

Student Leadership Team Priority Areas

2024–2026



Introduction

The 2024-26 Student Leadership Team have identified four key priority areas that reflect the shared vision and goals of our individual manifestos. Through extensive discussions, these priorities emerged as areas where there was strong consensus among the team, all rooted in the needs and aspirations of the student body. Our focus is on ensuring an equitable, supportive, and consistent experience for all students, particularly in the areas of student support, wellbeing, academic experience, and neurodivergent inclusion. These priorities will guide our collective efforts as we work to provide the best possible experience for Open University students.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Campaign for access to OU student support services with increased availability that meet needs of the OU student population.



STUDENT WELLBEING

Champion initiatives that prioritise the wellbeing of the diverse OU student communities.



THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Advocate for best-practice in teaching delivery to create a consistent academic student experience.



THE NEURODIVERGENT EXPERIENCE

Campaign for improvements in policy & process to create an equitable experience for diagnosed and undiagnosed neurodivergent students.



Student Support

Campaign for access to OU student support services with increased availability that meet needs of the OU student population.

As the elected Student Leadership Team, we are committed to ensuring that all students have access to the support they need, when they need it. In an institution as diverse and dynamic as The Open University, it is essential that the support systems in place reflect the broad spectrum of needs across our student population.

At the heart of this priority area is the need for the availability of Student Support Teams to reflect the barriers that OU students face in accessing study, offering more options for ways that students can reach and interact with SSTs, and developing more individualised personalised support pathways that can adapt to the varying schedules, responsibilities, and backgrounds of our students.

We look forward to working constructively with the University on this priority.

Student Wellbeing

Champion initiatives that prioritise the wellbeing of the diverse OU student communities.

There is a strong link between wellbeing and achieving success in higher education. Our enormously diverse student community is made up of individuals from all walks of life, each with their own unique challenges and needs. Ensuring that efforts to protect and improve student wellbeing reflect this diversity is central to this priority area.

To champion this, the Student Leadership Team intends to introduce a range of initiatives that will provide OU students with opportunities, resources, and support that will contribute to positive wellbeing. We want to ensure that all students have the opportunity to feel as though they belong to a community that they care about, and that cares about them.

This is an exciting area of work that has the potential to enhance the overall student experience.

The Academic Experience

Advocate for best-practice in teaching delivery to create a consistent academic student experience.

At our 2024 Conference, OU students passed a motion to campaign for the University to consider ways of preserving and extending the curriculum, rather than reducing the current curriculum.

As elected representatives of the student body, we believe that every student at the Open University should be entitled to a high-quality and consistent academic experience. Whether you're attending tutorials, submitting assessments, or communicating with your tutors, we believe that every student deserves clear, supportive, and reliable academic interactions.

At the heart of these concerns is the need for greater consistency across teaching delivery. This means ensuring that students, regardless of their course or tutor, have access to the same high standards of academic support and feedback. We believe that a clear definition of best-practice teaching delivery should be agreed upon and applied across the board to ensure all students receive the same level of quality in their academic interactions.

We know that everyone at The Open University cares deeply about giving students the best possible experience, and we are excited to engage with them on this important area of work.

The Neurodivergent Experience

Campaign for improvements in policy & process to create an equitable experience for diagnosed and undiagnosed neurodivergent students.

At our 2024 Conference, OU students passed a motion calling on the University to better support diagnosis of Neurodivergent conditions such as ADHD where students are seeking a diagnosis to support their study.

This priority area goes further than that in aspiring to create an environment within The Open University that is inclusive, accessible, and supportive of those who are neurodivergent, whether diagnosed or undiagnosed.

Our aim is to ensure that neurodivergent students are not left behind by rigid structures or lack of understanding and that their access to support is not determined by whether they have received an official diagnosis. We will work closely with the University to push for these much-needed changes, advocating for a culture where neurodivergent students feel seen, understood, and supported. By focusing on improvements in both policy and process, we believe we can help create a more equitable and inclusive academic experience that allows all students to succeed.