

UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON STUDENT SENATE

Report to Council from its meeting on 29 April 2020

Committee Chair: Professor Jean-Noël Ezingard

The 30th meeting of the University Student Senate was held on Wednesday 29 April 2020 via Zoom.

Report from the last meeting

The report from the last meeting was presented to Student Senate.

Coronavirus update

At the beginning of the meeting, the Vice-Chancellor gave a presentation on the University's response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Student Senate noted that the University's absolute focus was on supporting its students throughout the pandemic. The focus of the meeting would be on the ways the University would achieve this.

Learning, teaching and assessment

Student Senate received a report from the Vice-Provost (Education) on the steps the University had taken around learning, teaching and assessment in response to the pandemic. Academic colleagues had made a rapid shift to online teaching and, while there were always improvements to be made, the overall response from students was very positive. Extensions to assessment deadlines had been given and revised academic regulations were being put in place to support the principle of 'no detriment'. The University was aware that the pandemic could impact some students more than others, and was doing everything it could to mitigate this.

Student Support

Student Senate received a report from the Director of Student Engagement and the Director of Student Support Services. It was noted that all University support services had now moved online. Proactive programmes of student support had been put in place, and the vast majority of third-year students had already been individually contacted, with the remainder of students at the University scheduled for the coming weeks. Individual students were being assigned to one of three priority groups, with interventions being targeted towards those with the greatest need.

Employability

Student Senate received a report from the Director of Alumni, Development and Careers. It was noted that the University's careers and employability provision had now moved completely online and a programme of summer events was being developed. This would include employer-led sessions, advice and guidance, a CV

programme and virtual internships. It was noted that it may be useful to provide advice to students who are also key workers.

Reflections on the online student experience

Members of Student Senate was asked to provide their reflections on their experience in moving to online teaching. The following observations were also shared with the group:

- That thanks were given from the RSU and the SU Council to the University for its rapid response and focus on students
- That BAME mentoring sessions had been moved online
- That the RSU elections had been concluded online
- That postgraduate research students would be supported with a tailored approach designed to reflect individual needs
- That alternative systems to the module evaluation surveys would need to be put in place to ensure that the student voice was adequately captured
- That Student Senate was supportive of the student-led budget being reallocated to the hardship fund

It was noted that this was the last meeting of Student Senate of the academic year. Student Senators were thanked for their enormous contribution to the University throughout the year and were invited to stand for reappointment in 2020-21 if they remained students at the University. The Vice-Chancellor wished all students good luck with their assessments over the summer.

Next meeting: 25 November 2020

George Turner
Acting University Secretary
April 2020