

## Promote a better understanding of people with Special Needs

### Union Notes

According to the British Social Attitudes Survey 2009: Britain is party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 8 of the Convention requires States that are party to the Convention to: • raise awareness throughout society, including at the family level, regarding persons with disabilities and foster respect for the rights and dignity of disabled people • combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to disabled people, including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life • promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of disabled people (UN, 2009).

### Union Believes

Despite the legal requirements of the Convention, as stated above, there is still a very low level of awareness and understanding concerning people with Special Needs in society. Furthermore, people with Special Needs are often portrayed in a negative and, sometimes, derogatory manner. This often causes people with Special Needs to be seen as a 'burden' on society and, in some cases, to be viewed or treated as sub-human/inferior beings. A greater understanding of people with Special Needs is needed to prevent further misunderstandings and instances of discrimination against them.

### Union Resolves

The Goldsmiths Student Union (GSU) should provide training that promotes a better understanding of people with special needs/disabilities of all kinds. The proposed training should, ideally, provide participants with information regarding the day to day challenges that people with Special Needs often face. There should also be information to hand on Reasonable Adjustments that are legally required for people with Special Needs. This training should be made available on a voluntary basis for all members of union staff, sabbatical officers and other members of the Goldsmiths community.

Proposer: James Drew

Secunder: Jashar Masih