Institution-Wide Partnerships to Enhance Student Service Quality

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University of Tasmania

ANZSSA Conference
2-5 December, 2018
Melbourne
Our Journey of Discovery

2014
Professional Services Review
Go live SLIMs (new student management system)

Vision for Student Service Quality at the University of Tasmania
Student Service Transformation Project

2015-2017
Budget constraints & more structure change
CRM system implementation
‘Launch’ of the Student Experience Portfolio

Student Experience Strategy (2016 - 2020)
Student Journey Mapping Initiative

2018
Vision for Student Experience & Service Quality (II)
Collaboration tide starts to turn
New Senior Leadership
Vice Chancellor
Provost
Widespread adoption of LEAN
Journey continues……
Student Experience Organisational Structure and Themes

Executive Director, Student Experience

Executive Support

Safe and Fair Community Unit

U Connect
Tier 0 Knowledge base & Self Help Resources
Tier 1 Student Information and Enquiry
Communication

Retention & Success
Wellbeing
Learning and Language
Leadership, Careers & Employability
Student Success (Intervention)
Student Advisers & International Support

Student Life
Student Orientation, Engagement & Events (UTASLife)
Student Living
Sport & Recreation

Riawunna
murina Pathways Program
Indigenous Student Support
Community Program

Academic Administration
CALE
CoSE
UC
CoBE
CoHM
Course Advice & Support for Academics

Student Experience
Institutional Student Experience Strategy

**Pillar 1**
Build the capacity of students to engage in their university experience in ways that are both individually transformative and build the social capital of the institution and the broader community.

**Pillar 2**
Support a diverse and dynamic University community through the provision of high quality environments, experiences and clear communication strategies that assist students to make connections with peers, support staff and the broader community.

**Pillar 3**
Embed a suite of comprehensive and quality services for students that are integrated, responsive and focused on supporting students' holistic wellbeing, academic success and engagement.

**Pillar 4**
Facilitate rewarding and high impact experiences that enrich and extend students' program of study and academic journey, including leadership and civic engagement.

**Pillar 5**
Strengthen the partnership between students and the University through conversations, co-creation and celebration.

Student Experience Strategy 2016-2020
The UTAS Context – student load

Domestic student load

International student load

Growth in domestic student numbers 2014-2018

Growth in International student numbers 2014-2018

Number of students
The UTAS Context – Student growth and SE staff FTE

Staff Profile

University of Tasmania is a highly distributed University with a strong regional presence and multiple site locations:

- Sandy Bay Campus (Hobart)
- Several discrete sites across the Hobart CBD
- Newnham Campus (Launceston)
- Inveresk Campus (Launceston)
- Cradle Coast (Burnie)
- Darlinghurst (NSW)
- Rozelle (NSW)
- Darling Harbour (NSW)

As FTE reduces, reach and equivalency of quality have become critical issues.
Service Quality in Higher Education

- HE institutions operate in an intensively competitive environment and are being called to account for the quality of the education and student experience they provide.

- To succeed and survive, HE institutions need to make constant efforts to ensure quality of offerings, experiences and services.

- Defining and evaluating service quality in HE and understanding how different factors influence student behaviour is complex.

  ➔ But it is crucial in enabling a University to efficiently design and provide the services, as well as optimise the allocation of resources.

Service quality needs to sit at the forefront of institutional strategic and operational planning and implementation.
Service Quality in Higher Education - A student-centric culture

Student-centric: service quality from students’ perspective (rather than management)

- Service quality: a measure of how well a delivered service (as experienced) matches students’ expectations
- Good service quality associated with:
  - Student satisfaction, attraction, loyalty & retention
  - Positive word-of-mouth
  - Increased profitability and sustainability

Determinants of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1990)
- Tangibles
- Empathy
- Reliability
- Responsiveness
- Assurance

Criteria for good service quality (Gronroos, 1988)
- Attitudes & behaviour
- Reliability & trustworthiness
- Access & flexibility
- Professionalism & skills
- Recovery
- Reputation & credibility
- Technical quality (product)
- Functional quality (delivery)
- Corporate image (environment)

Service quality factors (Abdullah, 2006)
- Non-academic
- Academic
- Reputation
- Access
- Programs
The Student Experience vision is to enable quality learning and student experience at the University of Tasmania through the provision of quality service and outstanding services.

4 key factors of influence - Enablers

- Enabler 1: People
- Enabler 2: Space
- Enabler 3: Technology
- Enabler 4: Evaluation
## UTAS Vision for Student Service Quality

### People
Staff are our greatest asset in providing quality services to students, and improvements implemented to influence this enabler can make a direct and immediate impact upon service quality.

### Spaces
The influence of learning, service, and social spaces on students’ choices to study at a specific University, remain on campus, and in turn connect with their peers and the institution, cannot be underestimated.

### Technology
Contributes to student service quality through university systems that support students’ administrative and learning activities and management of their studies, support needs and enquiries, and through online and digital technologies that enable students to engage with the university, its services, and their learning.

### Evaluation
The provision of quality student services is not possible without access to relevant data and feedback to inform continuous improvement.
The UTAS Context – Student diversity

It is important for universities to be cognisant of the differences between student cohorts and that these differences may influence their service quality perceptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-degree (incl. UPP, Pathways, ELC, murina, Associate &amp; Diploma degrees)</td>
<td>1,825</td>
<td>5,113 (+180%)</td>
<td>6,326 (+24%)</td>
<td>7,663 (+21%)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>2,147</td>
<td>2,076 (-3%)</td>
<td>2,261 (+9%)</td>
<td>2,340 (+4%)</td>
<td>2,099 (-10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESB</td>
<td>4,570</td>
<td>5,531 (+21%)</td>
<td>6,031 (+9%)</td>
<td>6,133 (+2%)</td>
<td>5,879 (-4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>569 (+23%)</td>
<td>674 (+18%)</td>
<td>706 (+5%)</td>
<td>658 (-7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature-aged (&gt;25 years)</td>
<td>15,314</td>
<td>17,940 (+15%)</td>
<td>20,750 (+16%)</td>
<td>22,721 (+9%)</td>
<td>21,008 (-8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Parentheses show % growth from previous year)
UTAS Vision for Student Service Quality

Phase 1 - Service Transformation (2014-2017)

In 2014, the University of Tasmania established A Vision for Student Service Quality at the University of Tasmania

Aims:

- To articulate a clear vision and high-level implementation plan for the provision of quality, student centric model of delivery of services for students that could be shared across the institution and inspire our teams

- To examine how to effect the vision across the four enablers/factors of success - people, space, technology and evaluation

- To harness the unique opportunity that presented at that point in time when the full range of student-related services were brought together under the one portfolio within the central Academic Division of the University
## Progress against the 4 enablers (2014-2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic priorities for each Enabler</th>
<th>Measures of success (KPIs)</th>
<th>Progress indicator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1: PEOPLE</strong></td>
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</table>
| Implement a series of Service Transformation workshops for all Student Centre staff in collaboration with Professor Simon Bell, University of Melbourne | 100% staff participation  
Evidence of outcomes in team operational plan |                    |
| Develop a set of service standards and clear performance metrics for student services delivery across the institution | Standards drafted  
Evidence of standards embedded into practice  
Standards promoted |                    |
| Identify and bring into standard practice a knowledge-base system for student services staff | Knowledge-base system implemented  
Training programs undertaken |                    |
| Prepare student services communication guidelines in relation to consistent, accurate, timely and professional communication to students | Guidelines complete  
Evidence of guidelines embedded consistently across service areas |                    |
| Implement a connected client services model underpinned by best practice models and strategic decisions around integrated student centred learning and services spaces | Model developed  
Restructure complete  
Spaces aligned to model |                    |
| Embed a plan for ongoing training for Student Centre staff, particular in relation to customer service | Induction and training program developed  
Evidence of training program routinely |                    |
| **2: SPACE**                         |                           |                    |
| Undertake visits to university sites that have been recognised as exemplars in relation to creating integrated student centred learning and services spaces | Secure funding for UK and US missions and recent Australian models (UniSA, and Adelaide)  
Undertake visits |                    |
| Provide informed input into the work of the library Master Plan and relevant Morris Miller and Newnham Project User Groups, based on site visits | Formal process for input into Capital Investment Committee approved |                    |
| Establish integrated student learning and services spaces on Newnham and Sandy Bay campuses | Kerslake Centre and MML refurbishment approved and completed |                    |
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<th>Progress indicator</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3: TECHNOLOGY</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence Digital Strategy program in relation to tools used for communication to students</td>
<td>Evidence of consistency across C&amp;U Handbook, student communications from divisions &amp; faculties, web presence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelop current students website</td>
<td>Web overhaul complete (recognising ongoing improvement)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore the analytics capabilities within MyLO to improve intervention strategies</td>
<td>MyLO capabilities analysed and larger BI solution documented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide expanded use of online solutions to student access to resources and support</td>
<td>Evidence of equivalent ratings from online students in key service quality surveys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish an enquiry management system to manage and monitor enquiries through to resolution and inform continuous business improvement</td>
<td>New CRM implemented and evidence of consistent practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4: EVALUATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake visits to university sites that have been recognised as exemplars in relation to creating integrated student centred learning and services spaces</td>
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Service Quality – The Student Voice

Service Quality Survey (SQS)

- 30 statements relating to students’ experiences with staff and student services provided by the University
- 5 response categories from ‘Strongly disagree’ to ‘Strongly agree’ + ‘n/a’ category
- 2 open-ended items relating to student ‘praise’ and ‘criticism’ of the University
- Focus on non-academic support services (e.g., tangibles, access, availability and flexibility, functionality) and staff (attitudes & behaviour, interpersonal skills, reliability)

SQS 2015 – 2018

- Total of 4,600 respondents across the 4 years
- Respondents mainly female students (70-75%), domestic students (75-85%), full-time students (55-75%) and students undertaking Bachelor degrees (60-80%)
- Included strong representation across all age and equity groups, campus locations and modes of study

Results

- Similar pattern across students from different equity groups
- Overall, international students rated services more positively than domestic students
Service Quality – The Student Voice

Note: Positive evaluation = positive + strongly positive student responses
Main themes of SQS Student Responses:

- Overall, the majority of students felt satisfied with the support services and consider them high quality.
- Most students consider support staff to be respectful, able to communicate well and are easily contacted.
- The majority of students (86-92%) felt they are safe and secure on campus.
- Most students (79-84%) said that the University uses up-to-date technology and 92-95% were able to access University systems when they needed (email, MyLO, eStudent).
- Most students (81-85%) felt they were able to access support and resources that were relevant to them.

- The areas needing improvement are not surprising (parking, food and beverage, access to public transport and financial assistance) and highlight a number of recognised issues that are at different stages of resolution.

- The SQS themes are reinforced by external National student evaluations:
  - SES (2014-2017) - overall experience is slightly below (~1%) the national average of 80% student satisfaction; student satisfaction with support services improving but remains below (3%) the national average of just under 70%.
  - ISB (2014-2017 - overall student experience and satisfaction with student support have both improved but still sit ~1% below the national averages (approximately 90% for both).
UTAS Service Quality Vision: Phase 2

Enablers – essentially the same but the descriptors have evolved

People & Capacity

• Focus on improving staff productivity through streamlining routine business processes drawing on LEAN principles.

• Student-facing staff will engage in internationally-recognised professional development in the field of appreciative advising and inquiry to progress a consistent and strengths-based approach in supporting student success.

• Deepening engagement with students as partners.

Physical & Virtual Spaces

Key areas for further enhancement in relation to fit for purpose physical and virtual space that supports formal and informal student learning experience. Driven by need for:

• Equivalency of student experience and service quality for different sites and modes of delivery.

• Focused effort on the user experience of our virtual spaces (vs designing future physical capital).

• Attention to fit-for-purpose physical spaces (acknowledging current work on campus locations & designs) for:
  ➢ informal student learning & connection
  ➢ space to encourage community & campus vibrancy.
UTAS Service Quality Vision: Phase 2 cont’d

**Business Process & Systems**

Focus on the *Student Journey Mapping Initiative* – to inform institutional decision-making and planning in order to support the productivity of student service staff into the future.

- Development of a more comprehensive understanding of the customer experience through the student lens throughout key milestones of the academic lifecycle;
- Engendering a sense of shared accountability for addressing governance, business process and system deficiencies informed by this work; and
- Drawing on LEAN principles, remove inconsistencies, retro-fits, duplications, double handling or over-engineered processes to redirect resources to areas which add value.

**Evaluation & Business Intelligence**

Focus on advancing the work of the Business Intelligence (BI) Unit following development of student load and diversity dashboards as part of Phase 1.

- dissect data at a course, unit and eventually student level → single student dashboard across learning, teaching and support.
- Increase student participation in multiple opportunities for feedback and more widely promote the analysis of student experience data to evaluate service impact and drive strategic decision making
Example 1: Student Journey Mapping Project

Tell us what you think!
(and have a slice of free pizza!)

Do administrative processes let you fly through UTAS?
...or do they sometimes trip you up?

6th March 2018
Newnham Campus
Room Y204
Student Centre (Kerslake)

Entry at the following times*:
11:00am, 11:30am, 12:00pm,
12:30pm, 1:00pm, 1:30pm

Here is your chance to let us know!
The University will be holding ‘Tell us what you think’ sessions at Newnham Campus on 6th March. This will be the chance for you to provide us with your valuable feedback, so business and system improvements can be made, resulting in your administrative experience becoming as easy as possible.
Next Steps improving the Student Journey: Four Streams of Focus

- Early Engagement
- Admissions
- Enrolment
- Curriculum
The Roadmap...  
Roadmap of current initiatives, planned initiatives, and initiatives subject to funding, which are envisaged to improve the student journey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Active or planned initiatives (with approved funding)</th>
<th>Planned initiatives which are subject to resource approval. Implementation dates of initiatives subject to funding are tentative and subject to change.</th>
<th>Active or planned initiatives which are investigatory, and likely to lead to new initiatives and requests for additional resourcing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Engagement</td>
<td>1. University College: Auto enrolment</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>2. NOAH Study: New domestic admissions system</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
<td>3. Continuing &amp; professional education programs</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>4. Domestic admissions &amp; automation of advance standing</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced Online Application Scholarships</td>
<td>5. Single staff view for frontline staff</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Development of Student Portal for Personalised Assistance</td>
<td>6. Curriculum innovation design frameworks</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Scheduling Transformation</td>
<td>7. Digital marketing &amp; content delivery solution</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>8. Continuous development of student portal for personalised assistance</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>9. Enhancement of virtual enrolment information</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
<td>10. Single staff view for frontline staff</td>
<td>Work to be progressed in 2020 &amp; beyond</td>
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</table>
Example 2: My Place . My Voice

- To understand and guide a future model of student participation, representation and leadership at the University
- Included broad consultation across University student communities
- Conversations about how students want to be empowered to add value and have impact through meaningful engagement in leadership opportunities
Example 2: My Place . My Voice

**Focus:**
- Students’ views and experiences relating to their sense of community, connectedness and belonging outside of the traditional learning environment
- Types of decisions and issues that students would like to influence and the ways they would like to have impact

**Multi-methodologies** (to capture the different types of student engagement):
- Workshops – facilitated 60 min discussion workshops, students in small groups (109 participants)
- Short online surveys (120 participants)
- Long online surveys (187 participants)
- Paper surveys (531)
- In-person short interviews (22 students)
- Online single questions (via UTASLife Facebook page) (28 participants)
- Video interviews – 30-60 seconds (1 participant)

**Examples of areas covered across methodologies**
- Students’ sense of community and belonging
- Current strengths and influences on the sense of community
- Increasing students’ sense of community and connectedness
- Issues and decisions students would like to be able to influence
- Empowering students to engage with the decisions / issues they would like to influence
- Student representation
Example 2: My Place My Voice

Data analysis:
- Currently underway
- Thematic content analyses
- Frequency analyses
- Student cohort analyses

Preliminary analyses:
Final comment

It’s all about partnerships