

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

25 – 26 April 2020

CONFERENCE 2020

The C E C is asked to: -

- i) **receive** a report on the plan for an online-only Conference event.

1. **Executive summary**

- 1.1. The OU Students Association biennial conference will be an online-only event due to the recent circumstances concerning the coronavirus pandemic. Detailed planning has begun and positive comments of support have been received.

2. **Introduction**

- 2.1. This report is to provide an update on the planning that will take place over the next three months which will be led by the Conference Project Manager and supported by the Conference Steering Committee and Staff.

3. **Staff teams**

- 3.1. Staff teams have been revised to support the new online-only format. These include:
 - Tech Team
 - Business Team
 - Registration Team
 - Comms Team
 - Programme Team
 - Volunteering Team
 - Impact Team
- 3.2. The teams will include a newly formed Tech team who will ensure that we are able to deliver an effective conference on a suitable platform that's

efficient, effective, secure and accessible. Alongside the platform, an engagement tool will also be considered to allow delegates to feedback during the event through a range of polls and surveys.

- 3.3. The programme team will start to explore flagship events to entice delegates to attend and consider incentives such as key speakers, prize draws and special sessions. The team will help build a programme that suits the new shape of Conference.
- 3.4. Discussions will also consider how we can provide opportunities for delegates to tell us what they think about the Association, how we support them as an OU Student and a chance to share their ideas and create opportunities beneficial to them.
- 3.5. The Conference Steering Committee will continue to provide direction and support with discussions.

4. Business

- 4.1. Business is expected to be much lighter than the previous conference as there will be no constitutional changes. To ensure quorum through Business, it is essential for at least 40% of registered delegates to vote.
- 4.2. To reduce risk and to give students the opportunity to vote over a longer period of time, the Business team will explore the option of having the voting take place prior to the event with at least a two-week period for students to vote.
- 4.3. The team will also explore incentives for taking part in the voting and whether elements of the Conference should be made unavailable to those who don't.

5. Registration

- 5.1. The timeline for Conference registration is as follows:

Item	Date
Registration Opens	17 April 2020
Registration Closes	11 May 2020

- 5.2. Students will be able to register for conference via the online registration form on the Conference microsite. There will be a total of 500 spaces available in the ballot.
- 5.3. Student registrations will be reviewed daily, and after eligibility and national seat allocation has been checked, a confirmation of registration will be sent to the student with further information on the selection process.

5.4. A randomised selection system will pick successful students in line with the number of places available per nation (including England and Continental Europe).

6. Key dates

6.1. Notice to Conference will be sent to all students on 17/04/20 as per our constitutional requirements.

6.2. The Conference ballot will open on 17/04/20 and will be included in the Notice to Conference. The ballot will be closed on 11/05/20.

7. Next steps

7.1. The Steering Committee together with Association staff will continue to deliver and plan a new and innovative special edition of Conference to ensure its successful delivery in June.

7.2. A number of challenges will be presented along with the planning of an online-only event. A number of workshops and discussions will take place to consider solutions and various options.

The Conference Steering Committee