

ORS Front-line Service Redevelopment Recommendations

Updated 5/13/2022

Phase One of the Linc Program (September 2021-February 2022) largely focused on the identification of the goal state for the program. The Program Advisory Committee sought to answer the question: “When we are done, what do we want the new student service model to look like, in terms of: values, staffing, physical and digital spaces, information systems and technologies, and more?”

To help answer this question, the Linc Program Project Manager engaged in significant research and consultation over the course of the Fall 2021 and early Winter 2022 semesters and, ultimately, provided the Linc Program Advisory Committee with a series of recommendations in late February, 2022. The Committee reviewed these recommendations and detailed characterization of the goal state was achieved and is captured in the 49 accepted recommendations below.

Should you have questions about any of the recommendations, please do not hesitate to reach out to members of the Linc Program Advisory Committee for more information.

Recommendations

(It is recommended that...)

Service Integration

- 1.1 – Work associated with Admission Services’ internat@uoguelph.ca, find.yourself@uoguelph.ca, and admissio@uoguelph.ca email accounts, the x. 58721 phone number, and walk-up traffic should be transferred to The Linc.
- 1.2 – Work currently managed by the Enrolment Services’ front-line (the es@uoguelph.ca email account [including requested processing], the x. 58731 phone number, Confirmation of Enrolment [CoE] production), and walk-up traffic should be integrated into The Linc.
- 1.3 – Work associated with managing the finaid@uoguelph.ca email account, the x. 58715 phone number, a portion of OSAP processing, and walk-up traffic (phone and walk-up traffic includes student account-related inquiries) should be integrated into The Linc for initial launch.
- 1.4 – ORS revise staffing and budget allocation as needed to support the transfer of the accquest@uoguelph.ca workload to The Linc, concurrent with the creation of a centralized Linc email account (Phase Three).
- 1.5 – Processing work remain in front-line staff roles, so as to support front-line staff wellbeing and burnout prevention through ensuring variation and regular opportunities to step back from front-line service.

Staffing

- 2.1 – The *CoE Batch Method* be taught to all Linc staff, to realize a significant efficiency and facilitate staff redeployment to other high-value activities.
- 2.2 – Two positions be created that have split responsibility for front-line duties and supporting the coordination/management of the Linc.
- 2.3 – A core staffing level of 7.0 FTE (6.0 front-line and 1.0 coordination) be shifted over to the Linc.
- 2.4 – The possibility of student-staff be explored, to allow for greater staffing flexibility.

- 2.5 – An “Tier 2” OSAP specialist position be created, to handle more complex processing and student inquiry responsibilities.
- 2.6 – A budget be established for Linc student-staff.
- 2.7 – The hiring of the Linc coordination-focused positions be scheduled so the incumbents will be available to help with Linc staff hiring and training and Linc launch coordination.
- 2.8 – Those responsible for hiring front-line staff (if required) attempt to hire for both existing knowledge and experience (to support operational continuity) and the competencies/characteristics noted to most often align with success in front-line one-stop roles, striking an appropriate balance if needed.
- 2.9 – Hiring efforts incorporate best practices for creating equitable selection processes, so as to promote staff diversity and historically underrepresented students’ feelings of belonging.
- 2.10 – To help support Linc staff wellbeing and satisfaction, proven strategies should be employed, including: supporting work and personal value alignment, one-on-ones, appreciation, ample compensation, efforts to support inclusion and deconstruct systems of oppression, and significant and on-going training.
- 2.11 - A comprehensive training plan be developed that speaks to training program goals, methods, logistics, schedule, content, facilitators, and more and details a “just-in-time” training strategy.
- 2.12 - Service data be reviewed to help identify potential regular training times for Linc staff, such that impacts on students are minimized.
- 2.13 – Trainers should be sourced from amongst ORS departments, to support the development of relationships and trust between front- and back-office staff.
- 2.14 – Specific focus be given to ensuring Linc staff training includes, in addition to content and process specific knowledge, content related to: student and staff inclusion, student and staff wellbeing, empathy, and team development.

Information Systems and Technology

- 3.1 – The potential for redeploying AskGryph as a chat bot and sourcing a live chat option via [24/7].ai (AskGryph provider) be explored and, if both possible, that relative costs and benefits be identified.
- 3.2 – That Slate integration with The Linc be planned for Phase Three of the Slate project.
- 3.3 – A Word document be created that captures important information related to ORS services and processes (SOPs, common email responses, relevant training materials, etc.), to serve as an editable, searchable database supporting Linc service provision.
- 3.4 - Live chat be added as a contact method for the Linc, with the specific provider being determined based on a variety of factors including accessibility, existing program integration, and potential partnerships.
- 3.5 – Barring the forthcoming quote being unreasonable, ORS continue utilizing the QMatic Orchestra queuing software, making specific redevelopments as identified in the report (*ORS Frontline Services Redevelopment Recommendations* report).

- 3.6 – Contact Centre linked phones be placed at each Linc “back-office” workstation, in addition to those used in the ORS call centre, to support assigning additional staff to phone service when volume exceeds that which can be managed by those in the call centre.
- 3.7 - ORS work with one-stop colleagues, ORS front-line staff, and the CCS Network Infrastructure team to merge and redevelop our call pathways/flows.
- 3.8 – Messaging be shared on the ORS website, alongside telephone contact information, regarding phone service being provided by direct line (if applicable) and thus accessible for those with hearing impairments.
- 3.9 – ORS explore the potential of connecting with students via text message in situations where a student may benefit from such an approach.
- 3.10 – ORS explore the potential of connecting with students via Courselink, with limited frequency, when information is important and relevant to the majority of students.
- 3.11 - Virtual meetings be adopted as an additional way for students to connect with ORS front-line staff, for both scheduled meetings and for “drop-in” service initiated through the queuing software.
- 3.12 - A project be undertaken to investigate the extent to which service improvements could be achieved through revising the ORS website.
- 3.13 – ORS explore partnering with the CCS Project Management Office to identify a plan for website redevelopment.
- 3.14 – Workflow Management System adoption be explored during Phase Three of the program, when ORS will have greater knowledge of the realities of operating a one-stop.

Service Model

- 4.1 – The Linc be developed so as to support staff service that is relational, comprehensive, educational, empathetic, pleasant, strengths-based, proactive, and outcome- and service-oriented.
- 4.2 – Linc team purpose and values identification be prioritized once Linc staff have been selected.
- 4.3 – An intra-office communication system, similar to that currently employed by SFS, be developed to support high-quality service provision.
- 4.4 – A “tier-2” on-call system be developed that identifies at least 1 subject matter expert from ES, SFS, and AS that is available to Linc staff for consultation as needed.
- 4.5 – A Linc staff schedule be created that is reflective of staff preferences and the benefits of consistent breaks from customer-facing service provision.
- 4.6 – To support Linc organization and ORS-wide communication, a “service calendar” be developed that features information relevant to student service provision.
- 4.7 – Hours of operation be revised in the ways detailed in the *(Frontline Services Redevelopment Recommendations* report, so as to most effectively support student service and Linc operations.

- 4.8 – A student advisory board be created to discuss one-stop/student service issues and potential solutions, helping ensure that students remain centred and involved in shaping decisions.
- 4.9 – The UAIC Coordinator and Program Counselors be invited to collaborate on defining each groups responsibilities, how best we can collaborate, and how we can most effectively communicate information to students.
- 4.10 – More significant partnership between Linc management and Program Counselors be sought, to improve inter-group communication and support consistent, effective student communication.
- 4.11 - A single Linc email address be created that students will be directed to email for all services handled by the office.
- 4.12 - ORS collaborate with Communications and Public Affairs to use central social media accounts whenever possible, rather than operating our own accounts.
- 4.13 – Student orientation efforts be explored, to identify whether opportunities exist to improve information sharing related to administrative and academic services and policies.
- 4.14 – Communication efforts be increasingly personalized, through working closely with advisors who support historically underrepresented students to ensure they are well-prepared to respond to student inquiries and through exploring capacity to increase personalization techniques when sending mass emails.
- 4.15 – Instituting classroom visits as a communication technique *in addition to* email, text, and/or Courselink notifications be explored.
- 4.16 – Annual current student communication plans be developed, to support increased organization, collaboration, and consistency.