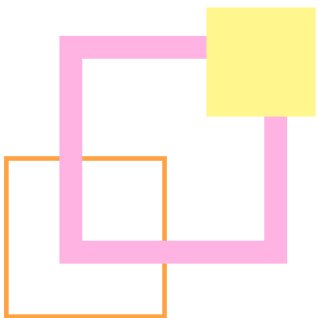


END OF SEMESTER REPORT

Emily Bannister
President of Education
2025-2026



REFLECTING ON MY *DEBUT* AS YOUR PRESED

As my first semester comes to a close, it is time to reflect on my debut era as your President of Education!

I believe it is only fitting to start my semester roundup with potentially my most discussed impact: I suggested the Freshers' Week Pit Bull Night!

But on a more serious note, I have had the privilege of representing students academic interests at the University of St Andrews. In a global landscape marked by constrained educational resources and eroding academic autonomy, the role of academic representatives is now more critical than ever before. Student Unions play an essential role in safeguarding our academic institutions, and I implore all students to engage with student democracy wherever possible.

I would like to extend my gratitude to all the academic representatives who I have the privilege of overseeing. Class Representatives, Postgraduate Representatives, Language Convenors, School Presidents, and Faculty Presidents, none of my work would be possible without your support and guidance- thank you.

I have been driving forward bold changes to our Union and University! From leading university wide campaigns, to representing students nationally, to enhancing aspects of our 600-year-old institution some believed untouchable, I am so grateful to everyone who has trusted me with this incredible position. I understand all too well that change cannot happen overnight, so will forever and always remain fearless to deliver on the issues that matter most to you.

Semester 2... are you ready for it?

Emily Bannister



FEARLESS

student voices

I am dedicated to protecting and embedding fearless student voices at all levels of university decision making!

Achievement or Project	What I've Done
RECORD BREAKING ELECTIONS: 902 candidates 2783 voters	<p>This year, your academic representation team have broken elections records! I'd like to extend another congratulations to all Class and PG Representatives elected, and a thank you for all your incredible work so far.</p> <p>Alongside the Education Council, I then organised and led the training of approximately 400 student representatives!</p>
STUDENT VOICE AUDIT	<p>I launched a student voice audit! Through this, the Academic Representation team audited all Student Staff Consultative Committees (SSCCs) to investigate the extent to which these meetings occurred. We found that undergraduate SSCCs are highly respected, but there is work to be done to ensure postgraduate SSCCs occur in similar numbers.</p> <p>We analysed the extent to which student voices were respected, common themes across all meetings, and the success rate of student suggestions- I will present results to the university in semester 2.</p>
STUDENT VOICE RECEIPTS	<p>In partnership with the university, I helped launch the new Module Feedback Questionnaires. We have streamlined questions, ensured staff take results more seriously, and prioritised closing the feedback loop. I helped lead the MFQ publicity drive to gather the highest responses in recent years!</p> <p>Crucially, Module Coordinators now must evidence how student feedback has made changes through providing you a student voice receipt!</p>

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Achievement or Project	What I've Done
CO-WROTE THE UNIVERSITY'S SELF EVALUATION AND ACTION PLAN	<p>I was the student lead for the University of St Andrews' Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP). The purpose of the SEAP is to reflect on student feedback to set institutional priorities. I looked at internal and external student survey results to produce an action plan for our institution to carry out.</p> <p>I further contributed to a university action plan reflecting on last year's Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review.</p>
UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE ACADEMIC FORUMS	<p>I organised and chaired the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Academic Forums! In these your School Presidents, Faculty Presidents, and Postgraduate Presidents advocated for improvements to learning, teaching and research provisions.</p> <p>UAF: improved tuition fee transparency, increased study abroad/ industry placement support, and transparency over the university's financial position.</p> <p>PGAF: PGT dissertation timeline transparency, PG community initiatives, and PGR contract clarity.</p>
MAIN BAR SURVEY	<p>I was the Executive Officer lead for the Main Bar Survey. This ensured students had the power to influence potential changes to Main Bar. We gathered 1647 responses!</p>

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Achievement or Project	What I've Done
INTRODUCED VICE SCHOOL PRESIDENTS	<p>I introduced Vice School Presidents to reduce the extensive School President workload and prologue student engagement with representation.</p> <p>This has been on a trial basis for this year whereby a Class Representative in each school has volunteered to take on additional Vice School President responsibilities. This has been met with positive feedback as Vice School Presidents have contributed to the productivity of academic representation teams in each school.</p>
STAFF DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION	<p>During the new staff induction, I presented about the importance of the student experience, engaging with student voices, and the Students' Association! I presented alongside the Director of Student Experience to demonstrate the value of student-staff partnership at all areas of the university.</p>
LAUNCHED THE STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT GUIDANCE	<p>Continuing the work of my predecessor, I launched the Student Partnership Agreement guidance and training. Faculty members are trained to value the student voice in decision making which has placed students at the heart of shaping the quality of their own academic experience!</p>

SPEAK NOW

postgraduates

I always speak up on the issues that matter most to postgraduate students!

Achievement or Project	What I've Done
<p>SECURED WORK SPACES FOR POSTGRADUATES WHO TEACH</p>	<p>I ensured that it is in university policy that postgraduate research students who teach can now request work spaces to privately and securely grade their students work!</p> <p>Just reach out to a member of staff in your school who will accommodate your request for a private room away from undergraduate students.</p>
<p>PROTECTED AND EMBEDDED POSTGRADUATE STUDENT-STAFF MEETINGS</p>	<p>I have ensured postgraduate Student Staff Consultive Committee meetings are embedded and respected!</p> <p>Carried out in partnership between the Union and University, annual audits will assess the extent to which postgraduate SSCC meeting occur. Through these audits I hope to ensure all schools have dedicated fora for the student voice.</p>

RED communications

I am committed to cutting the red tape to streamline communications!

Achievement or Project	What I've Done
EXPANDED HEAR TRANSCRIPTS	I have expanded Higher Education Achievement Reports! Class and Postgraduate Representatives, Halls Life leadership roles, and Student Ambassadors will now be recognised on your official university transcripts!
IMPROVED TRANSPARENCY OF REPRESENTATIVES	The Executive Officers launched our official Instagram to improve our outreach and transparency. I began my quarterly updates to communicate changes to students. The Academic Representation team will launch a 'Semester One Report' in the New Year. I relaunched the 'Weekly Wins' series to highlight the achievements of all your Class Reps, Postgraduate Reps, School Presidents, Faculty Presidents, and Postgraduate Presidents.
CAREERS CENTRE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY	I contributed to the Careers Centre Communications Strategy to improve their outreach to students. Through improved LinkedIn and Instagram usage, I hope their resources and support can reach all student groups!
ALUMNI RESOURCES GUIDE	I produced a short Alumni Resources Guide, and am working with multiple university services to improve how they publicise their alumni resources further.

REPUTATION innovation

The University of St Andrews has a historic reputation but innovation must always be prioritised!

Achievement or Project	What I've Done
PREVENTING OVER-ASSESSMENT	I helped organise a workshop with Directors of Teaching and student representatives to work towards realistic assessment models in each school.
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE	<p>I spoke up at University Court and Academic Senate for a better university stance on AI, including the necessity for students to be trained in using AI positively.</p> <p>I am also contributing to new university policies on AI to ensure students are adequately trained in AI for our future careers!</p>
PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CURRICULUM	I have introduced the Outstanding Commitment to Teaching for Sustainability award in the 1413 Teaching Awards to reward the teaching of sustainable practices. I introduced this award to inspire all faculty members to work towards embedding sustainable practices in the curriculum.
CHINESE STUDIES REVIEW	Alongside your Chinese Convenor, I contributed to a full review of the Chinese studies curriculum. This was in response to negative student feedback last year. We provided student recommendations to innovate teaching and resources, and then worked in partnership with the department to action proposals.



LOVER

support

I want to ensure that all students who face barriers to academia know of all support available to them!

Achievement or Project	What I've Done
TEXTBOOK GIVEAWAY	<p>I have continued to fight for the accessibility of study materials to reduce the financial pressures of buying essential textbooks. I organised the Textbook Giveaway. 300+ books were donated by students throughout summer and then given back to students who need them at the Freshers' Fayre!</p>
EMBEDDED EDI REPRESENTATIVES IN SCHOOL STRUCTURES	<p>I have met with the EDI faculty leads and each school's EDI Officer to ensure all EDI Representatives provide a 'Student Voice Report' in school EDI meetings. This new introduction will ensure regular student feedback on EDI matters.</p>
BAME SCHOLARSHIPS	<p>I have supported the BAME Students' Network secure oversight over the development of scholarship selection guidance. I further worked with them to increase the transparency of scholarships for BAME students on the university website.</p>

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Achievement or Project	What I've Done
ADVOCACY FOR PALESTINIAN STUDENTS	<p>I contributed to and signed an open letter with Executive Officers from across the UK. This was sent to government ministers calling for them to ensure the safe passage of Palestinian students to the UK in September. Alongside my fellow Executive Officers, I further pushed our University leaders to act.</p>
LGBTQ+ POLICY WORK	<p>I renamed a University policy to better show respect towards our transgender and non-binary student community accessing academic support.</p>
STAGE 2 ACADEMIC APPEALS	<p>Through removing the involvement of student assessors in stage 2 appeal assessments, I have ensured that only qualified and experienced academic professionals make the assessment of stage 2 academic appeals for the remainder of the academic year.</p>

FOLKLORE

outreach

I am committed to ensuring that University of St Andrews students become a representational impact nationally and internationally!

Achievement or Project	What I've Done
EDUCATION STRATEGY FORUM	Attended by Vice-Chancellors, Deans, Principals, Chief Executives, Finance Directors, and other departmental heads from across the UK, I attended and presented at the 'Further and Higher Education Strategy Forum'. In partnership with the Vice-Principal of Education (Proctor), I presented on the importance of including student voices in decision making.
EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION QUALITY ASSURANCE THEMATIC PEER GROUP	I have been appointed a member of the European University Association Quality Assurance Thematic Peer Group. This is an opportunity for peer learning and exchange of experiences. I will be representing University of St Andrews students internationally!
INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH	I organised for academic representatives from the Stockholm School of Economics Students' Association to visit St Andrews and share their good practice with us.
SPAROS TERTIARY QUALITY STUDENT EXPERT GROUP	I have been selected a member of Student Partnership and Quality Scotland's Tertiary Quality Student Expert Group. Through my appointment, the University of St Andrews' will influence enhancement framework at a national level!

EVERMORE funding

I want to enhance your student experience through lobbying officials to introduce a sustainable Further and Higher Education funding model!

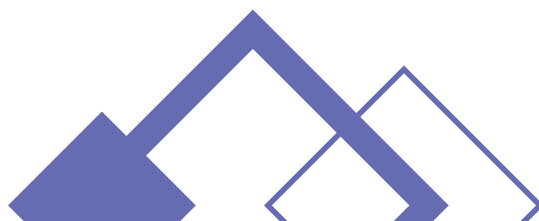
Achievement or Project	What I've Done
ADVOCACY FOR IMPROVED STUDENT NUMBERS	<p>I have spoken up University Court and over relevant meetings about the implications that the increased undergraduate cohort has on all aspects of the student experience.</p> <p>I also met with the Scottish Funding Council to advocate for an improved balance between our quality student experience and a sustainable funding model.</p>
RE-LAUNCHED A NATIONAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING CAMPAIGN	<p>I helped re-launch the 'Save Our Scottish Universities' campaign! Now re-named 'Save Our Scottish Education' to encompass further and higher education.</p> <p>Alongside Executive Officers from across Scotland, I am pushing the government to increase FE and HE funding!</p>
MET WITH THE MINISTER FOR FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION	<p>I was invited to a meeting with Minister Graeme Day to discuss higher education funding. We spoke about the necessity to prioritise student experience, the unsustainable education funding model, and Scotland's place as an attractive destination for international students.</p>



Midnights study spaces

I work closely with library and estates teams to protect and expand study spaces!

Achievement or Project	What I've Done
LAUNCHED A 'DESK HOGGING' CAMPAIGN	<p>In partnership with the libraries team, I have launched a campaign to reduce the practice of students using their belongings to reserve seats in all university libraries.</p> <p>Be kind, unwind, and leave the desk behind!</p>
EXTENDED LIBRARY OPENING HOURS	<p>Following a proposal from the library to reduce opening hours for this academic year, I pushed back and ensured library opening hours are in line with student usage levels at each point of the year.</p>
OPENED BEACON BAR AS A STUDY SPACE	<p>After receiving student feedback about Main Library occupancy levels and harsh lighting, I opened Beacon Bar as an alternative study space for revision and exam weeks! The space serves as a relaxed study space that embraces natural lighting.</p>
LIBRARIES OPEN FORUM	<p>Alongside the library team and your Arts and Divinity Faculty President, I organised the Libraries Open Forum to gather in person student feedback about library etiquette. From your feedback we will work towards improving your library experience.</p>



1647

main bar survey responses

38

different committees

DEBUT

in stats

440

academic reps overseen

1100

pages read for court

+

3

academic forums

300+

textbooks donated

564

hours in meetings