**UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON**

STUDENT SENATE

**Summary Report: 28 November 2018, 2pm**

The twenty-fifth meeting of the University Student Senate, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, was held on Wednesday 28 November 2018. The Vice-Chancellor welcomed all present, particularly those who had recently joined Student Senate as representatives. Apologies were noted.

The **report from the last meeting** (Paper 3), which had been presented to the University Senate and Council, was received and confirmed by those who had been present as an accurate record of the meeting.

Under **matters arising** it was noted that the University’s strategic plan for 2019-2022, which had been discussed in detail at the last meeting, had now been approved by Council. A concise version was presented in hard copy to members of Student Senate.

Update on the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor

Student Senate was informed that Professor Jean-Noël Ezingeard had been appointed as the new Vice-Chancellor of the University and would start on 1 May 2019. The selection process had been rigorous and students had been represented throughout. On 1 May 2019, Professor Paul O’Prey would take over a new role as President of the University until 31 July 2019. He would assist and advise Professor Ezingeard in his new role as Vice-Chancellor.

Preparations for the Teaching Excellence Framework

Student Senate received a report on the University’s preparations to make a submission to the Teaching Excellence Framework. It was hoped that as a result of the submission the University would improve on its current bronze rating and receive a silver rating. RSU Officers were involved in preparing the submission. Student Senate was consulted on what information should be included in the submission, and the following points were noted:

* The high number of student societies and extra-curricular opportunities
* The high number of student representatives
* The recent impressive election turnout
* The University’s wellbeing provision
* The flat rep system
* That students have a strong and diverse sense of community
* The work that has been done to engage off-campus students
* Timetabling changes that have improved student engagement

Student Senate was also consulted on what might be improved, and the following points were noted:

* The new Library is an excellent building but very busy. It would be useful to consider extending opening hours further
* There could be more dedicated study space for postgraduates
* It would be useful to have a 24hr space in Froebel
* There could be more effective social spaces

Plans and priorities for Roehampton Students’ Union during 2018-19

RSU Officers in attendance at the meeting talked about some of their priorities for the coming year, which included the following:

* Continuing to free up Wednesday afternoons for sport and other activities
* Academic deadline spacing
* Postgraduate student engagement
* Considering the format of the College Cup
* Support for part-time officers
* Mental health first aid training
* A hate crime reporting site
* A safer drinking campaign
* The BAME attainment gap
* Considering proposals to rename buildings and other spaces at the University.

It was also noted that the Harvey Building was to be renamed the Sir David Bell Media Centre once the redevelopment had been completed.

BAME Ambassadors

Student Senate received a presentation from the President of Roehampton Students’ Union, setting out a new BAME Ambassadors scheme designed to tackle the BAME attainment gap. The scheme contained a range of initiatives, including placing BAME Ambassadors on University and RSU Committees.

Teaching Year Review

Student Senate received a presentation on the new teaching calendar for 2019-2020. The calendar would result in more teaching for students and would mean that teaching would take place after the Easter break. Ongoing work was needed to consider the postgraduate student calendar. Student Senate discussed the importance of supporting students participating in religious holidays and festivals and ensuring that assignments were not set too early in the term.

Race Equality Charter

A presentation was given to Student Senate on the Race Equality Charter project, which was in its early stages. A questionnaire would be distributed in due course to all students asking them about their experience. It was noted that the survey was quite long but that the format was set by the Equality Change Unit. Student Senate discussed the possibility of offering incentives to complete the survey and the need to ensure that the messaging around the survey was carefully considered.

Prevent Working Group

The Prevent Working Group was looking for new student representatives and members of Student Senate were encouraged to get in touch with Reggie Blennerhassett if they were interested in participating.

Update on Harvey Building Works

The principal contractor for the Harvey development, Volker Fitzpatrick, was interesting in engaging students as part of their work. Members of Student Senate were encouraged to get in touch with Reggie Blennerhassett if they were interested in participating.

Top of your agenda

In this regular item students advised those present about a range of matters that are currently of particular interest. Among the matters raised by student members at this meeting were the following (ordering as presented round the table):

* The student-led budget
* Continuing to subsidise graduation
* Support for care leavers
* Organising a black hair conference
* Making the Reef a more effective social space
* Giving thanks to Department Representatives and part-time Student Officers
* Promoting student mental health
* Providing careers support in the Dance department
* Research study space and card access
* Putting on an event to help international students get to know the University
* Improving the engagement of students at Whitelands in the University community
* Advertising opportunities for postgraduate students
* Encouraging students to register to vote
* Renovating the Digby Diner and passageway
* Developing a new Digby Stuart brand

The Vice-Chancellor thanked all present for their contributions, and closed the meeting.

Next meeting: Wednesday 20 February 2019

*George Turner*

*Deputy University Secretary*

*January 2019*