VP Academic Student Voice

The Vice President (VP) Academic Student Voice has the responsibility for keeping the University’s educational programmes and related matters under continuous review.

The VP Academic Student Voice:

- Is the University’s point of contact for matters relating to educational programmes.
- Is a full voting member of the Student Leadership Team.
- Is required to produce regular reports and contribute to a collective report. There will also be opportunities to feed back to students through a range of platforms.
- Is a student member of Senate and a member of Senate Reference Group; either President or VP Academic Student Voice will Chair this.
- Is a member of Qualifications and Assessment Committee, which approves new modules/qualifications and authorises amendments and withdrawals.
- As a member of the Student Leadership Team, helps to keep other members up to date with academic issues which could impact the student experience.

Key skills and attributes

The post-holder will need to possess, or be prepared to develop rapidly, the following:

- Thorough knowledge and understanding of academic governance within the University, and the nature of academic representation.
- An interest in the wider Higher Education sector.
- Effective communication skills and an ability to chair meetings.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Commitment to develop further skills and knowledge appropriate to the role.
- A broad understanding of the Students Association and the Open University.

Training and support will be offered to any successful candidate.

Role Specific Essential information, including time commitment

This is a voluntary role which requires on average 15 hours a week, but can be busier at some times.

Examples of meetings attended by VP Academic Student Voice

The nature of our Student Leader’s roles is that there are always additional Association and OU working groups and committees that they will attend, as well as a range of one-off activities. We are therefore providing the most comprehensive list we are currently able to.

The list specifies scheduled meetings; additional work is typically required between these through online discussions and/or reading papers. In general, where there are face to face meetings these often take place in Milton Keynes, however, we are embracing blended working and so many meetings are hybrid.
Association meetings

- **Student Senate Reference Group** – A student group who meets ahead of Senate to discuss views on papers. This group helps inform the six members of Senate. They meet four times a year, ahead of the main Senate meeting.
  - Wednesday 11 October 2023
  - Wednesday 31 January 2024
  - Wednesday 17 April 2024
  - Wednesday 19 June 2024

- **Student Leadership Team Meetings** – Formal SLT meetings to agree action taken by the Association on Student-facing issues and to discuss proposals to the Board of Trustees when required. All formal business is covered in these meetings and these are mandatory except for unavoidable circumstances.
  - 6-8 Oct (Online)
  - 2-4 Feb (Hybrid – Milton Keynes)
  - 26-28 April (Online)
  - 12-14 July (Hybrid – Milton Keynes)

- **Monthly Student Leadership Team catch up** – a less formal but regular opportunity for the SLT to get together to discuss current issues, ideas and generally support each other in role.

OU meetings

- **Senate** – four times a year after Senate Reference Group, usually Wednesday Afternoons, including a lunch meeting for the six Senate Student delegates.
  - Wednesday 11 October 2023 – 13.30-16.30 – Online via MS Teams
  - Wednesday 31 January 2024 – 13.30-16.30 - In Milton Keynes*
  - Wednesday 17 April 2024 – 13.30-16.30 – Online via MS Teams
  - Wednesday 19 June 2024 – 13.30-16.30 - In Milton Keynes*

*Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed to allow you to attend in person.

- **Student Casework Steering Group** – twice a year.

- **Qualifications and Assessment Committee**
  - Tuesday 7 November – 14.00-17.00 - Online via MS Teams
  - Tuesday 27 February – 14.00-17.00 - Online via MS Teams
  - Tuesday 21 May – 14.00-17.00 - Online via MS Teams

- **Co-Chair of Peer Review Group**

- **Assessments Team**

- **APRG (Assessment Policy Review Group)**
  - Thursday 7 December – 10.30-12.30 - Online via MS Teams
  - Thursday 7 March – 10.30-12.30 - Online via MS Teams
Thursday 20 June – 10.30-12.30 - Online via MS Teams

- **Academic Conduct Review Group (ACR)** - once per month
- **Student Outcomes Portfolio Board (SOPB)**
  - Wednesday 8 November – 14.15-16.15 - Online via MS Teams
  - Wednesday 10 January – 14.15-16.15 - Online via MS Teams
  - Wednesday 13 March – 14.15-16.15 - Online via MS Teams
  - Tuesday 7 May – 14.15-16.15 - Online via MS Teams
  - Tuesday 9 June – 14.15-16.15 - Online via MS Teams

- **Curriculum Portfolio Panel (CPP)**
  - Monday 16 October – 14.00-1600 – Online via MS Teams
  - Thursday 25 January – 09.00-12.00 - Online via MS Teams
  - Thursday 7 March – 09.00-10.30 - Online via MS Teams
  - Thursday 20 June – 09.00-10.30 - Online via MS Teams

*All dates and times are correct at the time of writing.

**Your staff link for the role will be: Head of Volunteering and Representation**

**Shared Responsibilities of all Elected Student Leaders**
As a member of the Student Leadership Team (SLT), you have been elected to represent students, provide support, create a student community and champion the Association.

All elected student leaders have the following shared responsibilities:
- To work as a team to support the Association’s mission, vision and charitable objectives
- To truly harness the Students Association values of being: Welcoming, Accountable, Bold, Adaptable and Sustainable.
- To attend initial onboarding sessions, the official quarterly SLT meetings each year, monthly SLT catch ups and the Association’s biennial conference.
- To effectively communicate with fellow SLT members and the staff team who work in collaboration. This involves the regular use of official spaces e.g., Microsoft Teams and emails.
- Support, connect and work with other Association Volunteers and Representatives who are providing vital activities, services and events to members.
- To be the public face of the organisation involved in raising awareness, developing promotional materials, delivering presentations and hosting student facing sessions.
- Submit regular reports and blogs regarding your role, showcasing impact and engaging members, including contributing to the production of a biennial SLT report for Conference.
- Where possible, attend at least one Student Consultation meeting to engage with students.
- You will be committed to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Act openly and responsibly and be prepared to be accountable for your actions.
• Respect confidentiality in any information which has been imparted to you in confidence and recognise the importance of this - if this information relates to a safeguarding matter, you must not keep it to yourself. Speak to a member of the Volunteering and Representation team should you have concerns.

Further information
These remits are not exhaustive and specify the core responsibilities of Elected Student Leaders. They are subject to change dependant on circumstance and ongoing developments. There may also be items that fall across remits where postholders will work collaboratively.

Remits indicate the normal assignment of responsibilities, however, where both parties are agreed, role descriptions are not intended to prevent the sharing or transfer of relevant work for good reason and in the interest of supporting one another.

All volunteers are expected to follow the Volunteer Policy and Agreement, the Values and Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct given to them on taking up a role with the Association.

All volunteers are required to have their own IT equipment and internet connectivity sufficient to fulfil their remits. In exceptional circumstances, and for a period not exceeding six months, the Association may be able to provide the loan of a laptop.

What you can expect from the OU Students Association:
• We endeavour to ensure that all roles are of real benefit to the student community and make a difference to all those you engage with.
• Your volunteering will be appreciated and recognised for the value it brings.
• We aim to give you all the necessary information and training that you require to complete your role and to make decisions. If you feel you need additional support in your role, please let us know and we will be happy to help.
• A full training, onboarding and support package is provided to all elected members to ensure that no matter what existing experience or knowledge you have, you are supported to carry out your role.
• You will be volunteering for a non-discriminatory organisation that strives for equality and celebrates difference.
• You are free to stop volunteering at any time. If you need a break from your role or feel you need to step down, please contact the President, Deputy President or Head of Volunteering and Representation who can support this.
• All reasonable expenses incurred when carrying out your role will be reimbursed.
• A certificate of volunteering (on request).