

UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON

SENATE

REPORT ON THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE STUDENT SENATE

The sixth meeting of the Student Senate was held on Wednesday 9 May 2012.

Business of the meeting

A Report (Paper RSS06/1) on the fifth meeting of the Student Senate, held on Wednesday 8 February 2012, was approved and its contents noted. Thereafter the business of the meeting proceeded as follows:

1. Welcome

The Chair and those present welcomed Professor Lynn Dobbs, newly appointed Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University, to her first meeting as a member of Student Senate.

2. “Top of the Agenda”

The President of the Roehampton Students’ Union proposed the addition of a standing item to Student Senate agendas, entitled ‘Top of your Agenda’, which would give student members an opportunity (if they wished) to air matters most important to them at the time. Although members were encouraged still to suggest items formally for the agenda via the Secretary, this item was piloted at this meeting, raising a wide range of interesting matters.

3. Student Life

Pro Vice-Chancellor Andy Masheter gave the meeting an update on the ‘Student Life’ Project, which was proceeding effectively, building on suggestions first aired at Student Senate.

4. 24-hour opening of Library

The meeting also received a Report on the trial of 24-hour opening of the Library, which had been highly successful regarding uptake, and much welcomed by students on and off campus. As a result the University is considering extending the period of 24-hour opening in the future.

5. RSU Societies Handbook

Baz Barrett, RSU, introduced a draft of a RSU Student Handbook giving advice for the management and running of Clubs and Societies. This will help to ensure appropriate skills and operational experience is maintained as personnel running University societies changes from year to year.

6. National Student Survey

RSU, and other student members present, reported that participation of final year students in the National Student Survey was high this year, in part due to the various methods employed by the Students’ Union to encourage students to take part. This included making the survey available during or after lectures, with helpful guidance from RSU on how to complete the questionnaire.

7. Digby Stuart Square

Two items raised by students in English and Creative Writing included the use of Digby Stuart Square for outdoor events, such as readings and performances, and events to bring together mature students from across the University. Staff present would welcome suggestions and proposals relating to these items.

8. Student Charter

Julie Hall, Director of Learning and Teaching Enhancement, and Alex Murray, President RSU, introduced proposals to produce a 'Student Charter' for the University. This will become a requirement for all Universities in the HE sector, but Roehampton will be able to build on its extensive development of quality initiatives with student input in recent years.

9. External Examiners' Annual Reports

The meeting was advised that External Examiners' Annual Reports would be made available to students via 'Moodle', enabling students to see how examiner output worked and the resulting comments from the examiners.

10. RSU Teaching Awards

The President of RSU declared the results of the first round of Student-led Teaching Awards, which had produced winners from across the University and across a wide range of programmes.

11. Student Engagement Conference

RSU Sabbatical officers also told the meeting about a workshop session they would be giving at a Student Engagement Conference, run by the Higher Education Academy and the NUS, all about the value of Student Senate at Roehampton and some pointers on how such a body could be established in other HE Institutions.

12. Student Partnership Funds

The main business of Student Senate concluded with extensive discussion about the allocation of Student Partnership Funds in 2012-13. A report on the spending of £50K in 2011-12, and proposals from students and staff for distribution of a similar amount the coming year were considered. The meeting considered that funding should be split between the Library, the Gymnasium, supporting proposals in the Student Life project, and developing social spaces at the University.

13. Conclusion

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of the meeting, thanked all the student members of 2011-12, and especially those who would be leaving the University at the end of this academic year, for their contributions to another successful year of Student Senate meetings.

*Andrew Skinner
Deputy University Secretary
Secretary to Student Senate
May 2012*