

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**Central Executive Committee**

25 – 27 October 2019

CULTURE REVIEW

The CEC is asked to:-

- i) **note** this update from the Culture Change Working Group.

1. The Board of Trustees has recently approved funding from reserves to employ the services of Pecan Partnership to provide the Association with a review of its organisational culture and working practices. This is to give insight into those aspects of the current culture that are working for us and helping the Association to be effective and able to deliver on its strategy and those aspects that act as barriers and prevent the Association from being as successful as it could be. This is in line with a key strategic objective from 2017 – 2020 strategy document, to develop our organisational culture to provide: ‘a welcoming, engaging and supportive environment for everyone with a positive, forward looking and professional image the best able to deliver on the Association’s objectives.’*
2. After a costing exercise, the Working Group (named as the authors of this report), was keen to recommend Pecan Partnership to Trustees, considering that there was evidence to suggest that their experience would provide us with some insightful recommendations that we are able to work on. The Group was given access to a piece of work previously completed for the Open University that we felt to be of real value and which we understand is currently being employed by University management. The Group have been pleased with all the dealings with the consultancy to date. This includes their organisation and preparedness, the individual tailoring to our needs, the prior research completed on the Association and its leadership team and the way in which an online meeting was conducted to be inclusive to all. We appreciated the engaging and accessible manner in which our project was discussed and Pecan’s knowledge around the subject which impressed us all. We believe their proposed project plan to be a realistic timescale and the number of voices they expect to include in the review to be inspiring.
3. The Working Group will be working with the consultants to manage and facilitate this review which is expected to incorporate desk research, observations, interviews, focus groups, questionnaires etc. The project will include as broad a range of feedback as possible and involve many opportunities for diverse voices

to feed into this review. At the end of the project we expect to be in receipt of a number of recommendations with some key priorities identified that if acted on could be expected to make the most difference.

4. At the time of writing, the working group has arranged a first meeting with the consultants on Tuesday 15th October in order to scope and plan the nature of the work and agree with them the questions that we are most interested to focus in on.
5. As part of the project, and in agreement with members of the CEC, Andy Loveless, the Director of Pecan Partnership will be in attendance for part of the CEC meeting on Saturday October 26th in order to observe the discussions and activity as part of this review.
6. The Working Group will be able to provide any updates to the meeting from our first scoping exercise and answer any early questions from the Central Executive Committee.

** Association Strategy 2017- 2020; strategic objective E12*

Stephanie Stubbins, Deputy President
Cherry Day, Vice President Equality and Diversity
Sarah Jones, Faculty Association Representative for WEL
Kirsty Lamb, Student Trustee
Verity Robinson, Head of Student Support
Wendy Burrell, Deputy Chief Executive (Students and Staff Engagement)