



OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

25 - 27 January 2019

OBSERVERS TO CEC MEETINGS

The CEC is asked to:-

- i) **discuss** the paper
- ii) **approve** the recommendations

1. Background

- 1.1 This paper is a revised version of that brought to October 2018 CEC (10/18/11 “Observers to CEC Meetings”), including recommendations from that meeting.
- 1.2 Inviting students to attend CEC meetings as observers is a long-standing practice. Observers may participate fully, except that they may not vote and will generally be expected to leave the room when confidential (“green”) papers are discussed. This is agreed by all to be desirable in terms of openness and informing potential future CEC members.
- 1.3 This paper is intended to specify numbers of observers and how they are recruited, taking into account changes in Students Association structures.

2. Reasons for proposed approach concerning student observers

- 2.1 The aims of these proposals are:-
 - To make the recruitment of observers a straightforward process
 - To limit the number of observers at any given CEC (as too high a number can both reduce the utility of the experience to observers and impact on the CEC adversely) whilst maintaining an appropriate number of places overall.
 - To ensure a diverse selection of observers without being unduly prescriptive on exact numbers.

3. Proposed approach for selecting student observers

3.1 Frequency

No student to be invited as an observer if they have previously attended a CEC meeting, as an observer or member.

In exceptional circumstances the CEC may decide to invite an individual for a second occasion when there is a specific reason for their presence.

3.2 CEC meetings involved

Observers to be invited to attend any CEC meeting except the initial autumn (October) meeting and the final (July) handover meeting of the term.

3.3 Number of observers

There is to be a maximum of five observers at any CEC meeting.

3.4 Categories of observers

The invited observers during a CEC's two year term should include the following:-

- a. One from the Disabled Students Group
 - b. One from Plexus
 - c. One nominated by the Societies Committee
 - d. One studying in each Faculty, and one studying the Open programme (5)
 - e. One from each UK Nation, and one from Continental Europe (5)
 - f. One from the Trustees
 - g. If other formally affiliated Groups are formed, one from each such group
- However, these categories may overlap – for example, a Scottish student who is studying in FASS would count in d) and e)

Other observer places may be filled as deemed appropriate, so more than one in some of the above categories will result.

3.5 Advertising the opportunity to be an observer

This should be done 2-3 months in advance of the relevant meeting, and the routes used include (but not be limited to) the Association website, social media and individual contacts.

3.6 Selection of observers

In the event that more observers wish to attend than spaces are available, priority should first be given to students who have some history of activity within the Association. In the event this is not sufficient to make the selection, a panel of at least 3 CEC members, led by the Deputy President, will be convened and asked to make the decision.

A student who has a disciplinary matter on their record may be considered as an observer, but if there are serious concerns about a student's behaviour, they may be excluded from consideration.

It is not mandatory that all observer spaces shall be filled.

4. Non-student observers

- 4.1 The possibility of inviting non-student observers, such as university central staff or Associate Lecturers has been considered several times.

It is proposed to limit such observers to a maximum of one per meeting, and that interest in this opportunity is established by an advertisement in “OU Life” on the intranet.

Cath Brown
President