

Student Support & Wellbeing Committee

Tuesday 13 October 2015

14:00 – 16:00

Location: 060A-C Level 0, Skempton Building, South Kensington Campus

Minutes

Present:

Simon Archer
Mary Bown
Gerry Greyling
Joanna Haigh
Brett Harmony
Joanne Harris
Andrew Keenan
Colin Kerr
Sue Mannion
Arash Mostofi
Rosie Summerhayes
Leigh Turvey
Angela Urasala
Jennie Watson
Sue Webb
Lynda White (Acting Chair)
Andrew Willson

1. Welcome to new members- Angela Urasala (Advice Services Manager), Jennie Watson (Deputy President for Welfare), Sue Webb (Interim Head of International Student Support) and Paul Noke has taken over from Charles Gallagher (Head of Residential Services and Support).
2. Apologies for absence: Neil Mosley, Denis Wright (Chair), Sarah Freedman, Paul Noke, Tina Moloney, Charlotte O'Brien, Julie King, Michael Jones, Kelly Swaby, Claire O'Brien, Michael Emerson, Stamatia Giannarou, Mirko Kovac and Lorraine Craig.
3. Amendments to ToR and membership. Paper A
 - (i) No comments
4. Minutes of the previous meeting – Tuesday 09 June 2015 Paper B
 - (i) Amendment to the wording of item 4. This refers to the Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation policy, not the mental health policy - these changes have since been made and the updated minutes are available. **Action: LM**
5. Matters Arising: (actions from last minutes) Paper C
 - (i) Minute 4.1: College's Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy- update email attached. (CK)
 - (i) The intention was for the draft policy to be agreed at this meeting. However the document needs re-drafting due to contributions from ICU and the Communications department. The issues raised were:
 1. The role of the ICU should be stronger defined to emphasise the support they are able to provide students throughout this process.

2. The balance between victims and perpetrators should be reviewed as perpetrators have a structured process, whereas the policy doesn't define as clearly the process and support available to victims.
3. How to differentiate between rude behaviour and harassment, bullying and victimisation.
4. ICU felt the tone of the policy did not strike the right balance.

- (ii) The committee discussed the best method of hosting the policy. It was agreed that the requirements to host the document alongside other governance documents whilst ensuring it is easily accessible and presented in an appropriate student-centric fashion was important and needed further consideration.

Action: CK

- (iii) CK to re-draft with above considerations, SSWC to review doc.

Action: CK

- (ii) Minute 4.2: Liaise with Registry about changes to the policy and procedures for consideration of additional examination arrangements. (DW)

- (i) The Disability Advice Service re-wrote the policy to make the process simpler. The new policy will return to QAEC on 10 November, then onto Senate on 9 December.

- (iii) Minute 10.3: Communications to be reviewed regarding transport issues for students who live in Woodward Hall. (KS)

- (i) Sue Mannion updated the Committee on Kelly's behalf. A few parents raised their concerns about the distance from Woodward Hall to the South Kensington campus with the Wardens, but generally there were fewer concerns made by parents than previous years.

Action: KS

- (iv) Minute 10.4: Student Hub to be consulted regarding the issues and complexities with students being able to select their roommates. (KS)

- (i) Sue Mannion updated the Committee on Kelly's behalf. The Committee discussed the option of a US-style system where small profiles are released for students to view and select their own roommates. This will involve a significant departure from current practice. Kelly was tasked to look into the system capabilities and Jennie is to take this to the Union to see what they think about the suggestion.

Action: JW/KS

- (v) Minute 12.4: Orientation information to be removed from the ISS webpage and to provide the Chair with more information so he can follow this up. (SW)

- (i) Completed. Orientation is now run by Campus Services and they have set up a new page.

- (vi) Minute 13.2: Communication to be reviewed about paperwork required for IoS cases before exams. (LC)

- (i) LC absent. Update to be provided at the next committee.

Action: LC

- (vii) Minute 13.3: Students going on internships need communication and clarification to be made aware of the timeframes associated. (LC)

- (i) LC absent. Update to be provided at the next committee.

Action: LC

- (viii) College's Mental Health Policy- update from (DW).

- (i) Completion of the new report has been deferred until the appointment of a Mental Health Advisor in early 2016. The Committee recognised the importance of an updated policy and guidance as wardens are having to deal with more mental health issues.

- (ii) Following a discussion about the preparedness of wardens to deal with complex issues such as suicide, the Committee discussed the need for a review of the existing documentation and consideration for suicide prevention training to be repeated.

Action: DW

6. Transition of pre-sessional students into their degree courses (BH).
- (i) A number of problems have been raised that affect students who are enrolled in a pre-sessional course. This leads to increasing anxiety amongst these students:
 1. Students are unable to register for their main course prior to the end of their pre-sessional course.
 2. They have to move out of temporary accommodation in between courses.
 3. Their ID cards expire meaning they can't access facilities.
 - (ii) The root cause of the issue is as a result of course end dates within the student system and the rules associated with ID card, etc. that are dependent on that date. This is a known issue that also affect other areas within College but that is solvable within Registry. The Committee was notified that the new student system will allow a student to be enrolled on more than one course, thereby resolving the existing limitations. BH is to liaise with GG to resolve any lingering issues.

Action: BH/GG

- (iii) The issue around the period between the end of pre-sessional courses and the start of the academic year is of particular significance in terms of accommodation and access to facilities. Historically students in this predicament have been helped in an ad hoc manner. The issue affects c. 130 pre-sessional students and with a growing proportion of undergraduate pre-sessional English students it was agreed that a policy may be needed to more formally manage the process and services available during this period in the academic year. Brett is to liaise with Kelly.

Action: BH/KS

7. Future Student Services Review. (Panel members).

Paper D

- (i) A brief update was given about the review. It was confirmed that a consistent approach in questioning had been taken. The Chair has contacted Tom Welton (Chair of the Future Student Services Review Committee) to include the Centre for Academic English, however it was felt that Residential Life would be currently omitted due to a recent review.

Action: LW

8. Annual Reports

- (i) College Tutors (LW)

Paper E

Challenges: The Chair summarised the report. It was emphasised that another female College Tutor is needed and that the availability of space to hold confidential discussions remain an issue. Denis Wright has been in negotiations to procure a suitable room in Sherfield for the College Tutors.

- (ii) Student Hub (KS)

Paper F

Sue Mannion presented the report on behalf of Kelly.

Challenges: September has been exceptionally busy with an increase accommodation enquiries compared to last year. There was an over subscription of 166 bed spaces and the College decided to open Bernard Sunley and Fisher Hall which were both due to be refurbished this year. The number of under-18s in Halls has increased over the past three years, there are 110 in Halls this year.

Upcoming: The STROL and e-induction platforms may be redesigned this coming year, private housing advice appointments are to be re-launched, there is on-going training with Registry staff and a review of how letters can be produced from the Hub instead of Student Records.

- (iii) Chaplaincy (AW)

Paper G

Upcoming: The Chaplaincy emphasised their desire to do more on reflection on meaning and value in work- conversation.

- (iv) Imperial College Health Centre (SF) Paper H
No report labeled.
- (v) Student Counselling Service (RS) Paper I
Challenges: The waiting time for students had gone up, but this should improve with new appointments being made. A prioritising system has recently been implemented to help manage the severe cases.
Upcoming: From January 2016 the Student Counselling Service will be called Student Counselling and Wellbeing to accommodate mental health. Two further counsellors are being recruited to reduce waiting times, plus a Student Mental Health Advisor and Study Mentor enabling the team to offer more life skills workshops.
- (vi) Student Financial Support (GG) Paper J
Upcoming: The Student Support Fund helped 74 students this year, totalling c.£47k. It's been agreed to increase the maximum value of an award to £2,000. More formalised marketing material is being produced and will be circulated in due course.
- (vii) International Student Support (SW) Paper K
Challenges: Sue Webb updated the committee about more visa changes that are on the horizon and the particular implications for Imperial students; particularly in terms of the finances students are required to hold prior to visa applications.
- (viii) EYEC (TM) Paper L
Challenges: There is an on-going issue is the removal of College subvention to parents, but this is an issue for EYEC more than the parents.
Upcoming: EYEC is looking at ways with Advancement to help parents with their fees. There are plans for a reunion next year for past parents and children and current users.
- (ix) Disability Advisory Service (MB) Paper M
Challenges: There are increasing numbers of students who need to be seen and office space is particularly stretched. In addition, all support for those diagnosed with learning difficulties will be removed by the government. The DAS can administratively manage this, but College will have to decide whether to accept this approach and then fund it accordingly.
Upcoming: Funding for additional staff members has been secured and an Assistive Technology Trainer has been agreed for 2016/17. DAS now offers weekly appointments at Silwood Park and are looking in to how social media can improve on their service. All SpLD students can now access a minimum of four specialist tutorials. Study Mentoring will now fall under the Student Counselling and Wellbeing service. From next year the College may be expected to refer DSA-funded students to external agencies if they are more competitively priced.
- (x) Centre for Academic English (JK) Paper N
Brett Harmony presented the report on behalf of Julie King
Challenges: Changes to Tier 4 visas now require Secure English Language Testing from our students. The Centre for Academic English staff has spent a lot of time helping student understand and comply the new requirements. A large proportion of Chinese students have been affected. This needs to be reviewed to find more effective way of dealing with this situation.
Upcoming: Planning to expand the series specifically aimed at undergraduate students. New appointments will be starting early 2016 increasing with demand. In addition, there have been changes to the Postgraduate English Requirement and a new collaboration with English for Academic Studies has been introduced.
- (xi) Wardens (AM) Paper O
Challenges: An increase in anxiety and mental health issues has flagged the need for further Mental Health First Aid training – the Wardens are looking into how to fund such training.
[Note added to Minutes: funding of mental health training for hall warden teams has been

confirmed from the Student Support budget - DW]. Also, the growing cost of accommodation in South Kensington halls is a concern that it will increase financial difficulties for students living in South Kensington for medical or welfare reasons.

(xii) ICU Student Advisory Service (AK)

Paper P

Verbal report only. The ICU SAS team has had some staff changes recently and following the appointment of Angela Urasala as well as further staff expansion, the SAS will be able to offer a wider service to students comparable to other institutions.

9. AOB

- (i) The Committee discussed the government's 'Prevent Programme' as raised by the Chair. Some concerns were raised about the practical implications of the programme and the ICU commented on a growing resistance of the programme within the student body.