

MEETING OF STUDENT PANEL
SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN AND DECISIONS TO BE COMMUNICATED

Date of Meeting	15 June 2010	Next Meeting	7 December 2010
-----------------	--------------	--------------	-----------------

	ACTION/DECISIONS	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
1.	<p><u>Welcome and previous action points</u></p> <p>Chair told panel he would hand his position as chairman to other student governor in 2010/11. The panel agreed with the handover. Andrew will stay a member of the student panel next year.</p> <p><u>Fundraising</u></p> <p>Andrew suggested that the discussion about how to raise funds should be continued on Moodle. Anyone who needed assistance with accessing Moodle could get in touch with Saskia.</p>		
2.	<p><u>Update on Mojo café</u></p> <p>Avenance operations manager Michael Ricketts and Acting café manager Luis Lopes were present to update the panel on recent developments in the café. MR told the panel that Avenance regarded City lit students not as a captive audience, but tried to run a competitive business in a highly competitive market. Avenance looked for a manager who would bring innovation to the café. He encouraged students to give positive and negative feedback to Avenance. Negative feedback had helped to make recent changes to management and food offer. It had also brought about customer service training of café staff. Positive feedback would help Avenance find out what kinds of products students wished to see on offer in the cafeteria. Some panel members had found that feedback cards had leading questions encouraging solely positive feedback; Michael said these would be amended.</p> <p>Michael told students that café would offer more meal deals in the future, loyalty schemes and food or cake prepared onsite. The current chef was very good and prepared homemade food where possible. He encouraged students to bring in recipes for dishes that students wanted to see on offer in the café. The coffee pod would continue beyond its trial period as it had proved successful and would offer sandwiches in future. Panel members asked for the hot drinks loyalty card to continue and the vegetarian meal option to be continued. The vending machines on 2nd and 4th floor were new and serving better quality hot drinks. The Principal reiterated that students would need to tell City Lit staff if they had any negative experiences. These would definitely be dealt with.</p> <p>Michael Ricketts told students he would return to update the panel next year if requested.</p>		
3.	<p><u>Mojo café – extended closing times on Saturdays</u></p>		

	<p>A panel member requested that the café opening times on Saturdays were extended. Course breaks on Saturdays were often after the café had closed, so students had to leave the building to buy food. The Principal told the panel that the building was closing at 5pm and that it was not economically viable to extend opening times of the building and the café.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Nick would send out an email to all tutors teaching on a Saturday, reminding them to schedule breaks within the café opening time.</p>	NM	18 June
4.	<p><u>Student survey outcomes</u></p> <p>The Head of Marketing, presented outcomes of the student survey to the panel. City Lit had received over a thousand responses to the survey, whose participants had been randomly picked. 75% of students had said they found services satisfactory or better. As a result of students' responses City Lit staff would now take further action on five critical areas, which were communications, online enrolment processes, course descriptions, interviews/auditions and student feedback. Disabled students were overall less satisfied with City Lit services so their responses would be closely analysed, in order to address issues these students had raised. Liora asked the panel if they wished to raise any other issues. A panel member raised concern that some ethnic groups were underrepresented in the survey. Liora told panel that City Lit was currently looking at how to get back more feedback from underrepresented groups. With regards to disability, some surveyed students had not declared their disability when studying at City Lit. Nick mentioned that questions on the enrolment form had been re-phrased for this reason, but that some students did not want to declare their disability and they did not have to.</p> <p><u>Comments on interviews/auditions:</u></p> <p>A panel member suggested to introduce a voucher system for students who had passed a course level. This would allow them to circumvent interviews, but progress straight to the next level.</p> <p>Another student had attended interviews in Drama and found them very helpful to decide how to build a course portfolio, the interviews were partially an advice session which had been excellent.</p> <p>Was there any way of standardising class levels between different colleges in London? Nick agreed it would give flexibility to students, but was very difficult to organise.</p> <p>A panel member mentioned that in her class, starting points of students were very diverse. This would hinder more advanced students in their progression. The less advanced students had joined from a waiting list. In these cases bridging courses should be introduced to bring such students up to speed.</p> <p>The Music auditions could be better organised: students had to queue up by means of a ticketing</p>		

	<p>system for two hours or more. Why could there not be time slots that were allocated to students before the day of the audition. This could be done by telephone or email.</p> <p>Students should also be made aware that in some programme areas, they could attend interviews throughout the whole year and queues were shorter then.</p> <p><u>Comments on communications:</u></p> <p>Students said their experiences were overall positive, but sometimes they found it difficult to get hold of departmental staff. They would leave a message on the departmental voicemail and it would take a few days to be responded to or they would not receive any response. Some students in City Lit were also unsure which department was responsible for them, so this would need to be communicated better. Nick told the panel that each department had one administrative staff member, but when lines were busy during enrolments, all staff would have to respond to calls.</p> <p>Where would students find the departmental telephone numbers? They were printed in the prospectus and in the student guide. A student suggested to create a purse-size card with all vital phone numbers on it.</p> <p><u>Comments on online enrolment:</u></p> <p>Liora mentioned that students on concessionary fees could now enrol online. They could bring in written proof for concession two weeks after their enrolment. City Lit was also currently addressing how students could retrieve their password if they had forgotten it. Another student suggested to create priority places on progression courses for students who had completed lower level courses. Peter told students that City Lit would not want to introduce this, as it could disadvantage new students from getting onto courses.</p> <p>Liora mentioned that the website now allowed students to leave online reviews of courses.</p>		
5.	<p><u>Involvement of student panel in 'tell us what you think' event</u></p> <p>Nick explained that City Lit was planning to run a feedback event that could involve student panel members. Students could post anonymous feedback or discuss concerns with the student panel. Would members be interested to get involved?</p> <p>Most members wanted to get involved and suggested to extend the event to a whole week as it would enable City Lit to reach different student groups. The event could possibly be held in the café and students could be offered free coffee/tea and biscuits. Saskia would send panel members some dates to choose from. Other sites such as Stukeley Street should also be involved where possible.</p> <p><u>Action:</u></p> <p>Saskia to send to panel members dates and time slots to chose from via email and Moodle.</p>	SW	1 August

	<p><u>Other feedback channels</u> Another option was to hand students short questionnaires while they were queuing for enrolments. Peter mentioned that City Lit had sent emails to students who had withdrawn from courses. Most responses were that students dropped out for work or other personal reasons. But some students had also given useful feedback which City Lit would now analyse.</p>		
6.	<p><u>Required level of English on non-accredited courses</u> A student panel member had encountered several students on courses who had not the required level of English. They would constantly struggle with what the tutor said and tutors would often have to give them extra support which would hold up progress of the class. Was there any means of testing students' level of English before they came on a course? Peter told students that course outlines all had skills statements now which would list the level of literacy and numeracy skills that students needed to embark on a course. City Lit was working towards making this system more robust. Some programme areas encouraged students with diverse skills levels to join their courses, such as Counselling. Nick added that tutors should normally recommend students to transfer to a bridging or lower level course who were not ready for the level they wanted to study at. City Lit had Skills for Life courses, such as ESOL (English for speakers of other languages). A student suggested to add these courses, e.g. <i>Brush up your grammar</i>, to the course outline to make it clearer to students which support courses were available. A student on the Foundation Arts course said that all students had had a skills assessment at the beginning of their courses. This had been very helpful to all starting the courses. Peter suggested to invite Skills for Life Programme Manager to the next meeting in December who was responsible for skills for life. She could discuss this further with the panel.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Saskia to invite Skills for Life Programme Manager to December meeting to talk about skills screenings.</p>	SW	1 July
7.	<p><u>Student progression into employment</u> A City Lit student had send an email to the student panel inbox. He suggested to track progression of City Lit students into employment and to record their progress and success systematically. This could also help connecting City Lit alumni stronger to their former college. Peter told students that City Lit would gather this data were possible. Some departments had a log of where students were moving to after they had completed an accredited course. Students also stayed in touch to let City Lit know of their successes. With non-accredited courses, this would be followed up only through the course evaluation form. Students should write to Marketing if they wanted to share any successes. City Lit also followed their students' success</p>		

	on the web now.		
8.	<p><u>Course outlines – student panel’s suggestions</u></p> <p>One member said that his outline was wrong, it said that the group would choose a play that would be studied, when in fact the tutor had chosen the play before the course.</p> <p>It seemed a lot of tutors negotiated the course outline at the start of the course with their group, and this seemed like good practice. But this could also raise students’ complaints who wanted to study what the outline said.</p> <p>Could City Lit create a course guide for each course in pdf-format which would go on the website. This could be printed out by students. Peter said that City Lit would try and email the course outline to all students in the future after they enrolled. Introductory events for courses also helped immensely. These were held for longer accredited courses. Moodle could also be involved more strongly, which would enable students to access documents electronically.</p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions should be on the website, if possible for each department or course. On the web, there could be a question at the bottom of course outline to find out if information was useful to reader.</p> <p>A Foundation Art student mentioned that the disciplines available should be explained to students as early as possible. This would avoid confusion at a later stage.</p>		
9.	<p><u>Next year – meeting dates</u></p> <p>In the next year, the student panel would meet on 7 December 2010, 5 April 2011, 14 June 2011.</p> <p>Andrew asked panel members who wanted to leave the panel to let Saskia know. Saskia would assume that all others would want to continue, providing they were still attending courses in the next academic year. The chairman as well as Peter and Nick thanked all students for their attendance and constructive feedback throughout the year.</p>		