

Roehampton Students' Union

Extraordinary Students' Union Council

AGENDA

Tuesday 4th October 2022 - 5pm for a 5.15pm start
Chapman Hall, Southlands

		Max time	
1.	<u>Membership & Agenda</u>		
1.1	To note the agenda, consider proposals for urgent business (items which have arisen since the agreed deadline for agenda items which cannot wait until the next meeting of SU Council), and to agree to the guillotine - 8.15pm.	5 mins	5.20 pm
1.2	To note proxies in attendance and the apologies of absent Officers.		
3.	<u>Decision-Making</u>		
3.1	To approve RSU President, Harrison Cohen's Policy Proposal, 'Improve Student Support.' (attached - page 3)		
3.2	To approve RSU Vice President (Community & Welfare), Sharon Azams' Policy Proposal 'Protect Students Impacted by Course Reforms.' (attached - page 4)	125 mins	7.25 pm
3.3	To approve RSU Vice President (Education), Mushtaq Ismail's Policy Proposal 'No More Cuts!' (attached - page 5)		
	<u>BREAK</u>	10 mins	7.35 pm

<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p><u>Accountability</u></p> <p>Questions to RSU Officers</p> <p>To ask any other questions to the Students' Union Officers about the University's academic staff cuts</p>	<p>15 mins</p>	<p>7.40 pm</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Any Urgent Business</u></p> <p>To consider any other urgent business agreed at the start of the meeting</p>	<p>5 mins</p>	<p>7.45 pm</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Next Meeting</u></p> <p>Tuesday 18th October 2022 at 5pm in Adam Room, Grove House (Froebel).</p>	<p><u>2 hrs</u> <u>30</u> <u>mins</u></p>	<p><u>7.45</u> <u>pm</u></p>

Policy Proposal title: Improve Student Support

Name of proposer: Harrison Cohen (President)

Contact details of proposer: Harrison.Cohen@roehampton.ac.uk

Name(s) of seconder(s): Mushtaq Ismail (VP Education) & Sharon Azams (VP Community & Welfare)

Has this proposal been submitted via RSU Ideas? No



Roehampton Students' Union Council notes:

1. The recent academic changes has had a significant negative impact on the student academic experience, including, but not limited to:
 - Reduction of academic staff has caused delays to enrolment, release of timetables, with timetabling changes on the first day of teaching often without notification
 - Students have made financial preparations for the academic year, and many have been left out of pocket due to late changes
 - Students have been unable to study specific modules on their programmes advertised at the beginning of their course
 - Students have had to chase the University for programme updates
 - Many programmes are oversubscribed, which has caused timetabling issues into the start of term
 - Students have begun their programmes late due to complications with admissions and clearing, international complications, and timetabling issues, with minimal accommodation made for those who have missed induction; these are the students most at risk of isolation and withdrawal from University

Roehampton Students' Union Council believes:

1. Students should be notified of any timetabling changes as procedure
2. Students should receive their timetables in advance of the academic year at least 21 days prior to their start date, which would help students prepare for work, childcare, or other commitments, which is essential with the escalating cost of living crisis
3. Students should be reimbursed if timetables are changed at short notice and are left out pocket as a result
4. Students should not be expected to change dissertation subjects as a result of University-enforced academic changes
5. Students should not be expected to change module assessments when taking re-sits or deferrals due to University-enforced academic changes
6. The University have a responsibility to update students regularly about the status of their programme
7. The University should share student engagement data with RSU relevant support is in place

Roehampton Students' Union Council resolves:

1. Lobby the University to ensure that students will not be further impacted by the academic changes through the above factors, including but not limited to timetable improvements; communication improvements; further financial and wellbeing support; and specific programmes of study.

Policy Proposal title: Protect Students Impacted by Course Reforms

Name of proposer: Sharon Omonor Azams (VP Community & Welfare)

Contact details of proposer: vpcommunity@roehampton.ac.uk

Name(s) of seconder(s): Harrison Cohen (President) & Mushtaq Ismail (VP Education)

Has this proposal been submitted via RSU Ideas? No

Roehampton Students' Union Council notes:

1. 19 courses have ceased enrolment for September intake for 2022/2023 academic year. The University stated that "these [changes] aim to support an excellent academic experience for all current and future students. We want to ensure that all our students succeed in their studies and careers after graduation", in addition to sustaining their "...strategic aim to ensure we deliver academic courses that match student demand and have the best possible student outcomes."
2. Courses have been suspended due to a "lack of experts" (138th UoR Senate), amongst other reasons.
3. Students were initially warned about the cuts of 12th May 2022, with confirmation of the changes on 18th May. The University justified these changes "because we have seen shifts in the number of students enrolled on our courses, with some growing rapidly and others declining."

Roehampton Students' Union Council believes:

1. Affected students in their final year should not have their grades threatened as a consequence of the University-enforced academic changes
2. Students and staff should be given an appropriate amount of time to adapt to potential changes in the staffing of their programme. Changes in staffing significantly affects a number of facets of the students' studying experience – such as their ability to undertake a particular dissertation topic, decision to remain at the institution, selection of particular modules and more.
3. The University's claim to "treat everyone affected with dignity, respect, and financial fairness" has not been reflected in their actions. Students should be made aware of potential reforms to provide a wider perspective at University

Roehampton Students' Union Council resolves:

1. Lobby the University to apply a no detriment policy for students entering their final year of a programme that has been impacted by University-enforced academic changes, to ensure no student is adversely affected
2. Lobby the University to introduce a minimum 6-month recruitment period that must be undertaken once a significant reduction of staff in a particular programme has been identified before the programme is positioned to potentially be terminated or suspended.
3. Lobby the University to introduce procedural minimum 6-month statement to alert all students enrolled in courses where trends have shown a decrease in enrollment, and anticipated decrease in staff or anticipated decrease in successful registration before the programme is positioned to potentially be terminated or suspended.

Policy Proposal title: No More Cuts!

Name of proposer: Mushtaq Ismail (VP Education)

Contact details of proposer: Mushtaq.Ismail@roehampton.ac.uk

Name(s) of seconder(s): Harrison Cohen (President) & Sharon Azams (VP Community & Welfare)

Has this proposal been submitted via RSU Ideas? No

Roehampton Students' Union Council notes:

1. In May 2022, the University sent Voluntary Redundancy notices to 226 academic staff members, with the intention of between 60 and 70 staff members accepting the redundancy package
2. More staff members accepted the redundancy package than anticipated
3. Academic staff members have an increased workload due to the academic changes and shortages in academic staff teams
4. Academic staff are feeling vulnerable due to losing a substantial number of their colleagues

Roehampton Students' Union Council believes:

1. All staff members have a right to job security
2. All students have a right to receive the education promised when they enrolled on their programme
3. Students have a right to be informed about programme or module changes well in advance of enrolment
4. All students have a right to finish their programme without disruption
5. Improved staff working conditions would likely improve the student academic experience

Roehampton Students' Union Council resolves:

1. Lobby the University to pledge to no more staff redundancies for at least the next three years
2. Lobby the Vice Chancellor to hold regular town-hall meetings with students affected by the academic staff cuts and programme changes
3. Work with the University to ensure the provision of acceptable working conditions for all University staff members
4. Promote and increase the usage of Digital Rep, as a tool to collate an accurate and extensive database for student academic concerns
5. Continue to raise feedback and agreed actions to the University about student experiences