My name is Maryam, I am an international PhD student from Iran, the president of Persian society and founder of the Iranian dance society. I was ISVR Acoustics Group Students Rep in 2018-2019.

Being a PhD student, also demonstrating for different modules to undergrads, helped me understand the issues that students have. Such as some departments lacking a social space for students and academics, some students suffer from too much self-study and lack of guidance in specific modules. Sometimes student reps are limited in what they can do or their requests for the students are postponed or delayed with the different excuses.

There are also many international students studying in our university in different levels and course which some time their problems are totally different from a local student (visa issues, problems about money transfers and their mental health issues due to being away from their country and living alone here) which being an international student myself, I understand it and I am familiar with the struggles they have.

I can not say that I will solve every single problem there is in the university but I can promise that if I get the role, I will do my best and will leave the position better than when I got it initially.

I think it is important that students get involved with the existing societies in the university which gives them an opportunity have some time away from their studies and a chance to socialise more specially for PhD students who mostly are isolated and working alone.

I am very passionate about helping people and improving my society and I think that was the main reason for winning the Excellence in Volunteering Awards for Outstanding Commitment to Equality and Diversity in 2019.

Hope I can help students by improving their educational environment and solving some of their struggles.

I aim to leave this world better than what I was born in. I have studied most my life and half of it was as an international student so I am familiar with the problems that students face every day and how some small but fundamental changes can have positive effects on their student life. I think it is important that university runs seminars on topics such as time and stress management. Specially PhD students are very much isolated and mental health problems are very common among their society. I plan to work with VP activities and VP welfare closely to encourage students to get involved and benefit from the active societies in SUSU. Also, organise seminars on mental health issues and motivational speeches in different departments.