

Learning and Teaching Committee



Paper Title: Loughborough University Student Leadership Audit

Authors: Andy Borrie, Jo Emmett, Simon Wombwell: Sports Development Centre

1. Specific Decision Required by Committee	LTC is asked to consider recommendations in the report which are intended to underpin a coherent strategy to develop a UK leading system for personal leadership development within students.
2. Relevance to University Strategy	n/a
3. Executive Summary	There are pockets of excellent student leadership development across the University that are as yet uncoordinated. In order to create a coherent strategy for developing this area of student learning it was determined that an audit of current activity was required. This audit was conducted on behalf of LTC by SDC staff with the work being overseen by a Steering Group.
4. Essential Background Information	n/a
5. Risks, Risk Mitigation and Governance/ Accountability	n/a
6. Implications for other activities	n/a
7. Resource and Cost	n/a
8. Alternative Options considered	n/a
9. Other Groups/Individuals consulted.	n/a
10. Future Actions, Timescales & Frequency of Review by this Committee.	n/a
11. Success Criteria (KPIs)	n/a
12. University Executive comment (required for Council papers only)	n/a

Loughborough University Student Leadership Audit

April '15

(undertaken by SDC on behalf of LTC)

Background & Purpose

There are pockets of excellent student leadership development across the University that are as yet uncoordinated. In order to create a coherent strategy for developing this area of student learning it was determined that an audit of current activity was required. This audit was conducted on behalf of LTC by SDC staff with the work being overseen by a Steering Group comprising:- Andy Borrie (Deputy Director of Sport – Coaching and Performance SDC), Jo Emmett (Strategic Manager – Performance Sport SDC), Amy Ward (VP Education LSU), Helen Smith (Head of Careers and Employability CEC), Dr Hilary McDermott (Senior Lecturer SSEHS), Birgit Lewis (Employability Learning Manager CEC) and Simon Wombwell (Education and Development Manager SDC).

Methodology

To complete the audit we used an agreed framework of open questions to allow exploration of the anticipated variation in the leadership skill development offered within departments. A copy of this paper is available upon request and the table of departmental contacts is in Appendix 1. The recorded findings have been shared for comment with the audit group.

It should be noted that we did not attempt to review the quality of delivery and standard of content of specific workshops and programmes during this audit.

Summary of Findings

1. Academic department offer ~ The leadership skills development offer varies hugely between academic schools, consequently student exposure to leadership skills either theoretically or practically varies widely. There are areas of real excellence within the academic offer.
2. Support Services and SU offer ~ The support services within Loughborough University and the Students Union are going through a particularly intensive period of review and programme development in relation to leadership skills. The on-going work is being closely linked to the development of strategic models such the Graduate Attributes and the expansion of the Employability Award. The development of leadership skills appears to be a high priority for the support services and SU but the overall offer is still not completely coherent.
3. Despite the growing recognition that this is a key for student development opportunities to develop an understanding of leadership skills is not widely available. We estimate that the opportunities on offer have an estimated total reach of less than 1000 students and the number of engaged students is less than 250.

In the majority of cases, the students taking part in leadership skill development opportunities have been presented with the opportunity because of forthcoming roles that in part include leadership. Taking an example relevant to all academic departments, the Students Union delivers a series of leadership workshops for Programme Presidents and Programme Representatives. These students have been elected into these positions and have the offer to attend as a matter of course. Circumstance rather than personal reflection that leads to a desire to develop leadership ability is the determining factor in creating opportunity. The Programme President and Programme Representative targeted workshop programme saw approximately a 10-15% engagement rate from

the total cohort of 500 students fulfilling these roles in 2014/15. This suggests that even when opportunities exist student engagement is not as comprehensive as one would like.

4. Two clear strands of leadership activity came to light during the audit:
 - There are discipline specific and extracurricular programmes that deliver practical development of leadership skills
 - There are academic programmes that within their formal design incorporate leadership skill 'awareness, understanding and reflective learning'.

Programmes tend to fall completely into one of these two categories with few offers linking both theory and practice to maximise learning. In a small number of cases credit bearing modules have developed with leadership skill inclusion. For example- 'Advanced Interpersonal Skills' module within the SBE and 'Project Leadership' within the Wolfson School.

5. Within the academic offer where there is an opportunity to develop leadership skills and/or understanding this is normally within a discipline context i.e. business leadership, sports leadership. In contrast LUiL are adopting a more interdisciplinary approach to understanding and development of leadership.
6. With the growing recognition of the value placement years have within a student's development pathway, it was pertinent that a number of departments identified a desire to enhance the impact of the placement from a leadership learning context. The need to enhance/create leadership skill understanding programmes prior to this practical year identifies a time when leadership programme access could be most effective. Within SSEHS and Performance Sport leadership programmes the target year for leadership skill programmes is Part B.
7. The audit found that the existence of the leadership skills development offer within academic departments is very much dependent on individuals. If the department have staff with expertise in leadership and transferable skills alongside their academic expertise, programmes have evolved. Often there has been a large personal time commitment from staff members to create the programmes as opposed to a strategic drive from the department to develop the area. This is not a model for growth that can be relied upon to deliver excellence in this area.
8. The variety of experience and delivery variation across the university served in itself to demonstrate what value the pooling knowledge could have.

Recommendations

These recommendations assume that the LU believes that this is an important area for student development. We believe we should;-

1. Create a clear Institution wide strategy for this area. We clearly have cross Institution pockets of excellence but these need to be joined together and strategy developed to filling gaps in provision and take our delivery to a higher level.
2. Departments should be tasked with ensuring that students have access to some form of leadership training whether that is directly through the curriculum or linking to the support services.

3. Seek to create a leadership 'champion' in each department and support service. These staff should be specifically educated and trained to develop leadership skills in students. This work could engage CAP and the Staff Development team.
4. Develop an Institution forum for student leadership development that can share best practice, create dialogue, stimulate awareness in students and staff and assist in quality assuring delivery.
5. Through the work of the Forum create a common 'language' about leadership at Loughborough that standardises terminology where possible and makes it possible to use the coherence of our leadership offer as a marketing tool with prospective students.
6. Through the Forum work to continue the on-going work to link the extracurricular offer across LU and the SU.
7. Ensure that staff that input the time within departments to move this forwards have their commitment fully recognised within workload modelling.
8. Develop an additional flagship programme that takes the best students from existing programmes on an accelerated journey. The intent would be to create the leaders of tomorrow in a variety of fields of work who have an allegiance to the University as they become national leaders in their areas. Exemplar of such a programme is shown in Appendix 2.

Summary

If LU provided sufficient resource to underpin a coherent strategy we could develop a UK leading system for personal leadership development within students. This would enhance the attractiveness of LU as an HE Institution of choice for high flying students.

There is a willingness across departments and support services to grow our offer in this area and LU should look to build on what already exists as a matter of urgency.

Given that much good practice already exists the overall Institution wide offer could be enhanced relatively quickly by creating a vehicle for information exchange amongst those active in this area.

Andy Borrie, Deputy Director of Sport

Jo Emmett, Strategic Manager (Performance)

Simon Wombwell, Education and Development Manager

Appendix 1.

School or Support Service	Method of Collection	Staff Member Providing Information	Auditor
Aeronautical, Automotive, Chemical and Materials Engineering	Interview	Steve Tarleston (Senior Lecturer) Dr Simon Martin (Director of Studies)	Jo Emmett
Arts, English & Drama	Interview	Dr Chris Christie (Senior Lecture)	Jo Emmett
Business & Economics	Interview	Dr Keith Pond (ADT)	Jo Emmett
Science	Interview	Dr Sandie Dann (ADT)	Jo Emmett
Civil and Building Engineering	Joint Interview	Martin Tuuli (Senior Lecturer) Dr Scott Fernie (Senior lecturer)	Jo Emmett
Loughborough Design	Interview	Dr John McCardle (ADT)	Simon Wombwell
Electronic, Electrical and Systems Engineering	No contact received	Target was - Dr Vincent Dwyer (ADT)	Simon Wombwell
Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering	Email	Prof John Tyrer (Optical Instrumentation)	Simon Wombwell
Sports, Exercise and Health Sciences	Interview	Dr Lorraine Cale (ADT) Dr Hilary McDermott (Senior Lecturer) Nick Bromell (University Teacher of Physical Education)	Simon Wombwell
Loughborough University in London	Interview	Dr Erik Bohemia (Senior Lecturer)	Simon Wombwell
Graduate School	Interview	Dr Kathryn North (Researcher Development Manager)	Simon Wombwell
Library Services	Interview	Emma Walton (Director of Library Services)	Simon Wombwell
Careers & Employability Centre	Joint Interview	Birgit Lewis (Employability Learning Manager) Susan Taylor (Careers and Development Manager)	Simon Wombwell
Sports Development Centre	n/a	Simon Wombwell (Education and Development Manager) Cath Harvey (Sports Volunteering and Employability Manger)	Simon Wombwell
Student Union	Interview	Laura Crawford (student Development Co-ordinator)	Simon Wombwell

Appendix 2. The Loughborough Personal Excellence Programme – A Flagship

The success of tailored or specific programmes depends greatly on how students perceive its value. If we wish to develop a flagship programme for our 'outstanding students' the highest potential achievers at Loughborough we need to demonstrate its outstanding value and readily prompt access and awareness.

Additional consultation is required with academic and support service colleagues to define an 'outstanding student'. This needs to joint up effectively with Success Competences and Graduate Attribute work.

Entry routes for the Loughborough Personal Excellence Programme (LPEP):

- If the scope and uptake of the Employability Award continues to grow this could form a valuable route to access LPEP. The LPEP could feasibly sit within or aside from the scoring system for the employability award. Due to the volume of peer reliance and involvement we need to maintain that students are engaging in the programme to further their skills and enhance abilities throughout.
- Considerable work is required to maximise the positioning within academic departments. This perhaps more than anything else will determine where leadership skill development sits within a Loughborough student's development pathway. It is important that for those departments with leadership skill related modules that a pathway can be formed for the outstanding students to target the LPEP. Ideally all degree programmes that successfully have an individual enrolled on the programme would consider making this a credit bearing element of the student's experience. Thus allowing the development of a recognised interdisciplinary leadership module within Loughborough University.
- The third route would be through other formalised 'platform level' leadership skill development programmes. Namely those available through the Students Union, Sports Development Centre and specific extra-curricular programmes run by departments.

This flagship programme could serve to influence preconceived student views of what components are critical to maximising their learning experience at Loughborough. In addition, vitally, what is significant to their long-term personal goal attainment and that the offer at Loughborough is very different to that experienced at previous educational institutes.

It would be unrealistic to suggest with the current broader position of personal growth and particularly leadership skill development, that in the first year of the excellence programme all Part B students would be exposed to the application opportunity. However, in year one we believe current leadership work would allow for the recruitment of an effective opening cohort. The group forming the foundation of a part peer accessed application process in year two.

Leadership skill acquisition pathway for the LPEP:

1. Awareness
2. Understanding
3. Development
4. Practical application (Practice)
5. Reflection
6. Enhancement

The programme will naturally encourage a cyclical repetition of 4 – 6 and an attitude to create and take every opportunity to re-engage with steps 1 – 3 during their life long development pathway.

The recommendation is for the LPEP to be accessible as an interdisciplinary programme, aligned where possible to medium or long term practical application opportunities. If students are taking a placement year then aligning their inclusion in LPEP could prove highly effective, with review workshops during the placement year. To remain dynamic and practical these workshops could be facilitated in several geographically chosen locations in the country.

The LPEP development group will need to build on the work of this audit to utilise pockets of existing expertise and practice to build a highly dynamic programme.