

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

24 - 26 January 2020

REPORTS FROM OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION GROUPS

C E C is asked to:-

- i) **receive** the reports
- ii) **note** that unless this paper is starred for discussion prior to the meeting, printed copies will not be supplied

Reports submitted by:-

Disabled Students Group (DSG)
PLEXUS

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

24 - 26 January 2020

REPORT FROM THE DISABLED STUDENTS GROUP (DSG)

Since our last report:

Committee

We have had one Committee member leave us, and so until our elections, we are running at 3 Officers and 5 other members.

Participation

Inclusion October 24th.

Acting Chair and Acting Secretary attended via Skype. The main topic of interest for us was regarding Alternate Formats, and what has gone wrong again. Acting Chair updated meeting on D.S.G. activity.

Mental Health in the Curriculum.

Committee members attended both the Edinburgh and the Cardiff events. The event due in Manchester was postponed. Attendees discussed how students with mental health issues can and should be supported in their learning. In addition, identify key trigger points, key identifiers that staff should be aware off, as well as discuss how best to support these students.

Student Led Event - OUSA Student Forum- Analytics: Who? Why? And What?

Billy Docherty attended this event as both D.S.G. Committee Member and FASS Faculty Rep, and he was able to input into the discussions. It was raised the issues facing students with disabilities, who feel they cannot disclose their disability because they fear being overly judged by both the University and their Tutors.

CEC Observer.

Marilyn attended the C.E.C weekend in October. She found it interesting to see how the Committee worked and how they have a great time socialising also.

Online Consultation on Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Support.

Two Committee Members attended this event and were on hand to provide some signposting for students.

Disabled Veterans Scholarship Programme.

The first collaboration meeting to work together to see how we can support disabled veterans better. Megan and Chris attended as Acting chair and Acting Secretary, joining them was Colin Pritchard as a D.S.G. member, who along with Chris is a Disabled Veteran. The Students Association and the D.S.G. along with other clubs

and groups, are going to be promoted more via a newsletter and D.V.S.F. LinkedIn page.

The next planned meeting for this is, February 6th.

Careers and Employability Support.

Acting Chair and Acting Secretary had meeting with Cathy Lovell and Jackie Pickles, about how we could support and spread the word about the support service they provide. This is something that is ongoing.

Campus Meetings.

Acting Chair and Acting Secretary had meetings with Head of Volunteering, Head of Student Support and O.U.S.A President. This was regarding changes to policies on safeguarding, and guidelines. A constructive meeting where questions from Committee Members and Disabled Students were put forward, and subsequently the responses fed back. This was very welcome as the topic had taken up too much time.

Community drop-ins and Meet-ups.

Group and Committee Members continue to attend these events helping students and promoting the Association and D.S.G.

Updates

Merchandise.

Unfortunately, this cannot be done. In consultation with O.U.S.A Staff and looking at prices and numbers, it has been deemed not to be cost effective. The only ways to achieve our own branded items are impractical, which the Committee feels is a shame.

Survey Results.

Now that the results of our survey are in, we are delighted with over 100 responses. They have given us plenty of suggestions and direction on how they want us to support/represent them and what they wish from Committee, regarding articles and items. Committee will be working to sort out 3 or 4 items to start running with.

Elections.

Due to the discussions that were taking place regarding guidelines changes, safeguarding policies and updating of role descriptions, the planned elections have had to be postponed twice. It is hoped that these can now happen in February.

So, What's next:

In addition to the day to day support, and signposting we give to students, the D.S.G. Committee will also be representing and helping students as follows:

Chat session for Hearing Impairment. January 20th.

Acting Secretary is running an online chat session for all levels of hearing impairment. The aim is to talk about issues, struggles and identify key support needs. This is with a view to championing the needs of the hearing impaired within the Disabled Students community. One such need is on accessible online tutorials.

Freshers.

We are having both a Facebook event, and an Adobe event where we aim to have an advisor to answer questions on D.S.A. assessments etc. This is primarily for students based in England, and it is hoped that future sessions will run for the other nations.

Megan Brown
Acting Chair,
For and on behalf of the Disabled Students Group (DSG)



Central Executive Committee (CEC)

24 – 26 January 2020

REPORT FROM PLEXUS

Following our last submission, we welcome the opportunity to provide this quarterly report to the CEC and wider Student body.

Committee Update

Since our last report we have had 1 resignation from post.

Finlay Games was our trans officer and has stood down from his position, this is due to the current situation and lack of activity of the committee to which will be addressed and can only apologise and thank Finlay for his support throughout his time in the role.

Engagement

Social Media

As our social media presence continues to grow, we've also recognised that our members (including the wider OU student community) are communicating via our social media platforms. One of the targets for the next 12 months is to consider our forums and how to increase traffic to this space. The forums are only available to members and is our official platform, including Annual General Meetings and elections.

Social Media

We continue to report on our social media presence and this quarters report is below which will demonstrate our reach on each of our platforms.

Due to the current situation of the committee I am unable to provide the usual social media report.

Please accept my deepest apologies for this.

Coming Up

PLEXUS Emails/Storage

I will continue to work closely with Sammi and Verity from the Student Support to look at new emails for the committee, this would release money for the committee to spend as we currently spend a lot on website/email and Dropbox. We have already disconnected our Dropbox account and are using OneDrive.

PLEXUS Re-Launch

As some of you may be aware, the PLEUXS committee has been slightly quiet over the last couple of months, however we are looking at doing a "relaunch" we are

looking at sending a survey out to members to see what they want from their committee, how do they want to communicate.

I think it is easy for a committee to come up with the ideas, however I think the message needs to go out to the membership to remind them that they are the ones in charge, and this is more of their committee than it is mine.

Some of the ideas we have had are, PLEXUS survey, also a shorter version of SOLAR the PLEXUS magazine and making it less of a magazine and more of a newsletter. We have been thinking about ideas of a bi monthly Open PLEXUS chat via Adobe Connect.

Since the resignation of Finlay I have contacted Verity and I have reached out for support as the committee is currently not working together as good as we could. I am hoping to get the committee together in Milton Keynes around a table and come to a strong framework for the committee and a clear understanding of the roles of each member of the committee.

Membership

Since the introduction of GDPR Guidelines the management of the committee membership has been handed over to the Student Support team. The table below is from the last CEC Report.

OU PLEXUS

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS



Total Number of Members	737
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Full Member	635
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Associate Member	31
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Friend of PLEXUS	48
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HLM	1
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Revoked	21
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Members by Region			
R01 - London	80	R09 - North	19
R02 - South	54	R10 - Wales	52
R03 - South West	51	R11 - Scotland	76
R04 - West Mids	63	R12(a) - Northern Ireland	27
R05 - East Mids	47	R12(b) - Republic of Ireland	6
R06 - East of England	33	R13 - South East	74
R07 - Yorkshire	52	R14 - Continental Europe	20
R08 - North West	72	R15 - Rest of World	6

Membership Communications			
Opted - In	403	Not-Opted In Members	333

Future Commitments

October 2019 – Black History Month

8th – 15th October 2019 - Hate Crime Awareness week

11th October – National Coming Out Day

13th November 2019 – Trans Awareness Week

20th November 2019 – Trans Day of Remembrance (TDoR)

1st December 2019 – World Aids Day

5th December International Volunteers Day

8th December 2019 – Pansexual/Panromantic Pride Day

10th December 2019 – Human Rights Day

All the above dates would be PLEXUS Social media Campaigns.

And Finally

I would just like the committee note my extreme gratitude to the Student Support Team, for their ongoing support.

I would also like to thank the PLEXUS Committee for their ongoing engagement. I would also like to pass on an important message I was told by Verity and would just like to echo through the CEC. We are all volunteers and it is important we take time out and relax.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. If you have any questions, please feel contact me via email.

Kirean Dingley

For and on behalf of PLEXUS

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