

MINUTES

Student Representative Council Meeting

Date:	Nov. 23, 2022
Time and venue:	5 – 6:30 pm, via Student Rep WebEx Space
In attendance:	Kurin Lelean, Divya Sharma, Nisura Yasaswin, Zulfa Soltani Guest: Suzanne McKinnon (Executive Director Student Engagement and Support)
Apologies:	Sixuan Guo, Mikayla Royal, Amanda Meehan, Ujjwal Kaushal
Minutes secretary:	Sixuan Guo

1. Institute response to SRC recommendations – Michaela Hosking, Manager of Student Engagement and Success

Michaela had a discussion with the Communication Team about the SRC recommendations on student communications. It was agreed that this is an area that needs continued work and effort. The Institute wants to make sure student communication meets the audience's needs, but it is challenging sometimes in choosing between the information that is critical and that is not critical but important.

There are a range of communication channels at Holmesglen, one of which is the newsletter. Holmesglen Online Community is also a great place for both staff and students to host content. Students are strongly encouraged to use this platform more. Currently, this platform is being updated to make it easier to navigate in terms of the volume of the content. Although this platform is not a space for students to hang out, the more students use it, the more they will view the content. When people open the newsletter, they are often directed to the content hosted on the Holmesglen Online Community.

There used to be student generated content, a call for content from students and a request for students to share any stories or information, etc. at the bottom of the student newsletter, but somehow these had dropped off. This will be reviewed to ensure that the avenue is accessible all the time.

The student newsletter goes out monthly. This frequency was determined by the open rate as well as the volume of the content.

Michaela will continue working with the communications team on these strategies and providing updates.

2. Student Rep Council membership in 2023

Kurin will step down as the chair of the SRC while Divya stays on as the communication coordinator in 2023. Nisura and Zulfa will stay on as members of the SRC in 2023. Michaela will check with other members and see who will stay on. New members will be recruited early next semester. Reps suggested to recruit students who will study for longer at Holmesglen as the new reps for the continuity.

3. Discussion Theme – Student Voice at Holmesglen

3.1. Overview of current ways students can have a voice at Holmesglen – Michaela

Suzanne and Michaela presented to the TAFEs across Australia in Adelaide last week on the work Holmesglen is doing in terms of student voice, which was widely recognized as significant.

3.2. What is the overall feeling from students about their ability to contribute to the Holmesglen student experience

Divya, who has served two semesters as the chair and as a student rep before that, said we have made progress in terms of building meaningful connections with executive members within Holmesglen, and have done great on the staff and student perspective. However, the connection between students, especially from different course levels, is still lacking. She felt that she wasn't able to find the medium to connect with someone from Glen Waverley, Eildon or even Chadstone campus. Due to Covid, we haven't been able to organize events to get large groups of students to go out to different campuses. Kurin suggested branching out to different campuses.

Reps suggested more engagement from different campuses, more advertising of the SRC to students next year, maybe during orientation, to recruit reps from different campuses.

Some reps felt that during orientation, there might be too much information for new students. They suggested asking teachers or library staff to mention the SRC to students along the way to attract new reps.

3.3. Are there any other ways students feel they should be able to contribute to decision making at Holmesglen?

Reps suggested the SRC to organize some conferences and invite students to ask questions. Michaela said she has tried very hard to empower the council to tap into some of the student activity, funding and lead some events. A couple of invitations were sent, but no one wanted to drive that. Time might be one of the barriers for lacking interest in this area.

Divya said she would like to organize a mental health event next year.

Suzanne suggested that reps ask their fellow students about event ideas, discuss them and bring in the one that is achievable, and the institute will support it. She suggested reps do an event calendar for semester 1, and some possibilities for semester 2, to start the process. She also suggested inviting some of our peers to a section of the SRC meeting to discuss about what we would do, and try and engage them in the project. She said that when the students lead the project, they also learn leadership negotiation in the process.

3.4. Do students feel their voice is listened to? What could Holmesglen do better?

Reps said that the students are aware that they can raise their issues or feedback to the SRC or their teachers. The SRC has a QR code that reps have access to raise issue or give feedback. Michaela said there is an avenue for student complaint at Holmesglen, so they the SRC members to collect student voice but not to be burdened by the complaints.

Reps said that students do have a voice, but sometimes they don't know where to access support, and some reps are able to guide the students if they have any issues.

Reps suggested that new reps to be trained on how to guide students when they have an issue, instead of referring everything to Michaela.

Reps also suggested not to give all information at once during orientation, such as the info about the SRC, because there is too much information and too much is going on then, and it would end up unread.

3.5. Do student want to contribute to the student experience beyond Holmesglen campuses? How can Holmesglen help?

Not discussed due to time limit.

4. Recommendations:

4.1 The student reps to work on a central calendar of student events for 2023 and to coordinate their work with the Institute student activities program, to collect greatest student voice.

4.2 To give student reps greater confidence across campuses, we will do a couple more training sessions through the semester and tour campuses and can rotate that across campuses.

4.3 We will do some work to raise a greater awareness of the student reps amongst the staff community, to make sure the staff across the Institute know who our reps are and so a relationship can be built.

5. Next meeting

TBA