

Scrutiny Panel Agenda

From meeting dated 01.05.2026

Student Leaders in attendance

International Experience SVL	Aamira Waghmar	AW
Academic Experience SVL	Precious Ikechukwu	PI
Inclusion & Wellbeing SVL	Dilpreet Kaur	DK

Apologies were received by **Twig Smalley – Communities SVL** as they could not make the meeting.

Badhri Durgapu – Employability SVL was unable to attend or respond to questions due to sick leave.

Panelists in attendance

Scrutiny Panelist	Peculiar Owagbayegun	PK
Scrutiny Panelist	Zayan Lorgat	ZL
Scrutiny Panelist	Dan Storrie	DS
Scrutiny Panelist	Zain Imran	ZI
Scrutiny Panelist	Abdullah Kaasim	AK
Scrutiny Panelist	Freya Dhiman	FD

General Leader Introduction

In the interest of time, there will not be a “General Leader Introduction” and Panelists have read their progress reports to make up for this.

All questions for Twig Smalley have been provided in writing in advance of the meeting due to their absence.

Questions from Scrutiny Panel

Twig Smalley - Communities SVL

What feedback did SCM (Society Committee Meeting) 2 provide, and how will the inclusion of incoming committee members as voting members impact the Student Council?

SCM 2 was designed to gather direct feedback from committee members about their experience working with the SU and Opportunities team. The main positives were around staff support and existing development opportunities, but there were clear areas for improvement. The biggest concern raised was lengthy admin processes, particularly around new society set-up, alongside communication response times, social media visibility, and clearer online FAQs.

In response, coordinators are already reviewing the new society process and broader communication systems.

On incoming committee members becoming voting members at Student Council, the key goal is improving quorum and continuity. It allows incoming leaders to immediately engage with democratic processes and shape decisions that will directly affect them in the following academic year.

Twig Smalley – Communities SVL

What steps are being taken to improve communication with student groups?

Communication has been a recurring piece of student feedback, so several steps are being taken. One was the proposed WhatsApp motion, although that didn't pass due to quorum issues.

In the meantime, Opportunities has moved more announcements onto Teams to make communication more centralised, while Learning Zone is being used for more action-based messaging.

There's also a wider review happening across the organisation to reduce duplication and make communications clearer. The aim is to have a more structured communication plan in place before new committees begin next year.

We're continuing to rely on student feedback to understand what communication methods are most effective.

Twig Smalley – Communities SVL

What were the main goals and outcomes of the Student Experience Action Group for LGBTQ+ students?

The purpose of the LGBTQ+ Student Experience Action Group was to bring together university departments and student-facing services to identify gaps in provision for LGBTQ+ students.

One key outcome was recognising that while there are strong staff-focused LGBTQ+ initiatives, student-facing events are less visible. As a result, we discussed creating more

visible Pride-related events for students.

Another priority was exploring the return of the Global LGBTQ+ Café, which previously provided a valuable space for international LGBTQ+ students.

There are still conversations to be had with areas like sport to ensure provision is fully inclusive, particularly given recent national policy discussions.

Twig Smalley - Communities

In the interest of community events across Leicester, do you think there could be more connections between DMU / DSU and these event organisers for better promotion and attendance by students?

We already have some strong partnerships, such as Riverside Festival and involvement in Leicester Comedy Festival, and DMU Engage also offers community volunteering opportunities.

That said, I think there is definitely room to strengthen how we connect students with wider Leicester events. The challenge is often awareness and students balancing academic commitments.

Going forward, I'd be interested in exploring stronger partnerships and more targeted promotion where there's clear student interest.

Twig Smalley – Communities SVL AND Dilpreet Kaur – Inclusion & Wellbeing SVL

How are you measuring the success of the 'You Said, We Did' initiative integration into the communications strategy? Is there a feedback loop to see if students feel more 'heard' now than last term?

TS: We've embedded 'You Said, We Did' into multiple areas including Student Council motion tracking, NSS responses, and feedback from Student Member Meetings and SEAG discussions.

In terms of measuring impact, we currently track engagement with those communications and whether issues raised are being resolved.

I think the next step is directly measuring whether students feel more heard, because

that perception data would strengthen the work we're already doing.

DK: Me and Twig are working on the same thing, so my response is largely the same. In terms of measuring success, Twig largely captured that in her response.

Dilpreet Kaur – Inclusion & Wellbeing SVL

The first few episodes of Brave Conversation have launched, and they look great. How do you intend to ensure its' longevity and keep it fresh?

DK: The key to keeping it fresh is making sure it's not repeated. The conversations are raw, and it's about what students are experience. Rather than sticking to a proper, rigid plan, we hope that student feedback on the series will influence changes. As long as it is relevant and fresh for students, it will continue.

Dilpreet Kaur – Inclusion & Wellbeing SVL

Are there plans for the Union to do continued marketing of Brave Conversations to students?

DK: There are definitely plans right now – the main point right now is to raise awareness, as we don't want to overwhelm students and make sure they know it exists before developing comms further.

PK: I wanted to ask a follow up question about the brand identity of it – is this more of a "Dilpreet" product or is it a "DSU" product?

DK: Initially, it started as a "me" thing, but soon, before I leave, it will become a "DSU" product.

Dilpreet Kaur – Inclusion & Wellbeing SVL

Are there plans for DMU / DSU staff to be featured on the podcast, perhaps to share challenges faced by academics or Union staff?

DK: Without giving too many spoilers coming, there are some DSU staff featured to share new perspectives, as we have a lot of student facing staff. Perhaps, with enough student demand, there could be a Season 2 / spinoff with staff perspectives? There is a gap between staff and students but perhaps there is a chance for them to relate on shared

issue.

Precious Ikechukwu – Academic Experience SVL

On technology focused courses e.g. Software Development, Computer Science, Cyber Security, how can we make sure that the teaching is being updated in line with rapid developments in technology such as AI?

PI: This is something I've already raised with the university, particularly around how teaching keeps pace with developments in the real world such as AI. If you're familiar with the AI policy its safe to say it's not currently coherent and fully formed. One key opportunity to take this forward is linked to my last manifesto goal which centres around working with the DMU Education Academy on an education piece around how teaching & lessons can be more responsive & inclusive, and how we can react better to these developments.

ZI: Are they really working on intergrating AI into Comp Science / Cyb Security, or are they still behind?

PI: Sometimes, curriculum development needs systemic changes which can take a whole academic year from time to time. Myself and the Voice team are currently working on a more efficient way to gain updates on feedback that we actively submit. At the moment, I can't really say for certain but I appreciate you raising that gap.

Precious Ikechukwu – Academic Experience SVL

“What specific gaps have been identified so far in accessing academic support, and how will student feedback be used when forming final recommendations to improve support?”

PI: From the feedback gathered so far, the key gaps relate to visibility, coordination and accessibility of academic support. That's what I managed to identify through Course Reps, Faculty Lead and outreach with the Student Voice & Advice teams. Many students are not fully aware of the support available or how to access it, and there is a lack of clear signposting to services such as academic tutors, library services, etc. Also, I feel they may need to train academic tutors on how to advise and handle specific issues. The approach has allowed us to identify a lot of key themes for improvement, and most likely requires a systemic change to improve engagement with support services, and we're hoping that we'll see changes in the next academic year.

Aamira Waghmar – International Experience SVL

How have you contributed to the DMU International student support buddy scheme, what measurable impact has your support had on the scheme so far?

AW: So basically, with the international student support called iBuddy, I used to promote it during my events so students know about it. But iBuddy runs recruitment only once, early in the academic year to join the buddy scheme which starves the January intake students to join the scheme. There are some suggestions such as continued recruitment across the academic year to ensure those new arrivals have the same chance. During my events, I hear a lot from students who started early how good it is but I am recommending continuing recruitment through the academic year.

PK: Is there a reason why they only recruit at the start?

AW: They just seemed to say that “that’s how they do it”. I don’t want to create something new, so why don’t we change the format of what already exists? A lot of similar schemes exist already. Early in the year, you apply for the scheme and, for example, if you’re a second or third year you get paired up with a first year to help them gel into university life. About once or twice a month, they should meet to check in, do other things outside of university and generally help be a support system. But I’ve passed a lot of recommendations over which should help the following academic year.

Aamira Waghmar – International Experience SVL

You are supporting the International Buddy Scheme. How are you tracking the 'quality' of these connections to ensure international students are finding long-term community rather than just a one-off orientation contact?

AW: I have an example from one of the groups that I met who originally met through iBuddy. We would always see them together through a lot of other events. I know it’s common to see individuals from similar backgrounds together but these two were from completely different backgrounds w/ similar interests, and there were a big group of these students who have stuck together throughout the academic year. I know that they don’t always want to do the feedback stuff, but we do see people partnered through the scheme continue to stay together! But as I mentioned before, I’ve submitted a lot of suggestions to make it better for the next academic year.

All SVLs

With summer & the end of the academic year on the horizon, locally organised events e.g. Riverside Festival are starting to take place on DMU campus. Were you aware of these events, and do you think the SU could have some sort of involvement in the promotion or awareness of the event?

TS: Yes - we're already involved because Riverside Festival takes place on campus, and we've supported promotion through social media and student engagement activity. I think there's definitely scope to increase awareness further, particularly as many students may not realise these events are open to them. That could be something worth building on in future years.

DK: Yes, we are aware of the locally organized festivals taking place on Campus. In terms of raising awareness, we try to raise awareness on our social media pages. Even though it's not a DMU organized thing, we push it as a way to communicate with the larger Leicester community.

AW: I echo that, as an ex-DMU student I actually used to go to Riverside Festival myself! In terms of working with more locally organized events, we try and push events that are in the wider Leicester area especially in times of closure e.g. Christmas / Easter etc.

PI: I'm aware of these events, but I know there are DMU comms about these events. Not so sure if DSU do the same level. But, I think we could do more to promote more locally produced events.

All SVLs

Given the end of the year approaching, what plans are we putting in place for review and then smooth transition/continuation of SVL responsibilities?

TS: As we approach the end of the year, continuity has been a major focus. The Student Voice Leader manager is reviewing induction processes, and I'm currently completing detailed handover documents covering outstanding motions, progress updates, key contacts, and next steps. I'm also ensuring projects like Share the Wear have clear continuation plans, alongside broader guidance for the incoming officer based on what I've learned in the role.

PI: At the moment, because most of our manifesto goals could not be achieved in one year, we're hoping that we can continue our work to begin changes in the next academic year. I'll essentially be continuing a lot of my work over the summer to help keep the momentum of these projects up. The first year in the role is about identifying where those gaps are and what work needs to be done, and the second year will hopefully be

beginning key changes to improve things for students.

AW: Like Twig mentioned, we've put in some time to review our year and what the next year looks like for us. For me, I feel I'm going to be more confident in doing some of the things I want to do. Sometimes I struggle in induction periods to grasp everything, but I have a lot clearer of understanding on what needs to happen going into my next year as well as learning from the experience we had this year.

DK: Everyone's already said what I wanted to! Twig has already mentioned induction reviews and how we can improve this process for ourselves and future SVLs. It's also a great chance for us to reflect on how far we've come but also how far we have to go in the coming year. We've got a year of experience and have learned, and it'll be easier to continue for next year.

Meeting Close & Actions Arising

At 14:59, the meeting was closed.

A vote was taken by Scrutiny Panel and determined the following:

The Student Leaders have made sufficient progress toward their manifesto goals.

General feedback:

Some answers on specific events like their "outreach" could do with being more specific, especially with content of the events & how their events are helping students.

The SVLs could do with ensuring stats are used to improve communication of progress – while their updates are generally good, they should work to make sure that they're backed up with stronger data.

Aamira: It might be an idea to find out exactly how many people did iBuddy last academic year, and use this to measure the uptake of it going forward.