



Ravensbourne Students' Union Advisory Board

Minutes of the meeting of the RSU Advisory Board on Monday 4th November 2019 at 4:00pm in the Board Room at Ravensbourne University London

MINUTES

Present

Guy Hurd – Chair (GH)
 Shakira Martin – Vice Chair (SM)
 Brian Duncan (BD)
 Dudley Nganjo (DN)
 Erin Uberbacher (EU)
 Jonathan Walmsley (JW)
 Leyla Sitki (LS)
 Louise Prideaux (LP)
 Yousuf Joondan (YJ)
 Sadi Uswatul Ambia – Secretary (SUA)

In attendance

None

Apology

Tamara Howe

Actions

Mins	Action	By whom	By when
5	The Union to visit a few other independent small and specialist students' unions to practically observe their operations and report back to the Board	GH, DN, LS and SUA	31.03.20
	To submit student demographics of Ravensbourne to the Board	SUA	09.03.20
	To submit the staffing structure of the University to the Board	SUA	09.03.20
	To follow up on the appointment of the Students' Union Manager	BD	ASAP
	To have some clarity regarding the role of the SU Manager in a situation where an action taken by the SU officers contradicts the University	SUA	09.03.20
6	To share the Ravensbourne Student Experience Strategy with the Board	LP	09.03.20
	To develop a Students' Union Strategy	GH, DN, LS and SUA	30.06.20
	To draft a plan to explain the NSS to final year students	LP and SUA	15.01.20
	To submit Freshers income and expenses to the Board	SUA	09.03.20

1 Chair's welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Board. The Chair thanked everyone for being a part of the Board.

After the Chair's opening remarks, all board members introduced themselves.

2 Terms of reference

The Board noted the Terms of Reference of the RSU Advisory Board without any amendment and addition.

3 Secretary of the RSU Board

SUA was appointed as the Secretary of the RSU Advisory Board.

4 Elections

SM was elected as the Vice Chair of the RSU Advisory Board for the 2019/20 academic year.

5 Relationship Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding

It was noted that the Vice-Chancellor of the University and the President of the Union signed a Relationship Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the University and the Union on 23rd April 2019. The agreement clarifies the working relationship between the University and the Union covering responsibilities of common concern to both parties.

As per the agreement, the RSU Advisory Board (the Board) was established. The Board is now responsible for oversight of the democracy, governance, strategy and financial affairs of the Union rather than the direct line management by the University was in place. In response to a query, SUA explained that the long-term vision is to evaluate the possibility of establishing the Union as an independent charity. However, the Union does not have to be a charity if it appears to be serving its purpose under the current operational arrangements.

Action: the Union to visit a few other independent small and specialist students' unions to practically observe their operations and report back to the Board

Action: to submit student demographics of Ravensbourne to the Board

Action: to submit the staffing structure of the University to the Board

The Board was supposed to delegate the responsibilities of day-to-day and financial management of the Union, implementation of policy, procedure and strategy of the Union to the Students' Union Manager. However, the role was not in place.

Action: to follow up on the appointment of the Students' Union Manager

Action: to have some clarity regarding the role of the SU Manager in a situation where an action taken by the SU officers contradicts the University

6 Students' Union Annual Plan 2019/20

GH provided a verbal update on the Students' Union Annual Plan 2019/20. The Lay members and the Governor members appreciated the plan, however, they noted

that the amount of tasks are excessive for a small team to accomplish. The SU officers were advised to reassess the annual plan and incorporate some of the plans to the proposed Students' Union strategy.

LP stated that some of the plans overlaps with the University's Student Experience Strategy.

Action: to share the Ravensbourne Student Experience Strategy with the Board

Students' Union Strategy

In terms of developing a strategy for the Union, SM suggested networking with other unions and share good practices. They also recommended visiting a few small students' union to observe and understand their operations. SM also suggested that the strategy should be led by elected officer with support from the SU Manager.

Action: to develop a Students' Union Strategy

National Student Survey (NSS)

It was noted that the Students' Union has the lowest score of 39.82 percent on the NSS amongst all departments within the University. SUA explained that the NSS Q26 on students' unions has been the sector's lowest scoring item since its introduction because of the way the question was structured. The question is about academic representation which the Union currently does not provide.

Action: to draft a plan to explain the NSS to final year students

Seeking help from the student representatives was also recommended.

The need for having a clear student voice structure in the University was also noted.

Students' Union Elections 2020

The timeline for the 2020 Students' Union Elections were noted as below:

- Nominations period: 6th January to 4th February
- Candidate briefing: 5th February at 3:30pm
- Campaigns period: 5th – 16th February
- Hustings: 12th February at 3:30pm
- Voting period: 17th – 24th February
- Result announced: 25th February at 1:00pm

Freshers 2019

Action: to submit Freshers income and expenses to the Board

7 Budget

The Board noted the following:

- Students' Union Budget 2019/20
- To note Students' Union Shop Budget 2019/20

It was suggested that the update on the budget get submitted in a much simpler and easily understandable format.

8 Any other business

a. Voter registration

SM suggested that the proxy voting is explained to students while they are encouraged to register to vote at the upcoming general elections.

9 Students' Union Constitution 2019 *(starred)*

Noted without any pre-submitted comment.

10 Membership of the RSU Advisory Board *(starred)*

Noted without any pre-submitted comment.

11 Next meetings

Monday 9 March 2020 from 3:00-5:00pm at Ravensbourne University London

Monday 18 May 2020 from 3:00-5:00pm at Ravensbourne University London