



**Service Value Assessment:
Academic Year 2021/22**

Guidance on completing the report

- The interim, light touch process has been retained for this reporting cycle and will continue to focus on the impact of and learning from the Covid-19 pandemic as well as other aspects of the student experience. Also, whether the industrial action has impacted the quality of provision and student experience, and, if so, how this has been mitigated.
- The report should be the output of a reflective process, focusing on
 - activities **over the past academic year**,
 - the student experience and
 - activities that relate to student use of the service.
- The report should be brief, **no longer than 5 pages**.

The [Student Support Services Review Policy](#) contains an overview of the process.

Service:	Chaplaincy
Report written by:	Harriet Harris
Date of report:	05/10/2022

1. *Doing new things* – a brief outline of and reflection on any new developments and their impact on service delivery.

New staffing

- We created Chaplaincy Listener posts (see below, section 2).
- We appointed a FT Associate Chaplain, in lieu of the 0.8 Associate Chaplain position previously occupied by Ali Newell. This relieves the University Chaplain and Head of Service from being the only FT Chaplain, such that continuity of care for emergency and severe situations can be better shared across the Chaplaincy team.

Student/staff support

- Alongside the already established Senior Tutor gatherings and Student Support Team gatherings, and Res Life team gatherings, we brought in a range of training initiatives to **support staff who are supporting students** (see trainings under section 4)
- With our Mandarin and Cantonese-speaking Chaplaincy Listener, we began collating particular challenges experienced by Chinese students, especially those from mainline China. We convened a

focus group from across the UoE, in order to create a forum on supporting Chinese students, to run in semester 1 of 2022-23. We receive many requests for guidance in this area.

New podcast Series

Alongside our two series of [Let's Talk](#) podcasts in collaboration with EUSA, we introduced:

- [Being at University](#) with the religion and belief student societies, to raise their profile after Covid.
- Islamic Society co-organised an event with Chaplaincy using their podcast on 'Being Muslim at University', and ran it in Islamophobia Awareness Month.
- Sikh students and Edinburgh Sikh Community created an event with us in honour of Guru Nanak's birthday, distributing free curry to students in Bristo Square. Greatly appreciated, and featured on the 'Being Sikh at University' podcast.
- [The Chaplaincy of Joyful Abandon](#), with leading thinkers on paradoxes of everyday life, including Sarah Woods and Rachel Mann, on perfectionism, transgender, writing poetry.

For Curriculum Transformation and L&T new initiatives, see section 4

For New Trainings and provisions for Schools and Services, see Section 4 below

We brought the [Compassion Salon](#), a literary salon discussing books with authors working in areas related to compassion, into the University, employing a PhD student to administer the events and increase the salon's profile among students and staff. We ran 6 salons (ave. participation 80-130 people), and launched *Mind your Life*, a poetry anthology for midwives and nurses, in an event in the Playfair Library held with Scottish Poetry Library.

Mindfulness for Pain and Mindfulness for Sleep online workshops were created and now [toolkits](#) are up on the website and are revisited by users. 110 live participants on Mindfulness workshops and day retreats, and more users of the website toolkits.

We introduced the Chaplaincy Walk: An opportunity for students to explore, and to connect with one another, and very naturally providing a wellbeing experience. This is a popular innovation for students who come to the LS feeling lonely, and for international students who are otherwise not exploring beyond their campus and halls. C 20 per walk.

With Edinburgh Innovations, and according to the [UoE policy on consultancy](#), Harriet began a 2-year Consultancy for Durham University (four days across two years). Durham is looking to become Sector-leading in Chaplaincy. Edinburgh is the benchmark Chaplaincy for UK universities. We have in the past year been consulted informally by Helsinki, Melbourne and Georgetown, and Harriet has supported Edinburgh Napier and Heriot-Watt universities in developing their Chaplaincies.

2. *Doing the same things in a new way* - a brief outline of and reflection on changes made to activities, processes, practices or policies.

Listening Service

We received The Herald Higher Education Award for best Student Support Service 2022 for the Listening Service. We made a few innovations to further resource and strengthen the service:

- increased in-person provision as Covid guidelines allowed, while continuing the phone, video-call, and email options and retaining the 24/7 provision;
- created Chaplaincy Listener posts to further resource the Listening Service beyond our Staff and Honorary Chaplains, and appointed two PT Chaplaincy Listeners. This has greatly eased the pressure on the staff team and on administrators who look to the Honorary Team when staff capacity is full. We provide c 80 hours of listening per month;
- took on a staff listener volunteer who had the relevant experience and qualifications, and who contributes a lot to the LS, and receives a lot back in terms of training and belonging;
- set in place two distinct forms of support for Listeners: the Listening Service Support Group, drawing on the Counselling Service for group supervision; and Listening Service Conversations, for sharing insights around themes emerging, practicalities etc. Both meetings serve to connect and support the larger team of Listeners, helping to avoid a sense of isolation, and affording opportunities to speak about more difficult issues;
- introduced the new Listening service online form/ survey saves a great amount of time for the team, from inputting details regarding the appointment to gathering demographic data on all aspects of the service, and noting listenees at risk.

We introduced a no-paper policy at Reception, to streamline all areas of bookings and reports, so that we no longer require a physical diary but we ensure that all details for every booking is now online and held with the booking itself.

In-person and online events

- A range of activities begun during lockdown were made in-person for the first time, including [PhD Bookclub](#) and [Why don't you write me?](#) Example of PhD student feedback: 'The Chaplaincy has really been a high point during my time at the University. WDYWM, the book club, the mindfulness course have all been so valuable for me'; 'Thank you so much for the discussion last week, I've already learnt a lot from you and the other PhD students'. PhD Bookclub now has over 55 members. WDYWM takes 100 members each 6-monthly cycle.
- We brought yoga back in-person – very popular in-person, room full.
- Created Tai Chi in a hybrid manner – more online take-up than in-person
- Ran Mindfulness Drop-ins online on Tuesdays and in-person on Fridays – more online take-up
- We brought the Mindfulness courses back in-person, and noticed the learning embedding better with in-person format.
- Geoffrey's Dreamwhispering has benefited from having an online option: staff and PhD students in particular take up this opportunity, which is bespoke mentoring.
- Harriet changed the Chaplaincy How-to online induction event to one on managing entry into university and taming your inner-critic. This proved so popular that staff requested inner-critic trainings for their teams. 45-85 students per session.
- Kitty's [MindLetter](#) continues to be very popular with new subscriptions coming in every week. C 700 readers per week

Abundant Academy

- Abundant Academy remained online because of people joining from right across the UoE, including the Vet School and WGH. 87 participants over first two years. Experiment of putting staff and PGs into the same cohorts worked out well: students receive guidance and mentoring from staff, and staff are refreshed by the student experience. Feedback: 'it feels so much better going into this academic year with the AbAc resources and experience, compared to this time last year before we took the programme'.

- Abundant Academy was piloted with members of other universities (Durham, Stirling, UWS), and from other sectors: Creative Industries, the FE sector, and NHS.

3. Has the industrial action impacted the quality of provision and student experience, and, if so, how this has been mitigated?

Chaplaincy Service was not much affected, and did not have any staff on strike. We continued to host student society meetings, and all our wellbeing events took place.

4. Summary of the impact of and learning from the Covid-19 pandemic (what worked well, what worked less well and what you might continue going forward).

What has worked well (include any partnership working activity):

Trainings and provisions for and with Schools and Services

- Geoffrey provided a range of Mindful Doodling sessions in response to student and staff requests for wellbeing-promotions in Schools.
- Geoffrey is resourcing those in a Peer-to-Peer Support scheme at the Roslin Institute whose activities are very similar to the Listening Service's
- Kitty worked with ECA in developing [Art in Mind exhibition](#): 6 guided 'mindfulness of art' meditations and conversations, recorded with students and staff from across the University, designed to bring awareness to the connection between engagement with art and wellbeing.
- Urzula provided Ecospirituality training for Universitas 21, and trauma support to New College for an International Woman's Day event
- Kitty and Harriet worked with a multi-disciplinary team across the CMVM, School of Health and Usher Institute in developing a PTAS funded course on 'Empathy and Compassion in Work and Life', contributing a large number of the teaching videos.
- Harriet provided a range of training in: Leadership, Compassion in universities, and personal skills for research, including to the CSG away-day; a Bayes Centre international grant-funded activity for ERC trainees; and for SRA. Further requests have come in, including from HR, Stirling academics, and from a research institute in Berlin.

Curriculum Transformation and L&T new initiatives and partnerships

At the Learning & Teaching conference we contributed two events:

- **Destigmatising mental health and suicide: Co-Creating spaces for healing and generative conversations about mental health and suicide now and for the future** (Harriet Harris, Taryn Mansfield, Kelly Blacklock & Glen Cousquer) [Panel]
- **Building a community of active hope** (Urzula Glienecke) [Workshop]

The mental health workshop will be developed into a further generative conversation about what does and doesn't help in the experience and students and colleagues going through episodes of poor mental health.

With the Vet School we created the first ever event for Survivors of Suicide Loss. We ran this on-line, with the Chaplain facilitating and providing the reflection, and with space for attendees to participate and speak as they chose. It was extremely effective in enabling Vet students and staff to share their losses and

anxieties, and it was a big step both for the UoE and for the Vet profession to take the lead in acknowledging and responding to suicide. The L&T conference event on destigmatising mental health grew out of this initiative.

Harriet co-wrote the briefing paper for Curriculum Transformation, on 'Wellbeing in the Curriculum', with Prof Liz Grant and Dr Mark Hoelterhoff.

As Co-Director of the UoE Global Compassion Initiative, and with EFI, Harriet co-organised a [UoE flagship event](#) for COP26, [Realising a Compassionate Planet](#), and brought Jane Goodall in as a speaker.

The University Chaplain (Harriet Harris) was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh

What worked less well:

- P&M: Administrators have become overwhelmed and have moved onto jobs that do not involve P&M; knock-on pressure upon Head of Service. We do not have P&M or IT lines of support within the organisational structure of the UoE, and are reliant on, and grateful for, the goodwill of other very busy people. This is time-consuming and anxiety-inducing, and has caused a rate of staff-turnover unknown to us before P&M was introduced.
- Ventilation requires upgrading within our building, and communication about ventilation was slow and confused at the start of 2021-22, impeding the opening up of the Chaplaincy Centre.
- Covid signage difficult to remove, so we have notices that are not relevant.
- Fewer students around in-person and using the social drop-in, and it has been difficult beginning new things without students having the day-to-day contact with the centre.
- Carol Service and Children's Christmas Party were not able to take place due to rise in Covid numbers. Chaplaincy joined the New College Carol Service and paid for it to be recorded and placed on the website as a substitute.

What changes might you continue going forward:

- Most of the above in sections 1, 2 and 4a
- Hybrid Staff Team Meetings to manage the shortage of office space and give flexibility to WFH.
- Hybrid Honorary Team Meetings to accommodate people joining from elsewhere, or when scheduled tightly between meetings within their own ministries and work-places.
- Continue supplying hand gel at the front foyer for all to use, and table wipes for the students to use before and after their events.
- Bringing 'God and Mammon' into our People and Ministry outreach (ref Annual Report 2020-21), so that finance is not left out of the provision.

May 2022