



CEC 04/21/2

## OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

### Central Executive Committee (CEC)

16 – 18 April 2021

### REPORTS FROM OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION GROUPS

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C E C 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:-

Disabled Students Group (DSG)  
OU PRIDE

## **Central Executive Committee (CEC)**

16 – 18 April 2021

### **REPORT FROM THE DISABLED STUDENTS GROUP (DSG)**

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#### **Committee Updates**

Our Secretary has resigned.

We are distributing this role out to our committee members.

#### **Group Membership**

Facebook: 2053

Twitter: 500

Full membership: 660

We are gradually increasing our full membership.

#### **Communications**

We now use Teams for our committee space as well as our new forum.

We have sent out an email to our members encouraging them to use the new forum and asking for ideas.

#### **Events & Activities**

February Freshers went really well. We had a guest speaker from STEM discussing accessibility.

#### **Student issues & challenges**

Alternative Formats is still an ongoing issue.

Students still not aware of DSA or various support funds.

#### **Any other initiatives or updates**

We have updated our Facebook Rules and questions before joining the facebook group, which includes our website.

We have had an increase in neurodiversity topics on both our new forum space and facebook.

We are in the early stages of putting together ideas for a newsletter.

**Megan Brown**

**Chair of DSG**

**For and on behalf of the Disabled Students Group**



## **Central Executive Committee (CEC)**

16 – 18 April 2021

### **REPORT FROM OU PRIDE**

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#### **Committee Updates**

The OU Pride committee currently stands at 4 members, 3 elected positions and 1 general committee member.

There have been no changes to the make-up over this period.

Committee meetings were held on the following dates:

11<sup>th</sup> January – this was a get to know meeting as a newly elected committee

27<sup>th</sup> January

3<sup>rd</sup> February

23<sup>rd</sup> February

18<sup>th</sup> March

#### **Group Membership**

We currently have 606 members registered via OUStudents.com

The numbers are growing due to the increased visibility the group has across all relevant platforms. One of the group's main aims for the next few months is to ensure this trend continues by continuing to have regular drop-ins (monthly) and other online events.

We are regularly reaching out to our membership via the forums and Facebook asking them to join in and asking for ideas on events we can run.

We are looking to ensure we have covered all important dates in the LGBTQ+ calendar and any relevant outside campaigns are advertised, asking our membership to take part.

#### **Communications**

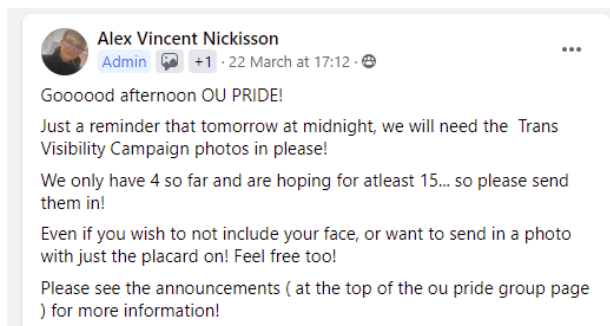
We have a new logo to support the name change in December/ January. We are going to do a 're-launch' event on 1<sup>st</sup> April where we will showcase the new logo alongside our mission statement. We are currently working on what exactly this will look like. The logo will be updated across all platforms on this date.

We currently have 482 members on our closed Facebook group, of these 412 were active members between 25<sup>th</sup> Feb and 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021. This number is growing quickly, and we attribute this to the regular content being put there. We have at least 2 or 3 posts on the group each week, with this mirrored across the forums.

We have reinvigorated the existing forums, changing their names to reflect our new group name. The participation in these is also increasing as members realise their existence.

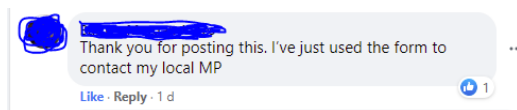


At the moment we are running a campaign for Trans Day of Visibility (31<sup>st</sup> March) where we are asking our members to take a picture with a placard showing their support for the trans community. We will be making a collage of this and releasing on the day. These posts are reaching 298 people with on average 15 comments. So far we have received 15 pictures to be included in the campaign with more promised.



We received feedback from a member who has a transgender child to say that they were discussing our campaign with their child, who then told their school mentor about it and the school are marking the day after the Easter holidays. We are currently in discussion with the school as to how we can help support them. I will have more details next quarter.

We made our membership aware of a campaign Stonewall are running to ban conversion therapy. This was very well received:



We hope that the engagement numbers will continue to increase by us continuing to post pertinent updates and by advertising our events.

## Events & Activities

We have been holding various events to work out what our members like and want going forward. These were:

Drop-In – a chance for members to join us online, meet the committee and have an informal chat:  
22<sup>nd</sup> January

26<sup>th</sup> February

26<sup>th</sup> March

We have had between 8 and 10 attendees, all who appreciated the event and wanted them to continue.

OU Pride Book Club – a book club where the book is written by a queer author or has strong queer representation within the book:

2<sup>nd</sup> March

This initial event had 5 attendees and the chat generated was positive and those who attended were happy to schedule another and suggestions were put forward for next months book.

Bingo! – an interactive game of Bingo

12<sup>th</sup> March

We had 13 attendees all who had a lot of fun and were asked for another bingo night to be scheduled.

LGBT Games Night – a night of fun with Pictionary and other online games

20<sup>th</sup> March

We had 8 attendees. Everyone who attended said they had fun and would love another night to be scheduled:

Really enjoyed Games night, looking forward to the next one

We have the following events planned for the next period:

Book Club – 6<sup>th</sup> April

Drop-In – 23<sup>rd</sup> April

(We are planning a quiz but no date set for this yet)

Monday Morning Rise and Shine – 3<sup>rd</sup> May (am) – a Monday morning opportunity for a chat

Book Club – 11<sup>th</sup> May

Bingo – 14<sup>th</sup> May

Drop-in – 28<sup>th</sup> May

Alex attended the Inclusion Group meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> January. We expressed an opinion on the matter of pronouns, which is under investigation as described below.

Lyndsay hosted a quiz on 2<sup>nd</sup> February as part of Freshers fortnight. This coincided with LGBT History month and the questions largely centred around LGBT history with a little general knowledge mixed in. It was attended by 9 people and well received.

The previous chair of PLEXUS requested a meeting with us to offer their support and provide tips on how to succeed for the future. This was held on 03/02. All members of the current committee attended and agreed it was a very worthwhile conversation. Following this, and in line with LGBT History month, an article was published to The Hoot on the history of PLEXUS to where we are now with OU Pride.

Alex attended a discussion on 10<sup>th</sup> February with transgender students on the issues they face. This centred around how tutors can use correct pronouns etc and it was agreed that pronouns should be added to email signatures for now and this will be

further investigated.

The issue regarding transgender representation was brought up with OU Pride not having a transgender rep discussed. It was agreed that this issue will be discussed within the committee.

Luke and Charlie attended the Club Cymru meet up on 15<sup>th</sup> February to introduce OU Pride and give a brief update on the changes to our group and where we hope to go from there. Following this Alex and Lyndsay were invited to the OU Wales Student Facebook page to allow us to update their members on anything we were running, and vice versa.

Lyndsay attended a Group Chairs meeting with Patrice Belton and the chair of the DSG on 17/02. This meeting was very useful in building relationships with some names given to Lyndsay to reach out and get OU Pride updates to.

Lyndsay attended OU Scotland's Big Blether on 04/03 and introduced OU Pride. This was very well received and has led to conversations with one of their members offering to assist with some events.

Lyndsay and Charlie attended the Microsoft Teams webinar on 10/03 to get hints and tips on how to run successful teams' meetings. Discussions are now underway as to how we can improve our workshop delivery using MS Teams.

The committee are committed to continuing to talk to our members and have agreed that all suggestions will be discussed.

As a committee we are looking at training for ourselves and have requested a discussion on service providers and costings.

We are looking at other avenues to interact with our members and will have more information on this next period.

### **Student issues & challenges**

Students have raised a few issues with us in relation to transgender issues. This generated a lot of chat within our social media platforms. In these instances, the concerns were taken to the university via Patrice Belton. Unfortunately, there was no easy 'fix' for these, but we have kept students aware of the situation.

We are committed to continue to attend inclusion meetings to ensure any issues brought to ourselves are brought to this forum and discussed as fully as possibly.

### **Any other initiatives or updates**

We are looking at other avenues to interact with our members (such as Discord) and will have more information on this next period.

**Lyndsay Thomson**

**Chair**

**For and on behalf of OU PRIDE**

