

Student Support Redesign Meeting Summary

Chair: Edward Peck, HE Student Support Champion

Date/time: 7 November, 10:00-11:30

Agenda:

Item	Topic	Lead
1	Welcome and introduction	Edward Peck
2	Student Needs Framework – purpose, design, and development	Juliette Morgan
3	Using the Framework in practice (case studies)	Ben McCarthy and Juliette Morgan
4	Discussion	Participants
5	Close	Edward Peck

Welcome and introduction:

- Edward Peck welcomed participants and provided an overview of the strategic context in which the Student Support Redesign project had been developed. Edward outlined the key objectives of the meeting, which included resolving outstanding issues with the Framework, and understanding how its utility could be improved.

Student-needs framework:

- Juliette Morgan (AdvanceHE) provided a short summary of the Student Needs Framework's (SNF) purpose and development journey. This included an overview of how the Framework had been used within HEP settings, as well as feedback gained from HEPs and AdvanceHE networks on the Framework.

Case studies:

- Ben McCarthy (HE Student Support Champion Team) summarised the approach adopted by Nottingham Trent University in using the SNF. This included development of an Intervention Matrix where support delivered by the University could be mapped against the 10 needs in the SNF and evaluated based on evidence and efficacy. This, in turn, enabled the University to identify areas for improvement. Ben highlighted several reflections (see the slide deck for an overview of these).
- Juliette Morgan (AdvanceHE) summarised the approach taken at AdvanceHE, where support was provided to its HEP members to help them to contextualise and use the SNF within their local settings. This included HEPs completing a self-assessed gap analysis to identify the extent to which they were meeting the 10 student needs and thus where improvements could be made.

Discussion:

- Attendees valued the comprehensiveness of the SNF and its requirement for HEPs to consider the whole range of support (e.g., beyond traditional foci such as disability and wellbeing). The SNF encourages HEPs to consider student support redesign across institutional boundaries which may help to break down silos of service delivery.
- The topic of students having 'needs' was raised. Some attendees thought that this suggested a deficit approach where the SNF assumes students have challenges that HEPs must take responsibility to fix. Rather, the role of the SNF should be to support HEPs to enable student success and remove barriers to support.
- Attendees agreed that more work is needed to understand how the 10 student needs might manifest in different local contexts, and thus how the SNF could be applied most effectively in different HEPs. However, there was acknowledgement that the existing SNF is flexible and could be moulded to suit local contexts (e.g., by changing the way the 10 needs are formulated to better reflect student or institutional characteristics). In addition, it was suggested that the SNF could be mapped against student lifecycles, and in doing so it could be aligned more closely to HEPs' internal structures and processes.
- Attendees wanted more clarity on which colleagues might be expected to lead or take part in SNF-related activity. It was noted that elements of the SNF are applicable to both professional service and academic colleagues, as well as senior colleagues in a strategic service redesign role.
- Attendees recognised that student support redesign can provide an opportunity to clarify the role of HEPs and set expectations with students (and others) on the types of support that a HEP is committed/ is not committed to delivering. This may be particularly apparent where HEPs may have overreached (e.g., on mental health).
- Attendees agreed that the SNF should be considered against the wider backdrop of other charters, frameworks, and policy developments. Where possible, the SNF should be mapped against these to enable HEPs to understand where and how the SNF aligns. Differentiation should be made between those things that HEPs must engage with (e.g., OfS conditions) and those things that HEPs may choose to engage with (e.g., University Mental Health Charter or Mental Health Taskforce outputs). Case studies on how the SNF may align and support these activities could be helpful.
- The role of student engagement was discussed. It was agreed that students should play a central role in how the SNF is applied within HEPs to inform service design and delivery; this could include student involvement with mapping interventions or supporting with adapting the Framework to local contexts and different student groups. Tools to support student involvement should be built into the SNF.
- The role of the SNF in delivering efficiency within HEPs was discussed, although it was acknowledged that this has not been a major focus of the work to date, and it could therefore be strengthened. Attendees were interested in identifying examples of HEPs divesting support to create a more effective and coherent support system. In addition, opportunities around shared service delivery was discussed.

Next steps:

- The Reference Group's next meeting, scheduled for March 2025, will review and discuss the development of a 'user guide' which will sit alongside the SNF. In addition, AdvanceHE will present proposals for a consultancy service aligned with the SNF.