

June - November 2021

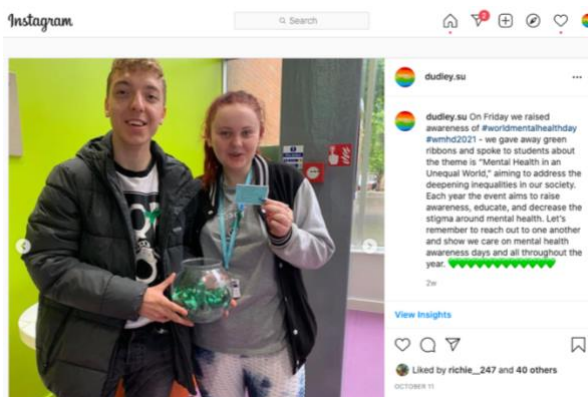
Dudley Students' Union Report to Corporation - Term 1

Dudley Students' Union (hereafter referred to as DSU) remains one of the best performing FE Student Unions in the country, continuing to meet the demands of a diverse membership during some very challenging times. After an incredible year of an all online offer during 19/20 since 20/21 we've acquired some external funding to meet staffing and project needs, received national awards for the work of our officers and continued to offer safe and accessible events.

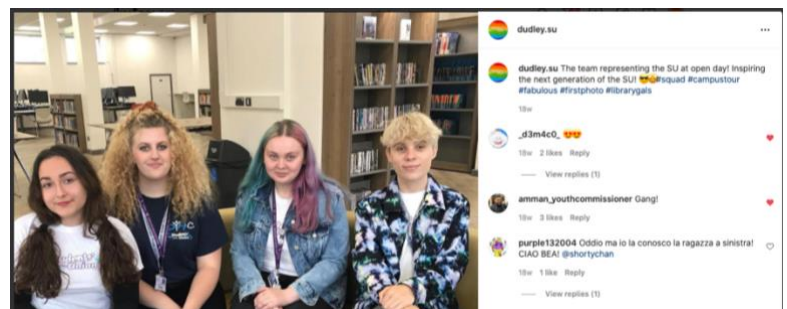
There have been a considerable number of stand out moments that we would like to draw attention to, these will eventually be transferred into a timeline to create part of an impact report which will be published later this academic year.

Mollie Amelia Hehir was duly elected to position of Sabbatical President in June 2021.

Mollie focused her manifesto on LGBTQ+/disability inclusion, Safety on and off campus and reconnecting post pandemic to alleviate student loneliness and isolation. All things which the membership have cited as some of their biggest concerns during Student Council May 2020. With a number of motions due to pass to mandate during the next student council Mollie has had an incredibly busy start to her presidential year.



Mollie during World Mental Health Awareness Day



Mollie and DSU team members talking to prospective students during open day

We hosted our biggest and best Freshers Fayre to date. Moving from the traditional Broadway only model to touring Broadway, Inspired and Sixth/Advance we connected with more students than ever before. Over 30 external organisations attended across the week of the Fayre, and during the week students were also able to meet in the Priory Park for an organised picnic, participate in class teambuilding on the Challenge Academy Big Rig, join in online Drag Bingo and put their knowledge to the test at the karaoke and quiz night. Feedback from staff, students and externals was overwhelmingly positive.

During this week we also ran a **trip to Birmingham Pride**. A Union first to attend this event we were very lucky to be one of the few post lockdown additional groups that secured a walking spot in the opening Parade. Twenty of our staff and members attended and proudly flew the DSU flag (which was designed and sewn by students studying fashion and textiles).


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During lockdown the **DSU LGBTQ+ Friends, Activist and Supporters Group** was established. This group worked hard to support the community and one another and **had their efforts commended at the National Societies and Volunteering Awards** where they were recognised as highly commended in the 'Committee Excellence' Category. For more info see - <https://www.organised.fun/nsvas2021>



Continuing with the winning theme earlier in the year **we nominated our amazing LGBTQ+ Officer, Jack Stokes, for the Queer Student Awards**. Incredibly he not only **won the College Award** but also the overall winner of winners award and **was crowned 'Queer Student of the Year'**. These awards have much broader interest and are supported by some big Brand organisations and companies. Although an online awards event took place this year we are also being invited to the (hopefully) face to face event in June next year which will be such an honour. For more info see - <https://www.thequeerstudentawards.co.uk/winners>

Overall winner



QUEER STUDENT AWARDS WINNER

Jack Stokes
QUEER STUDENT OF THE YEAR

"I am so honoured to have been named the Queer student of the year, and I'd like to thank the judges for this opportunity and Dudley SU for nominating and supporting me.

We must be at the forefront of our own narrative and refuse to be defined by those who only embody hate and bigotry. I want to be a strong voice standing up for LGBTQ+ youth, and I will not let silence be all they hear.

Loud and proud,
always!"

— Jack Stokes

And in addition to these national accolades one a lot closer to home. We were absolutely delighted to have had all of the nominations we submitted to the **Dudley Kindness Awards**

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short listed. We attended the event joined by CEO Neil Thomas to wait in anticipation for the results. **We were thrilled to have come home with 2 main awards and 2 highly commended positions in the categories of 'Stepping up in Education' and 'Young Believer Award'**. This was just testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff and elected officers. For more information see - <https://www.dudleycvs.org.uk/dudley-cvs-agm-and-kindness-awards-2021/>



We are happy to announce we have received funding from the Association of Colleges and the Pears Foundation to employ a Youth Social Action (YSA) Apprentice. With only 6 apprentices employed into this role across the whole country the competition to secure the role was extremely high. However the decision making panel felt that our application stood out from the rest in its ambition to develop Youth Social Action as an influential and beneficial aim for all providers involved.

The apprentice role is hosted from Dudley College but has split responsibility across partners at Walsall, Wolverhampton and Halesowen College. Their role will be to coordinate and manage YSA activities across the 4 colleges as well as working on national projects with the AoC to develop the kudos of YSA.

We were very pleased that previous President elect 2018/20, Aldrich Gonsalves, secured the post. Aldrich has an incredibly strong background in YSA and has hit the ground running since August with brilliant feedback from the AoC project Co-Ordinator and respective college mentors. For more information see - <https://www.aoc.co.uk/pears-iwill-youth-social-action-apprenticeship-project>

This year **DSU are recommitting to the Green Impact Award**, which is a United Nations

award winning programme to support environmentally and socially sustainable practice. Aldrich and Mollie will be heading up this task alongside support of a newly established student Sustainability and Eco Committee. **The committee have already started their work and successfully bid for a further 30 trees from the 'Woodland Trust'** (50 planted by DSU previously) which will be placed across the Broadway Campus during the week of the 800th anniversary of the 1217 Charter of the Forest. Other committee work will include the promotion of Fairtrade, healthy lifestyles



Aldrich on the college Woodland Walk promoting the Students for Trees campaign

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campaigns, running projects that link to nature and sustainability across campus and into the local community.

As ever DSU endeavour to ensure we are accessible and visible.

This year we have launched a [new social media channel on Tik Tok](#) please feel free to follow us and catch up with all our content. Alternatively view our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [flickr](#) or [Instagram](#) accounts.

We are really excited that we have **taken the opportunity over the summer to rebrand the website**. The new version will be launched in Jan 2022, it was an epic job for our Apprentice Oliver Cadman – however with patience and perseverance the new site is set to help drive access to DSU, our events, activities and services, even further.

We will continue to host the pop up shop across campuses and offer that face to face service to members wherever they study.



DSU have partnered with several external organisations this year to support students in different aspects of their student experience these include partnerships with sexual health service the What Centre, Here4YOUth who will be running a weekly mindful club, Midland Mencap in support of a voice for our disabled members and Arcus charity who will continue to support the LGBTQ+ community.

Please take a look at the links provided in this report to enhance your understanding of the massive contribution DSU makes to their members lives every day.

