Developing 'Academic Wellbeing'

The pandemic has also shone a light on issues such as digital poverty & inequality between students, with institutions needing to do all in their power to ensure education & support remain accessible through support systems, feedback systems & implementing the right policies to do the job properly.

Wellbeing and academic support should overlap. The university has both pastoral and academic responsibilities. By encouraging an overlap, I believe your academic experience will be enhanced.

Guides for students at all levels: eg. 'Surviving as an undergrad', 'Surviving a PHD', 'Surviving as a mature student', "Surviving a masters". These guides should include details on ILP processes, extensions/deferrals and well-being services. They should be available on ELE or iExeter for easier access.

My plan for clarified ILPs will mean flexibility & additional support for students who need it. By streamlining the processes around getting an ILP, more students will realise they are eligible & complete the process.

Implementing the Unitu feedback system (see Theme 2) or something similar will allow for more direct feedback and direct contact with those higher up.

Post-graduate & mature student support: PGR issues have only been exacerbated by the pandemic; constantly in front of a screen & without access to a decent research culture, often feeling

isolated. Many mature students have caring responsibilities that have needed their attention during lockdowns alongside their studies.

Improve pastoral content specifically for these students. Include; managing finances, imposter syndrome & isolation.

PGR/PGT ‘Hubs’ & ‘Mature Students Hub’ on Guild website developed alongside focus groups & reps. These webpages should be a one-stop-shop for these students, updated with relevant resources, as well as giving advice and connecting these students with each other. For example, when & how they can book out rooms to meet/work alongside similar students & give a sense of community to help with alienation. Or groups where they can speak on issues like imposter syndrome.

Likewise, events by the Guild tend to be mainly aimed at taught students. Need to include PG & mature students. The university community needs to be more inclusive of these groups of students.

Compassionate medical leave policies. During a global pandemic, medical leave should be readily & widely available to all students.UKRI students are eligible for 13 weeks paid medical leave (click here to read more).

Skills sessions or ‘tips’ for second years with no practice at live note-taking or class discussion. This content could be developed with the StudyZone or distributed through academic societies.

Focus groups/surveys to ensure any support they feel could have helped is implemented for incoming freshers.

These students did not take their A-Levels & their first year, which usually allows for an adjustment to university life & study, has been majorly disrupted. Staff have noted that many require more support than usually expected of first-year students & this needs to be addressed rather than accepted. We need to make sure these students are up to speed & feel adequately supported as they enter second year. See the 'Academic Wellbeing' section for details on the proposal for survival guides for all students .

Create 'academic communities' using academic societies: eg. through group chats for mature students to meet each other, support for second years who have never met course-mates etc.

<u>Welfare officers.</u> Using academic societies for feedback, ensuring accurate & timely representation of subject specific academic concerns at Guild level. This also means students can talk to people they know, meaning the feedback process becomes more informal & welcoming to as many students as possible. This also ensures that subject-specific issues that the VP Education would otherwise have trouble knowing, get back to Guild level.

Specific society group chats for mature students. By putting these students in touch with other students in similar positions, we can reduce the alienation and exclusion these students feel, and provide a proper support system through students who relate/understand their unique positions.

Societies to feedback to subject reps & COs; effective representation across subjects at Guild level; increase engagement & cohesion. It will also ensure easy & frequent collaboration between students & the Guild .

Regulate academic society committee attendance at SSLC meetings, possible accreditation for reps. SSLC council is supposed to have reps from academic societies. Attendance at SSLC meetings from Presidents of academic societies to be more regulated. For example, a minimum requirement of attendance/year. Alternatively, facilitate easy liaising between committee and subject reps or College Officers.