

AGM Report 2021

Head of Student Education – Ciprian Chiru

Hello and welcome to my AGM written report where I will be updating you on what I have been up to this year and on my key manifesto points. If you want to ask me anything about what I've been up to, feel free to email me at su.education@solent.ac.uk or reach out to me on our social media channels.

Manifesto Points:

Enrich the student experience through opportunities, support, influence and action:

- This was part of any concern or issue raised by students, regardless of its nature.
- As part of the process, I have taken part in resolving a lot of issues from financing issues to replacing diplomas not received free of charge by persuading the departments and make sure these are sorted.
- I have also sought to increase the student influence regarding the decision-making process and therefore I have done an email campaign to recruit as many Student Officers for the Student Council as possible. This was quite successful considering that the Council has never had so many officers. Two motions were also passed regarding the simulator usage in the Warsash Maritime School and the No Detriment Policy, which both were persuaded and implemented.

Addressing concerns raised through Course Reps regarding any academic issues or learning experience:

- As part of this manifesto point, I have worked alongside the Representation and Democracy department in order to restructure and revamp the Academic Representation system and provide a more focused training programme. We have attributed the following categories to the Course Reps, depending on the time they've been a student rep for: Level 1 (Providing training on how to deal with the main concerns that might come up regarding their course), Level 2 (Addressing concerns more complex than Level 1 and Level 3 (Senior Course Rep – focusing on mentoring the previous two levels). The faculty reps have also been very engaged and helped us deal with various issues raised through our Course Reps.
- I have taken the stance of contacting the course leaders, head of subjects and directors of school, depending on the situation, in order to address concerns raised by the students directly. Part of the process I have come up with, is the inclusion of the Faculty and Course Reps in the meeting, so the action plan can be agreed and its progressed followed by the representative in cause.
- This approach is offering a more direct and efficient approach to tackle the obstacles that might come up regarding the academic experience and the feedback was quite positive from all the stakeholders.

To offer guidance to any students who need it:

- As I have mentioned before, I've been working to offer guidance to students regarding various issues such as bursary inquiries, enrolment, diploma replacements, deadline extensions and course concerns.
- On any of the issues or concerns raised, I made sure it was carried on by the relevant department, chasing them if necessary and making sure the students see them finalised.
- On several occasions I have also supported students to fill in formal complaints, working alongside the Academic Caseworker.

To promote an environment with inclusivity, trust and progressive learning climate:

- This represents a support statement for my other manifesto points, meant to emphasize the abstract values that I am trying to promote.
- My email campaign that managed to increase the number of active officers is a good example. Part of this, two motions meant to make the life easier for students have already been passed. Moreover, I have initiated a change in the byelaws so we can co-op new officers and offer them the voting privilege, but this seats with the R&D for review.
- Currently I am working on a proposition with the VCG to make the SU organisation part of the assignments' briefs, so that way the students can engage more with the SU and access our services easier and with more confidence on board.

Other things I have worked on:

- SU Awards ceremony - Alongside Fern, the Head of Student Engagement, I have worked to deliver the Awards Ceremony, where the staff and students who had great contributions through their work and dedication. Initially we hoped we could have done this online, but due to the restrictions still being in place, we had to do it online. We are currently working on this.
- Implementing the No Detriment Policy – as this was requested by the students and also being passed as a motion in the Student Council, we have undertaken consultations with the VCG in order to provide a No Detriment Policy that would offer students the extra supported needed due to COVID-19 and also not affecting their degree reputation within the industry. In order to moderate the process, this was a joint effort from the Quality Management department, Students Union and the VCG group and it resulted in having a 'Phase 2' No-detriment policy. This was meant to reflect the new restrictions and the online teaching inputs, however still offering a strong learning experience meant to help students understand the competitive in their profession climate and to be ready to work in their chosen industry.
- Committee Meetings - Academic Board, Student Board, Faculty Committees.

- Trustee Meetings- Trustee Board, SOSUT, and Finance and HR Committee.
- Training - Graduate Management course and External Media Training with the BBC.
- Regular meetings with the VCG, Deans of faculties and the Quality Management department in order to discuss any arising matters or current issue which need to be addressed.