

## Appendix 2 – Feedback received

*This focuses on suggestions for changes of remit or need for clarification. It is condensed compared to the original – many thanks to all those who sent such helpful feedback – please do not feel it is not being taken into consideration due to only being summarised here. A number of people also said things were fine as they are!*

*There has also been some very helpful feedback about wording, which will be taken into account in the drafting of the full descriptions.*

I have put my own comments in underlined so it's clear I'm not claiming broader support for any views I have!

### President

- Do we need some checks and balances? The OU directs almost everything their way. The ability to set CEC agenda and the influence due to the title must also be considered. The President also has power to appoint many roles. Is this right? Should the CEC be able to intervene with a problematic president?
- Need to update description for BoT and remove OUSET
- Include Student Satisfaction Improvement Working Group Co-chair
- May need to change if Education Committee abolished
- Needs something about visibility to students
- Needs something about networking and relationship building
- Suggest more flexibility about eg who attends EDI Steering (and others) out of President and Deputy
- Suggest more flexibility between President and VP Ed about chairing AC and SRG
- Should have previous CEC experience (or at the outside, CCR)

### Deputy President

- Full or part time? (Strictly speaking a Trustee decision but worth discussing) (x 2)
- Should they chair a Nations “SRSC” type six monthly meeting?
- Mention improving student experience
- Mention additional meetings – eg Inclusion, Prevent,
- Mention Student Led Project Panel, OSL
- 30-40 hours a week
- Include something on flexibility between president and deputy about who does what, to allow playing to individual strengths
- Should have previous CEC experience (or at the outside, CCR)

### VP Administration

- Take out reference to liaising with Association’s legal and financial advisers (office function)
- Desired skills – add interest in administration generally
- Time commitment – 15 hours a week but variable
- Should they oversee democracy and accountability too?
- Oversight of elections should be staff, not CEC
- Financial aspects could be more of an office function?
- Not sure “Policy Reviews” should be in here – think that should sit with P or DP

### VP Community

- Is this necessarily a CEC role as it's currently done? Could it be replaced with a combined “comms and community”
- Does this need to include “faculty representatives” as well as “area representatives”
- Is overseeing representation at graduation ceremonies part of this role?
- Should facilitating community drop ins be included
- I suggest removing the explicit link with AARs. AARs, like FARs, should work with multiple VPs

## **VP Education**

- Expanding the “university’s point of contact for matters relating to educational programmes” to make it clear it’s curriculum development in the broader sense, together with quality processes
- Specifying involvement in consultation on qualification changes, additions and withdrawals
- Specifying other committees (eg Curriculum Portfolio Panel, Futurelearn PG, Apprenticeships)
- Some aspects of role “inherited” – eg PG liaison – so review
- Key part of the strategy “influence and transform” strand, including coordinating responses to consultations from DfE, OfS etc
- Minimum two hours a day but depends on committee schedule.
- Need to be on campus for meetings as hard to contribute remotely
- Should this role be split as it’s very large?
- A number of the committees VP Ed has customarily been on do not necessarily need to be so
- I think the most important part is the Academic Representation
- Consider mentioning possibility of delegating eg amendment approval to appropriately knowledgeable other individuals (such as FARs or CCRs)
- Suggest Charing AC and SRG is negotiable between VP Ed and President
- Should have experience as a CCR
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## **VP Equality and Diversity**

- Rename as VP Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (x 2)
- 15 hours a week is too little, but take into account individual variation
- Should there just be “VP Support and Welfare”?
- Mention of representing underrepresented groups is needed
- Mention of understanding of protected characteristics
- Should include meeting with Group chairs

## **VP Media and Campaigns**

- Remove – not needed. Other roles can take responsibility for this (x 5)
- Doesn’t reflect what we need from a comms perspective
- We need campaigns, not media

## **Student Member of Council**

- Should this be elected or appointed? – but what does that imply about being on CEC? (x 2)
- Needs same eligibility conditions as a Trustee?
- Specify 5 days a year for meetings minimum, plus another 5 days for papers, plus 4 days for SRG, plus potentially more for committees/ working groups/ panels
- Should be on Senate *ex officio*

## **VP Student Support**

- May need to add chairing/ agenda for SRSC six monthly meetings
- Will Individual Representation (if it happens) sit here?
- More clarity needed in wording
- I think something to say that this role often involves being responsive to circumstances and so can have an unpredictable workload and demands would be appropriate
- Needs to be working closely with FARs and AARs as well

## **VP Student Voice**

- 7 hours a week
- More detail – eg moderating student voice forums, SVSG, SRG
- Add in developing/improving ways for student body to share experiences/ideas/feedback with Students Association
- Important for helping improve work on student experience

- Many cross-overs with other roles which would work if it was oversight, but remit doesn't seem to reflect this
- Should this be joined up elsewhere – eg campaigns? (x 3)
- Voice should be BAU/ everyone's responsibility
- Should it come under DP?

#### AARs

- Remove Republic of Ireland AAR and merge either with Northern Ireland or Continental Europe (x 5)
- Do we actually need an England AAR ? There is not the clear need as for the other roles. But a PR issue to lose it
- Add attendance at six monthly Nations "SRSC-type" meetings
- Ensuring the CEC is aware of impact of decisions on students in continental Europe requires more than just a single Europe AAR –volunteers from each country, coordinated by the AAR, would work better
- Resourcing for provision of local events is an issue in Europe
- Remit covers broad areas – blurry lines – so need to ensure everyone understands who is responsible/accountable for what, first points of contact etc
- Remove specific link with VP Community in favour of broader working with CEC

#### FARs

- Add to the overview " and providing faculty information/liaison for Association business
- Addition of detail about who FARs work with (eg CCRs, VP Community etc)
- Make it clear that working with the CEC on non-faculty-specific matters will also be required
- Suggested change in the time required (both up (20 hours) and down (6 hours))
- Clarity that SRG contributions could be on the forum if meeting attendance is not feasible
- SRG should be optional
- A place on Teaching Committee should be available (x 2)
- FARs should be student rep with the scholarship centres (x 2)
- Develop links with PGRs
- Review how relationship with AARs is defined, and also relationship with VPs
- Should FARs be part of DP team
- Add attendance at six monthly SRSC meetings
- Remit covers broad areas – blurry lines – so need to ensure everyone understands who is responsible/accountable for what, first points of contact etc
- This role is in danger of becoming untenable for someone with a conventional job. Need to make some aspects optional to avoid that
- The balance here is very university facing, as it reads. I think a bit of rebalancing needed

#### Other roles

- Is there a need for rep posts for students with protected characteristics? (Person raising this suggested not, but that it should be discussed)
- Roles for protected characteristics would work if we had a different structure – part of a wider body to "challenge" the cabinet?
- Should we have some form of shadow board to allow mentoring and development of future postholders?
- Rep for Apprentices? Rep for PGRs?
- Is there room for a "deputy" for heavy roles such as VP Equality and Diversity and VP Student Support
- Do we need a role for policies and procedure (as distinct from the financial role with VP Admin)
- Could there be an unpaid senior role to avoid creating issues for people on benefits?
- Is there a case for a staff role as "CEC adviser" (like an HR person for CEC)

- Drop VPs Media & Campaigns and VP Student Voice and create VP Student Comms and Engagement to support new strategy.
- Do we need roles such as Black Students Officer

### General Information about CEC roles

- Need to specify in roles that additional tasks relating to CEC work generally will have to be carried out (x 2)
- Suggested rewording of general info to promote a positive organisational culture, and provide more detail about how student reps and staff work together
- Include new expectations in volunteer policy in “what the Association expects from role holders”
- Include “be visible and supportive to volunteers operating within their remit” wherever appropriate
- I’m not convinced about the emphasis on “lead role” – joint responsibility should be acceptable
- Something more on “general CEC responsibilities” – eg working groups, commenting on documents etc perhaps needed here – and placed not so much as an opportunity but an expectation
- In the point about not carrying out tasks that are inappropriate or unrealistic, it should be “please speak to a staff member, or the President or Deputy President”

### CEC size

- CEC is too big (without justification as to why). Risks with reducing size also highlighted regarding overloading
- CEC is too large in terms of students voting for reps
- CEC is too large to carry out its function – makes debates difficult. A different model with a small “cabinet” and a bigger group to hold them to account would be preferable
- CEC is the right size (x 3)
- If CEC was smaller it would overload reps or staff
- Could we restructure to a smaller/ two tier structure to have a smaller group of decision makers and FARs/ AARs other roles supporting/ feeding in (x 2)
- A smaller “core” CEC working with volunteers is seen elsewhere and could help with time commitments
- I feel the CEC needs to be a good size to allow for the fact that people have different amounts of time available at different times. We have to have some sort of “fail-safe” in place to make sure that a resigning or unavailable CEC member does not create an intolerable load or a big gap. The workload at present certainly would not suggest a smaller CEC to be appropriate.

### Other comments

- Recommendation that next CEC considers the purpose of the CEC and appropriateness of structure.
- There may be pressure to increase number of paid roles
- Student-facing roles need to be active on social media
- If additional tasks appear, consider adding them to any of CEC remits, not just VP
- Would be good to have elections earlier to allow a longer handover period. Maybe a handover booklet?
- Need for CEC members to keep each other updated more and avoidance of mission creep
- Need general updating, tightening up of wording (eg supporting strategic aims & objectives or charitable objectives, do we mean responsible or accountable)
- More mention of strategy in remit in terms of responsibility for delivery, contributing to projects and tracking of KPIs
- Where does the Research Strategy go in remits?
- Are the statements under “you will have” too demanding?
- The expected numbers of hours a week are too high – if they need this, could role-sharing be considered?

- Insufficient clarity that meetings can be attended by skype (x 2)
- Clarify what “eligibility” for trustee status means
- Need a much wider review of governance in general – CEC doesn’t have clear terms of reference
- Putting the CEC composition in the Constitution (now Articles of Association) is too rigid
- We need to maintain openness, both in terms of our own values and in terms of the OU’s desire for us to reach out more
- There is a problem with conflict of interests – CEC signing off role changes when they may wish to stand themselves – how do we get round it?
- Should we have eligibility criteria to rule out, for example, particular categories of university staff who may also be students?
- Next steps on this need to include Trustee approval
- We need to get a balance regarding CEC members working with each other and with staff. Obviously both are vital! But sometimes one gets emphasised at the expense of the other. Also a balance between independence and freedom to carry out the role without undue supervision, and the need to keep each other informed.
- I prefer remits to have some flexibility to allow for individual interests/ strengths/ experiences
- We need to see what we can do to make more roles accessible to the 75% of OU students who are in work.