

SU response to the new Student Engagement system

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This Union Notes:

1. University management have approved the trial of a new student engagement system
2. The University are going to implement student engagement software in four departments and want to roll this out to every department
3. This system would include the student's use of the VLE, library and IT services. It would also monitor attendance rate through the use of an app and swipe card access.
4. This would be the first time all this information for each student would be collated and for some areas collected.
5. Students will not be able to opt out of this system
6. That there is electronic monitoring already happening at Goldsmiths such as the seat monitoring in the library, which seems to not be accurate as the reports show the library as never being more than 60% full,
7. That universities such as Kings have been monitoring student emails, a direct invasion of students privacy

This Union Believes:

1. That retention and wellbeing issues at Goldsmiths urgently need to be addressed.
2. That the money spent on implementing this software could be put to better use by being spent on counselling, specialist support for students that DSA used to pay for, a paid peer assisted learning program and better more extensive access to wellbeing services for students.
3. That the university could do more to recognise the systemic flaws that mean students fall behind or never feel comfortable at uni, factors that result in students dropping out of uni
4. That the regularity with which a student logs onto the VLE can be seen as arbitrary to their wellbeing especially regarding the different nature of course structures at the University.
5. This system will unfairly target international students
6. There is reasonable concern that this data can be directly linked to Prevent data kept on students
7. There is also reasonable concern that once this data is collected and collated there is the potential for it to be used as a resource for government surveillance. This could have a very negative effect on students here on international study visas.
8. Students should not see their University as another branch of the UKBA. (UK

Border Agency)

9. That monitoring student's movements by swipe card access is unnecessary as departments already take registers and internally monitor student progress.

10. There are serious concerns as to how this data will be used in a rapidly changing political environment with policies such as Prevent already in place we should be incredibly cautious of student surveillance.

11. This system will increase the vulnerability of international students and further restrict their freedom whilst being here, their attendance of lectures could be used against them.

This Union Resolves:

2. For the Union to work with the University to find new ways to make students, both incoming and existing, to feel included at University and help students know where to turn in times of trouble.

3. For the Union to lobby against swipe card access into lectures and seminars.

4. To oppose the swipe system if it is implemented, as it will add unnecessary pressure and create a hostile environment where suspicion comes before trust.

5. To lobby the University to ensure further data protection policies are in place to protect international students who will be largely affected should such data be shared with UKBA and other agencies.