

Scrutiny Panel Agenda

From meeting dated 09.12.2025

Student Leaders in attendance

Communities SVL	Twig Smalley	TS
International Experience SVL	Aamira Waghmar	AW
Academic Experience SVL	Precious Ikechukwu	PI
Inclusion & Wellbeing SVL	Dilpreet Kaur	DK
Employability SVL	Badhri Durgapu	BD
Womens' Liberation Officer	Tanya Leech	TL

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

Introduction from the Leaders and a brief update on their progress.

Twig: Having a brief run through of Council updates. Projects have shifted slightly – Varsity is being looked after in operations by Commercial team. Now there are two projects replacing that during LGBTQ+ history month which I am looking over. Clothing swap and queer prom for all students. Still waiting on collaboration fund from DMU side so nothing really changed there and with the feedback stuff, reviewed feedback from SCM and have been passed onto relevant teams. Article will be coming out either next week or post-Christmas around that.

Dilpreet: Working on a proposal for volunteers called “Wellbeing Champions”, and a podcast which will be happening. Production first week of February, episodes out during march.

Aamira: We held first speak up circle in Lvl1. Canvas painting, students engaged and liked the idea of exploring different snacks as well as painting. Discussed what came out of the welcome survey and students had their own views. Culture fusion fair during refreshers - because it takes a lot of planning, we've moved it to during March time. Last one is a project about how mental health is taken in your cultures. Start planning how to execute with Dilpreet post-Christmas. £2500 discount for intl. students' have a response from the university.

Badhri – Conducting workshop for Employability team next year January, working with each faculty team members. Submitting article for placements.

Precious – Feedback loop station, initial plan was to have them installed across 3 different faculties & libraries. Budget for each of these stations are around £379 per station which was quote from MarComms. Due to costs, I was told we'll be going for one for budget constraints so

we decided on library as most neutral space for Course Reps etc. Want it installed by end of the year. Working on improving academic support services as it came up as key theme on NSS data. What I've done so far is contacting the university to know all of the academic support services they offer, and have put into email to email round and ask for data about students accessing, are they aware of it etc. Also factoring in DSU and NSS data. Essentially exploring all available data and then submitting proposal to university to make reforms to these.

Questions from Scrutiny Panel

Aamira – International Experience SVL

Aamira, you had an event called “Your Culture In A Canvas” recently. How do you feel the event went, what do you think you can improve on and what do you need from students to improve events in the future? (Asked by PK)

Thank you for the question. The event was quite good! First, I was anxious as it was the first one, and I'm used to being with the team but they were in meetings so it was just me. It went well, there were quite a few students who came in. I went downstairs and talked to some students who were in the CC. The main challenge that I faced is basically students don't really tell you what they want when you ask them, and when we deliver something based on what we think will be good for them, they don't like it. When we ask for feedback, it would really be helpful if they gave us realistic and constructive feedback so we can live up to their expectations and preferences. This will help us create good events in the future.

Zayan: Dilpreet, you mentioned there's going to be a podcast. Demon Media have a podcast, how would your podcast conflict with that? Have you thought about collaborating with Demon?

DK: At first, we thought about doing a collaboration, but we wanted to use our Brand Development team to keep it specific to DSU. My podcast is not going to be about student life or getting views, instead it's about (and called) “Brave Conversations”. The Demon podcast is around student life, but Brave Conversations is about more specific wellbeing topics.

Zayan: Aamira, you mentioned Refreshers and how you have a lot of plans for it. Can you share more about these and how societies can get involved?

AW: Cultural Fusion Fair, I wanted to do it during Re-Freshers as it's not as big as WF. But because it takes a lot of planning (RF has been planned before I was in post) and I want to include as many societies such as faith groups and culture societies etc. Societies do their own stalls at the fair to do fundraising, activities and more. I'm doing the cultural fair and societies have an opportunity to do more outreach to students. Meeting with internal team regarding planning.

TS: Looking at getting involved in RF, there is a societies fair. I'm hoping info comes out

soon or in Jan. Exactly the same as freshers, a different layout but will still be able to do stalls and what not. Refreshers is mostly for intake in January, which will bring students in.

Precious – Academic Experience SVL

Many DMU students have been facing concerns about attendance during their time at University, often feeling they have wrongly been sent attendance concerns. What updates do you have from the university on this matter? (Asked by Abdullah)

Apparently, I'm told it's a really big cross campus issue. Previously we've never had a policy guiding attendance. This is a new policy – not just attendance, but engagement too. Not only marked on attendance, but also how you engage with VLEs, lessons and more. Initially I did raise that issue with the university in last week of Nov. Students, especially CRs, were very uncomfortable with the response from the university. We asked the university directly if students will be negatively impact, and they said "no, students who are attending will not be negatively affected". There is a form within attendance emails to mark your attendance manually and I would urge students to fill this out. I recognize that it's a big issue but I'm glad the second article sent out was more supportive and understanding. They're going to have an email for TAC faculty to give a standardized response. I also learned comms was meant to be sent out to students on 1st Dec, but unsure if this has been sent. I believe they should be giving similar comms to what I've been putting out there.

AK: How come they can't see their attendance? I thought it was student complacency.

PI: With this issue, we had some of the attendance teams coming into CR (Course Rep) Catch Ups. CRs raised the same issue, Attendance said it wasn't really possible but I said students need to be able to see this. I'm working with the university right now to find a solution of this. Going to the next Academic Board meeting tomorrow but I will be raising this issue at AB as well.

TS: The new DMU App will have attendance by hopefully next term, so attendance will be able to be viewed by students on the app by next term.

PK: A lot of students weren't happy with the universities' response, some of the students feel like they want a formal apology. Students feel like they haven't been acknowledged and it's being brushed under. What can we do about that?

PI: The university have acknowledged a fault in the card readers but I sat down with the Voice team, FLRs (Faculty Lead Reps) and others to form a proposal with exactly what we want, apologies included. When we're in meetings we don't let the uni push us around! Students deserve more communication, etc.

AK: Students want clarity as opposed to apologies. It felt like the university want to just say “don’t worry about it” rather than just tell us what’s going on.

Precious – Academic Experience SVL (also briefly to rest of SVLs)

From their point of view, what would they need from us as Course Reps / Students to help achieve their goals? E.g. Precious has a lot to achieve but requires a lot of participation to achieve. What do the SVL's need from students to achieve their goals? (Asked by PK)

TS: Looking at Sports and Socs, we need participation in conversations & reporting problems early so I can escalate them as quickly as possible. Engagement in surveys, SCM was good but wanting to keep up. Emailing the inbox, quickest way to reach us with problems.

DK: Feedback, if we get realistic feedback on what students want that's the main thing. My remit is very wide spread and I don't hear from students. I want to hear what you want! All the things I'm putting on are my ideas, but I want to put events on from you. I don't hear much from students about the wellbeing services – are they good enough? Is there any feedback?

AW: I'll add to the point about the inbox, that's where you reach out to us. With some of the students, we need to emphasize that solutions take time. Sometimes we are escalating matters further up so just bear in mind these things take time. If we didn't know what students want, we'd be left with what I wanted to do as a student. Initially, nobody showed up and I need to do outreach.

TS: What's the best way of feedback? How do you want to give feedback?

PK: Distribution of information could be improved.

BD: SVL Drop-in Sessions every Monday! We are in person every week but only one student came. Usually, we don't have students attend but we're in the Pod, every Monday 1-3pm.

[General discussion about talking to students in person, this generation of students and how to work up courage for outreach.]

PI: We need Course Reps bringing feedback to meetings. Voice has a Course Rep tracker where all issues get inputted. If any issues relate to other remits, then SVLs get notified. Also, student involvement in NSS with Course Reps pushing their class to fill it out! Also, attendance to events e.g. Aamira's event, are all good ways to get in touch with us and give us good feedback.

ZL: Have you guys thought about the opportunities team, who do run events e.g. Give It A

Go. Have you thought of promoting DSU using these events?

TS: We're trying to reach every student in a very different way. When Opps do outreach, I'm there with them. SVLs have a more difficult challenge, as they do not have a specific department they work with. Maybe that's where the promotion of our projects can be looked at, through social media usage etc.

PI: What I am doing is doing GOATing throughout the university and its faculty buildings to try and bring us to students.

Precious – Academic Experience SVL

We saw you took a trip to DMU London. Can you share more about the purpose of your trip and how it benefits us as students? (Asked by Zayan)

PI: Myself and the Voice team went to DMU London to promote the Course Rep role. We now have 4 reps at DMU London thanks to our outreach! Because it's quite new, I sat within the academic meeting and helped the Course Reps with their first proper university meeting. I also got quite a bit of feedback which I have taken. We went into classes, talked to them and they then approached.

AW: We represent DMU London as their Students' Union too. Majority of the students are international students.

Twig – Communities SVL

Students who tried to join sports teams mid-season often felt excluded or told it was “too late.” How could you work with the sports teams to ensure mid-year joining is allowed? How can they improve it? (Asked by Dan)

So this is quite a big task. It is something I've raised as a concern with the new head of DMU Sport & Leisure. There are historical issues with this around the culture – sports teams don't want to run secondary trials. Awaiting a response from DMUsport about how to make this happen without my intervention but it looks like I will have to intervene. I want to make sure there are secondary trials.

PK: Why don't they want to run secondary trials?

TS: There is logistical work for it to happen but in my opinion it's not very much. I've also looked at memberships of people to play – if people did it as a 12-month membership then they would make more money. I'm hoping that I can convince the heads to feed it

top down.

Twig – Communities SVL (Also Dilpreet)

Students have raised concerns that under-represented students still do not feel included in sport.

What work are you doing to mitigate this and how do you feel the issue could be combatted?

(Asked by Zain)

Increasing representation and diversity within committee positions is manifesto goal. A more diverse leadership will automatically start bringing a more diverse makeup of sport. Improving the usage of language and tone used in committee elections. Had a discussion with UoN's black sport collective starters and how they used different language and techniques to improve the representation of black people in sport. There's also the early discussion with DMU Sport about those January intake students and secondary trialing which will improve representation as well. Group growth within DMU will hopefully embed inclusion permanently. We definitely want feedback from students on how they feel this could be done, as giving tangible feedback to future Communities SVL ensures work is still done.

Twig – Communities SVL

Players from different teams keep saying communication is still messy and unreliable so what's the core of the issue and how can you and DSU work to ensure consistent communication

between DMUSport and yourself? Do you think a student run communication system could work?

(Asked by Freya)

As I'm sure you're aware, it's historically a very turbulent relationship between DSU & DMU Sport. DMU Staffing changes have created gaps and inconsistencies which I and students have started to notice. I now have regular catch ups with head of DMU Sport to try and fill those gaps. I'm also reflecting on how I can be more available for students e.g. can I be at the Watershed once a week? Having streamlined communication to be majorly on LearningZone works much better for student groups. Also reviewed SCM feedback and taking it to DMUSport. Once we've ironed all this out hopefully the messaging becomes more consistent. With a student run communication system, what would you expect to see?

DS: Something like Teams, like an instant messenger.

TS: I have a few thoughts on this. 1. It's something I can look into – something similar to Course Rep chats. I like that idea. I think it's attempted to be implemented in the past, but perhaps with a new student population it could work. If students are interested in it, we

could have a strand of Demon Media which is directed toward communications by students, for students. I can definitely look into it and get back to you on that.

Twig – Communities SVL

A motion was recently passed at Student Council to provide the opportunity for alumni & external guests to purchase membership to societies. Can you provide an update on the progress of its' implementation? (Asked by Abdullah)

Yes! This has been taken to the Opportunities team and there are meetings happening. A full report will hopefully be given in the next Student Council. The biggest caveat is Security, and working with them to get it implemented. Opps Manager is creating a very detailed proposal for them and an update should hopefully be provided at the following Student Council. Won't happen until next academic year.

Twig – Communities SVL

Students have wanted to get the piano in Vijay Patel moved to the Campus Centre, but the university won't move it until it's been tuned and they've not heard anything for a while. Are you able to approach the university about this? Could they move it and then tune it? (Asked by Zayan)

I do! I spent all of today asking about this. I hadn't heard about this until the agenda came out. We love the idea, and our head of commercial is making arrangements to move it. No ETA on this, but I've found a tuner as well. Our hope is Easter, but there is no promises.

All SVLs

Students have voiced concerns that they feel like their issues are "disappearing" with no transparency or decisions. How can you make sure that changes and student feedback are being demonstrated? (Asked by Dan)

PI: First progress I made, in Education Committee I made a standardized agenda which is used in every single SVC meeting, sat in by Course Reps, Programme Leaders and more as well as clear direction on where to send the feedback.

AW: That's where projects like "You Said, We Did" where if something doesn't work out for students, that communication needs to go out. That's what I'm trying to do – even if we didn't get positive feedback from the university it's still good to inform them. We still escalate the matter, but the important thing is to feed back to students even if the work is

not done.

PI: When I send university staff an issue, I expect a response. I try and hold them accountable as much as possible! We want to know timeframes, steps and as much info as possible for the students.

DK: Aamira has already touched on my answer, but me and Twig are working on "You Said, We Did", which is all about closing the feedback triangle!

TS: YSWD, as well as how often do I communicate to my sports and societies. Honestly, not enough. I put together SCM even if I was ill for the meeting, but I feel I need to have an increased presence in student group areas such as the Watershed. I know there's issues, as ex-sports myself we gossip and talk, but we struggle to raise that issue higher than us. I want to try and increase LearningZone announcements with YSWD to try and show progress clearer to students.

All SVLs

Student are struggling with the idea of manifesto progress & ideas not matching student reality. As we wrap up for Christmas, what are some wins you can share with the students to communicate progress? (Asked by Zain)

TS: My manifesto is my long term goals, and it's things I want to achieve by the end of the year. Day to day is not my manifesto, so sometimes they don't make progress because we're dealing with other things to help students. E.g. DMUSports wanted to return Snow Sports to a society, but I worked with DMUSport to keep them as a sport and they are now competing and doing really well. As well, being able to turn feedback into a You Said, We Did from SCM is great. We need students to keep sharing real lived experience.

DK: When we created our manifestos it was based on what we knew from the outside. Once we got in, we got a much better picture on budgets, timelines etc. As a result we've had to make changes to our goals because it either can't be achieved in a year, or things have changed etc.

[PK acknowledges that there's a disparity between the SVLs' perception of change and what is reality is very different.]

AW: Same thing as Dilpreet – sometimes we set unrealistic goals based on what we see from the outside, so we don't know if things are achievable in a year. There are things that students want us to solve but we cannot do it and help. E.g. visa and immigration issues. We can't stop people from being referred to the Home Office, we can only signpost to relevant support services but they want us to resolve their own visa issues when I can barely do my own!!! We need students to give us a realistic solution too.

BD: After joining the job, I realized how difficult it can be to work with external companies

to provide jobs and workshops to students. My manifesto has things with employability workshops, skills and more.

PK provides feedback for the DSU website and how he feels the website isn't very student friendly and students don't use it to get information.

PI: My manifesto goals were formed based on my experience as a CR and FLR. My goals are about enhanced feedback integration, so coming into DSU I wanted to try and bring a lot of feedback with me. With my other goal it's about promoting the NSS, etc. I try and explore as much current data as possible.

Aamira & Dilpreet

We saw you attended the NUS England Democratic Event in November. Can you share an update on your input at that event, and what was learnt or achieved by you? (Asked by ???)

This question was not included in the agenda by mistake.

DK: Went to NUS event, met some like minded officers. My reflection and the things we talked about are things including knowing our issues are not DMU-Specific. We are struggling to find representation in underrepresented groups. There is something coming in January that is a consultation campaign around the Liberation committees, and how they look for students.

AW: Student voice Leaders from all across England. I went into sessions about international students & having a new post-16 white paper, new rules for international students etc. It's good to know that our issues are not just our own as well as making key contacts. We got some feedback. There were some areas that we were proud to say that we can handle them better, but some areas where we can definitely work on it better.

Asked by Zayan for Twig:

Some of the stuff for societies e.g. timings and document submission can be improved. Finances, for example, don't get grants and we feel the money takes a long time for money to clear.

Twig: Development Fund a) does not cover food and b) still needs a fundraising element for access. Finance system is just how it works, it's 4-6 weeks as there are set processes within the DSU Finance team for auditing purposes.

Zayan: We're also experiencing difficulty for booking rooms and the long time it takes to book stuff.

Twig: a number of factors for the 2 week window – staff sickness, risk assessments, activity plans, working with Security to inform them, so there's no real scope to change this.

Zayan: I feel like there could be further interaction between DSU and societies. I think there should be more facilitation to help find students. Some of us don't know how to approach students and feel DSU could do more to help more students join more societies.

Meeting Close & Actions Arising

At 16:54, the meeting was closed.

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