cardiffmet su

2017-18

ANNUAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cardiff Met Students' Union Annual Report 2018 was drawn together from student feedback gathered throughout the academic year 2017/18. Student representatives were also given the opportunity to offer additional feedback from their cohorts to contribute to the report, this allowed the Students' Union (SU) to gather feedback from typically harder to reach student groups such as post graduate taught and post graduate research students.

A range of sources were used including:

• Survey results
• School Rep meeting minutes
• Student Staff Liaison Committee minutes
• SU Tell US Campaign

A key part of the Annual Report is the resulting action plan, this is monitored throughout the year in the SU partnership meeting and directly with those responsible for actions.

The SU begin this year's report by reflecting on the recommendations and action plan from 2017 to show enhancements at Cardiff Met and Cardiff Met SU and to highlight those areas where further work is required.

This year's report has been put together to present feedback across the student journey from recruitment through to graduation and beyond. Common themes arising from student feedback have been identified in each area along with student ideas and suggestions for enhancement.

Throughout the report a set of actions have been highlighted to be undertaken by the Students' Union along with recommendations for the University. In order to ensure this report is representative the arising actions and recommendations were shared with the student population for a week long consultation period. SU Officers were also able to contribute and view drafts throughout the process and the final document was signed off by the Board of Trustees.

This report enters the University structures through the June Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee where the SU ask the University to respond to the arising recommendations and work in partnership to create an action plan to implement these in the next academic year.

CONCLUSION

Overall the SU and students are satisfied with the quality of provision delivered across the student lifecycle at Cardiff Met. The University continues to value the student voice and works positively with students and student representatives to respond to feedback and enhance the student experience. The SU notes that this has been a difficult year full of change within the University and unfortunately this has caused some delay in response to the recommendations of the 2016/17 Annual Report. In particular the SU would like to emphasise the re-occurrence of recommendations based on the University's communication with students, with this issue now arising for three consecutive years with no resolution. The SU therefore believes this should be a priority for the University moving forward.

As with previous Annual Reports the SU hopes to work in partnership with the University on resulting action plans in response to the student feedback presented here.

Hannah Reilly
Director of Student Engagement
Cardiff Met Students' Union

Online:

www.cardiffmetsu.co.uk
@cardiffmetsu on Twitter
/cardiffmetsu on Facebook

This report was considered and approved by the Students' Union Board of Trustees on 24/05/18

SU ACTIONS FROM 2016/17

ACTION: Develop Course Rep training to include different levels for returning and new reps.

UPDATE: With the addition of the SU Rep Conference in January 2018, reps were able to engage in further discussions with staff, fellow reps and externals. The conference helped to develop an extra level of skills and experience for those reps in attendance whilst also being an additional opportunity to gather student feedback.

73 TOTAL REP CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

100% FOUND REP CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS INFORMATIVE

4/5 CONFERENCE RATING FOR OVERALL EXPERIENCE

ACTION: Work with professional services to produce short informative videos to be included in rep training raising awareness of services across the University.

UPDATE: Due to staff changes this was not completed for this academic year. Following the Professional Services review the SU will approach again. A new recommendation for 2017/18 has been made in the Support chapter, the Students' Union hope to combine both ideas to support the promotion of professional services.

ACTION: Introduce and support 6 new positions into the representation structure as Part Time Officers.

UPDATE: All 6 Part Time Officers are now in place, trained and working on projects and campaigns in their areas. Termly blogs have been used to update students on their progress. A new position of Environmental Officer will be added for 2018/19.

WHAT OUR PART-TIME OFFICERS HAD TO SAY...

'Over the past three months, my role has been incredibly busy, February was LGBT+ Month with a number of events taking place. I was invited to the Stonewall Conference in February titled "People can perform better when they can be themselves" and I was lucky enough to meet the Board of Stonewall'

- Equality and Diversity Officer

'I have run algorithms that analyse information about our social media posts to look at the most engaging times, types of posts, topics of posts, days of the week etc.'

- Communications Officer

'Since the Eisteddfod being announced in Cardiff, I as the Welsh Language Officer will help a lot with the University stand with Dan Tiplady. I'm excited to spread the message of Cardiff Met at the biggest mobile festival in Europe.'

- Welsh Language Officer

SU ACTIONS FROM 2016/17

ACTION: SU to establish a proactive approach to tackling mental health by introducing a peer support structure of trained students to promote campaigns and raise awareness of issues relating to mental health/well-being.

UPDATE: Student Minds initiative launched in Jan 2018. 15 students applied to volunteer to run the Student Minds group, 6 successful candidates were selected and trained by Student Minds in January 2018. The volunteers have been running weekly Positive Minds sessions with an average of 4 students regularly attending.

ACTION: The SU to create a focus on promoting societies throughout the academic year to raise their profile and increase engagement.

UPDATE: The new SU post of full time Societies and Development Coordinator has created a focus in this area to engage societies and promote the creation of new opportunities.

54 ACTIVE SOCIETIES

+12 INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR

18 NEW SOCIETIES

14 RE-ESTABLISHED SOCIETIES

All of the actions and updates can be seen in:

Appendix 1: Action Plan of SU Actions from Annual Report 2016/17

WHAT OUR PART TIME OFFICERS HAD TO SAY...

'World Mental Health Day on Tuesday 10th October, it was held in Zen and had many guest speakers talking about their own struggles with mental health disorders and helped to get people thinking about reducing stigma surrounding mental health'

- Health and Wellbeing Officer

'I've been able to help out on events such as Fresher's fair, Charity fundraising events, taking charge of a week-long This Girl Can week of activities for females on campus and not to forget, the Christmas ball (Which was totes glam and uuuuber glitzy)!'

- Events and Activities Officer

'I started the pilot project of the Breakfast Club. The Breakfast Club is a fortnightly hour long session where new and returning international students can socialize and network with each other and home students over some refreshments on campus"

- International Students Officer

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY 2016/17

RECOMMENDATION: University to review and take action to improve the resources and services available to students seeking support. Ensuring a reduction in waiting time with access to appropriately trained staff and increased student satisfaction with the service.

UPDATE: A review of the structure and resourcing of the services will take place as part of the wider professional services review in early 2018. Until that is completed no action can be taken, but it is anticipated that a revised way of operating will be launched for September 2018. It is not appropriate to give further detail or updates as the review may directly impact on the roles of current staff.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue to develop the Buddy Scheme in partnership with the SU, striving to increase engagement from international students and expanding the offering to support students on Erasmus programmes.

UPDATE: Buddy Scheme was piloted in Feb 17 but was not available for Sept 17/18 as recruitment for on-campus buddies did not take place during the summer. Further discussions planned between SU and IPO [International Partnership Office] on facilitating a buddy scheme however thoughts are that this may be more effective at course level where level 5 students mentor/buddy level 4 students.

RECOMMENDATION: A body of work to be undertaken to enhance the use of technology for streamlined processes incorporating learner analytics to map the entire student journey from application to alumni in a central platform.

UPDATE: Protocol/policy in development to define student engagement as the first step in a planned route to the implementation of a learner analytics system. Initial discussions planned at LTB [Learning and Teaching Board] Jan 18. Work begun to scope student records system upgrade across the student lifecycle (applicant to alumni).

RECOMMENDATION: The University commit to enabling the Students' Union to establish more academic societies with links to courses and with the support of academic staff.

UPDATE: LTDU and the SU worked together in Autumn 2017 to produce student and staff guidance on promoting the benefits of societies and how student can create their own. This has been continued in the SU workshop for the Annual Learning & Teaching Conference on 12th April 2018.

SU COMMENT: Positive results of this partnership approach can be seen in the statistics shared in the SU's reflection on actions from 2016/17. Following the workshop presented at the Learning and Teaching Conference, the SU plans to review guidance for staff and approach to raising awareness.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY 2016/17

RECOMMENDATION: Following on from last academic year a review to be undertaken of the rep liaison role to share best practice, enhance engagement and standardise practice where appropriate.

UPDATE: Unfortunately due to changes in staffing not all Rep Liaisons were allocated ready for the new academic year and continue to be put in place throughout term one. Because of the increased pressure on school admin teams the SU were unable to identify a rep liaison in many of the schools and lacked that one point of contact to support the rep structure. Where a Rep Liaison has been identified this continues to work well and provide positive support for the School Rep and their team.

RECOMMENDATION: Improvements to University communication with students should be implemented for the 2017/18 academic year taking into consideration further feedback from students.

UPDATE: Internal communications, both with staff and students, has been limited due to staff changes over the last year. It is intended that the communications team will be enhanced as a result of the Professional Services review process, which in turn will enable the development of a new Internal Communications Strategy.

SU COMMENT: In the 2015/16 SU Annual Report the Students' Union recommended that student communication be centralised following concerns from students around confusing messages and email bombardment. The action following in 2016/17 was as a result of this issue continuing to be raised through student feedback mechanisms. Now in 2017/18 the SU are including a recommendation on communication for the third consecutive year as students continue to be dissatisfied in this area. Although the recommendation for this year can be found in the Pre-arrival and Induction chapter, it is fundamental to the whole student life-cycle, and includes a number of deadlines to ensure this doesn't continue to effect the student experience.

RECOMMENDATION: The SU supports the University's commitment to addressing the inconsistency in Personal Tutoring as part of the new Strategic Plan. By remodelling the role of the personal tutor across the institution and would like to remain involved in these discussions ensuring the student voice is at the heart of any changes made.

UPDATE: The Personal Tutoring policy was updated for September 2017 in order to provide a clear approach that is consistent across the whole institution. Staff development opportunities were provided to all Schools.

SU COMMENT: The SU has seen positive developments as a result of the work on Personal Tutoring. Further comments are included in the 'Support' chapter including a recommendation that builds on the good work already completed.

All of the actions and updates can be seen in: Appendix 2: Action Plan of University Recommendations from Annual Report 2016/17

PRE-ARRIVAL & INDUCTION

Students have offered positive reflections on Open Days and Applicant Days at Cardiff Met. They have enjoyed the opportunity to meet with staff and students they would be working with on the course as well as viewing the campuses and resources on offer.

Students would have liked to learn more about the SU at Open Days and Applicant Days. They would like to learn more about student life at Cardiff Met and to have the opportunity away from staff and parents to speak to current students

On the subject of open days and applicant days: 'Parent and prospective students should be split – applicants should be able to talk to current students alone, was useful when this did happen'

- CSSHS (Cyncoed) Student Rep

'More SU needed in open day – come into SU building, meet us'

- CSM Student Rep

ACTION - CARDIFF MET SU TO PLAY A ROLE IN ALL OPEN DAYS AND APPLICANT DAYS OFFERING A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE ON STUDYING AT CARDIFF MET.

Upon arrival at Cardiff Met those students living in University halls were welcomed by wardens who helped them settle in and showed them to a number of welcome activities. They valued this welcome from a current student, however some felt that the focus of the wardens and welcome activities lay just in the first few days and relied too heavily on drinking activities.

Commuter students on the other hand did not have this opportunity to meet with fellow students prior to their first academic sessions and reported feeling left out not knowing any of their classmates.

ACTION - THE STUDENTS' UNION TO CREATE AN ONLINE PLATFORM FOR STUDENTS TO MEET IN THE SUMMER, ALLOWING ALL STUDENTS TO CONNECT WITH THOSE ON THEIR COURSE, IN THEIR HALLS AND WITH SIMILAR BACKGROUNDS OR INTERESTS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL.

PRE-ARRIVAL & INDUCTION

During induction students felt like they were overloaded with information making an already difficult new experience even more daunting.

Feedback shows that during the first few weeks of term students are visited by staff from units across the University as well as receiving lots of information from their lecturers, often causing confusion and making it difficult to retain information.

'Careers information is more important in Year 2, students don't want to think about life after University in week one!'

- CSESP Student Rep

Students feel that having key information from their academic staff during induction would be most useful, this could include signposting to other services within the University. They also felt that those students who need further information on support services could receive this from Personal Tutors who they meet during induction. A consistent method of communication for students would help to make information more manageable during induction and throughout the student journey.

CARDIFF MET STUDENT CHARTER 2017/18

The University commits to: Provide effective methods of communication between staff and students.

ACTION - THE STUDENTS' UNION TO USE FRESHERS FAYRE AND MET FEST AS A WAY OF BRINGING TOGETHER THE CARDIFF MET COMMUNITY. BEING MINDFUL OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF STUDENTS AND THEIR INTERESTS AND WELCOMING EVERYONE TO CARDIFF MET AND THE SU.

Students offered positive feedback around Freshers Fayre and Met Fest as great opportunities at the start of the year to find out more about Cardiff Met and what it has to offer, as well as being able to socialise with staff and students from across both campuses. The new layout of the fayre offered more space for stalls and the creation of a stage area to showcase sports, societies and student reps at the heart of the fayre. The change in day to midweek also meant that students weren't visiting the fayre alone having already formed friendships at the start of induction.

There is of course room for improvement and student feedback has presented a number of suggestions:

• Freshers Fayre could be split more clearly to separate sport, societies and other opportunities

• The fayre could be used more to welcome students to the Cardiff Met community

• Better communication is needed about Met Fest – this could be promoted more at Freshers Fayre

• Need to be mindful of student budget when booking stalls especially food at MetFest

• Academic staff could be brought into Freshers Fayre to bring the whole community together and raise their awareness of what's on offer

• Raise awareness amongst returning students of how they can interact with these activities

RECOMMENDATION - BY SEPTEMBER 2018 THE UNIVERSITY MUST IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS AND BY 2019 HAVE CREATED A STUDENT COMMUNICATION PLAN REFLECTIVE OF THE NEW STUDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY, COVERING THE WHOLE STUDENT JOURNEY AND TAKING INTO ACCOUNT STUDENT FEEDBACK.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

WORK PLACEMENT

Students value real world experience and opportunities to put theory into practice.

Students have shared examples of being supported through a year in industry and having the opportunity to develop skills and experience beyond the classroom. More students would like the opportunity to do this.

Unfortunately in several cases students have identified a need for more support in finding relevant work placements and in fitting these around their academic timetable.

Supporting the Cardiff Met Strategic Plan
The Cardiff Met EDGE will enable all students to develop skills, experience, confidence and resilience through a package of placements, projects, internships, volunteering and international mobility.

Chapter B4. Indicator 6. Current UK Quality Code for Higher Education Higher
Education providers ensure all students have opportunities to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression.

Expectations for Quality. Core Practices. New UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.

'I had lots of support from the Uni in applying and during my year in industry. I was also asked to present guest lectures to other cohorts after my placement. The real world needs to be brought into the classroom more, I learnt things on placement year that are essential to industry but aren't taught on the course.'

- CSM final year student

'Issues have arisen with work placement this year. Humanities students who had stated they were not interested in teaching were placed in schools and had little support to find their own placements in more relevant areas. Whilst some students were able to find appropriate placements the timetable did not allow them to complete blocks of time in the workplace except outside of term time which was not always feasible for the organisations.'

- CSESP Student Rep

RECOMMENDATION - A SET OF MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR WORK PLACEMENT TO BE AGREED AND IMPLEMENTED ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY, THE DESIGN OF THE CURRICULUM AND TIMETABLES MUST ALSO BE UPDATED TO REFLECT THESE.

TIMETABLE

In last years Annual Report the SU noted that the introduction of the Personalised Timetable may highlight common issues with timetabling such as long gaps or bunched lectures and could result in a decline in satisfaction. In fact, satisfaction levels have increased:

75% OF STUDENTS SATISFIED WITH THE ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THEIR COURSE (NSS 2017)

+3% INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR

79% OF STUDENTS FELT THE TIMETABLE WORKED EFFICIENTLY FOR THEM (NSS 2017) COMPARED TO

75% AGREEING THEIR TIMETABLE WORKED EFFECTIVELY IN (NSS 2016)

RECOMMENDATION - THE UNIVERSITY TO RELEASE INDICATIVE TIMETABLES TO ALL STUDENTS BEFORE INDUCTION WEEK. INDICATIVE TIMETABLES SHOULD INCLUDE TIMES STUDENTS WILL AND WILL NOT BE EXPECTED TO ATTEND UNIVERSITY. ALLOWING STUDENTS TO ORGANISE EXTERNAL COMMITMENTS IN ADVANCE.

RECOMMENDATION - INCREASED FACILITIES FOR QUIET STUDY AND SOCIAL LEARNING SPACES SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO FUTURE ESTATES PLANS FOR ALL CARDIFF MET CAMPUSES.

Despite the overall increase in satisfaction around timetabling and organisation, students are still raising timetabling concerns.

Some of these concerns effect certain groups of students:

• The late release of timetables at the start of the academic year makes it particularly difficult for those students needing to arrange childcare or organise work shifts.

• Commuter students find it difficult to have long gaps between lectures as the campuses do not have adequate facilities to remain on site for the day. Long gaps between lectures would be made easier for all students with more provision on campus for quiet study and social learning space.

• Students wishing to participate in sport outside of CSSHS (Cyncoed) have found that their timetables often clash with fixtures and training opportunities.

'Timetable issue, full day of lectures, 9.00am-6.00pm, with only a lunch break in the same all day. Lots of students find this to be too much and lose concentration by the end of the day'
- CSSHS (Llandaff) SSLC Feb 2018

'Dietetics/Nutrition Reps raised that Dietetics & Nutrition on Thursday and Fridays having four and five hour gaps. Friday only having a 3-4 timetable.'

- CSSHS Llandaff SSLC Oct 2017

'Issues regarding lectures on Wednesdays conflicting with sport engagement'

- CSSHS (Llandaff) SSLC Feb 2018

In some cases the wider picture needs to be considered, the example below demonstrates how the timetable will never have a one size fits all solution but that students and staff must work together to find an appropriate compromise.

'The Foundation Student Representatives felt that they had too many consecutive sessions on a Monday afternoon; with a total of 5 hours in the day and a further 5 hour on Tuesday. CSM SSLC Nov 2017

Action: RC (as Timetable Link Co-ordinator) to discuss with the Programme Director and potentially review the timetable for Term 2.

Post meeting update: RC discussed the issue with Programme Director who confirmed the matter had been raised and discussed at the Programme Committee. The outcome was that no change was to be made as other students were happy with the condensed timetable and the resulting two free days.'

- CSM SSLC Nov 2017

TEACHING

Students across all levels are satisfied with the teaching they receive and value the excellent knowledge and real life examples that staff bring to the classroom.

'Support from my supervisors has been excellent, and they have demonstrated a wealth of experience and knowledge. My supervisory meetings have challenged me academically and allowed me to develop as a researcher.'

- PGR Student

'Often brings in props, leaflets and guest lecturers in order to enhance our learning experience. Is an expert in her field and draws on her own previous career in order to bring the subject to life.'

- SLTF Nomination 2017/18

'The lectures are engaging for the entire cohort. [He] is a very passionate lecturer and truly loves his craft and is constantly encouraging further personal development. [He] gathers feedback frequently to improve the way he delivers the module and to keep the cohort engaged. [He] is an inspiration for many of the students ... [he] uses a multitude of methods, audio records lectures frequently for our use, and frequently records himself working through scenarios or the topics relevant to assignment work to provide a better understanding.'

- SLTF Nomination 2017/18

83% OF STUDENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH THE TEACHING ON THEIR COURSE (NSS 2017)

moodle

In the SUs 2015/16 Annual Report it was recommended that the University: Ensure Moodle minimum requirements are consistently applied across the institution and that these are easily accessible for staff and students to view.

Having worked with the University to embed this during the 16/17 academic year and to share best practice, students are now looking for the next step in Moodle development.

'My lecturer uses Moodle as a space to share questions and answers on assignments. Studets post questions and staff answer them for all to see. This means staff don't have to answer the same question, several times and students that aren't as confident in asking get to see the answers to their questions.'

- CSESP Student Rep

'[He] always gives lectures notes a week early and gives us fantastic information on Moodle to improve our grades and our learning experience while at university.'

- SLTF Nomination 2016

'Moodle could be tailored to suit each course... Not relevant for everyone.'

- Student feedback submitted to the Tell US campaign.

Chapter B3 Indicator 6. Current UK Quality Code for Higher Education
Higher education providers maintain physical, virtual and social learning environments that are safe, accessible and reliable for every student, promoting dignity, courtesy and respect in their use.

Expectations for Quality. Core Practices. New UK Quality Code for Higher Education
The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.

RECOMMENDATION - THE UNIVERSITY WORK WITH STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES TO RAISE THE MOODLE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS, USING EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE AND ADDITIONAL STAFF TRAINING TO MAKE BEST USE OF THE PLATFORM.

SUPPORT

PERSONAL TUTORING

In last year's Annual Report the SU supported the Universities commitment to addressing the inconsistency in Personal Tutoring. The results of this project are now able to be seen and despite an initial settling in period for some, feedback is positive.

RECOMMENDATION - AN ONLINE RESOURCE BE CREATED FOR PERSONAL TUTORS DETAILING INFORMATION ON SERVICES AVAILABLE TO CARDIFF MET STUDENTS AND HOW TO REFER TO EACH SERVICE.

'Returning students (current levels 5 and 6) expressed some difficulty adjusting, however new students had no issues as they were unaware of the previous system.'

- CSM SSLC Nov 2017

'Students from one course in particular, ... feel the support has been more than great. This is due to the fact that they see their Personal Tutors every two weeks, enabling them to build rapport making it easier to open up if anything arises.'

- CSS L4 Lead Rep

'Almost 100% of students were satisfied that they had met with their personal tutor during induction.'

-Student Admissions and Enrolment Survey 2017

'For students who met with their Personal Tutor one-to-one, satisfaction was very high (93% overall).'

- Evaluation of the 2017/18 induction programme and update on the Enhancement Week 2018 Appendix 2

Some students still feel that the Personal Tutor system needs more work with greater awareness by staff and students on how personal tutoring works and why we have it. It has also been noted that Personal Tutors need to maintain good knowledge and understanding of other services across the University to be able to signpost appropriately.

'Personal Tutoring very new in CSM - needs more work – staff need to understand point of personal tutoring so students can understand it. Personal Tutors need a better understanding of other services so they can signpost appropriately. Personal Tutor should be relevant to course for familiarity.'

- CSM student rep

STUDENT SERVICES

In the SUs 2016/17 Annual Report it was recommended that:

University to review and take action to improve the resources and services available to students seeking support. Ensuring a reduction in waiting time with access to appropriately trained staff and increased student satisfaction with the service.

The University committed to undertaking a full review of professional services early in 2018. Unfortunately due to circumstances beyond the Universities control, this process has been delayed and so as yet no action has been taken in response to this recommendation. The SU continue to work closely with the University on this and provide student feedback to enhance all services.

Student Services were further impacted by the voluntary severance programme over the summer and despite additional pressure and a lack of resources, have been working hard to continue the essential support they provide for students. When forming this report the SU have been able to gather constructive evidence to support our previous recommendation to the University as well as comments celebrating the successes of Student Services. A small number of students have been willing to share their experiences with us and the SU would like to see this as the start of a programme of positive promotion around Student Services.

STUDENT SERVICES

'The support has been so important not just due to my disabilities but it has given me confidence that I didn't know I had.'

- Student Services service user

'You were clearly passionate about students, that you understood their needs, that you didn't rush them and you were very caring in your approach.'

- Sharing feedback from Student Services service user

'They understood my needs better than me. They dedication to help students with disability is admirable.'

- Student Services service user

'Some students have been scared to ask for help or have heard bad things so don't want to go to Student Services.'

- CSM Student Rep

RECOMMENDATION - STUDENT SERVICES TO PROACTIVELY ENGAGE STUDENTS IN THE REGULAR EVALUATION OF SERVICES AND TO MAKE USE OF AND SHARE THE FEEDBACK GATHERED FOR PROMOTION PURPOSES.

Student feedback also suggests that there needs to be greater awareness around the services on offer. This links to the wider issue of student communication that has been highlighted in the last two SU Annual Reports and continues to be recommended this year. Whilst the recommendations on student communication have been at a high level and suggest a top-down approach, there are also opportunities at ground level to better communicate with students using the resources available.

'Who are Student Services? Where are they? What do they do? – They should put pictures on the website and make it more personal.'

- CSM final year student

'Are Student Services available at Cyncoed to talk to someone?'

- CSESP Student Rep

'Regarding issues outside academic work, support routes for Academic Associates are not as clear.'

- PGR Student

RECOMMENDATION - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO CREATE COMMUNICATION PLANS TO HELP STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT SUPPORT IS ON OFFER AT CARDIFF MET, AND WHERE AND HOW TO ACCESS IT. THESE PLANS SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS AT DIFFERENT POINTS IN THE STUDENT LIFE CYCLE AND SHOULD TAKE A PERSONAL APPROACH.

The SU feel that whilst recommending this to Professional Services, the SU could also benefit and increase student engagement through a new communication plan.

ACTION - THE SU TO CREATE A COMMUNICATION PLAN TO HELP STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE SU CAN OFFER, AND WHERE AND HOW TO ACCESS IT. THIS PLAN SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS AT DIFFERENT POINTS IN THE STUDENT LIFE CYCLE AND SHOULD TAKE A PERSONAL APPROACH.

COMMUNITY

Many of the SU's services create opportunities for students to build a sense of belonging and feel part of a community at Cardiff Met.

Supporting the Cardiff Met Strategic Plan:

Our Students and Staff are our most valued asset. By creating an environment in which individuals thrive we will thrive as a University.

SU SPORT & PINNACLE CAMPUS SPORT

'Not just about playing football – meet students from lots of different years, cultures, courses etc.'

- Year 1 CSSHS (Cyncoed) student

'My main network throughout my university life was as part of the sports team. ...Through this network I created friends throughout different years of study, I was able to pick the brains of more senior students on future pathways and able to answer questions and guide younger students. This peer to peer support was hugely beneficial during my time at Cardiff Met.'

- CSSHS (Cyncoed) alumnus

Unfortunately many students in Llandaff feel unable to engage in sport at Cardiff Met. Although their campus does not have the same facilities as Cyncoed, they would like to see better use of the fields and Plas Gwyn facilities available close at hand.

'More activities/sport needed at Llandaff & more visible.'

-Student feedback submitted to the Tell US campaign

ACTION - THE SU TO ORGANISE SPORTING/PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES USING THE FACILITIES AVAILABLE AT LLANDAFF CAMPUS AND PLAS GWYN HALLS.
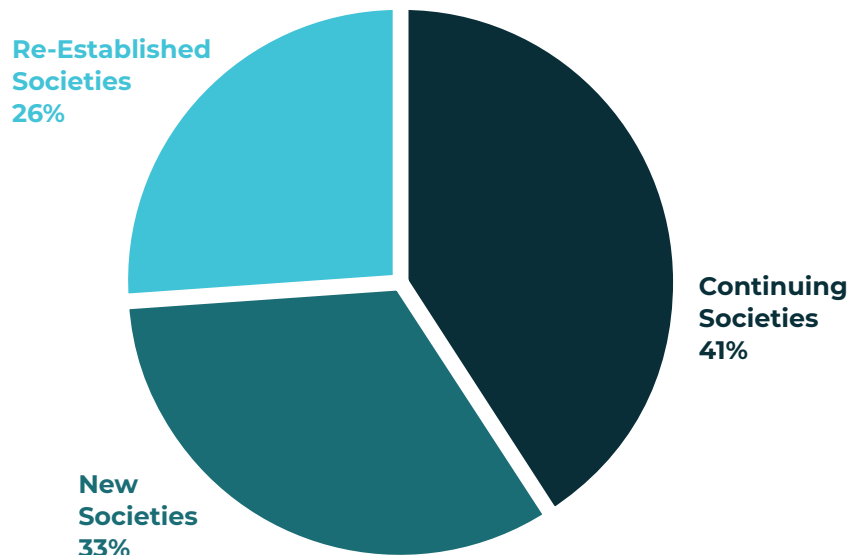
1294 STUDENTS ENGAGED WITH PINNACLE CAMPUS SPORT (PCS)

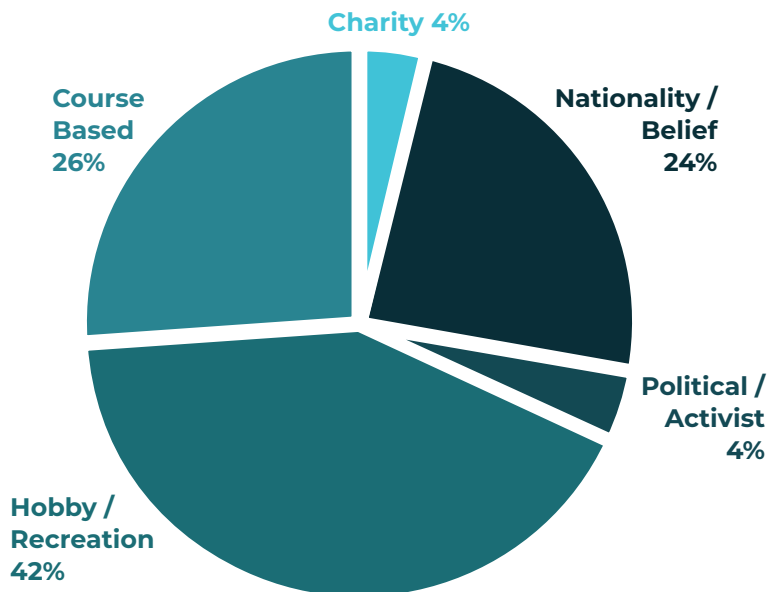AVERAGE OF **64** PCS PARTICIPANTS PER WEEK

1203 SU SPORT MEMBERS

NUMBER OF SOCIETIES

- Re-Established Societies 26%
- Continuing Societies 41%
- New Societies 33%

SOCIETY CATEGORIES

- Charity 4%
- Course Based 26%
- Nationality / Belief 24%
- Political / Activist 4%
- Hobby / Recreation 42%

'As simple as it sounds you get to meet other welsh speakers that are not on your course or your year this results in more familiar faces when you're going from lecture to lecture when in Uni.'

- Gym Gym (Welsh Society) Committee

'The Drama Society have worked hard to bring all 5 schools together through a number of fundraisers and has succeeded in its efforts. These include quiz nights, in which we managed to get students from every school involved.'

- Drama Society Committee

Since the 2016/17 SU Annual Report, the SU has been working to enhance the societies provision at Cardiff Met. By taking on a member of staff dedicated to this area the SU has been able to increase the number and profile of societies, with a focus on engaging more course based societies.

6 RE-ESTABLISHED
COURSE BASED SOCIETIES IN 2017/18

3 NEW
COURSE BASED SOCIETIES

The next development for societies is to build a more robust membership structure. This will allow the SU to monitor the size and scope of societies, to be able to assess the engagement in societies across the student body and as a result work to enhance this.

ACTION - SU TO IMPLEMENT A COMPULSORY MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR ALL SOCIETIES, USING THE DATA COLLECTED TO MONITOR AND ENHANCE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT.

IDENTITY

The representation structure regularly brings students from different schools together. The School Reps and Part Time Officers are a diverse team from all of Cardiff Mets schools and campuses, from different backgrounds and with a range of interests. By being a part of the rep structure these tudents have been able to build cross-university friendships and a wider network for their future careers.

'More events like this conference needed to bring people together.'

- SU Student Voice Conference attendee 2018

To enhance the rep structure a partnership approach needs to be embedded across the institution. Reps thrive where they feel supported by both the SU and the University.

'Academic staff need to better understand the rep structure to use it properly – hierarchy – who does what etc – ... Needs to be a consistent buy in to rep structure.'

- CSM Student Rep

5 SCHOOL REPS   **6** PART TIME OFFICERS   **22** LEAD REPS

392 COURSE REPS   **169** REPS ATTENDED SU TRAINING

100% REPS RECEIVED STUDENT VOICE HANDBOOK

ACTION - THE SU TO WORK CLOSELY WITH KEY CONTACTS IN EACH SCHOOL TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR STAFF TO EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT STUDENT REPRESENTATION AT ALL LEVELS.

Chapter B5 Indicator 4. Current UK Quality Code for Higher Education

Higher education providers ensure that student representatives and staff have access to training and ongoing support to equip them to fulfil their roles in educational enhancement and quality assurance effectively.

Expectations for Quality. Common Practices. New UK Quality Code for Higher Education

The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.

MET FEST

'MetFest offered an important opportunity for staff and students to interact and socialise in an informal setting. Feedback indicates that many staff and students were appreciative of a large-scale induction event being held at Llandaff.'

- Induction evaluation and Enhancement Week Overview Appendix 2

ACTION - THE SU, AS LEAD OF THE INDUCTION WEEK SOCIAL STRAND, TO DELIVER METFEST BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS OF LAST YEAR, AND WITH CONSIDERATION OF FEEDBACK GATHERED FROM STAFF AND STUDENTS. PARTICULARLY FOCUSING ON THE PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION SURROUNDING THE EVENT WHILST ENCOURAGING BUY IN FROM ALL LEVELS OF THE UNIVERSITY.

IDENTITY

Many students have highlighted the lack of a cohesive Cardiff Met identity and how this separates each school and its students. Whilst some schools have strong individual brands that students feel a sense of belonging to, others aren't sure where they fit in the Cardiff Met community.

'There is a lack of community at Llandaff. CSM as a school has a lack of identity, the building has an identity but not the school and the students. CSAD students have a recognisable identity'

- CSM final year student

'Comments have been made about the social separation of the two campus', this means that some feel there isn't really a sense of community within Cardiff Met.'

- CSSHS (Cyncoed) Student Rep

'Enjoy Academic Associate community – can be difficult to engage in research community as studying part time and on different campuses.'

- PGR Student Rep

RECOMMENDATION - THE UNIVERSITY TO WORK WITH STUDENTS AND THE SU TO CREATE A COHESIVE CAMPUS FEEL ACROSS THE TWO CURRENT SITES AND THE NEW SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGIES CAMPUS, BRINGING THE CARDIFF MET COMMUNITY TOGETHER WITH ONE SHARED IDENTITY.

ENHANCEMENT WEEK

Whilst the SU believes in the concept of enhancement week and saw success in some of the activities that took place, for example the SU Rep Conference, there are many improvements to be made.

73 DELEGATES ATTENDED INAUGURAL CARDIFF MET SU REP CONFERENCE: STUDENT VOICE MATTERS

100% FOUND THE REP CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS INFORMATIVE

4/5 OVERALL CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE RATED

The SU recognises that there was a short planning period for Enhancement Week 2018 and no budget allocated, and without a clear message across the institution, confusion was created amongst staff and students.

Some of the messages students have reported receiving regarding Enhancement Week:

• Take a week off

• Use it to complete placement hours

• It is another reading week

• You will have regular lectures

• Exams will take place

'We had some great sessions during Enhancement Week, one lecture on folk law in Harry Potter, random but great . I loved having a member of staff sharing their knowledge and expertise outside of normal teaching. There were also sessions on managing stress and coping mechanisms.'

- CSESP Course Rep

'Enhancement Week has the potential to be used a lot better. You need to make it useful to come in; improving profile as a student, volunteering, assessment centre practice etc. Fill it with HEAR recognised activities. There needs to be better comms and better staff buy in, staff need to understand the point of it so students can.'

- CSM Student Rep

'Students suggested that more communication would be beneficial for Enhancement Week, and that some students viewed it as an additional week off. It was suggested that tasters of Optional modules would be beneficial as a part of any future Enhancement Week.'

- CSM SSLC Nov 2017

RECOMMENDATION - THE UNIVERSITY TO ADOPT A TOP DOWN APPROACH TO THE ORGANISATION AND COMMUNICATION OF ENHANCEMENT WEEK. PLANS SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE MOVE TOWARDS SEMESTERISATION WHILST BEING MINDFUL OF STUDENT NEEDS AT DIFFERENT POINTS IN THE STUDENT LIFE CYCLE.

GRADUATION AND BEYOND

Graduating from Cardiff Met doesn't mean goodbye, but welcome to the next chapter in the journey. Students value learning from their peers and people who have been in the same situation as them, it is motivating when they are able to see what previous students have achieved. The Students'' Union have heard positive feedback from students who have enjoyed interacting with alumni, however they raise concerns around the lack of opportunities to discuss future prospects with them.

'Alumni were arranged through a member of staff to speak at an open mic night, organised by the Open Mic Society – would like to see more of this type of thing.'

- CSESP Student Rep

'There has been little mention of Alumni, however if there was Alumni from the relevant course to come in and give a short lecture on what they did after the course, this may benefit the students.'

- CSSHS (Llandaff) Student Rep

Alumni are the best ambassadors for Cardiff Metropolitan University, they have called the campus' home, and have been immersed in the values that Cardiff Met champions. They are an integral part of the wider Cardiff Met community, they should be welcomed back to tell their story of how Cardiff Met helped them become the person they are today.

With links to 100,000 alumni around the world, how does the university keep track of the graduates who want to stay in contact with Cardiff Met? One of the pillars of Cardiff Mets Strategic Plan is People, in order to support this there should be a drive to keep in contact with alumni, keeping them as an integral part of the Cardiff Met community. Once a student has graduated they may still maintain the connections with the staff that taught and supported them through their studies, if they were to receive emails from a familiar name they are more likely to engage and to respond.

RECOMMENDATION - THE UNIVERSITY WORK COLLABORATIVELY TO EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE ALUMNI IN ENHANCING THE EXPERIENCE OF CURRENT STUDENTS, WITH A SHARED APPROACH TO CAPTURING AND USING ALUMNI DATA.

RECOMMENDATION - A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON THE SUPPORT ALUMNI CAN OFFER TO ENHANCE GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY BE EXPLORED THROUGH THE CREATION OF AN ALUMNI MENTORING SCHEME.

STUDENTS' UNION ACTIONS 2017/18

Cardiff Met SU to play a role in all Open Days and Applicant Days offering a student perspective on studying at Cardiff Met.

Students' Union to implement a compulsory membership registration system for all societies, using the data collected to monitor and enhance student engagement.

The Students' Union to create an online platform for students to meet in the summer, allowing all students to connect with those on their course, in their halls and with similar backgrounds or interests prior to arrival.

The Students' Union to work closely with key contacts in each school to provide information and resources for staff to effectively support student representation at all levels.

The Students' Union to use Freshers Fayre and Met Fest as a way of bringing together the Cardiff Met Community. Being mindful of different types of students and their interests and welcoming everyone to Cardiff Met and the SU

The Students' Union, as lead of the Induction Week Social Strand, to deliver Metfest building on the success of last year, and with consideration of feedback gathered from staff and students. Particularly focusing on the promotion and communication surrounding the event whilst encouraging buy in from all levels of the University.

The Students' Union to create a communication plan to help students to understand what the SU can offer, and where and how to access it. This plan should take into account the needs of students at different points in the student life cycle and should take a personal approach.

The University to work with students and the Students' Union to create a cohesive campus feel across the two current sites and the new School of Technologies Campus, bringing the Cardiff Met community together with one shared identity.

The Students' Union to organise sporting/physical activities using the facilities available at Llandaff Campus and Plas Gwyn halls.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY 2017/18

By September 2018 the University must identify responsibility for student communications and by 2019 have created a student communication plan reflective of the new student engagement strategy, covering the whole student journey and taking into account student feedback.

A set of minimum standards for work placement to be agreed and implemented across the University, the design of the curriculum and timetables must also be updated to reflect these.

The University to release indicative timetables to all students before Induction Week. Indicative timetables should include times students will and will not be expected to attend University. Allowing students to organise external commitments in advance.

Increased facilities for quiet study and social learning spaces should be incorporated into future estates plans for all Cardiff Met campuses.

The University should work with student representatives to raise the Moodle minimum requirements, using examples of best practice and additional staff training to make best use of the platform.

An online resource be created for Personal Tutors detailing information on services available to Cardiff Met students and how to refer to each service.

Student Services to proactively engage students in the regular evaluation of services and to make use of and share the feedback gathered for promotion purposes.

Professional Services to create communication plans to help students to understand what support is on offer at Cardiff Met, and where and how to access it. These plans should take into account the needs of students at different points in the student life cycle and should take a personal approach.

The University to work with students and the Students' Union to create a cohesive campus feel across the two current sites and the new School of Technologies Campus, bringing the Cardiff Met community together with one shared identity.

The University to adopt a top down approach to the organisation and communication of Enhancement Week. Plans should take into account the move towards semesterisation whilst being mindful of student needs at different points in the student life cycle.

The University work collaboratively to effectively engage alumni in enhancing the experience of current students, with a shared approach to capturing and using alumni data.

A particular focus on the support alumni can offer to enhance graduate employability be explored through the creation of an alumni mentoring scheme.

APPENDIX 1

ACTION PLAN OF SU ACTIONS FROM ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

STUDENTS' UNION ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE	PROGRESS
Produce a clear role description for the role of Group Reps, take examples from CSS pilot and consider how this will be rolled out in other schools.	IG and HR	Sept 2017	Role description published in rep handbook, on SU website and covered in training for all levels of rep.
Develop Course Rep training to include different levels for returning.	IG and HR	Dec 2017	With the addition of the SU Rep Conference in January 2018, reps were able to engage in further discussions with staff, fellow reps and externals. The conference helped to develop an extra level of skills and experience for those reps in attendance whilst also being an additional opportunity to gather student feedback.
Increase focus in course rep training on; meetings, working with different levels of rep structure and team building.	IG and HR	Sept 2017	Training updated. 80 reps trained in main event in October with mop up sessions throughout term 1.
Work with professional services to produce short informative videos to be included in rep training raising awareness of services across the University.	WF	Sept 2017	Due to staff changes this was not completed for this academic year. Following the Professional Services review we will approach again.
Begin to prepare new School Reps before summer break, increasing effectiveness and reducing burden in September.	HR	July 2017	School Reps and Part Time Officers given 'Summer Packs.' This included key information and briefings for their roles along with a summer project to be presented during training week in September.

APPENDIX 1

ACTION PLAN OF SU ACTIONS FROM ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

STUDENTS' UNION ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE	PROGRESS
Include Equality and Diversity as a core element of training for student representatives.	HR	Sept 2017	Equality and Diversity training was delivered by an external training consultant as part of the week of training for School Reps and Part Time Officers.
Introduce and support 6 new positions into the representation structure as Part Time Officers.	WR	Sept 2017	All 6 Part Time Officers are now in place, trained and working on projects and campaigns in their areas. Termly blogs have been used to update students on their progress.
Discontinue the position of Sport and Social Rep ensuring responsibility and support for social activities is picked up by Societies and Activities Officer and SU team.	HR and WF	Sept 2017	Part Time Officer role changed to Events and Activities and has been working closely with School Reps on social activities for students.
SU to establish a proactive approach to tackling mental health by introducing a peer support structure of trained students to promote campaigns and raise awareness of issues relating to mental health/ well-being.	WF	Jan 2018	Student Minds initiative launched in Jan 2018. Further update to follow
The SU to create a focus on promoting societies throughout the academic year to raise their profile and increase engagement.	KD	Ongoing	The new SU post of full time Societies and Development Coordinator has created a focus in this area to engage societies and promote the creation of new opportunities. 54 active societies +12 on last academic year, 18 new societies, 14 re-established societies.

APPENDIX 2

ACTION PLAN OF UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE	PROGRESS
The University work positively with the SU to embed a partnership approach to student representation.	CA		SU President and Vice Chancellor of the University have signed Partnership Agreement
Following on from last academic year a review to be undertaken of the rep liaison role to share best practice, enhance engagement and standardise practice where appropriate.	SU		Unfortunately due to changes in staffing not all Rep Liaisons were allocated ready for the new academic year and continue to be put in place throughout term one. Because of the increased pressure on school admin teams the SU were unable to identify a rep liaison in many of the schools and lacked that one point of contact to support the rep structure. Where a Rep Liaison has been identified this continues to work well and provide positive support for the School Rep and their team.
Improvements to University communication with students should be implemented for the 2017/18 academic year taking into consideration further feedback from students.	JC		Internal communications, both with staff and students, has been limited due to staff changes over the last year. It is intended that he communications team will be enhanced as a result of the Professional Services review process, which in turn will enable the development of a new Internal Communications Strategy.
The Students' Union to be used as the vehicle for key student communications, spreading important messages to students and gathering feedback.	JC WF (SU)		Communication with and through the Students' Union will be a key focus of the new Internal Communications Strategy.

APPENDIX 2

ACTION PLAN OF UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE	PROGRESS
A body of work to be undertaken to enhance the use of technology for streamlined processes incorporating learner analytics to map the entire student journey from application to alumni in a central platform.	JB		Protocol/policy in development to define student engagement as the first step in a planned route to the implementation of a learner analytics system. Initial discussions planned at LTB Jan 18. Work begun to scope student records system upgrade across the student lifecycle (applicant to alumni).
University to review and take action to improve the resources and services available to students seeking support. Ensuring a reduction in waiting time with access to appropriately trained staff and increased student satisfaction with the service.	KP	July 2018	A review of the structure and resourcing of the services will take place as part of the wider professional services review in early 2018. Until that is completed no action can be taken, but it is anticipated that a revised way of operating will be launched for September 2018. It is not appropriate to give further detail or updates as the review may directly impact on the roles of current staff.
As part of the commitments made by signing the Time to Change Wales Pledge the University and SU should work together to establish a Mental Health and Well-being Policy for staff and students (we would like the University to create a "Mental Health and Well-being Policy", to commit to a minimum requirement for all students).	KP WF (SU)		Happy to discuss a shared statement of values or commitment, but not able to commit to minimum requirements until review of service is completed.

APPENDIX 2

ACTION PLAN OF UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE	PROGRESS
The Assessment and Feedback policy be updated to create a uniform approach to managing student expectations regarding feedback turnaround.	CM		The Assessment & Feedback policy was updated for September 2017 in order to provide a clear approach that is consistent across the whole institution.
The SU supports the University's commitment to addressing the inconsistency in Personal Tutoring as part of the new Strategic Plan. By remodelling the role of the personal tutor across the institution and would like to remain involved in these discussions ensuring the student voice is at the heart of any changes made.	CM	July 2018	The Personal Tutoring policy was updated for September 2017 in order to provide a clear approach that is consistent across the whole institution. Staff development opportunities were provided to all Schools.
The University continue to gather student feedback and monitor timetables to establish an effective timetable and eliminate common issues.	MB	Dec 17 – Set objectives for next phase of project. To be ready for the 2018/19 intake	The Personalised Student Timetable Project (17/18) is currently being reviewed by BIS. A report will be presented to the next project board meeting in December, and actions agreed for the next phase of the project (to meet 2018/19 entry). Student reps provided feedback into the project review – facilitated by the SU.
With the review of induction and commitment to the whole student experience in the new strategic plan, there must be an emphasis on building a community of staff and students across the whole institution.	WF (SU) CM KP		Agreed – would be interested to discuss this further in terms of the potential input from Student Services & Employability.

APPENDIX 2

ACTION PLAN OF UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE	PROGRESS
Continue to develop the Buddy Scheme in partnership with the SU, striving to increase engagement from international students and expanding the offering to support students on Erasmus programmes.	NB	March 2018	Buddy Scheme was piloted in Feb 17 but was not available for Sept 17/18 as recruitment for on-campus buddies did not take place during the summer. Further discussions planned between SU and IPO on facilitating a buddy scheme however thoughts are that this may be more effective at course level where level 5 students mentor/buddy level 4 students.
The University commit to enabling the Students' Union to establish more academic societies with links to courses and with the support of academic staff.	LTDU KD (SU)	July 2018	LTDU and the SU worked together in Autumn 2017 to produce student and staff guidance on promoting the benefits of societies and how student can create their own. This has been continued in the SU workshop for the Annual Learning & Teaching Conference on 12th April 2018.