

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

27 – 28 April 2019

CEC CODE OF CONDUCT

The CEC is asked to:-

- i) **discuss and agree** a draft CEC Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

- 1.1 During the January CEC meeting the President proposed having a Code of Conduct for the C E C. It was generally considered a good idea as it would show the level and commitment that members are adhering to by being on the CEC. It was thought that it could be a helpful tool to be able to hold members to account without the need to go down a disciplinary/complaints route.
- 1.2 It was agreed that a lot of the contents in the BoT paper could be transferable to a CEC version as well as using other existing documents like the CEC role descriptions and CEC etiquette paper to assist with the work.
- 1.3 Comments for additions of where the CEC version would differ from the BoT version were to add a heading for 'Relationships with the OU and external bodies', 'Relationship with Students and the expectations' and when talking about 'forums' clarify whether this meant the student facing forums or CEC internal forums.

2. The Code of Conduct

- 2.1 The Code of Conduct, first draft, is presented as an appendix to this paper.
- 2.2 The Central Executive Committee are asked to discuss and agree a draft Code of Conduct.

Caroline Cowan
Vice President Administration

1. Introduction

1.1 This Code is designed to supplement the existing Volunteers' and Disciplinary Policy and whilst it may repeat some of the provisions listed in those documents, does not replace them.

1.2 Members¹ are also reminded that they must also abide by the regulations applying to any student.

2. General Provisions

2.1 Members must respect and uphold the values of the Open University Students Association

2.2 Members must act within the Constitution of the Association and abide by all policies and procedures of the Association.

2.3 Members will act in the best interests of the Association

2.4 Members will not seek to profit from any decision made and must declare all conflicts of interest

2.5 In discussions, Members should be aware of their own and others' conflicts of interests

2.6 Members will respect confidentiality (either at C E C, University or Individual level) at all times unless the C E C, University or individual agrees that information may be released.

3. Meetings and other discussions

3.1 Face to face meetings

3.1.1 Members are expected to prepare for meetings by reading papers diligently beforehand

3.1.2 Members are expected to play an active role in all meetings, making appropriate use of their knowledge and experience.

3.1.3 If a Member is unable to attend a meeting they must inform the Chair (either directly or via the Association's Office) of that fact. If they wish to make comments on the papers to be included in discussions at the meeting, these should be submitted to the Chair.

3.1.4 Members should work to the deadlines announced for each meeting in respect of preparing reports and papers so far as is practicable.

3.2 Forum discussions (on C E C forums)

3.2.1 Members are expected to engage in forum discussions as part of their role, and to regard these in the same light as face to face meetings.

3.2.2 Members should check forums regularly unless they are unavailable in that period.

¹ For the avoidance of doubt 'Members' in this document refers to Members of the Central Executive Committee

3.2.3 Unless it is impossible to do so, Members should indicate in the forum itself or by email to the Office or the Chair if they will be unavailable for a week or more.

3.2.4 Forum discussions will be open for a specific length of time, which generally will not be less than a week

3.3 Other discussions

3.3.1 From time to time, other meetings may be called (for example by Skype) if an urgent matter has arisen and synchronous discussion is considered the best approach.

3.3.2 If a Member cannot attend such a meeting, then any comments should be forwarded in advance to the Chair.

3.4 General provisions for discussions (whether synchronous or asynchronous)

3.4.1 Members will show respect to the opinions of colleagues (Members, Staff, Observers and external contributors) even if they differ from their own.

3.4.2 Members will conduct discussion in a fair and reasoned manner

3.4.3 Members will accept the decision of the Chair on closing discussions, if necessary.

3.4.4 A Member will accept the majority decision of the C E C in any form of discussion and will support that decision at all times even if they privately disagree with it, and even if they were not present at the meeting at which it was made.

3.4.5 Members will not seek to revisit decisions made during earlier discussions unless circumstances have changed materially

3.4.6 The minutes of the C E C are the official public record of discussions.

4. Relationship with the Board of Trustees

4.1 The CEC is the Leadership Team of the Association for setting policy, is the public face of the Association and is the representative body to the University and other organisations. The Board of Trustees is responsible for Strategy, Finances and Governance of the Association but also has the power to override the C E C as indicated in the Constitution.

4.2 Whilst Association Strategy is the responsibility of the Board, the Board has agreed to work jointly with CEC on this

4.3 Members will support the work of the Board and not engage in any public criticism of decisions made, or otherwise undermine the Board in any way.

4.4 A Member who is also a member of the Board will maintain a separation between these roles and recognise the different responsibilities of each.

5. Relationship with Association employees

5.1 Members will respect the roles of staff, and of management arrangements in the staff team, avoiding any actions that might undermine such arrangements.

6. Relationship with Volunteers

6.1 Members share responsibility to ensure that there is a culture supporting the wellbeing and valuing of all Association volunteers.

7. Relationships with Students

7.1 Members are the elected representatives of the Student body and are accountable to them

7.2 Members should be prepared to answer questions from the student body either via the dedicated forum or directly. They may refer the question to another C E C member if they feel the topic is more suited to that member's remit. Where questions are asked privately via email any personal data, such as name and email address, should not be passed on without the permission of the person asking the question.

7.3 The question should be acknowledged and a reply given in reasonable time. Students, however, should be aware that C E C members are volunteers with multiple calls on their time so may not reply immediately.

8. Relationships with the University and other external bodies

8.1 Members should remember that they are the public face of the Association when dealing with any body outside the Association.

8.2 As such when engaging with these they should not act in any way likely to lead to the Association being seen in a poor light.