

Student Activities Officer: do the winds blow Westerly?

By [YUSU Yak](#)

Thursday 14 February 2013

Student Activities Officer is not for the faint-hearted.

Every year some societal scandal has splashed into the campus media, umpteen secretaries have loudly complained about their kit, or their storage, or their room bookings, and ratification has been dogged by rumour and rebellion.

This year has been pretty typical. Chris West has kept the ship more or less on an even keel, despite the odd mutiny here and there.

He has lived up to most of his manifesto pledges. The problem is, most of his pledges were already in place, and for the ones that weren't, the balls were already rolling.

What Yusu Yak wants to know is: how much has West added this year?



Though strong on RAG, some have said West has been weak on Volunteering

RAG has received a lot of attention, with great results. There are more societies than ever. But these wins came at a price. For a while now there have been rumblings among the more gossipy of the Givers, that Volunteering has been neglected this year.

The latest debacle with Palestinian Soc led to politically-costly chopping and changing, with the societies committee strong-armed by West into ratifying the PSS, leaving many more than a little miffed.

In a display of precious little political nous at the start of his term, West managed to disgruntle all campus print media in one fell swoop, leaving a change of printers to the last minute. However, since then he has won back some support from the hacks - the Yorker gave him eights and nines in their Sabb Review earlier this year, awarding him (and every other YUSU officer) unashamedly gushing praise.

From her view, tethered outside Grimston house, The Yak sees a certain respect from both Nouse and Vision for Chris. This sabb does what he says on the tin. Unfortunately at times, not much is written on the tin. And it doesn't take much to make him spill the beans.

Student Activities is this year one of the most hotly contested positions. Competition is advancing from all

angles – from proactive YUSU insiders like Anna McGivern, to keen Green Sebastian Odell. West needs to muster his support, leave the lazy comfort of the plush YUSU offices, and prepare to defend his title.



The Yak thinks though often criticised,
Chris still has everything to play for

He will have to move quickly. His opponents will not hesitate to seek out and exploit his weaknesses. Slow and steady will not win this race.

The danger is that in failing to keep all of the three areas happy this past year – societies, RAG, and Volunteering – Chris may have burnt the bridges that brought him to his position last year. In 2012 there were only two other competitors, whose support was divided and niche. West could summon the formidable combination of RAG and Volunteering. This year may not be so easy.

A clear front runner from the offset, Kallum Taylor can motivate a significant number of voters not just for himself, but for other positions too. Yet insiders tell The Yak that the West-Taylor bridge may have already been burnt, as relations between the two sabbs have become somewhat chilly in recent months while Taylor distances himself from the gaffe-prone officer.

West needs to come out and say what he's achieved this year, and how he's going to build on those achievements next year. He needs to shore up a core vote, and make amends in his rockier relationships.

Strong competition from many angles will split the vote against him, which when coupled with the incumbent advantage of having his face out there for a year, may sway things in his favour. Student Activities candidacies are rife with empty promises and amateur campaigns. If he sounds strong and credible, he may yet convince us.

One thing is for sure: West cannot rest on his laurels.



3 comments

SHA

15 Feb '13 at 6:37 pm

Just a quick one to say how glad (and surprised) I am that YUSU have allowed this to be published. A couple of years ago and something like this wouldn't have made it past the mighty YUSU censors or would've been subject to a take down notice from them post-publication. So thank you YUSU.

[Report](#)

postgrad

1 Mar '13 at 12:03 pm

I don't think it's appropriate to single out Chris in campus media this close to the election!

[Report](#)

Yoly

7 Oct '15 at 11:44 am

I think many people will come to an agmneret that wireless lawn mowers include the way of the long term in city landscapes. They can be safer compared with their challengers, both electric, and are eco-friendly in addition, with nil emissions. It is not necessary to store combustibile gas in your property to help fill the particular mower any Saturday, and you simply do not have to keep worrying about you or

your soccer-ball-kicking toddler tripping in the cord of the electric lawn mowers.

 Report

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