Enhancing Student Support – Senior Tutor Network

Meeting at 12.30pm on Tuesday 31 2012
Theatre 40, Joseph Black Building, Kings Buildings

Action Notes

Convenor
Professor Ian Pirie, Assistant Principal

CHSS
Dr Matthew Chrisman, Philosophy, Psychology and Language Science
Mr Neil Houston, Education
Dr Colin Roberts, Economics
Dr Julian Ward, Literature, Languages and Cultures

MVM
Dr Philip Larkman, Biomedical Sciences

CSE
Dr Donald Macleod, Biological Sciences
Professor Simon Harley, GeoSciences
Dr Martin Reekie, Engineering
Professor Graeme Reid, representing the College
Dr Maximilian Ruffert, Mathematics
Dr Judy Hardy, Physics and Astronomy

Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
Dr Jon Turner, Director

IT Tools
Ms Susan McKeown, Project Services Corporate Team
Mr Chris Giles, Student Admissions and Curricula Systems

Project Team
Ms Nichola Kett, Academic Services
Ms Sara Welham, Academic Services

Records Management
Susan Graham, University Records Manager

Additional Discussion – Future Meetings

Members agreed that it would be better for the planned September meeting to be held during the following week (week beginning 24 September) and that future meetings should take place at lunchtimes on different days during the week in order to allow as many members as possible to attend.

Action: NK to schedule meetings as detailed above. Please refer to the Senior Tutor Network wiki page for further detail https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/PESS/Senior+Tutor+Network

Suggestions from members as to who they would like to attend future meetings should be sent to Nichola Kett. Jon Turner confirmed that representatives from central support services are keen to attend meetings.

Action: Members to email suggestions for future meetings to Nichola Kett Nichola.Kett@ed.ac.uk
1. **IT Tools and Records Management Principles**  
*Presentation by Susan Graham, University Records Manager. Main points:*

- Information relating to University business belongs to the University. The University has legal obligations in relation to information management and the use of the IT Tools will assist with compliance.
- Data Protection legislation expects that information will be managed in an appropriate way and the IT Tools will help to support this. For example, individuals have the right to see information held on them by the University and this can present problems where the information is held locally. The use of IT Tools will also reduce the burden on individual staff members in meeting information legislation obligations.
- Recording information using the IT Tools will ensure that it’s secure, maintained and backed-up.
- Information must be adequate, relevant and not excessive. Therefore, a judgement has to be made as to what information is made generally available and what is restricted to those directly supporting the student. Rarely is it considered good practice for information to only be available to one person.
- It is important to consider what is appropriate to record. For example: “This student has a personal life difficulty and has been referred to counselling” is an appropriate note to be available to the core group supporting the student.
- In general, the detail of the student’s ‘personal life difficulty’ should not be recorded unless the student specifically requests otherwise. The information recorded should be adequate to reflect the situation so that those supporting the student are able to do so but should not reveal intimate details.
- In terms of recording matters relating to Special Circumstances, staff should record that the student is experiencing problems (although again, not the detail), what is being done, and where the relevant information is held.
- Where students have discussed a matter with a member of staff and they have stated that they do not wish any further action to be taken (including disclosure to other staff) then the consequences of doing so should be explained to the student. A record should be made that a meeting took place, that the student requested that no further action be taken and that the consequences of this have been explained to the student. No information about the actual issue should be recorded. It was acknowledged that no action can then be taken, however, it is important that there is a record that the conversation took place.
- The information within the IT Tools should not just be viewed as the record between a student and a Personal Tutor as there are other staff who play an important role in supporting the student who need to have access to appropriate information also.
- It was noted that due to cultural reasons, some international students may not wish to discuss private matters in what they perceive to be a formal discussion.
- Further clarification is needed on the processes relating to the recording of disclosure of disability by students and how information on reasonable adjustments could be made available to appropriate members of staff through the IT Tools.

The above will be incorporated into guidance for staff and students.

Chris Giles presented screenshots of the IT Tools. Main points:

- Students see all notes added to their record by staff on the IT Tools.
- There will be further discussion on the email communications sent to Personal Tutors as a result of IT Tools activity in due course.
- ‘Flag for deletion’ will mean that the note is removed from view but it will still remain within the IT Tools on the student’s record.
- To indicate that a meeting has taken place a note should be added.
- A possible future IT Tools development: tabbed records to separate academic progress discussion and all other matters.

2. **Student Support Implementation Group (SSIG) – Feedback**

2.1 **Non-attendance of Students at Scheduled Meetings**

The Convenor updated members on the discussion at the SSIG meeting on 26 July 2012 relating to the non-attendance of students at scheduled meetings. At this meeting, members
concluded that because there is a relevant paragraph contained within the Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations 2012/2013 and information is also contained within the roles and responsibilities document, that an additional document was not required. It was confirmed that if Schools wish to have additional attendance requirements, these should be detailed within the School Tutoring Statement and the Programme Handbook.

One possible development for Phase 2 would be for a sentence to be added to the roles and responsibilities document which would outline any possible consequences of non-attendance of students at scheduled meetings.

2.2 Draft Tutoring Statements

Brief mention was made to the name ‘School Tutoring Statement’ as some Schools had named their documents differently. Post meeting note: these documents had been given a different name as it was considered that there could be confusion with academic tutorials and tutoring arrangements due to the title ‘School Tutoring Statement’. A final name for the documents will be discussed at the August SSIG meeting. The likely final name will be ‘School Personal Tutoring Statement.’

Members were asked if they would be agreeable to the posting of draft tutoring statement on a private area of the project wiki to enable those writing statements to see examples from other Schools. Members agreed that this would be appropriate. This approach was agreed at the July SSIG meeting also.

3. Development of Training and Resources

3.1 Exemplars from University of Exeter


Jon Turner confirmed to members that:

- Matters are progressing well in line with the detail presented in the Arrangement for Briefing, Training and Resources paper, and that an updated version would be circulated shortly.
- Although IAD had received some feedback on the resources developed, members are encouraged to provide further feedback.

**Action:** Members to provide feedback on all aspects of training and resources to Jon Turner J.D.Turner@ed.ac.uk

Chris Giles confirmed that SACS training team members will be available during Induction Week and that new training materials are being developed and will be disseminated for School briefing session.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Enhancement

Due to time constraints it was not possible to discuss this item. It will be discussed at a future meeting.

5. Communications – Feedback from Working Group

Sara Welham confirmed that:

- The draft communications strategy will be circulated in due course.
- A communications timeline is being developed and members’ input will be required.

Nichola Kett
10 August 2012