



AMOSSHE

The Student Services Organisation

Autumn bulletin 2020

Working together

For Student Services professionals autumn is always the busiest time of year. Induction and orientation for freshers, settling students into accommodation, raising awareness of services, and implementing support and wellbeing strategies are just part of a broad remit. In 2020 those pressures have been exacerbated by moves to online or blended learning and support provision, social distancing and isolation requirements, local lockdowns and national guidelines changing from week to week.

How have Student Services teams coped with these challenges?

The short answer is: admirably. **AMOSSHE** members have shared their progress with each other throughout, revealing creative, resourceful and timely responses to urgent situations, and inspiring leadership under pressure. With every sudden change of direction and emerging crisis Student Services have focused on the safety, wellbeing and development of students, responding to needs, meeting expectations, and adapting every day.

Students have faced extremely difficult situations this term, and the mainstream media has given due voice to students' challenges. But there has been sparse reference to the staff teams working around the clock across the country to improve or alleviate students' difficulties as much as possible. So it's heartening that the value of the work of Student Services has become apparent within the higher education sector, leading to injections of extra funding and support from governments across the UK.

It has also been inspiring to see how **AMOSSHE** members have collaborated with each other, shared advice and resources, and supported colleagues through difficulties. Despite the pressures in each institution, our members have also taken time to contribute to sector-wide research and enhance their professional skills and knowledge.



Thanks so much to all our members
for your hard work and dedication!

Supporting students through the pandemic: AMOSSHE research

This autumn **AMOSSHE** members contributed to research about how their services have been supporting students through the pandemic. These infographics summarise some key findings.

Student Services provision for autumn 2020

Total averages

16%

Fully online

84%

A blended approach

Support for students

in university-owned accommodation

- ▶ Food deliveries / parcels
- ▶ Online and on campus social events
- ▶ Welfare / wellbeing support and therapy
- ▶ Check-ins for isolating students
- ▶ Guidance and support information
- ▶ Delivery / provision of essential supplies
- ▶ Dedicated helpline / email address

Support for students

in private sector accommodation

- ▶ Online and in person social events
- ▶ Welfare / wellbeing support and therapy
- ▶ Check-ins for isolating students
- ▶ Food parcels
- ▶ Guidance and support information
- ▶ Ensuring access to wi-fi / IT
- ▶ Dedicated helpline / email address

Support for students

living at home / distance learning

- ▶ Welfare / wellbeing support and therapy
- ▶ Online social events
- ▶ Check-ins for isolating students
- ▶ Guidance and support information
- ▶ Food parcels
- ▶ Ensuring access to wi-fi / IT
- ▶ Dedicated helpline / email address

Blended approach proportions

Total averages

77%



Online

23%



In-person

AMOSSHE members can access more survey findings here:
www.amoshe.org.uk/reports-and-guides#research

Looking after our students and their mental wellbeing.

We know from our independent research conducted last year that the highest referral point for counselling support is now, and the highest access point is in January/February.

The end of this term and the build up to the new year is a crucial time for us to get students set up with their support - and with campus and local lockdown restrictions in place, these winter months could prove more challenging than ever before.

We can support your counselling and mental health services and help you deliver vital support to your students to ensure they remain engaged in their studies.



find out more



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“Planning now to ensure that student support services are aware of the potential rise of **domestic abuse** and the need for increased capacity will be important”.

- UUK 'Beginning The Conversation: Responding to Domestic Violence and Abuse in HE Communities During Covid-19 Pandemic'

Is your institution prepared for the 'spike' in complaints and reports when lockdown's lifted?

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Professional development in challenging times

During this extremely busy autumn **AMOSSHE** members have taken the opportunity to review and refresh their professional expertise by taking part in events focusing on delivering the best possible services in difficult circumstances.



Student mental health: minding the gaps

In October **AMOSSHE** members and higher education sector experts explored how to use the Student Minds University Mental Health Charter and Universities UK Stepchange Mentally Healthy Universities framework to identify gaps in student mental health provision. They also shared resources and good practice for virtual mental health support and supporting less prominent student groups.

More with less?

In November **AMOSSHE** members and higher education sector experts discussed the challenges of more service provision in new contexts, a growing remit, increasing demand for services, and higher expectations of customer service, efficiency and effectiveness. Also, how to maintain team morale when faced with less budget, time, space and staff.



AMOSSHE members can access the event resources here:
www.amoshe.org.uk/events-resources

AMOSSHE annual sponsors



How do you support students who wouldn't normally reach out for help?

When students struggle with academic writing, we know it can impede their performance, lower grades and confidence, and ultimately impact retention.

Enquire about **discounted access** to Smarthinking, which offers experienced academic writing tutors who are available 24/7 to complement your existing services and provide students with high-quality, on-demand feedback on their written assignments. **96%** of learners say they'd recommend Smarthinking to a friend.

"It helped me feel more supported in my degree."

"Around **1/3** of university students **aren't confident** in asking for help with their written assignments or **even identify** when there is a potential problem."

Pearson HE Learner Survey, March 2020

go.pearson.com/removingbarriers



LET'S TALK ABOUT RACE IN THE WORKPLACE

MARSHALL
E-LEARNING CONSULTANCY

Many of our clients asked us for a module which specifically helps cultivate a constructive and candid conversation about race in the workplace. For this there was no one better than Maggie Semple, OBE whose expertise and experience within this field allows us to produce a module which explores what it is to be a non-white person in today's workplace.

Our course – **Let's talk about race**, takes a look at the experiences of black people in the workplace and the impact of white privilege and micro-inequities. Workplaces can be hugely important in tackling the issues of structural and individual racism. By their nature, workplaces tend to be more diverse than the social circles held by individuals. Therefore by ensuring inclusive hiring and management processes, employees will collaborate with a broader range of people that will challenge potentially previously held notions of stereotypes and other biases.

Learners will not only hear the first hand experiences of Black people in the workplace but will also be given strategies and tips for confronting their own biases and mitigating them. The purpose of the course is to persuade the learner that racism isn't just explicit racist language, abuse or discrimination and that racism also takes the form of inequalities and inadvertent biases that are embedded in organisations and in society. Learners will come away from the course with an increased sense of the need to consciously and pro-actively address racial bias within their organisation.

To see a video preview click here:
youtube.com/watch?v=rkTrKmdkmAo

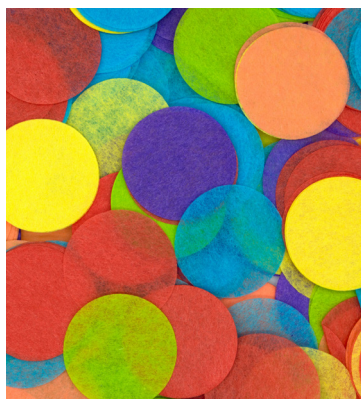
To find out more or to see a demo contact
Cameron Rifai: crifai@marshallacm.co.uk

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www.marshallelearning.com
contactus@marshallacm.co.uk



Keep up to date with AMOSSHE events at www.amoshe.org.uk/events



Intersectionality and Student Services: thinking and doing differently

4 December 2020, online

This professional development event explores how we can appreciate, embrace and anticipate our students' intersectionality and think about diversity in a more meaningful way. Join us to discuss different perspectives on intersectionality in order to help you raise awareness, guide your teams and design your services to better reflect and support your students.



Digital poverty in the context of Student Services

22 January 2021, webinar

This webinar discusses student digital poverty in the context of Student Services. What does digital poverty mean for different students (access to wifi, equipment, software, skills)? How are different student groups impacted? How can Student Services best support and engage these students? How do we manage student needs and expectations, and change our service models to account for these?



International Student Success: A new collaboration opportunity

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

epigeum

This holistic online programme will equip all international students with the knowledge, skills, and understanding that are central to preparing for, and adjusting to, university life in the UK. We are inviting institutions to collaborate with us on the development of **International Student Success**. Following a one-off payment, you will directly contribute to the programme's creation:

- Sharing best practices with other leading institutions during a collaborative workshop
- Ensuring that the resource addresses the needs of your international student population and meets your institutional requirements, by agreeing a detailed content outline and reviewing sample materials
- Receiving an institution-wide, unlimited subscription upon publication

If you would like to find out more about *International Student Success*, please email epigeum@oup.com

Lead Advisor for *International Student Success*

UKCISA UK Council
for International
Student Affairs

[Click here to read our Q&A with UKCISA: 'How has Covid-19 affected the international student experience?'](#)



Our Promises

www.unitehepartners.com

**UNITE
STUDENTS**

Safe and Secure

- Safety is our top priority
- Five-star rating by the British Safety Council
- We continue to work closely with the local police and emergency services across the UK
- Tried and tested procedures for incident management in extensive scenarios

Getting you settled

- Carefully designed welcome programme to support a healthy transition into student life and the development of strong social networks
- The MyUnite app allows students to chat to future flatmates in a secure, moderated forum
- Student Ambassadors support the development of social networks and ease the transition into university life

There when you need us

- We give students space to find their way, but commit to being there when they need us
- Staff are trained to actively listen and signpost to information and support within the university and community
- Security teams on hand 24/7 to support with safety and anti-social behaviour
- 24 hour emergency control centre available 365 days a year via phone, app or local call points
- All our employees are trained in our service style, based on the core principles of Connect, Act, Respect and Encourage – CARE

