

# **Strategaeth Undeb Bangor Strategy**



# Undeb Bangor Strategy

## Introduction

Bangor University Students' Union (Undeb Bangor) is an independent, democratically led charity that represents the needs of all registered students studying through Bangor University.

It is timely that this Strategy was being worked upon at a time where the student experience has been dramatically affected by the Coronavirus pandemic and has profoundly changed the lives of Bangor university students. We have adapted our services this year to deliver a digital first approach to complement our usual in person approach, and this Strategy identifies the need to be flexible and adaptable in our future delivery to the changing environment both online and in person to continue to reach all students.

We have been on a collaborative journey with our students, sabbatical officers', staff, trustees, and the University in order to develop this new Strategy for 2021-24, which will help us deliver the highest student experience for our diverse student body. We have worked in partnership with an experienced external consultant who has vast knowledge of strategic development and knowledge of working in the sector, in order to help us shape and develop this important piece of work and ensure that the student voice is central to our work in moving forward.

This strategy will clearly ensure that we reach out and deliver to students from underrepresented groups, and students studying on all our campuses.

We have identified a need to communicate more effectively and take a digital-first approach to how we communicate with you; we need to offer meaningful experiences and support and develop our student led opportunities and help you develop skills and experiences to enhance your employability setting you up for the future; we need to be a strong and active voice for your rights, ideas and issues and support you to thrive at University.

Our Strategy will be supported annually by an operational plan and a set of outputs and Key Performance Indicators that will focus our work, and measure the success of our Strategy, while still allowing for the additional priorities of our annually elected officers, and to respond to the ever-changing landscape of Higher Education.



# Purpose, Promise and Principles

## Our Purpose

**We represent, empower, and support you at Bangor University, setting you up for your future.**

## Our Promise

**We promise to listen to you, adapting to your needs in order to support you**

## Our Principles

Our principles will frame and underpin our work and approach over the time of this strategy and our culture will be led by these principles:

- 1. WE ARE ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE TO ALL STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY:** This means that we are there for you irrespective of your gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, identity and cultural background.
- 2. WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU:** We're sure that you will have an amazing time at Bangor University, but we want you to know that when life throws a curveball, we will be here to provide you with support.
- 3. WE ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF STUDENTS:** This means that by holding elections each year we have student leaders who will represent your voices to the university, the community and the country!
- 4. WE CHAMPION THE WELSH LANGUAGE:** We are proud to celebrate the cultural and historic importance that helps makes us so unapologetically Welsh.
- 5. WE VALUE DIVERSITY:** We fully recognise the differences between our members and how this can build strength, we want to build multicultural communities and bonds that will stay with us forever.



## Strategic Themes

To deliver our purpose and promise we will adopt the following strategic themes, these will guide more detailed plans at an operational level.

- 1. We will empower you to influence change and enable you to shape your academic experience.**
- 2. We will offer meaningful experiences and student led opportunities enabling you to lead active lifestyles and build friendships.**
- 3. We will ensure you understand your rights and have help when you need it, championing student mental health and wellbeing and supporting you to thrive at University.**
- 4. We will encourage and support you to shape your future, ensuring you recognise how getting involved in your Students' Union will enhance your employability.**
- 5. We will deliver an effective and sustainable membership organisation.**



## Your Representation and Voice

We are here to ensure students get the most from your education and are active partners in shaping your experience at University. We will ensure that students' voices are listened to and that students continue to be at the heart of decision-making within the University, understanding what works well and what challenges and concerns you are facing, which is critical to your success at university.

In order to achieve this, we will ensure that:

- Course reps are well trained, supported and empowered to communicate with students and academic staff to make a difference in their schools.
- The curriculum is positively impacted by student representatives and learner feedback, maximising the opportunity for student engagement in the development of the curriculum.
- We work with the University to increase provision to better academic facilities and social and digital learning spaces.
- Our representative and democratic structures are engaging, accessible and flexible, and match the needs of students, ensuring inclusive and democratic participation.
- We develop our campaigning work ensuring that through effective student representation and student led-campaigning we identify and resolve the issues you care about.



## Your Student Opportunities

Student life is positively impacted through Undeb Bangor opportunities and activities. Students having access to extracurricular activities has a positive impact on your student life, which of course will benefit your personal development; employment prospects; health and wellbeing as well as boosting your social life.

In order to achieve this, we will ensure that:

- We continue to offer a broad range of student led opportunities ensuring cost is not a barrier to participation, working with the University to continue with our offer of free membership to our clubs, societies, volunteering and UMCB activities.
- We encourage and facilitate an inclusive, welcoming culture for all students within all of our student groups and activities, and ensure we provide a diverse and relevant range of opportunities to suit all of our students' backgrounds, hobbies and lifestyles
- Campus developments support and encourage student led activity and a sense of community securing additional activities spaces.
- We rebuild our volunteering opportunities following the impact of Covid-19, enhancing our work in the community, and creating new volunteering opportunities, with a big focus on promotion of our projects amongst students.
- We provide an effective introductory programme aimed at helping students settle in through our Welcome Week activities and hold engagement activities throughout the year.
- We collaborate with the university to offer support with student recruitment, through promoting and showcasing our services and student led opportunities to prospective students.



## Supporting You

We are here to make students life better; university is a hugely enriching experience, but many can find this a challenging environment and we all need extra support at times. We want you to feel connected, safe, and supported, turning our attention to every stage of your student journey, ensuring you have access to open, available and welcoming services.

In order to achieve this, we will ensure that:

- We proactively support students by improving awareness of and providing effective signposting to relevant support services.
- We provide professional and confidential academic advice and support to students and will make every effort to promote the service amongst all students including Postgraduate students.
- We continue to work with the University to ensure the delivery of the Student-Led Mental Health Strategy and the Health and Well-Being Strategy, ensuring student mental health and well-being is a priority.
- We work with the University to further develop our peer-to-peer support networks to help you make friends and support your mental health.
- Our students will be supported to protect and strengthen their health and wellbeing, and we will work with the University, to offer education and training to our student leaders on how to identify, and respond to mental health and well-being concerns among their peers.



## Your Future

We want you to have the best start to your future careers, offering opportunities for you to gain valuable skills and experience that can be used after your time at Bangor. Being part of Undeb Bangor is proven to enhance your skills in and outside of your degree and make you more employable. We'll continue to provide opportunities for you to develop and ensure you recognise what you gain from getting involved, inspiring you to make a positive difference in the world.

In order to achieve this, we will ensure that:

- Students are aware of the opportunities available to them through Undeb Bangor; can reflect on the skills they have developed through student leadership and organising their own activities and are able to articulate them in a meaningful way.
- We have well-resourced and supported student leaders equipped with the skills to be effective, by developing our leadership development programme further.
- We promote the benefits of volunteering to students' employability and the impact of this work on the local community.
- We look to develop efficient networks of alumni that were involved in Students' Union activities to return to talk to our students about their experiences and careers.
- We continue to provide student staff opportunities within the SU.
- We work closely with the University careers team and academic schools ensuring the University provides a quality employability programme and careers services.





## Your Organisation

We will build a strong and engaging Students' Union that students can rely on, ensuring we are student focused and relevant to our members and that we deliver our services in a way which meets the needs of students. Our strategy sets our direction, but it will not be possible without these enabling priorities and supporting activities that we need to focus on and resource appropriately to support the delivery of the strategy.

## Enablers

### Our Relationship with the University

We will continue to develop our relationship with the University, ensuring that students are at the heart of University decision-making, being a critical friend and challenge them when it's needed, whilst also recognising that we can achieve more together in supporting students and to deliver an exceptional student experience.

### Our Organisational Strength and Governance

We will ensure our members are central to our decision-making and we are compliant with the Good Governance code for charities and students' unions. Developing a strong and effective Trustee Board, and strong staff and officer leadership, that are acting in the interests of our members, and have clarity over competing interests and develop sustainable practice.

### Our Communications and Student Engagement


Our student body is changing, and more students will be accessing university digitally therefore we will take a digital first approach to how we communicate with you, enhancing our digital offering and responding to changing digital needs. We will ensure our students are aware of the benefits of being a member of Undeb Bangor, ensuring they know who we are, what we do and how we can support them, ensuring we increase participation among harder to reach groups. We will champion the Welsh language ensuring our communications are bilingual and our services are available in both Welsh and English. This will all be driven by a Communications and Digital Engagement Strategy that is fitting for the organisation and supports all aspects of the Students' Union.

### Our People

We will recruit, develop, challenge, and support our staff, sabbatical officers, and student leaders to deliver this Strategy. Providing training and development opportunities for staff to ensure they have up to date knowledge, skills, and support to carry out their roles, and we will set clear objectives for staff to help deliver this strategy to ensure we are delivering maximum efficiency on behalf of the student body. We will work to create a positive organisational culture which promotes collaboration and cross-departmental working, also reviewing our ways of working to provide the best experiences for students.

### Our Finances

We are committed to improving our financial sustainability, as well as ensuring that funding is invested in the right areas of the Union's activities, ensuring appropriate level of financial resource.

A decorative header consisting of several parallel diagonal stripes in a rainbow color palette: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple.

This will be supported by effective financial management and efficient online accessible approach to our financial systems. We will become paperless to further support the Sustainability agenda.

### Our Sustainability

We take great pride in our sustainability work and recognise that our impact goes beyond the Students' Union and that we have a responsibility to demonstrate our commitment to a sustainable future. We will work towards the Wales' wellbeing goals and the UN Sustainable Development Goals and will continue to achieve national recognition.