NOTES

Present:
Professor Ian Pirie, Assistant Principal, Learning Developments (Convenor);
Faten Adam, Student Support Co-ordinator (Geosciences);
Louise Carracher PG Student Support Assistant (Health in Social Science);
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer (Academic Registry);
Claire Davies, Student Support Officer (ECA)
Pamela Docherty, Student Learning Advisor (Maths);
Claire Donlan, Student Information Point Manager;
Chris Doye, Study Development Advisor (IAD);
Karen Duncan, Student Support Assistant (Divinity);
Victoria Farrar, Student Support Administrator (Engineering);
Kate Farrow, Student Support Administrator (Informatics);
Anastasia Fliatoura, Student Support Assistant (Business);
Morna Firth, Visiting Student Advisor (CHSS);
Laura Gonzalez-Riende, UG Recruitment Co-ordinator (Physics & Astronomy);
Sara Hollywood, Student Support Officer (ECA);
Emma Latto, Student Support Co-ordinator (Geosciences);
Tamsin Leech, Student Support Officer (PPLS);
Debra Mailey, Student Experience Officer (CMVM);
Nicola Marshall, Student Support Officer (ECA);
Judith McAlister, Student Support Officer (HCA);
Sergio Mori, Student Support Officer (Health);
Margot Morton, Student Support Officer (Business);
Frances Parry, Student Development Advisor (IAD);
Sharon Pearson, Temporary Projects Officer (CMVM);
Kirsty Robertson, Visiting Student Advisor (CHSS);
Katie Scott, Peer Support Development Officer (EUSA);
Jefferson Shirley, Student Support Officer (Education).

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting and introductions were made.

2. Notes from the previous meeting

The notes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Peer Support Developments

Katie Scott (Peer Support Development Officer, EUSA), presented an update on Peer Support developments to date. The Peer Support Project is a strand of the wider Enhancing Student Support Project. Work on this strand began in August 2012, with the aim that every undergraduate student would have access to peer support by the start of 2013/14. A number of
pilot schemes have evolved during the first semester these include schemes based in Physics, Maths, Veterinary Medicine, Geology, Nursing, Economics and Accommodation Services (Fast Track).

A 'Toolkit' will be collated over the coming months which will include a menu of peer support options/models along with training, delivery and support materials relating to each option/model. The Toolkit will enable Schools to identify a model(s), which best suits the needs of their students, and that the kit will provide practical guidance as to how to take these forward. Although many schemes will be largely student-led, it is essential that every School or subject-area identify an academic and administrative staff contact who can take responsibility for ensuring peer support is maintained and developed.

Key Elements to a successful Peer Support Project:

- The projects are discipline owned and student-led, with an acknowledged element of academic and administrative responsibility
- Programmes are supportive, non-remedial and have a holistic attitude to the student experience
- The Student Leaders reflect the diversity of the student body
- All Student Leaders go through a rigorous recruitment, induction and training process
- All students involved sign-up to the Universities ‘Peer Support Code of Practice’
- An additional central service provision with a strong focus on pastoral care
- A robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism

Student Leaders or Mentors are the student Volunteers who support, interact and facilitate work mainly with lower year students within the Scheme. The responsibilities of this role vary depending on the Scheme but mainly involve providing academic, pastoral and social support. All Mentors and Leaders go through comprehensive training to equip them with the skills to fulfil their roles, particularly active students may continue on to become Student Coordinators. (This model draws strongly on the Manchester and Stirling University Schemes).

In order that quality can be assured from the outset issues around monitoring and evaluation of peer support systems are currently being examined. Future stages of the project will include exploring peer support for PGT students, and a possible institution-wide mentoring scheme.

**Action: Schools to identify a Peer Support contact.**

5. **Visiting Student Support**

Kirsty Robertson (Senior Visiting Student Adviser, CHSS Visiting Student Office) presented an overview of Visiting Student Support in CHSS. There are a number of Visiting Students (VS) in CSE and a few based in CMVM but the overwhelming majority are hosted in CHSS. The dedicated Visiting Student Office (VSO) forms the Student Support Team for VS in CHSS and works with the VS Personal Tutors (VSPTs) to provide all on-programme support. The VSO provides support, guidance and administrative assistance to the VSPTs, and should usually be the first point of contact for VS in CHSS regarding any academic or personal issue (usually dealing with such issues on behalf of the VS PTs).

For further information on both Peer Support Developments and Visiting Student Support please follow this link: [https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/PESS/Student+Support+Team+Network](https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/PESS/Student+Support+Team+Network)

6. **Any other business**

There was no other business.
7. **Future Meetings**

The following dates were noted (venues to be confirmed):

- Wednesday 10 April 2013 at 2pm;
- Tuesday 7 May 2013 at 2pm;
- Monday 10 June 2013 at 2pm.

Brian Connolly  
Academic Services  
February 2013