

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**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)
- Vice President Administration (page 6)
- Vice President Community (page 7)
- Vice President Media & Campaigns (page 9)
- Vice President Student Support (page 12)
- Student OU Council Member (page 16)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for England (page 19)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for Wales (page 20)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for Scotland (page 21)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for Northern Ireland (page 23)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for Europe (page 23)
- Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Business & Law (FBL) (page 24)
- Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Wellbeing, Education & Language Studies (WELS) (page 26)
- Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Arts & Social Sciences (FASS) (page 29)
- Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) (page 32)

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

This report covers the period 1 January – 9 April 2020 and is an overview rather than a complete list.

Covid19 Pandemic

This has obviously brought huge changes to how the university, its students, and the Association work.

We have had a real team effort in moving from one online chat per fortnight to three per week to support students and keep them in touch with each other. Running SRG online was a new challenge – thank you to everyone for making it work.

I have been spending quite a lot of time in various OU meetings to address the crisis; these cover areas including assessment, support and communications. Many CEC members and other volunteers have been working exceptionally hard to support students with their concerns and queries in response to the university's decisions on changes to assessment.

Media and Communications

- Student Support video on tutor relationships
- Student Support video (with FASS FAR) on tutorials

Board of Trustees

Our external Chair is now in place, and we have now successfully recruited an external trustee with financial expertise. Our board is finally at full numbers! The Board has met once in person and had a number of forum discussions, including approving the new Role Remits and the revised Relationship Agreement

Appointments Committee

Appointments Committee met face to face, and had an extensive discussion reviewing procedures to date, the need for transparency, and a review of the best approaches to training for CCRs.

Student Voice Steering Group

The planned Student Voice event happened in January. We were fortunate to have external speakers, including Eve Alcock, the Bath Students Union President. It included six short talks on various aspects of student-staff partnership (each jointly delivered by a student and a member of OU staff), workshops on partnership and on reaching the hard to reach (each jointly led by a student and a member of OU staff), and a panel, featuring both students and staff. The event was very well attended (so much so that we ran out of coffee!) and seemed to be both appreciated and enjoyed.

Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group

The priorities identified by the student-devised Action Plan have led to the setting up of two Task and Finish groups. One of these will look at causes of dissatisfaction and how to address them; the other will examine how to promote academic community. Both are

being scoped out at present and are intended to be co-chaired by a student and an OU staff member, and have membership from across the university

Recognition of Excellence in Teaching – Student-Nominated Tutor Awards

As part of the OU's Recognition of Excellence in Teaching (RET) Awards, we negotiated to reintroduce student-nominated awards for tutors. The nomination period launched in December 2019 and ran to early January 2020. There were 477 nominations received(!). From these, our internal panel (the four FARs, the Student Council Member, VP Student Support and myself) produced a shortlist of 14 for the final five awards. We were really impressed by the quality of the nominations and felt saddened not to be able to give more awards. The winners will be announced soon, and it is hoped they will be presented at a celebratory event (covid-19 permitting).

Meetings

Again, not an exhaustive list.

Induction meetings with new OU staff

- New Director of Marketing & Communications ("Marcomms")

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

- With Student Casework, to discuss ideas relating to the Students Association introducing and Individual Representation
- With staff from PVC Students Office, on the Relationship Agreement revisions
- To get the Association membership survey in place
- Stakeholder workshop (reviewing SRSCs)
- To discuss OU's plans for Student Learning Adjustments Strategy and supporting evidence
- Presenting our strategy, and links with OU strategic priorities, at Student Support Management Team meeting
- To discuss Association involvement in some EDI initiatives
- To discuss Association involvement with the Assessment Exceptions Group
- Presenting on the new Access/Open FAR role at the Curriculum Innovation Senior Team meeting
- Delivering training on Adobe Connect for OU staff involved in online consultations
- To discuss Peer Review Group draft report

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

- Library
- Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Students
- Team in PVC Students office
- Government & External Affairs
- Assessment, Credit and Qualifications

Regular meetings with CEC and Association staff

- With Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executives
- With Chief Executive
- With Sue McCabe

Specific Students Association meetings

- Conference Steering Committee
- To discuss QAA Lead Rep role
- To discuss strategy development
- Induction meeting with new Chair of Board of Trustees
- Appointments Committee meeting to discuss proposed changes in recruitment and training for CCRs
- Induction meeting with new Association staff
- To discuss possibility of a broader cross-university body for distance learners
- Preparation for student consultations
- Delivering training on Adobe Connect for Meet-up hosts

OU Committees and Groups

- Various Emergency Management Teams – on student support, on academic implications, on communications and on assignments & extensions
- PVC Students Advisory Group
- Apprenticeships Steering Group
- Apprenticeships Change Programme
- Social Media Policy Working Group
- QAA Reference Group
- Recognition of Excellence in Teaching Awards panel
- Exams & Assessment Steering Group
- Curriculum Portfolio Panel
- Education Committee
- Support for New Students working group
- Council
- Digital Strategies Steering Group (the group formally known as Technology Steering Group)
- Recording Tutorials Policy working group
- Senate (and Senate Reference Group, which I chaired following the resignation of VP Education)
- Student Consultation Management Group
- OpenTEL and eSTEEeM Working Group

Other events

OU events

- Presenting a Lightning Talk on “What OU Students (Really Really) Want at Curriculum Strategy Workshop
- Presenting, with Director of eSTEEeM, on the model we devised for Students as Partners in Scholarship at the Student Voice event
- Leading, with STEM AD Academic Excellence, workshop on Student Partnership at Student Voice event
- Co-presenting on proposed revised Student Charter at STEM Faculty Assembly
- Presenting to Marcomms staff on what OU students want
- Briefing meeting with QAA
- Birmingham Student Consultation
- Two online consultations as a facilitator
- Two online consultations (replacement for face to face) as co-lead

OU Recruitment

- Shortlisting and Interviewing for the appointment of STEM Executive Dean

External events

- Interview with HEFCW re impact of Diamond funding and any remaining gaps
- HEPI lunch – launch of report on part time and mature learners
- Speaking at All Party Parliamentary Group for Students on Maintenance Loans for distance learners
- Presentation, with two OU staff, to UKAT on distance tuition and support

Association Recruitment

- Shortlisting and interviewing for new Finance External Trustee

Association events

- Compering (and competing in) University Challenge Warm-Up event
- Strategy Launch Event for OU staff in Belfast
- Co-hosting additional online chats (to keep spirits up during lockdown)

Cath Brown
President

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT ADMINISTRATION

This is my report to the Central Executive Committee and covers my activity from January to March 2020.

I have attended meetings with Alison regarding various aspects of my role, and with Rob and Magda regarding the *ex officio* posts on OUSET and OSL prior to the Covid-19 outbreak. During this period, I have discussed the subvention negotiations. However, this year the University stated that there would be no face2face meeting with them. So, most of the negotiating has been through email via Alison.

Bye-Laws Review

Alison and I met with Wendy and Beth and to discuss the Bye-Laws review. Alison had the onerous task of making a definitive copy, taking in all the necessary changes. A copy for approval will be presented at this meeting. The election review was completed. My thanks go to Steph for all her hard work and assistance with this.

Conference Steering Group and Societies

In December, the 2020 Conference Steering Group was set up and I have been involved in many of the discussions. Nevertheless, everyone will be aware of the changes being made as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. Throughout this period, I have been involved in auditing various Society end of year Accounts. Despite the new changes made, by Alison, to the Accounts form, making things simpler and easier to use. i.e. they just input the numbers and the form completes the rest, the number of those submitted remain few. We have lost a couple of Societies, but we have also gained some new ones.

Board of trustees

As VP Admin. I am a member of the Board of Trustees. Full details of non-confidential Trustee activity can be found in the minutes of the Board meetings and the CEO's report to the CEC.

Diary

18 January 2020 Conference Steering Committee meeting (unable to attend due to ill health)

Caroline Cowan
Vice President Administration

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT COMMUNITY

This is my first report as Vice President Community written from lockdown. It covers the first four months of 2020.

Clubs and Societies

Societies – On 7th March I attended the meeting of the Societies Committee. We discussed the biennial Conference and how the Students Association can support our societies. We'll be looking at creating a mentorship scheme for the societies' new committee members, where established committee members from our very successful societies will help and support the new committee members from other societies.

We encouraged societies to apply for grants, as there is still money in the budget and we already approved two. We are going to have discussions about what else we can do to support them, with all the events taking place online.

Community Drop Ins

We live in very strange and trying times. The lockdown forced some of our students to work from home, and other students to be in isolation for a period of three months. After a request received in the Community Facebook group, the Central Executive Committee (CEC) organised a lot more chats for our students. They take place every Tuesday (12 noon to 1.30pm), Thursdays (6.00pm to 8.00pm) and Sunday (7.00pm to 8.30pm) in the Community Adobe Connect Room (<http://learn1.open.ac.uk/mod/connecthosted/view.php?id=18986>). All students are invited, and we talk about everything and anything, related to our studies and not only. We exchange recipes, stories from the lockdown, look for film recommendations or ways and means to boost our study motivation.

Meetup Hosts

Due to the cancellation of all face to face meetups, we decided to launch training for Adobe Connect for all the current meet up hosts. The training was well attended, and we already had the Bath meetup online and it went really well.

University Challenge

The warm up for the new University Challenge Team took place on 10th January 2020 and was a resounding success. It was a great evening, and last year's team offered their support and help to this year's team. I am happy to report the 2020 University Challenge Team was chosen for the live TV rounds. Congratulations!

Students Association Presence at Day Schools and Residential Schools in 2020

This pilot project got started in March. I had a Students Association stall at the B835 Residential Schools in Manchester and Warwick. It was a mixed reception, some students knew about us (the Students Association), what we do and how we can help them. Some students wanted to know more about us. Some students were not interested, and a very small minority never heard of us.

Unfortunately, this pilot is now on hold due to the cancellations of any face to face events and tutorials, but I am hopeful it will pick up at the earliest opportunity, either during this term (before 31st July, 2020) or, depending on the next VP Community, after 1st August, 2020.

Conference Steering Committee

On 18th January, there was the first face to face meeting of the Conference Steering Group. It was a very productive meeting, and we discussed a lot of things, from timetable, accommodation and fun sessions, through to goodie bags, speakers and Conference Makers. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, the 2020 face to face Conference was cancelled and we're now looking for other options.

February Freshers Fortnight

It feels like a lifetime ago! Our February Freshers Fortnight provided lots of opportunities for students to find out more about the Association, what we do, how we can help them and how they can get involved. Most of the events were online, but we also had some face to face meet-ups. I travelled to Scotland and had two meetups, one in Edinburgh and one in Glasgow. They were not very well attended due to Storm Ciara.

OU Students Shop

As you know, VP Community is one of the company directors for OSL (OUSA Services Limited), the commercial name for the OU Students Shop. At the time of writing, the shop is not dispatching any merchandise, but the website is up and running and the past exam papers are available. A meeting with the company directors will take place in the very near future, as we need to discuss the current financial situation, recruiting or co-opting for the current vacancy and plans for the future.

Future meetings

All my meetings for the foreseeable future will be online. I do not have dates for anything in particular, but I keep in regular contact with the rest of the Central Executive Committee and the Community Team in the Students Association Office and will do our best to support our OU students community in these very difficult times.

*Anca Seaton
Vice President Community*

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT MEDIA & CAMPAIGNS

This report covers my activities between January and April 2020. No doubt everyone's lives are very much evolving around the current pandemic situation. I am in the fortunate position to be able to carry on working full time from home, however I still have a high level of flexibility to enable me to attend meetings remotely and carry on working on the projects I am involved in or leading on. Please keep safe everyone!

Website

A lot of this discussion remains confidential for the time being due to the sensitive nature of the project. The Digi comms team and I have been looking at ways to improve our current website, a discussion paper around this is going to be presented to CEC in our April meeting.

NSS

The NSS work continued to be a very major work until mid-March, when Covid-19 took over. Up to that point, a lot of social media and proactive measures were in place to increase the number of students completing the survey. As of 8th of April the NSS still continues, however there is no longer any expectation for the Association or the OU to proactively encourage students to complete it as priorities shifted. There are a lot of talks about the validity of the data post Covid-19 pandemic start, but this will be judged by Office for Students and HEFCE (and corresponding bodies in the nations) as time goes on and results are visible.

Increased engagement

With the Covid-19 pandemic and the UK being on lockdown it was very quickly clear that students need engagement with others more than ever. Digi Comms and Community teams have therefore decided on a 12-week activity calendar to help get students through this uncertain period. Clubs, societies, groups and student reps elected or appointed have the opportunity to feed into the calendar and hold different online events or create engaging content as they see fit.

Conference sponsorship

I was part of the planning for conference sponsorship packages until (yet again) Covid-19 took over and the face to face Conference in June had to be cancelled. This was going to provide an opportunity to cover some of the costs of Conference and bring in companies that could be interest to our students. I am hopeful that the groundwork carried out by Alison Lunn, Heather Bloomer and myself will support any future opportunities where sponsorship of one of our events may be an option.

Student consultations

I was due to attend the Dublin and London student consultation meetings as a CEC member, both of which had to be cancelled as a face to face event due to Covid-19. In

replacement of this, I supported an online student consultation event. There was a lot of rich feedback from students around tuition and assessment.

End of module assessment decisions

End of module assessment decisions were sent out to students finishing their module in May and June on the weekend of 3rd of April. With the OU being closed for the weekend, myself and a lot of other representatives set up camps for the weekend in various Facebook and WhatsApp groups relating to OU studies to help support students during this time. Although our role is never to advise, it was a really good opportunity to explain what certain decisions meant for students. I believe a lot of students valued us being around over the weekend and I hope we were able to help some students by doing this.

Staff changes

I don't usually write long sections about staff changes but as lot has happened with the Digi Comms staff team since my last report, and I would like to take this opportunity to highlight these and express my appreciation.

James Phillips joined the team from the Student Voice team following a reshuffle, bringing a bunch of new ideas and enthusiasm.

Kate Dungate returned from her maternity leave at the end of March as Head of Digi Comms. Kate was around at the start of my CEC term and I am very excited to have her back to support delivering the ongoing projects.

Sam Kenealy left the Digi Comms team to join the Volunteering team. Sam came to his role when we really needed the extra help and he was ready to jump straight in and has been absolutely amazing. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sam for all his hard work with me over the past year and wish him very well for his future in another part of the Association.

Heather Bloomer stepped back from her temporary cover position as Head of Digi Comms as Kate returned from maternity. Heather has been incredible to work with, even when it was only the 2 of us in the team for a couple of months last year. I am really proud of her as she was leading us through a lot, and she was a pleasure to work with in her temporary position. Heather carries on in the team as a senior officer.

Meetings

22nd January- NSS response campaign group

24th January- meeting with Amy King from SST (with the FBL Faculty Representative, Matt Porterfield)

24th January- Digi Comms meeting

24th January- Sponsorship meeting

18th February- NSS response campaign group

12th March- NSS response campaign group

14th March- Dublin student consultation (cancelled due to Covid-19)

16th March- Widening Participation- BAME working group (unable to attend in person due to emergency surgery, but involved via e-mails to feed into the work)

18th March- Digi Comms meeting
24th March- Digi Comms team Business Planning
26th March- Digi Comms meeting
28th March- Online student consultation
1st April- Kate Dugate reintroduction
6th April- website discussion with Digi Comms team
14th April- CEC paper meeting with Digi Comms team

Fanni Zombor
Vice President Media and Campaigns

REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT STUDENT SUPPORT

Since my last report for January's meeting, so much has changed. I hope you are finding ways to cope with whatever this virus is throwing your way and you, your friends and family are keeping safe and well. If you haven't found it, the OU has a website [here](#) with regular updates and information about how the OU and your study has been affected. The Help Centre will soon have an FAQ page about this.

The Student Support remit generally includes anything that can have an impact on students. I oversee the Peer Support Service, Chair Service Review and jointly Chair a meeting attended by Student Support Team staff and Association Reps, and I am a Trustee of OUSET (OU Students Educational Trust).

I have taken on some of the responsibilities of Vice President Equality and Diversity, Cherry Day. I have been more involved in the Disabled Students Group (D S G) and attended additional OU meetings normally attended by V P, E and D.

Peer Support Service

Our Peer Supporters continue to support students and answer one off queries. The Service is available to all students who need a listening ear. You can find contact details and information [here](#) and on the Peer Supporters Facebook Page called 'OU Students Peer Support' - <https://www.facebook.com/OUstudentsPeerSupport/>. If you message the page, your posts and the replies will be private so others will not be able to see the messages.

A recent survey of our Supporters was followed by an online meeting. We are trying to ensure that Supporters have what they need so they can continue to provide support for students.

O U S E T (OUSET)

The OU Students Educational Trust is the Association's Charity for students experiencing financial hardship. Details can be found [here](#). I attended a recent Adobe Chat session where students suggested various ways we could raise money for OUSET.

Inclusion January Meeting

I have taken over chairing this until July 31st. Inclusion is a meeting attended by Group Chairs, Students Association staff and OU staff. At the meeting we hear updates from OU departments and the Groups, in addition to having discussions about issues affecting students with specific barriers to their study. At the January meeting Jo Buxton shared research she is carrying out into making tutorials accessible for all. We also heard that information about mental health and wellbeing has been collected in one place on the Help Centre and can be found [here](#)

April's meeting has been cancelled because the virus makes it difficult for OU staff to attend this meeting, even remotely. We will hear from the departments who usually report to the Inclusion meeting. I will still raise issues outside the meeting.

Service Review Meetings

Service Review meetings discuss matters relating to Academic Services and IT. The January meeting had a demonstration of the new look Help Centre. It has less clutter, is easier to navigate and better for accessing via mobile phones. Links to previous information have not changed. There is much useful information [there](#).

Adobe Connect Chats

The Central Executive Committee has expanded the number of chats students can be involved with to 3 per week and I have attended some of those. Some students have asked for information about their studies, but we have had Dingbat sessions and suggestions for OUSET fundraising. These sessions are to try to help address feelings of isolation.

Mental Health Working Group (S M H W G)

I have been added to the OU's Mental Health Working Group which has been looking at the OU's Strategy for this. The important stage for students is implementation where the vision of the strategy is put into practice in ways that will have a positive impact on students.

S M H A (Student Mental Health Agreement) Working Group

This is another group I've been added to and it is looking at actions rather than strategy or policies. It is Scotland specific at the moment and one aspect I and other student reps have been contributing to is how the Students Association helps with student mental wellbeing. The aim is to present a combination of what we and the OU do.

Corporate Parenting Steering Group

This meets twice a year and considers how best to support students who have had experience of being in care. Our most recent meeting was in March. OU in Scotland has a named contact for care experienced students. By 2030 Scotland is aiming for no difference in retention and success between those with and those without care experience. Although it is important to increase the numbers of care experienced people going to University, it is vital that the support is relevant for their specific needs in order to improve success and retention. This is one of the roles of this Steering Group which includes some care experienced OU students.

A C Q (Assesment, Credit and Qualifications)

Cath and I have regular meetings to discuss matters with this department. We raised a couple of issues which will be discussed outside the meeting. One was whether it would be possible for students to submit draft versions of emTMAs, as we can with EMAs. Another was about students being able to bring alternative formats of materials into exams, such as those allowed in some Maths exams.

Recording Tutorials

I continue to be involved in the group that is ensuring that wherever possible students will be able to access recordings of online (Adobe Connect) tutorials

Support for New Students

The OU is looking at improving support for new students and, rather than just sitting in a meeting, part of my role (and others in this group) is to share internal and external resources that we have heard about or used which might be useful for students. In addition to the Association's resources I shared such things as [DnA Matters](#) and Mr Woo's [maths tutorials](#). The hope is that these resources will help students in the not too distant future.

D S G (Disabled Students Group)

My involvement with the D S G in recent weeks has increased. The D S G is open to any OU student with a health condition, disability or SpLD such as dyslexia. Members have access to closed forums. There is also a closed Facebook Group. More information can be found on the website [here](#). I was present when the recently elected D S G Committee had a training session organised by our staff. Amongst other things under discussion was correct channels for communication, an introduction to the Association, and I shared some of my experiences. I look forward to working with the Committee until the newly elected V P Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is in post on August 1st.

I have tried to keep members of the Disabled Students Group on Facebook updated with the latest information from the OU about decisions relating to the virus, especially around assessments. I have also answered questions from members in there about this.

E D I S G (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Steering Group)

Another OU led group I've been added to. We heard about some of the difficulties that BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) students face across Universities including racial harassment and attack. This was not specific to the OU but the OU and the Students Association need to ensure there are safe spaces for OU BAME students to report such experiences and ensure they are confident that the OU and the Association will deal with these reports.

SeGA (Securing Greater Accessibility)

Another group I've recently joined. The meeting in March talked about accessibility testing and I was able to share that the D S G might be able to help with that. We also discussed the importance of making sure that accessibility is considered when modules are being created rather than as an afterthought. This also includes resources that could be useful for a module. Anything that is current on the OU website, so not including archived material, has to comply with new accessibility regulations.

Various Meetings

There are ongoing Task and Finish Groups and Working Groups I attend, including Communications with students; Exams and Assessments; and Module Material Production. Cath and I had a meeting with staff from the Assessment Exception Group which considers individual student's requests for adjustments which tend not to fit into any current policy. I've just been added to the Access, Participation and Success Operational Group.

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

Future Commitments

April 20th	SMHA
April 21st May 19th June 15th July 14th	SMHWG
April 21st May 7th June 9th July 7th	Exams and Assessment
April 21st May 21st	Recording Tutorials
April 24th - 26th July 17th - 19th	CEC Meeting
April 29th June 3rd July 15th	SeGA
May 18th	ACQ
May 22nd	Communications Meeting
June 17th	S R G and Senate
June 22nd	EDISG
TBC	Ouset Trustees Meeting
TBC	Service Review
TBC	S S T staff / Association Meeting
TBC	Access, Participation & Success group

Alison Kingan
Vice President Student Support

REPORT OF STUDENT OU COUNCIL MEMBER

It seems totally surreal to be writing a CEC report with the coronavirus pandemic raging around us and the whole country in lockdown. I am full of admiration for CEC colleagues who are spending long hours trying to find workable solutions for students as they approach their final assessments or providing opportunities for them to come together and talk about anything and everything to relieve their stress and anxiety and I'm equally proud of those who are grappling with the challenges arising in their work places and local communities. When I join in the applause for NHS staff, carers and keyworkers on Thursday evenings, I mentally add in all the Association staff and volunteers who are working so hard to support students through these difficult days.

Council Meetings

Extraordinary Meeting 4 February 2020

Subject to minor amendments the Council approved the University's Access and Participation Plan for submission to the OfS. They also approved

- the establishment of a FutureLearn Shareholders Representative Group as a formal sub-committee of the Council
- revised procedures for appointing the PVC (Students)

Council Meeting 9/10 March 2020

The March meeting of the Council took place in Edinburgh. Council met on the afternoon of 9 March to hear presentations on the funding of HE in Scotland, the Scottish political and public policy context, and an account of the initiatives currently being prioritised by the OU in Scotland. In the evening, Council members and guests attended a dinner and reception at Dynamic Earth.

The formal meeting of the Council took place on the following day in the OUIS office. Agenda items included consideration of the University's plans for dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic, the annual review of the OU/Students Association Relationship Agreement (more on this below), the University's annual Statement on Research Integrity and the regular updates on institutional performance, Core Systems Replacement, FutureLearn and the AL Contract.

A light touch review of the OU/Students Association Relationship Agreement had proposed only minor changes, including formalisation of the agreement that all committee papers should be accessible to the CEC. Student members welcomed the proposed changes but also argued that wider cross-faculty sharing of papers amongst student reps would support students in their representative roles. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor informed the Council that a more extensive review is planned for the coming year and promised that paper sharing among reps will be included in those discussions. In the meantime, she will raise the issue with the Executive Deans at a future meeting of VCE (Academic).

Governance and Nominations Committee (25 March 2020)

Agenda items included consideration of ways to recruit new Council members and increase diversity, a review of the terms of reference of Council committees,

arrangements for the annual effectiveness review and the regular update on external developments in governance.

Academic Governance Advisory Group

Following extensive engagement with stakeholders the implementation plan requested by Senate has now been completed and was accepted by Senate on 1 April. I'm delighted to report that we achieved a very good outcome as far as the Students Association is concerned.

- the recommendation that questions to Senate be submitted 24 hours before the meeting (which would have caused difficulties to members of SRG and the student members of Senate) will not be taken forward.
- our argument that the responsibility for technological improvements to enhance the quality of remote attendance at meetings lies firmly with the OU and not with the Association has been accepted
- our work to review representation has been acknowledged and there will be a meeting with the governance team shortly to discuss how the OU can best support students in their representative roles

QER Review

Sandra Summers and I have been appointed as joint Lead Student Representatives for the OU's 2021 Quality Enhancement Review. Last month we attended an initial online briefing session given by the QAA officer who is co-ordinating the review and we will be having regular meetings with Donna Wright (the OU's facilitator for the review) and the reference group who are putting together the University's submission. We have established a small working group to co-ordinate the student contribution to the review and will be inviting input from the CEC, CCRs and SRG members in due course. We hope to have a first rough draft of the student submission ready by the end of June.

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

13 Jan	Student Charter Task and Finish Group
22 Jan	SRG and Senate
23 Jan	Appointments Committee
24-26 Jan	CEC weekend
28 Jan	Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group
29 Jan	Governance and Nominations Committee
29 Jan	Student Voice Showcase and Workshops
30 Jan	Student Voice Steering Group
11 Feb	QAC
13 Feb	Student Charter Task and Finish Group
20 Feb	Academic Governance Advisory Group
25/26 Feb.	PRG reviews of Boards of Study QME reports
9/10 Mar	Council
12 Mar	Academic Governance Advisory Group
25 Mar	Governance and Nominations Committee
26 Mar	Appointment Panel for PVC Students
30 Mar	Review of draft PRG Report (with Cath and Cinnomen)
31 Mar	QER Reference Group
1 April	SRG/Senate
6 April	Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group

Planned future meetings

These are a movable feast but will include meetings of SRG, Senate, Council and GNC in May and June, as well as regular quarterly meetings of the Student Voice Steering Group, the Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group and the Student Charter Task and Finish Group. With my CCR hat on I will be attending QAC and Sandra and I will be having monthly QER meetings with Donna Wright to share information and report progress.

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 February - April 2020.

Due to the current ongoing health emergency caused by the Coronavirus pandemic, there is little to report this period as I have found myself managing an increased workload in my day job in the NHS and most of the meetings and events I was due to attend were cancelled as a result of the effects of the outbreak.

However, I did have the pleasure of being able to attend the face to face student consultation event in Glasgow on the 7th March, shortly before everything shut down, as I was available to stand in for our Scotland AAR who was sadly unable to attend. I was welcomed very warmly by the staff from the Open University in Scotland (OUiS) and had a very enjoyable day getting to know students and having a “good old blether” as it’s known north of the border!

Freshers also took place at the end of January, beginning of February and I attended some of the online events:

- Facebook Welcome Chat
- WELS Adobe Chat
- Study Skills Adobe Chat

The events were well attended, and it was a pleasure to be able to virtually “meet” lots of new students and catch up with old friends, as well as answering lots of questions and providing a quick OU acronym glossary in the Facebook event!

Social Media and Forums

There has been a lot of activity on social media lately due to the questions, anxieties and issues that have arisen as a result of the pandemic, with many students finding their studies affected in one way or another. I have, along with the rest of the team, endeavoured to support students and answer queries where possible as well as posting and sharing information as it has been published.

Upcoming events

Friday 24th – Sunday 26th April – Quarterly C E C business weekend [Online].

Danielle Smith
Area Association Representative England

REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR WALES

Since my last report obviously many things have been delayed or cantered around covid-19.

I attended training on measuring outcomes.

The Local volunteer panel role is now open to recruitment for the pilot which has been extended to one year.

I have helped with keeping the community together during this time by helping with chats.

I have of course continued to contribute to CEC forum discussions and day to day duties including raising concerns as necessary.

Also, since last CEC I had the privilege of observing the Board of Trustees. I would like to thank them for making me welcome.

I am also pleased to report we have a record number of student volunteers from Wales across the range of roles that the Association offers.

Lucy Richardson
Area Association Representative Wales

REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR SCOTLAND

This report will be rather shorter than usual, as CEC members will be aware, due to a family bereavement in February, I have not been able to be as active since the last meeting in January.

Social activities and meetups

Prior to shutdown with the current public health situation, meetups continued to take place across Scotland, and the Freshers' events which were planned took place in early February, both in Glasgow and in Edinburgh – many thanks to both Billy Docherty, F A R F A S S, and Anca Seaton, Vice President Community, for their work in facilitating and hosting those events. I continue to regularly participate in the Community Drop In events and the extra events via Adobe Connect being held during the current period.

O U in Scotland and external meetings

As I mentioned in my last report, the annual O U Student Consultative Meeting in Scotland was due to take place, which it did at Glasgow Caledonian University in early March. I am told this was well attended and my thanks go to all students who gave up their day to be at the event. The March meeting of the Student and Staff Engagement Group (Scotland) (S S E G S) took place a few days after the consultative meeting, once again in Edinburgh. Matters discussed included the University's response to the current coronavirus pandemic, a skills agenda update, the O U in Scotland S F C (Scottish Funding Council) outcome agreement, and an update on the work the O U I S is doing as regards to student experience and widening access. As with all S S E G S meetings, as A A R Scotland, I submit a regular update paper on our activities within the Association in Scotland and our involvement in O U I S and external body events/meetings/projects.

The Sparqs (Student Participation in Quality Scotland) National Education Officers' Network met in Dunfermline in February, and this was attended on my behalf by the F A R F A S S, Billy Docherty. The final meeting of the current year will take place online in early May. Work also continues on the O U I S Student Mental Health Agreement as part of the N U S Scotland Think Positive work on student mental health. The Mental Health Conference has now been rescheduled to take place in late October due to the current pandemic, but there will be online sessions on what was due to be the original date in mid-May. The O U I S has set up a S M H A Working Group and has recently held its' first meeting online.

I attended the Q A A Enhancement Themes Leaders Group meeting in Dundee, in early March. This was the final meeting of the current year of the group, which updates on work that institutions are doing, relating to the themes, as well as looking forward to the next Theme.

Finally, can I thank all members of the C E C, staff team and those at the O U in Scotland for their support during the difficult time I and my family have had following our bereavement. I appreciate this and keeping things in my role running as smoothly as possible.

Activities and meetings attended since the last C E C

January 29 – 30 N U S Scotland Think Positive Mental Health First Aid training, Glasgow

March 10 Q A A Enhancement Themes Leaders Group meeting, Dundee

March 11 O U I S Student and Staff Engagement Group meeting, Edinburgh

March 19 O U I S Student Mental Health Agreement Working Group, via Skype

Future Commitments

April 20 O U I S Student Mental Health Agreement Working Group, via Skype

May 7 Sparqs National Education Officers Network, via Skype

May 11 N U S Scotland Think Positive Student Mental Health online conference

July 18 – 20 C E C Meeting, venue T B C

*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 (A A R) for Continental Europe. In this role, I am responsible for representing and reporting upon the views of students living in Continental Europe to the C E C and informing the C E C about Association Activities within Continental Europe.

Social Activities

There has been some interest in face to face meetings from students at the forums (Germany, Spain). In all occasions the link to the O U S A 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

I have been given administrator rights at the Facebook groups for Southern and Northern Europe. I am also a member, and in some cases administrator, to some Southern Europe national groups (France, Spain, Italy, Greece and Switzerland). I have also requested membership to some local national Northern Europe groups without any response, as of yet. Until now I use my personal Facebook and Twitter accounts for the role, but most news is 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, 254. V L E forums were silent as usual and I have provided my contact info there as well.

Other Activities

Corona virus, a new pandemic, has spread in many European countries some of which are paying an increased death toll. Countries are locking up and European citizens, among which are many OU students, are experiencing quarantine and isolation. Open Learn was suggested as a means to creatively and inexpensively pass time during quarantine. 'Brexit,' and overseas degree recognition continue to be pressing issues which are ongoing from previous terms. I try to follow closely the news about 'Brexit'. I participate at the Student Led Projects Approval Panel.

Michael Kasoutas
Area Association Representative for Europe

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

Activity since the last Central Executive Report.

Staff studying in FASS

I was asked by the FASS FAR to cover a meeting of OU staff who are also studying FASS modules. This was the first time this group had met and I was able to give a short presentation about the Association. I thought the idea of the meeting was something all faculties should consider and have mentioned it to FBL where it received a favourable response.

Teaching Committee

The most interesting point to come out of the January FBL Teaching Committee was the postponement of the proposed joint MSc with the University of Bologna. This was something that student representatives on various committees had expressed concerns about, and I had a meeting with the Associate Dean last December to put our views forward. This delay should provide time for our questions and concerns to be dealt with.

Student Voice Showcase

The Student Voice Showcase event at the end of January saw a number of CEC members presenting examples of working with OU staff and demonstrating the benefits of collaboration to an audience mainly consisting of senior academics. I presented on how I was involved in the planning of the FBL student conference last year and how, together with a team of student volunteers, we made the day such a success.

Freshers

As part of Freshers 27 January to 7 February, I joined with FBL SRSC and FBL Student Experience staff to host an online event aimed at both new students and returning students. One of the new students expressed an interest in volunteering with the Association and was signposted to the volunteering team.

WELS Residential School

The WELS faculty held a residential school near Milton Keynes for social care students and I joined the Association's Communities staff to hold an Association stall at this event as well as being allowed to address them at one of the plenary sessions on the Saturday. This was probably one of the last residential schools that will be held this year due to the coronavirus lockdown.

Student Consultations

The Belfast Student Consultation was also a victim of the coronavirus travel restrictions, unfortunately being cancelled when I was already on the flight to Belfast. I did get to visit the OU Office there and sat in reception in case any students turned up, but none did.

Online meetings

Three meetings the following week were cancelled, including the FBL Faculty Assembly where we were due to present the new Students Association Strategy and the Student Charter. All meetings are now online. They included a successful workshop on the new LLB degree, held on Adobe Connect and with about 20 staff and 2 student participants. This had some technical issues with delegates dropping out at times but on the whole the Adobe platform held up well for a full days meeting (with virtual lunch break).

The Association is now offering three drop-in chat sessions per week to serve students during the travel restrictions, and CEC members are volunteering as hosts to assist the VP Communities.

Another successful Adobe Connect session was held for the Senate Reference Group, expertly chaired by the President in the absence of a VP Education. This again showed that despite minor technical issues, successful large meetings can be hosted on this platform.

Current activities are, understandably, less than normal which does allow time for me to participate in drop in chats, answer questions on the election forum and study for my remote 'exam' due before the CEC.

Meetings since the last Central Executive Report

16 January: FASS staff as students meeting
16 January: FBL Teaching Committee
21 January: Polly Corfield, FBL Careers and Employability Service
21 January: Referencing Implementation Group
22 January: Senate Reference Group
24 January: Amy King, Head of Student Support FBL
25-26 January: Central Executive Committee
29 January: Student Voice Showcase event
4 February: FBL Wellbeing and Student Chat (online)
14-16 February: WELS Residential School
13 March: Consultation event, Belfast
24 March: Proposed New LLB Workshop (online)
1 April: Senate Reference Group (online)

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)

As quarters go, this has been a challenging one. There has been so much that I can say about how good it has been representing W E L S students. To pick a few highlights, working with Elodie, Dasha and Kate on student voice activities. Some of the more difficult parts have been just over the last week talking with members of the faculty about how students would react to various options on the table about End of Module Assessments. And then seeing the reaction of students to the news that mostly they have been cancelled. It has been a privilege to be able to help a lot of students who have been struggling with a new norm and their studies, and an even greater honour to see how many students who now have no more assessments, carry on their studies instead of giving up. It really is an honour sometimes to see the resilience of O U Students.

As part of the team working on the new Student Charter, it has been good to be able to present on it at Faculty Assembly in person and see how so many staff want to embed it into everything that they do. It has also been a new experience to, now twice, present it in skype meetings. I guess it is right when it is said ‘you learn a new skill every day!’. I am looking forward to the launch of this document and for it to be even more accessible to students and staff alike.

Working with the Student Learning Adjustment Strategy team to try and work out what is best for students who require alternative formats was extremely trying at times, but I worked really hard to make sure as much as I could that the student's voice was heard throughout. Even when I was in meetings that I mostly only heard every other word because the Skype connection was terrible.

Throughout all this, I had been planning to run for President of the Students Association, and this has been a fascinating and challenging process due to the current circumstances. I count it a privilege to have worked with such amazing colleagues that this is where it has led. It is now just a case of biting my fingernails as we await the result! I have really enjoyed the questions put to me, and I hope that I have been able to answer them in full. Even if I don't get in, I will support whoever it is as they will need it taking the Association forward with all the excitement that will bring. So only one more of these reports to go – let's hope that everyone keeps healthy and the fantastic resilience shown, stands our brilliant students in good stead in the months to come.

Meetings

<u>Faculty</u>	<u>Staff and C E C</u>
8.1.20 Elodie Vialleton – Student Voice meeting	6.1.20 Review of C C R day 10.1.20 Review of Student-Led Project Panel

<p>13.1.20 Catch up with Dasha Ivkina-Macdonald 14.1.20 W E L S Teaching Committee 14.1.20 Model Office Working Group 17.1.20 Filming for H W S C 23.1.20 Assessor for Model Office recruitment day 4.2.20 PRAXIS Steering Group 6.2.20 Scholarship Steering Group 26.2.20 W E L S E L T 26.2.20 H W S C Board of Studies 3.3.20 W E L S Faculty Assembly 6.3.20 Kate Breeze – student voice in faculty 10.3.20 Model Office Working Group 12.3.20 E C Y S Board of Studies 13.3.20 Catch up with Dasha Ivkina-Macdonald comms in L A L 23.3.20 Tyrrell Golding 24.3.20 W E L S Teaching Committee 25.3.20 W E L S E L T 25.3.20 Dasha Ivkina-Macdonald and Julie Buck L A L comms 31.3.20 E C Y S comms</p>	<p>10.1.20 Catch up with Verity Robinson 13.1.20 Teaching Committee catch up with Hannah Whitaker 15.1.20 Proof Reading Training 16.1.20 Student-Led Project training 17.1.20 Wendy Burrell 20.1.20 Culture Update Wendy Burrell 24.1.20-26.1.20 C E C Weekend 3.2.20 Culture review meeting 3.3.20 Rob Avann 19.3.20 Community Chat 24.3.20 Community Chat 31.3.20 Community Chat 1.4.20 Student Experience Discussions</p>
<p><u>Other Meetings</u></p> <p>7.1.20 S L A S 9.1.20 S L A S 10.1.20 Office for Students Round table 13.1.20 S L A S 13.1.20 Rebecca Cordy Alternative format journey discussion 14.1.20 P G R Liaison group 20.1.20 S L A S 22.1.20 S R G 24.1.20 Sally Hayes – Student Voice Conference discussion 29.1.20 Presenting and co-running a workshop Student Voice Conference 31.1.20 Skype call to plan Student Hub Live slot 3.2.20 Student Hub Live – Fitting study into life and not life into study. 12.2.20 Mental Health Steering Group 13.2.20 Student Charter review</p>	<p><u>Future Plans</u></p> <p>7.4.20 Community Chat – there will be many others 8.4.20 Brown Bag on Scholarship 9.4.20 or 15.4.20 W E L S Faculty Executive session with W E L S Students 14.4.20 PRAXIS Steering Group 15.4.20 W E L S E L T 15.4.20 Athena Swan 20.4.20 Student Charter review 21.4.20 P G R Liaison Group 23.4.20 Assessment Policy Review Group</p>

<p>17.3.20 Briefing for presentation of Student Charter to Faculty Assembly</p> <p>18.2.20 Briefing for Online Student Consultations</p> <p>4.3.20 Mental Health Steering Group</p> <p>7.3.20 Birmingham Student Consultation</p> <p>11.3.20 Online Student Consultation</p> <p>17.3.20 Tina Forbes – discussion on F A S S Peer Mentoring scheme</p> <p>17.3.20 Referencing Implementation Group</p> <p>18.3.20 Athena Swan</p> <p>23.3.20 Presentation of Student Charter to Open Programme Senior team</p> <p>26.3.20 Online Student Consultation</p> <p>30.3.20 Presentation of Student Charter to Access Support team</p> <p>2.4.20 Student Consultation Debrief</p>	
---	--

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>Review of CCR day</i>	6 th Jan 2020	Meeting with key staff and CEC members in regard to CCR training day
<i>Teaching groups FASS</i>	7 th Jan 2020	Teaching and students group meeting on campus
<i>Teaching Committee FASS</i>	7 th Jan 2020	Attended teaching committee
<i>Students voice matters planning skype meeting</i>	13 th Jan 2020	Planning meeting for up-coming event.
<i>Speakeasy planning skype meeting</i>	13 th Jan 2020	Planning for up-coming speakeasy event Edinburgh
<i>Meeting with head of student voice in Scotland</i>	20 th Jan 2020	Meeting with new head of student voice in Scotland at the Edinburgh office. To plan our joint presentation at the Student Voice Matters conference
<i>Meeting with Shona Littlejohn in OUiS</i>	20 th Jan 2020	Met with Shona Littlejohn at OUiS
<i>Adobe connect CEC members</i>	22 nd Jan 2020	A meeting to discuss the setting up of volunteers in Wales as a pilot
<i>CEC Weekend</i>	23 rd – 26 th Jan 2020	Attended CEC weekend
<i>Meeting Jean McAvoy head of school psychology</i>	28 th Jan 2020	Meeting to discuss feedback from student consultation forums
<i>Student Voice Matters conference</i>	29 th Jan 2020	Attended and presented at this conference with the head of student voice in Scotland
<i>STEM Freshers chat</i>	5 th Feb 2020	Supported STEM FAR in fresher's adobe chat
<i>FASS Freshers chat</i>	30 th Jan 2020	Hosted FASS fresher's event
<i>Meet up with VP Community</i>	8 th Feb 2020	Edinburgh face to face meet up
<i>Scottish Psychology student's panel</i>	14 th Feb 2020	Skype meeting to plan for Scottish psychology student's panel. With Beth Metcalf and Hayley Ness
<i>Skype Call with PVC Students</i>	17 th Feb 2020	Meeting to discuss student charter presentation at faculty assembly
<i>Scottish Psychology student's panel selection</i>	18 th Feb 2020	Skype meeting to plan for Scottish psychology student's panel. With Beth Metcalf and Hayley Ness
<i>NEON conference</i>	19 th Feb 2020	Attended the SPARQS NEON conference as sub for Mark Cameron (AAR Scotland)
<i>Psychology Hub</i>	26 th Feb 2020	Attending the psychology hub presentation in Linlithgow
<i>Meeting with Pete Turner</i>	2 nd March 2020	Meeting to discuss community events
<i>Meeting with Wendy Reid</i>	2 nd March 2020	Meeting to discuss future planning

<i>Meeting with SRSC</i>	3 rd march 2020	Met with Julia Proser (Head of SRSC FASS)
<i>FASS Faculty Assembly planning</i>	3 rd March 2020	Met faculty staff to plan student attendance at FA
<i>Tutorial video filming with Cath</i>	3 rd March 2020	Videoring for student's information videos
<i>Culture review meeting</i>	3 rd March 2020	First meeting of Culture review group
<i>Student consultation</i>	7 th March 2020	Attended the student consultation in Glasgow
<i>Meeting the student voice team in OUiS</i>	11 th March 2020	Met with student voice team to discuss mapping planning for OUSA
<i>Scottish Psychology student's panel</i>	16 th March 2020	Skype meeting to plan for Scottish psychology student's panel. With Beth Metcalf and Hayley Ness
<i>Mental Health working group Scotland</i>	19 th March 2020	Skype call of the initial Scottish Mental health group.
<i>Scottish Psychology student's panel training day</i>	28 th March 2020	Training day for new psychology students panel members
<i>Senate ref group</i>	1 st April 2020	Adobe connect session with senate ref group
<i>Senate Meeting</i>	1 st April 2020	Attended via skype Senate meeting

FASS Connected/ General chats on Adobe

The FASS Connected sessions have stopped at present with the ongoing Corona Virus situation. It was thought better to hold adobe sessions for all students on a regular basis. We now holding 3 chat sessions a week for all students.

Scottish Psychology Students Panel

We have now successfully recruited 5 students from across Scotland to serve as the first panel. They have attended an adobe training session in regard to volunteering and the student's association. This was originally to be a full day face to face, but with the current situation it will now be held over 2 adobe sessions.

Speakeasy Events

Due to the ongoing Corona Virus emergency both speakeasy events have been postponed. These will resume once things return to normal.

Cancelled Events

Due to the current situations a lot of meetings and events have been postponed or cancelled. This has led to an increased amount of telephone conversations and online chats.

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

Billy Docherty

Faculty Association Representative for Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

REPORT OF THE FACULTY ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (FAR) FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHS (STEM)

Roles:

Central Executive Committee (CEC) Member, STEM FAR, eSTEEeM Student Referencing Panellist, Senate Reference Group (ex officio), Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group (on interim)

Attended Meetings & Events Jan-April 2020

7 January	Degree classification algorithm review (Adobe)
20 January	Created the STEMFARep information page (Facebook) *
24-26 January	CEC Weekend – (including Culture Review Feedback, Open Degree Presentations & Teaching Awards Steering Group meetings)
27 January	BAME Advocates whiteboard session – with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and OUSA Student Voice Teams
27 January	STEM FAR – Catch up (with Beth Metcalf (on Campus))
5 February	STEM Freshers - Online Community Chat – (Hosted with Anca Seaton)
6 February	STEM Teaching Excellence Conference (1st) *
17 February	OUSA FARs - Presenting Student Charter – debrief with Julia Levett (Online - Skype)
26 February	STEM Faculty Assembly (Including Student Charter Review Presentation) *
26 February	EDISG Meeting (Stand in for Stephanie Stubbins)
9 March	EDI Catch up - with Joan Simons (Skype meeting)
1 March – Ongoing	COVID19 Outbreak impacting F2F Meetings, Study and Mental Health
12 March – Ongoing	CEC Online Meetings: via OUSA CEC 2018-20 / OUSA COBRA / CEC FORUMS / Adobe Connect / Email *
26 March – Ongoing	OU Community Drop-ins Increased (to 3 per week) – all CEC Reps Collaborating as Hosts in moderation (Adobe Connect)
1 April	Senate Referencing Group Meeting (Online – Adobe Connect)

Meeting Overview (*asterisked (*)*):

STEMFARep Page:

Created a condense space for all STEM / OU /OUSA related news and highlights for students to have ease of access (on Social Media), and to enable students to communicate directly with their STEMFAR (about meetings, events and questions). I am in the process of drumming up ideas with STEM students to help me facilitate community-building activities during isolation.

STEM Teaching Excellence Conference

1st Teaching Excellence Conference, attended by both STEM Staff and Students. It highlighted some of the fundamental and revolutionary work taking place in STEM from OpenStem Labs to blended Online tutorials (with video illustrations and practical demonstrations). Was able to feedback and question accessibility and inclusiveness for students, during some presentations.

STEM Faculty Assembly:

Presented and reviewed, the updated (condensed) Student Charter to the STEM Faculty Assembly; where I collaborated with the Associate Dean for Student Experience (Carlton Woods) and OUSA President (Cath Brown) to address questions and feedback.

CEC Online Meetings:

CEC Online meetings have increased, due to COVID19 Outbreak and Governmental call for public isolation. This also sparked the closure of the OU campus which impacted staff availability and support systems for students. Therefore, to help manage and support students the CEC have been meeting daily on Facebook, to plan and coordinate sharing of information and interim support for students.

Future Meetings and Events:

24-26 April	CEC Weekend (Online)
29-30 April	eSTEE M Conference (Online)
20 May (TBC)	STEM Faculty Assembly
17-19 July (TBC)	Handover Weekend and CEC Meeting (Silverstone)

Other activities:

- Have been actively informing, signposting, supporting, engaging with and reassuring students on Social Media (mainly FB) and forums, due to COVID19 and uncertainties with study formats; e.g. cancelled tutorials/eTMAs/EXAMS/EMAs; lengthy OU response times with email only contact; Study/Work/Life disruptions and; Mental Health (MH) challenges.
- Raised a call-to-action alarm, on behalf of Student and Volunteer's MH during the crisis. This was actioned promptly by OU & OUSA staff separately to increase the level and quality support resources and channels available to students. Although, this is still under development.
- Presently, looking to launch an informal event: a 4 week 'OU Spring/Isolation Declutter Bingo' (later in April with the help of a stem student), to help combat isolation and to motivate students. This will be actioned on the STEMFARep Page.
- Still playing an active role in working BAME group and been offering feedback and insight to OU groups in support of this. Work still being carried out to pilot the main BAME group and other BAME student representation.
- Continued; sharing information and events, answering (STEM & generalised) student questions, encouraging students and, liaising with OUSA's CEC, Volunteers and Staff and CCRs, on Social Media (mainly Facebook), Email, Forums and phone (to resolve queries where necessary).

- Self-nomination & participation in CEC 2020 Elections – including informing and campaigning to Students via Social Media, Hustings Q& A & Collaborating with candidates on Slack

Patrice Belton

Faculty Association Representative for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)