Area Representative for Republic of Ireland

Overview of role

Area Association Representatives have the primary responsibility of supporting the development of a student community in their area and, where necessary, representing the views of students in their assigned area to the Central Executive Committee, the Open University and relevant external bodies.

The Area Representative:

- Is the lead contact in negotiations with national Parliaments/Assemblies/Higher Education bodies/OU in the Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Wales).
- Ensures the Central Executive Committee is aware of the impact of decisions for students in their nation.
- Works in collaboration with other members of the Central Executive Committee to meet our strategic objectives.
- Is visible and contactable for students to support with area-specific study issues.
- Supports students in providing local events such as meet-ups, local volunteer projects and other initiatives.
- Works with Vice President Community to support Community volunteers in their area.
- Is the lead contact for ‘Meet Your Students Association’ events supported by Vice President Student Community and other Central Executive Committee members.
- Supports Vice President Student Community in Association wide initiatives.

You will have:

- Passion for the OU Students Association Vision, Mission and Values.
- Willingness to engage with students, volunteers and Association staff in pursuit of our shared objectives.
- Good communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Commitment to develop skills and knowledge appropriate to the role.
Time commitment

Within this role you can expect to spend on average 10 hours per week. This role offers slightly more flexibility than an officer role but is of equal importance and your attendance may be required at local events such as meet ups, ‘Meet Your Students Association’ events and at meetings with local parliaments and assemblies.

You will also be required to attend campus for the following:

Central Executive Committee meetings – these are held four to six times a year at weekends.

Please note that meetings often require preparation time outside of the hours mentioned. Travel time to and from meetings has not been included in our estimation of the time commitment for individual roles.

What additional support will you receive

As part of your role you will be supported by Vice President Community and the staff Community team based on campus.

Description of Responsibilities of all Volunteer Members of the Central Executive Committee 2018-20

Common Responsibilities of all Volunteer Central Committee Members, who:

- Act on behalf of the President and therefore are responsible to the President between meetings of the Central Executive Team.

- Work together as a team to support the Association’s Mission, Aims and Objectives. This involves effective communication amongst Central Executive Committee members using the private forums, emails, skype and other means.

- Promote the activity of the Association within their area of responsibility in accordance with Conference decisions, Association policy and the OU Students Association Strategy.

- Work in collaboration with the Association's representatives on University Committees towards the achievement of Students Interests being recognised and reflect within University policy.

- Regularly report to OU Students Association members by submitting quarterly reports regarding individual remits and contributing to the production of the Central Executive Committee report to Conference.
• Be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of Association policy within their remit. Taking responsibility for drafting responses to Policy Reviews initiated by members and initiating Policy Reviews on behalf of the Central Executive Committee where required.

• Maintain timely communication and effective working relationships with relevant members of the Association staff team, who are available to support role holders with the operational and administrative aspects of their remits.

• If required, delegate authority to another person to undertake specified work on their behalf but the role holder concerned will remain responsible for the outcome, for reporting to the student body and for providing regular progress reports to the Central Executive Committee.

• Work together where aspects of their remits overlap and/or personal interests and skills can provide a useful synergy. However the lead role, including responsibility for reporting to the student body should be clear at all times.

• Develop effective links with relevant Open University staff and teams, building effective working relationships.

• Attend their ‘home’ OU National/Regional Students Consultative event to ensure a Central Executive Committee Representative presence.

**Opportunities to take on more responsibility**

Outside of specific remits, there are also often additional opportunities to be involved in meetings, events, working groups and project teams. These can be of personal interest to individuals as well as being fun and a great way to gain experience but are not included within the above time commitments. Some examples may include:

• Relevant OU working groups and project work streams.

• Contributing to discussion surrounding Higher Education issues at a national level. Making representation to and seeking to influence government and other bodies and institutions.

• Attending relevant conferences and events, sometimes speaking on behalf of the Association.

• Supporting the Association in another volunteer role of interest.

**What the OU Students Association expect from you in this role:**

• Act in the interests of the wider community of OU Students Association members, showing appropriate respect and consideration when communicating with fellow students and others, both inside and outside of meetings.
• Act with moral integrity and honesty, and in an ethical and honourable manner.

• Act in an open and responsible manner and be prepared to be accountable for your actions.

• Conduct yourself with objectivity, and in a calm and professional manner, not allowing yourself to be influenced by personal prejudices.

• Respect confidentiality in any information which has been imparted to you in confidence, recognising the importance of this. If this information relates to a safeguarding matter, it is important that you do not keep it to yourself. Speak to a member of the Volunteering team should you have concerns.

• When appropriate to your role, engage with students wherever possible, e.g. forums, social media and face to face, to gain an insight into your fellow students’ experiences. It is important that volunteers reflect our values by helping to create a sense of community and support wherever possible.

• Share our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

• Discriminatory behaviour, harassment or online abuse directed towards others will not be tolerated.

• All volunteers are expected to follow the Volunteer Agreement given to them upon taking on a role with the Association.

What you can expect from the OU Students Association:

• Support from the Volunteer team and Association staff team throughout your time with us.

• We will endeavour that all roles will be of real benefit to the student community and will make a difference to all those you engage with.

• Your volunteering will be appreciated and recognised for the value it brings.

• You will be kept informed of any additional training or accreditation opportunities offered by the Association, either by a dedicated monthly e-newsletter, via the volunteering section of the website or on your executive team forums.

• We aim to give you all the necessary information and training that you require to complete your role. If you feel you need additional support in your role please let us know and we will be happy to help.

• You will be volunteering for a non-discriminatory organisation that strives for equality and celebrates difference.

• You do not have to carry out any tasks you deem to be inappropriate or unrealistic, please speak to a staff member if this is the case.
• You are free to stop volunteering at any time. If you need a break from your role or feel that you need to step down, please contact the President or Deputy President who can support with this.

• We will give you any information related to your role in a timely manner.

• All reasonable expenses incurred by your role will be reimbursed.