

MANIFESTO

International Students' Officer ~

Christina Farmer



Last year I decided to apply to take part in the Roehampton exchange programme and study a semester abroad in Australia. Being an International student in a foreign county, was something that I had never dreamed I would have the courage or knowledge to do, and it is a hugely nerveing, yet exhilarating step for anyone to take.

After my own experiences in Australia, I feel truly passionate about passing on my own advice to International Students' and helping them not only fit into Roehampton life, but also to assist them in making the most of their time in one of the most fantastic cities in the world....London! As well as having firsthand experience of moving half way across the planet without any indication of what lay ahead, I am also not from London and I know once again how daunting a huge bustling city can feel a little overwhelming!

I would want to have contact with the incoming International Students' before their arrival and let them know prior what to expect when they arrive. Having a support system from the very beginning, I feel is vital to welcome students' into the country. As international students' arrive a few days previous to other students' I want to make the most of this opportunity to help them become aware of their surroundings, the area, how simple things like buses and tubes run and most importantly where to find the best places to eat and drink and how to spend their free time!

Ideally, I want to create a support group, probably on Facebook, as this is the easiest forum for most students to access, retrieve information and ask questions, that students' can ask prior and find out information before they arrive. I would also like to send them a welcome letter from myself informing them of my role and how my position in the union is designed to make them feel a part of our university life and the Roehampton community. I want to plan regular socials for any Internationals who are interested, including visits and trips during both

the day and evenings. I want to introduce them to typically British pastimes like football matches, pub grub and quizzes, Fish & Chips on the beach, Christmas delicacies and visiting the famous landmarks of London! As well as introducing students to the English ways, I want to give students an opportunity to share their cultures background and lifestyle with the university. Days like Thanksgiving, Chinese New Year, Australia Day, Diwali and St. Nicholas Day are only some of the culturally diverse celebrations e could acknowledge and celebrate. One thing I strive to plan is a city trip away for a few days to show International Students' another part of England and to enjoy the English ethos.

I am aware that the Welfare department is creating a welcome pack for International Students' which is something I would like to be heavily involved with. I also have a good relationship with Clare Burke, the International Officer for exchanges who I would liaise with to make sure my connections with the students before their arrival was secured.

I am running for this position because I want to give students the same support that I received as an International Student and to make sure that nobody feels lost or alone when arriving in a completely new country! I feel that I could redefine the role and bring it to a completely new level and provide a figure that students could speak to comfortably. Students' will have already chosen Roehampton for many reasons and I want to make sure, like I was, they are definitely not disappointed!