

# Sikh Soc

*[University of  
Hertfordshire]*

**Annual Report  
2013-2014**

**The University of Hertfordshire Sikh Society**  
**promotes activities that appreciate the culture, history and ideology of the Sikh way of life.**

## **OUR VISION**

Our vision was to increase awareness of the Sikh society among students at the University of Hertfordshire and increase their understanding of Sikhism as well as strengthening and bringing our community closer together.

## **OUR VALUES**

Our society mainly focused around the theme of equality in gender, religion, and colour – emphasising on the fact that we as humans, are all ONE, hence we should do good deeds and respect everyone as they are. While taking this into account, we never promoted Sikhism in terms of forcing people to convert or follow our beliefs, but rather giving a positive view of what it is about, since it is a less known religion, when compared to others (e.g. Christianity, Islam, Hinduism).

## **OUR AIMS**

As the university lifestyle is bursting with distractions, our vision was simply to keep the Sikh community in touch with their roots, potentially aid their development in terms of Sikhi, and also promote the understanding of Sikh values to those who were new to the religion for e.g, the equality talk about women was a very good talk to show a key element about Sikhism, all are ONE in equality (as mentioned before).

## INTRODUCTION

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ke Fateh

I came into the Sikh society during my first year, and had no clue what they would be doing, until the cha and samosa event came, where the promotions were done.

However, I realised that from the event that happened after cha and samosa, there weren't as many people attending. Progressively throughout the year, it occurred to me that some of the events just weren't enough for students to come to and be interested. So it occurred to me that more approachable and friendly events or activities were needed in order to make sure that these particular students would come. For example, football would have made a family community that would be established weekly, or a games night for people to get involved and enjoy themselves – the social activities were just as important as Sikh-based events for students to be comfortable, enjoying it, and learning about Sikhism.

## MEMBERSHIP & OFFICERS

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

It was primarily last year's committee, apart from those who had graduated, however, since nearly all of us were leaving this year, we had to make sure that new members could carry on the society. So our mission from the beginning was to bring in and interest as many first years as we could and then approach them about how they felt taking a bigger part in the committee after we were gone.

### **SOCIETY OFFICERS**

There were no pre-designated roles in the society. When we had the idea for a new event members at the meeting would volunteer to take up a task. That would be their task to organise and manage, if they needed help all they need do was to ask.

### **SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP**

We had 38 signed members this year. Our membership was £5. Of those 38 members we would regularly have 20-25 people attending our events. Also it was mentioned throughout the year that members would also get a discount on the hoodies when they arrived.

STUDENT SERVICES

## **ACADEMIC STUDIES**

There were no academic studies in the year 2013-2014, but the year 2012-2013 we had the regular Sikh Studies class.

## **WORKSHOPS**

[N/A]

Not enough time to add extra activities due to time consumption in organising other events.

## **ASSISTANCE**

We tried our best to provide a safe and comfortable environment for students. Whether they had questions about Sikhi or university.

SOCIAL LIFE

## **FRESHERS WEEK**

In Fresher's week, we promoted the society to potential members, offered them freebies, informed them of upcoming events and developed a list of contacts. We also kept laptops with us to help new members sign up, and also gave out jalebis!

## **CELEBRATIONS**

[N/A]

This was because we didn't have enough time to add extra things to our schedule. Time was consumed by lack of organisation in terms of booking rooms and posters.

## **EXCURSIONS**

There was a trip to two gurdwarai last year November (2013). We was going to have another one later but it didn't manifest due to an emergency.

## CAMPAIGNS & EVENTS

### **MAJOR EVENT**

Kirtan Jam was the largest event we had. Both in terms of the number of people who came and also the organisation it took. From booking speakers and kirtanis to the langar.

### **ACTIVISM**

We had a charitable games night which was the follow up to a month long food drive. We donated all proceeds to Kirpa Food Drive during the Christmas period.

## COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS

### **MODES**

We used various ways of communicating with students at Hertfordshire and local surrounding areas. We used flyers, texts, university papers, email, Facebook, and posters. The most effective way of making people aware of events was getting members and close friends to change their Facebook profile picture to the event poster! Other students and friends were tagged in these photos to maximise the number of people who would see the poster. We also had a committee phone on which students could contact committee members if they had any problems, particularly around the time of events (using the Whatsapp application). We tried to involve people from differing friendship circles at the university with the hope that our society would reach out to a greater number of people. The new committee is currently in the process of creating an Instagram and Twitter page in order to expand on the

### **EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

Many organisations helped us both with freshers merchandise to speakers. BOSS, Naujawani, Basics of Sikhi.



## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

# SUMMARY

Overall a good year in terms of events and members. Looking to continue that trend.

## THE FUTURE

Since we are passing on our roles to the new committee, we have recommended to them what to do next year in order to make sure they can improve the society, they will:

Book all rooms for the semester and make poster templates to save a lot of time for preparing for events.

Do more leisure activities (e.g. weekly football) to get students involved, and keeping them comfortable and confident to come to Sikh society events (a positive promotion). This will also increase funds to do other events/activities. Do more fun events such as gatka performances, or how to tie a pagh, so students can participate actively.

Plan a big langar towards the end of the second semester, giving free food to everyone, while giving leaflets to show everyone what Sikhism is about.