

AGM Report 2023

VP Education – A. Stefania David

Hello and welcome to my AGM written report where I will be updating you on what I have been up to this year. 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.

Period poverty

Period poverty can affect anyone who menstruates and access to menstrual products should be an essential, not a luxury. They are an everyday item for anyone who bleeds and must be easily accessible for all. This is not just a potential health risk if people can't afford to change regularly, it can also mean students' education and wellbeing can be affected, and I can't sit back and watch this happen. No one should be held back because of their period. Students should be focusing on their education, not if they can afford sanitary products this month. Four vending machines have been installed across the female, male, unisex and disabled toilets on the ground floor of The Spark, at Solent University. This is a trial and university also helped us with money for the products and they wanted to start with the ground floor of the Spark. The machine will dispense pads and applicator tampons for free and with ease. Alongside this, baskets full of period products are available in toilets across other Solent University owned buildings, such as Solent Library and St Mary's campus, well as the Students' Union's SU Exchange. More variety it's in the Exchange. I have worked with Grace and Green which already worked with other Sus across the country. There were some problems with this campaign but in the end, everything went smoothly and the launched of it was successful. I was featured on ITV meridian as well as on Global Heart South Coast Radio.

Violence against women and girls

I have launched a Violence Against Women and Girls campaign to improve student safety within the community, which includes the free personal alarms and we shared it on different platforms to raise awareness. The personal alarms, which have been funded by Southampton City Council, are small enough to discreetly hold or can be clipped onto clothing. They create a high-pitched alarm sound by pulling out the cord to attract attention and call for help, and they have

a built-in light to illuminate dark areas. We are aware these alarms are not the solution to protecting our students, but we want them to feel safe and this is one way to do that. This is an on-going campaign where I am working with the local authorities, the council, charities and many more organisations within the area to increase safety in Southampton. I also talked with Steph about a survey for women to gather more information about what kind of support they will need from us

An evening march taking place on International Women's Day is seeking to 'reclaim the night', to raise awareness for gender-based violence and night-time safety in Southampton. The march is a show of strength and a collective demand for freedom from sexual violence, domestic abuse, street harassment, rape culture, victim blaming and all forms of violence against women. We will have Hampshire police with us as well as Southampton council and we will have speeches from different people including myself.

Other things that I worked on:

- Talked with university about an additional Redbus screen and discussed the logistics (hopefully we will have another two)
- We had a trustee induction
- We had social events for all students (Open Mic, Pub quiz, Halloween) including an event just for Warsash
- I had to deal with some cases about Nigerian students who had problems with their payments and now more cases came with visa (same like last year)
- Steph and I were delivering a workshop to academics about effective students' representation (talking about SU and how we can improve our relations)
- Steph and I were also working together with the council on the lit route walk as well as on planning the map for the locations that will have the lights switched off from 1-4 AM

- Attended a meeting with Dfe and gave a short intro about SU with Winston and Steph
- Wrote and submitted TEF (first we tried to do a podcast, but not enough engagement and we changed back to a written submission but still used some of the resources that we had.)
- We have launched a new way to support Solent University students, called the SU Exchange, to ensure they don't miss out on basic living essentials due to the cost-of-living crisis. The SU Exchange opened its Monday 28 November, and includes a community pantry, book exchange, thrift store and a microwave for use. It will also offer free period products and condoms for students to collect. All Solent University students are welcome to use the service and access stock to take home through a one-off payment of £5. This will last until the end of the academic year and students can use the service once a day to take up to five items at a time.
- Working with the sabbs on planning the Union Awards which will happen in May and the event will be on the same day with a Summerball
- Created Warsash Women female support group (WWFSG), a safe place where different topics will be discussed and key speakers will be invited to tell their experiences Continued WWSG and made the steps for a new page and looked into different ways to engage with different cohorts also I had different meetings with Warsash officer a about their concerns and from this semester they will have pop-ups in their campus from student hub. Promoted the personal alarms and ordering more for this semester.
- Committee Meetings - Academic Board, Student Board, Faculty Committees.
- Trustee Meetings- Trustee Board, SOSUT, and Finance and HR Committee and Risk Committee
- Training – Bystander training
- 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.