Student Life Mentoring Mid-Year Report (SID Data)

February 2017

Service Scope and Evaluation

In Semester One* of the 2016-17 academic year, we had 61 mentors operating in eleven teams across the University’s three residential sites – Stag Hill Campus, Manor Park and Hazel Farm. These teams mentored first year UG and PG students and logged over 24,000 interactions with approx. 4,200 mentees.

*We only mentor from Welcome Weekend to Week 10. The exam period is not covered.

Our teams gave practical advice on communal living issues, signposted students to relevant academic and student support services and mediated conflict where necessary. The most popular general enquiries logged, and therefore the most common conversations that mentors were having with students between September – December, were relating to off campus accommodation advice with 847 unique enquiries, degree related advice with 557 unique enquiries, and Student Life Mentoring social events with 497 unique enquiries. There were over 15,000 interactions (2,000 more than 2015/16) which built rapport between mentors and students.

Data Analysis

Due to issues with data collection in previous years, we created 22 new categories for 2016/17 with the aim of looking at a more detailed breakdown of what the Mentors were talking about. As part of this initiative we introduced ‘Signposting’ categories so we could gather data on which University...
Services the Mentors were recommending to their mentees. The chart above shows the individual signposting categories and the most popular by far is Signpost to Fault Reporting. Initially we were expecting there to be more Mentors signposting to ALS and Centre for Wellbeing for example, however after a quick check of the some of the free text the Mentors had written it would seem that the figures above are more or less accurate.

The one concern with using separate signposting categories is that it requires the Mentors to often log their conversation under multiple categories and this can take them a lot longer to complete. This means that the data above may only reflect the signposting that the Mentors were willing to log after they had already logged the enquiry description, so a quicker and easier method – such as SID One Click – would still be the best option for collecting this type of data.

The issues presented by students vary chronologically with the majority of issues being addressed in the first few weeks of students arriving, making October our busiest month by far. Below is a graph of the main challenges our mentors advised on broken down by month.

The majority of categories peak in October and tail off as issues are resolved, such as Fault Reporting for Facility Issues. However enquiries about Off Campus Accommodation peak in November when the students start looking for housing for next year.

Categories relating to the Student’s Union (which is not an area we have collected data on before) all peak in October as the student’s arrive and want to know about events/sports/societies that are available at Surrey.

Now that we are in the fourth academic year of using SID to capture data, it is possible to look back on trends from previous years in Semester One. Unfortunately we can only analyse a small amount of
the enquiry categories we currently use because over they have been broken down and become more specialised over time. However we can still look at the key categories and identify trends.

The most notable trends over the past five years relate to Wellbeing, Facility Problems, and Off Campus Accommodation queries.

**Wellbeing**

The large jump in enquiries relating to Wellbeing in 2016 could in part be due to breaking this category down into more specific areas:

- Low Mood
- Homesickness & Loneliness
- Anxiety & Stress
- Concern for Other Student

This has made it easier for Mentors to categorise any concerns raised and record the data more accurately. The rise in enquiries could also be due to have more Mentors this year, therefore leading to more conversations with more students.

**Facility Problems**

There has been a distinct drop in the amount of signposting to Fault Reporting over the past four years, which could be due to the extra work being done by Estates and Facilities before the students arrive to make sure there are less issues with facilities and equipment.
Off Campus Accommodation

This category was always one of the most popular in November each year, however this year the dramatic increase is most likely due to the opening of the new Surrey Lettings Agency and the introduction of their information sessions, and the Student Life Mentoring Welfare Card on this particular topic. The increase in enquiries is a positive thing in this case because it demonstrates that the students are engaging with the well timed information we are providing for them.

Student Life Mentoring Social Events (September – December 2016)

International Orientation and Under 18 Social Events

During International Orientation week approximately 60 new international students attended a Student Life team organised campus tours run by Student Life Mentor Team Leaders. The Student Life team also organised three evening social activities with games, quiz and refreshments. Approximately 80 students attended these events.

The Student Life team ran a social event aimed at students aged under 18 in the residences towards the start of the semester, this attracted 16 students, all whom were international students. Mentors chatted with the students, as well as playing games and enjoying light refreshments.

A total of £30 was spent on the above events, equating to £0.19 per head.

All Residential Student Social Events

Student Life Mentors organised a total of 10 events over 10 weeks of Semester One. Events included: a BBQ by the lake, bowling trip to Guildford’s leisure centre (The Spectrum), three Quiz Nights (two in Heart+Soul at Manor Park and one on campus in a Court Reception. There was also a s ‘mores evening, sushi making, games night at Heart+Soul, trip to see the Guildford Stoke Park fireworks, a treasure hunt around Hazel Farm, and also a live music evening at Hazel Farm.

A total of 556 people attended these events, with £599.40 being spent on the activities. This equates to a cost per head being £1.07.