

**UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON  
STUDENT SENATE**

**Report to Council from its meeting on 1 February 2023**

Committee Chair: Professor Jean-Noël Ezingard

The 38<sup>th</sup> meeting of the University Student Senate was held on Wednesday 1 February 2023. The meeting was held remotely via MS Teams.

**1. Welcomes, introductions and apologies**

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted. Student Senators and attendees introduced themselves by typing a brief introduction in MS Teams chat.

**2. Report from the last meeting**

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

**Actions arising from the last meeting**

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

*Accessibility (left-handedness)*

It was noted that additional left-handed flip desks would be ordered as required. Student Senators were asked to let the Chief Operating Officer know if left-handed desks are needed in a specific space on campus.

*Communications (Cross-university)*

It was noted that a project team had been established to review potential solutions for cross-University online communications, including the option of Facebook Workspace.

*Communications (Accommodation)*

It was noted that the University's maintenance team had been asked to give adequate notice to students when required to carry out work in halls. However, it was acknowledged that if the work was urgent the notice period would be correspondingly shorter.

*Teaching (Staffing)*

It was noted that new posts in the Faculty of Business & Law had been approved and would be advertised shortly. It was confirmed that all workloads had been reviewed to ensure that no staff in the School had an excessive workload.

**3. Update from the Vice-Chancellor**

Student Senate received an update from the Vice-Chancellor and discussed the following:

- The University's Hardship Fund had been increased to address the cost-of-living crisis and other negative external factors. The Communications team would continue to promote the Student Hardship Fund to students.
- That according to press reports, the UK Government was currently reviewing

international student visas and while not imminent, a possible cap on the number of students and any dependents granted visas was being considered. That the University's TEF submission was submitted to the Office for Students on 24 January 2023. Thanks were extended to the PVC (Education) for leading on the submission and the RSU Sabbatical Officers for their input to the student statement.

- Feedback on NEST messaging: It was suggested that the noticeboard in Bede House reception was an effective way of disseminating information on the NEST and could be considered for other reception points. It was agreed that messaging in accommodation blocks would be explored further. **Action: Chief Operating Officer**

#### 4. Updates from Student Senators

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

Issue	Discussion
Community lunch	<p>Student Senate heard that the number of students attending the community lunch had increased greatly due to the cost-of-living crisis. It was noted that more signposting was needed for the initiatives available, such as the £2 hot meal deal, to raise awareness among students. <b>Action: Chief Operating Officer to liaise with Comms and Elixor on promoting initiatives</b></p> <p>The hardship fund for international students was also discussed. It was noted that all eligible students should have received an email promoting the fund.</p>
Laundry costs	<p>It was suggested that the cost of laundry services could be reduced. While it was noted that on-campus accommodation costs included heating and that the yearly increase had been less than the rate of inflation, in view of the cost-of-living crisis it was agreed that the issue would be considered by the Cost of Living group and brought back to the next meeting. <b>Action: Chief Operating Officer</b></p>
Timetabling	<p>The issue of exam scheduling was raised. It was acknowledged that there were some issues and agreed to review the upcoming schedule to address the issue of bunching. It was further agreed that Student Senators should provide feedback on the schedule for Law School exams to the PVC (Education). <b>Action: Student Senators/ PVC (Education)</b></p>

Hybrid teaching	The accessibility of in-person lectures was raised. The Recorded Teaching Policy was referred to and it was noted that although academics were required to consent to the recording of lectures, they should be encouraged to make recordings available where possible. <b>Action: PVC (Education)</b>
Industrial action	It was noted that a number of initiatives had been implemented to minimise the impact of industrial action by the UCU. Most classes would go ahead as usual and each school had specific plans in place to cover teaching. The impact of the ongoing travel strikes, and the necessity of an online teaching option was also noted. The University's primary goal was to minimise any disruption to students.

**5. Student engagement data and intervention work**

Student Senate received an update and Student Senators were invited to contact the Director of Student Life following the meeting with any feedback or questions.

**6. Nest update: data and themes**

Student Senate received an update. It was noted that the Director of Student Life would email Student Senators following the meeting for their thoughts and suggestions on the Nest. **Action: Director of Student Life**

**7. National Student Survey Update**

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) gave an overview of activity to-date and invited Student Senators to give further feedback outside of the meeting.

**8. Another other business**

The Vice-Chancellor reminded Student Senators that feedback was always welcome outside of meetings.

**Date of next meeting:** 26 April 2023

*Elaine Lentell  
Governance & Legal Office  
February 2023*