

“ Vision: ”

If you want to achieve anything, you need to know where you are going. Our vision is a clear statement of what we feel York St John Students' Union exists to do:

Broadening your mind. Making new friends. Advancing your career. Experiencing a different culture.

University can transform your life. So whatever you want to do with your time at York St John, we'll make sure you achieve it.



where we are going

**York St John Students' Union
Strategic Plan 2010-2014**



Values:

Our values guide our work, and we want you to feel part of a union that reflects these beliefs in everything we do for you.

Fun

There's more to student life than lectures. Taking part in clubs and societies can help you develop your skills. But the union also gives you the chance to relax, make new friends and have a good time.

Inclusive

Whoever you are, wherever you come from and whichever course you're studying, the union is here for you. We're always looking for new ways to welcome more students into our family.

In touch and listening

As your union, we can only do a good job if we know what you want. Every year, we ask all our members how we can improve their time at university.

Value for money

We help you make the most of your money at university. This means good quality, affordable shops and bars. It also means making sure you feel your time at York St John's has been well spent.

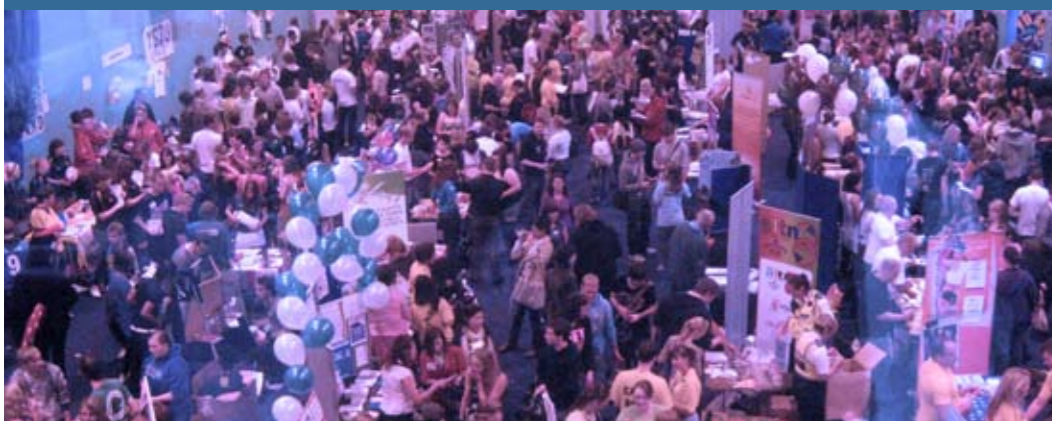
Working together

We work with students, university staff, local businesses and the community. Together, we help you get more from student life — from volunteering opportunities to work placements.



This year, we asked you what you worried about as a student at York St John, what is important to you and what we as a Union could do to make your life at university better. From the comments you gave us, we have built a list of things that we are going to do to address your concerns.

We now want to hear again from you as to whether you think these are the things that we should focus on – what we've got right and what we've got wrong.



Academic Achievement

Your number 1 concern was how well you would do with your degree. Here's how we're going to help you achieve academically:

Improve the Learning Resource Centre for all students

- Improve electronic resources and provide more support to accessing these
- Video tutorials on how to use LRC resources
- Learning Centre User forum to feedback problems
- Campaign on quiet learning & review of quiet zones

Reduce the number of timetabling problems

- Work with Uni on clarifying timetable in advertising
- Measure problems course by course to make local changes
- Lobby for a review of the electives system
- Investigate seminar flexibility (can more options be offered?)

Rep structure creates changes that improve courses

- Academic action plans for each programme
- Lobby university to involve more students in major decisions
- Review and overhaul Programme Rep system – recruitment, support and training
- Promote the changes that our reps have made

Students get the academic support they need

- Create charters on fair assessment, feedback & contact time
- Campaign about learners responsibilities
- Use Moodle (VLE) to let students make immediate changes to their courses
- Measure feedback course by course. Praise & name/shame

Support Services

You want to know what support is there to help you during your time at YSJ. We will help you by:

Students know what financial support is available

- Produce staff newsletter so they can communicate what is available to students
- Student volunteers to take up the role of "Money Doctors"
- Run targeted campaign at mature students to let them know what financial assistance is available

One to one advice is available from a range of sources

- Create web videos of specialists answering FAQs
- Have volunteer advice workers alongside each campaign
- Extend "student to student" mentoring scheme
- Train wardens and ambassadors to be aware of what support is available

Support and guidance information is easy to access

- Investigate putting touch screen info point into Union
- Reception staff trained by Student Support so they know what's available
- Create physical advice info point in Union building
- Link our customer database with Student Advice system

Students are happy with their accommodation

- Develop Hall committees to build community cohesion
- Provide mediation service for people with housemate issues
- Create website providing info on halls from the point of view of students in those halls
- Build "Recommend Your Landlord" service

Including Everyone

Not everyone feels they are part of the Union. This is what we're going to do to change that:

Involve Mature & International Students in the Union

- Link YSJ International events into our events programme
- Segment "Mature" students to better communicate with them
- Separate Welcome handbooks for Mature and International students (with content directly from those people)
- Additional induction events for these groups

Expand Ents to include non-drinking events

- Run events that aren't based in the Union building
- Provide afternoon (12-4) & early evening (4-8) entertainment
- Look to keep coffee bar and shop open longer to support these events
- Use the building as 3 separate spaces on slower nights

Students are aware the Union is more than a building

- Run campaign explaining all of our other services
- Provide better signage within the building
- Introduce Union "Roadshow" where Sabbs and Union Councillors go out to halls, etc and say what Union does
- Sabbs work out of office each week to raise profile

Build student involvement year on year

- Make volunteers aware of the benefits from doing their roles
- Market all volunteer roles through Opportunities Gateway
- Run a campaign explaining how easy it is to get involved
- Introduce a Union development programme – a training package that encourages people to build their involvement

Best Value

Students should know that they are getting the best products and services for the money they spend. We will make sure this is the case by:

Students feel Union Building is welcoming

- Introduce Mystery Customer system
- Develop a customer service working group
- Create a brand identity for all staff rather than just in each service
- Look to make changes to the entrance of the building

How we provide value compared to our competition

- Create online benchmarking tool so students can compare prices to other places
- Review the branding of our commercial services

Students understand we give their money back to them

- Create new profit recycling message with simple information about how money supports services

The more involved you are, the more value you get

- Develop a Union loyalty card tied to the activities that people are involved with as well as what they buy
- Create a VIP club for NUS card buyers with special events and specific emailed discounts
- Investigate how we can link non-commercial campaigns with our commercial services to better promote what we do

Career Development

Our students want to know that they'll get good jobs after graduation. This is how we are going to help this happen:

Being a member of staff at SU helps your career

- Flexible staff team who can work in any area
- Skills expression sessions offered through Uni Careers
- Volunteer placements offered to staff
- Staff share skills with each other to become a learning organisation

Opportunities to improve skills are available

- Offer Union as a place for work placements
- Reintroduce skills training programme
- Provide more training and info on life skills
- Careers guidance available in a range of media not just the face to face meetings

Students think about their careers from year one

- Run a campaign to make it less scary
- Increase opportunity awareness by using all Uni staff
- Promote opportunities through University website and VLE

Graduates use the benefits of their involvement

- Alumni come back and give inspirational talks
- Track graduates to see impact of Union involvement
- Recent graduates can use careers materials and support
- Introduce workplace mentors scheme for finalists and new graduates

“It's back to you...”

It's back to you. Tell us what you think. Are we focusing on the right things? Have we missed something really obvious? You can give us your feedback in a number of ways:

- Fill out a TELL US WHAT YOU THINK card and drop it into one of the comment boxes around campus.
- Email to su@yorks.ac.uk
- Post a comment on the discussion board of our Facebook page (search for "York St John – Students' Union")