EQUALITIES & SUPPORT OFFICER

ELIGIBILITY TO STAND

To stand for the position of Equalities & Support Officer within PLEXUS you must satisfy all the following criteria:

1. Be a Full Member of PLEXUS prior to the announcement of nominations
2. Be a registered student of the Open University

OVERVIEW OF ROLE

PLEXUS was created in August 2016 by a group of individuals who recognised that there was a vacancy for a safe space for the LGBT+ community within the Students Association and a space where LGBT+ students could access support throughout their studies.

PLEXUS is led by a team of student Officers, who are elected every two years by the Full Members of PLEXUS.

The Equalities & Support Officer is responsible for leading on activity that provide support for the PLEXUS membership. Furthermore, the Equalities & Support Officer will work closely with the Vice-President Equal Opportunities to ensure that the curriculum offer and structures are appropriate for the LGBT+ students across the Open University.

ESSENTIAL FOR ROLE

The Equalities & Support Officer should be passionate about representing OU Students whether this be online or face-to-face. The Equalities & Support Officer should have knowledge of the LGBT+ community and understands where and when LGBT+ students require additional support, outside of their study regimes.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

The Equalities & Support Officer will deliver in the following areas:

1. Act as point of contact for the Membership of the Group regarding any concerns or issues they may have either from a personal or academic point of view
2. Maintain the support network for members enabling them to access support or networking opportunities in their local area, in addition to the OU Students Association
3. Engage and respond to LGBT+ support groups both nationally and locally to support the needs of PLEXUS and its membership
4. Engage and respond to LGBT+ charities in support of equal opportunities for LGBT+ people; for example, Stonewall UK
5. Provide support and access opportunities for LGBT+ Women in conjunction with the Women’s Officer
6. Ensure the Open University material is suitable for the current generation and recognise where former terminology is derogatory and not acceptable
7. Liaise with the Vice-President Equal Opportunities regarding any issues or concerns that are raised by the Membership or Committee
8. Liaise with the Vice-President Student Support regarding any issues or concerns that are raised by the Membership or Committee

**DESIRED SKILLS**

- Good communication skills
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Good networking skills
- Passionate about student representation and the mission and aims of PLEXUS
- Willingness to engage with new and existing students

**SUPPORTED BY**

The Equalities & Support Officer works co-creatively and collaboratively with their fellow committee members and Student Support staff team who are based in Milton Keynes. You will be in regular contact with all parties via email and hold/contribute to virtual meetings and face-to-face when possible.

**EXPECTATIONS OF THE PLEXUS MEMBERSHIP AND OU STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**

- To act professionally whilst in the role
- Successfully implement the Constitution of PLEXUS
- Respect the views and opinions of others
- Represent PLEXUS in a positive manner
- Behave in a manner that respects the Constitution and by-laws of the Students Association, including our commitment to Equality and Diversity

**IN RETURN, THE EQUALITIES & SUPPORT OFFICER CAN EXPECT**

- Support from the Chair of PLEXUS
- Access to networking opportunities and events delivered by the Open University and the OU Students Association
- Induction and appropriate training deemed necessary for your role
- A handbook detailing the services available within the Association, policies, support structures and general information.
- Develop transferable skills and confidence
- Network opportunities, internally and externally
- Meet other students and have fun

**TIMESCALES**

- This role will run from 1st January 2018 until 31st December 2019.