SUMS- The New Website

Did you know we're building a shiny new website?

We've gone back to basics to build it from the ground up, planning every last pixel to work better for you. It's launching this summer, and as President of your UoN student group, we need your help to get your content onto the new website.

A bit of background:

We've been working closely with groups of you, our students, to scope, plan, design, build and test an entirely new website using a purpose-designed platform called SUMS (Students' Union Membership System), which has been created by students' unions, for students' unions.

We're really excited about the difference this will make to your online experience, and we hope you will be too.

Your new website will:

- Be totally mobile-responsive (hooray!)
- Showcase what we offer and what you can get out of our services
- Be packed with useful, personalised, up-to-date content
- Have a whole new structure that's easier to navigate.
- Keep everything in one place
- Feature handy new services
- And of course, give access to all the amazing student groups like yourselves, who make us the vibrant, diverse place that we are

Why are we doing it?

Ultimately, because you told us things aren't right. For one thing, the website isn't very easy to use – particularly on mobile. And after a lot of research and planning, we now understand what you need and how to make it happen. Here's what we're hoping this project will do:

- Create a new and better online experience that puts your needs first.
- Give you clear, accessible, and helpful content that's easy to find and use
- Enhance web performance, making it faster, more reliable, and generally better for everyone
- Make every page mobile-friendly, so that from ticket sales to housing advice you can get what you need in a swipe.

What have we done so far?

Lots! We started our digital transformation project back in October 2019, so we've been really busy behind the scenes for months. Choosing our web platform – SUMS – was a huge part of the early stages, and we spent a lot of time doing our research and scoping the project to work out exactly what was needed.

We've installed the new platform to support our events online. We've sorted our student data so that, in the new site, it'll always be bang up-to-date and we've planned out election processes. We've created a new site map, which is basically the way it's structured. We've also recruited a student panel to consult on everything from design, content and navigation to the layout of our web pages.

A few Digital Programme FAQs:

What's changing?
The SU is upgrading its website and improving its membership platform, which support student groups.

What are the benefits for changing?
We know that the website is not benefiting our students, visitors and committees, so the new website and membership platform will be more intuitive and help students get the information they need.

Why are we doing it now?
We know we're behind and we need to improve. We've spoken to students and planned to make the changes now.

When will the website change?
The website will be ready for the start of the next academic year. You may see some changes in the summer so we're ready for welcoming students in September 2020.

Will the website design and content change?
Yes, there'll be a new design and more relevant content.

What will be different for me visiting the website?
New design, updated content, new navigation, an easier way to find what you want...

Will the website be mobile friendly?
Yes! We know that most people view the website on their phones so this is essential.

Can I see a demo of the new website?
Yes. Once development gets underway and there are screen designs to see, we'll share them.

Which other SUs use SUMS?
Many Students' Unions use SUMS, including Lincoln, who developed the platform, as well as Sheffield and Loughborough.

Do I log on to the website with the same details as before?
Yes.

As a committee member, can I still book and event or set up an election?
Yes.

Can I still promote my events and sell tickets through the website?
Yes.

What will happen to my extra information on my student group pages?
We're still working on some elements so can't give you a definitive answer just yet. What we can tell you is that there will be further communication and opportunities for training and development to support your needs.

Who do I need to contact if I have any questions on this?
Your Development Coordinator can help in the first instance. They are liaising directly with our Digital Programme team so if you have any questions, get in touch with them.