

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

27 – 28 April 2019

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

The CEC 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:-

- President (page 2)
- Deputy President (page 6)
- Vice President Administration (page 10)
- Vice President Community (page 12)
- Vice President Education (page 14)
- Vice President Equality & Diversity (page 17)
- Vice President Media & Campaigns (page 19)
- Vice President Student Support (page 23)
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- Area Association Representative (AAR) for England (page 32)
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- Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Business & Law (FBL) (page 39)
- Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Wellbeing, Education & Language Studies (WELS) (page 40)
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REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

This report covers the period 1 January – 5 April and is more of an overview than a complete list.

Specific Concerns raised with the OU (not covered elsewhere)

- Exceptionally poor handling of students' attempts to book on laboratory schools
- Insufficiently knowledgeable advisers in student support teams
- Implementation of tutorial recordings policy
- Potential impacts of the new Associate Lecturer contract on students

Media and Communications

- Video on dealing with getting behind/ not feeling motivated (Facebook Live)
- Video with Pro-Vice-Chancellor – Students on NSS
- Student Hub Live for February Freshers
- Student Hub Live on Student Satisfaction
- Blog on Wonkhe site on the “secret life of distance learning students”
<https://wonkhe.com/blogs/some-students-lives-are-more-secret-than-others/>

Board of Trustees

I continue to be acting as Chair of the Board of Trustees until our external Chair is recruited. There has been one further Board meeting as well as numerous forum discussions. Several requests for use of discretionary funding have been approved, including ones for attendance at Associate Lecturer Staff Development events to promote awareness of the Association amongst ALs, and a plan for a Volunteer Celebration dinner in the summer.

Strategy

The Association has started work on reviewing its strategy. The project progress is being overseen by the Strategy Project Steering Group. Work so far feeding into this includes a student consultation, a survey of Central Committee Representatives and Senate Reference Group, and workshops with the Central Executive Committee, Trustees and the Association's staff team, including a Strategy Development Weekend in March. This is now being taken forward by a series of working groups.

Specific committees with the OU that I co-chair (with PVC Students)

Student Voice Steering Group

This group discussed updates on the Student Engagement projects (including the Student Engagement website; greater visibility of the latter was agreed to be needed!). It also considered the report received from the Student Voice Mapping project; this did not really achieve what had been hoped but there is some useful data in there that can be interrogated further.

Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group

This has had three further meetings, in which final planning took place for the Student Satisfaction event, the purpose and terms of reference of the group were reviewed (we

had concerns that it was not fulfilling its intended purpose) and an overview of the relevant activity currently taking place in the University was obtained.

Meetings

Again, not an exhaustive list.

Induction meetings

- New Graduate School director
- New Interim STEM Executive Dean

One-off specific meetings with Association office staff and CEC

- Planning for event to improve OU staff's knowledge of the Association
- Planning how to increase our reach across the OU
- Planning for, and discussing different approaches at, the Bath Residential School

One-off OU meetings, either about specific issues with individuals or groups

- To discuss how information is given about tutorials, and how this could be improved
- To discuss what improvements could be made in Student Recruitment and Support Centres (SRSCs)
- Student Voice Website
- With Strategy Office, to discuss appropriate measures for the university to evaluate how it is improving student success
- Subvention meetings (with VP Administration, Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive (Finance)) to negotiate our block grant from the university for next academic year
- Workshop on offline and alternative formats (aimed to prevent the issues of this year recurring)
- To discuss student involvement in validation
- To discuss potential eSTEEeM project on barriers faced by LGBT+ students
- To discuss developments in the Open MA/MSc
- With the Marketing Insight Team

Regular "catch up" meetings with the OU formally, and with specific OU staff; these happen at various intervals (from monthly to quarterly)

- UCU (to discuss matters of common interest and receive advance notice of any matters likely to affect students)
- Strategy Office
- Government and External Affairs
- Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Students
- Director, Students
- Research and Academic Strategy
- Senior Manager, Student Voice
- Vice Chancellor
- Careers and Employability

Regular meetings with CEC and Association staff

- With Deputy President, Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive
- With Chief Executive
- With Sue McCabe
- With the Strategy Project Steering Group

OU Committees and Groups

- Senate
- Senior Team
- Referencing Project Implementation Group (*this is aiming to review the OU's referencing system to make it easier and more consistent for students*)
- eSTEEeM Conference working group (this is to plan the part of the eSTEEeM Conference about student engagement, and to discuss further student involvement in the conference)
- Technology Steering Group
- eTMA system replacement
- Core Systems Replacement (CSR) Reference Group
- Enhancement Themes in Scotland
- SEaM Working Group
- SEaM Management Group
- Education Committee
- PVC Students Advisory Group
- Student Voice Monitoring and Evaluation Group
- Recognition of Prior Learning focus group
- Substituting on the Student Experience Committee
- Substituting on the FASS SRSC Strategic Group meeting

Other events

OU seminars and conferences

- On how a different approach to designing modules can improve the student experience
- On recognition of prior learning
- On the use of analytics to identify and support students at risk of not succeeding
- On working with students to improve the learning experience
- On a “social justice model for assessment”
- On “patchwork assessment”
- On student induction
- Employability scholarship

Sector-wide consultation events and conferences

- QAA consultation event on “grade inflation” in the university sector and what should be done about it
- TEF consultation event
- NCVO Conference
- Enhancing Student Engagement conference
- Wonkhe “Secret Life of Students” conference (at which I spoke)

OU Recruitment/ Interviewing

- Interviewing for Interim STEM Executive Dean
- Longlisting for new Vice Chancellor

Meeting external bodies/ visitors

- Attending the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) visit to the OU in Wales and contributing to discussions
- Meeting visitors from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator
- Meeting the Universities Minister
- Meeting the Vice Chancellor of South Bank university

Miscellaneous

- Compering our University Challenge team's play off against the previous year's team, and a PhD student team
- Speaking at the OU's Student Satisfaction event
- Running a stand at AL Staff Development event
- Attending Students Association Research Symposium

Student Consultation Events

- Attending Milton Keynes and Bristol student consultation events, contributing to the Association presentation and co-leading the afternoon discussion between attending students and Association student representatives and staff

Other ongoing engagement with students

I continue to be a frequent visitor to the "Talk to Your Students Association" forum and to the main Open University group on Facebook, as well as various other forums and groups connected with the Association and the OU. I also use my own social media (Twitter and my page) to engage and promote Association events. I have also attended local meet ups where possible

. Other Association events

- Ran an online "pub quiz" open to all OU students as a New Year event
- Ran a Societies themed online quiz as part of February Freshers

Cath Brown
President

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT

It's been a positive start to 2019 and as I reflect at the last 8 months as Deputy

President, I realise time is flying by and the Central Executive Committee (CEC) of 2018 – 2020 are a 3rd of the way through our term. You can read some of ‘highlights from our first 6 months’ highlights [here](#).

I am grateful for the continued support from Wendy Burrell (Deputy Chief Executive) and continue to work closely with Cath Brown (President). I have monthly team meetings with Cath Brown, Rob Avann and Wendy Burrell and regular catch-ups with other members of the CEC. I have had the pleasure of attending some fantastic events and one-off meetings, some of which I will describe in this report; as well as my regular and quarterly meetings (listed at end of report).

I have given some ‘*Adobe Connect Training*’ to the new Chair of PLEXUS and some Club admin and have held a couple of ‘*Ad-Hoc Refresher Adobe Connect Training*’ on request. During the absence of a Vice President Community, I coordinated/hosted ‘*Community Drop-in Sessions*’, supported some of the ‘*Community*’ work (e.g. ‘Clubs’, ‘Residential School work and ‘Freshers’ events).

Freshers was held between 21st January and 1st February 2019. I attended the ‘*Welcome to the OU Students Association*’ Facebook event and hosted as ‘*Freshers Special Community Drop-in Session*’. I supported each of the Faculty Association Representatives (FAR) in their individual ‘*Faculty Freshers Events*’ for WELS (Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies), FASS (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences) and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). In the absence of FAR for FBL (Faculty of Business and Law) I co-hosted an ‘FBL Freshers Event’ with other Business or Law Central Committee Representatives (CCR).

The result of by-elections was announced on 13th March 2019. I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate our new Vice President Community ‘Anca Seaton’ and our new Faculty Representative for the Faculty of Business and Law ‘Matthew Porterfield’; along with our new Student Trustees ‘Adelaide Ribaud’, ‘Cinnomen McGuigan’ and ‘John Paisley’. I am looking forward to working with them on the CEC and BOT (Board of Trustees) respectively.

I attended a ‘*Strategy Development Workshop*’ on the 2nd and 3rd March 2019 along with other CEC members, Trustees and Association Staff members. We reviewed the Students Association vision, mission and strategic focus areas. We looked at emerging themes through feedback previously received (e.g. freshers, student consultation forum, student representative surveys, association forums etc). The project has moved on to look at key strategy areas which has been divided up into smaller working groups and I have been given a place on the ‘*Student Support Working group*’.

Representation Review

I continue to work with Peter Cowan (Vice President Education) along with Sam Harding (Head of Student Voice) on a full review of ‘*Student Representation*’ (specifically ‘*Central Committee Representatives*’). We have been collating and analysing the feedback from the Committee Staff Survey, OU Staff Survey and Central Committee Representative Survey; and will be releasing the OU Student Survey to the wider student community shortly. [further information in ‘representation review’ CEC Paper]

Postgraduate Research Students (P G R Students)

I regularly attend the ‘*Postgraduate Research Students - Graduate School Liaison Group*’ (PGR - GS Liaison Group) to discuss PGR issues, provision and work. On the

5th February 2019 I attended a PGR Induction for on the for the February intake of PHD Students. I have regular meetings with Amy Fergusson (Projects Officer, Community) to plan our work for postgraduate research students.

We have planned some pilot themed events for PGR students, working alongside the Graduate School and specific OU units. We hosted our first themed PGR Student event on Careers and Employability in the hub on campus; which was supported by the Careers and Employability Service, Personal Development Unit and the Graduate School. 20 PGR students attended and were able to get free 'headshot' photographs taken by a professional photographer (funded by the Graduate school) that they can use for their research or career profiles. Our second themed event on 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' is planned for the '25th April'.

Volunteering Update

In January I attended some planning sessions for our 'pilot' student led homelessness project called 'Donate & Donuts'. This project was led by Sarah Jones our F A R (Faculty Association Representative) for WELS (Wellbeing, Education and Languages) and held in Milton Keynes on the 28th January 2019 from 2pm until 8pm. It was a [successful event](#) attended by over 100 people and we collected over 2500 items for the homeless. We spent the next day counting our collection and organising the items for distribution to Bus Shelter MK, MK Soup Run, Help our Homeless MK and the MK Winter Night Shelter.

Work is continuing on the '*Investing in Volunteers*' accreditation and we are on track for a submission to panel I July 2019. Heather Allen N C V O (National Council of Volunteer Organisations) will be starting face to face interviews about 'volunteering at the association'; the interviewees will be randomly selected from volunteers, staff and trustees. We have had a successful submission for CAN Conference on '*Investing in volunteers*', the feedback received through this activity will feed into this work. [Please see '*JiSC CAN Conference 2019*' below]

We have received approval from the Board of Trustees for Discretionary funding for a '*Volunteer Celebration Event*:' to be held in June 2019 (date to be confirmed). [Further volunteering updates can be found a separate '*Volunteering*' CEC paper]

Culture Review

We have had a successful submission for CAN Conference on '*Engaging Students in Change - Culture Change Workshop*', the feedback received through this activity will feed into this work. [Please see '*JiSC CAN Conference 2019*' below]
[There is a separate '*Student Association Culture & Related Issues*' CEC paper for more information]

JISC CAN Conference 2019

Change Agents' Network (CAN) Conference 2019 around '*The Evolving Landscape of Staff-Student Partnership*' on the 29–30 May 2019 is being held at the OU Campus for the first time. There will be Representatives from all areas of Education from across a variety of Establishments, with contributions from colleges and universities. I put together 2 submissions around Culture Change and Investing in Volunteers, they were both accepted and are part of the conference programme.

1. “Why ‘Investing in Volunteers?’” - We will be discussing ideas and working together on how to shape future success for our volunteers. The main workshop will focus on understanding the best ways to ‘invest in students as volunteers’, to help students position themselves for success.

2. ‘Engaging Students in Change - Culture Change Workshop’ - We will work on key areas to understand/improve current culture and address areas of concern; identifying ways to work with students to create a unified ethos, build motivation and effect positive change.

I will co-presenting Billy Docherty’s (FAR FASS) CAN Conference submission ‘Diversity in Education’

Student Experience Discussions

I have been hosting dedicated monthly ‘Student Experience Discussions’ sessions with Amelia Gackowska (Vice President Student Voice); which is an opportunity to hear about the student journey and the different experiences that impact it, both positively and negatively. Feedback will be collated from general areas of concern, and added to other ‘Student Experience’ feedback collected through a New dedicated student-focused [‘Student Voice’ Forum](#) and [New ‘Student Voice’ Feedback Form](#) (which can be anonymised).

This feedback will be considered and prioritised (e.g. items of concern or to celebrate success from across the wider student body). They will be added to a ‘Student Voice’ information paper, which will be added to the Agenda of the ‘Student Experience Committee’ (a mid-tier governance committee) for discussion. We will be sharing this paper with the wider student body and then extract the relevant information for the Student Voice section of our website and close the feedback loop for students. This feedback may also be channelled into other specific areas too, to inform the work of our Student Representatives and shape our Student Voice Work. Amelia and I are coordinating this work, with support from the OU Students Association Student Voice Staff Team.

Future sessions will be held on the 1st of each Month at the same time (7.30pm - 9.00pm) in our dedicated [Student Voice Adobe Connect room](#). Please get involved, get your ‘Student Voice’ heard! The more students that feedback, the more evidence we have to share with the University.

Miscellaneous Events I have attended

25 January	SeGA AC Workshop – Student Voice
6 February	Widening Access in WELS event
11 February	Offline and Alternative Formats
11 February	Open and inclusive special interest group meeting
14 February	Students as Partners Workshop
15-16 February	Residential School
4 March	eTMA Vendor Session
23 March	Student Consultation – Dublin
28 March	SPARQ Conference in Edinburgh
2 April	Institutional recommendations from draft QME report
2 April	Student Voice monitoring and evaluation

OU Students Association Working Board/Groups/Committees

1. 'Appointment Committee', 2. 'Board of Trustee', 3.'Controller Advisory Panel', 4. 'Culture Change Working Group', 5. 'Election Review Group', 6. 'Fitness to Volunteer Working Group', 7. 'Inclusion Meeting', 8. Chair of the 'O S L (Open University Services Limited – OU Shop) Board of Directors, 9. 'Representation Review Meeting', 10.'Senate Reference Group', 11.'Student Led Project Panel', 12. 'Wales Volunteer Panel', 13.'CEC Strategy Working Group (Student Support)

Open University Working Groups/Committees

1. 'Enhanced Employability & Career Progression Steering Group' 2. 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group', 3.'Honorary Degree Committee', 4.'Induction Working Group', 5. 'Postgraduate Research Students – Graduate School Liaison Group, '6.'Prevent Steering Group', 'Referencing Implementation Group', 7.'Student Consultation Management Group', 8.'Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group', 9.'Student Voice Steering Group'.

Stephanie Stubbins
Deputy President

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT ADMINISTRATION

It has not been long since the January meeting of the Central Executive Committee (C E C) but there has been a fair amount happening as regards the Student Association, some of it very public as you will see from the other Officer reports and some more behind the scenes which certainly describes the VP Administration role.

The most important dates in my diary have been taken up by two subvention meetings. The first of these meetings were with Chris Rooke, Director of Academic Services and then with Liz Marr, Acting PVC Students. Unfortunately, before anything could be agreed we had to bring Liz up to speed with university block grants (Subvention process) and how the Association worked. Nevertheless, these meetings went very well thanks to the support from Alison, Rob and Cath. It looks as though we have the three years subvention deal back on the table and they have agreed to put in writing that the University will back us should anything go wrong.

I took part in the joint Trustee-CEC strategy weekend and have subsequently been appointed to the working group concentrating on relations with the OU as part of the strategy development. I have been working on the Elections review and looking at a CEC Code of Conduct both of which are the subject of papers to be delivered at this meeting. There are also a couple of amendments needed to the By-laws and I will bring these changes to the CEC and Trustees for discussion and approval at a future meeting. I also discussed changes to the Volunteering Policy with Head of Student Volunteering, which you will hear about at this meeting.

I took part in the Student Consultation at Milton Keynes on March 22nd and the afternoon went down very well with the students. We gained a few ideas from them and it was a very valuable exercise hearing different students views from also areas of their journey with the OU. I believe a paper will be issued in the near future.

I took part in a meeting discussing the student voice website, which was very enlightening. You will hear more about this from other officers' reports. I also took part in a workshop on improving PG induction resources and experience, as a student rep who is currently studying for an MA. This was very useful as I was able to input my experience as a graduate becoming a post graduate student, what I found helpful and what was not so helpful, it turned out that there are a lot of really helpful resources out there, but the students are not necessarily aware of them. The Library will create a page on the website where all the necessary resources will be linked. There was also talk of PG student taking part in a video. They have asked for volunteers I have been tasked with trying to find PG students interested in helping out. I still have a few things to iron out like expenses, but I will be putting a notice on the forum for anyone who is interested. When I have more details, I will let you know.

I have attended a Trustees meeting and various online discussions. Full details are available in the minutes and the Trustees report to the CEC.

I was unable to attend the Societies meeting, so I am waiting for the minutes to let me know what happened, but in the last meeting we were being very proactive with helping them to get up to speed with their compliance with the Data Protection Act . I have attended meetings with OSL and OUSET.

Key Meetings since last Central Executive Committee Meeting:

5 February 2019	Student voice Website
5 February 2019	Pre meeting and OUSA Subvention Meeting
8 February 2019	Board of Trustees meeting
27 February 2019	Student consultation briefing
3 March 2019	CEC Project meeting
22 March 2019	Consultation event
26 March 2019	Changes to Volunteer Policy meeting
26 March 2019	OSL meeting
27 March 2019	Improving PG induction resources and Experience
9 April 2019	Ouset meeting
23 April 2019	Charter Day.

Upcoming Meetings

10 May 2019	Board of Trustees meeting
2 July 2019	Audit Planning meeting

Caroline Cowan
Vice President Administration

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT COMMUNITY

This is my first report as Vice President Community. It covers a sort period of time, from 13th March (elections results being announced) to 9th April, 2019 (time of writing).

After the initial euphoria after the elections results were declared, the panic set in. There was a flurry of emails about Induction, writing a profile for the website, completing training courses, etc. Being on the Central Executive Committee isn't new to me, but I noticed it is harder to make a start while everybody else is in full flow. My previous experience on the CEC helped me get up to speed in most areas and plan my activities for the next few months and beyond.

Induction

As touched briefly above, I attended an online Induction session run by Beth Metcalfe, our Head of Volunteering. It was a novel experience for me, as I was in a noisy service station somewhere on the M5. It went really well and it got me up to speed with the latest changes in the Students Association staff and my own position.

OSL (OUSA Services Limited) aka OU Students Shop

I attended a face to face meeting of the OSL Board of Directors. We discussed the changes in the postal charges calculation for international orders, reviewed the existing board membership structure and the warehousing charges for processing of orders and graduation ceremonies. We also discussed the current financial position and agreed on the next steps, and took into consideration the decisions made in the online part of the meeting the week before. But by far, the most exciting part of the meeting was about the OU 50th Anniversary Project run in partnership with the OU Development Office. We had the chance to see the new merchandise celebrating OU's 50th birthday, which is going to be available in the webshop soon. Keep your eyes peeled!

OU Student Consultation – London

I attended the OU Student Consultation meeting in London with VP Media and Campaigns, Fanni Zombor. It was a good meeting, the facilitator kept the discussion on topic and encouraged students to contribute to the meeting. The afternoon session was a presentation of the Students Association, who we are, what we do, how we support students and create a vibrant student community. I am pleased to report that almost all students stayed for the afternoon session, were very interested in what we had to say, used the "Student Idea" cards to let us know if there was anything they wanted us to do, or wanted more information about meetups, for example, or how to get involved.

Community Drop Ins

I carried on the online Community Drop In started during Steph Stubbins's term. There were some teething problems (mainly due to my laptop deciding to do its own thing, and not what I wanted). My aim is to try and introduce themes to these drop ins, as a conversation starter. I would like to involve other aspects of the Students Association, for example clubs and societies, or tips for a healthy body and mind, etc.

Student Community Working Group

The Central Executive Committee have several working groups covering the different areas of our strategy. I am the CEC lead in the Student Community Working group, together with other CEC members and also members of staff. The forum has been set up for us, and we are now starting the discussions about finding three strategic objectives, find the stakeholders and think about any additional insight/data/research we need to add in order to support our strategic goals.

Bath Residential School

The Bath Residential School runs for 5 weeks from 6th July, 2019. The Student Association will have a team of volunteers each weekend (usually one lead rep and 2 resi school volunteers), and they meet and greet at registration, have a short slot in the plenary to tell students about the Students Association and our activities at Bath, also run a merchandise stall and the quiz.

The call for volunteers for the Bath Residential School will go out towards the end of next week (w/e 21st April, 2019) and close three weeks later.

Meetings and events attended

21 March	Community Drop In (online)
26 March	OSL Board of Directors meeting (campus)
26 March	Community Team Meeting (campus)
30 March	London Student Consultation
1 April	National Council for Voluntary Organisations Conference London

Future Commitments

13 April	Associate Lecturers Professional Development Conference – stall holder with Cath Brown (near Birmingham)
16 April	Chemistry Resi School – Students Association and Alchemy stall holder (campus)
16 April	Student Community Strategy Meeting (online)
18 April	Community Drop In (online)
23 April	Charter Day (campus)
23 April	OU Students Virtual Choir (initial meeting) (campus)
8-9 May	eSTEEeM Conference (campus)
9 May	Training for meet up hosts (online)
10-12 May	M500 Weekend (Students Association Stall Holder) (Kents Hill)
11 May	Societies Committee (campus)
17-19 May	Science Revision Weekend (Students Association Stall Holder) (Staffordshire)

Anca Seaton
Vice President Community

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT EDUCATION

It has been a busy three months since the last Central Executive Committee (C E C) meeting with many internal and external meetings attended as well as the usual C E C business which goes on between meetings.

Meetings attended were:

Curriculum Forum (Monthly)

This considers the institutional aspects of curriculum and its sustainability as laid out in the curriculum plan. Items discussed in this quarter included Employability in Curriculum (in response to the Enhancing Employment and Career Progression working group), Flexible Study Intensity and discussing the Membership and Terms of Reference for the Curriculum Portfolio Panel which will replace the Forum from May. This will be the advisory group for the Vice Chancellor Executive (Academic) and will, after some concerns expressed over the initial membership, include a student rep (V P Education) in the main panel.

FutureLearn Postgraduate Courses (Monthly)

This is in a 'test and learn' phase until Spring 2020. The first module, H880, is in progress and it is envisaged that three more (two from F B L and one from FASS) will be started in Autumn 2019. These three are due to enter academic governance as part of the module approval process shortly.

Quality Monitoring and Enhancement – Board of Studies Reports and Review Meetings.

This has been part of an ongoing project to review the process and to identify areas where students can play an active part in developing these. Some recommendations will go to the Student Experience Committee and Cath, Steph and I were able to comment on the institutional report draft before it goes to that Committee.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education Accreditation (monthly) -

Meetings to date have been held to draft the self study document which will be presented to the accreditation panel. As well as my comments as part of the working group, a workshop was held after the January Senate Reference Group meeting and comments from there were also fed into the latest draft document.

Post-Graduate Research Student / Graduate School Liaison (monthly) – we have discussed issues arising from Post-graduate research students and provide support as needed.

Senate Reference Group / Senate (quarterly)

A fairly quiet agenda for the most recent meeting but that did not get in the way of a long discussion over the Academic Performance paper in particular. A new and clearer format made it easier to identify areas for discussion at both S R G and Senate. The S R G meeting was helpful in providing the student members of Senate with ideas to carry forward to the full meeting where, among others, we highlighted the recording of tutorials, student representation on the A L Contract implementation teams and taught postgraduate fees.

Student Experience at the end of Module (SEaM) working group (monthly)

I was invited by Cath to join her on a sub-group of this relating to the questions about tutors as part of the wider review of SEaM. We have reviewed the questions and made some short term recommendations for this year only. A more detailed review is needed for permanent changes.

Other Projects and Meetings

I was also invited to attend some demonstrations of potential replacements for the electronic submission of T M As and exams (setting and marking) and attended the meeting to produce the high level requirements for the latter. At the time of writing the final meeting of this phase, the assessment of the exam systems, is still to take place with a final report to go to the Vice Chancellor's Executive at the end of the month.

Within the Student Voice Team I attended the Research Seminar on March 7th where some details of a student led research project were presented. I also took part on a discussion panel at the end of the session. I also attended a Central Disciplinary Committee (C D C) Rep Development Day where C D C reps identified areas for better support of student reps involved on this committee and also a discussion session with the Head of Student Casework which included practical issues such as student attendance at these meetings in person. I took part in the 'I am a student rep' session both in the video Q & A session and inviting the P V C Students to take part – which she was happy to do so answering questions on the value student reps add to the University.

The main ongoing project within my remit at present is the Representation Review and a paper highlighting progress to date is part of the C E C agenda.

I was, along with Cath, a student rep at the University's face-to-face consultation in Bristol and was delighted with the turnout. A clear vindication of comments made by Association reps in the South West regarding the lack of such opportunities in the past. It was a good day with a lot of interesting discussion and valuable comment regarding the Association collected by the Student Voice team.

I have also held regular catch-up sessions with Sam, Allan and Hannah either during my visits to campus or via Skype. As Chair of CAP I have had discussions with the Head of Operations regarding the upcoming forum review and this is also summarised in a paper to the C E C.

And not strictly within my remit but one of the most enjoyable volunteer roles within the Association I attended the Barbican Graduation ceremonies on March 22nd and 23rd.

External Events

It has also been a busy time for external events. It is important that, as an organisation, the Association has a visible profile in the Higher Education sector. One way to do that is to be there at National H E events and many C E C members have been involved in these.

My contribution has been:

Quality Assurance Agency Enhancement Themes – I attended a one day conference in Edinburgh looking at how students can use data to support their representation to their University.

The Student Engagement Partnership – Cath and I (as students) and Pooja and Sammi (as presenters) attended this conference which was looking at how student representation and partnership can enhance the student experience.

Quality Assurance Agency Grade Inflation Consultation Workshop – this is currently a 'hot' topic as the number of 1st class and 2:1 degrees awarded across the Higher Education sector has risen dramatically since 2012. There are varying reasons for this but in order to ensure credibility that a qualification and its grade remain meaningful the Q A A led a consultation into this and a Code of Practice for higher Education Institutions to ensure public confidence in the quality of degree awards. Subsequently Cath, who also attended, and I drafted a formal response to the consultation.

Peter Cowan
Vice President Education

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

This Report briefly outlines my activities since the date of my last Report to the C E C. Note: Unfortunately, since my last report, my husband and I are still dealing with the sad news we received in December and are also now going through the process of selling and buying property for my 92-year-old Mum. Therefore, my work for and on behalf of OU students has (and is) rather patchy so this report is a brief one and only contains ongoing items and brief details of activity for January, February, March and upcoming commitments in April 2019.

The OU's Race Equality Charter Mark Application

This application was due to be submitted in February 2019 but due to a low response to both staff and student surveys, this has now been pushed back to July 2019. New surveys have been sent out and I'm attending meetings via Skype and on Campus when I can. Ongoing.

Mental Health Awareness

The OU and the Students Association are very keen to promote the importance of students' mental health wellbeing and the support that's available. A first meeting took place in July 2018 and VP Student Support and I have had a couple of meetings since then with the OU. Unfortunately, the person we were liaising with in the OU has retired so we're meeting with the new person at the end of April to further discuss the ways in which we can work together on this important issue. Ongoing.

Students in Secure Environments (SiSE)

Currently working with the SiSE team on a 'study buddy' project and reinstating the issuance of a redacted copy of the OU Students Magazine which can be sent to OU students in secure environments. Also, having discussions with the SiSE team about working with the Prison Reform Trust to explore how organisations promote opportunities for people with lived experience of prison. Ongoing.

The Open University's EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) Objectives

There are a number of these which are currently being re-written. The link to the OU's Equality page is [here](#) for more info. A couple of these objectives which I'm directly involved in are:

Objective 1c – Improve equality declaration data for students

The rationale for this OU-led 'Objective' is to improve the monitoring data to allow the OU to measure participation and outcomes for students across a wider range of characteristics and circumstances. The OU says: 'This will help ensure that all individuals, especially those who have not declared their status on their student profile, feel able to access and participate in their learning experience with the OU. Ongoing.'

BaME – Black and Minority Ethnic students

Because of the degree-award-attainment gap in respect of BaME students, I'm involved with a number of activities on subject. I attended an all-day workshop last July which

focussed on ACCESS students and this issue was promoted during Black History Month last October by the Association's Student Support Team. Ongoing.

Assessment Exceptions Group – Disability/Reasonable Adjustments

Was invited to join this group by Peter Taylor - Professor of Organic Chemistry STEM, Life Health & Chem Science – after working with him on the Open Board of Studies committee. Prof. Taylor heads the team who work with students across all Faculties who submit special circumstances forms after an exam or EMA (End of Module Assessment). Ongoing.

Daily online activity

- Participating in Association working groups
- Dealing with enquiries from students and other student issues relevant to my role
- Attending meetings via Skype and Adobe Connect
- Participating in online events – currently a joint DSG (Disabled Students Group) and OU event on Facebook about using technology whilst studying with the OU.

Diary

1 – 3 March CEC Strategy weekend at Kents Hill
22 Apr – 3 May CEC weekend and other meetings on Campus and at Kents Hill

Monthly Meet-Ups

West Sussex OU Students Coffee 'n Chat at Haskins Roundstone Garden Centre, Angmering – Monthly when possible

- March 30
- May 11

Cherry Day
Vice President Equal Opportunity

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT MEDIA & CAMPAIGNS

The Hoot

The relaunch of the OU Students Magazine was by far the biggest project I was involved in/ leading on over the last few months. There is already some information in my previous report on the first steps of the Magazine. After the approval from CEC, most of January was spent by exploring the WordPress tool and site builder to create a basic site which could then later be changed and shaped to our needs. It was clear that the space was primarily for students to engage with each other. After the site was built, I then went to the CEC on our forums to ask for feedback on different parts of it every week. With their feedback, and the involvement of those who initially signed up for the development project, we shaped the Magazine to make it appealing to students with the help of a Magazine project staff team, who carried out the operational bits. This mainly took place in February through to mid- March.

Whilst the design was being done, other aspects of the project were started as well. This included the privacy policy, setting up social media accounts for the site, creating a newsletter for the site, writing the submission and writers' guidelines, making the site accessible, testing it for any issues and creating the gamification for the site. A group of staff and myself worked on these bits.

After finishing the majority of the above work, the site was opened to CEC, groups and societies for testing on the 22nd of March, which allowed for any last minute changes to it.

At the time of writing this report, The Hoot (<https://thehootstudents.com/>) has just been officially launched and we've had 345 users and 1,196 views on the first day. More information on the first few weeks of statistics will be shared with the CEC on CEC weekend.

The second phase of the project will begin soon, which will include more testing of accessibility and setting up some other functionalities on the site as well as looking through everything we have done so far.

DiSC Implementation Group

I have been a regular attendee of this group. It looks at the bigger picture in term of digital skills both for staff and students. The group works to find ways to help people gain the necessary skills they need for their studies life and employment. It also takes part in finding ways to reach people to let them know these opportunities are available and tries to find other parts of the University where there is already some of this skill training happening.

CSR Staff and Student Reference Group

I am one of the student representatives on this reference group. We receive updates about the different elements of the project and are provided the opportunity to challenge and question the product owners as well as suggesting direction for the project.

CSR eTMA and exam demos

I have been asked by Cath Brown to attend a demo for both of the systems. Throughout the sessions we found out about the company, the product they had to offer us and we were given the chance to question functionalities important to us about all the software. Apart from the demos I attended, there were other sessions involving different product

owners, and Cath attended the wrap-up session for the eTMA system while Peter Cowan attended the exam logistics one.

Campaigns and External Engagement working group

After the Strategy Weekend in March, I have been appointed to be the CEC lead on the campaigns and external engagement working group alongside Sam Harding from the staff team. At the time of writing this report discussions have just begun, but the working group is due to give an update on the key focus area later on in April CEC weekend.

London Student Consultation

I attended the London Consultation event in March with our newly elected VP Community. During the day we discussed various subjects including plagiarism and assessment. There was a wide variety of opinions which made the discussion quite interesting and we also had the chance to promote some of the work we do for students. Overall, we received good feedback about the work we do and got some good suggestions on other activities the Association could run.

CAN Conference at the OU 2019

The CAN Conference this year will be held at The Open University. I am the nominated student to take part in the decision making and shaping of the conference. The conference has the theme of the staff-student relationship. As part of the panel, we judged the proposals and decided which ones will be accepted to present at the June conference.

As part of the conference at the time of writing this report, we are recruiting students to help on the 2 days in exchange for having the opportunity to participate in the conference as well.

Student Panel at CAN Conference

I have been very kindly asked to lead on the student panel discussion at the CAN Conference 2019. The student panellists are yet to be confirmed, but the discussion will be focusing on the meaning of staff-student partnership for students and how consistent students' experiences are in this area.

Changes in my staff team

Kate Dungate, current Head of Digital Communications will be going on maternity leave in mid-April and our current member of staff, Heather Bloomer will be covering the head role in Kate's absence. The team is still recruiting for the technical officer role (now renamed Digital Communications Optimisation Officer) and they will begin interviewing for Heather's cover shortly.

Future EdTech Conference June 2019

I have been invited by Future EdTech to take part in their student panel in their June Conference alongside a few more students from different backgrounds. I am hoping this appearance will help the wider education sector understand what studying with the OU means.

Council interview with students and staff

I have taken on this project from Kate Dungate. I have started working with the OU Communications team and the OU's Council to create an engaging interview to help raise the profile of Council both for staff and students. It is intended to be a video piece, which will allow people not involved directly with the Council's work to gain a better understanding of what the Council does and who they are. The aim is to film either in May or July.

List of meetings

28th of January	Ted x Open University briefing
28th of January	Devendra Kodwani lecture
28th of January	Donate and Donuts
31st of January	CAN Conference Skype meeting
1st of February	NCVO all day Campaigns Training
5th of February	supporting EU students through Brexit
5th of February	Magazine meeting
5th of February	CAN Conference Submission Review
5th of February	CAN Conference makers
6th of February	STUDIO role discussion
6th of February	Student Satisfaction event
12th of February	NSS Campaign Team Meeting
13th of February	Comms catch-up and Introduction to temporary admin member
13th of February	CSR Staff and Student Reference Group
13th of February	Magazine CEC session planning
20th of February	Magazine CEC Adobe Connect session
21st of February	Magazine meeting
26th of February	Finalising Magazine name
27th of February	Student Consultation Briefing
28th of February	CSR Staff and Student Reference Group Skype
1st of March	Magazine meeting
1st of March	CAN Conference makers
2nd-3rd of March	CEC Project meeting/ Strategy weekend
6th of March	Comms team meeting
6th of March	OU Communications Network event
6th of March	CAN Conference Planning
7th of March	Magazine meeting
7th of March	eTMA vendor demo
11th of March	CSR Staff and Student Reference Group
13th of March	NSS Campaign Team Meeting
14th of March	Magazine meeting
20th of March	Magazine meeting
25th of March	Magazine meeting
25th of March	PGR event
25th of March	DiSC Implementation Group
26th of March	CSR Exam logistics vendor demo
26th of March	Student Consultation presentation discussion
26th of March	Comms team meeting
30th of March	London Student Consultation event
1st of April	NCVO National Conference
3rd of April	Magazine meeting
3rd of April	CAN Conference planning meeting
8th of April	Comms team handover meeting

8th of April	CSR Staff and Student Reference Group
8th of April	NSS Campaign Team Meeting
8th of April	Planning Council members student interview
25th of April	VC candidates' student interview
26th of April	CAN Conference volunteers shortlisting
26th of April	Campaigns and External affairs working group
27th-28th of April	CEC weekend

Fanni Zombor
Vice President Media & Campaigns

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT STUDENT SUPPORT

This report covers my role as V P Student Support since January 2019. The Student Support remit generally includes anything that can have an impact on students. I oversee the Peer Support Service and I am a Trustee of OUSET (OU Students Educational Trust).

Peer Support Service

Our lovely Peer Supporters continue to support students during their modules and answer one off queries. The Service is available to all students. If you need a listening ear please look at our site [here](#) which gives some information about what you can expect and ways to contact a Supporter. If you are struggling to maintain motivation or have a question you'd like to ask them, last time I looked they didn't bite, so you have nothing to lose by taking that first step and contacting a Supporter.

O U S E T (O U S E T)

The OU Students Educational Trust is the Association's Charity for students experiencing financial hardship. Details can be found [here](#). Trustees next meeting is on April 9th during which we will hopefully finalise details of our updated Declaration of Trust. Lorraine Adams continues as Temporary Chair.

Service Review Meetings

Service Review meetings discuss matters relating to Academic Services and IT. The most recent meeting was held in January and the next will be at the end of April. Matters under discussion in January included;

- Students can use the new Microsoft Office 365 for non-study purposes during their time with the OU and up to 2 years after. The OU will not be carrying out spot checks. However, Microsoft is able to identify untoward activities.
- Although many of the OU's student facing policies can be found using the search in the Help Centre that is not the case for all of them. However, they are on the Student Policies and Regulations site which can be found via the Help Centre. A direct link is [here](#).
- The OU is aware that there were problems booking tutorials a while ago but they have hopefully addressed these so that it won't be a recurring problem.
- We informed the OU the computer specifications that students should check when purchasing a computer are out of date in some places on their website. This will be looked into and rectified.
- We raised whether .rtf format for submitting TMAs would continue to be accepted and we hope for an update about that in the April meeting.

Student Support

Cherry (V P Equality and Diversity) and I continue to have regular meetings with the OU about the support offered to students. Although there has recently been a change of OU staff we hope these meetings will continue.

Facebook

I continue to be active on Facebook. I followed up a post from a student who wanted to contact other students attending their Graduation Ceremony. Danielle Smith, AAR England, passed on that the OU opens up Facebook Groups for each Graduation Ceremony. Something to look out for if you will be attending your Ceremony. If you are attending a Ceremony shortly, congratulations and have a great day.

S S T / S R S C Roadshow (Student Support Teams; Student Recruitment and Support Centres)

Verity from the Association Office and I continued to give presentations to OU staff. In January we visited the Offices in Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast. We were joined in Cardiff by Lucy, A A R (Area Association Rep) for Wales and in Belfast by Wendy, A A R for N Ireland. Unfortunately, Mark, A A R for Scotland, was unable to join us in Edinburgh. We showed OU staff who talk to students what the Association provides which complement what the OU offers. We hope they will share this information with students who contact them. This includes mentioning Peer Support, O U S E T, Clubs, Societies, Meet-ups, the D S G and P L E X U S. More information can be found about these on our website [here](#).

Verity and I have been made very welcome wherever we have given this talk. OU staff were very keen to find out ways the Association tries to help with feelings of isolation. If you recognise that feeling please look at our website to see if anything we offer could reduce that isolation. If you want to organise Meet Ups with other students the Association can help you, the information is on our website.

Edinburgh and Belfast Meet Ups

I was a little nervous hosting Meet Ups for students in Edinburgh and Belfast. My nervousness was partly caused in Edinburgh because both Meet Ups were on the same day and we needed to get on a plane after Edinburgh to host the evening Meet Up in Belfast. I wish I lived in Star Trek world so I could have been instantly transported at the press of a button. Some nerves were around how the meetings would go but I need not have been concerned. The Meet Up in Edinburgh was attended by students wanting to meet other students and covered a variety of topics. The serious study discussion involved planning an experiment to see what impact alcohol consumption would have on study. We also found out quite a lot about forestry. The Belfast Meet Up was more related to issues about study. Meet Ups can be a lot of fun and provide mutual support because we all understand the study experience, including that three letter phrase TMA – Tension Mounting Assignment.

Corporate Parenting Steering Group

This initiative is led by the OU in Scotland, so I can only attend via Skype. The OU is continuing to consider what additional requirements and support is needed by OU students who have experience of being in care. More information, including their Corporate Parenting plan, can be found [here](#). If you would like me to take anything to the group please contact me on the email address at the end of this report.

Corporate Parenting and Edinburgh Hub Launch

I was busy in Edinburgh, despite only being two days. In addition to talking to OU staff and hosting a Meet Up, there was coincidentally a launch of an initiative in Edinburgh to

help students, not just those from the OU, who have experience of being in care. The most important part of the evening for me was the four care experienced students who shared their personal stories and experiences, some of which made upsetting listening. I heard that many feel stigmatised and won't let their Universities know they are care experienced in case they were thought of as problem children who had to be placed in care for that reason, rather than due to difficult family backgrounds. It was mentioned that more care experienced people spend time in prison than University. Their education is not helped if they are split from siblings and have to attend many different schools.

Each of the four panel members told moving stories of how at least one person made a significant difference to them. Without them it is possible those four would not have attended University. Our Peer Support Service, is one way we can help care experienced students, with Supporters who can provide that listening ear, motivation, a shoulder to cry on or answer questions.

Jisc Can (Change Agents Network) May Presentation

For about 18 months I was the student representative on a Working Group looking into transforming student policies. The experience was worthwhile because the Project Team listened to what I and other students said and took actions based on that. I made the grave error of heaping well earned praise for the Project Lead in the final meeting and as a result I am now attending the Jisc CAN Conference in May. So, my reward for being nice, is to have the nerve racking experience of standing in front of approximately 60 strangers to co-present with the Project Lead about the positive aspects of this Working Group. The aim is to share with attenders good practice and the importance of listening to students and consulting properly.

Strategy Working Group

The Students Association is undertaking a review of its strategy. One identified thread is supporting students. It is still at the embryonic stage but I am co-lead on that aspect, along with Cherry, V P Equality and Diversity. We are fortunate to have Anna from the Association's Student Support Team as the staff lead. Along with the great enthusiasm she brings – she also laughs at my jokes.

Various Meetings

I have attended various meetings at the OU about TMA extensions and talking about the Student Support Teams. I also attended an AL Training Day to share information about the Students Association.

Please forward any parts of this report elsewhere. If you would like to contact me please email oustudents-support@open.ac.uk

Future Commitments

9 April	O U S E T Trustees Meeting
23 April	OU Charter Day
24 April	Service Review Meeting
24 April	Meeting exploring future of Through the Gate PS
26 – 28 April	CEC Meeting
8 May	eSTeEM Conference
30 May	Jisc CAN Conference

26 June
June TBC

Senate Reference Group and Senate
Peer Support Online Meeting

Alison Kingan
Vice President Student Support

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT STUDENT VOICE

Since the start of this year I have spent more time on campus and attended some very interesting events as well as began some projects which I hope to continue in the longer-term.

We have had two out of the three training events organised by the Student Voice Team for student volunteers, namely a Committee Skills Training Day in January and a Research Symposium in March. The first of these offered C C Rs and S R G members the useful chance to learn more about how to efficiently prepare for and attend meetings as well as report back to the wider student body through reports and blogs. The symposium was an opportunity to hear about research projects currently being undertaken by both the Association and the university which promoted other ways for volunteers to become involved, for example, as student voice researchers. A third training event is currently being planned for June 2019.

The Student Consultation Management Group finalised the topics and questions to be asked at the face to face and online consultations taking place during the Spring. I personally attended the meeting in Manchester on 9th March which resulted in some good discussions surrounding assessment preparation and support, expectations of tutors and advisors, and communications for new students. We also presented the Students Association activities and services, promoting the then-ongoing by-election and collecting feedback and new ideas for student-led projects.

Together with Deputy President Steph Stubbins, I have begun hosting online drop-in sessions for all students focused on student experience. Students are welcome to provide positive or negative feedback on any topic related to their studies which will be collated to raise at the Student Experience Committee and for us to consider other appropriate routes for communication as well as signposting regarding current issues. The first two chats have had small numbers of attendees possibly influenced by technical problems with Adobe Connect, but hopefully numbers will increase as the regular date becomes known. We have also arranged a monthly online drop-in for off-campus postgraduate research students, but so far this has been less popular than the face to face sessions for campus researchers.

My next immediate work is to build upon the strategy weekend held in March to identify key areas and priorities for the Association's next long-term strategy. I shall be co-leading a working group discussing our engagement with the student body. Also in the next weeks I will be attending regular committee meetings as well as a meeting with the chairperson of the Middle States Commission regarding The Open University's re-accreditation in the USA. Following that I have been given the opportunity to lead a session at the **Jisc Change Agents' Network** conference which the university is hosting at the end of May; due to the increase in online tutorials rather than face to face tuition, I will use this opportunity to explore three possible benefits of feminist pedagogy as a method of improving efficiency in the digital classroom.

Meetings attended

10/1/2019 Student Consultation Management Group
12/1/2019 Committee Skills Training Day
24/1/2019 Senate Reference Group
25-7/1/2019 C E C Meeting

25/1/2019 Presentations by University V C E
28/1/2019 Student Led Project: Donate and Donuts
30/1/2019 Student Voice Steering Group
20/2/2019 Student Consultation Management Group
20/2/2019 Discussion on O U Students Magazine
27/2/2019 Student Consultation Briefing
1-3/3/2019 Students Association Strategy Weekend
1/3/2019 Student Experience Drop-In
7/3/2019 Research Symposium
9/3/2019 Face to Face Student Consultation in Manchester
25/3/2019 P G R Student Drop-In
1/4/2019 Student Experience Drop-In
3/4/2019 Senate Reference Group

Upcoming meetings

25/4/2019 P G R Student Drop-In
26-28/4/2019 C E C Weekend
26/4/2019 Campaigns Workshop
1/5/2019 Student Experience Drop-In
1/5/2019 Mental Health Charter Workshop
7/5/2019 Student Voice Steering Group
7/5/2019 Middle States Accreditation, Chair of Panel Visit
13/5/2019 Student Consultation Management Group
24/5/2019 P G R Student Drop-In x 2
29-30/5/2019 Change Agents' Network Conference

Amelia Gackowska
Vice President Student Voice

REPORT OF STUDENT OU COUNCIL MEMBER

Council Meeting 5 March 2019

Agenda items at the March meeting of Council included consideration of the OU's refreshed strategic plan and proposed success measures, updates on institutional performance, strategic risk and Core Systems Replacement, and reports from a number of Council sub-committees (Governance and Nominations Committee, Remuneration Committee and Finance Committee). There were also confidential items on the AL Contract and FutureLearn.

Points to note:

Updated Strategic Plan.

VCE has identified three key focus areas:

1. Improving Student Success through:
 - supported open entry for all undergraduate provision
 - improved communications with continuing students
 - the introduction of a robust model for flexible study intensity;
2. Core Systems Replacement (CSR)
3. Implementation of the new AL contract

Strategic Success Measures

The draft presented to Council did not include any measure of academic support. High quality support is a key element of student success and the comments we are seeing from students about the incomplete or inaccurate advice that they have received from their SSTs suggest that the support offered by the University is less than perfect. In order to monitor (and hopefully mitigate) this, I requested that the NSS questions on academic support should be included as part of the teaching metric alongside the NSS questions on teaching and assessment. The three questions that make up the Academic Support block are:

- I have been able to contact staff when I needed to
- I have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to my course
- Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices on my course

Council agreed that this metric should be added to the Strategic Success Measures.

Students Association papers

Council approved the Articles of Association and the updated Relationship Agreement between the University and the Students Association. In addition to some minor changes in wording the updated Relationship Agreement commits the OU and the Association to work **together** over the next year on:

- developing institutional strategies, in particular in relation to the OU's strategic objective regarding Student Success

- developing support for Student Voice
- supporting the Student Engagement Standard Project (previously known as the 'Kitemark' project)
- the review of academic representation led by the Students Association
- improving the administration of student representatives' expenses
- the Students Association's Incorporation as a Company Limited by Guarantee

The agreement also includes a new section on the sharing of academic governance and Boards of Study papers which confirms that

- CEC and SRG members should have access to **all** academic governance papers
- BoS CCRs can share confidential papers with CCRS on the committees above theirs in the governance structure to which the business relates and (unless the Chair or the author of the paper specifically refuse permission) with CCRs on other BoS in the same Faculty.

Joint meeting of Council and Senate 3 April 2019

Council members joined SRG student representatives and Association staff for a buffet lunch before the joint meeting of Council and Senate.

Governance and Nominations Committee (GNC) 6 February 2019

Appointments

A number of permanent and interim appointments to Council and its subcommittees were discussed and recommendations made to Council.

Charter and Statutes Review

The review of the Charter and Statutes has been postponed until after the current review of governance process being led by John D'Arcy and the Academic Governance Review, which began on 1 April.

Evaluation of Council Member Performance

A process for the evaluation of Council member performance was agreed. It will include annual self-assessment questionnaires and biennial appraisal interviews with the Chair or Deputy Chair of Council.

Some of the meetings and activities I have attended since my last report

6 Feb	Governance and Nominations Committee
6 Feb	Student Satisfaction Event
19 Feb	Strategy Development Project Steering Group
19 Feb	Validation briefing
26 Feb	Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group
27 Feb	Social Justice model for assessment workshop
2-3 Mar	Association Strategy Workshops
4 Mar	Council dinner
5 Mar	Council meeting (Nottingham)
13 Mar	TEF Independent Review Listening Session (London)
19 Mar	Student Journey Workshop Day
23 Mar	Student Consultation (York)
26 Mar	Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group

1 Apr	NCVO conference (London)
2 Apr	WELS Teaching Committee (as CCR)
3 Apr	Academic Governance Review meeting
3 Apr	SRG and Joint Meeting of Council and Senate
4 Apr	AL Staff Development Event

Future Meetings

23 Apr	Charter Day
23 Apr	Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group
25 Apr	Meeting VC candidates
26-28 Apr	CEC meeting and Campaign workshop
3 May	Extraordinary meeting of Council
14 May	Council meeting
22 May	Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group
5 June	Academic Governance Review meeting
12 June	Governance and Nominations Committee
18 June	WELS Teaching Committee (as CCR)
22 June	Student Voice seminar
25 June	Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group
26 June	SRG/Senate
16 July	Council

Barbara Tarling
Student Member of OU Council

REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR ENGLAND

This is the quarterly report for the Area Association Representative for England from January – March 2019.

Committees and meetings

Since my last update in early January, I have attended various meetings on campus. These include the last Central Executive Committee (C E C) weekend in late January, a strategy workshop weekend in early March and the Student Consultation Management Group meeting in February to finalise the details of the face to face and online consultations being held across March.

I was pleased to be able to attend the Manchester and York consultations in March as a member of the C E C and it was an absolute pleasure to meet with students attending that day who gave up their time to come and participate and be part of the student voice feeding back to the O U on various topics. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of those students for attending.

I have also attended a Strategy Steering Group meeting in February as part of the work being done on developing the new Students Association strategy, to be launched in late 2019.

I continue to be a member of the Student Led Projects group and a C E C moderator of the Controller Advisory Panel.

Furthermore, looking ahead to September Freshers and the next academic year, I have met with the staff Community Team at the Students Association office to discuss some ideas on things we can do for the student community. More details on this will follow in due course as we firm up some of the ideas discussed and finalise plans however it's very exciting to be involved in developing activities for students.

Social and community activities

Due to personal circumstances over the last few months, unfortunately I have been unable to arrange a further meet up in my area. As we are now heading into exams and E M A periods, this is something I will pick up again ahead of the new academic year.

I have been encouraging students to organise their own meet ups and promoting both the regular meet ups in various locations in addition to any that have been organised.

However, as part of the Student Consultation events, the Students Association does have an afternoon slot to talk to students about the Association and opportunities on offer, and along with Student Council Member, Barbara Tarling in York, and V P Student Voice, Amelia Gackowska in Manchester, as well as members of the staff team, we held two very successful and interactive sessions. The Students Association will be publishing reports from the face to face events very shortly.

I have been assisting students who have been contacting me, mainly via social media, with any questions or queries they may have about a variety of topics and signposting on where relevant to the appropriate areas of the University.

I am really looking forward to working with our new V P Community, Anca Seaton following her election to the vacant post in the recent by-elections.

Social Media

I continue to maintain a presence on social media, both via my A A R page on Facebook, where I share updates and Association opportunities, in addition to tweeting regularly about all things #OUstudents.

Future commitments

23 April 2019: Attending the 50th birthday celebrations at the O U's Charter Day

26 – 28 April 2019: C E C Weekend

26 June 2019: Senate Reference Group & Senate

10 July 2019: Education Committee

Danielle Smith
Area Association Representative England

REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR WALES

Elections review

I continue to be involved with the elections review working group.

Consultation

I attended the Wales student run by the consultation office, report by myself and Sarah Jones will follow shortly. On a personal note, it was nice to see students engaging fully even if the number of non-attendees was slightly discouraging.

Wales Volunteer Panel

Working group has now been set up and will begin working shortly, looking into the idea of the panel and the potential and the potential for rolling out over other regions/nations.

Strategy

I attended the CEC strategy weekend where we began the underpinnings of developing the new OUSA strategy for the next few years, I have been invited to be on the working group for the community element of this new strategy and am eager to begin.

Community

Wales continues to have several groups on social media, and has considerable interest in meetups. However this is over a large geographical area which causes issues for students wishing to attend. Efforts will be made during the summer to restart the Cardiff meetup, as well as potentially seeding Newport and other major areas. I continue to help host the online community meetups.

Open University in Wales Office

I have had several meetings with the OU in Wales since the last CEC meeting. Things are shaping up well for the 50th anniversary event due over the rest of the year, including meetings and OUSA awareness training in the OU Wales office, partially due to the SST roadshow run by Allison Kingan.

Lucy Richardson
Area Association Representative Wales

REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR SCOTLAND

This report covers my activities since I last reported to the C E C in January.

Social Activities and Meet Ups

Since my last report, expressions of interest in meetups continue as well as interest from those who wish to attend. My predecessor in the A A R role, Patricia Gray, continues to hold regular coffee morning meetups in her local area and these continue to be successful. I have also attended some of the online Community Drop in sessions when possible.

O U in Scotland and external meetings

I was unable to attend the Scotland student consultation meeting in March in Glasgow, due to prior family commitments, but I was able to attend the Student and Staff Engagement Group (S & S E G) Scotland meeting a few days later, via Skype, with other student colleagues attending in Edinburgh. Further detail around the O U in Scotland's plans for celebrations as part of the O U 50 celebrations were presented and amongst these are plans for a community style event later this summer which we would be delighted to be involved in! Also, as part of the celebrations, I have been invited to a parliamentary reception being held at the Scottish Parliament on the evening of Wednesday, April 24th. I have attended many events in the past at the Parliament in Edinburgh in my previous spell in the role and find that it is a good opportunity to raise awareness of us as an Association in Scotland and the work that we do.

I have arranged to meet with the S R S S team in the Edinburgh office (Student Recruitment and Support) following feedback that the F A R for F A S S, Billy Docherty, received on inconsistent information, advice and guidance and also in relation to disability support at the Glasgow consultative meeting. I raised this feedback at S & S E G S and following that meeting, received an invite to come in and chat with the S R S S staff and see first-hand more about what they do for students. I will be with the team the day before this upcoming C E C weekend. Feedback, I am assured, will be taken on board following the consultation and to encourage this to continue to be fed back to the University through us as student representatives. I also attended the Northern Ireland student consultation in Belfast in late March alongside the A A R for Northern Ireland, which was a positive day from both the consultation meeting itself as well as the Association meeting that followed. I would like to thank the Deputy President for allowing me to sit in on the Association meeting in Dublin the following day (as I happened to be in the area!) and enjoyed both meetings in Ireland, and the range of views that students expressed. I'm sure the A A R Northern Ireland will have more detail in her report but one thing I was a little surprised by was one comment on the relevance of plagiarism as being part of the consultation within the assessment topic.

Along with Billy as F A R F A S S and Cath as President, I am leading on a student led project proposal as part of the O U i S work on the Q A A Enhancement Themes as mentioned in my previous report. The project proposal is in its' early stages but what is hoped is that we intend to create and hold a workshop around student knowledge of learning analytics, what their data is used for and student views on what data they feel should/should not be held on them. I came up with the proposal after the Q A A event in December I attended in Edinburgh (noted in my last report) and a breakout session that I attended during the day as I feel that not many students may know of learning

analytics and what their data is used for, so it's hoped that this proposal will come to fruition. I hope that O U i S staff and O U staff based on campus, will assist and participate also.

Activities and meetings attended since last C E C

- 13 March O U i S Student and Staff Engagement Group Scotland meeting, Edinburgh (in attendance via Skype)
 - 22 March O U in Northern Ireland student consultative meeting, Belfast
 - 23 March O U in Ireland student consultative meeting, Dublin (O U Students Association meeting only)
- Plus Online Community Drop in sessions via Adobe Connect (regularly)

Future Commitments

- 24 April O U in Scotland Scottish Parliamentary Reception (as part of the O U 50th celebrations), Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh
- 25 April Meeting and visit to S R S S team in the O U in Scotland office, Edinburgh
- 26-28 April C E C meeting, Milton Keynes
- 19-21 July C E C meeting, Milton Keynes

Mark Cameron
Area Association Representative for Scotland

REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR EUROPE

This is a report about my activities as the Area Association Representative (AAR) for Continental Europe. In this role, I am responsible for representing and reporting upon the views of students living in Continental Europe to the CEC and informing the CEC about Association Activities within Continental Europe.

Social Activities

There has been some interest for face to face meetings from students at the OUSA VLE forum 'Meet Students'. In all occasions the link to the OUSA website about meet ups was provided (<https://www.oustudents.com/about-meet-ups>) so students can advertise their meet-ups there and be supported by the Community team. Moreover, I suggested to contact me if they needed any further assistance.

Social Media

As administrator for the Facebook groups for Southern and Northern Europe I have added as recommended the following eight (8) Facebook groups:

1. Open University (closed group)
2. OUSA Students Association Disabled Students' Group (closed group)
3. PLEXUS – OUSA LGBT+ (closed group)
4. OUSA Spain
5. OUSA Greece
6. OUSA France
7. OUSA students in Italy
8. OUSA Students Association Community

I am also member, and in some cases administrator, to some Southern Europe national groups (France, Spain, Italy, Greece and Switzerland). Only the Greek national group had some new posts about degree recognition and professional rights. I have also requested membership to some local national Northern Europe groups without any response as of yet. I continue to use my personal Facebook and Twitter accounts for the role, but most news are shared through posting at the Southern and Northern Europe Facebook groups. The current number of group members are as follows: Northern Europe, 340 and Southern Europe, 253. VLE forums were silent as usual.

Other Activities

I participate at the Student Led Projects Approval Panel and I have been appointed as a CEC member of CAP. Since this CEC is on Easter Sunday (for the orthodox world) I will not be able to attend it, please do accept my apologies. Participation to the charter day was not possible since expenses could not be covered. I have written a small text about Brexit with useful links for European students and another one about a prominent Greek OUSA Alumnus.

Activities since last report

- 20 February '19 Adobe Connect Session about the students' magazine
01 – 03 March '19 Strategy meeting at Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes

Future Commitments

Participate in the redesigning of the V L E forums.
Host an adobe connect event for C. Europe

Michael Kasoutas
Area Association Representative for Europe

REPORT OF THE FACULTY ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (FAR) FOR BUSINESS & LAW (FBL)

This is a rather short report as I was elected in mid-March and I am still in the first few weeks of the role, although I have to mention the wonderful support I have had from members of this committee and staff in the office. This has made a rather daunting task a lot easier.

FBL Faculty Update

I have emailed the faculty assembly secretary requesting assistance in engaging with the right contacts for my role and I am awaiting a reply. I was also able to meet the FARs from WELS and FASS to consider activities they do and would also work for FBL. I particularly like the idea of inviting up to 5 students to observe a faculty assembly and I will be pursuing this with the faculty.

Social Media

I am intending to set up a separate Facebook page for the role, once I understand how to run this separately from my personal one.

Senate Reference Group

I attended the SRG meeting on 3 April, I found this a very informative induction into the work of the Senate and where it fits within the OU. Prior to the SRG I met with various members of Association staff in the office.

Other projects/meetings

The online induction meeting on 17 March welcomed those successful in the by-election. It was not role-specific and a further induction meeting with Association staff was set up. I completed the compulsory online training courses on Data Protection, Prevent and Safeguarding 1 & 2.

I contacted the Open University Law Society through the office, although I was already a paid-up member, as I have not received any communication from them since August 2018. I have concerns over this society and I will be discussing this with the Societies Rep.

I volunteered to present to a school in Stirling on 21 March as part of the Law School's Open Justice initiative, there not being enough enrolled students on the relevant module in Scotland to meet the commitments they had already made.

Matt Porterfield

Faculty Student Association Representative for Business and Law (FBL)

REPORT OF THE FACULTY ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (FAR) FOR WELLBEING, EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE STUDIES (WELS)

The last few months has been busy with a rush of T M A's for both of my modules. I can now see an end in sight even though there are still a few weeks to go. I have had the amazing honour of being part of the first Student Led Project on Homelessness in Milton Keynes. This was extremely successful, more so than I ever could have thought. This could not have been done without the support of all the staff in the office, the support of the University overall and the amazing volunteers on the day. We had over 2500 donations and these went to three different charities and on the day, we had several homeless people come in and take some of the donations. A great privilege to be part of this and thank you to all who were involved in some small or big way. I have spoken again at another faculty assembly, this time I enjoyed it more! I have also attended Senate as an alternate. I loved seeing how it all worked. I am looking forward to Charter day and seeing all the things that the University are going to do to celebrate turning 50. It is lovely to feel that my Dad studied with the O U in the early days and I am studying with them as they celebrate their 50th birthday. So happy birthday O U and here's to another 50 years of changing lives.

Faculty

- 28.1.19 Filming a video for W E L S and the disabled student support team
- 29.1.19 Meeting with Joan Simons to talk about student voice
- 30.1.19 W E L S freshers chat on adobe connect – not as many students as in October but some very useful conversations
- 6.2.19 Sitting on a panel at an O U wide Student Satisfaction event – nerve wrecking but good fun.
- 6.2.19 Filming with Tyrell Golding about the N S S
- 28.2.19 Filming for W E L S with the Library
- 5.3.19 Meeting with Central Committee representative who came as an observer to W E L S Faculty Assembly
- 5.3.19 Faculty Assembly – spoke for 10 minutes to update everyone on what I was doing and to remind them to point students in my direction
- 5.3.19 Lunch with A L reps and Fary Cachelin, new Executive Dean for W E L S
- 23.3.19 Should've been at E102 day but had to miss due to family illness, gave my input via email
- 1.4.19 Should've been at PRAXIS steering group – due to illness sent apologies
- 2.4.19 Filming for W E L S with O U Careers
- 2.4.19 First meeting with Fary Cachelin. Just an introduction to what I do and to start to build a relationship.

3.4.19 W E L S Accessibility catch up – a review of what has been happening so far so that I am up to speed at my first meeting.

Staff and C E C

28.1.19 Donate and Donuts
29.1.19 Sort out Donate and Donuts donations and take to one of the Charities
15.2.19 Culture review meeting
15-17.2.19 K802 residential weekend
18.2.19 Societies Quiz
19.2.19 Strategy Development project steering group

27.2.19 Student Consultation Briefing
28.2.19 Culture Review meeting
1.3.19 Filming for the Students Association
1-3.3.19 Strategy weekend
8.3.19 O U Consultation day in Cardiff
9.3.19 A L event in Bristol
20.3.19 missed a meeting about residential schools but gave my input via email

Other Meetings

7.2.19 Scholarship steering group
14.2.19 eSteM Students as Partners workshop
14.2.19 Meeting with Lesley Goss (Tutor)
1.3.19 Meeting with Matthew Moran to discuss S R S C's
5.3.19 Meeting with Kieron Sheehy about Lego
2.4.19 OpenTEL and SeGA meeting
3.4.19 S R G

Future Plans

11.4.19 Scholarship Steering group
23.4.19 O U Charter day

Personally, it has been a hard few months with smallest child having chicken pox and a close friends husband dying but I am grateful for all the good wishes I have had and the support from fellow students and members of the student's association. I am looking forward to getting my next two assignments done and then it's on to the final two E M A's before the end of my second year. I have now signed up to do two level 3's in October which I can't wait to get started on. I am loving the contact I am having with students and I am looking forward to being able to do this more over the coming months.

Sarah Jones

Faculty Association Representative for Wellbeing, Education & Language Studies (WELS)

REPORT OF THE FACULTY ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (FAR) FOR ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES (FASS)

List of Meetings Attended (# indicates further information in main report)

Meeting		Discussion
<i>S R S C meeting</i>	Online	
25/01/19 <i>Nicola Powell</i>	Face to face	One 2 one meeting Personal development
25/01/19 <i>V C E High tea Annual Dinner</i>	Face to face	Annual Dinner at Kents Hill Park
26,27 TH / 01/19 <i>C E C</i>	Face to face	C E C leadership weekend
27/01/19 <i>Meeting with Cath Brown and Mark Cameron</i>	Face to face	Meeting to discuss a possible student led consultation in Scotland.
30/10/19 <i>Student Voice Steering Group</i>	Face to face	Met as part of the student voice steering group
31/01/19 <i>F A S S Freshers chat</i>	Online Adobe	Hosted a F A S S fresher's chat
03/02/19 <i>Meet up with F A S S students Edinburgh</i>	Face to face	Met up with some psychology students in Edinburgh to discuss issues they are having with DE200
07/02/19 <i>Meet up with F A S S students Glasgow</i>	Face to face	Met up with some psychology students in Glasgow to discuss issues they are having with DE200
14/02/19 <i>S T E M Students as Partners</i>	Face to face	Was invited to attend this one day event within STEM, looking at student engagement.
15/02/19 <i>Meeting with Volker Patent</i>	Telephone	Spoke to Volker about how we can work together in promoting and supporting possible work experience placements for student in F A S S
19/02/19 <i>Strategy meeting online with Steph Stubbins</i>	Online	Catch up meeting with Steph, planning and discussion around the up-coming CAN Conference
22/02/19 <i>Meeting with Hayley Ness Edinburgh Office</i>	Face to face	Met with Hayley to discuss some possible new projects and groups to support psychology students in Scotland. Also discussed a closer working relationship between the F A S S team and myself in Scotland.
22/02/19 <i>Meeting with Psychology AL's Edinburgh</i>	Face to face	Met with Hayley Ness and some of the psychology ALs to discuss how we can work better to support students.
26/02/19 <i>WELS accessibility Meeting</i>	Face to face	Attending this meeting on behalf of Sarah Jones
<i>Meeting with Nicola Powell</i>	Face to face	One 2 one catch up

<i>27/02/19 Meeting Caroline Kelly</i>	Face to face	Meeting to discuss ongoing work with students and how to link better with student support.
<i>28/02/19 Meeting with Sarah Jones</i>	Face to face	A catch up with Sarah to discuss my recent attendance to the WELs accessibility meeting.
<i>28/02/19 Meeting with Kate Lister</i>	Face to face	Meeting to introduce myself and discuss my plans as rep over the next year. Kate also going to make contact with other staff that might be useful for me to meet.
<i>01/03/19 Peer Support meeting with Alison Kingan, Verity Robertson and Ben D Jones</i>	Face to face	Met with Ben Duncan Jones to discuss possible peer mentoring in psychology using the association peer mentoring service.
<i>02/03/19 C E C planning weekend</i>	Face to face	CEC Strategic planning weekend
<i>09/02/19 Student consultation, Glasgow</i>	Face to face	Open University and Students association consultation day.
<i>21/02/19 Meeting Shona Littlejohn Edinburgh office</i>	Face to face	Meeting to discuss issues raised during the Glasgow Consultation.
<i>25/03/29 Fastest meeting</i>	Face to face	Attended the first meeting of the FASTEST scholarship committee.
<i>Meeting Faculty Accessibility Co-ordinators</i>	Face to face	Met with the 4 accessibility co-ordinators to discuss how best we can work in making sure that the student voice is incorporated into their work.
	Face to face	We also discussed how as F A R I can work along side them to support students.
<i>PGR event</i>	Face to face	Attended the PG event hosted by the Depute President.
<i>Evening meeting with student observers</i>		Met and discussed paper for faculty assembly with the student observers.
<i>26/02/19 Faculty Assembly</i>	Face to face	Attended with the student observers the faculty assembly. First we had a meeting with the Exec Dean then the main Assembly.
<i>27/02/19 Vendor Testing</i>	Face to face	Attending a demonstration by vendors in relation to Core System Replacement
<i>Meeting with Ben Duncan Jones</i>	Face to face	To discuss setting up a student panel for upcoming British Psychological Society visit and review
<i>Senate Reference Group</i>	Face to Face	Attended Senate reference group, then council lunch

Faculty Assembly

Once again I had 5 students attending the faculty assembly as observers. I already have enough students registered for the meeting in June. The exec dean is also looking to restructure the assembly, which will include student reps having a slot to report staff activities ongoing or to start discussions.

Library Training event

I co-hosted a face book chat session with the library for new students, this was a short but informative event

Careers Event April/May

I am hosting one day of facebook chats with the careers service during there events in April and May. This will allow F A S S students the chance to find out more in regards to their future career needs.

Employability and work placements

I am waiting on Volker Patent getting back to me in relation to me being involved more with this research and project. The aim will be to make sure that all F A S S students have access to this type of scheme.

Other activities

- Reading/posting in C E C, S R G and Central Reps forums
- Reading and responding to emails from colleagues, OU Student Association Staff and OU staff
- Reading and posting in student forums

List of future meetings/commitments

50th Anniversary Gathering in Glasgow, 20th June 2019
Psychology Panel for British Psychological Society
Start new F A S S Chats both adobe and Facebook
Participation in Careers events April and May

Billy Docherty

Faculty Association Representative for Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)