



HELENA AUSTIN

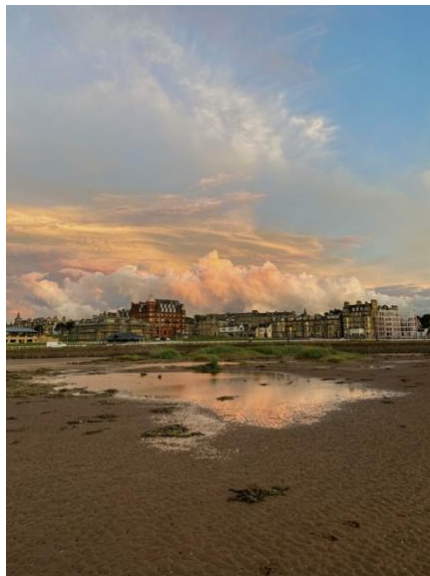
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MEMBER FOR FIRST YEAR

Manifesto Commitment:

1. Provide relevant online resource support.
2. Guidance through any Covid-related issues
3. Enhance wellbeing through information.
4. Championing diversity & inclusivity.

I want to prepare First Years to make a successful transition into Uni life.

Manifesto Helena Austin Member for First Years 2021-22



My COMMITMENT

Hi, my name is Helena Austin.

I am running as the Member for First Years 2021-22. We all know that change can be challenging and anxiety provoking. My aim is to support First Years to make a stress free and successful transition into University life.

I have four objectives I believe will support students as they make their transition.

1. Develop and provide relevant and timely online resource support.
2. Guidance through Covid-related issues that may impact the student experience.
3. Enhance student wellbeing through information on Uni's services.
4. Champion diversity & inclusivity to ensure all feel part of the community.



Timely and Relevant Online Support

Before a student steps foot on campus, I believe we should support their information needs and reach out to make meaningful connections. This is particularly important given the increased anxiety students may be facing as a result of the corona virus.

I will:

1. Continue Maitreyi's (2020-21 First Year Member) Class of 2025 Instagram Idea
 - I will establish a Class of 2025 Instagram account.
 - Encourage students to submit a photograph and write a short biography to introduce themselves to the year. I will manage activity and will respond to each post and/or question within 24 hours.
 - I believe this is an informal way for me to meet students, and for students to meet each other before term commences. It will also enable students to have questions or concerns answered promptly.
2. Develop Facebook Groups to Facilitate Chats and Manage Enquiries
 - I want to encourage Facebook activity over the summer. This will be in individual FB pages or in Messenger chats.
 - I plan to continue with a general Welcome-To-St-Andrews student group but also create groups for each sub-honours subject and common interest groups. I will also post links to societies and to other interest groups. Students can determine what FB group or chat best suits their individual needs.

- Often students do not want to commit fully to joining a Society from the onset of student life, by connecting them with like-minded individuals they can test the waters and explore their options until ready to commit.

3. A Private and Confidential Online Question Format

- I believe a space for common questions and answers should be available to incoming first years.
- I want to create a Microsoft forum specifically for Q&A's. I plan to answer their questions as best as possible, creating an informal but genuine student response.
- I see this as a vehicle for first years to submit questions in a safe and confidential way.



Coronavirus Help and Guidance

The Coronavirus pandemic has added stress to every student's life, and no doubt many incoming first years will have concerns about how the virus may affect them.

1. Coronavirus Communication

- I will be based in St Andrews during the summer. I will keep connected with the University Coronavirus helpdesk and local news. I will relay the most-up-to-date-information to students on social media and provide an additional resource to help ease anxiety.
- I will advertise the Covid Helpdesk as a resource for students. Nearer the start date, I will contact residence halls to relay relevant information to

students, posting information to social media at least two weeks before first semester.

2. Feel for St Andrews

- Unlike most of us, the incoming First Years were unable to attend Opening Days, which are instrumental to getting a flavour for the university.
- I am proposing a series to be posted on my SRC Facebook page that will give a current student perspective of life in St Andrews, in the time of Covid.
- This will include images of St Andrews that students would like to get a better feel for.
- It will also include a video aspect where I hope to gain access to halls of residence, lecture rooms and the sports centre to give a more in person experience.



Promoting Wellbeing

Transitioning from home to University can be overwhelming. I want to promote emotional health and wellbeing activities that are available at St Andrews.

1. Wellbeing resources

- On my social media platforms, I will make sure there is access to high quality and readily available resources provided on campus, for example: student health services, how to register with a GP and even the yoga groups on campus.

2. Freshers' week

- I will be highly visible and will offer my support to any student who feels they need additional support or a friend.
- I will ensure that First Years have an awareness in advance of the Fresher Week activities that will help them maintain emotional health and wellbeing.
- I will advertise the importance of all students attending the Got Consent Training presented at the start of the year to reduce sexual assault.



Diversity and Inclusion

St Andrews should be known as a welcoming environment for all students. My commitment to diversity through this role is that all students will feel included and a vital part of the St Andrews community.

1. Action

- During the summer and Freshers week, I will advertise the variety of Groups at St Andrews supporting student diversity. I will help students to connect with specific groups such as LGBTQ+, faith groups, BAME Group and Internationals Group. I will do a spotlight every fortnight of summer with officers from these groups on my social media platforms.
- I will encourage students to contact me privately on social media if they

have concerns or queries related to the transition into a new environment. I will ensure I answer their questions and direct them to support if required.

- As a dual national, I will develop a buddy system for any student who would like to be linked with someone from their home country to provide them with additional support as they make the cultural transition.