

**OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**

**Central Executive Committee (CEC)**

25 – 27 October 2019

**REPORTS FROM OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION GROUPS**

---

C E C is asked to:-

- i) **receive** the reports
- ii) **note** that unless this paper is starred for discussion prior to the meeting, printed copies will not be supplied

Reports submitted by:-

Disabled Students Group (DSG)  
PLEXUS

## **Central Executive Committee (CEC)**

25 - 27 October 2019

### **REPORT FROM THE DISABLED STUDENTS GROUP (DSG)**

---

**Since our last report;**

#### **Committee**

There has been no change to the make up of the committee, although the Acting Officers are starting to settle in, and are getting ready to move forward. The committee is also starting to look forward to Elections.

#### **Participation**

##### Bloomsbury Institute Presentation.

Billy Doherty D.S.G Committee Member and Cherry Day VP (Equality and Diversity) were keynote speakers at a conference held at the Bloomsbury Institute for Teaching and Learning. Yet again a tremendous success.

##### I.A.G (Information and Guidance) Conference. July 15<sup>th</sup>.

This day event was attended by Acting Chair Megan Brown and Acting Secretary Chris Hughes. This was a good day and well worth the D.S.G. being there. Things we took away from the day were: How to listen more effectively and help students more by being able to signpost better. In addition to the speakers and activities of the day, it was also good to network with Student Support Teams, Disabled Veteran Students Program, and other support teams.

##### Inclusion July 18<sup>th</sup>.

Acting Chair updated the meeting on the new officers and updated them on our Campus visits, and that we were looking forward to freshers and increasing website participation.

##### Campus Meetings July 24<sup>th</sup>.

The purpose of the day as we saw it, was to touch base with some key departments and to introduce ourselves. We had meetings with various people which were all Disabled Student focused. Individual meetings were with Library Services, A tour and meeting with Alternate Formats, Auxiliary Services, Kate Lister. Following which Acting Chair recorded a new welcome message for the Group website (this however may need some further attention). Unfortunately, we were unable to meet with Alison Lunn on the day and had to do this later via Skype. A very successful day, with lots of positives!

##### Website survey.

We have put out a survey to students asking for feedback on how they would like us to be representing them and for website content ideas and possible ideas for

merchandise, etc. At the time of writing (04<sup>th</sup> Oct) there have been 53 responses and some excellent answers.

To date we have had 66 new full members of the D.S.G. since September the 10th

### Training.

Training of officers has now been completed, enabling us to better represent and support students.

### Freshers Fair.

Marilyn Salström (Acting P.R and Comms) and Ron Turner attended this event held on Campus to promote the Group to students answering any questions, and signposting students. The big message was to push official membership and the website.

Freshers events have been held via Adobe Connect and Facebook, with some great feedback and brilliant engagement. We still have one event to go, a Q&A session with a DSA (England) advisor, it is hoped that future sessions will be done to over the other nations.

### Community drop-ins and Meet-ups.

Group and committee members continue to attend these events helping students and promoting the Association and D.S.G.

### **So, What's next;**

In addition to the day to day support, and signposting we give to students, the D.S.G. Committee will also be representing and helping students as follows:

### Regions.

The committee is still exploring the possibilities of regional Meetups, or further engagement through existing meet-ups.

### Mental Health in the Curriculum.

Committee Members will be attending these events in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Manchester.

### Merchandise.

We are continuing to look at and hope to have D.S.G Merchandise available for students to purchase from the OUSA shop.

### Elections.

BI Annual elections will probably take place before the next report, and there will be quite a bit of focus on this. We will be striving to fill all committee positions, as part of this, we are currently having a discussion regarding merging Web Controller and PR and Comms officer positions.

## Survey Results.

The survey is open until the end of November, after which we will be looking at the feedback and results to set an agenda for the New year, and something for the new committee to hit the ground running with.

## Postscript.

Should the current Officers and Committee members not make up the newly elected D.S.G. Committee, we wish to extend our gratitude to O.U.S.A staff, and C.E.C members for their support and guidance.

Megan Brown: Acting Chair  
For and on behalf of Disabled Students Group

**Megan Brown**  
**Acting Chair,**  
**For and on behalf of the Disabled Students Group (DSG)**



## Central Executive Committee (CEC)

25 - 27 October 2019

### REPORT FROM PLEXUS

---

Following our last submission, we welcome the opportunity to provide this quarterly report to the CEC and wider Student body.

#### Committee Update

Since our last report we have had 2 resignations from post.

Mark, our Equalities and Support Officer has moved on from the OU and continuing his studies at another University. I would like to, on behalf of the PLEXUS committee, thank Mark for his assistance and work for the committee and members.

Robin Prior, a non-portfolio committee member, has also handed in his notice for the role, I would like to thank Robin for his time in this role

***An email will be going out to the membership to arrange co-opt into these two roles.***

#### Engagement

##### Social Media

As our social media presence continues to grow, we've also recognised that our members (including the wider OU student community) are communicating via our social media platforms. One of the targets for the next 12 months is to consider our forums and how to increase traffic to this space. The forums are only available to members and is the platform we use for official business, including General Meetings and elections.

##### Hoot

Stephen our Campaigns officer has written pieces for Hoot, the Open University Student Association online magazine, the articles can be found at the following links:

**Nottingham Pride:** <https://thehootstudents.com/robin-hood-and-his-merry-men-pride-in-nottingham/>

**Belfast Pride:** <https://thehootstudents.com/enjoying-the-craic-in-belfast-the-pride-tour-continues/>

**Bournemouth Pride:** <https://thehootstudents.com/pride-at-the-beach/>

***Due to a change from Dropbox to Onedrive I have been unable to provide the usual social media report.***

***Please accept my deepest apologies for this.***

#### Coming Up

##### PLEXUS Plus

I have had an idea with the help of the PLEXUS committee regarding a new "PLEXUS Plus" membership, this will be what we would like a wider network across

as many universities and cities up and down the country as possible. I will be contacting Universities in my local area of Coventry/Birmingham to get their thoughts on the project and to tackle area by area.

### PLEXUS Emails

I am working closely with Sammi and Verity from the Student Support Team to look at new emails for the committee, this would release money for the committee to spend as we currently spend a lot on website/email and Dropbox. We have already disconnected our Dropbox account and are using OneDrive.

### PLEXUS Re-Launch

As some of you may be aware, the PLEUXS committee has been slightly quiet over the last couple of months, however we are looking at doing a "relaunch". We are looking at sending a survey out to members to see what they want from their committee, how do they want to communicate with us and each other, etc...

I think it is easy for a committee to come up with the ideas, however I think the message needs to go out to the membership to remind them that they are the ones in charge, and this is more of their committee than it is mine.

Some of the ideas we have had are, PLEXUS survey, also a shorter version of SOLAR the PLEXUS magazine and making it less of a magazine and more of a newsletter. We have been thinking about ideas of a bi monthly Open PLEXUS chat via Adobe Connect.

Ideas have been put forward of the PLEXUS Committee going to Kent's Hill for a weekend of team building and idea generating..... watch this space!

## Membership

At the time of this report PLEXUS has 737 members. Our highest proportion of member remains in London closely followed by Scotland. However, following our increased engagement in the Nations we have seen significant rises in members in Scotland and Wales.

### OU PLEXUS

### MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS



Total Number of Members	737
-------------------------	-----

Full Member	635
-------------	-----

Associate Member	31
------------------	----

Friend of PLEXUS	48
------------------	----

HLM	1
-----	---

Revoked	21
---------	----

Members by Region			
R01 - London	80	R09 - North	19
R02 - South	54	R10 - Wales	52
R03 - South West	51	R11 - Scotland	76
R04 - West Mids	63	R12(a) - Northern Ireland	27
R05 - East Mids	47	R12(b) - Republic of Ireland	6
R06 - East of England	33	R13 - South East	74
R07 - Yorkshire	52	R14 - Continental Europe	20
R08 - North West	72	R15 - Rest of World	6

Membership Communications			
Opted - In	403	Not-Opted In Members	333

## **Future Commitments**

October 2019 – Black History Month

8<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019 - Hate Crime Awareness week

11<sup>th</sup> October – National Coming Out Day

13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 – Trans Awareness Week

20<sup>th</sup> November 2019 – Trans Day of Remembrance (TDoR)

1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 – World Aids Day

5<sup>th</sup> December International Volunteers Day

8<sup>th</sup> December 2019 – Pansexual/Panromantic Pride Day

10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 – Human Rights Day

*All the above dates would be PLEXUS Social media Campaigns.*

## **And Finally**

I would just like the committee note my extreme gratitude to the Student Support Team, for their ongoing support.

I would also like to thank the PLEXUS Committee for their ongoing engagement. I would also like to pass on an important message I was told by Verity and would just like to echo through the CEC. We are all volunteers and it is important we take time out and relax.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. If you have any questions, please feel contact me via email.

**Kirean Dingley**

**For and on behalf of PLEXUS**

[chair@ouplexus.co.uk](mailto:chair@ouplexus.co.uk)

[www.ouplexus.co.uk](http://www.ouplexus.co.uk)