**Research Academic Representative Forum (RARF)**

**Date: Monday 2nd December**

**Time:** 18:00- 20:00
**Location:** Blackett Lecture Theatre 2

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|  | Welcome and objectives8 attendees (5 in person, 3 online)EH updated on her role as Deputy President Education and provided manifesto updates. Mitigating Circumstances* EH stated that this may be more relevant to taught students specifically regarding assessment and feedback.
* EH is working on getting student MC case studies to provide a case to the university of student's experiences.
* Working on creating a sharepoint integration for MCs.
* Discussing with the unversity about removing standard MC documents and making it digitalised.
* EH asked students experience for any good practice – there was little response.

UROP & UKRI* UKRI has not increased since 1994, which is particularly important to the reps in the room. ICU working with 4+ London University's to lobby for change. EH also referred to the UROP fund and the focus to lobby for an increase of the number of bursaries' available.

Inclusivity* Creating an ‘About Us’ Union page, in 9 languages (aim to complete by the end of the academic year).
 | No actionsSlidedeck |
|  | PTES/PRES/MEQ* A reminder that the surveys are circulating soon and are really important for feedback to the college.
 | No actionsslidedeck |
|  | Learning well programme* EH promoted the panel event taking place in February looking at sustainable study strategies and wellbeing. EH highlighted that having a PGR student would be really beneficial. EH asked if this could be shared within networks.
 | No actionsSlidedeckNo actions |
|  | Digital Learning Student Group* Open to all students interested in digital education to feedback and participate in projects and communications.
* Offers training, project experience and references.
* Promotion of assessment tenders, student testers.
 | No actionsslidedeck/paper |
|  | Student Shapers* Paid partnership, to enhance education. Apart of the learning and teaching strategy, offering financial support and a framework to ensure impactful and inclusive collaboration.
 | SlidedeckNo actions |
|  | Study spaces* 2nd worst in Russel Group universities when it comes to space. EH showed statistics on how ICL students have the least amount of space even though they visit libraries etc more than their peers.
* Students and staff are being increased at White City but not expanding the facilities.
 | External slidedeckNo actions |
|  | Union Council Paper on Rent* EH highlighted the proposed rent paper with increased changes. EH noted that the OTs have brought down the increase from 50+ to 18%. EH also discussed hall seniors and their role in the rent debate.
 | Slidedeck/paperNo actions |
|  | White City* EH laid out the White City plans and asked reps for their input. Moving around 5,000 staff. Students stated that in current plans there are no provisions for study spaces, libraries or sports.
* EH discussed faculties/departments that are currently located in White City and will be moving by 2029.
* EH promoted opportunities to engage with the White City programme with panels and working group.
* RM noted place to relax/unwind - mindfulness room, get away from sensory overload is missing in current plans.
* Shape the Future campaign about White City was promoted.
* Naming Places campaign, reps asked what if name is inappropriate will it be filtered?
 | External slidedeckNo actions |
|  | TEF/Educational Gain* EH broke down ‘Educational Gain’ and how you define success and experience in Higher Education.
* EH presented how educational gain is measured such as through quantative and qualative skills, skills for employment, general skills and value skills.
 | Slidedeck/paperbackNo actions |
| Items for discussion |
|  | PG Supervision* Results recorded on menti
* Reps feel anxious to raise a complaint about working. EH promoted our advice service and that reps should come forward earlier than forums.
* Reps had mixed feedback about supervision support. They stated it depends on whether you get along with your supervisor and share the same values. One rep had a suggestion that at the beginning of the year you have an informal chat to see if you have the same values.
 | MentiNo actions |
|  | Postgraduate representation* Research group dynamics. Reps stated that sometimes they don’t have a research group as different supervisors have different ways of working.
* Reps would like to see a greater budget for reps to be able to celebrate eachother and incentivize engagement.
* Best practice was shared about a buddy system between PHD students.

PG Events* EH to look into early term 568 rep lunch
* Reps are struggling with a lot of different events at once at the end of the year (December) and would prefer it if these could be focused at the beginning of term or spread throughout the year.
* Reps would like more events for PGR and exclusively for them.
* Reps felt some events should be open for all put prioritized for PGR (eg Olympics)
 | MentiEH to look at 568 PG rep mixer lunch next October |
|  | Parity of PG vs UG student experience Building Community* Improving sense of community can be challenging without support of departments/divisions as they need to encourage their students to take time away from their work to get involved with things.
* Reps stated it's hard in different departments, as there isn't a lot of chance to meet those from other departments as any social activity is departmental led.
* PGRs social activity is privately arranged but reps tend to be limited due to budget.
* Reps felt that they didn’t hear a lot about communication of welcome and welcome fair. EH to to investigate lack of communication to PGR students regarding notifications of welcome and welcome fair.
 | MentiEH to to investigate lack of communication to PGR students regarding notifications of welcome and welcome fair. |
|  | AOB* Shuttle Bus (earlier and later) EH to raise about frequency and times and chase response.
* Library spaces on South Kensington. SAF research students have no access to a desk – EH to pass this on. J
* Desk space - not all PGRs are allocated desk space either, which can make it difficult to come onto campus if you don't know where you'll be able to work – EH to raise.
 | Verbal EH Actions 1. To raise about frequency of shuttle bus and times.
2. Pass on feedback about library spaces and availability to PGR students.
3. Allocated desk space for PGRs isn’t always available which makes coming to campus difficult, PGT students have to share.
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