

taking the steer from the people who matter

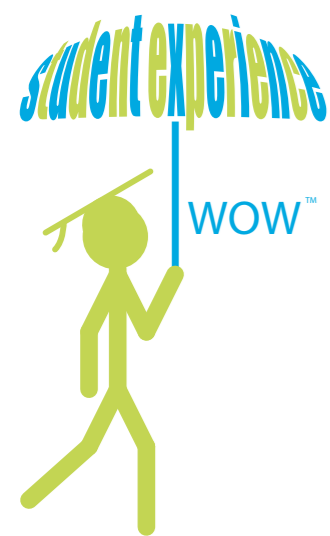
From the start of SERIG, staff and students have been consulted about their views. A project launch meeting was held in July 08 and at this meeting task team members identified their priority outcomes for the review. In October four focus groups were held with students and their desired outcomes in terms of service delivery were largely similar.

SERIG represents an opportunity for us to work together to ensure students are dealt with in an efficient, professional, effective manner - a manner they would expect from any customer-focused business.

Staff Views

The outcomes identified by staff at the launch of the project are:

- Working together for common goals
- Efficient integrated systems
- LJMU reputation
- 24/7 virtual world
- Standardised/consistent processes
- Adding value to student experience
- Working in successful organisation renowned for excellence
- Good place to work
- Fewer complaints/duplication
- Clear roles
- Effective communication
- I know what my role is
- I know why I do it
- I know where I fit in the organisation
- I know I am valued
- More ownership
- Better IT systems
- Student responsibility
- Determine performance indicators (for service level agreements, benefits realisation etc.)



The 'Student Experience umbrella' icon shows how the Steering Group envisages the Student Experience and its meaning to students

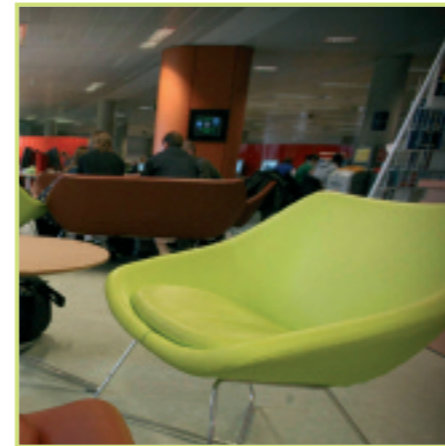
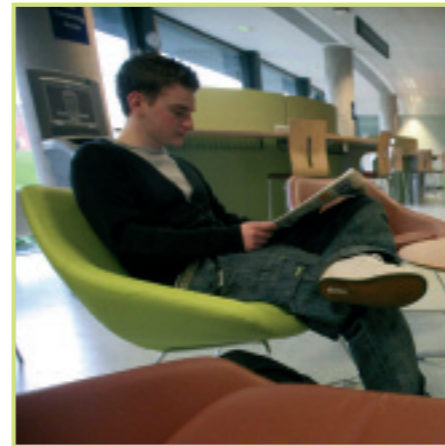
Student Views

Four student focus groups were held in October last year with LSU student representatives.

The overall responses demonstrated that students felt there was some inconsistency in student support across several areas. The main concerns were:

- Discrepancies between support for different levels/years of students
- Inconsistency in use of Blackboard as a support and teaching tool
- Discrepancies between support for disabled students
- Lack of clarity in the role of campus centres and school offices
- Confusing channels of communication – emails/tutors/blackboard/website

It is clear that there is agreement that there should be greater consistency and transparency around roles, procedures and processes and a recognition that student needs should be at the centre of everything we do.



the role of staff

SERIG has been two years in the planning and will become more tangible in its output from now until September 2009. There are elements of the programme that must be in place before wider implementation.

A project team has been mapping and tracking every separate process associated with an individual student to ensure that no function remains outstanding. The team is also mapping staff roles and responsibilities associated with each function to ensure that there is no duplication and that the process is seamless.

The role of staff

One of the most critical aspects of the change will be the transition to providing all generic student facing programme support from the centres.

In order to make the transition as effective as possible all student administration activities (i.e those previously carried out on the Campus centre front desks and in School/Faculty offices) will be based at the transaction desks in the centres. All learning support and reception/appointments services will be carried out at the welcome desk and will be staffed by LIS staff. This will be reviewed once the services are running.

Training will be provided to ensure that staff are able to carry out all activities taking place in the centres.

Timeline 2009

JANUARY TO MARCH

Structure of new centres to be approved

Detailed process maps to be signed off

Locations finalised

Training and development needs identified and agreed

APRIL TO SEPTEMBER

Faculty Admissions Hubs to be implemented

New centres to be launched

The new student service model will be in place by the beginning of Semester 1 2009

Communications

All communications and announcements concerning SERIG are archived on a dedicated website www.ljmu.ac.uk/serig

Executive responsibility for the SERIG Programme lies with Professor Diana Burton, Pro Vice-Chancellor.

Responsibility for leading the SERIG implementation lies with Maxine Melling, Director of Learning and Information Services.

A dedicated Communications Group has been established to provide local contacts in Schools and Service Teams. See website for details.

To raise any issues or to provide feedback on SERIG: serig@ljmu.ac.uk

SERIG newsletter

February 2009



dream ☁

plan ⊕

achieve 🏆

why us, why now?

What makes LJMU different? What will make a University stand out in the 21st century? Whilst students are looking for an academic qualification to make them stand out in the graduate jobs market, increasingly, it is also the quality of the University experience that will make a difference to potential students not only choosing a university, but staying the course and then remaining in touch after they finish.

Over the last two years, LJMU has taken radical steps to enhance the academic programme by embedding realistic graduate skills aligned with the world of work. Simultaneously, the University has also been quietly working towards improving and enhancing the quality of administrative services provided for students.

With students investing not only time and energy in their university education, it is vital that they receive value for money and experience an exceptional service from all of the underpinning administrative functions that are a necessary part of their education.



What is SERIG?

SERIG (Student Experience Review Implementation Group) refers to a number of internal reviews that have taken place looking at how the University manages and delivers the administration of the student experience. In May 2008 the final SERIG report, which contained ten recommendations for change to student administration, was approved by the Vice-Chancellor. A programme of work was put into place in order to implement these recommendations – with an anticipated implementation period of approximately 18 months.

SERIG aims to deliver:

Services that are:

- accessible
- student demand led
- flexible
- responsive, prompt, efficient
- consistent

Processes that are:

- lean
- able to cope with complexity
- robust
- accurate

Benefits

The main benefit from SERIG is the improvement of services to students, however, savings will also arise from

reducing duplication across the University and stream lining processes. It has never been the intention of this review to make immediate savings on staff costs and the Vice Chancellor has given a commitment that there will be no loss of employment as a result of the SERIG implementation.

Changes to service delivery

After implementation of SERIG all generic student facing support will be provided from three campus based centres (based in the existing Learning Resource Centres – Aldham Roberts at Mount Pleasant, Avril Roberts at Tithebarn Street and IM Marsh). Administrative support in the Faculties will either be specialised and linked to programmes (e.g. placements, field work) or will be in support of academic staff.

The campus based centres will include social learning zones following the very successful piloting of this development at the Avril Roberts Centre. In addition, students will be able to access library and IT help, finance support, welfare and counselling, careers guidance and employability support, as well as being able to hand in coursework – all in the same place.

With funding already in place for a major refurbishment for the Aldham Roberts LRC, this will provide the blueprint for the physical representation of this new concept in student support.

First impressions matter. A student's first experience of dealing with LJMU should reassure them that their investment in us will afford them access to an efficient, professional service where their needs are foremost in the planning of our processes and procedures.

admissions... a model of efficiency

The challenge for SERIG was to develop a system for admissions that would ensure standardisation of procedures across the University whilst retaining the specialist expertise that can necessarily only come from staff based within a particular faculty.

The model which has been agreed strikes this balance. Admissions staff will be based at one of six faculty hubs. They will be line-managed within the faculty and procedures will be set and monitored by Student Recruitment to ensure consistency across all areas. This is not a leap into the unknown. Three faculties, Science; Education, Community and Leisure and Health have already adopted this structure and have found it to be effective.

In essence, this ensures that students benefit from being dealt with in a way which has been carefully planned and developed with their needs in mind, but also benefit from the specialist knowledge within their own faculty which is so important for a well-rounded university experience.

This change will be supported by a regular and mandatory programme of staff development involving admissions staff in all faculties working together to adopt standard procedures and share best practice. An Admissions Group will be formed, chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Delivery, to ensure consistency and transparency of admissions practice, in keeping with national sector requirements. This group will report annually to the Quality and Standards Committee.

A further recommendation of SERIG is that international admissions staff should be transferred to the Student Recruitment and Widening Access team. A separate exercise is currently taking place to process map their activity and this will look, in particular, at interaction with the faculty admissions hubs.

Tim Sellars, Admissions Manager for the Faculty of Science commented: "We have successfully adopted the admissions model in the Faculty of Science. We have found it allows us to work together in a productive team environment and gives greater flexibility in managing staff cover. One of the great strengths of the model is that communications are very much targeted at applicants."



new centres



Description of Centres

The Centres house all services associated with learning and information support, as well as student facing services for welfare and counselling, enrolment, administration and programme support, employability and careers. The ground floor of the centres is designed specifically for students, ensuring that they can get all the support that they need to pursue their studies as well as social learning space. The centres will have expert reception staff who will be continually available to direct and advise students, and refer them to one of the many expert members of staff operating from the centre. Close links will be maintained with faculties to ensure that services are directly informed by academic programmes.



Key concepts

Everything under one roof – the students' immediate support needs to be housed within a single space, to include Finance, Welfare, Counselling, IT support, e-learning support, access to technology, Library services, Campus centre services, etc.

Student centred – the focus is very much on convenience for the student and the holistic student support experience. Support services will be delivered in a joined up way, in collaboration with faculties and relevant central services.

Seamless student experience – the centres will offer a blend of services, facilities and resources. Students do not need to discern one team of staff from another. Welcome team staff, along with LIS and Student Services professional and para-professional staff will provide services, with referrals made to appropriate experts where necessary.

Flexible learning space – practical and versatile spaces throughout the centres. The spaces need to be owned by the students, whilst at the same time being of a multi-purpose nature when consultation with staff is required. Students will be able to find the appropriate learning space to suit their study requirements and learning styles. Bookable student seminar rooms, flexible and social learning spaces, group study areas, quiet study areas and PC workstations will all be available.

Technology rich – up-to-date, fit for purpose technologies will be available for learning throughout the centre. Mobile learning through the use of wireless laptops and handheld learning devices will be encouraged. Student spaces will be equipped with appropriate learning technologies (i.e interactive whiteboard/display screens in seminar rooms, for students to make use of).

Knowledgeable staff – welcome staff will form a reception team, whose role is to direct and guide students to the facilities, services and resources that they require. Referrals and appointments with appropriate staff will be made from the welcome area. Expert professional and para-professional staff will all be based within the new centre and timetabled for availability to students. Similarly, routine student support can be provided through increased roving.

Aldham Roberts Centre

In line with long-standing plans to refurbish the Aldham Roberts LRC, the first Centre will open in Mount Pleasant. This is an enormous undertaking and the timeline for completion is outlined below.

May – October 2009

PLEASE NOTE that during the construction and refurbishment phase the Aldham Roberts LRC and Aquinas Building will be closed.

Essential service arrangements

Student Welfare Services

February – October

Relocation to 5th Floor, Clarence Street

Campus Centre Services

May – July

Relocation to John Foster IT Suite

August – October

Relocation to Clarence Street

*Enrolment activities to take place at Clarence Street and Mount Pleasant Upper Gym

LRC

All library services will move from the Aldham Roberts Centre from 15th May with no access to the LRC and the Aquinas Building until October 2009.

Essential texts and staff moving to Avril Roberts with local arrangements in place for use of University of Liverpool library.

Full and further details about the essential service arrangements are available on the University website.