

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

**Student Leadership Team (SLT)**

14 – 16 February 2025

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update

---

The SLT is asked to:-

- i) **receive** an update on the Association's EDI work.
- ii) **receive** an update from the Support Groups.

## Introduction

- 1.1 The EDI and Student Welfare Team would like to update the Student Leadership Team on work towards our EDI objectives and provide an update from our current support Groups.

## Updates from the EDI and Belonging Team

- 2.1 Cases for the Individual Reputation service continue to grow but unfortunately, we said farewell and good luck to Charlotte who left the team to join the Citizens Advice Bureau. We are hoping to recruit for another adviser soon.
- 2.2 Library Study Volunteer requests have hit 700 since the service began in 2019 and we continue to get positive feedback from both volunteers and users. Our most recent feedback was from a user who had submitted a request 3-6 times and when we asked 'How has using this service helped you?' They ticked 'made me feel less isolated', 'made me feel better equipped to study', that it 'offered me

study support for key stages' and 'to have people invest time in my studies has made me feel encouraged'. In the free text they also noted that 'material sent has always given me a different angle to DA223 set text authors'.

2.3 After the soft launch of OU Students Connect (the Aluminare platform) to Group members there was also a small launch through September Welcome Week. We have mostly concentrated advertising the platform with Groups although the SLT have done a great job in sharing with Faculties and their own community spaces. Within Groups we had a target of 15% Group member take up by January and I can confirm the current numbers are:

- BAME Group – 45 (28%)
- DSG – 240 (24%)
- OU Pride – 88 (22%)

2.4 Group Committee Appointments [were really successful](#) with just a few remaining Committee members left to train. Reports from each are below as usual.

2.5 We did our bi-ennial Engagement Survey for Students in Secure Environments in the summer and were delighted to receive 242 responses from students. Responses indicate that we can do more to advertise our Library Study Volunteer service as 145 respondents were unaware of the service. A further evaluation of the findings will be shared in due course.

2.6 We are busy finalising the Neurodivergent Students Action Plan which can feed directly into the new SLT Priority project. This too will be shared in a longer report soon.

2.7 The 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the SiSE Newsletter has been sent for printing this week and will be posted to our website for others to read in the coming weeks. The latest edition took on board feedback from the summer survey and will be trying to include more relevant topics for the readers such as general interest topics (e.g history) and study skills.

**Verity Robinson**  
**Head of EDI and Belonging**

## Groups Update

### 4.1 Report from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students Group:

<a href="#">Student Leadership Team Report – February/2025</a>	
<b>Group Name: Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Students Group</b>	
Chair: Vice Chair: Comms Officer: Secretary: Events Officer:	Danielle Bagnall Florence Bull Farah Javed Navjot Sandhu Monet McKenzie
	<p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The new committee has attended online sessions for training. Implementation of discussions, towards ways of establishing regular meetings, and methods of contact are being devised.</li> <li>Facebook membership has increased by 6 new members, OU Connect requires a strategy to increase target audience, and engagement.</li> <li>In continuation from last month BAME renaming survey requires follow up, comments, any additions, and future progression.</li> </ul>
<b>OU Connect:</b>	
Threads Originated By: - Committee - Members Types & Themes of threads:	
	0 threads
	2 threads (social chat)
	45 total members
	1 New Year, 1 student introduction on previous committee thread
<b>Facebook BAME Group</b>	
Threads: Threads Originated By: - Committee - Members Types & Themes of threads:	
	1 thread (focus group).
	204 total members. 3 threads (1 social chat,
	1 Student position

	advertisement, 1 award recognition)
	Please see below for new member posts:
	New Year, student research WELS position, WELS Student Award.

**Authored By:** Danielle Bagnall, Chair – BAME

#### 4.2 Report from the Disabled Students Group:

[Student Leadership Team Report – Month/2025](#)

**Group Name: Disabled Students Group**

Chair: Vice Chair: Comms Officer: Secretary: Events Officer:	Clare Charlton Becky Fowler-Monk Felicity Burgess
--	---

##### Key points:

- Two students flagged that there is policy at Facebook which reports issues with mental health and sexuality in the media. We have taken this to the OU Pride group and the chairs met to discuss. We have agreed jointly to watch and wait, reacting as necessary. The two main students have taken this over a number of the platforms but reaction from DSG members has been limited.
- New committee has in part completed some of the training and existing members have completed mandatory training.
  - Events lead – awaiting response following DSG specific training non-attendance.
  - Secretary – sadly resigned post before training and new member is being selected.
- Membership of Facebook and OU Connect continues to grow

**OU Connect:**

Threads Originated By:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committee</li> <li>- Members</li> </ul> Types & Themes of threads:	11 threads (vast majority were ND/MH/disability support/queries, with a post on social chat and OUSA/DSG each.).
	7 threads (social chat, OUSA and MH/wellbeing support/queries)
	236 total members
	Achievements, Delivery problems,
<b>Facebook DSG Group</b>	
Threads:	
Threads Originated By:	16 threads (63% were ND/MH/disability support/queries, with 3 on social chat, 2 on the library and 1 on OUSA/DSG).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committee</li> <li>- Members</li> </ul> Types & Themes of threads:	17 threads (41% were DSA/equipment/mentor queries, with some posts on reasonable adjustments for study, social chat, disability support/queries, OUSA and MH/wellbeing support/queries
	Please see below for new member posts:
	DSA, Disability support, a need for strategies for coping with OU studentship, problems with providers of equipment, how to charge for paper & ink supplies, emotional support, assessment marking strategies, facebook policy, tutor support, software.

**Authored By:** Clare Charlton, Chair – DSG & Felicity Burgess,  
Communications Officer

#### 4.3 Report from OU Pride:

Chair: Marli-Ann Norman

Vice Chair: Kit Renard

Comms Officer:

Secretary: Kellin Daniels

Events Officer: Rachael Jaconelli

**Key Points:**

- The whole of OU Prides committee are new in post, and have completed all or most of required training.
  - VC post has been taken over by Kit as the original post holder stood down.
  - Secretary role has been taken over by Kellin as original post holder is now VC.
  - Events officer is new in post as original post holder withdrew.
- A student has flagged the use of Meta platforms due to Mental health remarks and sexuality remarks. As a committee we released a statement with regards to this. Chair also had a teams meeting with the Chair of DSG as these comments were also highlighted to them. Both Chairs have agreed on a wait out approach, for further direction from OUSA.
- OU pride Facebook page and OU Student connect continue to build and attract new members.

<b>OU Connect:</b>
8 new threads
3 from New committee introducing themselves
1 from a student regarding Meta platforms
1 from a student regarding a remembrance/memorial for a friend
1 from a student regarding the impact of pride events
1 regarding Christmas event
1 from the old committee saying farewell.
85 members and growing.

<b>OU Pride Facebook:</b>
14 new threads
5 threads of introductions (students and committee)
1 farewell thread from old committee
2 threads regarding Meta platforms
1 thread is a poll wanting to get to know members

1 memorial post
1 celebration post of LGBTQ+ military ban being lifted
2 misc posts.
955 members

Authored by- Marli-Ann Norman OU Pride Chair.