

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

24 – 26 January 2020

CONFERENCE 2020

The C E C is asked to:-

- i) **receive** a progress report on arrangements to date

1. **Executive summary**

- 1.1. The OU Students Association biennial conference takes place on 26 - 28 June. Discussions are underway and planning for Conference has begun.

2. **Introduction**

- 2.1. This report is to provide an update on Conference planning to date and to provide members with the current thinking on ideas.

3. **Steering committee**

- 3.1. The Conference Steering Committee has begun discussing plans for Conference over one face to face meeting which took place on Saturday, 18 January and the established online forum. Items discussed range from the conference programme to evening entertainment.
- 3.2. The conference steering committee includes representatives from our CEC. Our president Cath Brown, Anca Seaton, Caroline Cowan. It also includes our Chair of Societies, Cinnomen McGuigan and Cherry Day, VP Equality and Diversity. The committee's five student members are Jeremy Lane, Emma Varty, Nichola Connolly, Sarah Andrews and Bev Smit. Association staff supporting the committee are Amy Undrell and Wendy Burrell.
- 3.3. The Steering Committee will continue to discuss specific and measurable objectives for the event. These will be linked with the Association strategy and will be discussed further on the forum.

4. Business

- 4.1. Business is expected to be much lighter than the previous conference as there will be no constitutional changes. Therefore, panel discussions and key speakers will form part of the business session.
- 4.2. The steering committee has agreed that business champions will not be needed for Conference 2020.
- 4.3. Key speakers will be explored over the next few weeks for business, panel and debate discussions. These include our honorary graduates and key political figures.

5. Focus

- 5.1. The general focus for Conference will be around one team and partnership. Student reps, volunteers and staff all working together as one team.
- 5.2. This is to be reflected in the Conference branding and communications leading up to and during Conference.

6. Conference programme

- 6.1. The conference programme will feature a mixture of workshops and debates throughout the conference weekend.
- 6.2. OU staff will work in partnership and alongside students and Association staff on any workshops, debates and panels.
- 6.3. Saturday programme will finish earlier to allow time for a quiz in the evening followed by a disco and optional chill out in the hotel bar. The quiz and disco will no longer feature at the same time to allow students the option of attending both.

7. App

- 7.1. An app is to be explored for face to face delegates. The functionalities of the app will allow delegates to look at the conference programme, book workshops and create a timetable.
- 7.2. The app will be a useful tool to receive push notifications. This will allow updates and alerts to be sent through the app. This could include programme changes, reminders about attending the delegates booked workshop and for instant feedback.
- 7.3. Delegates will have the option of having a physical copy of the timetable or using the app before attending the conference weekend.

8. Online conference

- 8.1. The steering committee would like to mirror the face to face conference for online delegates.
- 8.2. Workshops and debates will be recorded where possible for playback. Photo sharing and networking opportunities will also be explored. Further discussion will take place in due course.

9. Next steps

- 9.1. The Steering Committee together with Association staff will continue to plan Conference to ensure its successful delivery in June.

The steering committee