**Enhancing Student Success 2016-2017**

**Annual Report to SEC**

# **Executive Summary**

The remit of the Enhancing Student Success (ESS) group is to develop, implement and monitor University-wide projects to achieve significant improvements in student outcomes, focussing on continuation, progression, achievement and post-study progression. The original focus was on entry year student performance – the First Year Experience - but the remit has widened this year to include student success across all levels and post-study progression. This therefore complements the work of other groups, particularly Changemaker Hub and employability, and ILT.

There are seven major work-packages that together form the ESS action plan. The ESS action plan was significantly revised during the year to support a shift from multiple diverse small-scale activities at faculty or professional service level to University-wide projects with specified activities and responsibilities at faculty and professional service level.

Overall there was good progress made across all the seven work packages.

# **WP1: Learning Analytics**

# The objective was to procure a Learner Analytics supplier based on high level requirements. The procurement exercise was carried out via G Cloud and DTP Solution Path were selected. The project will now commence in as a three month Readiness Assessment in preparation for a 12 month pilot across selected programmes in the University. The one year pilot in 2017/18 will be measured against agreed KPIs linked to withdrawal rates and involve programmes across all faculties.

# **WP2: Enhanced Student Advising**

## **Buddying system**

A working group was established to review current student peer-to-peer buddying systems with the aims of improving transition to HE and sense of social belonging, and improve early programme in-year student retention. A model has been developed based on a number of core principles, such as voluntary; screening for role; role benefits; training; focus to ensure complementary to other student support. A pilot will run in 2017/18 in relation to a small number of courses with a view to roll out in 2018/19.

## **Learning Development**

During the 2016-17 academic year, the ESS Tutors within Learning Development have offered: extended bespoke drop in sessions; extended online support; Maths GCSE provision; open online course for new students; Flying Start sessions. This has been evaluated and the move towards greater links between subject and learning development across academic and digital development in the curriculum will continue next year. (see proposals for a new Learner Support system).

**Learner Support**

A review of the current PAT system in the context of sector good practice was completed and reported to ESS. A proposal for a new personalised Learner Support system has been developed with the broad direction of travel supported by ESS and SEC. The system would integrate: revised personal academic tutoring, integrated academic, employability and learning development in subject curriculum across levels, social belonging at programme level; centralised triage support, specialist support; and learner analytics. Operational models will be developed in 2017/18 for consultation and approval. The aim is to roll out a new Learner Support system progressively, year-on-year from level 4 in September 2018.

# **WP3: Learning and Teaching for Year 1**

The objective was to make recommendations for a redesigned entry-year curriculum and to develop strategies and solutions to improve learning, teaching, and assessment practices for academic staff to deploy in order to support academic transition, progression and success for students at Level 4.

In 2016-17, the research for WP3 was conducted and the final research report was submitted to the ESS Steering Group. On the basis of the research findings, the team are now working on proposals for an entry-year curriculum.

# **WP4: Social Belonging**

The Changemaker hub has provided students with a range of events, activities and engagement opportunities designed to promote Changemaker whilst supporting students to feel part of Northampton. The Changemaker programme was coordinated with the Student Union and together provided a comprehensive programme of activities. Whilst this approach provided a comprehensive range of ‘fun’ and ‘social’ activities it also highlighted the importance of adopting a wider definition of social belonging which acknowledges the role of social belonging at programme/course level and the role of Faculties and academic staff in contributing to a student's social belonging, this learning will be taken into the plan for 2017-18. (see proposals for a new Learner Support system.

# **WP5: FYE and Partners**

A successful conference was held to share common issues, solutions and good practice in relation to student continuation across the UK partnership

# **WP6: Transition into HE**

Providing better support to students as they transition into Higher Education has been identified as a way UoN can improve both the student experience and student recruitment. Developed in collaboration between academic and professional services staff, the ‘Helping you transition to University’ section of the UON website provides students with a range of key information and links. :

# **WP7: Graduate Employability**

The 2016-17 Graduate Employability Action plan focussed on implementing best practice and providing a platform through which employability would be embedded in the whole student experience. Key areas of activities were developed and there has been evidence of improvement

* Improved management of the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey:-
* Improved levels of engagement with the university’s employability award
* Launch of a new online employability platform
* The Launch of Grad Boost
* The introduction of the Work Based Learning team working closely with the Changemaker hub
* Completion of the development of the CHaNGE framework
* A review of professional accreditation of programmes has been undertaken and plans to widen the availability of jointly accredited programmes will be implemented in 2017-18.
* All Faculties have rolling employability action plans with the Changemaker Hub
* Additional targeted activities and support have been provided to courses where graduate employability is below threshold levels

# **WP8: Learning and Teaching for Years 2 and 3**

During the 2016-2017 academic year a University-wide review of the UMF provisions on assessment was undertaken. This review resulted in a number of proposals for amended the current UMF to ensure that the University approach to assessment remained fit for purpose and relevant to a 21st century learning and teaching environment. This work also provided an opportunity to embed employability and Changemaker into our programmes through the work of the [ChANGE project](https://www.northampton.ac.uk/ilt/current-projects/change/) achieved by a reshaping of learning outcomes in line with revised UMF guidance.

The UMF revisions were approved at Senate (July 2017) with an implementation phase in 2017/18 for a September 2018 study start for all UG students.

# **Faculties, Joint Framework and Foundation Study Framework**

Faculties continued to focus on identified actions throughout 2016/17 but with an agreed move towards the University-wide project focus as 2016/17 progressed. This shift in approach, also aligned more directly to OFFA, seeks to achieve greater impact through consistent operation of agreed actions and activities across faculties.

Joint Hons Framework and Foundation Framework have been a specific focus across all the packages to ensure the needs of these students are addressed. The appointment of subject leaders in these two areas have already led to significant developments. Jt and FF have been integrated into the annual review through AQSC with action plans to support improvement developed in 2017. FF had undergone a major Change of Approval in July 2017.