

William Sarenden

Welfare Student Leader



About William's Role:

William is a **Welfare Student Leader**. The Welfare Student Leader is responsible for campaigning on issues that affect student welfare including housing, mental health and financial hardship. As well as to work on behalf of Birkbeck students to improve the student experience; Represent the needs of students in all areas of work, including to University committees and leadership.

His main responsibilities include:

- Represent the views of students at Birkbeck and campaign for student welfare.
 - As a representative of Birkbeck students, be the face of the Students' Union.
 - Campaign for Student Welfare.
 - Be a point of contact for Birkbeck students
 - To proactively collect feedback and input from students regularly to ensure work is representative.
 - Attend University meetings and committees, elevating the student voice at these levels.
 - Sit on Academic Panels.
 - Meet regularly with key leaders in the University.
 - Be a Governor at Birkbeck University.
- Work with Birkbeck to ensure their work meets students' needs and improve the student experience.
 - Create initiatives to improve the student experience at Birkbeck.
 - Lobby the University for change.
 - Negotiate best outcomes for students.
 - Run campaigns, events and activities to benefit and enhance the student experience.
- Develop a community for Birkbeck Students.
 - Create initiatives to improve the student experience.
 - Create opportunities for students to network with other students, or to increase engagement with Union activity.
- Attend Student Union meetings.

William's Manifesto:

“I have five main areas that I wish to focus on during my time as the welfare lead. I believe in protecting students' Mental health and creating opportunities for all students to thrive. As you can see from my goals below, my beliefs are clear and set out to improve the Birkbeck experiences.

1. To be the voice for all, especially those that feel they don't have one, those that have been overlooked and those that need it the most.

Birkbeck University has been the key for many people's development over the past 200 years. Its rich history comes down to its students; those from the past, present, and future. The role of the welfare leader is to look after and be the voice for all those that make up its history, and I intend to achieve as much as possible throughout the year.

2. To make Birkbeck spaces more wellbeing friendly.

The Environment here at Birkbeck needs to become a space that students want to spend time in, rather than a place just for lectures. Study spaces, outside spaces and classrooms are in need of a friendly and welcoming redesign to allows students to feel comfortable while on campus.

3. To successfully create events to promote Mental Health Awareness.

Hosting events around key dates throughout the year will allow for students to take breaks from the busy student life and focus on well-being. This will also help spread Awareness and allow for extra publicity for services that are already on offer. I intend to host at least two events this year.

4. To create a Wellbeing Tab on the new Student Union Website.

Creating a new tab on the SU website will allow for a focused on the well-being of Student and act as a place they can find key information about study tips, safety in and around Campus, cost of living and the best locations to relax after a busy day at University. This will all help to improve the student experience.

5. Student Outreach.

Currently there are many different issues surrounding the student experience. With an upwards increase in the cost of living, housing problems and Union strikes, there is a need for more direct student feedback. This will then allow for more focused action from officers and the SU”

William's Additional Postings:

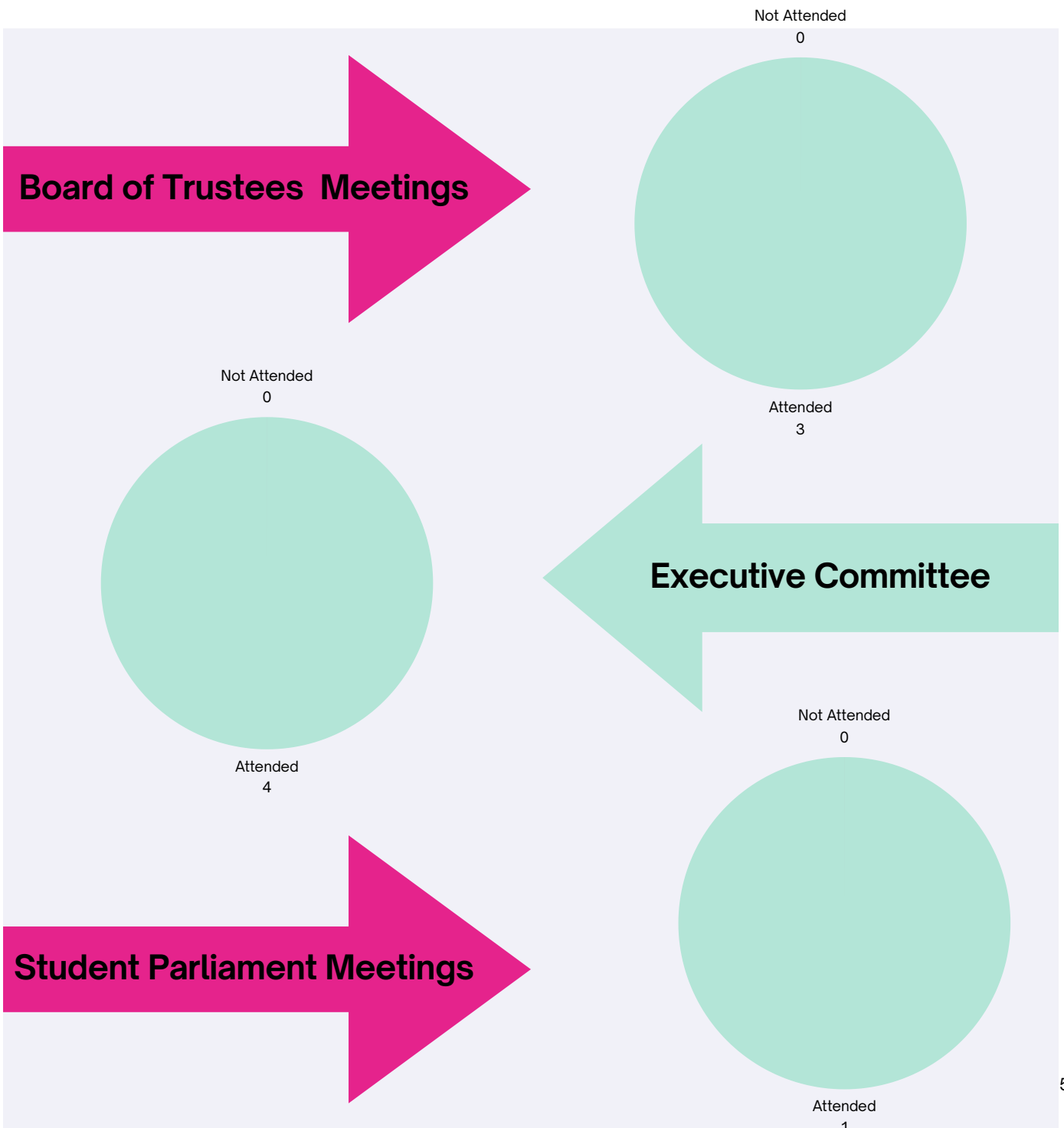
In addition to his role as welfare student leader, William has taken on partial responsibilities as an **International Students Liberation Leader** due to the previous incumbent stepping down.

This role is split with a second officer and take up approximately three hours per week.

The purpose of the International Students Leader role is to represent the needs and views of all international students at Birkbeck. He works on behalf of Birkbeck students to improve the student experience; lobby the University to make positive change at Birkbeck, attend University committees and meet regularly with leadership and create a Birkbeck community.



Committee Attendance Stats:



William's Report

William Sarenden | SU Chair & Welfare Lead (21 hours) | Term 1

Introduction: I Was elected as the student Welfare lead, due to having the most votes I also became the SU Chair, chairing all SU committees. In addition, I am a Governor of the University meaning I sit on many college committees. Both additional roles (which do relate to welfare) take up a fair amount of my 21 hours a week.

My Manifesto - Objectives and Outcomes

1. To be the voice for all students, especially those that feel they don't have one, those that have been overlooked and those that need it the most. (ongoing)

Firstly, I listened to the SU support team about the biggest concerns from students, including the AI Policy, enrolment, and timetable issues, then brought this to the vice Chancellor and making sure actions are being taken & I am included in the ongoing discussion. I met with the PVCFE and Faculty heads to discuss the course rep program to establish an entirely new system. I connected with other unions, comparing how they advocate for their students and making sure we deliver the same standard. Being chair of the SU also means delivering on this manifesto point as making sure we run democratically, effectively, and collaboratively will achieve this.

2. To Create a Wellbeing Tab on the new Student Union Website (Finished)

The SU website lacked key information on student wellbeing and after hours of research into what other unions have for students, I came up with my priorities: The cost of living tips, Reeding for wellbeing, Student loneliness, Safety in and around campus and Learning at Birkbeck. All pages are up, with lots of useful links and helpful tips. One specific mention is that our union didn't have any information about consent on the website, so I worked directly with our support team on this as this is imperative to the student experience.

3. To successfully Create events to promote Mental Health Awareness (ongoing and ask)

Mental Health Awareness week isn't until the 13th may. however, plans are already in process for this week. Because this is so far away, I have shift focus onto issues that I can raise now. I created 2 additional social posts, one about stress awareness day and one about World Mental health day.

4. To make Birkbeck spaces more wellbeing friendly. (ongoing)

Firstly, part of our new strategy for the Vice Chancellor is to push for new student spaces. This includes utilizing empty spaces in BCB. I brought this to the Governors and senior Members of the college. This would allow our communities to have more spaces which in turn would create a community feel and allow for the development of each group.

5. Student Outreach (Ongoing)

I did this through the Referendum on NUS (hours of time spent on proposal and speaking with them). I also created the 'Students' Union BIG 5' survey which had over 60 responses. This was a way of getting feedback on the first few weeks of the term, Student experience and showing my face on campus to combat again those annual survey statistics.

Other Outcomes:

I have made an ongoing effort to work with the University and not against, as our relationship has been an ongoing challenge. I have been activated in all my allocated committee meetings, been active in setting up new meetings with the new and old vice chancellor, and many others. Without this effort the Union would not be taken seriously and wouldn't be able to actively advocate for our students | I Organised and gave out over 200 free condoms and 100 sanitary products | I attended Many welcome week events to promote my visibility |

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Instrumental in building a better relationship with the college | Had the Student voice heard with regards to NUS membership | Brought the biggest student concerns forward to the leadership of the college | Created new critical student information that the union didn't have on the website | Course rep structure change | active stance on strikes, world conflicts and international update | Finishing the wellbeing tab | active in welcome week and society meetings | Available to students every Tuesday.

International Role Responsibilities (3 hour additional)

I started by taking over the Instagram, had to re-organise posts, bio, followers, logo etc | The account had around 100, now has 200 (a double in growth) | Created new posts including WhatsApp QR code, announcements, and events etc | bar social organised | repost the daily content from SU Instagram | Created WhatsApp group for people to connect with other international students. It Has over 150 members in less than 2 months, already more than the LGBTQ+ network WhatsApp | Took over email access, when through all 136 emails when inherited | Poster creation and putting up around campus | Joint organised the Christmas mixer with the BAME network | worked on Israel and Palestine statements | Ellie and I wrote the update on Kim's leaving.