

Meeting	Student Panel
Date	Wednesday 8th November 2023, 18:00-19:30, Zoom
Attendees	City Lit: Dragana Ramsden (DR), Wendy McKaig (WM), Libby Took-Mitchell (LTM) Student Panel Members: 7 panel members attended.
Notes	Melanie Headley (MH)

Summary of discussions:

1.0	<p>Welcome & Ground rules/Introductions.</p> <p>LTM: Senior Product Manager, looking after the systems around enrolments (website enrolment, help centre, systems used by the enrolments team). New role which is part of the technical team.</p> <p>DR: Last panel meeting for Anesu, Belinda, Breda and Claire. Panel member recruitment is under way. Any referrals to KK.</p>
2.0	<p>Executive update - WM</p> <p>Lobbying The government awarded FE colleges an additional 6% uplift in funding to support pay increases for staff. Adult education colleges (post 19-year-old students) were ineligible. The exclusion of adult education from the funding increase was disappointing and City Lit continues to lobby for additional funding.</p> <p>FE Commissioner The college continues to experience financial challenges, however term 1 has had a strong start, slowly recovering from the impact of Covid and the cyber-attack. The college is still in formal financial intervention. The FE Commissioner visited with her team last week and is hopeful that when she returns in May/June 2024, that financial intervention will come to an end. The relationship with the FE Commissioner, Shelagh Legrave, has been collaborative and has led to other initiatives that the college has become involved in, e.g. training for new governors and principals.</p> <p>Events One of City Lit's specialist areas is the Speech Therapy department. In September the college hosted the Stammering Pride and Prejudice conference which brought together speech and language therapists from across the UK.</p>

In September the college hosted the very first UK Massage Championship, which ran over 2 days. The Health and Wellbeing department were a key partner in delivering the event. City Lit massage students competed, one of whom won 3 categories. The next event will be in September 2024.

Mental Wealth Festival (October). A week of talks, events, and workshops to highlight the importance of speaking about mental health issues and manage the difficulties that people may experience.

A new partnership with the Bloomsbury Festival which covers several creative and visual arts disciplines. The college was a host venue for a number of events across the weekend.

OFSTED

The current Chief Inspector (Amanda Spielman) who will be in post until the end of December 2023, visited a range of education providers across the spectrum. She chose to visit City Lit with her team. She visited several classes and met with the curriculum team.

Award

The college has been awarded the Mayor's Skills Academies Quality Mark for the creative industries. This is in recognition of contribution City Lit makes to the creative sector. City Lit supports students' journeys into independent creative practice.

Last week, the college was awarded the Mayor's good work standard.

City Lit Awards

The City Lit Awards will be taking place next week at which Dragana Ramsden will receive a staff recognition award. The ceremony honors students, tutors and staff.

Association of Colleges and Hoxle

Following the college's OFSTED results, there have been a number of dissemination events where WM and DR will be sharing how City Lit achieved and outstanding grading.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I)

From this academic year, WM and DR will be the leads for ED&I across the college to move it forward and ensure an approach that is beyond compliance. As plans emerge, feedback from the panel will be sought as the student voice will be a critical aspect in the way plans are developed and delivered.

Panel Questions

Q: Is there an update on the meeting held between City Lit and a cross-parliamentary group which discussed issues affecting the deaf community?

	<p>WM: The principal followed up with the MP who visited City Lit to ask how the college can help/become involved, outlined talking points for parliamentary debates/discussions e.g. free BSL training for hearing parents of deaf children. Mark Malcomson has not had a response yet. WM to follow up with Mark and will report back at the next panel meeting.</p>
3.0	<p>Update on projects - DR</p> <p>Apply testing – some changes already implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clearer guidance on marking the sections complete. When all sections are completed, the form will submit• Application submitted once all sections have been marked as completed• Clearer help and guidance• Department specific comments have been shared, e.g. the comment regarding disclosing sensitive information <p>Course evaluations – in progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consulted with students, tutors, and an external research agency• Now working on technical link between the feedback platform and the college database. This may take some time as there are bigger database projects affecting this. <p>Student voice as part of the revised Quality strategy for the next 2 years. The college is not receiving enough feedback from course evaluations. Each department is trying to find the right way to engage with their students to develop their provision and teaching.</p>
	<p>Help Centre Update – LTM</p> <p>The feedback from the panel fed into a project plan. The new help centre has been live for 2 months.</p> <p>Panel exercise:</p> <p>For each question tell us whether you found the information, was it easy or difficult to find and was the information helpful, did it tell you everything you need to know.</p> <p>Group 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do I reset my City Lit IT account password?2. Do I qualify for a bursary, and how do I apply?3. Where is City Lit i.e., how can I travel to the main building? <p>Group 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How can I use my City Lit gift voucher online?2. I want a refund; can I get one and how?3. Is there a Library City Lit and what are the opening times?

Help Centre – Panel feedback

Key changes to the help centre - LTM

Restructured the content. The home page had 11 boxes, now down to 4 categories.

There is a navigation panel which tells users where they are within the help centre.

LTM – How do you search? Google, City Lit website?

- Know help centre exists so navigate to City Lit search bar.
- Would Google or go to website and enter search term.

LTM – Q: Were there any issues with the task? Areas for further improvement?

- Resetting passwords – which one? Google, City Lit? They are not the same. If not computer literate, a student may not know the difference.
- Resetting passwords is under bookings/payments/fees, not an obvious place to find it.

LTM – There are Google Classroom accounts, course related accounts and “My City Lit” which is on the website. Students can book course and request refunds. The functionality of the account is linked to bookings. There are different accounts with different ways to reset them which can be confusing. City Lit has endeavored to keep the language consistent.

LTM – Q: How do you refer to the various accounts?

- City Lit IT account = My City Lit account and all others referred to by brand e.g. Google, Microsoft Office 365
- IT password is an ambiguous term.
- Clarity needed in the help centre around what each account is and what a student can do with it (functionality)

Has any thought been given to fonts and the background colour in order to be dyslexic friendly?

LTM – the way the help centre look is dictated by the brand guidelines, using a sans serif font which is better for dyslexic students and it is high contrast. The new layouts have numbered steps for visual clarity. Grey text has been removed, there are consistent headings. The site has been tested and works with screen readers. LTM to investigate background colours.

There are things that work on the site; this should be acknowledged. It is helpful to be aware of what is working.

Searches were input with the full question and 1 or 2 words. Shorter searches returned a smaller number of results. Numbering steps is useful. Was surprised to see the term “gift voucher” as it implies that there are physical vouchers. There are references to store credit and credit – should be consistent.

LTM: All articles have an owner who is responsible for reviewing content as well as a team who can edit them. There are 140 articles for review. Staff will be trained on how to write articles that are written in clear English.

LTM to check through site for references to store credit/credit to ensure the use of consistent language and will settle on a term, similarly for (gift) vouchers.

Library page – when looking at the page, the most relevant search term was “student centre” but in the preview line, “library” was highlighted several times. Having student centre and library would make it clear. Opening hours were at the bottom of the page. It is the most common search/question, so it should be at the top (along with the contact number). Students may not make the link between the student centre and library, perhaps thinking that they are 2 different areas.

LTM will check for consistency across the site. It should be referred to as the student centre and library. Opening hours to be moved to the top of the page.

Directions/maps – finding site maps required several clicks. A map featuring all locations that allows students to click on the individual site which then shows a detailed pop-up map with bus details tube etc.

LTM: There is currently a page with individual maps and then another page with how to get to the site. LTM to investigate what is possible within the constraints of the software.

FAQs - There are only 4 categories: why? On other sites, there are a broad range of questions/answers rather than students having to search.

LTM – There are discussions regarding creating a general FAQs page that becomes the landing point for students to click on a question and are taken to the appropriate page/answer. If all the FAQs that are currently on 4 separate pages are merged into 1, it becomes a long document. Some of the questions are very specific (e.g. Google Classroom, exams). If a student is not using Google Classroom or taking an exam, they would have no interest in having those subjects on a general page.

The FAQs page is pulling FAQs from various areas of the help centre. There isn't currently a general FAQ document. LTM will feed this back as there were discussions about creating a general page.

AOB

Any further comments or suggestions to be emailed to KK/DR