



**AVERY**  
FOR DOSDA

**avery  
for  
dosda**

**MANIFESTO**

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# meet avery!

**My name is Avery and I'm running to be your next DoSDA because I want to make the student experience at St Andrews the absolute best it can possibly be.**

I want to make St Andrews an inclusive place for all students to enjoy and to be able to access the wide variety of activities, services and resources offered by the Students' Association.



As DoSDA, I will bring **transparency** and **clarity** to the Students' Association and its Subcommittees. I will **strengthen engagement** between students and the Union through its programmes and valuable resources. I will create **a more efficient Union**, ensuring we're as accessible and transparent as possible. I will bring an empathetic and diplomatic approach to the role.

My manifesto focuses on long-term goals for the Union as well as the day-to-day details which come with the job. If elected, I promise to be accountable to all students throughout my term.

**I hope to demonstrate to you that I am the most qualified candidate with the plan which will benefit students the most!**

It is an ambitious plan for the Students' Association, but **there's something for everyone in this manifesto!**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Avery', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

# my experience

Since first engaging with the St Andrews Students' Association in my First Year, I have continued to hold active roles within the Union. These varied roles have allowed me to understand how the Union works and how to achieve our goals.

## Students Association Board Trustee

As a Trustee, I have received invaluable experience in reasoning, conclusion drawing and effective strategy construction. I also understand the financial and commercial strain the Students' Association is in. This experience would allow me to smoothly transition from a Student Trustee to a Sabbatical Trustee – this means I'll be able to be effective from day 1.

## SSC Societies Officer

As Socs Officer, I have changed the Re-Affiliation process (to make it easier for societies and their new presidents), began Tuesday Society Sport, added a BAME Coordinator to the Committee, heightened Committee publicity through an Instagram page, increased transparency between the Committee and society presidents, and streamlined the training process (by recording them).

## SRC Member for First Years

I have also been on the Student Representative Council, advocating for the needs and wellbeing of first year students joining the University. I opened the conversation around University Instagram takeovers, held Freshers Week Office Hours to answer questions and address concerns of new students, and gave tours of not only the University, but also the town to help First Years become acquainted with St Andrews.

## Equal Opportunities Committee

I helped sponsor a key motion addressing sexual and gender-based violence in St Andrews. This motion led to the adoption of the Athletic Union's policy to require Club Presidents to attend Got Consent Workshops, to the Principal and Vice-Chancellor publicly pledging to combat sexual and gender-based violence at the University, to making Got Consent training a mandatory part of the matriculation process, and to create the Sexual and Gender Based Violence working group.

## supporting subcommittees

**Line-managing Councillors and their Subcommittees is an important part of DoSDA's job on a daily basis.**

Union Subcommittees play an integral role in shaping the experience for students across the university, not just those who actively engage with the Union. I plan to be explicitly clear to each Subcommittee about what they can do with Union resources, in order to maximise the impact that each Subcommittee has on the student experience. I will utilise the new Student Activities Forum to encourage more inter-Subcommittee collaboration.

The DoSDA is tasked with line managing the following subcommittees, and I have noted how I plan to support each of them in the role of DoSDA:

### What would I do differently?

#### Charities Campaign

**University Collaboration** – I will work with the Campaign to continue its beneficial relationship with the University. I will **liaise with relevant University staff members to allow for more Campaign collections at University events** and work to **continue a form of the very well attended Can Do Cocktails event**.

#### Charitable Societies –

- I plan to help the Charities Campaign **increase training opportunities for the committees of Charitable Societies**, so they can more effectively work alongside the Campaign.
- I will also work with the Cash Office to **create a Charitable Society grant fund** through the Charities Campaign to help Charitable Societies put on better events and therefore raise more in donations.
- Finally, like Mermaids' Presidents Forum, I plan to **congregate Charitable Society Presidents through a monthly Charitable Societies Round Table** in order to foster collaboration and communication, as the Charitable Societies Facebook Group proved to be ineffective.



## Music Fund

**Music Centre Partnership** – I plan to arrange a **partnership between the University's Music Centre and the Music Fund** in order to provide support and teamwork. This partnership will hopefully **allow student musicians to use the Music Centre's space** when it is not being used and **increase the Music Fund's presence and publicity**.

**Committee Support** – As a new Subcommittee with a somewhat uneasy history, I intend to guide the Music Fund committee in a direction that will lead to **longevity and success**. Music is such an important part of many students' time at St Andrews and the Union can do more to be supportive.

## Union Debating Society

**High Profile Speakers** – I plan to use the DoSDA position to help the UDS find and **access more high profile speakers**.

**Society Collaborations** – The UDS primarily collaborates with political societies. Since half of the students at the University study scientific degrees, I will work with the UDS Committee to **reach into the Faculty of Science**.

**Accessible Debating** – I will work with the UDS Committee to **encourage an accessible atmosphere** within the subcommittee and its events. The UDS is full of tradition and can portray an old-fashioned and impersonal image, but I plan to collaborate with the Debates Officer to **encourage a space consisting of inclusivity and diversity** through a wide variety of themed events.

## Mermaids Performing Arts Fund

**Antony Tudor Drama Fund** – The Antony Tudor Fund is a valuable resource for students staging expensive musicals or productions not picked up by Mermaids. I will make sure that the **information regarding application deadlines and the fund in general can be easily found** on the YourUnion.net website and publicised clearly. As this fund has been dormant for the past few years, I will work with Union Management and the fund holders to **set out a proposition for the revival of the fund containing definitive dates** to be more transparent and hold all parties accountable.

**Theatre Space** – I oppose the closure of the Barron Theatre, however we must work to shore-up theatre spaces in St Andrews.

- As the Barron Theatre is unfortunately on imminent track for permanent closure, as DoSDA, I will coordinate with the Byre Theatre to **include more students on the Board of the Byre**.
- Since students are effectively being forced out of one of three Student run theatres in the UK, students should at least be able to be adequately represented. Currently, only the DoSDA and one student (a recent development) sit on the Board, and this must change.
- I will also communicate directly and openly with the University to **work towards an agreement to keep the Barron Space open for as long as possible**.
- I will insist on a plan of action collaboratively created by the University, Mermaids and myself to **relocate every displaced student group to a suitable space and for sufficient time slots**. I will always value and the student voice.
- Finally, I will work with the Union Staff and DoES to **conduct an Efficient Use of Space Review**. Given that usable space for student groups is becoming increasingly difficult to find, I will work to play scheduling Tetris in order to more effectively **organise timetables and efficiently use the Union's limited space**.

## Societies Committee

**Grants** – I plan to work with the Societies Committee to **publicise grants more widely and effectively**, as grant applications have decreased over the past few years. I will aid the Societies Officer to find creative ways to give out grants through events and awards.

**Societies Newsletter** – I will bring back the **weekly Societies Newsletter**.

## Postgraduate Society

**PG Student Involvement** – I intend to work very closely with the Postgraduate Officer to **discuss how postgraduate students feel about engaging with societies** and student groups typically marketed to undergraduates. This dilemma fluctuates yearly based on the postgraduates studying at the University, so rather than implementing a blanket scheme to increase postgraduate student group involvement, I believe that it is imperative to **listen to postgraduate representation**.

## Student Volunteering Service

**Reconfigure Website** – The SVS website seems to be an underutilised resource for student volunteering. Website logged **hours should be directly inserted into the Union’s Volunteer Portal**. The website itself has not been updated since 2017/18. I believe it should serve as **a central location for students to access volunteering** opportunities. Students should be able to easily access and operate this system to log their hours and be recognised for their hard work.

**Accurate Records System** – Currently, SVS does not have a running list of people who have volunteered with them. I intend to help the Committee **create a records system** in hopes to **retain a steady volunteer base, build a greater core volunteering network and create a sense of community** under the SVS image.

## BAME Students Network

**BAME Careers** – I plan to work with the BAME Officer and the rest of the BAME Network **to reach out to professionals and employers and expand the career resources** the Students’ Association can provide for BAME students. I will be communicative and liaise between the Careers Centre and the Network to **create engaging events and opportunities to go beyond lectures** and engage the most students possible.

## Saints LGBT+

**Pride** – Pride is such a crucial event to not only students but also for the wider St Andrews community, while also **assisting town and gown relations** between the University and St Andrews. I will work with the Saints LGBT+ Committee to make sure that **Pride continues to be one of the most anticipated events of the year**.

## Subcommittee Budgets

I will find a way to **properly and fairly allocate Subcommittee budgets**. This begins with **meeting with each Subcommittee head** to discuss their annual budget and drafting budget plans with them rather than merely collecting a budget request form and financial paperwork.

From a Students’ Association Board and Union Budget standpoint, I will make sure to **research and propose other budget cuts before remotely considering cutting Subcommittee budgets**. Subcommittees and societies make up a crucial part of the student experience that would be directly negatively impacted by financial cuts.

## working with the other sabbs

The DoSDA is one of the most intersectional Sabbatical roles and the following outlines how I plan to collaborate with the other Sabbatical Officers:

### Association President

**University Strategic Plan** – This year, I worked with the Association President to provide accurate society records in order to review the student experience progress of the University's Strategic Plan. As DoSDA, I intend to **liaise with each subcommittee head to effectively meet their goals for the University's Strategic Plan.**

**Affordable Housing** – I will **reach out to letting agencies and permit them to attend the Re-Fresher's Fayre** in order to allow for students, and especially first-time renters, to become more familiar with how the rental process works.

### Athletic Union President

**Student Group Sport** – As Societies Officer, I worked with the Athletic Union and the AU President to start a **weekly opportunity for societies and student groups to engage in sport.** The event was incredibly successful, and I plan to **continue it next year as a permanent fixture.** This also helps bridge the gap between the Students' Association and the Athletic Union.

**Distinction Between Societies and Clubs** – I will work with the AU President and Societies Committee to draft legislation to **clearly state when it is appropriate for a student group to become a society versus becoming a sports club to limit confusion** during the affiliation process.

### Director of Education

**Academic Societies** – I intend to liaise with the DoED to **connect School Presidents with their school affiliated societies.** This connection will allow for **more collaboration between schools and student run societies.** It will also allow for **more students to have access to society funding** through events and activities.

**Careers Week** – I plan to work with the DoED and the Careers Centre to put on a Careers Week that includes **interesting speakers** (like Maisie Williams in 2019) and a **breadth of careers options** that are not strictly limited to Science and Arts Faculties offered at the University. This will

include representatives from new and emerging fields to give students a chance to engage in relevant and exciting careers discussions.

**Volunteering Portal** – I will work with the DoED to ensure that **all Academic Representatives (including Class Reps) are added to the Volunteering Portal** to recognise the hard work that they put in.

## Director of Wellbeing

**Joint Line Managing** – I intend to **address and review the benefits of joint line managing** with the Director of Wellbeing to ensure that Subcommittees continue to benefit while also guarantee that the Sabbaticals are held accountable for their Subcommittees.

**Society and Subcommittee Got Consent Involvement** – In November 2020, I jointly created the **J 20.22 Motion**, stating that the Students association will strongly encourage each society's committee to attend Got Consent Leadership Training, with intention to make this a mandatory procedure by April 2022. Given that the review period would fall within my term as DoSDA, I will **make sure the process is streamlined and well explained**, all while **receiving and presenting feedback from the societies** that this motion will be affecting.

**Building Map** – Before Semester 1 of the 2021 academic year, as DoSDA, I will have **ensured that an online building map of the Union is available on YourUnion.net**. Given that some people, and especially new First Years, have never been in the Union before, a building map would not only be beneficial, but it would also **stand in line with the Union's pledge of inclusivity and accessibility**. As this action is mentioned frequently, but never acted upon, I will make sure that this valuable resource is finally created.

## Director of Events and Services

**Centralised Booking System** – I will work with the DoES to **create a singular centralised booking system that is simple to use**. This form would not only include each space available to book in the Union building, it would also **include the Wardlaw Museum**, as it is a new partner of the Students' Association and is interested in holding student run event.

**Can Do Scheme** – I will collaborate with the DoES to create a course of action with the University to continue to **utilise the Can Do Marquee** and present Can Do events throughout the year. I believe that we should prioritise the Marquee, as it was an expensive investment and decreases the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Even as restrictions ease, I

am committed to **take advantage of the increase space**, especially with the imminent closure of the Barron Theatre.

**Outlet Campaign** – If you have studied in either Main Bar or Rector's Café, it is hard to miss the severe lack of outlets in both of these spaces. I plan to work with Union Management to **increase the number of outlets available** for students utilising these spaces in the Union. These outlets could either be placed underneath the tables or in the floor. This would increase the number of people interested in using these spaces to revise, leading to **more people purchasing food and drinks**.

## Students Association Board

**Financial Stability** – Since I have represented the SSC on the Association Board, I understand the Union's current financial standing. I will sit on the Finance Subcommittee of the Board and **ensure that society and Subcommittee Budgets are the last to be impacted** by any necessary budget cuts.

**Commercial Space** – The progress of clearing out the space previously home to Blackwells has been slow and has not been transparent. While on Board and the Finance Subcommittee, I will make it a **top priority to hold the Management Team accountable and utilise all possible commercial spaces** to help build back the Union's financial deficit from COVID-19.

**Student Representation** – As a member of Board, I will and have had students' best interest at heart. **I will be reliable and unwavering** when working with Lay Trustees and the Management Team in discussions regarding Union space and the student experience. I **refuse to have student interest be silenced** or ignored on the Board.

## focusing on student development

The Student Development aspect of the DoSDA's job is often overlooked. I will make sure that all of the following opportunities are not only accessible to all students through clear signposting, but also well publicised through a variety of platforms.

### Careers

I plan for **Careers to be one of my main focuses** as the DoSDA. The DoSDA has not always been engaged with Careers as a focus, but I believe it is a key part of student development and I can enhance the resources that students are given.

- I will begin work with the Employability Officer to **include speakers from new and emerging professional fields**, because students find that career options presented by the Careers Centre can seem limiting.
- I believe that Careers Fayres and events should be expanded to more than just investment banking and law.
- I plan to **connect the Union with the Careers Network** spearheaded by Fiona Hill by working closely with the Alumni Officer and Employability Officer. Student feedback has echoed that alumni-based career events are more beneficial to them, as they are seen as more applicable based on the connection to St Andrews.

### Centre for Educational Enhancement and Development (CEED)

People are confused about what is actually offered at CEED. Upon surveying students, a striking majority thought that CEED only gave out subject specific guidance. Given that CEED is mostly marketed through mass emails, I intend to work with CEED to **relay student interest and publicise its opportunities** through a wider variety of channels, in order to more clearly and accurately convey the valuable services that CEED provides. I will also attend monthly catch-up meetings with their team and help with the Student Leader of the Year Award.

### Volunteering Portal

It has been made clear that students are put off logging volunteer hours this because it can sometimes take days to complete. I plan to **conduct a review of the service** and the system to find a more accessible and **straightforward way for students to catalogue service hours** and get recognised for them.

## Fund Accessibility

Students barely have an idea of what funding from the Students' Association looks like or how to access it. There are more funding opportunities beyond the Societies Committee's grants and the Performing Arts Fund. The following outlines how I intend to widen access to these funds through the following means:

**Employability Fund** – School Presidents tend to use this Fund exponentially more than societies do. While societies have been hosting an increasing number of careers based events, this fund has not been publicised to societies during the 2020/21 year. Given that the DoSDA oversees this fund, I will be sure to **encourage societies and student groups to apply to the Employability Fund**.

**Student Project Fund** – The Student Project Fund has the ability to supply a student with £500 to arrange a project to enhance the student experience. As DoSDA, I will make sure to **publicise the Student Project Fund on all social media outlet**, as it helps students who tend to not be directly involved with the Students' Association integrate and make a difference within the student body.

**Debating Bursary Scheme** – This Fund has the opportunity to be publicised to more than just the Debates Subcommittee. It can be **geared to help first time debaters who need financial aid get involved**. I will also make sure that this fund is **included on the YourUnion.net website**, as it is currently not.

## engaging with societies and activities

Societies are a key part of the student experience and for some, influence their entire student experience at the University. My goal is to make it as easy as possible to make friends, start societies, operate societies while adhering to health and safety guidance and the Association's charitable status.

### Risk Assessments

**Trainings** – As Societies Officer, I have worked directly with the Union Building Manager to change Health and Safety Trainings to be more thorough and beneficial. As DoSDA, I will work with the Union and the Societies Committee to **make sure that these trainings are easy to understand and engaging**.

### General and Supplemental Risk Assessments –

- As Societies Officer, I implemented **Risk Assessment Workshops**, and I will work with the Societies Committee to make sure that they are offered throughout the re-affiliation process. This will help clarify exactly what needs to be amended in a society's General Risk Assessment, as this assistance frequently gets misconstrued through email.
- Currently, the process of risk assessment approval is slowed, as one member of Union staff is responsible for approving both GRAs and SRAs. Clearly, assistance in this department is needed, so **I will lobby the Association to either hire another member of staff to assist in this process, or train someone to be able to permanently inherit part of the workload**. This lack of support has led to societies waiting for upwards of three months to become fully affiliated.
- I will also work with the Building Manager and the Societies Committee to put more emphasis on the **use of Supplemental Risk Assessments and the handover of correct General Risk Assessments to decrease some of the unnecessary admin** that society committees have to complete.

### Society Online Banking

- As SSC Societies Officer, I began the process of giving societies the option to access online banking. After a trial period with a handful of societies, the **system seems to not only work, but benefit societies**. While this is a long-term goal, I will work closely with the Cash Office to **make sure it is manageable for societies**

**and permanent members of Union staff.** With online banking, it will be **easier for student groups to hold “pay at the door” events** (like Ballroom Dancing Society’s weekly classes). This voluntary process could be **easily incorporated into the re-affiliation process.**

- There was a lot of confusion regarding online banking and PayPal accounts for society this year. As DoSDA, I will make sure to **clearly and explicitly liaise between the Cash Office, the Societies Committee and student run societies** and **supply frequent updates** to all bodies involved in order to circumvent avoidable confusion.

## **Freshers/Re-Freshers Fayre**

Given that both the Fresher's and the Re-Fresher's Fayres occur in person during the 2021/2022 academic year, I would like to implement the following actions:

- **Change table numbers** –I plan to **renumber the tables**, so each room will start with a corresponding letter, so navigation becomes easier (e.g. MB1 – Main Bar Table 1). This will also **limit the traffic in the Union Reception.**
- **Start “Access Hour” earlier** – I will start **the Access Hour at 11:30 AM**, placing a sign on the sidewalk to clearly state that Access Hour is happening, and have only one entrance open during this time, in order to **adequately guide traffic.**
- **Shorten Re-Fresher's Fayre** –By **shortening the Fayre by one to two hours**, the Fayre will seem busier, more engaging and more inviting to students. This will in theory **lead to more people signing up to more societies.**

If either the Fresher's or the Re-Fresher's Fayres cannot happen in person during the 2021/2022 academic year, I would like to implement the following actions:

- **Hop In** –I will work with the ACE Team to make sure that Fayre **registration is opened at the earliest convenience**, while **attaching clear instructions.** I will also make sure that **trial runs are thorough and address confusion** surrounding live Q&As, pre-recorded videos, stall admins and stall access.
- **Communication** – I will be **communicative and collaborative** with the Societies Committee, the ACE Team and affiliated student groups. Freshers Fayre is meant to benefit the students and I will

ensure that all **societies and the Societies Committee are up to date and informed** regarding the progress of ACE, myself and the Management Team to avoid confusion.

## Event and Committee Accessibility

**Continue Event Accessibility Work** – Over the past summer, I helped the SRC Disability Officer construct an **Accessibility Pledge** to allow societies, Subcommittees, and unaffiliated **student groups to commit to running accessible events**. This is the first step in making **accessibility for all the standard in the Students' Association**. I plan to work with the Disabled Students' Network and the Wellbeing Committee to continue to **make student activities accessible**. In doing so, I will help **construct an official Events Accessibility Guide** to help societies and Subcommittees know how to be more accommodating and inclusive during Fayre-style events and beyond. There are a few documents floating around; however, collating them into a guide will help make them easier to access and engage with.

**Access Hour** – I will move to make **Access Hour a standard practice during all Fayre type events** where large crowds and loud noise would be present. It is vital to give all students at this University an **opportunity to succeed and equal access to all resources** provided by the Students' Association.

## YourUnion.net Website

Given that the Societies A-Z page is one of the most visited pages on the Union website, **coming to a formal decision regarding whose responsibility website management** is important and will hopefully lead to accountability and efficiency. I also plan to continue the Director of Events and Services' work in **making the website easier to navigate by looking into the way other university's websites are constructed**.

## Unnecessary Waste

I plan to begin by using **QR Codes rather than maps** for the Fayres to reduce a mountain of paper waste. I will maintain and uphold the Students' Association's commitment to be as resourceful and sustainable as possible throughout my term as DoSDA.



## thank you for reading!

Thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto! I hope the depth of my plans and my considerable experience have shone through. I also hope you are convinced that I'm the best candidate for DoSDA and that I'll achieve real change for the students of St Andrews.

You can check out my Facebook page to get involved in my campaign! Please feel free to email me with any questions about my manifesto (ak287@) and I'll be happy to give an answer.

Yours,

Avery ☺

## vote avery for dosda on 4th & 5th march