

Sharing Promising Practice – 2017/18

The Senate Quality Assurance Committee’s sub-committee commended a variety of promising practice for wider dissemination from Student Support Services’ annual reports. This report summarises promising and positive practice identified by the sub-committee.

Some common themes included:

- Global Community: International Student Advisory Service’s Refugee Advisory Group and humanitarian work
- Staff Development: University Sport and Exercise’s Step Up programme
- Digital transformation: Student Recruitment and Admissions’ use of social media and student blogs
- Impact reporting: Student Counselling Service’s use of key performance indicators (KPIs)

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Summary of promising practice

Accommodation Catering and Events (ACE)

- Residence Life innovations, particularly in relation to dealing with complex, student welfare issues and a new mental health appointment within the team.
- Introducing initiatives on providing clearer financial information and support for students experiencing financial difficulties.

The Advice Place

- Secret shopper initiative: a proactive way of using our students to gain service user feedback.
- Triaging drop in users to manage volumes, increased demand and the impacts on students.
- Taking positive action in supporting staff dealing with complex student cases.

Careers

- Proactive work on employability with School Development Plans: Careers has exciting partnerships with Schools, Colleges and across services that represent the personalized service students' desire.
- Reporting risk analysis: the service report provides a good example of reporting risk analysis and mitigating actions with its risk analysis table.

Chaplaincy

- Community building activity: the Chaplaincy provides an excellent space for students to engage with and have conversations on issues.
- Providing an impressive range of opportunities, support and offering different perspectives.
- Positively engaging in dealing with complex student welfare cases.

Edinburgh Global (including International Student Advisory Service)

- Edinburgh Global's partnership working with Careers and Student Recruitment and Admissions as an area of positive engagement.
- Staff development: providing collaborative opportunities for staff development through International Staff Week activity.
- International Student Advisory Service's humanitarian work, specifically with the Refugee Advisory Group and Council for At Risk Academics.

Estates

- A positively motivated service and list of priorities.
- An impressive list of achievements linked to the University Strategic Plan

Finance

- Reflecting and implementing change monthly
- Service is recipient of an impressive variety of awards for individuals, teams and the department.
- Reporting: excellent reporting of granular data on service use

Information Services Group (ISG)

- Good progress on lecture recording, resources for learning, resource lists and Makerspace.
- Reporting: providing a good, self-critical report on a complex service. The report made good use of thematic grouping of drivers and feedback and honest reflection on challenges and mitigating actions for risks.
- Meaningful engagement with the University Strategic Plan.

Institute for Academic Development (IAD)

- Communications and accessibility: ongoing work to improve communications and develop online workshops for increased accessibility.
- Key contributor to implementing the University Learning and Teaching Strategy.
- Reporting: good balance of reflection on challenges to the service in the annual report.

Student Counselling Service

- Doing an outstanding job under increasing pressures.
- Achieving favorable and clearly prioritised waiting and referral times during 2017/18.
- Reporting: provided exemplar reporting on impact demonstration, included helpful demographics, data, and focused KPIs.

Student Disability Service

- Good progress on incorporating Disability Review recommendations.
- Positive improvements in communication with Schools and disability contacts.

Student Recruitment & Admissions

- Approach to continuous improvement; do and be rather than tell.
- Identifying market intelligence as a priority, which is a positive key development
- Increased use of social media and student blogging to represent the diversity of the student population.
- Reporting: good reflection and clarity on risk assessment.

Student Systems and Administration

- Managing under difficult circumstances with an increasing number of new initiatives and priorities for a service not fully resourced.
- Reporting: an honest reflection on challenges.

University Sport & Exercise

- Staff development: highlighted the Step Up programme as a model of positive practice.
- Reporting: an exemplar of a well-developed and comprehensive report – use of infographics in the report highlighted as positive practice, which could be adapted for others.

Full support service reports are available on the Student Support Services wiki.