



OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)

19 - 21 October 2018

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST) ROADSHOWS

The CEC is asked to:-

- i) **note** the update
- ii) **discuss** how or whether to expand this.

1. Background

- 1.1 This fits the V P Student Support sections of the Strategy as follows. E10 expanding the Peer Support Service, helped by spreading the word about it. A7 raising awareness of OUSET and increase applications. Potential discussion of E4 and mentoring with the Careers Department. Additionally there is the A2 section on raising awareness of our actions and impact with OU Staff and Associate Lecturers.
- 1.2 By the end of October Verity, I, most FARs and an AAR will have talked to OU staff in the England SRCs (Student Recruitment and Support Centres) / SSTs (Student Support Teams). This happened as a result of me asking a member of OU staff at Conference whether we should now be calling SSTs SRSCs when suggesting students contact them. We then got talking about my role which led to an invitation to talk about Peer Support and our Charity OUSET (Open University Students Educational Trust) to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths) staff at the Manchester SRSC / SST. By the time the presentation took place in July this had expanded to include more of our activities.

2. Presentations

- 2.1 Our presentation includes a little background of the Association, the CEC (Central Executive Committee), LERs (Learner Experience Reporters), our Magazine, Freshers Fortnight, Graduation Ceremony Volunteers, Student Led Projects, the Studio, Trustees, Student Voice Twitter, our shop, and Nightline. We also talk about Groups and Societies. We go into more depth about OUSET, Peer Support, Meet-Ups and Clubs. We also take questions. We try to give a rounded view of how we can help students, not just with their study experience eg Peer Support, Groups and OUSET but also what the

Association offers to help students feel part of a community and reduce feelings of isolation

3. Objectives

- 3.1 There are several objectives for these Roadshows. We want to provide information about the Association to OU staff who are talking to students, so they know whether it is appropriate to refer us to students. We barely touch on Student Voice because it does not fit this objective, not because we don't consider it to be a valuable part of the Association. This provides opportunities to build relationships early in our 2 year term. We also want to use this as a means to increase awareness of the Association.

4. Manchester, Nottingham and Milton Keynes

- 4.1 The presentation to STEM staff in Manchester during July was intended to be a one off and only Verity and I attended. We spoke to about 25 staff spread over 2 sessions. One outcome we hadn't predicted is that a member of Manchester staff will join an Inclusion Meeting to determine if they want to attend in future.
- 4.2 Following the Manchester presentation Verity and I decided to explore whether other England SRSCs / SSTs would be interested in hearing the same presentation. During a Skype Session we talked through our presentation with a member of staff from FASS, (Faculty of Arts and Social Science); FBL, (Faculty of Business and Law); and WELS, (Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies). They were all interested in us attending their SRSC / SST in person and also requested their FAR attend. We've added the England AAR to the Milton Keynes presentations which will be to a combination of FASS and FBL staff.
- 4.3 The 3 Nottingham presentations will take place on the afternoon of October 9th. WELS FAR Sarah will also be attending. In the morning we have been invited to visit various departments and meet staff, including an Educational Advisor. Nottingham also houses the Careers and Employability Service, and there will also be a meeting with them.
- 4.4 The 3 Milton Keynes presentations will take place throughout the day on October 22nd. In attendance will be AAR England, Danielle; FASS FAR, Billy; and, hopefully, the FBL FAR. Each session will be slightly longer than the Nottingham ones. The advantage is that we will be able to include more information but the disadvantage is that there will not be enough time for additional sessions similar to Nottingham. However, the situation is slightly different because we are more easily able to visit SST / SRSC departments and staff in Milton Keynes.

5. Discussion

- 5.1 Verity and I would also like to explore whether it is feasible, and appropriate, for these presentations to be shared with the Nation Offices too. Input from the Nation AARs would be appreciated. Would this be worth exploring with ALs to see if, or when, it might be useful to provide them with this information? I would like to explore having regular meetings with SRSC staff, similar to the Service Review Meetings I Chair, maybe twice a year, in Milton Keynes to

share issues raised by students and to share our future plans and learn about theirs.

Alison Kingan
Vice President Student Support