



Heriot-Watt University Sports Union

Annual Report

2019/20



SPORTS
UNION

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Executive Summary

The Sports Union (SU) have had another outstanding year, with increasing membership, increasing activity levels, and has continued to contribute positively to the wider University ambitions. The five key workstreams across the SU are Participation, Wellbeing & Engagement, People Development, Profile & Relationships and Operations, explored in further detail within this report.

The SU recorded its **highest ever membership** numbers with 2445 memberships held by 1785 students, surpassing the total for the end of 2018/19 by December. With the addition of Table-Tennis this year, the SU **has 31 clubs in total**, many of whom compete in British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) and Scottish Student Sport (SSS). With over **200 training hours per week** and **330 BUCS fixtures** per year there are a large range of recreational and competitive offerings available within the SU. The SU also enjoyed numerous successes at inter-university and regional competitions, as detailed further on.

This year, saw a revamp of BurghVarsity with home and away fixtures counting towards the final score, while the SU launched the inaugural Watt Big Wednesday event, providing staff and students an opportunity to experience student sport at Heriot-Watt on a Wednesday afternoon.

In addition to on-field activity, the **SU raised £14.5k for Movember**, finishing in the top 20 institutions in the UK. The SU also hosted 3 large social events in the SU Ceilidh, Ball and Strictly Come Dancing, with **over 1750 people in attendance** across the events combined.

The introduction of Oriam ParkRun, saw SU ambassadors start a **student takeover** for Wellbeing Week which aligned with the first ever ParkRun being held at the Dubai campus. The SU is committed to supporting further global integration on sport & wellbeing in the future.

The SU volunteer programme and club development schemes continue to **be sector-leading**, befitting of the world-class facilities provided for members. The SU has successfully integrated into using **Microsoft Teams** for all internal communication and file sharing, improving the support available to all volunteers.

The SU continued working in partnership with Lothian Disability Sport this year, directly funding over **1000 opportunities** for accessible activity, alongside numerous fundraising efforts at club level.

Engaging with all club presidents and the Executive, the SU underwent its first full review since 2010. As a result, the SU expects to raise **£12.1k in additional revenue** and provide further investment into coaching, student representation at competition and expand the staff team. This will ensure the sustainability of the SU and its services in the long-term.



PARTICIPATION



SU EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY
SPORTS UNION

Burgh
varsity
THIS CITY IS OURS

HERIOT
WATT
UNIVERSITY

SPORTS
UNION

Club Successes

The SU is a participation-focused organisation, with 31 student-led clubs, facilitating activity commensurate with all abilities, ranging from some of the countries best athletes right the way through to absolute beginners.

Team Sports

Hockey Men's 1 won Scotland Tier 1 whilst the Rugby Club were also offered a 'play off' position to Premier North 2 after a great season in Scotland Tier 1. More importantly, they have introduced women's sessions to their scheduled activity, and with two female members of their committee next year, will be looking to develop this further into competitive opportunities and continuing their partnership with the Currie Chieftains.

Football Men's 1 have bounced back with immediate promotion to the top tier in university football in Scotland. Their 3rd and 5th string teams both reached the final of the Scottish Student Sport Conference Plate Final, with the 3rd team winning on penalties.

The Cheerleading Main Team won the British Cheerleading Association Scottish Sensations as well as the inaugural SSS Cheer Championships and the Nations Cup for Scottish CoEd Cheer at the BCA Nationals.

Individual Sports

The Swimming mixed team won all of their meets across Scotland this year, and sent members down to BUCS, increasing opportunities for all levels of participation at the club.

Conference Cup Finals day also saw the Badminton mixed team returning with a Silver medal, after coming agonisingly close to overcoming UWS.

The Squash Club competed in the BUCS Premier League for the first time, placing amongst the top 6 University teams in the UK, as well as finishing 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th in the SSS individual championships.

After their introduction as a fully constituted club, Table Tennis have competed in, and won, their BUCS division, entered into the National League, and entered two teams into the East League, leading to an unprecedented 'double-promotion' mid-season due to their strong start.

At BUCS Championships, Karate scholar, Greg Anderson, won gold for the second year running, and was selected for Team GB Olympic qualifications.

Memberships

The SU has recorded **its highest ever membership numbers** this year, with 2445 memberships sold to **1780 students** (unique members). The SU surpassed last year's unique member total by **November** and had reached last year's total memberships by December. Across the 31 clubs, this gives us an average of 79 members per club, all run by student volunteers.

Watt Big Wednesday

In February the SU hosted the inaugural 'Watt Big Wednesday', with the intention to celebrate the "Watt Family" with the wider University and community. Despite the weather, the luxury of the world-class Oriam facilities meant that only one fixture fell foul to the snow, leaving spectators with some brilliant spectacles across a Football double-header with Edinburgh Napier, Cup and League fixtures for the Rugby Club, all three Basketball teams taking to the court as well as Netball 2s taking on Aberdeen after their open-training session in Sports Hall 1.

With the support of the Principal the Oriam Bistro hosted university staff for a welcome reception before taking in some of the action. With Oriam branded 'Sports Union' from top to bottom, it was brilliant to show-off the atmosphere of a Wednesday afternoon when students are competing, practicing and volunteering right across the facility.

BurghVarsity

In collaboration with neighbours at the University of Edinburgh, the SU organises an annual varsity event, where each sport takes on their Edinburgh counterparts, with little recent success for Heriot-Watt. This year saw a revamp of the event, focussing on BUCS fixtures throughout the year between teams from each SU that are placed in the same division, ensuring a fair competition.

This was all due to come to a climax with added friendly fixtures to engage 'leavers' and give students one last chance to represent the University, which was unfortunately postponed due to the outbreak of COVID-19, at which point **Heriot-Watt were top of the leader board** with nine wins to Edinburgh's eight, with Mixed Badminton ending in a draw.



Wellbeing & Engagement

Health and Wellbeing

This remit has been incredibly strong both at club and SU level this year. Social media campaigns and case study videos on the importance of mental health and how sport, and the SU, have supported those who are struggling through difficult periods have been ever-present throughout the year. SU Basketball President Stewart Morgan, who was diagnosed with testicular cancer in October, led the way in a Movember fundraising effort, bringing the SU total to **£14.5k placing us in the top 20 institutions in the UK**. Stewart, supported by Oriam, attended the Movember Awards, where he was recognised for being the **highest student fundraiser in the UK (£4.5k)**, and awarded the “Know Thy Nuts” award, for his social media drive to raise awareness of the severity of the issue to young people.

The SU was also delighted to support the Couch to 5k scheme through SU ambassadors leading sessions to get people active, aiding staff and community members through the start of their fitness journey.

Global Park Run

As part of the universal calendar in place across the student services, the SU aligned its work throughout Wellbeing Week in Semester 2. This saw the SU Ambassadors supporting the Park Run, through a student volunteer takeover of the free, timed 5k run that happens every Saturday on campus, coordinated with the **Dubai Campus hosting their first 5k event** through their Athletics Club. Unfortunately due to COVID-19, the Malaysia Campus were unable to join in despite the strong interest.

Special Events

The annual SU Ceilidh at Murrayfield in October, yet again, gave new students their first flavour of the Scottish tradition, as well as the spirit of the “Watt Family”, with **625 students** in attendance it continues to be a highlight of the SU calendar.

The SU recognised the great work of its clubs at the Sports Ball at the Corn Exchange in February, along with the Principal and Vice Principal. The award winners were:

- **Club of the Year – Volleyball**
- **Development Trophy – Equestrian**
- **Social Club of the Year – Dance**
- **Team of the Year – Volleyball Mens 1**
- **Sports Personality of the Year – Stewart Morgan**
- **Fresher of the Year – Gregor Morgan**

SU Survey

The annual SU Survey collected responses from 712 members, with feedback on the SU as a whole, Oriam, the volunteer programme and their individual clubs. An issue the SU has when reporting on the demographic make-up of its membership is the lack of data transferred to its system after matriculation, and thus the only source of information surrounding certain groups within the SU is through this survey.

Key Findings

The **average overall experience** from respondents was 7.92/10

Oriam received an average overall experience rating of 8.13/10

There is a **60/40 male to female** gender split within the SU, which is in-line with the general university population. **Female** members reported an average overall experience of **8.13/10**, higher than the male average of 7.74/10.

96% of committee members, and **100%** of ambassadors who completed the survey would **recommend the role** to another student.

31% of respondents **had not participated** in their chosen sport before they came to university. Of those newcomers, **15%** of respondents said they would continue to participate in the sport through a community or alumni link with their club. **Only 12.86%** of respondents said they did not plan to continue participating in the sport.

SU special events had an average of 86.5% of respondents rating their event experience as **“good” or “excellent”**, and in addition to this staff were able to provide some really valuable feedback to ensure the SU continues to improve upon the already strong offering it provides.

Other findings

14.2% of responses were **international students**, 88.11% of whom rated an experience of 7/10 or above

The lowest average score of 7.87 came from **Postgraduate students**, however with the new timetabling policy coming in to place next year the SU is hopeful that this will provide them with more opportunities to participate.

8.5% of respondents suffer from **mental health conditions**, 88.52% of those rating their experience as 7/10 or above.



People Development

Volunteering

The SU volunteering pathway continues to be sector-leading with engagement from all years, schools and backgrounds. Last year's **cohort recorded 17,000 hours**, with this year's numbers still to be submitted. The SU will continue to support its volunteers through the Saltire Award Scheme and Enhanced Transcripts to accredit these hours as well as enhance their employability through volunteer training. This support is provided both administratively and through the funding of coaching and officiating courses. **216 club committee members** across **31 clubs** were aided by the recruitment efforts of the Ambassador Programme throughout the start of semester activity. These 26 Event Ambassadors and 16 Lead Ambassadors are led by the SU Vice President, Holly Clayton Littler and the six-strong Executive Officer team. On top of their ambassadorial work, each exec is assigned a remit, and with the support of their Lead Ambassador team ensure that the SU Calendar is filled with **engaging and inclusive activity** and make the SU a better place to be.

SU clubs not only rely on their committee volunteers, whether that's leadership opportunities as Club Presidents, financial responsibility as treasurers, or event management as Social Secretaries, but they receive engagement right across the board. Student drivers ensure all participants can be transported to fixtures or off-campus activity, members take turn officiating fixtures, and a number of teams also rely on volunteer coaching at a recreational level.

Additional Courses

Last summer, alongside the Student Union, some of the key SU volunteers were able to complete the **Mental Health First Aid Course**, equipping them with the tools to advise SU members on the best support routes through any difficult periods they may face. The SU will continue to encourage all of its members and volunteers to take advantage of courses or sessions already available through the Student Union, Wellbeing Centre and Advice Hub.

Club Coordinators

Some SU clubs are also in the fortunate position of being able to offer **paid-role for students** to take on a bulk of the administration within the club. With a full recruitment process, training and weekly **support from the SU office**, this ensures the seamless organisation of fixtures and transport. The added benefit of **professional and personal development** through the experience from application to exit, ensures the individual benefits in terms of **employability**, as well as financially, and the clubs and members also benefit.



Profile & Relationships

Kit Tender

The SU is delighted to be entering into partnership with local firm, **FN Teamwear** who will be providing us with **Joma** kit from the start of the 2020/21 academic year. This year marked the end of the relationship with Infinity, providing Under Armour kit for the last four years, and the staff embarked upon a tender process for a new provider. Throughout this process there was a focus on ensuring a **high quality** of product at a more **affordable** price for SU members, with a continued consideration of **sustainability** across the supply chain. This will allow both the SU and the students to purchase more products and ensure the SU achieves maximum brand **exposure**. The SU is confident that quality of product, price point, **service** level and support from both sides will make this a very successful period for all three parties.

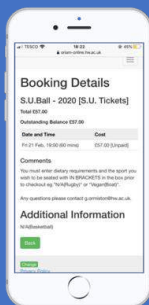
Lothian Disability Sport

The SU continued its partnership with Lothian Disability Sport (LDS), with last year's donation **providing access for over 1000 people**. In return, LDS provided disability inclusion training, available to all SU volunteers.

Kicking off the year, all SU ambassadors t-shirts sported their logo at all events. The SU hosted an incredibly successful 'Strictly Come Dancing' fundraiser, coupling individuals from 16 sports with a member of the Dance Club to choreograph and perform in front of **600 people** at the Jam House. The Ambassador team performed their most technically challenging routine yet, and the Dance Club performed a showcase from all of their styles. The event welcomed alumni and former SU Presidents as judges and **raised £2.5k** that will aid Lothian Disability Sport in facilitating even more accessible activity across the region.

Branding

As part of an on-going branding exercise, the SU has been able to add several pieces of mobile and permanent branding to increase the prominence of the SU around Oriam, including hanger banners in the Sports Hall, containing tag lines such as "Watt Welcome", "Watt Sport", "Watt Family" and "You Watt". In preparation for Watt Big Wednesday, the SU also acquired window panels for Sports Hall 1, as well as banners to be hung on the indoor synthetic pitch with the slogans "**Watt Sport, Watt Life**", and "**Once Watt Never Not**", identifying the affiliation that members have to their club, the SU and the University, throughout their studies and beyond.



Operations

SU Review

This year, the staff team, in collaboration with the elected Executive Officers and Club Forum went through the first full SU Review since 2010. The rationale for this was the increased pressure on an **unsustainable deficit**, due to increased membership not reflecting income, as the SU runs a centralised structure and commits to covering costs, such as **kit, entries, external facilities, coaching and transport** for all teams. These costs all increase with membership growth, to accommodate **participation** opportunities for all members. Other income streams, through the University subvention and Oriam grant had been exhausted, and thus the SU had to return to the students to ensure it can still provide a high level of support to its clubs going forward.

The key recommendation was to introduce a charge per member, to be reviewed each year, that club pass on to the SU, in order for us to remain **centrally funded**, thus relieving the administrative and financial pressures from club volunteers and cover the projected deficit. This will also aid investment to all clubs through **coaching and entries**, focussing on **inclusivity** and opportunities for all. The capacity of the staff team will also expand, with the part-time Sports Administrator role becoming a **full-time position**.

This was **passed unanimously** by the Club Forum at the SU AGM on the 31st March 2020, with the SU Review forecast to **generate £12.1k in extra revenue**.

Finances

The finances with the 19-20 forecast, and 20-21 budget can be found on the next page. These have been adapted for the impact of the SU Review, with increased expenditure on coaching and salaries, balanced by the SU Membership income of £5.50 per member of each club.

Systems

This year the SU wanted to focus on the use of systems within the SU operation and how these could be improved. The major change was switching to the use of **Microsoft Teams** throughout the summer of 2019, moving away from offline shared drives and duplication of documents through email attachments, and made Teams the default channel for all internal communication. This allowed all documents and templates, to which SU volunteers require access, to be stored in a central, easy-to-locate, area. This also allows us to take full advantage of other programs as part of the Office 365 software, including the Shifts tool for volunteer scheduling, Microsoft forms for collecting information and Sway for creating communications.

The SU also moved all tickets sales over to the Oriam management system where it can easily sell to each individual member. This avoids placing the risk of one volunteer per club carrying a large amounts of money on behalf of their members, either as cash or in their personal accounts, and allows us to run reports on ticket sales throughout the sales period and thereafter.

ACCOUNT	BUDGET 19-20	FORECAST 19-20	BUDGET 20-21
Ball	£ 33,006.00	£ 31,571.00	£ 33,666.12
Ceilidh	£ 12,870.00	£ 13,072.55	£ 13,300.00
Strictly	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,804.56	£ 6,940.65
Blues	£ 50.00	£ -	£ 51.00
Varsity	£ 2,000.00	£ -	£ 2,500.00
Facilities	£ 4,685.00	£ 400.00	£ 5,000.00
Coaching	£ 6,820.88	£ 7,205.20	£ 5,100.00
Equipment	£ 7,000.00	£ 5,600.00	£ 7,140.00
BUCS entries & rep	£ 2,000.00	£ 4,800.00	£-
Minibus	£ 5,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 5,100.00
Clothing	£ 4,000.00	£ 8,758.95	£ 5,000.00
Sponsorship	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,500.00	£ 12,000.00
SU Membership	£-	£ -	£ 12,100.00
TOTAL	£ 95,431.88	£ 94,712.26	£ 107,897.77

ACCOUNT	BUDGET 19-20	FORECAST 19-20	BUDGET 20-21
Varsity	-£ 2,000.00	-£ 2,150.00	-£ 2,040.00
Ball	-£ 32,883.64	-£ 31,597.62	-£ 33,541.31
Ceilidh	-£ 11,399.77	-£ 11,398.32	-£ 11,627.77
Blues	-£ 4,500.00	-£ 4,500.00	-£ 4,590.00
Strictly	-£ 4,262.28	-£ 3,396.23	-£ 4,347.53
Coaching	-£ 33,500.00	-£ 33,802.30	-£ 37,448.77
Coach CPD	-£ 1,500.00	-£ 1,500.00	-£ 1,500.00
Equipment	-£ 12,000.00	-£ 12,000.00	-£ 7,140.00
External Facilities	-£ 30,000.00	-£ 27,000.00	-£ 30,126.21
Marketing & Promotion	-£ 3,000.00	-£ 6,000.00	-£ 3,060.00
BUCS Affiliations	-£ 5,401.83	-£ 5,406.58	-£ 5,509.87
SSS Affiliations	-£ 3,366.68	-£ 3,366.68	-£ 3,434.01
Club Affiliation	-£ 10,000.00	-£ 11,173.48	-£ 7,500.00
Vehicle Hire Arnold Clark	-£ 20,000.00	-£ 16,000.00	-£ 20,400.00
Fuel Card & repairs	-£ 6,000.00	-£ 4,000.00	-£ 6,120.00
External Transport and Ratho	-£ 11,000.00	-£ 8,000.00	-£ 11,220.00
Annual Lease costs	-£ 12,739.32	-£ 12,739.32	-£ 12,994.11
Minibus Assesment Charges	-£ 1,000.00	-£ 1,380.00	-£ 1,020.00
SSS/BUCS Rep/Trav/Accom	-£ 10,000.00	-£ 5,000.00	-£ 6,000.00
Entries	-£ 10,000.00	-£ 12,000.00	-£ 17,107.58
Corporate Clothing	-£ 8,000.00	-£ 13,433.31	-£ 5,000.00
Salaries	-£ 85,150.00	-£ 85,150.00	-£ 102,972.89
Staff & Volunteer Expenses (NE)	-£ 2,250.00	-£ 1,000.00	-£ 2,295.00
Travel & Conference	-£ 2,500.00	-£ 2,000.00	-£ 2,550.00
Volunteer System	£-	£-	-£ 1,500.00
Long-term planning	£-	£-	-£ 960.38
New sports/ activities	£-	£-	£-
TOTAL	-£ 322,453.52	-£ 313,993.84	-£ 342,005.43

SURPLUS/ DEFICIT

-£ 227,021.64

-£ 219,281.58

-£ 234,107.66

University Subvention

£ 159,700.00

£ 159,700.00

£ 168,500.00

Oriam Contribution

£ 65,000.00

£ 65,000.00

£ 65,650.00

£ 224,700.00

£ 224,700.00

£ 234,150.00

-£ 2,321.64

£ 5,418.42

£ 42.34



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