PARTNERSHIPS FORUM

13th March 2014

MINUTES (confirmed)

Present:

Name                Organisation

Kristin Barker      Canterbury College
Dr Andrew Hills     Canterbury College
Danielle Banyai     Canterbury College
Anna Webber        Canterbury College
Brian Jones         Canterbury College
Linda Marsh         Canterbury College
Louise Ainley       Central School of Ballet
Dr Tim Wright       Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust
Prof. Mike Mulchay  HEKSS – Dental
Haedish Khera-White HEKSS – Dental
Dr Hilary Diack     HEKSS – GP
Richard Martindale  ifs University College
Hannah Stretton     LAMDA
Dr Amanda Bolt      LCDS
Sue Graham          Mid Kent College
Steve Casey         Mid Kent College
Tim Roberts         National Centre for Circus Arts
Nancy Cranham       National Centre for Circus Arts
Elizabeth Hurt      Northern School of Contemporary Dance
Amanda Britton      Rambert School of Ballet & Contemporary Dance
Dr Louise Naylor    University of Kent
Vanessa Nedderman  University of Kent
Jane Anderson       University of Kent
Graham Lewis        University of Kent
Dr Jill Holliday    University of Kent
Debbie Reed         University of Kent
Ruth Westbury       University of Kent
Tina Hagger         University of Kent
1. Welcome and Introductions from the Chair

1.1 Malcolm Dixon, the University’s Quality Assurance Manager, introduced the forum and order of the day.

1.2 Apologies for absence were noted.

2. Minutes of the Partnership Forum 14th March 2013

2.1 To confirm the minutes of the last Partnership Forum meeting and to consider any matters arising minutes.

- The minutes of the last Partnership Forum were confirmed as an accurate record.

- It was reported that this summer will see the first cohorts of students classified under Kent’s new marking and classification methodology.

It was also noted that whilst these changes were to be rolled out to Validated Institutions from September 2013 (as recorded in the Partnership Forum minutes of that year) subsequently Learning and Teaching Board agreed to give partners more time. Changes would now be implemented from September 2014.

It was reported that representatives from the Quality Assurance Office had visited and liaised with partners as part of on-going support in the adoption of these changes.

3. Collaborative Provision Register

3.1 To note the register of the University’s current partnerships.

- The register was noted and partners were asked to contact Matthew Redmond with any updates or amendments.

4. To Receive an Update from Kent on Higher Education Review, QA and Regulatory Matters – Malcolm Dixon

4.1 Update on Higher Education Review and Developments at Kent.

Malcolm Dixon provided an update on recent and upcoming activity at Kent.

New Member of Staff

It was reported that a new member of staff, Tina Hagger, had joined the Quality Assurance team in October 2013 to manage new collaborative partnerships and new programmes put forward by existing partners.
Matthew Redmond would remain the lead contact for Validated Institutions as well as remaining responsible for established collaborative partnerships.

The lead contacts for Partner Colleges would remain Vanessa Nedderman and the Partnership Development Office.

Higher Education Review

It was noted that Kent would be undergoing Higher Education Review by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in March 2015.

As with previous reviews the QAA may request access to University partners however under the current review methodology this would not include partners subject to their own review by the QAA.

If access to a Partner is requested, the type of evidence that the QAA might wish to consider in relation to that partner would include:
- Latest formal agreement.
- Details of partner approval.
- Detail of the most recent periodic review.
- Detail of recent programme approvals.
- External Examiner reports.

However it was highlighted that the review would be focussed on Kent itself.

Chapter B10 – Managing Higher Education with Others

It was reported that Kent had recently revised its Collaborative Provision Policies and Procedures to ensure on-going compliance with Chapter B10 of the QAA’s UK Quality Code.

Once the revised Collaborative Provision Policies and Procedures are available partners will be advised through QA News.

Code of Practice

Relevant developments to Kent’s Code of Practice were highlighted including the development of a new Annex related to Student Engagement with Quality Assurance.

This new Annex will draw together existing information from across the University and make it available in one place.

It was also noted that Annex O (relating to Partner College awards) would be undergoing review to ensure that it remains up-to-date.

Other Changes
It was noted that in line with the QAA requirements Kent had implemented a dedicated web page through which students can access the full External Examiner report for their programme.

However due to the restrictions on Kent logins, it would not be possible for all partner students to access their programme report through this portal.

Therefore partners would be contacted about how they can also meet the requirement to make reports available in full.

Other Credit Framework / Code of Practice changes were also highlighted including:

- The introduction of two automatic referral opportunities. This practice would need to be adopted by partner institutions commencing with the summer 2014 Boards of Examiners meetings.
- The Introduction of a new Concessions grid and expanded guidance on the use of concessions - again for use from summer 2014.
- Revised requirements for providing a sample of assessed work for external examiners including an allowance for providing only a sample of work assessed in the first class band, rather than ‘all firsts’.

Information on these changes would be included in the QA News, termly e-mail to Validated Institutions and in updates to the Validation Handbook.

**Kent Survey**

The introduction of a Kent survey for Validated Institution students was reported.

The survey has been introduced so that Kent can access raw student feedback on partners and their programmes as a way of engaging with them and enhancing the overall validated student experience.

The survey would be launching in May 2014 and would ask students to comment on both their experience and also their understanding of the relationship between Kent and their place of study.

Students would receive a unique link to complete the survey, and the survey would be managed by Kent’s Quality Assurance and Planning and Business Information Offices.

5. **Research Led Teaching in Practice: What Does it Mean and Why Does it Matter?**

Fran Beaton, Senior Lecturer in Higher Education & Academic Practice and Programme Director for Kent’s Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education provided a session on research led practice.
This session considered the definition of research led teaching, what is researched and why research is carried out.

Links were made to the different aspects of research such as research for the discovery of new knowledge, research to inform a specific end and research to keep up-to-date with a subject or a sector.

Research in support of professional practice was also considered such as that related to dance, the performing arts, or medicine.

In direct relation to teaching it was identified how research can help make new links between existing subjects and therefore inform new approaches to teaching those subjects.

It was also highlighted how application of research can impact teaching through the way it encourages teaching staff to step back and consider what they do and why they do it.

The way in which a research led approach creates researchers out of students was also considered.

This highlighted how research can feed into teaching and vice versa, opening up research to broader communities, such as students, teaching colleagues and beyond.

**Post Meeting Note:** Following the session on Research Led Teaching the following link to a report and case studies on Research-Based Curricula in College Based Higher Education (CBHE) was provided for Forum attendees: [http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/college-based-he/research-based-curricula](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/college-based-he/research-based-curricula)

6. **Evaluating the Student Experience**

Dr Andrea den Boer, Director of Learning and Teaching in the School of Politics and International Relations, provided a session on best practice in evaluating the student experience.

The student experience was defined as being the entire academic experience from teaching, to the way the programme is managed.

As part of this the importance of peri-academic activity was highlighted such as staff and students engaging in open forums, the operation of societies within a school and encouragement of social activity within Schools.

It was noted that such activity helps to forge a sense of School identity, therefore enhancing the student experience.
The importance of evaluation and improvement of the student experience was also highlighted, for example through required quality assurance activity such as end of term module evaluations.

However it was also recommended that other evaluative measures are put in place to measure and improve the student experience such as mid-term evaluations.

A variety of methods to achieve this were explored for example asking students what should be stopped, started or continued within a module they are already studying.

Other key methods of evaluation such as Staff Student Liaison Committees, Programme Evaluations and National Student Surveys were also explored. The benefits of each were highlighted as was the importance of using feedback from these to influence current and future thinking.

There was also a focus on how feedback should be used. It was recommended that a staff member, such as a Director of Learning and Teaching, should be given the responsibility for considering feedback and implementing changes out of it.

In addition it was recommended that students are informed of how feedback has been acted on to ensure that they are part of this process. It was noted that this type of activity can help support student evaluation response rates with students more likely to provide feedback if they can see previous feedback being acted on.

Best practice at partner institutions was highlighted as part of the session. This included identifying the positive atmospheres created by partners, the use of final exit interviews by some partners, the use of student focus groups, and the encouragement of the student voice in annual monitoring and other developments.

7. Significant developments and updates from partner institutions since the last Forum

7.1 To receive oral updates from each partner institution representative on significant developments and good practice identified in the past year.

Attendees provided updates on any significant developments since the last forum.

- **ifs University College** – It was reported that the *ifs* had been granted University College title since the last forum. The *ifs* would also be undergoing Higher Education Review by the QAA in 2014.

- **National Centre for Circus Arts** – Circus Space became the National Centre for Circus Arts in March 2014.

  The change in name reflects the leading role the National Centre for Circus Arts is taking in supporting the wider circus sector in the UK.
• **Mid Kent College** – It was reported that Mid Kent are undertaking a refurbishment of the Maidstone campus, with refurbished buildings operational from September 2015.

• **Health Education Kent Surrey and Sussex GP Deanery** – It was noted that Health Education Kent Surrey and Sussex GP Deanery are involved in a new academic Primary Care Unit supporting the education and development of primary care practitioners and development of primary care research.

• **University of Kent** - It was also noted that Kent would be celebrating its 50\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary next academic year.

8. **Workshops**

7.1 Attendees were invited to attend workshops in the following areas for the afternoon session of the forum:

i. Running Effective Boards of Examiners.
ii. Categorical Marking: Using and Understanding the Marking Scale.
iii. Bridging the Gap: Communication, HE Administration & Use of the Student Data System.
iv. Edexcel Update

Where available presentations from these and the morning sessions are published on the Quality Assurance Office website: [http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/forum/index.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/collaborative/forum/index.html)

9. **Any Other Business**

8.1 There no items of other business were tabled for consideration.

Date of the Next Meeting – 2\textsuperscript{nd} April 2014