the local Council and more, often working together with VP Community. This position ensures that student opinion is heard widely across external bodies, and that students have a part to play in influencing changes where they live and work (as well as where they study). For example, the VP Voice will work closely with the VP Community in encouraging students to vote in local council elections.
- **NUS Liaison**
Keeping abreast of NUS activity, reporting back to Exec and the student body – representing Surrey to the NUS. This position will take the ex-officio position at NUS conference and so will automatically attend, and ensure that students understand the processes that happen nationally to represent them to the government and beyond.

The Voice Zone

The voice zone operates within the areas as defined in the VP role description as well as broader voice and campaign issues, for example NUS national demonstrations. Students with a passion for **issues, campaigning, speaking up and fighting causes** should consider standing for the Voice Zone.

Activity

This is the zone for students doing things, taking part in activities, playing sport, society activity and more

VP Activity

*Many Student Unions have a VP Activities which is an amalgamation of VP Sports and VP Societies, this position is not the same as that definition. The traditional VP Activities is responsible for **all** aspects of sports and societies, this position is only responsible for the actual activity.*

The Vice-President Activity is the officer who leads on students doing things, society activities, playing sport, or a recreational activity, including;

- **Sporting Activity**
This officer works with the Team Surrey President to ensure that they are supported to represent students on the Team Surrey board. This will ensure that the relevant representational issues are raised with the Team Surrey President through the Activity Zone and Union Executive. The VP Activity will also be on board to support the Team Surrey President surrounding representation through meetings with senior Sports Park and University management, ensuring that the interests of students who take part in sport are always at the heart of decision-making processes.
- **Accessibility of sport:**
Working with the Team Surrey President and Team Surrey Student Executive, the VP Activity will ensure the prominence of these new roles and will ensure that sport remains accessible, while maintaining the Team Surrey performance focus. The Team Surrey Exec will be encouraged to utilise a space on each of the zones – and report back to the Team Surrey President, who then reports into the VP Activity and Team Surrey operational group.
- **Society Activity**
The VP Activity will support societies in achieving their aims, ensuring that societies understand which area of the Union can support them – and working with the other Union officers (such as the VP Voice concerning AGMs and the VP Community concerning event management).
- **Activity Infrastructure**
Ensuring that the right tools are in place to help students take part in the activities they want to do – for example, working with the Union’s communications department to ensure that students understand where they can find information about participating in activities through the Union, ensuring that the ways in which taking part in activities can enhance the student experience are affectively and consistently communicated in a targeted way.
- **Campaigning Activity**
Along with VP Voice, this VP will assist societies and groups who wish to take part in campaigning activity, ensuring that there are no barriers to students who want to organise an activity which promotes a cause or point of view that they are passionate about.

- Fundraising
Working alongside VP Community to support fundraising activities – most prevalent when these are linked to the work of a team surrey club or a union society, including community events and awareness raising for the positive contribution students make to their communities through the activities they join.
- Activity Issues
Working with VP Support to help identify where there are barriers to students taking part in the activities they enjoy, such as financial hardship or the pressure of a busy academic timetable. Ensuring that the other officers within each of the zones have an awareness of the importance of student activities to health, wellbeing and the student experience as a whole.

The Activity Zone

The activity zone operates in the areas outlined in the VP role as well as allowing students who have a passion for **developing new student activities, increasing participation, keeping active and extra-curricular development** to make a change.

The top two places in the Activity Zone are reserved places, one for the chair of the Team Surrey President, and one for the chair of the Societies Executive, who then become members of Union Exec. This will require electing these two positions at the same time as the rest of the zone, and therefore they will become stand-alone elections.

For more information, please see the accompanying document regarding 2024 amendments

Support

This is all about helping students, as well as enabling students to help each other. The support zone is there to look out for students during the times when things go wrong and make sure there are resources in place to help.

VP Support

The Vice-President Support is the officer who leads on services which the Union provides to help students, and represents the Union to those who provide support services to students.

- **Union Advice**
Responsible for the professional advice service provided by the Union to students – this VP will oversee the advice and support services the Union operates, this officer will ensure that the themes and issues raised by the professional advice offered by the Union (eg an increase in academic appeals from one particular student demographic) are fed back to the University and that action is taken to enhance and prevent issues in the future before they develop.
- **University Support Services**
Working with VP Voice, the VP Support represents students to University provided support services – ensuring that these services are accessible to students, productive and efficient, and that student feedback about these services results in real change that students can see.
- **Wellbeing & Campaigns**
Working with VP Community and VP Activity, promoting wellbeing throughout the student community and supporting students who wish to take part in wellbeing activities on and off campus, for the promotion of their own health as well as the health of others.
- **Training**
Working with the VP Activity to ensure that students have access to training programmes that will improve their student experience, from making sure that University provided training and workshops are accessible to all, to providing in house training to members of societies who want to learn how to support their members throughout the year.

The Support Zone

This zone is ideal for students who want to **help other students, create a caring campus, and promote wellbeing.**

Community

The student community takes many forms, and students are part of several diverse communities while they are studying at Surrey – from the community of flatmates in their first year, to the community of neighbours when they move into private rented accommodation, to the community they form when they join and new club or society. The Students' Union plays a central role in bringing communities of students together, and supporting them as they develop. The community zone is here to bring students together, to socialise and meet others.

VP Community

The Vice-President Community is the lead officer for social and community activities, including

- **Entertainment**
The social activities of the Union, including Rubix – this VP will make sure that student interests are taken into account in the decision making processes around the entertainment provided by the Students' Union, through the work of the community zone and input of the zone members.
- **Welcoming students**
The VP Community will be the lead officer responsible for welcoming new students, at key events such as Freshers' Week, through to welcome events that take place throughout the year for research students or those who join outside of the traditional induction provided.
- **Showcase events**
This VP will be the lead officer on major showcase events such as Colours Ball, Student Awards and International Festival, ensuring that the changes and developments that students want to see are incorporated into these events, and ensuring that these events reflect the student community as a whole, with as much student involvement as possible.
- **Fundraising**
The RAG committee reports into the VP Community, and they will work with VP Activity on fundraising activities and events, especially those that involve club and society committees. The VP Community will ensure that the fundraising contributions made by students are properly recognised and will work with the VP Voice to ensure that the causes students care most about are properly acknowledged by the Union.
- **Volunteering**
Working with full time Union staff on community and local volunteering, including being the lead officer responsible for the Union's Investors in Volunteering accreditation as well as working with VP Activity on volunteering activity throughout the year. Ensuring that students are aware of the volunteering they can take part in, either individually or as part of a group.
- **Campaigns**
Working with VP Support on cross campus awareness and change campaigns, and with the VP Voice to ensure that these campaigns reflect the views and passions of students.
- **Community life:**

- Working closely with the VP Voice to ensure that the contribution and influence students can have over their local communities is properly promoted and acknowledged by external organisations, and that students feel welcome in the Guildford community.

The Community Zone

This zone operates in the areas outlined above and is ideal for students who want to get involved in **entertainment, community outreach, public relations, fundraising and volunteering.**



Communications

In this change process, communication will be at the heart of the process, **telling students** what is happening, **asking students** what they want and **informing students** of our progress.

It is absolutely recognised that many students will be familiar with 'who to go to' about their issue, however for many others they either have nobody to go to or go to who they know. We will put a physical and virtual infrastructure around our interaction with students so we make their experience as smooth as possible

It is important to note that it is not for individual students to have to understand exactly who or where to go, but for the Union to look after their needs **as an individual** and not put them through a pre-defined funnel. The new development on the ground floor of the Union Building will be designed specifically to be the welcoming front of the Union as a physical space to welcome all.

Conclusion

The 2024 detailed structure is designed to ensure that all VPs are encouraged to work and to cooperate together, the zone committees cross over in several areas intentionally.

There also additional obligations on Union officers, such as a variety of University wide and faculty specific committee places to fill, these shall be allocated annually as appropriate to the incoming team, as well as defined committee places for some roles (e.g. President shall continue to be a member of Council).