Welfare Officer Report 06/03/15

Suicide Safer Proposal

Regarding questions asked last meeting about the 'suicide safer' proposal:

* The training will be offered to all lecturers but they particularly want to interest personal tutors in doing the training.
* The training is optional and time off will be given to do it.
* There will be a strict assessment afterwards to make sure that the training given is being used and if it is making a positive impact.
* The point of teaching staff how to recognise 'warning signs' isn't to 'analyse' students but to help identify those who are in real distress and struggling at university who may not have confided in a member of staff yet. A recognition of the warning signs in a student would lead to an informal chat, and perhaps a referral to the counselling service.

I also met with Louise Jones recently. One of the ideas we had for email counselling we have managed to already incorporate into the Nightline. So we decided to look at:

* Making information on good mental health available in halls and to every student by distributing the 'little book of mental health' produced by the uni in halls in September and in the first lectures of the semester.
* Information on how to apply for mitigating circumstances, essay help and workshops and other academic help services the uni provides to be distributed in halls as well.
* Or the uni needs to advertise the academic help and mental health services that it offers much more.

Our Nightline has begun recruiting volunteers and we've already had quite a few people sign up for training. Volunteers must complete training and the training is in the planning stages now. We nearly have a full committee as well.

The plan is to run a 'trial' week during summer exam period. We will have trained volunteers by then and the point of the trial week will be to learn from any mistakes and to think about how to improve the service. If any improvements are needed they will be taken into account before our re-launch next September.

There will also be an email advice service that runs alongside the Nightline and emails will be answered by Nightline volunteers. We are considering adding a live chat feature and the possibility of our own website for the future, but will not be doing drop-ins for the foreseeable future as it would compromise security at this time.