

## Micro-volunteers – Initial Impact Report – June 2021

Micro-volunteering was envisaged as a way of allowing students to get involved with volunteering on a flexible, ad-hoc basis – something which is likely to be attractive to OU students, especially younger students, students in employment, and those with caring responsibilities. It was also intended as a providing a pool of volunteers who could be drawn on for small projects or last minute requests, without the need (and administrative burden) of having to conduct a full recruitment.

It was originally planned that there would be a pool of 50 micro-volunteers, however, after a successful promotion, 105 people applied and 95 were accepted – all of which were new to volunteering with the Students Association. 75 then went on to complete training and start taking on tasks.

At the time of writing (4 June), the micro-volunteers have been involved in the following roles since taking up their roles (12 April):

- Review of student support pages on website
- Content creation for The Hoot/LinkedIn
- Promotion of CCR/SRG vacancies
- Audit of regional forums
- Audit of club forums
- Mapping the student journey workshop
- Student journey – pre-study and initial engagement consultation

The following additional activities are currently scheduled:

- Review of resource bank for Black students
- Interviews with QAA external assessor
- Review of volunteer role description

As part of celebrating National Volunteer Week, we gathered testimonials on why students volunteer. This is what one of our micro-volunteers said:

*I have been studying on the OU since early 2018 and this year I felt like I wanted to get more involved in OU life and community other than just my studying. Since starting my degree, I have been struck at how supportive and inclusive the OU is, particularly all the work the Association does in terms of mental health support and creating a safe, diverse and inclusive environment. I felt like I wanted to give back to the community and also meet new people as online learning can at times be a little isolating. When I saw the opportunity of becoming a micro-volunteer I therefore jumped at the chance of applying. It is the perfect role as it is flexible so fits nicely around studying, working, general life etc. whilst also allowing me to get involved, give back and meet new people as I wanted. I only started in April so looking forward to all the upcoming opportunities.*

More comprehensive reviews and feedback will be carried out when the micro-volunteers have been in post for longer, provisionally at 3 months and 6 months.