

MINUTES

Student Representative Council Meeting

Date:	Wednesday 14 th June 2023
Time and venue:	5.00pm via Webex
In attendance:	Nisura Lekamlage, Sixuan Guo, Amanda Meehan, Mikayla Royal, Divyangana Sharma, Watareka Somaweera, Chris Collingwood, Michaela Hosking, Sam Butler.
Apologies:	None received.
Minutes secretary:	Chris Collingwood

1. Opening and welcome

Michaela introduced Sam Butler from Student Engagement

2. **Minutes of previous meeting** – Taken as read. Proposed by Chris, seconded by Amanda.

3. **Previous Actions** – No formal recommendations from recent meetings due to not achieving quorum.

3.1. Learner Engagement and Partnership Strategy – Survey to determine student pride in, and engagement with, the Institute.

3.2. Reminder for members to stay up to date with Webex.

4. **Discussion Themes**

4.1. **Ensuring Holmesglen is a safe and inclusive space for all learners.**

4.1.1. Definition – That all Learners, regardless of their background, identity, experiences, and ethnicity be respected, valued, and supported. A place where Students, Faculty, and Staff can freely express themselves, engage in meaningful discussions about their dreams and goals without discrimination, harassment, or exclusion.

4.1.2. Promotion of Diversity, Cultural Sensitivity, and Gender Equality on campus. Student Engagement Team has run events, with more planned. Michaela suggested signage at reception desks and national flags of international students displayed on campus. Chris asked about “opt-in” short courses or skill sets that could help improve diversity and cultural sensitivity. Divya suggested recognising international holidays and festivals. The risk of missing something and causing offence might become too great a workload. Michaela stated that this had been discussed in the Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

- 4.1.3. Accessibility – Chris described the challenges he experienced while moving around campus. Signage and wayfinding could be improved. Michaela reported that an external accessibility audit is planned. Sixuan asked for the campus maps to be improved.
- 4.1.4. Mental Health Support Services for Students. – Divya spoke with Student Wellbeing about the counselling services backlog and improving cultural sensitivity. Michaela reported that there is institution-wide staff training on Diversity and Inclusion.
- 4.1.5. Improving Security on Campus – Mikayla raised the issue of evening classes finishing at 9pm and having to walk alone to transport. Michaela stated that security at all campuses should be available to escort students to car parks. Amanda raised the issue of there not being enough time between classes to move cars to safer parking.
- 4.1.6. How to improve awareness and education on Diversity, Inclusion, and Respectful Behaviour – Michaela reported on the current and planned efforts by Student Wellbeing. Nisura suggested to increase exposure of this in social media, Divya supported this. Sam asked which platforms would be the most effective.

4.2. Connecting with Holmesglen Alumni. How do we remain connected once you graduate?

- 4.2.1. Organising Alumni networking events – Michaela stated that the Alumni webpage is being updated. Divya asked if there was any compelling reason for past students to remain connected with the institute?
- 4.2.2. Student Newsletters_– Nisura suggested a regularly updated newsletter.
- 4.2.3. Alumni Guest Speakers – Chris noted that all teachers would be qualified in the subject they teach. Amanda noted that it may be difficult for alumni to find time to present.
- 4.2.4. Alumni Mentorship Programs – Michaela felt that this would be beneficial to current students as mentees but may not be seen favourably by alums due to time constraints. Sam suggested that an acknowledgement of the time invested and committed to mentoring current students would need to be at the core of the program. Sam also suggested to “sell” the concept to alums by highlighting the advantages. Chris suggested to approach alums when looking for placement employers. Acknowledging that Amanda and Divya have previously been recognised with awards.
- 4.2.5. Alumni involvement in campus events – Nisura suggested inviting previous awardees to attend graduations and to be acknowledged during the program, Chris suggested a small entry in the program as acknowledgement.
- 4.2.6. Alumni invited to Graduations – paired with previous item.

4.2.7. Alumni fundraising – Nisura suggested scholarship programs in partnership with alumni and their companies. He also suggested a fund-raising dinner for alumni. Chris commented that for this to succeed, the institute needs to have a strong alumni association.

4.2.8. Growing Alumni networks – Michaela mentioned that there is a scholarship foundation in place. She acknowledged that a healthy network would be more amenable to being involved.

5. Recommendations

5.1. Enhance campus maps and wayfinding signage to include lifts, stairs, ramps, and common spaces.

5.2. Review the process of assessing special consideration / deferred assessments to reduce unnecessary pressures on student counsellors.

5.3. Consider delivering mental health first aid as PD to students. Also consider the possibility of embedding (if possible) mental health first aid into more courses.

5.4. Encourage more social media activity that promotes current student life and is targeted to current students.

5.5. Students should be empowered to create more social media content for Holmesglen social channels.

5.6. Consider engaging with alumni via networking events and digital newsletters.
Consider bringing alumni out to classes to provide a view into their experiences to students.

5.7. Consider including stories of alumni in student communications.

5.8. Establish an alumni mentorship program that brings final semester students together with alumni. Consider trial with diploma and degree students.

5.9. Consider inviting previous year graduate awardees to student awards ceremony.
Also invite those awardees back to talk with current students about their success and other experiences.

Proposed by Divya, seconded by Mikayla.

6. Next meeting and meeting topic.

This was not discussed due to time constraints.

7. Close

Michaela thanked Nisura for chairing the council this semester and his assistance in his tenure. She wished him well as a graduate. Nisura thanked Michaela and Divya for their help, and Holmesglen for the opportunities during his 4 year course.

Meeting closed at 6.45pm.