**DISABLED STUDENTS OFFICER – AISLING MUSSON**

I am a 2nd year Social and Political Sciences student, a disability activist and I have the experience, enthusiasm and drive to represent disabled students and make campus and the university a better place. I am running for disabled student’s officer because I want to improve the lives of disabled students and energize the Network!

Here are my manifesto pledges:

1. **Accessibility**

I shall:

* 1. Produce a “best-practice” accessibility guide for societies with the consultation of disabled students, and create a session for YUSU societies training on how best to implement that, as well as meeting with any society that would like to improve their accessibility
	2. Lobby for increased accessibility on campus, including full wheelchair accessibility in campus buildings (for example the Warren) and other adjustments to make campus more navigable to disabled students.
	3. Work with colleges to make fresher’s week more accessible, delivering disability sensitivity training to STYCS, as well as making sure that there is a strong, well-advertised programme of non-clubbing events in all colleges.
	4. Work with sports societies and the sport president to broaden opportunities in sport for disabled students
1. **Awareness**

I shall:

* 1. Plan events commemorating disability awareness weeks and days on campus to raise awareness of the difficulties disabled students face on campus and eliminate stigma towards disabled students. I will organise panels and speakers from advocacy groups to commemorate nationally and internationally recognised days of awareness for numerous disabilities.
	2. Improve signposting on the website and in general to resources, organisations and services surrounding health and mental illness. There has been improvement on this issue, especially with regards to the website (as established after recommendations by the Graham report [<https://www.york.ac.uk/media/studenthome/features/2016/Student%20Mental%20Ill-health%20Task%20Group%20Report%20Mar%202016.pdf>]) but information could be clearer and more broad in terms of where to go for help, and I would work with the university to improve this.
	3. Run events and meetups in colleges to raise the profile of the Network and encourage active involvement of new students in the network.
	4. Work with departments to make sure they are always thinking about how disabled students are affected by their work – continue lobbying individual departments to try and get as many lecturers on board with lecture capture.
1. **Activism**

I shall:

* 1. Endeavour to make the Disabled Students’ Network a campaigning network, partnering with organisations such as York Mind and Mind Your Head to run campaigns and drives to reduce stigma on our campus
	2. Work with the Wellbeing Officer and other liberation officers to introduce a 3rd party hate crime reporting centre to campus
	3. Lobby for the implementation of the Graham report’s recommendation including: more provision of Mental Health First Aid training and other support for “frontline” staff.
	4. Lobby the council and the Value of York Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to continue consultation and feedback with students on the provision of healthcare (particularly mental healthcare) in York, especially on the issue of the new mental health hospital.
	5. Work with the university and Disability Services to examine how we can improve the issue of disability testing, the cost of which at the moment is blocking people from getting diagnoses and access arrangements on their course. Other universities have moved to address areas of non-medical funding no longer covered by DSA, and I will encourage York to do the same.