

## OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

### Central Executive Committee (CEC)

10 – 12 February 2023

### EDI & SW Update (incl Reports of the Groups)

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The CEC is asked to:-

- ) **receive** an update from the EDI and Student Welfare Team
- i) **receive** the reports from the Association groups

#### 1. Team Updates

##### 1.1 Introduction

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.

#### 2. EDI Working Group and EDI and Accessibility Steering Group

2.1 There have been some changes to the formal structures of our EDI work which we are still trying to negotiate. Previously we had an EDI Working Group made up of mostly staff members and a couple of students (VP EDI and VP Engagement). We had paused this work when the new SLT came on board as we were unsure how to proceed and initially we were missing a VP EDI to help lead the Group. We are very happy to have our newly elected VP EDI, Natalie Baker, join the team.

2.2 As you all know, your manifestos and pledges have been composed into priority areas and one of these is EDI and Accessibility (EDIA). In November we were made aware that there would be an EDI and Accessibility Steering Group with a number of key topics of focus.

2.3 Discussions were had to see how to manage both the EDIA Steering Group and the EDI Strategy which has its own project areas laid out and we identified that a number of the focus areas within the EDIA Steering Group translated across to the EDI Strategy and vice-versa. The EDIA Steering Group will be used to

direct some of the EDI Strategy work but largely the EDI and Student Welfare team will do as much of the work in the strategy as we can around other projects and report back to the Board of Trustees and SLT on progress.

2.4 The main aim of the EDIA Steering Group is to 'Promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the Students Association and alleviate barriers in access University services and support'. We were given five focus topics and at our first meeting in January the Steering Group prioritised as follows:

- Mental Health and Loneliness
- Support and Accessibility for those with additional learning needs (diagnosed and undiagnosed)
- Address/Challenge issues around EDIA
- Cost of living
- Peer support (the mechanism of students supporting other students, not the Peer Support service)

2.5 While the EDI and Student Welfare Team have some extra capacity we should be able to progress the EDI Strategy, if capacity in the team changes we may have to look at the practicality of this plan again.

### **3. Completed or Planned EDI Work**

3.1 After some feedback we had been given from VP Student Support we contacted the module team for DE200 (a Psychology module) who in their module materials had described self-harm as 'disturbing behaviour'. We had asked whether there was a need for this phraseology and whether they could consider changing it so it didn't appear as judgemental as it did. Their response was *"the module team agree that the term 'disturbing' is unhelpful and judgmental and we convey apologies to any affected students. We have added this to our list of module changes that need to be implemented."*

3.2 In October as part of the 50th activities the monthly podcast was themed around 'Diversity and Accessibility' which I was asked to host. We had Ciaragh Hubert (Director of Accessibility at the OU), Laura Cranstoun (Secretary of the Disabled Students Group) and Sristi Sengupta (Committee member of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Group) on the panel and it was a really enjoyable and productive conversation. From this experience Ciaragh and the DSG have forged a good working relationship and are starting to work on partnership projects together.

3.3 Working with team members from the Digital Communications team we completed the second edition of The Hoot for Students in Secure Environments in November and sent out 3 copies to each prison where there are students. Unlike we did with the first edition we have included a letter to the Educational Officers in the prisons to explain what the magazine is and what it's for. We are also sending out individual copies in the Library Study Volunteer resource pack sent by the warehouse in the hope to increase engagement. We are already planning our next edition (due to be sent in May) and are really hoping in the meantime we will receive some student submissions but have plans to contact ex-students in secure environments to ask for their submissions as well as contacting a social enterprise in Leeds who give work opportunities to marginalised people (including prisoners).

- 3.4 We have been working on a review of our Support Groups, looking at how we support them and what their purpose is for their members. The review is due to be completed in early spring and we have a workshop with the student Steering Group on the 3rd February to come together and decide final recommendations for the review. In the next update I will go into detail about the recommendations and the plans for implementation.
- 3.5 Myself and the President were given the opportunity to join the 'Lessons from Auschwitz' programme hosted by the Holocaust Education Trust and Union of Jewish Students. The programme consisted of three online tutorials and a visit to Auschwitz Birkenau and Auschwitz Birkenau II. This was a very sobering and eye opening experience designed to raise awareness of the experience of Jewish people and why anti-semitism has no place in modern society. I will be blogging about my experience and what I learned in an upcoming Hoot article for Holocaust Day of Remembrance.
- 3.5 We have the following planned campaigns for the next few months:
- Holocaust Day of Remembrance (27th January)
  - LGBT+ History Month (February)
  - International Book Giving Day (14th February)
  - University Mental Health Day (2nd March)

**Verity Robinson**  
**Head of EDI and Student Welfare**

**Student Leadership Team (SLT)**  
**January 2023**  
**REPORT FROM OU PRIDE**

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### **1. Committee Updates**

The OU Pride committee currently stands at 3 members, 2 elected positions and 1 co-opted position.

We held the following committee meetings  
5<sup>th</sup> December – a general committee catch up

### **2. Group Membership**

We currently have 919 members registered via OUStudents.com, which is an increase of 36 (from 883) members on the last quarter.

We continue to reach out to our membership via the forums and Facebook asking them to join in and asking for ideas on events we can run.

### **3. Communications**

We currently have 826 members on our closed Facebook group, this is an increase of 24 on last quarter.

Of these members, 426 were active members between 25<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2023.



As this period was over the Christmas break period we did expect this to be quieter however we tried to keep the page somewhat active.

Our posts continue to have an average reach of between 300 and 400 and an average engagement of between 30 and 60.

Our most popular post this quarter was our new VP EDI introducing themselves which was fantastic to see and we are really looking forward to developing this relationship.

Other popular posts have been more politically minded posts regarding Gender Recognition reforms in Scotland and the attempts of the UK Government to stop these reforms.

#### **4. Events & Activities**

On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October we held our Freshers event which was very well attended with some of our existing members attending as well.

We ran a very informal session with a bit about the committee and our usual quiz, which always goes down well.

Everyone who attended said they had fun and in fact some of the attendees have been at later events.

Our Come and Chat events have been a regular feature and have been really well attended this quarter.

During this period there were many major days of note in our calendar.

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November was Intersex Day of Remembrance

On this day we shared the Intersex flag and a bit about its history and meaning.

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November – Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November was Transgender Awareness Week

To mark this week, we talked about what 'transgender' actually means (Stonewall, 2022), pronouns, the Trans flag and a statement from the Terrence Higgins Trust.

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November was Transgender Day Of Remembrance.

As is becoming tradition today we asked for silence on the page, to allow us to remember our transgender friends and family who may have lost their lives in the last 12 months.

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December was World Aids Day.

Steve took over Facebook for the day and posted a few articles aiming to inform, educate and destigmatise.

There was videos entitled "The Undetectables", "Things not to say to someone who is HIV Positive" and some fun facts about HIV.

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December was Pansexual/ Panromantic Pride Day

We shared the Pan flag and a basic timeline from when the term was first heard.

We have a session on the second week of Freshers and are really looking forward to getting word out about what we stand for, what we do and what we hope to do in the next few months.

#### **5. Student issues & challenges**

Over this period the forums have been quiet.

Politically the landscape is very unstable for a section of our membership. Our plan is to keep everyone as informed as we can whilst making sure everyone knows they are loved and have a place where they are accepted.

We will publicise any campaigns related to this to give our members the best chance they have of taking part should they wish to.

## **6. Any other initiatives or updates**

As part of the Group Review process we were asked to extend our tenure which we were more than happy to do.

We have a 'self-love' event in the planning stage for February which will be about making time for yourself, self-care, those little things count etc.

**Lyndsay Thomson**

**Chair**

**For and on behalf of OU PRIDE**

**Student Leadership Team (SLT)**  
**January 2023**  
**REPORT FROM THE DISABLED STUDENTS GROUP (DSG)**

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## **1. Committee Updates**

The current committee is made up of 7 members – 1 chairperson, 1 secretary, 1 Events and Communications Officer and 4 general members.

### DSG Committee

Officers:

- Chair – Marilin Salstrom (on extended leave)
- Secretary – Laura Cranstoun
- Events and Communications Officer – Becca Phoenix

General Committee members:

- Felicity Burgess
- Hannah Burns
- Nichola Connolly
- Steph Stubbins (on leave)

Since October's report, we have had some changes, losing 2 more members; Susanna Van Tonder and Sophia Davis, thus making us short of 4 general members. Additionally, our chairperson has been on extended leave due to personal circumstances, and another committee member has also taken leave until the end of January 2023.

In November the committee agreed to design a co-option process to fill the 4 roles. Through a private Recruitment channel on Teams, we discussed, planned, organised and executed the different stages involved. We created an application form with various questions relevant to committee work, values and responsibilities. In December we advertised the opportunity on our website, forum space, Facebook, Twitter and emails to current DSG members. In January, the Students Association supported us by collating the 16 applicants and compiling their responses anonymously into a Microsoft Form, where we ranked each of their responses out of 5. The 4 candidates with the highest overall scores were presented to us on 13<sup>th</sup> January and the committee agreed that they were satisfied with the outcome. Natalie Baker, VP EDI also supported us throughout the process.

The committee will discuss plans for inducting new committee members at the next committee meeting, alongside Verity Robinson and Natalie Baker. There is specific support required and we are hoping to allocate tasks and responsibilities fairly to both new and existing committee members following the induction period. Until now, we have had to streamline and prioritise our DSG tasks and responsibilities to ensure that we have a manageable workload.

Dates of committee meeting held since October's report:

- 25<sup>th</sup> October
- 22<sup>nd</sup> November
- 27<sup>th</sup> December

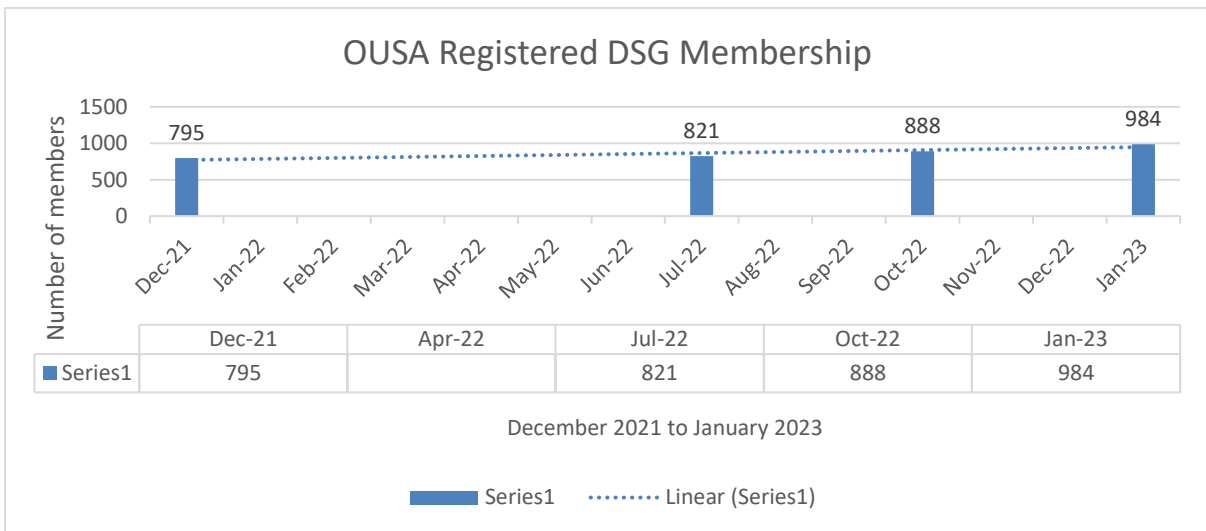
Natalie attended her first DSG meeting in December and will continue to be invited to attend. Verity will also be invited to attend until we have a complete committee.

## 2. Group Membership

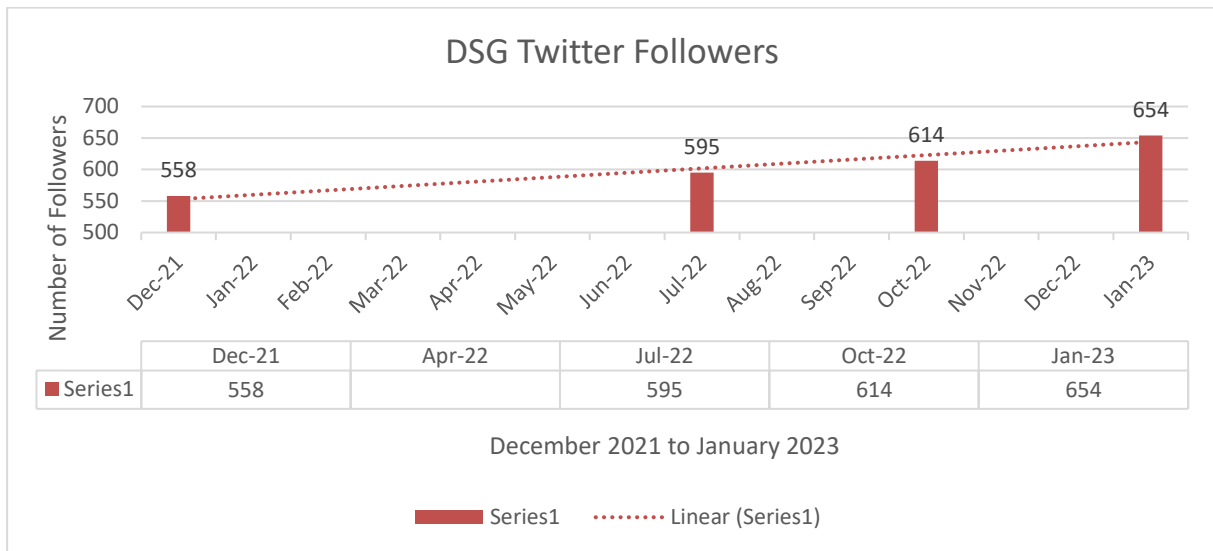
Students Association registered DSG members: 984 - up 96 since October (+10.8%)

Facebook: 2324 members - up 28 since October (+1.2%)

Twitter: 654 followers - up 40 since October (+6.5%)







We have seen a steady increase in membership on all our platforms once again. This is due to our active committee work, ensuring that we are present, engaging with students, organising and hosting a variety of events, and reacting to the needs and enquiries of our diverse community consistently and positively. Increase in registered members can also be attributed to the co-option process in December and Freshers events in October, where we had 40 attendees.

We have continued to use Microsoft Teams to collaborate and plan tasks and deadlines, with several dedicated channels to each area of our work. This helps to make committee work more organised and transparent to all.

### 3. Communications

#### DSG Values and Tagline

We want to make it clearer to members who we are and what we stand for and so at our last committee meeting on the 27th of December, we came up with 4 DSG Values, a tagline and a group description. We plan to use these on our platforms, merchandise and other promotional materials and would like to update our logo to include them.

#### DSG Values

- *Community*
- *Compassion*
- *Diversity*
- *Inclusion*

#### DSG Tagline

- *'Run for disabled students by disabled students'*.

#### DSG description

- *'Whether you have a disability, impairment, are neurodivergent, or have mental or physical health conditions, or support someone who does - all are welcome!'*

#### DSG Merchandise

With the support from Natalie Baker, we have created a new design for our double-sided leaflet which includes up to date information, as well as a QR code which members can use to access our website. The leaflet will be printed and sent to both

Scotland and Wales for face-to-face Freshers events in February 2023 with support from Lara Munday.

**Disabled Students Group**  
Community Compassion Diversity Inclusion

We are a support group run for disabled students by disabled students at all levels from across the OU!

We have been supporting disabled students for nearly 20 years!

Whether you have a disability, impairment, neurodivergence aspects, mental or physical health conditions or support someone who does - all are welcome!

Run for disabled students  
by disabled students!

**OU Students Association**

**What do we do?**  
We run many events throughout the year including:

- Monthly drop in session - Last Friday of the month - 5pm-6:30pm
- Quarterly newsletters
- Awareness days
- We offer support to students across social platforms including OU forums, Facebook and Twitter

**What do I need to do?**

- To join the DSG use the QR code or contact us: DSG@open.ac.uk

There are no commitments from you needed to join the group!

- it is for you to access at any time and you can engage with the group as much or as little as you like!

Join the DSG:

**OU Students Association**

We currently have no DSG merchandise in stock but are planning on creating branded items including pencils, bookmarks and rulers. These can be used at Freshers and as prizes for online events. We will be working with Anna Mahon to create new resources soon in the coming weeks.

### Website

We have made several changes to the website since October including the introduction of inverted colours, a group description on the home page and a dedicated tab for the Newsletter. We have also used the website to advertise for the co-option and updated committee members' bios to reflect the current committee.

There are a number of changes we want to make to the website over the next quarter, including a dedicated FAQ section that can be shared on other platforms with members who enquire about commonly raised topics. We would also like to make DSG reports and minutes available to our members to allow for more transparency about our operations. We will be posting the presentation to our upcoming Freshers event on the 26th of January on our website so that it is available for students who are unable to make the session.

There have been discussions about creating a 'noticeboard' on the website for posting a range of information, including upcoming events, sharing OU opportunities and similar ways of engaging with our community. However, we have postponed these plans until we have more people on committee.

### Newsletter

The first edition of the DSG Newsletter on the website was published at the start of November. The link was sent to 924 recipients (IP addresses) via the mailing list, 236

of which have been opened since 9<sup>th</sup> November (26%). This is higher than any previous email sent to members with the next largest figure being 19%. The webpage has been viewed 58 times since the 9<sup>th</sup> of December.

The working group for the Newsletter at present consists of the Events and Communications Officer and 2 committee members. We are hoping that after the new committee members have completed their induction, we will be able to take on another member of the working group.

The current structure of the Newsletter is as follows:

- Introduction
- Main feature
- Signposting Spotlight:
  - Each edition signposts to a different resource for students.
  - Edition 1 was the Open University's Careers & Employability Services.
  - Edition 2 will be for SHOUT and Mental Health Support at the OU Poll.
  - This edition we are using this feature to gain insight into improving our events.
- Creative Corner:
  - Members send in contributions for this.
- Awareness Days campaign:
  - Featuring recent and upcoming days/weeks/months.

### Facebook

There was a poll posted on the Facebook Group on January 3<sup>rd</sup> asking our members what time would be best for them to attend events. We had 41 responses with the majority preferring 7-8pm. This will inform how we plan events in the future.

There have been 2 new moderators assigned since October as we needed more support on the platform after losing committee members. The *#sharingpositivity* and *#NDandMHachievements* posts have been taken over by a committee member so that the Events and Communications Officer can focus on other tasks.

Facebook is our most popular platform therefore posts there receive the most engagement, allowing us to advertise effectively. There are also opportunities to add features such as polls which allows us to ask our membership questions.

However, there are some safety concerns with Facebook such as members contacting committee members privately rather than going through official channels such as the DSG email and non-current members having access to information as they have not yet been removed from the group.

### DSG Forum

Although the Forums are quieter than the Facebook page, they are a space for current members to use. Due to the features and layout, there are better opportunities to give more detailed replies and signposting to members. Having notifications sent to emails ensures that members always get a timely response from a committee member. We have been highlighting our DSG mailbox for more private communications which has seen an increase in activity in recent months, particularly over the co-option period.

We have been trying to develop a 'magazine' style although since we have been limited in our committee, we have been unable to do this consistently. However, we have been using our logo and more colourful images and graphics to make the space more attractive and sharing links to our Newsletter and other DSG activity such as Hoot articles. The 'image description' feature helps to ensure that posts are accessible. The *#sharingpositivity* and *#NDandMHachievements* are organised by a committee member on Mondays and Fridays, although they don't receive much engagement.

Members use the forums to ask specific questions or look for general advice. Popular topics include:

- Studying with ND
- Studying with pain conditions
- General module enquiries
- Introductions and trying to connect with others.
- Finance, funding and benefits queries.

In October we had an incident with a member who had posted inappropriate content. Currently there is only one Forums Moderator, but they have not received the training. Therefore, an emergency meeting was held with other committee members and an action was agreed; the original post was edited, and the student was contacted to let them know they had breached the *Code of Conduct for OU Students Association Forums*. We realised that members are unable to edit or delete their posts after a short amount of time which may have exacerbated the issue for the student involved. This led to us creating a pinned post - *'How to use the Forums and contact DSG Committee Members'*. We would like to prepare a similar feature for our other platforms.

We recently learned that the forums are not members-only anymore and that any OU student can access them. This raises issues about privacy and security, particularly as we post our drop in links there regularly.

### Twitter

Since October, we have streamlined our use of Twitter to focus on other platforms. It has several strengths including the ability to schedule posts and the ease of sharing OU and OUSA information from other accounts. There is also the ability to reach students who may not be DSG members to increase our membership. In terms of accessibility, Twitter allows for the edition of alternative text/image descriptions, something which is essential for our members.

Unfortunately, despite these benefits, Twitter remains to be our least active platform with little to no engagement with previous postings. We intend to discuss our future presence on Twitter once we have new committee members who may be able to increase engagement. At present, we are using it exclusively to share posts and information from the OU and OUSA and advertise our events.

### #Posts

Since the last SLT report, it was decided that the *#sharingpositivity* and *#NDandMHachievement* posts will no longer be posted on Twitter due to lack of engagement.

Our *#sharingpositivity* posts have become less active with an average of 3 and 5 comments per post. The *#NDandMHachievements* posts are increasingly successful

with the last post on 16<sup>th</sup> January gaining 20 comments. This may be due to the more specific nature of the post and appealing to a small number of members. We will continue to discuss how we can engage with members on our platforms which may include introducing new post formats.

### Information Sharing

We are often sent information and opportunities from different services and groups within the OU and externally, which could be useful for our members including Careers and Employability Services and Snowdon Trust Masters Scholarships. We try to share as many opportunities as we can on our platforms. However, this can be time-consuming to do across the Forums, Facebook and Twitter. If we had a noticeboard on the website, we could provide links and direct our members there. This would also allow us to assess engagement and interest in these types of posts.

## **4. Events & Activities**

### Drop in Events

We have continued to hold our drop-in events on the last Friday on each month. We have started to include a central theme to each event to provide structure and hopefully increase engagement.

- On October 28<sup>th</sup>, this was regarding studying and managing chronic pain health conditions.
- On November 25<sup>th</sup>, we focused on student voice week and a member recited a poem.
- On December 30<sup>th</sup>, we held our first Quiz for which the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> places won Amazon vouchers.

We are planning to maintain this, with January's event on the 27<sup>th</sup> being a collaboration with the ND club and February's event on the 24<sup>th</sup> being related to EDIA at the OU. We aim to collaborate more with other teams, groups, clubs and individuals from the OU and OUSA in the future.

### Awareness Days Campaign

We have continued our awareness days campaign by writing Hoot articles and sharing information on our various platforms regarding these events. In October, we celebrated Black History Month on social media and the forums with a mention of various figures in disability activism. In November, we highlighted International Stress Day/Week with an article in the Hoot and posts on our platforms. We suspended the campaign throughout December and January due to our small committee and busy schedule. We plan to resume with "Time to Talk" day on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February and will be updating the awareness days calendar to reflect upcoming events in 2023. We hope to have a dedicated committee member who is responsible for this campaign after the induction of newly co-opted members.

### Student Voice Week – November

We prepared questions to ask students on all our platforms during SVW to gather responses about specific areas including:

- Representation with the OU
- Representation with the OU Students Association
- DSG activities/events

- DSA and student finance
- Accessibility, alternative formats and reasonable adjustments

Facebook had the highest number of responses (approx. 10), Twitter had 2 and the forums didn't have any at all. The engagement did not match the time and work involved. In hindsight, it may have been better to have attended some organised events relevant to our community and share links to our platforms and promote the group.

### Freshers Events

Our October 2022 Freshers Event had 40 attendees, which was an impressive number. Due to this success, we have arranged our next online Freshers event at a similar time – 2 pm on 26th of January. This will be an information session for new members and will be held on Microsoft Teams. We have also organised a prize draw, where the winner chooses an awareness day/cause/charity which we will promote on our platforms.

### Students Association meetings

Our Secretary has attended several meetings with association staff (Linda Aradi and Verity Robinson) since October, especially concerning the co-option process and support for issues related to the committee. She also attended meetings with Anna Mahon regarding merchandise and resource management. We appreciate the support and guidance from the team and aim to foster positive relationships and collaborations.

### OU Accessibility Workshops

The OU have organised a number of accessibility workshops attended by some of our committee, including Steph, Felicity and Nichola. We have regular updates from them on Teams and at committee meetings.

### Officers Meetings

The officers of the committee have started to hold regular meetings (usually fortnightly) to discuss any current affairs concerning the DSG. This is an opportunity to make decisions and plan the agenda for the upcoming committee meeting. With the chair's extended leave of absence, these have most often been attended by the Secretary and Events and Communications officer alone. We have found them to be constructive and aim to continue this going forward.

### Groups Review

Most of our committee have been involved in the Groups Review process, either through feedback on Microsoft Forms and/or attending focus groups. Currently the Secretary, Events and Communications Officer and 3 general committee members are planning to attend the hybrid meeting in February 2023, either online or Face to Face in Milton Keynes. There has been a strong DSG presence throughout and during a focus group in December 60% of attendance was from DSG committee members. It has been invaluable to be part of discussions like these, supporting with the co-option process and in strengthening the group's direction, aims and practices.

### Observing SLT Meetings

We plan to have a member of the DSG observing at each of the upcoming SLT meetings. We have provisionally decided that the following members will attend:

- 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> February (Face to Face) - Laura Cranstoun
- 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> April (Online) – Hannah Burns

- 14th-16<sup>th</sup> July (Face to Face) – Becca Phoenix
- October - tba

### Mindapples mental health training

Our committee members are due to attend Mindapples mental health training on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of February, both at 6:30-8pm. The first of these sessions will take place whilst some of our committee are on campus for the Groups Review and so at present we are unsure how many will be able to complete this training.

### Training

We have expressed an interest in various training opportunities to support our current committee and new members including:

- Moderator Training - Due to issues arisen on Facebook and the Forums, we have asked the Students Association if the moderator training would be applicable to social media platforms too.
- Mental Health First Aid
- Induction training - We plan to organise induction training for our new committee members alongside an induction session with the Students Association.

## **5. Student issues & challenges**

We have heard from a number of students through Facebook, the Forums and the DSG Mailbox, requiring advice and signposting regarding the following issues:

- Studying with ND – particularly Dyslexia, ASD and ADHD
- Studying with Chronic pain conditions
- Catching up with studies when falling behind
- Connecting with other students and building relationships
- Difficulties with personality disorders
- Accessible Materials
- Reasonable adjustments
- General accessibility issues
- Difficulties receiving DSG emails and newsletters.
- Module materials
- Finances, benefits and funding.

Recently we have been signposting many students to the *Neurodivergent Students Club* whom we are collaborating with at our next drop in on 27<sup>th</sup> January. We also signpost students to other OU and OUSA resources, such as *Specific learning difficulties (SpLD)*. However, a FAQ resource would be helpful as we are often signposting similar sources to a number of students.

We have also been keeping a log of student issues. After meeting Ciaragh Hubert, Director of Accessibility at the OU, during the recording of the podcast *Association Conversation Station* in September 2022, she has been keen to work with the DSG. She has introduced us to Holly Parrot, Senior Manager of Disability, Support and Accessibility. We plan to meet with Holly in February for her to signpost us to the relevant teams and departments within the OU who can assist us with addressing students' issues.

## 6. Any other initiatives or updates

### Gathering policies and guidelines

We are gathering policies, guidelines and reports relevant to the DSG to file in our Teams space, which will help committee members to access them easily. We plan to update committee and officers' roles descriptions once we have a new committee, defining roles more clearly. We are hoping these actions will support our new committee members as well as being useful for the next committee when it begins in January 2024.

### Collaborations and Representation

We have been contacted by various teams and services who are keen to work with us, asking us to prepare presentations about improving accessibility, join team meetings, and share student voices and experiences in studying with a disability. Some of these sources include:

- Employability and Careers Service
- Alexandra Hobb from STEM
- STEM virtual fieldwork hub meetings
- Ciaragh Hubert's proposal for *Student's Stories*

### Social Opportunities

We have had very few opportunities for socialising as a committee or for building relationships. We had plans for a winter social event in December but had to postpone these due to workload and a reduced committee. Some of our team have been struggling with mental health issues and it would be good to have the opportunity to meet regularly to build supportive friendships, rather than being purely work-focussed. Once we have a full committee, we would also like to plan for face-to-face meetings.

### DSG 20<sup>th</sup> Celebration

The DSG will be celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> year in June 2023. Some ideas we are considering include:

- Celebrating with 'friends of the DSG' e.g. other support groups
- Celebrating the history and future of the DSG
- Organising branded merchandise
- Launching an Instagram page
- Creating a promotional video

### Celebrating our success

It has been a challenging time for the DSG in recent months due to being short of committee members, as well as the extended leave of our Chair. This has required the existing team members to take on additional roles and responsibilities. We have also required support and guidance from the Students Association, for which we are very grateful. We are very proud of our team and what we have managed to achieve despite our challenges, with member engagement, membership and activity continuing to increase and positive feedback from various sources. We are equally excited about having a full committee, bringing our postponed plans to fruition and welcoming fresh ideas and approaches on board.

**Becca Phoenix and Laura Cranstoun**



**DSG Events and Communications Officer and DSG Secretary**

**For and on behalf of the Disabled Students Group**



**Central Executive Committee (CEC)**  
**February 2023**  
**Black Asian and Minoritised Ethnic Committee Report**

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*There is no report from the BAME group this meeting.*