

MINUTES

Student Representative Council Meeting

Date:	Sep. 21, 2022
Time and venue:	5 – 6:30 pm, via Student Rep WebEx Space
In attendance:	Kurin Lelean, Sixuan Guo, Divya Sharma, Nisura Yayaswin, Amanda Meehan, Mikayla Royal, Zulfa Soltani
Apologies:	Ujjwal Kaushal
Minutes secretary:	Sixuan Guo

1. Institute response to SRC recommendations – Mr Gordon D’Rosario, Manager of Student Wellbeing, and a Board Member

Mr Gordon D’Rosario attended the SRC meeting and addressed the 7 recommendations the SRC made in our last meeting on 16 Aug. 2022. There is a list of Holmesglen and external mental health and welfare services on our website but not easily accessible. This information will be updated, and the website will be revamped for easy access. Counsellors and the SRC (in consultation with peers) will provide input to the information and the landing page for this information.

Holmesglen wellbeing team refer students to external services such as CAT team, emergency services, other services and community health center depending on where they live. The person’s culture, religion and situation will be taken into consideration when making the referral. The Student Wellbeing team will look at the possibility of bringing back representatives from community health centers to Holmesglen on a regular basis.

The health insurers Holmesglen promotes to the international students provide 4 x 30 min free mental health coaching services and has an app that address some common themes in mental health. However, some reps feel that the resources the app provides are repetitive but might be worth knowing.

As for the campus events to open the discussion about mental health amongst the student community, before COVID, there were stalls managed by staff from the Student Wellbeing including counsellors and disability officers over free food and bags with information and pamphlets about the service and what kind of mental health support people can receive. Some campus events are being planned for 2023.

A change of language will be considered to remove the burden of from the students who access mental health support and create more inclusive and safer place for students.

Anonymous students’ testimonials may encourage other students to use the service without breaching their confidentiality. Students’ time in doing the testimonials will be recognized. Campus posters or leaflets may be used to delicately encourage some students to do the testimonials.

2. Updates from Michaela Hosking, Manager of Student Engagement and Success

Michaela mentioned the items that would be an actioning in response to the SRC recommendations, some of which were covered by our meeting with Mr D’Rosario and some further work need to be done.

A couple months ago the SRC discussed the jobs board, making it accessible online and categorizing jobs in a way that separates professional jobs that require qualifications and those can be undertaken while studying. Thanks to Holmesglen's Employment Centre, a digital jobs board which presents a range of casual and professional employment opportunities is online (<https://community.holmesglen.edu.au/landing-page/find-job>). This will also be published on the coming Student Newsletter.

The SRC recommended to increase visibility and transparency of Student Service and Amenities Fees (SSAF) expenditure at Holmesglen a few months ago. The report for 2021 can now be accessed online (<https://holmesglen.edu.au/Students/Fees/Student-Services-and-Amenities-Fee/>).

Report for 2022 SSAF expenditure will be prepared at the end of the year as usual. Suggestions on how to spend future SSAF are welcome.

3. Discussion Theme – Student Representative Council Communication Channel

3.1. How does the HG SRC communicate with the course level SRCs?

Reps said that they might not know there are course level Student Representative Councils at Holmesglen. There is one SRC in Nursing, which is becoming active now, one in Community Services and Youth Work, one is hospitality which may not be active. Reps suggested having an end of the year event to start it off and have a discussion with course level SRCs on how to build a connection.

3.2. Should there be a communication medium to connect the HG SRC with different course level SRCs? If so, what does that look like?

Reps suggested establishing communication between different SRCs via Webex meetings, dinners, or formal meetings every 3 to 6 months. Michaela would be happy to organize an end of year summit, bringing all reps at course levels and institute level as well as past reps together, run a couple of sessions on self-development, and have some celebration too.

3.3. Should the SRCs share some similar discussion themes for the meetings?

Topics discussed at different course level SRCs would be very different. Reps suggested to discuss on a common topic for each meeting. Reps said that with more people in the meeting, the scope would be broader. It would be great if these meeting with course level SRCs can be scheduled so that everyone is on the same page at some stage of the year.

3.4. Student Life Newsletter

3.4.1 Do students engage with the HG student newsletter?

Reps mentioned that many students may not be aware of the HG Student Newsletter even four months into the course. Would student involvement boost their engagement in the HG Student Newsletter? Divya mentioned her experience in a students summit for student representatives from different universities and TAFEs in Australia, where the President of the National Student Union talked about the student media being a great way to communicate with students. However, there is not any form of student media at Holmesglen to communicate with students other than the Facebook group. Since we already have a student Newsletter, we may just build upon it, involve students in it.

3.4.2 Should there be student involvement in the newsletter to make it more student-friendly rather than it being Institute focused?

Reps recommended having students who are studying relevant courses to involve in this while getting copywriting or graphic design experiences for their resume. Students from sports media do a lot of interviews for their assignments, not just about sports. Some of these students would like to become journalists. Reps felt that involving these students in the newsletters would definitely improve student engagement.

3.4.3 What kind of sections/stories/ services would students like to see on the newsletter?

Stories and achievements of students or staff can be covered, and small milestones can be celebrated in the newsletters. For example, a celebration of Amanda being nominated for a state-wide award would be a great encouragement to other students. Other topics such as a social issue, an ongoing topic, something relevant to exams, oncoming events, main calendar dates, etc. can also be covered.

3.4.6.4 Should SRC use Student Life newspaper as a mode of communication with the students?

Reps mentioned that websites and social media platforms would be more effective than newsletters in communicating with students, as they are where our targeted audience would most likely spend their time on. Reps also said that students' contribution is not just about writing the news but also managing how and in what form it is accessed. Reps suggested that if the newsletter and student media are run by students, they would be more popular. For example, some student media on a university level have about 13,000 followers, showing students taking initiative and interacting with it.

4. Recommendations:

4.1 Annual meeting with course level SRC and Institute SRC. 3-6 months to have similar discussion themes.

4.2 Student newsletter requires more content to be generated by students.

4.3 Seek some understanding Holmesglen social media audience so content can be reviewed and recommendations can be made.

4.4 Provide students more professional opportunities for communications.

4.5 Seek some understanding on the strategy of the current newsletter. Why is it monthly? What content is sought for these newsletters?

Next meeting is scheduled for 17 Oct., 2022, 5pm via the SRC WebEx Space. Topic: Sustainability at Holmesglen