



**CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CEC)
1 October – 12 October 2021**

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Central Executive Committee (CEC) held via the online forums from 1 October – 12 October 2021 and via Microsoft Teams on 9 October 2021.

PRESENT

Patrice Belton, Vice President Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)
Ian Cheyne – Deputy President
Nichola Connolly – Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Wellbeing, Education & Language Studies (WELS)
Gareth Jones - Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Business & Law (FBL)
Sarah Jones – President (Chair)
Alison Kingan - Vice President Student Support
Cinnomen McGuigan – Vice President Education
Matt Porterfield - Vice President Administration
Lucy Richardson – Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Open and Access
Anca Seaton - Vice President Community
Hanna Silk – Area Association Representative (AAR) for Wales
Bev Smit – Faculty Association Representative (FAR) for Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)
Danielle Smith – Student Member of Council
Kate Wells – Area Association Representative (AAR) for Europe
Leanne White – Area Association Representative (AAR) for England
Fanni Zombor - Vice President Engagement

IN ATTENDANCE

Rob Avann – Chief Executive
Rebecca Coster – Research Assistant (part)
Gabiella Cull – Executive Support Assistant (minutes)
Sue Maccabe – Strategy Change and Projects Coordinator
Alecia McNaught – Student Observer (part)
Beth Metcalf – Director of Membership Services
Dan Moloney – Director of Engagement
Pooja Sinha – Research and Information Officer (part)

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

A. PRESIDENT’S WELCOME

The President welcomed the CEC to the October 2021 meeting and gave a special welcome to the student observer, who was attending for the first time.

B. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

C. MINUTES

C.1 The minutes of the last meeting (CEC 04/21/M) were approved.

D. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

D.1 None raised.

SECTION A: ITEMS FOR APPROVAL AND REPORT

Taken on the Forum Meeting between 1 October – 12 October 2021

1. RECEIVED: REPORTS OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CEC 10/21/1

- 1.1 The CEC were pleased to see a change in the format of how reports from those who are absent or unable to submit are presented and acknowledged.
- 1.2 VP Engagement suggested that it would be beneficial to discuss the purpose of these reports as she explained that some CEC members seem to use them for different purposes, which could be challenging for students reading them to be able to interpret. The President understood her point and outlined that as these reports are student facing, the purpose of the reports is about sharing the impact that reps are having and the difference that is being made by the CEC with the student membership. They should therefore be written with this in mind.

2. RECEIVED: REPORTS OF OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION GROUPS

CEC 10/21/2

- 2.1 All CEC members thanked the Chair of OU Pride for yet another comprehensive and informative report. Given their low committee numbers, the President was even more impressed and wondered what additional support could be given to help ease the pressure on both committees.

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- 2.2 Following the resignation of the DSG Chair, some CEC members wondered what additional support this group may need in recruiting a new Chair and some more committee members. The England AAR confirmed that the DSG have recently appointed an Acting Chair and some plans have been put in place with the help of the EDI and Student Welfare staff team, with a view to increasing and engaging membership and support.
- 2.3 A few CEC members expressed concern over the BAME group as there had been little activity. They were keen to know what they had been up to over the last few months. VP EDI responded to explain that it has been a difficult time engaging with the group and that she has stepped in to be interim Chair. She did however explain that while attendance was relatively low, BAME members did attend some of the Fresher's events, showing that committee members do want to engage. The EDI and Student Welfare team, alongside VP EDI are looking into co-opting a Chair for the group to help start and maintain momentum.

3. RECEIVED: REPORT OF AFFILIATED SOCIETIES CEC 10/21/3

- 3.1 A lot of CEC members were disappointed to see the loss of some long-standing societies but acknowledged that it is unfair to students to advertise inactive societies. They were, however, pleased to welcome a range of new societies, such as the People and Planet society, which the FASS FAR hoped will attract the students who asked about environmental societies at Freshers.
- 3.2 VP Community provided context behind the issue, explaining that these issues have been ongoing in previous years, but that Covid has impacted on societies even more.

4. RECEIVED: FINANCE REPORT CEC 10/21/4

- 4.1 VP Admin updated the CEC on the audit, confirming that both the audits of the Association and OUSET had been completed with clean audit reports and compliments from the auditors to the Finance and Resources staff.
- 4.2 The President was excited to see how some of the allocated budget will be used to put on the 50th birthday celebrations.

SECTION B: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Taken on the Forum Meeting between 1 October – 12 October 2021

5. RECEIVED: BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT CEC 10/21/5

- 5.1 The CEC sent their warm welcomes to the new members of staff who have joined the Association in the last quarter. CEC members requested an updated organisational chart to display the new staff members so that they could better understand who has joined which team. The Chief Executive provided this.

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- 5.2 VP Admin was disappointed that the plans for the blended working trial don't include publicising who will be in the office and when. The Chief Executive responded to explain that all members of the staff team will be working, no matter where they are based, and will all be available to contact. He saw no benefit in publicising who is in the office at this stage.
- 5.3 VP Student Support was pleased to see that the BoT had rejected the proposal not to have any face-to-face activity before Spring 2022. The FBL FAR wanted to make the BoT aware of the increasing desire to return to face to face and the disbelief that some students are feeling that we don't have this option, considering the rest of society has opened up.

6. RECEIVED: EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION WORKING GROUP UPDATE CEC 10/21/6

- 6.1 Some of the CEC queried why the group's monthly meetings have been changed to once every two months, particularly as EDI is an urgent and topical matter. VP Engagement, who sits on the working group, explained that because of increased workloads due to other ongoing projects, people struggled to attend every monthly meeting. She outlined however, that whilst the meetings have reduced, a lot of work is being done via Teams instead.
- 6.2 The CEC are looking forward to hearing more about the work of this group and hearing about the strategy in November.

7. RECEIVED: FRESHERS FORTNIGHT REVIEW 21J CEC 10/21/7

- 7.1 All of the CEC expressed their immense gratitude and praise to VP Community and the Community Team for their hard work in pulling off another successful Freshers. Some members commented on the vast number of Freshers events which were on offer, as well as VP Student Support commending the team in making the meetings and activities more secure this time. VP Engagement hoped that in future face to face Freshers, there will still be some online elements as the past few Freshers have proven that having them online increases engagement and opportunities. Online Freshers is the only way International students can participate.

8. RECEIVED: OU BUSINESS SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP WITH UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA CEC 10/21/8

- 8.1 This paper is of a confidential nature and is therefore reserved to the confidential minutes.

9. RECEIVED: UPDATE ON ATHABASCA RELATIONSHIP AND REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT CEC 10/21/9

- 9.1 The CEC noted this update and approved the continuation of the informal partnership agreement as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding.
- 9.2 The President commented on the benefits of having such a great relationship with an international student's union; it enables a greater community and common practice

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can be shared. VP Engagement queried whether the Association would seek relationships with other international unions to start a growing network. The President responded that whilst for the moment, the focus is to build on the relationship with Athabasca, in the future the plan will be to expand.

10. RECEIVED: COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY **CEC 10/21/10**

- 10.1 The CEC approved the proposed communications strategy.
- 10.2 The FBL FAR queried what makes this communications strategy different to what the Association has been doing already and what will make it successful. The Director of Engagement explained that the difference is having it explicitly set out in a strategy document that enables the Association to be accountable to its stated intentions, assess whether we are achieving the objectives, underpinning the approaches taken to the Comms matrix and plan.
- 10.3 A few CEC members requested for the document to be written in plain English to make it more accessible to foreign students whose first language is not English.

11. RECEIVED: VOLUNTEER POLICY **CEC 10/21/11**

- 11.1 The Wales AAR questioned whether there could be scope to include provision for new volunteers to be supported by an existing volunteer to assist with the induction processes and provide support during their term. The Director of Membership Services thought this was a great idea and explained that the Senior Volunteer Training and Wellbeing Officer wants to explore an official 'mentor scheme' but said there is no reason as to why an informal arrangement couldn't be offered in the meantime. Many CEC members supported this idea.
- 11.2 Other CEC members made various comments on the policy. The Senior Volunteer Training and Wellbeing Officer confirmed she will take these away, alongside comments from the BoT, and will re-issue an amended and updated version.

12. RECEIVED: WEBSITE UPDATE **CEC 10/21/12**

- 12.1 This paper is of a confidential nature and is therefore reserved to the confidential minutes

SECTION C: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
Taken on 9 October via Microsoft Teams

13. STRATEGY PERFORMANCE REPORT **CEC 10/21/13**

- 13.1 The Strategic Projects and Change Coordinator presented the performance report which gives updates on the Key Performance Indicators, the fourteen projects in the strategy projects portfolio and the staff team business plans. She asked the CEC to outline areas of both achievement and concern, so these can be highlighted to

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Trustees at their meeting. VP Community re-inforced the success of Fresher's this year, following the high level of attendance and initial feedback. She gave thanks to those involved in the setup of the Association leaflets, as she linked the high number of attendees to the awareness raised through the leaflets being sent out in module packs. Furthermore, VP Community explained that we need to find out at what point of the student's journey are the Association's messages most meaningful. The Strategic Projects and Change Coordinator agreed that we need to be conscious about the student journey and choose the right times for our messages to have the greatest impact. The Student Member of Council identified two areas of achievement: first, being the significant increase in returning visitors to the Hoot and secondly, a great achievement that two OU students have made it to the final of a space design competition.

- 13.2 A few areas of concern were raised. The FBL FAR wanted the Trustees to be made aware of the amber status of a lot of strategy projects but clarified that these amber statuses are mostly due to resourcing issues as other projects such as Conference and the Governance Review Implementation have had to take priority. The Strategic Projects and Change Coordinator further explained that projects 7 and 9 are tied with the OU and so this has also halted progress as the Association has had to work to their timeline. VP Education was however confident that a lot of the amber-stated projects would turn to green soon as a lot of work has been ongoing in the background.
- 13.3 The Student Member of Council recognised the impact the pandemic has had on some of the metrics, such as the decrease in meet ups. She raised concern over the low numbers of views on YouTube but acknowledged the need for new, exciting content which could help increase engagement on social media. The decline in peer supporters was also identified as a concern due it being such a valuable service. VP Education identified rep recruitment as an area of concern. She asked for all CEC members to get behind every recruitment drive, with the aim to engage as many students as possible. The FBL FAR explained his desire to start up project 10, as the NUS had already started a campaign and consequently, we could be left behind.
- 13.4 The England AAR explained that the DSG figures are slightly misleading as whilst the DSG numbers have increased, the engagement of the group has not. She stated that the group feel unsupported and so asked for support from CEC members.
- 13.5 ACTION:** The President asked for any further points to be sent to the Strategic Projects and Change Coordinator in advance of the Board of Trustees meeting.

14. GOVERNANCE REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION CEC 10/21/14

- 14.1 The Chief Executive briefly introduced this paper on behalf of the Governance Review Working Group and then immediately opened the floor for questions from the CEC, working through the paper in its sections. Questions surrounding the Student Leadership team were posed first. The FAR FASS questioned how we will fill the extra positions and stated the need to come up with new, innovative ideas to interact with students and engage them. The Chief Executive agreed, explaining also that the Association will have to be much better at defining role remits and time commitments to reduce the turnover rate.

- 14.2 VP Education condemned the process of the implementation of the Governance Review, arguing that it had been 'bulldozed' through without sufficient discussion. Some other CEC members felt the same and expressed disappointment over the process, with the FAR Open and Access confirming that they opposed the proposals and would be campaigning for them to be struck down at Conference. The Chief Executive confirmed that the implementation is not a definitive decision as the specific proposals had to be agreed by the Board of Trustees and then voted on at Conference, where Student Members will have their say on the proposals. Ultimately, the students voting at Conference will decide if the proposals go forward or not. He highlighted the sheer volume of hours that all involved with the Working Group and Consultation Group had put in to ensuring the opportunity for views to be heard as part of the development of the proposals, and this work was outlined in the paper. He further reminded CEC members that the work had been triggered by the external report's recommendations and the Working Group had been tasked with taking those recommendations forward into implementation which required them to develop the very proposals that could be put to student members at Conference. While it was important that criticisms were aired at the meeting, he asked for those to be put forward constructively and with due regard to the integrity of those who had worked on the proposals.
- 14.3 There were a few comments surrounding the number of elected positions, with a few members questioning why the number had reduced. The Chief Executive responded to remind CEC members that the external report had suggested the number proposed in this paper, and had pointed to the length of time students currently spend having to read the vast number of manifestos, which subsequently results in a lack of engagement. By having a reduced number of elected positions, engagement should increase. The Open and Access FAR, and Student Member of Council, suggested a place for Nation/Area reps to sit on or otherwise attend the Student Leadership Team. A couple of CEC members did however highlight that reducing the number of positions could lead to an increase in workload for a smaller number of people.
- 14.4 The Student Member of Council questioned whether the Council role should be an elected position, rather than the proposed appointment. The England AAR supported this concern, acknowledging that we could end up with a hierarchy of positions which are elected, and positions which are appointed. She emphasised the need for all or nothing. Whilst the Chief Executive understood this point, he re-inforced the issue of having too many roles to elect and hence, too many papers for students to read. VP Student Support argued in favour of the Council role being appointed as it had been seen in previous years that students applying for the role don't understand what it involves and aren't equipped to carry it out.
- 14.5 Questions were then focused around the next section of the paper, on the Student Forum. The FBL FAR explained that he would like to see the FARs being elected. Additionally, he raised concern over cross-overs between the different structures and positions, therefore recognising a need for the remits to be well-defined. The Chief Executive confirmed that there will be a limit to prevent such cross-overs as defined elsewhere in the paper. The Open and Access FAR stated there should be an Open and Access FAR on the Student Forum, rather than only having a school representative. This was agreed as a sensible addition.

- 14.6 The Student Member of Council disagreed with the proposal for there to be both appointed and elected positions on the Student Forum. She referred to it as a 'two-tier system' and suggested all positions on the Student Forum to be appointed instead. VP Education disagreed, arguing for all positions to be elected. The England AAR questioned whether appointments would be anonymised in the applications. The Chief Executive shared consideration for anonymous applications and outlined that it would be a part of future planning should the proposals move forward.
- 14.7 Following discussions surrounding the Student Forum, comments turned to the Scrutiny Panel. Some CEC members argued for the BoT to also be scrutinised by the Scrutiny Panel and that it cannot just be the Student Leadership team who are affected. VP Education argued for accountability across the board. The Director of Membership Services confirmed that the BoT are actually held to account externally by the Charity Commission. In the main, there was support for the proposal to introduce a Scrutiny Panel which was agreed by some CEC members to be a good idea. It was however noted by some CEC members that perhaps the title 'Scrutiny' was too strong, and something more along the lines of Assurance or something similar might be more fitting.
- 14.8 The proposal for an AGM was thoroughly discussed. The Open and Access FAR expressed concern for having an AGM over Conference due to losing the social element that Conference holds. The Chief Executive outlined that should the AGM move online, there will still be a wider programme to include these more social events and other key features (speakers, debates, workshops etc) – making it more attractive for students to attend.
- 14.9 A lot of CEC members were disappointed that students will no longer be able to see and visit campus for themselves. They highlighted the importance for students seeing their campus and the great impact it can have on them, such as the feeling of belonging and being part of a university community. The Chief Executive understood these feelings and explained that staff too have great memories of Conferences on campus. But Campus would remain an important feature of work, and other opportunities could be developed to accommodate visiting campus. Further, it was hard to ignore or defend that relatively few students benefitted from being able to attend Campus for the very substantial cost to the Association.
- 14.10 VP Education questioned the rationale behind the quorum being 50 student members. VP Community supported this, arguing that this quorum level is too low and needs to be increased. VP Admin and the Chief Executive responded to explain that this is common practice in a lot of other charities to have a minimum quorum level and he highlighted the minimum level in place at one super large charity. It is simply a minimum level. On the other hand, the proposal in the paper was to remove the upper limit on attendance which is currently in place, which meant that every student member would be able to attend and vote in the AGM which was not the case at present.
- 14.11 When discussing the next steps, the conversation heightened with some CEC members reverting back to arguments against the Governance Review and the process behind it. VP Education asked when rules revision would be taking place, and

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the Chief Executive and VP Admin responded to indicate that the governance review had served that purpose in this term, taking a fuller and more detailed look at our entire governance structure than had taken place in quite some years. VP Engagement responded to highlight the huge amount of time and effort that had gone into creating these proposals and stated that the Working Group's intention was not to make this a done deal at all, and comments on this ignored the role that Student Members at Conference would have in voting on the proposals.. She asked for the CEC to engage with the Governance Review in their capacity as student leaders and help fellow students understand it better too.

14.12 The President asked CEC members to indicate, by a simple show of hands, their support or otherwise for each of the main proposals which would help to illustrate the main areas of contention when these proposals were discussed by the Trustees. The results, with 16 CEC members present and able to vote, were as follows:

- Student Leadership Team – 6 votes in favour
- Student Forum – 13 votes in favour
- Scrutiny Panel – 10 votes in favour
- AGM – 9 votes in favour

14.13 The President thanked the Chief Executive and other members of the Working Group for the paper and their comments during this session. She noted that the next steps would be that the feedback gained from CEC members in this session would be raised with the Board of Trustees at their meeting when they considered this same paper. The Trustees would make the final decision on what proposals would go forward to the next stage of development.

15. NSS RESULTS ANALYSIS

15.1 The Research and Information Officer introduced this paper. She explained that the key measure for the Association is Q26, which is specific to student unions. Students are asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statement: 'The students' union effectively represents students' academic interests'. The Research and Information Officer stated that we need to look at year on year trends to understand ways to improve. In the 2021 NSS, the percentage of students selecting either 'definitely agree' or 'mostly agree' in response to Q26 was 43.43% which was the lowest score since the addition of this question. The Strategy and Insights team have identified groups where this percentage was lowest. January 2022 marks the start of the 2022 NSS so the Research and Information Officer wanted ideas to propose courses of action to seek improvement in next year's scores.

15.2 VP Engagement was keen to increase engagement at a Faculty level and also suggested that CCRs could help engage these less-satisfied groups of students. The WELS and FASS FAR were both happy to be involved in the promotion of the survey and will try extending the reach of the message. The FASS FAR suggested getting the word out through StudentHome. The Open and Access FAR also offered their support and was pleased to see Wales had a higher percentage of students agreeing to the statement and suggested focusing on what has been successful in Wales and replicating this for other dissatisfied groups.

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15.3 VP Education highlighted that one of the Association's faults is that so much work goes on but very little is voiced. She stated that we don't close the feedback loop and need to prioritise showing what we do for students to encourage them to engage with us. The Student Member of Council outlined that the Association must make it clear what the NSS is and do so in more regular visuals; showing students what we do for them and creating a greater impact. VP Engagement agreed and suggested whether each CEC member could commit to creating a video each week about the Association's achievements.

15.4 ACTION: VP Engagement to schedule a session to teach the CEC how to create videos which can be used on social media. These to be then shared on social media to improve engagement.

16. ELECTIONS REVIEW

16.1 The Director of Membership Services introduced this paper and asked for comments and/or questions from the CEC. The FBL FAR outlined a need for role descriptions to accurately reflect the commitment hours but recognised the effects the Governance Review will have on the elected positions. VP Admin agreed that the Governance Review will have a huge impact on the roles and consequently, changes to role descriptions can't happen until after Conference. VP Engagement outlined her support for the removal of the forums, as a lot of effort goes into them, just for the same small minority of students to participate.

16.2 The FBL FAR further stated that some students are 'technophobes' highlighting that the process needs to be inclusive for everyone. VP Engagement agreed but argued that making videos non-compulsory gives those who do decide to create them, an advantage over other candidates. Discussions continued surrounding whether videos should be non-compulsory or scrapped all together, with the Student Member of Council recognising the high level of dropouts at the video stage of the elections process. She emphasised that videos are a barrier for those who don't want to create one and consequently should be removed. VP Education argued for an 'all or nothing' approach.

16.3 RESOLUTION: To achieve an outcome, a vote was announced and each CEC member had to vote for either 1) no videos at all or 2) videos being optional but with support provided by the Association. The results were as follows:

- Voted in favour of no videos – 6
- Voted in favour of videos being optional but with support provided - 10

16.4 The FASS FAR raised the issue of a low voter turnout in the previous election, potentially due to a lot of students not receiving their voting code, and then not proceeding to chase it when it didn't arrive. The Director of Membership Services explained that this is mostly out of our control but outlined that through raising awareness and generating conversation about the elections, it should encourage students to actively chase their voting code, should they not receive it.

16.5 The England AAR raised that accessibility needs to be considered when rewriting the role descriptions. She emphasised that in order to appeal to minority groups such as

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the DSG, descriptions need to outline that any accessibility requirements someone may have, will be taken on board and relevant adjustments made.

- 16.6 VP EDI expressed concerns that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be done as it is procedure but not completed with any meaning. The Director of Membership Services confirmed that these will be carried out in depth on the elections review as the Association wants to make it as fair as possible.
- 16.7 RESOLUTION:** 14 CEC members voted for these election review recommendations to go to approval from the Board of Trustees.

17. CEC EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW ANALYSIS

- 17.1 The Head of Executive Support and Staff Welfare introduced this paper, outlining that 16 CEC members took part in the survey across July and August. She brought the analysis of the survey results to CEC to understand what the priorities were in terms of changes to their experience. The analysis was split into several categories; role remits, handover and induction, CEC meetings and overall experience so far, and so discussions followed the same format.
- 17.2 Role remits generated a lot of discussion, with the majority of CEC members arguing for remits to accurately display the number of hours needed to undertake the role, as well as being honest about what is involved. VP Education supported this, arguing that we need to be incredibly transparent about what each role involves as currently, role retention is so poor due to unrealistic hours portrayed on the remits. She suggested that to improve turnover rate for representatives, the remits should also display additional responsibilities that are not compulsory, but you may be asked to get involved with. VP Engagement suggested having a Teams channel where student reps could offer out opportunities to attend meetings that an individual may not have time to attend themselves. The Open and Access Far offered similar views, stating a need for a better pool of deputising to help spread out workload when needed and that reps should be encouraged to take breaks just as Association staff do. The Director of Membership Services questioned where this perception to work extensive hours came from and that it is a wellbeing issue which needs resolving.
- 17.3 The FASS FAR questioned whether there is support for students who want to become a student representative but face digital poverty. The Director of Membership Services confirmed that student reps can loan a laptop for a period of 6 months through the Association, but further additional provisions could be looked into.
- 17.4 Discussions then turned to Handover and Induction weekend. Many CEC members praised the Handover and Induction weekend and explained of its importance. VP Education wanted to embed the idea of a Handover weekend for new reps who were elected in by-elections. VP Community emphasised the benefits of handover for new and current CEC member, however she did outline an issue – some representatives didn't turn up at previous Handovers which makes it difficult for the new representatives taking over those positions. She suggested that a process should be put in place, whereby if a current rep doesn't turn up, a staff member can step in to offer that much needed support and guidance. The Deputy President further identified that getting all the information together about a role into a suitable 'package' for the

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new rep can be difficult and he recognised that it is hard to anticipate questions new reps will ask.

- 17.5 CEC meetings was the next focus and discussions started with a comment around returning to face to face. VP Education expressed a strong desire to return CEC meetings back to a face-to-face setting. She referred the negativity in this paper to the lack of face-to-face interaction and explained that the CEC feels disconnected. She further recognised that there are no spaces without staff present and felt that if there were spaces without staff, better connections may form between the CEC. The Chief Executive responded to say that if that's what CEC would like, staff will step away from these spaces. VP Engagement gave an insight into some CEC only spaces and explained that she often finds them uncomfortable, and discussions can often get out of hand, subsequently she would like to see a staff member in these spaces.
- 17.6 The Open and Access FAR suggested that info papers could be spread out and shared in Teams, so they are not all coming to CEC, resulting in less papers to read in advance of the meetings. VP Engagement stated that she likes having the info papers on the forums as it saves time. The Student Member of Council pointed to the vast amount of papers CEC have to read and outlined that a lot of papers come with bulky appendices which aren't always necessary. She suggested for these to be reduced where possible.
- 17.7 Those CEC members who opt for printed papers raised concern over the continuous problems they have receiving their paper packs and explained they need to receive them earlier to give them enough time to read them.
- 17.8 ACTION:** The Head of Executive Support and Staff Welfare to move the final paper mailing deadline forward so printed papers can be ordered earlier.
- 17.9 The final area for discussion was reflecting on their overall experience so far. It became apparent that a lot of the CEC have been feeling negativity amongst the group which has caused many knock-on effects. VP Engagement was disappointed to see that the culture of this term's CEC has become so negative. She stated that writing comments in social media, Teams and Forums needed to stop and a united front needs to be gathered. VP EDI opened up about her feelings of being unsupported. The CEC had an in-depth discussion of how they have all been feeling and looked forward to the Sunday session with Jiten Patel to try move past this turbulent period.
- 17.10 ACTION:** The Head of Executive Support and Staff Welfare to post additional questions in the forums for CEC to comment on, to help further understand the priorities when it comes to change at the December CEC.

18. BEHAVIOURAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW CHANGES

- 18.1 The Director of Membership Services introduced this paper and asked for the CEC to approve the changes to the current Bye-laws. The CEC were broadly in favour of the changes to the behavioural governance with only a few comments. The Open and Access FAR was broadly in support but doesn't believe that an individual should be given anonymity when putting in and going through a complaint. VP Engagement was also in support, recognising just one area for improvement – she wanted to add in that

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support can be given to people going through the complaints procedure as it can be a daunting process. She made clear though, that support should be given to the subject of the complaint as well as the person making the complaint.

- 16.2 VP Education was pleased to see the introduction of an Equality Impact Assessment on these behavioural procedures and processes, to help take a stand for those students with protected characteristics.
- 16.3 VP Admin explained that removing these policies from the bye laws makes it easier to publicise them and a lot easier to change them if they're in a separate document.
- 16.4 The Student Member of Council highlighted the need to reflect on the learning that is gained from complaints, and to share the outcomes of complaints and therefore close the feedback loop. It is essential to show the improvements that are being made. The Deputy President supported this, illustrating that the nature of feedback can be used to inform students and future endeavours.
- 16.5 RESOLUTION:** The CEC then voted on the following and the results are outlined below –
- 15 CEC members voted to approve the CEC recommending the changes to the bye-laws to the BoT
 - 15 CEC members voted to approve recommending the BoT adopt these new policies and procedures
 - 14 CEC members agreed to the inclusion of 'Kindness and Compassion' in the Association's organisational values
 - 16 CEC members approved changes to other policies and guides to ensure consistency and simplicity of our policies and procedures.

SECTION D: ITEMS TO NOTE

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 BoT and CEC observers

The President asked if the CEC would be happy to start up the opportunity again for BoT members to observe the CEC meeting and vice versa. Names of those who want to attend the BoT meeting were asked to email the President and Head of Executive Support and Staff Welfare.

RESOLUTION: 13 Members of the CEC voted in favour of this.

17.2 UCU and the strike ballot

VP Education requested for the Association to have a piece on the Hoot to explain what's happening with the UCU situation. She explained that normally the Association

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makes a statement and recognised a need to be ahead of the game this time round.

17.3 Co-opting vacant positions

The President explained that although the CEC has some vacant positions, unfortunately, there is not the staff capacity to co-opt to these positions in the same way at the moment.

The Deputy President was concerned about losing the relationship with the OU in Scotland, therefore he offered to help with the Scotland related workload to try maintain this relationship.

The Deputy President and Director of Membership Services had discussed a possible alternative way of handling a co-option which was agreed to be more feasible and they would progress this outside the meeting.

18. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

18.1 The next meeting of the Central Executive Committee will take place over the weekend of the 3 – 5 December 2021.

Action Log		
Item in the Minutes	Action	Action holder
13.5	Any further points (achievements or concerns) to be sent to the Strategic Projects and Change Coordinator in advance of the Board of Trustees meeting.	All CEC members
15.4	VP Engagement to schedule a session to teach the CEC how to create videos which can be used on social media.	Fanni Zombor
17.8	The Head of Executive Support and Staff Welfare to move the final paper mailing deadline forward so printed papers can be ordered earlier.	Gabby Cull
17.10	The Head of Executive Support and Staff Welfare to post additional questions in the forums for CEC to comment on, to help further understand the priorities when it comes to change at the December CEC	Gabby Cull