Enhancing Student Support
Student Support Team Network

Notes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10 April 2013 in LT1, Appleton Tower.

Present:
Professor Ian Pirie, Assistant Principal (Convenor)
Jemma Allan, SIP Supervisor (BP/ML/KB)
Richard Arkless, Business Analyst (SACS)
Michela Bacci, Student Support Officer (LLC)
Frank Bergeret, Project Services Team (IS)
Karen Davidson, Student Support Officer (Economics)
Clair Davies, Student Support Officer (ECA)
Chris Doye, Study Development Adviser, (IAD)
Alun Evans, SIP Supervisor (BP/ML/KB)
Sheila Fraser, Project Services Team Manager (IS)
Helen Hamer, Teaching & Graduate School Manager (Physics & Astronomy)
Sara Hollywood, Student Support Officer (ECA)
Susan Hunter, Academic Policy Officer (Services)
Ginette Lowdean, Advice Place Co-Ordinator (EUSA)
Francs Parry, Study Development Adviser (IAD)
Sharon Pearson, Temp Projects Officer (CMVM)
Kirsty Robertson, Visiting Student Adviser (VSO, CHSS)
Lorna Sheal, Students Support Officer (Health)
Jefferson Shirley, Student Support Officer, (Education)
Jill Timmins, Student Support Officer (Economics)
Nadia Tuzi, Senior Academic Tutor (SBS/BTO)
Tamsin Welch, Student Support Officer (PPLS)

Apologies: Barry Croucher, Margot Morton

1. Welcome & Introduction

The Convener opened the meeting with introductions to the speakers and the main topic of IT Tools. The group was reminded that access to IT Tools is available via EUCLID and staff are encouraged to experiment with use. In-year developments to the system have been agreed and new functions will come on stream as available.

2. Notes of the previous meeting

These were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. IT Tools in the Schools of Physics and Astronomy

Helen Hamer described the use of IT Tools in the School particularly the notes function in relation to special circumstances, examinations and progression interviews. It is also a quick method of passing information between the student support team, personal tutors and students.

IT Tools has aided professionalised and streamlined business process, offering efficient communication, consistent handling of information in a confidential and quick way. The School has developed process flow charts which have been adopted by the College and shared with other Schools as an example of best practice. The system has been a valuable aid to developing business processes and a sense of community, particularly with new students prior to arrival. The School will review their
use of the system for communication by consultation with students at the end of the academic year.

During the following discussion it was noted that the system provided a useful audit trail of student activity and could provide evidence to promote change. The Tools make recording easier.

Although School organisational structures differ, the aim is that business processes within the University are the same with devolved implementation at local level; standardising key business processes.

Flow charts provide useful information for staff for training with process diagrams.

Further information and/or copies of flow chart templates are available from Helen Hamer: email helen.hamer@ed.ac.uk, tel 650 5254.

4. IT Tools New Functionality

Richard Arkless demonstrated the improvements and updates that will go live before the end of April. These include actions reflected from EUCLID (which are not visible to students), pre-defined standard generic notes in drop down lists, for example for special circumstances. Recommendations for wording for the generic drop down lists will be welcomed from the group.

Action: SSTN to IS

The discussion raised the issue of joint degree students’ special circumstances. These cannot be currently viewed by both Schools in terms of authorised access to IT Tools notes. IS will investigate the options.

Action: IS

The calendar function is now live and staff are encouraged to use this to populate student calendars with PT meetings. IS will test the options for forwarding Outlook calendars to Google and feedback to the group. Once timetabling is live it is hoped to tie up with the student calendar so it will be possible to view student availability. It was also noted that students on interruption are not flagged as such in IT Tools. An interim solution was suggested to add a note or group note on IT Tools.

Action: IS

The Convener thanked Helen Hamer and Richard Arkless for their presentations. The group was thanked for attendance and contributions and encouraged to continue using IT Tools in an experimental way.

5. Future meetings:

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

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

Susan Hunter,
Academic Services
11 April 2013