

Student Union and Student Advisory Service: roles and responsibilities in relation to disabled students

Student Union

The Oxford University Student Union's (OUSU) role in supporting disabled students includes providing advice, representing and advocating for students and liaising with other parts of the collegiate University to improve the student experience for all, as well as working with individual students facing difficult situations.

Oxford Student Union demonstrates its commitment to equality by having a full-time Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) who promotes student wellbeing across Oxford, including that of disabled students. The Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) regularly advocates on behalf of disabled students and other liberation groups to the University and external bodies.

There is also an elected part-time Disabled Students Officer who represents disabled students and campaigns on all issues affecting them. They work together to raise awareness of disabilities, both visible and invisible, across Oxford University students, staff, and members of the community and to help equalize the experience of disabled students.

The Oxford Students' Disability Community is an autonomous SU campaign made up of students from across the collegiate University and led by a Chair who is chosen by students within the Campaign and various executive committee members who serve different roles. This group campaigns on issues that affect disabled students at Oxford and links with the National Union of Students Disabled Students Campaign where appropriate.

The SU also works closely with Common Room Officers, including Welfare, Equal Opportunities and Disabled Students Officers. The SU aims to provide support and training for students taking on these roles, as well as collaborating with them on projects and empowering them to make change within the University.

Student Advisory Service

A key service which works within Oxford SU is the Student Advice Service. This is a free and confidential service available to all students. The Student Advice Service is independent from the colleges and the University and exists to give impartial information and support to students that are facing difficult situations. The Student Advice Service is committed to improving the experience of all students at Oxford. The insight gained from helping students is used to develop the support services offered and make changes for the better.

If a student has a disability-related dispute with their college, department or any part of the University where they have been unable to come to a resolution through speaking directly to staff and working with the Disability Advisory Service, they can access the SU Student Advice Service who will work with them and support them to try to come to an agreed solution with all parties involved.