



UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON STUDENT SENATE

Summary Report: 20 February 2019

The 26th meeting of the University Student Senate, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, was held on Wednesday 20 February 2019. 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, 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 review of the teaching year was ongoing and that work was focussed on two strands, agreeing the calendar for 2019-2022 and agreeing principles for future academic calendars, including considering the impact of religious events such as Ramadan on assessments.

RSU elections

Student Senate was informed that preparations for RSU elections were well underway. The elections would be for 30 officers, including full-time sabbatical officers, college roles and other part-time roles. All registered students are eligible to vote in the election and can do so online. For the first time, a vote will be held to elect a Muslim Students Officer. RSU are particularly keen to promote engagement from BAME and female students. Student Senate received examples of the promotional material and the University Communications Team agreed to send out a text message to all students promoting the elections.

Update on mental health training

It was reported that the Vice-President (Student Welfare) had been on accredited mental health training and found it useful. However, RSU had more recently become aware of the ongoing costs of delivering the training to staff and students. It was agreed that in principle Student Senate would like the training to be delivered, but also that it was important that this was done in a cost effective manner. The University Secretary and Registrar agreed to take the issue away and work with key members to address it.

Opt-in scheme for emergency contacts

The Director of Student Support gave a report on an opt-in scheme for emergency contacts for students. It was noted that the University of Bristol had introduced a similar scheme and it had received 94% uptake. The Roehampton Students' Union Council had given its unanimous support to the scheme. Student Senate was very supportive of the scheme, and was pleased to note that the contact did not need to be a member of the student's family.

Student Senate also discussed concerns about the mitigating circumstances process and whether it was being applied consistently across the University. It was agreed that work would be undertaken by the University Secretary and Registrar to address the concerns.



University of Roehampton Bus Service

Student Senate noted that the University Bus Service had nearly finished its pilot period and the deadline for reviewing the contract was approaching. An average of 3,000 journeys per week were undertaken on the bus. Feedback from members of the service was positive, particularly for those based at Whitelands. It was agreed that more work could be done to promote the different routes that students might take, including changing for the 33 to Hammersmith at Barnes Station. It was also noted that the timetable appeared to have been removed from the Student Portal.

[Note: The timetable has now been added to the portal]

Module evaluation surveys

Student Senate received a report on the Module Evaluation Surveys that had been recently completed. The results of these had been published online, along with action plans by programmes who had received lower evaluation scores. It was noted that the action plans were also reviewed by a panel chaired by the Vice-Chancellor. Student Senate considered that the exercise was useful, but also noted that it was important that lecturers followed the agreed process for completing the survey. The importance of programme rep attendance at meetings to discuss the results of the surveys was also noted.

Under this item, Student Senate also discussed issues relating to student attendance at lectures. It was suggested that this was a complex issue with a number of underlying factors. It was agreed that an item would be added to the agenda of the next meeting of the Student Education Outcomes Panel.

Student Led Budget

It was noted that at the next meeting of Student Senate members would be asked to make suggestions for the student led budget. RSU was asked to co-ordinate these suggestions in advance of the meeting.

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):

- Postgraduate space
- Student mental health
- Support for care leavers
- A research project centered around care leavers
- Engagement with Whitelands



- Access to audio-visual equipment for students in the Department of Media, Culture and Language
- Multi-media engagement
- Domestic abuse awareness
- A campaign around empowering students
- Involving Sky in the Digby Stuart and Froebel football match
- Decolonising the curriculum in the Department of Social Sciences
- Mentoring
- Multi-purpose spaces on campus
- Dancers' mental health awareness
- Keeping Wednesday afternoons lecture free
- The postgraduate newsletter
- The Women's Leadership Conference
- Security around campus
- Lectures in the School of Education on increasing BAME awareness

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

The University Secretary and Registrar led Student Senate in giving thanks to the Vice-Chancellor, who was chairing his last meeting before stepping down. It was noted that Roehampton had the first Student Senate in the UK, and had been instigated by Professor Paul O'Prey. The concept has subsequently been taken up by a number of other Universities.

Professor Jean-Noël Ezingard, incoming Vice-Chancellor, would chair the next meeting scheduled for 15:00 on Wednesday 1 May 2019.

George Turner
Deputy University Secretary
February 2019