**Student Council Report**

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Position: Vice-President Education  
Date of Council: 29/10/20

Please find below a summary of the 4 main projects I have been working on since taking up my role in the summer.

1. **STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH COVID – PRIORITY CAMPAIGN**

   Working with the Sabbatical team on a joint priority campaign with an aim of providing added academic support to our new and returning students across all schools at Herts. Expanding my research and raising my voice in front of the university officials on topics like Personal Tutoring, Second Lock down plans, Student Registration issues including UG to PG progression and considerations around framework resembling Safety Net Policy.

   **Evidence:** Attended meeting with University’s Deputy Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor Education & Student Experience and Secretary & Registrar about these concerns and highlighted these themes at the very highest level.

   **Explanation:**
   - Met Deputy VC Matthew Weait twice and informed him about the concerns related to added academic support which included Consistency across all schools which leaded to Personal Tutoring Framework. Moreover, asked about consideration of an option which might resemble Safety Net Policy?
     **Outcome:**
     - **New SAC policy** has been announced on 8th October 2020 which will be the same as it was for Semester B – previous semester.
     - **Updated Safety Net policy** has been announced on 14th October 2020 favouring students in these challenging times.
   - Met Pro Vice Chancellor Education & Student Experience Mairi and Secretary & Registrar Sharon in VCSU meeting and advocated for student registration issues and delays for International student CAS approvals.
     **Outcome:**
     - Most of the **registration issues** were resolved and students were able to get **CAS** as well which helped them progressing from Undergraduate to Postgraduate courses.

   Being an Education Officer, my role is well connected with the academic side of things. Therefore, I am very much keen on working on the issues through which our students can receive a better academic experience in these uncertain times.

2. **BUILDING A POSTGRADUATE NETWORK**
The Postgraduate students make up to 26% of our student body at Herts. Having this considerable figure in mind, I want this cohort representing themselves through a network which might be of help in socialising likeminded PG and mature students.

**Evidence:** After doing my research, I came to conclude that there is below average involvement of PG students in societies and Union as a whole. Moreover, I haven’t seen much of their engagement in activities as well.

**Explanation:**

- Created an initial action plan on this motive and targeted schools who have the highest number of PG representation. Shared this idea with the Officers who are linked with those schools.
  
  **Outcome:**
  I have asked the Sabbaticals to convey this message to the SCO’s who they are engaged with so that they can circulate it to the PG reps (once finalised) in their respective schools.

- Had a meeting with our Campaign Advisor and discussed about the branding options and other possibilities for this network.
  
  **Outcome:**
  Tash has already met with the Marketing team and have discussed the promotion plan for this network.

Unfortunately, International PG students find it quite difficult to get started with their settlement in a new environment due to shortage of time. Being a Postgraduate student, I have realised that building this network can help the new students to easily get settled at Herts if they can be supported by their peer group.

3. **COURSE ORGANISATION & COMMUNICATION**

The main purpose of this manifesto point was to be well-informed about the academic issues faced by our students. Help and support of School Community Organisers and student reps is vital in achieving this task as an Education Officer.

**Evidence:** I have been linked with SPECS (School of Physics, Engineering & Computer Science). As soon as I came to know that I arranged a meeting with the relevant SCO’s and we exchanged our action plans and on the possibilities of working together. Moreover, for better understanding on how the school is looking forward to supporting our students, I also had a meeting with Associate Dean Stephen Kane.

**Explanation:**

- Undertaking this role, I came to realise that all the Officers are linked with different schools so that the workload for each of them can be balanced equally. Therefore, I couldn’t have proper 1:1 meeting sessions with different SCO’s. But, to make sure that
they can approach me in case of an emergency I contacted Voice Team in this regard.

**Outcome:**
I am part of the SCO’s group chat which can help me to ask for any specific feedback/query. On the contrary, they can also directly raise any specific concern which needs to be highlighted on priority basis.

I genuinely feel that the relationship with the SCO’s and student reps will help this cause. For this purpose, I had been jointly involved in giving a big drive for student rep elections. I’ll engage myself with the SCO Forums as well to maintain proactive communication with them.

4. TIMETABLING

**Updates:**
I considered it as my manifesto as most of the students were frustrated by their Timetabling in the previous academic year. As of now, most of the studies are online and due to mix blend of learning there isn’t any clear picture yet.

In addition to that, I am also waiting for the Student Academic Satisfaction Survey results which can be used as an opportunity to research further issues and by the next Student Council I’ll be able to look and workout on this point as well.

Further information about the work I do can be found here: [https://hertfordshire.su/your-say/electedofficers/vice-president-education/](https://hertfordshire.su/your-say/electedofficers/vice-president-education/)

And further information on Student Council can be found here: [https://hertfordshire.su/your-say/student-council/](https://hertfordshire.su/your-say/student-council/)

Thank you for reading!

Saad Raees
Vice-President Education