

Statement from The Students' Union President 2025-2026

Hello, and welcome to my first report to Corporation as the very proud, newly elected, President of Dudley Students' Union. It is a true privilege and honour to have been elected by hundreds of students in May's presidential election.

Prior to this, I was fortunate to serve alongside my predecessor and great friend, Jack Stokes, who led with courage, ambition, and integrity. While Jack leaves behind a legacy of strong leadership, I bring my own traits and priorities to the role, and I hope to build upon the respect and progress achieved under his presidency.

As with any new leadership role, the first term has been a fast-paced and insightful learning experience. I am grateful for the support of our exceptional colleagues, returning student leaders, and volunteers who have made the transition both smooth and inspiring.



Across the college, region, and country, students continue to face real challenges, from balancing their studies with financial pressures to accessing the mental health and wellbeing support needed to thrive. This term has highlighted the resilience of our student body and the vital role of strong, active representation. The Students' Union has worked hard to ensure that student needs are recognised and prioritised through campaigning, enrichment, and wellbeing initiatives, all rooted in a commitment to putting students first.

This report reflects, under my leadership, our progress so far and the foundations we are laying for lasting, meaningful change within our college community.

I am also pleased to introduce a new section of the report that highlights the social impact and strategic alignment of Dudley Students' Union's activities. This element maps key initiatives against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Ofsted's 2025 framework priorities around inclusion and belonging, and the British Values agenda. It provides governors with a clear picture of how the Union's work contributes to students' personal development and wellbeing, while also strengthening the college's reputation, partnerships, and community engagement. This addition supports governors in monitoring impact, championing equality and inclusion, and ensuring the college continues to deliver meaningful outcomes for learners and the wider community.

I hope you enjoy this report's insight into student life, leadership, action, and achievement.

In solidarity,

Kaynat Ahmad

Dudley Students' Union President elect 25/26

This report will highlight key areas of work under the DSU core themes and values which are:

- **Empowering Representation:** We actively listen to and represent students' views, campaigning on their behalf to improve their college experience and ensure their voices influence decision-making.
- **Developing Skills:** We provide meaningful opportunities for students to gain new skills through volunteering, leadership roles, and training, helping them prepare for life beyond college.
- **Building Community:** We create a welcoming and inclusive environment through a variety of social activities, events, clubs, and groups that encourage students to connect, build friendships, and enjoy their time at college.

'SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT'

We are delighted to announce that **Dudley Students' Union** was not only shortlisted but **won the 1st Runner-Up** for the **Education Service Award** at the esteemed **Birmingham Community Inspiration Awards**.

Being shortlisted for such a prestigious award was already a significant honour, recognising the **positive and growing impact of our Students' Union within the wider community**. This recognition reflected our continued commitment to supporting and empowering students, while also actively engaging with and contributing to our local region.

And the figures spoke for themselves the event organisers said:

*'our judges shortlisted **225 nominees** from almost a thousand high calibre nominations received this year from the Midlands and surrounding areas. From the shortlist we then went ahead to select the **90 finalists**. Congratulation to all the runner up and winners for each of the award category. **Awards were presented to 45 runner-up and winners** by a host of VIPs at the awards ceremony'.*

Securing this Award is a proud and defining moment for Dudley Students' Union. **It serves as a powerful testament to the hard work, passion, and dedication of everyone involved in the Union** from elected officers and student representatives to staff and volunteers. This is not just an individual accolade, but a **collective achievement** that belongs to all who have contributed their time, energy, and ideas to building a more inclusive, supportive, and active student community.

We are proud to stand alongside other inspiring organisations that are making real, lasting change in their communities. This award reinforces the importance of student voice, community involvement, and the power of working together for a better future.



We were joined at the event by alumni members, volunteers, current officers and staff

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who played a role in this journey. This is your achievement and together, we will continue striving to raise the bar for student representation and community impact.

For Further information see:

<https://www.thecommunityfoundation.org.uk/community-inspiration-award>

This achievement aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), highlighting the Union's commitment to empowering underrepresented voices and promoting meaningful community engagement.

In line with Ofsted's 2025 framework, this activity demonstrates inclusion, belonging, and active citizenship, showing how students are encouraged to participate fully, value diversity, and contribute to a cohesive community.

It also reflects the British values of mutual respect, tolerance, and democracy through recognition of diversity and celebration of civic engagement.

The social investment return includes enhanced organisational reputation, strengthened community trust, and increased opportunities for future funding and collaboration.

Representation - including campaigning, lobbying and liberation teamwork

Dudley Students' Union Represents at Parliament for Shadow Curriculum and Assessment Review Launch

Following our active participation in the regional workshop on the government's **Curriculum and Assessment Review (CAR)**, Dudley Students' Union was honoured to be invited to **Parliament on 8th July** for the **national launch of the Shadow CAR Report**.

This event was a vital platform to ensure that student voices, particularly from our local community, were represented in national discussions around education policy. By taking part, we demonstrated our commitment to advocating for fair, student-centred reforms that reflect the real needs and aspirations of young people today.

Our involvement in this national initiative reinforces Dudley Students' Union's growing influence and credibility in shaping meaningful change within the education sector.

It also strengthens our role as a key stakeholder in driving forward-thinking conversations around the future of curriculum and assessment.

For further insights, see the FE News article:

[**FE News | Youth-Led Shadow Curriculum and Assessment Review: Young People Are Calling For An End To SATs and Fewer GCSE Exams**](#)



Kea, DofE UK Youth Ambassador and Eddie Playfair, senior policy manager at the Association of Colleges (AoC) joined Jack Sophia and Aldrich for a press pic in the Houses of Parliament

This involvement aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 4 (Quality Education) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), highlighting the Union's commitment to inclusive, equitable education and participatory decision-making. In line with Ofsted's 2025 framework, this activity demonstrates how the Union promotes

inclusion, belonging, and active citizenship, empowering students to influence systems that affect their learning and future opportunities. It also reflects the British values of democracy and the rule of law, through active engagement in policy dialogue and respect for transparent governance. The social investment return includes strengthened institutional credibility, enhanced national visibility for student leadership, and a tangible contribution to shaping educational reform that benefits current and future learners.

Achievement in Petition Week – Fair Deal for the Future

Dudley Students' Union is proud to announce that we achieved second place nationally in this year's National Union of Students (NUS) Petition Week, centred on the "Fair Deal for the Future" campaign. This campaign focused on advocating for equal wages for young people, tackling student poverty and apprenticeship wages, matters of real importance to our student community. A total of 655 Dudley College students signed the petition, demonstrating strong engagement and a shared commitment to fairness and opportunity for all young workers.



The poster features the NUS logo (national union of students) and the campaign slogan 'Fair Deal For Our Future' with the subtext 'Fair Wages, Fair Education, Fair Future'. The main title is 'Fair Deal Week of Action' in large, bold letters. Below this, it states '20th-24th October 2025' and 'prizes to be won'. A 'get involved' section includes a QR code. To the right, statistics are listed: 'Students are £2,000 worse off than in 2021/22', 'Apprentices earn as little as £7.55 an hour', and '14% of learners have used a foodbank'. At the bottom, the slogan 'enough is enough, we deserve a fair deal for our future' is repeated in a stylized font.

Securing second place nationally, beating Higher Education Unions in addition to FE counterparts, represents a significant achievement and highlights the dedication and enthusiasm of our students in championing equitable treatment and democratic participation. Particular credit goes to returning student executive and the SU Crew for their outstanding leadership in bringing this national campaign to campus and empowering students to make their voices heard on issues directly affecting their future.

To show your support sign the petition here:

https://www.nus.org.uk/fair-deal-for-our-future?recruiter_id=683843

This success aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and reflects Ofsted's 2025 focus on inclusion, belonging, and active citizenship by encouraging participation in democratic processes and advocacy for social justice. It also upholds the British values of democracy and individual liberty. Encouragingly, the government has already begun responding to related concerns, including the recent announcement of maintenance grants for the most disadvantaged students. The campaign continues to build momentum for positive change and demonstrates the Union's commitment to representing and advancing the interests of young people in our community.

Representation and Leadership at National Student Event.

President, Kaynat Ahmad, proudly represented Dudley Students' Union as a **VIP guest at the Pakistani Society of Newcastle University Students' Union celebration of Pakistan's Independence Day**. The event culminated with **Kaynat delivering a powerful keynote address** to an audience of hundreds, including students, staff, local dignitaries, the local MP, and the mayor. Her speech highlighted **her dedication to student representation, inclusion, and wellbeing, reflecting her growing influence within the national student movement**. Kaynat's participation in this high-profile event exemplifies the leadership, ambition, and commitment she brings to her role and serves as an inspiration for others to engage, participate, and take on leadership roles within their own communities



Participation in National Union of Students (NUS) Campaigns Day

In August, Kaynat and Sophia attended the National Union of Students (NUS) Campaigns Day at Sheffield College. **The event offered an opportunity to engage with representatives and staff from other colleges and students' unions across the region**. Throughout the day, they participated in discussions on **NUS priorities**, including enhancements to student transport, addressing far-right extremism on and off campus, and advocating for equitable wages. This facilitated the sharing of best practices and the **exploration of collaborative strategies to effectively address key issues within the student movement**.



These engagements aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), reflecting the Union's active role in promoting fairness, equality, and civic participation. In accordance with Ofsted's 2025 framework, this activity demonstrates inclusion, belonging, and active citizenship by supporting students to engage meaningfully with social and political issues that affect their daily lives. It also promotes the British values of democracy, the rule of law, and mutual respect by encouraging students to participate responsibly in debate and decision-making. The social investment return includes the development of confident, informed student advocates; strengthened partnerships with national student networks; and contributions to systemic campaigns that create lasting social and economic benefits for learners.

Creating community - supporting students to meet like-minded people, try new things and tackle loneliness and isolation

Freshers' Week 2025 marked a successful and engaging start to the academic year, welcoming new students into the Dudley College community.



Organised and delivered by the Students' Union in collaboration with college staff, the week featured a tour of the Students' Union and Freshers Fayre activities across campuses. The Freshers' Fayre was a highlight **connecting learners with a wide range of internal and external services, clubs, and organisations promoting wellbeing, health and enrichment initiatives.** Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with many students reporting that the

events helped them feel more confident, informed, and included. The **Students' Union remains committed to ensuring that all learners, especially those new to the college, feel a strong sense of belonging from the outset of their journey.**

Stall holders and visitors commented on the professional organisation of the events and also the exceptional behaviour of students they engaged with.



This directly supports Sustainable Development Goals 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), 4 (Quality Education), 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), ensuring every learner can access community support from the outset. In line with the Ofsted 2025 framework, the week enhanced personal development, inclusion and a strong sense of belonging, particularly for those most at risk of disconnection. British values were embedded through respectful behaviours, informed choice, and democratic participation in SU activities. Feedback from stallholders and visitors praised the professional delivery and excellent conduct of learners, demonstrating a strong positive culture. The social return on investment includes increased retention and wellbeing, stronger early engagement with support services, and empowered learners who feel confident, informed, and valued as members of the college community.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Update

This year, Dudley College SU proudly supported two student teams to participate in the **Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme expedition** one at **bronze level** and one at **silver level**. By hosting in house expeditions, we keep the cost to the students as low as possible. Both teams demonstrated outstanding commitment,



resilience, and growth throughout the programme. From planning and completing their expeditions to volunteering and skills development, students showcased strong **leadership**, effective **teamwork**, and high levels of **engagement** across all sections of the award. They also developed their social and emotional skills such as **resilience, confidence, communication, empathy and problem solving** all of which will help them navigate adult life.



Each team faced physical and mental challenges during their assessed expeditions, yet overcame them through clear communication, strategic planning, and mutual support.

The programme's **assessor** noted that the students displayed "**remarkable dedication and a strong sense of responsibility, working together to overcome challenges and supporting each other throughout their activities.**" The assessor also highlighted their enthusiasm and consistent engagement as key strengths that set them apart from other expeditions he has assessed.

This initiative aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), 4 (Quality Education), and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), supporting holistic personal growth and community engagement. In line with Ofsted's 2025 framework, the DofE programme demonstrates inclusion, belonging, and character development by offering accessible opportunities for all students to build resilience, teamwork, and confidence beyond the classroom. It also reinforces the British values of individual liberty, mutual respect, and community responsibility by empowering students to make positive contributions to society. The social investment return includes enhanced student wellbeing, improved employability through transferable life skills, and strengthened community relationships through volunteering and service activities.

Launch of New Student Clubs

As part of our continued efforts to enhance student engagement and enrichment, the Students' Union successfully launched **two new student-led clubs** so far this academic year: the **European Union Society** and the **Hedgehog Heroes Society**.

The **European Union Society** was created to inspire students with an interest in politics, culture, and global affairs, **offering a platform for discussion, debate, and cultural exchange**. It aims to promote awareness, critical thinking, and international understanding among students of all backgrounds.



The **Hedgehog Heroes Society**, is open to all students, it was established in support of the national **Hedgehog Friendly Campus initiative**. The club focuses on environmental action, wildlife conservation, and sustainability awareness across the college. Early activities have included **campus litter picks, awareness campaigns, and biodiversity workshops**.

Both clubs have already attracted strong interest and participation and reflect the Students' Union's commitment to supporting diverse interests, student leadership, and positive contributions to both the college and wider community.

We are keen that students are able to connect with us whatever campus they study on, one way in which we are achieving this is **via social media and increased online presence** and another is **hosting events and activities at various campuses**. **Every Tuesday** we will be at the **Advance Campus** running **Gamers Club**, this will be a way to **connect with students who study there** and be used as a foundation to **develop meaningful conversations around mental health and wellbeing** and other important topics.

These initiatives align with Sustainable Development Goals 4 (Quality Education), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 13 (Climate Action), and 15 (Life on Land), demonstrating the Union's commitment to education, inclusion, and sustainability. In line with Ofsted's 2025 framework, these clubs exemplify inclusion, belonging, and personal development by enabling students to pursue shared interests, exercise leadership, and contribute to their community. They also uphold the British values of democracy, mutual respect, and individual liberty by fostering open dialogue, civic participation, and environmental responsibility. The social investment return includes increased student engagement, stronger cross-campus community connections, enhanced wellbeing through shared purpose, and greater environmental and cultural awareness.

Skills Development – Including training opportunities, professional development, and volunteering.

Staff/Leaders Professional Development Initiatives

We are pleased to report that our colleague, **Aldrich Gonsalves - Youth Social Action Co Ordinator**, has recently started his journey towards obtaining the **UEFA C Licence** coaching qualification. This course, which runs over a period of two years, marks an important step in his professional development as a football coach.

The UEFA C Licence is designed to build a strong foundation in modern coaching methods, focusing on player development, effective session planning, and creating a positive learning environment. **Aldrich's decision to pursue this qualification reflects his dedication to continuous improvement and his commitment to raising the standards of coaching** within our organisation. Aldrich currently coaches and manages **cross college football teams** that are registered to the **FA** these include **Development league, FE ESOL League and PAN Disability league**.



Alongside this, **President Kaynat Ahmad** is also pursuing professional development through a **10-week part-time IT course**. Following the completion of this programme, she plans to further enhance her skills by undertaking a course in **Artificial Intelligence**.

We wish both Aldrich and Kaynat every success in their respective journeys and look forward to supporting them. Their dedication to continuous learning reflects the Students' Unions commitment to professional growth and the positive impact it brings to our operations.

Dudley Students' Union Contributes to Local Regeneration Through Community Research

As part of **Dudley MBC "Plan for Neighbourhoods"** regeneration initiative, Dudley Students' Union actively supported the development of community-led change by engaging students in meaningful research and training.

Staff members **Sophia** and **Aldrich** accompanied students **Kayleigh** and **Mosses** to complete training as **Community Researchers**.

Following their training, the **students conducted important local research** designed to capture the views and experiences of those who live, work, and study across the borough. **Kayleigh focused on the experiences of neurodivergent youth, while Mosses explored the perspectives of Black young men and children.**



From left Kayleigh and Mosses planning their projects at the Plan for Neighbourhoods training session

A key focus of this project was ensuring that the **voices of students and young people** were represented in shaping funding priorities. The feedback gathered through this work has already been submitted to the project team and is playing a valuable role in shaping plans for revitalising local areas.

This initiative reinforces Dudley Students' Union's ongoing commitment to ensuring that **student perspectives are recognised and influential** in decisions that directly impact their communities and futures.

For more information, read the official update from Dudley Council

[Community welcomes opportunity to revitalise local areas | Dudley Council News](#)

This activity aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), demonstrating the Union's commitment to community development and participatory governance. In line with Ofsted's 2025 framework, it reflects the importance of inclusion, belonging, and civic participation by enabling students to contribute meaningfully to their local area while developing confidence and transferable research skills. The project also embodies the British values of democracy and mutual respect, as students worked collaboratively with residents to ensure diverse voices were heard and represented. The social investment return includes enhanced student employability through

applied research experience, strengthened community relationships, and direct influence over how local investment priorities are determined.

NUS West Midlands Regional Leaders announcement

We are pleased to share some exciting news from our Student Union. Our Student Union President, **Kaynat Ahmad**, has been **selected by the National Union of Students (NUS)** as a **Regional Leader**.

The NUS recently opened **Four vacancies** for the Regional Leader positions. Kaynat nominated herself for this important role and, following a competitive selection process, was successfully chosen.

As a **Regional Leader**, Kaynat will be working within our region to **lead and coordinate campaigns** that reflect the priorities and needs of students. She will also address any regional issues that may arise, ensuring that the student voice remains strong and well-represented.

In this role, Kaynat will collaborate closely with **other Student Union Presidents and Officers** across the region, sharing best practices, developing joint initiatives, and representing our institution at a broader level.

We are looking forward to seeing the positive impact of her leadership both within our college and across the region.
Let's see where this exciting journey leads next!



Final Notes from us

Looking ahead, the Students' Union will continue to build on the positive momentum achieved this term. The upcoming **Students' Union elections** will provide an opportunity to identify and establish the next leadership team, ensuring continued representation and engagement across the student body.

Plans are also underway to **launch additional student clubs and societies**, broadening opportunities for students to connect, collaborate, and enhance their college experience.

Furthermore, the Student Union is pleased to confirm its **involvement with the Association of Colleges (AoC) Student Leadership Programme**, which will focus on key themes including **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**, **Sustainability**, and **Women in Sport**. This engagement will support the ongoing development of our student leaders and strengthen our commitment to inclusive and sustainable practices.

The Students' Union remains dedicated to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and forward-looking student community, and looks forward to the continued success of these initiatives in the months ahead.

Check out everything we are doing and follow us on socials:

Instagram: **@dudleysu_**

TikTok: **@dudleysu**

Website: [Dudley SU](https://www.dudleysu.ac.uk)

If you would like more insights into the work of the union please do not hesitate to contact either President Kaynat.Ahmad@dudleycol.ac.uk or Student Development Officer Sophia.Daly@dudleycol.ac.uk

It has been a positive start to the year, and we look forward to **building** on this success through continued **campaigns, events, and student engagement** opportunities.