



AMOSSHE

The Student Services Organisation

Winter bulletin 2023

Understanding Student Services

UK higher education is a colourful place. Every provider is different in its aims and structure, as well as its locations and student demographic. **AMOSSHE** is a network of Student Services leaders across over 170 UK higher education provider organisations, and if there's one thing we understand as an association, it's that Student Services can be just as different from one organisation to another.

No two institutions have the same Student Services. The range of services provided, the policies and approaches, the support initiatives and interventions, how students access services, and the number of professional staff and budgets supporting them, are all wide and various.

That's why it's important to get an understanding of our members' work – what they're currently doing, what they're trying to achieve, what's working well and what needs more attention.

AMOSSHE is undertaking a series of member surveys to gather insights about our sector. We've already explored the scale and scope of some defined service areas (disability, mental health and wellbeing, careers and employability), and we're taking the pulse of our members' responses to emerging trends and topics (working relationships with the NHS, welcome and induction, the cost of living).

Our research is ongoing, and our findings will help our members work together, sharing learning and contributing to a common mission in all our many different ways.

AMOSSHE members can find all our sector research here:

[AMOSSHE member research](#)

Step **ZERO** technology, created by UniWellBeing, is a new generation of digital mental healthcare that builds a trusted therapeutic relationship with students.

Step **ZERO** delivers cost savings by acting as the first point of contact offering emotional and practical support, "stepping up" students to a human professional as necessary.

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Randstad: who we are.

We have an in-depth understanding of the Education sector at every level: Randstad UK supports disabled and disadvantaged students across primary, secondary, further and higher education - also providing employment opportunities for these students once they leave education.

Our division - Randstad Student Support - is the largest provider of disability support to Higher Education students in the UK. Over the last 20+ years, we have helped over 200,000 students achieve their true academic potential.

We understand the current challenges facing student services leaders.

We know that access to support services within higher education institutions increases year after year. This is coupled with ever-growing challenges around supporting those with more complex and multi-faceted support needs.

Our solution.

We act as a true partner, to bolster your existing student support services. Our services have been proven to have a big impact when it comes to increasing student satisfaction and retention, crucially reducing wait times for students accessing additional support so that institutions are able to meet demand in real-time. Our offer includes:

- Qualified non-medical support staff to work with students not eligible for government-funded support, including international and degree apprenticeship students
- Counselling and wellbeing support provision - immediate access to a large UK pool of highly qualified and experienced Counsellors and Mental Health Practitioners
- Deaf Support solutions - over 250+ British Sign Language Interpreters UK wide
- Internal roles within Student Services; such as Disability and Wellbeing Advisors, Administrative staff and Service Managers

Get in touch.

stephanie.eardley@randstad.co.uk
randstad.co.uk



AMOSSHE representation in the higher education sector

AMOSSHE has been busy this winter representing our membership association in the higher education sector at meetings and events. **AMOSSHE** representatives across the four nations of UK regularly contribute their expertise and perspectives to inform and shape developments in response to established and emerging topics. Here's just a sample of the representation work undertaken this winter.

Student drug use

AMOSSHE Executive Members Chris Warrington (University of Leeds) and Ravteq Singh Dhesi (Aston University) have been closely involved with the work of the Universities UK Taskforce on Student Drug Use, which aims to develop a framework for the sector. Chris and Rav have contributed to working groups addressing student demand for drugs, and the support that students require as part of a harm reduction approach to drug and substance misuse.

Student finance

AMOSSHE member Catherine McKeown (University of Sheffield) regularly represents us at meetings of the Student Loans Company, including the Student Finance Stakeholders Operations Group and Vulnerable Students Stakeholder Group. Catherine provides updates about developments to our membership, and coordinates member feedback to the Student Loans Company.

Sexual harassment and misconduct

AMOSSHE Executive Member Claire Slater and Senior Policy and Research Officer Sam Boyle contributed to a Universities UK sector roundtable about the Office for Students' consultation on introducing a new condition of registration for higher education providers in England to tackle cases of sexual misconduct and harassment. And Sam joined Executive Member Ravteq Singh Dhesi (Aston University) at the first meeting of the Office for Students Prevalence Survey Expert Advisory Group, to advise on a roadmap for producing a pilot survey about the prevalence of student sexual misconduct and harassment in higher education.

Mental health

In December **AMOSSHE** member Nic Streatfield (University of York) represented our association at a meeting of the Universities UK Mental Health in Higher Education advisory group, which discussed the aims and work of the UK government Student Support Champion as well as sector work to prevent student suicide. And this year **AMOSSHE** members at Middlesex University and Queen's University Belfast hosted launch events for new sector guidance about suicide prevention.

International Student Affairs

In late November **AMOSSHE** member Paul Rossi (University of the Arts, London) travelled to Madrid to represent our association at the European Conference for Student Affairs and Services. The conference, organised by EucA (European university college Association) attracted 120 people from 20 countries (Europe and beyond) to discuss the current generation of digital and pandemic-influenced students, and how support professionals can respond to this new and challenging environment. This was a great opportunity to forward **AMOSSHE**'s strategic aim to dovetail our work with global trends and practice in Student Services.

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46%

are concerned
about their
finances

30%

reported their
mental health
had declined

26%

accessed mental
health support

Better informed. Better placed to make a difference.

Download a copy of our Student Happiness Index or find out about our Student Assistance Programme with unlimited access to a BACP accredited 24/7 mental health and counselling helpline.

*Figures taken from our 2022 Student Happiness Index

"Endsleigh provides us with a 24-hour telephone advice service to students to help reduce student wait time for therapy. The team is professional, pleasant, and responsive. The data they provide is comprehensive and offers assurance that the service is being utilised by our students."

Thomas Wheelband
Head of Student Wellbeing Service,
University of Leicester

Service design, managing risk and supporting staff

In February 2023 **AMOSSHE** hosted our annual Winter Conference to explore the theme ‘thriving under pressure’ – how to deliver high-quality services in response to high demand and high expectations.

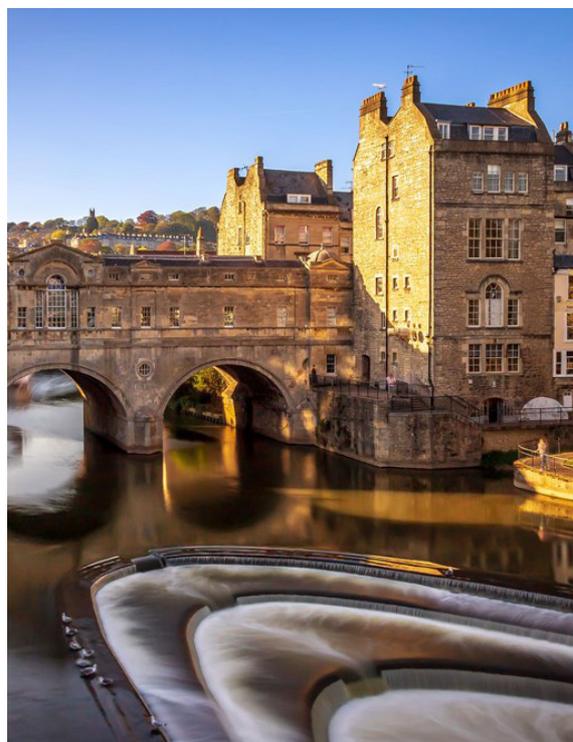
AMOSSHE members can find all the event resources here:

www.amoshe.org.uk/events-resources

Over 150 **AMOSSHE** members and sector colleagues joined us in Bath for the conference. Our keynote speaker was Higher Education Student Support Champion Professor Edward Peck, who discussed new ways of developing student support systems, and we were joined by a panel of UKCISA (UK Council for International Student Affairs) #WeAreInternational Student Ambassadors, who gave insights into their unique experiences as international students.

Sessions featured case studies of service design to meet high demand and respond to fast changing circumstances, led by The University of Manchester, Cardiff University and Keele University. There were also workshops and sector guidance about managing risk and expectations while delivering services in the face of high demand, led by Shakespeare Martineau, Universities UK, University of Bristol and University of Nottingham. A third strand of sessions, led by UCEA (Universities and Colleges Employers Association), AbilityNet and Students Minds explored the important topic of supporting and equipping staff to cope and thrive.

Finally, a workshop led by TASO (Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education) discussed the development of a Student Mental Health Toolkit, which aims to help the higher education sector identify and make use of effective practice to support student mental health.



AMOSSHE annual sponsors 2023

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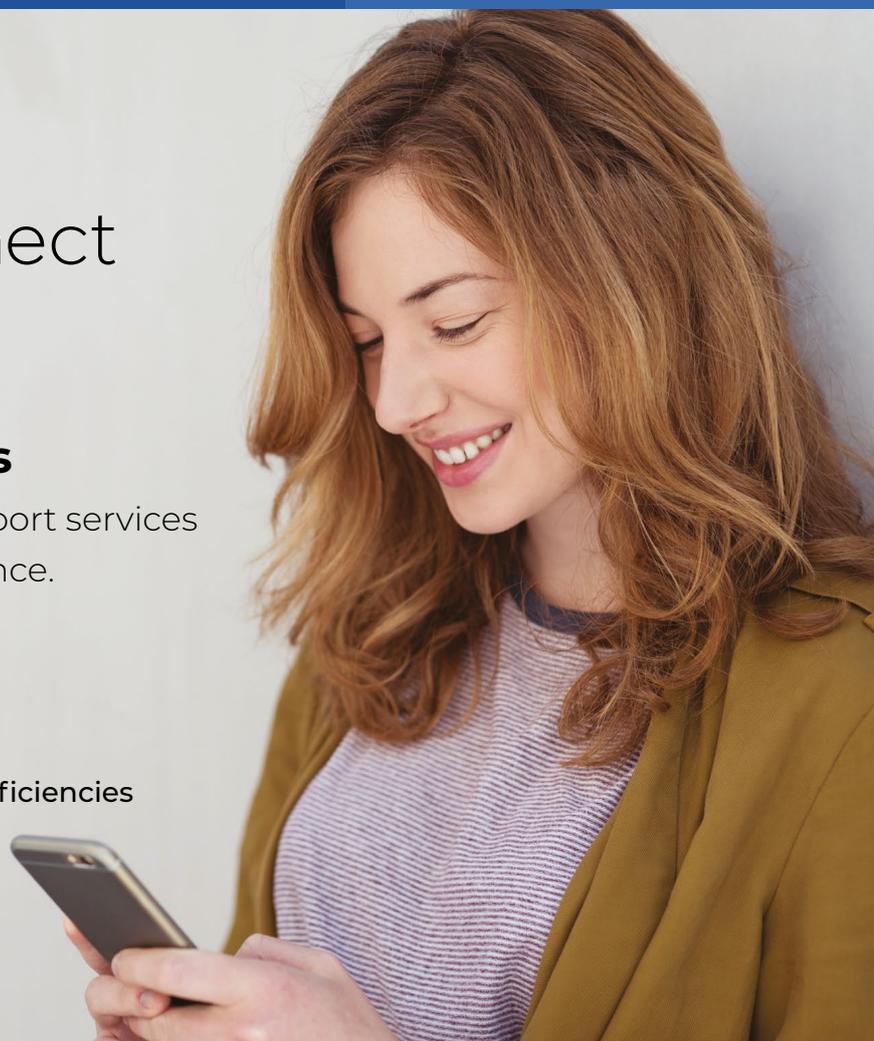
Student satisfaction



For universities and colleges

Helping careers and other student support services deliver outstanding support and guidance.

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- Advanced reporting and data insights
- Help teams manage workflows and process efficiencies
- Provide proactive interventions



Executive Committee and National Office team changes

Here's a quick update about some changes in the **AMOSSHE** Executive Committee and National Office teams – an opportunity to welcome some new colleagues on board!

New Executive Member

Sarah Cavendish has stepped down from her role as Executive Member on the **AMOSSHE** Executive Committee to take up a new role in the sector. In last year's Executive elections Aleata Alstad-Calkins (University of Roehampton) received the most votes of the nominees who were not elected. Therefore **AMOSSHE** has invited Aleata to join the committee as an Executive Member for the remainder of the role's term (until 1 August 2023).

We want to take this opportunity to welcome Aleata to the Executive team, and thank Sarah for her contribution to our community, and wish her all the best.



Aleata Alstad-Calkins



Sam Boyle



Chloé Kitts

New National Office team colleagues

In November **AMOSSHE** welcomed two new colleagues to the National Office team: Sam Boyle (Senior Policy and Research Officer) and Chloé Kitts (Events Administrator).

Sam joins the team as Senior Policy and Research Officer to help us improve and develop existing and new resources for our members, and work alongside members to deliver support where needed. Sam will develop key areas of work on data and research for **AMOSSHE**, helping us to produce research and reports on sector challenges through initiatives such as our benchmarking surveys. Sam will also work with members to interpret reports and frameworks from a Student Services perspective, and help us continue to influence the higher education sector to improve the student experience.

Chloé joins the team as Events Administrator to help run our events and conferences programme. This involves maintaining relationships with sponsors, assisting with the planning, logistics, administration and running of events, venue scoping, and taking minutes of strategic and events planning meetings.

Chloé joins **AMOSSHE** for the rest of this academic year to cover parental leave for our Operations Manager Anya Barbazza.

We all put on a brave face sometimes

Togetherall is the clinically managed, online community where students and staff can share what's on their minds, anonymously, safely, and in the moment.

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- 24hr professional moderation and clinical safeguarding
- 4.5+ million students have access to Togetherall
- Trusted by 400+ education institutions globally

If it's on your mind, it's on Togetherall.

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Cost of living crisis – help for universities and students

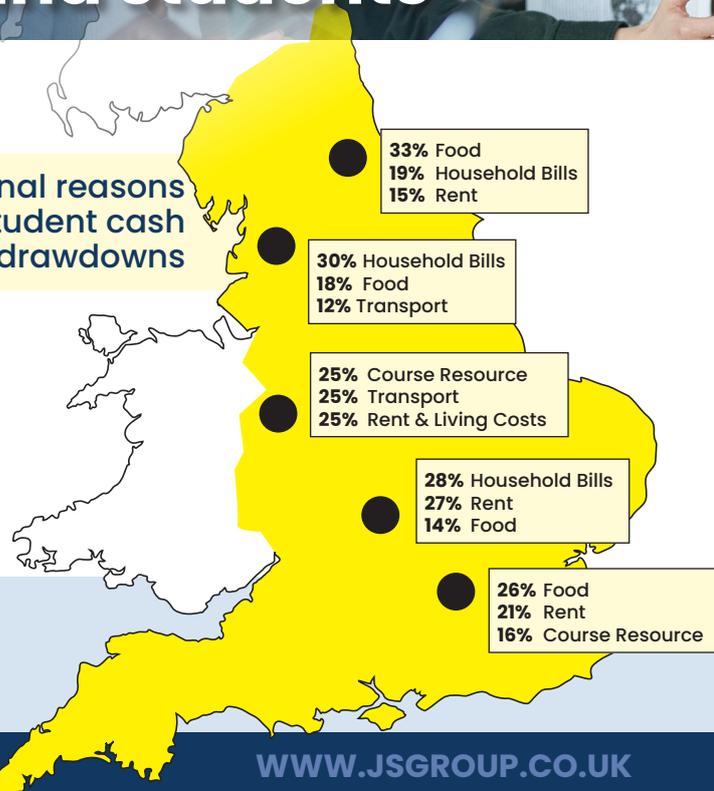
Our **Aspire Cash** service enables delivery of cash payments and grocery vouchers to students almost instantly.

Via our new Student Engagement Portal, students can take their cash awards in one go or over time to help them budget.

We provide a user-friendly portal for allocating funds by cohort or individually, providing valuable insights into student needs and usage. Using **Aspire Cash** significantly cuts down on admin time and costs.

For more information:
Read our **Faster Emergency Cash** blog or contact julie.walkling@jsgroup.co.uk

Regional reasons for student cash drawdowns





Epigeum's Support and Wellbeing Programmes

Pressure Points

COVID-19 has had a detrimental impact on student mental health. This course provides support and guidance for your students through the pressure points of university life. Addressing key issues students deal with in light of the pandemic, *Pressure Points* will enable university wellbeing teams to focus on complementary in-person initiatives and students in crisis.

In Development

To Be Published
May 2023



Our Prevention & Response programmes promote positive change by raising awareness of, and preventing, harassment and sexual misconduct

Find out more at www.epigeum/courses/support-wellbeing/

Student Mental Health Programme

Client Statement



University of
Strathclyde

"Students are very different to employees, but not many of the EAP providers who have made the transition into the student sphere have appreciated that, so it's been very reassuring to meet the clinical lead because they're the ones managing the people who are working with our students." - University of Strathclyde

Our Impact



93%
Decrease
in severe
category



89%
Decrease in
moderately
severe



70%
Decrease
in moderate
distress



x40
In those
reporting as
healthy

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.life

For Universities, Colleges and Institutions:

- Our student mental health programme works alone or can integrate with existing services to provide overflow counselling services.
- In a crisis, we can liaise with campus security or a main contact to arrange for emergency services or support for the student immediately. (Can be mobilized 24:7 or for Student Services out of office hours only).
- We operate in 20+ countries globally (Exclude US & Canada), with multi-lingual counsellors, serving students in more than 26 languages.
- We have standard reporting processes in place across referrals, engagement, outcomes and risk management.

For Students:

- Access to up to 6 counselling sessions per issue, per year.
- 24:7 access to mental health support service including in the moment support.
- Our Managed Network includes over 2,000 counsellors and psychotherapists from all around the UK and Ireland.
- Student referral from counsellors or student services as overflow or prioritizing severe cases internally. Students
- can self-refer via free phone, Live Chat, WhatsApp, email and SMS.

PLUS

- Access to health and wellbeing platform for students, including video workouts and training programmes, recipes, e-Learning programmes for mental health, sleep and financial wellbeing and self guided meditation.

AMOSSHE
National
Conference



5 to 7 July
Belfast
Online

AMOSSHE National Conference 2023: booking opens 23 March

The **AMOSSHE National Conference 2023** takes place between Wednesday 5 and Friday 7 July 2023 at the Hilton Belfast hotel in **Belfast**, with a parallel **virtual** conference taking place online on Thursday 6 July 2023. Booking for AMOSSHE's flagship event of the year opens on **Thursday 23 March!**

The theme of the conference is **inclusivity and making connections**:

- **Inclusivity** – how can Student Services foster a sense of belonging and inclusive community for all our students? How can we develop our services to enhance the offer to all students and increase engagement? How can we build thriving staff teams that reflect and respond to the rich diversity of our student communities?
- **Making connections** – how can Student Services come together as a community to support each other, share learning, and be flexible and forward thinking in our work? What can we learn from colleagues around the world, and in other sectors? How can we collaborate more effectively with students, academics and other higher education stakeholders, as well as statutory services, third-party providers and charities, to deliver robust, future-orientated services?

If you're coming to Belfast to attend the conference in person, you can choose to attend as a:

- **Residential delegate** for all three days of the conference, including accommodation for two nights at the conference venue with all meals, and all evening events.
- **Non-residential day delegate**, which includes lunch and refreshments only. You can attend the evening events for an extra charge.

If you're attending the conference as a **virtual delegate**, you can attend the online sessions on Thursday 6 July, and network with virtual and in-person delegates and sponsors.

Find out more details, including
the delegate prices:

[Find out more](#)

AMOSSHE would like to thank **Belfast City Council**, **Tourism Northern Ireland** and **Visit Belfast** for their support of the **AMOSSHE National Conference 2023**.



Student Money & Wellbeing Report 2023

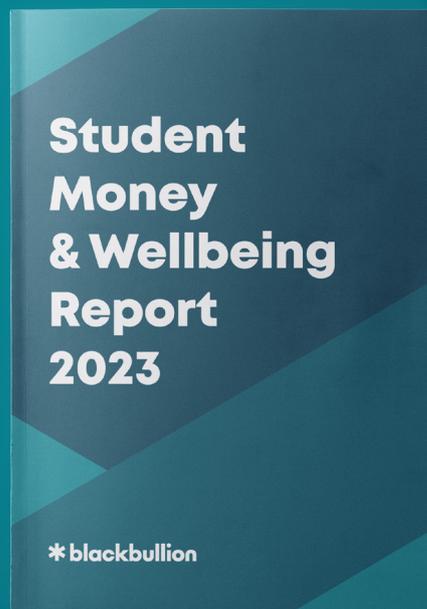
What is the cost of living crisis really costing students?

The Student Money & Wellbeing Report is the annual Blackbullion whitepaper about the impact of financial concerns on students' wellbeing, university experience and academic attainment.

Now in its third year, this year's report shares the findings from a survey completed by 1,000 UK university students in January 2023 and explores the 'real cost' of the cost of living crisis for students.

Download your copy:

[business.blackbullion.com/
student-money-wellbeing-2023](https://business.blackbullion.com/student-money-wellbeing-2023)



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& build belonging
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Keep up to date with AMOSSHE events at www.amoshe.org.uk/events



Your Student Services professional development journey: what next?

16 March 2023, webinar

This webinar for Student Services professionals in higher education explores how to prepare yourself for the next stage of your career journey, whether that's taking on a higher level role, an expanding remit, or moving sideways into a new area.



Joined-up university approaches to inclusivity for disabled students

26 April 2023, online

This half-day event explores how to join the dots between professional services, academic colleagues and other stakeholders to create more inclusive learning environments for disabled students in higher education.



Suicide postvention

17 May 2023, online

This half-day event explores how to support our students and communities after a student or staff member dies as a result of suicide. This event is an opportunity to learn about recent sector guidance on postvention, discuss case studies of good practice, and share experiences of postvention support.



AMOSSHE National Conference 2023

5 to 7 July 2023, Belfast and online

The AMOSSHE National Conference is the UK's foremost opportunity for Student Services leaders to share expertise and good practice, develop strategy and skills, and build professional networks. The theme of the conference is 'inclusivity and making connections'.



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Increase
Efficiency



Ensure
Accountability



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Reporting

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