

Candidate Question Time - VP Education

Kate Roberts 06:32

Hi everyone, welcome to our fourth night of candidate question time. My name is Kate Roberts, your current president, my pronouns are she her, and I'll be your host tonight and across the week. I'm joined by Phill Dowler, our democracy coordinator will be supporting me with the tech tonight.

Kate Roberts 06:47

We're currently live on zoom and Facebook, and we'll be recording this evening to be uploaded to YouTube. Last night, we got to hear from candidates running for the position of Vice President Wellbeing and Diversity. Tonight however, we'll be focusing on candidates for the role of Vice President Education.

Kate Roberts 07:03

We'll just take a minute to run through how the evening will work. In each segment, candidates will take it in turns to start off with an opening statement. Once each candidate has made their statement we will then move on to questions. Questions were pre submitted by students over the last few weeks, and each question will be asked to all candidates of that role, and candidates will have a set period of time to respond. Time will start once candidates begin speaking. And if candidates continue to speak beyond reason, after the indicator has gone red, the candidate will be muted. Now with that I would like to welcome candidates for the role of Vice President Education.

Kate Roberts 07:48

If candidates able to put their videos on that would be fantastic.

Kate Roberts 08:05

Sathwik, are you able to put your camera on? Brilliant, there we go.

Kate Roberts 08:10

So this evening we are joined by Rida Haider, Maia Jarvis, Sathwik Pajjuri and Niamh Smith. Katharina Schulze is also running, but has not joined us this evening. So thank you so much, everyone for joining us. We're going to move right into opening statements in alphabetical order by surname, you will have three minutes to make your opening statement and time will begin once you start. So this means we'll be starting with Rida.

Rida Haider 08:39

When I was a child, I always dreamt of coming to the UK for the purpose of higher education. UK is one of the most popular countries with a rich history and tradition of providing world class education. Here I am today, good evening friends and my fellow opponents. My name is Rida Haider, and I'm running for the role of Vice President Education. Having spent almost three years at this university, I've become confident and well informed about the various facets of the education system within our university. I

have not only witnessed but also listen to the students and their concerns while studying at the library, while serving as an academic rep for over two years, and also while chairing two student groups.

Rida Haider 09:18

My manifesto broadly comprises of four main points. Number one, establishment of a long term education plan. In terms of current pandemic, we needed a structure, and we needed a structure which would accommodate the needs of every student and address the problems being faced by students in a pragmatic manner.

Rida Haider 09:37

Number two. My second point focuses on improving the healthcare, as well as health care provided to students so that they can focus better and give their best introduction to a pet therapy and meditation session, especially during exams is one of my main items on the agenda.

Rida Haider 09:55

Thirdly, I would like to work closely with the faculty to improve the quality of education, and definitely bring Royal Holloway among the top 25 universities in the world ranking conducted by times higher education. For this purpose, I would like to suggest the idea of signing more MOUs with with more renowned universities in the world.

Rida Haider 10:14

Last but not least, employment. Every student graduating from Royal Holloway must have a job through campus placement. For this purpose, I would like to focus on implementing more number of schemes such as the micro placement scheme, which already exists, and also introduce scale and personality development programmes, more mock interviews, and CV building sessions.

Rida Haider 10:37

So I appeal to you all today to vote and support me to the role of VP Education, because I promise that I will be the voice of every student. I will be your voice remember, RH for RH, Rida Haider to Royal Holloway. Thank you.

Kate Roberts 10:54

Thank you, reader will now move on to our next candidate which is mayor.

Maia Jarvis 11:00

Hi, evening, everyone. My name is Maia and I go by she/her and I'm a third year music / english student and I would love to be your VP Education. I believe that the two things I can bring to this role on my extensive experience on my boundless enthusiasm. I've worked highly this year as a school rep to address students concerns and I have a track record of turning student feedback into concrete change.

Maia Jarvis 11:25

Firstly, I campaigned for the music department to change their method of assessing recitals after all, students said that their suggestion of live zoom recitals was unsuitable. I collated over 50 written responses and debated staff and a team's meeting, where I put forward our suggestions and fought for

students, despite constant pushback. They completely changed their assessment method and went with our suggestion, which positively impacted 110 students and I was awarded rep for the month, which is pretty cool.

Maia Jarvis 11:53

And I've also responded to Media Arts students who wanted more lighting around George Elliot and Woodlands because they didn't feel safe. And this problem is now being solved by estates and I'm continuing to chase them up to ensure that they deliver on making a change.

Maia Jarvis 12:08

And in order to try and combat student loneliness during lockdown. I have also organised three virtual study group sessions with my media arts department rep, which took place this week, which is nice.

Maia Jarvis 12:19

And so now you've heard that I've already driven for student led change, what do I want to do for you next year. Firstly, I want to fix the personal tutor system. At the moment, we have no way of identifying people who aren't being supported by their tutor, and I'm sure many of you listening will fall into that category. I will implement a system that identifies people who aren't being supported by liaising with senior tutors to conduct midterm check ins. And I will ensure that all students can ask their tutors references and have solid relationships with their personal tutor.

Maia Jarvis 12:50

Secondly, I want to make sure students have a say in how we move on from the alternative assessments for, in this year. I will provide extensive in person exam support for those first and second years who haven't experienced in person exams for a long time. And I also want to keep the good parts of COVID-19 measures. I promise that lecture recordings will be clearly uploaded to Moodle, and allows students to learn asynchronously if they need to.

Maia Jarvis 13:13

I also want to ensure that joint honour students have more tailored support and provides students with more writing support by posting links to CeDAS directly on your Moodle pages. So no searching through emails and all that and creating more workshops that are assignment specific.

Maia Jarvis 13:29

This year, I have really enjoyed being a school rep and working closely with the current VP Education. And I've built solid working relationships with staff within my school and all my department reps and worked on several projects to improve student experience. I would love to spread this to the whole college and make actual impact on the whole student body. I believe that a crucial part of this role is somebody who has fresh ideas for improvement directly from students, who can hold the uni accountable to make sure they deliver and someone who's not afraid to challenge the status quo. I believe,

Kate Roberts 14:04

I'm afraid you have run out of time now so thank you very much for your answer.

Maia Jarvis 14:08

I was I was done anyway.

Kate Roberts 14:10

We're going to now move on to our next candidate which is Sathwik.

Sathwik Pajjuri 14:15

Hi everyone, I'm Sathwik. Mainly, I'll be telling my problems I have faced and why the reason.

Sathwik Pajjuri 14:29

Sorry, hi, this is Sathwik. The main reason behind my nomination for VP Education is the problems I have faced after coming to university. Basically I'll be dealing in dealing with the reality, and the problems faced by a lot of other students currently in Royal Holloway.

Sathwik Pajjuri 14:54

Basically most of the overseas students don't have proper knowledge on how the education system in the UK operates and what are the things they need to be prepared of while coming from their home country. And after coming to UK, it takes time for them to adjust. And in that span, they will be completing a term or so. So that loss of the most of the people and students lose many things. And due to the pandemic, everything is online, and they can't contact their tutors and helpers, especially in Royal Holloway. So establishing a good relationship between the tutors and the students, is first main thing and the second thing is the grading of your course works etc. and the problems encountered in the coursework, there is no proper help in the course etc. So, I would like to cover it up by making a simple changes in the system.

Sathwik Pajjuri 15:56

And finally, when a student should be aware of what the university is giving, which includes benefits or some kind of properties, etc, where everyone should be aware of what the university gives and what a student should ask for the university.

Sathwik Pajjuri 16:25

That's it. Thank you.

Kate Roberts 16:28

Thanks very much. We're now let's move on to our next candidate, which is Niamh.

Niamh Smith 16:39

Thank you, Kate.

Niamh Smith 16:41

Hello, hope you're all doing well. My name is Niamh Smith, my pronouns are she/her. And over the next three minutes, I'm going to tell you why I should be your next VP Education. I passionately believe in ensuring that all students receive the opportunities they deserve in a post COVID world. From first

years through to post graduates, I want to actually make a meaningful change to each and every student at Royal Holloway. To do this, I've crafted a 15 point Manifesto, which contains something for everyone. Don't worry, I'm not going to go through the whole thing. But I'm going to highlight a few points that I think are unique to my Manifesto.

Niamh Smith 17:19

I will diversify the curriculum by working with students, not for them. Allowing you to have a say in the development of new modules and the reviewing old ones. I will lobby the university to offer resets on any past modules or assessments below the greater 62. To make up for the absence of a best 90 policy this year.

Niamh Smith 17:37

I will fight to ensure that all students who are meant to graduate in 2020 or 2021 will actually receive a graduation, that these students get to say and how and when this graduation is staged.

Niamh Smith 17:49

I will make Mental Health Training compulsory for personal tutors so that they have the knowledge to help students who are struggling with these issues.

Niamh Smith 17:57

I will also put up employability high on the agenda, creating a graduate placement scheme for final year students to gain experience they've lost out on due to COVID-19. I also look at increasing the number of part time jobs both on campus and within the local community.

Niamh Smith 18:12

I will provide extra funding for academic societies, improve the functioning of the academic rep system and create networking opportunities with other universities.

Niamh Smith 18:21

I will improve Moodle, ensure visiting tutors are trained and paid fairly and double down on the issues of commitment to sustainability, pledging to make our campus carbon neutral by 2030.

Niamh Smith 18:32

And finally, I promise a full investigation into the handling of COVID-19 by academic departments, ensuring that we do actually learn from previous mistakes. I know from past experience that I'm not everyone's cup of tea, but I urge everyone watching this to vote not for the candidate. But for what that candidate plans to do. If given this rare opportunity, I will not let the student body down. Hopefully I will have the next academic year to prove that to you. A vote for me is a vote to ensure that no student is left behind. Thank you.

Kate Roberts 19:05

Thanks Niamh. And thank you very much everyone for your opening statements. We're now going to move on to questions which you'll have five to answer. You'll have two minutes to answer each

question. And your first question is, what does decolonisation mean to you? And what could it look like in practice? This time, we're going to start with Niamh.

Sathwik Pajjuri 19:27

And sorry, I didn't heard the question. It was a blur in the middle.

Kate Roberts 19:32

That's right. The question was What does decolonisation mean to you? And what could it look like in practice? We'll start with Niamh.

Sathwik Pajjuri 19:41

Yeah, first of all, my English is not that good that I can understand the meaning of decolonisation. And the second thing is, I. Hello?

Kate Roberts 19:56

I think you've dropped out of there and I'll send you a chat message Sathwik. If we go to Niamh for your answer, please.

Niamh Smith 20:01

Shall I, shall I start? Okay, perfect.

Niamh Smith 20:06

For me decolonising the curriculum, which is what I believe this question is referring to means moving away from a centralised Western canon of knowledge and towards a more open curriculum which features writers of many different nationalities and races.

Niamh Smith 20:20

In practice, I think that this is more achievable in some subjects than in others. For example, it'd be much easier to decolonise a subject like history or geography, rather than computer science, for instance. I would think that decolonizing a subject just to use the example of English, which is one of the subjects I personally study, would involve looking at reading lists and trying to include works by a diverse range of authors.

Niamh Smith 20:44

However, I think that it is important when conducting decolonisation work and diversification work in general that it is not left, specifically up to me. I am a reasonably privileged white woman. And I think a lot of this work should be led by others who have a greater stake in this issue than I do. As a result, if I'm elected, and you choose me as your VP Education, I will allow students to play a key role in decolonisation, putting their views forward to influence the reviews of old modules and the creation of new ones.

Niamh Smith 21:19

That's, that's me finished.

Kate Roberts 21:22

Brilliant. Thanks, Niamh. The next candidate we're going to hear from Sathwik, and he seems to have dropped out on mine, so I'm not sure if he's still there.

Sathwik Pajjuri 21:32

Yeah, I'm there. I just joined. Sorry, I was having some internet issue I do not really, this is why this is happening. And yeah, as far as I'm concerned with the decolonisation, there is nothing like the other lands opinion or anything, or etc. Here. After coming to UK, everyone begins brought in and mature so that nothing happens, actually, something inferior or something superior.

Kate Roberts 22:05

Thank you Sathwik. And the next candidate we're going to hear from is Maia.

Maia Jarvis 22:11

And yeah, so to me, decolonising or decolonising. The curriculum, curriculum means ensuring that there are a wide eclectic array of diverse voices, and ensuring that we consider multiple viewpoints, not just those of straight white old men, and most crucially, amplifying the viewpoints of those in marginalised groups.

Maia Jarvis 22:29

So for me, this practically looks like doing a complete review of the curriculum. And you know, taking apart our reading lists, and ensuring that we are not just centering the same voices, and, you know, hearing from, you know, trans academics, black academics, and all, all people from all groups. And I would try and go about doing that by building good relationships with lecturers who are from these marginalised groups and get their opinions as they are kind of academics, and also working with the student Collectives and centering student voices to hear how they experienced their learning and what they want out of their university experience that they're not getting. And I think it would be helpful to actually get someone external to review the curriculum to ensure that the assessment of it is objective and thorough.

Maia Jarvis 23:16

But I also think another part of decolonising the curriculum is appreciating that students come from different backgrounds when they come from a levels. So in the music department, the moment I designed a form with a lecturer regarding new modules that will help students learn classical repertoire, because at the moment, we kind of expect that they know that stuff. And I think part of decolonising is also realising the students come from different backgrounds, we're not expecting them to all have the same level of knowledge and actually helping them increase their knowledge in all areas.

Kate Roberts 23:51

Thanks, Maia. The next candidate we're going to hear from as a reader

Rida Haider 23:56

Thank you for the question, Kate. decolonisation in my opinion basically refers to a change. It is an idea, a process by which we need to rethink, reframe, and reconstruct our ideas of giving education. If

that means that we need to implement an individualistic approach then be it, but it has to be done in favour of students, in favour of supporting students from all walks of life.

Rida Haider 24:24

At university we meet students from different countries different cultures, who may not be accustomed to the culture of a university, it is very important to create an atmosphere create, a set of principles on the basis of which the students feels accepted.

Rida Haider 24:45

This can be executed by practising the principles of healing, empowerment, reflection, definitely connection and validating the students and their experience. And also learning from them. These experiences will not only not, not show the skills of our students, but also will assure the student in performing better and achieving their dreams. Thank you.

Kate Roberts 25:20

Thanks, Rida. And thank you so much everyone for your answers. We're now going to move on to the second question. So the question is, this year has seen a massive shift and how we receive our education. This presents some real opportunities for the future. What In your opinion, could education look like in the future? For this question, we're going to start with Sathwik.

Sathwik Pajjuri 25:45

Hi everyone.

Sathwik Pajjuri 25:55

[Music plays]

Sathwik Pajjuri 25:57

Basically providing education is the basic requirement is providing the resources to learn, first of all, and yeah, our university provides many of the resources but most of our students are unaware of those resources and educating them how to utilise the resources is another thing. So providing education is not only the thing to be disposed of it is also providing how to utilise those resources for your education is the main thing.

Kate Roberts 26:33

Thank you Sathwik. The next candidate we're going to hear from is Rida.

Rida Haider 26:42

Thank you for that question once again. And this question is also, is this also, this this question coincides with one of my manifesto agendas, that we do need to establish a long term education plan. In terms of a pandemic. We have witnessed the transition of a face to face education to an online one which has led direct emphasis on the use of technology, computers and internet. Why? The trend, the transmission of knowledge has been online, but it has also created a few loopholes and issues for students who have not been able to attend university, within the university and who have been attending universities in the other parts of the world, from their homes. I believe we need to establish an

education plan that accommodates the needs of such students, we need to make sure that they are provided with all sorts of research paper, library books online, which will ease them in, in receiving high standards of education, which can only be done if we implement technological advances in our education system. That's all Kate.

Kate Roberts 28:06

Thanks, Rida. So the next candidate we're going to hear from is Niamh.

Niamh Smith 28:25

Okay, I think an education of the future will be mostly online, but still the features of the in person experience. We have seen how important in person contact is during the COVID pandemic when families and friends have been separated for long periods of time.

Niamh Smith 28:42

However, I think that a lot of positive things to come out of this experience such as lecture capture for pretty much every single department, and digitalization of resources, I think they're here to stay. And that's great. I think the playing field was not entirely levelled, is a lot more equal. So hopefully we can continue to work towards complete equality. I think that in the future, we might see more student voice in the management goals of the university due to the events that we have seen in universities such as Manchester where students recently led a vote of no confidence in their Vice Chancellor.

Niamh Smith 29:18

As we've seen many social justice movements bring to life in the last year. I think that's something similar will happen with the student movement, and that there will have to be a review of how universities run to place students more at the centre. I would like to think personally that in the future, that maybe what I term, the Waitrose model of business, will come to pass in the university sector. Which is where students actually have a financial and managerial stake in the university, and thus have more power to change things that matter to them.

Kate Roberts 29:49

Thank you very much Niamh. And we're now going to move on to our next candidate Maia.

Maia Jarvis 29:56

Yeah, so there has been so many positive things from the COVID-19 measures that have been brought in. And I think they bring about a more flexible and inclusive approach to education. So I think that in the future, it could be more beneficial for more people. So, you know, the covid 19 pandemic has brought in measures that, you know, the disabled community, for instance, have been asking for for years. And they've only just been introduced now. But now they're here, we need to make sure they stay.

Maia Jarvis 30:26

And so in terms of what education would be like in the future, or next year, I want to ensure that lectures continue to be recorded and are clearly signposted and uploaded to Moodle. And they also

want to ensure that lectures continue to be uploaded to Panopto to ensure people can access closed captions.

Maia Jarvis 30:43

I also think students should be provided with the opportunity to learn asynchronously, and that there should be more chances for blended learning. So people who, you know, learn in person and want to learn in person. And we've learned how valuable that is, and that it's been taken away from us can learn in person, but people who maybe need to learn from home, we can also tune in live or watch something that's been recorded at a later date.

Maia Jarvis 31:07

And I also want to see a more flexible mode of attendance kind of brought in where, you know, people need to be allowed to have sick days and record, watching a lecture recorded could count, as you know, being there, you don't have to tune in live. So, yeah, so in terms of how I think it could be in the future, I think we need to make sure that the more flexible and inclusive approach to education that we've seen, needs to stay.

Kate Roberts 31:36

Thanks, Maia. And thank you, everyone for all of your answers to that question. We're now going to move on to your third question, which is, how would you ensure effective representation and engagement with the postgraduate community, both on and away from Egham and London campuses? For this question, we're going to start with Maia.

Maia Jarvis 31:57

Firstly, I would set up regular meetings with postgraduate web, web, reps, and the postgraduate student collective. And I really want to get to know the specific problems that face that postgraduate students face. Because at the moment, you know, I'll be completely honest, that's an area that I don't have much knowledge of. And I'm really keen in expanding my knowledge of all student problems, because I can't claim to know everything about everyone. Um, and I think the most important thing is, you know, when I'm starting initiatives and trying to put together things to improve student experiences, that we consult postgraduate students and say, you know, would this actually help you and make sure that their voices are being heard in, you know, the plans that we've put together.

Maia Jarvis 32:44

And also, I think it would be nice to be kind of present in maybe the London campuses and be present in kind of postgraduate spaces, and not just focusing just on the undergraduate students. And so yeah, I would love to get to know more postgraduate students and address the specific problems they face.

Kate Roberts 33:05

Thank you. The next candidate we're going to hear from is Sathwik.

Sathwik Pajjuri 33:11

Yeah, this question is blessed to me as I'm a postgraduate student. And yeah, I really know the problems of these postgraduate students where they are facing, especially while in their learning

modules, they don't know what are the resources available. And first of all, taking feedback from them at the very first month will be helpful so that their academics can be improved in the very first manner. And secondly, educating everyone about their academics is one thing because most of the people are not aware of what is going on and whose graduation is more like just doing a little thing. Yeah, there are many things in the post graduation where we need to be focused of, and currently, the module followed by Royal Holloway is highly stressed, and as I can experience this stress. And yeah, as far as I know, many of them postgraduates modules currently done in Royal Holloway are fully stressful, and needs to be changed immediately.

Kate Roberts 34:17

Thank you, Sathwik. The next candidate, we're going to move on to his Rida.

Rida Haider 34:23

Thanks for that question, Kate. I would like to begin by saying that I am also not very well versed with the postgraduate students however, from my little knowledge I have, I would say that postgraduate students are an integral part of our university to begin with. And we can, we can, we can make them feel more inclusive by maybe giving them more teaching responsibilities and maybe having more staff contracts with them. At both Egham as well as London campuses. For the students who want to, for the undergraduate students who want to take up the courses, which they, which postgraduate students are already pursuing, we can introduce a sort of buddy system or a buddy contract in, in terms is, on the same lines of shadowing that happens at the hospital where the postgraduate student can maybe give an insight to the to the undergraduate student about their lives and about their, their life whilst studying. And also maybe, maybe show them or make them accustomed to the subjects they're studying or mode of studies. And also on the way of writing dissertation, these are all small steps that can be taken to engage postgraduate students within the university.

Kate Roberts 36:00

Thank you, Rida. And we're now going to move on to our next candidate Niamh.

Niamh Smith 36:12

So it's interesting that this question mentions the London campuses, I actually want to conduct a policy inquiry into this campus as I think it's been a bit neglected. Where the SU and more widely where the university is concerned.

Niamh Smith 36:26

And I also plan to do another policy inquiry on postgraduate taught students more generally, so that we can make sure that the provision for them is adequate. And things are generally working as they should be.

Niamh Smith 36:39

I want to create a tailored version of the SU newsletter specifically for post graduates, as a lot of these students don't really engage with the issue, unfortunately. So I think by doing this, they might actually think, you know, SU represents me, and they have events and services that appealed to me. And so I'll get involved, which, which would be great.

Niamh Smith 36:57

And more generally, I'm planning to create new tools so that students can contact their academic reps more easily. And so that reps could also be more active and actually have that impact on the student experience, which is sometimes lacking.

Kate Roberts 37:17

Thank you very much Niamh for your answer. And thank you, everyone. We're now going to move on to the fourth question. So the question is, how will you work with school reps to foster inter school relationships within the academic community? For this question, we're going to start with Rida.

Rida Haider 37:39

Thank you for this question. We can work effectively with the school reps by coming up with something common between courses and then offering maybe a joint degree or joint activities that will give an opportunity to the students at Royal Holloway to maybe learn about different subjects and different modules. And this can be initiated during this, or the academic rep conferences when academic reps from all areas meet together and undertake the training. And I believe it's a perfect opportunity to come up with ideas of joint academic issues and topics. For instance, I'm a biology student, and I would love to learn about stocks. So if there is an idea where we can come up with a system where a business student or biology student come up with a scheme where they can teach each other or maybe they can organise a debate or, or a learning session. That would be ideal. And this can also be achieved by maybe giving students a chance to do a, to do a module in a degree which is not their own degree, just to enhance their knowledge and garner more information about a certain area of subject or study, they would like.

Kate Roberts 39:23

Thank you, Rida. The next candidate we're going to hear from is Niamh.

Niamh Smith 39:31

So if elected, I will have regular meetings with all of the school reps separately and also meet with them as part of the Education Executive. And in my opinion, the Executive is a perfect chance to build these inter school relationships. And hopefully, through the meetings of the Executive will be able to create events or schemes that do bridge different schools in the university. And I also think it's important that we encourage inter school relationships between academic societies as well. And again, I think events are the way to go. So I think it'd be great if, for example, we had like a joint lecture by history and psychology society on the history of psychoanalysis. So maybe a joint trip by politics and physics to maybe somewhere like Switzerland where you've got CERN. And you've also got a lot of the EU institutions there as well. So I think it'd be great if maybe we looked beyond the academic representation system and also looked at academic societies as well as I think a lot of students who wouldn't necessarily get involved with the academic system or departmental schemes would be up for getting involved with, with their, with their societies that they're a member of.

Kate Roberts 41:01

Thanks, Niamh, the next candidate we're going to hear from is Maia.

Maia Jarvis 41:09

Yes, so I would like to meet with school reps more often than currently occurs and build really strong lines of communication with them. And I know the question is about school reps. But I also believe in building strong communication between you know, individual department reps, and you know, course reps on the ground, because that the students are really, you know, on the ground and having all these issues. So, I'd like to build relationships with them. And I'm currently music rep before the student workshop, which is a society affiliated with the drama department. And that's all about building relationships between music, drama, and media students. And I know I'm talking about kind of within the school here, but essentially, the approach that I've had to that role I would love to bring to inter school events. So it's all about finding niches that can be filled by students from other roles from other departments, sorry. And so for example, if you have a composer in the music department who needs a text to set to music, well, we've got hundreds of creative writing students.

Maia Jarvis 42:08

And I would love to start off the year by meeting with school reps, meeting the department reps, and finding these niches because we've got all these students out here, you know, someone you know, in the film department needs an actor. And I've got the mentality to, you know, approach those problems from being a music rep at the student workshop. And I think school reps can be a really good channel. And so people can email their school rep and say, Hey, I'm looking for this person. And we can build people CVs, you know, get their academic skills boosted by doing all these things.

Maia Jarvis 42:40

And I also think joint honours students are a really good way to foster across students, across school relationships, I'm, I'm a cross school joint honours student, and I would love to set up more social and academic events targeted at joint honour students. I'm currently organising music and theatre workshop. And that is all about, you know, building bridges between departments. And I would love to bring that same approach to the cross school relationships.

Kate Roberts 43:10

Thanks, Maia. The next candidate we're going to hear from is Sathwik.

Sathwik Pajjuri 43:14

Thanks for the question. And yeah, considering the academic group rep use, the very first thing I will do is taking a feedback on a weekly basis so that for the very first month, we can get to know or what are the problems faced by the student. And we can reduce the impact of the problem in the first month itself. As every term has a particular time period of three to six months, by solving the impact in the first month, we can agree, we can at least get the students know that there is a Students Union, who cares about them. And if it is not solved by the academic representatives, then the most common problem will be forwarded to the concerned department and all every lectures or the additional guest lectures, whatever they are needed for the students will be provided in the very first manner so that the students can really get intense manners. Yeah, thank you.

Kate Roberts 44:12

Thank you. And thank you, everyone, for all of your answers. We're now going to move on to your fifth and final question, which is, as Vice President Education, you'll be heading up academic rep conference, which takes place annually, each year focuses on a theme. So what would your focus be for conference 2022? This question, we're going to start with Niamh.

Niamh Smith 44:40

So when I was originally thinking about this question, I was thinking, a conference on kind of inclusivity and diversity and then I realised that that was infact this year's conference. So I, this is this is a bit out of the box, but I would quite like to host a conference on extra curricular education, so to clarify what this is, I basically mean academic societies, online courses, or anything people might do outside their course to upskill or expand the knowledge of their subject. And I think this is really important because when we think of education, we're so often focused on kind of what's part of this course or department or school, but we don't look at what students are doing outside their studies to educate themselves. So as part of the conference, there'll be events on things such as MOOCs, which stands for massive open online courses, academic societies, study groups, and anything else extracurricular that students kind of do in their spare time that contributes towards that education. And I feel like this would really kind of plug a gap and help with kind of working out the kind of the agenda for the next five or six years at the SU and looking into an issue that hasn't really been looked into before.

Kate Roberts 46:06

Thanks, Niamh. The next candidate we're going to hear from is Rida.

Rida Haider 46:11

Thank you for the question, Kate. When I saw this question, I was actually happy. Because I plan if I become the Academy, Vice President Academic, I would love to focus on rebuilding student community post COVID. Over the past one year, we have seen transitional changes in the way education was relayed to us in the way we received knowledge, a lot of students have faced issues, ranging from emotional, mental, as well as issues in motivation, it is very important to restructure and come up with the plan will be rebuilt student community, to make them feel more motivated and make them engage into a normal education life. And go back into the way of university education as well as school education used to take place when we had traditional of offline timed exams, or when the pressure of assignments was not that much. And when students actually had a balance between their work and leisure. I think because of COVID, a lot of students lost out on that and rebuilding the student community post COVID will focus on all the aspects that students lost out on in past one year, which will also include intensive training in mental health, which is a very important issue these days. And we must each student must focus it, each staff member much work, must focus it and give leverage to it in making decisions about a student's progress. So yes, in 220, in 2022, if I get an opportunity, it will be focusing on rebuilding student community, post COVID. And definitely giving students a hope of giving their lives back giving the university life back to them.

Kate Roberts 48:28

Thank you. Thanks, Rida. The next candidate we're going to hear from is Sathwik.

Sathwik Pajjuri 48:36

Yeah, first thing I do is what the who are the students whom is their college life and the COVID. And whatever they want to do after the COVID situation. College should provide all the facilities that the student want, so that they can get the student life back. And the second thing is, educating all the students that there is someone who always cares for them. As you can see in the meeting, there are only five people and most of the people don't even know that there is an education meeting going on, so that they can at least vote.

Sathwik Pajjuri 49:14

Educating everyone in the university that these are the benefits. These are the properties of university. These are the rules and regulations of the university, you should be prepared of these and make sure that every student will never miss the college life. Thank you.

Kate Roberts 49:34

Thank you, the next candidate we're going to hear from is Maia.

Maia Jarvis 49:40

Yes. So initially, the thought that came to my head was, you know, building as we talked about before, the inter school relationships and finding those niches among students. And then I also thought about how we should talk, we should talk more about how academia prepares you for the outside world. And I think it'd be really useful to have a conference that was about, how can you sell your degree? How can you identify your academic skills? And you know, put them in your CV? And where will they lead you? And what transferable skills does your degree give you? I think it'd be really beneficial to help students identify the skills that they need, and also saying, you know, how can I, what society can I join to boost that? What project can I get involved in. And I'd also like to use that as a platform for academic societies, and where they can advertise the events that are going on, and let people really, you know, boost their CVs by taking part in more things academically.

Maia Jarvis 50:35

And I also think we don't dedicate enough time to let people think about their career. And I don't know whether any third third year students or finalists relate to this, but I feel like it's a whole nother module in itself, just trying to figure out your career apply for jobs, apply for graduate schemes. And I feel like we almost need to embed time for that career development in the degree itself. So, you know, for example, if you're studying music, you could have you know, a half unit or some workshops on you know, working with management and doing the admin side of things. And I think we do need to somehow embed time in the degree dedicated to career development.

Maia Jarvis 51:13

And so, yeah, I think my answer would be, you know, a rep conference on how to use the academic body and lectures on your own skills to boost your CV and boost your employability, which I think would benefit many people. And since the job market has absolutely been hit by COVID.

Kate Roberts 51:32

Thanks, Maia, and thank you everyone for your answers. So that brings us to the end of the questions this evening.

Kate Roberts 51:38

Voting is open from Monday the 22nd of March until Wednesday, the 24th of March, we have results announced later that night. In our voting system, we use single transferable vote, which is also known as STV. This means that you can rank candidates in order of your preference, candidates will need to secure 50%, plus one, of the total votes in order to secure the position. If this is not achieved right away, the person with the lowest votes will be removed from the election, and the votes will transfer to remaining candidates according to your preferences. This will continue until either a candidate achieves the 50% plus one line, or only one candidate remains.

Kate Roberts 52:17

Thank you so much to our candidates and to you for joining us tonight. We're going to return tomorrow at the same time while we hear from candidates for the role of President. We look forward to seeing you there. Have a good evening. Thank you.

Niamh Smith 52:29

Thank you.

Sathwik Pajjuri 52:29

Kate, I actually got a question for you.

Kate Roberts 52:33

Sorry, Sathwik. We're gonna end this there, if you want to send me a question, please drop me an email, and I'll catch up with you afterwards. Thank you.

Niamh Smith 52:42

Thanks, everyone.

Maia Jarvis 52:45

Thank you.