CONTEXT – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2012 the University agreed a project to assess how it delivers the services and supports the processes by which students' journey through from the point of enquiry to application and ultimately graduation. The Student Journey Programme is seeking to enable service excellence by putting students' needs at the centre of these services and is investing in new IT systems which, amongst other benefits, will enable more self-service, better access to information, and more automation of many routine processes amongst other benefits.

Over the last few months, as we have understood more about the enabling IT systems, a potential organisational support model has been developed. A number of small working groups consisting of Service Owners, support and academic staff have been discussing how best to deliver services and configure processes so that across the University we have the optimum models for supporting our students.

Some of these ideas have already been shared; staff may have been involved in one of the open presentation sessions or enquiry management briefing sessions that took place before Christmas. The purpose of the current engagement sessions is to share ideas for the suggested model and seek comments and feedback from staff.

POTENTIAL ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT MODEL:

Individual working groups of professional and academic staff have looked at the different processes that we deliver, including admissions, general enquiries and on-course support. From this has developed an initial proposal for an organisational support model. We want to have a model that works for the organisation as a whole, so it might be different to how things are structured at the moment, but the overall aim is to meet the SJP objectives.

General Enquiries

It is suggested that the Service Points model will provide a single service for dealing with all general, information and advice, for student enquiries. There will be a physical Service Desk at each campus through which all enquiries will be triaged, supported by the new ESD technology that will give a single knowledge base of information.

The Service Desks would be supported by a team of advisors, with a high focus on delivering excellent service to enquirers. This will mean that other Professional Services and Faculties will not be the first point of contact for general enquiries and roles and responsibilities may be changed as a result.

The benefits this model could provide include:
- A single point of contact for enquirers where they can get multiple information and advice questions resolved.
- Appointments booked with specialists and/or direction to the right specialist service. Enhanced management information to enable ongoing improvements.
- A single knowledge base that all staff can access and provides consistent information
- Minimal "pass on" of enquiries.
- Self-Service capabilities through mobile devices
- Efficiencies in service delivery as dedicated team responding to general enquiries rather than multiple parts of the organisation.

QUESTIONS:

- Are there any areas of general enquiry that should continue to be handled locally rather than through the service desk?

- Are there any other activities that a central service desk could usefully deal with?

Admissions

Given how important the admissions process is to BU and in order to ensure as swift a response to applications as possible and a consistent approach, it is suggest that BU has a dedicated admissions team. At present there are different models; IAT is a dedicated team as is the case in HSS, but in the other Faculties admissions support is combined with other tasks and responsibilities.

It is really important to ensure that whatever model BU has for admissions, it maintains a close relationship with academic staff and those delivering the admissions function have a detailed knowledge of the programmes they are supporting. The suggested model builds on those critical factors.

It is suggested that BU has a dedicated admissions team(s) under the Service Ownership of the Head of Admissions.

The team(s) would deal with all aspects of the admissions process until the applicant is an enrolled student, this will include support for interviews and other selection activities. The team(s) would need to work closely with academic staff to maintain this key relationship and understanding of programmes.

The benefits of this suggested model include:

- Increased expert knowledge as the team is dedicated to admissions
- Greater consistency in offer making and the applicant experience of the admissions process
- Improved reporting and management information capability, removing the need for duplication of effort.
- Flexible team that can respond to peaks and troughs
- Efficiencies in service delivery as support is dedicated to admissions process

QUESTIONS:

Are there any other possible benefits to be gained from a dedicated admissions service?

Are there any reasons why this model might not bring the benefits identified?

Faculty Programme Support

The Service Owner consultation of 2013 agreed that Schools, now Faculties, are responsible for providing on-course support to students. This was also one of the reasons that Placements support was moved to Faculties as it is part of the students' academic study on their programme.

What is included in programme support has therefore been reflected on. If general enquiries and admissions were to be supported as is suggested, then programme support would be focused on the needs of the programme. This would therefore include matters such as:

- Assignments, Marks, Mitigating Circs
- Withdrawals, Transfers, Pausing Study,
- Accreditations, local stage Complaints and Appeals
- Support for Programme events, induction, enrolment, graduation, open days other activities that the Programmes offer
- Pastoral support to students
- Administrative requirements related to external regulations e.g. NHS Contract, Programme Accreditations, PSRBs
- Administration of Committee, Programme, Framework meetings
- Collation of data and information e.g. ARFM/ARPM monitoring, research ethics, attendance monitoring, Tier4
- It is also recognised that there are support requirements which are particular to individual Faculties/Programmes.

It is also suggested that support for **Exams** and **Quality** processes might be provided solely by teams located in the Professional Services. At the moment we have these central teams but there are some tasks that Faculties pick up and it is often unclear who is responsible which leads to uncertainty and duplication of effort.

QUESTIONS:

- Are there any areas of programme support that have not been identified in the information provided?

- Pastoral support is important for students, what can be provided by administrative support and what needs to be provided by Academic Advisers or Programme tutors?

- If Exams and Quality processes were to be provided entirely by Professional Service teams, what is essential for this to work effectively?