**UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON**

**COUNCIL / SENATE**

**SUMMARY REPORT ON THE LATEST MEETING OF STUDENT SENATE**

The twenty-first meeting of the University Student Senate, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, was held on Wednesday 10 May 2017.

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed all present, noting that some students were attending for the last time before graduating from the University, thanking them especially for their contribution to the work of Student Senate.

The recently-elected RSU Sabbatical Officers were congratulated on their election, including Jack de France who will continue for another year as President of the Students’ Union. Joanna Briggs would be VP Education, and Chuchu Nwago would be VP Welfare.

The **Report on the last meeting** (Paper 1, previously circulated) was confirmed by those present as an appropriate record of business.

There were no particular **Matters arising** from the Report that would not be addressed on the agenda.

1. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**
   1. Student-led Budget for 2017-18

Student Senate received a paper from the President of the Students’ Union regarding proposals and costings for the **Student-led Budget 2017-18** (Paper 1a).

In some useful discussions prior to the meeting RSU sabbaticals and senior University staff had agreed that an approach to this element of the University budget this year might concentrate on allocation of larger sums to sponsor some significant projects.

The three items proposed to take forward within the £50K student-led budget were as follows:

* £20k towards a Student Leadership Conference, and related leadership development. There had already been two highly successful Leadership Conferences organised by RSU, targeted respectively at a BAME audience and Women in Leadership, but a further conference would be designed to appeal to all students.
* £25k towards part-time internships based in RSU. A range of internships had already proved to be useful and successful, and all wanted to build on that initial success to give students valuable temporary employment opportunities.
* £5000 towards Roehampton Students Community Fund, which students may bid for to sponsor an event, project or skills development. Students had put on events, often cross-department, which had been very successful but some initial financial support would be welcomed and encourage more activities.

Student Senate welcomed these proposals which would all be taken forward in the coming academic year.

* 1. Student behaviour: Encouraging good citizenship at Roehampton

This item was led by Stephen Driver, Deputy Provost, who was leading a review of student disciplinary processes at the University. Staff were concerned about a number of more serious incidents involving violence, threatened violence and drugs-related misconduct.

Students were asked about their concerns relating to misconduct at the University, and views on how to encourage good citizenship among students at Roehampton. Current concerns related to an apparent rise in drug availability and use near to or on campus.

The current Review was examining both relevant University documentation, such as the Student Code of Conduct and Student Disciplinary Regulations, and related processes, but also guidance from outside bodies such as Universities UK (all these in Paper 2).

The student input during this meeting was considered extremely useful to those involved in the review. Student members present considered that the University was working appropriately and doing a great deal, to manage behavioural problems among students and they were supportive of both the initiatives and the aims of the Review.

1.3 Student Welfare Activities

The University Registrar, Mark Ellul, provided the meeting with information on the various Student Welfare activities introduced during this academic year, and those planned for the future. Although many were internal initiatives, some were also affected in conjunction with outside welfare organisations.

Discussion centred on helping students to know what was available to them in terms of welfare support, and encouraging them to engage and take advantage of what they can gain from. It was also important for applicants and students with special requirements to register these with the University Disabilities staff in order to gain fullest advantage.

Senior staff present also recognised that more work had to be done to ensure that all staff can signpost and advise students appropriately and accurately about services available to them, both long-and short-term.

It was welcomed that some students volunteered for supportive charities in the area.

**2. ‘TOP OF YOUR AGENDA’**

*In this regular item students advised the meeting about a range of matters of particular interest to them as individuals.*

Students provided information on a range of events being organised in relation to the end of the academic year by academic departments, colleges, societies and the RSU.

The opportunities that the new Library would provide were also anticipated and welcomed, and the value of this as a multi-cultural source for all was encouraged by students.

The Students’ Union was doing a great deal to encourage students to register to vote, and then to vote, in relation to the upcoming General Election. As with previous campaigns, the Union would be hosting hustings for local candidates in the near future.

Many students spoke of the value of Student Senate to them personally, and considered that the opportunity for student representatives to meet with senior staff and feed into decisions was something Roehampton should be proud of and maintain.

At the end of the meeting the Vice-Chancellor thanked all present for their commitment to Student Senate this year, which had led to useful and informative discussions at all three meetings.

**Next meeting: 1 November 2017**

Andrew Skinner,

University Secretary and Secretary to Student Senate

May 2017