

'Improving guidance for students on module choice'



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Overview

Project rationale?

- Student survey results suggest that ‘academic support’ is an area for improvement
- A *significant number of courses*, score poorly [UWSS, 2016, annexe A Q3.1] - communication, information and guidance concerning module choices

Project aims?

- Identify what ‘underlies’ the issues in this area
- Review existing sources/systems of information and guidance
- Identify the kind of information and guidance students would like
- Improve student satisfaction through recommendations

Stakeholders and methodology

- Targeted four particular groups:
 - SU
 - Institute Reps and StARs
 - Programme Advisory Service
 - Student Records
- Collection of data?
 - Informal 'chats'
 - Focus group
 - Interviews
 - Questionnaire

Summary Feedback from Programme Advisory Service & Student Records

Programme Advisory Service:

- On hand during Induction/Welcome Week
- Provide workshops on selection 2 weeks before deadline, attend Education 'carnivals'/WBS module selection session
- Attend JH workshop

Problems identified & observations?

- Timing for choosing modules; staffing in PA Service; choosing modules on basis of assessment and staff; timetabling

Registry Services – Student Records:

- Run advice for 2 weeks but often turn up on final day
- Input into Induction/Welcome Week

Problems identified & observations?

- Likely to choose on basis of assessment
- Seek advice from peers or module lead
- Process can prove difficult for JH students
- Process e.g. not completing it properly
- Incorrect advice from staff
- Information on the module descriptors

Feedback from Students/SU

- 48 responses to 15 targeted questions from StARS collected at the end of the academic year. The highlights are as follows:
 - 41% said type of assessment is the most important factor informing their module choice
 - 22% of students felt content was important when selecting a module
 - The tutor and when the module is timetabled made up 15% and 13% respectively
 - The first point of contact for students looking for module information was Blackboard at 34% followed by SOLE at 26%, module leaders at 17% and peers at 13%
 - At 29%, 27% and 16.7% the second point of contact was PAT, Module Leader and Course Leader respectively
 - 81.3% of respondents had never attended a module fair
 - Students reflected that they understood the importance of making the correct module choice, but only 55% felt the information and guidance on module selection from SOLE was accurate and 43% found the module selection process of SOLE effective

Recommendations to-date & moving forward?

- Institutes should ensure **concise and up-to-date information** about modules is provided on their **blackboard pages**
- Module Leaders should be asked to ensure the **information on SOLE is accurate** in a timely manner before the module selection process begins with careful consideration for:
 - Assessment Structure
 - Module Description being ‘inviting’ and accurate
- Reconsider / **Review module fairs**, are they necessary, could they be improved?
- Consider **start dates for module selection** process so:
 - They are timely
 - Students have all the information available to them to make informed decisions.
- Moving Forward:
 - Continue to collect data from students to get a more concise picture
 - Review Qualitative data in more detail and look for additional trends
 - Review of process of module selection on SOLE to identify areas of improvement