



Issue 16 – Friday 9th June 2017

The following items have been discussed at the most recent SPEP Meeting:

Workload Allowance for Placement Tutor Roles

Changes to the allocation of workload hours to activities, such as Placement Tutor roles, were discussed. The University is no longer operating the Faculty Workload Allocation Model (WAM) in its full format, it is piloting a centralised workload allocation framework, which will be implemented across the University in 2018/19. The pilot is taking place in at least one School in each Faculty. In the Faculty of Science, it will take place in Natural Sciences and Psychology (NSP). Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences (PBS) and Sports and Exercise Sciences (SCS) will continue as before. Further information about the changes can be found on the SPEP SharePoint site, available [here](#).

NSP representatives reported that they have received a brief update about the scheme from the School Director, Professor Andy

Introduction

The Science Placement and Employability Panel consists of Academic and Support Staff representatives who meet regularly to discuss placement and employability matters arising within the Faculty. The SPEP Newsletter has been devised to report back the matters discussed and keep all Faculty of Science staff up to date.

Tattersall, and that line managers have attended relevant training. While the details of the scheme remain unclear, the WAM will be replaced by some form of centralised workload allowance modelling. Although the tariffs have not yet been published, the understanding is that they are not fixed and are open to negotiation.

National Awards Schemes

The nominations for this year's Student Employee of the Year (SEOTY) and Rate Your Placement awards have closed, so the Faculty will be unable to take part this year. Academic Placement Tutors and Employability Champions are encouraged to share student success stories with the PLSU and the WOWCC so that nominations can be submitted next year. Nominations can be made by employers, students or university staff. The awards are open to all universities, and students on any degree programme. Sam Forde will circulate an overview document and supporting materials about the awards to SPEP members for information.

It was suggested that the WOWCC could coordinate submissions to SEOTY, as this award is open to internships and extra-curricular paid work, including part-time jobs whilst studying. The PLSU could coordinate submissions to the Rate Your Placement awards, as these focus upon Work Based Learning (WBL) placements. A Faculty awards event could also be an effective way of managing the submission of nominations and preparing them to progress from local to regional to national rounds.

There were discussions about using feedback to form the basis of nominations. Suggestions included adding an agreement tick box to a section of the Placement Learning Code of Practice paperwork. Currently, the WOWCC collect feedback about student internships, but potentially this would not be in enough depth for a nomination. Feedback collected by the PLSU is mainly focused upon students' health and safety whilst on placement. Sarah Dalrymple asks students to request references from their placement providers to use in their portfolio assignments and suggested that it may be possible to formalise this practice.

Student Queries Resource Map

A draft resource to show where the responsibilities lie with regards to student support within the Faculty and across the University was shared and discussed. One suggestion was that it could benefit from being underpinned by an electronic database. SPEP members are invited to review, edit and add their own queries to this draft document by **Friday 23rd June**, accessed [here](#). The document is a working Google Doc, so any changes are saved automatically. Errors can be undone by pressing CTRL+Z.

CRM

There was brief discussion about the University's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. An update about CRM will be provided at the next SPEP meeting.

New Academic Framework Communication Strategy

Phil Denton gave an update regarding the communication strategy for the new academic framework and returning sandwich year students in 2018/19. A new academic framework will be introduced in 2018/19. For

students returning from a sandwich year placement, Level 6 marks will come under the new academic framework. It is arguable whether this is less advantageous for the student. There is no central communication strategy but Phil has contacted Programme Teams so that they can communicate the changes to students and provide advice.

The PLSU reported a significant drop in the number of PBS students on sandwich year placements. This has been counteracted with more summer work placement opportunities, leading to more referrals to the WOWCC. The development of degree apprenticeships may also result in less sandwich year placement opportunities. The PLSU hope to work more closely with the WOWCC with regards to degree apprenticeships in STEM subjects.

PBS Employer Forum

The PLSU organised an Employer Forum on behalf of the PBS Employability Champions. Employers from the pharmaceutical and biomolecular science industries attended the event on Thursday 18th May. The event aimed to explore subject-specific WBL placements and academic partnership opportunities. The event was really successful and the PLSU are in the process of getting feedback and evaluating the event, with a view to planning further activity in the future.

Degree Apprenticeships

It was queried if any degree apprenticeship opportunities were discussed at the PBS Employer Forum and it was fed back that there were some preliminary discussions. WBL Officer, Danielle Anderson, has been attending the Degree Apprenticeship Business Development Forum and introduced an NHS contact to the forum lead. With the six local NHS Trusts hosting around fourteen students each, there may be the potential to develop a pharmaceutical science degree apprenticeship.

WBL and Placement Teams Meeting Group

The PLSU attended the initial meeting of the Work Based Learning and Placement Teams Group on Wednesday 10th May, hosted by the Liverpool Business School. The group is designed to enable WBL and placement teams from across the University to share ideas and best practice. There are plans to develop a shared resource for storing copies of provider's insurance certificates. There are also plans to share and develop ideas for service level agreements or charters, as part of the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) award. The group will meet twice a year and hard copies of the minutes will be shared at the next SPEP meeting. There were suggestions that the group could become a panel.

WOWCC Updates

WOWCC representative, Laura Aldridge, provided an update about WOWCC activities. Overall, a very good level of engagement within the Faculty was reported. In Semester One, there were 118 hours of delivery, including within modules and optional events. Laura has led the delivery for PBS and SPS and Careers Advisor, Hayley Fallon, has led the delivery for NSP. In Semester Two, there were 104 hours of delivery. Across both semesters and schools, there were fourteen optional careers events. Good attendance was reported. For example, 113 students attended a Pre-registration Pharmacy event and 50 students attended a “Working in Forensics” event. The exception was the “Working Abroad” event. 75 students registered for the event but approximately 23 attended.

The representation of employers has increased in WOWCC areas. Employers are invited to set up pop-up stands on a Thursday in the Byrom Street foyer area, next to Starbucks. REED Scientific and Pharma Serve recently visited. Charging recruitment agencies a fee for visiting the University was mentioned as a potential idea. Going forward, WOWCC will follow a similar structure of organising employer stands and optional events. For the optional events, WOWCC want to tap into larger companies, in particular, those with graduate programmes. They have already hosted Aldi and Enterprise Rent-a-Car.

The Careers Zone has hosted lots of one-to-one appointments. The “Careers Readiness” survey has shown a significant increase in the number of students using WOWCC services. In some groups, this has been as high as 50%. The location of the Byrom Street Careers Zone was cited as a positive influence on student engagement.

Laura discussed the findings of her research project, published for the Higher Education Careers Service Unit (HECSU): “To what extent has the fragmentation of careers education and guidance, offered to young people in schools and colleges, affected the level of career readiness which students have when they arrive at university?” (2016). Laura will be talking further about her research at the Teaching and Learning Conference on Thursday 15th June.

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Should you have any information you wish to feed back to the Science Placements and Employability Panel, good practice you would like to share or any input with regard to the items mentioned above please contact your School Representative or Bethany Cragg.

Date of the next Science Placements and Employability Group Meeting: **TBC**