

SUS Membership Consultation

As part of the project work SUS officers completed a membership consultation to ascertain the members' views about the SUS strategy and structure. The full results are included as an appendix and a summary of the findings presented below.

Summary

- The Members were 91.5% satisfied or very satisfied with SUS
- The most important services provided by SUS were seen to be the competitive sports programme, networking, communication links, liaison with BUCS and development of partnerships.
- Research, coaching support, volunteer development and recreational sport/physical activity opportunities were deemed least important services to members.
- The areas in which members felt SUS could improve in would be better communication between SUS & BUCS; better coaching support and volunteering; more publicity, marketing and sponsorship; but most of all to develop inter-university sport. There were also requests for more collaboration with NGBs and to develop the physical activity and health aspects of sport.

Staffing & Structure

- 52.9% of members thought that the current staffing does not meet the needs of the organisation.
- 88.2% of the members thought that the current committee structure meets the organisation.

SUS Executive is asked to consider the following:

Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask any questions / comment about the findings

SUS Membership Consultation 2010

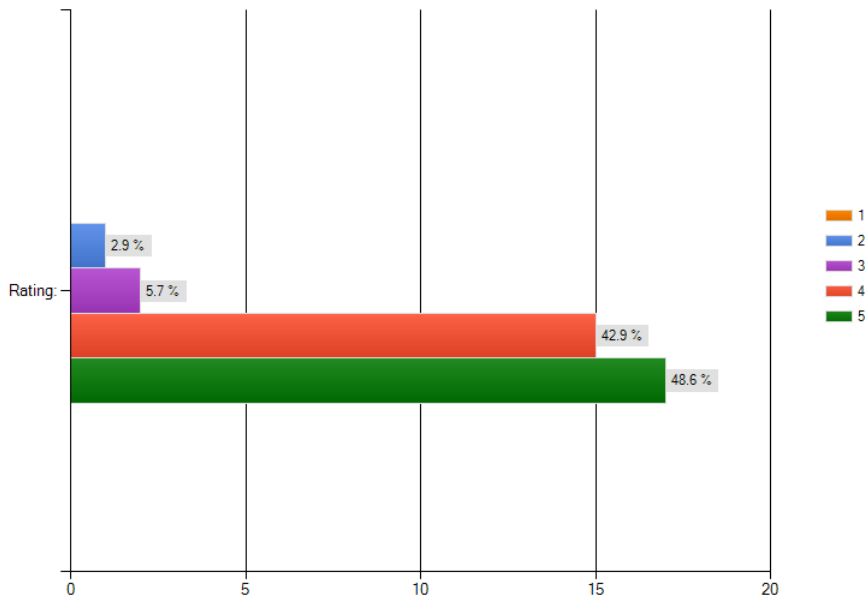
OVERVIEW

The survey was conducted online via Survey Monkey. The survey was completed by 35 individuals from a total of 13 universities and also encompassing SUS SDC's.

MEMBER SATISFACTION

1.

How satisfied are you with the service you receive from SUS? (With 1 being Not satisfied and 5 being Very satisfied)



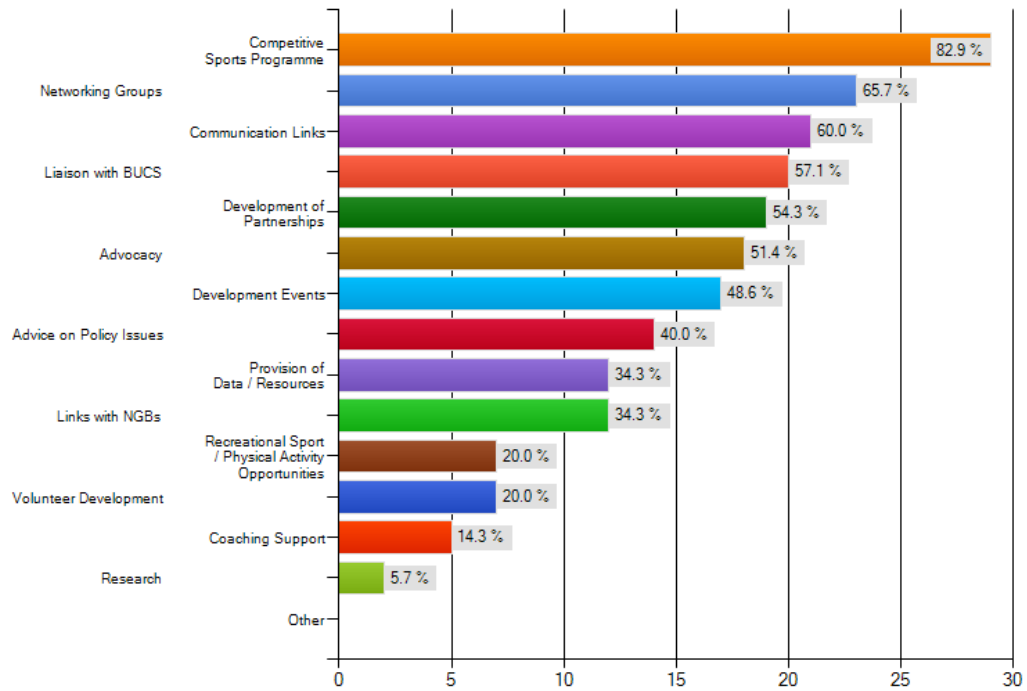
No respondents deemed themselves unsatisfied with the service from SUS. The vast majority (91.5%) stated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with SUS service.

Comments:




<p>I feel, overall, that the service provided by SUS is very good. However, in times of austerity, and although SUS provides very good value, we need to be careful that the value of SUS continues to outweigh the opportunity cost elsewhere within Sports Unions. The SUS affiliation fees are rising but Sports Union block grants are not. Overall, the customer service aspect of SUS is very good.</p>
<p>Feel being not in Edinburgh is a disadvantage.</p>
<p>I appreciate the complexity of the SUS role and the fact its delivered by a very small core staff team > credit is due to SUS for the way it makes progress against such a dynamic and expansive brief.</p>
<p>From the fairly short time I have been dealing with SUS I have been very impressed by the organisation.</p>
<p>Feel that SUS has not represented the interests of Stirling in the past 3 years.</p>
<p>On a personal level perfect but the office is maybe overstretched at times ?</p>
<p>We don't make much use of the services, so I am not in a position to pass any useful comment on the standard.</p>
<p>I recognise the constraints in which SUS must operate in terms of human and financial resources.</p>

2.



















What do you feel are the most important services that SUS offers to you as a member (Choose as many as you feel appropriate)?



Comments:

 The competitive sports programme is the highest priority. I would like to see all members having improved experiences through inter university sport provision.
 note - physical activity important to be on the agenda - patricianly in the advocacy -
 Training opportunities

3. Are there any areas where you feel that SUS could serve you better?

	I would like to see a smoother and more seamless communication between SUS and BUCS. There are currently elements of duplication which it could be argued that Scottish institutions are paying twice for as they pay affiliation fees to both SUS and BUCS. Is this relative value for money compared to English and Welsh institutions?
	Coaching Support, volunteering, develop partnership.
	I feel SUS could develop the physical activity and health aspects of sport
	No x 17 responses
	Would certainly value further face to face updates with SUS officials, perhaps even on an annual basis, ideally on an individual level or even cluster basis with local HEI/FEIs > my preference would be for this kind of consult to augment other exchanges and enable more local issues/opinions/priorities to be aired and addressed
	yes, there are a number of areas
	More help with facility bookings and avoidance of double bookings.
	Publicity, marketing and sponsorship
	Yes - I feel SUS should focus on developing inter-university sport to the highest possible standards. There are some problems facing inter-university sport eg. 1. Some top teams in some sports playing in England as competition in Scotland is not good enough; 2. Bad behaviour by students such as bad language, lack of respect for referees, cheating. These basic items need to be as good as they can be.
	improve the development between the Universities and the Sport national governing bodies
	Sports marketing and profile?
	SUS is still a relatively young and emerging organisation. It has developed considerably over this short period and fulfils a number of important and valuable roles for its membership. Future expansion of services will be dependent upon the future structure and the needs and aspirations of the members - the organisation needs to continue to be responsive to the aspirations and requirements of the membership.
	I think there is an opportunity for each host University to open SUS meetings with a 15m presentation on recent developments - that will provide an opportunity for us to share best practice
	More collaborative ventures with specific NGBs for training, participation and performance.
	Currently vast amounts of development underway, would like to see a continuation in the high levels of communication between SUS and SDC.
	No major areas are falling below par - need to maintain finger on the pulse so to speak and continue to drive the development of the sector across all areas.
	I understand that work is ongoing in volunteer development and this is an important area. We have to be realistic about just how much SUS is able to undertake on behalf of the membership and what roles and responsibilities should be devolved to departments.
	The membership is high, with lots of new member institutions coming onboard continually - almost unavoidable but sometimes feel like 'just another member institution'. Don't have a solution for that though!

Out of 35 responses, 17 claimed there were No areas in which SUS could serve them better.




STRATEGY VIEWS

1. Could you please indicate the priority of each aim below:

	Low	Medium	High
3.1 Ensure solid business development planning and operational structures in order that SUS business is effectively delivered.	0.0% (0)	29.4% (10)	70.6% (24)
3.2 Embrace partnership working to develop advocacy and support local and national delivery and development of sport and physical activity.	5.9% (2)	44.1% (15)	50.0% (17)
3.3 Be pro-active in promoting sport and physical activity and its benefits.	5.9% (2)	35.3% (12)	58.8% (20)
3.4 Provide competitive sports at a range of levels for members in our Universities and Colleges	0.0% (0)	5.9% (2)	94.1% (32)
3.5 Act as the hub for professional development of people, projects and networks within the sector.	8.8% (3)	47.1% (16)	44.1% (15)

There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

Comments:



 Again, SUS must prioritise its competitive inter university sports programme. This should be reflected in expenditure and use of staff time. SUS/BUCS are best placed to deliver these services. I would question whether SUS/BUCS are best placed to provide advocacy, promotion of general physical activity and the general development of sport. These are NGB and institutional responsibilities.
 3.4 is what SUS should be about. This puts students at the centre of SUS's operations.
 There is certainly a huge amount of energy and talent which can be harnessed in the sector

2. Could you please indicate the level of priority which should be placed on each (1 being low, 5 being high):

	1	2	3	4	5
3.1.1. Evaluate the status of the organisation to ensure that it is appropriately structured to deliver this strategy.	5.9% (2)	5.9% (2)	17.6% (6)	35.3% (12)	35.3% (12)
3.1.2. Cultivate an appropriate human resource capacity to deliver the strategy and respond to growth.	8.8 % (3)	5.9 (2)	8.8% (3)	50.0% (17)	26.5% (9)
3.1.3. Develop a long-term financial planning approach which is underpinned by the business operational needs.	2.9% (1)	2.9% (1)	14.7% (5)	44.1% (15)	35.3% (12)
3.1.4. Administer a risk management policy for the business of SUS.	11.8% (4)	17.6% (6)	50.0% (17)	14.7% (5)	5.9 (2)
3.1.5. Make certain that all SUS business is absolutely committed to promoting and achieving equity and that unfair discrimination is eliminated.	2.9% (1)	5.9% (2)	26.5% (9)	32.4% (11)	32.4% (11)

There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

Comments:






 SUS must focus it's energies and staff resources on making a difference to the end product that students receive
 The business of SUS is already secured nationally. A risk management should be taken into account but not a priority in my opinion

3. Could you please indicate the level of priority which should be placed on each (1 being low, 5 being high):

	1	2	3	4	5
3.2.1. Advocate the role of the sector to external groups and organisations and build upon productive links, encouraging partnership working to increase recognition of and investment in the sector	0.0% (0)	14.7% (5)	5.9% (2)	50.0% (17)	29.4% (10)
3.2.2. Develop the sector's contribution to national policies and strategies that enhance the work of the membership (including Reaching Higher and Let's Make Scotland More Active)	2.9% (1)	8.8% (3)	17.6% (6)	29.4% (10)	41.2% (14)
3.2.3. Support access to and affordability of the sector's high quality facilities.	2.9% (1)	8.8% (3)	32.4% (11)	32.4% (11)	23.5% (8)
3.2.4. Progress a clearly defined long-term partnership with BUCS.	5.9% (2)	2.9% (1)	14.7% (5)	38.2% (13)	38.2% (13)
3.2.5. Develop beneficial partnerships and sponsorship opportunities on behalf of the sector with commercial organisations.	5.9% (2)	2.9% (1)	23.5% (8)	52.9% (18)	14.7% (5)
3.2.6. Support major events including London 2012 and Glasgow 2014 and contribute to the development of legacy from these events.	2.9% (1)	8.8% (3)	20.6% (7)	47.1% (16)	20.6% (7)
3.2.7. Aim to be the lead organisation for Colleges in Scotland to help them build a foundation for the delivery of increased physical activity, high quality sports programmes and national level competitions	2.9% (1)	8.8% (3)	8.8% (3)	44.1% (15)	35.3% (12)
3.2.8. Strengthen partnerships with colleagues from the academic community	5.9% (2)	17.6% (6)	29.4% (10)	32.4% (11)	14.7% (5)

There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

Comments:



 SUS and BUCS must work in harmony and avoid duplication
 3.2.7 It is important to advise the colleges if they want advice but they should be encouraged to develop their own structures and ways of doing things. They need to have ownership of what they wish to do.
 SUS-BUCS discussion has been here for a while. efforts should be made by both parts to get it sorted. That would permit SUS to move on and focus on national developments
 3.2.8 This has to be a SHARED commitment to partnership
 3.2.1. is important, but the more we do ourselves, the more we will be noticed. it is important to work on it, but not dedicate too much time as people can't ignore a good thing.

4. Could you please indicate the level of priority which should be placed on each (1 being low, 5 being high)

	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.1. Support the development of a sustainable national approach for participation in recreational sport and physical activity.	0.0%	11.8% (4)	23.5% (8)	35.3% (12)	29.4% (10)
3.3.2. Raise the profile of the health and physical activity agenda within the sector through lobbying, research, education and promotion.	0.0% (0)	14.7% (5)	23.5% (8)	41.2% (14)	20.6% (7)
3.3.3. Collaborate with members to provide appropriate, imaginative and diverse physical activity.	0.0% (0)	17.6% (6)	29.4% (10)	23.5% (8)	29.4% (10)
3.3.4. Produce informative and attractive resources to promote and celebrate health and well-being and share good practice.	2.9% (1)	20.6% (7)	23.5% (8)	35.3% (12)	17.6% (6)
3.3.5. Ensure that all our programmes are inclusive	5.9% (2)	8.8% (3)	8.8% (3)	47.1% (16)	29.4% (10)

There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

Comments:






 SUS must prioritise its competitive sports programme before any of the above priorities. I would argue that the above is the responsibility of individual institutions.
 The development of a sustainable national approach is key. I don't think SUS should act as a lobby group. SUS should focus on main sports and secure their sustainability before moving on to new and diverse activities.

5. Could you please indicate the level of priority which should be placed on each (1 being low, 5 being high)

	1	2	3	4	5
3.4.1. Further remodelling and modernisation of the SUS competitions programme to provide sustained, progressive opportunities for increasing numbers of participants.	2.9% (1)	5.9% (2)	5.9% (2)	35.3% (12)	50.0% (17)
3.4.2. Work closely with a range of National Governing Bodies to foster improved links and develop student sport.	0.0% (0)	5.9% (2)	8.8% (3)	47.1% (16)	38.2% (13)
3.4.3. Support education and deployment of match officials through appropriate education and support programmes.	2.9% (1)	5.9% (2)	8.8% (3)	52.9% (18)	29.4% (10)
3.4.4. Consult members regularly on key topics leading to improved event administration and streamlined communications.	0.0% (0)	11.8% (4)	26.5% (9)	47.1% (16)	14.7% (5)
3.4.5. Assist athletes with potential to compete at a performance level to access the support required to maximise their development.	0.0% (0)	14.7% (5)	29.4% (10)	20.6% (7)	35.3% (12)
3.4.6. Develop a range of integrated and parallel competition programmes for college student population.	2.9% (1)	11.8% (4)	14.7% (5)	47.1% (16)	23.5% (8)
3.4.7. Design and implement a coaching plan for the student sector, in partnership with selected governing bodies.	2.9% (1)	11.8% (4)	23.5% (8)	32.4% (11)	29.4% (10)

There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

Comments:


 I believe SUS must evaluate its priorities and I would suggest that this is inter university sport and the representative sport programme. The simple reason being that SUS/BUCS are needed to provide a competitive and representative sports programme. I believe it is the individual institutions responsibility to develop sport.
 Some NGBs are not as well developed as SUS and may in fact hinder any progression in the universities and colleges sector.
 Some of these are resource dependent.
 3.4.6 There must be a shred responsibility and commitment to this aim
 3.4.5. Is done on an institutional level allot, sus should support those institutions that don't have the resources to do it, but not help those who already get allot of support.

6. Could you please indicate the level of priority which should be placed on each (1 being low, 5 being high)

	1	2	3	4	5
3.5.1. Gather and disseminate data about the impact of the sector through annual research and auditing	0.0%(0)	11.8%(4)	23.5%(8)	47.1% (16)	17.6(6)
3.5.2. Oversee marketing activities including utilising new media and technology to encourage excellent communication for the sector.	0.0% (0)	11.8% (4)	20.6% (7)	52.9% (18)	14.7% (5)
3.5.3. Facilitate several professionally managed development events to a broad cross-section of the membership.	2.9% (1)	2.9% (1)	32.4% (11)	50.0% (17)	11.8% (4)
3.5.4. Enable and support special interest networking groups to promote professional exchanges and develop higher standards of service	2.9% (1)	2.9% (1)	38.2% (13)	38.2% (13)	17.6% (6)
3.5.5. Develop models of best practice to assist the training of professional staff and volunteers.	2.9% (1)	2.9% (1)	17.6% (6)	58.8% (20)	17.6% (6)

















There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

Comments:

 Not just new media! Utilise and promote old media too

7. Is there anything you feel is missing from the strategy?

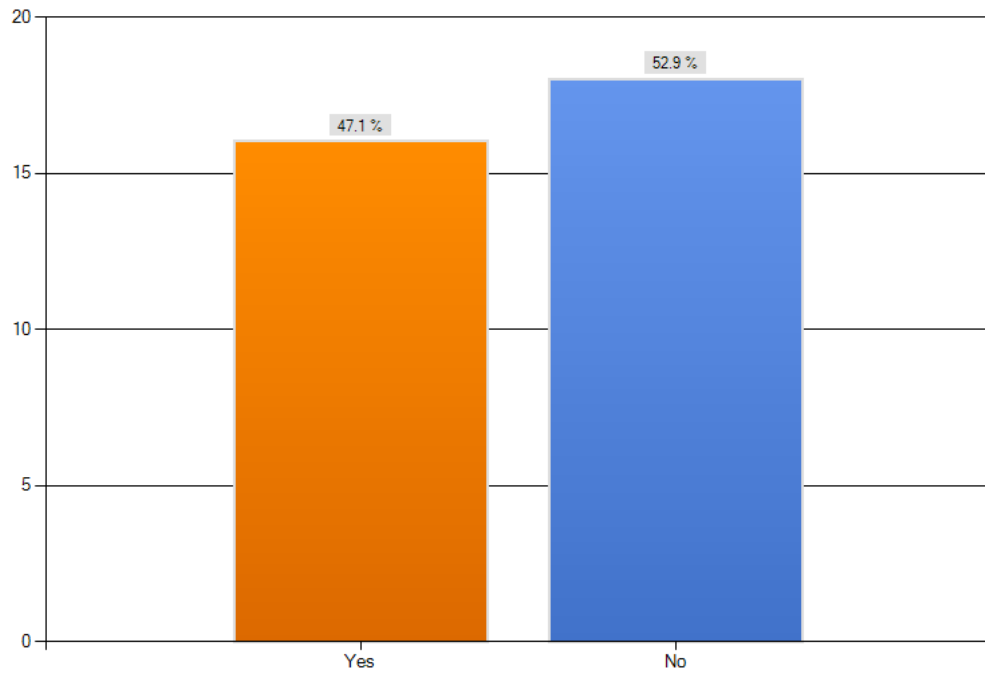
There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

	Just to reiterate earlier comments...SUS should focus on providing an enhanced student experience through its competitive sports programme and representative sport. I feel SUS are best placed to do this. However I would question SUS' place in the development of sport, promotion of physical activity at an institutional level.
	No, I like the idea of promoting the importance of sport. Raising quality, encouragements and benefits of participation for all types of standards.
	Providing clear evidence based targets/actions to measure success and impact
	Identify key sports for funding and relief
	Seems pretty comprehensive
	All very healthy and strategic- but don't forget to support autonomy also. SUS is about the sport! Help the institutions to make it both competitive and fun.
	It's not so much a matter of things missing but a matter of emphasis. SUS is a quite political organisation. Is this a significant function? I suggest not. It needs to put students at the centre of all it does
	Widening access in sports i.e. incorporate students with disabilities. Could aim to develop activities in this sector working with national governing bodies.
	The strategy is thorough and comprehensive and the result of extended consultation with the sector- it will require to be flexible and adaptable to respond to change in the future.
	Maybe try to give the smaller sports a higher profile than some of the larger ones to try to encourage participation in them.
	Promotion and development of inter-uni/college competitions such as conference sup finals.
	Ensure a variety of levels are maintained, it is important to boost the elite, but include the celebration of sport or those that are not in an elite category.
	While the need for centralisation is clearly important, there should perhaps be a recognition of regional differences
	Think most applicable areas are covered in some shape or form
	The range of work covered above is extensive and the need for appropriate staffing and other resources to support work is clear.
	18 answered No

STAFFING

1.





















Do you feel the current staffing structure for SUS adequately meets the needs of the organisation?










There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

2. Would you suggest any staffing changes to better service our aims and objectives?

There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

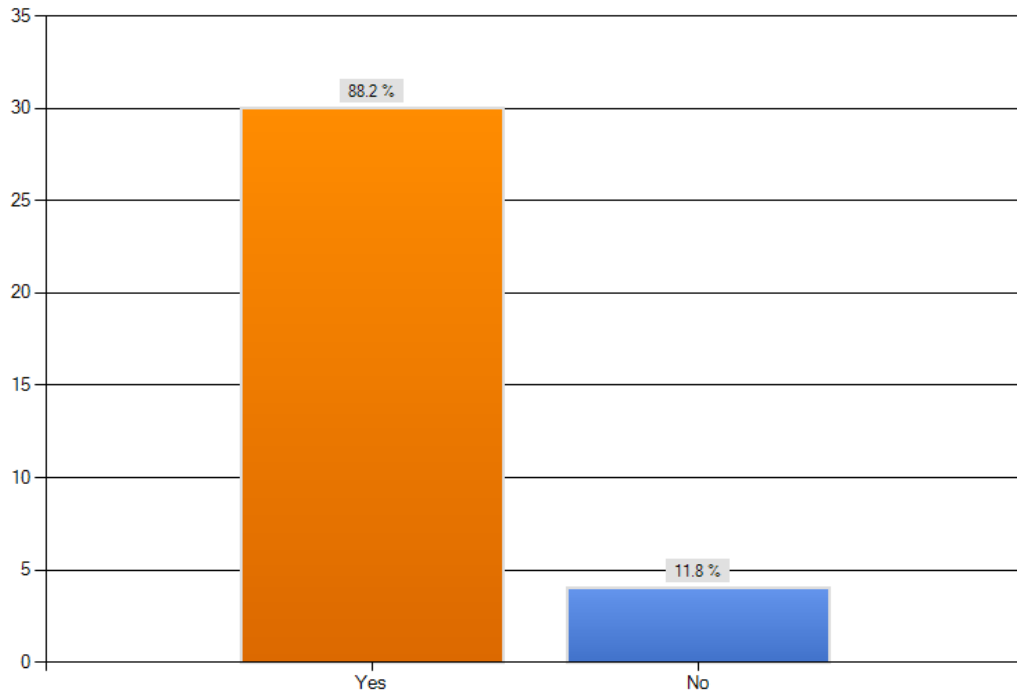
	I feel that institutions are getting excellent value for money from the current Sports Administration Assistant. As I have stated previously, our institutions need for SUS is the competitive and representative sports programme. Therefore, we do feel that we get excellent value for money with the Sports Administration Assistant. I feel any staff time directed towards improving the student experience through the above priorities is excellent value for money.
	No - Ross is forever helpful... (not him as a person but his role as a staff member is very supportive/helpful)
	I think a chief executive type role is required
	No as all staff supportive to my needs as SDC
	My views on this are well known > SUS should move to a chief operating officer and reduce reliance on volunteer chair > staff nos should remain small unless SUS can secure additional and assured funding from elsewhere > members cannot be expected to contribute more in the present climate > SUS should still embrace volunteer base on committees to preserve personal development, networking and stake holder commitment
	I think it may be advantageous to have a part time position for an individual to liaise specifically with SDCs to ensure the needs of their specific sports are met. This may not require a continual part time post and may be better served by have regular liaison sessions throughout the year. I still think you would require a separate individual to cover this remit as I am aware that all of the staff at SUS are very busy with their current remits. Just throwing around ideas here but this role could cover a kind of mentoring role for new SDCs. I know that Stew spends a lot of time with the SDCs (which we value a lot!) but I'm sure this could be done more efficiently by having someone particularly for this role and allowing Stew to focus on more key areas.
	more staff dealing more in depth with the individual sports, many of the SDC positions are voluntary which limits the time that SDC's can spend on their relevant sport
	depends on funding but for future sustainability SUS needs to be less dependent on a volunteer chair
	Perhaps go down the BUCS line where certain members of staff are associated with certain sports.
	The difficulty with increased staffing is likely need for increased funding. Pressures on HE institutions currently would make an increased contribution from departments and Sports Unions difficult to support.
	Depends on strategy - are you competing with what BUCS provides or complementing? Staff numbers should be fewer if the latter.
	I think a gradual increase in staff to reflect the growth of the organisations the best way forward.
	If SUS continues to grow and provide more and more services, the structure will need to be looked at in order to provide the best services.
	There may be too much load on the Executive officer at present ? A number two perhaps with an emphasis on sports marketing ?
	Number of staff is not high but it seems that organisation's objectives constantly reached we love you SUS for your high level of engagement in university sports.
	This question is best answered by those already in position- is the structure 'fit for purpose'? - both currently and to support future development?
	Current structure is working - but only just as all employees currently working at full capacity. This makes it difficult to grow and develop the organisation
	Increased administrative support to allow other members of staff to be released for other work.
	A CEO, more Sports Administrators and guaranteed funding for the College post
	Given the ambition of the organisation and it's member institutions SUS will always be in a position where a greater number of staff would make the delivery of services easier or more comprehensive. However, what practical improvements can be made

	at this stage should be investigated appropriately as they seem to have been by the SUS Executive.
	possible part time staff member sourcing financial support for sports as they cannot access lottery and central funding is being reduced
	SUS rely heavily on volunteers for event delivery, which means that the sports programme quality can vary depending on the quality of the volunteer. The sports programme manager does support this, but as their job becomes increasingly strategic, there may need to be more delivery of sport support as if a volunteer does not fulfil their role, there is not a consistency for student participants to expect high quality programme. I think to fulfil the strategic plan, specifically in development, you need a staff member in that area too. SUS does a very good job with the staff they have and I am sure things will progress with who they have, but could progress more with one or 2 more members of staff.
	Under review
	I say yes above, but clearly the work that is done would be more beneficial if there were more of you hitting a wider audience
	No drastic changes, believe a role such as CE / Chair might help to allow current staff to utilise their time more effectively, and concentrate on matters which the organisation and membership feel a priority for. This is taking nothing away from the current staff - who do an excellent job, think it just needs a little more structure and clarity in roles and responsibilities.
	The addition of a Sports Programme "assistant" would enable Stew to devote more of his time to the strategic development issues facing SUS. The Assistant could take on the increasingly extensive work relating to the support of sports programmes and ongoing activity, enabling SUS to maximise the opportunities for further development that are presented.
	7 specifically said 'no'

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

1.















Do you feel the current committee structure for SUS adequately meets the needs of the organisation?



There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question. Overall the membership felt that the committee structure is meeting the needs of the organisation (88.2%)

2. Would you consider any committee structural changes to better service our aims and objectives?










There were 34 responses, 1 skipped the question.

 Promoting these committees more to SDC's to ensure that they are aware of these groups and what they offer such as PAC committee resources
 I believe strongly that current committee shape is right > SUSPAC is perhaps the least obvious in terms of value addedness to sector, but still valid. I would like to see more interest group meetings to promote professional exchanges in key areas
 the focus of the physical activity committee should be more strategic
 I believe individual sports will need more volunteer help at the SDC/SDO level in order to make effective changes.
 Communication!!!! Never hear from any of these - bureaucracy for bureaucracy's sake???
 The committee structure is fine as long as it has strong student representation and voice. However, I think much of this activity is peripheral to its main focus - competitive inter-university sport.
 Some changes have been made recently and I feel that the committees suit perfectly
 The structure should be reviewed to ensure it is supportive of the membership's needs and aspirations- it may need to change as SUS grows and develops to best serve the membership.
 Maybe a 'minor sports committee' (or with a better name) where SDCs from minor sports and maybe reps from NGBs could get together to discuss issues affecting them, opportunities etc and try to build up their membership working together and sharing tips?
 As SUS grows each committee may find themselves supporting more working groups, such as the Marketing Group but the structure can be adapted and expanded as appropriate.
 better contact with sdc's from committees
 maintain student representation on the aquatics committee
 No - although more University's now have Development Officers in some shape or form - but understand you can't have a group or committee for every area.
 19 specifically said 'no'

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

Are there any other comments that you would like SUS to take on board during this review process?

There were 13 responses, 22 skipped the question.

 My predecessor filled in page one.. I did the rest - reflects only my views from this early stage.
 Would be good to meet other SDC's at some point, having a standard set or guidelines or rules for each sport would be helpful to SDC's which can be added to or edited by current SDC's depending on different situations arising (think it might already be in process). All staff have been very supportive and helpful over last 2 years as SDC.
 Stay lean, mean and hungry
 I feel that is well run and efficient, particularly when compared with BUCS.
 Yes - I think SUS has to be careful that it does not become something that does not reflect the reality of what goes on in the various universities that make-up SUS. I find SUS is too focussed on policy and politics at the expense of inter-university sport. Is SUS doing what it was set up to do? What problems are facing inter-university sport? Is SUS directing enough of its time, energies and resources to make inter-university sport as good as it can be? Finally, are there things that SUS is doing that can be best done by each university? E.g. providing coaching courses for its students, promoting physical activity, encouraging volunteers?
 Developments should meet everyone' needs. In other words SUS should keep in mind that some of the universities are smaller and developing at a different rates. The biggest challenge is to find the right balance.
 SUS not BUCS and that's everything I want to say ;) SUS is very helpful to the university sports and is much more open for students in comparison to BUCS. This base gives the chance for the constant cooperation and communication between two parties. Thank you all the staff for all your hard work and engagement
 I have raised a couple of times the potential to establish an "interest group" or forum for grounds staff from departments, to enable issues relating to this important service delivery to be considered. Scotland is ill-served in this field and a SUS Grounds Staff Forum could be the vehicle to improving staff development opportunities and other related development areas.
 5 specifically said 'no'