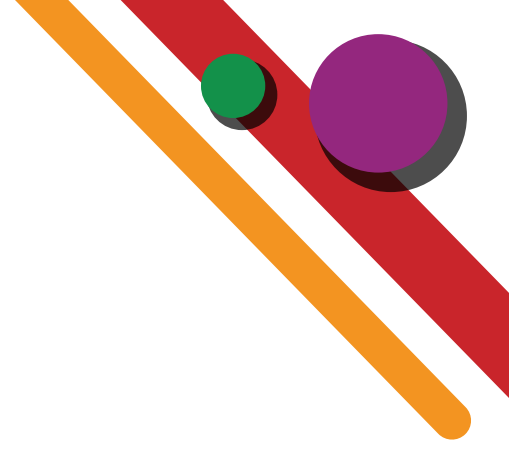




SENEDD!



Officers Report Bayanda Vundamina

**Senedd
02/12/2024**



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Summary:

The main focus of Undeb Aberystwyth has been the Officer Role Review, as a union we have been looking to reduce the number of our full-time paid sabbatical officers to less than 5.

There are many reasons for this decision such as SU Policy, NUS Recommendations and financial incentives.

Over the past 3 weeks we have held 13 consultation groups consisting of 50 students and 34 staff members to get feedback on what roles they would like to see and highlight potential gaps in our current structure,

We are now at the stage where the Trustee board will decide on what positions will go to an all student-vote and these new roles will come into effect for the 2026/27 Academic year.

We have hosted numerous events at the Undeb such as:

- Aber challenge which saw teams of students compete against each other in a series of party games for pride of being crowned Aber Challenge champions as well as one lucky student walking away with the coveted free superteams ticket.
- We have held Sexual health awareness and guidance week supported our students to challenge stigma and negativity around sex and raised awareness of sexual health information and services.
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- Academic Representative elections and training.
- Academic Rep Conference

New Staff

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Arewa as our new Academic Representative Coordinator, and we look forward to collaborating with her.

As well as this we have a number of students from the professional pathways program who are working in various departments of the Undeb.

Bayanda – President

Over the past month, I have been actively involved in the officer role review process, closely observing the consultations and providing valuable input to ensure the process is thorough and inclusive. This work has been vital in assessing the effectiveness of current structures and exploring ways to better support the needs of officers and the wider student community.

In addition to this, I have diligently represented the union by addressing issues raised by students at various university committees. Through these engagements, I have advocated for student concerns, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in institutional decision-making processes. This has reinforced the union's commitment to enhancing the student experience and fostering meaningful collaboration with university stakeholders.



I established an International Student Advisory Board consisting of 15 international students from diverse backgrounds. This board serves as a vital platform to provide both the Union and the University with direct insights into the lived experiences of international students. The initiative aims to ensure that these students' voices are heard, their challenges are understood, and their needs are addressed effectively. During our discussions, we focused on key themes that significantly impact their university journey:

- **Induction:** Examining the effectiveness of orientation programs in helping international students transition smoothly into their new academic and social environments.
- **Accommodation:** Addressing issues related to housing availability, affordability, quality, and cultural adjustments.
- **Access to Services:** Highlighting barriers to essential resources, such as healthcare, mental health support, academic assistance, and career services.
- **Finding Communities:** Exploring ways to foster a sense of belonging through cultural societies, peer networks, and opportunities for social interaction.

Through this initiative, we aim to identify areas for improvement, advocate for meaningful change, and create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all international students.

Elain – UMCA President and Welsh Culture Officer

Elain has actively participated in Undeb Aberystwyth's Officer role review consultations over the past month. During these consultations, various concerns were raised, particularly regarding the future of UMCA, the Welsh Students' Union in Aberystwyth.

In response to these concerns, Elain worked closely with both Undeb and UMCA to help secure the future of the role. UMCA's campaign received strong support from thousands of people, including some of the biggest celebrities within the Welsh Language community, which played a key role in ensuring the continued success of the Union.

Last weekend, Y Ddawns Ryng-gol, an annual event hosted by UMCA, took place in Aberystwyth. The event welcomed over 700 Welsh students for the Rhyng-gol weekend, which included a fun-filled Friday night of karaoke at Llew Du and a Saturday gig featuring some of the most popular Welsh bands, providing entertainment for the attendees.

Elain has also been planning and gathering sponsorships for the Eisteddfod Rhyng-gol, another major event in the Welsh Unions and societies' calendars.

Looking ahead, Elain is preparing for Welsh Language Rights Day, scheduled for December 7th. In addition, she is busy planning Aelwyd Pantycelyn's Christmas Concert and UMCA's 'Hwyl yr Ŵyl' week, both of which are key events in the Welsh language community's calendar.

Tiff - Opportunities Officer

Tiff has had an incredibly productive month, with a series of successful events and initiatives, alongside important projects that are well underway. One of the major highlights was her involvement in ArtsFest, where she had the support of an assistant, Kyle, who made the event even better. All ArtsFest events have now been finalised and are ready for promotion on the website.



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Tiff is also preparing for a major organisational task, planning a clearout and reorganisation of the Cage storage and Monkey Huts, as well as creating a Club/Society Wall outside the Opps office. In terms of event planning, Tiff has been focusing on the Superteams After Party and exploring a Varsity sponsorship deal with Fireball, due to the shared slogan, "Unleash the Dragon." AberChallenge, a key event for Tiff, was a tremendous success this year. Despite the challenge of a vacant societies coordinator role, Tiff stepped up to handle much of the work, and the event ran smoothly. The media content generated will also serve to promote the event for next year. Special congratulations go to the Femininomenons for their victory and Huw from AberSnow for winning the free Superteams ticket.

With AberChallenge now behind her, Tiff is focused on her sports facilities priority, and we can expect further communication about that soon. On the communications front, the "Tiff Tries" initiative is back, and the launch of "Try with Tiff" has already generated interest from various groups. She encourages anyone interested to get in touch via the SU Opportunities email.

Tiff has also shown strong leadership in supporting White Ribbon Day, creating a video to showcase the Union's support for this important cause. Her work on employability initiatives is also worth noting, as she has been collaborating with key figures from the University, including the PVC for Education and Student Experience, the head of the careers service, and the Volunteering coordinator.

Tiff also recognised Ultimate Frisbee and Aber Sound System (ASS) as the Clubs and Societies of the Month for September and October.

She has made substantial progress on her policy work, completing three out of five policies, including Strength and Conditioning and RAG Charity policies. Her work on sustainability is progressing with a bin lottery project aimed at encouraging recycling and integrating it into the AberChallenge Scavenger Hunt.

Representing the University at Wales Student Sport (WSS) and BUCS events was another key responsibility for Tiff. Looking ahead, she is excited about the planning for Student Volunteer Week, which is already in motion, as well as her involvement in various development meetings related to volunteer projects.

Tiff has also made significant contributions to Open Days, representing the University and Students' Union during the Student Life Talk, with the support of volunteer students on the panel. Planning for Aber 7's has already begun, and she is particularly proud of her involvement with Anthony Nolan, a charity focusing on the stem cell register. One of our students ran the stall, getting more than twenty students signed up within 40 minutes. She is very happy to share that she helped make it happen.



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In summary, Tiff's ongoing efforts and contributions have been central to the success of numerous events, initiatives, and projects within the University and Students' Union. Her commitment to student engagement, sustainability, and employability is evident, and she continues to drive positive change across various fronts.

Will – Academic Affairs

Since the last Senedd, I have hosted my first Academic Forum, which had a strong turnout. We discussed AI policies, the library, neurodiversity, and special circumstances. The Academic Representative meet-and-greet was also a success, with representatives from various departments in attendance. I have engaged in further discussions regarding the library; a decision has been reached, but I am uncertain about the extent to which I can share the details.

Additionally, I co-hosted the engaging "Sexy Quiz" alongside Mo, Tiff, Alex, Tristan, and Marty. In another University Senate meeting, we addressed topics related to student experience and the educational plan, among others. I attended a trustee workshop led by WONKHE and Nick Smith to enhance my understanding of my role as a trustee for UndebAber.

At the time of writing, I am in the process of planning a weekly group study session, which I will facilitate, operating out of the Students' Union building. Full credit for this initiative goes to Noel Czempik, who conceived the idea.

Finally, I successfully planned, organized, and ran an Academic Rep Conference that garnered significant attendance and covered various topics, including neurodiversity, AI literacy, employability, and volunteering.

Mo– Wellbeing Officer

University:

Mo has attended various University meetings, including TrACE action planning groups, fitness to practice panels, Officers and VC 'catch up' and the Education and Student Experience Committee. She is still having conversations with student services to find out the best possible ways they can collaborate. They also learn about the current situation in student services and how that has changed, with hopes of gaining substantial insight into the department's mechanics and climate due to the financial and resource budget changes. Mo also attended a training session hosted by Dyfed-Powys (Fraud and Digital Crime Training).

Undeb:

Mo has attended meetings within the Undeb, including event preparation meetings, Officer role reviews, Senedd training, team meetings with the wellbeing department, SHAG week planning, Trustee mentor session, forum training, and trans day of remembrance planning. She hosted her first wellbeing and liberation forum, had positive conversations, and collated a clear action list of things to work on/ do. Mo worked with the trans and GNC and the LGBT+ officer to help run a 'chill and chat' session for Transgender Day of Remembrance. Mo has been planning events for InAber for Winter and January exam distress. Mo was the lead officer for the third Annual SHAG week, they helped to run and host events, and film comms. They hosted the SHAG week quiz with help from Tiff. The night was very successful, and students seemed to enjoy the evening. Mo has also done some work for Men's Mental Health Awareness month, they had a walk, which was originally postponed and a coffee morning. For the coffee morning, they invited two guest speakers, including the hosts of the 'Over



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the Falls' podcast and representatives from 'Men2men' and a local group to Ceredigion. They are hosting events around the holidays and activities, such as 12 Days of Wellbeing, to ensure they continue to work on their policy to "Enhance promotion and increase student engagement in wellbeing-related activities."

