**Officer Report**

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| **Name:**  |  Jennifer Lynam  |
| **Role:** | VP Undergraduate Access and Education |
| **Council meeting:** | Michaelmas 2023, Week 7 |

# Section One | Manifesto Updates

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| **My Pledges**  | **Progress**   |
| Accessibility of College ball tickets | Following the last student council, I attend JCR PresCom to present an agenda item on the accessibility of college balls. From this I sent a form around to JCR presidents to get some feedback on current provisions as well as names of who their JCR Ball Presidents are. I will be reaching out to Ball Presidents this term and providing them with an opportunity to consult on how to create access tickets for their college. I will also be working on a document that can be used by all JCRs that explains the process of creating access friendly ball tickets.  |
| Investigation into access and outreach paying conditions  | I have sent out a survey to students to voice their opinions on this. I will be using this quantative data, alongside qualitative data to create a code of best practices that students can use in their colleges to argue for the importance of paying students.  |
| On-course support for students  | I will be meeting with the pro-vice chancellor for education, Martin Williams to discuss this. I believe that this can feed in well to the university’s Access and Participation Plan (APP) which they will eb writing over the next few months. Alongside my investigation of departmental course provisions, I will also be getting student feedback that can be used to feed into the APP.  |

# Section Two | Projects

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| **My Projects** | **Progress**   |
| Rewriting Policy Document for the Quality Assurance Working Group  | Following on from the work of the previous Undergraduate Education Sabbatical officer, I am working with the university’s quality assurance working group to include provisions for suspended students within their policy document. For context, each year, the colleges are sent a list of provisions that they should adopt in order to ensure the ‘quality’ within each college which relates to student experience can be scrutinised. Despite the argument that colleges cannot be ‘mandated’ to adopt a policy, the work of QAWG works to ensure that colleges are providing a baseline of provisions for students. The experience of suspended students is one that is has disparities across colleges and one that goes unscrutinised. In order to rewrite this into the QWAG provisions, I have consulted groups of students that have direct experience of suspension. Through their work, I have gathered information on the experience of suspended students, and importantly, what colleges should be doing to support them. I will be collating this feedback into a policy proposal to QWAG which will be taken to their next meeting in Hilary 24.  |
| Financial provisions for care-experienced and estranged students  | Following discussions with students to feed into the QWAG policy proposal, particular concerns have been raised in regard to the financial experience of care-leavers and estranged students. Working with a student, we will be proposing that the university becomes a partner with the This is Us foundation which provides students with scholarships to cover rent costs. This will open up a conversation with the university in regard to their own provisions for care-leavers and estranged students. |
| Academic representation and Divisional rep handover  | Following the recruitment of divisional reps this term, we have run a series of training and handover sessions for these students. We are planning to bring in ideas on how we can improve academic representation into the Student Union review. |

# Section Three | Events

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| **Events/Media**  | **Date**  | **Outcomes / Impact**   |
| Rent Negotiation Training  | 15/11/23 | Following on from the success of rent negotiation training last year, we ran this again in 6th week of term. There was a decent turn out for this event and a lot of engagement from attendees. Myself and the VP for activities and community, paired up with SU advice to deliver the workshop who helped to enrich the information that we gave to students. Following this event VP activities and community created a handbook and a group chat to keep people connected and to share experiences. We will also be running a similar event next term called ‘know your renting rights’ to help students who are privately renting. For future events, I will be consulting JCR presidents to disseminate information through them to JCRs, as we communicated this event through our social media and all-student email. |

# Section Four | Committee meetings

Please give a summary of your committee meeting attendance and detail key outcomes/impacts.

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| Education Committee (26/10/23) * Presentation from Pro-VC Martin Williams on the access priorities of the university. I noted the importance of on-course support for students which should feed into the next access and participation plan. I also noted the fact that the university wants to increase postgraduate scholarships but has not increased funding that can support this because of the increase in course costs.
* Presentation on the university’s race equality charter bronze renewal. Discussion of awarding gaps for black students.
* Discussion of SU review by Pro-VC Martin Williams. I noted the importance of contextualising Oxford SU within a collegiate university and how this differs from other universities.
* Discussion of VC’s colloquium. I noted the importance of ensuring that the pilot course brought in multi0cultural perspectives on climate change and was not restricted to a western perspective.

University Council (30/10/23)* Discussion on how the university will be approaching the admissions tests. I noted how the university must ensure that access priorities are met. As admissions exams are a key part of the admissions process and a way to assess candidates purely on academic merit, I highlighted how this might impact candidates from underprivileged socio-economic backgrounds.

Academic Registrar’s meeting (31/10/23)* The academic registrar gave an in-depth outlook into the work that her department has been doing and their plans for the next year. Importantly, the Academic registrar brought up the possibility of industrial action. Questions were asked on how the university would be able to prepare for this and learn from the previous consequences of the marking and assessment boycott.

Admissions committee (2/11/23)* Of note was the discussion of the effects of the admissions tests failure.

Catch-up with the Bodleian (7/11/23)* The main project that I have been engaging with the Bodleian on is the D-Phil night event that will be held in Blackwell Hall in the Weston library. This will be a really important space for people to meet up and feel connected to the university.

Continuing education strategic management board (7/11/23)* I gave feedback on the importance of student representation on continuing education management boards to give perspective on student experience.

Senior tutors committee (13/11/23)* It was great to attend this meeting with a JCR President who also gave useful insights on student experience.
* I gave some feedback that I gathered via access rep com on student perspective on Opportunity Oxford. The university takes the stance that the programme is a bridging scheme that equips students before Michaelmas term begins. From speaking to students, there is a clear sentiment that OpOx students want more support through their first year. I communicated this through the committee.

Digital Education Transformation Steering Group (13/11/23)* Updates on the new *Leganto* digital service.

Admissions executive committee (16/11/23)* An interesting discussion was had on pre-arrival comms for students. I stated that it is important to communicate how students can apply for central university services before they arrive- especially the Disability Advisory Service (DAS). This is especially important to combat the backlog that DAS is currently experiencing, and which impacts students receiving their SSPs later into Michaelmas term.

Rep coms Disability repcom (25/10/23)* Important concerns raised on how the SU can function to provide comms to students on applying to central university services such as DAS.

Access repcom (2/11/23)* Consultation of students on the paying conditions of colleges for access and outreach work.
* Interesting discussions on Opportunity Oxford

Undergraduate academic repcom (9/11/23)* Interesting discussions on support for a reading week.

JCR Presidents committee (PresCom) (6/11/23)* Presented my two projects on access ball tickets and investigation into the paying conditions in colleges for student outreach and access work. Presidents are passing this information onto their JCRs which is much appreciated.
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# Section Four | Future Plans

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| **Event/Project** | **Date**  | **Anticipated outcomes / impact**  |
| Unite the Unions *(event)* | Hilary week 1 | I will be inviting the UCU, Unison and Unite Unions to come together in this event to discuss the university’s working conditions and the how it functions as an employer. This will hopefully increase student support and engagement with their work. |
| Local campaigning in Oxford *(event)* | Hilary week 2 | Collaborating with VP activities and community, I will be inviting local campaigners in Oxford to discuss what successful campaigning looks like in this city. This will be working to break the town and gown divide in the city and show students how they can also get involved with it. Local campaigners will hopefully include Keep Camps fields closed and Across Borders.  |
| Prelims advice Fair *(event)* | Hilary week 4 | Following on from this event that was run through Class Act, we will be repeating this event this year. This event will be set up like a fresher fair, but will have students from second year and above manning the stalls to give personal advice and information on how they approached their prelims. This functions as a way for students from different colleges to meet and discuss university examinations.  |
| Foundation Year Steering Group *(committee)*  | 22/11/23 | I will be attending this meeting to give student feedback on the foundation year programme. After electing a foundation year officer to the Class Act campaign, they will be my main source for gaining student feedback on the programme so that I can bring this back to the committee.  |
| Bodleian Library disability committee *(committee)* | 24/11/23 | Papers tbc.  |
| University council *(committee)* | 27/11/23 | Papers tbc. During this meeting, a below-the- line will be passed to increase postgraduate divisional representation. There will be two postgraduate reps on each divisional board when this is passed.  |
| Taught Degrees Panel *(committee)* | 28/11/23 | Papers tbc.  |
| Curators of the universities libraries committee *(committee)* | 28/11/23 | Papers tbc.  |