AMOSSHE Residential meeting

25 and 26 July 2024 | The Eastside rooms, Birmingham

Attendees: Jill Stevenson (JST), Sarah Sweeney (SSW), Emma Bales (EBA), Chris Warrington (CWA), Ian Munton (IMU), Paul Rossi (PRO), Aleata Alstad-Calkins (AAC), Sammy Li (SLI), Sally Lambah (SLA), Angela Scanlon (ASC), Keith Houghton (KHO), Andy Shanks (ASH), John Bloomfield (JBL), Benjamin Parsons (BPA), Emma Maslin (EMA), Jaimee Shan (JSH), Michelle Scop (MSC), Julia Jean-Baptiste (JJB).

Minutes

Thursday 25 July

Item 1 Welcome and conversation time

JST welcomed everyone to the meeting, including our two new Executives, KHO and ASC and our new National Office team members.

Item 2 Standing item: Reserved business, Conflicts of Interest & AOB check

No conflicts of interest or any other business declared.

Item 3 Standing item: Minutes and matters arising

The June minutes were confirmed as accurate and there were no matters arising.

The action log noted the following changes:
31 - ongoing
32 - ongoing
33 - to be changed from HM to EBA
35 - complete
38 - JBL to review
47 - ongoing
49 - CWA made contact and has arranged a meeting. Ongoing.
51 - complete
62 - working group to be formed

Item 5 Opening remarks and agenda for residential

JST set the context for the meeting, our approach to working together for the year ahead, and our culture as a committee. Our values of being collaborative, supportive and impactful guide our approach. JST asked everyone to consider the following during our conversations:
- Our sector stakeholders.
- Our key messages as an organisation.
- The diversity of our membership (kinds of higher education providers, kinds of members – lead / additional, home nations, personal characteristics).

It was agreed that meeting in person is preferable and to not have hybrid meetings going forwards, as we don't see each other often.

Item 5 Introductions and team building

The executive committee took part in team building activities after introducing each other and discussed their context and institutions to help everyone get to know each other a little better.

Item 6 Standing item: Policy update and external development stakeholder map

See paper 24-25-02. CWA and PRO presented the external development and stakeholder mapping spreadsheet to update the executive on the relationships we currently hold with organisations in the sector, and how these priorities are ranked. BPA asked the executive to review the document to ensure all relationships were accounted for, and to let the national office team know of any changes. This spreadsheet is important to frame discussions at the residential and who are our top stakeholder audiences we wish to influence as an organisation.

EMA talked the executive through the policy document and structure, separating policy updates for discussion and for noting, and also where there were updates needed since the papers had been shared due to the unfolding policy landscape from the general election at Westminster earlier in the month.

The executive discussed the appropriateness of AMOSSHE publishing guidance for members to dealing with encampments on campus. BPA asked whether this would be guidance or sharing of best practice, as the former would not normally have been something AMOSSHE as an organisation would look to do. Members of the executive gave examples of what their universities had already published in this area, such as e-learning modules on freedom of speech (SLI) and how to protest safely (KHO), or where other organisations like NASPA have published guidance. The executive decided that AMOSSHE would share areas of best practice and institutional case studies rather than guidance. This would be for members, as opposed to a wider piece to share externally.

For the third policy update for discussion (Scottish government funding consultation), it was decided that this should be sent out to the AMOSSHE Scotland leads group for further consideration by Scottish members.

Policy updates since the paper was written

Other updates:
- Office for Students are due to appoint a new chair imminently.
- Office for Students regulations on tackling harassment are widely expected to be published on 31 July.
- HEMHIT are due to formally continue, we are waiting official confirmation.
- AHUA have asked whether we want to work with them and UUK on a response to the EHRC reasonable adjustments guidance.

Action: Executive members to send in details to the national office of anyone they know who chairs or is on the executive of similar association organisations so we can update the linked areas on the stakeholder mapping relationships.
Action: Stakeholder mapping group to create a column on the spreadsheet indicating the links between these relationships and the strategy

: EMA to ask members for examples of best practice around encampment issues specifically regarding campus relations or general student support in order to collate and share as a members-only resource.

: EMA to contact Scotland Leads as to whether it would be appropriate/relevant for AMOSSHE to respond to the Scottish government funding consultation.

: Executive to ensure the stakeholder spreadsheet is up-to-date with the relationships and groups they represent AMOSSHE on.

Item 7 AMOSSHE operations and activities

Finance update

JBL discussed the papers 24-25-03, further amendments will be made to the budget upon final receipt of costs and presented at the next executive meeting.

: JBL to present final budget figures at the October executive meeting.

It was noted that member renewals are delayed due to the new website not being live yet but initial renewal emails have been sent and will be followed up as soon as possible.

CPD programme overview

The CPD programme from last year was discussed and the committee were reminded of those events that have been agreed so far this year (as per the paper).

The committee discussed various options for the final outstanding CPD event this year including strategic planning / budgeting / writing a business case / getting approval for policy / influencing upwards / operating in a hostile financial environment.

It was agreed that we should seek to have topics on LGBTQi+ and postgraduate support into the winter conference programme if appropriate.

: CPD leads for COD10 and winter conference to consider the above points for the winter conference and other CPD events.

Communications activity update

The new website and launch date were presented to the committee and an update on the progress around social media engagement (LinkedIn) was discussed. The committee were happy with the direction of the work on this.

Risk register

The risk register was presented to the executive, further work will take part to amend some of the details in the individual reports across the next few months. A discussion also took place about the risk imposed on quoracy from the AGM and the committee are keen to investigate this and see if we can minimise the risk of further EGM's needing to take place in the future.

The hack on Microsoft systems was also discussed, AMOSSHE systems were unaffected but a question was raised as to the impact of not being able to access laptops.

: EBA and JBL to look at risks associated with the EGM/AGM.

: JBL to contact IT and ask the question regarding access to systems for national office equipment for potential future threats related to the Microsoft hack.

Item 8 Revisit SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats.

The committee discussed and updated the previous years SWOT diagram. The focus of change was the need to consider how we can bring the student voice into more of our conversations. The committee also discussed CPD costs and how we can influence those who come along to our events to become members and therefore see the wider benefit in our network. It was agreed that we should look to at our CPD costs for non-members and promote the financial impact of becoming members (especially if members are considering attending one or more events).

Action: The CPD development group to consider the costs of CPD alongside the promotion of member benefits.

Item 9 Policy key messages discussion

ASH introduced paper 24-25-06 and the executive split into three groups for a workshop to establish three to four organisational priority areas, along with key stakeholders we wish to influence, and suggestions of our organisation statement. The executive decided in the wider discussion that it would be better to consider three to four overarching priorities for the organisation rather than topic areas, as multiple topic areas were considered important or difficult to separate between. These were highlighted as: reducing bureaucracy, funding for the sector, and whole-institution approaches. These would be the three main priorities we would want to come across in any policy positions we hold and will inform all aspects of work we wish to undertake.

Action: JBL to make reviewing our organisational priorities a long-standing agenda item to ensure our policy updates are relevant to the organisation and our approach.

Item 10 Strategy 24-25

The committee looked through our agreed strategy workstreams and considered what should be a priority to work on across the initial year (the strategy officially runs from 2025-2030 but we are looking to start some work in advance).

Each workstream aim was discussed and activity was allocated against these, the committee also discussed some wider initiatives and how we balance our resources (both financial and physical) to enable us to fulfil agreed plans.

Action: Workstream working groups to be set up to start working on the prioritised areas and agree timescales and implementation plans.

Item 11 Reserved Business

No reserved business was declared.

Item 12 Allocation of lead activity

The committee allocated themselves to take responsibility for different remit areas of AMOSSHE for the coming year including strategy areas, CPD and operational groups. A few gaps in the groups were discussed at the meeting. JBL will go away and review the list to ensure everyone is taking on a reasonable amount of work and there is a balance of responsibility across the committee.

Action: JBL to look and review the executive committee representation allocations
Action: Executive committee members to look at the sustainability work and put themselves forward

Item 13 Any Other Business

EMA updated members on Bridget Phillipson's statement released since the policy update that stated the new interim OfS chair (David Behan), the independent review of the OfS outcomes and that the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 had been paused.

Item 14 Reflection time

The committee reflected on the work across these past two days and suggested areas that we could change for next year.

These included; shorter more frequent breaks, more time for the Friday strategy tasks, look at different techniques for the workshops.

Action: JBL to consider shorter more frequent breaks for next years residential and more time for the Friday tasks.
Action: JBL to look at different workshop techniques and skill building for future residential meetings (IMU may be able to advise).

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Navigating these papers

These papers are designed to enable you to navigate them on a tablet or PC using a variety of links throughout the document. Any wording that's underlined will take you to either an external page or another point in this document. To get back to the agenda from this document please click on any of the AMOSSHE logos you will see throughout the papers. These papers are best viewed using a PDF viewer such as Adobe.

Agenda

Thursday 25 July

Morning introduction: 11:30 to 12:30

Item	Title	Status	Presented by	Paper
1	Welcome and conversation time (until 11:30 at the latest)	Noting	Jill Stevenson	
2	Standing item: reserved business, conflicts of Interest and any other business check	Discussion	Jill Stevenson	
3	Standing item: minutes and matters arising	Approval	Jill Stevenson	24-25-01
4	Opening remarks and agenda for residential	Noting	Jill Stevenson	
5	Introductions and team building	Discussion	John Bloomfield	

Lunch: 12:30 – 13:30

13:30 to 17:30 (with 30 minute break at around 15:00)

Item	Title	Status	Presented by	Paper
	Standing item: external development stakeholder map and policy update	Discussion	Ext dev leads Emma Maslin	24-25-02
	AMOSSHE operations and activities - Finance update - CPD programme overview - Communications activity update - Risk register	Discussion and Approval	John Bloomfield Benjamin Parsons Chris Warrington Julia Jean-Baptiste Emma Bales	24-25-03
	Revisit SWOT - What's changed, what do we need to add?	Discussion	John Bloomfield	24-25-04
	Strategy overview and reflection - Reflection on the new strategy and feedback from members	Discussion	John Bloomfield Strategy Leads	24-25-05
	Reflection time	Discussion	Jill Stevenson	

Friday 26 July

09:00 to 13:15 (with a break at around 11:00)

	Policy key messages discussion		Policy Advisory group	24-25-06
	Strategy 2025 to 2030 -　Structure of the strategy -　Actions from aims for the coming year	Discussion	John Bloomfield Strategy group	24-25-07
	External development map	Discussion	Ext dev leads	24-25-02
	Allocation of lead activity	Approval	John Bloomfield	

Any other business: 13:15 to 13:30

16	Any other business	Discussion	Jill Stevenson	
17	Reflection time	Discussion	Jill Stevenson	

Lunch and finish: 13:30 – 14:30

Main outcomes from the meeting:

1) Understanding of the current state of AMOSSHE
2) Allocated activity for executive for the year ahead
3) Understanding of the main challenges for AMOSSHE
4) Agreement on key messages for influencing stakeholders
5) Agreed activity for the year ahead stemming from the new strategy and CPD
6) An opportunity to meet each other and get to know each other

Exec Board	Action No.	Agenda No.	Action	Actioned to	Status
Jan-24	21	2	Resources and Membership Engagement workstream teams to consider how we can use the new website platform to gather diversity data about our membership. This will require attention to our GDPR procedures for holding this sensitive data. There also needs to be a process for ongoing collection of this data.	Resources and member engagement teams	Closed
Jan-24	31	6	JB / BP to devise / share a process for responding to requests to work with AMOSSHE that come through Chairs or other Executive members.	JB, BP	Ongoing
Jan-24	32	7	JB and BP to extract actions from the Rules of Association paper in order to implement the changes.	JB, HM	Ongoing
Jan-24	33	7	JB and HM to review ideas about extending Executive terms from two years.	JB, HM	Ongoing
Mar-24	35	3	BP and PR to reach out to LASER (London And South East Region) members and ask who would like to represent AMOSSHE on the London Higher working group for NHS collaborations. PR and RSD are happy to help connect colleagues.	PR, BP	Ongoing
Mar-24	38	4	JB to review the allocation processing with AMOSSHE's accountants to better stabilise showcasing income.	JB	Ongoing
Mar-24	44	6	Strategy development team to devise an action plan, including measures of success, which could be published with annual reports to provide updates on progress with the strategy. Team to consider publishing actions each year to showcase internal work to membership. To be mindful of key performance indicators.	Strategy Development group	Closed
Mar-24	45	7	BP to ask the Executive for CPD1 and CPD2 lead volunteers.	BP	Complete
Mar-24	47	7	BP to add 'planning for the year ahead' to the schedule for the end of August member discussion.	BP	Ongoing
Mar-24	49	8	CW to try to meet the interim CEO of Student Minds. JB to reach out for a meeting in the meantime.	CW	Ongoing
Jun-24	51	3	Policy group to look at lobbying efforts in relation to HEMHIT continuation and funding for higher education. Lobbying might be aligned with other organisations to governments, and also aligned to organisations representing Vice Chancellors to ringfence funding for Student Services. For review at residential.	Policy group, EM	Ongoing
Jun-24	52	3	EM to analyse the trends of policy asks from sector bodies such as UUK, GuildHE, mission groups, UKCISA to identify where their asks coincide with our priorities. To present at residential.	EM	Complete
Jun-24	53	3	Policy group and EM and JJB to start putting together statements / positions of our asks / responses.	Policy group, EM, JJB	Complete
Jun-24	54	3	Executive to volunteer to speak to Disabled Students Commitment speakers at the National Conference to establish a working relationship going forward.	Executive	Closed
Jun-24	55	3	At residential, review the stakeholder mapping spreadsheet to re-establish priorities. Add a 'not started' colour to the progress column. Consider GuildHE and change 'Edward Peck' to 'Student Support Champion'.	Executive	Complete
Jun-24	56	4	JJB / BP to create a presentation-ready version of the strategy for use at the National Conference.	JJB, BP	Complete
Jun-24	57	4	BP to update the strategy wording to remove the repeat of "we'll".	BP	Complete
Jun-24	58	4	Strategy Development group to ask members to feed back on our strategy at our upcoming National Conference.	Strategy Development group	Complete
Jun-24	59	5	CPD development team to consider the balance of free webinars and sponsor webinars.	CPD Development group	Complete
Jun-24	60	5	CPD development team to look to publish the 2024/25 programme all at the same time towards the beginning of the academic year.	CPD Development group	Ongoing
Jun-24	61	6	Executive to test the new website at the July residential meeting.	Executive	Closed
Jun-24	62	8	BP and JJB to consider how to advertise the benefits of AMOSSHE membership and why you should join to coincide with rising costs.	JJB, BP	Ongoing

Policy update – July 2024

Proposed outcomes for the session:

- Executive to have brief overview of policy landscape in England and devolved nations (where mentioned)
- Executive to have discussion and provide responses to following topics: general election impact, encampments and Scottish Government funding consultation
- Executive to receive updates on other policy areas including AMOSSHE work in these areas

Guide to the document

This paper provides a policy update for the Executive on key changes to the policy landscape across England and devolved nations (where applicable).

The document is split into two: policy updates for discussion in the Executive meeting, and policy updates for noting.

Policy updates for discussion

- [General election and impact on the sector](#)
- [Encampments on campus](#)
- [Scottish government funding consultation](#)

Policy updates for noting

- [UK Higher Education policy implications following the General Election](#)
- [Changes to the Welsh HE landscape](#)
- [OfS chair resigns](#)
- [OfS conditions of registration for sexual misconduct and harassment](#)
- [HEMHIIT update](#)
- [EHRC advice note regarding duty of care and reasonable adjustments](#)
- [SLC DSA service update](#)
- [UUK social mobility roundtable](#)

Policy updates for discussion

General election and impact on the sector

The General Election saw a change in government at Westminster with Labour now having a large majority and a total of 412 seats. Purdah has now lifted, however a new government brings with it change and uncertainty as to the Labour party priorities in Higher Education. The Labour manifesto was arguably vague in relation to its designs on HE, the key points of which were summarised below:

- Scrap short funding cycles for key R&D institutions in favour of ten-year budgets that allow meaningful partnerships with industry
- Statutory requirement for 'Local Growth Plans' where local leaders, colleges, industries and universities work together to put long-term plans in place for local area and infrastructure
- Guarantee work/training/apprenticeship/university for all 18-21 year olds
- Devolve adult skills funding to combined local authorities
- FE colleges to become Technical Excellence Colleges

- Improve access to HE
- Raise teaching standards
- Outlining how students can move between institutions (?)

The manifesto also states that "the current higher education funding settlement does not work for the taxpayer, universities, staff or students. Labour will act to create a secure future for higher education" (p.86)[1]. The latter is particularly of interest as there is potential here for a funding review, with policy commentators suggesting a potential tuition fee rise may be on the cards[2]. Bridget Phillipson, just before she was confirmed as Education Secretary on morning of the election, said to reporters that she was aware the university sector needs finance stabilisation and therefore it will be of interest as to how this plays out in the upcoming months.

Here are some key appointments who are likely to heavily influence HE policy in England and therefore useful to know when considering our top-priority stakeholders to influence in the upcoming year:

Name	MP/House of Lords	New role in Westminster
Bridget Phillipson	MP for Houghton and Sunderland South	Secretary of State for Education
Peter Kyle	MP for Hove and Portslade	Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology
Jacqui Smith	House of Lords	Minister for Skills, Further and Higher Education
Sir Patrick Vallance	House of Lords	Minister for Science in Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

Many sector bodies in preparation of the general election published their own manifestos and asks for the new government. Below highlights key themes across the sector and where these may align with our own priorities.

- Reinstate maintenance grants for poorest students and review parental income thresholds for student loans (UUK; GuildHE; IHE; Student Minds; Sutton Trust)
- Improve university mental health services through funding and incentivised collaboration between NHS and universities (GuildHE)
- Provide greater support for students with cost-of-living crisis e.g. free prescriptions bursaries for placements, winter fuel allowance (Student Minds)
- Improve rental rights for students (Student Minds)

Questions for Executive:

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[1] Labour. (2024). Labour's Manifesto: My plan for change. 13 June 2024. Retrieved July 15, 2024, from https://labour.org.uk/change/my-plan-for-change/

[2] Leach, M. (2024). Why wouldn't bet against a fee rise after the election. WonkHE, 6 June 2024. Retrieved July 16, 2024, from https://wonkhe.com/blogs/why-i-wouldnt-bet-against-a-fee-rise-after-the-election/

- What are our key organisational priorities which we want to covey to Jacqui Smith? *==This will be discussed in greater detail in the Friday workshop on AMOSSHE organisational priorities==*

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Encampments on campus

Since the last meeting, a series of institutions have undertaken legal action against the encampments (e.g. Birmingham, LSE, Nottingham, Queen Mary) in order to evict the encampments from the premises. Other institutions have had their encampments dissipate following an agreement reached with senior leadership (e.g. Durham, Bristol, Cambridge, Reading). The latter have been established often following an agreement to review their divestment strategies.

As of 15th July, it was thought around seven out of thirty six known encampments in May are believed to have remained[3]. It is unclear whether any encampments will resume in the 2024/25 academic year.

There has been discussion amongst members during June members meeting and regional meetings around best practice in tackling the encampments and supporting students. From these meetings it seems that there is little information, advice and guidance around how staff can best support students and fellow staff regarding this issue, and this could therefore be something AMOSSHE could contribute to providing for members. Care must, however, be taken to ensure that this remains politically neutral given this highly-charged sensitive, political issue.

Questions for Executive:

- Does the Executive agree that this would be a useful piece of work to undertake in time for the next academic year? If yes:
    - What areas (e.g. student support, staff support, health and safety) should be included in this guidance document?
    - Which sector friends would be useful to contact to help us put together a guidance document for universities?
    - When and how should this be published for maximum use for members?

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[3] Adams, R & Abdul, G. (2024). Gaza protest camps at UK universities wind down amid legal action. The Guardian, 7 July 2024. Retrieved July 12, 2024, from https://www.theguardian.com/education/article/2024/jul/07/gaza-protest-camps-uk-universities-legal-action

Scottish government funding consultation

Following the Withers review[4], the Scottish Government have launched a consultation on proposals for legislation to change the post-16 funding body landscape[5]. The proposed changes broadly are as follows:

- Plan 1. Keep funding models the same.
- Plan 2. Take funding role away from Skills Development Scotland (SDS), giving provider funding responsibilities to Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and student support responsibilities to the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS)
- Plan 3. Move all funding responsibilities for all elements of post-16 education to the SFC and dissolve SAAS.

The proposed changes have been suggested that it will improve the way student support is provided in Scotland as by bringing all financial support for post-16 education in one place, it will be easier and fairer to navigate for students. The consultation closes on **Friday 20th September 2024**.

Questions for Executive:

- Do the Executive consider responding to this consultation as something that should be a priority for AMOSSHE?

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Policy updates for noting
UK Higher Education policy implications following the General Election

On Wednesday 17th July 2024 the King's Speech was read with a list of legislation and priorities the Labour government aim to implement[6]. Notably absent was any explicit reference to Higher Education.

This is a fast-moving situation and given the timeframe in which this policy paper will be published to Executive members there is insufficient time for a proper review and unpacking of each of the relevant bills proposed for this document and how this will impact the wider HE sector. However, the following is likely to be of particular relevance for members:

- Making spiking a criminal offence (Crime and Policing Bill; England & Wales)
- Modernise the Mental Health Act 1983 and improve mental health provision for young people (Mental Health Bill; England & Wales)

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[4] Kernohan, D. (2023). The Withers review gives the Scottish Government something to lean on. WonkHE, 1 June 2024. Retrieved July 15, 2024, from https://wonkhe.com/blogs/the-withers-review-gives-the-scottish-government-something-to-lean-on/he Scottish Government something to lean on | Wonkhe

[5] Scottish Government. (2024). Post-school education and skills reform legislation: consultation. Consultation Paper, 25 June 2024. Retrieved July 15, 2024, from https://www.gov.scot/publications/post-school-education-skills-reform-consultation-legislation/-school education and skills reform legislation: consultation - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

[6] The King's Speech. (2024). 18 July 2024. Retrieved July 19, 2024 from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6697f5c10808eaf43b50d18e/The_King_s_Speech_2024_background_briefing_notes.pdf

- The new Renters' Rights Bill, a version of the Renters Reform Bill including no fault evictions but no mention of student renters as of yet (England & Wales)
- Greater responsibilities for local areas around transport networks, skills, employment support (English Devolution Bill; England & Wales)
- New Council of the Nations and Regions for improving communication across devolved nations (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland Wales)
- Skills England Bill to support with training workforces (England)
- Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, also known as Martyn's Law, will have implications as to how campuses must operate to ensure they have the appropriate level of security in place (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland)

Update for executive:

- EM to monitor updates to the proposed bills and will provide an update at the meeting of any key policy updates

Changes to the Welsh HE landscape

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales recently announced their last funding allocations before the transition to the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (Medr). This has meant a 6.5% total cut across the sector, but varies between 4.5% and 14.1% per institution based on the previous years' funding allocation[7].

On 16th July, it was announced that Welsh first minister Vaughan Gething had resigned from his position and as Labour leader. Whilst there have been calls from other parties for a snap election, not currently due until 2026, at the time of writing this has not been confirmed. At the time of writing, it is too early to say how this will impact the sector (e.g. changes in government priorities, changes in ministers).

Update for executive:

- EM to monitor updates to the Welsh HE landscape and will circulate any appropriate updates to members

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OfS chair resigns

The Chair of OfS resigned on 9th July 2024. This is unsurprising given the change of party following the UK general election, and the former Chair's previous ties to the Conservative party as both a former Conservative MP and the leader of Boris Johnson's leadership campaign in 2019.

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[7] Salmon, M. A brutal set of funding allocations for Wales' universities. WonkHE, 9 July 2024. Retrieved July 16, 2024, from https://wonkhe.com/wonk-corner/a-brutal-set-of-funding-allocations-for-wales-universities/

The OfS have also previously come under fire regarding concerns around their independence as an organisation from the government[8]. Whitehall sources have claimed that there will be a reform of OfS expected following this[9], although it is unclear what this will look like besides having a new interim/permanent chair instated. Names currently floated in the media include Chris Skidmore (former Universities' minister) and David Bell (Vice Chancellor at Sunderland University)[10].

Update for executive:

- EM to monitor updates to this role and will circulate this information when available

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OfS conditions of registration for sexual misconduct and harassment

A condition of registration for HEI providers in relation to sexual harassment and misconduct was due to be published on 30 May, but this was confirmed as not occurring due to the general election. JB contacted our OfS contact (Suzy Allinson) post-election to request an update on this and she confirmed that no new date for publication could be shared, but that we were on their list for when this would be published 'soon'.

Update for executive:

- Meeting with Suzy Allinson arranged for August to introduce EM to rest of the team
- When the OfS publish their conditions of registration, we will share these to members via the newsletter
- AMOSSHE will also ask the OfS to deliver a webinar to members
- Depending on what the conditions are, we will explore best ways in which support members in implementing changes where appropriate

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[8] Kernohan, D. (2023). Everything in the Industry ad Regulators Committee OfS report. WonkHE, 13 September 2023. Retrieved July 12, 2024, from https://wonkhe.com/blogs/everything-in-the-industry-and-regulators-committee-ofs-report/

[9] Adams, R. (2024). UK politics: Badenoch confirms she did criticise Sunak over election at shadow cabinet – as it happened. The Guardian, 10 July 2024. Retrieved July 12, 2024, from https://www.theguardian.com/politics/live/2024/jul/10/conservative-leadership-james-cleverly-reform-uk-labour-keir-starmer

[10] Fazackerly, A. (2024). UK universities need rescue package to stop 'domino effect' of going under. The Guardian, 13 July 2024. Retrieved July 18, 2024, from https://www.theguardian.com/education/article/2024/jul/13/uk-universities-need-rescue-package-to-stop-domino-effect-of-going-under

HEMHIIT

AMOSSHE have continued to be represented on HEMHIIT (DfE Higher Education Mental Health Implementation Taskforce) which seeks to build on best practice and ensure that guidance and key initiatives in student mental health are implemented in full, with clear measures for identifying progress. Whilst this taskforce had originally been extended to Spring 2025, these meetings were paused due to purdah meaning the taskforce and the sub-groups within these have not been able to report or meet on anything.

We are yet to hear if/when the meetings for the HEMHIIT taskforce and its subsequent sub-groups will be resumed, and if there will be a revised end-date to the taskforce given that the original timeline of Spring 2025 had not taken into account purdah.

The current areas of focus are:

- Case Management
- Student Commitment
- Adoption of best practice / student mental health charter
- Information sharing
- Competency framework
- Data Analytics
- NHS secondary care partnerships
- NHS primary care partnerships

Update for executive:

- JB to contact Ben McCarthy for an update on when/if HEMHIIT will be resuming

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EHRC advice for duty of care and reasonable adjustments

The Equality and Human Rights Commission have published an advice note for HE providers on making anticipatory reasonable adjustments for students following the judgement in the case of University of Bristol versus Dr Robert Abrahart[11]. It highlights how reasonable adjustments should be provided in anticipation of an official diagnosis. Furthermore, it states the importance of providers clearly outlining and justifying a course criterion as being a competence standard over a method of assessment as whilst these fall outside the parameters of the Equality Act 2010, they should be reviewed to ensure they do not indirectly discriminate.

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[11] EHRC. (2024). Advice note for the higher education sector from the legal case of University of Bristol vs Abrahart. Published 10 July 2024. Retrieved July 12, 2024, from https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/advice-note-higher-education-sector-legal-case-university-bristol-vs-abrahart

Updates for Executive:

- This advice note was initially presented at National Conference by an EHRC representative
- AMOSSHE have published a summary of this advice note for members which is available on our website and has been linked to in the weekly newsletter[12]

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Student Loans Company DSA service update

Student Loans Company on the 12th July 2024 provided an update on the implementation and development of their new DSA service which came into effect at the end of February 2024. They will be publishing a new DSA data pack which will be published on Gov.uk and will show the end-to-end journey in greater detail for students. In the next phase, they will be introducing more integrated technology between SLC and the two suppliers to reduce the administrative burden for students. Suppliers will now be paid at point of need should a repair or replacement be required during a students' course rather than in advance to providers. Whilst non-medical help is not included in the DSA reform, there have been new guidance for selecting NMH published in collaboration with the Department for Education[13], and the Welsh Government[14].

Update for Executive

- We have contacted SLC to ask for a shareable copy of this update to distribute to members

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UUK Social Mobility Roundtable

AAC attended a roundtable hosted by Universities UK on the topic of creating opportunities for social mobility. The aim of the roundtable was to gather relevant stakeholders to input into key policy interventions, for the wider HE sector as well as the incoming government, which could maximise

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[12] AMOSSHE. (2024). Advice note from the legal case of University of Bristol vs Abrahrt: guidance summary. Published 11 July 2024. Retrieved July 12, 2024, from https://www.amosshe.org.uk/disability-sector-updates/13380692

[13] SFE. (2024). Guidance for assessment centres. 10 July 2024. Retrieved July 15, 2024, from [Exchange blog - SFE, Practitioners (slc.c](https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/practitioners/guidance-for-assessment-centres/o.uk) [https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/practitioners/guidance-for-assessment-centres/o.uk)](https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/practitioners/guidance-for-assessment-centres/o.uk)

[14] Student Finance Wales. (2024). Guidance for assessment centres. 10 July 2024. Retrieved July 15, 2024, from https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/practitioners/guidance-for-assessment-centres/

and sustainably deliver opportunities for learners to drive social mobility. This will support in UUK's wider strategy to influence government in their HE policy plans.

UUK currently have six proposed recommendations for government to consider when making policy changes or financial decisions that will impact students and the wider higher education sector. One of the recommendations include that HEI's have a consistent, guaranteed transition support package that everyone from a disadvantaged background is entitled to no matter where they choose to study. It was further emphasised the need for a consistent, aligned strategy to both influence government and also challenge the HE sector to be more consistent in their approach to access, participation, and social mobility. Additionally, there should be better coordination and collaboration with the NHS, government and HEIs to improve access and outcomes for students.

Update for Executive

- It is unclear whether or not this was a one-off opportunity or something that we will be invited to input on for future occasions
- We are waiting to hear back from UUK whether the feedback from the meeting can be shared with our wider membership. If so, this will be updated on our website

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External Stakeholder map

Proposed outcomes for the session:
- Agree the key changes proposed to the stakeholder map
- Understand the requirements to consider external stakeholders throughout the residential meeting in preparation for the final session.

The map has been amended in light of comments at the previous meeting including an additional colour to indicate 'not started' in the progress status column. Further work will be completed after discussion at the executive meeting on the structure of the strategic priority and relationship outcome columns to clearly show that although something might not currently be a strategic priority, it is a high value relationship and should be clearly monitored and actions / responsibility associated with them to ensure progress.

AMOSSHE operations and activities overview

Proposed outcomes from the session:

- Executive have a good overview of the financial situation of AMOSSHE
- An understanding of the performance of 23-24 CPD programme
- Approved programme of CPD activity for 24-25
- An understanding of some of the communications methods and structure being utilised
- An understanding, and suggested changes to the current risk register

Finance management report

The management reports provides information to date to the end of June 2024. As you can see we are performing well against budget but there are some notable points to highlight.

Income

- Both CPD and National Conference income were slightly below expectations for the year. We knew some of the CPD events did not perform as well as we had hoped, but at the same time we had potentially been overly optimistic on the projections for some, mainly the online conference event. For National conference it's a mix of not quite selling all residential packages and having more members attending than non-members per the budget (therefore less income per delegate).
- Membership outperformed expectations partly due to issues with allocation of renewal income across last year and this year. I'm hoping we can remedy this in the coming financial year to make it more stable in the predictions.

Expenditure

- As predicted, central costs are much higher than in the original budget. We didn't include project costs for the new website within the figures and we have overspent on areas such as temporary staff whilst recruiting new staff.

Draft budget 2024/25

This budget is based on figures received so far. Usually I would seek to sign this off as the budget for the year, but there are some factors that still need to be resolved to enable me to do so.

- Further work needs doing on the Winter Conference and National Conference costs. We are still to secure a venue for Winter Conference (we have options) and the National Conference committee need to decide on the costs and location for one of the evenings dinners, which could significantly change the costs.
- I'm trying to understand from some suppliers if further increases in costs will take place this year. Some incremental increases have been included, but for peace of mind on some of the

larger costs (such as office service costs and IT costs) it would be good to understand if there are any expected changes to provision and costs associated with these.

The membership and projected membership numbers have been updated to reflect the figures agreed at the EGM in May. At the present time the budget shows a slight surplus, but I expect with the increasing costs for Winter Conference venues and potential increases in some central costs that this will take us back to break even. I will endeavour to make these changes in the coming month and send through an updated budget for consideration over email.

Membership update

We have been delayed in running our renewals process as a result of the changes to the new website and CRM system. These have been resolved and the process has started, but we're unable to provide up to date membership figures. Please see the latest figures we have (these are the same from the June 2024 meeting).

Membership level	March 2024	May 2024
Small and specialist	45	44
Tier 1 organisation	32	31
Tier 2 organisation	58	58
Tier 3 organisation	43	43
Additional member	401	425
International organisation	10	10
International additional member	25	25
Less than 50% HE organisation	0	0
Corporate organisation	4	4
Corporate additional member	8	7
Individual member	4	5
Non-profit organisation	3	3
Non-profit additional member	0	1
Student member	2	2
Total organisations	195	193
Total members	892	917

These organisations have left the membership:

- Royal Academy of Music (Small and specialist)
- University College Birmingham (Tier 1)

2023/24 CPD programme feedback

The CPD feedback produced at the meeting in June has been updated to include feedback from the National Conference.

2024/25 CPD programme draft

A proposed programme for the 2024/25 events, based on previous Executive discussions, has been developed to be reviewed and agreed.

Communications activity update

To implement an effective communications strategy, we hired a consulting agency Red Pencil (RP) to analyse our online presence. The agency provided an in-depth analysis of the organisation's online presence, compared it to our peers within the sector, and offered recommendations. RP has suggested improvements for our strategic plan and online presence. We've taken their recommendations into consideration for the launch of our new website and the release of our 2025 to 2030 strategic plan. RP also provided recommendations for our social media presence, which included:

1. Focusing our efforts on social media platforms that we find most useful, depending on our resources (using Twitter and LinkedIn in March 2024).
2. Engaging in more conversations with our audience.
3. Creating a messaging calendar with a great spread of content.

1: Focusing our efforts on specific social media platforms

Initially, we evaluated which social media platforms to use going forward. The team decided to use LinkedIn as our sole social media platform. Being an employment-focused platform, it's suitable for updating our followers on sector news, events, career development, and more. In contrast, X (Twitter), which is mostly used for short and opinionated content, doesn't align with AMOSSHE's online voice positioning.

Our efforts on LinkedIn have increased, and we've started tracking our monthly analytics to analyse our progress. Below, you can find a table with LinkedIn analytics for the past six months.

LinkedIn Reporting Template						
	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	May 2024	June 2024
Content						
Posts	0	3	5	7	10	16
Impressions	137	173	1,659	1,990	3,311	11,039
Comments	0	0	2	0	0	19
Reposts	0	0	1	1	8	9
Reactions	0	1	27	31	48	391
Engagement rate	0.00%	0.72%	13%	10%	13.13%	55%
Pages						
Unique visitors	65	155	88	57	78	259
Unique views	30	39	1,068	1,355	1,821	3,941
Page views	130	443	248	142	163	560
Following						
New followers	33	56	22	24	50	115
Total followers	-	-	-	**1,407**	**1,457**	**1,572**

Impression: An impression is counted when your content is displayed or seen by a user on their LinkedIn page, regardless of whether they engaged with it or not.

Engagement rate: We've had to rethink our formula for measuring engagement, as some of the traditional metrics used don't always accurately reflect growth. Each item was weighted in order of considered impact.

Analysis summary:

- Impressions increased significantly each month, with a notable spike in June. This indicates growing visibility and reach.
- The increase in the number of posts each month is positively correlated with the rise in impressions, reactions, comments, and engagement rate, suggesting that more frequent posting leads to higher engagement.
- The steady increase in new and total followers indicates successful growth in the page's audience.
- The unique views and visitors metrics show that not only is the content reaching more people, but it's also encouraging them to explore the company page further.
- There was a dip in engagement in April due to the lack of comments on our content that month. It's important to create content that pushes our audience to comment.

2: Engaging in more conversations with our audience to share ideas and inspire

RP recommended that we engage in more conversations with our audience. With the recent hiring of Em and JJB, we aim to develop more in-house research, create key messages on hot topics, and develop targeted communications campaigns. Once published, our in-house research will be a good conversation driver with our members and the rest of the sector. Key messages will align with the organisation's priorities. Selected topics will be finalised by the Executive Committee, after which the Policy group will determine AMOSSHE's positioning. Once approved, BP, EM, and JJB will collaborate on drafting key messages to firmly establish AMOSSHE as a leading voice within the sector. Our initial communications campaigns will likely focus on encouraging members to use our new membership platform, which offers enhanced networking features, professional development resources, and exclusive sector insights.

3: Creating a messaging calendar with a great spread of content

In March, the communications team introduced a content calendar. Every month, we plan our content calendar to strategically schedule content that may interest our members. The content calendar includes our different communication channels and audiences, as well as a calendar for diversity and accessibility-related national dates / events (for example Disability Pride Month, Loneliness Awareness Week). We introduced responses to these national dates because RP recommended highlighting events that inspire people to share their stories. Since introducing the content calendar, we've published a variety of content, including AMOSSHE events, sector news, partner content, and more. The calendar has proven to be a valuable planning tool, allowing us to space out content effectively, and we plan to continue using it.

Risk Register review

All sub-risks from the sheet can be viewed by clicking on the names within the overview sheet. A few things to note:

- A small review has taken place on some of the risks recently but a more through review by EB and JB will take place in the coming months to make more explicit links to the impact the additional mitigation factors have on the overall risk, we will also seek to ensure consistency and refining of language throughout the document.
- In the coming two months we will need to refine our operational risks when the new website goes live as this changes a number of processes within the office and therefore who is responsible for some of these. Once this is live and updated JB and EB will review the document to ensure these are accounted for within the risk level. At the present time we are not suggesting a change to the risk level for these operational factors within the office.

We welcome a conversation on the content of the risk register and the associated risk level based on these.

AMOSSHE SWOT analysis summary

Proposed outcomes:
- To revisit the SWOT structure and agree any changes to the location of items listed
- Discuss and agree why these have changed and consider the impact for future conversations around our strategy actions

In July 2023 residential AMOSSHE executive members produced the below SWOT analysis on the organisation. For this session AMOSSHE will review the below, move any items that have changed since last year and review our progress on the opportunities and challenges in particular to ensure that anything discussed is incorporated into the actions for the year ahead.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Member-led organisation	**Diversity and inclusion**
• Representing all four UK nations	• Lack of representation of diverse demographic attendees and institutions at conferences
• Broad membership community	• Supporting minority groups within the membership to network
• Feeling of connection through Jiscmail, engagement and collegiate approach	• Diversity of the membership / Executive in terms of personal characteristics, and we don't know enough
• Members welcome the opportunity to shape AMOSSHEs work	• English issues and policies swamp / outweigh home nations
• Institutional membership mandates to represent sector	• Representation from the home nations is ad hoc
Networking	**Communications**
• Members have the opportunity to network with each other through our events, conferences, Jiscmail and more	• Lack of communications plan impacting members' understanding and perceptions of AMOSSHE's positioning and policy
• Expertise and experience across a broad range of Student Services	• It's not clear that we can support members' professional development
• Members' influence and position	• Lower "brand awareness" – not all HEI people have heard of AMOSSHE, or its pronunciation, within the membership but also in the wider sector
• Members' understanding of an institution's strategy and reputation alongside the operational understanding of issues and challenges	
CPD programme	**Understanding our members**
• Focused on specific topics that members need	• What do we mean by member?
• Our connections with expertise across the sector and beyond helps us find CPD speakers	• We don't understand our members enough through data
• Competitive pricing / value for money	• We're not using CPD feedback data enough / effectively
Values-led	**Resources**
• Strong values led approach	• Limited resources compared to some other organisations
Resources	**Student voice and engagement**
• Committed Executive members	• No relationship with NUS
• Good National Office team	• Students' understanding of Student Services
• Good relationship between National Office and Executive team, which positions us well to collaborate / reshape strategy	
• Financially sound and sustainable	

Opportunities	Threats
Income	**Resources**
• Income generation through internationalisation and consultancy, including training sessions for teams at HEIs rather than conferences • Income generation via sponsorship at events • Grow our income for re-investment • Grow income from sponsors	• Inflation costs (venue hire, conferences leading to less representation at events and impact on budget) • Cuts to institutional budgets impacting members' ability to engage with events (particularly small institutions) • Capacity of Executive and succession planning (not creating an Executive that we can't replicate in terms of demands on Executive and/or replicate the skills currently used by Executive (Chair in particular)
Communication	**Sector policy**
• Communicate more effectively what we ARE doing and set the expectation of what we CAN do • Get professional advice on how to get our voice heard • Develop a high-impact internal and external communications strategy to promote our 'brand' and improve understanding of what AMOSSHE represents	• Student Support Champion • Universities UK de-prioritising mental health agenda and delegating tasks to AMOSSHE • "Shadow groups" • Becoming a lightning rod for issues around 'duty of care' and seen as the resistors • University Mental Health Charter programme risks duplication of some of our networking/sharing good practice activities
Support for member groups	
• Early career CPD • Encourage aspiring managers to engage • Provide introductions to HE Student Services • Bring forward the voice of the practitioner more • Look into potential membership groups not aligned to region, for example specialist provider networks • Strengthen regional groups • Develop ways for minority groups within the membership to network	
External networking	
• Student reference group / panel • Engagement with students' unions • Opportunity to influence the world, working with international universities that have been interested in events, learning and influence, leading institutions to be better / professionalise • Learn from other countries as well for best practise • Do more to support members with internationalisation, (for example, joint CPD with sector partners like UKCISA, other international organisations) • Engagement with peer associations, including shared services for members (for example, joint events) • Work with Student Minds to have real impact on national agendas • Carefully and strategically position AMOSSHE given Universities UK's de-prioritisation of mental health • Replace Universities UK as a major policy developer / influencer in relation to student support	

Broader focus

- Address issues other than mental health in order to support our wider membership
- Use online CPD to help address niche issues
- Align with Sustainable Development Goals, to be part of an international movement
- Growth and expansion and involvement in important issues

Member engagement / development

- Involve our members more in our work
- Help members to develop their professional recognition and progression

AMOSSHE Strategy member feedback

Proposed outcomes from the session
- To be refreshed on the strategy plan
- To consider the feedback for consultation on the strategy session tomorrow to ensure we are incorporating appropriate feedback into our actions.

We asked via the national conference and online for feedback generally for the strategy but also specifically on the aims of the strategy. Below is a summary of the feedback received.

Influence our sector

- Sector benchmarking to influence local/institutional/investment and development
- Final point (on collective expertise) brings us back to our purpose, supporting students!
- Work to prompt respect of professional services across the sector (not 'non-academic')
- Welcome the reference to research informed practice – supports the significant strength of student services provision
- "you said, we did" to show progress on policy to investment conversations
- Guidance on how to evidence 'success' in student support vs mental health/therapeutic services
- Use collective influence to shape policy and practice
- Identifying the key priorities
- Measuring and profiling the impact of student services
- AMOSSHE to do a university roadshow?
- Influence on how we provide leadership in the sector?
- Actively and methodically engage in horizon scanning
- There could be more to help frame the collective values of AMOSSHE for individual members, eg NASPA. Better articulate why SA pros should join/participate - a clearer direct 'hook

Cultivate excellence

- Professional mentoring from executive members
- Look further afield for inspiration (international, other part of HE and other sectors)
- Mentoring opportunities (matching experienced leaders with those new to the sector)
- Mentoring program for colleagues at different career stages
- Micro/Macro credentials for engaging in CPD activity
- Facilitate more online sharing events/ presentations from members
- Advanced notice of topics for the Monday member sessions as often booked when topics announced but sometimes too late to attend
- Coordinate shared training events on universal topics e.g. investigation training
- Levels of training or mentorship coaching opportunities within the membership
- Like reference to 'ambition' sense of future proofing appetite for change

- Good to include all members but is it unrealistic? Maybe create an overall number for consideration?
- Mentoring to increase ethnic diversity I senior leadership
- Even more workshops with sector organisations
- Raise profile of importance of students services and the value teams bring

Empower our community

- Alumni help and support (mentoring and professional development support)
- Some services need more help getting recognition than others
- Collaborate with other sector bodies (ARC/EFYE/AGCAS)
- Being able to relate and network with colleagues from a variety of institutions (size, type etc)
- Examples of good practice, lessons learnt, skills exchange
- Work to strengthen our parity with academic colleagues
- Provide opportunities for sharing best practice
- Responsive training to student issues and trends (affordable and accessible)
- Working groups to locally address shared issues with best practice
- Create resources that can be utilised as 'evidence' and sources of internal credibility
- Chance to influence AMOSSHE HE's representation at key bodies such as MHTF and DSA
- Professional accreditation (FHEA, SFHEA, PFHEA)
- Finances are very tough, consider value of AMOSSHE and the audience
- Would be empowering to support recognition through celebrations such as AMOSSHE awards
- Focus on regional networks
- Appreciate this is 'national', but we know how much can be achieved via regional/nation collaboration - feels missing

General feedback

- Aims resonate, but wonder if we could be more deliberate/explicit about values

Workshop: Establishing AMOSSHE priorities

Workshop outline

Time	Description	Policy group lead	Notes
10 mins	Introduction of the document	AS	Introduction to the document, structure and aims for the session.
20 mins	Discussion of the proposed priority topics in groups.	AS; SLi; SS	Executive will be split into three groups with a policy advisory group member leading each group. Each group should discuss what should be included for the top-priority stakeholders and AMOSSHE statement.
20 mins	Feedback and decision on organisational priorities.	SS	Group to feedback on discussions and establish 2-4 priorities including key messaging and stakeholders we wish to influence.

Proposed outcomes

At the end of the workshop with the Executive committee, we will have:

- Established and ordered which topic areas should inform our organisational priorities for the 2024-25 academic year
- Collated what work is already being done by AMOSSHE in these areas including across the devolved nations
- Identified the top priority stakeholders we wish to influence in regards to our expertise in the sector
- Established the key points to be made in our external organisational statements to identified stakeholders

Guide to the document

This paper is a **working document** which outlines topic areas which have been established by the Policy Advisory Executive group as potential key priorities for AMOSSHE members for the upcoming academic year.

All topic areas

- [Effectively supporting students with mental health conditions](#)
- [Duty of care including anticipatory adjustments](#)
- [Effectively supporting students with a disability](#)
- [Gender-based violence and sexual misconduct](#)
- [Campus relations](#)
- [Improving student engagement and success](#)
- [Graduate outcomes and careers](#)
- [International student experience](#)
- [Data analytics](#)

- [Using AI in Student Services](#)
- [The cost of student living](#)
- [Student housing](#)
- [Supporting staff](#)

Many of these topic areas will overlap and therefore whilst these have been separated for the purposes of this paper for discussion, there is an acknowledgement that some of the key challenges, how we are currently tackling a particular issue or the top-priority stakeholders we wish to influence will be similar across multiple topic areas noted in this paper.

For each topic, we have provided the following information:

- Why it is an important topic for AMOSSHE
- Key challenges surrounding this topic area
- How AMOSSHE are currently tackling the issue
- Top-priority stakeholders we wish to influence in this topic area
- our AMOSSHE statement

Proposed priority areas

We propose that we should decide **no more than four priority areas** for AMOSSHE to influence key stakeholders in the sector. We suggest the following two as **key priority areas**:

- [Effectively supporting students with mental health conditions](#)
- [Duty of care including anticipatory adjustments](#)

The following three topics are **potential priority areas** in need of further discussion:

- [The cost of student living](#)
- [Effectively supporting students with a disability](#)
- [Campus relations](#)

Where items are highlighted in yellow in the document, this is where we particularly require input during the workshop. **This is only required for the areas we decide are key priority areas.**

Summary of key topics

Student wellbeing

Effectively supporting students with mental health conditions

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

Supporting students' mental health and wellbeing is acknowledged to be the responsibility of the whole institution[15]. However, it is Student Services where staff dedicated to support the mental health of students (e.g. mental health advisors, counselling services) are situated. These staff members are often tasked with connecting and coordinating other relevant staff members (e.g. academic tutors, accommodation wardens) to ensure that the student is receiving adequate support.

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[15] Student Minds. (2024). The Student Mental Health Manifesto. Retrieved July 3, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/Ij2Fs

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

The 2023 UCAS application cycle saw the number of students declaring a mental health condition on entry to university as having increased by 63% in a single academic year[16]. A number of mental health conditions fall under the Equality Act 2010 which means that Student Services have a legal duty to ensure students with a mental health condition receive the appropriate support.

It is widely acknowledged that the HE sector is experiencing extreme challenges to funding[17] with Student Services no exception to this. Anecdotally, student services members have shared in recent members meetings across all nations that they are having to reduce and consolidate resources within teams to offer a minimum level of service amidst funding challenges.

How are we currently tackling this issue?

- AMOSSHE are represented on HEMHIIT main taskforce and in a number of the sub-groups (e.g. analytics, compassionate comms, professionalisation of services)
- AMOSSHE have previously worked with Student Minds on the University Mental Health Charter
- AMOSSHE are working with Scottish government on their New Student Mental Health Plan
- AMOSSHE members share best practice through CPD events and participating in our collaborative meeting spaces (e.g. members meetings, regional leads meetings)

Devolved nations input needed.

Top-priority stakeholders

- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

AMOSSHE Statement for top-priority stakeholders

Ideas for statement:

- AMOSSHE does not advocate for the University Mental Health Charter to be mandatory, instead having providers be accountable and consistent in their approach to student mental health
- Any legislation towards student mental health should consider the appropriateness for the diversity of institutions in the sector, and the wide demographic of students these reach

[Return to summary of key topics](#)

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[16] UCAS. (2023). Highest number of students sharing disability and mental health conditions secure place at university. Retrieved July 4, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/Pf5Pz

[17] OfS. (2024). Navigating financial challenges in higher education. Retrieved July 4, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/lgPq1

Duty of care including anticipatory adjustments

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

AMOSSHE is committed to supporting the welfare and wellbeing of their students and staff. Universities are considered to have a general 'duty of care' in which they are responsible to deliver education services whilst protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of their students. Student Services are a key part of any university in relation to supporting students in terms of their safety and wellbeing during their time at university.

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

The phrase 'duty of care' holds ambiguity in its sector implications. Whilst previously noted that the Department of Education consider universities as having a general duty of care to its students[18], there has been substantial discussion as to the extent to which this should be acted upon by institutions and what constitutes the reasonable steps that universities should take in which to avoid injury and harm (mental and physical) to students. Particular organisations such as the LEARN network advocate for a statutory duty of care to be adopted by universities. AMOSSHE published their position on this matter in 2023[19] stating that as an organisation we do not believe that an additional legal statutory duty of care is the right approach for embedding the wider improvements identified by bereaved families and the LEARN network. Rather, as an organisation we feel that attention should be focused on further funding to the NHS to support student mental health and for facilitating a whole-institution approach to student health and wellbeing.

Separate to the debates around having a statutory duty of care is the legal implications of the responsibility that universities have around duty of care for its students. This has come under particular scrutiny following the case of Natasha Abrahart who sadly died by suicide in 2018, and the consequential legal case where the parents of Natasha successfully sued the University of Bristol in 2022 for the breach of the Equality Act 2010. The University of Bristol appealed this ruling and the case was taken to the High Court at the end of 2023. The Equality and Human Rights Commission were given permission to intervene in this legal case to offer fair and impartial advice during the trial. The advice to providers were presented to members at the National Conference 2024 and are now published[20]. We have provided a short summary of the advice available on our webpage[21].

How are we currently tackling this issue?

- AMOSSHE helped develop the Universities UK Suicide Safer framework which it has supported members to embed in their institutions regarding sharing information with trusted contacts and postvention approaches

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[18] Lewis, J & Bolton, P. (2023). Student mental health in England: Statistics, policy and guidance. Research Briefing. House of Commons Library. Retrieved 4th July, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/qgrFs

[19] AMOSSHE. (2023). AMOSSHE's position on a proposed additional statutory duty of care. Published June 2, 2023. Retrieved 4th July, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/MXkDb

[20] EHRC. (2024). Advice note for the higher education sector from the legal case of University of Bristol vs Abrahart. Retrieved July 10, 2024, from https://t.ly/lL_NN

[21] AMOSSHE. (2024). Advice note from the legal case of University of Bristol vs Abrahart: guidance summary. Retrieved July 11, 2024, from https://amosshe.org.uk/disability-sector-updates/13380692

- AMOSSHE are represented on HEMHIIT main taskforce and in a number of the sub-groups. The taskforce was originally born out of the Parliamentary debate calling for the creation of a statutory duty of care
- Hosted EHRC at the National Conference to share the note for learning with members following the legal case of Abrahart v Bristol

Devolved nations input needed.

Top-priority stakeholders
- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

Statement for top-priority stakeholders
Ideas for statement:

- There should not be a statutory duty of care
- Instead should work with organisations (e.g. EHRC) to implement information, advice and guidance where appropriate

Return to summary of key topics

Effectively supporting students with a disability

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

Disabled students should be identified in an institutions' access and participation plans to ensure that students irrespective of their disability are supported to access, succeed in and progress from higher education[22]. Whilst this should be a whole-institution approach, this heavily relies on coordination by staff in Disability Services and the wider Student Services who identify and inform relevant staff across the institution (e.g. academic tutors, accommodation wardens) regarding the support necessary to fulfil a particular students' accessibility needs. This is in addition to the other services linked to disability support that are often found within the student services umbrella, such as non-medical help and assistive technology.

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

Most recently the Disabled Students' Commission[23] highlighted key challenge areas in need of improvement to disabled students' experiences in Higher Education. In their published commitment, it calls for the sector to:

- improve consistency in support availability across university departments
- provide a choice of academic practices (teaching, learning and assessment) that accommodate disabled students' individual requirements

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[22] OfS. (2024). Disabled students. Retrieved July 4, 2024, from https://t.ly/2vKx-

[23] Disabled Students Commission. (2023). Annual Report 2022-2023: Enhancing the disabled student experience. Retrieved 4th July, 2024, from https://t.ly/7iqFE

- communicate clearly with students throughout their degree, including where there will may be changes to the support they receive
- ensure disability support is in place for the start of their studies, or interim support is employed if waiting for a diagnosis

The latter challenge links to where universities may have to put in adjustments to pre-empt an official diagnosis of a disability and/or mental health condition. This links to duty of care and the extent to which reasonable adjustments should be put in place to negate this. This topic also links to other groups such as international students, a group of students that are often less likely to declare having a disability to their institution which can thus impact their experience and general wellbeing whilst at university.

The Department for Education launched a call for evidence to help consider how to improve how non-medical help provision is funded through DSA for disabled students in Higher Education[24]. This closed on 3rd July 2024, with the results of this likely to influence our approach to this challenge.

How are we currently tackling this issue?
- AMOSSHE were represented on the Disabled Students' Commission in which part of their work was to launch the Disabled Student Commitment
- At the June 2024 AMOSSHE Scotland Leads meeting, AdvanceHE staff presented the Disabled Student Commitment to work with members to understand how it could be implemented within Scotland's HE landscape
- AMOSSHE continues to be represented on the Student Loans Company Disabled Student Stakeholder group

Devolved nations input needed.

Top-priority stakeholders
- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

Statement for top-priority stakeholders
TBC

Return to summary of key topics

Gender-based violence and sexual misconduct

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?
Universities have a duty to protect its staff and students from physical and mental harm. It is therefore the responsibility of all universities to develop and implement systems, policies and

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[24] Department of Education. Improving non-medical help for disabled students in higher education: Government call for evidence. Retrieved July 5th, 2024, from https://t.ly/QJ6xe

procedures in order to respond to incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct that take place[25]. Within universities, Student Services staff are often the first port of call for students who report sexual violence and misconduct through university reporting tools, as well as managing the delivery of bystander training to staff and students.

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

Impending new conditions of registration from the OfS in relation to harassment and sexual misconduct are due to be published in July 2024 after the general election. This is likely to increase the regulatory burden on institutions, in addition to additional staff time and resource to adequately read and respond to the requirements in a time where members are already highlighting experiencing a strain on their resources. Smaller institutions in particular may struggle to have the appropriate resources (staff time, technological systems) to put in place necessary infrastructure where they have less staff to devote to this area. AMOSSHE responded to the OfS consultation on this work[26], also highlighting that a 'one size fits all' approach would not work given the diversity of institutions within the sector.

As an organisation that works across devolved nations, any new requirements from the OfS do not apply to providers outside of the English context. Therefore whilst relevant and likely to have some overlap, we will also need to consolidate sexual misconduct and harassment guidance in each of the devolved nations.

How are we currently tackling this issue?

- AMOSSHE responded to the OfS 2023 consultation on the proposed new conditions of registration for sexual harassment and misconduct
- AMOSSHE was represented at the Policy Foresight conference in December 2023 to discuss with sector leaders, researchers and practitioners the OfS consultation on regulating harassment and sexual misconduct.
- As an organisation we will be taking note of the conditions of registration that are due to be published by the OfS in July 2024 and how best to disseminate this to members. OfS previously stated they were open to hosting a webinar for AMOSSHE members regarding these outcomes which we will look to schedule as soon as possible

Devolved nations input needed.

Top-priority stakeholders

This may be more of an internal priority to publish IAG for the sector once the conditions of registration are published.

- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

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[25] OfS. (2023). Prevent and address harassment and sexual misconduct. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://t.ly/WHW-L

[26] AMOSSHE. (2023). Our response to the Office for Students proposals for regulating sexual misconduct and harassment. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://rb.gy/3cz5rj

Supporting diverse student groups

Campus relations

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

Protests on campus over a range of EDI topics, most recently in relation to gender politics[27] and the conflict in the Middle East[28] has meant that university staff are increasingly reporting involvement in mediating campus relations amongst both students and staff involved. In recent regional and members' meetings, staff have discussed how they have been supporting those students involved in the pro-Palestine encampments and Jewish student communities and where the university has mediated conversations with senior staff (where applicable).

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

The challenges around managing campus relations can be broadly split into two main groups: supporting students, and supporting staff. Supporting all students affected in what is an extremely complex and emotionally-charged situation can be challenging for staff members. For example, in respect to the current conflict in the Middle East staff are dealing with a rise in antisemitism cases[29] whilst simultaneously supporting Palestinian students whose family and friends may be affected.

Members are having to balance campus safety in relation to the encampments whilst respecting students' freedom of expression[30]. Anecdotally members have highlighted how alumni, trade unions and external groups are also actively participating in encampments and other student-led protests, which makes it increasingly difficult to establish roles and responsibilities of Student Service members in these contexts.

The previous government encouraged universities to sign up to the IHRA definition of antisemitism and had made noticeable traction, but it remains unclear how this will interact with the recently legislated Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) bill. It can also be unclear where the Prevent duty of universities falls within this conflict.

Managers and Heads of Departments need to be able to support their staff teams to not only ensure they are able to provide the appropriate student support as noted above, but also manage the wellbeing of staff if affected. Relatedly, there may be conflicts between staff on the above issues which managers may need to mediate in order to maintain team relations.

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[27] For example, Carrell, S & Brooks, L. (2023). Edinburgh University tries to defuse row after trans rights protests over film. The Guardian, 12 May 2023. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://rb.gy/nhpf0z

[28] Adams, R & Abdul, G. (2024). Gaza protest camps at UK universities wind down amid legal action. The Guardian, 7 July 2024. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://rb.gy/yg9fg8

[29] Cowan, M & Kotecha, S. (2023). Jewish students at UK universities 'deeply anxious', union warns. BBC News, 8 November 2023. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-67350003

[30] Whitten, S. (2024). Gaza campus protests: what are students' free speech rights and what can universities do? The Conversation, 10 May 2024. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://rb.gy/e25a3e

- AMOSSHE have previously been represented on UUKs Israel-Gaza Group.

Devolved nations input needed.

Top-priority stakeholders
- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

AMOSSHE Statement for top-priority stakeholders
TBC

Improving student engagement and success

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

Improving student engagement and success of students is not a new priority for universities, but there has been a notable shift in the last decade from a focus solely on improving access to university to also consider how universities can improve the progression and success of its students, and in particular those from underrepresented backgrounds[31].

In England, the OfS Equality of Opportunity Register[32] has identified a series of risks to students' access, success and progression at university and the groups these are likely to impact. The identified risks of mental health (risk 8), cost pressures (risk 10), and access to resources such as accommodation (risk 11) are all areas which are a key remit of Student Services in Higher Education.

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

It is widely acknowledged that a whole-institution approach is necessary to improve student engagement and success[33]. Practically speaking this can be difficult, with challenges noted including liaising with staff across the institution and knowing what work is already being done across the organisation in order to avoid replication and/or establish a joined-up approach to a particular issue across departments.

Spending related to the Access and Participation Plan (APP) is almost exclusively concentrated in access and outreach initiatives as opposed to on-course support and general student experience. This means that Student Services often have minimal resource in order to tackle supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds in HE.

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[31] HEPI. (2022). Giving widening access a real reboot. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://rb.gy/hp1ggi

[32] OfS. (2024). Equality of Opportunity Risk Register. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/XW0hW

[33] Thomas, L. (2024). What is a whole provider approach to widening access and student success? WonkHE. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/73LWn

How are we currently tackling this issue?
- ==AMOSSHE recently attended a UUK roundtable on improving social mobility==

==Devolved nations input needed.==

Top-priority stakeholders
- ==Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)==
- ==Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)==
- ==Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)==
- ==Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)==

AMOSSHE Statement for top-priority stakeholders
==TBC==

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Graduate outcomes and careers

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

All universities have a duty to ensure students from any background are able to succeed in, and then later progress from, university into employment or further study[34]. Careers services are a key service which seeks to support students in this transition and are often included in the portfolio for Heads of Student Services.

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

Whilst there was initially talk from the previous Conservative government to reduce and/or remove graduate visas for international students studying in the UK[35], this was not made into law prior to the General Election and has, at the time of writing, not been prioritised for change by the current Labour government. WonkHE have also highlighted high levels of dissatisfaction amongst particularly international PGT students with the levels of careers support they require to enter into the job market after their course[36]. Postgraduate research students are another group of students who are highlighted as having dissatisfaction with their graduate career prospects due to a decrease in availability of entry-level academic jobs, lack of opportunities for relevant work experience on-course and a lack of support for those looking for careers outside the sector[37].

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[34] OfS. (2024). The regulatory framework for higher education. Retrieved July 9, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/mTNkC

[35] Gov.uk. (2024). New measures to tackle student visa abuse. News story, 23 May 2024. Retrieved July 9, 2024, from https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-measures-to-tackle-student-visa-abuse

[36] Dickinson, J. (2024). Are international students getting the careers support they need? WonkHE, 16 June 2024. Retrieved July 9, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/DYWLT

[37] Dickinson, J. (2023). The voice of PGRs is barely audible in UKRI's "new deal". WonkHE, 27 September, 2023. Retrieved July 15, 2024, from https://wonkhe.com/wonk-corner/the-voice-of-pgrs-is-barely-audible-in-ukris-new-deal/

In England, the OfS Equality of Opportunity Register[38] identified the risk of progression from higher education (risk 12) for particular student groups, namely students from low-income backgrounds, care-experienced and estranged students, students from minority ethnic groups including GRT, Black and Asian students, disabled students and students with a mental health condition. Consequently this overlaps with other area priorities (supporting students with mental health conditions, supporting students with a disability) already outlined in this document.

How are we currently tackling this issue?
- TBC

Top-priority stakeholders
- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

AMOSSHE Statement for top-priority stakeholders
TBC

Return to summary of key topics

International student experience
Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?
International students form around a fifth of the current undergraduate population and just over half of the postgraduate student population in England[39]. In devolved nations international students are also represented in the general student population, ranging from a fifth of the overall student population in Northern Ireland[40] to a third of the overall student population in Scotland.[41]

International students face a specific set of challenges which AMOSSHE members will likely be the first port of call in which to respond given the remit of Student Services, further outlined below.

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[38] OfS. (2024). Equality of Opportunity Risk Register. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/QzAnn

[39] HESA. (2022). HE student enrolments by level of study, mode of study and domicile 2020/21. Retrieved July 9, 2024, from https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/sb262/figure-8

[40] Department for the Economy. (2023). Department for the Economy publishes Higher Education statistics. Retrieved July 9, 2023, from https://tinyurl.com/ypmusjja

[41] British Council. (2024). 8 reasons why you should study in Scotland. Retrieved July 9, 2024, from https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/blog/top-reasons-to-study-in-scotland-uk-international-student

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

In the last couple of years, UK government has increasingly been described as having a 'hostile' attitude towards international students[42]. This was particularly notable in discussions around the graduate visa route as a way to reduce and/or remove graduate visas for international students studying in the UK in order to curb migration figures[43]. However this was not made into law prior to the General Election and has, at the time of writing, not been prioritised for change by the current Labour government.

The sector has recently attempted to diversify the international student market from China[44]. However, this relies on the agility of the university infrastructure and support arrangements to cope with this diversification of student body. For example, a more diverse international student body alters the accommodation market in the type and price point of accommodation required by this student group.

In respect to general international student experience, the Office for Students in partnership with UKCISA and the Department for Education commissioned a recent report to investigate three areas of international student experience: use of well-being and wider support services, the impact of COVID-19 and work done to prevent and tackle harassment and sexual misconduct[45]. Particularly noted is how practical issues associated with accommodation and finances could impact international students' wellbeing. A lot of the recommendations for improving student experience in these areas however are not necessarily international student-specific, such as having a whole-institution approach to key issues and providing mandatory consent modules for all students.

How are we currently tackling this issue?
-   UKCISA remain our sector friends and continue to update us regarding the landscape of international student experience

Top-priority stakeholders
-   Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
-   Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
-   Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
-   Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

AMOSSHE Statement for top-priority stakeholders
TBC

[Return to summary of key topics](#)

[42] Spence, M. (2024). The public does not share government hostility to international students. Financial Times, 18 May 2024. Retrieved July 9, 2024, from https://tinyurl.com/2wumu7u8

[43] Gov.uk. (2024). New measures to tackle student visa abuse. News story, 23 May 2024. Retrieved July 9, 2024, from https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-measures-to-tackle-student-visa-abuse

[44] Cannings, J., Halterbeck, M & Conlon, G. (2023). The benefits and costs of international higher education students to the UK economy. May 2023. Retrieved July 15, 2024, from https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Full-Report-Benefits-and-costs-of-international-students.pdf

[45] Pagliarello, M et al. (2023). Working in partnership to improve international student integration and experience. LSE, 16 January 2023. Retrieved July 9, 2024, from https://tinyurl.com/mvsx543x

Technology and student services

Data analytics

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

Data analytics are crucial for Student Services teams to be able to deliver a joined-up approach to student support. Where students have declared a disability and/or mental health condition on entry to university, it allows the relevant Student Services teams to have the information needed to put the relevant support in place for the student. Depending on the type of system, this can also enable cross-working with other relevant members of staff across the institution (e.g. student registry, academic tutors).

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

A student declaring a disability/mental health condition on entry does not automatically mean that the student is able to get their required support needs in place. This is because the data systems that for example the admissions teams use and have access to are often different to those which other teams use. Furthermore, different levels of data are shared with different staff groups depending on sensitivity which can result in a disjointed approach to data-sharing. Students may also prefer not to have this data declared on their record and instead access disability services without providing information that can track the intervention progress, subsequently being missed from intervention data.

Students may declare a disability after they have enrolled, and/or may declare a disability to another staff member outside of Student Services. In both instances, these rely on the staff member noting down the relevant information and sharing this to the relevant staff members in Student Services in order to for the appropriate support to be put in place. Additionally, small and specialist providers do not often have the financial and/or technological infrastructure to be able to have a 'one-stop shop' to data analytics if this has not already been established at their institution.

There has been some use of data analytics to track and evaluate the success of certain post-entry interventions to improve student wellbeing at university, however there is still much work to be done in the sector to understand what role this can play in wellbeing support and how this can be implemented across institutions[46].

How are we currently tackling this issue?

- AMOSSHE are represented on the data analytics working group of HEMHIIT

Top-priority stakeholders

- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

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[46] Summers, R. (2024). Learning analytics are a part of the 'what works' toolkit. WonkHE, 22 February 2024. Retrieved July 11, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/BaS9d

AMOSSHE Statement for top-priority stakeholders
<mark>TBC</mark>

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Using AI in Student Services

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

Artificial Intelligence is being increasingly used in the HE sector. This has gained particular notice through tools like ChatGPT and how this is used by students to generate academic essays[47] but also through ChatBots used by universities as a way to triage student requests[48]. Some AMOSSHE members have reported the latter used as part of their Student Services offer to support with triaging students to the appropriate support required.

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

There is currently little guidance and/or examples of best practice on the use of AI in HE specifically within a student services setting. General concerns around using AI in a university setting which could relate specifically to Student Services include that systems can inherit biases through training data and a reduction of accountability given more emphasis placed on an algorithm model[49].

How are we currently tackling this issue?
- <mark>TBC</mark>

Top-priority stakeholders
- <mark>Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)</mark>
- <mark>Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)</mark>
- <mark>Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)</mark>
- <mark>Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)</mark>

AMOSSHE Statement for top-priority stakeholders
<mark>TBC</mark>

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[47] Shea, E. (2024). Understanding the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Higher Education. HE Professional, 7 February 2024. Retrieved July 11, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/nEpa5

[48] Ellucian. (2024). How chatbots benefit higher ed. Retrieved July 11, 2024, from https://www.ellucian.com/blog/how-chatbots-benefit-higher-ed

[49] Leafe, D & Mercer, J. (2024). The AI revolution is transforming the student experience in higher education. NOUS, 7 February 2024. Retrieved July 11, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/lSiPH

Miscellaneous
The cost of student living
Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

The cost-of-living crisis has affected the entire UK population including university students. Supporting students is the responsibility of multiple teams located within Student Services. Student Funding Advice teams provide students with monetary financial advice and support, and Wellbeing teams support students where their financial situation may be impacting on their mental health and wellbeing. Where Careers departments fall within the remit of AMOSSHE members, they support students in finding local part-time work opportunities to help financially support their studies.

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

In England, student maintenance loans have not increased sufficiently with the cost of living[50]. This is combined with stagnant parental household income thresholds (where appropriate) which have not been changed since 2016 and therefore do not reflect this changing context[51].

Across England and devolved nations, students are now more than ever needing to use part-time employment as a way in which to fund their living costs[52]. Large proportions of students are also reporting their mental health and wellbeing worsening due to rising cost of living[53] and considering dropping out of their course as a result of financial difficulties[54][55].

How are we currently tackling this issue?
- AMOSSHE are represented on multiple groups hosted by the Student Loans Company. These include groups discussing bursaries, operations, disabled students, and vulnerable students
- We have previously worked with NASMA, including as part of their judging panel for their Student Money Advice Awards

Top-priority stakeholders
- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

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[50] ONS. (2023). Student voices: experiences of the rising costs of living. 6 September 2023. Retrieved 10 July, 2024, from https://tinyurl.com/2mda5ms5

[51] The Sutton Trust. (2024). General Election policy briefing: Reforming student maintenance. March 2024. Retrieved July 10, 2024, from https://tinyurl.com/mr4y68j3

[52] HEPI. (2024). Student academic experience survey 2024. HEPI, 13 June 2024. Retrieved 10 July, 2024, from https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2024/06/13/student-academic-experience-survey-2024/

[53] ONS. (2023). Cost of living and higher education students, England: 30 January to 13 February 2023. ONS, February 24, 2023. Retrieved July 10, 2024, from https://tinyurl.com/4h5nrc87

[54] NUS. (2023). Fighting for students: the cost of survival. Retrieved July 10, 2024, from https://tinyurl.com/ynb7y9v3

[55] NUS-USI. (2024). Cost of living report 2024. Retrieved July 10, 2024, from https://tinyurl.com/3hxpu33f

Student housing

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

Student housing during their time at university, both in terms of university-owned accommodation and managing relations with private landlords and the wider housing sector in the relevant towns and cities, usually falls within the remit of Student Services under the Accommodation service.

Accommodation staff are also often one of the first ports of calls for students who are in distress in university-owned student accommodation[56] and therefore with a key part to play in supporting a large majority of students' mental health and wellbeing whilst at university.

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

The last few years have seen the housing sector dealing with a greater number of students due to an increase in student numbers following the centre-assessed grading during COVID-19 and overall demographic increase in the number of 18 year olds in the general population[57]. Consequently, UK cities such as Durham, Glasgow and Bristol reported housing shortages in the city which meant students living further out of the city or commuting from home in order to study at their institution[58].

Meanwhile the Renters Reform Bill had ascended to the House of Lords but failed to be made into law prior to the dissolution of parliament in May 2024 for the General Election. Whilst the bill had initially promised to end fixed-term tenancies, AMOSSHE and sector friends had championed the need for appropriate caveats for the student housing market to ensure it was relevant to this group of renters. At the time of writing, the new Labour government have just announced the Renters' Rights Bill[59] which appears to incorporate previous iterations of the Renters Reform Bill (ending no-fault evictions, strengthening tenants' rights) however there is no mention of student renters at this time.

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[56] Student Minds. (2023). Student Minds: Putting student mental health first. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://www.studentminds.org.uk/uploads/3/7/8/4/3784584/our_impact_2022_-_2023.pdf

[57] Blakey, M. (2023). Accommodation shortages: are the odds stacked against students? HEPI, 29 August 2023. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://tinyurl.com/4ukx9m2z

[58] Jeffrys, B & Convery, N.J. (2023). University accommodation: 'I got into uni, but couldn't find anywhere to live'. BBC News, 29 August 2023. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-66591376

[59] The King's Speech. (2024). 18 July 2024. Retrieved July 19, 2024 from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6697f5c10808eaf43b50d18e/The_King_s_Speech_2024_background_briefing_notes.pdf

- AMOSSHE have previously worked with sector colleagues such as CUBO and Universities UK to continue to make the case for a student exemption to the ban on fixed-term tenancy agreements
- AMOSSHE is represented at the Living Black at University commission, although the focus of this commission is on racial issues, particularly for Black students, in student accommodation

Top-priority stakeholders

This may be more of an internal priority to publish IAG for the sector.

- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

AMOSSHE Statement for top-priority stakeholders

TBC

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Supporting staff

Why is this an important topic for AMOSSHE?

AMOSSHE is committed to supporting members, not only in sharing best practice to improve the experiences of the students they work with, but also in supporting the staff themselves.

What are the key challenges surrounding this topic?

It is well-documented that the HE sector has faced significant challenges over the last few years including the coronavirus pandemic, the current cost-of-living crisis and increasing financial pressures[60]. In some institutions this has manifested through staff redundancies and/or bans on recruitment[61].

Student services staff in particular have reported in members meetings increasing caseloads and the requirement to cut costs across portfolios where members are responsible for managing whole teams. More recently, campus relations have an added layer of complexity difficult for managers and heads of departments who need to be able to support their staff teams to not only ensure they are able to provide the appropriate student support, but also manage the wellbeing of staff if affected. This is particularly where there may be conflicts between staff on the above issues which managers may need to mediate in order to maintain team relations.

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[60] National Audit Office. (2022). Regulating the financial sustainability of higher education providers in England. Department for Education, 9 March 2022. Retrieved July 11, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/E5CR8

[61] Rhodes, D. (2024). Yorkshire and Lincolnshire unis' £107m bill for staff redundancies. BBC News, 1 June 2024. Retrieved July 11, 2024, from https://shorturl.at/dDgzY

How are we currently tackling this issue?

- AMOSSHE offer CPD to members on a wide range of topics, including professional development for staff which in the past has included staff wellbeing as a focus

Top-priority stakeholders

- Minister for Higher Education, England (Jacqui Smith)
- Minister for Higher and Further Education, Scotland (Graeme Dey)
- Cabinet Secretary for Education, Wales (Lynne Neagle)
- Minister for the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (Paul Givan)

AMOSSHE Statement for top-priority stakeholders

AMOSSHE have a network of members that we can canvas. Lots of different institutions, a really good base for representing diverse institutions, devolved nations, practitioners and managers.

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Strategy update

Executive residential meeting 2024

This paper outlines the practical implementation of the new strategy alongside suggested areas for implementation, taking into account feedback from members on our aims and through the development of the strategy workstream groups.

The proposed outcomes are to consider:

- Agree the structure for managing the operational aspects of the new strategy.
- What areas of work do we want to prioritise for the coming year.

Strategic enablers and living values

These are practically brought to life through a series of questions that will be asked when we seek to agree practical work is aligned with the strategy. The below table outlines the questions and which value or enabler they refer to. This is imperative to ensure we are living our values and producing work that is focussed around our strategy.

Value	Impactful	What is the purpose / impact of what we're doing, and how does it relate to our strategic aims?
Value	Collaborative	Who do we need to work with? Are we establishing strong connections and partnerships, with other stakeholders in the UK and abroad?
Value	Supportive	Are we engaging everyone in our community (considering diversity and wherever they are on their professional journey)?
Enabler	Using technology and data	Is what we're doing clearly informed by expertise / data / evidence / using the right technology to have the most effective impact?
Enabler	Sustainable (financial and environmental)	Are we being sustainable in what we're doing, both in terms of our own resources and protecting the planet's resources?
Enabler	Using data to measure impact	How are we measuring the impact of what we are doing?

Process for agreeing and implementing practical work within the strategy

Steps to implementation (once final strategy approval has taken place)

Initially the July residential in 2024 will be used to set and agree measures for success for the strategy based on our aims. These will be used within each workstream to ensure we are focussing on prioritising work that enables success. If we feel we need to change the measures this should be brought back to the executive for discussion. For the initial year each workstream is to consider existing work and work that was not completed in the previous strategy to see if they are still the right areas of work for the new strategic plan.

- Yearly review of the strategy directives at the July residential. This includes:
  - Review the success of the previous years agreed activity (including their alignment with the aims and vision).
  - Agreement to up-coming year activities based on feedback and evaluation through the strategy group.
  - Agreement for benchmarking measures to indicate improvement.
- Workstream groups leads established.
- Values and Enablers table used to evaluate the success of priorities and alignment to strategy.
- Each workstream will work to a template which will be used to indicate progress, this will be reported back to each executive meeting and used at the beginning of each workstream meeting to assess progress and next steps.

Workstreams and areas for implementation

Influence our sector workstream

Priority areas for implementation in 2024 to 2025

(cells in blue are the bullet points from the aim)

Influence the work of leaders and stakeholders in our sector and beyond to highlight the impact of Student Services	Use our community's voice to influence higher education policy and investment in Student Services	Use our collective expertise to develop and share practice that's informed by research and practical application to make a positive impact for our students
Stakeholder mapping – Evaluation and updating	Create effective methods for engaging members with relevant sector areas – For sharing expertise and experiences	Develop our research and benchmarking capabilities

Influence the work of leaders and stakeholders in our sector and beyond to highlight the impact of Student Services	Use our community's voice to influence higher education policy and investment in Student Services	Use our collective expertise to develop and share practice that's informed by research and practical application to make a positive impact for our students
Develop our key messages – And a plan for sharing them with relevant audiences		

Other potential areas of development

- Policy updates – Different ways of presenting, for example videos / conversations / podcasts / blogs on key issues topics – 'punchy' summary
- Reports / blogs – Share on social media – share with membership at events
- Policy / special interest topics
- Identify common narrative messages – About the impact of Student Services on student and institutional success
- Target sector press more actively – positive narrative of Student Services
- Promote benefits of AMOSSHE membership – Stall at events? Online intro? Member profiles? Highlight the range of activities / resources / CPD. Quick video on website explaining what AMOSSHE is, and benefits of engaging with us
- Decide how to promote new external development opportunities to members
- Decide on a review process to see how effective and beneficial our external development activities are for members and AMOSSHE

Empower our community workstream

Priority areas for implementation in 2024 to 2025

(cells in blue are the bullet points from the aim)

Create an environment where every member feels included and empowered to contribute their talents and perspectives	Create opportunities for everyone in our community to engage with each other and make an impact	Connect and collaborate with partners and influencers in the UK and around the world to inform and strengthen our community
Undertake a survey to capture the diversity of our membership – To understand how to best support and engage under-represented groups	Mentoring programme / buddy scheme	International partner development – Including knowledge exchange and joint activity to enhance the diversity of our resources
Eliminate Jiscmail – Move to a more fit for purpose / two-way based communications channel	Peer support groups – For example, for new members / safeguarding leads / communities of practice	Engage more with other member / mission organisations – To develop resources / CPD etc.

Create an environment where every member feels included and empowered to contribute their talents and perspectives	Create opportunities for everyone in our community to engage with each other and make an impact	Connect and collaborate with partners and influencers in the UK and around the world to inform and strengthen our community
Publish our new EDI policy – Link to member etiquette and sponsor engagement policies	Run online sessions on how members can get the most out of their membership	

Other potential areas of development

- Undertake research on sector data to understand different groups within the sector / membership – For example early career people, personal characteristics
- Create a database of people who can represent / speak – On behalf of AMOSSHE at events and meetings
- Engage different members – Including those who do not currently get involved, map their AMOSSHE journey / experience / offering
- Identify what members need from AMOSSHE
- Member confidence building – Safe space to celebrate / share, professional development, success profiles
- Tailor communications to align with 'stages' of Student Services and professional journey
- Engage potential members – Video intro to broadcast membership benefits, active campaigns at deadline times
- Networking – Enable networking in face-to-face events, and enable events outside of official AMOSSHE events
- Social gatherings – Such as pizza nights and coffee mornings (either face-to-face or online) – create a relaxed space for people to talk
- Create measurable targets to understand the impact of new and existing member networking opportunities
- Create a channel to update the membership about Executive positions, intentions and responses to emerging sector issues – For example, podcasts post-Executive meetings (target at stakeholders)
- Increase diversity on the Executive Committee
- Re-evaluate regional group structure – To generate further engagement
- Identify areas of activity / opinions – That a majority of members would agree with, which we can promote as areas of common narrative
- Monthly random connection – Get different people talking
- Engage AMOSSHE alumni – To encourage members (what did AMOSSHE ever do for me? Success profiles) / share expertise
- Attend and engage with international / national conferences and events

Cultivate excellence workstream

Priority areas for implementation in 2024 to 2025

(cells in blue are the bullet points from the aim)

Share and develop the tools, resources and encouragement to empower our community to excel, innovate and contribute	Provide experiences and opportunities that foster learning, skills enhancement and personal growth	Provide opportunities for everyone in our community to identify and enhance their personal skillset to make the most of their ambitions and abilities
Benchmarking / research – Promotion: public social media, share with associations, video / podcast of results	Research on different types of CPD areas for different types of members – Action learning sets, targeted sessions for different levels of member, masterclasses with associated partners, etc.	Professional Recognition and Career Development portal – Launch the website portal, provide case studies / personal stories

Other potential areas of development

- Enable member reflections – Including comments on CPD events, shared on LinkedIn, to benefit individuals. Informal recording to talk about an event someone attended (for example, quick one minute video) informal ways to communicate that can be tagged on our website easily
- Enable members to produce content – For newsletter / blog / web (would need framework)
- More active, dynamic podcasts, webinars and events
- Ask speakers at events to record short videos about their work
- Develop Student Services leaders to further their career
- Identify a series of outcomes from completed research and data analysis – To determine if these are providing a positive impact for members
- Bring in partners to member discussion groups – For example the Office for Students and other external voices, to lead member discussions and Q&As
- International membership organisations and international students' lived experience – Podcasts / case studies – promote to members
- Attend and engage with international / national conferences and events
- Engage more with other member / mission organisations – To develop resources / CPD etc.
- Promote AMOSSHE to students – To undertake research related to our areas of work
- Career development opportunities – Such as 'aspiring managers' attending the regional meetings or involve them to lead work overseen by the Executive / National Office