Enhancing Student Support – Senior Tutor Network
Meeting from 13.00 – 14.30
Monday, 11th March 2013, Forrest Hill - Action Notes

Convener
Professor Alan Murray, Dean of Students, CSE

CHSS
Dr Dominic Berry, History, Classics & Archaeology
Dr Matthew Chrisman, Philosophy, Psychology and Language Science
Dr Jessica McCrae, Law
Dr Paul Norris, Social and Political Science
Dr Sara Parvis, Divinity
Dr Colin Roberts, Economics
Professor Tonks Fawcett, Health in Social Science
Dr Julian Ward, Literatures, Languages and Cultures

MVM
Dr Kirsty Dundas, MBChB
Dr Philip Larkman, Biomedical Sciences

CSE
Dr Judy Hardy, Physics and Astronomy
Dr Paul Jackson, Informatics
Dr Donald Macleod, Biological Sciences
Dr Maximilian Ruffert, Mathematics

Project Team
Mr Brian Connolly
Ms Dawn Gray
Ms Sara Welham

IT Tools
Ms Sheila Fraser, Project Services Team Manager, IS Applications Division
Mr Chris Giles, IT Tools

Student Support Services Project Strand
Dr Sue Rigby, Vice Principal
1. **Apologies**  
Apologies received were noted by the Convener.

2. **Note from the last meeting**  
The notes from the last meeting were approved.

3. **Matters Arising**  
The issue of how to manage student engagement with the Personal Tutor system and attendance at meetings was revisited. A primary concern was how to track attendance, what to do about non-attendance at meetings and at what point the Tutor should sign the meeting off as unattended.

At present there is no way to automatically record and flag non-attendance or non-response from the student. There is no system to record attempts made to follow-up the student. It was noted that if there was an expectation that this information would be collated centrally that this would incur a high workload.

It was agreed that the consequence to the student of not attending meetings is that they are not accessing the support available to them.

It was recognised that there was a need to have a close-off mechanism when arranging meetings i.e. when do Personal Tutors accept that the student is not going to attend the meeting?

The obligation must be put on to the student to declare that they have no requirement for a meeting. It was felt that vulnerable students could be at risk if not chased-up. One suggestion was to look at class attendance patterns alongside Personal Tutor meeting attendance. This would help to highlight students struggling generally.

It was agreed that we need to know why a meeting is being closed-off. Is it because the student has attended, has not attended but is doing fine or has not attended but is struggling. With more experience of the system we should be able to identify the best method of handling this problem, but members agreed that at present a standard statement of guidance for Personal Tutors about when to close off a meeting should be prepared.

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<tr>
<th>To discuss providing guidelines on standardised expectations of what constitutes a reasonable effort to chase-up students not attending meetings.</th>
<th><strong>Action</strong>: College Deans and Ian Pirie</th>
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<td>To discuss text to make clear that a meeting has been closed off as the student has not attended - and share with the group electronically for feedback. 2 different scenarios: (i) student is fine (ii) cannot contact student.</td>
<td><strong>Action</strong>: College Deans</td>
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3.1. **3rd Year Abroad**  
The online system expects that students have a meeting with their Personal Tutor. There was agreement from SSIG that a meeting by email can, in some circumstances, constitute a meeting and can therefore be recorded.

If alternative arrangements are in place for student support to be provided by the host institution or sponsor the student is not required to also arrange a remote meeting with their Personal Tutor.
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<th>Action: Alan Murray</th>
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<td>Circulate the report from SSIG on the discussion of Personal Tutors for students on placement or studying abroad.</td>
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4. **Jean Grier – Presentation on the new complaints handling procedure (CHP)**  
Presentation on the new complaints procedure and advised that the CHP guidance is now available online (live as of 11th March 2013).

Edinburgh is the first University in Scotland to adopt the new guidelines, and as such is being seen as a pilot. All Universities will have adopted the new procedures by August 2013.

The new procedure has moved to a two-stage system, from a 3-stage system. This should make it a more stream-lined and less complicated procedure.

5. **DISCUSSION**  
The Network members made a request for guidance to be circulated to groups such as the Student Staff Liaison Committees.

The Network members discussed concerns about when to record a complaint, with particular reference to issues raised via organized feedback and forums such as the SSLC. It was felt that these were grey areas as students may not raise the complaint elsewhere knowing that the issue could be brought up at the next SSLC meeting.

The issue of the additional workload involved in logging all complaints will be reviewed and discussed once the Ombudsman has set up a working group to discuss the additional workload involved and the procedures for complaints.

Jean Grier requested volunteers for people to be Complaints Investigators.  
Action - All

Jean Grier to email School Administrators to request that any School documentation is checked and updated to align with the new policy.  
Action – Jean Grier

6. **IT tools – update from Chris Giles**  
Chris Giles gave a demonstration of some of the enhancements that have been made to the system:

The ‘Save’ button in the notes and meetings pages is now in a fixed position so it should always be visible.  
Can now view the student support team.  
Request to confirm attendance.  
Users requested that the system allow an ‘all tutee’ email to be sent. This is now available (by group/subgroup). Tutors will have to manually change the address list to BCc. from the address bar as the programme automatically inserts all addresses in the ‘To’ field.

The group requested that the check box be labeled ‘Check All’ to make this function clear, and the user guide to be updated to reflect these changes  
Action: Chris Giles.

7. **AOCB**  
Sue Rigby informed the group that NSS results are being reviewed and offered an opportunity for the group to share the experience of experienced staff members.

Network members were asked to email comments to Sue Rigby.  
Action – All
8. Date of Next Meeting
STN Away Day Thursday 18th April 2013 13.00-17.00 (with lunch) JCMB 3217, King's Buildings

Dawn Gray – 11 March 2013