Senior Tutor Network
Away Day: Sharing Practice

An Away Day for the Senior Tutor Network was held on Thursday 18 April 2013 in the JCMB Teaching Suite, King's Buildings. This was an opportunity for Senior Tutors to share good practice and identify the challenges and issues which had emerged during the first year of the Personal Tutoring system. Discussions were focused on engaging all students, group meetings, and the use of IT Tools. The following is a summary of the main points noted:

## Topic 1 – Engaging all Students

### Good Practice:
- Student Support Teams (SST) – much valued by PTs and students.
- PT Training - well thought-out and delivered.
- Transparency – ST and SST aware of level of PT/Tutee engagement.
- The House System.
- Parallel teaching and PT support.
- Feeding back on results/performance – clear benefits to students.
- Finishing notes with a question – encourages engagement.
- Crib-sheet questions for semester 2 meetings – clear and consistent structure.
- Peer Support – passing on experience.
- General feeling that level of support has improved.

### Challenges and Issues:
- PT/Tutee ratios.
- Encouraging staff engagement - with students, IT Tools, the SSTs.
- Encouraging student engagement with the IT Tools.
- Evaluative evidence.
- Enforcing participation – is there a stick?
- Greater clarity about the benefits and roles for staff and students.
- Semester 2 meetings – loss of momentum/purpose?
- Listening to students – ensuring system responds to their needs.
- Engaging best and worst students.
- More consistency of practice.

## Topic 2 – Group Meetings

### Good Practice:
- Community building – helping students feeling part of a cohort.
- Specific and purposeful content - linking meetings to core academic studies.
- Student led agenda - ensures relevance and value.
- Working across year groups.
- Opportunity to raise topics (i.e. graduate attributes, employability, feedback).

### Challenges and Issues:
- Why? Purpose not clear, meetings not valued.
• Huge variation in implementation and delivery of group meetings across the institution.
• Theory v practice gap.
• Timetabling and space – persistent scheduling problems.
• Attendance poor – uptake far less than the one-to-one meetings.
• Size of groups unwieldy – can be up to 50 students at a time.
• Confusion in relation to PT and Peer Support group meetings.

**Topic 3 – The use of IT Tools**

**Good Practice:**
• Perceived as easy to use.
• Full, very clear records of meetings and discussions.
• Monitoring of attendance at 1-2-1 meetings.
• Students are using the system.
• Audio Feedback.
• Incentive to use system – SST can sift/ triage issues.
• Student ‘ownership’ of information – instantly available to students.

**Challenges and Issues:**
• Ease/speed of use - sometimes easier to use email directly (e.g. for one off tasks).
• Mobile Devices – usability limited.
• Capturing evaluative information for references.
• Students familiar with email system – true practice will only be revealed once a full cohort has passed through the system.
• No agreed way to deal with special circumstances.
• Access to relevant assessment results (long term aim).
• Not always clear when to use which button.
• Making sure only pertinent information is recorded so that system is not cluttered.
• Conflicts with open door policies – when should ‘events’ be recorded?
• Confidentiality.
• Monitoring system – concerns over use of system as line management tool.