

LAUREN BINNING

MENTAL HEALTH & WELFARE CONVENOR



Hi! My name is Lauren, I'm a 3rd year Neuroscience student running for re-election of Mental Health and Welfare Convenor! I have loved my past two years with the committee, it has given me an insight into what students are so desperately looking for in Mental Health support, and leading the charge last year really opened my eyes to all the things we as a student community can do better. I want to use every bit of my experience to implement change, and amplify the student voice in things that work well and those that really don't.

Peer Support Groups - One of the main things students who are suffering with ill mental health feel is that there is no one around them to talk to about what they are going through that truly understand. People are always sent to counselling services or any other listening services for generic advice and that's not enough for some people. I want to start student support groups, lead by experienced consultants, dedicated to specific areas of mental health, like trauma, OCD, or any requested from students, where people can come along to talk about what they've been through with someone who understands and sympathises. A place to vent if you will, somewhere safe and welcoming.

Mental health first aid training - With mental health issues on the rise, more and more people are in and around ill mental health. To properly support friends and family through their thoughts and feelings, everyone should have access to a mental health first aid training, to be able to know what to say in delicate situations, or how to talk someone through a stressful spiral of thoughts. This kind of training can save lives, while improving your own mental health in the process.

These are only a few things I would like to achieve as convenor this year: my further plans include a Welfare Ball to celebrate individuality, and working with societies and local charities to take mental health awareness into all walks of life. Being a new committee, our aim is to raise awareness more than anything, but not at the expense of implementing real change. I'm under no illusions that I can fix the face of mental health, but I have the experience and knowledge, personal and otherwise, to give it a good go.