

## Online Student Representatives' Meeting, 27 November 2017

**Present:** Adam Gac (Level 4, Opera Studies); Timothy Lloyd, (Level 5, Opera Studies); Kate Aiken (Level 4, Theatre Studies); Karen Ball (Level 4, Theatre Studies); Mike Lees (Level 5 Theatre Studies and Chair of the Theatre Studies online student representatives); Andrew Walker (Interim Principal)

In attendance facilitating the meeting: David Matthews (VLE Development Manager)

AW welcomed the student representatives to the meeting and thanked them for agreeing to act as representatives for their programmes. He thanked several of the student representatives for agreeing to continue to act as student reps having done so already and he congratulated Mike Lees on having been elected as the Chair of the Theatre Studies online student representatives.

Students' attention was drawn to the student representatives' pack, which included a list of their fellow student reps. AW noted that within the student reps' pack details were provided of a range of College committees on which student representation was sought. Online student reps were encouraged to consider putting themselves forward for College committee membership.

In response to issues raised at a previous online student reps' meeting, a copy of the College's Strategic Plan had very recently been circulated to all online student representatives and their comments had been invited.

AW also mentioned that the College was in the process of developing a new learning and teaching strategy. He indicated that online student reps' views on the development of this document would be warmly welcomed. He agreed to circulate a copy of the draft document to online student reps for their comments.

**Action:** AW to arrange for draft learning and teaching strategy to be circulated to online student reps for comment.

A number of issues were raised by student representatives:

Online communication between students was raised as an issue by Theatre Studies student reps. The benefits of being able to contact fellow students was raised. It was felt that being able to contact students across the levels would be useful. Difficulties were raised regarding the ability to work collaboratively with other students whilst using the current software systems. Students asked whether it would be possible to have access to Office365. It was noted that on-campus students had access to this resource.

**Action:** AW to explore possibility of enhancing the resource available to facilitate student communication.

Students noted that it would be beneficial to have the opportunity to meet each other. TL mentioned that on occasion Opera Studies students were able to do so via optional residential events. TS student reps felt that occasional optional study days would be well received. ML mentioned that some discussions had taken place regarding an online student session being planned for the College's Symposium week in the spring.

**Action:** AW to discuss with online programme directors.

Students from both programmes observed that the recent level 5 student survey had not been appropriate for online students. AW indicated that a bespoke online student survey would be developed by the College this year and suggested that a draft version of the document should be sent to student reps for comment. The student reps welcomed this suggestion and agreed to comment upon a draft version prior to wider circulation.

**Action:** AW to raise this matter with the Head of Quality and to ensure student reps were provided with draft copy of survey for comment.

TL noted that Opera Studies students were finding some challenges navigating the VLE pages. He suggested that some documents had proven to be difficult to find. It was suggested that some more documents would benefit from being located in a general non-programme specific section entitled 'useful documents'. It was acknowledged that the structure of the VLE had improved in recent years but it was felt that there was still further work to do on this matter.

**Action:** Observations relating to the VLE would be shared by AW with the VLE Development Manager (DM).

It was drawn to the College's attention that the College's Strategic Plan accessible via the VLE was not the current version. It was agreed to update this.

**Action:** AW to raise with Quality Office staff.

Students raised questions regarding the accessibility of external examiners' reports. AW explained that it was usual practice for the external examiners' report to be made available to student reps, who had access to the report as members of the Programme Committee. AW noted that it was not usual practice for the report to be circulated more widely, though he indicated that if individual students wished to see the document it could be made available to them – either via the programme director, or programme administrator. He indicated that if a student asked the programme student rep to share the external examiner's report this would also be possible. Student reps asked whether it might be possible for the external examiners' report to be made available via the VLE.

**Action:** AW to discuss the possibility of uploading of external examiners' reports on to the VLE.

Student reps requested that the notes of the previous student reps' meeting should be circulated ahead of future meetings. It was also requested that online student rep meetings should be arranged well in advance so as to maximise attendance levels.\*

**Action:** AW to raise with Quality Office to ensure that relevant notes would be circulated to student reps ahead of subsequent meeting.

Student reps were thanked for their attendance and DM thanked for his technical support throughout the meeting.

\*The next online student reps meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday 27 March at 6.00pm.