Education Executive Minutes

Date & time	23/01/2024 17:00-19:00
Location	Moore 004/5
Attendance	Sharanya Sivarajah (Vice President Education – Chair) Izzy Masters (School Representative – Humanities) Isabella Neergaard (School Representative – Life Sciences and the Environment) Martin Kapusta (School Representative – Business & Management) Het Unadkat (PGT Community Officer) Madelaine Gray (Co-opted member) Hannah Hockin (President) Nisha Bundhun (Vice President Wellbeing and Diversity) Lauryn Fleming (Academic Communities Coordinator – Secretary)
Apologies	Isobel Morris (Co-opted member) Oliver Case (School Representative – Law and Social Sciences) Carmen Anderson (School Representative – Performing and Digital Arts)

Item	Action	Responsible	Due
3	SS to discuss essays and assessment week with Matthew will update reps on outcome.	SS	02/02/2024
3	SS to discuss assessment timetable release timings with Zainab.	SS	12/02/2024
4	SS to pick up members' concerns about consistency with Moodle with Zainab	SS	02/02/2024
6	IM to email reps about a cross-school (essay focussed LSS, PDA HUMS) conversation about assessments with Vice Dean of Education from each School.	IM	02/02/2024
9	Updates on extenuating circumstances to members after conversation with academic staff/strategic working group.	HH	26/02/2024

Item	Notes	Action
2	Carrying on work with representation system, library is now returning to 24/7 opening but other spaces are still available for students who might want somewhere smaller. Academic representation action plan formed based on NSS – trying to push the visibility of VP Education	

	through social media and now trying to work it into an educational hub (school reps agree). Updates on UCU, library etc on social media. Organised an academic skills workshop which is a student led initiative to allow students to meet their course mates and reps and CeDAS is presenting. Adding to the academic support we offer from the SU, we are running rep development sessions, chairing meeting, and closing feedback loop to act on student and key contact feedback. Sabb lead on LGBT history month – working with the LGBTQ+ Community Officer and working on ideas that students want to see. Running speed dating where some funds will be donated to the RHUL transition fund. IN asks if these events/initiatives are something that they can promote. Manifesto update – student employability Grad week will be touched on later in meeting, providing support for students at the end of their studies, next manifesto point APP group to make education as accessible as possible at RHUL. Stress 121 contact with sabbs and sabb drop ins for students. HH congratulates SS on the work being done and supports Grad Week especially.	
3	IM shared that there has been some work done on assessment scheduling over assessment periods. Lots of essays are being scheduled over the same couple of weeks which means students can't relax over winter break. Often students don't get the questions until the week before the winter break which doesn't allow students to balance time effectively.IM is working with Jenny Neville (academic lead for English) to try to share exam questions earlier. The plan is to put together a working group with a range of students to try to find a solution. Also need to reconsider where assessments can go within the term and how many assessments can take place before winter break to allow them to be more evenly distributed. IM put together assessment toolkit to hand out and raised module pathways with Humanities school so lecturers can tell students in advance what assessments will be required during the course. There is a way of having individual choice but also a level of organisation with module delivery and assessments etc. Appreciates that there would be an admin burden, but it is change that needs to happen. Richard Hawley (Head of EDI) planning school social events – craft workshops etc.	

		SS to discuss questions about essays being in assessment week with Matthew Humphreys later in the week and will update reps on outcome.	
		IN had second school board meeting of the year and gave a presentation which staff were appreciative of. Biology students had assessment deadline stacking but the issue is resolved now. Doing some work with heads of departments to introduce them in their roles to give them visibility and allow students to see who is make the decisions etc. Trying to organise an academic rep meeting and rep fair which will be discussed with staff.	
		MK thanks the Business and Management School as they've put lots of effort into student voice. The new head of student experience has lots of good ideas around how to get students to collaborate. The Marketing mentoring scheme was successful, and teachers were pleased with the outcomes and the students mentoring were very helpful. Business changemakers were launched in collab with the Vice Dean of Education and other academics and recruitment will begin next week. The initiative is a student structure outside of SU but will collab with reps and students. Incentive to work in this way through vouchers etc, meetings signed off with Executive Dean, trying to get more feedback from students and understand what it is that they want and can update in next Ed Exec on progress. First year of running so will trial and see what success is like and MK will share updates with members of Exec. There are big discussions assessment futures as there were some issues with feedback as it has been basic and impersonal but now trying to encourage more in-depth feedback.	
		IM says something similar is happening in Humanities (like RH100) and gift cards good incentives.	
		SS looking forward to seeing collaborative approaches between initiatives like changemakers with the SU and rep system etc.	
		MK asks other School Reps about relationship with other academic reps. IM thinks they attend SSAMs but not necessarily had a chance to talk with reps as much as desired so far and first years seem engaged. MK states that there are 25 reps and in first SSAM there were 3 attendees so trying to find out reasons as to why there is a lack of engagement.	
4		Talk about careers service – how efficient do members find it and how is their experience with it?	

	How confident do students feel with careers and employability and how the careers service ties into their experience?	
	IN had a good experience but must seek them out for whatever it is. The team were happy to give advice, read through statements, give useful information but some students don't know they can go to careers service to look through MA applications, personal statements, practice interviews etc.	
	IM – Humanities had a careers alumni night where alumni from the school came and about 60-80 students attended who got to interview alumni on their experience. Most of career's support is driven by the school itself and not necessarily through the Uni careers service. The Careers Lead in Humanities had lots of collab with IM to investigate career support/events/accessibility etc.	
	MK shares that the careers service is always invited whenever there is an event or opportunity. Service is helpful for more general topics like what career pathways come from a specific degree etc but not had as much of a positive experience when proof-reading personal statements etc. It's good for first years but more support would be useful for third years etc.	
	SS mentions that the careers service is hiring students as careers consultants who can proofread CV etc which will give permeant members of staff more time to give targeted advice to students.	
	MG suggests that it depends on the knowledge of specific topics or fields from staff. It could be useful to give a questionnaire beforehand to help match a student with a more relevant staff member.	
	HU suggests that not many students will know about the services that careers offer. There could be more communication but also thinks it's students' responsibility to look for information/read emails/newsletter etc to hear more.	
	IM reinforces idea of sending emails/newsletter from specific people with a name signed off rather than generic message sent to everyone. Messages through Instagram to outline events etc and then direct students to emails where there will be more information. Students don't use Moodle for anything other than class content.	

	SS to pick up members' concerns about consistency with Moodle with Zainab.	
5.	LF outlines the School Rep 360 initiative and asks members for feedback and whether they would like to participate. School Reps ask for more information outside of the meeting but seem appreciative of the opportunity.	
6.	SS asks about experience of assessment period changes. IN suggests that having a designated week of revision and knowing the dates of assessments is helpful especially as an international student and students that have been spoken to in cohort enjoyed it too. HU outlines an anecdote of a peer whose exam was lisyed on campus connect but on the day, their name wasn't on the seating plan. The supervisor checked but the student was told the exam was at a different location to what campus connect stated. HH recommends the student contacts SU advice centre for support and guidance. IM states that there should be less assessments taking place in term time – the 5 day extensions over winter break often push deadlines into term time.	
7	LF asks members to feedback on the NSS Action Plan that the SU have been working on. Members think that the plan covers all necessary points and LF asks members to get in contact if anything else comes to mind to share outside of the meeting.	
8	Members were asked to discuss ideas and thoughts about how representation could look at RHUL or how they as student leaders would like to design education/representation. Members feedback is as follows: • Course reps per number of students (1 per 100?) different in each department • Quality over quantity (less, active reps rather than more inactive) • Interviewed rather than signing up • Other forms of student voice (ambassadors, mentoring, changemakers) • Feedback / Focus groups • Focus training on what feedback belongs in an SSC. Maybe student (school rep) led training? • Focus on co-creation – workshops to compliment this, SSAM seem more focused	

	on information exchange. Make switch to focus on 2-3 discussion points • Law held follow-up meetings for particular points. Encourage this to facilitate 'closing the loop'?	
9	LF updates members on the Academic Communities project and that the timeline is being postponed for a March 2025 launch although work is still being done to implement. SS makes members aware of the Leadership Elections and that nominations are currently open. If members want to ask questions, then SS welcomes them outside of the meeting. SS reminds members that the Academic Skills Workshop is taking place tomorrow (24 January) and encourages members and other students to attend. HH updates members on Extenuating Circumstances – a workshop took place with academic staff and strategic planning earlier this week. HH will be updated on information on 24 January from staff and will share any non-confidential information regarding the policy when available. SS thanks members for their attendance and contributions and closes meeting.	