Harnessing data, changing lives

Catherine Grout, Jisc
1. Mental health “crisis” in context
2. New areas of analytics
3. What we have learnt/what’s new
Mental health “crisis” – backdrop

Greater awareness of the issue (mental health and well being)

Particular concern about children and young people

2015 NUS Survey: 78% reported issues, 33% suicidal thoughts*

2017 HEPI and HEA survey: declining student well being

Tech and especially social media may be a (newer) factor

High percentage of students who commit suicide are not previously known to support services

IPPR: 94% increased demand for counselling services
What’s going on?
What’s going on?
Ask a university doctor...

Dominique Thompson - key factors

- Perfectionism
- Competitiveness
- Target Driven
- American Dream (meritocracy)
- Parent over-involvement
- 24/7 society (unrealistic expectations)
- Loneliness
- Certainty v Uncertainty
- Social Media

“...the age when most students attend university, they are at high risk of developing mental health difficulties, which in the context of transition to new environments, social network upheaval, increased academic, financial and career pressures, could make them more likely to struggle”

https://www.buzzconsulting.co.uk/about
4. Analytics approaches and how do they link?
Jisc learning analytics service

Ethics & data security

Data explorer

Study goal app

Learning analytics predictor

https://www.jisc.ac.uk/learning-analytics
Harnessing data to support student success

The power of data and analytics is harnessed to ensure that every student in the UK can have access to a high quality and meaningful higher education experience that equips them for the challenges of life irrespective of background and means.

What are the problems?

• Students dropping out
• Students failing to make their grades
• Problems more acute for lower income and ethnic minority students and for female students
• Rise in numbers of students reporting mental health issues
Beyond learning analytics – Digital Futures

Intelligent campus

Curriculum analytics

Employability & apprenticeship analytics

Wellbeing analytics
Intelligent campus

The intelligent estate

Enhanced student experience

Intelligent learning spaces

Learning data hub

Intelligent library

Smart experiments

Intelligent workspace

Smart city

https://www.jisc.ac.uk/rd/projects/intelligent-campus
Curriculum quick win: reducing assignment clustering
Learning analytics is about analysing student data to make improvements and improve student outcomes...

- Learning and wellbeing are linked
- Indicators of engagement used for learning analytics could also indicate wellbeing issues
- Early warning signs of drop-out are often the same as those of mental distress
- Can flag students who disengage from their studies or show other changes in study behaviour
Holistic approach may have benefits

https://www.jisc.ac.uk/learning-analytics
Making the case

Jisc and the mental health crisis in our universities

Could data and analytics help to promote student wellbeing and mental health? Jisc commissioned independent global higher education expert Professor Martin Hall to examine this idea and he highlights the key findings of this report in this guest blog. Professor Hall was former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Salford and former Jisc Chair.


http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/6916/1/student-wellbeing-and-mental-health-the-opportunities-in-learning-analytics.pdf
Ben’s snowdrops – determinant and risk profile – James Murray

Guardian, 9 October 2018

From concept to implementation

• Bristol/Ben Use case shows:
  • Data probably held in a student record system
  • Data almost certainly held somewhere
  • Data that requires some interpretation
  • Information that the university knows, but probably not as data
  • Information only parents or others know.
Conversations with three universities

1. All three saw the potential of seeing richer data about students in one place
2. All saw student CRM type functionality as important
3. All were wary of the idea of using data driven prompts to identify students in crisis not known to them
4. All of them saw moving from data to process to people as key
5. Range of degrees of data informed approaches
6. Range of level of centralisation of services
7. No-one size fits all – three universities very different student populations
Potential Recommendations

1. Are you ready? - know your data and start discovering its potential
2. Start the conversation about data now
3. Build links between data, systems and people
4. Build up a richer picture of your students and their support needs
5. Enable information and data flows across your institution
6. Build in interoperability and open standards
7. Understand relevant legal and ethical frameworks
8. Start to work in a wider data landscape
Enabling data to play a role...

- More likely to succeed if:
  - Clean data
  - Confident about the legal and ethical side
  - Having a workflow and process from data to people
  - Interoperability - being prepared to unlock data from disparate systems
  - Open data architectures and standards
Data informed conversations

It’s not about replacing human interaction with predictive models or AI.

Some working assumptions

1. Big data can provide new insight (e.g. 500 million records)
2. National level datasets can provide new insight
3. Work done to develop Learning Analytics models might be transferable
4. Data dashboards can play a role in alert/triage
What else has been happening?

- Privacy and ethics at forefront of debate
- Striking a balance
- Taking an informed perspective
- High level group on Consent
- Role of ICO

LA code of practice mental health and wellbeing annex
https://community.jisc.ac.uk/system/files/391/Wellbeing%20CoP%20v0-11.pdf
What else has been happening?

• New OFS projects kicking off

University of Derby
Education for mental health: enhancing student mental health through curriculum and pedagogy
This project will create an evaluated, national online toolkit for academics that provides evidence-informed guidance on creating and providing curriculum, pedagogy and assessments that facilitate better student mental health while improving educational outcomes

University of Northumbria at Newcastle
Mental health and analytics: a continuum approach to understanding and improving student mental health
This project aims to improve mental health and learning outcomes for all students, match students in need to appropriate health and wellbeing support, and reduce student suicide. These will be achieved by the innovative integration of technology, advanced educational data analytics, student relationship management, and effective models of support.
What else has been happening?

[Image of a webpage from Universities UK]

Mental health: A whole university approach
11 Jul 2019, 09:30 - 17:00
Woburn House, Tavistock Square,

https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/events/Pages/Mental-Health-A-Whole-University-Approach.aspx

HEFCE step change pilots ending and reporting
What else is new?

• Jisc is planning next set of actions (scaling up)—two ideas have been explored [https://www.jisc.ac.uk/reports/horizons-report-emerging-technologies-and-the-mental-health-challenge](https://www.jisc.ac.uk/reports/horizons-report-emerging-technologies-and-the-mental-health-challenge)

• More work to understand potential of data informed approaches and analytics

• Would like to in more depth work with data at scale analysis

• Would like to do more work on supporting student wellbeing and resilience

• Will take a collaborative approach to this

• Elsewhere:
  • Increased emphasis on working with the NHS (new group)
Thanks for listening...

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