

Vision 2020

**We're Making History
Strategic Plan 2016-2020**



**CITY
STUDENTS'
UNION**

Contents.

- 5** Welcome.
- 6** We are City Students' Union.
- 7** Our Values.
- 9** Our Strategy.
- 10** Priority One.
- 11** Priority Two.
- 13** Priority Three.
- 14** Priority Four.
- 15** Priority Five.
- 17** Our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 18** Our Strategic Enablers.



Welcome.

Welcome to City Students' Union's Strategic Plan, Vision 2020.

This plan sets out what the Students' Union, in conjunction with its members and other stakeholders, aims to achieve by the year 2020. We aim to be better than ever before by being bolder than we have ever been.

This is an exciting time for City Students' Union. Over the last two years we have worked hard to lay the foundations for an organisation that can deliver an ambitious plan for the Union.

We have worked hard to understand our members, our University and the communities that we inhabit and impact on. Launching a major piece of student research, where we engaged more students than ever before (surpassing even previous election turnouts), we have gained an understanding of who they are, their lives, their hopes and their worries. We have spoken to the University community about what they want from a students' unions and how we can make a positive impact on the community. We have also engaged with the National Union of Students to see how we can make an impact nationally.

This document is a culmination of all of our conversations, our research, and our lessons.

This plan is our commitment to you, to be better and bolder than we have ever dared to be before.

We are City Students' Union.

The Vision: "City Students' Union: A high quality, sector-leading students' union".

As a students' union, we must constantly be striving to be the very best organisation for our membership, no matter which direction they lead us. This means we should always be high quality and at the forefront of our sector.

Our Values.

We are Inclusive. We are Broad-minded. We are Creative. We are City Students' Union.

At the heart of everything that the Students' Union does are its values. They give us our identity, guide how we make decisions, and how we conduct ourselves.

We are proud that our values are unique, giving us an identity and way of working that is rarely replicated.

We are Inclusive.

We believe that equality is achieved when we are inclusive of all of our members. We are committed to the principles of social justice. We believe that our members should have equality of access and participation in the Students' Union and our activities.

We are committed to the principles of equity, recognising the differences that our members have and giving them the tools to succeed.

We are Broad-minded.

We realise that we do not have all of the answers and we should always be open to change and challenging our way of thinking.

We are continually learning, talking and sharing information with our students and stakeholders to ensure that we are making the best decisions and offering the best services for our members.

We are Creative.

We celebrate our history, but we are not constrained by it. We are continually on a journey of self-discovery and self-determination, and we support our students on their own journeys.

We are not afraid to take risks, try new things and forge a new path for ourselves, the University, and its students.



Our Strategy.

Our strategy to be a high quality, sector leading students' union is simple but bold.

"Through active partnerships and dynamic student representation, we will create connected communities, full of opportunities where students can individually and collectively grow together by 2020."

Underpinning this are five strategic priorities that will guide the Union's activity over the next four years.

Priority One.

“We will understand the needs of our students and the issues affecting them, and will be the recognised experts of the student experience at City, University of London.”

We exist primarily to represent and act on the views and needs of our members - all students at City, University of London. To do this we must make sure that we understand our students, continually researching, talking, listening and acting on their views.

Our Big Ideas

- We will investigate and implement new methods for engagement and feedback, aiming to reach all students.
- We will improve our data collection and use this to inform our decision-making and activity.
- We will carry out further research on students’ academic experiences and lifestyle habits.

What does success look like in 2020?

- We will be able to map each students’ interactions with the Students’ Union.
- We will have a library of research dedicated to the student experience and students’ lifestyle habits.

Priority Two.

“We will create and develop communities at City in which every student feels they belong, feels supported and feels respected.”

Students and staff agree that there is a lack of community at City, University of London. We know how important community is: it aids academic retention and progression, creates a space for students to discover passions, and allows students to develop personally and professionally. We are uniquely placed to support students in developing the communities they seek.

Our Big Ideas

- We will create a high-quality support system for student communities.
- We will work with the University to create communities between students and staff, particularly Programme-based Societies.
- We will create and support active community partnerships, both in the Islington area and for commuter students in their locality.
- We will reevaluate our events programme, ensuring we provide a diverse range of affordable activities and events based on what students want.
- We will bring people together to celebrate the unity and diversity of all City communities.

What does success look like in 2020?

- We will increase the number of events that we run, improve the quality of the events, and increase the number of students who attend these events.
- We will have increased active community partnerships, both in the number of partnerships and the number of students engaging with each partnership project.
- We will attain ‘Investors in Diversity’ accreditation.



Priority Three.

“Every student will be able to identify how the Students’ Union has had an impact on their academic experience at City.”

Our constitution clearly states that one of our key aims is the “advancement of education of students at City, University of London”. Students have told us that their academic studies dominate their priorities, and improvements in their course and learning experience, academic experience, and academic support and advice are the most important things we can work on. We believe that working collaboratively with the University we can make the academic experience the best for every City student.

Our Big Ideas

- We will work to improve the quality of teaching and the academic experience at City, University of London, highlighting best practice as taken from our research.
- We will utilise Programme Representatives as active partners to campaign and lobby on academic issues.
- We will provide independent advice on course issues and academic disputes.
- We will collaborate with the University on a programme of academic skill development.

What does success look like in 2020?

- Students will be able to name the Students’ Union’s achievements.
- The University’s progression rate will have increased in line with the University’s own target in each Programme.
- Students will know who their Programme Representative is and what they do, and will believe the system is effective.
- Programme Representatives will believe that their training is effective.

Priority Four.

“We will be a springboard to help students to plan and prepare for their future.”

Students have told us that life after university, their career, business aspirations, and personal development are just as important as their academic pursuits.

We recognise that life after university isn't just about getting a job. We believe that by working in partnership with a range of organisations we can give students opportunities to develop their current skills and gain new ones. We will also help students who already know what path they want to follow, but help them to discover new passions they'd never considered before.

Our Big Ideas

- We will create a more diverse range of personal development opportunities based upon what our students want, focusing on leadership, volunteering and skills development.
- We will work in partnership with the Careers Service to promote employment and volunteering opportunities, and ensure students know the importance of beginning their career pathway in the first year of university.
- We will provide quality opportunities, and ensure all volunteering and experience gained is meaningful, recognised and rewarded.
- We will work to improve access to and experience of social and commercial enterprise ventures.
- We will work closely with the University to ensure personal and skills development are embedded into the curriculum and supported by academic departments.

What does success look like in 2020?

- We will support and develop the creation of an employability award that recognises transferable skills developed through Students' Union based activities.
- Students involved in the Students' Union will know it has contributed to their personal development.
- Students will know how to access the employability opportunities that the Union supports and provides.
- Students will consider the personal and skills development events we provide to be of value.

Priority Five.

“We will support students in their journey at City, University of London.”

Students being able to access advice and support during their time at university is key to their success, both academically and personally. Support during their first year is especially important, helping their transition into Higher Education. Students have to adapt to new challenges and ways of learning, as well as many living independently for the first time, making new friends and budgeting successfully. Students' academic success is paramount to what they value, and we can provide the support and advice to aid this.

Our Big Ideas

- We will work with the University to improve the induction and transition of students.
- We will improve the online and physical profile of our support services.
- We will identify the challenges that impact students' wellbeing and experience in higher education.
- We will provide a confidential and independent advice and signposting service to support students who encounter difficulties whilst at university.
- We will continue to recognise the power of peer support to deliver advocacy and advice by encouraging the development of student-led initiatives that integrate with professional university services.
- We will ensure that students are supported in their living environment, whether it be private rented accommodation, in accommodation off site with friends and fellow students, or commuting from the family home.
- We will work with the University to improve the provision of support services, especially around mental health and support for student carers.
- We will build partnerships between organisations, charities and external agencies to support our work.

What does success look like in 2020?

- New students will agree that the information provided to them by the Union aided their transition to University.
- Students will know how to access our support services.
- Students will consider our support services to be of high quality and effective.
- We will have a network of active external partnerships supporting student wellbeing.



Our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Successful pursuit of our strategy will be measured by four key indicators in 2020:

- We'll be in the top quartile of students' union's, as measured by question 23 of the National Student Survey (NSS).
- 70 percent of students will have engaged in at least one Students' Union service, activity, democratic process or campaign each year.
- We'll have been involved in 100 percent of University academic quality and engagement processes.
- Academic completion rates will have risen to 90 percent in every Programme of study.

Our Strategic Enablers.

Successful pursuit of our strategy will be underpinned by six strategic enablers, which will be developed into supporting strategies. These are:

Our Partnerships

We will work in partnership with students, the University, the local community and other necessary organisations across all area of work.

Our Governance

We will ensure that our governance is fit for purpose and delivers a high quality, consistent and responsive organisation, and that we are financially sustainable.

Our People

We will attract, develop and retain the talented and innovative workforce that a modern students' union requires.

Our Democracy

We will have sector-leading democratic structures and levels of participation, ensuring that our decisions, outputs and impacts are student focused and student led.

Our Communication

We will ensure that our communications are fit for purpose, ensuring that there is a vibrant two-way communication stream between the Union and its stakeholders.

Our Environment

We will use our physical premises to reform the way we work and connect with our members.

The Challenge:
 "To be a high quality, sector-leading students' union."

Our Values:
 We are Inclusive. We are Broad-minded. We are Creative.

The Strategy:
 "We will create connected communities, full of opportunities where students can grow together."

Priority One:
 Experts in the student experience.

Priority Two:
 Developing communities.

Priority Three:
 Academic experience impact.

Priority Four:
 Students' next steps.

Priority Five:
 Supporting students.

2020 KPI:
 Top quartile for NSS Q23.

2020 KPI:
 70 percent of students engaged in the Students' Union.

2020 KPI:
 100 percent participation in quality & enhancement.

2020 KPI:
 Increase in academic completion rates.

Enabler:
 Our Partnerships

Enabler:
 Our Governance

Enabler:
 Our People

Enabler:
 Our Communications

Enabler:
 Our Environment

Enabler:
 Our Democracy

