



ENGAGING POSTGRADUAT E STUDENTS



Emma Beenham, Students' Union Manager
Gary Knight, Student Engagement Coordinator
The University of Law Students' Union (ULaw SU)

Objectives

Understand of role of Students' Unions in employability initiatives and enhancing employability

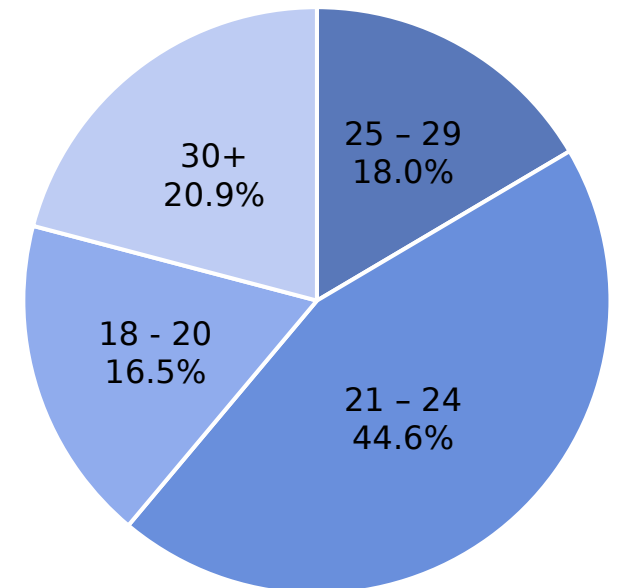
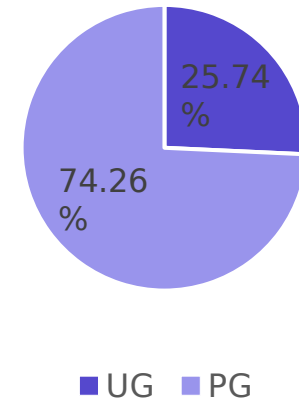
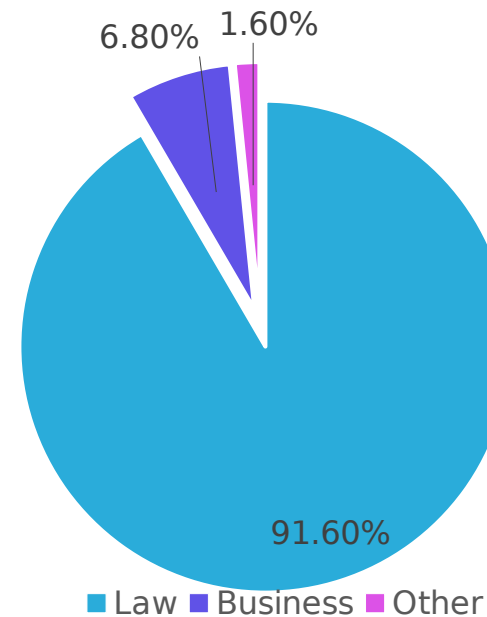
Case study: ULaw SU Skills Development Programme

Case study: ULaw SU 'Student Pool'

Discuss how similar initiatives may work for you

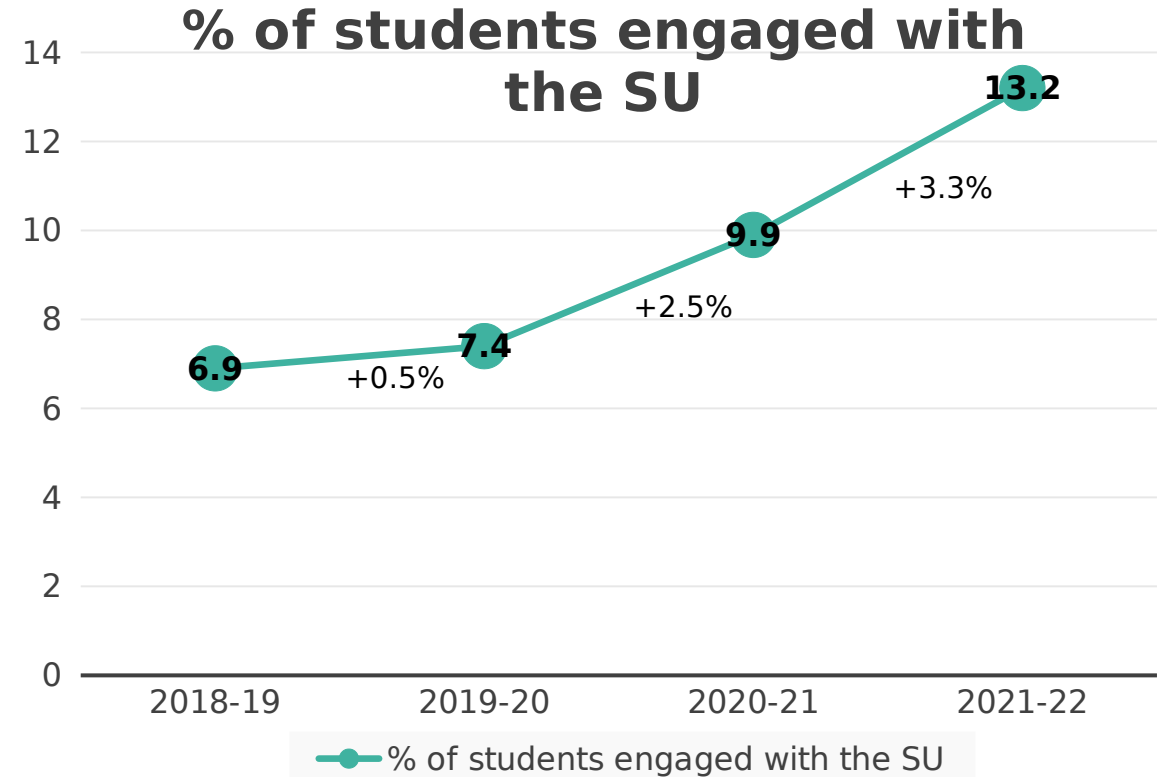
About The University of Law

- Multi-Campus University: 8 main UK campuses, 2 international campuses, our online campus and 9 satellite MoUs with other universities
- Approx. 18,000 students
- 74% Postgraduate students
- 40% of students are aged 25+
- 68% of students only with us for one year
- Centralised Students' Union - no physical space and very little physical presence



About The Students' Union

- Very little engagement with students
 - PG students (therefore older)
 - Professional courses
 - 1 year courses
 - Little interest in social activities
 - 90%+ commuter students
 - No events or sports facilities
- Skills Development Programme trialled in Spring term of 2020-21.
Launched fully in Sept 2021
- Student Pool launched in 2021-22



The SDP Journey

“The Skills Development Programme is a series of workshops and courses which aim to provide skills and qualifications which you may not otherwise receive through your academic studies.

Workshops are largely not course-specific and are open to all students on all programmes and modes of study. The vast majority of opportunities are free to students, but some do require a small contribution*.”



Workshop Examples - Delivered Internally (no cost)

- A Brief Introduction to Student Immigration Law (MV, Senior International Student Advisor)
- Becoming a Charity Trustee (CW, Tutor)
- Conflict Resolution Skills (AL, Visiting Lecturer)
- An Introduction to Implicit Bias (AL, Visiting Lecturer)
- LinkedIn for Lawyers: A Practical Guide (AL, Visiting Lecturer)
- Disabilities in Applications (PS, Associate Solicitor)
- Domestic Abuse: The Law and How You Can Help (delivered by students)
- Effective Chairing: Skills and Behaviours (RTA, Head of Quality Assurance)
- An Introduction to Transformational Leadership (SE, Money and Housing Advisor)
- Minute Taking for Professional Meetings (DS, Quality Assurance Manager)
- Public Speaking (JT, Tutor)
- Setting Up and Running Your Own Business (run by a variety of different staff)

Workshop Examples - Delivered Internally (no cost)

- Podcasting 101 (HW, SU Communications Manager)
- Practical Ways to Avoid Plagiarism, Self-Plagiarism and Collusion (MA, SU Advice Coordinator)
- Using Microsoft Excel to Your Advantage (EB, SU Manager)
- Using Microsoft Excel to Your Advantage (EB, SU Manager)
- Deaf Awareness (EB, SU Manager)
- An Introduction to British Sign Language [6wk course] (EB, SU Manager)
- Culture and Languages Partnerships Programme (self-run, but admin done by Student Engagement Coordinator)

Workshop Examples - Cost Covered by SU

All of these sessions are run by external companies or individuals. The cost is covered entirely by the SU.








- Trans Inclusivity 101
- An Introduction to Programming in Python
- E-learning modules through Epigeum on:
 - Consent Matters
 - Online Safety
 - Tackling Harassment: Being An Active Bystander
- Looking After Your Mate (Student Minds)
 - Run for free, but on a reciprocal skills swap arrangement with Keele

Workshop Examples - Subsidised by the SU

The examples below are courses delivered by external companies or individuals. For these, we either have a special arrangement for significantly reduced course costs and/or ask students for a contribution towards the course fee. We try and keep this as low as possible and we run an 'honesty bursary' system for those unable to pay.

- Negotiation Skills, 4 wk course. £8pp contribution from students, SU subsidise £16pp.
- First Aid Level 3 qualification, full day course. Tiered contribution from students, £9, £18 or £35. Cost pp is £42.50 on a reduced cost arrangement.
- Mental Health First Aid qualification, 2 day course. £25pp contribution from students. Delivered by internal Wellbeing Manager who charges only for course materials from MHFA England.
- Train to be an Accredited Civil & Commercial Mediator. Reduced course cost of £600pp (usually £1800pp). We do offer a limited number of partial bursaries for these course of £200.
The honesty bursary does not apply to this course and we judge bursary applications case-by-case.

Administration

-  SDP Booklet sent out at the start of each term
-  Students sign up via MS Forms
-  Confirm their place within 5 days
-  Send list of attendees to workshop leader
1wk prior
-  Workshop leader sends out joining link & info
-  We send out feedback form & slides after session
-  Students receive compiled certificates at the end of term

Participati on

400 - 650 individual students

3000 - 4000 total registrations

Average of 5 - 7 workshops per student

Attendance rate of between 50-80% (depending on time of year)

Single most popular project run in whole university

Increased engagement by over 90%

**THE STUDENT
POOL**



The Student Pool

Student Representation on Committees Project ensures the student voice is heard on a variety of internal issues

Unlike everything else the SU does this project is more faculty-led than student led (which is why it is technically apart from other things the SU offers)

Students have been involved in policy review and implementation, course construction, mental health/wellbeing initiatives and a review into cost of living initiatives

It is open to all ULaw students to ensure the diversity and inclusion of the whole student body is represented, and also to be able as much variety of background and opinion as possible

What Are They Involved In?

Membership of committees (Academic Board, ethics committees, quality assurance panels, student experience subcommittees, international student experience group)

Mental Health Charter input

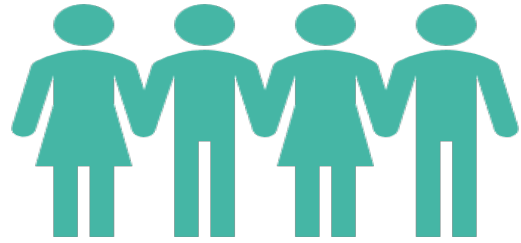
One off projects-focus groups (course creation, WP groups, online marking issues, whole uni policy review)

Offering the student input and review to every facet of the internal university experience

Benefits to Students



Transferrable Skills



Civic Engagement



££££



CV Enrichment

The Student Pool Journey

2021-2022

7 students headhunted
Involved in 5+ projects
One-off projects and membership of committees

2022-2023

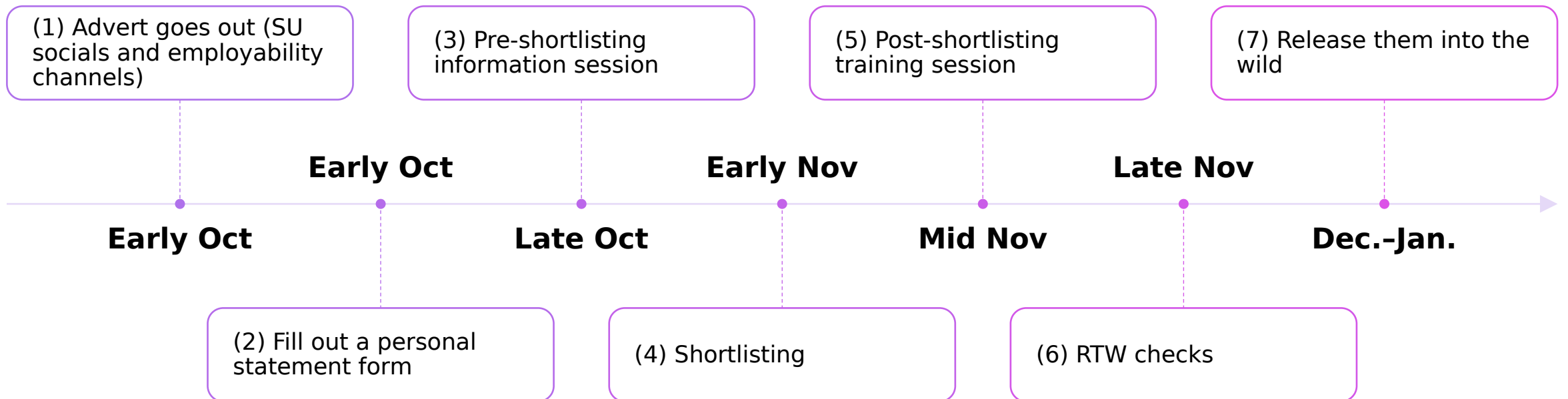
10 students recruited
Involved in 15+ projects
Sustained membership of committees and one-off projects

2023-2024

20+ students recruited
Sustained membership of committees, multi-meeting projects
Four year-long themes

- **AI**
- **Sustainability**
- **Cost of Living**
- **Attendance rates**

The Recruitment Process (2022)



Any Questions?

Emma.Beenham@law.ac.uk

Gary.Knight@law.ac.uk

