

GUSA Council Member - Nomination Form & Manifesto 2021/22

Position		Welfare Convener
Nominee:	Name:	Vera Maria (VL)
	Club:	Hares and Hounds / GUSA Welfare
Nominator:	Name:	Sophie Chisholm
	Club:	Hares and Hounds
Second:	Name:	Cameron Macalister
	Club:	Athletics



Hi! I'm Vera Maria, and I'm running for Welfare Convener. As we navigate our way to the post-pandemic norm, I aim to develop and strengthen GUSA's welfare system. I plan to expand on the existing welfare framework and initiate new pre-emptive support strategies to cater a strong welfare system to all GUSA students and athletes. To strengthen the GUSA welfare system, my core areas of focus are:

1. Encouraging Mental Health and Wellness

I believe all students should have access to mental health support and a safe and stigma-free environment for honest conversations about student and sport wellness. To encourage openness and improve student support, I plan to oversee the launch of GUSA's new Peer Well-Being Support program, offering confidential and inclusive listening services from trained student-led listeners for all GUSA club members. Additionally, to facilitate mental health discussions, I will organize wellness events and invite guest speakers, such as this year's virtual evening with Renée McGregor discussing eating disorders in sport. These discussions and events will aim to break down mental health barriers and promote holistic sports training.

2. Tackling Isolation and Building Community

As a result of remote student environments, many students have faced isolation and loneliness. To prevent further seclusion and build a stronger sports community, I aim to expand and organize inter-club initiatives, such as promoting the 'Welfare Wednesday' - campaign, encouraging clubs to generate and share weekly wellness ideas and topics. Also, with the re-opening of gyms, I will reintroduce Gym Buddies and Studio One Safe Space to provide a friendly and inclusive environment for students. Similarly, I will advocate for continued training sessions and resources collaborating with Scottish Disability Sports to ensure the accessibility of our clubs. For additional welfare community building, I will organize a welfare stand at the freshers' fayre allowing students to engage with GUSA welfare plans.

3. Supporting and Strengthening the Welfare System and Conveners

Finally, I aim to strengthen GUSA's welfare system by organizing monthly welfare seminars for club welfare representatives and conveners, sharing welfare support, resources, and training. Additionally, I would oversee the welfare committee of 2021-22 and actively help organize the committee's wellness programs and initiatives to promote wellness as a daily practice throughout the year.