











# QUARTERLY STRATEGY PERFORMANCE REPORT Sept 2022

# SECTION A: STRATEGIC KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

This section provides a quarterly update against the 20 strategy metrics.

Where the data collection mechanics have not yet been established and/or no new data is currently available, metric boxes have a strike through. Where data is being reported for the first time and there are no previous statistics to track movement against, this is indicated in the metric box.

Where there are previous statistics, this is displayed in the metric box along with a movement indicator.

Movement	For metrics where we are seeking to achieve upward tracking	For metrics where we are seeking to achieve downward tracking
Significant improvement	 Solid green upward arrow	 Solid green downward arrow
Moderate improvement	 Hollow green upward arrow	 Hollow green downward arrow
No change	 Amber horizontal arrow	 Amber horizontal arrow
Moderate deterioration	 Hollow red downward arrow	 Hollow red upward arrow
Significant deterioration	 Solid red downward arrow	 Solid red upward arrow

For metrics which require supporting/qualitative information (eg profiles, impact reports), the information is attached as further appendices.

# INFORM & SUPPORT

## AWARENESS

### Metric 1

Annual Membership Survey (AMS) - % response rate

**2021 - 2.14%**  
**2020 - 0.98%**

**No new data until 2022 AMS results are available**

### Metric 2

Annual Membership Survey (AMS) Question 8 - % of responders selecting options 1,2,3 (awareness of membership of Association)

**2021 - 91.8%**  
**2020 - 95.1%**

**No new data until 2022 AMS results are available**

### Metric 3

Annual NSS Question 26 - % of responders selecting "N/A" (proxy for not aware)

**2022 – 18.55%**  
**2021 - 14.3%**  
**2020 - Unpublished**  
**2019 – 16.4%**

### Metric 4

#new visitors to website & Hoot (rolling 12 month figures)

#### Website:

**Year to Sept 2022 – 177,902**  
**Year to Sept 2021 – 219,974**  
**R (significant deterioration)**

#### Hoot:

**Year to Sept 2022 – 20,085**  
**Year to Sept 2021 – 16,230**  
**G (significant improvement)**

After a long track of increases in year-on-year new visitors to the website this is the third quarter of deterioration. These 12 month rolling statistics now straddle the transition to the new website which may be affecting the figures. This should be monitored across the next quarter to see if it is indicating a downward trend which may need to be addressed. A truer indicator of underlying trends may be easier to see when we are able to compare the full first 12 months for the new site vs the full 12 months for the previous site.

The Hoot continues to show significant growth in new visitors.

# INFORM & SUPPORT

RELEVANCE

### Metric 5

Service/resource usage – #students per area


[See summary on pg 6](#)

Some of the services are showing a quarterly decrease, but these are in line with normal seasonal fluctuations. Assoc newsletter sign ups and click through rates have increased this quarter.


### Metric 6

#returning visitors to website & Hoot (rolling 12 month figures)

#### Website:

Year to Sept 2022 – 37,548  
Year to Sept 2021 – 47,558  
 (significant deterioration)


#### Hoot:

Year to Sept 2022 – 2,392  
Year to Sept 2021 – 2,420  
 (moderate deterioration)

Website returning visitors have dipped in line with the dip in new visitors. Although the Hoot year-on-year growth in new visitors is still showing healthy increases, returning visitors is now in decline for the third reporting quarter.

### Metric 7

Social Media Engagements (Assoc Twitter a/c) – % of total impressions

 3 months to Aug 2022 – 2.2%  
3 months to May 2022 – 2.0%  
(moderate improvement)

Our average 2-3% levels have returned. Tweets that saw the highest impressions were on 50<sup>th</sup> archive material and promotion of TOTUM card.

### Metric 8

Annual Membership Survey (AMS) Questions 14 & 15 - % (median) of service/resource users who would recommend to other students

Services users:  
2021 median - 91%  
2020 median - 88%

Resources users  
2021 median - 84%  
2020 median - 71%

No new data until 2022 AMS results are available

Service/Resource Description	Measurement Basis	Mar 2022	June 2022	Sept 2022	Quarterly Change	Year-on-Year Change
Societies	As at reporting date	17	17	17	No change	Decrease
Societies members	As at reporting date	7,785	7,887	7,887	No change	Increase
Shop orders	In quarter prior to reporting date	282	235**	314	Increase	Decrease
Shop average order value	In quarter prior to reporting date	£35.43	£36.16	£35.73	Decrease	Increase
Assoc newsletter new sign-ups	In quarter prior to reporting date	275	59	234	Increase	Decrease
Assoc newsletter open rates	Average for quarter prior to reporting date	24.5%	22.3%	16.9%	Decrease	Decrease
Assoc newsletter click through rates	Average for quarter prior to reporting date	3.7%	2.4%	2.9%	Increase	Decrease
YouTube Video Views	In quarter prior to reporting date	2,270	2,481	1,908	Decrease	Increase
TOTUM cards	For 12 months prior to reporting date	10,828	10,623	10240	Decrease	Decrease
Peer Support Users	For 12 months prior to reporting date	135	148	-	Increase	Increase
Library Support Requests	For 12 months prior to reporting date	131	126	-	Decrease	Increase
Ouset successful applications – number and % of all apps	Most recent presentation/academic year	2021 J/K 52 (91%)	-	-	-	-

\*\* In the last quarter there were an additional 938 graduation sales with an average order value of £28.27

Data unavailable for Peer Support Users and Library Support Requests. To be updated and recirculated.

# ENGAGE & INVOLVE


## ENGAGEMENT

### Metric 9

Election participation – % eligible voters taking part

#### Main elections:

2022 – 1.30%

 2020 - 1.13%  
(moderate improvement)

#### By-elections:

2020 - 0.75%

2019 - 0.76%

(no new data)

No new elections held since 2022 main election & by-elections

### Metric 10

Activities participation - students per activity type

[See summary on pg 8](#)

Support group membership has continued to grow. Club statistics have dropped this quarter due to the recent clubs review.


### Metric 11

Quarterly volunteering participation - volunteers active in roles and applications

#### Active in roles – Year on year tracking:

3 months to Sept 2022 – average 212

3 months to Sept 2021 – average 289

 (significant deterioration)

#### Active in roles – month on month tracking:

Aug 2022 – 214

Jul 2022 – 200

June 2022 – 202

#### Applications:

3 months to Aug 2022 – applicants 65(% new volunteers = 63%)

3 months to May 2022 - applicants 19 (% new volunteers = 63%)

Reduction in year-on-year tracking, predominantly due to the micro-volunteer pilot ending. Month-on-month tracking is holding steady.

Showing good levels of new volunteer engagement this quarter with Central Committee Representatives and graduation roles.

Activity Description	Measurement Basis	Mar 2022	Jun 2022	Sept 2022	Quarterly Change	Year-on-Year Change
Disabled Students Group members	As at reporting date	795	811	888	Increase	Increase
OU Pride members	As at reporting date	841	845	883	Decrease	Increase
BAME Group members (excl FaceBook)	As at reporting date	129	133	149	Increase	Increase
Clubs	As at reporting date	88	83	56	Decrease	Increase
Club members	As at reporting date	14,264	13,829	12,591	Decrease	Increase
Number of online events & meet-ups	In quarter prior to reporting date	28	71**	54	Decrease	Increase

\*\* We have previously reported only meet-ups and ad-hoc online events, reporting mechanics have now been revised to incorporate all community events including regular drop-ins etc – totals going forward will therefore better reflect ALL community meet-ups and events.



## ENGAGE &amp; INVOLVE

REACH

**Metric 12**Profiling of election  
participants**Profiles for the 2022  
elections will be available in  
the September 2022 report****Metric 13**Annual profiling of  
engaged students**Not yet available****Metric 14**

Annual profiling of active volunteers

An anonymised profile was shared in the June 2021 report for all volunteers active in roles during the period January 2020 to March 2021 which showed under-representation of younger students (35 and under), newer students (Level 1) and male students in the total volunteer cohort in comparison to the make-up of the overall OU student body.

The next stage of this work - to determine whether different types of roles show differences in demographic characteristics to the student body and volunteer cohort as a whole and to carry out another profile – is still in progress and will be shared when available.

## INFLUENCE & TRANSFORM

### IMPACT

#### Metric 15

Annual Membership Survey Question 28 - % of responders agreeing that the Association has a positive impact on their student experience

**2021 – 52.6%**

**2020 – 47.6%**

**No new data until 2022 AMS results are available**

#### Metric 16

Annual NSS Question 26 - % of responders agreeing that the Association effectively represents students' academic interests

**2022 – 42.34%**

**2021 – 43.4%**

**2020 - Unpublished**

**2019 – 45.0%**

#### Metric 17

Annual volunteering feedback – % volunteers identifying positive growth & development

The annual feedback survey is under development but has not yet been introduced.

#### Metric 18

Biennial Representation/ Service Review – % OU committee staff identifying positive student impact/influence in committees

**2019 Review 82.0%**  
**No new data available yet.**

## INFLUENCE & TRANSFORM

IMPACT

### Metric 19

#### Qualitative Impact Reporting:

CEC Quarterly Impact Reports – Update on the Association website

## ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

MAINTAIN AN ENABLING  
ORGANISAITONAL CULTURE

### Metric 20

Annual Membership Survey Question 29 – % responders selecting ‘agree’ options on whether the Association is living its values. In both surveys, around a third of responders selected ‘not sure’ to this question. The percentages below are from the two thirds of responders who did express a distinct view.

#### INTEGRITY:

2021 – 68.5%, 2020 – 68.5%

#### EQUALITY & INCLUSIVITY:

2021 – 72.1%, 2020 – 71.5%

#### OPENNESS:

2021 – 70.5%, 2020 – 69.6%

#### COLLABORATION:

2021 – 68.9%, 2020 – 69.4%

#### KINDNESS & COMPASSION:

2021 – 71.6%

No new data until 2022 AMS results are available

# SECTION B: STRATEGY PROJECTS UPDATES

# SECTION B1: COMPLETED PROJECTS

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Project Final Update
<p><b>Project 1A</b></p>	<p><b>Conduct membership research and analysis.</b></p> <p><b>Workstream 1A:</b> Develop and launch the Annual Membership Survey to gain membership feedback. The survey will provide valuable on-going data for strategic KPI tracking, provide inputs for service/activity reviews and help to inform business decision-making.</p>	<p><b>Workstream 1A:</b> The AMS was piloted and then fully launched during 2020. It will be repeated in Autumn each year. This work has now been transitioned into Business-as-Usual activities and sits within the Strategy &amp; Insights Business plan for delivery and reporting for the 2021-22 AY and on-going.</p>
<p><b>Project 2</b></p>	<p><b>Individual Representation.</b></p> <p><b>Phase 1:</b> Identify needs, assess options and develop recommendations and funding requirements. Prepare a full business case for presentation to OU PVC-Students to seek OU funding.</p> <p><b>Phase 2 (subject to funding provision):</b> Develop and implement individual representation resources and services for a fixed pilot programme period. The pilot programme will provide ‘proof of concept’ for the realisation of the benefits identified in the Phase 1 business case. It will also provide the evidence base for the development of a case to secure additional funding to allow the permanent inclusion of individual representation for students in the Association’s services portfolio.</p>	<p><b>Phase 1:</b> A feasibility assessment was carried out during 2020 and a business case for funding was presented to the OU. Funding was agreed for a 15 month pilot programme, commencing at the start of the 2021-22 AY.</p> <p><b>Phase 2:</b> The pilot programme was launched in August 2021 and will run until October 2022. A funding request has been submitted to the OU for continuation of this service beyond October 2022</p>

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Project Final Update
<p><b>Project 4</b></p>	<p><b>Scope of work:</b> Map the student journey from registration through to graduation, identifying comms and engagement touchpoints where the Association can meet student needs and expectations at key stages of their journey.</p> <p><b>Project Required Outcome:</b> This work will contribute to the aim of creating meaningful on-going connections and communications with OU students at all key stages in their student journey.</p>	<p>This work was completed during June 2021 and delivered comprehensive engagement and comms recommendations for six key stages in the student journey: pre-study; initial engagement; learning; end of module; results; and after study.</p> <p>These recommendations will be incorporated into future marcomms plans, commencing with the 2021-22 marcomms plan (Strategy Project #15).</p>
<p><b>Project 8</b></p>	<p><b>Stakeholder mapping &amp; analysis:</b></p> <p><b>Workstream 8A:</b> Stakeholder mapping exercise – identify all internal and external stakeholder groups, develop an understanding of the importance, contributions and potential impacts of each group.</p> <p><b>Workstream 8B:</b> Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan. The plan will include the objectives and aims of any engagement/comms with each of the stakeholder groups and will be used to inform decisions on the choice of engagement/comms channels, comms content, timings and priorities.</p>	<p>The stakeholder mapping exercise (Workstream 8A) was completed in the Spring of 2021. Three maps were created: one for the OU Students Association; one for the OU; and one for the external stakeholder environment. On-going maintenance of the stakeholder maps has been passed across into Business-as-Usual activities.</p> <p>The work to complete initial stakeholder engagement plans (Workstream 8B) was completed during early Summer 2021. The implementation of these plans has been consolidated into the development of the 2021-22 marcomms plan (Strategy Project #15).</p>



Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Project Final Update
<p><b>Project 11</b></p>	<p>To commission an external review of the OU Student Association governance structures and mechanisms that will result in clear and achievable recommendations for change that can lead to improvements in efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation.</p>	<p>Almond Tree Strategic Consulting were commissioned to carry out the full Governance Review and they delivered their findings report and recommendations to the Association in Spring 2021.</p> <p>The recommendations were accepted by our Board of Trustees (BoT) and a draft implementation plan was produced.</p> <p>A number of student consultation activities were carried out and, building on the consultation findings and the report recommendations, a series of proposals were developed. The Board of Trustees accepted these proposals and agreed to call a Conference for 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2022 for members to vote on whether the proposed changes should go ahead.</p> <p>The proposals were developed into a set of resolutions and were voted on by members at the Conference in January 2022. Unfortunately none of the resolutions met the required 75% approval threshold for implementation.</p>
<p><b>Project 14</b></p>	<p>Develop and implement an action plan to further the advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) throughout all Association policies, activities and ways of working.</p>	<p>The Equalities Action Plan was completed in Quarter 1, 2021.</p> <p>The requirements of the plan are being taken forward by the EDI Working Group under Business-as-Usual processes as part of a broad scope of work to advance our EDI agenda. This will also include the development of an EDI sub-strategy. The Working Group delivers quarterly updates on progress to the CEC and the BoT.</p>

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Project Final Update
<p><b>Project 12 &amp; 13</b></p>	<p><b>Project 12</b> Identify a model of ‘One Team’ working and produce a ‘protocol’ for student representatives and staff members identifying clear expectations.</p> <p>Communicate a ‘One Team’ message and intent, devising a ‘One Team’ action plan and designing/leading ‘One Team’ sessions and activities.</p> <p><b>Project 13</b> Devise an agenda that highlights, encourages and celebrates our stated values.</p>	<p>This project will now be incorporated through staff links, behaviour policy and through the strategy in EDI. This strategy project is now closed.</p> <p>Continued promotion of our values will now be incorporated into business-as-usual activities within business plans and through the implementation of the new EDI sub-strategy and this strategy project is now completed.</p>

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Project Final Update
<p><b>Project 15, additionally incorporating Project 5 and Project 6</b></p>	<p><b>Overall Scope: Develop Comms Strategy and Marcomms Plan.</b></p> <p><b>Part 1: Develop Association Communications Strategy</b> in same format as other enabling strategies (Volunteering &amp; Research) incorporating aims (linked to strategic aims), objectives and measures of success.</p> <p><b>Part 2: Develop Marcomms Planning Tool</b> by merging comms matrix work to date with stakeholder engagement outputs from Project #8. Planning tool to identify external/OU/membership audiences, audience comms objectives, audience messaging themes and channels/timing considerations.</p> <p><b>Part 3: Develop Association Marcomms Plan for 2021-22 AY</b> with clearly identified actions, responsibilities/accountabilities and monitoring/evaluation mechanisms.</p> <p>This project incorporates the two further strategy projects that were initially separately scoped:</p> <p><b>Project #5</b> (the development of a Student Engagement Value Statement)</p> <p><b>Project #6</b> (working with OU principal stakeholders to promote, sign-post and support the Association.)</p>	<p><b>Part 1:</b> The Communications Strategy was completed in July 2021 and runs through to the end of the 2022-23 academic year.</p> <p><b>Part 2:</b> The Marcomms planning tool was completed in October 2021 and will be regularly maintained vis business-as-usual processes.</p> <p><b>Part 3:</b> The Marcomms Plan for 2021-22 was completed in November 2021 and is now operational. The development of an annual Marcomms plan will now form part of annual business-as-usual planning processes.</p> <p><b>Project 5</b> The engagement value statement was completed during March 2022 and will be published via the ‘Get Involved’ section of the website.</p> <p><b>Project 6</b> Requirements for working with OU stakeholders to help to promote, sign-post and support the work of the Association have been incorporated into the 2021-22 Marcomms Plan.</p>

# SECTION B2: PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

Project Number	Project Status	Project Scope / Description	Project Update
Project 1B	GREEN	<p><b>Overall Scope:</b> Improve our understanding of student needs, expectations and motivations and conduct a regular review of our services, engagement activities and communications.</p> <p><b>Workstream 1B: Service &amp; Activity Reviews.</b> Create the process for an annual service and activity review and facilitate the first such review before transitioning the process into BAU. The annual reviews will enable us to assess, on an on-going basis, the effectiveness and impact of our work and enable informed decision-making on resource allocation/prioritisation.</p>	<p><b>Workstream 1B:</b></p> <p>This project has now been handed over to Head of Student Community to take on the collation and writing of a report for presentation to the new CEC.</p> <p>The next steps are collation of a report to the CEC for strategic input around the issues prioritised which are causing barriers to student engagement in services. These will be shared with the incoming CEC and the outgoing CEC for comments, and priorities will then be agreed based on the strategic priorities of the incoming CEC.</p> <p><b>Risks and Interdependencies:</b></p> <p>Large projects such as Elections, 50th planning and Freshers will always impact staff capacity, the planning had taken this into consideration.</p> <p>The roles of CEC Lead and Staff Team Lead for this project will both need to be reassigned due to the change in CEC and the appointment of the Director of Membership Services to the role of Chief Executive.</p>

Project Number	Project Status	Project Scope / Description	Project Update <i>(SEE ALSO SEPARATE CEC PAPER 07/22/06 FOR A MORE DETAILED UPDATE ON THIS PROJECT)</i>
Project 7A	GREEN	<p><b>Workstream 7A – WORK IN PROGRESS:</b> Create new communities where students can benefit from social interaction and informal mutual support.</p> <p><b>Workstream 7B: - WORK NOT YET STARTED</b> Create more opportunities for students to support other students though volunteering roles that are effective and adaptable to student needs.</p>	<p><b>Workstream 7A</b> was initiated in March 2021.</p> <p><b>Completed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key requirements for platform established from Test and Learn project and other sources.</li> <li>• Decision to pursue our own pilot supported by CEC.</li> <li>• Project Team completed full options analysis including researching potential providers, attending demos with several providers, and receiving proposals from providers.</li> <li>• Options analysis identified Aluminate as the most appropriate platform.</li> <li>• Business Case for year long pilot approved by BoT.</li> <li>• Advice sought from Head of Finance and Resources, StoneKing and DPO on contractual terms.</li> <li>• Meeting between OU IT and Aluminati.</li> <li>• Update to OU’s Digital Student Experience Team.</li> <li>• CEC updated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key actions and next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Aluminati configuration requirements.</li> <li>• Involve new CEC members as appropriate.</li> <li>• Assign tasks to project team.</li> </ul> <p><b>Risks and Interdependencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliant on OU IT for the technical work to integrate single sign on with Aluminate. Timelines for this are already at risk due to IT staff leave and capacity.</li> <li>• Need to stay in close contact with the DSE/MyOU team as there is still a significant interrelationship between the aims of the projects.</li> <li>• Promotion of the platform by the Association and the OU will be critical for the pilot’s success.</li> </ul>

Project Number	Project Status	Project Scope / Description	Project Update
Project 9	AMBER	<p><b>Revised Overall Scope:</b> To develop a Representation Action Plan to support the shared goals of the Association and Open University to ensure Student Voice is effectively heard at all levels of the University to improve outcomes for students. This work will aim to remove barriers to inclusion, increase engagement.</p> <p><b>The action plan will:</b> Develop, in conjunction with the OU, a shared Code of Practice for academic representation with the aim of improving the effectiveness of student voice within OU governance.</p> <p>Support the University's own Student Voice Action Plan.</p> <p>Develop shared principles for best practise and standards for Student Engagement, working with key OU stakeholders to promote the standards and embed student engagement in OU activities and projects.</p>	<p><b>Code of Practice</b> The code of practice draft has been shared with members of the Supporting and Improving Academic representation Task and Finish group to provide read through and provide feedback at the next meeting. All other guides that have been presented for example guide to communicating with students and staff guidance on academic representation have received feedback with some suggested changes which will be implemented and await final approval at the next task and finish group meeting. The incoming VP Academic has been made aware of the progress of this work and is getting up to speed with the status of this project.</p> <p><b>Student Engagement Standard</b> A meeting has been organised with the incoming and outgoing VP engagement to look at the tweaks to the student engagement standard and begin conversation on ideas of how this will be launched in student voice week in November.</p>

Project Number	Project	Project Scope / Description	Project Update
Project 10B	GREEN	<p><b>Workstream 10A</b>  <b>WORK NOT STARTED</b>            Establish a process for authorising, funding, supporting and running campaigns.</p> <p><b>Workstream 10B:</b>  <b>WORK IN PROGRESS</b>            Produce a manifesto for life-long learning.</p>	<p><b>Workstream A:</b>            This work will no longer be treated as a strategy project but will instead sit within the Policy &amp; Public Affairs business plan for 2022-23, which will cover campaigning where we are specifically seeking to influence higher education policy.            The Student-Led Projects initiative is currently creating a model for authorising, funding, supporting and running student-led projects. This will be treated as a 'Test &amp; Learn' model which – if successful – can then be rolled out and used as a model for Student-Led Campaigning in other areas.</p> <p><b>Workstream B:</b>            The project team has met on several occasions now to agree a project plan as well as the key themes that will be addressed in the manifesto. The outputs from the project will include:            A manifesto document (PDF – possibly printed)            A microsite containing the manifesto content but with more interactive features            A launch event (with scope for further nations launch events)            A comms campaign that effectively promotes the manifesto messaging</p> <p>The data has been collated and coded with areas of focus established. Due to personnel changes and other factors and a need to do this project justice, we have decided to push the timeline back so we hope to launch in February 2023. Currently in the process of drafting a copy of the manifesto with more student focus groups in the pipeline. We are also keen to get a comms campaign started as well looking at the practical side of organising a launch event. E.g. event space, who to invite etc.</p>



# SECTION B3: PROJECTS NOT YET STARTED

Project Number	Project Scope / Description	Notes
<p><b>Project 3</b></p>	<p><b>Scope:</b></p> <p><b>Workstream A:</b> Implement a student support resource library.</p> <p><b>Workstream B:</b> Explore opportunities to expand our student support services through partnerships with external service providers, support agencies and societies.</p>	<p><b>Workstream A:</b> Within Business-as-Usual activities two mini-hubs have been created - one for EDI resources and one for individual representation resources – and scoping work has been carried out on the development of a broader Association-wide resources hub for use by students, volunteers and staff. It is anticipated that the development of a full resources library/hub will be considered as a development opportunity for the new website.</p> <p><b>Workstream B:</b> It is likely that any requirements for this work to be conducted will be determined by the outcomes of the annual service review (Project 1B).</p>

# SECTION C: BUSINESS PLANS UPDATES

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Chief Executive	<p>An ongoing challenge for the Students Association is being meaningful to ALL our members. This has often led to us trying to be all things to all people. We are a relatively small organisation with a large reach, but we need to be very clear what we are prioritising and how we go about achieving the biggest impact with our limited resources. This work has begun working together between the SLT and the staff to support creation of the new team's priorities so that staff are positioned to support SLT aims and ambitions.</p> <p>The new strategy development gives us an opportunity to explore all areas of work and make some tough decisions about what we can realistically continue and what we may need to pause or stop going forward. Although this may feel like a negative, if we can pull together to really focus on delivering amazing services and events in the areas we can have the biggest impact, then this is a real opportunity to increase engagement and awareness of what we do.</p> <p>Recruitment, By-elections and co-option of new trustees mean we will be putting ourselves in the strongest position to achieve these goals together over the next term.</p>	None identified

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Director of Membership Services	<p>We have made significant progress with Strategy Project 7 to introduce a new Student Chat Platform. The contract with a platform provider has been signed and implementation is underway. A member of the new Student Leadership Team, Ben Mansell, FAR Business and Law has been appointed Project Sponsor. The updated Terms of Reference for the Environment and Sustainability Working Group have been approved by the Student Leadership Team and the group are now moving forward with the development of an action plan and the introduction of a new volunteering role.</p>	<p>We are wholly reliant on the OU's IT Infrastructure team for the delivery of single sign-on for the Student Chat Platform which puts at risk our project timescales because of competing priorities for them.</p>

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
<p>Director of Engagement</p>	<p>The DigiComms team have rolled out the new approach to Association comms with guidance and content materials developed and shared to support teams to manage their comms campaigns more independently. The Comms Champions have met twice to share comms activity and best practice and these will continue to provide the DigiComms team with an overview of comms activity across the Association.</p> <p>Significant work has been carried out with the new CEC to help them to create a set of team priorities to focus on during their two-year term. Engagement has been fantastic and positive from the CEC and it is hoped that the priorities will be officially adopted at October’s CEC meeting.</p> <p>I have been in the interim COO post for the last 4 months and have worked with the interim Chair of Trustees to support the decision-making process around permanent CEO recruitment.</p>	<p>It’s disappointing to lose so many of the newly elected CEC so soon after being elected. It means that those elected in the forthcoming by-election will be slightly being the existing team and additional work will be required to bring them up to speed and bring the whole group together around their priorities.</p> <p>Further work will be carried out around how we describe and explain the roles to potential election candidates to help them to understand what they are committing to, and to establish whether there is a gap between the presentation and the reality.</p>

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Community	<p>The new system for new club applications appears to be bedding in well, this will be monitored toward the end of the calendar year and tweaked as needed.</p> <p>On the whole the existing Club Leads have responded well to the new process requiring them to become trained volunteers, this will be an on-going process and students are seeing the opportunities and benefits of becoming accredited volunteers.</p> <p>There was a constructive meeting with new VP Administration regarding clubs and societies particularly relating to their good governance and any associated risk. A further more in depth meeting is planned to look at the specifics of clubs who are running well, those who need extra support and those who may need to become clubs or be lost altogether.</p>	<p>There was a significant challenge in re-scheduling all freshers activities to a slot two weeks later in the year – we have undertaken significant work to make this happen and time will tell as to how this impacts the quality of the project and its impact on students.</p> <p>The Community Team will lose Georgia Demopoulou in mid October, this will leave a significant gap in staffing so we may be less productive for a short period. The decision has been made to appoint a temporary member of staff on a six month contract which again may prove challenging to productivity.</p>

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Digital Comms	<p>To help us improve communication across the Association, Comms Champions from every staff team have been identified, and the first meeting of the group went ahead in early September. A variety of relevant training for this group of staff is being booked, starting with a grounding in communications place remotely in October.</p> <p>All CEC members received access to a new Twitter account. These accounts will be handed over to the next student in the role in two years' time, taking with them the audience built up in a long-term effort to raise and maintain awareness of the CEC and their important work. Content starring members of our new CEC is performing well – particularly reels and TikToks, garnering over 1000 views on one video despite our relatively small following on the new account. Key contacts in the OU Marcomms unit are supportive of the new CEC and are keen to help us raise awareness of them by sharing our posts and featuring members in communications and events.</p>	<p>The media blackout following the death of the Queen and subsequent changes to Freshers dates greatly impacted our work. That said, we responded swiftly to all issues that arose, and were able to reschedule/rework planned communications, content, and other messaging effectively. This scenario reminded us of how important our move to greater forward planning is - it meant we could confidently make rapid changes to our communications plan as we clearly understood the impact of changes made to the schedule throughout September and October.</p> <p>An issue relating to emails persists with oustudents.com. Some students who sign up to the website are not receiving a validation email (or the email is landing in their junk folder), and so are experiencing difficulties in logging into the site. We have been in close communication with our developers, MSL, to try to resolve this and now have a viable solution in place. Fortunately, the vast majority of content on the site can be accessed without an account, though we are nonetheless working hard to rectify the issue.</p>



Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
EDI & Student Welfare	To be updated and recirculated online	

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Executive Support & Staff Welfare	<p>The July CEC weekend was a big success and provided a great opportunity for staff, current and new CEC, BoT and OU guests to get together. The training sessions went well for the new CEC and I think everyone particularly enjoyed the formal dinner, celebrating the achievements of the Association over the last 50 years.</p> <p>Leanne returned from maternity leave on the 18<sup>th</sup> July and has settled really well back into the team. It is great to have her back and be able to distribute projects and tasks between ourselves and even out the workload.</p> <p>We have recently filled the Executive Support Assistant and two Student Advisor roles following some really strong interviews. We look forward to making these unconditional offers and then inducting the individuals into the Association.</p>	<p>Despite precautions put in place for the CEC weekend, there was a Covid outbreak which affected quite a few staff and students. This did result in some staff having to go on sick leave to recover but we know that even with the best measures put in place to try reduce the possibility of people catching it, it wouldn't have been possible to prevent it.</p> <p>There have been quite a lot of changes in our team lately, meaning we are having to adapt to our new roles and the way the team now functions. Once we have our permanent Executive Support Assistant, we will be able to full adjust to the new composition of our team.</p>

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Finance & Resources	<p>The audit of the 2021-22 accounts was completed in September and these will be presented to Trustees for approval at their meeting in October. We are proud to report that for the third year running, the auditor had no recommendations to make or control weaknesses to report.</p> <p>A key focus for 2022-2023 is to source a cloud hosted finance system to replace our current system, hosted on OU servers. This has always presented difficulties when upgrades need to be applied, but remote working has presented further challenges. We have formed a project group and are coming to the end of an initial information gathering phase. The next stage is to issue a Request for Proposal towards the end of November.</p> <p>Changes are being made to our finance reports to try and make them more audience appropriate. Feedback to <a href="mailto:alison.lunn@open.ac.uk">alison.lunn@open.ac.uk</a> is welcomed to inform this process.</p>	<p>The changeover of elected reps and trustees has delayed the recruitment to the Finance Resources and Risk Committee. It has therefore not yet met. This may delay progress of the Committee's schedule of work although we will make every effort to get back on track following confirmation of membership at the forthcoming Board meeting.</p> <p>Success Factors, the OU's HR system, continues to generate additional payroll reconciliation and follow up work, particularly around recording and authorisation of overtime. We are working on some further guidance for staff to try and resolve some of this.</p>

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Operations	<p>The handover period for OUSET trustees is now completed, and we are very happy to move forward with our new BoT and new chair Sarah Jones. Before the end of the handover, we held our 82<sup>nd</sup> OUSET BoT meeting which included the new &amp; existing trustees – this was a fantastic opportunity for our new trustees to see how meetings are run and ask final questions to our previous BoT.</p> <p>A new staffing structure for the Operation Team was agreed and commenced from 01/10/2022. I am very happy to inform you that both Keith and Mandy will be continuing their roles as project officers in permanent positions moving forward, they have already picked up further project work across the association. Ryan has also accepted an extension to his contract and will be continuing his good work with us as operations administrator until the end of December 2022. We will then be looking to install a permanent position internally for Operations Administrator (advertising will start Nov 2022). This will give us a permanent team moving into 2023.</p> <p>The Gravit-E upgrade to our webstore is due to start October 2022. This will improve our security, usability, and visual look! We look forward to receiving the next steps, which Keith as project lead is discussing with Gravit-e currently.</p>	<p>Though we have seen better engagement from our volunteers we have recently received further dropouts. This means we must send the operations team to more graduation ceremonies this season – though still not as many as last season. As this is meant to be a stall for students run by students, this is not an ideal situation. Hopefully this is still in part due to COVID worries, we will continue to monitor the situation as we progress through this grad season.</p>

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
<p>Policy &amp; Public Affairs (P&amp;PA)</p>	<p>Having been in the post for about 5 months now, I have slowly gotten to grips with the role and all it entails. By the end of November, I hope to have provided two submissions to the OFS around the review of the NSS and students’ learning experiences at the OU. In the past few months, I have helped draft statements and articles around namely around the government’s views on the Race Equality Chartermark, the upcoming strike ballot that University &amp; College Union (UCU) members will be partaking in and changes in the Higher Education regulatory body. By the end of October, I also hope to have conducted two student focus groups looking into what OU students expect from lifelong learning as well as their experiences of learning and teaching at the OU.</p> <p>Dan, colleagues in the GEA, PVC Students, and in P&amp;PA teams at a nations level have been integral in helping me build partnerships and expand our stakeholder engagement around the issue of lifelong learning. By the end of the year, I hope to have met and engaged with political stakeholders in the nations to gain buy-in for the manifesto for LLL.</p>	<p>Challenges may occur from what students have to say in the coming focus groups. Prior to me joining, research was conducted to help provided a topical basis for the manifesto for LLL – there is the chance the coming focus groups may provide information which challenges that very basis. However, I anticipate that this will be unlikely.</p> <p>The original timeline for the LLL manifesto has been pushed back by about 5 months due to changes in personnel and staff resource. Thankfully there is no time pressure with this project and it gives us an opportunity to give this project the time it deserves as we hope to make a nation-wide impact with it.</p> <p>Political gridlock in Northern Ireland may limit our influence there with the P&amp;PA team also having their impact limited. Furthermore, with the UK government agenda constantly changing, it is difficult to establish what the timeline is for the outcome of the lifelong learning entitlement consultation.</p>

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Strategy & Insight	<p>Annual Membership Survey sent to OU students studying in secure environments (SiSE). This survey ensures that this group of students – who have far more limited opportunities to engage with the Association - are able to have their voices heard.</p> <p>Using the results of the 2021 Annual Membership survey, we have completed a new series of ‘Insight of the Month’ infographic updates. The themes have included Association Awareness, Disability, and Values in Action.</p> <p>In June we held our first ever online Prize Winners’ Party – a celebratory event for students who have won prizes during the academic year in our competitions and survey prize draws. The session gave students the opportunity to meet fellow students in a relaxed setting and learn more about the Association and ways to get involved.</p>	<p>Workloads has necessitated the reschedule of some of the activities in our Business Plan. These include refreshing key pieces of Association research which are &gt;2years old to ensure evidence is up-date which will now take place next year.</p>

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Volunteering & Representation	<p>The team was able to organise and deliver an onboarding and induction weekend. Some Members of the student leadership were present both online and face to face. The sessions focused on getting the newly elected members to create priorities together that they wanted to achieve as a team by the end of their terms. The sessions also encouraged the importance of working together even when members have differing views and importantly being able to do this respectfully. Training for newly appointed reps was delivered in preparation for their roles on committees across the governance structure.</p>	<p>The team continue to support the issues with registration on the website. A few student applicants interested in the volunteer roles we have advertised have faced issues as corresponding emails have ended up in their junk mail. We have had some reps step down from committees they have been appointed to. This always causes some disruption especially if there are only two reps on the committee. We have also had members of the student leadership team who have stepped down from their elected roles which has prompted including</p>

Business Area	Achievements & Deliverables	Issues & Risks
Association 50 <sup>th</sup>	<p>We were able to successfully weave several 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary elements into the plans for the July CEC weekend and annual dinner. These included the planting of a tree on Campus to celebrate our student leaders over the past 50 years, the sale of 50<sup>th</sup> merchandise during the weekend's activities, and a stand showcasing some the highlights of the last half a century. The dinner itself also included nods to our 50<sup>th</sup>, such as the premiere of our <a href="#">new achievements video</a>.</p> <p>We shared great content throughout July and August in line with our themes of <a href="#">‘Our student leaders’</a> and <a href="#">‘Our history in pictures’</a>, which included this wonderful look back at <a href="#">CEC achievements during the 2020-2022 term</a>, and two <a href="#">new episodes of our podcast</a>. The best performing tweet of the month in July was our feature of <a href="#">Cinnomen McGuigan talking about what achievement she was most proud of</a>, which received almost 900 views. Similarly, <a href="#">the best performing Hoot article, written by Allan Musinguzi, also focused on Cinnomen’s time as part of the CEC</a> and was viewed over 200 times. During August two of the Association’s three most popular TikToks were part of our 50<sup>th</sup> campaign, with the <a href="#">planting of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary tree video</a> and the <a href="#">50<sup>th</sup> flashback video</a> bringing almost 1,600 views in total.</p> <p>Finally, work also began on the Digital Exhibition, which we are due to launch in December on the second of our two birthdays. The Exhibition will sit alongside other <a href="#">exhibitions on the Open University Digital Archive</a>, and will serve as a lasting tribute to our first 50 years. The project team have started to gather the required content, which has included a visit to the Library’s archives and co-ordinating with the team there. The planned launch of the Exhibition on December 16<sup>th</sup> will be a fitting way to end a year of celebration.</p>	<p>One of the challenges presented during this time has been the delay in reaching the point of Fundraising Consultants Ltd presenting the proposed fundraising strategy, which was unfortunately unavoidable due to time constraints on both sides. In terms of 50<sup>th</sup> content, plans have been adjusted in light of the media blackout following the death of the Queen. As Freshers has now moved to October, this month will now be particularly busy on the DigiComms side of things due to rescheduled content running at the same time as by-elections, so we’ve had to adjust our plans for October’s ‘Diversity’ theme in order to accommodate this.</p>



**OU Students  
Association**

PO Box 397  
Walton Hall  
Milton Keynes  
United Kingdom  
MK7 6BE

**Contact us at**

-  [www.oustudents.com](http://www.oustudents.com)
-  [@OUstudents](https://twitter.com/OUstudents)
-  [fb.com/OUstudents](https://fb.com/OUstudents)
-  [instagram.com/oustudentslive](https://instagram.com/oustudentslive)