



Oxonía University Network Constitution

Introduction

In May 2013, a Leadership in Higher Education event was held in Oxford, UK, hosted by the Oxford Academy for Education and Development (OAED). Delegates who attended the event agreed to form a new and exclusive Network for the purpose of collaboration and partnership in higher education (HE), research and entrepreneurial engagement. This was confirmed by the signing of a 'Memorandum of Intention' by the delegates who were present on 24th May 2013. Later in the year and in consultation with a group of HE advisors, the proposal for the Network's Constitution was drafted by the OAED and approved by the founding members, which is as follows:

Article 1 - Name and Legal Status

The network will be known as the Oxonia University Network, an independent non-governmental organisation that is open to Universities, Higher and Further Education institutions as well as suppliers of products and services to the HE sector. It will be registered in the UK as a subsidiary body of OAED.

Article 2 - Vision, Objectives and Activities

Vision and Mission

The network considers diversity, cooperation and continuous quality improvement as fundamental values of its member institutions. Members of the Oxonia University Network will share the common doctrine of advancing internationalisation for all member universities.

The mission of the Oxonia University Network is to assist each member university to achieve its own international mission by offering a range of opportunities and the sharing of best practice in higher education. The network will also assist in the exchange of expertise; physical resources; sharing of initiatives; research collaboration; and scholarly activities amongst members.

Moreover, Oxonia University Network aims to provide mutual support to its members towards establishing "Centres of Excellence" in academic quality and research that will facilitate a more competitive presence in the global higher education arena. This will be made possible through the introduction and adoption of OAED Learning Quality Standard (LQS) Certification by members.

Objectives

The multinational character of the network facilitates the promotion of new technologies, the transfer of resources, establishment of joint programmes, exchange of information and the introduction of long distance and on-line learning. Other objectives of the network

include:

- Helping network members adapt to the ever changing social needs of the HE landscape.
- Support members in the development of their international programmes.
- Place the network at the forefront of topical HE issues.
- Create a bridge between UK higher education institutions and their peers overseas for mutual collaboration.
- Build a reputation and credibility for the network within the global HE sector.
- Create all the necessary academic settings necessary to allow constructive student and staff exchanges.
- Provide a platform for network members to share good practices in teaching and learning, to enhance the student experience.
- Establish a joint fund to support research projects within member universities.
- Enhance cultural understanding, friendship, peace and dialogue among network members, contributing to the promotion of sustainable regional and international development.
- Attract new university members to the network.
- Attract Affiliated Members who will add value to the network
- Source funding for the network, to supplement subscription income.

Activities

- Recognise and promote the work of network members through network communications and PR.
- Develop connections with relevant European and international organisations, associations and foundations.
- Provide support to member institutions towards achieving their international goals.
- Receive OAED services at a discounted rate including quality English language programmes, teacher training courses and academic publishing assistance.
- Promote and encourage joint research projects among member institutions.
- Secure grants and scholarships for graduate students and researchers from member universities.
- Develop social and cultural cooperation by organising conferences, seminars, workshops, sports events and other activities.
- Provide members with the marketing tools they need to promote their association with the network e.g. network branding materials including logo and a presence on the web portal.
- Promote internal and external opportunities for members through the web portal.
- Manage collaborations between network members and help remove potential barriers to collaborative working.
- Facilitate the sharing of best practice and disseminate quality improvement processes.
- Develop events and programmes on behalf of members based on regional needs.



Article 3 – Governance

The governing and advisory bodies of the Oxonia University Network are: The Secretariat, The Council, The General Assembly, The Presidency, The Honorary Chancellor and the Advisory Board.

Secretariat:

The Secretariat acts as the Executive Board of the network and has overall responsibility for managing, coordinating and maintaining the network, its future direction and constitution. The Secretariat is the seat of the Oxonia University and is based in Oxford, UK at the OAED's offices. The Secretariat is led by the OAED's Chairman.

The Secretariat is responsible for directing network policies and activities between Council meetings and has the decisive power to execute them. It shall also prepare discussion papers and reports; propose the annual budget for approval by the Council; admit new members to the network; arrange programmes and meetings for the exchange of information and experience among members and identify innovative ideas to promote the network's standing at a global level.

The Secretariat is responsible for appointing a manager and may also appoint officers, committees and staff as required delegating specific powers and authority to them. All member institutions will need to appoint a contact point to liaise with the Secretariat.

Council:

The Council is the governing body of the network, comprising the President or Vice President, the OAED Chairman and three other members from different countries. The three members shall be active senior executives within the higher education sector who will hold office for a term of two years and will be eligible for re-election for one further term only. The Council meets once a year during the Annual General Assembly and has a quorum of three members, including the President or the Vice-President and the OAED Chairman. Decisions shall be made by a simple majority.

The Council has the responsibility of reviewing the strategic direction and policies of the network and proposing them to the General Assembly. Council also decides the annual work plan and budget for the network.

General Assembly:

The General Assembly is the largest decision-making body of the Oxonia University Network and comprises Rectors/Presidents/Chancellors of the member universities or their representatives. The General Assembly has the following roles:

- Meets annually.
- Adopts and amends the Constitution of the network.
- Approves policies and strategic plans proposed by the Council.
- Approves nominations of Council members including the President and Vice President.



- Approves the nomination of Honorary positions including that of the Honorary Chancellor of the Network

General Assembly sessions are convened by the President or Vice-President. Each member university shall have one vote in the General Assembly. The quorum of the General Assembly is at least one half of the group of member universities. Decisions are taken by simple majority.

Extraordinary meetings may be called by the General Assembly but the reasons for this will first need to be circulated by the General Assembly to network members to seek their approval for the meeting to take place. A date, time and place will be proposed for the extraordinary meeting.

Presidency:

The President of the Oxonia University Network is a prestigious figure, demonstrating considerable contribution to the development of the network and its representation at the international level.

A President will be elected by the Oxonia General Assembly. The Secretariat of the Oxonia University Network will provide the President with regular updates on network activities and also key information for the President to compile and circulate his/her annual report. The role is to:

- Serve for a two year term from Jan 1st – Dec 31st.
- Preside over the affairs of the Council and the General Assembly ensuring sessions are minuted and the minutes are circulated to all members.
- Attend and chair the Assembly and Council meetings.
- Provide an annual report to members of the Oxonia University Network.
- Where required to provide input into key Oxonia University Network membership communications.
- Direct and manage the nomination process for voting in the successive Assembly President.
- Liaise closely with the Network's Secretariat to keep up to date with all network activities and plans.
- Input into the future direction and strategy of the Oxonia Network.
- Represent the network at international events and organisations.
- Assist with raising funds for the network.
- Assist in attracting new members to the network.

Honorary Chancellor:

The Honorary Chancellor would be invited by the Oxonia University Network to serve on the Assembly for a period of 2 years. His role would be to:

- Champion the Network.
- Be a figurehead for the Network.
- Attend the General Assembly.

Advisory Board:

The Advisory Board is a prestigious board consisting of a select group of external, reputable figures drawn from the HE sector. Their role is to provide advice to the Network on request and to attend quarterly meetings when required.

The Secretariat of the Oxonia University Network will invite chosen people onto the Advisory Board who will:

- Advise and support the Network.
- Champion the Network.
- Personally help to extend links between the Network and key institutions and individuals with whom they have professional relationships that could benefit members.

Article 4 – Membership

Full Membership

Full network membership is open to universities conferring at least one of the following degrees on their students (BA/BSc, MA/MSc, PhD) and they must also be recognised by the relevant Ministry of Education in the country in which they operate.

Full membership gives university members the opportunity to:

- Access all network communications and programmes.
- Fully access resources on the web portal.
- Attend the General Assembly.
- Participate in other network events and programmes.
- Be elected to serve on the Council.
- Be nominated as President of the Oxonia University Network.
- Attend conferences, workshops and training programmes at a discounted rate.
- Promote the institution through all network publications and the website.
- Receive research funds negotiated by the Network.
- Become one of the network's 'Centres of Excellence'.
- Be nominated to receive awards from the network.

Associate Membership

Associate members will be providers of higher education (HE) and further education (FE) courses, including colleges and schools (but excluding universities) and may also be suppliers of products and services to the HE sector. They will add value to the network through their specific expertise in the HE sector.

Associate members will receive:

- The majority of network communications.
- Access to the web portal for some of the on-line resources.



- Invitations to network events (excluding the General Assembly meetings).
- The opportunity to collaborate with member universities.

Obligations of participating Members

Member universities will undertake the following commitments when they join the network:

- To actively support and promote the network.
- Give the Network priority when developing their future international strategy.
- To meet any mutually agreed terms, conditions and timescales.
- Commitment to full participation in Network activities.
- Act in accordance with the ethos and principles of the Network.
- Ensure that the subscription fee is paid on time and in full, according to network invoice terms.

Article 5 - Finance and Subscription

Finance

Funding for the Oxonia University Network will initially be from subscription based membership but once established the network will apply for supplementary grants from public and private sources, where available.

Subscription

The annual subscription fee is payable on joining and will be renewed on the anniversary date via an invoice in advance of the due date. Network subscription income will contribute towards the fixed and variable costs of the Secretariat maintaining the network, covering core network activities and communications including administration and marketing materials.

Other Resources

The network may receive bequests, donations, grants or other income from private or public sources nationally or internationally, allocated to the specific objectives of the Oxonia University Network. This will be documented within the annual President's report and publicised to the network once secured.

Project Fees

Separate fees, terms and conditions will be agreed for ad hoc projects and value added consultancy services, outside of core membership subscription. These will be formally quoted prior to commencement of any activity.



Article 6 - Termination of Subscription

Termination of Network membership by a member

Any member wishing to terminate their membership of the network must give 3 months written notice to the Secretariat. Any unused portion of the subscription fee is non-refundable.

Termination of membership by the Network

The Secretariat may choose to terminate a member's subscription to the Oxonia University Network if it considers that the member had contravened the network constitution. Notice of this will be given in writing to the member and any outstanding subscription fees will be refunded, providing the account is in credit.

Article 7 - Winding Up of the Network

In the event of the winding up of the network, The Secretariat will be responsible for all matters pertaining to its dissolution.

Dissolution by the General Assembly

A proposal may be made by the Oxonia General Assembly to dissolve the Network, providing that it is backed by two thirds of the full membership, in writing to the President and that dissolution is completed at a General Assembly meeting. Reasons for the recommendation to dissolve the Network will be shared with all members of the Network following the decision and it will also be minuted at the final General Assembly meeting.

Dissolution by OAED

If the Oxonia University Network should be wound up at a future point in time by OAED, network members will be given a minimum of 3 month's notice in writing. The remainder of the subscription fee will be refunded if more than 6 months remains on the institution's subscription term, from the date of notification in writing.

In the event of dissolution, any assets or intellectual property belonging to the Oxonia University Network shall be divided equally between the OAED and Full Members.

Article 8 - Miscellaneous Provisions

The common language used by the Oxonia University Network will be English.