Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 January 2010
Darwin Conference Suite at the University of Kent

Present:

University of Kent (Chair): Malcolm Dixon, Quality Assurance & Validation Manager
  Jane Anderson, Partnership Development Officer
  Margaret Anderson, Assistant Registrar - Humanities
  Anita Bampton, Student Records & Examinations
  Rachel Evans, Quality Assurance & Validation Office
  Dr Andrew MacGregor, Faculty Officer - Sciences
  Andrea McDonnell, Quality Assurance & Validation Office
  Vanessa Nedderman, Partnership Development Officer
  Jon Pink, Academic Registrar
  Paul Sales, Student Records & Examinations
  Wendy Sorrell, Social Sciences Faculty Office
  Ann Tull, Sciences Faculty Office
  Ruth Westbury, Partnership Development Officer

Edexcel:
  Dr Keith Brooker, BTEC Quality, Standards & Regulations Manager
  Valerie Beaney, BTEC Regional Development Manager for Kent

Liaison Officers:
  Dr Kay Foster, Deputy DOLT, School of Biosciences
  Dr Derek Kirton, Reader in Social Policy & Social Work, SSPSSR
  Dr Mike Went, DOLT, SPS

Programme Advisor:
  John Hawthorn (Engineering Programmes at MKC & SKC, Faculty of Sciences)

Kent Union:
  Tim Vivian, Advice & Outreach Worker

Canterbury College:
  Danielle Banyai, Co-ordinator Social Sciences
  Andrew Baxter, Faculty Leader for HE Business & Technology
  Andrew Hills, HE Curriculum Development Officer
  Rachel Mann, Director of Higher Education & International Provision
  Paul Mathew, Faculty Leader Creative Arts
  Guy Metcalf, HND Business Co-ordinator
  Carole Mulcare, Co-ordinator HE Business Programmes
  Anna Webber, Head of Faculty for HE
  Sheila Wood, Coordinator HE Applied Animal Science

Mid-Kent College:
  Ray Fielder, Head of Faculty
  Pat Lowdnes, Head of Faculty, Higher & Academic Studies
  Eleanor Wood, HND Applied Chemistry PAL
1. **Apologies for Absence**

   Apologies for absence were received from Richard Jones, Keith Lampard, Linda Lough, (University of Kent); Francesco Cerminara and Chip Harris (Programme Advisors); and Paul Broad, Julie Coleman and Daphne Rowlands (Mid-Kent College).

2. **Welcome**

   Malcolm Dixon welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Dr Keith Brooker (BTEC Quality, Standards & Regulations Manager) and Valerie Beaney (BTEC Regional Quality Manager for Kent).

3. **Minutes of HE in FE Forum 28 January 2009**

   The minutes of last year’s HE in FE Forum were agreed.

4. **Edexcel Report**

   4.1 **Quality Update**

   Dr Brooker congratulated the Kent on its strong partnership with Edexcel. He noted that the Kent’s Annual Institutional Review Report highlight examples of good practice in several programmes, including the Furniture and Fine Craft at South Kent College, IT at Mid Kent College and Retail Management at Canterbury College.

   Kent’s Associate College Handbook was cited as an example of good practice.

   Edexcel had noted the positive outcome of Kent’s QAA audit in November 2008 and Canterbury College’s favourable IQER.

   4.2 **Future of BTEC Higher Nationals**

   Dr Brooker gave a presentation (Copies of the slides will be circulated with these minutes). The main points of his presentation were that:

   - New HNC qualifications within the QCF Framework will be introduced by September 2010.
   - Programme Specifications should be ready by February 2010. Syllabae will be retained as far as possible
   - Some programmes will be deleted but all major sector areas will still be represented.
   - There will be national launch events for the new qualifications and their structure
   - The Licence arrangement will change from NQF qualifications to QCF qualifications
• At present 56 Universities have licence agreements with Edexcel with a wide variation of programmes including legacy versions (pre-NQF), NQF versions and centre-devised versions.
• Kent’s licence with Edexcel runs until 2013.
• There has been a resurgence of Higher Nationals (HNs) in England in terms of student numbers and innovative uses of the award.
• Level 4-7 provision – similar move
• New HNs: HNC – will be level 4 (120 credits) and HND level 5 (24 credits). Both awards will reflect the overall grade. Graded units will be at or above level 4.
• The HNC will be nested within the HND award so that if HND is not completed a fallback award may be given
• The new Edexcel FEI licence is scheduled to start in September 2010
• The new Licence arrangement will cover:
  - BTEC HNC,HND
  - Foundation – Art & Design Diploma
  - Higher level short courses levels 4-7
• Edexcel acknowledges that FE colleges are capable of managing QA process and, under the proposals, can be remitted to quality assure all BTEC provision from level 4-7
• Under the proposal, FE colleges can apply to have autonomous control of their external examiners, assessment, boards of examiners meetings.
• If adopted at Kent, such a shift of responsibility would be reflected in a reduction of the fees the University pays to Edexcel.
• Edexcel will continue to register all students and issue certificates for QCA approved programmes.
• Edexcel will continue to do an annual one day check for those FE Colleges who have been given direct approval to run QCF programmes (level 4-7)

Comments from the members on the transitions arrangements in 2010 included:
• Whether Foundation Degrees (FDs) will decline as a result of HNDs at level 4. Dr Brooker explained that HEFCE will fund HND/Cs and FDs. However, he anticipated that the subsidy for FDs may be reduced in 2010/11.
• Whether the HNA will be nested within the HNC as the HNC will be nested within the HND. Dr Brooker responded by informing delegates that they final arrangements were being put in place.
• Whether programmes such as Retail Management will continue: Valerie informed members that there had been a ‘purposeful’ move to discontinue Retail Management due to the low take-up nationally.
• South Kent College inquired whether it was possible to offer the same volume of credit over a reduced number of modules (i.e. offer module for great amounts of credit). Dr Brooker confirmed that this was acceptable to Edexcel.
The University of Kent’s Working Group for Regulations and Conventions (WGRC) will be discussing the implications of these changes on 16 February 2010 should the detail of the new HN framework be made available at that time.

5. Collaborative Provision Audit (CPA) 2010

Rachel Evans, gave a presentation (Copies of the slides will be circulated with these minutes). The presentation set out key dates and the main points may be summarised as follows:

- Kent will have a preliminary meeting with the Assistant Director of QAA in March 2010. [This date has now been confirmed as Monday 10 May 2010].
- Kent has compiled a CPA register and this will be circulated to Partner Colleges. Rachel asked that all Directors of Further Education should check the register for completeness and accuracy.
- The CPA Steering Group is chaired by David Nightingale (Kent’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor) and has already met twice.
- The draft Institutional Briefing Document (IBD) will be written by Louise Naylor, Director of the Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (UELT), Malcolm Dixon and Rachel Evans.
- Kent will be updating its web pages for CPA and requests for further information may be forthcoming.

6. Board of Examiners 2010

6.1 Update on arrangements

Boards of examiners meetings will be held during June and July 2010. It is important that the Partnership Development Office and respective Faculty Offices are informed about all those people who will attend the boards of examiners meetings including internal members of staff, external examiners and school liaison officers.

Training days for HE in FE examiners will be held on both the Medway and Canterbury campus during April 2010.

Both the Faculty Offices and the Partnership Development Office will need to know the date of the boards of examiners meeting and who is due to attend. Curriculum Vitae of members of board including external examiners and the School Liaison Officer should be supplied.

6.2 Guidance for examiners 2009/10

Guidance for examiners for 2009/10 will be circulated to College staff after Kent’s WGRC has met on 16 February 2010.

6.3 External Examiner Report Submission System (EERSS)

The move to the EERSS system has highlighted a need for greater precision in Kent’s Code of Practice for Taught Programmes as to the ‘work-flow’ process though which franchised / validated institutions, in liaison with cognate schools, should respond to external examiners’ reports submitted through EERSS. It has been noted that the sequence for consideration and responding to reports has been inconsistent on occasion, with most responses submitted by the cognate School in EERSS only after consultation with the Colleges. The Code of Practice will be amended to
make clear that partner institutions should be consulted by cognate Schools at Kent before a proposed response is posted online.

Ann Tull informed members that Kent log-ins have a shelf-life of 12 months. Temporary passwords should be changed upon receipt and it is requirement that they are changed every nine months after that date. Kent’s Helpdesk will issue log-ins but not Kent email addresses.

7. Appointment of External Examiners/School Liaison Officers/Student 2009/10 Enrolments
A spreadsheet was circulated which showed the current enrolments for the franchised programme together with all the acting External Examiners and School Liaison Officers.

It was noted that South Kent College’s programme ‘BA (Hons) Visual Design and Advertising has changed to ‘BA (Hons) Visual Design and Communication’.

An updated spreadsheet will be circulated with these minutes.

8. Annual Reports 2008/09
A spreadsheet was circulated showing receipt of annual reports from External Examiners, School Liaison Officers and Programme Advisors for the academic year 2008/09.

An updated spreadsheet will be circulated with these minutes.

9. Liaison Officers’ Reports
The University of Kent’s Code of Practice for Taught Programmes was revised in August 2009. Annex O has clarified the role of the School Liaison Officer and Programme Advisor.

John Hawthorn made the point that the role of Programme Advisors may need further clarification so as to avoid any potential confusion with the role of External Examiner.

There are still a number of outstanding School Liaison Officer’s reports, which Liaison Officers were encouraged to submit as soon as possible in order to enable Karen Browne from Quality Assurance & Validation Office to complete the Edexcel 2008/9 Report that the University must submit by March 2010.

10. Date of the next meeting
The date of the next HE in FE Forum will be Wednesday 26 January 2011 at the University of Kent.