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H/02/28/06 **15/16 2A-3**

Chaplaincy Annual Report Feedback, 2014-15

Response to recommendations in previous year's report:

The recommendation made in last year's report has been responded to fully and positively. Space issues continue to be problematic and the Chaplaincy is making considerable effort to address this through its consideration of current use of existing space and through the way in which it provides a wide range of services and provision outside the Chaplaincy Centre and spaces.

Commendations:

There is much to commend in the report, including:

- Provision of a high quality service to increasing numbers of students users.
- Maintaining high levels of student satisfaction with the service.
- Maintaining breadth and depth of the multi-faith team.
- Offers an impressive range of activities through faith groups and non faith based societies and groups.
- Improvements to administrative functions, discontinuing some activities and introducing new developments indicate a proactive approach to embracing new ways of working and supporting students.
- National and internationally leading roles of the Chaplain and Associate Chaplain in their fields.
- Success of partnerships the Chaplaincy has developed both internally with other services, Schools and EUSA and externally with the local community and faith groups.
- Creative and responsive initiatives to enhance the student experience.
- Key role in community/public engagement of the University.
- Work in student and staff crisis support/death and bereavement support.

Promising practice commended for wider dissemination:

Other services may learn from the Chaplaincy's:

- Approach to use of outreach activities to overcome existing space limitations.
- Partnership approach to developing and delivering initiatives to enhance the student experience, e.g. the rollout of mindfulness.

Recommendations for the service:

The Chaplaincy is asked to:

- Continue to make effective use of Chaplaincy spaces to enable its use by a wide variety of faith groups and other relevant groups.
- Use the Creative Brief developed to promote the work of the Chaplaincy and the opportunities for support and development it offers for all students.
- Consider ways in which greater collaboration with both the Advice Place and the Counselling Service may alleviate pressure during bottlenecks.

Recommendations for other parts of the University:

- To consider how insights from the "What's a University for" series can benefit development of the University Strategy Plan, if not already incorporated.

Feedback on the Annual Report from the Chaplaincy for 2014/15

A detailed report from the Chaplaincy setting out the very wide range of activities supported by the service which contribute to the Student Experience.

1. Response to recommendation from last year -

to continue to progress discussions and planning in relation to space issues and report on development in next year's report.

“New rooms in KB were ready for use by late Semester 2, in the new Mary Bruck Building. They are well-designed for the purposes of shared space, kitchen facilities and Muslim prayer provision. As we knew would be the case, they are not as spacious as we requested. Difficulties may arise over the Common Room space being required also for prayer or contemplation space. We are considering this matter in relation to revised handling of bookings (in relation also to Prevent compliance duty), and in relation to arrangements that we make for the new area due to completed at Easter Bush in 2017, where space will be tighter. Students at Chaplaincy Centre drop-in are still sometimes sitting on the floor though we have brought in extra portable and stackable seating.”

2. Summary of key themes from the annual report

Sets out the fit with the University’s strategic goals and how it supports the strategic themes of Outstanding Student Experience, Global Impact, Lifelong Community, Social Responsibility, Partnerships and Equality and Widening Participation.

The Chaplaincy Centre is well used but much of the work of the Chaplaincy also takes place outside the Chaplaincy Centre. The Centre is used by religious and belief societies and also social- welfare and campaigning societies, creative and well-being groups and a language café.

The report includes details of initiatives undertaken during Freshers Week to support induction, new weekly events, an end of year “Thank You Tea” which enables students to thank someone in UoE who has helped them during their time at university, community outreach initiatives and ways of supporting staff and their support of students. These all contribute to enhancing the student experience.

Improvements to administrative functions, discontinuing some activities and introducing new developments indicate a pro-active approach to embracing new ways of working and supporting students.

User feedback and ratings indicate a slightly lower overall rating in ESES results than in 2014 at 75%. Levels of satisfaction are higher in years 3 and 4, when more students make use of drop ins. Free text comments are largely positive. Focus group work has been carried with users and non users to try to understand more about people’s perceptions of Chaplaincy and what it provides. A creative brief has been produced to inform how the Chaplaincy is presented aimed at all students becoming aware of its existence and what it can offer. In terms of international students satisfaction with worship facilities and faith provision as measured in the ISB, ratings are high.

A key strength of the Chaplaincy is the breadth and depth of its multi faith team and how it operates with fortnightly meetings of the Honorary Chaplains team and ensuring that the team meet staff from across the University.

The Chaplaincy team works with local community and faith group networks in Edinburgh and the Chaplain and Associate Chaplain play leading roles nationally and internationally in their fields. The success of partnerships which the Chaplaincy has developed both internally with other services, Schools and the EUSA and externally with faith groups and others is clearly evidenced in the report.

The priorities of the Chaplaincy for the coming year are summarised in the report as:

- Improve communication and efficiency within the team by recruiting and inducting a fulltime Administrator in place of two part-time roles.
- Maximise the potential of the new rooms at King’s Buildings, provide clear guidelines on usage of shared space, and provide resources to meet the needs of the diverse user groups.
- Refresh and further promote Religious Literacy in Higher Education, as fits the changing needs in the world, Prevent compliance duty, and the demographic of University members. Work with the Religion and Belief Advisory Group on this.
- Further develop the potential of the Camino and multi-faith and belief work in fostering good campus relations, combatting dangers of alienation, and assisting Widening Participation.
- Develop WUF ideas and impact along diverse tracks as appropriate.

Commendations

- Offers a very wide range of activities through faith groups and non faith based societies and

groups

- Its facilities provide good space for student groups and for individual drop in
- Strong partnerships, both externally and internally
- Creative and responsive initiatives to enhance the student experience
- Key role in community/public engagement of the University
- Work in student and staff crisis support/death and bereavement support
- Approach to multi faith chaplaincy team

Good practice for wider dissemination

- Partnership approach to developing and delivering initiatives to enhance the student experience eg rollout of mindfulness

Recommendations for the Chaplaincy

- Continue to make effective use of Chaplaincy spaces to enable its use by a wide variety of faith groups and other relevant groups
- Use the Creative Brief developed to promote the work of the Chaplaincy and the opportunities for support and development it offers for all students

Christine Lowther 07/01/16

Chaplaincy

The report is comprehensive and conveys an impressive range of activities by the service as well as a clear openness to embrace a whole range of beliefs as well as student clubs and societies. It is clearly prized by the student body who use the service.

Good practice for sharing

- “What’s the University For” series. This is especially pertinent now as the university is creating a new strategic vision and plan. It also benefits the university by fostering a sense of community the lack of which is often criticised by the student body.
- The inclusivity of all religious groups promoting religious tolerance and the links with a huge variety of societies, clubs and university organisations.
- Strong links with external partnerships. There are a number of places in the report where beneficial links are described on page 19.

Points to note

- It might be good to be more joined up with the Advice Place to provide help in fresher’s week where there are bottlenecks in the two services. The Chaplaincy reports a particular issue with fresher’s week.
- The availability of the Chaplaincy services in all campuses of the university (Easter Bush is mentioned but what about Little France?).
- Are there more things which can be done to raise the profile of the Chaplaincy? Perhaps it would help to target new students in a more pro-active way.

Antony Maciocia