

GUSA Council Member - Nomination Form & Manifesto 2024/25

Position:	President
Name:	Karl Kirkpatrick
Club:	Athletics



	Nominator's Name	Signature
1.	<u>Emma Duncan</u>	<u>ED</u>
2.	<u>Suzie Reid</u>	<u>SR</u>

My name is Karl – I'm a 4th year studying International Relations with Social and Public Policy, and I'm so excited to be running for President.

About me

I have a lot of experience within GUSA, which I believe makes me a perfect fit to lead the association as President, for example:

- GUAC member 2020 – present
- GUAC Social Secretary 2021 – 2022
- GUAC Fundraising and Alumni Convenor 2022 – 2023
- GUSA Events and Recreation Convenor 2022 – 2023
- GUSA Secretary 2023 – 2024
- GUSA Freshers' Helper 2021, 2022 & 2023
- GUSA Freshers' Helper of the Week 2022

Being on the GUSA Executive this year as Secretary has given me invaluable experience of the inner workings of GUSA, as well as the outward-facing parts of the job, such as the UofG Sport Partnership, Cross Campus relations and managing all of the GUSA Freshers' Helpers. I have excellent time management, organisational, and problem-solving skills, as well as being an experienced public speaker, all of which will work to my benefit as President.

What I want to do as President:

A lot of the President's work involves the day-to-day running of the association, and I have briefly laid out above reasons why I am well-suited to do this. Below are some of the main areas I want to focus on whilst President:

Engaging with members

GUSA's standing as a student union must not be forgotten. I want our members to know that I am here for them should they need me, and plan to start weekly 'Office Hours', where any member can come for some face-to-face conversation with the President, allowing them to voice their concerns or suggestions. Similarly, I plan to reach out to all 51 club captains at the beginning of my time in office and make sure they know I am here if they need me, as I did with club secretaries this year. I will also continue utilising surveys to gather student opinion, allowing me to represent their views more legitimately with data to support my arguments. Lastly on this point, I want to release fortnightly/monthly updates of my work and the work of the council on our social media platforms.

GUSA long-term planning

I will sit in on Council handovers to ensure that expectations for the year are agreed, and to define success measures for the coming year. I will also consult former Presidents and the GUSA Senior Council to construct a methodology for this evaluation, which can hopefully be passed down to future Presidents and amended where appropriate. I will revisit these conversations again before finalising positions for next year to ensure that we are getting the most out of our volunteer positions, and that the people in these positions are getting the most out of being on Council. I also want to engage in financial planning for the year from the start of my time as president and work with the Sport Finance Team to ensure GUSA has a sound financial plan in place to allow the association to evolve. This would include looking at spending any excessive reserve money on things like returning the Vice President to a sabbatical role.

If elected, I will work with the current President on a 4-year GUSA strategy which is already underway, reflecting how sports can be a force for good in terms of student experience and wellbeing. This will be passed at Senior Council and solidify long-term aims for the association.

Welfare, Inclusion, and Culture

The welfare and protection of our members is of paramount importance, but this must not come at the expense of the welfare of our club Welfare Convenors. I want to work to change the culture within clubs where they can at times be seen as 'club therapists'. I want to add an appendix to the code of conduct, summarising the information already there in terms of which type of complaints go to who, and distribute this to club committees. The change from Welfare to Inclusion and Culture Convenor is a positive step, meaning that complaints are now sent directly to the President, and I will work with the convenor to ensure that the role takes off in a way sustainable for future years.

The FNT/Empower Hour sessions have been a positive initiative but have ultimately had low attendance. I want to find out why, and what can be done to increase the popularity of these sessions. I would do this in the first instance by meeting with groups on campus which represent these students, as well as students who attended the sessions, and the Convenors who set the sessions up.

Memberships and facilities

I will devote myself to lobbying those at the top of the university for funding to allow Sport membership prices to remain where they are. I also deeply believe that discounted memberships for first-year students have a positive impact on both the physical and mental health of these students and I will continue to advocate for this, as well as distributing a survey to first- and second-year students to get data around how these discounts impacted them. I also want to open conversation with UofG Sport to ensure that deadlines for club memberships fall around SAAS payments, lessening the financial burden.

In terms of facilities, I want to explore the utilisation of additional spaces in the Fraser Building, St Andrew's Building, and the ARC, which can be used for club sessions to allow more sessions to take place in the studios at the Stevenson Building.

Outreach

I want to work with the Outreach Convenor to put together and lead an International Student Working Group, so that we can learn what will work and what won't work for that demographic of students, which is underrepresented in our clubs in comparison with the number in the wider student population. I also want to further our work with the Rising Stars Programme to see it properly take off this year. The programme would bring schoolchildren from Glasgow to our facilities to watch BUCS games, and we have funding from the university to provide transport for this. I believe that this is a great way to give back to Glasgow and will hopefully encourage those children coming to watch to get involved in sport, and in future years consider coming to the University of Glasgow.

Sustainability

I will focus on making sure GUSA remains committed to sustainability. Firstly, in terms of travel, by encouraging the use of public transport to nearby fixtures/sessions, and secondly in terms of kit, especially regarding the new kit tender which will be happening this year. It is important that we secure a kit contract with a company which shares our commitment to sustainability.

Wednesday nights

I believe that Wednesday nights in the GUU have been successful, both in terms of student enjoyment and safety. I will gather the opinions of club social secretaries and, if the consensus is pro-GUU, work with my Executive to tweak Wednesday nights to make them even better based on club suggestions.

I hope that the above points have laid out my plans and direction for the year ahead. I want to maintain GUSA's position as a positive force within the University community, whilst being there for and representing our members.