**A. POLICY/PRACTICE DETAILS**

1. The title of the policy being analysed.
   Peer Mentoring

2. Please explain the main purpose of the policy being analysed.
   Peer Mentoring is one of the peer support schemes offered through the Students’ Union Peer Support area. The aim is to set up and maintain new and existing Peer Mentoring schemes across the University, in partnership with departments. Peer Mentor schemes assist with the transition to HE, help with student integration and enhance the student experience. The Peer Support area is also responsible for providing training and support for student mentors involved in peer support schemes across campus.

3. Who will be affected?
   Students offered services (Mentees)
   Student volunteers (Peer Mentors)
   Staff involved with the schemes.

4. Aspects of the policy that particularly impact on equality and diversity.
   Disability - consideration needs to be given to students with disabilities to ensure that students with disabilities are able to volunteer as mentors and have access to all forms of support; e.g. Moodle, training. In addition, it will be important to ensure that Peer Mentors are aware of the range of disabilities and ways that this can influence how they work with a diverse range of mentees.

   Gender – consideration needs to be given to the gender of Peer Mentors who sign up to the role. Mentees are generally the full cohort of students in a course but it will it will be important to monitor feedback by gender, to ascertain whether there may be a
differential take up of the mentoring scheme by gender. There may also be a
differential in take up by gender as the year progresses.

Race/Ethnicity - consideration needs to be given to different ethnic groups that sign
up to volunteer as Peer Mentors, to ensure that there is a suitable range of
volunteers.

Age – consideration needs to be given to age to ensure there is a diverse age
spread across our volunteers as well as monitoring mentee feedback.

B. Analysis

5. Please indicate evidence used and the process by which you have arrived at
your conclusions.

Areas that were highlighted in the volunteer participation statistics are:

Disability - The most common disability that peer mentors disclose is ‘Specific
Learning Disability’ (4.8%), this is higher than the University statistics. There are no
peer mentors with a hearing impairment or visual impairment. It will be important to
ensure that publicity, particularly Peer Mentor recruitment is inclusive for all students,
including those with disabilities.

Gender - There were more female Peer Mentors (59.8%) compared with the number
of students across the University (45.7%). Male students are underrepresented in
the Peer Mentors (37.8%).

Race/Ethnicity - The percentage of Black African or White/Black African peer
mentors is lower than the percentage of Black African or White/Black African
students reported across the University (0.8% compared to 2.2%). If this trend
continues in the next year recruitment strategies that target this group may be
necessary.

Mentees were given the opportunity to provide feedback about the peer mentoring
scheme in most departments. A paper survey was carried out in departments where
the peer support team had approval. Feedback was gathered from the following
departments and courses: Civil Engineering, Electronic and Electrical Engineering,
Psychology, Social and Policy Science, Biology and Biochemistry, Chemistry, Maths,
Natural Sciences, Pharmacy and Pharmacology, Business Administration and
Accounting and Finance. 852 students completed the survey out of a possible 1703.

Areas that were highlighted in the survey are:

Age

“Gives us someone our age/around our age with a bit more experience of the
university” (Department for Social and Policy Sciences)

“Someone similar age to talk to” (School of Management)
In question 5 we asked, do you think the personal characteristics of your Peer Mentor can influence what you feel comfortable sharing with them. The results are displayed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No answer given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>330</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This may reflect some of the opinions shared above referring to the age of the Peer Mentor.

6. Risk of adverse impact on protected groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High impact</th>
<th>Medium impact</th>
<th>Low impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy/Maternity</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion/belief</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage/civil partnership</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Mitigating potential adverse impact

7. Conclusions and recommendations for amendments to the policy/practice.

Please give an outline of the key actions based on any gaps, challenges, priorities and opportunities you have identified.

The conclusions above based on the risk of adverse impact were determined from the feedback gathered. High impact was selected as these were the most common aspects highlighted and where we could identify new practice to be introduced. Low impact was selected for the aspects that didn’t appear to cause any risk from the feedback gathered. Finally, medium impact was selected for age as it didn’t appear a risk in the participation statistics but some qualitative data opposed this.

Disability

- The Student’s Union has recently changed the website to make it more accessible for students but it will be important to review the pages to ensure students are provided with alternative ways of accessing this information in areas where they may
congregate, such as through plasmas, lecture shout outs and posters. The Student’s Union are planning training to look at using alternative technologies to provide information.

- Training material and online resources will be made available for visually impaired students in a format that is accessible to screen readers, for example using PDF and Word formats.

- The Peer Support Team to ensure all new Peer Mentors are given an opportunity to disclose if they have any specific needs to ascertain whether we need to adjust activities accordingly.

- Include aspects of diversity in the training sessions to raise awareness.

- The Peer Support Co-ordinator will work with the Disability Advice Service to ensure that the Peer Mentors are aware of the Social Facilitation programme which is currently offered to students with Asperger’s Syndrome. This will ensure that Peer Mentors will be aware of the scheme and the particular needs of students using this scheme.

- Provide diversity information on Moodle to support Peer Mentors.

Gender

- Continue to monitor the gender split of Peer Mentors. If the pattern of more female volunteers continues then engagement strategies to encourage male students to volunteer as Peer Mentors will be considered.

Race/Ethnicity

- If trends continue, research why BAME students did or did not volunteer to become Peer Mentors, analyse the reasons given against the students’ ethnicity to explore why they did not volunteer.

- It is acknowledged that International students may face additional cultural adjustment issues when first studying here. The Peer Support co-ordinator will work with the International Student Advice Team to provide training for the LINC mentors. The Peer Support co-ordinator will also ensure that elements of cultural awareness and the difficulties that some international students can face will be addressed in training and on the moodle page.

- Continue to monitor the age of Peer Mentors in order to address the issue of mature students wishing to have mature student mentors. It may also be necessary to review potential reasons why mature students are unable to volunteer as mentors and adapt the scheme to enable this to happen.

- Research has shown that mature students are significantly more likely to withdraw from their programmes, therefore peer mentoring has a particularly important role to play in helping to reduce social isolation and retention of mature students.

General
- Respond to requests for specific mentoring needs (mature students requested a mature student mentoring scheme which was successful in one course)

University Staff

A need has been identified for University staff to have knowledge of the Peer Mentor Schemes which run in their departments. It would also be useful for those staff who are not directly connected with the schemes to have a working knowledge of how Peer Mentoring operates.

Recommendation

The Peer Support Co-ordinator will work with Student Services staff to ensure that up to date information on Peer Mentoring is available to all staff via the Student Services website. Thus ensuring that University staff are aware of the scheme and that it is aimed at the diverse student population.

8. Timescale for implementation of changes or introduction of new policy.

   September 2013 – Write an action plan
   September 2013 – June 2014 – implement changes

D. Publication

9. Final reporter:

   Oliver Schofield, Peer Support Coordinator

   Agreed by A. Wilson-Garner

10. Date:

    15/03/2013

11. Review date: