

Core Pre-Matriculation Awareness Module



Proposal for Future Implementation

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Overview

This proposal has been developed by a small working group of students, which was formed during the first semester of the 2021/22 session. The principal objective of this proposal is to call for the future implementation of a core pre-matriculation awareness module. The proposed module would be mandatory and comprises of four key sections:

- Gender Based Violence and Consent
- o Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Climate Change and Sustainable Action
- Academic Integrity

The premise of the module is centered around raising awareness, empowering students with knowledge and ensuring a greater level of understanding across our diverse student community. This module is not a direct solution to the problems that each topic addresses, but the objective and positioning of this module would ensure students are arriving at this university with a more equal and crucial level of awareness. At the very least, students would be given a reinforced reminder of very important issues that affect us all in different ways.

This paper strives to present a strong case for this proposal through articulated justification, research, and student support. Our calls for this module have a strong foundation, and the working group have endeavored to lead this initiative with pragmatism and professionalism since the beginning. We have ensured, to the best of our abilities, that all core questions and concerns around this project have been considered and presented within this paper. We have also consulted with several key stakeholders across university and beyond, demonstrating our efforts in considering all logistical and professional aspects of this project.

This paper will provide an extensive outline of each proposed section. This paper will also outline the resources already available and will examine why these are insufficient, which raises the need for this proposal. This paper will also provide additional and alternative recommendations as a supplement to the core proposal, should the university reject our request. This paper also includes the wider student voice, accompanied by a supporting motion of the Student Representative Council.

Content Warning: This paper contains information and statements that some readers may find distressing. If you are impacted by any of the content, please consider visiting the University mental health webpage.

It must be stated that the University of Dundee have not yet approved or endorsed any of the content within this proposal paper. Given this is an internal project, however, the use of the university logo was sought and approved by the Director of External Relations.

Foreword

"This paper is not a show and tell, nor is it meant to be a set of unrealistic demands that are expected to be fulfilled immediately. This paper is a testament to what a working group of students and I envisaged when we asked ourselves what more could be done. The issues we are dealing with are of great significance and sensitivity, so we needed to ensure that momentum continued beyond this year. An academic session is simply not long enough to address what we are proposing. These institutionally wide proposals are complex and challenging to execute in the right manner, and so, we have made efforts to ensure this is a long-term project with long-term goals.

There is no doubt that some of the most prevalent issues across our student community are directly reflective of wider societal issues. As part of this proposal, we are submitting that these issues are not being given the acknowledgement and action that they so desperately need. Our university have admirably taken strides in showing their willingness to positively progress, but no one can deny that much more is needing done. This proposal is only a first step in that journey. I absolutely believe that this proposal can be the driving force towards a more tolerant, mindful, and united student community. Awareness and empowerment should undeniably rest at the core of who we are. When you consider terms such as safety, consent, violence, racism, misogyny, discrimination, intolerance, bigotry and so on, nobody can deny that our university have a fundamental part to play in addressing these issues. This must take precedence. We are not thrilled with the fact we need to ask for mandatory training and awareness, but these are very real problems that necessitate very real action. As an educational institution, we have a pivotal role to play in this action. Awareness, knowledge, and empowerment are the student's tools in making a difference, and we think this proposal is part of that difference.

What we are proposing is by no means revolutionary, and it is becoming increasingly worrying to see our university somewhat fall behind in this space. This proposal is overdue, we are admittedly late. In its purest form, this proposed module is about decency, but in a wider context, this is a powerful way to ensure that all our community are placed upon a more equal level playing field in terms of awareness and acceptance. I began this project with a preconceived anticipation of failure, but much of the student body, and indeed much of the university staff, have shown their unwavering support and optimism. The project's growth has in itself raised awareness on the issues we focus on, and I do not think the momentum will fade anytime soon. Should the university consider this proposal and reject it, it would be on them to explain why. This proposal has at least initiated those difficult conversations and has got the ball rolling, it now rests on the university to act. Nevertheless, I am extremely doubtful that the university will deny the need for some or all of what we request. I urge the university to demonstrate their commitment to the student voice, to consider this proposal with all due regard and recognise both its necessity and potential."

Cameron Irons
School President of Social Sciences
Vice-Chair of the Student Representative Council

Proposal Summary

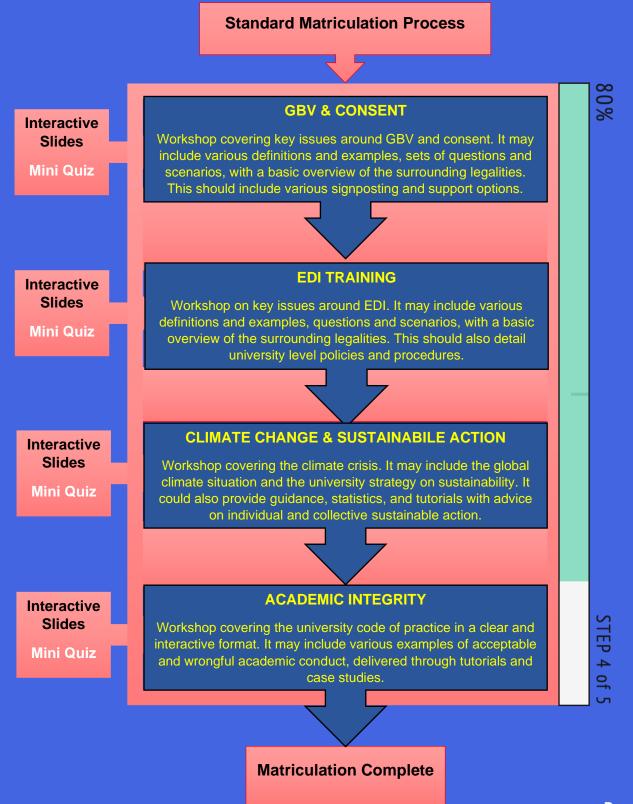
We respectfully call upon the University of Dundee Executive Group to consider this proposal paper in full. This proposal calls for the future implementation of a core pre-matriculation awareness module. The proposed module includes four key sections that should be delivered in an engaging and educational format, designed to build awareness as a mandatory element of student matriculation. The sections are explained in considerable detail throughout this paper. Not only is this proposed module a golden opportunity for our university in several ways, but it is unequivocally the right thing to do. Moreover, this project could be direct evidence that the university genuinely listens to its students. This is a long-overdue step that the university must take in fulfilling many of their commitments, in reaching their goals and catching up with other universities and their commendable efforts within this space.

We want to stress from the outset that the module should not be designed to present information, scenarios, and questions in a patronising or lethargic way. This must not end up being another tokenistic or tick-box initiative. A matriculation module is not enough in itself to create better awareness across the student community, but it is indeed a powerful and wise step in the right direction. This module will hopefully place all incoming students on a more level playing field with a common understanding on key issues, whilst highlighting important services, policies, and procedures within the university and beyond. This module's aim goes beyond understanding and awareness building, this could hugely empower our student body through the use of education, this could stimulate healthy debate and encourage greater tolerance and respect for others. This module could also be a focal point for a selection of signposting and further resources that would never normally be positioned within this critical stage of the student journey. These opportunities must never be dismissed or downplayed, these are exciting possibilities that should be immediately seized and driven forward by our university.

The implementation of this module will clearly be a complex and time-consuming project, and it will unlikely be accomplished within one academic session. As this paper will illustrate, several stakeholders, professional services and departments will need to collaborate to make this feasible. The working group emphasise that student input and co-design is paramount, especially since it would be a module that students undertake themselves.

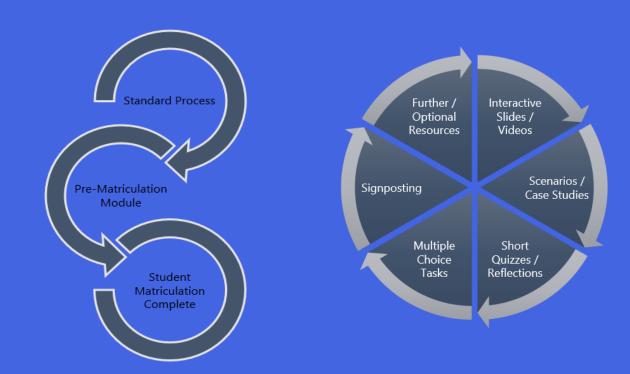
We also acknowledge that some academic schools and services within the university already have an integrated set of content, similar to that of the proposed module. In saying this, we firmly believe that this proposed (mandatory) module would effectively address various underlying issues that are clearly existent, including the widespread disengagement with such resources. An intricate and allencompassing matriculation module could do many positive things, which will be outlined throughout this paper. As a starting point, this could be a strong example of our institutions forward-looking attitudes. This could emphasise how serious we take our zero tolerance policies. This could give the student community something to be proud of and unite behind. This could show our students how open, respectful, and supportive we are as a community, and this could indeed put our university ahead of others in how they address the concerned topics. We are asking the university to avoid falling behind, to appreciate the issues that underpin this proposal and accordingly make the right decision in accepting what we request.

Proposed Module Structure | Overview



Proposed Module Structure | Overview

We propose for the module content to be delivered in the most engaging and interactive way as possible. The section content should be organised to maximise user experience, which could be facilitated through high level software and design tools. The content within each section could be delivered using interactive slides, supplemented with short videos and tutorials. The sections that might need case studies or scenarios should be easy to navigate and allow students to input options, directions, or decisions. Each section could also be accompanied by short quizzes that encourage students to focus and grasp the content. Alternatively, there could be short reflective exercises or mini statements that students must match to certain answers. Each section could also include an array of short multiple-choice tasks, meaning students would have to constantly consider the content/concepts/issues presented to them.



It would also be very beneficial for the content to be augmented with further resources and signposting, should students wish to learn more. This would also mean that the mandatory tasks are not cumbersome and overly time-consuming. The importance of signposting has been raised frequently during this project. Each section ought to include a considerable number of relevant links to services, information, and support within the university, and also externally to outside organizations and services. We propose for the module to be of a length that does not exceed 3-4 hours. Any individual section (such as EDI training) would ideally take one hour. This avoids students spending unreasonable amounts of time completing the tasks whilst ensuring focus is kept.

Proposed Module Structure | Overview

Priority of Topics

Whilst this proposal calls for a mandatory pre-matriculation module that would focus upon four key sections, we understand that there are certain matters that take precedence, and some issues are of a higher priority in terms of awareness and training within a university setting. The working group propose that the GBV and consent module should take ultimate precedence alongside the EDI training. Such prioritisation is driven by our student feedback and the realities around implementation. We still firmly believe that sustainability and academic integrity are greatly important and ought to be given greater attention at this university, but we appreciate that not everything can be satisfied and implemented at once.

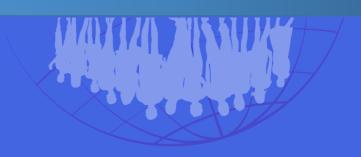
Consequently, the university could consider delivering two separate mandatory training courses, in place of the all-encompassing matriculation module we propose. This paper has thus presented each of the proposed sections separately. The working group would still be satisfied if the university considered developing optional modules on sustainability and academic integrity, which could then be extensively promoted to students.

- Highest Priority
- GBV and Consent
- EDI Training
- High Priority
- Academic Integrity
- Priority
- Climate Change and Sustainability

Whilst it is difficult to suggest any of these issues are more important than others, it is vital to strategize our requests and ensure that we have at least some of the proposals put in place. GBV and EDI are matters of student welfare, respect, tolerance, safety, and community, which is why we feel these are of a higher priority in terms of this proposal. The latter two sections should still be implemented over time, or at the very least, be developed as optional courses.



Proposed Module Sections



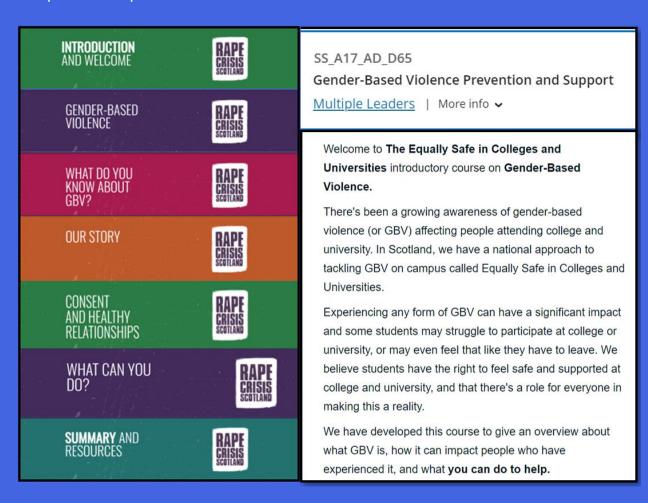
Proposed Section (1) **Gender Based Violence and Consent**



To put it plainly, understanding consent and violence should never be an option, so suggesting ways to increase understanding simply cannot be opposed with robust justification. Gender-based violence (GBV) and matters around consent, should never be swept under the carpet. It cannot be understated how vital it is for all of us to recognise the role of gender in violence and understand the root causes of it. This is an extremely uncomfortable subject, but there is little space for opposing any opportunity to spread the message out further, empowering students to interrupt the casualisation of sexist and discriminatory language, sexual abuse, harassment, and rape culture as a starting point. Students can do this individually and collectively, in using the tool of education and awareness. Students ought to be required to undertake a module that strives to achieve this. This extends to the need for awareness around consent and healthy relationships, providing all students, at the earliest possible stage, with the fundamental rules and consequences relating to consent and GBV. The following section will present the current resources available, our universities ongoing initiatives and our case for the proposed section.

Existing Material

All matriculated students at the University of Dundee have access to the GBV Prevention and Support module on MyDundee.¹ This module was developed to be suitable for all colleges and university students. This is an introductory course that covers an array of core topics, but this is only an optional course that students need not ever engage with. One of the main driving forces behind this proposal was the lack of awareness around the existence of this resource, without the need to even consider how many students have completed it. The course deals with awareness and details the disturbing facts around GBV, it also provides guidance and further resources about preventative action. The figures below are snapshots of the optional course, with sample content provided.



¹ https://my.dundee.ac.uk/ultra/

Sample Content from MyDundee GBV Resource



View the following scenarios and think about the questions:

Scenario 1

Scenario 2

You're with a group of people at the student union. One of the guys in the group comments on a girl wearing a hijab who has just arrived there by herself, who you recognise from your course. He whistles under his breath and says 'mmm I like an exotic girl'. It's quiet in the union, and she looks like she's overheard, and seems a bit uncomfortable. The guy in your group says he's going to find out where she's from.

- . What do you think might be going on in this scenario?
- · Are there any ways you could step in?
- · Are there any risks in intervening?
- · How might you call on other people to help?

Consent is:

- Affirmative
- Voluntary
- Sober
- Honest
- Conscious

Consent isn't

- Absence of a no
- Coerced
- · Lack of resistance
- · Lack of protest
- Based on assumptions

WAYS TO THINK ABOUT CONSENT



Getting consent is about being tuned in to what your partner wants and paying attention, rather than making assumptions about what they want or how you think things 'should' go.

Proposed Action

The working group undertook this optional MyDundee module. It was agreed, based upon our positive experience with it, that this could be adopted as the proposed GBV section of the pre-matriculation module. There would be little need to redevelop a GBV and consent module, particularly due to how intricate, comprehensive, and balanced the current module is. It would thus be prudent and efficient to place it within matriculation as part of the wider proposed module. This suggestion is strongly supported by senior members within DUSA, and the student support services.

Recent University Progress | GBV Charter²

The "EmilyTest" charity was formed in 2016, following the tragic passing of Emily Drouet, who was a university undergraduate that took her own life following a campaign of GBV from a fellow student. This tragedy was avoidable, and the 'Emily test' lays out minimum standards which would have saved Emily's life. This charity is funded by the Scottish Government, which has developed the first GBV Charter for colleges and universities. The Charter award is a flexible framework, based on evidence, student and survivor voices and co-creation with staff, to help institutions start or improve their work in tackling GBV. It aims to set out both minimum standards and excellence in preventing GBV, responding effectively when it happens, and supporting everyone it affects.³

Gender-Based Violence Charter - Emily Test

We are proud to announce that we are one of the first universites to sign up to the Gender-Based Violence charter. The GBV Charter was launched across Scotland in December. The Charter is an Award which allows educational institutions to take the 'Emily Test', which involves meeting minimum standards where Emily's life could have been saved.

The Charter challenges universities and colleges to ask themselves the simple question "Would you have saved Emily's life?", and then to go further by asking "How would you have supported her not just to survive, but to thrive?".

The charity works in partnership with the participating universities and colleges to understand and assess their activities and works in a coaching capacity to bring standards in prevention, intervention and support and to capture areas of excellent practice.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Charter

for Universities and Colleges

This university were one of the first in Scotland to become a signatory to the Gender-Based Violence Charter, which sets the University a collection of minimum standards that they must meet – known as the Emily Test. This is a strong commitment by the

² Permission was sought from the CEO of EmilyTest to use any relevant material

³ About us | EmilyTest

university in its efforts to doing more in this space, and it gives this proposed section a greater relevance and necessity. The Charter centres around five core principles. Those principles are:

- 1. Foundational stage: Open and Learning
- 2. Awareness stage: Educated and Empowered
- 3. Systems stage: Comprehensive and Connected
- 4. Access stage: Equal and Inclusive
- 5. Approaches stage: Safe and Effective

"This Charter is not a checklist. It is not a 'nice to have;' it is a comprehensive, research-based guide to getting GBV prevention, intervention, and support right for every student. By working together, we can achieve the goal we all share: to make Scotland's Universities and Colleges world leaders in GBV prevention, intervention, and support. That's not a pipe dream, I truly believe it can be our reality"

- Fiona Drouet MBE EmilyTest Founder & CEO | Mother of Emily

Discussions with Fiona Drouet MBE

Fiona was very supportive of the fact that students at the University of Dundee were pushing for mandatory modules within matriculation. Fiona mentioned that St Andrews University students took a very similar approach to pushing for such an initiative, which was subsequently accepted by their senior executive group. Fiona also noted that her charity is currently working with St Andrews to upscale their consent module to a national level, which would mean every Scottish student in higher education would have to sit a GBV module. Fiona explained that one of the main motives behind this upscaling was the fact that understanding consent and GBV should never be an option. Fiona also gave us permission to reference the EmilyTest and GBV charter where relevant.

In line with Fiona's own words, the possibility of the University of Dundee being a leader in GBV prevention, intervention and support is very close to becoming a reality. There is a strong chance that all Scottish students will eventually need to take a GBV and consent module, irrespective of this proposal, our university should not sit back and wait for this. We have the means, the motive, and the student voice to make it happen now. This is unequivocally the right thing to do.

GBV Charter | Matriculation Module Alignment

For the purposes of this proposal, the second principle is of the greatest interest and relevance. Namely, education and empowerment. The proposed matriculation module is premised upon education and empowerment, so it is in direct alignment with a core principle of the GBV Charter, a charter of which we are now a signatory of. This is a golden opportunity for this university to act upon their words, to demonstrate that we can go further than just "signing up". We can lead by example and show future university and college signatories that direct action is necessary and possible. This matriculation module is only one part of that direct action, but it is most certainly a bold and effective starting point.

The five Principles are interconnected:
having the foundation in place to bring in effective
GBV education and GBV systems and then
ensuring victims/survivors can 'get in' to those
systems and the right procedures are 'coming out'
of those systems



Need	Charter Principle
Educational needs	Knowledgeable & Empowered
Students and staff arrive at institutions with variant sex, consent & GBV education – mythical understandings are prevalent and both students and staff have knowledge gaps about options & rights	Education and training is geared at identifying GBV, knowing where to turn, disclosure being supported in all areas, and those disclosures being met with informed responses

A foundation we already have in place is the optional GBV prevention and support module available to students. As articulated in the figure to the left, students arrive to institutions with a varied GBV education, with gaps in this knowledge about options and rights. The education and empowerment principle of the GBV charter indicates that prevention is at the core of everything. We firmly believe that having a core GBV and consent matriculation course would advance our own efforts in achieving this principle. Such a course would be geared at empowering students, providing an equal base level of awareness, allowing students to understand where to get support and providing overall guidance and rules.

We hope that the university appreciates how this proposed module firmly aligns with the underpinning principles and spirit of the EmilyTest. We have taken the first step in affirming our commitment to GBV prevention and support, but now we must act. This proposal is underliably part of our much-needed action.

EmilyTest identified the following failures in the events leading up to Emily's death:

- A lack of education and training among students and staff on identifying and intervening in GBV.
- · A lack of information-sharing and escalation following GBV disclosure.
- · A lack of training, support, and clear job descriptions for students in pastoral roles
- A lack of appropriate risk assessment aimed at differentiating emergencies, creating timely interventions, and the prioritisation of safety.
- · A lack of signposting messaging in the spaces Emily used.
- A lack of meaningful messaging to student populations, using language that would
 have resonated with Emily her mother, Fiona, states that Emily may not have
 identified with services such as "Women's Aid".
- · A lack of connection between mental health crisis and GBV.
- · A lack of connection between safeguarding under 18s and GBV.
- · A lack of partnership-working between universities and GBV services
- The use of a GBV framework instead of an isolated focus on sexual or domestic violence; Emily's case involved a combination of different forms of abuse and spanned multiple spaces.
- · A lack of defined and applied perpetrator intervention.

Placing a core GBV resource in matriculation would undeniably help to prevent the failures identified in the figure to the left. This resource would ensure a greater level of information sharing, signposting, and meaningful messaging within the correct space. Matriculation is a critical phase of a student's journey in joining this institution, a GBV and consent course is not only a safety measure, but a measure that is morally imperative.

Emily's experiences of GBV, and her death, were preventable. Therefore, a lack of prevention measures can also be highlighted, including:

- A lack of GBV, consent, and sex education at key points of the academic year, such as freshers' week, to support students to understand healthy relationships and to know what abuse and violence is.
- A lack of information sharing between authorities and universities, and between universities, about repeated GBV perpetration.
- A lack of empowerment and opportunities for the student community to identify GBV and find safe spaces to come forward.
- Repeated breaches of student misconduct policies not being identified and acted upon, with significant gaps between policy and policy implementation.

We currently have optional GBV education open to students, but we are aware the engagement is low and most certainly not exposed to incoming freshers. There is currently no widespread mechanism that provides guidance, information, and awareness on GBV and consent during welcome weeks.

The proposed GBV and consent module would equip our students with knowledge, training, and tools to recognise and act on GBV issues. Students would know, at the earliest possible stage, where and how to seek support. The EmilyTest principle we have highlighted is about creating a culture of coming forward. Our students would be exposed to seriously meaningful messaging at a critical time, and the module would undoubtably strengthen awareness on how to intervene, prevent and come forward. Some of the GBV Charter action areas include:

- GBV awareness-raising during student recruitment
- Have physical & digital GBV signposting
- Have a GBV advice function GBV training for student representatives
- Have a GBV reporting tool

Official University Gender-based Violence Statement Updated on 1 June 2019





"The University of Dundee is committed to opposing and tackling gender-based violence in all its forms. Gender-based violence affects many people throughout society, and we see our role as working alongside Dundee University Students' Association, educational institutions, and city-wide organisations to contribute to eradicating gender-based violence. We also seek to ensure staff and students are supported and that the University is a safe place to work and study. Our Dignity at Work and Study Policy as well as Ordinance 40 covers some of the procedures we have put in place to deal with gender-based violence at the University of Dundee.

Gender-based violence takes different forms including (but not exclusively) domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dowry-related violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. The University of Dundee, for the purposes of its work on gender-based violence, has adopted the Scottish Government's explanation and acknowledges that: -

- Gender-based violence is a function of gender inequality.
- o It can take many forms including physical, sexual, and psychological harm.
- o It can happen to anyone but disproportionately affects women and children.

The University also acknowledges that some people can experience additional discrimination including, for example, those who have experienced gender-based violence and who are disabled, BME, or from the LGBT+ community. Our Equality and Diversity Policy outlines our commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion among staff and students to ensure that individuals realise their full potential. Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion also involves the University promoting gender equality and in working proactively towards eliminating discrimination on the basis of sex and gender.

We ask everyone in the university community to uphold our values by contributing to a supportive environment for those who have been affected by gender-based violence as well as raising awareness of the impact of gender-based violence. Working together as a community will not only help the University to advance its values but it will also contribute to wider campaigns which aim to eradicate gender-based violence in society. Together we can end gender-based violence."

⁴ Gender-based Violence Statement | University of Dundee

Student Voice Testimonies | GBV and Consent

Content Warning

Please note that all students wished for their statements to remain signed.

Mhairi Franklin | Level 4 | President of Dundee University Law Society

"This proposal is not asking for a lot. A mandatory GBV module puts all incoming freshers on a more level playing field, all arriving to this university with a shared definition of consent, a shared understanding around intervention, prevention, and support. It is an understatement to say this is incredibly important and desperately overdue. Students should be exposed to this information at the earliest possible stage, after all, this is about the law, healthy relationships, violence, danger, and simple decency. Issues with GBV and consent are very real, and they exist within every university. After four years at this institution, I can confidently estimate that every second or third female in our student community have felt either unsafe, humiliated, violated or assaulted during their student life. If anyone doubts my estimation, I implore you to prove me wrong, but it is likely I am actually underestimating this. This might be an uncomfortable topic for some, and for that I make no apologies, as this is the disturbing reality for many. A core training module will not deter predators, it will not eradicate GBV, it will not foster a new culture and it will not guarantee student safety. Nevertheless, the proposed core training on GBV and consent will be a step towards these results, this training will still provide students with awareness and assurances, providing some comfort in knowing that the university take these matters seriously. I would be alarmed and deeply disappointed if our university deny this proposal, for all its worth and for all it can work towards."

Iona Henderson | Level 1 Student

"Gender based violence and consent is simply not discussed enough at a student or university level. I have personally felt unable to express my concerns and I have been taken aback by the lack of awareness amongst the student body. This is not any individuals fault, but there remains an absolute necessity for action to be taken to improve this. A compulsory training module would raise awareness and allow far more students to feel comfortable in approaching the subject with fellow students and staff. Coming to Dundee, I did not think that this area would be such a concern to me - and now it is something which is on my mind every single day. The university must realise that this issue does not affect just one or two people, this affects a massive portion of students, all of whom have experienced gender-based violence or breach of consent in some way, and the only way to effectively reach them is to implement this module. If I were to start university again as a fresher and I sat down to do my pre-matriculation tasks, I would feel deeply assured that the university cared and recognised this as an area that a lot of students struggle with - and I would genuinely think that I could turn to them for support, which is something that I could not confidently say now."

Jess McCardle | VP of Feminist Society | GBV Prevention Network

"Gender based violence is incredibly prevalent in higher education settings and there are very limited resources available to students surrounding this. There needs to be a university wide focus on the prevention and awareness of issues of gender-based violence, consent, and healthy relationships. In my roles as Feminist Society Vice President and member of the student led GBV Prevention Network, I have worked with other students on developing and delivering a workshop to teach students and staff about healthy relationships and consent, and what to do if someone discloses to you that they have been a victim of gender-based violence. These workshops are woefully under-attended and especially so by the people who need this information the most. Making this information a mandatory element of matriculation would ensure all students come to the university with the knowledge of where to go for support and will hopefully open up the conversations around these issues."

Zara Singleton | Level 1 Student

"The amount of trivialisation and lack of understanding around GBV and consent that is displayed by students on a daily basis (and wider society), is not just worrying objectively, but it is deeply damaging to students like myself. I should not have to watch my back on a night out, I should not have to explain why I feel uncomfortable to others, and I should not have to advocate for this proposed module. This should already be in place. The main issue is clear, many do not know what GBV means, many do not know it exists. Making any material mandatory is not a political move, it is not a safeguard, it is just common sense and a decent thing to do. It needs to happen now"

Toby-Kelly Simpson | Level 1 Student

"As a fresher, it took me a matter of weeks to realise how little awareness there was around GBV and consent. We all come across several different types of students, which is indeed a positive thing, but all of us have different perceptions and feelings about what GBV is, and most worryingly, what consent means. During the series of spiking events across Dundee, the sheer level of ignorance and intolerance towards GBV and consent was horrendously exposed to an extent I could never have imaginedespecially for a student community. If there had been a core training module prior to attending university that year, I know for certain that those attitudes and comments would have been very different and more mindful. I never really considered GBV training for students before coming here, but after hearing about this proposal, and after what I have experienced this year, I would be shocked if this never materialised. I am aware that other universities already have such a resource, and they are becoming more common across the UK, so it is time for Dundee to do the same. I would not have thought twice about doing the module, if it were part of student registration, I know for a fact that everyone else, opposed or not, would just do it. The benefits and necessity of it are unparalleled to any issues in making it mandatory."

Wider Student Remarks | GBV and Consent

These comments have been obtained from a variety of public social media platforms that comprised of students within our university. The topic of these discussions was whether or not we should implement mandatory GBV training in any form. There were also several discussions around spiking's. These comments were written a few weeks prior to this proposal's original formation. We have anonymised all comments.

"I don't think GBV modules should be mandatory or take up teaching time."

"...the level of gender-based violence present at the moment is unacceptable, and everyone would benefit from being educated on it. Maybe you would feel differently if you were the predominantly receiving party, which is why I think people like [....] need to receive that sort of education. [Not] in a mean way, just in a "I don't think you get how crucial it is" kind of way"

"Our own campus and course haven't been safe recently, anything that can be done to change that is important."

"Some people [have] also been spiked in their drinks...wear thicker clothes I guess idk"

"I think it's weird to be so vehemently opposed to something that can only be beneficial and that so many people think is necessary."

"People are gonna spike people cause they are bad people, that's not gonna change"

"Many of these boys think it's just 'lad culture,' think they can get away with it, go unchallenged by their pals, victims are ignored, blamed, ostracised...gaslit."

"I feel like some kind of education about it should be mandatory no matter whether it's a module, lecture, seminar [it] doesn't matter as long as its mandatory."

"I don't think a course can make a difference, but a seminar where people talk about this problem can."

"Not talking about it doesn't bring about change"

"Viewing it only through the objectively, very poor and very low-resolution lens of 'gender' is reductionist to the point of absurdity. Especially for core matriculation."

"Like obviously people who are gonna do it are gonna do it, but isn't it better to educate and even just have that possibility of more safety that just ignoring it and letting things go on as it is?"

"I just don't see what the point is in having a GBV class, if you are the sort of person to touch people up in a club you already know it is wrong, but you do it anyway"

"Genuinely concerning knowing that some of the people we interact with don't see GBV as an issue worthy of their time"

Proposed Section (1) Summary

What We Have

Our university currently have a variety of student support services and several safeguarding and zero tolerance policies. Students can access information on official university platforms and DUSA lead several initiatives and services that deal with consent, GBV and safety matters. MyDundee also offers students the optional GBV Prevention and Support module, positioned within the 'organisation' section. There is occasionally student or staff led events and workshops that feature GBV awareness.

What We Propose

We propose that the university either integrate the optional GBV module into student matriculation, as part of the wider matriculation module, or otherwise develop their own GBV and consent module with further signposting and clear university policies, which

would ideally be co-designed with students.

Why This Proposal

Understanding consent and GBV should never be an option. Students arrive to university with different levels of understanding and attitudes, which raises the need for core training to ensure a more equal level of understanding. Student safety must be of the highest priority within a university setting. Greater education and caution ought to be delivered to students, especially when they first arrive to the university. The current GBV training is optional, difficult to locate and deeply under promoted. By virtue of it being optional, the modules uptake and general awareness of its existence is minimal.

What We Achieve

The proposed actions are not enough on their own to establish a better culture of consent and safety across university life, but it is a strong step in the right direction. Aside from placing all our students on an equal footing of awareness, we would totally reform the way our university seemingly treat these issues, thereby immensely improving our standing and attitudes. Overall, the university would be promoting and respecting an incredibly important issue, all the while putting their commitment to the GBV charter into direct action.

Proposed Section (2) Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion



Positioning a mandatory EDI training course within student matriculation would not completely eradicate prejudice, discrimination, and inequality, but it would undoubtedly prove to be a tool that challenges and addresses various behaviours and barriers that still exist today. EDI strives to place positive value on our differences and is core to truly achieving equality of opportunity and treatment of all. The university are on a journey with EDI, which is embedded in the purpose and operation of any educational institution. We must be determined to do more than our mere statutory obligations; we must renew our commitment to achieving more and we must foster a culture that promotes EDI in every sense of its meaning. Mandatory EDI training is nothing new, it is becoming increasingly commonplace, and indeed, increasingly essential. EDI training would be a bold step in empowering all our students to thrive and prosper, whilst demonstrating that our university put their money where their mouth is and put their words into action. Conversations around EDI are difficult, but these are conversations that cannot be dismissed any longer. EDI training must not be another box to check, but rather it should serve as a proud example of our university going that step further, facing the realities that are deeply felt and valued by each of us. Eradicating issues around EDI can and ought to be done through educational empowerment.

Existing Material

There is currently a module on MyDundee, named the 'Equality and Diversity Module for Students', which was last updated in 2015. Below is an overview of this resource.⁵

Module Overview

"The University has an ongoing commitment to promote equality of opportunity for all staff and students associated with it, to maximise everyone's abilities and fulfil their potential to meet the changing and diverse needs of the University. This commitment is reflected in the University's policies and strategies and is also illustrated in the University's Transformation Vision."



This student e-learning module introduces Equality and Diversity. The module includes useful introduction about the roles and responsibilities of students in relation to the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Helpful scenarios and quizzes are incorporated to test your knowledge and understanding along the course.

The module is meant to assist students to understand the basic Equality and Diversity principles in an easy format that takes less than an hour to complete. Students will benefit from Equality and Diversity training as it is viewed as an essential skill in the workplace, one that is transferable to absolutely every job or position, as we all have to get along together in the modern world.

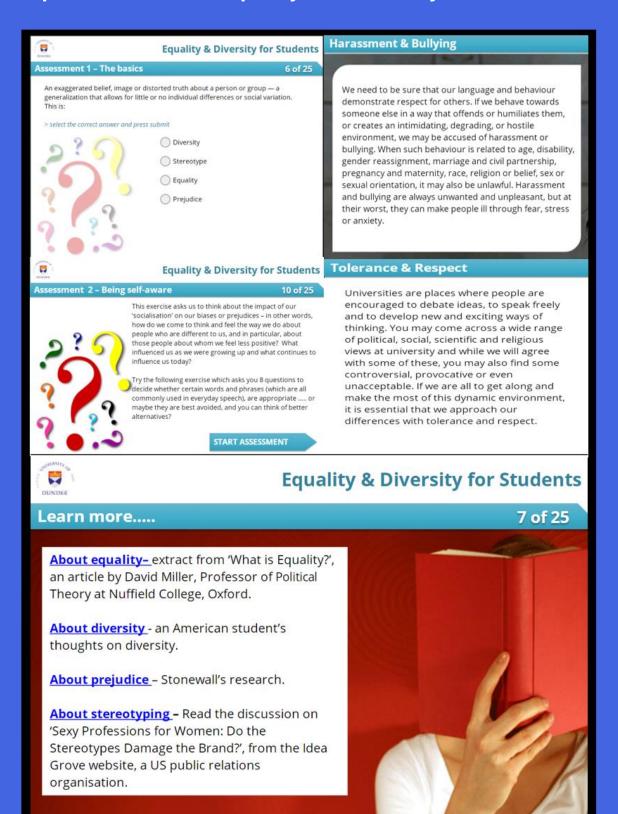
People who are informed and knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity are infinitely more employable and more attractive to employers than those without training in this fundamental area of social responsibility.

The key objectives of this course are:

- Raise awareness of the advantages of social diversity among students.
- Make sure that students know about their equality and diversity rights and responsibilities.
- Be an important component in an institution's response to legal duties to advance equality and foster good relations between different groups of students.

⁵ Content (dundee.ac.uk)

Sample Content from Equality and Diversity Module



Proposed Action

It only takes a short scan of the current student diversity training to know that the content is inadequate, antiquated, and limited. Considering our extensive feedback and consultations, any diversity training must be developed and delivered cautiously and should cover an appropriate number of issues. If the content is overly simplistic, obvious, and disengaging, it risks coming across as tokenistic and patronizing. This is a risk that must be avoided, particularly if we are proposing for EDI training to be placed within matriculation. Accordingly, we are proposing that a revised EDI training course be developed, which should be an upgraded and expanded version of what we currently have. We have presented some suggestions that should be considered below. If the university feel we are unjustified in our comments on the current training, or otherwise cannot commit to recreating a module, we propose that the current training should be integrated into matriculation (at the very least).

The university may consider contracting an external module developer, or they may internally create a revised EDI training module for students. The content could be developed through co-design working groups of students and staff. We could build upon what we already have, and indeed use our staff EDI training as a model to refer to. Of course, the content must be appropriate for all students, with relevant signposting, further resources and must include trigger warnings where needed. In line with similar courses, the module need not take too much time to complete. A thorough, yet useful and informative coverage of content, is both commonplace and desirable.



Our current and optional EDI training takes students around one hour to complete. We appreciate that these types of training courses are most effective when they are not overly time-consuming. We propose that any new EDI training should take a similar amount of time, but we suggest that new EDI training is more engaging, interactive, and diverse in its content.

Compulsory Staff EDI Training

All University of Dundee staff must complete equality, diversity, and inclusion training.



This mandatory staff training is designed to increase awareness and understanding, and to comply with the institution's legal obligations. The module completion rates are monitored by the universities equality and diversity office, but individual staff performance is not monitored and remains confidential.⁶ The training consists of a range of different online modules. The EDI office also provides in-person training on general diversity awareness and the protected characteristics, unconscious bias, disability and reasonable adjustments and Equality Impact Assessment.

Proposed Actions

It is difficult to see why our staff are provided with this training, but not students. Whilst there are optional modules for students to undertake, the university should place similar training for all students within matriculation. If staff must complete EDI training to be employed by the institution, students ought to be required to complete EDI training to join the institution as a student. The university should impose the same requirements on the student body, and place similar resources within matriculation. The logistical and completion elements of any student EDI training could follow the same procedures as the current staff training.

⁶ Equality Diversity and Inclusion: what we do | University of Dundee

Student Voice Testimony | BAME Community

Hasan Mahmood (Student)

Diversity Lead & Treasurer of Dundee University Law Society

Content Warning Please note that Hasan wished for his statement to remain signed.

"The Race Charter results came as no surprise to myself and many of my friends within the BAME community. It is an unfortunate but very common occurrence to feel unwelcome, out of place and disliked for the colour of your skin, faith or even your name. However, the report caused shock among my friends outside BAME ethnicities, triggering extensive discussion about the issues faced by many minorities at university. As an individual who experienced their first racist encounter in the form of a beating with bats and rackets, on a walk home from school, in broad daylight at the age of five, I am overtly aware of the mental trauma that a lack of inclusion and equality can cause.

I am not unique in the experiences I have had. I would argue that I'm lucky to experience something relatively tame in comparison to experiences other people of minority backgrounds have suffered, and still struggle with. I continue to feel intimidated and on edge anytime I meet someone new, even at university sanctioned events, as my many experiences have taught me it is often extremely difficult to determine a person's true opinion of you. Simply trusting someone enough to have a conversation with you, one to one, can result in racist verbal abuse, where they might diminish or degrade your achievements, achievements that required me to constantly overcome institutional obstacles. It is regularly believed that I am only successful because I need to meet diversity quotas. The hostility that is felt by many BAME students at this university is constant and relentless. The prejudice that we suffer becomes increasingly covert, but no less prominent. This often leads to many BAME students attempting to abandon their heritage, faith, or culture in efforts to mimic their non-BAME counterparts. It is for these reasons that I am delighted to see there is proactive initiative by a student at the university, hoping to shed light on issues that many have suffered since their childhoods, and have come to accept and live with. It is appalling and disgraceful that such a diverse university fails to celebrate the cultures and differences that each student brings to the institution in their mere existence. To feel pressured to hide your differences, is to have your very existence snubbed. I truly believe that the university are capable in changing this, I also have no doubt that they really want to.

This proposed section of EDI training has the potential not only to educate those students who are merely ignorant, those who unintentionally cause distress to BAME students. This proposal also allows students, who are simply unaware, to appreciate that this issue remains a very current one. I have experienced incidents with even close friends, who have unintentionally used a racial slur, not realizing it was inappropriate. After all, these friends were brought up in places where they are commonplace. It is both frustrating and disheartening to see the university shy away from addressing what is understandably an uncomfortable and distressing topic to confront. It evokes a feeling of shame in the victims who suffer racial abuse.

I am not naive enough to hope that this matriculation module will prevent racial abuse at university, however, I do think it will effectively educate most of our students to be allies to BAME students and encourage them to support anyone who may suffer racial abuse. More

optimistically, I hope the mandatory awareness training for our students will ensure there is prevention of racial abuse, and intolerance, as students will take the lead of the university, from the implementation of this module, to not shy away from the uncomfortable conversation where you must stand up to bigotry. It is disheartening to have to realize that years of racial abuse forces many members of the BAME community to passively accept nothing will change, but I hope to see Dundee University finally take a stance and ensure the issue of inequality and lack of tolerance is addressed, and every student becomes aware of the struggles their friends may be suffering daily.

Failure to implement this proposal, which is merely asking for awareness training, puts forward a clear statement to all BAME students at this University, a message that the status quo will be maintained and the struggle BAME students suffer in every aspect of their lives will remain a dirty secret that no one is willing to address."

Student Voice Testimony | LGBTQ+ Community

Jake Mace (Student)

General Secretary of Dundee Renters Union | President of UoD Politics Society

Content Warning

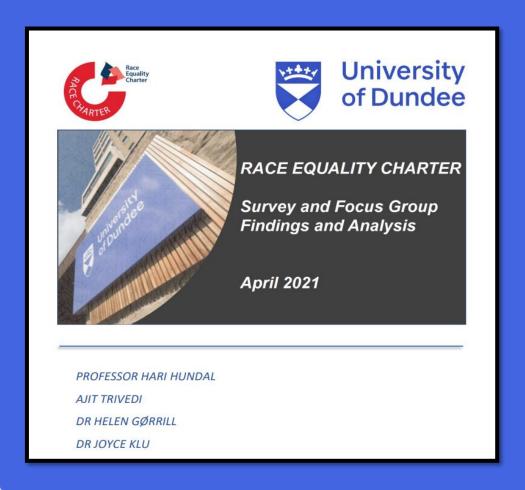
Please note that Jake wished for his statement to remain signed.

"The importance and relevance of the proposed core pre-matriculation module cannot be overstated regarding LGBTQ+ people in our university community. Gender, sex, sexual orientation and trans identities are protected characteristics. Queer people must have an opportunity to consult the University on expectations of matriculating students in recognizing the value and precarity of people who identify with those characteristics. The proposed prematriculation module offers the most streamlined and concerted effort to ensure the safety, inclusion, and recognition of those in our community. Issues surrounding consent and gender-based violence are a matter of public safety for everyone at the university, there is no doubt. However, there are unique challenges surrounding consent for people who move in queer circles. For example, 62% of British gay men report being touched without consent compared to 21% of heterosexual men (Source: Human Rights Campaign, https://www.hrc.org/resources/sexual-assault-and-the-lgbt-community)

A module inclusive of consent can only serve to benefit LGBTQ+ people exponentially regarding their personal safety. At the University of St. Andrews, a module which utilizes similar themes has been received with praise from the majority of LGBTQ+ people with whom I have spoken. As a queer person, I am hugely supportive of any efforts to develop the university's reputation as a safe space. The petition to save club nights last year again highlighted to me the value of queer spaces on campus. Multiple respondents told me that they felt it was the best place in Dundee to have a safe night out while openly presenting in a queer manner. These are not light topics and they do not deserve a light touch. We should focus our efforts to build a safe, sustainable place for all students through the core pre-matriculation module proposal."

The Race Equality Charter | Findings Report

In 2020 the University of Dundee launched a large consultation about how racism and discriminatory behaviour affects its staff and students on and off campus. The consultation exposed several issues that the university is firmly committed to addressing by putting in place actions during the tenure of a REC Bronze award.⁷



"

The cosy way of thinking may have been that a progressive institution such as a university, and the community that surrounds it, would not have a problem with race. The results of this survey show the dangers of making such assumptions.

- Professor Iain Gillespie | REC Report Foreword

⁷ Race Equality Charter Action Plan | University of Dundee

University Statements | Responses to REC Report





There is a clear need for transformation, and it is imperative that responsibility for driving this change falls on all of us and not solely on the shoulders of those of BAME ethnicity. The successful implementation of actions that will be detailed in our REC submission will not be achieved unless it is driven by strong leadership from the highest University level, including School Deans, Directors and other senior managers leading by example and taking responsibility for change. I am confident that we can come together as a community to help bring transformation that reflects on the views, ideas, and the demand for change from the current status quo.

- Professor Hari Hundal | University of Dundee Race Equality Charter Lead.



I apologise on behalf of the University to every member of our community who's been a victim of racism while living, studying or working here. It's unacceptable in our society that people should experience this, and we must show zero tolerance of such attitudes and behaviour. The results of our Race Equality Charter survey showed problems that exist across much of our society are also problems within our university community, the city, and the surrounding area.

There's much in the report that makes for disturbing, uncomfortable, and even shocking reading. My absolute commitment is that this survey must be the start of a process of acceptance of the issues which are laid out in these results and lead to greater actions to make the University, the city and Scotland a truly fair and equitable place for all, regardless of race.

The University has many policies in place regarding racial equality, diversity, and inclusion. We've taken positive steps over many years to ensure fairness and a welcoming environment for all. But the results of this survey show that it is not been enough, we must do more.⁸

- Professor Iain Gillespie | Principal & Vice-Chancellor

⁸ Race Equality Charter survey - results | University of Dundee

Race Equality Charter | University Action Plan

The survey and focus group findings have informed the development of actions that promote positive and sustainable change within the institutions internal structure, practices, and cultural ethos. The university are already developing projects which have been in development in some cases since before the launch of the survey.

These included (but are not limited to):

- Reviewing complaints procedures to ensure action can be taken which supports individual facing racial abuse
- More unconscious bias training for all students and staff
- More courses and training to be placed on MyDundee to increase education on racism and privilege
- A curriculum review will review diversity of academic reading lists and issues around decolonising our programmes
- Research commissioned into any historic links between the University and slavery and other issues of racism and inequality

Examination of Action Plan | Matriculation Module Alignment

In response to the REC Survey, the actions above were devised in efforts to combat the several issues exposed within the report. Some of the report highlighted the negative perceptions and experiences with the university complaints procedures. The university seek to review such procedures to ensure any individual – be it staff or student – can seek appropriate support when they face racial abuse. The proposed module section focusing on EDI could include extensive signposting and comprehensive mapping of the complaint procedures in place, ensuring more students are aware at the earliest possible stage as to where they can seek support. Another action that the university are looking to introduce, concerns unconscious bias training for all. This action could be directly satisfied through this matriculation module, with the EDI section covering numerous examples, scenarios and training on unconscious bias. Another notable action includes the introduction of more courses and training on MyDundee, aiming to increase education on racism and privilege. This action could also be directly satisfied by the matriculation module, and it would immediately address the ongoing issue of engagement with current resources and ensure any further efforts did not go to waste. Additional resources are a positive change, but to ensure wider engagement and effectiveness occurs, they should be within a core matriculation module.

University Action Plan (Continued)

The snapshots below present the actions that the university are taking to strengthen its culture around equality and inclusion - as part of its application for the Bronze RECM. These snapshots have been sourced from the university website section on the REC.⁹

3. Institution and Local Context								
Action	Issue needing action	Action(s) to address the	What success will look	Timescale for	Person/group			
Ref:		issue	like	Actions	Responsible			
3.1	UoD to raise awareness of its	Create or adapt an anti-	Integrate this training	By June 2022	Head of EDI			
	zero-tolerance to racism and	racist training module for	module by June 2022.					
	introduce an anti-racist training	all staff and students.						
	module and develop an active							
	bystander intervention				Head of			
	programme for staff and	Make anti-racist training	Initial target completion	By Dec 2022	EDI/Director			
	students.	compulsory and publicise to staff and students.	of 80% of module by end	and Dec 2023	HROD/School			
		to starr and students.	of Year 1, with 100%		Deans			
			target completion by academic and PS staff and		Deans			
			students by School Roll by					
			end of Year 2.					
			end of real 2.					
		Record training uptake and	Provide a report on	By Feb 2023	Head of			
		follow up with	training completion to		EDI/Director			
		Deans/Directors on	RECIT/REC-SAT and EDI		HROD			
		compliance in their areas.	Committee. Feedback to					
			School Deans and Service					
			Directors on completion					
			rates and					
			recommendation on poor					
			compliance					
4.2	BAME individuals were far less	Actively encourage	Increased feedback and	From Jan 2022	Head of EDI			
	confident that reporting incidents	reporting through	awareness by staff and	onwards				
	of racial bullying/discrimination	workshops and lunch-time	student community on					
	to their School/Service or to the University would be taken	sessions that inform and raise awareness of how to	how to raise complaints as evaluated by return of in-					
	seriously or result in appropriate	take race complaints	session feedback forms					
	action.	forward and sharing action	and positive responses	Surveys 2023				
	action.	because of complaints (see	from the Biennial REC	and 2025				
		also Action 4.3).	surveys (see Action 3.4)	and 2023				
		aiso Action 4.5).	surveys (see Action 5.4)					

Further Comments on REC Action Plan

Under the "Action(s) to address the issue" column within the table snapshot above, the most notable actions include the creation or adaptation of a compulsory anti-racist training module for all staff and students, which the university ought to publicise. As noted already, staff must complete an EDI training course upon joining the institution, but no such training is required for students. This action is in harmony with the proposed EDI section of the matriculation awareness module. This action is intended to be integrated by June 2022, which leads to the assumption that this module will become mandatory for all students in the upcoming 2022/23 session. The action also includes review procedures and target completion rates by students. We are unaware of the

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⁹ University of Dundee REC Action Plan.pdf

current progress with this action, but should this module be in place in the coming year, it is suggested that this module be placed alongside the other proposed sections of the matriculation module. If this action has seen no substantive progress, this action could be directly satisfied in accepting this proposed EDI section. Moreover, the proposed section goes further than anti-racist training, as it would hopefully include other matters around EDI, such as equality legislation, LGBTQ+ awareness and misogyny.

As seen in the **bottom row** of the table snapshot above, one notable issue was the fact that BAME individuals were far less confident in reporting incidents of racially motivated bullying or discrimination to their school or student services, their lack of confidence extended to the university handling the reports seriously or appropriately. This concern has a corresponding action plan, namely, to introduce workshops and sessions to raise awareness on complaint handling. Whilst this action could go far in addressing the current feelings of BAME individuals, our feedback and wider student consultations would suggest that mere workshops and lunch sessions are minimal in their impact. Such actions would most probably see little engagement, delivered within the busy semester timeframe that would ultimately be inconvenient, under promoted and underdelivered. These views are directly reflective of student feedback on initiatives similar to this, particularly relating to "one-off" events around GBV and consent, which have seen minimal engagement or promotion.

We therefore propose that such an action would also be highly achievable, and best executed, through integrating this information within the EDI section of this proposed matriculation module. This suggestion does not dismiss the original action plan, as these smaller sessions could prove effective. We do submit, however, that exposing this information to fresher cohorts during matriculation would prove far more effective in the long term, providing students with a greater sense of understanding around tackling complaints, reporting procedures and the various services available to them.

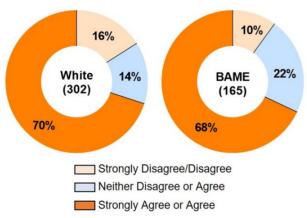
None of these points even mention the wider-scale benefits in executing these actions, and indeed the proposed module. The University claim to have EDI at the forefront of their priorities, these actions would directly reflect such claims, and it could advance the institution further in becoming a sector leading University within this space.

Race Equality Charter | Sample Data from Report

The material presented below are samples of information included within the Race Equality Charter Report from April 2021. The survey snapshot and corresponding student comments indicate previous discussions around potential training on racism and diversity awareness. The report snapshots also present clear support for such training, akin to that of the proposed matriculation module.

There was general agreement among both White and BAME students that the University should introduce a specific training module/course on anti-racism to help educate its staff/student community and curb racist attitudes/behaviour (Figure 43). However, despite support for such a training module there was considerable diversity in opinion in the free text comments on its need and/or potential merit.

Figure 43: Students were asked if they agreed/disagreed on whether the University should introduce a specific training module/course on anti-racism. Numbers of students responding are indicated in brackets.



Sample Student Comments on Anti-Racist Training:

"If the course on anti-racism was in place it should be mandatory." - White Student

"I think the university should definitely have a module/course on anti-racism, but one that is done well. We have previously received presentations about racism but they are often long-winded and people lose focus very quickly. Make it more interactive and have maybe more case studies." - Student ethnicity not disclosed.

"I do not recall a single incidence where the University has tackled racial inequalities in all its forms. I feel it is strongly lacking in its education of students regarding this topic. All my knowledge of systemic racism and the Black Lives Matter movement has been gathered through my own personal learning and education of the issue. However, this questionnaire is a good start but more must be done." White Student.

Further comments have been presented below, which concern various points made during focus groups relating to the race equality charter.

It was suggested that whilst students are not at University to specifically be educated on race issues, embedding race equality training within the curriculum was a good idea if it clearly informs them of the value the institution places on diversity and inclusion, and the expectation that all students are respectful and tolerant of those whose ethnicity differs from their own.

One student suggested that there ought to be a mandatory requirement for every student to take a core training module on equality, diversity, and inclusion irrespective of the course/school they are in and perhaps this needs to be fulfilled as part of the process of progressing within their degree or graduation. However, there was also a view that on-line training modules are not effective as most individuals skip the module content and can pass by repeated attempts at the on-line quiz. It was suggested that if this were a proper longitudinal module with an assessment that attracted credit it would be taken more seriously.

The suggestion above regarding a mandatory core training module on equality, diversity and inclusion was a point of interest. There was a comment made in response to this suggestion that highlighted an online module would not be effective, as most individuals would skip through the content and simply repeat the course if they failed. This is a prevailing concern when it comes to the proposed matriculation awareness module. If the module is not compulsory and graded, students could indeed skip through content without engaging, rendering the entire module counter-productive and futile. This should be a key point of discussion when considering this proposed module, should this be taken any further.

Another point of interest is the survey data relating to anti-racism training, which presents generally strong student support. This support is further evidenced by this proposal's own survey data, which is presented within the student opinion section of this paper. Out of the 467 surveyed students within the REC survey, around 70% of students agreed with the need for anti-racist training. Some of the sample student comments were of interest. It was noted that any training of this sort should be mandatory, and one student underlined that the premise of the training was positive, but it had to be done well. The training should not be dry and long-winded, but instead it should be interactive with some case studies. The survey data and student comments further indicate the clear student will for training of this nature, which would all come under the EDI section of the proposed matriculation module.

Proposed Section (2) Summary

What We Have

The university have made several commitments to doing more to confront and eradicate racial discrimination and inequality across the institution. The university have a plethora of EDI policies, and all staff must complete EDI training courses as part of their employment. Students currently have the option to complete an EDI module on MyDundee. We also host events and occasionally organise guest panels to discuss EDI. Our academic schools have EDI committees that collaborate with the university EDI office, who oversee a variety of matters in this space.

What We Propose

We propose that the university develops a fresh EDI module that all students must complete during matriculation. The module should be tailored to our community, codesigned to ensure it is embraced by students. It should have content that is both appropriate and comprehensive. Alternatively, we propose that the current (optional) EDI course becomes integrated into student matriculation.

Why This Proposal

The realities and issues around EDI must never be swept under the carpet. This proposed section would not only raise crucial awareness, but it could also pave the way for more open discussions that educates and stimulates healthy debates across the entire student community. Students arrive to university with different levels of awareness and attitudes, which raises the need for core training to ensure a more equal level of understanding. EDI must be of the highest priority within a university setting. Greater education and caution ought to be provided to students, especially when they first arrive to the university. The current EDI training is optional, difficult to locate and is deeply under promoted. By virtue of it being optional, the module uptake and general awareness of its existence is minimal

What We Achieve

These actions would demonstrate our universities unique, forward-looking, and welcoming culture, highlighting how serious we treat EDI. Aside from awareness raising, this module could provide students with crucial signposting, guidance, and training, all the while satisfying our overdue action plans and charter recommendations.

Proposed Section (3)

Climate Change and Sustainable Action

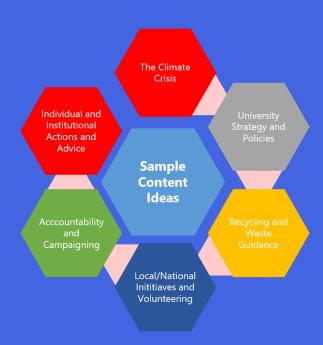


Climate change is absolutely an issue of today, so there is little time to even debate the necessity for widespread awareness and the encouragement of individual action. Education and awareness are the strongest agents for change, and we strongly believe that our university have a fundamental part to play in this change. Placing a short non-academic course within matriculation will by no means solve the imminent dangers, but it will certainly help students understand and address the impacts of the climate crisis, empowering us with the knowledge, guidance, and attitudes needed to make even the slightest of a difference. This module section could encourage us to alter our ways in the fight for a safer future, whilst proudly demonstrating our university's stance and sector leading attitude towards sustainability. We have gone far as a university within this space, but not far enough. This is everyone's business, everyone's problem, but more importantly, this is everyone's responsibility. The University of Dundee has the potential to be a global leader in environmental sustainability, particularly through student engagement and awareness. This proposed module section could be a large step towards such ambitions.

Proposed Action

The university should introduce a compulsory course within matriculation that addresses the climate crisis and provides guidance around sustainable action. The training must be useful, and it could be created by students. It should encourage sustainability, and not just be a greenwashing and tedious exercise. The module should not be a purely factual and statistical overview, but instead should be a resource that encourages independent responsibility and direct action. The resources should be informative and helpful, with additional material for students who are interested enough to learn more.

If the university agreed to develop and integrate this proposed training, it would need to include the most pressing issues that affect all of us. The module could encourage lifestyle changes, practical steps in lowering individual carbon footprints, and could promote various local projects and initiatives that are centred around sustainability. The key themes ought to be the climate crisis on a wider scale, our university strategy, and goals, as well as crucial guidance, advice, and signposting.



Student Voice Testimony | Sustainable Action

Fraser Hope (Student) | Geography and Environmental Science

"A training module that focusses on environmental sustainability does not need to be a deeply complex course, it may only need to provide a basic overview that highlights the most burning issues, yet still prove effective in raising awareness and encouraging individual mitigation. As a student of geography and a passionate advocate for climate issues, I wholeheartedly believe that widespread awareness training is desperately needed - this is clearly an overdue initiative. Now is the time for education to take a front seat in combating the biggest issue humanity and our planet face. The climate crisis and the need for serious behavioural change is not up for debate, and we may well be too late. I am proud to have been a student here, but I would be even more proud to say that Dundee Uni took bold steps in raising crucial awareness on this issue."

University of Dundee | Recent Achievements

Dundee ranked top in UK for climate action

Published on 17 June 2021

The University of Dundee has been ranked top in the UK for climate action in the 2021 edition of the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings.

The University of Dundee was ranked top in the UK for climate action in the 2021 edition of the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings. This was out of 1100 universities. Dundee ranked fifth globally.

The rankings recognise the role of universities that extends beyond research and teaching to a third mission revolving around engagement, knowledge exchange and innovation for societal good. They measure the global higher education sector's success in delivering the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The table measures universities' research on climate change, their use of energy and their preparations for dealing with the consequences of climate change.

"Sustainability is at the heart of our mission to transform lives locally and globally, and so we are delighted to have our outstanding efforts recognised in this way." 10

- Professor Iain Gillespie, Principal and Vice-Chancellor

This is a very significant achievement for our university, and there is no doubt that we will continue to excel with climate action in various ways. Given our institutions success and widespread recognition, there leaves little reason as to why the university would reject an opportunity to greatly increase awareness across the student body. The proposed climate action section would not necessarily advance our wider goals and activities, but it will most definitely reinforce our universities commitment to a greener and safer future for all. It will also encourage student-level action and may well prompt young students to get more involved, when they might not have otherwise done so.

¹⁰ Dundee ranked top in UK for climate action | University of Dundee

Student Voice Testimony | Sustainable Action

Maitane Sandonis Perez (Student)

Student Council | Sustainability Representative

"The climate crisis requires immediate institutional and individual action to reduce the global carbon footprint. It is crucial that the younger generations are aware of this situation and are taught ways to live more sustainably. A recent survey I conducted showed a lack of awareness amongst Dundee students. Our university have a crucial role to play in ensuring that all our students acquire an environmental crisis education. This issue is going nowhere, and it would be absurd and irresponsible of us to dismiss it any further. A core pre-matriculation module with insightful information on climate change and sustainability would ensure an environmentally aware student community, a community that is equipped with the knowledge and tools to reduce their individual carbon footprint, to advocate for change and to get involved in local projects, all the while the university would be demonstrating their sector leading attitudes and approaches to combatting this looming crisis."

Student Council Data | Sustainability Survey Samples



I haven't been here long, so I'm not sure if this happens or not, but a university-wide consultative process to work towards specific sustainability targets. For example, empowering students and staff to make less carbon intensive journeys to uni. Asking how this can be done, and seeking the best solution available.

I've barely been on campus for the past two years for obvious reasons, so it's not as though I can suggest "turn the lights off more". However, like many of my peers I am terrified of the future we face in the context of climate change and as a considerably large body the school of life sciences is obligated to prioritise not only developing more sustainable methods within the school, but using their very influential position in the university to put pressure to move to greener strategies. This includes ensuring the university invests sensibly, manages waste effectively, uses energy sustainably, etc. Primarily, it requires working with experts to do more than what is expected of the university (and not expecting students to have the answers). What is expected of the university is nowhere near enough-they must do what is *needed*, not required.

Excessive use of small single use plastic equipment, for example, spreaders used to culture bacteria. In a recent lab we were provided with 6 single use spreaders, where reusable glass alternatives exist, there would just have to be a sufficient number of them. Other single use plastics that I have had to use excessively in the lab include microcentrifuge tubes, cuvettes, droppers and tips of micropipettes.

Notwithstanding the limited amount of data presented, it can be taken from the feedback that the university could be doing more to empower students to take more sustainable actions. There is an abundance of guidance and measures that are understated across the student community. The vast majority of students evidently want more to be done both within their schools and the university as a whole.

Potential Challenges

It has been suggested that this proposed module is too politically driven, which renders its mandatory implementation as inappropriate

Whilst climate change is perceived in some lights as a political issue, there is no question that this is a very real challenge and one that cannot be ignored. As a university, and indeed as a city, we pride ourselves as a community with ambitious sustainable goals, and we are a university that performs extremely well with climate action. Mandatory training on climate change should not be regarded as a politically motivated initiative, it ought to be seen as an example of our university going one step further in creating a more mindful, sustainable, and compassionate student community. Education and students are one of the most powerful agents of change, so we should empower our students with the necessary information. guidance and advice that can work towards that change. The training and module content need not be politically inspired either, there is little controversy in encouraging more sensible and proactive behaviours.

As previously mentioned, the other proposed sections are far more essential and of a higher priority to students.

Whilst we have acknowledged that other proposed sections are higher in priority, we still believe that the university should implement a mandatory training course on climate action, or at the very least, develop it as an optional resource.

Based upon our feedback and in consideration of the priority of topics, we still maintain that this proposed section is extremely important in all it can achieve. That is why we are proposing for this section to be a mandatory element of matriculation, but we do understand that any matriculation course needs to have a solid justification, and one that cannot be considered political or one that negates the priority of the proposed sections on EDI and GBV.

Proposed Section (3) Summary

What We Have

Our university are extremely successful in terms of climate action on a global level. We have several ambitious sustainability goals and integrated policies relevant to this. Interested students occasionally have the opportunity to engage in climate action

projects, conferences, sustainability initiatives internally and across the community. We also have several leading degree programmes and research activities that centre around the climate and sustainability.

What We Propose

Proposing a mandatory climate action module is somewhat detached from our achievements and policies as an institution. This proposed section centres around awareness, which is currently sparse and very much needed for a plethora of reasons. The module information need not be demanding or patronising, it may only provide advice and could present students with a variety of options that merely encourage action and engagement.

Why This Proposal

The calls for climate change awareness within education are becoming increasingly common, particularly the responsibility that universities have. "The fight against climate change and everything it implies...requires a greater awareness and improved willingness to act by all civil society actors." Students should be given the knowledge, guidance, and opportunities to get more involved.

What We Achieve

A core training module that focuses on the wider climate crisis and one which provides guidance on individual action could prove extremely beneficial in many ways. Not only would it demonstrate our universities steadfast commitment to global environmental challenges, but it could encourage all of our students to consider how they can be part of the fight against the imminent dangers we face.

¹¹ Climate awareness - Iberdrola

Proposed Section (4) Academic Integrity



Academia is centred around the quality of people's work, and the integrity with which that work is produced. Academic integrity concerns the commitment to sincere and ethical conduct in an academic setting, and it is most relevant at a university level, as it concerns the crediting of other peoples work and ideas. The University of Dundee has a vast array of different rules and procedures on academic practise, depending on the levels of study and the courses we do. However, there is nothing to suggest that greater awareness around these rules and procedures would be a hindrance to students and their academic work. We believe our proposed section would in fact enrich the quality of work produced by students and create greater assurances that academic misconduct becomes less common. We acknowledge that various schools and programmes already promote the rules around academic integrity, making it clear to students what they can and cannot do in relation to their courswork and assessments. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that greater awareness around this topic is necessary at the earliest possible stage of student enrollment. A short training course would not only promote good academic practise, but it could also provide extremly important guidance, rules, consequences and procedures in an effective and interactive manner.

Existing Material¹²

Click to View the Code of Practice

DUSA and CTIL developed a video for students explaining different types of academic misconduct.

Click to Watch the Video



As things stand, promotion of academic integrity and the avoidance of academic misconduct are very basic parts of student induction and training. The active participation of staff is encouraged to ensure that students fully understand acceptable and unacceptable academic practice. Such promotion and reminders are seen across several courses, and staff regularly highlight the importance of such rules during assessment periods. Research/postgraduate students are currently required to successfully complete online modules on research integrity training prior to their upgrade review, the university strongly recommends that students complete the modules within the first 3 months of starting their research degree. We evidently have the means to provide similar training to the wider student population, and we can see that the university take academic integrity very seriously, which is why we are proposing for an alternative, more engaging way to promote, deter and support students around this issue.

Research Integrity Training Resource (Students)

ID: PACG004_ORG0000

"The University of Dundee is committed to excellence in research by promoting the highest standards of research integrity. Research integrity is essential for advancing knowledge and maintaining the trust of the research community and the public. All researchers have a responsibility to be proactive in developing their understanding of good research practice and of the various ethical, legal, and professional frameworks, obligations and standards that govern research."

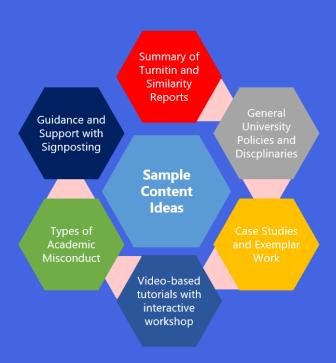
Responsible and Ethical Practice in Research and Publication is an online video-based training course designed to promote researcher awareness and engagement with research integrity issues. The course covers issues such as ethical practise, plagiarism, authorship, and research misconduct.

¹² This material was mainly sourced from <u>Academic misconduct by student's code of practice |</u>
<u>University of Dundee</u>

Proposed Action

Our university regards academic misconduct as an extremely serious offence, which makes the need for awareness all the more critical. Severe consequences can arise in cases of academic misconduct, and so the university ought to improve the current training and information that is provided to students. We believe that the most effective way to combat a lack of awareness around the complex and vast set of rules and guidance, is to implement a short course that delivers information in an engaging, interactive, and clear way. We believe that such a course should be delivered to students at a critical period, that being matriculation. Students would arrive to university having been made very aware of the rules, consequences, and principles around academic integrity. The proposed matriculation course may indeed prove beneficial in lowering instances of misconduct, it may well foster a deeper understanding and will address the inconsistencies found in delivering this information.

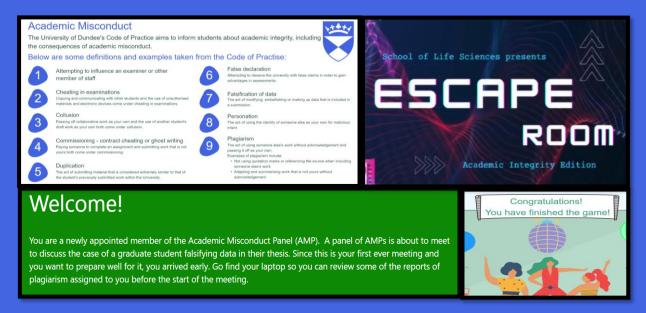
The proposed course need not be lengthy or complex. The course may only need to cover the university code of practise, which applies to all students, with a series of accompanying case studies and examples to help students understand what the code of practise means. The course could prove very beneficial if it explained the consequences of misconduct, which could act as a deterrent and preventative measure as students proceed with their studies.



In relation to the other proposed sections, namely the GBV and EDI courses, we believe this course is not as much of a priority, but it is nonetheless a fundamental facet of being a student at any university. This course could easily be developed, as the information is already available, albeit scattered across various websites and platforms. Having all the important guidance and rules within one course would be effective in allowing students to come to terms with a new and serious standard of academic practise. We all arrive to university with different levels of understanding, but this module would tackle this and help prevent future cases of misconduct. No student should have to face the serious repercussions, merely because of a lack of awareness.

Ongoing Student Initiatives | Academic Integrity

A group of current student representatives within the School of Life Sciences have developed an academic integrity resource. ¹³ The group created an "escape room" activity which requires students to complete various games and riddles. The idea behind the project was to make academic practise more interesting and captivating for students to learn about, rather than the "normal methods of lectures that students zone out of." The activity also includes further resources that can be saved for future reference.



The figures above are only a snapshot of the resource, the full escape room task comprises of several stages, questions, and interactive scenarios. This is a work in progress, and the students are now working with CTIL to enhance this resource. CTIL are working to expand the module to make it more relevant to students across the whole school and are also aiming to adapt the layout and software being used. The students explained that certain aspects of academic integrity were not included in the tasks, as they were not deemed relevant to their courses. However, the group indicated that there is potential for additions, and that CTIL would be keen to adapt the resource for all schools. The initial thought was to make the escape room tasks a competition across life sciences. The group suggested that the upgraded version resource could be integrated into matriculation as part of the academic integrity section. We ask that the university consider this resource, and should the university oppose this proposed section entirely, they could support the mass distribution of this project and assist schools in running mini academic integrity competitions.

¹³ Contact: Nicole Garrido | School President of Life Sciences

Potential Challenges

It has been suggested that matriculation is not the most strategic time or platform to deliver a course on academic integrity, as such information is best placed around assessment periods.

We strongly believe that a short course on academic integrity, within matriculation, puts all students on good stead as they proceed with their studies. Students would be coming to Dundee already aware about the various rules, procedures, and consequences. This course would also ensure that students from different academic backgrounds are arriving with an equal level of understanding, all the while being given this information in an engaging way.

Academic integrity is multifaceted, several schools operate under different rules, so an over-generalized course may be ineffective.

Whilst we acknowledge different courses have varied rules and processes, the university code of practice applies to all, and the principles of good academic practice apply to all. This course would cover content applicable to all. Regardless of specific schools, understanding the procedures and rules are undoubtedly crucial to grasp.

There are other elements of this proposed module that ought to take priority, so additional topics such as this may not be as pressing and necessary at this time.

As mentioned in the proposed structure section, we appreciate that other proposed sections should take precedence. That is not to say we should oppose having a course available to students, mandatory or not.

In light of the foregoing challenges and our counter points, we believe that this proposed section is still essential and long overdue. We acknowledge that this course may be better delivered at different stages in the academic year, but there is nothing to stop this course being made available to students whenever they wish to be reminded of academic integrity. If the university do not wish for this section to be made mandatory, it would still be very useful to develop a course than students can opt into completing at any time via MyDundee. At the very least, the university should consider altering the current information on academic integrity that is presented within matriculation. The information could and should be presented in a more engaging, clear, and practical way. An entire training course may not be necessary, but more can certainly be done. This proposed section would not just exist in the interest of students, but in the interest of the university as a whole.

Student Voice Testimonies | Academic Integrity

Zechariah Laari | DUSA VP Academia | CEPMLP Postgraduate Student

"As the current and future DUSA Vice President of Academia, I fully support any initiative that aims to raise awareness around good academic practise as a student. Academic integrity is a very serious principle at all institutions of higher education, and so it is fundamental that we do everything we can to keep our student community fully informed about the rules, concepts, and practises as they progress through their student career. The consequences and personal experiences of those who breach our code of practise should never come down to a mere lack of awareness. This is why I truly believe in the proposed academic integrity module for student matriculation. The training should not be there to scare our students, or to warn them as such, the training must be a positive reminder which provides helpful examples and clear rules. DUSA and I are fully committed to assisting in the development and review of any mandatory academic integrity module in the years to come."

Nicole Garrido | Level 4 Life Sciences Student | School President

"There is often misunderstanding and confusion over what exactly academic integrity is. Ensuring that students fully comprehend all aspects of it will help students to be prepared for assignments and life after university. Introducing academic integrity comprehension early in a student's career is vital to fix this widespread uncertainty. We developed a life sciences academic integrity escape room because of the increasing number of students that were committing academic misconduct. Myself and my team wanted to create a new initiative that would teach students in a fun and engaging way. We initially produced the room to target the School of Life Sciences, but since, CTIL is continuing the project to tailor it university wide to create a common resource. While life sciences differ in approaches from other courses, it is nonetheless essential that all schools share this vital resource. Accordingly, I fully support the proposed module section on academic integrity, and it could well include this escape room resource. It will be a crucial part of the wider proposed module that I have no doubt will benefit students, not only during their time at university, but in their professional careers to come."

Eleanor Valentine | Level 1 Law Student

"Whilst many students are aware of the university's academic code of practise, it is not always clear as to what the rules are and what they mean for students. This can lead to honest mistakes that students may not even be aware of, and those students could face serious punishments as a result of this lack of awareness. This is a risk faced by many of us, and that is a very concerning reality. Clarifying the code of practice through a matriculation module could see the number of academic malpractice incidents significantly decrease. By highlighting the code of practice, students may start the new academic year with a fresh perspective as to what is and isn't accepted conduct"

Proposed Section (4) Summary

What We Have

The university currently provide a very short overview of academic integrity within one section of the online matriculation process. This information can be ignored and signed off like any other terms and conditions form. Students are also provided with various

off like any other terms and conditions form. Students are also provided with various warnings and reminders during assessment periods, within their module handbooks and across MyDundee and university resources. Some schools run their own workshops and initiatives, though this is not consistent across all schools.

What We Propose

We propose for the creation and mandatory implementation of a short training course on academic integrity. The course could be a simple overview of the rules, types of misconduct and an explanation of the consequences in instances of bad practise. The course could also allow students to navigate through scenarios and exemplar pieces of work.

Why This Proposal

The University regards academic misconduct as an extremely serious offence, and students should be aware of the potential penalties that can be imposed for academic misconduct related offences. The severity and problems around academic good practise can and should be addressed through greater education and guidance. We firmly believe this is best achieved through a mandatory course on academic integrity for all incoming students.

What We Achieve

Whilst the direct benefits are hypothetical and somewhat unpredictable, we have had several consultations and feedback which firmly suggests that instances of academic misconduct would be less frequent, should this mandatory course be placed within matriculation. We also believe that this is effective in underlining the principles of good practise, which students can carry forward into their future careers. This module would also ensure that everyone arrives to our university with a more equal level of awareness.

Proposed Development Strategy

The working group are in no position to suggest how the university might approach the development of any proposed module. That being said, we have presented some potential options that could be adopted by the university, which are all based upon our extensive feedback and consultations.

External Providers

•The university may wish to consult with external providers who specialise in developing training courses for higher education students. This would ensure that the content is professionally designed and appropriate in its delivery. Some potential problems with this option might be the cost of contracting a module developer and the lack of uniqueness to our university. If we purchased a module from an external source, it may lack signposting, rules and policies that are specific to our university.

Student Co-Designing

• As will be dicussed in further detail, our feedback and consultations show a clear desire for students to be involved in designing any of the proposed modules - particularly the EDI training. CTIL and IT have both suggested that student focus groups could be formed to provide feedback and ideas, ensuring that the students have a say in what they will ultimately be made to complete. DUSA have also recommended a small group of representative students could sit on any given working group or committee to provide suggestions and content proposals. Several students have underlined that they would only support this proposal if they were properly consulted in the development stages.

Working Groups

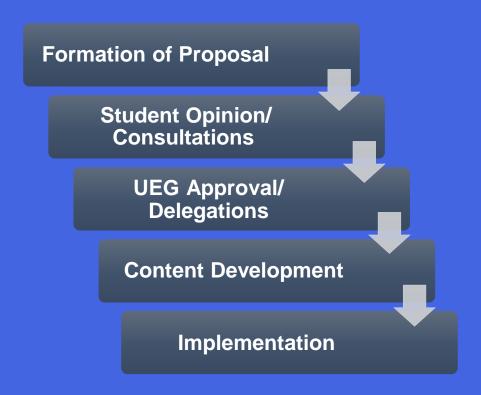
•There are various committees across the university that oversee EDI, GBV, academic integrity and sustainability matters. These groups could be the main leads that assist in developing the proposed sections. Otherwise, new working groups could be formed that comprise of both staff and students, with such groups being responsible for planning and developing the courses, in collaboration with the likes of DUSA and CTIL.



One of the most important aspects of developing any or all of the proposed sections, is ensuring that there is a clear timescale with a set of checkpoints. This will allow for various parties to get involved at the relevant stages and allow for working groups to have set deadlines. We acknowledge that this project will take a considerable amount of time and planning, so there is a strong need for a clear map of progress over one or two academic years.

Proposed Implementation Strategy

The following information provides a breakdown as to how the project has been managed thus far and includes suggested strategies moving forward. Given the scale and challenges of this project, it was best to present this information in phases, seeking to clarify the various elements, stakeholders and timescales involved.



Phase 1 ~ Formation of Proposal

Initial formation of a student working group in November 2021, comprising of some voluntary students and representatives. Several meetings were held to discuss the basis of the idea. A basic proposal was formulated that consisted of the four key sections. A strategy for gathering the student opinion was planned, and an agreement was made on drafting a proposal paper.

Timeline | November 2021

Phase 2 ~ Student Opinion and Consultations

Several students were contacted by their school office managers with the original proposal message, the working group members also sent various communications to group chats. Over one hundred students and around 15 student societies promoted the proposal on their social media platforms. DUSA developed a webpage for further feedback and assisted in promotional activities. The paper was being continuously drafted throughout this phase, and consultations with various departments were also being held. This was the busiest period with regards to student engagement and proposal development.

Timeline | January 2022 - April 2022

Phase 3 ~ University Approval / Committee Delegation

It is hoped that the University Executive Group (UEG) consider this paper in full and discuss the project within the Academic and Corporate Governance team. Ideally this proposal would then be considered before the University Court and Senate, where it can be given official approval. Subsequently, the University would ideally begin to assign responsibilities to various committees and start holding consultations as to how they move forward with module development, student input and implementation.

Timeline | April 2022 – September 2022

Phase 4 ~ Module Content Development

This phase should begin as soon as the university approve of the project. The module content would need to be led by the relevant stakeholders, departments and professionals that deal with the topics proposed. For example, the University Race Equality committee and the Quality and Academic Standards committee could begin discussions on how they direct the content development. The Centre for Technology, Innovation and Learning have expressed a willingness to help develop the content in an interactive way. Additionally, the university may wish to consult with external companies and designers to develop the module. DUSA could lead the student input, inviting students to get involved in co-designing some content. For example, students of Geography and Environmental Science may be approached to provide input into the climate action section. Another example could be students from the LGBTQ+ society and students within school EDI subcommittees could provide input for the EDI section.

Timeline | Academic Year 2022/23

Phase 5 ~ Implementation

Suggesting a particular strategy on how the university could implement the module would not be appropriate at this stage. That being said, and assuming the entire module would be ready for student interaction, the module should be integrated within matriculation for all students matriculating (or re-matriculating) in September 2023. This would allow all students that currently study at the university to engage with the module. In the academic years following this, it is proposed that the module only be sat by incoming students. This suggestion may be rejected, and it may change in future years to require students to retake the module upon re-matriculation, particularly if the module is upgraded with additional or updated material. It is also important to note that students should be given sufficient time to complete the module, prior to attending university. Ample notice is extremely important, especially since students officially accept their offers at different stages, with some deciding to attend just days before arriving to the university. This issue may require the module to remain open after matriculation, for those who did not have sufficient time to complete it. This will likely increase the amount of work needed to track those who have completed the module during term time.

Timeline | August/September 2023 | Academic Year 2023/24

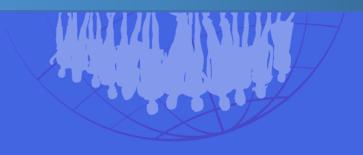
Review

If this module is implemented with all students required to complete it in the 2023/24 session, it is imperative that a review takes place once all students have undertaken the module for the first time. This review will be critical to ensure that the module ran smoothly and did not cause too many problems logistically or digitally. Moreover, it will be important to gather wider student feedback on the individual experiences with the module, particularly the content and how they perceived it. The first "trial run" of the module will by no means display any wider behavioral changes across the student body. However, it is hoped that future pulse surveys, student focus groups and consultations will find that the module proves effective in raising awareness, providing crucial resources, and provoking positive discussions. The university may find in future years that students, on a wider scale, no longer question the module's purpose, content or belonging in matriculation, as it will simply become part of the normal process in joining the university. In saying that, reviews, upgrades and improvements will always be desirable.

Timeline | January 2024 | Academic Year 2023/24



Student Voice



Student Opinion Survey

The importance of student opinion cannot be understated. Whether a university survey is asking about the curriculum, student experience, or blended learning during COVID, it is highly valuable to understand the viewpoint of students, especially if decisions are to be made at the highest levels of the institution. The working group thought it was crucial for this paper to include direct evidence of the student opinion relating to this proposal. A short survey was circulated to several academic schools across university and shared around social media platforms. The student led survey was designed to be very brief to capture the general student opinion in a quick and conclusive manner. Three questions were put to survey responders, and no questions sought to clarify specific characteristics such as gender, age, or ethnicity. The working group did not feel such details were necessary, especially since this proposal is focussed on the student body as a whole.

Integrity of Survey Data

Only students within the University of Dundee were able to complete the survey, this was ensured using Microsoft forms, with students being required to sign into the survey via their student emails. Only one response per student was permitted.

Response Turnout



The working group originally hoped to receive at least 1000 responses, so the final turnout was somewhat disappointing. In saying that, this survey was released close to the DUSA elections, which had a very low turnout itself, and may have been a distraction alongside the busy assessment period. The declining turnout of students in elections and surveys is clearly a problem on a national scale, and not just our student body. After some feedback, future projects and surveys of this nature would be best launched at the start of a semester or before reading week. Nevertheless, over 900 responses will likely capture the wider student opinion, as it is still a significant number of student respondents that is likely to be a clear cross-section of our community.

Further Feedback Opportunities

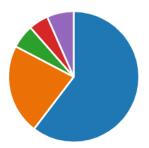
As this section will explain, students were also invited to provide written or oral feedback in any way they wished. We received over 40 written emails, all dealing with different concerns and positive suggestions. DUSA also supported this initiative through setting up their own feedback channel, as a supporting organisation. The DUSA led data is also presented in this section.

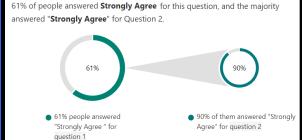
Survey Data Summary¹⁴

The University of Dundee should implement a short module as part of the student matriculatio process, designed to educate and raise awareness on matters surrounding Gender Based Violence and Consent, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Environmental Sustainability and Academic Integrity. * Student Opinion | Core Pre-Matriculation Awareness Module Strongly Agree Agree This proposal calls for the future implementation of a core pre-matriculation awareness module for all students, which would be a mandatory element of student matriculation at the University of Dundee. This proposal recommends an all-encompassing awareness module that includes matters of consent, genderbased violence (GBV), equality, diversity and inclusion, climate change and sustainable action, and acade integrity. Each section may include a variety of interactive scenarios, examples, definitions, legalities and The proposed module could help create a better understanding of important issues that affect us as a student community, and such a module will help ensure all students arrive to Dundee University with a more equal level of awareness around the proposed topics. signposting. A proposal paper is currently being developed by a working group, which will then be submitted to the university. The paper will include this survey data, and also present the underlying rationale, research, proposed structures and alternative recommendations. The proposed structure of the module will by no means act as the final design. It is inevitable that several consultations will need to take place with different stakeholders and student services, and various student groups may need to be formed to contribute to the modules layout and content. This will be a large effort, and will take a considerable amount of time, hence why the paper and all related campaigning refers to future implementation. . As a Dundee University student, do you feel there is a lack of readily available training and education on the issues that the proposed module would cover? $\,^*$ We hope to have the finalised paper published and available to students as soon as possible, once all research, consultations and student council voting has concluded. **Before students submit their opinion in this survey, it is important to mention that this proposal will not To an extent focus on any section of the module to be graded as such, nor would students be required to resubmit any of their answers/selected options. The proposal (at this stage) is not calling for a pass/fail test. Additionally, I don't know the proposal will highlight that a lengthy completion time would be undesirable at this stage* O No

 The University of Dundee should implement a short module as part of the student matriculation process, designed to educate and raise awareness on matters surrounding Gender Based Violence and Consent, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Environmental Sustainability and Academic Integrity.





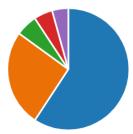


For the overall proposal, 82% of respondents (749) either strongly agreed or agreed to the implementation of a mandatory awareness module. 6% were neutral (53). 12% of respondents opposed this module. This data immediately indicates strong student support for this proposal.

¹⁴ Link to Data Summary

2. The proposed module could help create a better understanding of important issues that affect us as a student community, and such a module will help ensure all students arrive to Dundee University with a more equal level of awareness around the proposed topics.

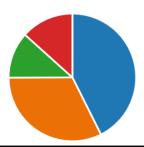


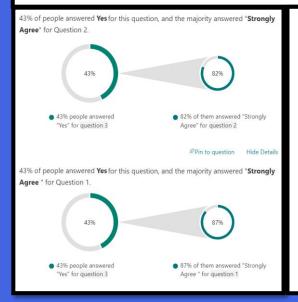


An overwhelming 85% of respondents either agreed (233) or strongly agreed (537) to the suggestion that this module would achieve its core aim of building awareness and understanding. This data indicates that while some students oppose the module, they still agree it could be effective in achieving its aims. However, 9% of respondents still disagreed.

3. As a Dundee University student, do you feel there is a lack of readily available training and education on the issues that the proposed module would cover?







This question was included to gather insight about current resources and training available to students, with 43% of respondents (386) feeling there is a lack of readily available training and resources which the proposed module would cover. Whilst this response rate is considerably lower than other results, 32% of respondents (293) still feel there is a shortage to some extent. 12% of respondents (106) did not know, and 13% did not feel there was a lack of readily available resources. This data highlights a clear need for better placement and promotion of training and resources, which we strongly believe to be achievable through placing a mandatory module within the student matriculation process.

Additional Student Feedback

Samples of (anonymised) email feedback from students

Email re. Length of module, grading, and trigger warnings

To: School President - Social Science

Hello,

This email is in response to the pre-matriculation module proposal.

I would like to start by saying that educating new students on academic integrity, sustainability policies, and the services provided by the university is extremely important, and I feel that this information should be provided to all students.

This proposed module seems to cover many topics and I feel that due to the length of the module, some of the proposed topics (GBV, issues surrounding consent, racism, misogyny) may not be covered to the extent they should be. I am not sure how effective a short module would be in teaching proper conduct, and whether this module would change the attitudes and actions of those who already intend on harming others. The email also stated that the module is not graded, and cannot be failed, meaning that those who still do not understand issues around consent, racism, etc. would still be able to continue with their studies. In addition to this, topics such as consent may upset students who have experienced sexual assault/harassment.

I hope you appreciate that I am not trying to dismiss these issues and I recognise that a lot of thought has gone into this project.

Kind Regards,

Email re. Additional feedback, focus on debate, interactivity

From:

Subject: Matriculation Awareness Module Proposal

Hello Cameron,

My name isand I am astudent. I just received your email about the matriculation awareness module proposal, and I think it is a fantastic idea. I filled in the survey, and I wanted to suggest that maybe a section could be added for people to submit any additional comments or ideas they might have. I am sure a lot of students will have interesting thoughts on the matter, and it would be nice to have a place to voice. them.

On my part, I think that the topics that the module aims to address are key, but I would like to comment that I think a focus should be drawn upon debate. I think it is great that students are given information on those topics, but I believe that this module would be a great way to encourage students to voice their opinion on the matters. Furthermore, I think making the module debate and interaction focussed (as opposed to a unilateral flow of information from lecturer to new students) would make it more appealing to students.

I really hope the project moves forward and think it would be great if you could keep all students in the loop and give them space and time to voice their opinions on the matter.

Kind regards,

Email re. Module grading

To: Cameron Irons (Student)

Dear Cameron,

After reading into your proposal, I was immediately interested in the idea and wanted to share some feedback, as per your invitation for student input.

As a female student and current president of the.......i believe I can speak for a large portion of the student community when I say this module would be effective, so long as it is done in the correct manner.

I want to be very clear, this module needs to have a graded element. Otherwise, this will simply act as a performative and tokenistic module if you do not include a pass requirement. If you want to raise awareness and provide a learning resource, you need to somehow consolidate that learning and allow the university to ensure that students understand what is expected of them.

As a female student, I would not feel comfortable attending university with others who have not demonstrated that they understand the concepts included within the module, if it does not include a grade/pass mark...students could simply bypass the content without engaging. Similarly, if they complete a test on the content, but do not need to pass, this would have dangerous implications as to what we are accepting at the University of Dundee.

Myself and several others to my knowledge, have personally experienced disgusting behaviour from other students within the university. This behaviour includes sexual harassment, misogyny to the highest degree, and racism. This is why I must stress the importance of setting a standard.

I do really think this module is worthwhile and very much needed, and I think it is an appropriate move, but please consider these concerns and I wish you all the best with the project.

Best wishes,

Email re. Additional feedback and student co-designing

I just wanted to send you an email to share some thoughts on your proposed matriculation module.

Having spoken with some friends about this, some of them currently studying at the University of St. Andrews (which has their own matriculation training), they were quite shocked that Dundee had nothing similar within their registration at all. I am aware that their student union and other societies were involved in pushing for the module, and it is fantastic to see it happening here! However, I do feel there has been little opportunity for this to be open for wider student input. I would love to be a part of this, I understand you can't invite too many students to support the project, but if the module goes ahead can you please make sure that we have a chance to get involved. I would particularly love to engage with the climate change topic, as it is something I believe Dundee can do much more with, especially regarding awareness and taking action. I hope this works out well and thank you for bringing it forward.

Yours sincerely

Email re. St Andrews University matriculation module (in reply to a query)

As a current student at the University of Dundee, but also a former employee at the University of St Andrews where such pre-matriculation modules are compulsory, I fully support the proposal to implement such modules at the University of Dundee. I believe it is crucial that students are involved in the design and implementation of those modules.

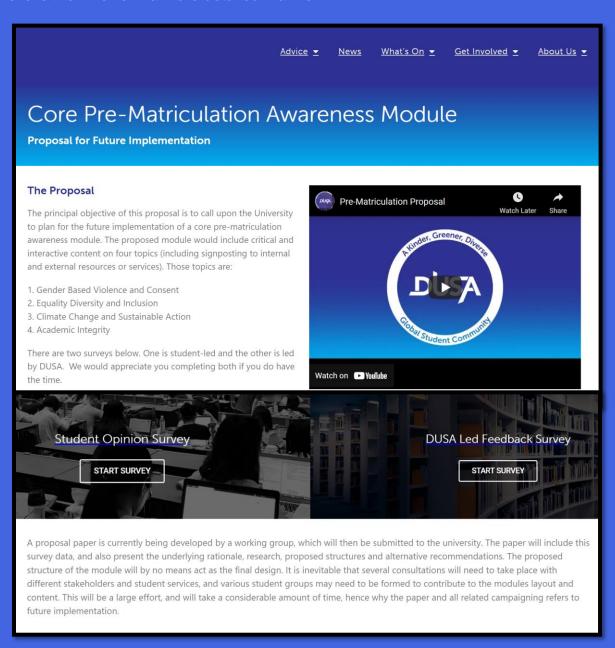
The TESA module (Training in Environmental and Sustainability Action) was created by two students at UofStA. This module later went on to win a Green Gown award and will form part of the University's legacy as we adapt and build resilience in light of the climate crisis. I feel this really shows the benefits of engaging students in this process and helps to ensure the content is relatable, accessible and provides a real learning experience for students, rather than just a tick-box exercise.

I do feel that the University should look to go further and introduce a mandatory pass mark for each module, to avoid the appearance of simply paying lip-service to what are extremely serious topics and could help foster a more tolerant, understanding and respectful University community.

BW

DUSA-Led Feedback Channel

After extensive consultations with DUSA and the student council, it was agreed that further feedback and promotion would be appropriate after the DUSA election period. A specific page on the DUSA website was developed to allow students to read into the proposal and watch the associated video message, before giving students a chance to share their views in a more detailed manner.¹⁵



¹⁵ Pre-Matriculation Module Survey (dusa.co.uk)

DUSA-Led Data Samples

Below are samples from the DUSA feedback channel. This channel gave students the opportunity to expand on their support or opposition of the proposal through written comments. Most respondents said broadly similar points, so the most frequent comments have been presented below. Students were asked, through a separate survey, if they were in support or opposition of the proposal. They were then asked to explain why. Green comments are supporting respondents who explain their support, red comments are opposing respondents.

"These modules will help create a better culture on campus but also give students awareness of issues that are important once they leave university"

"Matriculation is already a lengthy process. I don't want to do something else that gets in the way. I'm all for having an optional module post matriculation"

"I generally agree with this but people are allowed to have different opinions on these matters so it depends on what the subject material would be. There are issues like the inclusion of trans females in female sport that even those supportive of the trans community do not agree with.

Generally, I do think it's pointless, as I've found university students to be the most aware of these societal issues as a whole"

"Incredibly important that students know about these issues and should've been implemented a long time ago. Several other schools already have modules like this, Dundee is just behind"

"To ensure all students on campus have a core understanding of important issues"

"As someone who has experienced the topics mentioned in the survey who didn't get sufficient help from uni despite reporting I would find it quite triggering for me to complete this"

"Education is the best way to eradicating ignorance"

"The current resources on these subjects are inadequate, not visible enough and only optional. Also, these are directly applicable to the diverse and dynamic nature of work and life we find ourselves in"

Points of Clarification | FAQs

Below is a collection of the most frequently asked questions from both staff and students relating to this proposal. All these questions were raised either online, through emails, during stakeholder meetings, during working group planning, during focus groups and on campus. Each of the FAQs (in blue) include a short answer (in red) that hopefully provides clarification.

(1) "This is a very large project that will require a lot of work and time, how is this going to proceed?"

This proposal is indeed asking for a lot, and it is something that will not happen immediately. In saying this, we have developed this paper as a record of the student wishes. We have included a proposed implementation strategy too, which could act as a guide for moving forward. This project will likely proceed with university level consultations.

(2) "There are already resources and training available, what is the point in this?"

We are very aware of the training and resources available to students; however, they are all optional and barely promoted. Based on our student data and widespread staff consultations, these resources are engaged with at very low rates. This proposal will hopefully make similar resources mandatory, thereby combating these issues.

(3) "What are you hoping to solve in proposing a matriculation module?"

This module is not a conclusive solution to the issues proposed, but we believe it could be a strong and moral step in the right direction. Empowering and equipping the student body with core knowledge and awareness is vital in both the short and long-term. This module might well solve disengagement with training and awareness, it might not, but it is certainly better to do something than to do absolutely nothing. We should be doing more. This proposal is simply an attempt at doing more.

(4) "How can one module effectively cover all four sections, and why have these topics been prioritized over other issues?"

The proposed module will obviously be unable to effectively deal with four key issues such as these ones, especially if it is to be a matriculation level course. Many training courses or awareness modules of a similar nature do not seek to provide an extensive program, but instead strive to provide students/staff with a basic and critical understanding, but that is not to say we cannot propose each topic to include further reading, resources, and signposting.

(5) "This seems like a very woke and left-wing driven project that is essentially indoctrination, how can the university justify imposing this on the student body?"

We take a firm stance in saying that this proposal is not about forcing through a viewpoint. Raising awareness, empowering students through education and providing crucial guidance is not meant to be politically influenced – particularly for this proposal. We also do not believe that diversity, academic integrity, sexual harassment/violence, or the climate is anything to do with a political or woke agenda. This proposal even aims to encourage debate and to spark educational discussions, which totally interrupts any suggestion that this is some form of indoctrination.

(6) "As a BAME student, I fully support the premise of this proposal, but myself and many others are concerned about this ending up as another tokenistic and patronizing initiative, how will this be avoided?"

This is one of our deepest concerns. We fully appreciate the concern that this module could be ineffective and contrary to what our aims are - particularly for the proposed diversity section. After speaking with several groups of students and departments, we believe it is paramount to push for student co-designing. This strategy might well ensure that certain areas of content would not be viewed as tokenistic or patronizing. Moreover, we also accept that some students feel that a module simply does not go far enough, which is a very fair position, but this is merely one large step that will potentially lead to further steps in the future.

(7) "Assuming this would only be for incoming freshers, would current students in other levels be able to take the module if and when it is implemented?"

If the module was to be implemented in September 2023 for example, we are proposing that all current students at the university at that time, should be required to sit it upon matriculation or re-matriculation. Thereafter, it would perhaps only be for incoming students, but such a policy could change if additions/upgrades were made that necessitate re-taking the module beyond your first year.

(8) "Have you considered trigger warnings...some of the proposed content might be very difficult for certain students emotionally, or what of those who cannot physically/ mentally take the module?"

We certainly have! We carefully provided trigger/content warnings throughout our proposal, communications, and consultations, so we would expect the proposed module to have clear content warnings with corresponding support information. For those who would be deeply affected or triggered with some sections, there may be a policy for those to "sit out" of certain sections, but this is a matter beyond the scope of our proposal. For those who may be physically or mentally incapacitated, we fully appreciate how this could raise challenges, but this is also beyond the scope of our current efforts.

(9) "Several students, particularly international students, might have less time to prepare for university enrollment. How long will students have to complete it? What if applicants decide to accept Dundee just days before the completion deadline for the matriculation module?"

This was one of the most frequently raised concerns during our consultations. Due to the fragmented timeline of student applicants who accept their offers/join the university, it is important for this issue to be addressed at the earliest stage of any future planning. Some stakeholders have suggested that this issue might be addressed in allowing some students (who do not have time to complete the module) to be recorded as "partially matriculated," which would allow certain students to proceed with their studies without completing the module. In these situations, the students could be given a period to complete the module during the semester. Alternatively, it has been suggested that students in these situations could have until re-matriculation the following academic session to complete the module. For those who join the university outside of the main intake (such as second semester), it is presumed they would have to complete the module in a separate window, just as they would normally matriculate during this period.

(10) "Would this module not infringe the principles of academic freedom and the freedom of speech and opinion?"

Academic freedom and free speech are incredibly important facets of university life and our wider society. We firmly believe that raising awareness on issues such as racism, gender-based violence and sexual conduct can be delivered in a manner that is in no way damaging to these freedoms. The proposed sections strive for greater understanding, they could well open a space for the uncomfortable conversations, to spark discussions and foster a culture of awareness in a healthy and balanced way. This module could strengthen these very freedoms and opportunities to partake in honest and respectful discussions.

(11) "Would the University not be anxious about this module putting off prospective students?"

We strongly oppose any notion that this module would put off prospective students. Our extensive student feedback reflects these feelings. Our engagement with students and staff within St Andrews university (current and former) have suggested that recruitment is in no way an issue when it comes to their core-student training. Several staff and students across our university have also stated that this module could do the opposite, as prospective students may look upon this institution as one that takes these issues more seriously than others, with clear complaint procedures, clear policies, and with a forward looking and compassionate attitude.

(12) "Don't the University have bigger priorities and problems that they need to focus on? Why would the University bosses accept this over other things?"

We believe this proposal, for all intents and purposes, is directly attuned to the university and its core aims and current priorities. There is no doubt that diversity, sustainability, student safety and good academic practice are all in the forefront of the institution's priorities. We strongly believe this proposed module advances these priorities and enhances us as an institution in many ways. In saying this, we acknowledge that the university are very busy, and this proposal may not be executed immediately.

(13) "How can you be sure that this module would encourage discussion and debate, how would this even help?"

Whilst we cannot be fully certain that this matriculation module will instantly stimulate wider discussions, there is no doubt that placing such topics within student matriculation will start to increase the comfortability and awareness around these issues. In the long term, this proposed module might encourage further initiatives, events and projects that continue the momentum already achieved. Open discussions and all-encompassing debates are incredibly beneficial and a key aspect of university life.

Focus Group Discussions | Summary

The working group made every effort to consult with students from all walks of life, courses, levels, and those with very different opinions around this proposal. Small talks were held online and on campus. We have not disclosed any names of the (unofficial) focus group participants within this paper, as anonymity was crucial to ensure honest contributions. We hope the information below is useful in presenting further student opinion and constructive feedback. We have made efforts to ensure that students we consulted were diverse, we have also tried to present the discussions in an unbiased and fair way.



Discussion with Five Male Students

A series of small talks were held throughout the second semester of the 21/22 session. Five students, who were never directly involved within the working group or project, were keen to engage in feedback. The text below summarizes the core feedback provided. The students involved wished to remain anonymous for this paper, but they were willing to provide further feedback in closed settings, upon request.

There was a clear understanding about why such a module would exist. Two students did not like how "forceful" it sounded but were willing to understand more. They said their support depended upon whether it would be graded, and if it were not, they would feel more comfortable with the concept of a mandatory matriculation task. Four of the students agreed that they would not think twice about doing the module, especially if they were in first year. They stated they "would just get on with it, if the University asked us to do so." One student disagreed, saying he would have been "put off" coming to the University if he knew of the module. The group also brought up how carefully structured the content needed to be, as it could offend some students. Two students advocated for student participation in the content itself, one of the group members said he was willing to help with the EDI section. One student commented on how pointless the climate action section would be, not least because of the irreversibility of the climate crisis.

All were in consensus about having a shorter module that only provided the basics, due to the time commitment and disengagement of a longer course. Three students commented that they already knew most of the issues, so the module should only be a reminder or an overview, but they did agree signposting was important. One student said the GBV and consent section sounded daunting, and it would not prevent further incidents. Other students disagreed, saying that it would at least make the consequences clear, and the content should act as a strong deterrent and eye-opener. Some raised their worries that they would feel targeted as males. They stressed they would not want to be made to "feel personal guilt" or to forcibly accept that they are part of some wider problem. If they are to feel as welcome and involved as everyone, they want the module to be balanced, fair and not coming from a one-sided perspective. Overall, the group were generally positive and provided very constructive feedback.

Discussion with Five Female Students

A series of small talks were held throughout the second semester of the 21/22 session. Five students, some of whom were involved with the project, were keen to engage in feedback. The text below summarizes the core feedback provided. The students involved wished to remain anonymous for this paper, but they were willing to provide further feedback in closed settings, upon request.

The issue around recruitment implications was the first topic raised. Four of the students totally rejected the suggestion that this module could put students off from choosing Dundee University and said that it would have actually "attracted them more" with some commenting on the messaging around safety, the Universities serious attitudes and a better culture of awareness and open discussions. One student raised a personal experience around sexual harassment, stating they have been subjected to various levels of abuse by other students on and off campus. This student also noted that the GBV and consent section is desperately needed. All of the students agreed that the module would not necessarily stop future incidents, but it could act as a warning and spread vital awareness, especially for students who might have otherwise been oblivious to potential support and complaints procedures within the University framework. Two students also raised an issue around consent, explaining that they have witnessed or fell victim to several incidents within University night life. They stated that students have no room to oppose an increased understanding, as many do not appreciate the extent of the impacts it can have. These discussions in particular were emphatic of the reality that consent is not an option, so greater understanding it should also be absolutely mandatory. One student commented on safety around campus and said they would definitely feel more comfortable if there was an awareness module at the very start of student intakes, which would ensure more students felt secure in the knowledge of what to do, where to go and who to speak with.

One student highlighted that they did not personally agree with the proposal in its current format, and so they opposed the survey questions. The reasoning was due to the other topics of climate action and academic integrity. This person was concerned that having the four topics together in a module would overshadow the severely important issues of consent, violence, and racism. They said that if the GBV/consent topic were made mandatory with the diversity section, and not the other two topics, they would support the proposal more. Two other students partially agreed with this feeling, stating that an alternative option could be to limit the extent of the academic integrity and climate topics, allowing more content to be delivered on the consent and diversity topics. This suggestion was popular.

The group were in full agreement that the current GBV and consent module "sounded effective" in its content and delivery. Only one student in the group had completed it, who explained the module and her experience with it. Most of the group raised the point that because this module was optional and well-hidden, they did not know of it until these very discussions. They also stated that in order to address the fact that students do not have much time during the semester, the best strategy would be to make it mandatory. The whole group agreed that this would send out the right message, make the module effective and engage students better.

Proposal Working Group Deliberations – Mixed Student Group

Several focused discussions were dedicated to the proposed section topics. Below are the summaries of our conversations on the four proposed sections.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Training

The working group strongly wished to prioritise this section, given the subject matter and wider issues facing the university and wider community. All of the working group agreed that the Race Equality Charter Report exposed deeply shocking realities amongst our own student and staff communities. Many students within the group were steadfast in saying there was little need to justify imposing a mandatory training course for all students on EDI issues. Two students raised the fact that our own staff must complete various EDI training as part of their employment with the institution, and so the question is raised as to why students are able to join the university without such training.

Three students highlighted that they had personally faced abuse and discrimination during their time within the university, most commonly by fellow students within levels 1 and 2. These students commented on how several freshers come from a vast array of backgrounds, cultures and upbringings that mean the risk of racism, bigotry and abuse is very high. They also suggested that this was partly related to the lack of understanding, compassion, and sensitivity on the topics that the proposed EDI section might cover. All of the working group agreed that any education and awareness around these issues might help in bringing about a more inclusive, tolerant, and warmer culture. Two senior working group members openly admitted their lack of understanding, even after attending secondary education, as university life exposes students to far more diversity and culture. These members felt that if they had mandatory EDI training at the very start of their student careers, they would have been far more mindful of certain comments and attitudes that might harm others.

One student was very firm in his anger around the lack of clarity around complaints procedures and the encouragement from the university to open up about abuse and EDI issues. He stressed that had he been given this information within matriculation, particularly through an EDI module, then he would have felt more comfortable in knowing that the university have certain policies, procedures, and protections.

Gender Based Violence and Consent

The group, just like the EDI section, wish for this issue to be of the higher priority. Much of our discussions were around direct student safety, known victims within our community and several ongoing incidents across the university that we wish to leave out of this paper. In saying that, the group were in firm agreement that consent and GBV awareness is unequivocally necessary and long overdue. All members undertook the GBV resource on MyDundee, and most agreed that this course was ideal as part of the wider matriculation training. Some members wished for it to go further, suggesting the inclusion of relevant signposting and internal university policies. All members could provide several first-hand accounts of incidents within their university experience involving GBV and consent. All members agreed this section must be implemented as soon as possible, given the safety, decency, and wider societal elements behind it.

Academic Integrity Section

General consensus around the growing need for awareness and training on academic integrity. The group acknowledged the different rules and procedures for different schools, but a generalized and basic understanding is critical within matriculation. There was emphasis on making this information more engaging and crystal clear around the consequences in situations of breaches. The group agreed that this topic would probably be the least demanded and should take less of a priority. Student feedback strongly reflects this point. Members also raised the impact of COVID and the revised learning and teaching format, which strengthens the calls for further guidance, particularly within matriculation and especially due to the alteration of particular rules. Members also agreed that the current information, resources, and video tutorials are under promoted, disengaging and do not reach the masses effectively. Members generally agreed that the main motive for this proposed section is influenced by the severity of breaches, which can be avoided through greater understanding, deterrence, and early access to information (via matriculation).

Climate Change and Sustainable Action Section

This proposed section was admittedly discussed with a smaller sense of priority and passion. However, there was no dispute amongst the group in acknowledging the severity and necessity for greater action as a university and through individual action. The group also agreed that the challenges we face as a society and as a civilization are as relevant, if not more, to us as students in an educational and research sphere. The group firmly supported any increase in awareness around sustainable action, and some students commented on their own lack of personal understanding in taking independent actions to live more sustainably. Actions such as sustainable travel, second hand clothing, waste management, recycling, energy usage and dietary choices were all discussed in depth. Moreover, the group discussed the wider issue as an institution. It was suggested that the University environmental policies and sustainability strategy should be made abundantly clear to students, allowing greater accountability, and strengthening our student communities' attitudes towards a greener and safer future. This section could also provide resources and information that encourages students to get more involved with local and national initiatives, giving the Dundee student body opportunities to make a wider impact. Overall, the group were very keen on raising awareness on this issue, all agreeing this could be an extremely advantageous and topical area that would only make the University look all the more forward looking, committed and innovative in their strategies, attitudes, and impact.

Notwithstanding the survey respondents and wider engagement, we hope this project has involved contributions from a large group of students. Should any element of this proposal be accepted, there are a wide range of students who are very keen to continue engaging with the project where they can, particularly those involved within the working group and informal focus groups.

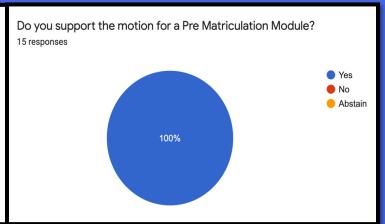
Student Representative Council | Supporting Motion

The SRC is one of the oldest student bodies at this university. The SRC has been responsible for raising the student voice since the university was founded. It is an elected body of students that has a series of important responsibilities which make sure that students have a lead role in deciding what DUSA should be fighting for on the student's behalf. The SRC consists of the DUSA executive and staff, School Presidents, representative students, and the Sports Union President.

SRC Student Representative Council

SRC Action on Proposal

A motion was presented to the SRC on the 5th of April 2022. Much of this paper was examined by councillors, who then proceeded to vote on whether they should officially support this proposal. Out of the fifteen councillors eligible to vote in the proceedings, 100% voted in favour. The SRC thus agreed that the university should consider this proposal in full. The SRC urge the UEG and all relevant stakeholders to meet and discuss this paper, and subsequently begin to plan its development. This was one of the only 21/22 motions to receive unanimous support.



Council Statement

"As the main governing body of students within the university, we are incredibly optimistic about the potential that this proposed module has to offer. We are a council made up of student leaders and representatives across a very diverse student body, from different schools and studies, yet we believe the proposed matriculation module is one for all and a benefit for all. This is something that the council are fully and proudly behind. This module could go beyond awareness building, it is symbolic of our university in its efforts to go that step further, to listen to its students and make necessary changes. There is nothing more powerful than education, this module provides education on some of the most pivotal issues that we face, ones that we have agreed do not get communicated enough."

Module Grading Debate

One of the most discussed aspects of this proposal is whether the module should be graded / include a pass or fail requirement. The working group were aware that this would be one of the most prevalent points within student feedback. Most students who provided feedback were clearly in favour of grading the module. This proposal was circulated to several students with the general position that the module would only be mandatory, and not necessarily graded. Nevertheless, students still strongly support the module proposal, and they support it as a mandatory aspect of matriculation. Below is a broad summary of the main arguments in support and opposition of grading the module. These arguments have been collated from direct student feedback, consultations and working group discussions.

Supporting Arguments	Opposing Arguments
Making the module graded would inevitably mean greater student engagement and attention. Students would not be able to proceed without attaining a specified grade. Students would have to absorb the information and consider the issues, before applying what they have learned in a test or quiz.	This module has never been done before within the university, so it may be argued that a less "extreme" version of the module should be trialed first, one that is still mandatory, but not graded.
Student feedback suggests how important it is for a module of this nature to be mandatory, so it would be directly reflective of the strong view held by several students (over 50) who have provided open feedback.	Grading the module would impose further logistical and recording challenges for departments that might oversee the module.
Grading the module or applying a pass/fail requirement would help avoid the view that it would be yet another tokenistic and patronizing attempt to tick another box that allows the university to state they have this module- but they do not properly enforce it and take it seriously.	A very small number of students (approximately 3) have expressed direct concern that grading the module would be indoctrinating and unfair, they would feel forced to be associated with a score on matters that some believe to be points of debate.
Grading the module would be in essence, a declaration that all students accept and adhere to the universities core policies, standards, rules, and principles.	Some students may not fully understand the issues due to external factors such as cultural perspectives, which makes the grading requirement problematic.

¹⁶ Please refer to the samples of further student feedback (email snapshots)

Working Group Discussion on Module Grading

The clear position of the working group on this issue was directly reflective of the wider student feedback, they were in full support of making the module mandatory. With regards to grading the module, most of the group favoured this, or at the very least, supported the calls for each section to include a reflective guiz that must be undertaken to allow students to proceed.

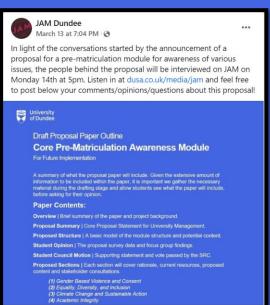
Members in favour of grading the module raised the points already presented within this section. One member stated that they would be in opposition to the proposal, if it were to not include any graded element. Two members commented that omitting to grade the module sections would allow students to simply sail through the content, without any confirmation that they have understood, engaged, or even thought about any of the issues. Most members agreed this would ultimately render the entire premise of the module as pointless.

Two members raised comments in disagreement with the above feelings, where it was suggested that if the module were mandatory (but not graded), it would still very much have a purpose- as "it would be better to have something over nothing, and nothing is where we currently are." Those members explained that because students would have to physically go through the content, the exposure was still going to have an impact. The module would still (potentially) include vital signposting, guidance and would raise caution around certain issues.

Overall, the working group acknowledged that the module grading issue is not the most pivotal aspect of the proposal, as we are not in a position to make those calls and the proposal had not yet taken any shape. It was generally agreed that because of the early stage we were at, the grading discussion may arise again in the future.

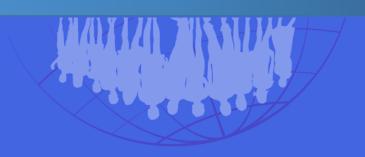
The biggest priority for the working group was focusing on mandatory courses and training being placed within the mandatory process of matriculation. Any monitoring of student results within any potential training would ultimately remain confidential, and any poor grades would never amount to anything anyway.





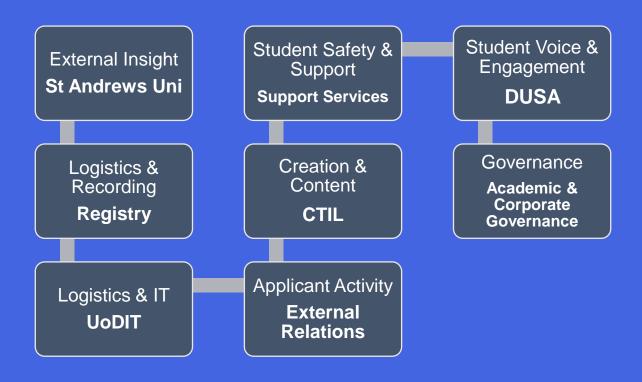


Stakeholder Consultations



Stakeholder Consultations | Overview

During the student opinion phase of this project, the working group met with various departments and associations across university. The decision to consult with the following departments was based upon their specific work and the areas that they manage, areas which we believe to be very relevant should this proposal be implemented. We also thought it was crucial to gain as much insight, advice, and information from a more technical and professional perspective. Each consultation has been summarised and dated in the following section.



It is hoped that the university can see in the following section that there is widespread interest and positivity for this project. While each department acknowledged the scale and demand that this proposal entails, they were all very enthusiastic and willing to support the modules development and implementation when required. Each of the consultations lasted around 40-60 minutes. Brief sets of minutes were taken.

The Centre for Educational Enhancement and Development (CEED) provides joined-up learning and teaching support to staff and students, combining educational development, pedagogical workshops, technology enhanced learning and IT skills, and academic and study skills support. CEED's remit supports the University strategy and their initiatives feed into the People and Digital enabling strategies. CEED's work has alignment to the Education supporting strategy which sets out their aim providing world-leading teaching and learning.

Meeting with CEED (January 2022)

Catriona Wilson FCIPD
Director of CEED

CEED is one of the core departments within the University of St Andrews. CEED are responsible for all matriculation activity, particularly the pre-matriculation "core student training" modules. St Andrews University students must complete a range of modules prior to officially starting as a student, which includes training on consent, Diversity and Inclusion, Environmental Sustainability and Academic Integrity. (Postgraduate students must complete additional training on research ethics and standards).

CEED made it very clear why they implemented the core training. They explained that several students campaigned for greater awareness around these issues, their student body were directly calling for the core training. St Andrews at that time (approximately two years ago) had several training/awareness resources already available to students. albeit voluntary and under engaged. They explained that the university thought it would be wise to collate all these modules into matriculation, both to satisfy the student demand and make use of the resources they already developed. The modules are now a mandatory part of matriculation which need to be completed to matriculate. CEED explained that the general student experience was overwhelmingly positive, and based upon extensive feedback and reviews, students felt gratitude and pride in the fact that their university were requiring students to have a deeper and equal level of understanding on key issues, particularly sexual harassment, and consent. CEED also said one of the biggest benefits around the modules was the way it sparks very important conversations across the student body. Several students made it clear the training was a necessary and overdue addition to matriculation, one that brings about far more benefits than difficulties. CEED emphasized that the modules are not a conclusive solution, but they are certainly an effective measure to create better awareness, stimulate debate and provide very important information to their students.

The St Andrews Matriculation Modules | What we know

As part of St Andrews matriculation, students must complete several core student training workshops that reflect topics that are important to the University community and relate to the core values of our university strategy. The topics are diversity, good academic practice, consent, environmental awareness, and research integrity (postgraduate only).

TESA Module (Sustainability)

Training in Environmental Sustainability Action (for students)

Training in Environmental Sustainability Action (TESA) is an online course for all students at their university. TESA is mandatory for all students as part of their matriculation. TEES offers awareness and training on climate justice, guidance on participating in local community initiatives, cycling initiatives and more. Students access this course through Moodle (like our MyDundee platform).¹⁷ This course was developed by students at the university.

Consent Module

"We are very proud to have successfully made our consent module a mandatory step of online student matriculation from 2020. Members of our committee continue to work alongside the University in annual reviews and updates to the module." - GotConsent@st-andrews.ac.uk

The University of St Andrews requested the "Got Consent" branch of their student union to adapt a module from their in-person workshops. The module aims to change the general student understanding of sex and consent, and a change in the way that assault, rape, and abuse are viewed and treated by the university. The Got consent initiative and their student union were calling for this to be made mandatory for years. They confirm that the module is not enough on its own to create a culture of consent in St Andrews, but it is a strong first step. They believe this module puts all the incoming students on a more level playing field in terms of a shared definition of consent, knowledge of bystander intervention, as well as the University policies and procedures.¹⁸

TGAP (Integrity Module)

Training in Good Academic Practice (TGAP) is an online module students will complete when they first matriculate at the University of St Andrews. The module

^{17 &}lt;u>Learning - Sustainability - University of St Andrews (st-andrews.ac.uk)</u>

¹⁸ Got Consent? (yourunion.net)

helps students understand the values underpinning all forms of academic work within the University, and helps students become acquainted with policies and procedures around research integrity and academic practice.

St Andrews place emphasis on the fact that university is vastly different in terms of structure, meaning independent learning is central to student progress. Thus, in adapting to university standards and expectations can be challenging for people of all levels and abilities. St Andrews strongly believe a short matriculation resource is a helpful step in settling students in. TGAP helps students understand how to avoid plagiarism, multiple submission, data falsification, false citation, cheating in exams, aiding, and abetting, coercion, and contract cheating. Students can also find the TGAP module on Moodle.¹⁹

Diversity Training

The St Andrews Diversity Awareness training module, in its initial form, was not overly popular amongst students. It was condemned by some for its lack of diversity and its treatment of BAME students. The most controversial aspect was one question, which asked 'why is it important for you to be interested in equality and diversity?', which failed to provide a fair selection of answers. Criticism also stemmed from the heavy focus on diversity around employability and the lack of focus on issues of sincere importance to student wellbeing. As a result of these concerns, the module was withdrawn. However, consultations were held, and the training was re-developed with students and external providers to include more effective and sensitive content that was fit for purpose. The new diversity module is undoubtedly more embraced than the initial module.²⁰

The University is not imposing mandatory consent training tests for students, the consent training module has been included in matriculation because students wanted it there. Students have campaigned hard for the University to make these trainings, on consent, sustainability, and diversity, available to all students as part of matriculation, and the University has listened to the student demand. These modules promote awareness and encourage discussion on key issues which are incredibly important to students.

- UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

¹⁹ Academic skills - Orientation - University of St Andrews (st-andrews.ac.uk)

²⁰ The truth about the St Andrews bias test - The Post (unherd.com)

University of Dundee Consultation Registry

Registry maintains student records and runs key undergraduate and postgraduate student processes such as matriculation, tuition fee invoicing, examinations, and graduations. Registry maintain the data in the student records system, which manages the student journey from matriculation to graduation. The registry team ensures all data is recorded in accordance with university requirements and those of external funding bodies. Registry also provide a range of services to students, academic and professional services staff, senior management, committees, and schools.

Meeting with Registry (February 2022)

Dawn Tindal Head of Student Records, Fees, and Module Assessment

A meeting was held with one of the senior managers within the registry department. After briefing registry on the proposal, they expressed their support. Registry immediately highlighted the timescale challenges, explaining this would take a substantial period to plan, design and eventually implement. Registry noted that because this module would be undertaken by all enrolling students, there would then be the challenge of tracking and recording module completion by each student. A similar method would likely be adopted from the current student records systems that manage things like module/assessment progress. Registry also stressed how they would need to be involved within every logistical and technological aspect of the project, given their overarching role within matriculation. Another challenge raised by registry was the module grading aspect, should students be required to pass the module, there would then be additional work to ensure this was monitored and enforced effectively.



The Student Support Team work to help with issues or challenges that are impacting on students academically or personally during University. The team can help students to identify their needs and highlight support available.

Meeting with Student Services (April 2022)

Keith Mackle FRSA, MBPsS Assistant Director and Head of Support Services

Keith was emphatic about how he wants greater awareness around GBV and consent at the earliest possible stage, particularly within matriculation. Keith advised that GBV and consent should take precedence (alongside the diversity section) of the proposed module, based on his experience and view that these issues affect students more seriously than other topics. Keith was still very supportive of building awareness on climate action and academic integrity. Keith supported how this module could strengthen the ongoing efforts of the University in the GBV space, particularly now that we have adopted the GBV charter. Keith commented on how this module could also be about stressing the actions students can face if they do not abide by the law, the University policies etc. Keith mentioned the current GBV Prevention and Support module on MyDundee, explaining there would be little need to recreate a similar resource, given how several professionals made the content appropriate, accurate and relevant for the higher education setting. Keith suggested that this resource could simply be repositioned within matriculation, to go alongside the other proposed sections. This suggestion is consistent with our DUSA consultations and the proposed actions within this paper. He also highlighted that if the University accept this proposal, they will need to deal with how much time students would have to complete the module. Keith suggested that this could be addressed through preventing re-matriculation at level 2 if students have still not completed the module. This could allow incoming students to have ample time to complete the matriculation task throughout their first year. Keith also noted that current student service initiatives like "Live Smart" could be signposted within areas of the module, as part of any further resource sections.

Keith commented that some may worry about this module for recruitment purposes, explaining that this additional work asked of students might be off-putting. However, it was firmly agreed with Keith that these concerns are not realistic at all. In fact, the module could spread a totally different message altogether, highlighting Dundee as a positive and open institution that takes these issues very seriously, thereby becoming more welcoming and attractive to prospective students both nationally and globally.



UoDIT provide IT services and facilities for the University. They offer a range of in-person and online training.²¹

Meeting with UoDIT (April 2022)

Nic Brew Applications Analyst Developer

One of the systems operators within UoDIT that we consulted was very optimistic about this proposal, Nic believed it was very possible to execute, despite its complexities. IT explained that they could simply draft a "dummy program" to place within matriculation, which would allow for a simple transfer of any particular course that the university wish to be made part of student matriculation. Once the courses were ready, there would already be a coded program in place to handle the process. IT proposed that a link could be set up within the matriculation forms to transfer students to a platform (such as MyDundee) to allow students to complete the module(s). IT further explained the main challenges were that of recording student completion and managing completion data. This would require various departments and considerable administrative work throughout matriculation and beyond. IT suggested an easier solution to this could be to make these courses a pre-requisite of student registration, but students would not have to complete them in time for matriculation. Instead, students could be made to do the training throughout the year in their own time and by the time that re-matriculation occurs at level 2, they would have to have completed all the courses included. IT acknowledged this was not the aim of the proposal, but it did address some fundamental challenges. In saying this, IT highlighted this may mean some one-year students could bypass the required training.



Student Recruitment and Admissions handle applicants from the enquiry stages through to the application and matriculation process.²²

Meeting with External Relations (April 2022)

Karen Martin Head of Enquirer and Applicant Communications

²¹ UoDIT | University of Dundee

²² External Relations | University of Dundee

Given the extensive role this department play in handling communications with applicants (up until the point of matriculation), it was made clear by one senior manager that external relations would need to be heavily involved within the planning and implementation of this module. External relations were content with the proposed timeline, and they expressed that an academic session dedicated to developing the module would be sufficient, so long as there were clear milestones/checkpoints within the session to ensure effective progress. External relations noted that applicants currently have access to MyDundee well before they officially begin their student career, meaning there is potential for the module to be delivered via this platform. They also mentioned their potential role in communicating this module to applicants prior to completing it. One of the main challenges that they highlighted was recording which students have completed the module, and how this would be handled by registry and UoDIT.



University of Dundee Consultation

Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning (CTIL)

The University of Dundee's central digital education team. CTIL provide digital tools and services for learning and teaching, support key activities like online assessment and work with the academic community to develop and promote best practice across the University.

Meeting with CTIL (April 2022)

Edward Wood Educational Technologist

After briefing two CTIL staff members on the proposal, they made it very clear how they supported the project and wished to be involved from the ground upwards. They emphasised the importance of co-designing the module content with students and highlighted the potential for continual enhancement each year. CTIL also noted that because student applicants have an account registered with the institution relatively early on, it would be possible to make the module accessible prior to officially joining the university. They also believe that CTIL could have a key role in ensuring the content would be effective in its aims, interactivity, and user engagement. CTIL mentioned they would likely need to work closely with UoDIT, who would deal with the more technological aspects regarding module completion and recording this with registry. CTIL also suggested there could be "further reading and resources" for specific groups of students, should it be more familiar or of interest to them. CTIL are waiting on this proposal papers completion and will assist the project when and where they can.



Dundee University Students' Association is designed to improve the lives of University of Dundee students. DUSA aim to provide bespoke products and services, excellent recreational facilities, and employment opportunities, which produce lasting memories of a first-class student experience. They are a not-for-profit registered charity, independent from the University, who are led by students and supported by volunteers and Association staff. DUSA have a zero-tolerance policy and are committed to ensuring the highest standards of equality, diversity, and inclusion.²³

Meeting with DUSA (January to April 2022)

- Cheryl Ann Cruickshank DUSA Chief Executive Officer
- DUSA Executive 21/22 (DUSA President, VPC, VPA, VPSA)

DUSA were very optimistic about this project and believe there is a strong appetite for it amongst students and across university. DUSA affirmed that this proposal highlighted the influence of the student council in general and that this proposal directly aligned with the organisation's core aims. DUSA highlighted that such a module would satisfy and align with several ongoing initiatives across the university too, including the universities policies/vision on GBV and diversity. DUSA were fully willing to support the proposal in any way, including the development of a feedback channel and extensive promotion of the proposal in efforts to gather student opinion. Several current and future DUSA officers confirmed their absolute support for this proposal and emphasised their commitment to seeing it through, to leading student consultations, to assist in its development and to provide future reviews and module feedback.

DUSA advised that student co-designing could be very beneficial, as it could mean any potential matriculation module would be embraced more enthusiastically across the student community. DUSA were open-minded about the grading element, but much like the working group, the main priority at this time is ensuring that the training is placed within matriculation as mandatory tasks.

DUSA officers are the most likely to continue this project in the foreseeable future.

²³ About DUSA

University of Dundee Consultation Academic and Corporate Governance

The directorate of Academic & Corporate Governance is responsible for the support of a wide range of functions including the Court, the Senatus Academicus, and their committees, and taking forward the development of policy and procedures initiated by those bodies. They also maintain the University's policies, procedures, and regulations in relation to corporate and academic matters.²⁴

Meeting with ACG (April 2022)

Dr Neale Laker
Deputy University Secretary
Director of Academic and Corporate Governance

Neale explained that we were, in many ways, pushing through an open door at the university. From the outset, Neale explained that he was keen to see mandatory training being placed within matriculation. He said there was little need to justify this. However, Neale advised that the proposed climate change course was rather political, and the university were not best placed both in their vision and sustainable strategy to justify placing a course on the topic within matriculation. Neale further commented that the GBV and Diversity issues were of a greater priority, both in terms of student safety and the need for greater awareness. He explained that there would be little need to recreate a GBV resource, as we could just place the optional GBV resource into matriculation. Neale also indicated that any grading of the module may be unnecessary, as student attainment in such courses was not a priority. Neale also indicated that an academic integrity course may not be as effective in matriculation, as such information is best placed closer to assessment periods.

Neale was positive overall and suggested the university could make a commitment to students on implementing awareness courses, but he highlighted that a set timeline was not the most appropriate, given there is several external factors to be accounted for in the meantime. Furthermore, Neale indicated that the best strategy moving forward was to draft an executive summary of the overall proposal, particularly for senior university officials to consider in a more efficient way. Neale emphasised that direct student evidence is important, and any proposal paper must be drafted cautiously, and it is important to avoid a fully one-sided argument.

²⁴ Academic and Corporate Governance: University of Dundee

University Strategy Alignment



66

Students are at the heart of what we do, which is illustrated by our sector-leading approach to student representation²⁵

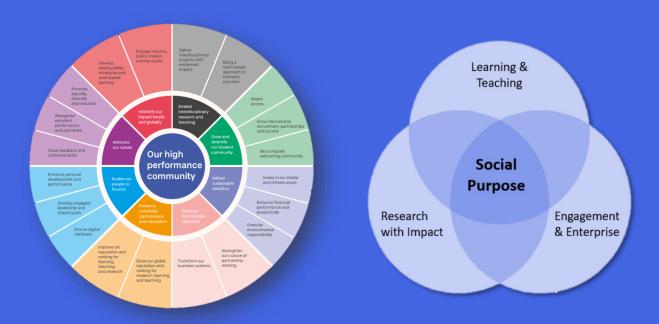
We listen to our students

Student opinion is central to our community and we are committed to responding to their feedback and driving enhancement. This is reflected in our strong and improving scores in the National Student Survey, where we are ranked in the top ten in the UK for overall satisfaction. Dundee University Students' Association (DUSA) was ranked in the top 10 in the UK and top in Scotland between 2012 to 2016 with overall satisfaction for students' associations, when this question was in use, and top in Scotland in the more recent Times Higher Student Experience Survey in 2017.

²⁵ Student partnership: University strategy: University of Dundee

University of Dundee Strategy | Overview

The university strategy contains a large amount of complex information, though it is clear from the information examined, that this is the core institutional mission for our university. It is important to demonstrate how this proposal aligns with the wider institutional mission and how it could advance it. The following section presents the case as to how the core-pre matriculation awareness module would align with the relevant aspects of the university strategy.



The university are extremely focused on enhancing its identity, and much of the strategy emphasises the importance of the university acting as an agent for social change. They believe that their social purpose includes the following elements:

- A triple intensive institution
- Passionate for their social purpose
- Focus on excellence to make a difference
- A confident and high performing community
- They are of Dundee, and for Dundee.

The Dundee Difference

The University of Dundee pride themselves on being an institution that listens, with a distinct, ongoing, and genuine commitment to the student voice. The university strategy aims to capture the student voice and continuously be influenced by it.

Alignment with Proposal

Strategy Theme	Proposal Alignment
Advancing our Values	
Valuing people by making time to listen to, help and support others.	The proposed EDI and GBV modules ensure both students and staff afford appropriate time to inform all our students of the channels to voice their concerns about EDI and GBV. This in turn illiterates the university has taken practical steps in listening to its students regarding extremely vulnerable circumstances and have provided resources for its students to support them through challenging circumstances.
Being aware of unconscious biases to be identified and overcome.	The proposed EDI module draws attention to the fact students may have unconscious bias at the very beginning of their studies at the university. This prevents a student causing unnecessary distress to another student before learning this bias may exist. Most students have no intention to cause this distress and find themselves feeling guilty for afflicting someone who is often a new friend. Students cannot be expected to identify their unconscious bias alone and the university must take responsibility to support its students in achieving this.
Recognise and respect differences, actively promoting inclusion.	The proposed EDI module addresses a heavily stigmatised issue within society from the onset of a students' studies at the university. This cultivates a culture of openness around the topic, encouraging discussions and celebrations of the differences between students. The university must set an example of acknowledging the differences we share, for students to

	learn and feel comfortable enough to share and celebrate them themselves.
Working Together	
Ensure every member of the University community is included and feels part of the bigger picture.	The proposed EDI module ensures all students from diverse backgrounds have their differences acknowledge and respected not only by their fellow students, but the management of the university and the university as an institution. By educating all entering students on the diverse nature of their cohort and how to better respect these students, inclusion of each and every student may be achieved.
Counter cynicism by encouraging productive discussion and problem solving.	The proposed EDI and GBV modules effectively address the difficult conversations that need to be had about the reality of the situations that occur on an unacceptably regular basis. By introducing the proposed modules, the university acknowledges the suffering of the victims of GBV and a lack of EDI, eliminating any suggestion of cynicism from the institution and encourages students to be less sceptical of each other. Training and support can be provided through the proposed modules, unifying the students with their university and eradicating cynicism.
Positively challenge divisive behaviour.	GVB and lack of EDI are extremely divisive topics. The proposed modules acknowledge this and thus have been curated to be the most accessible and least divisive tools possible by focussing on the issues that remain not divisive. Namely, GBV and lack of EDI are unacceptable and hinder the objectives of the university. To omit to challenge this behaviour leaves students feeling and becoming vulnerable to abuse. It would be unconscionable, therefore, to not instate the proposed EDI and GBV modules. These modules directly

	challenge, educate and address behaviour that does not align with the values of the university in a positive and educational manner.
Integrity	
Keep your word and be trustworthy.	It is imperative that our university is led by example to avoid hypocrisy in our institution. Professor Gillespie released a public statement following the Race Equality Charter survey, condemning the racist sentiments, and promising to address the discriminatory culture festering in Dundee. The proposed EDI module is a step towards addressing these concerns in addressing the ignorance of some individuals and educating others on the benefits of diversity. During the time of writing, nothing has publicly been implemented or proposed to address the concerning results of the Race Equality Charter survey, and thus it is highly recommended the proposed EDI module is instate as quickly as practically viable. Continuing to ignore the results of the survey directly diminishes the integrity of the university and belittles the challenges faced by those from minority backgrounds. A nationally reported survey highlighting the racial inequality at our university cannot simply be ignored. If there is no integrity in our university, no integrity can be expected of the students at our institution. The proposed EDI module is an effective response to the concerns raised.
Be open to challenge without defensiveness and willing to challenge without aggression.	The proposed EDI and GBV modules hope to challenge outdated, or sometimes, entirely unacceptable views some students my hold as a result of growing up in an environment where they were considered acceptable. These views may have also been

acquired over life experiences however remain incompatible with the inclusive and respectful vision of the University. It is therefore the purpose of the EDI and GBV modules to challenge these conflicting views and beliefs through a sensitive and nonaggressive manner. The medium of an educational course aims to achieve this by addressing these difficult areas as an opportunity for learning, rather than attacking the beliefs of students. The proposed modules are the most efficient and respectful way to challenge the opinions of students who may hold views which would be detrimental to other students. without resulting in aggressive or defensive confrontation.

Have the courage to question actions that are inconsistent with university values.

The proposed EDI and GBV modules will provide students with the courage to speak out against actions inconsistent with the university values, a channel to have their voices heard. It will educate and inform students on who to contact and the most efficient and productive manner to do so. Giving students the information on how to bring inconsistencies with the universities values to light is the only way these issues will come to light.

Making a difference

Focus on working well with others to get results.

The proposed EDI and GBV modules will ensure students a are equipped with the knowledge to interact and work alongside fellow students with drastically different cultures or mannerisms. These differences can sometimes cause difficulty in working together efficiently, however, the EDI module is tailored to eliminate this issue or provide resources for students to help them rectify any difficulties they may encounter. With a lack of the EDI module, students are less likely to

collaborate with students of differing backgrounds and cultures, leaving the entire university ignorant to approaches and solutions to long standing problems. The diversity that students have to offer, is often the very reason an unresolved issue is overcome as a new perspective revolutionises the approach to the solution. In a world and society that is continually changing and evolving, so must the ethical training of our students. Many mature students, as well as non-mature students, may find themselves out of touch with current societal norms, thus the EDI and GBV modules proposed will Embrace change. provide that information. With the evolution of our societal norms, these modules may be updated when required to remain current and appropriate. These proposed modules are required to address the changes in our society and to refuse implementing them will equate to ignoring that change exists in our society. **Excellence** The EDI and GBV modules will create a more unified and cohesive cohort of students who are then able to pool their creativity and initiative, helping each other exceed their own personal Nurture creativity and innovation. potential. The university itself benefits from a more collaborative student population which works collectively to produce academic excellence across all disciplines.

DUSA Strategy Alignment



The following section makes a case as to how the proposed module would align with our student association and their refreshed strategic five-year plan





²⁶ DUSA Launches Ambitious Five-Year Strategy

OUR FUTURE



Vision

A kinder, greener, diverse global student community, creating lasting impact for generations to come.



Mission

DUSA exists to represent students and provide innovative and excellent services that transform their lives.



Values

DUSA are committed to creating an environment in which all staff, volunteers and members are supported to continuously develop their talents, skills, and knowledge.

Core Values

- Dignity and Respect
- Honesty and Integrity
- Community
- Innovation

STRATEGIC GOALS



Increase influence and Impact

Increased engagement with students and becoming more representative of our diverse student population, building on our strong student voice and representative network. Improving the learning and teaching and overall student experience.



Create opportunities

Through providing students with volunteering, fundraising, employment, social and extra-curricular activities to build support networks.



Develop community

Improve equality, diversity and inclusion through development of community and sense of belonging amongst students from different backgrounds and cultures.



High quality student support
Through providing students with advice, advocacy, guidance, support and representation on housing, welfare, wellbeing and academic issues.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES





Develop physical and virtual spaces which help to achieve our strategic goals and are relevant to our

diverse, global student population.



Quality products and excellent services through developing our café culture, retail, events and support services, to meet the needs of our diverse, global student



Build Capacity

of our students, volunteers and staff through developing collaborative leadership. Improving policies, training and systems that support inclusion and innovation, enabling our people to fulfil their potential.



Improve sustainability
by being ethical and environmentally conscientious, in all that we



Create partnerships

which are mutually beneficial with University of Dundee, local businesses and community groups.



Alignment with Proposal

Future of DUSA

The future of our student's association is envisaged through a revitalised lens, a lens that is influenced by the core values of dignity and respect for others, community, honesty, integrity, and innovation. DUSA strive to be a kinder, greener, and diverse global community. It is undeniable that this proposal, in its entirety, would advance these ambitions. The module has been proposed on a very similar premise to that of DUSAs desired future, and it would certainly facilitate the necessity for universal respect and a strong sense of community.

Strategic Goals

DUSA want to increase the influence and impact of the student voice as a starting point. This goal could be hugely advanced in giving students the chance to directly shape the core matriculation module. DUSA also strive to develop community, through improving equality, diversity, and inclusion in strengthening the spirit of community and sense of belonging of students from all backgrounds and cultures. The proposed module could be central to this strategic ambition, as it would exist to create that sense of belonging and greater understanding for all. Students would be joining our university community, having just been exposed to the matriculation content, displaying the institutions bold and positive commitment to community, directly in partnership with DUSA. The association have also indicated their desire for high quality student support, through advice, advocacy, guidance, welfare, and academic support. The matriculation module could easily promote these services by DUSA on top of the universities own services, thereby making it abundantly clear to the students that they have a network of support and sense of security in all aspects of their university life.

Strategic Priorities

DUSA have several strategic priorities that will advance the association towards their vision. Most notably, DUSA wish to build capacity of their students through developing collaborative leadership, training and systems that support inclusion and innovation. The proposed matriculation module could be widely developed and supported by DUSA and their resources, which will directly align with their priorities in training and systems that facilitate inclusion. DUSA executives of the future and permanent support staff could play a key role in student reviews and focus groups that will constantly provide fresh data and student opinion on the matriculation module, if it comes into being. DUSA also wish to focus upon sustainability, ensuring everything they do is ethical and mindful of environmental sustainability. The proposed section on this issue would perfectly support and align with this strategic priority.

DUSA Statements

Both current and future members of the DUSA executive have declared their commitment to pursuing this project further, and act as the key student group in liaison with the university, should this proposal be approved. Below are some statements from the DUSA leadership, which are testament to their ongoing commitment and support of the proposal.



Student Executive

Dimitris Vidakis | Outgoing DUSA President [2021/22]

"As the outgoing President of our student's association, I would like to signify the importance of having a pre-matriculation module for students joining this university. This institution and our student community have a formidable reputation for being great champions of social issues like racism and gender-based violence. We want to offer an inclusive and safe environment for everyone. Hence, I believe that this module can enable students to inform themselves of the expectations when they are a student at Dundee University, ensuring strong awareness and the best possible experience for all."

Nyasha Mutembwa | Incoming DUSA President [2022/23]

"After the Racial Equality Charter, I started doubting the environment I was a part of as it revealed shocking perspectives, that we often ignore. Though the microaggressions build over time, I definitely believe it is high time we start, as a community, trying to put our efforts to actively tackle these issues, particularly racism and sexism. The proposed pre-matriculation awareness module should definitely be an effective start to our diverse and inclusive future; I proudly stand by it as the incoming DUSA President. Let us work towards a safer and more inclusive environment for all our students and staff. I can only hope that this initiative can be the catalyst for more necessary ED&I education within the university."

Jazmine Bennett | Incoming DUSA VP Community [2022/23]

"This proposal for a pre-matriculation module is a welcomed response to the shocking results of the Race Equality Charter and to all kinds of discrimination and marginalisation students face on and off campus. It will send a clear message that hate, and prejudice is not acceptable, and will hopefully create change towards its eradication. This needs to be supported by both the university and DUSA to ensure its success and to show that both institutions recognise the value of EDI education."

Additional Recommendations

The pre-matriculation awareness module is not a conclusive solution to the issues that the student body ought to be mindful of, nor is it right to think that this would be the absolute furthest the university should go. There remains an abundance of other topics and resources that the student body have requested greater clarity and support with. The recommendations below are brief and in no particular order of priority, but they are included to act as talking points for the future. These additional recommendations have been compiled together to reflect what several students have suggested in response to this proposal.

- There should be greater signposting for mental health support within the university, which could easily be placed within matriculation. This could also extend to an awareness workshop and guidance on supporting friends and spotting the signs of mental health issues amongst peers.
 - International students should be provided with an additional matriculation resource that provides an array of infromation that is designed to assist them in their integration to Dundee University as a student, this would apply to all international students.
 - During matriculation, Students should be provided with a collection of academic skills resources that many students do not recieve prior to university. This may include general study skills, workload management and work-life balance guidance.
 - Students should be provided with guidance and information relating to general student life, which is inconsistently provided for across university. This may include laws and rights around private tenancies, information around part-time jobs, exercise and wellbeing, and alcohol and drug abuse.
- Students should be provided with guidance and information on cybersecurity and online privacy. This may extend to email handling, cyber-bullying, and behaviour on social media.

Alternative Recommendations

Should the university reject this proposal in part or in full, the working group have included a series of alternative actions below, that would partially meet the aims of this proposal. However, we firmly believe that when the university considers the strong student support, research and justifications behind this proposal, there is little space for opposition. In saying this, we appreciate that such projects take a considerable amount of time and must be planned with several departments involved. These alternatives are merely suggestions at this stage, they are brief in detail, but are ranked in order of priority. These are not mutually exclusive recommendations.

- If the proposed module is rejected, we urge the university to consider placing the current MyDundee resources for GBV prevention/support and EDI training into the matriculation process.
 - Should the university refuse to place any module within matriculation, we urge them to at least create the proposed module and make it an optional course within MyDundee, as a resource that is frequently and strongly promoted.
 - We alternatively ask the university to consider running at least one mandatory workshop for all students, which could be delivered within first semester, delivered across a phased period.
 - We alternatively ask the university to award credits or issue certificates of some form to students who complete training/participate in these modules, whilst also promoting them in any way possible.
- We alternatively ask the university to promote the current diversity and GBV training to the absolute maximum, whilst considering better ways to raise awareness on other subjects through more interactive and engaging methods (e.g. climate change/ integrity)

Conclusion

This is a proposal that aims for a positive outcome, this is not a damning indictment, nor is it a set of unrealistic demands. In saying this, our proposed module is not a nice thing to have, it is emblematic of the deeply troubling issues that affect us as a community. This paper has highlighted that awareness is crucial as a first step in tackling various problems that we, as a student community, face in differing ways. If we choose to turn a blind eye to these problems, they will only fester. This paper is a testament to what we are already working towards as a community, an open, welcoming, and forward-looking university, a university that takes these topics seriously. Our proposal is not suggesting that our students are intolerant or uneducated, we are merely pushing for a more equal and greater level of awareness. Training brings far more to the table than a tokenistic gesture, it benefits us all, it sparks debate, it encourages more open discussions and allows all of us to consider things in a different light.

The student voice is abundantly clear, the majority of us want mandatory training within matriculation, and an even greater majority of us believe that it will bring about much needed awareness, despite some opposing it. The university have done a lot thus far, we already have voluntary training courses, we have a solid system in place with policies that aim to protect various groups of students, we have robust complaints procedures, we have student support networks and all the information we need. Nevertheless, the serious problem with all of this is the lack of awareness, promotion, signposting and engagement. Implementing these resources and this information into the student matriculation process will ensure that all of us, no matter our level or course, will be exposed to this crucial content. Indeed, some of what we are asking for will take considerable lengths of time, more consultations and feedback may be required. This paper is merely a first step in instigating solid action.

We are not campaigning for this module in efforts to tick a box, to simply say we have pushed for mandatory training, this is just the start of a long journey that will have a lasting legacy for our student community, a community that will hopefully experience a substantial change. Any future modules must not end up as patronizing and simplistic initiatives. What we have presented is a genuine proposal with a genuine aim. There is no reason why we should not excel in creating a more compassionate culture with a strong will for greater awareness around various societal and university issues.

We sincerely hope that university considers this proposal in full, and accordingly decide to implement a core pre-matriculation awareness module that covers the four proposed sections. As we have outlined, certain elements of this proposal may not be possible at this time, but we have made it very clear what should take priority. We have also offered both additional and alterative recommendations, but we trust that the university will take note of the student voice, the rationale, and the potential that this module offers our university.

Short-Term Requests | UEG Actions

After considering this paper in full, the working group respectfully request that the University Executive Group (UEG) and all associated decision makers take the following short-term actions in direct response to this proposal. The following requests are in no particular order of priority.

Share this proposal paper with all students and staff at the university. This will promote greater transparancy and will allow people to consider and discuss the proposed content, whilst raising awareness around the topics.

Send a message out to the university community on behalf of the UEG, explaining that they have recieved the proposal and the student voice, and express a commitment to considering the paper in full. No set timeline is being asked of the UEG for now.

Following the circulation of the paper and commitment to fully considering the proposal, we request that the UEG devise an action plan as to how they will act upon the proposal, should they approve of it. Otherwise, openly explain why they cannot commit to it.

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References and Acknowledgments

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