

Student Submission- Holy Cross College and St. Mary's College

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This student submission reflects the views and opinions of students at both the Holy Cross and St. Mary's campuses. In order to collate these views, I met with the QAA Facilitator to discuss what options I had to compile information from my fellow students. Following this, I decided to invite both Holy Cross and St Mary's students to a meeting at Holy Cross, on Wednesday 7th March at 4:30pm to gather their thoughts and feelings regarding their University experience. Invitations were extended by email and text by University admin staff at my request. 6 Holy Cross students attended in person and 2 St. Mary's students were in attendance via Skype. As only a small number of students were able to attend the meeting, students were then sent a questionnaire via their online Moodle portals, which asked questions relating to academic standards and the quality of their learning experience. I received 24 responses to the online questionnaire. Responses from both the meeting and online questionnaire are integrated within this submission. The courses studied by students who responded are as follows; BA Education and Special Educational needs (15 students), BA Education and Early Childhood (13 students), BA Business Management (1 student) and BA English Literature, BA Education and History (3 students).

1. Student Perception of Academic awards and standards

- 1.1. Students agreed that assessments become more challenging as they progress through their course, with many commenting that there was more independence expected in terms of assessments and research. Some students felt that often they were given assessment titles on topics that they had not yet covered, however these students clarified that they were given a choice of a few topics, many of which had been covered. Students also noted that tutors provide relevant and informative feedback to guide future assessments.
- 1.2. Most students knew where to access external examiner reports, commenting that they had been emailed to them, and they received text messages from College when they were made available. Those students who did not know how to access external examiner reports admitted that they did not always check their emails. Students were asked whether they understood the grading system for their assignments. It was mentioned that this had recently changed, and although students had received an email explaining the changes, some students had difficulty in understanding it. Students were aware of the rules regarding plagiarism, however one student suggested that self-plagiarism should be discussed in more detail and students should be reminded about it frequently.

2. Learning Opportunities

- 2.1. Students agreed that teaching staff on their courses are appropriately qualified, with some sharing experiences of tutors that have completed the course they are on themselves. Students are given opportunities to feedback on lectures at various points through the year; through student representatives prior to meetings, and in end of year evaluation forms. Students also felt that they could speak to their support tutors if they

were unhappy with any aspect of their learning experience. Students agreed that their learning resources were relevant and helpful, making reference to the availability of Liverpool Hope Library resources to network students. Students noted that it would be useful to receive some of the presentations for lectures a little earlier so they could look ahead to future sessions. One student commented that it would be helpful if lecturers shared changes they made to the standard slides; however some students commented that their lecturers already did so.

- 2.2.** Students felt that they were effectively involved in quality processes at all levels, evidencing this meeting as one example and student governors as another. Most students felt that their views were represented, making mention to the role of the student representatives, who liaise between staff and students. Student representatives, who were present at the meeting, commented that any points raised within the meetings were always actioned and followed up promptly. Experiences were the same at both Holy Cross and St. Mary's. Students also noted that their support tutors were extremely helpful and provided great guidance throughout the year, whether the problems faced were academic or personal. Some students noted that their support tutor only worked part time and so was not as responsive as other support tutors. One student suggested that there needs to be more communication between support tutors and academic tutors as often when trying to resolve a problem students have been passed between both.
- 2.3** Most students expressed that they were aware of how to make a complaint, and of the complaint procedure as a whole. Some students commented that they did not know how to make a complaint because they had never needed to. It was noted that complaints procedures are set out within the course handbooks and on Moodle. Of the students who had made a complaint, they felt that they were listened to, their complaints were dealt with promptly, and they were happy with the outcomes and the timescale of the complaints procedure.
- 2.4** Whilst students accepted that future careers were discussed within lectures, and agreed that tutors related certain aspects of the course to particular careers, on a whole students wanted to see more employability information embedded within the curriculum. Most students had set careers in mind, but would welcome guidance in how to "get in" to these careers.
- 2.5** Disabled students expressed that they were very well supported within the course, both by support tutors and academic tutors. They referred to extra time allowances on assignments and exams and resources that were made available to them to assist their learning. They also noted that their support tutors regularly checked in with them to make sure they were okay and were finding the course accessible. All disabled students that took part in either the meeting or the online questionnaires reported that they were happy with their learning experience.
- 2.6** Students commented that the online provision of the University was excellent. Moodle, which is the online learning system used by the college, is easy to access and has user guides if anyone is struggling to navigate around it. Lectures and independent learning tasks are set out in a 'week by week' order, making it easy to know where you are up to.

One student reported that she asked tutors to add dates to the weeks and upload power points sooner and this was resolved the next day.

2.7 Most students were aware of a 'student charter' that sets out mutual expectations of both the student and the university. Some students commented that a version of this can be found in the course handbooks and it was also discussed during induction. Students from St. Mary's noted that as a class, they created their own set of rules and expectations which they continue to abide by.

3. Enhancement

Students feel that there is an ethos of continual development within the University. Student representative meetings tend to bring about change when necessary which students felt shows the university values them and their opinions. Students are kept up to date with any changes, news and improvements via text and email.

4. Public Information

Students feel that the website is up to date and easy to access, with many commenting it was the first place they looked when wanting to apply for their course.