OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION  

Central Executive Committee (CEC)  
18 – 20 March 2016  

STUDENT RECRUITMENT & SUPPORT CENTRES (SRSC) EXECUTIVE GROUP

The CEC is asked to:-

i) receive the update from the Student Recruitment & Support Centres (SRSC) Executive Group.

Statement Provided by the University:

1. Since Council approved the Locations Analysis recommendation on the 24 November 2015, more detailed implementation planning has taken place. This has taken account of:
   a. Council’s request to review the provisional 3 year implementation timeline and
   b. feedback from staff which echoed Council’s concerns that a prolonged timeline could negatively impact staff morale and potentially lead to a detrimental impact on our student services.

2. The implementation schedule has subsequently been revised into a 2 year plan. This plan:
   a. will begin to establish the new Student Recruitment and Support Centres (SRSC) earlier, introducing new ways of working from May 2016. This will allow students to feel the benefits of the changes much earlier in the process,
   b. will help to protect student services during the transition by allowing significantly more time for key activities such as knowledge capture, recruitment and training
   c. will establish the foundation for the University to make continual improvements to its student services in the future
3. The revised plan does not adversely affect staff who are at risk of potential redundancy as previous commitments of employment made by the University remain unchanged.

4. On 4 February 2016 all staff and stakeholders were briefed on the revised, 2 year implementation plan. On site meetings were held in all region and Nation offices to explain the rationale for the condensed plan and the University’s vision for delivering enhanced student services, as defined by the Student Seamless Journey programme (SSJ). The SRSC programme will deliver implementation of this new service design.

5. This will begin with Phase 1 implementation which will establish the foundation for the new Student Recruitment and Support Centres in Manchester, Milton Keynes and Nottingham. This will run from May – August 2016, with work finishing before we enter our peak student registration period to minimise the risk of interruption to services.

6. Phase 1 will introduce the new ways of working as defined by the SSJ Target Operating Model. This will enable the work that is transitioning in from the closing sites (from October 2016) to move across into the new structure. This will facilitate the earlier delivery of enhanced student services.

7. Planning for phase 1 has focussed on understanding the resource requirements of the new Target Operating Model and refining the plan that will move us from our current configuration of services to the new SRSCs.

8. Work is ongoing on the development of robust knowledge capture and training plans that will ensure best practice processes are identified and underpin the training for all staff in the new SRSCs. This will help the University to ensure students receive an effective and consistent service.

9. The SRSC programme will be seeking student input into the design of both the recruitment and training processes. This will ensure that the programme develops plans that will deliver the services our students need. OU Students Association representatives on both the Executive Group and Programme Board will be able to monitor progress made with this.
10. The first external recruitment campaign for student facing staff was launched on 3 March 2016. This advertised opportunities in Student Recruitment and Support and Student Support Teams. Early recruitment is essential to ensuring the protection of student services during transition and to ensuring the foundations are in place to provide enhanced services as early as possible once the SRSCs have been established.

11. The launch of this campaign does not adversely affect staff who are at risk of potential redundancy. For these colleagues, options and previous commitments made by the University remain unchanged. This message was communicated to all staff as part of a programme update on 4 March 2016.

12. The consultation process continues. Staff at risk of potential redundancy are currently undertaking their second stage individual consultation meetings. These meetings are due to conclude by 4 April 2016. The University is also continuing discussion with both UCU and UNISON.

13. Work on estates planning and the design for the new SRSCs continues with input from colleagues across all areas of the University. On site work is currently scheduled to begin in April with the sites ready to accommodate the first batch of new recruits by the end of June 2016.

Ruth Tudor
President