



OU Students
Association

Wales Assembly
May 2011

Dear Student,

A Warm Welcome..... to the Open University Students Association (O U S A) in Wales... **Your** Association!

O U S A Wales Assembly Meeting

I hereby give formal notification of the face to face element of the next O U S A in Wales Assembly meeting to be held in Cardiff at the Open University Custom House Street Cardiff CF10 1AP on Saturday 25th of June from 10.00am to 12.30pm.

This meeting will also take place online, until 30th of June; in the O U S A suite of Moodle forums (you can find the link on your student homepage)

If you are wishing to attend the Open University in Wales meeting; following on from the Wales Assembly meeting, could you please get in contact by emailing the Chair Darren Evans on de2572@my.open.ac.uk or OUSA ECM Wales ousa-ecm-wales@open.ac.uk or Celia Weeks on cpw73@my.open.ac.uk

Have your say and help make your Association work - by telling us what you think about the way the Assembly needs to accommodate student requirements. Recently there have also been two social groups formed. These include: - The Happy Thursday Club, who meet for a get together and a chat; one evening a month in the Castle Pub and there is also the OUSA Wales Feedback Group – which also meets once a month in Cardiff; for social events and discussions. (Currently with people changing their emails over and some uncertainty as to who has and hasn't) I would ask that you contact either ECM Wales ousa-ecm-wales@open.ac.uk or Celia Weeks on cpw73@my.open.ac.uk for more information of how to contact these groups.

We would love to see you and hear from you, either by meeting you at our Cardiff Meeting or at one of the social groups, where we would like to hear your views and suggestions.

You can obtain this newsletter in an alternative format, such as large print or on coloured paper. Requests to ousa@student.open.ac.uk

What have your OUSA Wales Assembly Members been involved in recently?

The Graduation Ceremony in St David's Hall - Cardiff



We run the O U S A merchandise stall selling to the Graduates and their guests, memorabilia for this most wonderful occasion. A very long and busy day, but very enjoyable. If you are interested in participating at next year's event then get in touch with us.

Rep at Residential School for the O U Students Association

A photograph of three female students standing together and looking at a book. In the background, there is a sign for 'The Open University' featuring the university's logo.	<p>Have you ever been to Residential Schools with the OU and seen Student's Association reps greeting you as you arrive, organising social events like quiz nights and discos, or generally being on hand to offer a bit of help and advice?</p> <p>Have you never been to a Residential School but would like an opportunity to meet other students, learn some new skills and see what a Residential School is all about from a different perspective?</p> <p>Our Residential School reps are all a team of people that we need many more of, and it would be great if you'd consider applying to become one!</p>
--	---

Although, there are no Residential Schools held in Wales, some students volunteer their time at residential schools across the country. Perhaps you might like more information about this, if so please get in touch. **You can find more information and application forms here** - http://www.open.ac.uk/ousa/residential_school.php

The 2011 Residential Schools are held in: Bath, Durham, Nottingham and Sussex all expenses paid for travel and subsistence.

Student Elections

Students were alerted to the vacancies for the role of Trustee, some Assembly members have followed this up by starting the process towards election. We'll let you know the results once the election is over.

Socialising

Students continue to meet socially whether it is on line or face to face. Often, this is a time that makes studying less isolating as hints and tips can be passed on and support given. If you wish to find out about Groups in Wales then please get in touch, likewise you might wish to form a group. Again please contact us.

Social Groups: Would you like to meet other students interested in theatre trips/pub meals/ quiz nights/museum trips or any interest? Let us know and we can help set these groups up. Already in existence are the:-
OUSA Wales feedback Group and the Happy Thursdays, Contact Celia on cpw73@my.open.ac.uk or Sue on ousa-ecm-wales@open.ac.uk as we move over to Moodle these contacts will be added too as people change their email addresses e.g. Deb's Gardener; who runs Happy Thursday's group I don't have her current contact details at the moment.

Attending Committee Meetings

Some student members also participate in O U committees and have been attending meetings on your behalf. Being on a committee gives us the opportunity to get the voice of the OUSA students within Wales heard. OUSA is about students volunteering for these roles whilst studying. It's about students helping students.

OUSA Conference April 2011 – At Walton Hall Campus Milton Keynes

So what did you do at Conference Wales Delegates? Well, we finally passed the new Constitution – so hopefully we won't have to bore members so much in future by going on about the changes. Plus, even more importantly, the Charities Commission will now let us carry on as a charitable organisation! We also discussed the fiddly bits that didn't make the Constitution – the Bye-Laws. Those will hopefully get passed by the exciting (or perhaps I mean excited) newly elected Central Executive Committee during the summer.

We elected an excellent successor to the wonderful ex-President Roz Evans. Marianne Cantieri has a lot of experience as Vice President Education and I am confident she will do an efficient job in a fair and competent manner. [Roz on left, Marianne on right]



Students from across Wales made the journey in April to Milton Keynes for this year's Conference, where history was made when we voted to change the Constitution. Conference is where we as students have our biggest voice, where we can bring motions to be debated, as well as attend workshops and presentations. And finally play, where we get to meet other students face to face, and discuss studies and courses and social interests. Friendships are formed. Contacts are made.

This year Conference decided to pursue the policy that the O U should be more open about its plans, give more notice to students when changing qualifications or dropping courses and go in for more consultation. So no change there then. However the thing about these issues is that, like Lewis Carroll's Red Queen, we have to keep running just to stay where we are. And to be fair the O U do occasionally listen – in fact they may even be getting a wee bit better at it.

We heard Will Swann, the ever popular O U Director Students, freeze our blood talking about the O U's financial difficulties – but he ended with a sort of laid back, monotone chorus of *We Will Survive* so we felt a bit better. More to the point it seems the O U are approaching the future in a sensible, professional manner and are determined to continue providing a first class service. There were other interesting talks and presentations including stuff on the Student Support Review, the O U History Project and slightly bizarrely Bribery and Corruption.

New O U Email Address

Shortly, the O U will be switching off FirstClass and all forums will be on the Virtual Learning Environment (V L E). All forums will be accessed from your Student Homepage.

When FirstClass closes, the current O U email (@student.ac.uk) will also cease to be used.

There is a new O U gmail account for all students as yourname@my.open.ac.uk. Please do sign up for it as it is not automatically given.

Go to: <http://learn.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=469447&direct=1>

Click on "Sign up for your Open University Google account". In addition to a new email address you will also be able to access the Google Apps for Education service. It will also enable you to contact other students without giving out your non O U email

address. You also have to either be currently studying or registered for a course in order to access this free service. Remember the O U has 250,000 students, of which approximately there are up to 9,000 in Wales do you want them to have access to your personal email address?

Central Representatives on O U Committees

Central Reps are students who sit on O U Committees and put forward a student point of view. There are reps for all faculties and some specialised committees such as Mental Health or Disciplinary Committees. Application forms and details are on the OUSA website and appointments will be made in the summer, to start the new academic year in September. Meetings are usually held in Milton Keynes during normal office hours and expenses are paid. There are usually only 3 or 4 meetings a year.

If you are interested then please do go to the OUSA website www.ousa.org.uk for further details.

Did you know?

There is a special website for students aged 18- 24? To take a look please visit <http://www8.open.ac.uk/choose/18to24/>

There are websites for each faculty with the latest news and information?

<http://learn.open.ac.uk/site/STUDYING-SCIENCE>

<http://learn.open.ac.uk/site/HEALTH-SCIENCES>

<http://learn.open.ac.uk/site/OUBS-UBM> (undergrad business & management)

<http://learn.open.ac.uk/site/HSC-PROG> (health science)

<http://learn.open.ac.uk/site/MATHS-STATS>

<http://learn.open.ac.uk/site/UICT-CP> (undergrad ICT & Computing)

<http://learn.open.ac.uk/site/ENVIRONMENTAL-SCIENCE>

<http://engineering.open.ac.uk/>

<http://learn.open.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=4736&m=3> (arts & humanities)

<http://www.mcs.open.ac.uk/> or <http://www.mathematics.open.ac.uk/>

<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/news/whats-new.shtml>

<http://www8.open.ac.uk/about/main/faculties-and-centres/faculties-and-research-centres>

Click on this link to be taken to the OUSA homepage www.ousa.org.uk

Please remember if you need this newsletter in another format please contact ousa@student.open.ac.uk

Contacting OUSA in Wales

Email ousa-ecm-wales@open.ac.uk, or The Assembly Chair, Darren, de2572@my.open.ac.uk, (please be aware at this time of transition to Moodle that , on this newsletter the contacts have been kept to a minimum and a full list will be available when we go to Moodle and or in the next newsletter, with the contacts of the Groups in Wales you might be interested in)

Post: OUSA Office, P O Box 397, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6BE

Websites: www.ousa.org.uk and www.ousanearyou.org.uk

Forums accessible through student home OUSA Wales

Do you use facebook? Would you be interested to see news and events from OUSA Wales on their own OUSA Wales pages on facebook? Let us know. Are you keen to help with this if so we would love to hear from you? Your involvement doesn't have to be big or time consuming , and you never know you might get a lot out of it.

We hope you all enjoy reading this newsletter.