

**UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON
STUDENT SENATE**

Report to Council from its meeting on 23 November 2022

Committee Chair: Professor Jean-Noël Ezingard

The 37th meeting of the University Student Senate was held on Wednesday 23 November 2022. The meeting was held in Convent Parlour and some attendees joined remotely via MS Teams.

1. Welcomes, introductions and apologies

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the first Student Senate meeting of the 2022-23 academic year. Apologies were noted. It was also noted that Student Senate at Roehampton was a unique forum within higher education, in which senior managers and student representatives came together to discuss and make decisions around matters of importance to students.

2. Report from the last meeting

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

3. Actions arising from the last meeting

Student Senate received an update on key actions from the last meeting:

Additional prayer space

It was noted that provisions were now in place in all four colleges. The ongoing focus would be on increasing the scale of provision across campus.

Booking resources in the Sir David Bell building

It was noted that significant improvements had been made to arrangements for booking spaces and equipment in Sir David Bell since the last meeting.

Feedback on the new Computer Science programme

It was noted that the University had invested in study coaches to support its computing programmes. Computing is a growth area for the University and would also be a focus for the new Student Support and Success directorate.

Access to Putneymead Group Medical Practice

It was noted that students could access appointments at the off-campus site, but they would need to register with the practice in advance to do so.

4. Terms of reference, composition and membership

The terms of reference, composition and membership of Student Senate for 2022-23 were noted. It was noted that the position of Interfaith Officer was now vacant and that the membership would be updated accordingly.

5. Update on the start of term

Student Senate received an update from the Vice-Chancellor on the start of term, which focussed in particular on the following:

- That the University's student population continued to change, and was more diverse than ever in 2022-23.
- That the University had recently celebrated the opening of the Mary Seacole Health Innovation Centre, which was an OfS-funded redevelopment of an existing University building.
- A series of survey results were presented which indicated broad satisfaction with the start of term from new and continuing students.

Members of Student Senate then had a discussion about a number of matters, including the following:

- Feedback on the NEST: It was suggested that it would be helpful to utilise NEST as part of the enrolment process and the Director of Student Life agreed to consider this. **Action: Director of Student Life**
- Recent emails received from the UKVI Compliance Team: It was suggested that the tone of recent emails was unhelpful to students and unsupportive. Student Senate noted that it was important to communicate to students whose engagement was low that the terms of their Student Route Visa required high attendance at lectures and that a potential consequence of non-engagement was that their visa could be revoked. However, it was agreed that the emails could have been more supportive and the Chief Operating Officer agreed to review the templates. **Action: Chief Operating Officer**

6. Updates from Student Senators

Student Senate discussed a number matters that were highlighted by Student Senators in advance of the meeting. Highlights from the discussion are as follows:

Issue	Discussion
Onboarding international students	Members of Student Senate asked about the support provided to new international students during pre-arrival and induction. It was noted that the University had recently introduced NEST, a new student enquiry management service, which would enable greater support and information provision for new international students.
Accessibility (Left-handedness)	Student Senate heard that in some spaces on campus, only flip desks are available. In such cases, there are often no left-handed flip desks. The Chief Operating Officer agreed to look into this. Action: Chief Operating Officer
Communications (Cross-University) –	Student Senate heard a proposal to introduce Facebook Workplace, for the purpose of better supporting students to connect with each other online. It was agreed that further work was required given the importance of online community post-COVID. Student Senate heard that some of the University's existing systems,

	such as MS Teams, may be able to offer equivalent functionality, and that further enquiries would be made on this point. Action: Head of Web and Digital Engagement
Communications (Accommodation)	Student Senate heard concerns from members that the University's Maintenance Team do not give adequate warning to students of works in halls. It was agreed that the Chief Operating Officer would communicate these concerns to the Team. Action: Chief Operating Officer
Exams	Student Senate heard from members that some third-year students had not sat any exams previously because of the pandemic and were now being expected to sit exams in their final year. It was noted that exams were an important component of assessment practice in some areas, and that academic colleagues would support students to prepare appropriately.
Teaching quality	Student Senate heard concerns that some academic colleagues in the Faculty of Business and Law were overloaded with work. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost noted that a new workload model, the Academic Responsibilities Framework, had been implemented and should prevent this. However, they would follow up after the meeting to check on teaching time in the FBL. Action: Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost
Cost-of-living and laundry costs	It was noted that these discussions would be taken forward with the Sabbatical Officers outside of the meeting. Action: Chief Operating Officer

7. TEF planning

Student Senate received an update from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) on planning for the next Teaching Excellent Framework (TEF) submission, which was due in January 2023. It was noted that a separate student submission was being prepared by RSU colleagues.

8. Another other business

There was no other business. The Vice-Chancellor thanked all members of Student Senate for an excellent discussion and closed the meeting.

Date of next meeting: 1 February 2022

Dr George Turner
University Secretary
November 2022