

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

25 – 27 January 2019

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

The C E C is asked to:-

- i) **receive** this regular report from the Board of Trustees

1. There is a Constitutional requirement for the Board of Trustees (BoT) to provide a report to the CEC at least four times per year. This report is intended to provide the following:
 - a) a formal opportunity for CEC members to raise any questions arising from the minutes or other matters relating to the role of the Trustees, and
 - b) the opportunity for Trustees to raise any specific items with the CEC or report on progression of any non-routine matters.
2. The BoT have held two meetings since my last report, on 11 October and 3 December 2018. The meeting minutes of the October meeting can be found [here](#). The December Minutes are currently being finalised at the time of writing.
3. The main item at the October Meeting was the BoT approving the final 2017-18 Accounts. Mike Farwell, Partner at James Cowper Kreston, the Association's external auditors was in attendance to talk Trustees through the financial statements following the audit that had taken place earlier in the year.
4. Trustees approved £8,500 from their discretionary funding for the Achievements Project that will form part of the OU's 50th celebrations and involves creating a video from the Association's archive and a celebration of our history and achievements. Trustees also approved a proposal for £800 from discretionary funding for basic DBS checks for peer supporters on the premise that annual renewals would be budgeted for in future years.
5. The previous group of Trustees had completed a BoT Effectiveness Review that had generated a number of recommendations for improvements that were discussed by the Trustees. Better timekeeping for meetings, a BoT away day, external training and an action log for meeting minutes were some recommendations that have been implemented or being explored further.

6. Unfortunately, Trustees were not quorate at their December meeting so many decisions had to be taken on the forum afterwards however, discussions continued. The Draft Articles of Association (the new governing document that will replace our Constitution as part of the Incorporation process) was presented to Trustees for final approval. The Articles were approved on the forum. The next step is to submit them to the OU's Council for approval at their meeting in March 2019.
7. Trustees fed into a Board of Trustee Code of Conduct. The President is bringing this to the CEC for information and comments and will be using it as a starting point for discussions for a CEC version.
8. Trustees agreed to seek further legal advice on recruiting an external Chair of the BoT before approving a final proposal.
9. Outside of the meetings, following the By-Election in October, Kirsty Lamb was successfully elected as a Student Trustee and attended her first meeting on 3 December. Caroline Cowan resigned as Student Trustee to take up the position of VP Administration. Peter Bell resigned from his post as Student Trustee which has resulted in three Student Trustee vacancies to be filled in the By-election in February 2019.
10. Our annual report and accounts for the 2017-18 year were submitted for consideration by the University's Council on 27 November alongside our revised Constitution, which includes the changes approved at our Conference in June. Both were approved.
11. Trustees approved a request for £1500 from the discretionary spending budget to support a consultation process on revisions to the student magazine, including a face-to-face workshop. There is a further paper on this coming to the CEC Meeting.
12. Trustees discussed matters related to mental health within the Students Association.
13. The Remuneration Committee met on 29 November 2019 to agree a scope for the next phase of its work. Caroline Cowan as VP Administration has joined the committee alongside the two external Trustees. There is a further vacancy for a Student Trustee position that will be filled following the By-Election.
14. Staffing Matters: Helen Janes left her role as Representation Officer after 8 years with the organisation in December. Hannah Whitaker fills this position and is due to start on 27 January 2019. Paul Severn left the Digital Comms Team on 21 December and interviews are scheduled for 11 January to find a replacement. Alison Lunn, the new Deputy Chief Executive (Finance & Resources) started on 7 January 2019. Thank you to Taz Gardner who stepped up as Acting Head of Resources during the time this position has been vacant. Alison is looking forward to meeting the CEC at the January Meeting. Three members of staff will be taking maternity leave this year: Jess Smith, Head of Student Community (job share) from 21 February 2019, Kate Dungate, Head of Digital Communications, in April/May 2019 and then Beverley Woodbridge, Research Assistant in June/July 2019. Arrangements for cover for Jess are in hand and work will begin for Kate and Beverley soon.

Amy Ferguson has been made permanent in her role as Projects Officer (Student Community) after being previously appointed on a temporary 6 month contract.

15. The next scheduled face-to-face meeting of the Board will be held on 8 February 2019.

Rob Avann
Secretary to the Board of Trustees