

## NOTES FROM MAGAZINE REDEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP/CONSULTATION - 26 NOVEMBER 2019

### Positive & negative adjectives of what the group wanted the magazine to embody & avoid

This is a summary of the most constructive adjectives shared. I've attempted to add positive adjectives beside the negative ones to serve as a guide as to what to aim for. These are indicated with an arrow beside them. These may be subject to interpretation, so participants were asked to comment on them after the event.

What CEC consultation group would like the magazine to embody	What CEC consultation group would like the magazine to avoid
Up-to-date	
Diverse in content ←	Repetitive
Seasonal	
Accessible	
Informal ←	Formal
Authentic student voice ←	Mouthpiece for the OU
The highlights document should be condensed & the user experience should avoid the need for extensive clicking through and scrolling where possible←	Overly long
Frequently topical and holding the OU to account + Following the BBC's mission of informing, entertaining and educating←	Bland
Contemporary look (but not at the expense of accessibility & usability – e.g. needless moving elements which prove inaccessible) ←	Old fashioned
Easy for new readers to understand (not presuming prior knowledge)←	Exclusionary

### Discussion of Objectives

- The magazine should be very easy for students to find
- The group liked the BBC's mission to 'inform, educate and entertain'

### Categories / Content

Content:

- Billy expressed a particular interest in Faculty content being included
- Lucy raised that she would like to see more content from the Nations included
- There was an appetite for the following content: HE news, human interest stories with real students, quizzes/puzzles, pet of the month

## Categories:

- The discussion of numerous possibilities for types of content made it more challenging for participants to narrow down the categories of content at this stage.
- The general consensus was that broad categories would be needed, with several attendees offering 'lifestyle' as an example that would cover a range of content.
- Several attendees asked about potential sub-categories, and were pleased to hear that (on WordPress) there is an option of adding extra tags to a piece of content to make it easier to find.

## Views on example WordPress sites

Attendees seemed to have a preference for the layout of Nottingham SU's IMPACT online magazine out of the three displayed. It was less busy and more 'impactful'.

- 'This is clearly a mag' – Barbara
- Positive response to IMPACT having its own distinctive brand which compliments the main student union brand for Nottingham
- Interest was shown in us contacting Nottingham to get an insight into how they share their biannual highlights edition

## Concerns & hopes for the session / the project

Initial concerns about the loss of the PDF version of the magazine were allayed prior to the workshop as a PDF version of the magazine will still exist, but will require fewer design hours to produce. It is still planned to be distributed on a quarterly email via email to all students. The plan is for it to be digest of highlights of articles which are either not time-sensitive or not yet out of date.

- The office to enquire with OU Communications about their experience in ensuring WordPress is secure. It is currently be used by them to run [ounews.co](http://ounews.co).
- There was concern from one participant that dynamic content online and blogs are similar ideas.
- It was suggested that one option may be to invite students with an interest in design to get involved in creating the 'look' of the mag in the future. Billy commented that a regular review of the layout would be ideal.
- Attendees were interested in receiving a 'first look' of a test WordPress site put together by the Digital Communications team. The team aims to have something to share with the workshop attendees prior to January CEC.