

Queen’s University Students’ Union
Part-Time Student Officer Report

Role: Oifigeach Gaeilge/Irish Language Officer

Name: Aodhán Ó Baoill

Period Covered by Report: July 2019 – July 2020

Introduction

As the first year of my role, I knew it was going to be difficult to determine exactly what it would entail, and that perhaps a greater responsibility would fall on me to determine the parameters of the role and how it would develop in the years to follow. It also came with a huge amount of responsibility in terms of continuing and promoting the ongoing campaign for bilingual signage on campus

Key Events/Meetings

KEY EVENTS / MEETINGS		
Date	Details of Activity (and outcomes for students)	Location
August 2019	Meeting with An Dochtúir Marcas Mac Coinnigh, lecturer in Roinn na Gaeilge, to discuss methods and ways of language promotion during the coming year.	Ulster University Coleraine Campus
September 2019	Meeting with Education Officer, subject lead for Irish An tOllamh Micheál Ó Mainnin and An Dochtúir Marcus Mac Coinnigh, to discuss planned cuts to fees for the Gaeltacht course for students of Irish by the University.	University Square
September 2019	Follow up meeting to the above, outcome being a successful one for students. Was agreed by the university that fees would not be cut.	University Square
October/November 2019	Several meetings with An Cumann Gaelach QUB and the activist group An Dream Dearg to discuss the bilingual signage campaign. Agreed to promote an extensive social media campaign advertising the universities continued ignorance of student demands’ for language rights.	Áras Uí Chonghaile, Bóthar na bhFál
December 2019	Spoke at “Alternative University” on the future of the Irish Language in QUB alongside An tOllamh Micheál Ó Mainnin and Eoghan Ó Garmaile, Campaigns Officer for An Cumann Gaelach.	Common Grounds Café
December 2019	Protest at gates alongside members of UCU. Massive turnout, huge boost for morale for students.	QUB Gates

December 2019	Meetings with members of various local political parties to discuss their support – or lack thereof – for bilingual signage and an Irish Language Act	SU
December 2019	Protest at Stormont over Assembly failings on rights for Irish speakers.	Stormont
January/February 2020	Meeting with SABB Officers and UCU Members over alternative venues for the Féile due to the UCU strike.	SU
January/February 2020	Meetings with various candidates in the SU Elections to discuss the importance of including Irish in their various manifestos.	SU and other
March 2020	Féile Mhic Artúir – week long festival celebrating Irish culture, with events, debates, lectures and panel discussions; massive popularity and surge in interest.	SU, various bars and community centres.
April 2020 onwards	Zoom meetings with USI colleagues about protecting the rights of Irish speakers post COVID-19.	

Key Projects / Campaigns

PROJECTS / CAMPAIGNS	
Campaign / Project	Recent Progress
Fight cuts to Gaeltacht fees	Success, fees were not cut however the situation must be closely monitored.
Bilingual Signage Campaign	New E&D policy passed through senate however makes no clear reference to bilingual signage and must be tested at every opportunity.
Féile Mhic Artúir	First year of the Féile. Huge success and resulting in another massive increase in interest of Irish on campus.

Media, Press & Publicity (if applicable)

Local broadcaster Lynette Fay chaired and hosted several of the events during the Féile. Furthermore, it was covered heavily by local news stations such as Raidió Fáilte.

The bilingual campaign received massive widespread press coverage from national news outlets such as TG4 and RTÉ, as well as online coverage from several platforms and articles published in more local publications such as *The Irish News* and *The Anderstown News*.