

University of York Graduate Students' Association

GSA Annual Report

2009/2010

20.11.2010





Foreword

This year has presented a difficult challenge for the Graduate Students' Association; particularly, working within a new constitution has meant negotiating a new organisational structure. The association has also grown in 2009/10, recruiting five members of staff, including a new General Manager and Representation, Advice and Welfare coordinator. We consider the year to be a success, thanks to the dedicated help of those members of staff and a hard-working group of student officers and volunteers.

Not only do we now have a full complement of staff, we have also newly formed a Trustee board comprising of GSA officers, student trustees and appointed external trustees, who will guide our future strategy. The board's present task is to oversee our incorporation and registration as a Charity, in accordance with recent Charity Commission guidelines.

We are striving to improve the methods we use to communicate with our student members: an issue raised in an organisational review and highlighted consistently in student consultation. To this end, we have undergone a professional marketing audit and are now carrying out its recommendations to strengthen our brand, which should culminate in the launch of a new website in Autumn of 2010.

While we are focussed on improving ourselves, we have not forgotten that our role is to enhance the student experience and provide a voice and support for postgraduates at the University.

While our existing team and new staff members will ensure we provide a better level of individual student support, we are also concentrated on developing a graduate community across colleges and departments, between campus and the City. We believe that our community activity on campus, in graduate sport, through department representatives and networks will continue to grow and thrive as it has done this year.

As the University expands we are well aware that the challenges facing postgraduate students will increase and be amplified. We are confident that the GSA can continue to make a positive impact on the experience of our students and that we can develop to equal the University's expansion into a new campus.

University of York Graduate Students' Association

GSA stats 2009/10:

*637 principal
officer hours spent
in committees*

*538 fully funded
sports sessions*

129 events & trips

*112 hours of
Welcome Week
activities*

*23 paid & volunteer
officers & reps*

6 staff

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Representation

President

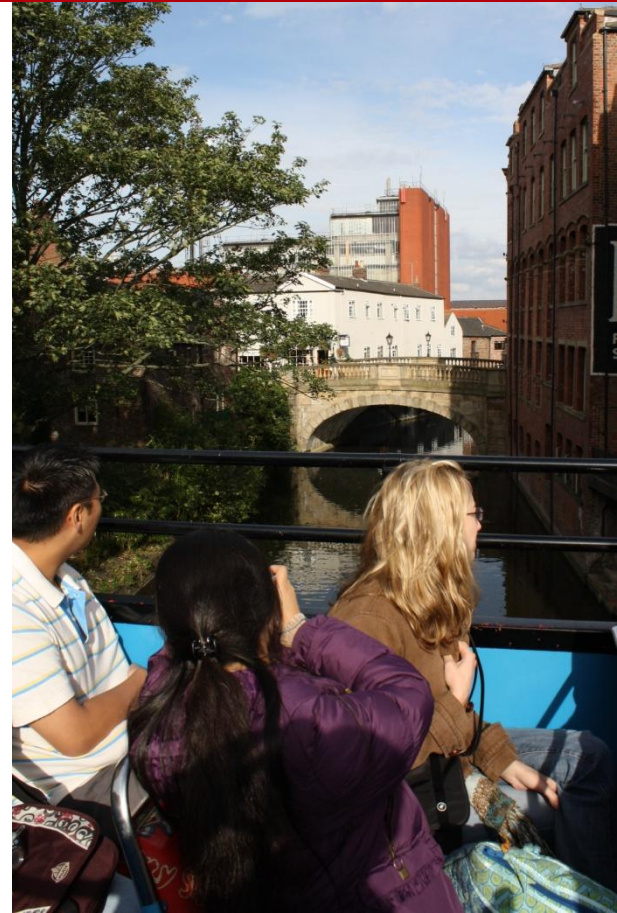
2009/10 has represented a year of development; we have concentrated on strengthening and internationalising our representation function.

We have extended our services to postgraduate students attending pre-sessional language courses. Working with the Student Support Office and the Center for English Language Teaching (CELT), we organised an airport pick-up service for each language course (July 6th and August 1st). We also conducted an orientation for those 140 students. We would like to continue this process in the future for students in summer pre-sessional courses so they feel welcomed into the GSA and the University as soon as they arrive.

We have endeavoured to present the voice of actual students to the University through its committees. For example, we have garnered opinions from a range of PhD students from arts, social science and science subjects on PhD thesis submission rate for the Board of Graduate Study.

We have, where possible, anticipated postgraduate issues and acted proactively; for example, a large number of students' visas would not allow them to attend their graduation, so we brought this issue to the University's attention in enough time to help those students. The postgraduate forum was vital for identifying those issues which would arise.

Creating a social and working community across campus is vital for the GSA. We can better help our members through better communication and cooperation with all departments, allowing two-way feedback. To this end, we have already delivered presentations for the Colleges and also for the international recruitment team which we plan to roll out across the University. Furthermore, we have attempted to improve our working relationship with YUSU and hosted an 'away day' to set down some patterns for future practice, which we hope to implement with the new YUSU team. We have also been in contact with postgraduate representatives at Goldsmith, Nottingham, Lancaster and Cambridge regarding training and sharing best practice. In future, we hope we can also have a better relationship with the University, York city and other universities and postgraduate students' unions in the UK and abroad.





Postgraduate Forum

The GSA appreciate that it is vital that the University is aware of the views and concerns of postgraduate students' and that we connect with our membership to ensure we accurately represent these views at university level. In March 2010, we held the university's first Postgraduate Forum in collaboration with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. This successful event has guided our activities and informed our discussions on the future strategy of the GSA while allowing us to reinforce our role at the university and giving postgraduates the opportunity to voice their opinion. The Action Plan that was generated and included in the review of the event has been well received by a number of University bodies, including Operations Group, University Teaching

Committee, and Student Services Committee. In June, we took the opportunity of hosting our second postgraduate forum, this time in collaboration with the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Students Dr Jane Grenville. This gave us the opportunity to demonstrate what we have achieved on the action plan to date, while developing this further to guide our strategy for the near future. Following the growing success of these forums, we will continue to organise one event per teaching term, while hoping to maintain the link with a member of University Senior Management Group. Dr John Local, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, has agreed to undertake this role at the next forum in November 2010.

Campaigns

Although this is a brand new area in our association, we have successfully run campaigns on mental wellbeing, plagiarism and student safety and cooperated on those concerning awareness of academic misconduct, crime reduction, LGBT awareness and employability. Meanwhile, we are continuing work with our YUSU counterparts to finish regulations on conducting campaigns. Campaigns is an area that we have identified for expansion and our new Representation, Advice and Welfare Coordinator will look to improve the way in which we deliver campaigns.

International

One area of attention that arose from these campaigns was an international focus on plagiarism awareness. On June 8th 2010, our international team organised an event to offer anti-plagiarism support to international students in as many of their native languages as possible, and therefore relied on volunteers who could provide this support and answer questions in different languages.

The languages supported were English, French, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Malay, and Hindi. Students discussed issues ranging from anti-plagiarism software to related university regulations. In the future, we plan to run these types of events throughout the year, especially in the first term.

Communities, Charities and Volunteering

The GSA Communities, Charities and Volunteering (CCV) manage postgraduate involvement in RAG throughout the year, which culminates in the RAG Parade; for only the third year, postgraduates were well represented at this pivotal RAG event. The Food Collection Charity Appeal is another major event that the GSA CCV coordinated for postgraduates this year, with Arc Light as the beneficiary.

Organising volunteering is another part of CCV and this year the GSA has coordinated opportunities for postgraduate students to undertake volunteering work in both The Mind Shop and British Heart Foundation Shop. Whilst we will continue to work with RAG and YUSU Volunteering in future, we hope to forge our own links within the community to present our students with the opportunity to not only volunteer but to develop their skills whilst helping the community.

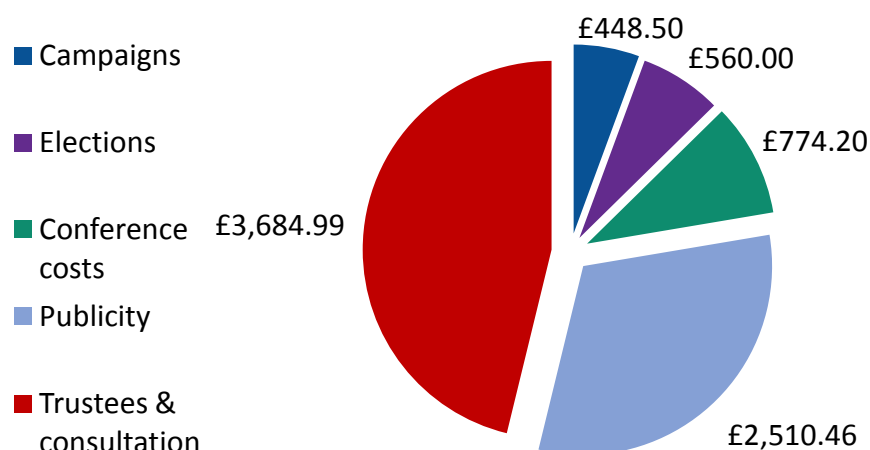


Arc Light is a charity that has been providing accommodation and support to homeless men and women in York since 1999.

Rui Huang

Rui Huang
GSA President

Representation expenditure (09/10)



Total Budget:
£10,299
Expenditure:
£7,995



Academic

Academic Affairs Officer

The Academic Affairs Officer is a new role for our organization; our Academic team, led by this Officer and assisted by a number of GSA officers and representatives, has focused on the following issues.

Academic Integrity

At the end of the previous academic year, the association agreed to work with the Standing Committee on Assessment to promote the standards of academic integrity, which the University strives to achieve, especially amongst international postgraduate students new to the UK. Further to the international project mentioned in the previous section, we have worked closely with the Academic Support Office (ASO) on plagiarism, arranging dedicated skills sessions for



postgraduates and providing opportunities to learn how to use SafeAssign to check the integrity of an essay and how to use reference managers. The feedback from this has been very positive, and all opportunities are over-subscribed when they are offered. With this in mind we will be introducing some academic training/refresher courses into our Postgraduate Welcome Week in October 2010, in collaboration with the ASO.

For the first time, the Graduate Students' Association took an active role in the planning, funding, and execution of Academic Integrity Week; in collaboration with the ASO and YUSU. By doing this, we were able to run events that were tailored specifically to postgraduate students.

Advice and Support

Our Academic Affairs Officer has prepared and accompanied many students to academic hearings this year, and alongside all other principle officers has assisted a large number of students who have sought advice on completing their studies. Though this is the case, we are aware that there are a large number of students who still do not seek our assistance when an issue may arise. We

hope to address this by working with the Academic Registry and Graduate Schools Office (GSO) to make signposting clearer, through production of guidelines and through creating an academic 'brand' as part of our new marketing strategy that is currently being completed.

In June the GSA recruited a new Representation, Advice & Welfare Coordinator, on a 30 hour a week basis, who will take on much of the academic advice and support workload. We are confident that with our new staff member in place that we will be able to offer a much stronger academic support service in the next academic year.

Research Students

We recognise that the needs of our Masters students will differ from those of our research students, and it is important that we consider carefully how we represent the latter. This year we have built up a good relationship with the Researcher Development Team, promoting their service and passing on relevant Forum feedback. We are also working with the new Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research on a potential Research Student Strategy; which will detail what York can expect from PhD students and what the student can expect from the University. We have also ensured we have consulted our research students on the new PGWT strategy (see below), and are working on a variety of issues raised at our forum, including standardised Thesis Advisory Panel guidelines and the availability of teaching opportunities.

Concerns about the latter issue were raised at our first forum. By working with the ASO and Management School, we have been heavily involved in a project to hire twenty-four PhD students from any discipline to work on an undergraduate unit within the school. This was a very successful initiative, attracting over 200 queries concerning the process and 60 applications. We will review this project with the ASO and Management and be of assistance should there be scope to extend this project in the future.

Postgraduates Who Teach

This has been an important year for matters relating to Post-Graduates Who Teach (PGWT) and GSA has been closely involved in these developments. In September 2009 a working group was set up to review university policy on PGWT and the support provided to them. The GSA played a key role in this consultation, holding an event on July 6th in which postgraduate students had the opportunity to discuss the revised policy with the GSA PGWT representative and comment on the details of the policy, guidance and role descriptors. Feedback was made on several important issues and the policy and related documents were amended to reflect most of these. In communication with the PGWT rep, the GSA Senate Rep successfully highlighted some of the remaining issues that had emerged from the consultation during the policies passage through Senate.

Postgraduate Voice on Academic Policies & Quality Assurance

This year has seen an array of new academic policies drafted by the University; including the new Teaching & Learning Strategy, universal Mitigating Circumstances, and Postgraduates Who Teach (PGWT) Strategy. We have taken a role in the consultations of each and have ensured the views of York's postgraduate student body are represented. We have also represented the student body on two Department Periodic Reviews, and taken a full part of the Annual Periodic Review (APR) Process for all courses offered here at the university.

Course and Research Representatives

To ensure that we accurately represent our postgraduate students, we rely on feedback from our course and research representatives, of which we have 65 across the campus. We offered each a training session early in the term, and have offered regular drop-in sessions across the campus and within departments throughout the year.

Though this has been the case, rep engagement with the GSA has been weak this year, with nine attending the training and many not responding to any correspondence. This has therefore been identified as an area which we need to develop, and with the support of our new Representative Advice & Welfare Coordinator, we are currently reviewing this system in an attempt to ensure it works better in the next academic year.

Council Representatives

The Academic representatives to GSA Council have been consistently involved: The PGWT representative has informed the development of the University's new PGWT strategy at every stage (see above). GSA Forum and University Feedback have informed us that there is room to reconsider the methods we use to connect with the growing number of postgraduate students who undertake a distance learning course. The association is now involved in reviewing how we ensure we are meeting these students' needs. Our Part-time students' representative has been pivotal in establishing an online social network for part-time students to meet outside of the GSA events schedule. We are in the process of reviewing the effectiveness of social media, especially for these difficult to reach groups.

The Academic representatives to GSA Council include:

PGWT Rep

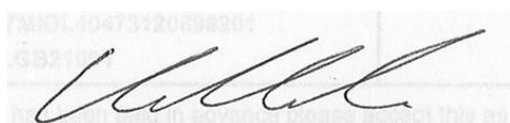
Part-Time Students Rep

PGCE Rep

Distance Learning Rep

Ordinary Reps x2

Taught & Research Reps



Kieran Alden
GSA Academic Affairs Officer



Welfare

Welfare Officer

Following the division of the Academic and Welfare Officer role in Summer 2009, a new position of Welfare Officer has enabled us to focus on the welfare service that the GSA provides for postgraduates. The key aims for this year were to continue to work with the University to improve security, enhance welfare-related activities in Welcome Week, to work with the Accommodation Office to ensure a smooth transition in the application procedure, review the current student hardship and childcare subsidy systems, and to encourage de-stress and mental wellbeing. To support our members we also provide a comprehensive guide to life at York to all new postgraduate students, which is delivered before they arrive.

Security

We have continued to work with Security and the local Police Force to improve student security. By attending Crime Prevention Strategy meetings, we have fostered relationships with key individuals and ensured that postgraduate safety and security is on their agendas. In particular, we have ensured that there is a separate welfare and security talk for postgraduate students in Welcome Week. Safety, security and crime prevention will also feature on our new website, written in conjunction with our local PCSO.

Accommodation

Alongside the introduction of a new online application system for campus accommodation, we have worked with the Accommodation Office to ensure that new students are receiving the right information in a timely manner regarding the accommodation opportunities available to them. To help new postgraduates we will run two Find a Housemate events this year, expanding from last year's (single) successful event. It is expected that these events will be attended by a large number of postgraduate students who will have the opportunity to meet prospective fellow housemates, view properties and seek advice from the Accommodation Office.



Financial Support

The student hardship loan application system that had been running previously was proven ineffective because of the administration required and little guarantee of the loan being repaid. The application process and criteria have been revised; in addition to a budget being allocated to the service should a student fail to repay their loan. Due to the limited budget, should the service be continually abused unfortunately it would have to close applications for the year. The service has also been renamed 'Emergency Loan' to ensure that students understand that the service is strictly for emergencies only.

The Childcare Subsidy Fund has a budget of £8,000 per year. For the period of 2009/2010 £3,622 has been spent. Although this is below expectation, a number of applicants are repeats. We found that many International students were unaware of the high childcare costs in the UK therefore were having to face financial hardship. This issue was discussed with the International Office who now ensure that this information is presented in their literature for prospective students. The assessment system for awarding a childcare subsidy is also under-review to further enhance the fairness and consistency of the fund.

Wellbeing

We have focused on promoting healthy minds and encouraging postgraduate students to de-stress. On the 2nd June the GSA held a de-stress day featuring free relaxation classes such as meditation and Indian head massages, as well as freebies such as stress stars and fruit. As a new event for the GSA, it proved to be successful and engaged with a diverse student population. Further to this, we have worked with the Open Door team to revive the Dr Who support group for PhD students which has stagnated for a period of time. We hope to further clarify the responsibilities of welfare providers across campus and improve our communication with those groups so that we can provide the best service we can; the start of this process will be to inform people working within the University about the support we provide, as well as focusing on getting this information to our students.

Future

Looking forward, security remains high on the student agenda in addition to independent support networks for students to discuss study issues and share ideas of best practice. The new emergency loan service process will need to be reviewed in future to assess its overall effectiveness. In order to make sure we are addressing the entire graduate community, the GSA and the University need to continue to foster a community for student parents.

Council Representatives

The Welfare representatives to GSA Council inform our policy decisions and also sit on various relevant YUSU committees, further to this a number have decided to take on larger scale projects.

For example, the GSA representative for students with dependants has been involved in the creation of a Student Parent Association, drawing together stakeholders such as YUSU, International Office, Student Support Office, ASO, CELT and a few faculty departments. It is hoped this will improve our service to and the experience of this group of students who are often overlooked.

The Disabled Students' representative has been active in working with YUSU's disability officer in proposing a motion at GSA Council and YUSU UGM regarding the consideration of students with visual impairments in relation to publicity literature, posters and website accessibility.

Our LGBT, Gender and Racial Equality representatives have been involved in YUSU committees as well as shaping our own policy to ensure that we remain fair in the decisions that we take at GSA Council. Our Off-campus representative has focused on collecting the views of postgraduates who live in York on how we can better connect with those students, resulting in the expansion of our events schedule and Welcome week plans.

The Welfare representatives to GSA Council include:

Disabled Students' Rep

Students with Dependents Rep

Gender Equality Rep

LGBT Rep

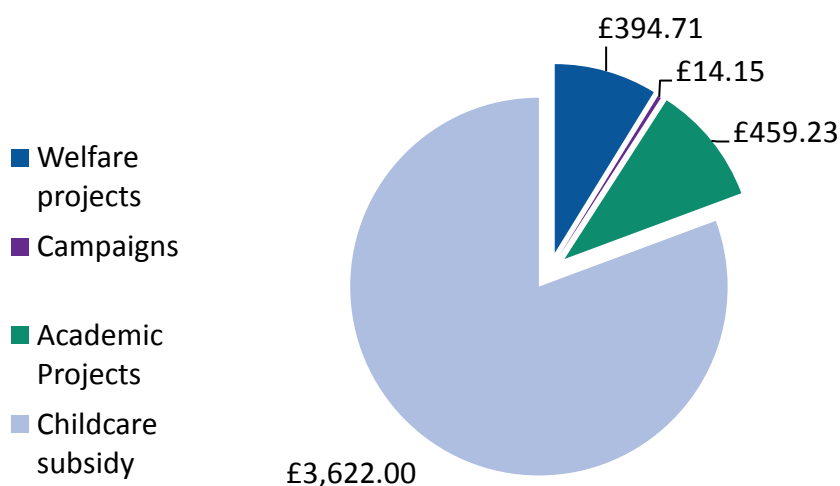
Racial Equality Rep

Off-Campus Rep



*Heather Rowley
GSA Welfare Officer*

Academic & Welfare expenditure (09/10)



Total Budget:
£11,150
Expenditure:
£4,490



Sports

Services Officer

This year has seen a general expansion in all of the services offered by the GSA; featuring the successful establishment of a sense of 'Graduate Sport', with a new colour and kit for Wentworth's college league teams, a broader range of events, with an emphasis on trips, and improved GCR activity. We are pleased with the level of service we are providing and optimistic about its development.

Sports

The 2009/10 year carried a number of aims which we have met; primarily increasing participation at GSA-funded sport sessions. Graduate Sport, which is free for all postgraduates, has been a

great success, presenting the opportunity to meet and socialise with fellow graduate students as well as to compete and stay healthy. Happily, for the first year since becoming a graduate college, Wentworth didn't finish last in the college league and only narrowly missed out winning, finishing 2nd; which demonstrates how far graduate sport has come in only a short period of time.

In order to improve participation in these sports sessions we concentrated on a

wider campaign of publicity: graduate sport is now advertised throughout campus and online. In the interest of maximizing the efficiency of our expenditure on sport, an agreement was made with the Sports Centre, which will see monthly invoices at a regular reduced costing.

Looking to the future, there are a few things to work towards. Having both quantitative and demographic data of the postgraduates taking advantage of these free sport sessions would be helpful in future endeavours. Furthermore, the sport teams are an excellent source of feedback from our membership as well as a springboard for any news or publicity issued by the GSA. With this in mind, we are investigating the best use of this forum.



Events

Events

The postgraduate population of the University is diverse and fragmented; however, the GSA endeavors to create a friendly social atmosphere for all its members. Increasing event attendance and exploring new activities were high on the priority list this year. Major poster campaigns and new information outlets were used extensively to inform postgraduates of the various activities being offered.

Feedback received from the first Postgraduate Forum showed that many postgraduates would enjoy family and outdoor events, and also some GSA events outside of term time. To branch out from our normal bar-based events we put a heavy emphasis on daytime, family oriented events and trips. These trips have been immensely popular and we are looking to expand this area in future. 2010 also saw the creation and success of the first Postgraduate Summer Ball. It was decided that, while a number of balls were held for students at York, there were no graduate-specific formal dinners held and that it represented a missed opportunity. The Royal York's Oak Room was filled to capacity and all the feedback from those in attendance has been very positive.

While there have been a number of successes this year, there are still some areas of improvement to carry over into 2010/2011. As most of the postgraduate population lives off-campus, the events planner will include more activities taking place in town. It has been suggested by our membership that those activities found on-campus



should be spread out more in the different colleges. The Autumn Term Planner for 2010 reflects this and hopefully will be a model for upcoming schedules.

Graduate Common Rooms

The GSA funds graduate common rooms, otherwise known as GCRs, in all colleges that host postgraduate students (as well as Kings Manor). In addition, the university communal

residencies containing postgraduates have Residence Associations that fulfill the same function. These GCRs are one of the best ways to improve social cohesion for York's postgraduates and, as such, have been area of some work this past year.

The GSA funded and coordinated 12 GCRs and Residence Associations in 2009/10, including:

All 8 Colleges

Constantine & Catherine House

Walmgate

King's Manor

Wentworth is the only college made up of entirely postgraduates; the smaller numbers of graduate in other colleges has presented a challenge this year. Communication and cooperation between the GCRs was encouraged in an attempt to reach a critical mass for social events in colleges with smaller graduate numbers.

All of the GCRs have access to funds through the GSA. Many committee members found the process for fund requests difficult and time consuming so the claims process has been revised with the result of faster processing time. Finally, there has been a new approach to using the central funds accessible to all GCRs/RAs whereby all GCRs make a prioritised set of claims to the fund. We believe this has made the distribution of the fund fairer across colleges.

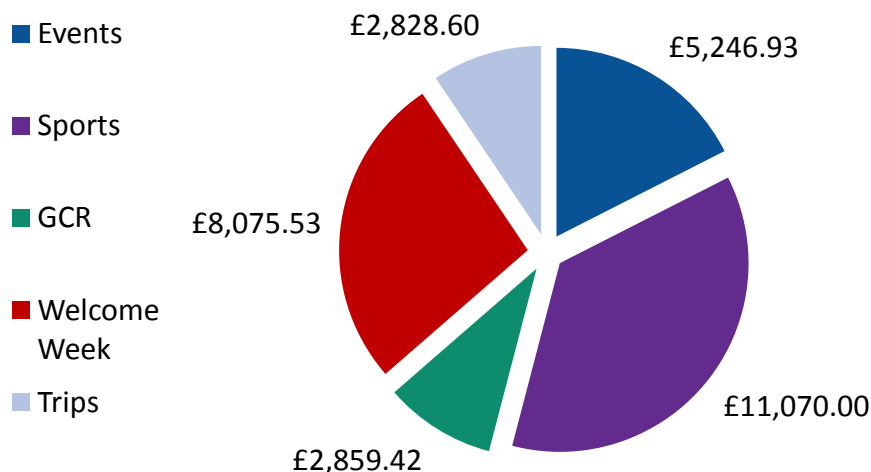
There is still work to do however; at this time, GCRs do not have their own constitutions, which we will amend in 2010/11.

Several GCRs requested a better training and handover period, along with a GCR Handbook: this will be ready by the 2010 Welcome Week. GCRs will be one of the primary areas of focus for our new Representation, Advice and Welfare coordinator who will aim to improve both communication between ourselves and the colleges and the level of support that those individual students who give time to making the GCRs work in each college receive.



*Michael A. Kirkpatrick
GSA Services Officer*

Services expenditure (09/10)



Total Budget:
£33,400
Expenditure:
£30,080.39



Finance

Finance Officer

The primary aim for this year was to professionalise the finances of the association; in order for the GSA to be accountable to its members it must be able to provide a full and accurate record of how and where graduate money is spent. To this end, an electronic accounting system was established and as of 2009/10, a full breakdown of our income and expenditure is available to our officers and members. Using this more detailed breakdown as a guide, we have formulated our budget for 2010/11 (App. 3) with consultation from our officers and student representatives; this was also passed by our Council and Trustee Board.

To streamline the cost of our events (and any others taking place in Wentworth) we purchased a full AV system. We will recoup the funds against rental in 2010/11.

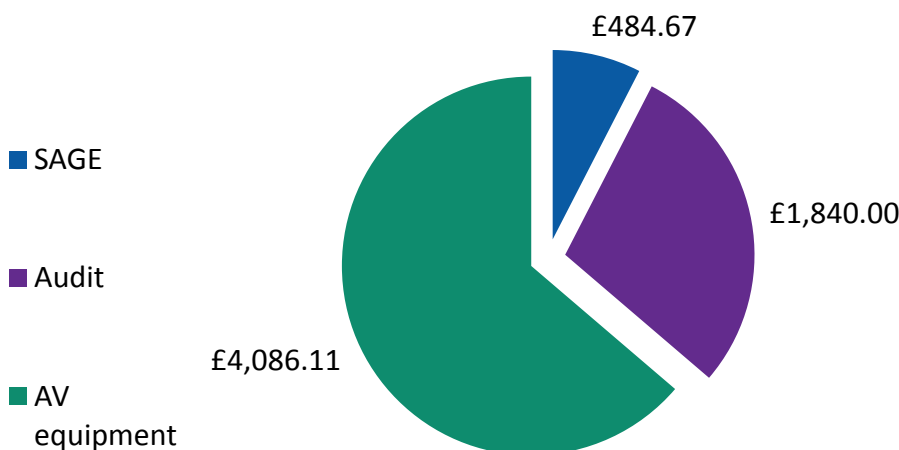
As a result of continued under-spend in previous years, the GSA has accrued a healthy reserve. We are in the process of instating a reserve policy, which will allow the association to invest these funds responsibly in projects which it has identified as fundamental to the success of its aims.

An ongoing concern for this association has been the proportion of the postgraduate fee capitation which is transferred to the York University Students' Union (YUSU). Negotiations are ongoing between the two organisations regarding how that money best benefits postgraduate students; we are hopeful that we can embark on cooperative projects in future years.

We are now confident that the financial management of the organization is at an appropriate level; this will allow us to expend less energy in future reforming our internal processes and focus on our activities within the student experience.

*Richard Rhodes,
GSA Finance Officer*

Finance expenditure (09/10)



Total Budget:
£3,000
Expenditure:
£6,410

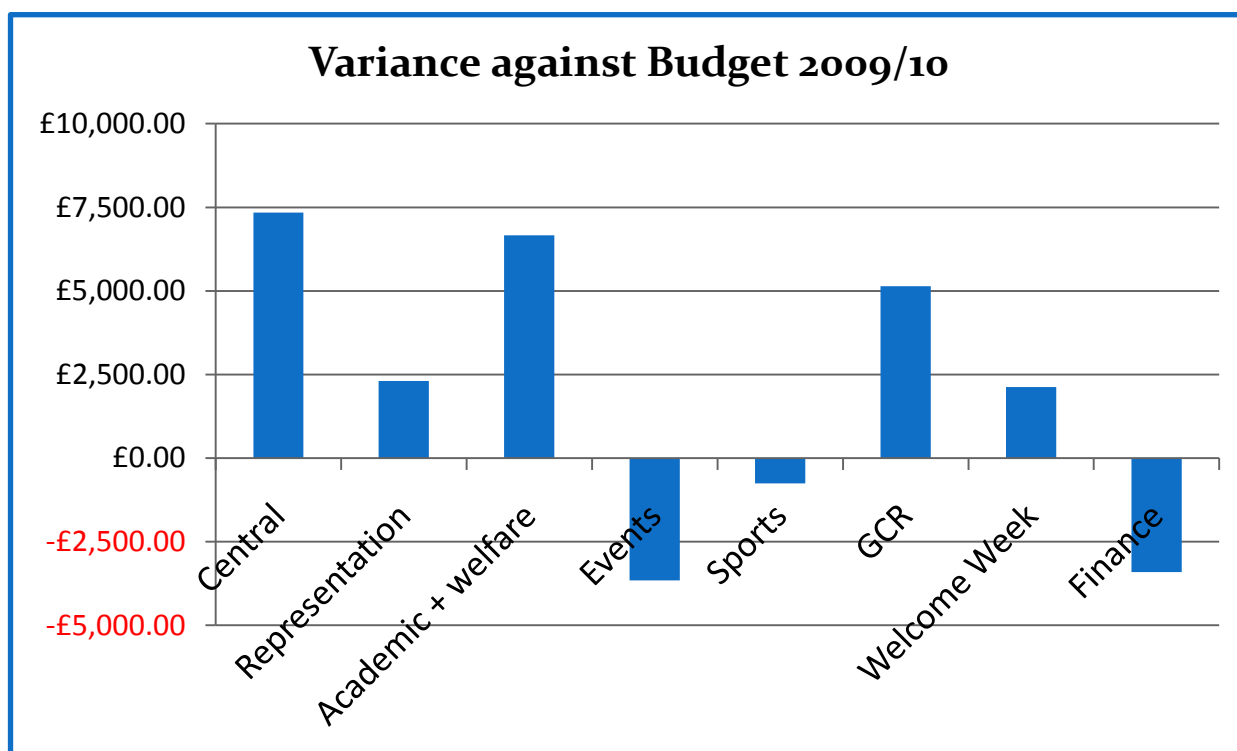
2009/10 Figures

This section will give an overview of the financial activities of the GSA for 2009/2010. If you wish to view a full breakdown of our accounts, our accounts for August 1st 2009- July 31st 2010 can be found in appendix 1; for a full audited report on our Accounts for August 1st 2008- July 31st 2009, please see appendix 2. The GSA Annual Budget for 2010/2011 can be found in appendix 3.

Overview	31 st July 2010	31 st July 2009
Income	£196,123*	£173,356
Expenditure	£165,001	£230,522
Surplus /(loss)	£31,122*	(£57,166)

*includes transfer of £26,968 from GSA trust fund

Overall, we have finished the period of August 1st 2009- July 31st 2010 with a surplus of £31,122. However, this figure does not reflect our working balance for the year as £26,968 was transferred from a trust fund held with the University, of which the GSA was previously unaware. If we exclude this transfer as an anomaly, calculating our expenditure against our grant and day-to-day income we arrive at a working surplus of £4,154, which is a significant improvement on the previous year.



The figure above shows the variance in **non-salary** expenditure against the budget for the year; this represents our pattern of expenditure on activities and resources (and not staff). As you can see, there is a surplus generated in the *Central*, *Academic and Welfare* and *GCR* budget areas, whereas the *Events* and *Finance* areas show a small loss.

It is important to note that as this is the first year we have had a detailed breakdown of expenditure, we expect that this variance will be drastically reduced for 2010/11, with a more accurate picture of previous expenditure guiding our budget.

Salaries	Officers	Staff	Cover Staff
Expenditure	£20,599.85	£53,948.80	£13,252.69
Budget 2009/10	£23,518	£64,628.41	£1000
Surplus/(loss)	£2,918.15	£10,679.61	(£12252.69)

The table above shows the expenditure on salaries for the period August 1st 2009- July 31st 2010. The discrepancy in both *Staff* and *Cover Staff* costs reflects a period in the Autumn of 2009 where we were in the process of recruiting a General Manager and had a temporary Manager on board. A large proportion of the over-spend in *Cover Staff* is offset by the saving represented in the *Staff* under-spend.

External grants	Deducted	2009/10	2008/09
50% PG capitation to YUSU	At source	£109,954.00	£102,333.50
ISA Grant	From GSA budget	£15,679.54	£15,679.54

The table above shows the allocation of postgraduate fee capitation to non-GSA student organizations. While the YUSU grant is allocated at source (we have administered the ISA grant) we are investigating how this money is effectively spent on postgraduates and what measures are taken to ensure that YUSU targets its activities at those who pay this fee.

General Manager's Report

2009/10 has proved to be a transitional year for the University of York GSA ('GSA') with several challenges along the way. There has been a high turnover of staff which brings with it a significant change of priorities, as well as working with a new constitution. This, coupled with outside pressures and previous financial reports, has meant that while the GSA has made substantial progress from a year ago, there is still work to do.

In January the GSA brought to an end a succession of temporary managers and appointed its first General Manager. This allowed for the opportunity to re-think as well as re-structure the organisation itself, along with its aims, objectives and business practices.

Following a brief period of assessment and reflection there has been work in several main areas. Firstly, the 'back office' functions such as HR provision and financial procedures were tightened up, service contracts were renegotiated and staffing provision was considered.

In February the GSA's part-time Academic and Welfare Coordinator left the organisation to take up a full-time position with York University's Students' Union ('YUSU'). After a period of reflection, the GSA decided to increase the workload of the position and widen the scope of the role to include responsibility for supporting Course & Research Representatives and Graduate Common Room Committees. Kay Mitchell was appointed into this vital role in July and we, as well as the University, should hope to reap the rewards in the future of having a staff member dedicated to these two vital parts of the Postgraduate experience.

Other areas of staffing have also been considered. In keeping with our desire to become a more professional organisation, and with the help of the University's Internship Bureau, we decided to take on a student intern to review our staff handbook and contracts.

In light of the Charity Commissions ruling on Students' Union, consultation with the University's Registrar and following legal advice, the trustees have decided to move the GSA to become a fully incorporated charity. It is felt that this will represent the best long term action for the organisation.

The GSA has also made significant progress in its attempts to better 'connect' with its membership. Amongst the ideas which have been looked at, 'the Postgraduate Forum' has perhaps had the biggest short-term effect by allowing a structured environment for postgraduates to air their views. We have also made a commitment to developing a better electronic and print presence and this is expected to have a longer lasting effect on the awareness of the organisation amongst the postgraduate community.

We also have made steps forward on building on our connections with the University, internal and outside organisations. Our relationship with several parts of the University has suffered over the last few years and this is an area of work which has become a priority. We have become

involved in many schemes, such as the 'Academic Writing Tutors project' with the Learning Enhancement team, providing advice and practical support to the conception of the project. We have also built up strong connections with areas of the institution such as the Graduate Training Unit and Academic Support Office.

There has been work done alongside the International Recruitment team to further develop the GSA into a major selling point for the University and we have liaised with College Provosts and the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Students) to develop a community for Graduates within Colleges.

We have started working closer with YUSU at an organisational and officer level, which started with a GSA hosted 'away day' and will continue through both formal and informal ventures. The GSA will continue to negotiate over the 'capitation' funds diverted by the University to YUSU from the GSA's annual budget.

Our relationship with the International Students' Association has also developed and, although the ISA will formally be part of YUSU for the future, the GSA is now in a position to ensure that international postgraduate students will be well represented.

The GSA has also appointed two new 'external trustees' for the first time in its history, ensuring that there are independent and impartial voices directing the organisation.

All of these initiatives cost and the finances of the organisation must be one of the priorities. After returning a significant loss (in 2008/9) of £57, 166, I feel that we have made significant progress to return a small 'working' surplus of £4,155 for 2009/10. We will endeavor to improve this position in future years however outside pressures such as Government cuts and increasing costs will mean that some provision may have to be reviewed further in an effort to do this.

In many ways the priorities for 2010/11 have already been decided by the work that has been done in 2009/10. By the end of 2010/11 I feel that we should be able to report back as a fully incorporated charity with a re-launched web profile and vastly improved support structures for course and research representatives and college common room committees.

In the later part of 2010/11 work will start on a strategy for the long-term future provision as a GSA and the challenges provided by the University's continued expansion into Heslington East. Providing that we receive a similar level of support and encouragement from the University then these areas of work are every bit achievable. 2010/11 will have its own challenges; however, I feel that the GSA is in better shape now, both financially, structurally and in the service we can offer postgraduate students, our staff and the University then it was at the start of the calendar year.

*Duncan Lean,
GSA General Manager*

Appendices

1. 2009/2010 Accounts

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST JULY 2010

INCOME	Note	31 July 2010 £	31 July 2009 £
University - block grant		159,744	155,848
Other income		8,621	13,997
Bank interest		790	3,511
		<u>169,155</u>	<u>173,356</u>
Transfer from GSA Trust Fund	2	26,968	-
		<u>196,123</u>	<u>173,356</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Facilities			
Graduate common rooms		2,894	5,877
Resident associations		-	783
Social events	3	14,246	15,680
CD Library		-	-
		<u>17,140</u>	<u>22,340</u>
Contributions			
Sports sessions		11,070	6,181
Overseas Students Association		14,322	15,679
Campus nursery		-	8,555
Other nurseries		3,646	7,984
		<u>29,038</u>	<u>38,399</u>
Support services			
Restructuring		-	33,138
Staff salaries		75,636	101,331
General office expenses	4	33,667	19,365
Insurance		2,229	335
Audit		1,840	1,811
Handbook		3,439	7,451
Website		-	3,287
National postgraduate conference		599	774
Profit on disposal of fixed assets		-	-
Depreciation on fixed assets	5	1,413	2,291
		<u>118,823</u>	<u>169,783</u>
Total expenditure		<u>165,001</u>	<u>230,522</u>
SURPLUS(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		<u>4,154</u>	<u>(57,166)</u>

2. 2008/2009 Audited Accounts

We include the auditor's report on our 2008/09 accounts as they were not submitted in our report for that year.

UNIVERSITY OF YORK GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST JULY 2009

INCOME	Note	31 July 2009 £	31 July 2008 £
University - block grant		155,848	140,597
Other income		13,997	1,192
Bank interest		3,511	9,236
		<u>173,356</u>	<u>151,025</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Facilities			
Graduate common rooms		5,877	3,022
Resident associations		783	224
Social events	2	15,680	13,840
CD Library		-	103
		<u>22,340</u>	<u>17,189</u>
Contributions			
Sports sessions		6,181	-
Overseas Students Association		15,679	14,366
Campus nursery		8,555	3,522
Other nurseries		7,984	432
		<u>38,399</u>	<u>18,320</u>
Support services			
Restructuring		33,138	-
Staff salaries		101,331	74,540
General office expenses	3	19,365	6,721
Insurance		335	1,988
Audit		1,811	1,763
Handbook		7,451	4,944
Website		3,287	2,180
National postgraduate conference		774	1,092
Profit on disposal of fixed assets		-	-
Depreciation on fixed assets	4	2,291	6,358
		<u>169,783</u>	<u>99,586</u>
Total expenditure		230,522	135,095
SURPLUS(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		<u>(57,166)</u>	<u>15,930</u>

3. 2010/2011 Budget

Income	
University Grant	£224,856.00
Secretarial Allowance	£8,020.00
Overseas Students' Bonus	£102,016.40
Interest	£1,080.00
Income	£8,250.00
Reserve allocation	£12,000.00
Total	£356,222.40
Expenditure	
University Allocated Costs	
50% Capitation to YUSU	-£112,428.00
Overseas Student Hardship Fund	-£23,463.77
Contribution to SSSO	-£24,483.94
Subtotal	-£160,375.71
Allocations	
Grant to the ISA	-£54,068.69
ISA Salary and Equipment	£39,068.69
Subtotal	-£15,000.00
Fixed Costs	
Salaries and Training	
GSA General Manager Salary	-£34,500.00
GSA Administrator Salary	-£20,500.00
GSA RAW coordinator Salary	-£18,500.00
GSA Designer	-£2,000.00
Internship	-£1,600.00
President Salary	-£5,166
Academic Officer Salary	-£5,166
Welfare Officer Salary	-£5,166
Services Officer Salary	-£5,166
Finance Officer Salary	-£5,166
Cover Staff Salaries	-£500.00
Officer Training	-£1,000.00
Staff Training	-£500.00
Conference Costs	-£500.00
Overheads	
Computing	-£1,040.00
Telephone/Fax	-£1,000.00
Office Stationery	-£1,250.00
Office Equipment	
maintainance	-£500.00
Audit	-£1,800.00
Human Resources	-£1,000.00
Insurance	-£1,165.00
Legal Fees (Charity	
Registration)	-£4,500.00
Website	-£500.00
PA Maintanance	-£250.00
Subtotal	-£118,435.00

Representation	
Non Principal Officer Elections	-£400.00
Principal Officer Elections	-£400.00
Association Council Costs	-£150.00
Trustee Board	-£1,000.00
Forum	-£1,160.00
Subtotal	-£3,110.00
Communication	
Publicity (print)	-£3,700.00
Marketing	-£500.00
Market Research	-£200.00
Design	-£3,500.00
Web Design	-£2,500.00
Design Equipment	-£2,000.00
Promotional material (inc. apparel)	-£3,000.00
Subtotal	-£15,400.00
Projects and Campaigns	
Presidential Projects	-£500.00
Academic Officer Projects	-£500.00
Welfare Officer Projects	-£500.00
Services Officer Projects	-£500.00
Finance Officer Projects	-£500.00
General Campaigns	-£1,000.00
Academic Campaigns	-£500.00
Welfare Campaigns	-£500.00
Course Representatives	-£250.00
Subtotal	-£4,750.00
Welfare	
Right to Choose Fund	-£500.00
Childcare Subsidy Fund	-£8,000.00
Emergency Loan Fund	-£400.00
Find a Housemate Event	-£600.00
Subtotal	-£9,500.00
Services	
Events and Activities	
Minor Events	-£1,500.00
Late Night Events	-£1,500.00
Trips	-£1,500.00
CCV	-£200.00
Sports	
Graduate Sports Sessions	-£9,000.00
Sports Equipment	-£750.00
Sports Promotion	-£201.69
Subtotal	-£14,651.69

Graduate Common Rooms	
Alcuin College	-£400.00
Derwent College	-£400.00
Goodricke College	-£400.00
Halifax College	-£400.00
James College	-£400.00
Langwith College	-£400.00
Vanburgh College	£0.00
Wentworth College	-£500.00
Wentworth GCR Sky	
Subscription	-£1,000.00
Constantine House RA	-£400.00
Catherine House RA	-£400.00
Walmgate RA	-£400.00
Kings Manor	-£100.00
GCR Central Fund	-£1,500.00
Subtotal	-£6,700.00
Graduate Welcome Week	
Events	-£2,000.00
Sports	-£200.00
Handbooks	-£3,000.00
Postgraduate Freshers' Fair	-£1,500.00
Welcome Week Publicity	-£500.00
Extra Staff	-£1,000.00
Officer Expenses	-£100.00
Subtotal	-£8,300.00
Overall Total Expenditure	-£356,222.40
Overall Surplus/Deficit	£0.00

