Enhancing Student Support (ESS)
Monitoring, Evaluation and Enhancement

Briefing Note:
Personal Tutor System Phase One Evaluation

The first phase of the Personal Tutor (PT) system evaluation comprising a bespoke online survey is now well underway and will close on Friday the 4th October having been ‘live’ and available to students from Freshers Week.

The second phase of the evaluation will be conducted via semi-structured focus groups with a representative sample of second and third year students in each School and will each be facilitated by a senior tutor and two student support officers.

The second phase of the evaluation adopts a critical friend model and aims to provide both objective neutrality and a supportive environment for students and staff of the School while their approach and implementation of the Personal Tutor system is being reviewed.

The senior tutor and student support officers comprising each team will be selected from three different Schools: each team will conduct one focus group with their allocated School.

The questions that form the basis for the semi-structured focus groups will be derived from the analysis of the survey results and will be specific and unique to each School. Of particular relevance will be the responses to the single free text question in the survey which should provide insights to the types of developments students would value as the Personal Tutor system develops.

A structured report with the findings of the focus groups will be completed for each School and an analysis of all the Schools’ reports will identify key themes to inform further development of the system.

Academic Registry and EUSA will support the organisation of the focus groups and once the review teams are formed IAD will provide training and support for colleagues to facilitate the running of the focus groups.

It is hoped that the experience of running the focus groups will also provide a learning opportunity for all staff involved in understanding the strengths, successes and challenges of developing the PT system in each of our Schools and the knowledge gained will subsequently be shared initially within the ST and SST networks.

The final stage of the evaluation will bring the information from the online survey, focus groups, statistics derived from the personal tutor system and EUCLID data together. An analysis of the complete set of data for all Schools will then be conducted by Academic Services to derive the key features and attributes of positive practice and also to identify where students collectively are highlighting issues where further development is needed.

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