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| **Issue/Topic** | Sabbatical Officers Final Report  |
| **Date** | 20/05/20 |
| **Background** | Outgoing President and Vice President, Georgia and Amy, final report. Overview of 2 year term.  |
| **Recommendation** | To note |

**President of Education & Engagement, Georgia Downs 2018-2020:**

Lecture capture (LC)- The ideal was for LC to be implemented in all lecture theatres/teaching rooms. After various meetings with the former director of learning and teaching, LC was firmly on everyone's agenda with full support from the university executive. However, the change in teaching delivery saw some resistance from lecturing staff and union representatives, with reservations around attendance. However, we have seen a slight shift in mindset from colleagues. To date, Learning Services have since purchased the technical devices to implement LC for a selection of classes before rolling this out university wide.

Voluntary opportunities- The aim of this was to encourage students to get involved with voluntary events. This was to offer non placement students an opportunity to build on their CV and experiences. In 2019 the university hosted a volunteer’s fair. Various organizations and charities from Suffolk were invited to showcase their opportunities for students.

Better quality events for different demographics and interests- 2018 Freshers saw a significant increase in events, including but not limited to drinking /non-drinking events, course rep event and so on. We co-organized Reclaim the Night, a protested for Ipswich Borough Council to adopt a Women’s safety charter. Through democratic voting, Summer ball also saw a huge change, including a new venue. To date, this is the first Summer ball to make a profit.

A student representation task and finish group radically changed the dynamics of representation. It was the first time student representatives, academics and services had the opportunity to review representation as a collective. Several recommendations came out of the group and were implemented 2019-20. The benefits of this are highlighted under the student representation statistics section.

Shop on campus- After receiving a significant amount of feedback such as council and NSS, food provision was in high demand for students on Ipswich campus. The previous SU shop closed due to financial demands, therefore any future food facilities needed to be completely reformed. Some of the changes made were for example: self-service tills, card only (no cash handling), student staff operated and different providers. Once voted by students, this required a collective work force to implement with full support from the university executive and was in operation for September 2019.

Online Feedback tool- students are offered different ways to give feedback throughout the year, including course committee and module feedback. This approach unfortunately was not robust enough to respond to student demands in a timely manner. With support from the student experience group, SOFIA (Suffolk Online Feedback in Action) is now live and accessible for course reps all year round. This required a lot of change for staff and students, for example: changing various democratic procedures, additional employment of a student staff member, reshaping student representation, including a review of course rep job descriptions. The tool enables reps to fulfil their role effortlessly which has significantly improved the perception of student representation, particularly as reps receive a response from staff imminently. It is worth noting that thanks to sabbatical campaigns and projects, the SU now has more students employed than staff, helping us to achieve our student led KPI.

Improve feedback within a reduced time frame- Various staff have different approaches to feedback, meaning each student receives different levels of feedback. With the help of CELT (Centre of excellence for learning and teaching) there is now much more guidance for staff to be able to give feedback. Various feedback methods were piloted across the university, for example one school were piloting giving audio feedback which was very well received by students and will influence future practice. As a result of this campaign, with the support of the VC and quality department, feedback turn around is now within 3 working weeks. Again, improving the student experience.

The role of president is to work alongside Part Time School Officers to represent student’s academic interests at school level. All school officers have met with their course representatives on a regular basis to discuss ongoing issues, including analyzing SOFIA data more broadly as a group. Through engaging with their reps, they have been able to raise the presence of student representation and improve the student experience overall. School officers have worked closely with their Dean’s and Associate Deans to raise particular issues which has enabled them to put the student stamp on school projects. They are often called upon to have an input on key decisions made by the university, this includes membership on University Senate which was previously limited to 2 nominees.

**Vice-President of Activities and Welfare, Amy Grant 2018-2020:**

24/7 Library – This election campaign was also featured numerous times in the NSS qualitative feedback. A proposal to fund a 24-hour library trial was approved by SLT. The library opening hours became 24/7 during exam and deadline periods. The trial is due to end May 2020 when the usage and impact will be reviewed.

Social Space - This election and re-election campaign gave a lot of credit to the importance of the student voice. The new student social space is an asset to the Students’ Union and has made a huge impact on the visibility of the SU. The space is extremely well used, and student feedback demonstrates the positive impact it has made on the student experience. The space also includes a kitchenette with a microwave for students to heat food. This has been a huge student win as this was a motion which was brought to student council and democratically voted on.

Keep Wednesday afternoons free – this campaign was inspired by a national student movement to get more participating in sport. The BUCS league, which many universities compete in, primarily takes place on a Wednesday. Many students are unable to take part due to clashes with lectures. Through the timetabling task at finish group, keeping Wednesday afternoons free became a priority and was successfully implemented in September 2019. From this success, Wildcard Wednesday was brought into the social sports program. This provides students with the opportunity to participate in a new activity every fortnight.

Silvercloud - This is a digital mental health platform which is used by other universities and the NHS. It uses cognitive behavioural therapy to deliver both self-help and coached programs to students who may need extra mental help support. A proposal for implementing this platform has recently been approved by SLT. This will benefit students as they will be able to access reliable, effective resources remotely and access coached support if needed. The focus on mental health across the institution is a growing topic for both students and staff. The silvercloud platform will also provide unlimited access for staff which will play a beneficial part in the universities approach as a whole to improve mental health across all departments.

Safe Suffolk Student - Safety on and off campus is something that many Students’ Unions will promote. This campaign took many angles to safety and prompted a number of networking opportunities, both internally and externally. The campaign originally took a holistic approach and offered students numerous self-care resources e.g. ‘Ask for Angelia’ a safe night out campaign, ‘Student Mind’, ‘Terrance Higgins Trust’ Sexual health, ‘Consent matters’ Student services campaign etc. This also provided the opportunity to work alongside Ipswich borough council to review the ‘Purple Flag’ accreditation. Through these channels it has been possible to provide appropriate student feedback regarding a ‘Safe night out’ in Ipswich as well as invite ‘Purple Flag’ to host stalls at our Freshers Fair. This campaign also provided a platform to host a ‘Self Care Fair’. The purpose of this was to provide an environment where students could network with the services available to them, both on and off campus. Again, this took a holistic approach and was attended but numerous internal and external services. Mindfulness sessions and Indian head massages were also available to students as part of promoting a self-care routine.

The focus of the Vice President is to develop Activities and Welfare. This remit has allowed numerous projects to be explored. A successful bid from BUCS and Sport England provided £7,000 to launch an Active Wellbeing Project. This is a proactive initiative to support students with their mental health. The aims of the project are supported by research which suggests that engaging in physical activity can significantly improve and individual's mental health. The design of the program uses social prescribing so that students who may be suffering low moods can be referred. These students complete a questionnaire both before and after the active wellbeing intervention. It became evident that social anxiety was one of the barriers to get students into sport. With this in mind, the students could also have access to an active wellbeing volunteer who would act as a buddy to attend sport sessions with. This project proved to be a huge success and to allow the project to continue, a further bid for funding was granted from the student experience group. This project was also featured by both the BBC and ‘MadeAtUni’ Lifesaver campaign.

Review of democratic procedures highlighted a need for an Activities Committee. This is chaired by the Vice President and provides a process for democratic decisions within student activities. Student representation across the Students’ Union is vital. Within Sports and Societies committee members are elected and are responsible for the voice of their group of students. Unlike course representatives, there was no formal structures to facilitate this student voice. Activities committee was created to ensure that this aspect of student representation had a purpose and focus as well as platform to facilitate change.

A responsibility as Vice President is to support elected part time Liberation officers within their roles.

* The women’s officer worked alongside the Vice President to investigate the possibility of implementing a Domestic Abuse policy. As a result, the university now has several key staff members trained as Domestic Abuse Champions and a policy is being created. Another initiative has been to source funding to provide a period poverty service: ‘The Red Box Project’. So far resources have been taken from the officer budget to provide free sanitary products in the SU bathrooms.
* LGBT+ officer and the Vice President both took leadership roles in the Suffolk Pride 2019 Committee. A Suffolk Pride event was a lead campaign for the LGBT+ officer when elected. The succeeding LGBT+ officer also played a key role in the Suffolk Pride 2020 committee. Creating more LGBT+ networks should also be a highlighted achievement. A Vice Presidential responsibility is membership on the Equality and Diversity Committee. The current and elected LGBT+ officer were able to provide in depth feedback through a student consultation phase of an upcoming University Transgender Policy.
* The BAME Officer was able to effectively communicate with the Chaplaincy on campus to establish ways in which the Prayer room could be better utilized. These networks are enabling a clearer understanding of student needs and how they differ across demographics.
* Students with Disabilities Officer has been working with the Students’ Union advice service to develop accessibility for students who may suffer from hidden disabilities, such as fatigue, mental health, epilepsy and mobility issues. A key campaign has been investigating a suitable area to provide a designated ‘quiet space’. This is being accomplished through partnership with the chaplaincy.
* Students with caring responsibilities Officer has secured key contacts within the Suffolk Carers Network. A motion submitted to Student council outlines a project to create more Family friendly study opportunities on campus.

**Sabbatical Officer led Foundation Board Bids**

Suffolk Student Wellbeing Ambassador (SSWA) - This project enabled four student wellbeing ambassadors to be employed by the Students’ Union. Their role requires engagement with students through the promotion of wellbeing and mental health services. The role also works alongside a research associate who aims to research the student opinions on mental health provision on campus. The SSWA’s collect data through facilitating focus groups and questionnaires, whilst also effectively supporting and signposting their peers.

Raising and Giving Society (RAG) - This bid provided a seeding fund to enable the creation of a RAG society. A student committee was recruited, and the society sought for a charity partnership. The RAG society have now signed a partnership contract with ZEST, a St Elizabeth Hospice branch. Throughout the year the society plan to use the seeding fund to host fundraising events. Half the money raised will go to ZEST while the other half will enable the RAG society to continue with their society aims.

Random Acts of kindness (RAK) - an initiative to improve student wellbeing and give them a boost during critical parts of the academic calendar, such as exam week. It was changed slightly this year to reflect the current demands of students. The funding enabled the Students’ Union to purchase board games and mindfulness colouring books for the student social space. Mindfulness session’s, Indian head massages and free fruit and coffee was also provided.