

Need Help? Just Ask!

As part of the University plan to enhance the student experience and to encourage staff to embrace a new approach to student support, we implemented a 'Meet and Greet' and 'Roving' service across the libraries.

These initiatives promote an ethos of Information Services' staff approaching students, rather than relying on students to approach a Service Desk with their enquiries.

'Meet and Greet' runs during the first 5 weeks of the September semester, and is aimed primarily at new students. The Roving team are available at busy times throughout the year. In both instances, staff are available, away from (and in addition to) the Service Desks, to answer general enquiries and promote our services.



Presented by Janice Broad, Customer Services and Site Liaison Manager, Information Services, 2012

Meet and Greet

Meet and Greet is aimed at new students and operates in the Thompson, Nelson and Law Libraries from late September to November between 11am -3am, weekdays. Customer Services (CS) staff meet and greet new students who may need help finding their feet when they first arrive.

Staff can be clearly identified by their 'Need help? Just ask!' badges and are located near various service points as well as walking around the building looking for students who may need help.

What sort of help is needed?

Enquiries vary from navigational enquiries, locating items and facilities, using the library catalogue or giving directions to other University departments.

What are the benefits?

When embarking on Meet and Greet, we recognised that we would get a different response from students to the response we get from standing behind desks. What we didn't realise, was the positive impact it would have on both staff and students and in turn, the service we provide. Here are just some of the comments from CS staff: *"Stepping into the shoes of a new student was a real eye opener – made me realise how overwhelming it can all feel"*.

"Students meet me in the corridor now and say hello".

"These days, I'm actively looking round for customers who might need help as I walk round the building completing other tasks".

Statistics from 2011

From 26 September to 24 October, CS staff dealt with 461 enquiries when meeting and greeting. This was in addition to enquiries dealt with at the Service Desks.

Roving

A similar approach to Meet and Greet, but implemented during busy times in the academic calendar.

There is so much information to take in at the start of term, so by the time it comes to writing that first assignment, a lot of information might now be forgotten. To ensure we give students as much support as possible, we increase our staff presence during key points of the year, (first assignments, exam time), to answer general enquiries and promote the services and facilities available to them throughout their studies.

Providing the Roving service, helps to build up an individual's confidence to be self sufficient in the future. If the task is complex, help is provided in stages and referred on where appropriate.

It engages students, offering help at the point of need and it encourages a word of mouth culture, turning students into loyal ambassadors who will promote our services to their peers.

Statistics from 2011

From November to March, CS staff helped 474 students when roving. This again, was in addition to enquiries dealt with at the Service Desks.

Looking to the future

Statistics are gathered each session and are used to monitor usage, ensuring that we (a.) are covering the right times of day (b.) making sure that we are utilising staff appropriately i.e. during reading week and less busy periods during the day, we will adjust the roving to suit demand.

Meet and greet will continue in its present format as there will always be new students who need some navigational support and an introduction to facilities. After the refurbishment, we will monitor the use of our Roving service to gauge whether the current format is still appropriate.