

Student Advisory Panels Student Success and Student Co-Production

Joanne McKenna – Student Success Officer

What are the Student Advisory Panels?

Student Advisory Panels provide a platform for EH students to offer their **feedback, ideas and opinions** on the **support and services** EH offers to its **diverse student body** across the student lifecycle.

This feedback helps steer the support we offer to our students, and in some instances, to **collaborate** on projects with us.

SAP History and Growth

First convened in 2020/21 with one off Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Panel in response to Black Lives Matter movement.

Expanded to six panels in 2023/24 with 39 panel members currently trained and two more training sessions taking place in January.

Student Advisory Panels:

- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students
- Care Leaver, Care Experienced and Estranged Students
- Disabled Students
- First Generation Students
- Mature Students
- Intersectional Panels

SAP Purpose

To address attainment and continuation gaps that are complex and the result of a range of intersecting factors

We wanted to be student led and to go beyond simply consulting with our students, we wanted to engage with them

APP and Student Voice

EH wants to hear student **feedback, ideas and opinions** on how we can **shape our support for students** from widening participation backgrounds, so that we can **collaborate together** to make sure the services and support we offer through our APP is built upon student voice

OfS also recommend that mechanisms are put in place to ‘**seek a representative view from different sections of the student body**’ on APP activities. Our SAP’s are an established way in which we can do this.

How was it promoted / how do students apply to be a member?

- Joint promo with other EH job opportunities (Student Guides, TAP etc)
- Student Life Arch / Welcome Weekend / Student Life - Careers Portal / SU Newsletter / Promoted to existing members and THRIVE Members
- Online application form - Qs - Why do you want to join this panel? Using real life, personal examples, please explain what skills and attributes you can you bring to the role?

Student Benefits from Panel Attendance

Paid £11.58 per hour (plus a 12.07% uplift as you do not get sick pay or annual leave)

Meet and make connections with other people with similar lived experience

The offer of optional additional ways in which students can get involved in this work, including further paid opportunities.

Great CV Material

Attend end of year celebration

Panel Member Training

- Held online and virtually – 1-1.5 hours
- Covered Who, What, Why, APP, how to apply, co-produced Code of Conduct , How actions are shared / accountability, evaluation, changes, benefits, achievements
- Attendance was compulsory, students paid same rate of pay as panel attendance

How students sign up for Panel meetings / Pay

Panel Dates are fixed for the year, 5 intersectional panels and 2 of each individual panel.

Students email to request to attend – reduce barriers.

Places on panels are limited so allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Priority to attend given to those who haven't attended before to ensure equality of opportunity.

Aim to provide opportunity to attend a minimum of three panel meetings per academic year, subject to demand.

What happens at a panel meeting?

Panels relatively informal and friendly to encourage open discussion and dialogue between staff and students.

Panel meetings led like a focus group discussion, moderated by Joanne McKenna, Student Success Officer.

Panel meetings are approximately 1.5 hours, typically 2 agenda items, allowing 30 minutes for each item.

Hybrid meetings, students encouraged to attend in person were possible. Those joining us on Teams are required to have their cameras on, and to actively contribute to be paid for their time.

How are the points raised at a panel acted upon?

Evaluation Co-ordinator will summarise a list of actions and suggestions during the meeting.

These will be circulated to the guest speaker to take away and act upon

All of the actions that arise from the panels are captured in a formal log which is shared with key stakeholders at the university.

Students will be kept informed about the progress of actions via a dedicated “You said, we did” webpage

Co-Produced Panel Expectations

We have worked with our Panel members to co-develop this Code of Conduct to that outlines mutually agreed expectations for all Panel members. Whilst we take an informal approach to our Panel meetings, it is important that we're all aware of these expected ways of working together.

Examples below;

- Please give notice if you cannot attend a panel meeting, and please arrive on time.
- Please don't interrupt or speak over other panel members
- There are no right or wrong answers, and no idea is a bad idea
- Be considerate of others' experiences, opinions and views
- If attending online, demonstrate respectful virtual behaviours- for example please have your camera on and actively participate in panel, put your virtual hand up to talk, and have no background distractions.
- Keep panel discussions confidential.

Panel Evaluation

- Baseline Survey
- End of Year Survey
- Theme Analysis of discussion
- Analysis of Actions
- Workshop Style discussion of highlights of year and improvements for next year

Panel Evaluation

Below are a small selection of quotes current and previous panel members have left in their surveys.

- *“I liked the ability to help change things for other students. it was very fulfilling. Thank you.”*
- *“I feel really proud to have been part of the panels this year.”*
- *“[I enjoyed] meeting people and having important conversations.”*
- *“[I] felt like people actually cared about what I was saying and putting things into actions to show that I was being listened to.”*

Future Change and Growth

- No longer hybrid – face to face only
- Earlier recruitment cycle – From March Onwards
- Fixed Panel Dates

Challenges

- Hybrid Panels
- Staff Attendees Following Expectations
- Student Expectations – line between fun / professional

Panel Achievements

- ✓ Developing a Race, Ethnicity and Religion staff training toolkit- with students reviewing the toolkits content and featuring in the training videos discussing their experiences
- ✓ Took part in a listening workshop with the Pro-Vice Chancellor around the experiences of Care Leaver, Care Experienced and Estranged Students
- ✓ Supported in the planning and design of WP On-Course / Access Support Programmes
- ✓ Reviewing Black History Month Celebrations, with panel members volunteering to be advisors to the Black History Month Committee

Panel Member Testimony

Adult Nursing student Akosua Poku said: “I joined the panel to make great changes to the lives of both prospective and current students. My ambition for the panel is to influence decisions and changes that will lead to the satisfaction of all students, particularly for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups.”



Lily-Joy Lancashire, a member of the Care Experienced and Estranged Panel shared; “My ambition for the panel is to raise more awareness and help Edge Hill be a safe place for students from a care background and estranged students. You’re never alone as a student here, there is always someone there to help. And whether it is the panel or your friends, as long as you reach out and try and get that help, you are not alone.”

Group Exercises



Breakout Groups

- How do you gain feedback from your current WP students and how do you respond to this feedback?
- How do you ensure feedback from students is acted upon, what are the mechanisms for accountability?
- Do you have opportunities for current students to collaborate on Widening Participation Initiatives?
- How do you manage the blurred lines of success work, when much of the 'doing' sits outside of central WP team?