

Give it a Go

Developing a Give it a Go programme

Find out more about what Give it a Go actually is, and why it is beneficial to develop a programme in your students' union. This briefing identifies how to design Give it a Go, how to develop an existing programme, and tips for overcoming common problems.

Introduction

'Give it a Go' is a name used by Students' Union to describe a programme of taster events and activities that students can have a go at. These are often one-off, special events and tend to include some activities organised by clubs and societies.

Give it a Go programmes have been running in some students' union for over 10 years and for some this is now an established activity. In others it is a new initiative being explored to open up new activities to students.

Give it a Go activities

There isn't a set type of activities, nor is there a specific combination of certain events.

Give it a Go programmes can include:

- Trips/tours
- Skills sessions
- Masterclasses
- Lectures
- Club & society taster sessions
- Commercial events
- Language classes
- Craft workshops

Session ticket prices are normally quite low (£2-10) or sometimes free, as the purpose is not to make profit but to offer a range of interesting activities.

Benefits of Give it a Go

There are many benefits to running this type of programme of activities:

- Students who haven't engaged with clubs and societies previously can try them out with no obligation to join
- Students who engage with one or two clubs or societies can find out more about others
- It's easier for students who are 'time poor' to get involved with new activities
- Low price Give it a Go sessions are accessible to students who could not afford full club or society membership
- The students' union engages with more students
- International students particularly enjoy Give it a Go programmes
- Sessions can be highlighted as good for families, which opens up the students' union to more student parents
- The programme can be designed to fit the budget of the students' union – it doesn't need to be expensive
- Trips can sometimes make a small profit, if organised carefully
- Give it a Go can provide many events that aren't focused on alcohol

Where to Start

When designing your Give it a Go programme, you should:

- **Talk to students** – find out what sort of activities they would like, how much they would spend and how much time they would commit
- **Budget** – Give it a Go doesn't need to cost much money but it is important to identify how much, if any money, you have to spend.
- **Schedule** – you could run a year-long programme, one programme per term, a welcome programme. Decide when yours will be.
- **Clubs and societies** – decide if you would like them to run sessions and decide how you will organise this.
- **Marketing** – how will you promote Give it a Go?

Development Stages

Develop your Give it a Go programme by introducing one of these ideas:

- **Specialists** – identify experts within your students' union/institution or pay external experts to deliver sessions.
- **Clubs and societies** – increase the number of club and society sessions by making Give it a Go a compulsory activity. Incentivise this through your reward and recognition scheme.
- **Student staff** – employ student staff to support the management and promotion of Give it a Go or to run the trips.
- **Profit** – identify sessions where the price could slightly increase to start creating a profit. The funds raised can then go to further improve Give it a Go.

Problem Solving

We've collated some advice for overcoming problems encountered by students' union already running Give it a Go.

No funding

Give it a Go doesn't need much funding. It needs some staff time and probably a logo and some poster/leaflet design.

If this is a concern, consider who you could contact for funding.

Could you work with the careers and employability department to organise Give it a Go skills development sessions? They may help with funding.

Have some sessions that are only for students living in halls of residence and ask for funding from the accommodation office.

In students' union where Give it a Go is established there is evidence stating that it is popular with international students. Take this evidence to the institution and build a case for using Give it a Go to engage international students.

Insurance

You may have separate insurance for students playing sport, and be worried about Give it a Go participants doing sports activities without correct insurance. Contact your insurer and explain the situation – they will be able to advise you.

Poor attendance

If you organise Give it a Go sessions and there is poor attendance, consider:

- Marketing – is it effective?
- The right sessions – talk to students again and get feedback
- The right time, location and price – find out if these are stopping students participating

Further information

This briefing was created following a Student Opportunities Lunch & Learn webinar that took place on 16th July 2013. The slides from this [webinar](#) are available on the Student Opportunities pages on NUS Connect.

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If you would like any further information about anything in this guide, please contact studentopportunities@nus.org.uk



