

Winchester Student Fellows Scheme

Background

The SFS has developed from the pioneering work done in its 'proof of concept' stage in 2012-13. This involved a much smaller scheme as part of the Jisc funded FASTECH project. The success of this initial stage allowed us to secure funding through negotiations between the Student Union (SU), Learning and Teaching Development (LTD) and Senior Managers by demonstrating the benefit that such a programme could have to the students involved and the whole institution. There was a clear case for something to fill the gap between issues raised by students about their courses and how these issues could be addressed. The majority of funding for the SFS is used for a £600 bursary provided to each Student Fellow to support their activities and time commitment.



Purpose

The purpose of the SFS is to recruit, train and empower 60 students to work alongside academics and professional staff on targeted educational development projects. These projects address a diverse range of topics which vary in scope and size but must be relevant to enhancing the student learning experience. The SFS both increases the level of student engagement with teaching and learning and empowers students to address varied issues, problems or barriers to a satisfying teaching, learning and social experience en masse.

What projects have taken place?

Student Fellow Projects explore a wide-range of educational development subject areas including:

- Assessment and Feedback
- Innovative use of technology
- Addressing NSS feedback
- Increasing Student Engagement
- Innovative forms of learning and teaching

A few examples of projects include the following:

- Improvement of resources and conditions for commuter students on campus
- Creating physical learning resources in Law
- Co-designing and validating a module in Modern Liberal Arts
- Evaluation of the use of lecture time in Sociology

Sustainability

The Student Fellows Scheme has seen success across the institution, as a genuine model of Student Engagement and staff-student partnership to enhance the student experience. Winchester has seen three institution wide cohorts of the SFS (2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16); developing into a scheme which prioritises internal dissemination of practice so a Student Fellow's work can have impact beyond their programme. This has been done through a Student Fellows Conference, intranet sharing pages of resources/reports and presentations to relevant committees. Further external dissemination has seen the SFS team and Student Fellows provide consultation and presentations at conferences CAN, RAISE and SEDA. The SFS has also been shortlisted for the HEA and NUS Students' Union and Institution Partnership Award (Highly Commended) in 2014 and the Student Experience Initiative Award in the Guardian University Awards. Also for the participating Student Fellows themselves, the experience and employability benefit of being part of the scheme has been quoted to be 'invaluable'. Due to the above, the University of Winchester and Winchester Student Union have shown support to continue and further develop the SFS in the foreseeable future.



How is the scheme managed?

One of the ways that we believe the SFS works so well is that it is managed in partnership between the LTD & SU. In particular, Research Fellow Dr Stuart Sims (LTD) and Blake Hutchings (Vice-President of Education, SU) jointly manage the running of the scheme in consultation with various other colleagues. This allows us to draw on our varied and complimentary expertise; specifically the SU provides access to communication networks of the student body and a strong mandate for supporting student engagement, whilst the LTD bring experience and expertise in teaching and learning.

For more information, please contact
Dr Stuart Sims (Stuart.Sims@winchester.ac.uk) or visit
winchester.ac.uk/studentfellows