Message from Geoff Green

Since my last bulletin, we have been very busy across the Division. Notably we graduated 4,082 students in July; and we have responded to six sector consultations, which is a reflection of the amount of change going on across the sector. Thank you for all your hard work during the last academic year, and I hope you managed some kind of restful break over the summer period.

Of course, September brings the start of the new campus academic year, and we have a large number of new initiatives to help enhance the student experience at Leicester. Our new Student App “MyUoL” is now available to download; the new Student Services Centre in the CWB is now operational; and of course we are launching our Fabulous First Year initiative during welcome week.

From the start of the new academic year, Reflect (the University’s lecture capture system) will be widely available across the campus for our students and we also have a new Attendance Management System in place to better manage our record keeping and the support we offer to students. These are all exciting changes and you can find out more by visiting the Reflect website and the Attendance Management web pages. If you didn’t make it to one of the staff briefings, you can access our Reflect recording on our Transformation and Change web pages.

Thanks to all of you who provided some constructive suggestions following my last bulletin, a summary of which you can find elsewhere in the bulletin. Two things I am personally doing as a result, to aid communication, is hosting a termly lunch for all new staff joiners to the Division, and a monthly “coffee & conversation” session, when anyone can drop in and have a chat – the first of these sessions will be on the 29 September, 10am – 11am in my office (room 036 FJB).

I cannot finish without mentioning the improvements we have seen in the last NSS, with an overall improvement from 85% to 88% against Q22 Overall Satisfaction. It is important that we all continue to stay focused on student satisfaction as a key indicator of success. We have also had a successful year with our latest Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey (DLHE) which for our 2014/15 cohort showed that 93.8% of our students are working or studying six months after graduation - an increase of 0.6% on the previous year - with 75.2% of our students in graduate level employment or graduate level study – an improvement of 3.1% on the previous year. Thanks and well done to all those involved.
Key Developments

Curriculum Learning and Teaching Forum, June

The inaugural Curriculum, Learning and Teaching Forum took place on 15 June 2016. Over 40 departmental directors of learning and teaching and professional services colleagues attended the event which was led by Professor Jon Scott as PVC (Student Experience). Colleagues held wide ranging discussions regarding the challenges facing the University in the area of curriculum, learning and teaching and identified a number of aspirations for delivery of our University’s programmes, including strengthening the partnership between staff and students in learning design, the development of flexible learning and the creation of a dynamic digital environment for learning. The Forum also received a presentation from Professor Vincent Tong of UCL about their Connected Curriculum initiative which focused upon the integration and engagement of the student body in learning design: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/connected-curriculum

Contact: Andrew Petersen ap262@le.ac.uk

New Student Services Centre

Opening on Monday 12 September, the Student Services Centre brings together the student facing services provided by Student Welfare, Counselling and Wellbeing, Registry and Fees Payments, Unitemps and the Career Development Service into a convenient central campus location.

The Charles Wilson Building foyer and mezzanine has been redeveloped over the summer to create a highly visible and accessible central point where our students can access an excellent level of service, assistance and support. In addition, many staff associated with these services will be relocated to levels 5, 7 and 9.

Further information: http://www2.le.ac.uk/staff/transformation-and-change/new-student-services-centre

Contact: Richard Wilcock rhw7@leicester.ac.uk

Launch of SITS Glossary online

In response to a need to de-jargon a subject littered with 3- and 4- letter acronyms, the Planning Office have released a SITS Glossary online. This provides a quick look-up for commonly used terms relating to SITS, a key component of the Student Record System, and can be found here https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/studentrecord/student-records-system/sits-glossary

For any updates to definitions, or requests for additional terms to be added, please email reporting@le.ac.uk

Contact: Heather Pritchard hlp12@leicester.ac.uk

Enhanced Student and Wellbeing Provision

Student Counselling and Wellbeing are preparing for the new term, this is a particularly exciting time due to their move to the new Student Services Centre and new initiatives which they are introducing. The team have developed new psycho-educational workshops which will be rolled out to students across the campus at targeted times of the year, to help equip students to cope with the many demands of university life. Counselling and Wellbeing appointments will continue to be offered by the team and a new system will be introduced which will enhance the service’s aim of matching the students to the professional with the most appropriate skill set to meet their therapeutic needs.

Further information: http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/counselling http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/mental-wellbeing

Contact: Michael Macbean jmc2@leicester.ac.uk

Launch of the Academic Administration Calendar

The Registry have updated and improved the online Academic Administration Calendar, which went live on the first day of the new academic year. This contains information about corporate academic administration processes and dates in the current academic year which colleagues across the University need to be aware of.

Further information: http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/calendar

Contacts: Leanne Sowter or Darren Stringer regprojects@le.ac.uk
In the last bulletin I asked for your ideas as to how the University can become more agile, resilient and effective, particularly in relation to the NSS.

Thanks to those of you who have provided feedback; this has been considered by the divisional senior leadership team and is vital in helping us to make ongoing improvements. Below I have included a summary of feedback and how we have responded to this.

You Said...  
...We Did

A staff social committee to organise events/groups/fun stuff. I want to set one up for Registry/ FPO/DL Hubs but would be happy to extend across the Division.

Registry/Fees Payments Ofice/Distance Learning hubs have set up a social committee for their area. In addition, following successful events in February and September 2016, we would like to form a cross-divisional staff social committee, and it would be great to have representation from every service/office in the division. If you are interested in joining and/or chairing the committee, please let Sally Achurch know.

More support/instruction/directives for departments when implementing new processes to avoid 33 different ways being created.

There are several things we are doing here. Eleanor Jackson (Departmental Manager in Cardiovascular Sciences) is leading a project to create a Good Management Handbook for academic departments, which will include cycles of business across the whole University. This should help everyone understand what our major processes are, when they take place, and why we do them. We are also in the process of forming a new Student Communications Working Group to try and coordinate and develop a more consistent approach to student and student-related communications. Lastly, on the new process development front, there is no silver bullet, but the work of the SLC Programme is helping us take a more consistent approach.

The power of conversations in change. Can we use the concept of strategic conversations to talk about and build rationale for change - bringing staff with us e.g. reflect or pathways. Staff air fears and we have intelligence or mood and we might be able to tweak our approach.

Whilst there is no doubt still more we can do, a starting point to help with this are the Academic Registrar’s “coffee & conversation” sessions, new staff lunches, and all staff talks. Any other suggestions/practical solutions would be welcomed!

We become the “did you know“ university. Make us unusual and intriguing. Innovations could come from staff suggestions. Examples: Did you know that at Leicester they generate their own electricity from the treadmills/solar panels on all buildings/wind tunnels?, Did you know that at Leicester the students can choose how they want to learn? All classes are online as well as being offered as a lecture, Did you know that at Leicester the students choose how they want to be assessed, it isn’t all exams?

This is a great idea, and is being fed directly into our Fabulous First Year work, and also the work of the Student Communications Working Group. Over the next year we will be developing and implementing a new Student Engagement Strategy under the leadership of the new Associate Director for Student Experience, Raj Patel.

Active promotion of the purchase of additional annual leave (5 days).

This suggestion has been highlighted to our HR Division, who are actively exploring the possibility and feasibility of introducing such a scheme.

Review the annual leave policy to allow staff to take ¼ days leave.

It is already possible to grant a quarter day annual leave to staff, and operational managers are encouraged to enable this for staff where operationally feasible, as an aid to flexible working.

If you would like to provide feedback, please email acadregistrar@le.ac.uk, tell your line manager, share it on the SAS group in Yammer, write it up on the ideas board in room 035 FJB or put it in the suggestion box outside my office on the Ground Floor of FJB.