# Student Council Agenda, Reports & Motions

de montfort su

# Student Council Agenda
# 13/2/25

| Agenda Item | Description | Lead | Timings (Mins) 15 min |
|---|---|---|---|
| Welcome | • Welcome to Student council – the event to make meaningful change at DSU.<br><br>You will be greeted by your officers.<br><br>Voting members will receive a paddle and a badge upon signing in. | HG | |
| Introductions and Apologies for Absence | • Introduction to Student Council and the purpose<br>• What Student Council will cover today<br>Apologies: Welfare officer - Fluffy Adewola | HG | 10 mins |
| Review of previous minutes | Quick summary of the previous minutes. Approval from council | JO | 3 mins |
| Student Executive Officers update *(Full Time, Paid, Students)* through written report.<br><br>- Completed projects<br>  Projects in progress<br>- Projects in discussion | **Manifesto progress – QR link will be available on the screen to view the officers written report, but please pre-read reports BEFORE the meeting**<br><br>• Union Development Executive Officer<br>• Academic Executive Officer<br>• Equality and Diversity Executive Officer<br>• Opportunities and Engagement Executive Officer | PK | 5mins |

| Liberation officer update *(Part Time, Volunteer, Students) through written reports* <br><br> - Completed projects <br> Projects in progress <br> - progress <br> Projects in discussion <br> - | **Manifesto progress – QR link will be available on the screen to view the officers written report, but please pre-read reports <u>BEFORE</u> the meeting** <br><br> • Disabled Students' Liberation Officer <br> • Mature Students' Liberation Officer <br> • International Students' Liberation Officer <br> • BAME Students' Liberation Officer <br> • Postgraduate Students' Liberation Officer <br> • LGBTQ+ Students' Liberation Officer <br> • Women's Liberation Officer | BD | 5 Mins |
|---|---|---|---|
| Scrutiny panel update | **The scrutiny panellist will update on recent actions and discussions which took place during the latest scrutiny panel meeting.** | JJ/TS | |
| Trustee board update | **An executive officer will update on the recent trustee board meeting, including items discussed and relevant actions.** | RA/JO | |
| Open Forum | **A space for all attendees of Student Council to air informal grievances for Council to consider.** <br><br> For example; <br><br> • Finances <br> • Housing <br> • Cost of living <br> • Student experience | PK | 10 Mins |
| Motions | **Formal Proposals sent in for Student Council to consider and vote on.** <br> • **What happens?** <br> • Motion A: Enhance and Change Course Rep Recruitment – Ramish <br><br> • **Motion B: Officer mandate – Ramish** <br><br> • **Motion C 1.1: Transitions Liberation officer** <br><br> • **Motion C 1.2: Alternative option for the Transition Liberation officer** <br><br> *The proposer of a motion shall be given two minutes to speak in favour of that motion, a* | HG | 20 Mins |

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|---|---|---|---|
| | *speech against of two minutes will be offered to the floor. Debate shall then be opened to the meeting. If there is no speech against a motion the Chair may use their discretion and move straight to a vote. 8.5.3. There shall be opportunities for a one-minute summation of the arguments for and a one-minute summation of the arguments against a motion at the end of debate.*<br><br>Vote on the motions which have been put forward. | | |
| Voting | | PC Counting votes EXEC | 10 Mins |
| General Discussion | • **Topics are set by exec officers**<br><br>• **PK – Flexible futures**<br>• **PK/JO - Sexual harassment campaign** | | 15 mins |
| A.O.B | • Any other business a member wishes to raise. | JO | 5 Mins |
| Meeting Closed | Option to stay, enjoy food and thanks for coming. | PC | |
| | | | |

| Name | Acronym | Role |
|---|---|---|
| Hayley Gule | HG | Chair Deputy Chair Academic Executive Officer |
| Patrick Chileshe | PC | Union Development Executive Officer Welfare |
| Ramish Ayub | RA | Executive Officer Opportunities and Engagement |
| Judith Olurankinse | JO | Executive Officer |
| Fluffy Adewola | AA | |
| Priya Karasala | PK | |

| Komal Shahzadi | KS | Equality and Diversity Executive Officer |
|---|---|---|
| Libs Morris | LM | Disabled Students Liberation Officer |
| Lyn Landon | LL | Mature Liberation Officer BAME |
| Daniel Duke | DD | Liberation Officer Women's liberation |
| Paige Billings | PB | officer Postgraduate Liberation officer |
| Ken Bizaliel | KB | Interntaional students Liberation officer |
| Badhri Durgapu | BD | Scrutiny panellist Scrutiny Panellist |
| Jas Jhagra | JJ | |
| Thanaa Sulum | TS | |

# DE MONTFORT STUDENTS UNION

## Motion: Enhance and Change Course Rep Recruitment

Aims and Objectives:

1. To change how Course Reps are elected via the De Montfort Students' (DSU) online method to a DMU Programme ran election which gives programmes more ownership and instruction of recruitment.

2. Course Representatives to have a clear structure and dedicated DMU Academic Staff lead to support delivering and raising student voice on their programme.

3. The University are reviewing how they are supporting Student Voice in their faculties so we want to make these changes in line with their changes for the next academic year.

This change would be in time for the Academic year beginning 2025-2026.

Background:

Feedback gathered from both Course Representatives and Academic Staff throughout the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 academic year highlights a significant sense of disconnection between the two groups. Both parties report a lack of relationships and resources to effectively perform their roles, with many programmes struggling to recruit a representative

Current Bye-Law Structure:

- *'2.6.3 Course Representatives must be elected through an online election, as facilitated by DSU'.*
- *'2 .6.3.1. Alternative methods will be used for some Courses at the discretion of the Voice Team with the approval of the Deputy Returning Officer; in order to ensure representation without barriers'*
- *2.6.5. Course Representatives may opt to continue their position in the following academic year if they will be returning to study on the same course at DMU, and opt-in within the communicated timeline.*

Why are we proposing these changes?

- Increased Visibility  : The new approach will give course reps greater visibility, allowing students to see who they're voting for from the very beginning and enhance relationships and understanding of the role.
-
- Greater Ownership and Communication: These changes will allow University Programmes to take more ownership of the Course Rep elections, fostering stronger communication and relationships between Reps, DMU staff, and students. As well as tailoring elections in the interest of the students on the programme.
-
- Supporting Student Voice: The University is currently reviewing how Student Academic Representation is supported, an in programme election process will complement their changes, such as Student Voice Committees chaired by academic staff and Reps ensuring a collaborative university approach from the get go.
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- Improved Election Timing: The current election timeline doesn't always allow for reps to be elected early enough in the academic year depending on their individual programme. The new process will ensure better representation from the start and allow reps to attend key meetings early on ensuring programme specific needs.
-
- Enhanced Voting Process: The change to programme elections will provide a smoother voting process and help eliminate the technical issues students sometimes face when voting online @ DSU due to differences in data.
-
- Closer Collaboration: DSU staff and academic staff will work closely together to ensure that the election process runs smoothly and is well-supported to aid a greater understanding of programmes contacts and processes due to the new unison format.
-
- Consistent Recruitment: The new method will create a more consistent and attainable approach to Course Rep recruitment, better aligned with the different course intakes e.g January/March.

How will the 'new' way work?

- Training Support for Academic Staff: Academic staff will have the opportunity to attend DSU-hosted training sessions to ensure they're fully equipped to support the election process and the Course Rep transition smoothly.
-
- Integration into Induction Plans: Course Rep elections will be incorporated into Programme induction plans, with the aim to elect a rep before the end of the first block. This ensures that reps are in place early to represent their peers.
-
- Ongoing Course Rep Training: Elected Course Reps will be able to book onto regular training sessions hosted by DSU, ensuring they have all the tools and knowledge they need to succeed in their role.
-
- Collaboration with Academic Staff: Course Reps will work alongside the designated Academic Staff Lead to chair the Programme's Student Voice Committee (SVC), creating a stronger link between students and academic staff.


What will remain the same?
- Democratic Elections   : Students will be recruited through a democratic election process, ensuring that Course Reps are chosen by their peers.
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- Voting Process: Only students currently enrolled in the programme will be able to vote in the election, ensuring that only those directly impacted have a say.
-
- Course Rep Training: DSU will be delivering regular training sessions for all Course Reps, providing them with the skills and support needed to succeed in their role.
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- Continuity of Role: Course Reps will have the option to continue in the role at the end of the academic year, ensuring stability and continuity within the programme.
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- Suggested Number of Course Representatives: Based on student numbers, the suggested number of Course Reps per course will be:
    o 1-100 Students: 2 Course Reps
    o 101-150 Students: 3 Course Reps
    o 151-200 Students: 4 Course Reps
    o 201-250 Students: 5 Course Reps
    o 251+ Students: 6 Course Reps

However, this can be adjusted based on the specific needs of the programme, as agreed upon by DSU and the students on the programme.

Next Steps?
- Approval by Student Council (13th February 2025)
- Approval by Education committee (March 2025)
- Changed to the DSU Bye-Laws imbedded
- DMU Staff training on election Process (Summer 2025)
- Academic Faculties to implement new changes on their course. (September 2025)
- DSU to deliver DSU Course Rep Training (October 2025 – July 2026)

**<u>Ramish academic officer:</u>**

We scrutiny panellists believe there should be a mandate for the academic officer:
Ramish Ayub
**Description**

DSU Student Members have not seen enough updates progress from Ramisha's manifesto. This officers answers towards scrutiny questions shows a lack of measurability from his projects in regard to timetabling and projects, which we see as a concern.

**What are we trying to improve/change?**

From this mandate, we want to encourage the officer, to demonstrate genuine progress to improve students access to timetabling concerns and regulations regarding block teaching, as per their manifesto.

We also want to change how executive officers respond to scrutiny panellists questions, as we simply wish that officers are more prepared to answer with answers that are measurable.

**Why is it important?**

This is important to ensure each officer is held accountable towards their projects and manifestos and to provide an example for other upcoming officers. It would mean that we can see the intention to progress accordingly.

**What is the outcome?**

We hope the outcome will entail more progress for projects like timetabling and block teaching.

Signature:

*Thanaa Sulum*     *Jas Jhagra*
(Thanaa Sulum)        (Jas Jhagra)

**Liberation Officer – Transitions Officer Motion Proposal**

**Students involved :** Libs Morris (P2649900) and Stephanie Muthambulwa (P2655163)

**Type of Motion :** Idea Proposal ( Proposal of a new Liberation Officer role)

**Description of the Motion**

We are proposing a new Liberation Officer Role under the title : Transitions Officer. This is to create a role to support care leavers / care experienced students in the university. Facilitating their integration and progression through higher education. This role will provide peer-to-peer support, bridging the gap between existing staff-led services and students who may be reluctant to engage with formal institutional support.

**What demographics would the Officer Cover ?**

The Liberation officer would represent care leavers and care experienced Students, we have spoken to some members of the transitions team such as Louise roles and she is in support of this idea. If this motion is passed the Transitions Officer would work with the Transitions team.

Many may struggle with:

- Lack of familial support during major life transitions
- Housing instability, particularly outside term time
- Financial independence challenges, including navigating student funding
- Social isolation – leading to lower levels of belonging and engagement

**How is this demographic not already covered ?**

During the last student council , the mature students Officer became the Parents , Guardians, Carers and mature students Officer. It however doesn't cover those on the other side of the system, therefore it would not be appropriate to merge care leavers into this role. Care leavers/ care experienced often have their own struggles with family relationships due to their own experiences in the system making adding it to the pre-existing role inappropriate alongside inhibiting the value of the role.

**What are you trying to change / improve ?**

While universities often provide staff-led student support services, many care-experienced students do not engage with these resources. Some reasons might include:

- A lack of trust in institutions due to negative past experiences with authority figures

- Feeling that staff lead services are impersonal or do not fully understand their lived
- experiences
  Concerns about stigma when seeking support from university

This role would provide an alternative support system – one that is accessible, relatable and driven by lived experience.

**WHY?**

Peer-to-peer support system: students may feel more comfortable confiding with someone who has a shared experience or deep understanding of the challenges they may face.

A more approachable and informal service: some students may feel intimidated or overwhelmed by formal support – offers a less formal, more personal approach that can encourage engagement. Better representation of care-experienced/leavers' voices – ensures their voices remain visible

A bridge between students and existing support services can signpost students to appropriate university resources while also acting as an advocate to improve these services

Fostering a sense of community – peer networking among this group of students – helps reduce social isolation. Involves meetings, workshops, events etc

### Why is this important ?

(Research indicates that only 13% of care-experienced young people enter university by the age of 19, compared to 43% of their non-care-experienced peers.)

Transiting into university life can be particularly daunting for these students, who may lack the familial support systems that assist others during this period. Challenges include securing stable accommodation, managing their finances independently and navigating complex administrative processes.

Liberation officer – works closely with self-identifying students, enhances the student experience with a focus on equity, diversity and inclusion and is elected to listen, give feedback, campaign, lobby and lead on input.

### What is the Outcome of the motion ?

To have a Liberation Officer titled: Transitions Officer as we believe this will help students feel more comfortable whilst actually accessing support instead of struggling in silence without feeling outed because of their background.

### Supporting evidence:

**Student-Led Success Stories:** The University of Strathclyde's Care-Experienced Student Network has reported **higher engagement rates** when peer support is student-led.

https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/search-bank/blog/how-students-are-helping-shape-university-led-and-peer-support-students-care-experience

**UCAS Research** highlights that care-experienced students often feel isolated, and peer support is a critical factor in retention and success.

https://www.ucas.com/advisers/help-and-training/toolkits/adviser-toolkit-supporting-students-individual-needs/supporting-care-experienced-students

**Student Testimonials**: Many care-experienced students have stated they feel more comfortable seeking support from fellow students rather than university staff.

https://www.celcis.org/application/files/9115/6147/3751/SFC_Report_FINAL_for_web_and_print.docx.pdf

**Frequently Asked Questions**

### 1. What is a care Leaver ?

A care leaver has been in the care of the local authority for 13 weeks or more, spanning their 16th birthday.

### 2. What does it mean by care Experienced ?

Care experienced – those who have spent time in foster care, residential care or other forms of state care

# Executive Officer Written Reports

# Officer written report

Date:

3/02/25

Name:

Fluffy Adewola

Officer title:

Welfare Executive Officer

Role description:

*{A description of your role.}*

As the **Welfare Executive Officer**, I advocate for student wellbeing, safety, and support services. I work to improve access to mental health resources, address cost-of-living challenges, and promote inclusivity. Through initiatives like wellbeing programs and awareness campaigns, I foster a healthier student experience. Additionally, I represent student interests on university committees and boards to ensure welfare policies meet their needs.

Officer goals:

*{A description of what you want to achieve as an officer, what is your focus? }*

My goal is to enhance student wellbeing by improving access to mental health support, cost-of-living resources, and campus safety measures. I work to promote inclusivity, including international students, and encourage self-care through monthly boot camps and wellbeing talks. I also lead campaigns on sexual health and consent. Additionally, I foster a strong sense of community through wellbeing drop-ins and events that create safe and supportive spaces for students.

Project completed:

*{Projects, campaigns, events you have already completed and the outcome.}*

Dsu Pantry- This has been approved by the University Leadership Board.

## Project progress :

*{A description of projects, campaigns, events you are getting up to including dates and people involved.}*

- Self care bootcamp (every last Wednesday of the month)
- Ramadan Wellbeing Talk (26*th* of Feb 2025)
- Termly international wellbeing drop-ins (outside term time)
- Safe to Say, Safe to Share (A sexual harassment campaign) 2*nd* of April 2025
- Shag Day (14*th* of Feb 2025)
- Light the night (5*th* of Feb 2025) Visibility checklist card for mental health
- support services and security
  (To be out in March)

## Projects in discussion:

*{Any projects, campaign, events you want to do but yet to be started.}*

## Something you are improving on within your role:

*{Something you are trying to change/improve.}*

One area I'm continuously working on is **ensuring greater visibility and accessibility of welfare resources**. Many students are unaware of the support services available to them, so I am actively working on making these services more visible through the **visibility checklist card**, wellbeing talks, Goatings, and self-care boot camps. Additionally, I am improving on **project execution and impact measurement**, ensuring that each initiative I lead not only launches successfully but also delivers meaningful results for students.

# Officer written report

Date:

03/02/2025

Name:

Gurupriya Karasala

Officer title:

Opportunities And Engagement

Role description:

*{A description of your role.}*

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- Work with the Opportunities team to implement Union's opportunity strategies, including societies and volunteering. Support academic and cultural society growth alongside respective Executive Officers. Collaborate with DMUsport team to improve sport opportunities for students, including clubs and events. Hold regular meetings with society and club committee members to address concerns and gather feedback. Serve as main representative to British University and Colleges Sports (BUCS). Lead personal development initiatives. Engage and encourage student participation in union initiatives. Represent student collective voices and lead relevant campaigns. Attend meetings to ensure student representation at all levels in Union and University. - Participate in delivery and implementation of Union's legacy projects. Strengthen collaboration with partners nationally and internationally. Implement student policies with Student Voice Team. Liaise with University departments to effectively promote student opportunities. Lead on student employability and skill recognition, including HEAR scheme and DSU Celebrates. Serve as primary representative to SRA, NaSTA, and SPA. - Act as information conduit between Students' Union, University, and Demo

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**A company limited by guarantee.**

**Registered Company No: 06634464 (England & Wales)**
**Registered Charity No: 1138587**
**VAT Registration No: GB115213715**

## Officer goals:

*{A description of what you want to achieve as an officer, what is your focus? }*

As your Opportunities and Engagement Executive Officer, my mission is to empower every DMU student to thrive academically, socially, and professionally.

1. **Empower Through Engagement:** I am committed to promoting awareness of our vibrant academic societies, showcasing the myriad benefits of active participation. By fostering a culture of engagement, students will discover endless opportunities for personal growth and academic enrichment within these societies.

2. **Cultivate Volunteerism:** Volunteerism lies at the heart of our community. I will tirelessly motivate students to embrace volunteer opportunities provided by DSU, facilitating valuable networking opportunities for participants, including student group committee members. Together, we'll build a network of passionate individuals dedicated to making a positive impact.

3. **Champion Diversity:** Diversity is our strength, and I am dedicated to promoting diverse involvement within our student body. By nurturing new Campaign and Representation societies aligned with our liberation goals, and actively reaching out to underrepresented groups such as mature students, we'll ensure that every voice is heard and every perspective valued.

4. **Empower Through Employability:** I will work tirelessly to raise awareness of the myriad employability opportunities available through DMU. From Frontrunnerships to placements, I'll ensure that every student has access to the tools and resources they need to kickstart their professional journey with confidence.

5. **Celebrate Cultural Diversity:** Our rich tapestry of cultures and traditions is something to be celebrated. I am committed to promoting and supporting student groups in their religious and cultural celebrations, fostering an inclusive environment where every student feels valued and respected.

6. **Promote Active Living:** Physical well-being is essential for academic success. I'll focus on boosting awareness and growth of DMUactive sessions, particularly in high-demand areas. Furthermore, I'll explore the possibility of providing additional sessions within DSU to ensure accessibility for all students.

## Project completed:

*{Projects, campaigns, events you have already completed and the outcome.}*

- DSU Pantry SCM meeting 1
- Halloween celebration (carving event)
- Braiding session for black history month
- Promoting and attending societies events
- Attending BUCS plays
- Jingle Mingle
- DMU sports Christmas Eve
- DSU Pantry
- Captains Forum
- Card readers for society members

## Project progress :

*{A description of projects, campaigns, events you are getting up to including dates and people involved.}*

- BUCS sessions
- Varsity promotion and campaign
- Culture clash
- Light the night
- Refresh re connect
- Flexible futures campaign
- Pre- arrival process for international students

## Projects in discussion:

*{Any projects, campaign, events you want to do but yet to be started.}*

- Student Forum
- Ways to improve drop in sessions in sports Sports
- awards- enhancement Holi – celebrations Langar
- on campus Working on Paying committee members
- (incentives)

## Something you are improving on within your role:

*{Something you are trying to change/improve.}*

- Connection between sports and my role
- International student experience
- Attending workshop of Flexible payment plans
- Working on enhancing the connection between committee members and exec

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# Officer written report

Date:

03/02/2025

Name:

Ramish Ayub

Officer title:

Role description:

*{A description of your role.}*

I will represent and advocate for students' academic interests at DMU.

Officer goals:

*{A description of what you want to achieve as an officer, what is your focus? }*

Amplifying Student Voices – Ensuring all students are heard and represented across

faculties. Faster Mental Health Support – Campaigning for quicker access to services, so students can get extension evidence within a week.

Project completed:

*{Projects, campaigns, events you have already completed and the outcome.}*

Completed my Drop in session
Completed my timetable project
Course reps are Engaged

Project progress :

*{A description of projects, campaigns, events you are getting up to including dates and people involved.}*

Working on the mental health Of students

Projects in discussion:

*{Any projects, campaign, events you want to do but yet to be started.}*

Extension for student if needed

Something you are improving on within your role:

*{Something you are trying to change/improve.}*

Trying to achieve all of my Goals on time.

# Liberation Officer Written Reports

# Officer written report

Date: 13/02/2024

Name: Bronze Sparks

Officer title: LGBTQ+ Liberation officer

## Role description:

*{A description of your role.}*

I help to give LGBTQ+ students a voice within our university and our student's union.

## Officer goals:

*{A description of what you want to achieve as an officer, what is your focus?}*

A more inclusive university with a better experience for LGBTQ+ students.

## Project completed:

*{Projects, campaigns, events you have already completed and the outcome.}*

Liberation Celebration

Pride month stall

## Project progress :

*{A description of projects, campaigns, events you are getting up to including dates and people involved.}*

Consent event name tbd: a collaboration between LGBTQ+, woman's and disabled student liberation officers educating students (and staff) on consent issues that are faced by these minorities such as don't do blank and instead do blank.

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Projects in discussion:

*{Any projects, campaign, events you want to do but yet to be started.}*

A project with Trade about homophobic behaviour and transphobic behaviour.

Something you are improving on within your role:

*{Something you are trying to change/improve.}*

Trying to improve students' general views towards the LGBTQ+ community even slightly to improve the next LGBTQ+ liberation officer's engagement with students as some students still appear to be wary of the LGBTQ+ people from my observations during events.

Making and providing resources for the next LGBTQ+ liberation officer to make it easier for them to take over next year.

# Officer written report

Date:

2nd Feb 2025

Name:

Daniel Duke

Officer title:

BAME Liberation Officer

Role description:

*{A description of your role.}*

A voice for the students

Officer goals:

*{A description of what you want to achieve as an officer, what is your focus? }*

I want to help achieve in boosting the Confidence of students

Project completed:

*{Projects, campaigns, events you have already completed and the outcome.}*

Reflections of Identity – created awareness for arts students in dmu

## Project progress :

*{A description of projects, campaigns, events you are getting up to including dates and people involved.}*

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Flexible Futures- The aim of the Flexible Futures project at DMU is to give students more ways to pay their tuition. Right now, students can only pay in two big parts. This project wants to create new options where students can pay in smaller amounts over time.

Working with various executive officers and liberation officers

Currently at marketing campaigning stage

Date feb 17/18

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## Projects in discussion:

*{Any projects, campaign, events you want to do but yet to be started.}*

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The Thought wall – the main aim of the Thought Wall is to create a safe, anonymous, and judgment-free space where students can express their emotions, thoughts, and struggles without fear of stigma.

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## Something you are improving on within your role:

*{Something you are trying to change/improve.}*

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Encourage students to be more confident

Foster a sense of community

Encourage emotional expresion

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# Officer written report

**Date:**

6/11/24

**Name:**

Libs Morris

**Officer title:**

Disability Liberation Officer

## Role description:

*{A description of your role.}*

To help students who have a disability including mental health needs feel like their voice is heard and help them access the support that they need.

## Officer goals:

*{A description of what you want to achieve as an officer, what is your focus? }*

Invisibility disability campaign ,

Raising awareness of disability support that's available at DMU,

## Project completed:

*{Projects, campaigns, events you have already completed and the outcome.}*

None have been completed yet

## Project progress :

*{A description of projects, campaigns, events you are getting up to including dates and people involved.}*

Invisible disability campaign – test shoot complete, Sophie hannaht a final year photography student is involved and we will be taking sign ups for students to take part in this poster campaign. Each poster will have an image of a student alongside a quote on how they feel about having disabilities.

Raising awareness – linktree has nearly been completed and will be launched 20th November,

Take over of Well-being Wednesday – 20th November – canvas painting and fact files on different disabilities for disability history month.

## Projects in discussion:

*{Any projects, campaign, events you want to do but yet to be started.}*

Looking at making sensory friendly bags, alongside running an open air cinema.

## Something you are improving on within your role:

*{Something you are trying to change/improve.}*

I'm trying to improve communication with students whilst not doing more than 1-5 hrs a week.

# Officer written report

Date:

03/02/25

Name:

Paige Billings.

Officer title:

Women's Liberation Officer

Role description:

*{A description of your role.}*

Voice of women students at De Montfort University's Students Union.

Officer goals:

*{A description of what you want to achieve as an officer, what is your focus? }*

- Empower women to be confident in explaining and exploring themselves
- Empower confidence in women students
- Encourage health & wellbeing to be in womens' lives <3

Project completed:

*{Projects, campaigns, events you have already completed and the outcome.}*

Liberation Celebration, Security talks, Meetings re. amount of period products (to be revisited)

## Project progress :

*{A description of projects, campaigns, events you are getting up to including dates and people involved.}*

As part of my role, I'll be attending the **two** following: Light the Night (5th Feb) & Louise Kiernan's Women's health panel (5th March) **My Period Power Campaign:** With Joelle Callis primarily, Natea, Bronze & more. **1x Article** on SU website**, 1x 2 page spread** in Demon Mag by end of March, **1-3 videos** after CD. **6x written information** relating to **each part of cycles** to go in **newsletters & teams chat**.

Aim: to empower women to be confident in speaking up about how their cycle affects them, to find ways to work with instead of against our cycles, and to raise awareness to women, the university and non-menstruating people how to support peers and students in relation to this.

Projects in discussion: *{Any projects, campaign, events you want to do but yet to be started.}*

Problem: As the block module system focuses on 6 weeks – if 2 of those are spent with mental or physical health issues, it can cause many difficulties for a student. Moreover, cost of living also relates to this – students shouldn't have to choose between food or hygiene... 'Class or no class'…

Solution: Date set for 12th March for 'Conversation Day' (CD)

To talk about affects on menstruating students of periods. Collating 'informal' data (video and written statements) as to whether women feel as though there could be more help from the university (relating to pain, finding resources to understand cycles better, ways of contacting NHS services, mental health, period poverty.)

## Something you are improving on within your role:

*{Something you are trying to change/improve.}*

I am improving my writing and communication skills, mostly for writing, whilst working with Joelle on the overall resource content.

# DE MONTFORT STUDENTS UNION

## Motion: Enhance and Change Course Rep Recruitment

**Aims and Objectives:**

1. To change how Course Reps are elected via the De Montfort Students' (DSU) online method to a DMU Programme ran election which gives programmes more ownership and instruction of recruitment.

2. Course Representatives to have a clear structure and dedicated DMU Academic Staff lead to support delivering and raising student voice on their programme.

3. The University are reviewing how they are supporting Student Voice in their faculties so we want to make these changes in line with their changes for the next academic year.

This change would be in time for the Academic year beginning 2025-2026.

**Background:**

Feedback gathered from both Course Representatives and Academic Staff throughout the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 academic year highlights a significant sense of disconnection between the two groups. Both parties report a lack of relationships and resources to effectively perform their roles, with many programmes struggling to recruit a representative

**Current Bye-Law Structure:**

- *'2.6.3 Course Representatives must be elected through an online election, as facilitated by DSU'.*
- *'2 .6.3.1. Alternative methods will be used for some Courses at the discretion of the Voice Team with the approval of the Deputy Returning Officer; in order to ensure representation without barriers'*
- *2.6.5. Course Representatives may opt to continue their position in the following academic year if they will be returning to study on the same course at DMU, and opt-in within the communicated timeline.*

**Why are we proposing these changes?**

- **Increased Visibility**: The new approach will give course reps greater visibility, allowing students to see who they're voting for from the very beginning and enhance relationships and understanding of the role.

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- **Greater Ownership and Communication**: These changes will allow University Programmes to take more ownership of the Course Rep elections, fostering stronger communication and relationships between Reps, DMU staff, and students. As well as tailoring elections in the interest of the students on the programme.

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- **Supporting Student Voice**: The University is currently reviewing how Student Academic Representation is supported, an in programme election process will complement their changes, such as Student Voice Committees chaired by academic staff and Reps ensuring a collaborative university approach from the get go.

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- **Improved Election Timing**: The current election timeline doesn't always allow for reps to be elected early enough in the academic year depending on their individual programme. The new process will ensure better representation from the start and allow reps to attend key meetings early on ensuring programme specific needs.

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- **Enhanced Voting Process**: The change to programme elections will provide a smoother voting process and help eliminate the technical issues students sometimes face when voting online @ DSU due to differences in data.

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- **Closer Collaboration**: DSU staff and academic staff will work closely together to ensure that the election process runs smoothly and is well-supported to aid a greater understanding of programmes contacts and processes due to the new unison format.

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- **Consistent Recruitment**: The new method will create a more consistent and attainable approach to Course Rep recruitment, better aligned with the different course intakes e.g January/March.

**How will the 'new' way work?**

- **Training Support for Academic Staff**: Academic staff will have the opportunity to attend DSU-hosted training sessions to ensure they're fully equipped to support the election process and the Course Rep transition smoothly.
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- **Integration into Induction Plans**: Course Rep elections will be incorporated into Programme induction plans, with the aim to elect a rep before the end of the first block. This ensures that reps are in place early to represent their peers.
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- **Ongoing Course Rep Training**: Elected Course Reps will be able to book onto regular training sessions hosted by DSU, ensuring they have all the tools and knowledge they need to succeed in their role.
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- **Collaboration with Academic Staff**: Course Reps will work alongside the designated Academic Staff Lead to chair the Programme's Student Voice Committee (SVC), creating a stronger link between students and academic staff.


**What will remain the same?**
- **Democratic Elections**: Students will be recruited through a democratic election process, ensuring that Course Reps are chosen by their peers.
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- **Voting Process**: Only students currently enrolled in the programme will be able to vote in the election, ensuring that only those directly impacted have a say.
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- **Course Rep Training**: DSU will be delivering regular training sessions for all Course Reps, providing them with the skills and support needed to succeed in their role.
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- **Continuity of Role**: Course Reps will have the option to continue in the role at the end of the academic year, ensuring stability and continuity within the programme.
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- **Suggested Number of Course Representatives**: Based on student numbers, the suggested number of Course Reps per course will be:
  - 1-100 Students: 2 Course Reps
  - 101-150 Students: 3 Course Reps

o   151-200 Students: 4 Course Reps

o   201-250 Students: 5 Course Reps

o   251+ Students: 6 Course Reps

However, this can be adjusted based on the specific needs of the programme, as agreed upon by DSU and the students on the programme.

**Next Steps?**

- Approval by Student Council (13th February 2025)

- Approval by Education committee (March 2025)

- Changed to the DSU Bye-Laws imbedded

- DMU Staff training on election Process (Summer 2025)

- Academic Faculties to implement new changes on their course. (September 2025)

- DSU to deliver DSU Course Rep Training (October 2025 – July 2026)

**<u>Ramish academic officer:</u>**

We scrutiny panellists believe there should be a mandate for the academic officer: Ramish Ayub

**Description**

DSU Student Members have not seen enough updates progress from Ramisha's manifesto. This officers answers towards scrutiny questions shows a lack of measurability from his projects in regard to timetabling and projects, which we see as a concern.

**What are we trying to improve/change?**

From this mandate, we want to encourage the officer, to demonstrate genuine progress to improve students access to timetabling concerns and regulations regarding block teaching, as per their manifesto.

We also want to change how executive officers respond to scrutiny panellists questions, as we simply wish that officers are more prepared to answer with answers that are measurable.

**Why is it important?**

This is important to ensure each officer is held accountable towards their projects and manifestos and to provide an example for other upcoming officers. It would mean that we can see the intention to progress accordingly.

**What is the outcome?**

We hope the outcome will entail more progress for projects like timetabling and block teaching.

Signature:

*Thanaa Sulum*          *Jas Jhagra*

(Thanaa Sulum)          (Jas Jhagra)

**Liberation Officer – Transitions Officer Motion Proposal**

**Students involved :** Libs Morris (P2649900) and Stephanie Muthambulwa (P2655163)

**Type of Motion :** Idea Proposal ( Proposal of a new Liberation Officer role)

**Description of the Motion**

We are proposing a new Liberation Officer Role under the title : Transitions Officer. This is to create a role to support care leavers / care experienced students in the university. Facilitating their integration and progression through higher education. This role will provide peer-to-peer support, bridging the gap between existing staff-led services and students who may be reluctant to engage with formal institutional support.

**What demographics would the Officer Cover ?**

The Liberation officer would represent care leavers and care experienced Students, we have spoken to some members of the transitions team such as Louise roles and she is in support of this idea. If this motion is passed the Transitions Officer would work with the Transitions team.

Many may struggle with:

- Lack of familial support during major life transitions
- Housing instability, particularly outside term time
- Financial independence challenges, including navigating student funding
- Social isolation – leading to lower levels of belonging and engagement

**How is this demographic not already covered ?**

During the last student council , the mature students Officer became the Parents , Guardians, Carers and mature students Officer. It however doesn't cover those on the other side of the system, therefore it would not be appropriate to merge care leavers into this role. Care leavers/ care experienced  often have their own struggles with family relationships due to their own experiences in the system making adding it to the pre-existing role inappropriate alongside inhibiting the value of the role.

**What are you trying to change / improve ?**

While universities often provide staff-led student support services, many care-experienced students do not engage with these resources. Some reasons might include:

- A lack of trust in institutions due to negative past experiences with authority figures

- Feeling that staff lead services are impersonal or do not fully understand their lived experiences
- Concerns about stigma when seeking support from university

This role would provide an alternative support system – one that is accessible, relatable and driven by lived experience.

**WHY?**

Peer-to-peer support system: students may feel more comfortable confiding with someone who has a shared experience or deep understanding of the challenges they may face.

A more approachable and informal service: some students may feel intimidated or overwhelmed by formal support – offers a less formal, more personal approach that can encourage engagement.

Better representation of care-experienced/leavers' voices – ensures their voices remain visible

A bridge between students and existing support services can signpost students to appropriate university resources while also acting as an advocate to improve these services

Fostering a sense of community – peer networking among this group of students – helps reduce social isolation. Involves meetings, workshops, events etc

## Why is this important ?

(Research indicates that only 13% of care-experienced young people enter university by the age of 19, compared to 43% of their non-care-experienced peers.)

Transiting into university life can be particularly daunting for these students, who may lack the familial support systems that assist others during this period. Challenges include securing stable accommodation, managing their finances independently and navigating complex administrative processes.

Liberation officer – works closely with self-identifying students, enhances the student experience with a focus on equity, diversity and inclusion and is elected to listen, give feedback, campaign, lobby and lead on input.

## What is the Outcome of the motion ?

To have a Liberation Officer titled: Transitions Officer as we believe this will help students feel more comfortable whilst actually accessing support instead of struggling in silence without feeling outed because of their background.

## Supporting evidence:

 **Student-Led Success Stories:** The University of Strathclyde's Care-Experienced Student Network has reported **higher engagement rates** when peer support is student-led.

https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/search-bank/blog/how-students-are-helping-shape-university-led-and-peer-support-students-care-experience

 **UCAS Research** highlights that care-experienced students often feel isolated, and peer support is a critical factor in retention and success.

https://www.ucas.com/advisers/help-and-training/toolkits/adviser-toolkit-supporting-students-individual-needs/supporting-care-experienced-students

**Student Testimonials**: Many care-experienced students have stated they feel more comfortable seeking support from fellow students rather than university staff.

https://www.celcis.org/application/files/9115/6147/3751/SFC_Report_FINAL_for_web_and_print.docx.pdf


**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. **What is a care Leaver ?**

A care leaver has been in the care of the local authority for 13 weeks or more, spanning their 16th birthday.


2. **What does it mean by care Experienced ?**

Care experienced – those who have spent time in foster care, residential care or other forms of state care