

J20-15 – Motion to formally affiliate the Disabled Students’ Network as a subcommittee of the SRC

Owner: Anna-Ruth Cockerham

In effect from: Immediately

Review Date: January 2021

Proposed:

Anna-Ruth Cockerham – *SRC Member for Students with Disabilities*

Seconded:

Emma Walsh – *Association Director of Wellbeing*

Dan Marshall – *Association President*

Ananya Jain – *Association BAME Officer*

Gabby Kyriakou – *SRC Member for Student Health*

The SRC and SSC notes:

1. The St Andrews Disabled Students’ Network has been operating as an informal subcommittee of the Students’ Association Equal Opportunities Committee since April 2020.
2. This committee was formed via interview and received 17 applications for a total of eight open positions.
3. An informal group of disabled students has been operating online since April 2019.
4. The previous SRC Member for Students with Disabilities discussed working on the formalisation of a disabilities subcommittee in reports to the SRC dated 29th October 2019, 15th October 2019, and 24th September 2019.
5. The current SRC Member for Students with Disabilities outlined creating a disabilities subcommittee in their manifesto.
6. Many other student unions operate disabilities committees or societies including UCL, Oxford, Cambridge, and Glasgow among others.
7. Disabled students face discrimination and disadvantage throughout academic and social life, including in the form of hate crimes/speech and through inaccessibility.

The SRC and SSC believes:

1. Disability is a diverse range of experiences and there is a need to better represent this diversity of experience.
2. Disabled students would benefit from a supportive social network and increased representation.
3. There is a lack of awareness of the difficulties disabled students face and a lack of knowledge on accessibility.

4. Forming a Disabilities Subcommittee would be beneficial in improving the diversity of representation of disabled students, raising awareness of the difficulties they face, improving social connections for disabled students, and targeting issues around discrimination and accessibility throughout student life.

The SRC and SSC resolves:

1. To add Appendix 1 to *Chapter 3, Part 7 – SRC Subcommittees* to the Association Laws (and renumber accordingly).
2. To rename the SRC Member for Students with Disabilities the SRC Disability Officer and update their role description as outlined in Appendix 2.
3. To replace “*SRC Member for Students with Disabilities*” with “*SRC Disability Officer*” everywhere it is mentioned in the Association Laws.
4. To hold an EGM and an interview process to appoint the positions outlined in Appendix 1 that are not currently held by the existing committee of the Disabled Students’ Network.

Appendix 1: Constitution of the Disabled Student' Network to be added to Chapter 3 – Part 7 of the Association Laws

Chapter 3 – Part 7, Subcommittees of the SRC: 7.7 Disabilities Committee (Disabled Students' Network)

1. Name

- 1.1. The SRC Disabilities Committee shall be known as the “*St Andrews Disabled Students' Network*” or the “*DSN*”

2. Aims

- 2.1. To represent the diverse needs and experiences of disabled students.
- 2.2. To provide support and resources to disabled students.
- 2.3. To create a supportive community for disabled students.
- 2.4. To raise awareness of the difficulties that disabled students face in the wider student community.
- 2.5. To advocate for change to practices that discriminate against or otherwise disadvantage disabled students.

3. Membership

- 3.1. The membership of the SRC Disabilities Committee (Disabled Students' Network) shall consist of all the matriculated students of the University except those who have exercised their right to opt out under the terms of the Education Act 1994.

4. Committee

4.1. Membership of the Committee

4.1.1. SRC Disability Officer

- 4.1.1.1. *Will be elected in the Students' Association Elections.*
- 4.1.1.2. *Will convene the SRC Disabilities Committee and chair the committee meetings.*
- 4.1.1.3. *Will represent disabled students on the SRC.*
- 4.1.1.4. *Will coordinate with relevant parties like the Students' Association or the University on issues affecting disabled students.*
- 4.1.1.5. *Will be responsible for overseeing the operations of the SRC Disabilities Committee.*
- 4.1.1.6. *Will be responsible for maintaining the support resources for disabled students, alongside the Deputy Convenor.*

4.1.2. Deputy Convenor

- 4.1.2.1. *Will chair the committee meetings in the absence of the SRC Disability Officer.*
- 4.1.2.2. *Will assist the SRC Disability Officer wherever possible and represent the SRC Disabilities Committee if the SRC Disability Officer is unable to.*
- 4.1.2.3. *Will be responsible for maintaining the support resources for disabled students, alongside the SRC Disability Officer.*
- 4.1.2.4. *Will be selected by interview.*

4.1.3. Secretary

- 4.1.3.1. *Will be in charge of taking minutes of committee meetings and keeping an archive of them.*
- 4.1.3.2. *Will manage the mailing list.*
- 4.1.3.3. *Will be selected by interview.*

4.1.4. Treasurer

- 4.1.4.1. *Will be responsible for managing the committee finances throughout the year.*
- 4.1.4.2. *Will coordinate fundraising and sponsorship for the committee, where appropriate.*
- 4.1.4.3. *Will produce the yearly budget in collaboration with the SRC Disability Officer.*
- 4.1.4.4. *Will be selected by interview.*

4.1.5. Events Officer

- 4.1.5.1. *Will be responsible for organising events and activities that raise awareness of disability and social events for disabled students.*
- 4.1.5.2. *Will liaise with societies and student groups to organise collaborations, where appropriate.*
- 4.1.5.3. *Will be responsible for coordinating Disability Pride Week.*
- 4.1.5.4. *Will be elected via AGM.*

4.1.6. Campaigns and Publicity Officer

- 4.1.6.1. *Will be responsible for managing the committee's social media.*
- 4.1.6.2. *Will be responsible for creating and managing our advertising campaigns to raise awareness of disability and the support available for disabled students.*
- 4.1.6.3. *Will coordinate the publicity for the committee.*
- 4.1.6.4. *Will be selected by interview.*

4.1.7. Accessibility Officer (Societies & Student Events)

- 4.1.7.1. *Will be responsible for overseeing the Students' Association Accessibility Pledge.*
- 4.1.7.2. *Will work with Societies Committee, societies, and student groups to improve the accessibility of society events.*
- 4.1.7.3. *Will be the contact for questions about accessibility for events run by the Disabled Students' Network.*
- 4.1.7.4. *Will run Office Hours and be a contact for questions about accessibility from student groups.*
- 4.1.7.5. *Will be selected by interview.*

4.1.8. Neurodiversity Representative

- 4.1.8.1. *Will be responsible for representing the needs and experiences of neurodivergent students to the committee.*
- 4.1.8.2. *Will be responsible for awareness-raising around neurodiversity and the support available for neurodivergent students alongside the committee.*
- 4.1.8.3. *Will be elected via AGM.*

4.1.9. Physical Disability Representative

- 4.1.9.1. *Will be responsible for representing the needs and experiences of physically disabled students to the committee.*
- 4.1.9.2. *Will be responsible for awareness-raising around physical disability and the support available for physically disabled students alongside the committee.*
- 4.1.9.3. *Will be elected via AGM.*

4.1.10. Mental Health Representative

- 4.1.10.1. *Will be responsible for representing the needs and experiences of students with mental health conditions to the committee.*
- 4.1.10.2. *Will be responsible for awareness-raising around mental health conditions and the support available for students with mental health conditions alongside the committee.*
- 4.1.10.3. *Will coordinate their activities with the SRC Wellbeing Committee and the SRC Member for Student Health.*
- 4.1.10.4. *Will be elected via AGM.*

4.1.11. Chronic Illness Representative

- 4.1.11.1. *Will be responsible for representing the needs and experiences of chronically ill students to the committee.*
- 4.1.11.2. *Will be responsible for awareness-raising around chronic health conditions and the support available for students with chronic illness alongside the committee.*
- 4.1.11.3. *Will be elected via AGM.*

4.1.12. First Year Representative

- 4.1.12.1. *Will be responsible for representing the needs and experiences of first year students to the committee.*
- 4.1.12.2. *Will be responsible for organising events and campaigns aimed at first year students alongside the committee.*
- 4.1.12.3. *Will be elected via EGM.*

4.1.13. Postgraduate Representative

- 4.1.13.1. *Will be elected via EGM.*
- 4.1.13.2. *Will be responsible for representing the needs and experiences of postgraduate students to the committee.*
- 4.1.13.3. *Will be responsible for organising events and campaigns aimed at postgraduate students alongside the committee.*

4.1.14. Director of Wellbeing

4.2. Interviews and Selection Committee

- 4.2.1. Interviewed positions shall be open to all matriculated students who have not opted out of the Students' Association.
- 4.2.2. The committee commits to an accessible selection process, and a candidate may use any aids or adjustments they require throughout.
- 4.2.3. The process shall consist of an application followed by an interview by the Selection Committee.
- 4.2.4. At least two weeks notice shall be given for the opening of interviewed positions (except in the case of casual vacancy).
- 4.2.5. The Selection Committee shall consist of:
 - 4.2.5.1. *The SRC Disability Officer.*
 - 4.2.5.2. *The Outgoing SRC Disability Officer (should one exist).*
 - 4.2.5.3. *The Director of Wellbeing*
 - 4.2.5.4. *The Director of Wellbeing-elect*
 - 4.2.5.5. *The Deputy Convenor (once selected by the rest of the Selection Committee).*

4.3. Elections and General Meetings

- 4.3.1. An Annual General Meeting shall be held at the end of Semester 2.
 - 4.3.1.1. The agenda will be as follows:
 - 4.3.1.1.1. Reports of the outgoing committee
 - 4.3.1.1.2. Elections
- 4.3.2. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be held at the beginning of Semester 1.
 - 4.3.2.1. Positions not filled at the AGM may be filled at the EGM.
- 4.3.3. An EGM can be called by the SRC Disability Officer or two thirds of the committee.
- 4.3.4. Two weeks notice shall be given of any General Meeting.
- 4.3.5. A Sabbatical Officer shall oversee any General Meeting and act as Elections Officer.
- 4.3.6. Proxy votes will be accepted at General Meetings, but students must declare their proxy at least two hours in advance of the beginning of the General Meeting and have their proxy authorised by an Elections Officer.

4.4. Creation of New Positions

- 4.4.1. The SRC Disability Officer and Director of Wellbeing may authorise the creation of new non-voting positions on an ad-hoc basis.
- 4.4.2. These positions expire at the AGM and must be re-authorised for any following years.
- 4.4.3. All such positions will be interviewed or co-opted by the existing committee.
- 4.4.4. Two weeks notice shall be given for the selection process of such positions.

4.5. Casual Vacancy

- 4.5.1. In the case of a casual vacancy, the position may be opened up for interview or co-opted by the committee.
- 4.5.2. One weeks notice shall be given for the selection process of such a vacancy.

5. Meetings

- 5.1. The committee shall meet at least once a fortnight during the semester, excluding during exam or revision weeks.
- 5.2. The SRC Disability Officer, Deputy Convenor, or Treasurer may call meetings.
- 5.3. Meetings shall be advertised at least 48 hours in advance and open to all matriculated students.
- 5.4. Meetings shall be quorate if at least three fifths of the committee are in attendance.

Appendix 2: Role Description of the SRC Disability Officer

SRC Disability Officer

April – March, Part Time, Voluntary

Aim

The role is to chair the Disabled Students' Network committee meetings, represent disabled students, and ensure that disabled students have equal opportunities to non-disabled students.

Key Responsibilities

What you will be doing

- Have final responsibility for matters pertaining to the running of the Disabled Students' Network;
- Chair General Meetings and committee meetings of the Disabled Students' Network;
- Assist committee members of the DSN with their duties;
- Have access to the DSN email account and be responsible for organising access for appropriate committee members;
- Serve on the Students' Representative Council, Wellbeing Committee, Equal Opportunities Committee, and the Student Museums Advisory Group;
- Represent disabled students and ensure Association Policy considers the impact on disabled students;

How you will be doing it

- Organising weekly committee meetings to ensure the smooth running of the DSN;
- Overseeing events and projects run by the DSN;
- Liaising with Student Services, the Careers Centre, the Director of Wellbeing, and other members of the SRC and SSC where appropriate;
- Increasing awareness of the issues affecting disabled students and the support available to them;
- Attending meetings of Union committees, and University Working Groups where invited;

Useful Skills and Characteristics

- An interest in and knowledge of the difficulties affecting disabled people and disability as an identity;
- Time management and organisational skills;
- Adaptable and communicative;
- Ability to handle conflict and disagreement;
- Ability to work in and manage a team;

Benefits

- Develop public speaking and professional communication skills;
- Gain experience in and organising events;

- Develop leadership skills;
- Opportunity to work with a diverse group of people;
- Exposure to a wide range of projects run by the Students' Association;

Expected Time Commitment

On average, you will spend 5-15 hours a week working on this role. Some weeks may be more time demanding than others.

Further Questions

Please contact the current holder of this post if you have further questions about this role.