

Improving the experience of students on the Autistic Spectrum

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Background

Students on the Autistic Spectrum face many challenges when coming to University above and beyond those of their neurotypical peers. Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong developmental disability that affects the way a person communicates and relates to the world around them. A person with ASD is likely to face difficulties with communication, social relationships and imaginative or flexible thinking, and is likely to experience high levels of stress and anxiety on a daily basis, which can impact on their academic experience.

Activities

We were awarded £400 from the Westfield Fund and used this to buy-in two specialist workshops from the National Autistic Society (NAS) for students known to DDS who have a diagnosis of ASD.

The workshops were:

1. Social relationships
2. Communication skills

Outcomes

Each workshop was attended by twelve students and we received positive feedback from participants.

Further work and dissemination

Subject to staff capacity within DDS, we would hope to develop a suite of workshops that can be delivered in-house, which build on these workshops and focus on topics suggested by our students.