OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)
3 – 5 December 2021

CONFERENCE 2022

The CEC is asked to:-

i)   **receive** a progress update on Conference arrangements to date

1.   Introduction

1.1.   Conference will be held over the weekend of 21-23 January 2022 with the event starting in the early evening on Friday, 21 January. The business element of the conference will take place online in the fortnight proceeding the weekend.

1.2.   The team are continuing to work together to provide solutions to the main challenges for the event. These include ensuring that the conference is fully accessible, providing flagship events that will entice delegates and ensuring quorum through business (achieving at least 40% of registered delegates to vote in business).

2.   Staff teams

2.1.   Together with the Steering Committee, the Association staff are continuing to work in the six teams supporting the conference, which include Business, Communications, Impact, Programme, Registration and Technical teams.

3.   Business

3.1.   As the business for the 2022 Conference will include suggested amendments to the Association's constitution, it is important that delegates have ample time to consider the information and vote. To reduce the risk of not meeting quorum and to give students the opportunity to vote over a longer period of time, voting will take place prior to the event.

3.2.   Delegates who register for the event will need to vote in the run up to Conference to receive access to the weekend.

3.3.   The timeline for Conference Business is as follows:

Item	Date
Voting open	12 January 2021
Voting closed	19 January 2021

4.   Communications

4.1.   The communications plan includes communications before, during and after the event. Newsletters will be sent to successful delegates in the run-up to Conference to provide teasers for the programme and reminders to vote.

5.   Impact

5.1.   The Impact team are working to ensure that we collect data before, during and after the conference so that we can fully measure the impact against the agreed objectives and strategy. Further planning will take place over the next couple of weeks.

6.   Programme

6.1.   The programme will be structured across the weekend. The daily sessions will all fit into one of our three key themes: the Association's values, the Association's 50th and sustainability.

6.2.   Speakers confirmed include Jackie Weaver, Caroline Ogilvie and the Vice-Chancellor, Tim Blackman. Further invites have been sent to current and past OU Students to provide inspirational talks across the weekend.

6.3.   A number of workshops will take place on the Sunday, which will focus on the Association. Throughout the weekend, opportunities to feedback will be made available by polls, Association sessions, and other information collection mechanisms. This will support the impact and evaluation after the event.

6.4.   Other sessions will include networking opportunities, University Challenge, EDI Insights and yoga.

6.5.   It is expected that members of the team will be available across the weekend for any technical queries or questions from delegates accessing the platform, as well as additional guidance hosted on the conference microsite.

7.   Registration

7.1.   Students were able to enter the conference ballot from Monday 8 November and it closed at midday on 29 November.

7.2. A randomised selection system will pick successful students in line with the number of places available per nation (including England, Continental Europe and the Rest of the World).

7.3. The successful students will be sent a short registration form on Friday, 3 December to confirm their place for the voting and weekend event.

8. Technical

8.1. The current focus for the Technical team is ensuring that the platforms we plan to use are as effective and accessible as possible. The team are also starting to plan contingencies for Conference.

9. Next steps

9.1. The Steering Committee together with Association staff will continue to organise and plan Conference to ensure its successful delivery in January.

Reiss Miller
Conference & Association 50th Project Manager