

# UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON STUDENT SENATE

## Report to Council from its meeting on 2 February 2022

Committee Chair: Professor Jean-Noël Ezingard

The 35<sup>th</sup> meeting of the University Student Senate was held on Wednesday 2 February 2022. Attendees joined via MS Teams.

### **Welcomes, introductions and apologies**

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the second Student Senate meeting of the 2021-22 academic year and noted apologies.

### **Report from the last meeting**

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

### **Updates from members**

The Vice-Chancellor gave an update at the start of the meeting on the activity that had taken place throughout the first term. This included the following:

- Most government COVID-19 rules affecting higher education had now been removed, with the University shifting from a rules-based system to one of community responsibility. The key messages are to wear a face covering in all indoor spaces, get vaccinated, test at least twice per week, respect others' space and keep your distance, and isolate if you have any symptoms.
- The University has introduced student pulse surveys to take place every fortnight and understand how we can support students better. These surveys are part of the package of mechanisms used to gather feedback from students, including other surveys, focus groups, through programme reps and RSU officers, flat reps and other student leaders.
- A large number of students had just started their studies in January 2022, predominantly in the Faculty of Business and Law.
- The National Student Survey was now open for all final year undergraduates until the end of April.
- That some University staff went on strike just before Christmas as part of a national dispute. The focus of the University was on minimising the disruption to student education and we were assured that the impact was relatively limited. Further strike action had recently been announced for the end of February and early March 2022.
- A Roehampton student resident had sadly died over the weekend, following the death of another the weekend before. Support had been provided to students and continued to be available. Southlands College was also arranging for the commemoration of both students.

Student Senate was thanked for its role in raising issues on behalf of the student body that the University was then able to address and resolve. Student Senators then raised a number of items to be discussed:

- **Accommodation fees:** Student Senate discussed the recent uplift in accommodation fees. It was discussed that the University had increased its fees to reflect inflation and to ensure it was aligned with other London-based universities. There remained a range of accommodation options at different price points to ensure that it was affordable for students who want live on campus, and a range of payment options were available.
- **Estates developments:** Student Senate discussed enhancements to the area outside the Students' Union, Digby Square and the possibility of developing an outdoor theatre. It was agreed that RSU would continue to be involved as proposals were developed and funding options considered.
- **Accessibility:** Student Senate discussed the need to ensure that the estate is accessible to disabled students. It was noted that there are some issues with accessibility, primarily as a result of our heritage estate. However, the University has invested in accessibility in recent years and has details of its provisions on <https://www.accessable.co.uk/>.
- **Hybrid learning:** It was agreed that there was a need to continue investing in technology to ensure that hybrid learning is of a high quality.
- **Washing machines:** It was noted that the Chief Operating Officer had established a working group to discuss the provision of washing machines across the campus.
- **Period poverty:** RSU would be making a proposal to financially support the provision of sanitary products across the campus.

### **Other items**

The group received a report from Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) on the University's latest graduate outcomes data and the range of careers support available to students.

**Date of next meeting:** 27 April 2022

*George Turner*  
*University Secretary*  
*February 2022*