



## Evaluating Efficacy of Student Support Services

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### Workshop overview



- AMOSSHE
- Case study – the University of Sheffield
- The VIP approach to evaluating efficacy
- What's the point?
- The AMOSSHE VIP toolkit
  
- Practical exercises

(overlap with keynote presentation)

## Exercises



- An evaluation “system” - compare & contrast
- Planning an impact evaluation (VIP)
- Assessing the value of your service (inspired by VIP)
- Benchmarking your benchmarking
  
- Barriers and solutions
- “So What”?



## What is AMOSSHE?



THE UK STUDENT SERVICES ORGANISATION

- We inform and support the leaders of student services
- We represent, advocate for, and promote the student experience
- We promote student well being, retention, progression and achievement

## Student services include...

- Careers/employability
- Financial support
- International students
- Religion/belief
- Legal compliance
- Health
- Mental health
- Counselling
- Child care
- Accommodation
- Learning skills
- Mentoring



...and more besides **(the whole student experience)**

## The University of Sheffield

- Founded in 1905
- Arts, Science, Engineering, Social Sciences, Medicine
- League Tables
- 25,000 students
- 6000 international



## Student Services Department



- “Student Journey”
  - Recruitment & Admissions
  - Learning & Teaching services
  - Student Support
- Nearly 400 staff
- One-stop shop (“SSiD”)



## Evaluation case study

[www.shef.ac.uk/ssd/improvement](http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssd/improvement)



### Service Improvement Team

- Core team & network of ‘ambassadors’
- Service level agreements & Professional Services evaluation criteria
- Inventory of monitoring, evaluation, benchmarking
- Customer care policy (& behavioural guidance)
- Structured review/action plan process
- Holistic evaluation/service value
- External market research
- “You said, we did” website
- Comprehensive evaluation ‘system’



## Activity



- How does your own approach compare?
- What works, what doesn't?
- What developments are you planning?



## Understanding the Value and Impact of Services that Support Students



or the Value and Impact project

or VIP

## The VIP approach



- “Holistic evaluation”
- Not monitoring (activity counting)
- Not satisfaction/feedback measurement
- Inclusive typology of assessment/evaluation
  - Learning
  - Retention
  - Inclusion/exclusion?
  - Cost effectiveness
- Project and pilots 2010-11
- Non-prescriptive ‘toolkit’ - range of tools

## What’s the point?



- sustainability (£££)
- professional practice
- service improvement

## Toolkit overview



- **Getting started** – planning, who to involve, skills required, timing/timescale, budget, focus, evaluation method/s, data collection, assessment instruments
- **Evaluating impact** – objectives, outputs, intended outcomes, impact indicators, data sources
- **Evaluating value for money** – objectives, inputs/costs, outputs, intended outcomes, value indicators, value for money judgement
- **Support materials**- data collection, ethics, examples, templates

13

## Online toolkit

<http://www.amosse.org/vip>



## Activity



- Planning an impact evaluation
- Using the VIP toolkit
- Realistic context/scenarios?



## Value & Value for Money



- **Value** can be both qualitative and quantitative. In qualitative terms it is the regard, importance, worth, or usefulness that something is held to deserve. In quantitative terms, it is the material or monetary worth of something, and the worth in terms of its cost.
- **Value for money** not only measures the cost of goods and services but also takes account of the **mix** of cost with quality, resource use, fitness for purpose and timeliness to judge whether or not, together, they constitute good value.

(Ref Audit Commission, 2009)



## Some Service Value Criteria



- Service usage data
- Fit with corporate objectives
- Reputation/esteem measures
- Customer feedback
- Innovation and project success
- New ways of working
- Income generation activity
- Partnerships/shared services
- Benchmarking
- Risk analysis

Quality

Innovation

Customer

Financial

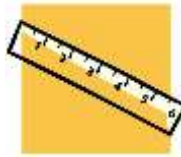
## Activity



- Service value template (inspired by VIP)
- Your own service
- Evidence to hand?



## Benchmarking your benchmarking



1. Active participation in relevant professional associations, networks, user groups.
2. Virtual benchmarking via mailbases and discussion groups.
3. Use of materials and resources produced by sector/professional agencies.
4. Benchmarking as a routine part of any service review exercise/project.
5. Appropriate links to relevant academic programmes/use of research sources.
6. Use of service evaluations like ISB which provide benchmarking data/comparisons.
7. Informal networking with peers, both in UK and overseas.
8. Use of quantitative KPIs (eg those published by statutory agencies).
9. Inward and outward visits to share (good) practice.
10. Use of external quality mark/accreditation systems (formal and informal).
11. Involvement in national projects (eg via professional associations).
12. Formal professional registration at individual (practitioner) level.
13. Internal 'benchmarking' to encourage consistency/improvement in service standards.
14. Input from 'external examiner'/critical friend/external adviser (and performing this role elsewhere).
15. Advisory 'board' arrangements including relevant external input.

## Activity



- Quick paired reflection
- Reasonableness test



## Plenary activity



### Implementation barriers & solutions

- (mis)understanding
- “Hearts and minds”
- Staff development
- Resources
- MFS



## Activity



# So What?





## **Value and Impact of Student Services (VIP)**

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