

DOSDA MANIFESTO

GO FOR
GAV

Hi, I'm Gavin, a fourth year student here at St Andrews, running to be your Director of Student Development & Activities. In the past 4 years I've been involved in everything from Just So and Music Society, to taking part in and then organising Race2, to holding a position on the Student Services Council (you might have seen me last year at Drag Walk too). This year I'm also part of the Athletic Union Exec Team. I have a wide range of experience that I can bring to the role of DoSDA. This manifesto goes into detail about all my ideas, but in a nutshell I want to:

Modernise banking for societies

Help CAPOD to work more closely with societies and students

Improve the way we publicise society events

Reduce paper waste

Encourage societies to hold more accessible events

BETTER BANKING

As AU Treasurer for the last year, I've noticed stark differences between the way the Athletic Union & the Students' Association allow affiliated groups to handle money. I want to improve this by:

Organising online banking for societies & subcommittees

This year I had the goal of moving every AU sports club to online banking. This makes it easier to keep track of finances; it also makes paying out money from bank accounts simpler and faster. We can adopt a system similar to the AU to make things easier for everyone.

Arranging card machines for rent from the Union Cash Office

Every year, less of us are carrying cash around in our pockets. I'm sure everyone who has put on an event or tried to sell something in St Andrews has had someone complain about the lack of card payment options that our societies currently have. Following successful similar schemes at other Universities in the UK, I want to offer short term rental of card machines to student groups.

Moving away from cheques being handed out by the Union Cash Office

Following the recent closure of the Santander & Clydesdale bank branches in town, and the growing popularity of mobile based banks like Monzo, cashing cheques is becoming harder for students. I will work with the Cash Office to explore alternatives that will work better for students in the future .

CONTINUING COLLABORATION

More collaboration between CAPOD & Subcommittees / Societies

CAPOD will be changing to CEED this year, and I believe this will enable them to work closer with students. I want Subcommittees & Societies to have more workshops and events tailored to their specific needs, so that they are able to make the most of them. I will push for more student lead and organised workshops as part of the Professional Skills Curriculum, resulting in a wider variety of events. I will also work closely with the AU President to improve the Saints Leaders program and bring more opportunities like this to students.

Update the volunteering portal

Following on from the work done to improve the process of adding volunteering awards to HEAR transcripts, I want more people to be engaged with the scheme. I will work with Saints Sport to make the website itself easier to use, and introduce small incentives for being involved in the programme. I will open the portal up to more students, allowing societies access to the site. I will improve on the previously successful 'Gives Back' awards, collaborating with the AU & CAPOD to recognise more volunteers and participants in schemes such as the PSC.

Encouraging society collaboration

As part of the Societies Committee this year we organised and ran an evening to encourage societies to work together. The turnout and results were great, with a number of great events organised. I will make sure that another event like this is held, in an effort to create a community of student groups that work together and all benefit

PUSHING PUBLICITY

Over the last year as SSC Member Without Portfolio, I've worked to improve the Students' Association Councils social media presence on Facebook. I've created weekly updates that explain what's happened in council meetings, as well as a weekly 'Your Union Your Week' calendar to publicise the wide variety of Subcommittee events that are always going on. This can be further improved by:

Working with Societies Committee to publicise society events and grants

Letting students know about the many successful grants the Societies Committee gives every semester will encourage applications and help us to support even better and more varied events. I want to continue with the Societies newsletter that was started this year, and give student groups more opportunities to have their news shared in order to make them as successful as possible.

Increasing engagement with weekly events calendars for societies & subcommittees

The 'Your Union Your Week' calendar worked well in Semester 1, but things have been quiet so far this Semester for this and the Societies calendar. I will get student feedback to work out how to get people to use them, and get these publicised in more places inside the Union, as well as making them easier to find on the website.

Continuing with the Sabbs On STAR radio show, and sharing it as a podcast

One of my manifesto points as SSC Member without Portfolio was to use a STAR show to help let students know more about the Students' Association. I want to continue with this, and make the show more accessible for people who couldn't listen live.

Updating the Union website

This year I was involved in updating the Mermaids website, and I think that the Union website can be similarly improved. I will pass on feedback and suggestions from myself and other students to the Students' Association to improve our website (which is still much the same as it was in 2012), updating it to help people find the information that they want easily, and making it nicer to use on mobile. Also, I will slow down the stressfully fast clock gif on the homepage.

EVERYTHING ELSE

Reduce unnecessary paper usage

We're in a climate emergency, and should aim to cut back on unnecessary waste. We can reduce the amount of paper that is handed out at events such as the Careers & Freshers Fayres, and cut pages out of handouts given to students on open days etc. The maps for Freshers Fayre can be turned into a format that is easy to use on mobile phones, saving paper and meaning that students will be able to navigate the fayre easier.

Improving Accessibility

A lot of societies hold events in spaces that are inaccessible to some people, because the alternatives are too expensive. I want to take part of the under-utilised societies budget, and provide grants for society events that focus on making events more accessible, allowing student groups to hire facilities that they were previously unable to. Access (half) Hour at this year's Refreshers Fayre was effective, but I want to publicise it more so that it is able to be utilised by more students. There is lots to work on with the DoWell to improve these issues.

Bring new life to Music Is Love

Music Is Love has particularly struggled recently. This is a role under the remit of MiL Officer and DoES, but I want to help in any way possible to improve it; I believe that it should work similarly to how Mermaids currently functions, with societies and musical groups becoming affiliates and applying for funding.

A safer and more secure Societies Cupboard

By creating sensible storage in the Councils Office (without taking over the entire place), a small amount of space will be created in the societies cupboard, making it easier to securely store societies' possessions. I will also look into other spaces such as the cupboard in the Large Rehearsal Room, as well as any potential space in the Barron, resulting in less things being stored all in one place.



As a DoSDA I will always be open to ideas and feedback from students. I want to support societies and subcommittees with everything they bring to me. If anything in this manifesto interests you, then Go For Gav when choosing your next DoSDA.