

OfS Student Panel Meeting - Minutes

Date: 10 September 2018

Time: 15.00 – 18.00

Location: Finlaison House, Furnival Street

Attendees:
Ben Hunt, Chad Allen, Lizzie Pace, Xenia Levantis, Zahra Choudhry, Shakira Martin, Megan Dunn (chair), Sinead Brown, Alice Richardson, Stuart Cannell, Luke Renwick, Ruth Carlson, Nicola Dandridge, Edward Davison, Ellie Mayo-Ward. Presenters: Conor Ryan, Victoria Holbrook, Catherine Cameron, Steve Hall

Apologies:
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Item 1: Chair's welcome

1. The chair thanked panel members for joining the meeting.
2. The chair thanked panellists for their varied contributions since the July meeting, in particular the work of sub-groups. Work on value for money had been progressing well and the student engagement sub-panel had been reviewing the principles, particularly to add a section on supporting and empowering students to engage with the OfS.
3. The chair provided a quick update on Equality and Diversity work in OfS.
4. The chair noted the positive steps in progressing work with the Student Loans Company on estranged students.

Item 2: Approval of 10 July 2018 meeting minutes

5. The minutes from the July meeting were approved.

Item 3: Chief Executive's report

6. The chair invited the OfS's chief executive to give a brief update to the panel. This included an update on the process of provider registration, an overview of the OfS transformation programme and organisational design process, and the launch of the Access and Participation Plan consultation.
7. The chief executive echoed the chair's thanks to the panellists for their involvement during the preceding months.

Item 4: Information and Guidance (IAG) Strategy

8. Conor Ryan, Catherine Cameron, and Victoria Holbrook (all OfS staff) outlined the OfS's emerging approach to Information, Advice and Guidance, including draft recommendations, and work which requires further exploration, for the panel to comment on.

9. Catherine introduced the work being undertaken on the new information resource which will replace Unistats and updated on recent progress on this work and future work which will include developing and testing prototypes.
10. The team outlined next steps for IAG; the strategy will be refined based on feedback from the panel, a draft strategy will be published for comment from external stakeholders, students will have input via focus groups and polling mechanisms, and collaboration with the student panel will continue. A final proposal is expected in early 2019.

Item 5: Value for Money (VFM)

11. Steve Hall presented an update on VFM progress. Ruth provided an update on the work of the VFM sub-group. The sub-group have been particularly interested in ensuring VFM covers the broad student experience, not just academic experience.
12. VFM will be presenting a paper to the board which builds on the work of the sub-group.
13. A discussion was had around the role students' unions play in ensuring providers are held to account in regard to VFM. This is an area which OfS needs to explore further.
14. It was noted again that the definition of 'value' is nuanced and means different things to different students. This needs to be recognised by OfS in all future work.

Item 6: 2019 Panel Options

15. The panel were presented with a series of proposals and options for what the panel might look like from 2019 onwards. The panel discussed; recruitment communications; the recruitment process for both new applicants, and returning panellists; remuneration; and training.
16. The panel provided feedback across these areas and requested that a new proposal be provided to the panel as a result. The panel were particularly interested in the recruitment process for returning panellists, but felt they could not make a final decision on this themselves due, in part, to conflicts of interest.
17. The panel suggested some next steps to improve the process for 2019.

Item 7: Panel Feedback

18. The chair led feedback from the panellists without OfS officials present and then concluded the meeting.