OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

Central Executive Committee (CEC)
23 July 2016

FORWARD PLAN

The CEC is asked to:-

i) **comment** on the items listed, adding any further suggestions for note

ii) **note** the listed items

1. **Introduction**

   The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of some of the key discussion and decision items that are likely to be presented to the Central Executive Committee over the new term. The aim of this is to help new CEC members to appreciate the type of business that is discussed and some of the items they are likely to be asked to comment on over the coming months. New CEC members may also wish to use this paper as a tool for their handover meetings and for question time, to learn more about these items.

2. **Forthcoming items**

   2.1 **Bye-election**: We have one current vacancy on the CEC, for a Republic of Ireland Area Association Representative. A schedule for a bye-election will need to be established, as will any changes to the format of the elections process. This will need to be worked on by VP Representation and Research and the Returning Officer.

   2.2 **Complaints review**: As stated in our current strategy, we are seeking to undertake a review of our complaints processes for student discipline. This will need to be led by VP Administration and the Deputy President, with staff involvement and support and dialogue with the University's Student Casework Office.

   2.3 **Conference 2018**: Planning for this will begin in late 2017, with changes to the Constitution front and centre in our plans.

   2.4 **Elections review**: There is a need to review the process, to consider what worked and what did not and make recommendations for future processes. The bye-election highlighted above offers an opportunity to 'trial' any new
suggestions. This work will need to involve at least VP Representation and Research, the Returning Officer and VP Administration.

2.5 **Honorary Life Members (HLMs):** As stated in our current strategy, there is a need to review how we recognise and utilise Honorary Life Members. There is an appetite from these key figures to support the Students Association and there is a need to convene a small working group to discuss how we might do more on this to keep them better informed and to involve them and make use of their experience, skills and passion for the Students Association.

2.6 **Individual representation:** As stated in our current strategy, we are seeking to consider further how the Students Association might move from a model based upon collective representation of our full student body to a model that also allows for individual representation of students in an appropriate manner. There will be much to consider here, including the scope of such a change and the staffing resources and funding needed to achieve it. This is an exciting prospect for the Students Association. A project group will need to be formed from relevant staff and student representatives to consider this further and explore possible models. This development will not only be a matter for the CEC, but also the Board of Trustees and will need discussion with the University where there are potential impacts upon our role in student discipline.

2.7 **Module delivery research:** This hugely important research carried out by the Students Association will need to be progressed within the University and awareness raised of its findings.

2.8 **National Student Survey:** The results of the 2016 edition of this UK-wide survey are due in early August. As in previous years, we will be doing analysis of the results and providing commentary to the CEC on both the aspects relating to the University and on the question related to satisfaction with the Students Association.

2.9 **Political changes:** We need to ensure that we stay up to date with, and exert influence over, future changes as a result of recent political decisions. This includes monitoring the progress of Brexit and associated impacts; monitoring the progress through Parliament of the Higher Education and Research Bill; monitoring the implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework and its impact on the OU; working with the University to potentially participate in a pilot for new proposed quality assessment models; and ensuring that we push our voice into the national conversation about part-time learning.

2.10 **Regions implementation:** Work will need to take place to implement and embed the new region model for England and recruit new student volunteers. We will also be recruiting and inducting new members of staff to deliver the outcomes that we seek.

2.11 **Remits review:** Prior to the elections in 2018, we will need to re-visit the CEC remits to make any adjustments and get them ready for the elections to proceed.

2.12 **Rules Revision:** This is fundamentally a review of our Constitution led by Vice President Administration. This process must take place every four years as
per our Constitution and is due to be completed by Autumn 2017 ready for the recommendations to be presented to the Central Executive Committee for discussion. The CEC will debate and agree the items to be taken forward to Conference 2018, where they will be presented for further debate by Conference delegates and put to the vote. The process to get to this point will include seeking the views of members, including potentially at a face to face event. This process was previously undertaken in 2013-14 and resulted in the changes to the Constitution that were agreed by Conference 2014, including the implementation of one-member-one-vote for our elections and the instigation of a reduction in area representation to allow for a move towards greater faculty representation.

2.13 **Strategy review**: During the term, there will be a need to refresh the strategy and decide upon next steps for further actions to continue to develop the Students Association.

2.14 **Student Consultative Process**: We will need to consider the recommendations from the latest annual review, refreshing our membership of each of the elements and working together with the University to explore the potential of new developments including the potential of engaging student moderators for the main consultative forum. Our work on this will be led by the Deputy President, with assistance from the staff team and other student members of the Student Consultative Executive.

2.15 **Student engagement project**: This key joint project with the University will begin to implement some of the new initiatives that we have been involved in developing. There will be a need to refresh the membership of the key working groups within the project with new members from the CEC and staff team. We will need to keep up the momentum with this project and continue to suggest new ways to improve student engagement within the University.

2.16 **Training programme**: As stated in our current strategy, we are aiming to develop and implement an ongoing training programme for CEC members and Trustees over the current term. We would also wish to seek views on the extent to which members would wish to engage more in personal development planning and work around how they might be able to demonstrate for their own career purposes the skills and experience they gain through acting as student representatives. This will likely be a greater topic of discussion at a future CEC meeting, to build on the work initiated during the handover and induction process.

3. **Next steps**

The above list is far from exhaustive, but it provides a brief overview of some of the key items that are likely to come forward over the early parts of the term.

Questions from observers about anything on the above list, or detailed in the strategy, are very welcome. Contributions to this list from outgoing members are also welcomed.

Rob Avann
General Manager