

YUSU ranked 'below average' nationally as

MATT GRUM

Jim Bulley
NEWS EDITOR

UNIVERSITY OF YORK students do not know their officers and feel poorly represented by their Union, a recent survey suggests.

The survey, conducted by *Nouse* last week, shows that 58% of students do not feel represented by YUSU and the majority are unable to name their Union Officers. Almost half the student body does not realise that YUSU sabbatical officers are paid, while a quarter are unaware where YUSU's Goodricke offices are.

However, over 70% of respondents stated that they supported YUSU's work.

YUSU President Tom Scott, who won office after a high-profile campaign dressed as a pirate, was the most recognisable sabbatical officer, with 71% of respondents correctly identifying him.

Also well known amongst the student body is York Sport President Alex Lacy, who was identified by 51% of respondents. Lacy said that he fears he is "probably more infamous than famous".

Other YUSU Officers proved to be less well known, with Services and Finance Officer Matt Burton and Academic and Welfare officer Charlie Leyland known by 47% and 43% of students respectively.

Societies and Communications Officer Rory Shanks was identified by 30% of respondents, while Student Development and Charities Officer Jamie Tyler was only known by 27% of respondents, despite 55% saying that they had met a YUSU Officer while at York.

Suggesting a failure of communication by the Union, over 20% of those surveyed did not know that the campus has a Students' Union bar, with many of that percentage surveyed in the



YUSU President Tom Scott is known to 71% of students whilst Student Development and Welfare officer Jamie Tyler is known to 27%

newly-launched Courtyard Venue itself. With campaigning for next year's sabbatical team imminent, 15% were unaware that YUSU Officers were elected, while 3% of those surveyed did not know what YUSU stands for.

Scott was described as "Mad Cap'n Scott" and "a non-committed pirate" throughout the survey, while respondents' answers suggest that the lesser-known Officers are infamous for other reasons.

Many of those surveyed were aware of Burton's work in securing the Union venue on campus, simply writing "isn't he the bar guy?"

when asked who Burton was. A number of students also believe that Burton is YUSU President.

Lacy was often described as "that naked guy", Shanks "must be YUSU because I see him hanging around with Burton a lot" and Tyler appears to be better known for his football, "I tackled him this one time in football 2nds" common.

Dan Walker, Goodricke JCRC chair, believes how little students know about YUSU is very worrying, especially "considering the amount of influence they can have on student life."

Other JCRC chairs echo this

sentiment, while suggesting that it is understandable that only some portions of campus life will be interested in getting involved with campus politics. Walker added that if "all of YUSU wore full pirate gear while on campus they'd be more identifiable and approachable."

Shanks claims that as the survey was conducted in their 14th week of 30 in office, the results are quite good, and that YUSU will become better known throughout the year, "particularly considering that there have been some things in our early office period that aren't exactly outward focused, such as

the planning of the Courtyard."

Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Students Jane Grenville commented: "York offers you more than most universities in terms of student involvement - you'd be daft not to take advantage of that." Grenville also goes on to point out that "YUSU are working hard on your behalf and doing a great job."

"To the 21% who haven't heard of the Courtyard, well, what can I say? Wake up and smell the coffee" Grenville added.

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HOW YUSU COMPARES

Union	Score / 7
Loughborough	6.4 (1)
Sheffield	6.4 (1)
UEA	5.8 (10)
Leeds	5.6 (16)
Edinburgh	5.5 (22)
Warwick	5.4 (25)
Newcastle	5.3 (29)
Oxford Brookes	5.1 (44)
St Andrews	5.1 (44)
UCL	5.1 (44)
Nottingham	5.1 (44)
Durham	5.0 (55)
Manchester	4.6 (74)
York	4.4 (80)
Cambridge	4.2 (89)
Oxford	4.0 (93)

National ranking shown in brackets

Source: Times Good University Guide

National survey leaves YUSU trailing in

GEORGE LOWTHER

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DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE ANNUAL Times Student Experience Survey has seen YUSU score poorly compared to other student unions, raising worries at the degree of student support for the union.

Their score of 4.4 out of 7 has come as a disappointment, placing YUSU considerably behind the other universities ranked in *The Times* survey. The universities of Exeter and Plymouth, positioned just below York, gained 5 and 5.6 respectively, whilst universities such as Sheffield and Loughborough scored marks between 6 and 7.

The Times Higher Education's Student Experience Survey aims to show which universities offer the best all-round student experience. Students themselves choose the attributes that they deem most important to them, and more than 12,000 full-time undergraduates were asked to rate their university on these aspects.

Wes Streeting, president of the National Union of Students, commented that, "while some cynics may be quick to dismiss the



Student support for YUSU has been called into question following survey results

results as 'just another league table', what makes this survey stand apart is that students themselves determine the factors important in delivering a high-quality experience."

These results come at a time when doubt is being cast over the strength of YUSU. In a recent survey, *Nouse* discovered that only 42% of those asked stated that they

felt represented by YUSU. Interestingly, amidst all of the hype of The Courtyard's opening, 21% of those asked (many of whom were in the Courtyard at the time) did not think York had a student union bar. Such results raise questions about the Union's effectiveness.

Jane Grenville, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Students commented: "It will interest stu-