

Huddersfield Students' Union Accountability Panel 1 Minutes 10am-12pm Wednesday 22nd October 2025

No.	Item
1.	<p>Accountability Panel 1 Minutes 10am-12pm Wednesday 22nd October 2025</p> <p>Attendees:</p> <p><u>Students' Union (SU) Executive Officer Team</u></p> <p>Freya Askwith-Martin - SU President (FM) Irfan Rashid Rather - Education Officer (IR) Dobby Dey- Equity Officer (DD) Bethany Murphy - Activities Officer (BM)</p> <p><u>Staff</u></p> <p>Caroline Devenport - Union Chair (CD) Hamish Wilkinson – Secretary (HpW) Stephen Dowson – External Trainer (SD)</p> <p><u>Panel</u></p> <p>Ellie Johnstone – Student Accountability Panellist (EJ) Holly Pinder– Student Accountability Panellist (HP) Faizan David– Student Accountability Panellist (FD) Ahmed Yasser Zeyada– Student Accountability Panellist (AZ) Grace Shaw– Student Accountability Panellist (GS) Shahid Mayet– Student Accountability Panellist (SM) Molly Pemberton – External SU Officer, President – Hallam Students' Union (MP)</p> <p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Heather Wade – Voice & Representation Manager (HW) – Running academic rep training. Swera Asif– Student Accountability Panellist (SA) Muhammad Raza– Student Accountability Panellist (MR)</p>
2.	<p>Establish Quorum (6 student panellists, plus the external Students' Union Officer)</p> <p>Quoracy Established (6 student panellists and the external Students' Union Officer were present)</p> <p>The Union Chair introduced the meeting, this included going through how the panel works, any rules that all the participants needed to adhere to, along with an opportunity for people to ask questions before the panel started.</p> <p>Stephen Dowson also provided additional training for the accountability panel. The Union Chair made clear that each Officer will have 15 minutes with the panel.</p>
	<u>Standing Items</u>
3.	<p>President</p> <p>A. Questions from the Panel.</p> <p>EJ: How will you make the Students' Union (SU) Floor more accessible for different types of students?</p>

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	<p>FM: We want to make the floor more engaging and accessible for all our students here at Huddersfield University. The current idea includes introducing different zones (such as a quiet area) across the SU floor. I am working with the Head of Student Experience on this.</p> <p>SM: I have a question around the Harm Reduction Policy. Is this an informed policy decision or was this motivated by students/research?</p> <p>FM: We are working closely with Change Grow Live to implement this policy at the University. We want to be in a position where we can effectively support students and create a more understanding environment for students to get tailored support (for instance, a drug related problem). It has been a long process. I have taken a paper to Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on further information surrounding this policy, and good work is being done.</p> <p>GS: Is there plans to expand activities within accommodation providers?</p> <p>FM: We want to put on events on the SU Floor (such as the global socials) for students who do not live in student accommodation or live at home with family/carers. With the amalgamation of IQ and Capital (two key student accommodation providers in Huddersfield), it may not be possible to organise joint events. But any separate events organised by the respective providers above, will allow any students to join in, whether living in that specific accommodation or not.</p> <p>HP: How will you promote friendships among students who live in studio apartments/rooms?</p> <p>FM: We encourage students to get a studio room within a known accommodation provider; however, it is a personal choice for each student. We encourage all students to take part in student life (societies/clubs etc). We won't be able to do specific events for students in studio rooms/live outside of known accommodation providers, but there are plenty of activities and opportunities happening.</p> <p>AZ: Do you have any updates on the Maintenance Grant?</p> <p>FM: We have been speaking to the Department of Education recently, but they have not commented further. The recently introduced Maintenance Grant will only be available to home students (it would have been nice for international students to have access, given that Maintenance Grants are funded by the international levy) The role of Maintenance Grants is part of a bigger campaign that the National Union of Students' (NUS) is currently focusing on.</p> <p>FD: What updates can you give on the Car Park idea?</p> <p>FM: Car Parking has been an issue for students over the last ten years. We are taking the big idea to the next big ideas student panel, which is taking place in mid-November. I will take student feedback that is provided at this activity and forward it across to estates and see if we can take this further.</p> <p>HP: I like the coffee and chat videos, they are good!</p> <p>FM: Thank you!</p> <p>MP: I enjoyed reading all the paperwork documents from the Officer Team. Everyone is very busy! The Harm Reduction policy is something that we have implemented at Sheffield Hallam (so if you require any advice, please speak to us). We have also piloted Alternative Graduations, and this has been successful. With the Maintenance Grant being funded by the international student levy, how will you support international students? On transport, free bus passes for under 22-year-olds currently exists (but what about mature students?). As for peer support, I'd like to know more about this. (is this academic or social?).</p> <p>FM: For the international levy, we mentioned this to the Department of Education, but they have yet to provide further comment. We will work with the international office and the finance office at Huddersfield University on this. We recently met with our local Member of Parliament (MP) Harpreet Uppal. She told us what exists so far in</p>

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	<p>terms of transportation. Transport will become publicly owned from next year within Kirklees (and then across West Yorkshire). For mature students, we'd like to see if railcards would work and be implemented on buses. Work has been done for the peer supporters; we are looking at starting up a peer supporter society. They work closely with the advice centre, student loneliness is a big issue, but they can work across both academic and social issues that students may face.</p> <p>MP: Going back to transport, do you have any thoughts to keep students engaged on this issue/conversation? FM: We have a Class and Social Mobility Network; we want to work with them on this issue. There is an event organised by Tracy Brabin (Mayor of West Yorkshire), and we want to attend it and talk about this issue with her. I have also been receiving different types of feedback from students around transport (specifically the Human and Health School Rep will provide more evidence for me).</p> <p>B. Student Questions.</p> <p>The Union Chair states that no questions have been submitted to the President.</p> <p>C. Panel deliberations.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>Positive feedback</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Moving ideas forward well (For instance, the Car Park big idea on the SU website).</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>Really active as an officer, will be great to see what gets achieved in the later panels.</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>Events in accommodation providers is a real positive!</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <th></th><th>Things to report back to the next Panel on / suggestions for development</th></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Many things are out of her power/control but do be open and honest on issues that can't be addressed right now.</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>Try to make sure events in accommodation providers keep happening throughout the year.</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>Consider short term goals as well, so that the panel can see actions in real-time.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Positive feedback	1	Moving ideas forward well (For instance, the Car Park big idea on the SU website).	2	Really active as an officer, will be great to see what gets achieved in the later panels.	3	Events in accommodation providers is a real positive!				Things to report back to the next Panel on / suggestions for development	1	Many things are out of her power/control but do be open and honest on issues that can't be addressed right now.	2	Try to make sure events in accommodation providers keep happening throughout the year.	3	Consider short term goals as well, so that the panel can see actions in real-time.
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4.	<p>Equity Officer</p> <p>A. Questions from the Panel.</p> <p>EJ: The Quiet Graduations big idea is good. If this idea goes forward, will anyone be allowed to attend, or will this just be for neurodivergent people? DD: Myself, the Disability Network and the SU President have all been working on this. We hope that Quiet Graduations will come into effect in July 2026. This will be for anyone who wants to celebrate and enjoy graduation, but in a quieter environment. There will no doubt be teething issues and feedback on this event when it is first tried out, but we are making good progress on it. FM noted: When registration gets published, the booking system will be open to all.</p> <p>HP: How will you appropriately manage Quiet Graduations? DD: We will communicate to all relevant people (graduating students, parents/carers, university staff) that this event will be for neurodiverse people, with emphasis that this is for them. However, we will cater for all people who</p>																		

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	<p>wish to attend, with an expectation that people who need this are prioritised. We have until July next year to get this together. Our job is speaking with the university's Awards Ceremony Planning Group (ACPG) to work through this.</p> <p>GS: How will you ensure students don't get singled out at the Quiet Graduations (or feel it's a lesser event)? DD: That is a good question. It is hard to not to feel different when creating these events. People who need these requirements already feel on the outside; this event is about creating a comfortable space for those who need it. It will take place on the same day as the other graduations, it will still be festive, and we will not try and change the event, we want to make it a better experience for neurodiverse people.</p> <p>SM: How will you educate people on what neurodiverse people face? DD: I have six Liberation Networks that I work with. The network lead of the Disabled Students' network has worked on a key campaign over the last year (Disability isn't a Dirty word). Within all our campaigning work, it's challenging to get out the message (comms are our biggest challenge). We are utilising social media primarily (I am currently promoting a new pack of information I have put together). We need to be open about these conversations to our students.</p> <p>HP: What is the plan on the sensory room? DD: The Social Learning Stakeholder Group (SLSG) is a place where we can influence the design and function of new and current spaces across campus. The John Smith Stadium in Huddersfield has a good sensory room and has been an inspiration to us and we would like something similar at the University. We want to get student feedback on these types of spaces and improve the current sensory space in the Daphne Steele Building (DS Building) and potentially create more sensory rooms across the University. We want to inform the spaces with student feedback that we get. (Dim lights, noise cancelling headphones etc.) There are different schools/departments across campus that are interested in this project.</p> <p>GS: How will you communicate these sensory spaces with students? DD: Communication is a big problem. Even when I was a student, it was hard to know what is happening within student life. I am working with the Liberation Networks on how we communicate with students. We offer both physical spaces for poster displays and digital channels to promote directly to students. The SU does lots of great things, but it's an issue to get the word out. If I get a second term, this can be a long-term issue for me to work on. A Campus App would be good. Centralised systems (such as MyHud etc) are not great from an interface point of view, and I am currently working on making this better.</p> <p>MP: It's great that the quiet graduation will be open to all students (not everyone has or can get a diagnosis etc). We never had an issue with an excess of bookings. On students feeling singled out, it was important that key University staff were present at them (SLT staff members like the Vice-Chancellor). On training students around neurodiversity, we provided Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training to all our clubs and society. Much of the training was gamified, to encourage participation, as well gain a sticker to demonstrate that they have completed it. The report you did was great. Excellent work on getting better at public speaking, it is clear how confident you are in this meeting! DD: Thank you! Our SU president is working on the peer supporter training, and we have similar things in place (badges etc). I've been looking at training around consent for societies as well. I think your suggestions are great.</p> <p>AZ: Great work on encouraging Societies to link up with and support Charities. How will you ensure they follow on their promises? DD: I have been speaking with lots of societies about this. I have been ensuring that their fundraising is in line with</p>

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	<p>our organisation and the Charities Commission. Students are currently bringing forward ideas on charities to support.</p> <p>HP: I have a question on Free Period Products, is this still happening?</p> <p>DD: The 3D printing society are looking to produce period product dispensers to be used in bathrooms. I agree, the availability of period products is hit and miss across campus. However, there are 9 locations across campus with free products available for students that are stocked consistently. The advice centre has period products available, and the women's network can take this forward.</p> <p>B. Student Questions.</p> <p>The Union Chair states that no questions have been submitted to the Equity Officer</p> <p>C. Panel deliberations.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>Positive feedback</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Really good at researching issues</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>Really clear on the ideas and issues she is working on.</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>Really confident at public speaking and was great to see reflection within paperwork.</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <th></th><th>Things to report back to the next Panel on / suggestions for development</th></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Even though communication is difficult, consider other ways to communicate with students.</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>Doing lots of great work, be confident on the issues you are working on!</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>Investigate neurodiversity training.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Positive feedback	1	Really good at researching issues	2	Really clear on the ideas and issues she is working on.	3	Really confident at public speaking and was great to see reflection within paperwork.				Things to report back to the next Panel on / suggestions for development	1	Even though communication is difficult, consider other ways to communicate with students.	2	Doing lots of great work, be confident on the issues you are working on!	3	Investigate neurodiversity training.
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5.	<p>Activities Officer</p> <p>A. Questions from the Panel.</p> <p>MP: I have a question around subsidised committee membership. Could you tell me more about this (is this a cost issue for students?) Societies at Hallam are free, how does accessibility play a part?</p> <p>BM: We are set up a bit different. Our committees don't set the prices; the SU takes care of the financial aspect. Societies are a £15 max cost or free (grant funding available) for the year. Sports clubs are £55 for fun sports or £75 for a competitive sport for the year. Subsidized costs are not a way to recruit more students (we have the highest number of students taking part in activities this year). Being a committee member of a society or sports club is hard, so providing some support to these students is important through reducing the cost of membership to them. I am Currently writing up a paper for our Trustee board (given the potential financial hit this could have).</p> <p>MP: We do have a hardship fund for students, if they want to take part in a sport club and are experiencing financial difficulties. Also, the work you have done on reducing spiking across Huddersfield is great</p> <p>BM: Our prices are cheaper compared to other universities (we do split payment instalments as well, if a student request this). Free memberships for students going through challenges will be introduced in due course.</p> <p>EJ: Spiking is an issue in Huddersfield, what you doing to work on this?</p>																		

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	<p>BM: It's not a big issue in Huddersfield, but it is an important issue. Ambulances have been called over the past few weeks. Maverick's bar is where the ambulances were called to, and we are working closely with them. We had a meeting with them recently including the campus police officer, plus student clubs/societies. I can share the outcomes from this meeting: No public members to be admitted on Wednesday nights (student night in Huddersfield), society/club members will be let in for free, but will need to show student ID. We will put out education from charities, general advice and resources as well for students.</p> <p>AZ: The costs can be too much for some students who wish to join a sports club, what solutions will you provide on this, could an incentive help?</p> <p>BM: In terms of incentives, we do not need to give an incentive to join clubs (they are popular among students) £75 is a lot of money but is good value for what they get (coaches, competition and travel costs are expensive) plus funding for socials. As for costings, we would like to put together instalments for students who request it. The costs have not gone up in 2 years, and we want to keep it there and it's reasonable.</p> <p>FD: I have a question on the Women only Gym. What are you doing to work on this? And can you ensure gym kit is in good condition?</p> <p>BM: Active Hud operate the gym. We have been looking at new equipment to get bought for the Women Only Gym. The gym at DS building is getting completed shortly and will include new equipment. I can provide feedback on the gym gear that would need to be replaced.</p> <p>HP: How can the DS building be more festive? More student events in that specific building would be good?</p> <p>BM: I'll be looking to implement more events in the DS Building. Given how close the Huddersfield campus spaces are to one another, it's easy for us to maintain a presence there. While many students don't tend to stay in the building for long, particularly as medical students have very busy schedules. I think there's real value in organising more events to encourage engagement. The Advice Centre will also have a presence in the DS Building, which should help increase visibility and support for students.</p> <p>B. Student Questions.</p> <p>The Union Chair states that no questions have been submitted to the Activities Officer</p> <p>C. Panel deliberations.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>Positive feedback</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Great work on addressing the spiking issue.</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>Great honesty on the club prices and not going forward with incentives for clubs/societies.</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>Really clear on the points she has been making and a great public speaker.</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <th></th><th>Things to report back to the next Panel on / suggestions for development</th></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Make sure that bars in Huddersfield are following through on reducing spiking issues.</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>Should be open to different sport clubs' fees in the future.</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>Be careful around the language around spiking (even though it's not a big issue in Huddersfield, it is a big issue for an individual who has been through it).</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Positive feedback	1	Great work on addressing the spiking issue.	2	Great honesty on the club prices and not going forward with incentives for clubs/societies.	3	Really clear on the points she has been making and a great public speaker.				Things to report back to the next Panel on / suggestions for development	1	Make sure that bars in Huddersfield are following through on reducing spiking issues.	2	Should be open to different sport clubs' fees in the future.	3	Be careful around the language around spiking (even though it's not a big issue in Huddersfield, it is a big issue for an individual who has been through it).
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	<p>A. Questions from the Panel.</p> <p>SM: My question is around Timetabling, what are your thoughts on this? IR: This is very subjective; students' needs are very different from one another. We are trying to make it easier for students to schedule their lives around their timetable (work, social life etc). We want to fix timetables for students so they can plan things accordingly in good time.</p> <p>FD: How will you achieve fixed timetables? IR: We are working on this at the minute.</p> <p>FD: Last year, many students had issues around timetabling, and I got to meet with my course leaders to make changes (economics). IR: The limited number of rooms and academics available, make it hard to organised things on a personalised level, finding the middle ground is key. It sounds like the SU was not required for your specific issue (and got resolved internally), but University wide issues are something that we will work on.</p> <p>HP: Timetabling will always be an issue at University. IR: It is a sector wide issue.</p> <p>AZ: Have you made it easier for students to get their timetables fixed (work patterns etc)? IR: A model where students can change timetables, is not a model we want to introduce. But we would like to keep communications levels between students and timetabling at a consistent point where changes can be made.</p> <p>FD: Do you have any ideas on getting student input on their timetables? IR: We are trying to achieve a timetable for everyone. We are holding focus groups (Coffee, cake and reps) to get and collate student feedback.</p> <p>HP: Can you help with student finance; they have not been great with me? IR: We work with them on a case-by-case basis, you are the first student to mention an issue on this (we can arrange a meeting later on).</p> <p>EJ: I have a question on the Personal Academic Tutors (PATs), how will you plan to promote this, so students are aware of them? IR: The lack of engagement around the PATs has been an issue. Social media is key. Lecturers will promote in person as well.</p> <p>SM: Have you liaised with the PATs on improving their performance? IR: Each meeting is technically themed, but we have spoken to the PAT leads, and we are looking at ensuring students know the importance of the PATs and that they perform to the best of their ability.</p> <p>GS: Many students do not get reached out by PAT + reassignments of staff across the university has exacerbated this. IR: Communication gap is an issue.</p> <p>MP: Not a question but a comment: It is reassuring to hear the issues on timetable (we are going through the same issues) Our EDI group did provide some help on this. A Timetabling Terms of Reference was important, also looking at new ways to get feedback from students also helped too. IR: We have solutions and we are working on them.</p>

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	<p>SM: I have a question around Engagement in classes; can you talk about this? IR: I would not be able to talk about this, as it is confidential.</p> <p>HP: Do you work with the English Language Support Programme (ELSPs)? I have found issues with content not getting implemented. IR: Thanks for your feedback, I will investigate this. Make sure you always come to us with feedback.</p> <p>HP: Could you explain why the Tutor Resits have been scrapped? IR: The issue was that international students often had to return home before their resit assessments took place, primarily due to visa restrictions. This was the main reason they were discontinued.</p> <p>HP: Sometimes Lecture capture may not have subtitles provided (when re-watching recordings) can you solve this? IR: I have noted this and we will look at this.</p> <p>B. Student Questions.</p> <p>The Union Chair states that no questions have been submitted to the Education Officer</p> <p>C. Panel deliberations.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>Positive feedback</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td><td>I like his determination! Not willing to please everyone and focused on specific objectives.</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>Very willing to discuss things and be open with the panel.</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>I like that he is trying to get a fixed timetable in place, this is a good thing.</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <th></th><th>Things to report back to the next Panel on / suggestions for development</th></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Be better to clearly outline what the issues are and what he is trying to accomplish (specifically on timetabling).</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>He needs to communicate more that students should approach him with questions.</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>Get more student feedback on issues.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Positive feedback	1	I like his determination! Not willing to please everyone and focused on specific objectives.	2	Very willing to discuss things and be open with the panel.	3	I like that he is trying to get a fixed timetable in place, this is a good thing.				Things to report back to the next Panel on / suggestions for development	1	Be better to clearly outline what the issues are and what he is trying to accomplish (specifically on timetabling).	2	He needs to communicate more that students should approach him with questions.	3	Get more student feedback on issues.
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7.	<p>Panel balancing deliberations These deliberations include the Union Chair, student panellists and the external officer only. All Officers will leave room</p> <p>The Secretary double checked that all feedback was accurate.</p>																		
8.	<p>End of Panel Minutes to be published within two weeks The next panel will take place on Tuesday 9th December 2025</p>																		