

## OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

### Central Executive Committee (CEC)

25 – 26 April 2020

### STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

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The CEC is asked to:-

- i) **Receive** the updates on strategy implementation

#### 1. **Board of Trustees Approvals**

- 1.1 Following the endorsements received from the CEC in January, the Board of Trustees approved the following at their meeting in February:
  - strategy measures of success
  - strategy performance management process
  - strategy programmes and projects structure
  - strategy projects initiation plan

#### 2. **Strategy Launch & Promotion Activities**

- 2.1 The majority of the strategy launch/promotion activities that had been planned for March/April have unfortunately been postponed due to the cancellation of face-to-face meetings and consultations and the subsequent closure of OU sites as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. These cancellations include face-to-face student consultations, launch events at the OU in Wales and the OU in Scotland, Faculty Assembly presentations and the OU Council/Senate Reference Group lunch.
- 2.2 Work will be carried out to identify where alternative methods can be used to share strategy details further with students and with key OU stakeholders.

#### 3. **Strategy Measures of Success**

- 3.1 Expressions of interest have been received to join the working group which will be responsible for getting the success measure tracking and reporting up and running. Implementation work is expected to commence within the next few weeks.
- 3.2 Initial tasks for the working group will be:

- Agree/propose responsibilities for the on-going provision of tracking data
- Coordinate the collation of pre-existing tracking data to create the base line performance position
- Create the templates for on-going performance reporting

3.3 The aim will be to create initial proto-type performance reports for the July CEC meeting.

#### **4. Project Implementation Updates**

4.1 For reference, a copy of the strategy-specific projects summary is provided in Appendix 1 and the approved project initiation plan is provided in Appendix 2. Updates on individual projects/workstreams that were prioritised to commence prior to Conference are provided below in points 4.2 through 4.5)

#### **4.2 Project 1/Workstream 1A – Membership Research and Analysis**

- A soft launch of the new Annual Membership Survey has been carried out – the survey was launched to a representative sample of 30,000 students at the end of February and was open for responses until the end of March.
- A total of 292 responses were received (just under 1%) which is comparable to previous survey response rates.
- Additional promotion of the survey, including a reminder email to all 30,000 students had been planned for later in March to provide a further boost to the response rate. These plans were suspended due to the escalation of the COVID-19 situation in order to allow both the Association and the OU to focus on higher priority pandemic-related support and communications for students.
- The Research Team have commenced the analysis of the response data which will be shared with the CEC once the analysis work has been completed.
- The analysis will be shared with students during Conference and will be used to identify potential topics for further exploration with the student body. It will also be used to support the service review which will be carried out under Project 1/Workstream 1B, which is expected to commence from July.

#### **4.3 Project 2 – Individual Representation Feasibility Study**

Work has commenced on the compilation of content for a business case to be submitted to the OU for funding for a pilot programme, as below.

- The Research Team have commenced analysis of the student input data on individual representation sourced from three 2019 activities - online strategy consultation, representation review survey, online focus group.
- An exploratory meeting was held with OU Student Casework office to establish information on student complaint processes and the 2018/19 complaint volumes, types and patterns and to understand the key areas where Association involvement may potentially impact the OU.
- An initial top-line summary and assessment of the services that the Association could provide has been completed.
- It is anticipated that an initial business case will be shared with the CEC via the forums for input and feedback during May.

- 4.4 **Project 8 – Stakeholder Analysis & Stakeholder Engagement Plan**  
This project has not yet been initiated but is expected to get underway within the next few weeks.
- 4.5 **Project 9/Workstream 9A - Developing, in conjunction with the OU, a shared Code of Practice for academic representation**  
As a pre-cursor to the development of a formal shared Code of Practice, the new Interim Head of Representation is prioritising working with the University on the implementation of the changes and recommendations identified through the Association’s Representation Review conducted in 2019, alongside the University’s own Academic Governance Review outcomes.
- 4.6 It is recognised that the COVID-19 emergency is impacting on work-loads for both CEC and staff members in delivering vital student support services and student communications and in working with the OU on the highest impact issues, along with adjusting to significant changes to ways of working due to the closure of the OU sites. In order to continue to maintain a focus on advancing strategic projects during this period, the focus will be on project outputs delivery with minimally sized core project teams utilising resource from other CEC and staff members and students on an assigned task basis as and when required.
- 5. Business Planning**
- 5.1 Initial drafts of business plans (covering business-as-usual activities and non-strategy specific projects) have been developed for the 2020/21 academic year. These will be reviewed and developed further during April and May in the context of the 2020/21 subvention feedback from the OU.

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