



PTAS Project Report (for SMALL PROJECT GRANTS)

Project Title: 'Feeling like I belong': Uncovering uncertainties linked to widening participation and sense of student alienation in the University.

Principal Investigator : Lucy Grig
School / Department : School of History, Classics and Archaeology

Team members : Lucy Grig (PI), Guillermo Díaz Liaño del Valle (PG Researcher) with support from other staff in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology

For further information, please contact: Dr Lucy Grig

Grant recipients are expected to submit a brief report at the conclusion of their project which outlines briefly the following : nature of work completed; outcomes; benefits to student learning/student experience; dissemination activity (where relevant – actual and planned) and how the activity could inform future work or be transferred to other subject areas in the University. The brief report will be published on the IAD web pages.

Brief Report (maximum 500 words)

What did you do? Our PG researcher designed an online survey to investigate feeling of belonging across our undergraduate student body, which received a total of 94 responses. He also met a number of students and relevant individuals and groups both within and beyond HCA, in a series of meetings and semi-structured interviews.. He produced an initial report based on these findings.

What did you find out? Guillermo Díaz Liaño del Valle's research identified a number of issues that affect the student feelings of belonging at HCA, and the experience of students more generally, with a particular focus on the experience of students from Widening Participation background.

Key issues raised include concerns around the lack of diversity in the student body issues when it came to both support and communication as well as concerns around the sense of community. The conditions of the pandemic altered the context of the research in ways that could not have been anticipated at the time the project was originally conceptualised.

How did you disseminate your findings? So far we have disseminated our findings at School level in small group meetings with relevant personnel and the EDI Committee with a broader presentation to the School Forum coming up. Beyond HCA our findings have been presented at the Learning and Teaching Conference and on the Teaching Matters Blog and across meetings of staff involved in other WP activities across the University.

Various issues including changes in personnel and the challenges of Covid meant that the next stage in developing the findings of the report will be actioned in 2021-2.

What have been the benefits to student learning? This information provided relevant staff with a better understanding of the issues affecting our students and help direct strategies to support them in their time at HCA, from induction onwards.



How could these benefits be extended to other parts of the university? We have already been in contact with staff in other schools and we are sharing findings and insights.

Who can be contacted for further details? Dr Lucy Grig, Classics.



Financial statement (please delete as appropriate):

Either

This project has utilised the funding awarded to it by the PTAS adjudication committee and the Principal Investigator or School Administrator appropriate can provide financial statements showing the funding usage as and when required by the UoE Development Trusts who may require it for auditing purposes.

PDF copy of this report to:

Email: iad.teach@ed.ac.uk