



COMMITTEE PAPER

Committee:	Student Experience Committee
Date of meeting:	Tuesday 24th October 2023
Agenda Item Title:	Big Deal Action Plan 2023/24
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Presenter:	Tristan Tipping

Executive Summary:

This paper includes a review of participation and engagement with SU curated co-curricular programmes, activities and support, specifically the unique Big Deal programme which saw significant growth during the 2022/23 academic year. We have concentrated on the participation of specific groups and communities and are exploring the relationship with progression and awards. The Union also proposes actions for the 2023/24 academic year.

Compliance and Risk:

N/A

Action:

The Union seeks the committee's support and recommendations for the continuing progress and development of the Big Deal programme throughout 2023/24 and beyond.

Appendices:

Appendix A: NSS and Bucks SU

Appendix B: The Big Deal : International sample programme.

Consultation and Engagement:

With thanks to Dr. Elif Ozberk and Benedict Watling from Strategic Planning and Change for her support with producing the data.

Background

1. The 2022/23 academic year was a positive year for Bucks Students' Union with the gradual return to near pre-covid levels of engagement and participation across the breadth of our offer.
2. Once again we performed particularly well with regards participation amongst full- time undergraduate students, where we recorded meaningful interactions right across the breadth of the provisions (90%+ in all schools with the exception Aviation and Security at 58%), with 63% of all FTUGs registering participation in the Big Deal programme.
3. The high levels of engagement and our unique Big Deal package undoubtedly had an impact on our highest ever rating in the National Student Survey where we returned to the 'Number One' position in the UK, alongside the organisation being shortlisted for the 'What Uni Students' Union of the Year' category for the 7th straight year.
4. Once again, student satisfaction for the SU question in this year's NSS outperformed the sector across a range of demographic groups, see **Appendix A**.
5. It was also encouraging for the Union to have our contribution, which very much centred around the delivery of the Big Deal, recognised as part of the University's well-deserved awards for both Cost-of-Living Support (What Uni) and as University of the Year for Student Support (Daily Mail).
6. After recording participation from nearly 30% of our Apprentice Learners in 2022/23, it was pleasing that during inspection colleagues from Ofsted noted favourably the opportunities we were able to create for our members. We now have an ambitious target to record participation with 50% of BNU apprentices during 2023/24.
7. We now have solid data sets for 2 years of engagement and participation whilst building a third year's set from September '23. We may now be able to start identifying trends of participation across the entire University journey of specific groups of learners. However, because of the lag, we are still awaiting relevant data to explore possible relationships between participation and student success beyond university, which includes securing highly skilled employment. However it is inherently true that students who are eligible to progress are more likely to be retained, and students who get higher classifications are more likely to move in to highly skilled employment, and this is well tested at sector level.
8. Whilst positive growth in participation amongst nearly all demographic groups we have studied is mirrored in improvement in NSS responses it is difficult to make comparisons in 2022/23 because of the significant changes to the survey. However, the correlation is still positive.

Findings

Students from areas of deprivation

9. Students from IMD quintiles 1 & 2 (commonly from areas of deprivation and lower income families) not only participate at high levels with Union activities and services, but they participate at higher rates than those from groups 3, 4 and 5.
10. Students from quintiles 1 & 2 make up 27.91% of the BNU taught student population.
11. For all BNU taught students, 72% of students from quintiles 1 & 2 participated in SU activities and services whereas the student population as a whole participated at a rate of 64.81%, 52.94% of students from quintiles 3,4 and 5 recorded participation.
12. For Big Deal activities specifically, 43% of students from quintiles 1 & 2 participated in SU activities and services whereas the whole student population participated at a rate of 39.09%. 37.91% of students from quintiles 3,4 and 5 recorded participation.
13. When we explore student participation amongst full-time undergraduates specifically, participation rates are understandably even higher. Over 90% of FTUG students from quintiles 1 & 2 are recorded as participating in general Union services, with 62.33% participation in Big Deal activities.
14. From the latest figures provided to us by Strategic Planning and Change:
15. In 2023, 83.1% of students from quintiles 1 & 2 who progressed had registered participation in Big Deal activities, with only 16.9% of students who progressed registering no participation. For those who did not progress participation rates were significantly lower (62.2% or -20.9%), with 37.8% yet to engage formally with the Big Deal programme.
16. For those in other quintiles (3,4,& 5) the difference is less stark but still significant, with 77.1% students progressing recording participation, while 65.3% (-11.8%) students who failed to progress
17. When we also apply filters by gender, we see that male students from quintiles 1 & 2 who progressed have recorded participation with Big Deal activities of 81.56%, whilst those who have not progressed have a far lower participation rate of 57.01%, a difference of -24.55%.

18. For Females from this grouping the difference is slightly less pronounced but still sizeable at -16.72%. However, for females in quintiles 3,4 & 5 there is a difference of 20.14% between the participation rates of engaged students (78.86%) and non- engaged students (58.72%).
19. For all demographic groupings we have currently explored we have identified that students who have progressed are significantly more likely to have been engaged with Big Deal programmes.

Global Majority Students

20. Black and Asian students at BNU are now as likely, if not more likely, to participate with Bucks SU co-curricular activities and services than their white peers.
21. 71.49% of Black students recorded participation across the breadth of the SU's activities and services.
22. 78.43% of Asian students recorded participation across the breadth of the SU's activities and services.
23. This tracks against 64.81% across the entire taught population.
24. 43.24% of Black students recorded participation specifically in Big Deal activities.
25. 78.43% of Asian students recorded participation specifically in Big Deal activities.
26. This tracks against 39.09% across the entire taught population.
27. When we look at full-time undergraduates, once again participation rates increase significantly.
28. Over 90% of our Black and Asian FTUGS have recorded participation in general Union programmes, activities and support across the 2022/23 academic year, whilst participation in the Big Deal stands at 53.52%
29. For the Students' Union Question in the 2023 NSS, Black students reported satisfaction levels of 88.52% against a sector average of 76.37% (+12.15%).

30. For the Students' Union Question in the 2023 NSS, Asian students reported satisfaction levels of 86.09% against a sector average of 75.04% (+11.05%).
31. We have good levels of participation from levels across the range of services but of Big Deal activities, our Black and Asian students are most commonly engaged with Events and Social Activities, Additional Skills and Development and Recreational Activities.
32. There is a positive difference of 13.9% between black students who progressed, with 83.5% participation in Big Deal Activities) and those who failed to progress (69.6%).
33. When we apply a gender filter to this, we can see that participation rates amongst Asian female students who progressed in 2022/23 at 75.61% far out-stripped the participation rates of those who did not progress at 52% (+23.6%).
34. Where we have seen significant growth in engagement from our Asian members year on year, we can also identify positive developments in attainment with a higher proportion of Asian students being awarded 1st and 2.1 degrees classifications, a positive difference of 6.5% (61.4% in 2021/22 against 67.9% in 2022/23). This excludes international students. The growth in 1st and 2.1 awards was less significant for our Black members with a positive increase of 1.6%.
35. Of Asian students who were awarded a 1st or 2.1, 79.2% had recorded participation in Big Deal activities, whilst only 45.5% of those awarded lower classifications participated in their final year.
36. Of Black students who were awarded a 1st or 2.1, 59.1% had recorded participation in Big Deal activities, whilst only 46.4% of those awarded lower classifications participated in their final year.

Our LGBTQ+ community

37. Students who have declared they are part of the LGBTQ+ community participate and engage with SU services at a higher rate than their peers.
38. 82.35% of LGBTQ+ students recorded participation across the breadth of the SU's activities and services.
39. This tracks against participation levels of 64.81% across the entire taught population.
40. 55.41% of LGBTQ+ students recorded participation specifically in Big Deal activities.
41. This tracks against 39.09% across the entire taught population.
42. When we look specifically at FTUG students from the LGBTQ+ students, over 90% have recorded engagement with Union run programmes, activities and support whilst 81.76% have recorded participation specifically with Big Deal Activities. In percentage terms, this is now the highest engaging community across our membership.
43. From the latest figures, students who progress from the LGBTQ+ community are over 10% more likely to have participated with Big Deal activities than those who do not. Within that group, a little over 90% of females who have progressed have recorded participation.
44. Students from the LGBTQIA+ community saw a 4.6% increase in 1st and 2.1 degree classifications from 84.5% in 2021/22 to 89.1% in 2022/23, the highest performing set in our study.

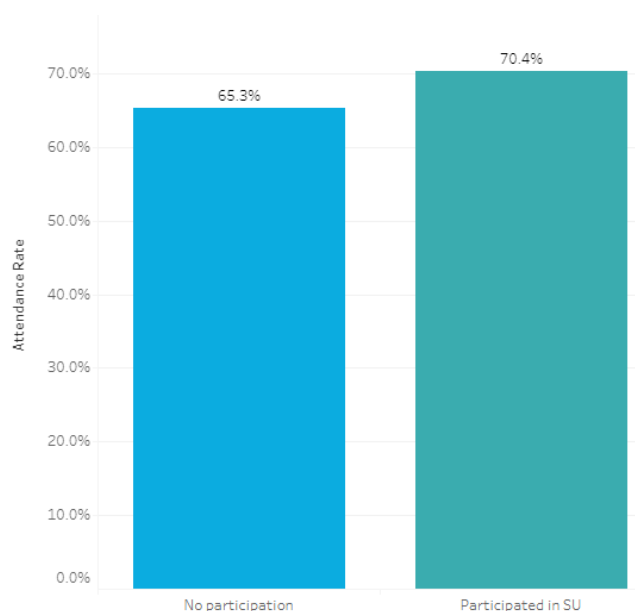
BNU students with a reported disability

45. Students who have declared they have a disability participate and engage with SU services at a higher rate than their peers.
46. 73.20% of students with recorded disabilities recorded participation across the breadth of the SU's activities and services.
47. This tracks against 64.81% across the entire taught population.

- 48. 55.41% of students with recorded disabilities recorded participation specifically in Big Deal activities.
- 49. This tracks against 39.09% across the entire taught population.
- 50. If we look at FTUG students specifically over 90% of students with a reported disability have recorded participation with Union run programmes, activities and services and 78.62% have recorded participation specifically with Big Deal activities.
- 51. In 2022/23 87.6% of students with reported disabilities who progressed had registered participation with Big Deal activities compared to 73.6% of those who did not progress (-14%). This difference is bigger (-25.88%) for female students in this grouping where 84.55% had recorded participation in the group who progressed and only 66.67% recording participation amongst those who did not.
- 52. 93.75% male students with a known disability who progressed in 2022/23 had recorded participation with Big Deal Activities.
- 53. For the Students' Union Question in the 2023 NSS, BNU students with a reported disability reported satisfaction levels of 85.83% against a sector average of 70.53% (+18.06%).
- 54. Students with a known disability saw an improvement in the award of 1st and 2.1s of 3.3% from 69.3% in 2021/22 to 72.6% in 2022/23.

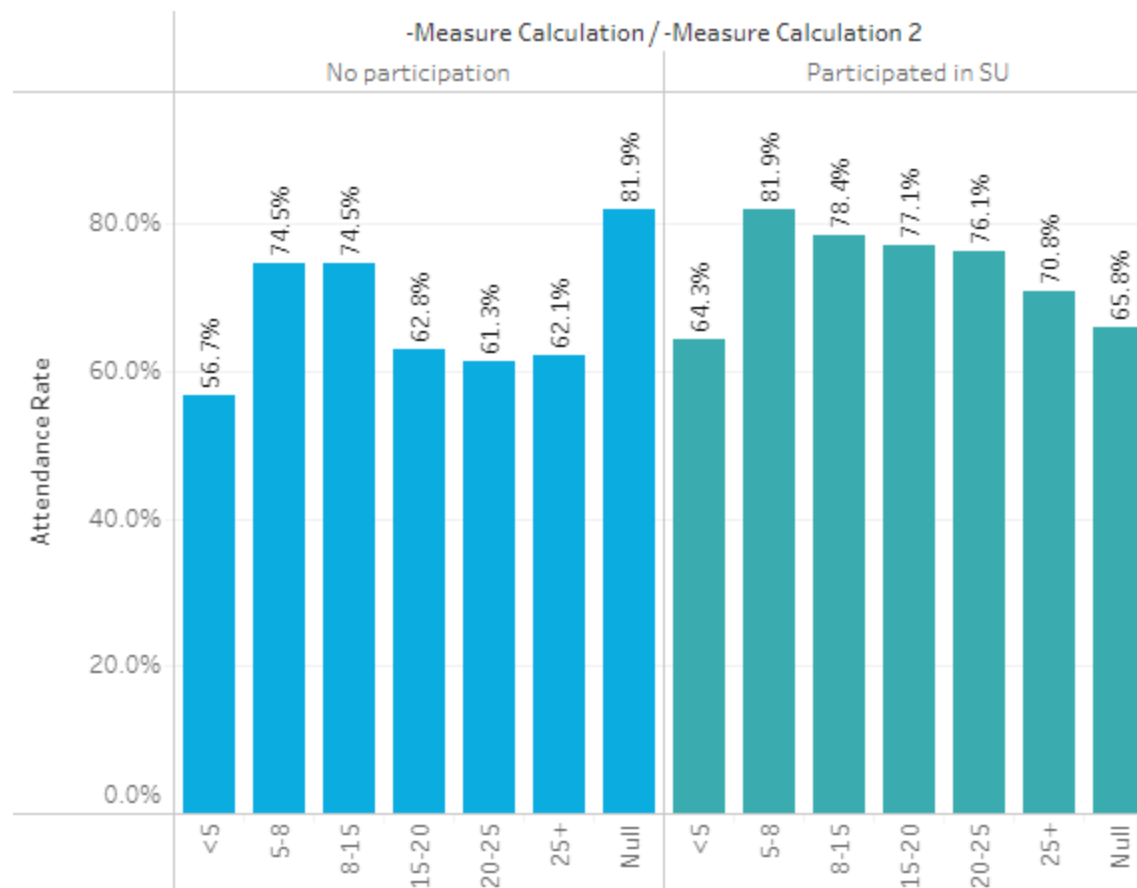
BNU students with a reported disability

55. For the first time our colleagues in SP&C have been able to connect the SU participation data to the attendance system and identified a positive link between participation and attendance. Students that participated in the SU in 22/23 had 70% attendance over the whole of the 22/23 academic year compared to 65% for students that didn't participate in the SU.



Buckinghamshire New University

56. Having started to explore some of the intersections for this we learn there is a greater impact for young students (13% increased attendance if they participated in the SU compared to 6% for mature), and for female students (7% increased attendance compared to 3% for male students). This becomes more relevant as we see the age of the students body falling year on year.
57. Colleagues in SP&C have also identified another interesting link in students that live far away from the campus.
58. Commuting students who participate with the cocurricular programmes and services all higher levels of attendance than those who have not yet participated.
59. The biggest increase in attendance is for students that live 15+km away, students 15-20km away have 16% higher attendance if they participate in the SU compared to those that don't.



Action Plan for 2023/24

60. Ascertain the relationship and potential positive correlations of year-on-year growth in participation on progression amongst specific student groups and communities. (October '23)
61. Trial new initiatives, working with appropriate representatives to devise interventions, events, activities and developmental opportunities focussed around supporting:
 - Female students with disabilities
 - Female students from our Asian community
 - Male students from IMD quintiles 1 & 2
 - Students from the school of Aviation and Security (all Union services) and Business and Law (Big Deal specifically Big Deal activities).
 - Apprentice learners
62. This is to take place in term one '23 and throughout the year.
63. Continue to roll out The Big Deal : International (see Appendix B) to further support our international community and to ensure a first rate experience for those joining at non-traditional entry points, with a target of 70% engagement with Big Deal Activities in 2023/24 for FTUG students from overseas. (Ongoing)

The Union seeks the committee's support and recommendations for the continuing progress and development of the Big Deal programme throughout 2023/24.

Appendix A: NSS and Bucks SU

2022-23				2021-22				2020-21				2019-20			
Bucks Students' Union ranking in UKHE – 1 st				Bucks Students' Union ranking in UKHE – 2 nd				Bucks Students' Union ranking in UKHE – 5 th				Bucks Students' Union ranking in UKHE – 3 rd			
	Bucks SU	Sector	Diff.	Bucks SU	Sector	Diff.	Bucks SU	Sector	Diff.	Bucks SU	Sector	Diff.	Bucks SU	Sector	Diff.
Q26															
Students' Union satisfaction	86.25%	75.9%	+10.35	69.87%	52.55%	+17.32	65.92%	53.28%	+12.64	73.08%	55.99%	+17.09	73.08%	55.99%	+17.09
Disability reported	85.83%	67.77%	+18.06	62.96%	49.93%	+13.03	66.67%	51.66%	+15.01	69.51%	55.04%	+14.47	69.51%	55.04%	+14.47
Under 21 on entry	88.76%	70.53%	+18.23	68.85%	48.09%	+20.76	59.26%	50.37%	+8.89	67.95%	52.54%	+15.41	67.95%	52.54%	+15.41
21-25	81.51%	73.55%	+7.96	68.03%	53.98%	+14.05	63.01%	53.87%	+9.14	73.78%	56.83%	+16.95	73.78%	56.83%	+16.95
26-30	78.31%	75.17%	+3.14	72.09%	52.05%	+20.04	69.44%	53.09%	+16.35	72.22%	55.73%	+16.49	72.22%	55.73%	+16.49
31 and over	87.31%	79.02%	+8.29	79.49%	57.36%	+22.13	73.99%	57.09%	+16.9	79.25%	60.37%	+18.88	79.25%	60.37%	+18.88
Black students	88.52%	76.37%	+12.15	67.65%	59.08%	+8.57	70.18%	58.43%	+11.75	75.29%	60.91%	+14.38	75.29%	60.91%	+14.38
Asian students	86.09%	75.04%	+11.05	65.89%	50.30%	+15.59	62.50%	51.81%	+10.69	70.71%	54.53%	+16.18	70.71%	54.53%	+16.18
Mixed students	86.84%	68.35%	+18.49	71.85%	54.35%	+17.5	69.69%	56.06%	+13.63	73.17%	58.30%	+14.87	73.17%	58.30%	+14.87
White students	84.95%	70.23%	+14.72	65.00%	49.84%	+15.16	58.26%	49.04%	+9.22	72.88%	52.48%	+20.4	72.88%	52.48%	+20.4
Female students	86%	74.07%	+11.93												
Male students	86.71%	68.44%	+18.27												

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	2018-19			2017-18			2016-17		
	Bucks Students' Union ranking in UKHE – 1 st			Bucks Students' Union ranking in UKHE – 3 rd			Bucks Students' Union ranking in UKHE – 5 th		
	Bucks SU	Sector	Diff.	Bucks SU	Sector	Diff.	Bucks SU	Sector	Diff.
Q26	73.53%	55.66%	+17.87	75.49%	56.47%	+19.02	69.26%	56.79%	+12.47
Students' Union satisfaction									
Students with specific learning disabilities	72.60%	55.89%	+16.71	71.26%	56.23%	+15.03	70.10%	57.10%	+13
Students with disabilities	57.95%	52.57%	+5.38	72.46%	53.59%	+18.87	70.00%	53.05%	+16.95
Mature Students	74.88%	55.70%	+19.18	74.95%	56.68%	+18.27	65.12%	55.13%	+9.99
Young Students	72.66%	55.65%	+17.01	75.90%	56.40%	+19.5	72.07%	57.37%	+14.7
Black Students	79.31%	60.34%	+18.97	80.83%	61.82%	+19.01	65.05%	62.03%	+3.02
Asian Students	72.34%	60.86%	+11.48	81.29%	62.12%	+19.17	71.69%	62.50%	+9.19
White Students	73.59%	54.07%	+19.52	73.05%	54.83%	+18.22	69.72%	55.12%	+14.6
Female Students	74.39%	58.00%	+16.39	78.11%	58.67%	+19.44	69.57%	59.15%	+10.42
Male Students	71.90%	52.12%	+19.78	69.82%	53.22%	+16.6	68.62%	53.39%	+15.23



SEPT 2023

THE BIG DEAL: INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

The Big Deal: International programme is designed to welcome, orientate, and prepare our students from all over the world, ensuring your journey continues successfully at BNU. We'll provide the social occasions, training, recreational activities and developmental opportunities to ensure everyone feels part of our university community and you are equipped to make the most of your time with us – and thanks to The Big Deal, it's all completely free of charge!



MONDAY 18

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| 09.30 International Welcome to BNU | 12.30 Bucks New Usage and Mini Tennis |
| 10.30 NOT SURE WHERE THIS IS | 14.00 CONCOURSE |
| 10.30 Big Conversation and Document Checks | 16.00 Free Hot Food in The Lounge |
| 12.30 THE ROOM | 17.00 THE LOUNGE |
| 12.30 Tea and Biscuits | 18.00 Games Night |
| 14.00 Welcome Mixer | 20.00 Chill Hub Event |
| GATEWAY | THE LOUNGE |

TUESDAY 19

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| 10.30 Big Conversation and Document Checks | 16.00 Free Hot Food in The Lounge |
| 12.30 THE ROOM | 17.00 GATEWAY |
| 12.30 Kwik Cricket | 18.00 Cinema Club |
| 14.00 Sport for Fun | 20.00 Chill Hub Event |
| EVENTS HALL | THE LOUNGE |

WEDNESDAY 20

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|---|--|
| 10.30 Aylesbury Students' Union Welcome Talk | 15.30 Advice Centre |
| 11.30 AYLESBURY 2.18/2.19 | 16.30 Drop In Session |
| 12.30 Tea and Biscuits | 16.00 Free Hot Food in The Lounge |
| 14.00 Welcome Mixer | 17.00 THE LOUNGE |
| GATEWAY | |
| 14.00 Life in the UK | 18.00 Pancakes 'n' Pyjamas |
| 15.30 Students' Union Quiz | 20.00 Chill Hub Event |
| THE VENUE | THE LOUNGE |

THURSDAY 21

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|--|---|
| 10.30 International Student Stories | 14.00 Bucks Students' Union Culture Festival |
| 12.30 THE VENUE | 17.00 S3.01 |
| 12.30 Social Dance | 16.30 Free Hot Food in The Lounge |
| 14.00 Fitness Session | 17.00 THE LOUNGE |
| DANCE STUDIO | |
| 12.30 Basketball and Volleyball Competitive Sport | 18.00 Crafts and Chill |
| 14.00 EVENTS HALL | 20.00 Chill Hub Event |
| | THE LOUNGE |

FRIDAY 22

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| 09.00 London Museums Trip - visit 4 musuems! | 14.00 Uxbridge Students' Union Welcome Talk 2 |
| 17.00 SIGN UP ON WHAT'S ON PAGE | 14.30 THE VENUE |
| 10.30 Uxbridge Students' Union Welcome Talk 1 | 15.30 Evening BBQ and Free Hot Food |
| 11.00 PARK ROOM | 20.00 THE VENUE GARDEN |

The Big Deal: International programme is only one part of a wide range of activity, support, entertainment and development available to students once they enrol with BNU and become a member of Bucks Students' Union – for the full list of opportunities visit bucksstudentsunion.org

