



CEC 07/21/2

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

2 - 4 July 2021

REPORTS FROM OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION GROUPS

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)

2 – 4 July 2021

REPORT FROM THE DISABLED STUDENTS GROUP (DSG)

1.

Committee Updates

One of our committee members resigned due to ill health. However we have a new co opted committee member.

Unfortunately due to other volunteer commitments , we haven't been able to meet as regularly as we would like.

2. Group Membership

Facebook: 2047

Twitter: 511

Full membership: 674

Our Followers on Twitter have increased and we are gradually increasing our full membership.

3. 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.

4. Events & Activities

Idea's are being discussed for October Freshers.

5. Student issues & challenges

Alternative Formats is still an ongoing issue.

Students still not aware of DSA or various support funds.

Keeping students and members interested during the summer break until new modules start

6. Any other initiatives or updates

We are in the early stages of putting together ideas for a newsletter, this is still ongoing. Hopefully with a change in committee members we can start some new initiatives.

Our weekly #SharingPositivity thread on our various platforms is encouraging members to participate.

Megan Brown

Chair of DSG

For and on behalf of the Disabled Students Group



Central Executive Committee (CEC)

2 – 4 July 2021

REPORT FROM OU PRIDE

1. Committee Updates

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

During the last period March – June we have given Charles a named position of Student Support Officer to greater reflect the mix amongst the group.

Committee meetings were held on the following dates:

18th March

3rd May

2. Group Membership

We currently have 639 members registered via OUStudents.com which is an increase from the last quarter.

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.

3. Communications

We had a 're-launch' event on 16th April where we showcased the new logo alongside our mission statement. Our new logo is shown below beside our mission statement



We had a video to advertise it: [OUPrideLogo](#)

We currently have 522 members on our closed Facebook group, of these 442 were active members between 13th April and 10th May 2021. This number continues to grow with more of our members becoming, and staying, active members.

442 active members ●
11 May 2021 - 7 Jun 2021



This can be attributed to regular daily posts on the platform with a mix of news and fun items all with their own #. Where possible the posts are replicated across Facebook and Twitter and the forums:

#MoodMonday – how is everyone feeling for the week ahead. Anything anyone is stressed about. This is tailored for exam week/ EMA deadlines looming etc. Our post on 10th May coincided with the start of Mental Health Awareness week so our post was about looking after your own mental health in a very stressful time of year for our members. We added a link to Mental Health organisations for anyone in distress. One of our members commented that it was good timing because of their anxiety levels.

Thank you for posting - my anxiety levels are through the roof right now so this is good timing.

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#TipTuesday – hints and tips for things to be aware of in the coming week, again tailored to the time of year etc. For example to coincide with Pride month:

[#TipTuesday](#)

So Pride month is now in full swing and I have noticed a lot more Pride flags than I would normally see.
I have also heard small kids ask what the flag is and why the colours so I thought we could look at how to explain Pride, and why its so important, to a child:
I really believe that if we educate the future generations properly on various issues we may start to see a difference!... See more

#WisdomWednesday – usually a quote from someone in the public eye with a piece of advice

Wow [#WisdomWednesday](#) already

I know ALOT of students have their EMA deadlines today, Remember You Got This!

And most importantly:



#ThrowbackThursday – a look back at a previous post or campaign to keep it in peoples thoughts

#FollowFriday – we use this to highlight the work of an LGBTQ+ campaign group or charity. We used this to highlight MindOut (an LGBTQ+ Mental Health charity), Stonewall etc, especially if any of these groups have campaigns running. Stonewall have featured a few times especially when they have come under fire in the media.

#SaturdayNight – what is everyone up to? Encourage people to chat

#SundayFunday – a game to encourage chat such as Pride Playlist – name a song that begins with the first letter of your first name.

Our posts currently have an average reach of between 300 and 400 and an average engagement of between 30 and 60.

The forums are also busy. One of the most successful conversations was regarding film and TV with good LGBTQ+ representation, and this conversation is one that

people keep going back to.
It has quietened down over EMA and exam season, but this was expected.

We ran a campaign for Trans Day of Visibility (TDOV) on 31st March where we asked our members to take pictures of themselves with a poster with phrases such as “I’m Trans Get Over It” or “I’m a Trans ally and Proud” and all with the #OUPride. The video was successful and everyone who took part loved it. One of our members spoke to their child about this campaign. The child then went to their school and spoke about it and as a direct result of this campaign the school decided to do an assembly on TDOV! The school approached us for recommendations of media and as a result we donated books to the school library. The video can be found here: [TDOVVideo](#)

We have launched a Discord server over the last quarter and have invited our members to join us here for a more informal, whenever anyone is online, chat. We have rules set up on this media that we ask our members to agree to before they are given access to our channels. We have also set up rules within the server itself for any breaches, for example, if anyone uses homophobic, transphobic, biphobic language etc they are given a warning. If this is repeated within a set timeframe they are muted for a set time and if this continues they are banned. Admins are informed of any infractions and so far there have been none.

At present we have 21 members signed up to this server.

We have 4 main channels; general, make-new-friends, lgbt-news-and-issues and resources. The news and issues channel has proven popular and there is usually a few members chatting each day.

4. Events & Activities

Following conversations, we had with our members we have a core group of events that are scheduled regularly. During these events we invite our members to suggest new or different events if they can think of any.

Our regular events are:

Drop-In – a chance for members to join us online, meet the committee and have an informal chat:

26th March

23rd April

We normally have 4 or 5 members join this event and it often goes on longer than the suggest hour. We use this to put up a slide publicising our other events or any big news events going on.

Monday Morning Rise and Shine

3rd May

7th June

In May we had 2 members join but none in June. We believe this is due to exam/EMA/ holiday season and plan to continue this event into the new academic year.

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

6th April

11th May

This event has 5 or 6 members join, half who really want to talk about the book and half who want to just have a chat so we try to discuss the book first then encourage general chat afterwards.

Bingo! – an interactive game of Bingo

12th March

14th May

This event is very popular and fun. We get on average 5 members join and always get good feedback on this event.

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

20th March

6 attendees at this event but everyone had fun and members asked that it is repeated.

General Quiz – a general knowledge quiz

7th May

This event was requested by, and led by, one of our members. Unfortunately no-one attended this event but we attribute this to being during the day and during EMA and exam time.

We are planning on using this event for Freshers later in the year.

We have the following events planned for the next period:

Book Club – 22nd June, 27th July, 31st August

Drop-In – 25th June, 30th July, 27th August

Monday Morning Rise and Shine – 5th July

We have a Discord Disco planned for 26th June where we plan an evening of games, music and general fun to celebrate Pride! We are planning a small pack for members who sign up with Pride face paints.

We have a Movie Night planned for Sunday 18th July. There is no specific theme and will be asking the members what they want to watch (it has to be available on Netflix for it to be accessible to all)

Events were quieter during May and June so a decision was made to drop to our core events for the exam and summer time whilst remaining fully active on social media, thus allowing our members to reach out if they require.

Lyndsay attended some parts of the EDI Conference 14/5 and 15/5 and really enjoyed it.

Lyndsay attended a Group Chairs meeting with Patrice Belton and the chair of the DSG on 10/05. Again this was a really good opportunity to build a network.

Alex attended the LGBT Network meeting on 25th May where it was discussed and agreed that OU Pride would work with the staff network to align support for LGBT events throughout the year.

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

We have ensured that all major LGBTQ+ events are flagged on our calendars and we publicise the days on our social media channels. We are using this as a way to educate our members and encourage questions. For example:



5. Student issues & challenges

Students have started to bring wider issues to the groups attention, such as a petition to make nonbinary a legally recognised gender in the UK. We have also been using our platforms to highlight the struggles the wider community are having such as the issues with the Government vs Stonewall recently.

These posts have sparked conversation and healthy debate which has been very encouraging to see.

6. Any other initiatives or updates

We have been approached by the Raindance Film Club, offering our group places at the screenings (virtual) and asking for help to advertise the LGBTQ+ events within the film festival. We are awaiting their eflyer and will work with them to inform our group of the event.

It has been a quiet quarter with all our membership working on exam prep or EMAs and this is something we will keep in mind next year. We are keeping our core events on over the summer, with regular social media posts and updates but we are

aware the engagement numbers will drop over the coming months.
As a committee we have started to create a 'To-Do' list for over the summer, with an aim to get documentation together on, for example, How to be a good Ally, common terms and what they mean etc. ready for our members early next academic year.

The committee have started discussions on what we can do for Freshers, both to encourage new members and to invigorate our existing membership for the new academic year ahead. We are really excited to see what we can do!

Lyndsay Thomson
Chair
For and on behalf of OU PRIDE