

Student Council (23.03.22) – Updates from Rhi

Preventing Harassment and Discrimination on campus.

What progress has been made / what has been achieved?

- In my last update I said that we were going to be getting active bystander awareness training for student leaders and I am pleased to announce that it is officially going to be happening. The first session will be taking place on Monday 28th March from 1-4pm with the plan to roll it out as a mandatory part of the SLDP programme. The goal of the training is to support students to call out and challenge inappropriate behaviours such as sexual harassment, rape, and sexual assault.
- In addition to this I have been granted £10,000 towards a proposal around embedding consent into the student life cycle. After speaking to several students over the last few weeks/months I am deeply concerned about the lack of awareness about what constitutes consent in addition to what are appropriate behaviours. This is why within this proposal I am asking for consent training to be rolled out to every single student. This would then allow the University to apply harder sanctions on those that do sexually harass/assault other students.
- I have also planned and finalised a Sexual Health Awareness and Guidance Week which will be taking place the week after Fresher's week in September/October. The main aim of this week will be to highlight the importance of issues surrounding consent and sexual assault, promoting healthy attitudes towards sexual relationships, and educating students on topics such as STIs and safe sex.

What are my next steps / what do I hope to achieve by the next meeting?

- I have been pushing the University since January to sign the pledge which is asking Universities to no longer use NDAs. I have met with several members of senior staff to discuss this and whilst I have been assured that they have never been used for any case of sexual harassment/assault, it still has not been signed. I know how important it is that this pledge is signed and therefore I will continue pushing for this, however I would appreciate support from the student body to lobby the University directly. Please click on this link to directly email the VC - <https://nus.eaction.org.uk/Build-trust-not-silence-email-your-VC>
- I have joined a sexual violence working group with other sabbatical officers from across the Southern Region of the UK to find a way of tackling gender-based violence across institutions. The first meeting is in early April, and I will feedback at the next council what the plans are to take this forward.

Improving the disabled student experience.

What progress has been made / what has been achieved?

- I attended the first Estates Accessibility forum and we spoke about undertaking a full accessibility audit of the campus to ensure that all spaces are accessible for students and staff.
- I have met with the Disabled Student Network a few times since the last council and we have been discussing potential campaign ideas.

What are my next steps / what do I hope to achieve by the next meeting?

- Due to Zara leaving we didn't manage to plan the Student Rights Campaign which I mentioned in my last update, so I would like to look at how this could be implemented in the next academic year.

Mental health and wellbeing of students.

What progress has been made / what has been achieved?

- I have been working with Liv our campaigns coordinator on break and breathe and we have hosted a Time to Talk event which allowed students to come together and talk openly about their mental health and wellbeing.

What are my next steps / what do I hope to achieve by the next meeting?

- To continue planning wellbeing related events for students during the last few months of term.

Supporting Ukrainian and Russian Students.

- A group of sabbatical officers and I came together from across the UK to discuss the devastating impacts of the invasion of Ukraine. Together we have written a letter to Universities UK compiled with a list of recommendations calling our institutions to act now. I am going to be meeting with the director of Universities UK international tomorrow morning to discuss everything further. If you would like to read the recommendations please refer to this link - <https://wonkhe.com/blogs-us/should-universities-tell-students-the-outcome-of-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct-complaints-2/>