

Student Disability Survey March 2019

Introduction:

A brief disability survey was conducted with students in the chancellors Mall outside the student centre in March 2019 to give an overview of students' perceptions of the disability service. Students were selected randomly from passing traffic in the Mall at that time so are likely to be a representative sample of students at the university.

Results.

The raw data for students' responses is given below.

1. Do you know about the disability service?	Yes 59	No 41
2. Do you have a disability?	Yes 19	No 81
3. Would you use the service, if you were aware of it?	Yes 70	No 28 Unsure 2
4. Do you know where the service is located?	Yes 32	No 68
5. If you are aware of the service, how did you find out the service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Received a Disability information pack e-mail 8 ○ Support Staff 17 	N/A 43

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Centre 21 ○ Life lounge 7 ○ Academic Tutor 5 ○ Phoned University 1 ○ Fellow Student 8 ○ Open Day 12 ○ Other, please say: Moodle 1 This survey 1 Past study 1 	
6. How would you prefer to be contacted by the service, if you had disclosed a disability?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E-mail 60 ○ Telephone 16 ○ SMS Text 17 ○ Fax ○ Letter 8 ○ Other, please say: 	N/A 22
7. How could we make our service more visible and accessible to students?		

Analysis:

1) Do you know about the disability service?

Over half of students were aware of the Disability service which is a favourable result considering only 15% of students at the university have disclosed a disability. Improvements certainly could be made to support student's awareness of the service. The disability service has a presence in the Mall on open days and other university events such as the mental health days and

similar events such as fresher's week. Some form of presence is embedded within university course attendance would improve student awareness of the service.

2) Do you have a disability?

Approximately 20% of students polled on the day noted that they have a disability. This is slightly higher than the 15% of students who have officially disclosed to the university. This could be an insignificant discrepancy due to the small sample size of 100 students or could be indicative of a small proportion (5%) of students who have not disclosed their disability to the university. Improvements in opportunities to disclose disabilities would improve this difference if indeed one exists.

3) Would you use the service, if you were aware of it?

Around 70% of students polled stated they would be comfortable using the disability service, which is positive considering only 15% of students at the university have a disclosed disability. Unfortunately, nearly 30% of students said they would not use the service. It was unclear if this was due to their perceiving they did not need to use the service or if this was due to their feeling uncomfortable using the service. Opportunities exist here to try to improve student's perception of accessing the disability service.

4) Do you know where the service is located?

Only 30% of respondents were aware of the location of the disability service. We can look at our literature and leaflets to check that our location is clearly displayed there. In addition, the disability service can look to display their banners on a more regular basis in the student centre.

5) If you are aware of the service, how did you find out the service?

Methods of finding out about the services was spread across a range of means, although the most often methods included support staff and the student centre followed by open days and disability pack being sent out by email. This suggests that signposting within the university is working well for students being referred to speak to university disability services. Also, our open day presence is a significant method of reaching out to our students. When students have disclosed to the disability service we send out an introductory 'Disability pack email' to ask them to make an appointment with the service and this is certainly another significant means by which students are able to be

aware of, and begin to access support with us. Other less well-represented mediums included the student Moodle system, which may be helpful.

6) How would you prefer to be contacted by the service, if you had disclosed a disability?

Far and above the most preferred method of communication for students from the disability services was via email. This also represents the most frequent means by which students actually do correspond with the service. Telephone and text was also preferred by a number of students (up to 30% combined) which demonstrates a need for a variety of means of communication to students. We do use telephone appointments and text reminders for appointments although due to the nature of texts the service usually send emails for any longer messages. Certainly, it brings up the question of whether increasing our focus upon text as a means of communication would be helpful.

7) How could we make our service more visible and accessible to students?

A selection of suggestions were made by students which included use of posters, adverts, sending emails, open awareness table (like SU), smaller waiting list for life lounge, more signs, more dogs, social media, talk more, signpost, telling students at induction, by text, more awareness, visible, workshops, flyers, brighter signage, student portal, website, campaigns, advice, publicity and presentation in class at induction.

As can be seen suggestions such as posters, emails, awareness tables, website are all things that are currently being engaged with by disability services in order to increase awareness. Strangely enough, the suggestion for more dogs has actually been put in place recently with the addition of Ali, Zara's sibling as a pets as therapy dog! Certainly more focus upon presence of the disability team in the Mall and events will be helpful.

Conclusion

The survey brought up some useful information in relation to our visibility to students and methods for improving it, which might be increasing our presence in the Mall, at student induction talks and on Moodle systems.