

RH100 – Panel Discussion

Time: 6.30pm

Date: Tuesday 8 December

Venue: Moore Annexe 34

Welcome

The second panel session will consist of two parts where we will specifically explore academic departments, and the services they provide for students.

Session 1 – Open Discussion

Richard Hawley will lead a group discussion which explores the role of an academic department and brainstorm the activities that occur in departments. The focus is on student services, not on academic teaching, though there are obviously big overlaps between these.

Preparatory questions to think about and explore with others before the panel discussion.

- Speak to your colleagues about what they think makes a good academic department. What has been your/their experience?
- Do you feel a strong sense of belonging to your academic department(s)? What would strengthen that sense of belonging?
- Do you find the front office of your academic department welcoming? Friendly? Is it open when you have queries or issues? Do you get good service from your departmental office?
- Do you have experiences of dealing with academic departments that show good service or good practice?
- Do you have experiences of dealing with academic departments that show poor service or bad practice? If there is one process or issue that you would like to change or improve in your relationship with your Department what would it be?
- Do you use your department website(s) as a source of information? Is there information about your Department that you feel should be there? Do you use other forms of Department social media?
- How do you communicate with academic and administrative staff in your Department? Does this work well?

Session 2 – Group Discussions

You will be split into groups, to explore the following specific areas:

Attendance Monitoring

- How is your attendance monitored at teaching sessions? Is your attendance checked for all sessions?
- Do you think it is important that the university knows that you are attending teaching sessions?
- What do you think should happen when students are missing academic sessions? Should there be warnings about attendance? How should attendance data be used by personal tutors and student support services?
- We are exploring different ways of monitoring attendance – there are currently very different versions of attendance monitoring in different Departments. In your group, you could discuss the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches.
- One of the options being looked at is a system of registering for sessions using an app (phone/tablet/laptop) or similar technology. Leeds University has a system called 'Check-In' (Appendix A). How would you feel about this approach being used at Royal Holloway?

Extenuating Circumstances

- What do you understand by an 'Extenuating Circumstance' (an 'EC')? What are they for, and what kinds of issues, conditions and events are they designed to deal with?

- Do you know what the College and Departments do with ECs? How are ECs factored into course results and degree classifications?
- Have you ever applied for an EC? What was your experience – how easy was it to do?
- If you have never submitted an EC, do you know how to apply for one?
- Have you ever applied for an extension to an assessed work deadline? How did you go about it? Was it clear to you on what grounds you could ask for an extension?
- What do you think are fair grounds for a short extension of an assessed work deadline? For example, would any of these be reasonable grounds: headache, public transport problems, computer failure, hangover, emergency veterinary care for a pet (add scenarios that you think test the system!)
- Who do you think should be responsible for granting extensions? Departmental administrators? A single academic in each department? Academics running individual courses? A central college system?
- At the moment, EC applications are processed primarily through Departmental Offices, but an option under consideration is an online system giving consistent information, and asking students to submit relevant documentation. Do you think this would be an improvement to the system?

Personal Tutors/ Personal Advisors

- Royal Holloway has a range of different titles to describe members of academic staff with direct responsibility for the development of a small number of students – they are sometimes called personal tutors, or personal advisors, or academic advisors. Some have suggested that they might be ‘academic coaches’. Do you have a preference? Or can you think of a better term? (Please don’t spend the whole session on this!)
- What expectations do you have of a personal tutor? What would you like them to do for you?
- How often would you like to meet with your personal tutor? Should you meet with them at regular times during the degree? How frequently? What are the times during your degree that you would most value meeting with your personal tutor. Should all meetings be one-to-one, or are group me
- Do you always attend meetings with your personal tutor?
- If you had issues that related to your academic work would you use your personal tutor for advice, and as a way to access further help?
- If you had issues that related to your wider life would you use your personal tutor for advice, and as a way to access further help? How else might you
- Do you know when your personal tutor has their ‘office hours’? Are they always available in these periods? Have you used them?
- How do you contact or communicate with your personal tutor? How quickly do you expect them to get back to you?

Next RH100 Panel

Tuesday 17th January in Wetttons Room A at 18:30-20:30

CHECK OUT



Check-in

Thousands of students like you already use the UniLeeds app on their mobile devices to stay up to date with their timetables, and from September a new feature called 'Check-in' is being added that will let you automatically register your attendance at lectures and other teaching activities.

10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHECK-IN

1 The Check-in feature on UniLeeds app lets you register your attendance at timetabled activities in teaching spaces across campus, replacing paper sign-in sheets.



2 Automated check-in uses your device's location services, so you'll need to enable it to do this. Visit www.leeds.ac.uk/Apps for more information or contact itservicesdesk@leeds.ac.uk or call +44 (0)113 34 33333 for advice on how to get set up and for answers to other frequently asked questions about Check-in.

3 Check-in works by allowing your device to detect a signal from one of the 'beacons' installed in every classroom and teaching space.



4 A check-in is achieved when your device successfully locates a beacon and matches this with your timetabled location.

5 Your device only looks for beacons when you're on campus with a timetabled activity, and a check-in is only stored when you're in the right location at the right time.

6 You can choose to check-in for each activity manually and register attendance yourself.

7 You can switch to auto check-in at any time.



8 You can view your check-in status via the UniLeeds app, and see your last check-in and a list of past check-ins.

9 If you don't have a compatible device, you forget your phone or it's not charged, simply log-in to the Portal from a cluster PC within 24 hours of the timetabled session and follow the instructions for self-check-in.



10 If you repeatedly use a cluster PC to check-in, someone from your programme may be in touch to make sure all is OK.

