

Skills Review 2013/14

Emma Walton- Head of Academic Services, University Library

Context

In February 2013 a group was convened to look at generic skills provision delivered to students by the Library and Student Services (ELSS, CDS & Careers). In addition members of the Students' Union and Student Voice were invited onto the group

Aim

The aim of this group was to ensure that those involved in skills provision are providing a comprehensive, valuable offer with regard to non-embedded, generic skills provision across the Library and Student Services.

Scope

To discover

- what was/is being offering across our services
- what sessions are popular (both attendance and feedback)
- if there is duplication across services

To discuss

- areas of best practice
- opportunities for scaffolding
- opportunities for new and innovative provision

To work towards

- effective promotion and marketing opportunities including signposting across services
- creating further opportunities for student engagement with regard to skills provision
- influencing the creation of or creating a virtual single point of information for added value skills provision

Membership

Emma Walton – Head of Academic Services, Library (Chair)

Helen Bentley – Counselling Service Manager

Liz Chahal – Head of Student Support Centre

Henrietta Pocock – Team Leader English Language Support Service

Susan Reed – Careers Advisory Team Manager

Yvonne Hamblin – Employability Development Manager

Steph McKeating – Academic Services Manager – Library (Learning and Teaching Portfolio)

Becky Laing – Academic Librarian (Learning and Teaching Portfolio)

Stephen O'Sullivan - Deputy Team Leader English Language Support Service

Laura Crawford – LSU

Emma Dresser – Student Voice

Jess Draper – Senior Learning Support Mentor - CDS

Outcomes

The group met four times during 2013/14 the outcomes of these meetings are as follows:

- **an audit of what is being delivered and by whom (see attached Skills Review Provision spreadsheet)**
This audit found that there was little duplication in content, and uncovered an extensive range of provision. However, it was felt that as a group we could collaborate more in the naming and describing of sessions to ensure clarity to students and could signpost more across services.
- **discussions relating to feedback particularly the methods of gaining feedback**
We all collect and collate feedback using a range of methods further work on this is needed.
- **discussions relating to scheduling**
All round the table had tried a variety of scheduling methods, regarding timing both time of the day and time in the term. Results of a review were inconclusive with no apparent trends
- **the creation of a leaflet pulling together all services**
This was seen as a way that services could highlight what they do for new students and returners in the absence of a single point of information

Future work

There is considerable work taking place across campus in the areas of personal development and employability and the work of this group will need to complement and feed into developments.

Projects such as:

- Graduate Attributes
- SBE skills development
- The LSU co-curricular project
- Peer support projects

Additionally, as an area identified as a strategic priority following this years' NSS results, further developments around personal development are expected from the centre as directed by Learning and Teaching Committee and the Learning and Teaching Strategy. It is likely that this work will have a bearing on the future plans of Skills Review group, therefore we are keeping a watching brief but will continue to meet and move forward where appropriate.

The group remains

- a forum for awareness raising across our services and others across campus
- a mechanism to remain relevant to our students in the area of generic provision
- allows for opportunities to benchmark and to share best practice in feedback and other areas

Future plans for the Skills Review Group are primarily focussed on looking at possible existing and the creation of new mechanisms through which to better promote skills provision and make this service more visible as a student offer. In light of both the range of work being undertaken and strategic steer in this area some of this work may fit better elsewhere.

Ongoing work includes the collection of attendance data for last year's provision which will aid future planning , further work on feedback and the promotion of our provision with the use of a new skills leaflet and assignment postcard.

We also hope to work with the Students' Union, Student Voice to investigate what students require from skills provision. (Methodology is to be decided)

It is hoped that this group can influence the direction of travel of further developments across the institution in this area of provision.

NB – For the above to take place we would like to invite a representative of the Sport Development Centre to join the group. Similarly if PGR provision is discussed a member of the Graduate School will be invited.