

Report from Director of Student and Academic Services

This standing report updates on broad developments in Student and Academic Services in light of the remit that this Service has in supporting the educational offer, student journey and experience.

This November report focuses primarily on the work of the newly broader Student Experience Team and the Careers Service.

The report is supplemented by:

- Appendix 1 - Student Experience Team diagram
- Appendix 2a - Student Development annual report
- Appendix 2b - Widening Participation Outreach strategy

Recommended action

To **note** the report and to consider any matters arising.

Report from the Director of Student and Academic Services

Introduction

Since the last meeting of Education and Student Committee, Student and Academic Services and Careers, Skills Development and Outreach have merged. Organisational development work continues to support colleagues in the merger of the two Services and to fully align our work to the needs of the University. A particularly successful part of the merger work to date was a full morning Directorate meeting on 29th October at which each team made a 'creative' presentation of their work contained within the Student and Academic Services 15-16 plan to the other teams.

The main substance of this standing report is updates from the Student Experience team and the Careers Service. The Careers Service is a new activity within the remit Student and Academic Services. Prior to the merger it had little exposure to Education and Student Committee despite employability being critical to our role as a university. The broader Student Experience team arising from the merger now incorporates the Student Development team and Widening Participation and Outreach Team, previously in Careers.

Both teams are re-developing their identities, and spending time with Schools discussing future service development. In addition, the Head of Careers and the Director of Student and Academic Services are establishing ways to better embed careers and employability matters into day-to-day operations as well as strategic development planning. Discussions are also underway with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategy and Planning) – also Chair of the Careers and Employability Strategic Hub – as to how best to initiate and how to oversee the establishment of some joined-up robust planning relating to the careers service and employability, including likely resource implications.

A re-advertisement for the Head of Careers is currently in place. Interviews will take place on Friday 20th November, chaired by the PVC (Strategy and Planning) and comprising the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences, the Dean of City Law School, the Director of Student and Academic Services, an external and HR representation. Candidates will also make a presentation to a small group of colleagues in Student and Academic Services.

Susannah Marsden
Director, Student and Academic Services
2nd November 2015

The Careers Service

The recent focus has been upon initial development of employability strategy in order to work towards achieving the career development and employability 'step change' activities in the Education and Student Strategy 2020. Activity broadly falls under the following headings:

Strategic contributions to the Career Development and Employability sub-committee of the Education and Student strategy 2020:

- ❖ Report written summarising the current placement provision and recommendations
- ❖ Report proposing the adoption of the 'Careers Registration' method of gathering data on the development of 'career readiness' of students: PILOT APPROVED
- ❖ Collaborative input into a paper summarising the potential impact of implementing an employability award

Employability strategy consultations with academic schools:

The information below summarises the current thinking in the different Schools in regards to future employability strategic developments in collaboration with the Careers Service:

Arts and Social Sciences:

- ❖ The growth of placement provision in an incremental fashion, e.g. 2 departments per year
- ❖ Embedding employability characteristics throughout the academic curriculum, measuring students' development of the characteristics and facilitating greater reflection, potentially by means of the personal tutor system. To be implemented in an incremental fashion, e.g. 2 departments per year

Cass:

- ❖ Building upon the pilot of an employability module for Actuarial Sciences in 2014 discussions are underway to develop a careers service delivered 1st year UG module which could ultimately be run across all Cass UG programmes

Heath:

- ❖ Working with the department to better understand the relative underperformance of nursing in terms of Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) outcomes and consider future strategy for improvement

Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering:

- ❖ Assisting the department to better understand the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data in order to feed into the existing wider plans for the school

Law:

- ❖ Incremental improvement of the existing LLB employability module
- ❖ Consideration of greater future emphasis on placements / internships
- ❖ The development of online employability support to accommodate growth in distance learning

Graduate School:

- ❖ More targeted marketing of existing careers service events to PhD students, highlighting the relevance of the events programme for PhD students exploring careers outside of academia
- ❖ Specific events highlighting the breadth of non-academic career options for PhD students and giving advice on how to successfully navigate the academic career path

- ❖ Specific webinar programme for PhD students, e.g. writing a post-doc application, presenting your CV when applying for non-academic jobs etc
- ❖ Submission of a joint funding bid for specialist Careers Consultant staffing

Improvement to internal careers service processes / systems:

Recruitment of PhD student 'application advisers' to be trained to deliver CV and application form appointments in order to be able to balance the need to be responsive to the demands for 1:1 appointments whilst having the Careers Consultant resource required for more impactful strategic initiatives.

Gemma Kenyon
Interim Head of Careers Service
October 2015

Student Experience team overview and priorities

The Student Experience team formed on 12th October 2015. The team brings together a diverse and powerful new combination of professional services staff (see Appendix 1) with an increased potential to support joined-up, evidence-based decision-making in relation to the following:

- a full life cycle approach from young people in primary school through to alumni
- combining and analysing multiple sources of data and feedback
- building expertise in student engagement and partnership both at the 'coal' face and strategic level
- support for cross-institutional initiatives and enhancements involving multiple service users and stakeholders

Priorities

Team development

A priority for the team is building a shared understanding of our collective mission supporting the student experience at a strategic and individual level. Appendix 1 outlines our approach to this work including the Strategy as a key driver and a seven 'stage' model through which the team works to empower students in maximising the potential of their relationship with HE and City.

We have also commenced stakeholder discussions to help inform our direction; meetings with the Deans of School indicate a need to work in close partnership to build capacity in relation to improving retention and student success.

Supporting evidence-based decision-making and joined-up approaches

The team plays a key role in helping City to 'know itself' through gathering student feedback, data analysis and evaluation, support for staff and student networks and committees, and annual programme evaluation. Over the coming year we will be seeking to support the combination of a range of data sources held within the team (e.g. student feedback, access and retention data, impact measures from specific activities supporting outreach and student development) with other sources (e.g. Welcome Week feedback, employability data) to better support action planning and strategic decision-making. We are also supporting Education & Student Committee's exploration of possible projects via sector research (e.g. how other institutions are using analytics).

The team works directly with students from primary school age via outreach activities through to our alumni acting as professional mentors for current students. We also support the student experience through collaboration with a range of partners internal and external to the University including, crucially, students themselves. This full lifecycle approach and a focus on the effectiveness of the student-university relationship will help to ensure maximum benefit realisation for planned reviews of the University's approach to outreach, student retention and engagement this academic year as well as enabling more critical approaches to the evaluation and development of the services and processes we deliver and support.

Supporting strategic planning and enhancement of services, systems and processes related to education and the student experience

The team manages the Education & Student Strategy, supports four out of the five hubs, and co-ordinates the Annual Programme Evaluation round which has been revised to ensure local level engagement with the Strategy. We also work with the SU to support student representation and partnership in the implementation of the strategy.

The S&AS Operational Plan received at the last meeting outlined the ways in which our team is supporting individual elements of the strategy. As this was created prior to the merger

with the Student Development and Widening Participation Outreach teams respective annual report and strategy are attached as Appendix 2a and 2b.

In addition to on-going development of our core services (see Appendix 1) we also support the development and delivery of enhancement and compliance projects in partnership with Schools and other services. Current examples include: Welcome Week review, development of Terms and Conditions, Sport and Leisure Strategy; Student Portal usage, pop-up bookshop; Interfaith Forum; exploring potential of Segmentation research with SU; personal tutoring project.

Maggie Cunningham
Head of Student Experience
October 2015