QUARTERLY
STRATEGY PERFORMANCE REPORT

DECEMBER 2020

SECTION A:
STRATEGIC KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

This section provides a quarterly update against the 20 strategy metrics.

Where the data collection mechanics have not yet been established and/or no data is currently available, metric boxes have a strike through. Where data is being reported for the first time and there are no previous statistics to track movement against, this is indicated in the metric box.

Where there are previous statistics, this is displayed in the metric box along with a movement indicator.

Movement	For metrics where we are seeking to achieve upward tracking	For metrics where we are seeking to achieve downward tracking
Significant improvement	Solid green upward arrow	Solid green downward arrow
Moderate improvement	Hollow green upward arrow	Hollow green downward arrow
No change	Amber horizontal arrow	Amber horizontal arrow
Moderate deterioration	Hollow red downward arrow	Hollow red upward arrow
Significant deterioration	Solid red downward arrow	Solid red upward arrow

For metrics which require supporting/qualitative information (eg profiles, impact reports), the information is attached as further appendices.

INFORM & SUPPORT

AWARENESS

Metric 1

Annual Membership Survey - % response rate

2020 Roll-out 0.80%
2020 Soft-Launch 0.98%

R **(moderate deterioration)**

The response rate for the roll-out is again disappointing, although we now have a collective pool of data of 1,600 responses for analysis and recommendations. We were again unable to send a reminder email to all recipients but were able to promote more widely this time and as part of the analysis we will match the response distribution to specific promotional activities to assess their effectiveness. More work is required to understand the potential barriers to response and ways to overcome them.

Metric 2

Annual Membership Survey Question 8 - % of responders selecting options 1,2,3 (awareness of membership of Association)

2020 Roll-out 95.1%
2020 Soft-Launch 89.0%

G **(significant improvement)**

Of the three options that contribute to the 95.1%, the greatest increase is for students who are aware that they are automatically members of the Association and who also know what is available to them as members, this has increased from 20% in the soft-launch to 28% in the rollout. This is reflective of the success of 20J Freshers in communicating Association services and activities to new students who comprise 14% of the responses.

Metric 3

Annual NSS Question 26 - % of responders selecting "N/A" (proxy for not aware)

No new data available until 2021 NSS results are published (anticipated July 2021)

Metric 4

#new visitors to website & Hoot (rolling 12 month figures)

Website:
Year to Nov 2020 – 212,682
Year to Nov 2019 – 189,714

G **(significant improvement)**

Hoot: Year to Nov 2020 – 10,660
(first time measurement)

Previous website figures:
Year to August 2020 – 196,509
Year to August 2019 – 171,202

New visitor figures are still tracking upwards with good growth levels. Contributing factors are likely to be the main elections and conference during 2020 which generate high levels of traffic, along with high 20J Freshers engagement levels.

INFORM & SUPPORT

RELEVANCE

Metric 5

Service/resource usage – #students per area

See summary on page 11

Some additional categories have been introduced for this report.

There are positive upward trends for membership of our support groups (DSG & BAME) and newsletter sign-ups (reflecting 20J Freshers activities).

Metric 6
#returning visitors
to website & Hoot
(rolling 12 month figures)

Website:
Year to Nov 2020 – 44,750
Year to Nov 2019 – 47,049

R (moderate deterioration)

Hoot: Year to Nov 2020 – 1,416
(first time measurement)

Previous website figures:
Year to August 2020 – 45,254
Year to August 2019 – 43,582
No single underlying factor has been identified for the small deterioration in figures – it may be a combination of multiple smaller changes/downgrades to activities during 2020 (eg fewer content updates and news posts). Awaiting next round of analytics to assess whether this is part of an underlying downward trend.

Metric 7

Social Media
Engagements (Assoc Twitter a/c)
– % of total impressions

3 months to Nov 2020 – 2.02%
3 months to Aug 2020 – 3.40%

R (moderate deterioration)

The three months to Aug 2020 (June/July/Aug) included two activities which generated significant engagement levels - Conference & University Challenge - and also included high engagement levels for two formal statements - on the BLM movement (4.4%) and on the 2020 Module Results (14.4%). There were no similar high impact one-offs in the three months to Nov 2020 (Sept/Oct/Nov), but there were good levels of engagement on all Freshers posts (c5%).

Metric 8

Annual
Membership Survey Questions 15 & 16 - % (median) of service/resource users who would recommend

Services users – median 88%
Resources users – median 71%

(First time measurement)

Seven different services/activities were asked about – the highest scoring was Conference where 95% of students who had attended a conference said they would recommend it to other students. Ten different resources were asked about – the highest scoring was the OU shop where 94% of students who had used the shop said they would recommend it to other students.

ENGAGE & INVOLVE

ENGAGEMENT

Metric 9

Election participation –
% eligible voters taking part

2020 By-elections – 0.75%
2019 By-elections - 0.76%
2018 By-elections - 0.51%
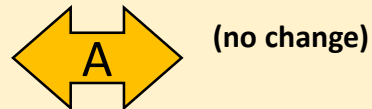
A **(no change)**

There has been no change to the level of participation in the by-elections from 2019 to 2020 which is still at less than 1% of the total eligible membership. Barriers to participation and methods for overcoming these will be examined by the Elections Review Working Group.

Metric 10

Activities participation
- students per activity type

See summary on page 11

One figure to highlight is the number of online events and meet-ups during the last quarter (55), reflecting the enormous efforts of our volunteers to keep students connected and supported during the pandemic.

Metric 11

Quarterly volunteering participation - volunteers active in roles and applications

Active in roles:
3 months to Nov 2020 – average 246
3 months to Nov 2019 – average 272
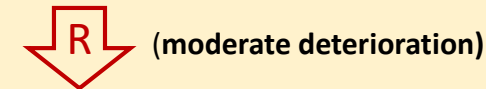
R (**moderate deterioration**)

The reduction in active roles during the three months to Nov 2020 compared to the three months to Nov 2019 is attributable to the cancellation of in person graduation ceremonies where we typically recruit c30 volunteers annually to run our merchandise stalls.

Applications:
3 months to Nov 2020 - applicants 30

ENGAGE & INVOLVE

REACH

Metric 12

Profiling of election participants – % penetration of member segments

A geo-demographic profile of the 2020 By-election participants was generated and compared to the profile of the overall OU student body. The profile has been shared with the Election Review Working Group.

The participating students profile largely mapped to the profile of the overall OU student body with only slight skewing seen in the age profile of participants with younger students (35 and under) being under-represented and older students (46 and over) being over-represented.

Metric 13

Annual profiling of engaged students – % penetration of member segments

Not yet available

Metric 14

Annual profiling of volunteers – % penetration of member segments

Not yet available

INFLUENCE & TRANSFORM

IMPACT

Metric 15

Annual Membership Survey Question 25 - % of responders agreeing that the Association has a positive impact on their student experience

2020 Roll-out 38.4%
2020 Soft-Launch 32.1%

G **(significant improvement)**

Responders selecting 'strongly agree' has remained steady between the soft-launch and the roll-out, with the increase coming from responders selecting 'agree'. The 'strongly disagree' category, although very low, has shown a slight increase from 1% to 3% - free text answers will be analysed to identify any underlying themes/factors.

Metric 16

Annual NSS Question 26 - % of responders identifying positive for effective representation

No new data available until 2021 NSS results are published (anticipated July 2021)

Metric 17

Annual volunteering feedback – % volunteers identifying positive growth & development

2020 data not yet available

Metric 18

Annual Representation/ Service Review – % OU committee staff identifying positive student impact/influence in committees

2019 Review 82.0%
No new data available
Next review August 2021

INFLUENCE & TRANSFORM

IMPACT

Metric 19

Qualitative Impact Reporting:

See CEC Quarterly Impact Reports (separate CEC paper - 01/21/01)

See Student Voice Week 2020 Update (separate CEC paper – 01/21/08)

See Appendix 2 – Black History Month 2020 – Headline Impact Report
The report provides an overview of the three Association led sessions and attendee feedback. The OU are currently working on a wider evaluation across all Black History Month activities.

See Appendix 3 – Freshers Sept-Oct 2020 - Headline Impact Report
The report provides highlights from our Freshers activities which saw high levels of engagement across 40 student sessions, 65% open rates on our emails and record levels of visitors to our microsite and engagement with our social media posts. Additional feedback is also provided in a separate CEC paper – 01/21/06).

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

MAINTAIN AN ENABLING ORGANISAITONAL CULTURE

Metric 20

Annual Membership Survey Question 26 – % responders selecting 'agree' options on whether the Association is living its values

Integrity:
2020 survey – 42.3%

Equality & Inclusivity:
2020 survey – 46.1%

Openness:
2020 survey – 44.3%

Collaboration:
2020 survey – 42.7%

(first time measurement)

Disagree options were very low for all values (<3%) and the neutral options (neither agreeing nor disagreeing) were all between 15% & 17%. A large proportion of students selected the 'not sure' option – between 35% & 38% across the values, with free text answers suggesting a key contributor to this was not feeling they knew enough to be able to make a judgement. If the 'agree' figures were calculated as percentages of only those responders who did feel able to make a judgement they would be in the range 68% to 71% across the four values.

Service/Resource (SR) Or Activity (A)	Description	Measurement Basis	Measurements Sept 2020	Measurements Dec 2020	Change
SR (Metric 5)	Societies	As at reporting date	22	22	None
SR (Metric 5)	Societies members	As at reporting date	6867	7045	Increase
SR (Metric 5)	Shop orders	In quarter prior to reporting date	704	830	Increase
SR (Metric 5)	Shop average order value	In quarter prior to reporting date	£32.56	£33.57	Increase
SR (Metric 5)	New newsletter sign-ups	In quarter prior to reporting date	260	588	Increase
SR (Metric 5)	YouTube Video Views	In quarter prior to reporting date	-	3,482	-
SR (Metric 5)	Newsletter open rates	Average for quarter prior to reporting date	25.50%	35.50%	Increase
SR (Metric 5)	Newsletter click through rates	Average for quarter prior to reporting date	3.30%	4.80%	Increase
SR (Metric 5)	TOTUM cards	For 12 months prior to reporting date	14,873	13,602	Decrease
SR (Metric 5)	Peer Support Users	For 12 months prior to reporting date	125	90	Decrease
SR (Metric 5)	Library Support Requests	For 12 months prior to reporting date	63	65	Increase
SR (Metric 5)	OUSET successful applications	Most recent presentation/academic year	-	(2020 J/K) 46	-
A (Metric 10)	DSG members	As at reporting date	397	585	Increase
A (Metric 10)	OU Pride (formerly PLEXUS) members	As at reporting date	590	578	Decrease
A (Metric 10)	BAME FB members	As at reporting date	57	79	Increase
A (Metric 10)	Clubs	As at reporting date	56	56	None
A (Metric 10)	Club members	As at reporting date	9784	10143	Increase
A (Metric 10)	Number of online events & meet-ups	In quarter prior to reporting date	-	55	-

**SECTION B:
STRATEGY PROJECTS UPDATES**

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Initiation Status G = Completed A = In progress R = Not yet started	Project Status (Active Projects Only)	Project Updates (Active Projects Only)
Project 1	**Overall Scope:** Improve our understanding of student needs, expectations and motivations. Conduct a regular review of our services, engagement activities and comms channels to identify improvement opportunities and increase participation. **Workstream 1A: Conduct membership research and analysis** Develop and launch the Annual Membership Survey to gain membership feedback on: our activities & services,; member expectations; study and volunteering motivations; awareness levels and comms preferences; engagement interests; Association culture. The survey will provide valuable on-going data for strategic KPI tracking, provide inputs for service/activity reviews and help to inform business decision-making. **Workstream 1B: Service & Activity Reviews** Create the process for an annual service and activity review & facilitate the first such review before transitioning the process into BAU. The annual reviews (in conjunction with strategic KPI tracking data) will enable the organisation to assess, on an on-going basis, the effectiveness and impact of all Association services and activities along with identifying new service opportunities. This will enable infirmed decision-making on resource allocation/prioritisation.	A	G	**Workstream 1A:** **Soft-launch pilot** – the full analysis of the soft launch results was unfortunately not available in time to be shared with the CEC in Oct due to an extended period of sickness/absence in the research team. The full analysis is now completed, has been shared with staff teams in individual sessions, will be shared with CEC shortly via the MS Teams forum and on the website (in info-graphic format). **Roll-out** – a full review of survey content was carried out with staff team in individual focussed sessions and the survey was developed further and tested ahead of roll-out. We received great support from the OU data team for data extracts and exports and form the Student Experience team in Academic Services who managed the CAMEL email despatch for us. The survey was rolled-out on time during Student Voice Week w/c 16/11/20 to 160,764 students. An extensive promotion & comms plan is in place including social media (with paid-for boosts), newsletters and fora. We also have great engagement from OU units who are helping to promote the survey including the Library, OU comms team, faculties, nations offices and ALs and we have scheduled features on StudentHome, TutorHome and OU Life. Responses as at the close date of 13/12/20 were 1,290 (0.80% response rate). **Workstream 1B:** The CEC approved the proposal to delay the first annual service review until the results of the roll-out are available. It is anticipated that this workstream will be able to get underway April/May 2021.

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Initiation Status G = Completed A = In progress R = Not yet started	Project Status (Active Projects Only)	Project Updates (Active Projects Only)
Project 2	**Overall Scope:** Commission a study into the feasibility of providing individual representation for students. **Phase 1:** Conduct research, analysis and discovery activities to identify needs, assess options and develop recommendations and funding requirements. Prepare a full business case for presentation to OU PVC-Students. **Phase 2 (subject to funding provision):** Develop and implement individual representation resources and services for a fixed pilot programme period. The pilot programme will provide 'proof of concept' for the realisation of the benefits identified in the Phase 1 business case. It will also provide the evidence base for the development of a case to secure additional funding to allow the permanent inclusion of individual representation for students in the Association's services portfolio.	A	A	We held off resubmitting an updated business case in October (with a revised funding requirement, additional support statements and a detailed implementation plan) in order to allow for further discussion of the proposed timelines in the context of the proposed up-coming staff changes. A decision was made with approval from the BoT, to delay the launch of the pilot programme until later in Spring 2021, to facilitate a delay to the start of the recruitment process. A revised implementation timeline has now been produced , based on a commencement date for recruitment of early January 2021 and an estimated service 'go live' date of end of April. The pilot programme will therefore run for 15 months, to the end of July 2022. A revised business case based on these parameters will be submitted to PVC-S early in the new year. Amber status due to the number of dependencies (funding , recruitment and project resourcing).

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Initiation Status G = Completed A = In progress R = Not yet started	Project Status (Active Projects Only)	Project Updates (Active Projects Only)
Project 3	Implement a student support resource library. Explore opportunities to expand our student support services through partnerships with external service providers, support agencies and societies.	R		Project not yet started
Project 4	Create meaningful on-going connections and communications with OU students at all key stages in their student journey.	R		Project not yet started, anticipated start date February 2021
Project 5	Develop and publish a student engagement value statement in order to actively promote the benefits of engaging in the wider student community and to encourage greater student involvement in Association activities and events.	R		Project not yet started, anticipated start date February 2021
Project 6	Work with OU principal stakeholders to encourage the OU to do more in promoting, sign-posting and supporting the work of the Association.	R		Project not yet started, anticipated start date February 2021
Project 7	Create new communities where students can benefit from social interaction and informal mutual support. Create more opportunities for students to support other students through volunteering roles that are effective and adaptable to student	R		Project not yet started

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Initiation Status G = Completed A = In progress R = Not yet started	Project Status (Active Projects Only)	Project Updates (Active Projects Only)
Project 8	**Overall scope:** Complete an analysis of the Association's internal and external stakeholders in order to develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan. **Workstream 8A:** Stakeholder mapping exercise – identify all internal and external stakeholder groups and develop an understanding of the importance, contributions and potential impacts of each group for the successful delivery of our strategy. **Workstream 8B:** Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan to support the delivery of our strategic aims and objectives. The plan will include the objectives and aims of any engagement/comms with each of the stakeholder groups and will be used to inform decisions on the choice of engagement/comms channels, comms content, timings and priorities. Stakeholder analysis and mapping will also provide inputs for strategic projects #6 & #9.	A	A	Workstream 8A: The stakeholder maps have now been generated. Three maps have been created, one for the OU Students Association, one for the OU and a third for the external stakeholder environment. These are based on spreadsheets that have been compiled containing further information on the relationships with stakeholders. Some further information in relation to the OU and OU Students Association may emerge through the working groups for workstream 8B, however, all maps are in a sufficient state of completion to begin the development of engagement plans. Workstream 8B: Two working groups have been established: one to develop an engagement plan for external stakeholders, and another to develop engagement plans for internal stakeholders and OU stakeholders. The 'external' working group has met twice, and documentation for the engagement plan is in the process of being developed. The 'internal/OU' working group will meet for the first time prior to Christmas (having been initially delayed in setting up due to the need to seek additional expressions of interest for project team members). Status is amber due to the original delays and a risk in relation to resource availability for workstream 8B.

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Initiation Status G = Completed A = In progress R = Not yet started	Project Status (Active Projects Only)	Project Updates (Active Projects Only)
Project 9	**Overall Scope:** A series of three related projects aimed at increasing and improving student voice in academic representation and OU ways of working. **Workstream 9A:** Develop, in conjunction with the OU, a shared Code of Practice for academic representation with the aim of improving the effectiveness of student voice within OU governance. **Workstream 9B:** Support the work of the OU in developing a student voice Community of Practice to improve the effectiveness of student voice in OU activities through information exchange, discussion and the establishment of best practice principles. **Workstream 9C:** Launch the Association's Student Engagement Standard and work with key OU stakeholders to promote the Standard and embed student engagement in OU activities and projects.	A	R	The activities assigned to this strategy project were brought forward from the previous strategy and at the time were deemed a good way to achieve the desired outcomes of; increasing and improving student voice in academic representation and the OU's ways of working. Since this time there have been a number of changes including, a new OU Head of Governance, an academic governance review, changes to the paper sharing agreement, changes to the Student Voice staff team and a period of vacancy for both VP Education and Head of Student Voice before new individuals took on these roles. We have also seen the dissolution of the OU Major Change Board and the introduction of PVC Students. It has become clear that there is much other work to be completed to bring all parties on board with each other before a shared code of practice will be ready to be put through central governance for approval. The stakeholder projects as well as workstream 9B and continued work with PVC Students and Boards of Studies will help us to increase awareness of student voice and representation. It is recommended that work on these specific activities be paused and the project rescoped to firstly develop a workable action plan for working with the University to improve areas of contradiction, provide clarity and share best practice which will be key to success of the Strategy Project aim. The project team seek the endorsement of the CEC to pause these specific activities whilst an action plan is developed for BoT approval in Spring 2021.

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Initiation Status G = Completed A = In progress R = Not yet started	Project Status (Active Projects Only)	Project Updates (Active Projects Only)
Project 10	Establish a process for authorising, funding, supporting and running campaigns. Produce a manifesto for life-long learning.	R		Project not yet started
Project 11	To commission an external review of the OU Student Association governance structures and mechanisms that will result in clear and achievable recommendations for change that can lead to improvements in efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation.	A	G	An invitation to tender for this review was sent to a long list of service providers in October. The facilitating Team met to discuss the applications and shortlisted 2 agencies for interview. Interviews took place online on 16th November. Both agencies were deemed very suitable for appointment but the decision was taken to work with Almond Tree Consulting owing to their having completed previous similar projects with other complex membership organisations, knowledge of the HE sector and their favourable costs which are within planned budget. Following background checks, a contract has been signed and work has started with consultants currently completing desk reviews of relevant documents. A first meeting between consultants and the facilitation team is planned for December. At this meeting the team will surface the areas to be considered, scope the parameters of the project and consider the timetable. Prior to this meeting, some pre-work will be completed by the facilitation team that will guide this discussion. The project will be joint led by Wendy Burrell and Rob Avann in the short term, with Rob taking over responsibility following Wendy's retirement from March 2021

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Initiation Status G = Completed A = In progress R = Not yet started	Project Status (Active Projects Only)	Project Updates (Active Projects Only)
Project 12	Identify a model of 'One Team' working and produce a 'protocol' for student representatives and staff members identifying clear expectations. Communicate a 'One Team' message and intent, devising a 'One Team' action plan and designing/leading 'One Team' sessions and activities.	R		Project initiated, but progress reporting not yet available.
Project 13	Devise an agenda that highlights, encourages and celebrates our stated values.	R		Project not yet started
Project 14	Develop and implement an action plan to further the advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout all Association policies, activities and ways of working.	A	G	An EDI Working Group has been formed, made up of 12 members across the Association, with the responsibility for actioning the 12 pledges made in the Association's Black Lives Matter Statement. Unfortunately only 2 of the members are from the CEC as this was an 'opt in' opportunity - we did have 3 CEC but one had to drop out due to other commitments. Work is already under way on a number of the pledge areas (which are being treated as 'mini-project' areas) including a student consultation, Equality Impact Assessments, a review of Association communications channels and platforms and the development of a resource bank. A separate update paper has been provided to the CEC. Discussions are also in progress with regard to the status of the working group and whether it may be converted into a formal committee with accountability to the BoT.

SECTION C:
BUSINESS PLANS UPDATES

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Chief Executive	•Annual Report to the Open University's Council completed and well received. •Successful audit with no adverse findings. •Data Protection Officer audit of compliance completed and reported to Trustees, actions underway to deliver changes required but overall opinion was very good which is testament to all the work put into this to date. •By-election completed. New Student Trustee in place and induction completed. Relationship with new Council Member underway. •Staff wellbeing and ability to perform in the challenging circumstances is very good, showing the resilience, team spirit and caring nature of the culture across our team. A huge thank you and recognition is due to all staff, reps and volunteers who are contributing to all achievements and successes reported in these updates. •The governance review tendering exercise has been completed, the chosen provider (Almond Tree Strategic Consulting) is in place and underway. •Annual review of OU-OU Students Association Relationship Agreement is underway and PVC (Students) has suggested moving this to a biennial review in the future.	•The University's Strategic Change Board was confirmed as discontinued following my update last quarter. We are not represented on the successor body, which is now considered a management group without representation from other sections of the University community. •Stakeholder mapping project is running slightly behind due to other priorities. •It appears that there will not be a negotiation with the Open University to agree the Subvention in 2021, it will simply be based on this year's figure plus inflation. •Staff are continuing to work from home until at least April 2021, with further review to take place in the New Year. At the time of writing, we are currently working on a survey for CEC members, Trustees and volunteers including CCRs. •There is work to do on OSL and OUSET governance: OSL reporting is being reviewed following BoT comments and a working group formed. OUSET needs to plan in a business cycle for 2021 including consideration of the criteria and future funding sources which remains a risk. •Brexit uncertainty around data protection remains. •Work to do on implementing new senior management structure and associated re-alignment of teams and reporting lines, prior to retirement of Deputy Chief Executive (Student and Staff Engagement) at end of February 2021. •Recruitment of Individual Representation Caseworker and Head of Executive Support and Staff Welfare (maternity cover) to be undertaken in New Year 2021. •Consideration of management development work paused at present due to other pressing matters.

OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Deputy Chief Executive (Finance & Resources) (F&R)	The basis for the core subvention allocation for 2021/2022 has been agreed so this enables us to begin early planning of 2021/22. A Shop Matters group, suggested by Tazneem Gardner, is meeting monthly to keep the financial performance of the trading operation under review, to review stock levels and product lines. The next step is to form a governance group to report up to the Board of Trustees and the first meeting is scheduled for January. The GDPR working group Terms of Reference and action plan have been approved and the action plan is progressing in line with expectations. The Data Protection Officer is working with various members of the group on actions to improve our compliance further. Progress has been made in addressing the previous CPD concerns.	The subvention allocation will no longer provide for growth beyond inflationary pressures, so it will be necessary to live within our means and/or put together robust business cases for the OU to consider additional funding. This will require staffing resource and expertise. Staff absences and contingency leave have impacted progress in some areas of the plan but now that the capacity issues are largely resolved, steps are being taken to progress outstanding actions. We need to understand the implications of a no deal Brexit on sales to customers based in the EU and also data protection implications for students residing in the EU as well as relationships with suppliers who store data in the EU. We are supported by our accountants and the OU warehouse in respect of the trading risk and by our DPO in respect of the data protection risks. Addressing these though will require staff resource and possibly funding to put required measures in place. On-going restricted access to campus due to the pandemic has caused some operational difficulties with the management of merchandise returns from customers. This is an issue for customer satisfaction and also for the accuracy of the reported stock valuation included in the monthly accounts. Working around this has been a necessary focus for myself and others and will continue to absorb some capacity for the foreseeable future.

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Deputy Chief Executive (Staff & Student Engagement) (S&SE)	Governance Review - Following a tender process and after successful interviews, a contract was agreed with Almond Consulting to undertake our long-awaited Governance Review. Work is starting this side of Christmas and consultants are already completing desk work on a review of the Association key documents. A first meeting is planned between the Facilitating Team and Consultants for December 15th, when the scope of the project will be agreed , details of methodology discussed and a timetable decided upon. The work will be completed across approximately 28 days to report in late Spring and will include observation work at January Central Executive Committee meeting and at the Trustees meeting in February. The Facilitating Team will meet with consultants at regular intervals throughout the project to ensure that work is on track and proceeding in the right direction. OneTeam - The Culture Change Working Group will be working shortly on a 'One Team' plan of action to be initiated in the New Year and to cover the remaining term of this Executive. Included in the plan will be a review of key relevant documents, policies and procedures. We will also be compiling a timetable to ensure that these documents are reviewed at set intervals into the future. Ideally the plan of action will include some external facilitation for 'One Team' related work. Through November the Working Group has revised the CEC Code of Conduct and compiled a set of One Team guiding principles to reflect the behaviours and attitudes that we wish to encourage. CEC members fed into this work and agreed a final draft which will be ratified at their January meeting. The Working Group has also been involved in helping to develop a draft Social Media policy that will be discussed at this meeting.	There is a small budget allocated for the One Team work and the Working Group will be discussing how to make the best use of these funds to call on some external facilitation.

OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Community	The standout event for the community team this quarter has been Freshers. Lara and Sandra worked tirelessly to make it a success and were supported by many members of staff and CEC colleagues. We saw a bumper turnout for events, and our volunteers, including our student leadership team put on a wonderful welcome for new students. Engagement with events, social media and our website saw a big upturn. This had a knock on impact of boosting membership for societies, clubs and groups. We also hope this milestone event will build confidence in volunteers, societies and clubs to continue to host more online events for students.	As student consultation on our student community activities continues, and with additional strategic planning ongoing within the team we have rescheduled two projects within the community business plan – namely the Meet-Ups and Societies projects. This will enable us to fully scope the projects and to take into account the findings of our consultation work.
Digital Comms	We have been pleased to welcome Sam back onto our team on a temporary basis and increase another officer's working week (James) to help maintain a consistent level of support for communications in the Association. A double Away Day gave us the opportunity to discuss challenges and opportunities for the team and different approaches to supporting with communications plans and using planning tools effectively when collaborating.

After a team effort we have completed the consultation phase of the website project. Over 100 requests have been categorised to inform the request to be sent to providers.

Heather has been working closely with teams and VP Engagement to coordinate appealing advent content for the Hoot, which is already outperforming last year in terms of number of readers.

Live trial taking place over collating events and promoting them with Vice President Engagement and Community in collaboration with Community Team. | Losing our Digital Communications Officer at this crucial stage of the Website Project has proved challenging. Although we are lucky to have gained temporary support from Sam who was previously supporting the Volunteer and Rep team. This also has the knock-on effect of increasing workload for the head of the team when it comes to planning recruitment and induction in the new year. Efforts have been made to prioritise recruitment so that it is carried out as promptly as possible, while still remaining a thorough process. This will be a valuable investment.
It is not unusual, but we have also dedicated time to contributing towards the action plan to deal with students using social media in unhelpful ways.
VP Engagement has been contributing towards a new Social Media Policy which should help us deal with similar issues in the future. |

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Executive Support & Staff Welfare	The first CEC and BoT meetings of the term were successfully delivered online with arrangements now underway for the January CEC where we will welcome the newly elected members from the By-Elections. Work is also underway for observers to attend CEC meetings remotely from January onwards. The updated Staff Handbook was approved by Trustees at their November meeting and has now been finalised and distributed to all staff. New procedures around probation, exit interviews and Management Team overtime are already being implemented. Successful inductions for two new members of staff, Reiss Miller, Projects & Events Officer (Volunteering and Representation) and Ellie Milnes-Smith, Representation and Volunteering Officer. Procedures for setting up new starters remotely are now properly in place to ensure they have the equipment they need when they are start, and the correct induction sessions scheduled to allow them to start with the Association smoothly.	Part of the new OU CSR System, Success Factors went live on 30 November. This is the HR and finance element of the project. It appears that many of our 'in-house' HR procedures may not be compatible with this new system so further meetings with the OU will be required on how best to make this system work for the Association. It may mean us changing ways we do things if additional admin rights cannot be given to us to allow us to continue with current procedures. This will also mean changes required to the new Handbook if some procedures are required to change.

OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Finance & Resources	Statutory accounts for all 3 entities were completed in accordance with the timetable. There were no control issues or recommendations raised by the auditors in respect of financial management of the Association or of the trading subsidiary, and only one recommendation made in relation to OUSET. The experience of the online audit process has led the team to make some adjustments to how we collect and electronically file supporting documentation to make it easier to populate the audit file next year. We continue to review our processes and procedures to strike a balance between effective control and supporting our people to do their jobs. There is more work to do here, but a month end checklist implemented from August is working well in steering the team through this process efficiently and effectively so that the monthly reports have been published earlier. The fortnightly catch ups with Vice President Administration are working well and his input to shaping our reporting is proving invaluable. The restructuring of the chart of accounts to manage the trading operation within the charity is also working well and was able to provide the required analysis to support the VAT return process at the end of October.	The new 2-part chart of accounts and budget monitoring tool introduced in August are presenting some challenges both for the Finance and Resources team and for budget holders. So, through the budget review process, we will seek to understand the difficulties, provide additional guidance and/or make changes to the structure where necessary. A no deal Brexit presents a risk to trading with our customers based in the EU, and we may be forced to pause sales to these customers until the requirements are clarified and we can put in place the necessary processes. We are following the advice of our accountants and liaising with the warehouse manager on arrangements for the import tax that customers will need to pay, the reporting of this and VAT implications.

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Operations	Completion of the closure processes of the OUSA Services Limited, followed by the successful move to the new entity now owned and managed by the Association. Governance review of the new OU Students Shop leading to the formation of the OU Student Shop Working Group (OUSA BoT representative, VP Admin, VP Community, DCE (Finance and Resource) and Head of Ops) Formation of the new staff working group called Shop Matters. This group is responsible for monitoring the day-to-day operations, looking into stock performance, stock levels and other challenges. No negative impact reported and continuation of the income generation through online only sales and promotion of the past exam papers. Maintenance of the target profit margins on merchandise resulting in good levels of income. Successful promotion of products and services via social media outlets resulting in an increased number of sales. Targeted advertising to graduates and Freshers. OUSET successfully processed 51 funding applications for October and November presentations, total fund allocation is 125K Appointment and induction of the new Trustees, including the appointment of the new Chair (Cath Brown) for 20-22 Term.	Brexit and its impact on sales outside of the UK. Work is underway to address the new regulations that may come into force in January 2021. This is still uncertain due to the ongoing negotiation between the UK and EU Drafting and formally agreeing the Terms of Reference for the new entity. OUSET still has one co-option vacancy. Getting OUSET Board to its full composition will help to complete review processes. OUSET financial sustainability. OUSET is looking at reviewing its funding criteria to reflect any changes within HE that may have come into force recently and to ensure OUSET's robustness. Limited access to the stock due to Covid resulting in delays in processing of exchanges and returns of orders.

OU Students ASSOCIATION

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Policy & Public Affairs	The Wales Student Volunteer Panel is now well established and contributing to policy discussions and consultations. The Students Association manifesto for Welsh elections in May 2021 has been drafted and is in the graphic design process currently. Discussions with Athabasca University Students' Union have progressed further and I have proposed to them a Memorandum of Understanding to agree how we will move forward together with plans for an international network of distance-learning student representative organisations. I have submitted further policy consultation responses, specifically to the OfS on 'digital poverty' and the NSS. Relationships with the OU's GEA team and the nations' public affairs managers continue to be strong and positive, providing valuable information and opportunities to advocate for our members. I have worked closely with the Students Association President to produce regular policy-related blogs, which have been published on The Hoot, and have future plans to publish externally (i.e. via Wonkhe/HEPI).	In person political party conferences were all cancelled in 2020 due to COVID19, reducing our opportunity to lobby and influence. The development of a UK-based community-of-practice has also been put on hold due to COVID19 and the impact this has had on student representative organisations. The plans for a Students Association podcast have not progressed, mainly due to doubts around the concept. This needs reconsideration.

OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Strategy & Research	The Annual Membership Survey was rolled out to 160,000 students in mid November during Student Voice Week and was promoted across all Association channels. We are grateful to the OU for their support with the data work and the email distribution and also to the many OU business units who promoted the survey. Responses as at the close date of 31/12/20 were 1,290 (0.80%). We worked with CEC members and OU colleagues to plan and deliver Student Voice Week, which included student consultations and a strategy session with the OU in Wales, and to contribute to a Student Voice evaluation framework. The team have supported a number of research and impact activities including conference evaluation, website surveys and analysis, consultations, Black History Month and Freshers. We are currently planning for the initiation of new projects within the Strategy Projects Portfolio in the new year, alongside the roll-out of project management tools.	We have experienced a few resource challenges in getting larger-scale business plan projects such as the Research Library and the Research Community of Practice up and running, due to the level of cross-team initiatives and activities that have been supported, but these have been rescheduled to get underway in the new year.

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Support	•All AL's were sent a slide to use in their tutorials with Association info. •Working with Staff Tutor to get more info into AL spaces. •Peer Support info on Help Centre has been updated •Peer Support forum on Students Association forums has also move to be more 'prominent'. •The shared guidelines for Groups is complete, next we want to work with Group Committee's to prepare a working document akin to a terms of reference that keeps their aims and objectives alive and specific to each Group. •We will be running sessions with the Groups round their CEC papers to come up with a template that works for them. This is to make it as easy as possible for the Groups to produce their papers. •Engagement with our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students is steadily climbing and we are holding the first BAME Group elections in the new year. We are confident with the right support the committee will continue to engage meaningfully with students. •78 members of the BAME Students Group. •PLEXUS changed their name to OU Pride after consulting membership. Current membership competition running for new logo. •Black History Month was action packed and saw a great many events take place. Evaluation of these is currently taking place. •We have just processed our 150th Library Study Volunteer request.	•We are seeing ever increasing requests from the OU to join Committees/Working Groups/Task and Finish Groups etc... Although these are important it obviously cuts down the time we have to work on other projects. •Take up for the OU Pride (PLEXUS) Committee was greatly reduced in comparison with how it's been in previous years. We are planning to work with those who are elected to re-engage with members and encourage a higher turnout for co-options/by-election. •Plans for further engagement with Students in Secure Environments has halted due to covid-19 as many prisons retain tougher restrictions.

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Volunteering & Representation	New Terms of Reference approved by the Board of Trustees for the Appointments Committee, induction of new Appointments Committee (AC) including EDI, unconscious bias and fair recruitment training. Senate appointments made by new AC following recommendations from the Board of Trustees. Recruitment for new Central Committee Reps and Senate Reference Group members with the new AC to fill some of the vacancies across the governance structure. We now have only one vacancy on SRG (NI). Newly elected Central Executive Committee inductions completed, including a successful team 'away' day to bond and explore projects as a new team. Central Exec members continue to be able to access support and training through Nicky on our team. Induction of two new staff to the volunteer team; Reiss and Ellie. Supported the completion of the written student submission to the QAA and provision of a video submission to the assessors. Streamlined the process to gain access to papers and sharepoint for student reps with the University governance team. Supported a number of sessions as well as the planning and delivery of Student Voice Week 2020. Recruitment and induction of our new Student Experience Link role, this role attracted 77% new students to the Association who have not volunteered with us before. Team continue to offer briefings to representatives. The new monthly rep huddle regularly attracts 30+ representatives with 44 attending out October session. Tyrell Golding attended November's session with great success, Tim Plyming (Head of Micro credentials) will attend in January. Shared a range of media and stories through Trustee week in November.	Delays on some project due to loss of Sam in our team and also delay in Ellie's start date. Will be amending business plans to reflect this. Face to face volunteering opportunities continue to be on hold which has caused a dip in volunteer numbers. With more student volunteers accessing @open accounts we have more to check completion of mandatory training and also need to review the relevancy, given that the GDPR training is OU focused and all other training is prescribed by the OU and may not be relevant for us. As volunteers continue to volunteer from home, we are working to offer ways to engage, but this is a continuous challenge and we are always looking at ways to support individuals to take breaks when they need and to reach out if they need support. Need to reopen recruitment for certain committees which are still low on numbers. E.g. EEE and Access only have 1 out of 3 positions filled.

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