

Covid-19 – Week Four Check In Survey: Response from the Skills Centre

Covid-19: Bath Check In Survey 2020/21 Wk4

Review of Skills Centre feedback from the survey responses.

Overview

Overall, there were few comments in the survey that directly mentioned the Skills Centre, its activities or resources. However, two comments in the working well section did directly relate to the Skills Centre. One response indicated that MASH sessions were very useful, and another that the foreign language learning course was really good.

Despite the lack of direct mention of the Skills Centre, its activities or resources, there were a small number of student responses (29) to the question about suggestions on how we could improve that were interesting. These comments, while not always directly relating to skills development, did indicate a level of difficulty that students were experiencing that could benefit from developing new skills or ways of working. For example:

"The hardest thing I find is keeping track of when everything is, and keeping on top of the pre-recorded content as there is no set time to do it."

"The amount of prereading feels very compared to previous years. Deadlines for coursework so far seem to be very short given the workload."

"The amount of material to get through, I barely have time to make dinner most nights because I am constantly working. Since starting I haven't felt like there's been a moment where I have done all the work, despite constantly working. Feels like we've been given a bit much"

These examples suggest that students might find time management and reading/notetaking support beneficial.

Having reviewed the responses, the Skills Centre will take forward the development of resources under the following themes:

- Time management
- Reading and notetaking
- Group working
- Presentation skills
- Essay writing
- Revision

In addition to the above themes, support for Doctoral students was mentioned in relation to skills support and it was suggested that the University's extra-curricular offer is better communicated. Also, one respondent suggested that MASH should offer in-person support.

Actions.

The Skills Centre has already made some changes which will address issues noted related to themes that it will take forward and these are:

Re-promoting its online resources as part of the Skills & Employability week. These resources are available through the MySkills portal, and cover:

- [Getting ready for academic study](#)
- [Successful reflective writing](#)
- [Analysis of essay titles](#)
- [Essential essay writing](#)
- [Note-taking skills](#)
- [Reading and note-making](#)
- [Referencing and plagiarism](#)
- [Critical thinking skills](#)
- [Revision](#)

These resources will continue to be re-promoted to students.

In addition to the above, the Centre is currently trialling with students' time management resources and these will be more widely available shortly. During the remainder of Semester 1, the Centre will be developing resources on online group work, and presentation skills. However, it is anticipated that these will be available in Semester 2, due to staff workloads.

The Skills Centre is also rolling out eleven skills development resources to Doctoral students. These resources are:

- Structure of a doctoral thesis
- Writing a literature review: Structure and approach
- Writing your thesis: Using viva questions to guide your writing
- Writing your thesis: The introduction
- Writing your thesis: Methods and results
- Writing your thesis: Discussion and conclusions
- Thesis essentials: Paragraph construction
- Thesis essentials: Grammar
- Thesis essentials: Writing concisely
- Completing your thesis: The abstract
- Completing your thesis: Editing and proof-reading

The Doctoral College also provides a comprehensive professional development programme that covers a range of skills and delivered by multiple partners from within the University.

While it is fair to say that communications about the University's extra-curricular skills offer have not reached as many students as the Skills Centre would like, it has been communicated in a variety of ways. To build upon our communication plan, the Centre will speak with Student Services to see if we can feed into their direct communications with students, as well as continuing to promote the skills programme at frequent intervals.

With regards to the suggestion that MASH should offer in-person support, MASH in-person support started later than expected due to Perspex screens delivery times. MASH is proving a general in-person drop in daily apart from Wednesdays. Drop-ins are for 2 hours and 4 seats are available to book. MASH is also offering a range of remote support that can be accessed via the [website](#).

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