Senate Reference Group Volunteer

Overview of role:
The Senate is the academic authority of the University which, subject to the powers of the Council, is responsible for promoting the academic work of the University both in teaching and research. The Council has the ultimate authority, but it has to respect the views of the Senate in academic matters.

The purpose of the Open University Students Association’s Senate Reference Group is to act in an advisory capacity to the student members of Senate and in particular, to ensure that the student members of Senate have the benefit of a face to face forum in which they are able to draw on the diversity of circumstances, views and opinions of students.

Senate Reference Group Volunteers play an important part in The Open University Governance structure and make positive contributions at the meetings that take place four times a year. As an SRG Volunteer you would need to be able to read complex papers in advance of each meeting and raise items as and where appropriate - and speak on matters affecting students and the Open University.

Essential for role:
You must be a full member of the OU Student Association, and have the capacity to read, interpret and understand complex paperwork in order to be fully prepared for your meetings (which can be made available in alternative formats). We can provide support with this function through our training programme and helpful tips. You must be willing and able to travel to the Milton Keynes campus for weekday meetings.

As you will need to engage with your fellow group members in the relevant online forums and spaces, access to a computer or device with internet access is crucial for the role.

We look for volunteers with a positive attitude, who are happy to work collaboratively with the wider group of student representatives and Association staff.

Supported by:
- The Central Executive Committee
- The wider membership of Senate Reference Group
- The Association’s Student Voice Team
- The Association’s Volunteering Team

Team contact details can be found in your volunteer handbook.

Desired skills:
You will:
- Have good communication skills, in particular be able to articulate evidence based points and participate effectively in discussions.
• Be willing to make a positive and active contribution to forums and the meeting. As part of this you will need to be comfortable in a formal environment.
• Prepare for and attend Senate Reference Group - This includes reading papers in advance of each meeting. These papers may require up to ten hours of reading time for each meeting.
• Have an interest in student issues, university policy, and the OU student experience.
• Be passionate about the OU Students Association mission statement and objectives.
• Be able to work both independently and as part of a team.

What the OU Students Association expect from you in this role:
• To act professionally whilst in your role, in particular to remain courteous, balanced and fair in representations made at any meetings
• To ensure that you act in a way which reflects our commitment to Equality and Diversity (our expectations of volunteers can be found in your handbook)
• To act with integrity, and comply with confidentiality and data protection as and when needed for the role

What you can expect from the OU Students Association:
• Access to a monthly volunteer newsletter and a volunteer handbook outlining all polices and the support you can access within your role
• An induction as appropriate to your role
• Reasonable paid expenses (in advance if required) when volunteering for the Association
• The chance to develop transferable skills and confidence, as well as learn skills valued by employers
• Opportunities to influence the direction of the OU and contribute to the teaching and learning experience for students in the future
• To have fun whilst volunteering!

Application Process:
Please apply online, if you would like an alternative format please email student-voice-team@open.ac.uk.

Please note that you will need to complete a Confidentiality Agreement as per your appointment to the role