

**OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION****CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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The CEC 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:-

- President (page 2)
- Deputy President (page 6)
- Vice President Administration (page 11)
- Vice President Community (page 12)
- Vice President Equality & Diversity (page 14)
- Vice President Student Support (page 15)
- Student OU Council Member (page 18)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for England (page 20)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for Wales (page 22)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for Scotland (page 23)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for Northern Ireland (page 25)
- Area Association Representative (AAR) for Europe (page 26)
- Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Business & Law (FBL) (page 27)
- Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Wellbeing, Education & Language Studies (WELS) (page 29)
- Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Arts & Social Sciences (FASS) (page 31)

## REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

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This report covers the period 1 July – 30 September and is more of an overview than a complete list.

During this period I have been covering some areas that would normally be covered by the STEM FAR, since that post is currently vacant.

### **Specific Concerns raised with the OU (not covered elsewhere)**

- Exam issues for the September sessions
- Delays in Alternative Formats
- Problems with information given out by SST
- Communications to students affected by an error in degree awarding

### **Media and Communications**

- Video aimed at new students
- Student Hub Live – Freshers
- Recording for voice over on example tutorial for Induction BOC
- Filming for Student Voice
- Video on dealing with disappointing results

### **Board of Trustees**

I continue to be acting as Chair of the Board of Trustees until our external Chair is recruited. The recruitment process will start shortly, with an interview date later this autumn. Incorporation has now been completed successfully.

Trustees have not met normally (i.e. to discuss business other than incorporation) since my last report, but on the forum, various matters have been discussed including the approach to safeguarding within the Association, and approval of discretionary funding for the on-campus societies fair and in connection with the culture review.

### **Strategy**

The work on the main part of the Association strategy is complete, and the new strategy will be formally launched on 28 October on campus, with other events to be arranged in the Nations offices. A working group is developing ideas for the launch. Work on the Communications Strategy continues; this is an enabler for the main strategy and is considering communications to students, OU staff and externally.

### **Appointments Committee**

Since the much-regretted resignation of VP Education, I have taken over chairing Appointments Committee. We were glad to have a range of good applicants for Senate Reference Group, and all places there are now filled except that reserved for a representative from the Republic of Ireland.

We have at least one student placed on every OU committee to which we formally appoint representatives, and are planning an additional recruitment drive during Student Voice week in an effort to fill the remainder.

Appointments committee are also looking to review processes for appointment to ensure we are maintaining our aims of being fair and transparent, and have sought

feedback from CCRs to aid this.

## **Specific committees with the OU that I co-chair (with PVC Students)**

### **Student Voice Steering Group**

We decided to defer the originally planned presentation of the Student Voice update to the VCE until the new VC has been in role slightly longer. The group was disappointed that the Student Voice score on the National Student Survey (NSS) is still lower than we would like, and noted that the biggest issue is that students see this as not relevant to their experience, indicating awareness as a significant problem. In line with this concern, work is ongoing on the Student Voice website, and a series of Student Voice videos have been created to help promote this. The Staff-Facing Student Voice Hub is still regarded as a priority, to make sure staff across the institution understand the benefits of incorporation of student voice, and how to do so, but resources are needed for this to be developed.

A Student Voice Week is being planned for November, with events including a Student Partnership Workshop, and student focus groups.

### **Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group**

The group discussed an analysis of this year's NSS data, and observed that the significant variations across the institution suggested that more sharing of good practice would be helpful. The student members, informed by CEC discussion, have developed a new approach to the group's action plan; this aimed to refocus the group on what we regarded as the important things – what factors are causing dissatisfaction, what initiatives are in place to improve satisfaction and how can these be shared, and how to address the problematic areas of NSS – Academic Community and Student Voice (though much of the work on the latter we felt should sit in SVSG to avoid duplication).

### **Meetings**

Again, not an exhaustive list.

Induction meetings

- New Director, Academic Services
- New EDI Senior Manager

One-off OU meetings, either about specific issues with individuals or groups

- To discuss the setting up of student-nominated awards for ALs in WELS
- To discuss putting into place some of the outputs from the "Student Partnership" workshop at the eSTEEeM Conference in May
- To discuss STEM plans for student partnership activities
- Planning Student Hub Live Freshers session
- With OU in Scotland to discuss Mental Health Action Plan
- Planning for project with OU in Scotland on running a student-led focus group on analytics
- VCE-Academic, to discuss our new Strategy and how we could work together to mutual benefit on some areas
- To discuss student involvement in TEF
- To discuss possible joint workshop aimed at ALs on "sense of belonging"
- To discuss student-facing analytics

Regular “catch up” meetings with the OU formally, and with specific OU staff; these happen at various intervals (from monthly to quarterly)

- Director, Learning Experience & Technology
- Strategy Office
- Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Students
- Team in PVC Students office
- Director, Students
- Government & External Affairs
- Director of Academic Services and Head of Student Support

Regular meetings with CEC and Association staff

- With Deputy President, Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive
- With Chief Executive
- With Sue McCabe
- With the Strategy Project Steering Group

Specific Students Association meetings

- To discuss content of member survey
- To discuss Student Voice Week
- To review the current activities and old Association strategy in the light of a “stop/start/continue” meeting which took place with various CEC and Association staff members

OU Committees and Groups

- PVC Students Advisory Group
- Apprenticeships Steering Group
- Education Committee
- AL Contract Steering Group
- Support for New Students working group
- Senior Team
- Council
- eSTEEeM Advisory Group
- Discussions on the development of a mentor scheme for credit transfer students
- Technology Steering Group
- Recognition of Prior Learning focus group
- Sustainability Week Planning Group

## **Other events**

OU events

- Attending (and speaking at) the dinner for FBL AL Conference
- Graduate School workshop
- Workshop for IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) staff
- Mock TEF Subject Panel
- Attending the Pan-Commonwealth Forum conference in Edinburgh
- Attending launch of Access, Participation and Success Strategy

OU seminars and conferences

- On Support for Exams and Revision

OU Recruitment/ Interviewing

- Interviewing for the Director of Academic Services

#### Miscellaneous

- Presenting at a conference (“Horizons in STEM HE”) with the Director of eSTEEem on “Students as Partners in Scholarship”

#### **Other ongoing engagement with students**

I continue to be a frequent visitor to the “Talk to Your Students Association” forum and to the main Open University group on Facebook, as well as various other forums and groups connected with the Association and the OU. I also use my own social media (Twitter and my page) to engage and promote Association events. I have also attended local meet ups where possible

#### **Other Association events**

- Residential School repping for two weekends at Bath
- Freshers’ chat for STEM students on Adobe Connect
- Freshers’ quiz on Adobe Connect
- On-campus Freshers’ Fair

*Cath Brown*  
*President*

## REPORT OF THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT

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C E C work is increasing as we move into the new academic year 2019/2020, but there is nothing like the excitement of seeing OU Students get excited about starting their new modules. Continuing students are reconnecting, and Freshers Fortnight has been an amazing experience for New Students who want to embrace their studies.

I have had a steady flow of work over the last quarter, although some slower periods over the last few weeks of the summer holidays. I have regular meetings with Cath Brown (Deputy President), Wendy Burrell (Deputy Chief Executive) and other Staff members when required. I continue my work with the Volunteering team and with the Culture Review Group (updates can be found in related information papers). I have listed my other regular and quarterly meetings at the end of this report.

We have just entered into our second year of our C E C term, so I have been catching up with some of my colleagues in one-to-one sessions to see how they are feeling about their roles and to check if they need additional help or support is needed. I have been doing training sessions for new Moderators in and on Adobe connect between the 9th September to 2nd October 2019; I continue to do Adobe Connect Host training when requested and I helped Vice President Community with Meet-up Host training on the 18th September 2019.

I have an ex-officio role as Deputy President on the Senate Reference Group, which is an appointed group of OU Students, that sit on this committee in an advisory capacity to the 6 student members of Senate. Senate is the academic authority of the University which is responsible for promoting the academic work of the University and is the highest decision-making body of Academic Governance (subject to the powers of Council).

I have been given a place on Senate as one of the Senate Six and will draw on the views and opinions of the Senate Reference Group members along with the other Student Senate members. I am looking forward to this opportunity to represent the wider student body in this capacity.

### **Freshers Fortnight**

This was an amazing array of activities and events that new and continuing OU Students could be involved with between the 23<sup>rd</sup> September and the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2019. I supported the 'Welcome to the OU Students Association Facebook Event' on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019.

I attended the 'Societies Fair Facebook Chat' and co-hosted the 'Societies Online 'Pub' Quiz' with Cath Brown on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019. I hosted 'Student Experience Discussion Fresher Special' on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 and hosted the 'Volunteering with the Associations' session on the 4<sup>th</sup> October.

### **OU in Wales**

Lucy Richardson (Area Association Representative for Wales) and I organised some Fresher events for O U Students in Wales, which were to be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2019 in Cardiff.

My husband and I arrived in Cardiff on the 27<sup>th</sup> September and visited the O U in Wales Office in Cardiff. I was given a schedule of meetings to meet different staff members, so I could gain understanding around the range of work they do for Welsh students.

- Louise Casella (Director of The Open University in Wales)
- Ceri Wilcock (Assistant Director of Student experience)
- Tracy Flynn (Senior Manager in Operations)
- Ruth Brooks (Senior Manager in Information, Advice & Guidance and Quality)
- Holly Barratt (Educational Advisor)
- Alyson Stonier (Learner Support Assistant)
- Michaela Jones (Senior Disability Advisor)
- Rhodri Davies (Communication manager in Welsh Language)

We first held the 'OU Students Association Freshers Event in Cardiff' on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2019 from 10am to 2pm at The Clayton Hotel, hosted by Lucy and I. This was a great chance for Welsh students to talk to us Student Representatives and to find out about the O U Students Association services and community. They were able to meet other new OU Students, sharing the same excitement of beginning or continuing, their OU study journey.

The event was also supported by 3 members of O U Wales Staff (Ruth Brooks, Holly Barratt and Alyson Stonier). This was a great opportunity for students to talk to dedicated OU staff around study choices, support needed and career advice.

Refreshments and the venue were provided by the OU in Wales and the association laid on a table of lunchtime snacks. There were OU and Students Association information stands, an OU merchandise stand and lots of free goodies too!

We followed up with a Freshers Meet-up on the same day, held in the Prince of Wales Wetherspoons from 3.30pm to 5.50pm. This was an additional opportunity to share study tips and general advice.

### **Student Experience Discussions**

I continue to host Student Experience Discussions on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month in our Student Voice Adobe Connect Room. This is an opportunity for OU Students to share their journey and the different experiences that impact it, both positively and negatively; this will feed into a student paper that will be submitted as an agenda item at the Student Experience Committee, the next one being on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019. Update from the previous submission at the meeting held in May 2019 can be found [here](#). The next session will be held on the [1<sup>st</sup> November 2019 from 7.30pm – 9.00pm](#)

### **Student Ideas**

I have been involved in work around the new platform '[Your Ideas](#)' which was launched last in September 2019, which invites student to submit ideas to the OU Students Association. Students can view and vote on other students' ideas and when they reach 50 votes, they can be progressed forward. Phase 2 of this work begins in November to evaluate the pilot and to further develop the platform with the provider.

### **Student Voice Week**

I am involved with the planning for Student Voice Week which is between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019. I attended an initial meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019, and we are working with the Open University to develop feasible workshops, adobe connect sessions, focus groups, consultations and sharing of information/content to celebrate the importance and impact of Student Voice. Any information and further updates will be given at the CEC weekend.

## **OU Students Association Strategy**

My recent involvement in this strategy work over the last 3 months:-

- Student Lead on '*Engage and Empower Working Group*' which was part of 'Phase 2 Strategy Work' around student engagement through volunteering, empowerment and community. We looked at aims, tasks/activities, skills, resources and communication support for projects ideas (short-term, medium-term and long-term), this work was completed in August 2019.
- Student Co-Lead of '*Communication Strategy Working Group*' to create a communications strategy. We first held a '*Communications Strategy Workshop*' on the 16th August 2019 to start initial discussions around understanding our audience and the purpose of communication. This work continued through September around content of information/messages, effective media/channels, communication settings, critical timing and key dates. This process is near to conclusion and a draft communication strategy will soon be ready.
- Student Co-Lead of the '*Strategy Launch Working Group*' which has the aim of managing launch activities for the strategy. We have looked at the target audiences, materials needed, strategy launch date, Nation perspective, promotion and launching to our student membership. A draft plan was presented to the Strategy Steering Group on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September with further recommendations, including the Strategy Launch Event on Milton Keynes OU Campus on the 28th October 2019.
- I participated in the Pro-Vice Chancellor Students Office & Students Association Strategy Workshop on the 19th September 2019.

## **Representation Review**

I am continuing to work with the Student Voice Team on the review of Academic Representation (specifically '*Central Committee Representatives*') from governance level to grassroots representation. This is part of the Students Association 2020 Strategy to ensure we can best represent the wider student body within University governance committees.

This project had four phases and three have been completed:

1. Developing the project plan and scope of work
2. Consultation activities and surveys with stakeholders
3. Analyse data/feedback, create recommendations [including a 'Representation Review Meeting' with Liz Marr (PVCS - Pro-Vice Chancellor Students) on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019 to discuss findings and finishing the last phase of this representation review].

Phase 4 is underway with a secondary meeting with Liz Marr to discuss implementing the recommendations and the co-creation of a CoP (Code of Practice). The 'CoP Student Representation, Task and Finish Group' has been created which I will be Co-Chairing with Rachel Garnham (Senior Manager of Student Voice at the OU). The first meeting will be on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

## **Postgraduate Research Students (P G R Students)**

I have regular meetings with Amy Fergusson (Community Projects Officer) and Hannah Whitaker (Student Voice Representation Officer) to plan further work for postgraduate research students. I continue to work with postgraduate research students and the O U



Graduate School, attending 'Postgraduate Research Students - Graduate School Liaison Group' (P G R – G S Liaison Group) meetings to discuss P G R issues, provision and work.

We held a P G R – O U Student Journey Workshop on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019, where we helped some P G R Students to map out their experiences on their Student Journey. We are aiming to hold further workshops (face-to-face events and an online alternative) within each faculty with support from the P G R faculty co-ordinators. The aim is to help us see gaps in University provision, to understand P G R Student experience and the pinch points that impact on their studies; to help identify the scope needed for association engagement

I attended the part-time students' induction on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 as a Student Panel member and talked about the facilities, support and services provided by the Students Association. I was also a guest at a P G R reception to welcome new Postgraduate Research Students to the Open University on the same day. I then attended the WELS - P G R induction on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 and did a presentation about the OU Students Association and a Workshop around community, voice and support.

We are awaiting confirmation of venue for our themed event on 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' around Wellbeing and Mental Health to be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

### **Future Miscellaneous Events**

13th November 2019	Senate Workshop: OU-FutureLearn-SEEK partnership
11-13 November 2019	Middle States Visit
18 <sup>th</sup> October 2019	50th Anniversary OpenFest
25 <sup>th</sup> October 2019	P V C students visit - Whiteboard tour for C E C
5 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Observer to WELS Faculty Assembly
5 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Observer to Q and A Committee
6th November 2019	OU Online Fair - Booth Content Reminder
12 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Observer to FASS Faculty Assembly
13 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Observer to STEM faculty assembly
11 <sup>th</sup> December 2019	Observer to FBL Faculty Assembly
15 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	Proofreading training Wed 15/01/2020 10:00-16:00

### **OU Students Association Working Board/Groups/Committees**

1. 'Appointment Committee' 2. 'Board of Trustees' 3. Chair of the 'Controller Advisory Panel' 4. 'Culture Change Working Group' (Student Lead) 5. 'Inclusion Meeting' 6. Chair of the 'O S L (Open University Services Limited – OU Shop) Board of Directors' 7. 'Representation Review Meeting' (Student Lead) 8. 'Senate Reference Group' (Senate Member) 9. 'Student Led Project Panel' (Student Lead) 10. 'Wales Volunteer Panel' (Student Co-Lead) 11. CEC Strategy Working Group 'Involve and Engage' and then 'Engage and Empower' (Student Lead) 12. 'Communications Strategy Working Group' (Student Co-Lead) 13. 'Strategy Launch Working Group' (Student Co-Lead)

### **Open University Working Groups/Committees**

1. 'Enhanced Employability & Career Progression Steering Group' 2. 'Equality Diversity and Inclusion Working Group' 3. 'Honorary Degree Committee' 4. 'Induction Working Group' 5. 'Postgraduate Research Students – Graduate School Liaison Group' 6. 'Prevent Steering Group' 7. 'Referencing Implementation Group' 8. 'Student Consultation Management Group' 9. 'Senate' 10. 'Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group' 11. 'Student Voice Steering Group' 12. 'Apprenticeship Change Programme Board' 13. 'Middle States Reference Group' 14. Co-Chair of the 'Student

Charter Task and Finish Group' **15.** Co-Chair of the 'Code of Practice - Student Representation, Task and Finish Group' **16.** 'Future Learn Postgraduate Qualifications Steering Group' **17.** 'Peer Review Group' **18.** 'AL Contract Steering group' **19.** 'Recognition of Prior Learning Focus Group'

*Stephanie Stubbins*  
*Deputy President*

## REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT ADMINISTRATION

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This is my report to the Central Executive Committee and covers my activity from August 2019 to September 2019. I have attended meetings with Rob, Magda and Alison regarding various aspects of my role and the *ex officio* posts on OUSET and OSL. As a result of the summer holidays August was quiet, not much happening. Although August/September was a very busy period with OUSET. September was marred by ill health and my dissertation due date which was 30 September, so much of my time was taken up with that. However, I did have a catch-up with Rob and Cath regarding the election review and as a result of this, in joint ownership with the deputy President, Steph Stubbins, we are now in the process of re-initiating the election review panel. Together with Alison I have attended meetings with the auditors to finalise the end of the year's accounts. I also had several students wishing to extend their membership of the Association. As VP Admin, I am a member of the Board of Trustees. Full details of non-confidential Trustee activity can be found in the minutes of the Board meetings and the CEO's report to the CEC.

### Diary

#### 2019

2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> March - CEC and Board of Trustees Workshop  
5<sup>th</sup> March - Subvention meeting  
22<sup>nd</sup> March – Student consultation face-to-face meeting (Milton Keynes)  
26<sup>th</sup> July Board of Trustees meeting  
6<sup>th</sup> August – Stop/Start/continue/change  
6<sup>th</sup> September – Election Review meeting  
3<sup>rd</sup> October Audit completion meeting  
14<sup>th</sup> October – Board of Trustees meeting  
24<sup>th</sup> October OUSET meeting

#### Upcoming events (dates subject to change)

Non at present.

*Caroline Cowan*  
*Vice President Administration*

## REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT COMMUNITY

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What a summer! Most OU students look forward to mid-June, when they finish and submit EMAs, sit exams and then try to catch up on all those jobs around the house that were put on the back burner, go on holiday and have time to relax and see their friends. But for VP Community, this is a very busy time, mostly preparing for the residential school and then Freshers' Fortnight.

### **Residential Schools**

Following from my previous report, the Students Association presence at the Engineering residential school in Bath was a success. Our great team of volunteers pulled together and represented the Students Association at this great event. After meeting with the School Director and the two module chairs earlier in the year, I decided to trial a slightly different approach to our presence at Bath resi school. Normally, there is one lead rep and two resi reps per weekend, and they are there for 2 days (Saturday and Sunday). I decided to amend this slightly and have less reps (only two in total) but add an extra day (Monday). The residential schools are the only opportunity for the Engineering students to meet face to face, as they have online tutorials only, so I took the opportunity to try and organise events to help them socialise, experience student life, find out more about the Association, and generally feel part of the OU student community. The two reps doing this trial were Cath Brown and I. We are both experienced reps and by doing this, we could ascertain whether this was a good idea. For the extra evening, we decided to have a film night. We gave the students the chance to select the film they wanted to watch. Unfortunately, only three students attended the film night, the rest of them preferred to go to the bar and talk to each other. So, the experiment did not work, students were not interested in what we offered, and my conclusion was that it was too much effort for very little benefit. The following weekend on Saturday night we had sheets of dingbats, and the students were extremely competitive. They had a really good time and the winning team shared their prize, a box of chocolates, with the organisers!

This year's residential school season highlighted the issue of reliability of volunteers. For one of the weekends, one volunteer got ill and communicated they wouldn't be able to attend, and the other volunteer was a no show and there was no explanation. Fortunately, I and another volunteer stepped in at very short notice. This is an ongoing problem we are confronted with as an Association, and I think it is an area that needs to be improved.

### **Freshers' Fortnight October 2019**

Freshers' Fortnight took place between 23<sup>rd</sup> August and 6<sup>th</sup> October 2019. There was a variety of events, face to face and online, and we had, once again, freebies! Students were very enthusiastic, we had a good turnout at our online events. The feedback I had so far was positive, the new students enjoyed learning about the Association and how we can help them in their OU journey. I am planning to gather feedback in a more organised way in order to help us plan the next Freshers' Fortnight which will take place between 27<sup>th</sup> January and 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

### **Societies' Event**

The face to face Freshers' event on campus in Milton Keynes was well attended. We had stalls from some of our societies and the OU Library. It was a family-friendly event; students enjoyed the campus tours, found out about societies, bought merchandise and had cake! I think the biggest surprise was a student from Switzerland who came to campus especially! We also took the opportunity to do some interviews with the societies

present at the event, and we'll be using the material on our website and social media to promote them.

### **Societies Committee**

I attended the Societies Committee meeting on the morning of the Freshers' event on campus. Listening to the reports from the societies, it became very clear that they are struggling to recruit active committee members. It was decided that we should email societies to ask how we can lend them a hand short-term. Another issue is relating to social media, some societies' committee members were interested in social media training. I will liaise with Heather and see what we can do to help.

### **Community Drop Ins (Adobe Connect)**

Community Drop Ins are getting bigger and reaching out to more students. Since my previous report, the attendance has grown constantly. The last drop in was the Freshers' Special, and we had around 30 students in the room at one time. I advertised it especially for new students as a chance to try Adobe Connect, the software used for OU tutorials.

### **Meetings and events attended**

31 July – Interviews for Community Projects Officer (campus)  
18 September – Meet Up Hosts Training (online)  
27 September – Societies Committee AGM and event (campus)  
30 September – Student Hub Live (campus)  
Every fortnight on Thursday – Community Drop In (online)

### **Future meetings**

25 October – Birmingham Graduation Ceremony as coordinator  
28 October – OU Students Association Strategy launch (campus)  
TBC – Community Team Meeting  
30 November – Societies Committee (campus)

*Anca Seaton*  
*Vice President Community*

## REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

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This report briefly outlines my activities since the date of my last Report to the C E C.

Apart from attending the CEC meeting weekend in July I've not been on Campus for face to face meetings. Wherever and whenever necessary, I use Skype or Adobe Connect for meetings which although not ideal, means I can be there. These online meetings include the OU's Student Mental Health Working Group and the OU's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group. Over the past few weeks I've also been monitoring and collating information on the delays in delivering Alternative Formats to students who need them for the Association's President which, with my own physical limitations, has taken up a lot of my time.

### **The OU's Race Equality Charter (REC) Mark Application**

This application was submitted in July. **Ongoing.**

### **Mental Health Awareness and other student issues**

A schedule of regular meetings via Skype with A.G. Hunter (Director), Student Support (Interim) Academic Services, and VP Student Support has now been set up and is happening. **Ongoing.**

### **Daily / when available online activity**

- Participating in Association and OU working groups
- Liaising with the OU and Association colleagues regarding issues brought to me by students
- Attending meetings via Skype and Adobe Connect

### **Diary**

- July 8 & 9 Presentation at Bloomsbury Institute's 9<sup>th</sup> Teaching and Learning Conference with Bill Dougherty. Subjects Accessibility and Diversity
- July 17 to 22 – On campus for CEC weekend and other meetings including Inclusion meeting
- DSG & PLEXUS meetings via Adobe Connect
- Freshers Fortnight events online

### **Monthly meet-ups – West Sussex Coffee 'n' Chat**

- July 27
- August 10
- September 28
- Next November 9

*Cherry Day*  
*Vice President Equal Opportunity*

## REPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT STUDENT SUPPORT

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This report covers my role as V P Student Support since July 2019. The Student Support remit generally includes anything that can have an impact on students. I oversee the Peer Support Service, Chair Service Review and Joint SRSC/SST Association Reps meetings, and I am a Trustee of OUSET (OU Students Educational Trust).

### Peer Support Service

We have recently increased our number of Peer Supporters who continue to support students and answer one off queries. The Service is available to all students. If you are struggling to maintain motivation, have a question, or need a listening ear please look at our site [here](#) which gives some information about what you can expect and ways to contact a Supporter.

Now for the very exciting news (imagine drum roll and fireworks) - Peer Supporters are active on Facebook, with a Facebook Page called 'OU Students Peer Support' and can be found here - <https://www.facebook.com/OUstudentsPeerSupport/>. If you message the page, your posts and the replies will be private so that others will not be able to see these messages.

### O U S E T (OUSET)

The OU Students Educational Trust is the Association's Charity for students experiencing financial hardship. Details can be found [here](#). We have just finished our busiest time of the year which is the build up to the October module starts.

### Service Review Meetings

Service Review meetings discuss matters relating to Academic Services and IT. The most recent meeting was held in July and the next will be in October. Matters under discussion in July included;

We raised the issue of students reporting necessary online services that are down out of Office hours after the 'Reporting Special Exam Circumstances' online form was unavailable late on Friday night of exam week. We were given some helpful advice about who to contact with various scenarios when there are problems with websites and some emails.

- If you find that there are any problems with website availability or performance, the first place to check is the IT Systems status page <https://status.open.ac.uk/>.
- If a problem isn't listed, you should report the problem to the [OU Computing Helpdesk](#). Although the OU Computing Helpdesk operates out of hours this isn't 24-hour coverage. A report made in the early hours of a Saturday morning will be picked up when the office opens later that morning. The helpdesk can then inform site owners as soon as possible when they open.
- If you receive an email from the University that is either unclear or you don't think is intended for you, you should follow this up with the sender of the message. If that is not possible, contact your Student Support Team.

We also talked about Module Websites being available for more than 3 years. We were told this has been looked at a number of times and their data suggests that few students return to websites 12 months after they have stopped studying that module.

At the next meeting we will be asking whether there will be any implications for students who continue to study using Windows 7 after Microsoft cease to offer security updates for that in January 2020.

### **S S T / S R S C Meetings (Student Support Teams; Student Recruitment and Support Centres)**

October will see the first meeting between a range of staff in the England SSTs / SRSCs and Association reps, including the Faculty Association Reps (FARs) and the England and European Area Reps. The focus will be to learn from each other about our roles and general issues affecting students. We are in the process of exploring whether we can have similar meetings for Association Reps and OU Staff in Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

### **Student Support**

Cherry (V P Equality and Diversity) and I continue to have regular meetings with the OU about the support offered to students.

### **Facebook**

I continue to be active on Facebook but it is always great to see other students helping out with responses before I get the chance sometimes.

### **Alternative Formats**

It was very disappointing to learn that a number of students would not be receiving their module material in alternative formats for some modules starting in October 2019. A number of Association Reps, including the President and Vice President Equality and Diversity have been working to try to resolve this issue. There has been some improvement on how long students will have to wait before receiving their materials. Students who feel their studies have been affected please consider completing a Special Circumstances form at the appropriate time.

### **Help Centre Feedback**

Student feedback into the [Help Centre](#) about information on there is taken seriously by the OU. The comments are discussed and can lead to changes. To encourage students to provide feedback, leading to further improvements, I have been in discussions with the OU about how they can demonstrate to students that their feedback has been listened to and actioned. OU staff are working on how to do this.

### **Freshers**

The Students Association held a number of Freshers events for students who are new to the OU. I managed to attend some of these. Times have changed since I started with the OU, when all I received was a box of books and a few leaflets.



## **Various Meetings**

I have attended various meetings at the OU including one about TMA extensions and another about recording online tutorials.

Please forward any parts of this report elsewhere. If you would like to contact me please email [oustudents-support@open.ac.uk](mailto:oustudents-support@open.ac.uk)

## **Future Commitments**

October 16 <sup>th</sup>	Senate Reference Group and Senate
October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Meeting with Assessment Credit and Qualification
October 24 <sup>th</sup>	Ouset Meeting
October 25 <sup>th</sup> to 27 <sup>th</sup>	Central Executive Meeting
October 28 <sup>th</sup>	SST / SRSC staff / Association Reps Meeting
October 28 <sup>th</sup>	Service Review Meeting
October 29 <sup>th</sup>	Creating resource for OU staff to access
November date tbc	Peer Supporter Training

*Alison Kingan*  
*Vice President Student Support*

## REPORT OF STUDENT OU COUNCIL MEMBER

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Since my last report I have attended meetings of Council, taken part in a mock TEF panel exercise to assess OU subject area draft submissions and attended the launch of the HEPI 2019 Students Insight report on behalf of the President. I also took part in a focus group run by the Office for Students to help with the development of their Student Engagement Strategy (coming soon apparently) and acted as one of the judges for the WELS Teaching Excellence Awards alongside two student colleagues. I continue to be a member of the OU's Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group and the CEC Strategy Working Group and will be standing in for VP Ed on the OU's TEF management group and on the Qualifications and Assessment Committee (QAC).

In my capacity as a member of Council I had the great privilege of attending the degree ceremonies at the Barbican on 21 September, celebrating the achievements of 700 of OU graduates. A few days later Councillors joined other members of the University community to say a fond farewell to our outgoing Vice-Chancellor, Mary Kellett, and to wish her every happiness in her retirement. Throughout her time at the Open University Mary has been a passionate advocate for students and a committed supporter of the Association and it was a real pleasure to see her awarded the title of Honorary Vice President of the Students Association in recognition of all she has done for us.

### **Council Meeting 16 July 2019**

At the July meeting, Council confirmed the appointment of Robert McCracken as University Treasurer and received presentations on the Augar review of Post-18 Education and Funding and the OU's Communication and Branding Strategy. Agenda items included updates on institutional performance, Core Systems Replacement, FutureLearn, and the AL Contract as well as a review of the Strategic Risk Register and reports from a number of Council sub-committees (Governance and Nominations Committee, Remuneration Committee, Audit Committee and Finance Committee). Discussion of the Estates Annual Report, the Carbon Management Plan and the People Services Annual Report was deferred to the September meeting.

Other points to note:

- **Appointment of new University Secretary**

A Joint Committee of Council and Senate, assisted by an external search agency, will conduct interviews and make a recommendation to the Council meeting on 26 November, with a view to having the new University Secretary in post on 1 January 2020. Membership will comprise:

- The Pro-Chancellor (Chair)
- The Vice-Chancellor
- The President of the Students Association
- 2 members of the Council (appointed by the Council)
- 2 members of Senate (elected by the Senate)
- An external member with experience of operating in a similar complex organisation

- **Office for Students**

- The Office for Students, which has replaced HEFCE as the regulator for Higher Education, acquired its full regulatory powers on 1 August and the

Council is giving careful consideration to the ways in which it can be fully assured of the University's compliance with new regulatory framework.

### **Council Meeting 24 September 2019**

Agenda items for this meeting included three items deferred from the July meeting: the Estates Annual Report, the Carbon Management Plan and the People Services Annual Report. The Council also received updates on Brexit risk management and CSR, and a report on OU Partnerships. After a break to attend the farewell lunch for Mary Kellett, the Council joined members of Senate in the Berrill Lecture Theatre for a presentation by Ms Gayle Ditchburn, Partner, Pinsent Masons Solicitors on the new regulatory environment. Ms Ditchburn then joined Council members for a more focused discussion of the Council's regulatory responsibilities.

### **Some of the meetings and activities I have attended since my last report**

16 July	Council
24 July	OU TEF Panel meeting
2 Aug	OfS Student Engagement Strategy workshop
16 Aug	Comms Strategy Workshop
3 Sept	WELS Teaching Excellence awards briefing
5 Sept	Academic Governance Review meeting
13 Sept	AL Contract Steering Group (substituting for Cath)
17 Sept	Launch of HEPI Insight Report
19 Sept	Strategy Workshop with PVC-S staff
21 Sept	Barbican Degree Ceremonies
23 Sept	Strategy Steering Group
23 Sept	Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group
24 Sept	Council Meeting and Development Day
26 Sept	OU TEF Provider Submission meeting

### **Future meetings**

14 Oct	Student Charter Task and Finish Group
15 Oct	Climate Emergency Forum/SRG Induction
16 Oct	SRG and Senate
22 Oct	TEF Management meeting
23 Oct	Governance and Nominations Committee
23 Oct	Strategic Planning and Resources Committee
25-27 Oct	CEC weekend
28 Oct	Association Strategy Launch
4 Nov	QAC (substituting for VP Ed)
12 Nov	Academic Governance Review Group
19 Nov	TEF Management Group
26 Nov	Council

*Barbara Tarling*  
*Student Member of OU Council*

## REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR ENGLAND

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This is the quarterly report for the Area Association Representative for England from July - October 2019.

It's been a very quiet period since my last report as we have been in the summer holidays and everyone has been taking a well earned break although I have been busy completing the first module of my MA and getting my EMA in at the beginning of September. Due to being away I was unable to attend the last CEC weekend in July.

I have been involved in the ongoing work to develop the new Strategy as a member of the Steering Group and also a member of the Strategy Launch Working Group alongside fellow CEC members and staff from the office.

Activities began to pick up as we moved through September with the advent of Freshers. Along with Vice President Community, Anca Seaton, I co-hosted the Milton Keynes Freshers Fair on campus on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September. The event was well attended by students, some of whom brought their families along to visit the OU campus. We had stands from some of the Societies, the Library, PLEXUS and the Disabled Students Group (DSG) who were all available to provide information (and a few freebies in some cases) to our visitors.

There were also walking tours of the OU campus, which were superbly run by student volunteers. The meet up was completed with tea and cake.

I'd like to take this opportunity to formally thank the following:

Peter, Ellie, Leah and Sam from the Students Association office. Peter and Ellie from the Community team did an excellent job in organising the meet up. Leah and Sam were available on the day taking pictures, updating social media and interviewing some of the Societies, not to mention the interview I did with a lovely student who had travelled quite a way from her home to attend! Keep an eye out for more on this.

Sarah, Jeremy and Caz, our wonderful student volunteers who came to help us on the day. Sarah made everyone feel really welcome as they arrived and signed in and I've nominated Jeremy and Caz to lead the walking tour of campus at our next Conference, they were outstanding.

Cinnamon, Societies Chair, all the members from the Societies, Kieran, Chair of PLEXUS, and Rob and Marilyn from the DSG who attended to run a stand on the day.

OU staff who gave up their Saturday to help including Library and catering staff.

VP Community, Anca Seaton, who allowed me to steal her idea but also led with much of the organisation earlier this year when I had to step away from my role temporarily due to personal reasons.

And finally, the students who attended. Without you it wouldn't have happened. It was a lovely afternoon and I'm really pleased to have met you!

Freshers events were carried on both online and face to face across the country. I have been on hand for students enquiring about meet ups in their area, signposting them to relevant sources to either find a meet up or find out about hosting one.

I attended the Students Association Welcome chat on Facebook. Unfortunately, Facebook took exception to the pace at which some of us were posting and blocked us from the event halfway through, so I would like to apologise to anyone who thought I had done a runner!

## **Social Media and Forums**

I continue to maintain a presence on social media, both via my A A R page on Facebook, where I share updates and Association opportunities, in addition to tweeting regularly about all things #OUstudents. I have access to all the regional forums as well as the Talk to Your Students Association forums, reading and replying to posts regularly.

## **Upcoming events**

On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October I am volunteering at the Harrogate graduation ceremony on the Students Association stall. It's particularly special to me as Harrogate was where I graduated myself in October 2018. I'm very much looking forward to being back and congratulating our newest alumni.

I will be partaking in a visit to the office of the Pro Vice Chancellor Students on October 25<sup>th</sup> with other members of the CEC.

The weekend of October 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> is our quarterly CEC business weekend. Having missed the July meeting, I am very much looking forward to being back with the team.

On October 28<sup>th</sup> I will be attending a meeting of representatives from the Students Association with staff from the OU in a Faculty Support meeting. I'm hoping for some very productive discussions.

And finally I will be present at the launch of the Students Association's new Strategy on October 28<sup>th</sup>. This is a very exciting time for the CEC as we see many months of hard work, discussions and consultation come to fruition.

*Danielle Smith*  
*Area Association Representative England*

## REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR WALES

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### **Strategy**

I have been a member of the Engage and Empower working group, and I am now a member of the strategy launch working group, and I am looking forward to the Strategy launching.

### **Pride**

I attended Pride Cymru along with staff from OUiW and plexus. We had a very good turn out and even had two banners. I do not know what the student staff mix was as everyone was mingling, and some staff are students, and some students are staff.

### **Freshers event Cardiff**

In co-ordination with the OUiW, myself and Stephanie Stubbins organized a fresher's fair. It was well attended, including undergraduate and postgraduate freshers. For another time I would make it clear that the event was open to all students sooner. A volunteer from Bath even came to lend a hand!

It was a great event, with existing students mingling with freshers and a great success.

### **Freshers 'Big meet-up' Cardiff**

The freshers big meet-up in Cardiff did not receive the attendance I would have hoped for. I will now be looking for a new venue/time for the Cardiff meetup.

### **Meetups (more generally)**

Despite attendance setbacks, there is clearly an appetite for more meet-ups in Wales. As a result of this I am planning to organize initial meet-ups in Newport and Swansea, in the hope they can then be taken on by long term hosts.

### **Social Media**

The association's Wales Facebook group has started to show growth and has started to be used more by students. I am grateful to the long-standing student admins for their continued help in this often-overlooked volunteer capacity.

*Lucy Richardson*  
*Area Association Representative Wales*

## **REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR SCOTLAND**

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This report covers my activities since my last report to the C E C in July.

### **Social Activities and meetups**

Social meetups continue across Scotland, not only the regular meetups, but a raft of new meetups are starting to emerge as a result of Freshers', which is a positive sign! As part of Freshers', both myself and the F A R for F A S S, held a meetup as part of Freshers' in Glasgow on Saturday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, following the O U in Scotland graduation ceremonies held the previous day. Meetups over the weekend were also held in Bathgate, and in Motherwell. We had a healthy turnout in Glasgow, and once again the meetup did continue beyond the allotted time, as it did last year!

### **O U in Scotland and external meetings**

I was honoured to be invited once again to the annual Graduation Ceremonies, taking place this year at the Royal Concert Hall, in Glasgow, on Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup>. These occasions are wonderful to attend and very emotional this year, with the honorary graduates that attended to receive their awards. Amongst those honorary graduates was Judy Murray, tennis coach and mother of Andy. She gave an inspiring speech to graduates and guests. I also took time to visit the merchandise stall (and thank you to those volunteering on the day for their time and efforts there). I understand that the stall did better than in 2018, which is a great effort!

I also graduated myself in the afternoon ceremony, rather loudly cheered across the stage by staff in the O U in Scotland office as I did so (despite my insistence to the contrary!). The ceremonies were presided over by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Josie Fraser, and over 500 students across both ceremonies graduated. I also want to take the opportunity to wish a warm congratulations to one of our former Scottish Executive colleagues and volunteers, Matthew Walker, who also graduated alongside me. Matthew gave a lot of his time to volunteering with us in Scotland and did some great work for us. It was a pleasure to see his hard work pay off as he graduated.

In my last report, I mentioned the student led project, being worked on by myself, Cath (as President) and Billy (as the F A R F A S S) as part of the O U in Scotland's work on the Q A A Enhancement Themes. The planning and detail for the project, on analytics, has continued since my last report and the workshop format which we have planned, is due to take place on Saturday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at the O U in Scotland office, in Edinburgh. The Themes' Leaders' Group which meets as part of the Enhancement Themes work, is due to meet on October 11<sup>th</sup>, in Glasgow. This group has, as part of its' membership, student reps and university staff from all Scottish institutions, along with others from external bodies and does a large chunk of the work surrounding the Themes. I am on this group and attended meetings last year alongside staff at the O U I S.

Following on from the Sparqs work that I detailed in my last report, the first meeting of the newly established Education Officers' Network is due to take place in Glasgow in mid-November, and the working group on mental health in the curriculum is due to meet sometime in November also. The President and I attended an initial meeting in Edinburgh on the development of a Student Mental Health Agreement with the O U in Scotland, last month. This is in the early stages and we met with Katie Gilbert from N U

S Scotland as part of their Think Positive work on student mental health. All Scottish institutions are developing such agreements and there are resources available to assist in that work. N U S Scotland are planning a mental health conference, due to take place in May 2020. I unfortunately missed this year's launch event due to being caught up in some severe travel disruption en route home from the July C E C meeting.

On a separate strand, myself and Billy Docherty (F A R F A S S) will be involved in discussions that the O U in Scotland are having with Scottish Student Sport, in enhancing student experience in the sport/physical activity area. I am also due to meet again with Sparqs in late November as is per the case, on an annual basis, as all other Scottish institutions undertake (known as the annual support visits).

The O U in Scotland are holding employer events and roadshows around Scotland, as part of the O U 50 celebrations. These events aim to help local employers gain more understanding of O U study, and how it can help upskill their employees in the workplace. I have been kindly invited to attend (at the time of writing my report), one of those events locally to me, in Oban, on Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Activities and meetings attended since the last C E C**

September 13 Meeting with N U S Scotland, Think Positive Student Mental Health Agreement, Edinburgh

September 25 Q A A Enhancement Themes Student Led Project catch up meeting (via Skype)

September 27 O U in Scotland Graduation Ceremonies, Glasgow

September 28 Freshers' meetup, Glasgow

October 8 O U in Scotland employer roadshows, Oban

### **Future Commitments**

October 25-27 C E C Meeting, Milton Keynes

October 28 O U Students Association Strategy Launch, Milton Keynes

October 30 S & S E G S meeting (via Skype)

November 1 Scottish Student Sport pre-meeting (via Skype)

November 11 Scottish Student Sport meeting, Edinburgh

November 14 Sparqs Scottish Education Officers Network meeting, Glasgow

November 20 Sparqs/O U in Scotland meeting, Edinburgh (and via Skype)

December 6 Board of Trustees Meeting, Milton Keynes (as an observer)

December 10 Q A A Enhancement Themes Leaders Group meeting, venue T B C

January 24-26 C E C meeting, Milton Keynes

*Mark Cameron  
Area Association Representative for Scotland*



## REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

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### Registration for October Northern Ireland

As Area Representative I attended the Open Day event at OU offices in Belfast city centre on 22 August. This event was very successful with an even bigger increase on the previous Open Day in May in terms of numbers of potential students attending and registering their interest. I spoke to many in the 18-21 age group who were considering the Open University as their first preference option for degree study. I directed their attention to the Students Association page and to the Northern Ireland FB page for their specific enquiries.

In September 2019 the Open University in Northern Ireland recorded its largest intake ever (source: John D'Arcy, Director OU Ireland).

### Meet-Ups

The meet-up events were suspended over the summer break as past experience has shown there to be a total non-attendance. This is because the great majority of students in Northern Ireland are either away for the summer or working.

I am looking at taking these meet-ups out of Belfast and further afield; locations for consideration are Londonderry, Enniskillen, Newry and Ballymena. I feel students in these locations are missing out on these events as they are not central to Belfast and it is not viable for them to make trips of up to 2 hours for an event that lasts an hour. I am confident that taking meet-ups to outer lying regions will be received positively.

Promotion of the Opportunity Hub has yielded positive results with students here becoming aware of paid placements that exist in NI. I will continue to promote this important service and feedback has been excellent.

As part of my role I have been attending the OU's Discovery Events held in libraries in various towns. Public interest in them has grown markedly and I feel that continual promotion of them played a role in increasing the OU's enrolment in NI this year.

This concludes my report for this period.

*Wendy Reid*  
*Area Association Representative for Northern Ireland*

## **REPORT OF THE AREA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AAR) FOR EUROPE**

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This is a report about my activities as the Area Association Representative (A A R) for Continental Europe. In this role, I am responsible for representing and reporting upon the views of students living in Continental Europe to the C E C and informing the C E C about Association Activities within Continental Europe.

### **Social Activities**

There were no targeted social activities for European students, however they were promptly informed about the O U Students Association community drop-ins.

### **Social Media**

As administrator for the Facebook groups for Southern and Northern Europe I have kept students up-to-date with major O U and O U S A news. Only the Greek national group had some new posts about degree recognition and professional rights. I continue to use my personal Facebook and Twitter accounts for the role, but most news is shared through posting on the Southern and Northern Europe Facebook groups. The current number of group members are as follows: Northern Europe, 338 and Southern Europe, 253. V L E forums were silent as usual with the exception of some European students using the international student's forum. A small activity was posted to both Facebook groups in order to initiate some discussion which had only a couple of responses.

### **Other Activities**

I participate at the Student Led Projects Approval Panel and I have been appointed as a C E C member of C A P. I participate also at the current C E C project about O U Students Association strategy. I also collaborate with OUSA VP Media and Campaigns in relation to issues affecting international students studying with the OU, and UK and international students wishing to use their OU qualifications for further study or employment outside of the UK.

*Michael Kasoutas*  
*Area Association Representative for Europe*

## **REPORT OF THE FACULTY ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (FAR) FOR BUSINESS & LAW (FBL)**

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### **FBL Student Conference**

On the Thursday & Friday before the previous CEC meeting the faculty held a highly praised student conference where over 100 students were invited to campus with overnight accommodation, joined by day delegates on the Friday. Some 21 "Skills for Success" sessions were held on the Friday aimed at the 3 main student group: UG Law, UG Business and PG. As a member of the planning committee, I was able to play a major role in the design and delivery of this very successful event. I also had to design, and help deliver together with 2 law SEMs, the 'mooting' session when the OU Law Society failed to turn up for their session with only 2 days' notice. This student conference event is now intended to be held annually.

### **Move to Business School**

The Monday after the last CEC I received the final module result for my LLB and confirmed my "First". I have now registered for a MSc in the Business school and will be able to experience that school in the faculty.

### **New Student Experience Managers in FBL**

The faculty has appointed two new Student Experience Managers, so VP Media and Campaigns and I "met" them on Skype as part of their induction and were able to inform them about our roles and the Students Association. I have since met them face to face, they are very supportive of student voice and the Association.

### **Student Support Team Issues**

Student issues that have come up:

- Advice on Law Study Home > Discover that only one of the two level 2 modules was counted towards degree classification. This was quickly corrected after I reported it.
- On the same page as above, it shows "a range of OU colleagues who are available to support you in your study". It includes Student Ambassadors and the Law Society but there is no mention of the Students Association at all. I am told it will be changed 'next year'.
- One student with 3 children says she thinks her LLB study will be challenging, as she was advised she had to do both level 1 courses in the same academic year.

The time restriction is to complete in 6 years but you have flexibility within this.

I have since met with the two Senior Managers and established a direct connection so I can quickly discuss any future issues with them. The above were isolated incidents and the latter one was corrected the same day the student posted on a forum.

### **FBL Teaching Committee**

I attended my first FBL Teaching Committee on 26th September. Many of the existing members, including the Chair, were attending their last meeting although their replacements were not all decided. All three student representatives were present and all contributed to the agenda. It opened with John Butcher talking about the 4-year Access & Participation Plan, which has the Executive Dean on the steering group, but will use England as being representative of all 4 nations. Student consultation will be

arranged. There were major concerns expressed, particularly by students, over one proposal for a new qualification and this was not approved at the meeting. A sub-group has been formed to discuss this proposal further and one student representative will be on this sub-group. A fuller report will be prepared and posted on the appropriate forum.

### **Freshers Activity**

An Adobe Chat session was held for FBL Freshers and (Re)Freshers with assistance from the FASS FAR. It was attended by a mixture of new and continuing students, including a new FBL CCR, and ranged over a number of topics. I see the fact it overran its time slot as an indication of its success.

Also as a part of Freshers activities, the Deputy President and I took part in an FBL Student Hub Live event on 1st October, suggesting hints and tips for those starting out on their OU journey.

### **Key meetings since the last Central Executive Meeting**

6 July: Association student volunteer celebration  
18/19 July: FBL Student Conference  
6 August: Stop Start Change discussion  
29 August: Student Hub Live preparation  
6 September: Student Voice Week discussion  
23 September: Referencing Implementation Group meeting  
26 September: Faculty Teaching Committee  
27 September: Faculty Freshers Adobe Chat  
1 October: Student Hub Live event for FBL

### **Forthcoming meetings**

16 October: Senate Reference Group  
23 October: Referencing Implementation Group

*Matt Porterfield*

*Faculty Student Association Representative for Business and Law (FBL)*

## **REPORT OF THE FACULTY ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (FAR) FOR WELLBEING, EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE STUDIES (WELS)**

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So, although I had a quiet start to my summer it was enforced rest due to illness. I had to miss the last C E C and the opportunity to volunteer at the Bath Residential School. I did manage to get a week away in Scotland with my family and thoroughly enjoyed a fantastic summer of cricket. I am just starting with my two level 3 modules, E309 and EK313. Currently it feels rather daunting, but I am sure once I get into it, I will be fine. The W E L S Freshers chat had 117 students pop in. It was so lovely to talk to so many students, although I had to do this at my neighbours' house due to lack of internet at mine. Taking part in S H L this year was great fun. I was more involved and spent much more time on the sofa and on the hot desk, taking students questions. I am looking forward to Student Voice Week in November when I will be running a workshop using Lego! I am also looking forward to volunteering at Cardiff Graduation ceremony, I love hearing all the student stories.

### **Faculty**

3.9.19 Teaching Awards panel and then judging teaching awards  
11.9.19 Student Induction meeting for Student Hub Live for E C Y S  
12.9.19 Annual W E L S Get Together  
17.9.19 Catch up with Karen Foley for S H L  
24.9.19 E C Y S S H L all day  
26.9.19 W E L S Extended Leadership Team meeting  
2.10.19 Catch up with Tyrrell Golding about E103 delay in books and alternative formats  
3.10.19 Meet with Jan Webb H W S C  
7.10.19 General catch up with Tyrrell Golding about Faculty activities  
8.10.19 Teaching Awards

### **Staff and C E C**

21.8.19 Filming Talking Points for Freshers  
6.9.19 Student Voice skype call  
11.9.19 Student Voice Week briefing  
12.9.19 Catch up with Ryan Cragg about graduations  
12.9.19 Catch up with Pooja Sinha about research and student engagement  
19.9.19 P V C Office and Students Association Strategy workshop  
23.9.19 Catch up with Stephanie Stubbins  
23.9.19 Catch up with Cath Brown  
23.9.19 Strategy Project Steering group meeting  
28.9.19 Volunteering at the Milton Keynes Freshers Event  
1.10.19 C C R Breakfast meet up  
1.10.19 Student Experience Discussions  
2.10.19 W E L S Freshers Adobe Connect Chat  
3.10.19 Student Voice week planning

### **Other Meetings**

4-6.9.19 RAISE Student Engagement conference in Newcastle  
1.10.19 W E L S Teaching Committee  
3.10.19 Scholarship Steering Group  
4.10.19 AOUG Research Awards – standing in for Stephanie Stubbins

### **Future Plans**

10.10.19 Skype meeting to discuss new referencing tool and doing a video for students  
14.10.19 Task/Finish Group Student Charter  
15.10.19 PRAXIS Steering Group  
15.10.19 Induction meeting for new head of L A L Rosina Marquez-Reiter  
15.10.19 Culture Change Steering group meeting  
16.10.19 S R G  
22.10.19 Skype catch up with Sally Boyle – H W S C Head of School.

I am continuing to embed what I have been doing within the faculty so that whoever takes over from me next term will have more that they can take forward and work with. I am looking forward to getting going with my third year. I am really loving working with the students and staff within my faculty and very grateful as always for the support I receive from the C E C and staff of the association.

Sarah Jones

*Faculty Association Representative for Wellbeing, Education & Language Studies  
(WELS)*

## REPORT OF THE FACULTY ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (FAR) FOR ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES (FASS)

### List of Meetings Attended (# indicates further information in main report)

Meeting		Discussion
<i>Bridging the inclusivity gap, conference at Bloomsbury institute for teaching and learning.</i>	9 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	Presented with Cherry Day a presentation in regards to diversity and equality at both OUSA and the OU
<i>Meeting with Ian Fribance and Rodger Knowles</i>	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	Meeting to discuss FASS Speakeasy
<i>Student Voice Steering Group</i>	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	Attended meeting on campus
<i>CEC Weekend</i>	19 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2019	
<i>Meeting with Amy McDermont</i>	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	Met with Amy from the Edinburgh office to meet new members of the team and to discuss future plans in FASS.
<i>Meeting with Hayley Ness</i>	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	To discuss psychology student's panel
<i>Meeting with student association</i>	6 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	Looking at stop/start/continue/change activities in relation to the new strategy
<i>Meeting with Hayley Ness</i>	8 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	Met Hayley in Glasgow to discuss support for Scottish students studying psychology
<i>Strategy Working Group</i>	16 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2019	Met other members of the CEC on campus in relation to new strategy
<i>Meeting with Helen Clough</i>	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	Met Helen to discuss my future attendance to the new reference implementation group.
<i>Meeting FASS team in Scotland</i>	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	Attended the FASS team meeting. Discussed my plans and possible projects for the coming year.
<i>Skype meeting in regards to Speakeasy</i>	28 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	Had skype meeting with Rodger Knowles and Catherine Greenwood in relation to planning for the launch of the Speakeasy events in FASS.
<i>Meeting Shona Littlejohn</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019	Met with Shona in Edinburgh office to discuss plan for the coming year and to discuss the launch in Edinburgh of the FASS Speakeasy
<i>Skype meeting with OUSA</i>	6 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	To discuss plans for student voice week 2019.
<i>Teaching and student's group</i>	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Attended my first meeting of this group, after taking over from another CCR
<i>Meeting Hayley Ness</i>	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Meeting to discuss the set up of a possible psychology students' panel in Scotland. It was agreed I would approach OUSA staff in regards to this. Peter Turner and Beth Metcalf.
<i>Skype with Cath Brown and Mark Cameron</i>	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Meeting to discuss analytics event planned for 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2019. Meeting allowed us to redraft the original proposal

<i>FASS volunteers</i>	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	First meeting with a group of new FASS volunteers, who will be trained to host in adobe rooms for new FASS CHAT events (now called FASS CONNECTED)
<i>Skype with Karen Foley</i>	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Meeting to discuss my upcoming appearance on Student Hub Live as Faculty Rep
<i>Meeting with Helen Key</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019	Met with Helen to discuss an upcoming FASS event in December 2019. This one day event will be in relation to assessment and feedback. It was agreed that 2 other students and myself would do a presentation in regards to what makes good/bad feedback.
<i>Reference project implementation</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019	Attended the working group with other student reps. A follow up meeting to be arranged to discuss what information is delivered to students
<i>Student Hub Live</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019	Took part as faculty rep on Student Hub Live
<i>Meeting with Rachel Penny</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019	Met with the new director of teaching in psychology and counselling. This was an initial meeting to discuss upcoming FASS events I have planned as FAR. Also, to look at how we engage with students more.
<i>Meeting with Dr Lee Curley</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019	Discussion about possible talks to Psychology students either live or as part of FASS CONNECTED.
<i>Meeting with Rodger Knowles and Catherine Greenwood</i>	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Catch up meeting to discuss Speakeasy launch in Edinburgh 2020.
<i>Freshers Chat</i>	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	FASS Freshers chat. We had 65 students attend the event.

### **Student issues**

1. Alternative format has again been an issue with some students FOR 19J
2. Students having to wait more than the allocated time in regards to exam result.  
Took this up with the Head of school in Psychology.
3. Students concerned around the new referencing system being introduced.  
Signposted students to the Library website which explains the new system.

### **Faculty Assembly Observers**

Following on from the FASS freshers chat, students have contacted me to apply to attend Faculty Assembly in 2020. I know I have 10 names of students meaning as it stands all my spaces are full for the coming year.

### **FASS Speakeasy**



This was an idea I submitted to the Executive Dean to take the Senior staff and local staff out to meet the students direct. The launch event will take place in Edinburgh on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020, then we are having an event in Northern Ireland in May.

### **FASS Connected**

This is a new monthly adobe chat session for all FASS students. The aim is to have one general chat a month. This will include things like a quiz, information sharing, sharing success, looking at arranging meet ups etc. This will also give me a platform to keep students updated on up and coming events.

We are also aiming to do some more specific chats throughout the month. This may be school/module chats, information sharing from reps to students and support chats as and when required.

### **Psychology Students Committee Scotland.**

I have been working with Hayley Ness (Staff Tutor in Scotland) looking at the possibility of setting up a Scottish Psychological Students Committee.

The main aims of this would be to split Scotland into 6 smaller areas and recruit one student from each to make up the committee. The students on the committee will start to build up a community of psychology students in their area through meet ups, online Facebook chats, adobe chats etc.

The Student's Association will be a partner in this, as we will be registering the committee members through the Association Community team. This will allow the Association to delivery appropriate training in GDPR, Safeguarding, Prevent and Adobe.

### **Analytics Consultation Day**

I have been working with Cath Brown and Mark Cameron on a student's consultation we aim to have in Edinburgh in November 2019. As part of the planning I have produced a working plan for the day and alongside Cath, Mark and Staff from the Edinburgh office we are now in the process of planning this event.

### **Other activities**

- Reading/posting in C E C, S R G and Central Reps forums
- Reading and responding to emails from colleagues, OU Student Association Staff and OU staff
- Reading and posting in student forums

### **List of future meetings/commitments**

*Billy Docherty*

*Faculty Association Representative for Arts and Social Sciences (FASS )*