

POPPY ELLIS LOGAN for WELFARE AND RIGHTS OFFICER

Why do I want to be the Welfare and Rights Officer?

Much of this stems from my experience of providing welfare support, but also from needing Welfare support myself. Most people are aware that being here is very pressurized and they want to help as much as possible, but this is not easy to do and I want to try and change that. I have been a member of the Welfare Team at Homerton this year, and I have sat on a number of Committees acting for the Homerton student body. I want to translate this to the wider University student body, as I have experienced several aspects of the Welfare system myself, and can see many ways in which I could improve it. I'm confident that I am the right person for this role because I am an open, approachable and trustworthy individual, and I don't shy away from sensitive or difficult situations. I have represented other students in the Welfare process before, making sure that people are aware of the support available to them, and trying to solve issues between students and senior staff members, in a way that is sensitive to all involved.

What would I most like to change?

- Improve the efficiency of the Welfare system: ensure provision is available for all who need it, that Colleges are prepared in advance, that all DoSes and Tutors are comfortable in situations where reasonable adjustments are required. There seems to be an issue in that information is not easily accessible, in particular to DoSes, and I think it should be mandatory that they are aware of it.
- There is often a discrepancy between official protocol, and what actually goes on. The legislation is in place to make sure everyone is supported as necessary,
- Extended study – Important people know about this because there are cases where the provision most people are familiar with (e.g. getting a laptop) doesn't resolve the difficulties (for example, people with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome) and an extended study option would be an ideal resolution.
- Many of the provisions in place are great, but often the onus is on the student to actively access the help available – you have to flag any issues to your Tutor, or you need the motivation to make the trek to the DRC to access the provision available. I want to try to make it easier for students to access this provision, through, for example, increased DRC funding, Skype sessions, etc.
- I want to set up consistent monitoring of people who may be disadvantaged, and for this to be not just in College, but also in Faculties, so that people can organize their work well in advance.
- I want to work towards changing the day the Cambridge week starts in so that we have some kind of Reading Week
- I want to work on the Shared Spaces initiative to make sure there is always somewhere people can go to if they need it
- I want to ensure all provisions in place aren't resting on assumptions that aren't necessarily true, and therefore exclude some people, e.g. that people have a positive home environment they can go to during the vacation, or if they intermit.
- I want to ensure that it's not only people with learning difficulties that are helped – I think provision for other conditions that can affect people's work, such as depression, SAD etc.

