PARTNERSHIPS FORUM

2nd April 2015
MINUTES (unconfirmed)

Present:
Name                        Organisation
Paul Crawley                Canterbury College
Bob Gibbons                 Canterbury College
Ronke Olukoya               Canterbury College
Anna Webber                 Canterbury College
Michael Poraj-Wilczynski    Canterbury College
Dr Tim Wright               Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust
Prof. MikeMulcahy           HEKSS – Dental
Leanne Martin               ifs University College
Allison McNeill             ifs University College
Joanne Brooke               Kent Community Health Trust
Nils Franke                 LAMDA
Ian Warren                  LAMDA
Dr Amanda Bolt              LCDS
Stephen Batchelor           Mid Kent College
Tim Roberts                 National Centre for Circus Arts
Hannah Perry                Northern School of Contemporary Dance
Jane Anderson               University of Kent
Kyra Harwood-Lucas          University of Kent
Dr Louise Naylor            University of Kent
Vanessa Nederman            University of Kent
Debbie Reed                 University of Kent
Prof. Michael Went          University of Kent
Ruth Westbury               University of Kent
Malcolm Dixon               University of Kent
Tina Hagger                 University of Kent
Julie Iliffe                University of Kent
Matthew Redmond             University of Kent

1. Welcome and Introductions from the Chair – Malcolm Dixon, Quality Assurance Manager
1.1 Malcolm Dixon, the University’s Quality Assurance Manager, welcomed delegates to the Partnership Forum and introduced the order of the day.

1.2 Apologies for absence were noted.

2. Minutes of the Partnership Forum 13th March 2014 – Matthew Redmond, Administrative Assistant, Collaborative Provision

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

- The minutes of the last Partnership Forum were confirmed as an accurate record.
- It was noted that the Kent Survey, surveying all Validated Institution students, had been piloted in 2014 and would be running again this year. The survey would now also be opened to Partner Colleges so that the views of all Partner Institution students could be recorded.

3. Collaborative Provision Register – Matthew Redmond

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.
- It was also noted that the Quality Assurance Office were aware of required updates to the Partner College section of the Register, which would be made following the forum.

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, Julie Iliffe, had joined the Quality Assurance team in October 2014 to provide clerical support to Validated Institutions. It was noted that Julie would be the key point of contact in relation to student records and transcripts.

Research Framework Exercise and National Student Survey
It was highlighted that Kent had recently achieved some successes in relation to both the National Student Survey (NSS) where the University achieved 91% in the category for ‘overall satisfaction’ and the Research Framework Exercise (REF) where the University was rated 17th in the UK for research intensity.

Higher Education Review

It was reported that Kent had completed the Quality Assurance Agency’s (QAA) Higher Education Review (HER) process during the week of the 9th March 2015.

Whilst the final outcome of the review remained embargoed at the time of the forum, an update was provided on the process and nature of the review itself. It was confirmed that the full published report for the review would be available on the QAA website from June 2015.

It was noted that the review process was based on assessing the way in which Kent meets the expectations laid down in the UK Quality Code. Assessment of this began with the submission by Kent of a Self-Evaluation Document in December 2014, which considered and evidenced how University practice meets each aspect of the UK Quality Code.

Following this submission and requests for further evidence in support of the Self-Evaluation Document, a five person QAA review team visited the University for a week to meet with staff and students from across all provision.

The visit process itself included meetings involving students from across all types of collaborative provision. The review team also requested a specific day focused on partner activity.

Prior to the review visit the QAA team also identified a specific partner to meet, the London Contemporary Dance School, and as part of this meeting held sessions with both staff and students to assess their experience of being part of a Validated Institution arrangement.

It was highlighted that some of the anticipated recommendations from the review would likely relate to partnership work. These included:

- Establishing a common model of academic liaison across all partners.
- Establishing a mechanism for assessing suitability of teaching staff on partner programmes.
- Adjusting the typology of partner arrangements to clarify the nature of Franchised/Validated and Validated Plus arrangements in relation to Partner Colleges.
- Ending use of C, I, H, M to describe academic level and replacing these with University wide use of 4, 5, 6, 7.
It was noted that the Quality Assurance Office at Kent were happy to speak with any partner due to undergo HER and the significant amount of preparation that is required for the review was emphasised.

Louise Naylor reported that the current system of Higher Education Review was currently being re-considered. This had highlighted strong support for implementing a more risk-based, outcomes approach to review, such as those used in other countries where the focus is on outcomes for students and enhancement rather than the specific processes employed by an Institution.

**Post Meeting Note:** In relation to the discussion on the review of the current system of Higher Education Review, the following link to the HEFCE website was provided: [https://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2015/Name,100766,en.html](https://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2015/Name,100766,en.html)

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5. **Library Resources**

Trudy Turner, Assistant Director, Library Collections, provided a session on Library Resources at Kent.

This session considered the breadth of learning resources available to students at Kent, the availability of resources and the financial commitment that Kent is making to library resources. It was noted that the current extension of the Templeman Library, at the centre of the campus, is a very visible commitment from the University to its library resourcing.

In terms of partners the session presented best practice that could be considered and followed by Institutions as they develop their own library resources and access to materials.

In discussing how libraries can have transformative powers and how resources can enrich the experience of students, the importance of having a strategy to underpin the work that Information Services carry out was highlighted, with reference made to the specific Information Services Strategy in place at Kent.

It was reported that the quality of materials is key and that in providing students with suitable resources for study, engagement with academics and students in feedback to help further develop resources was essential.

The importance of access to resources was highlighted it was noted that total access can be difficult to achieve, and is something that should be considered in line with an individual Institution’s own needs and resources and with both cost and benefit in mind.

The shift to e-resources was also discussed including how this has led to an increased awareness of the importance of digital literacy skills for library users, and the need to ensure that the student community are upskilled in locating and using such resources.
The importance of support for library users was highlighted, with reference made to the scaled model of support in place within Kent libraries, starting with online help, then progressing to telephone, email or face-to-face support.

Also highlighted was the importance of ensuring that students are aware of the library resources in their Institution, ensuring they are visible and that students know how to access and use resources.

It was noted that Information Services are happy to discuss the needs of partners and work with them to develop and enhance their library access and resources.

6. **The Careers and Employability Service at the University of Kent**

Natalie Basden and Amy Wiggins, Careers Advisers with Kent’s Careers and Employability Service (CES), provided a session on the core services and resources provided to students - in order to give partners an indication of practice they could consider adopting.

Through this it was highlighted that CES work in a student focussed way, as well as working with Academic Schools, and other professional services at Kent, to provide support for students seeking advice and guidance on careers.

Specific types of support reported were the availability of Employability Advisers to support students in the practical aspects of finding work, the provision of one-to-one careers guidance and the availability of e-resources and resources such as employer videos and a vacancy database that student can access.

Other initiatives to support students were also noted. For example the Careers Employability Award programme, designed to improve career planning and job hunting skills. It was explained that this award is completed via quizzes, learning exercises, and assignments, leading to personalised feedback for students on their career plans.

The Employability Points scheme was also discussed. This scheme rewards students for engagement in extracurricular activities, with students then able to redeem reward points gained for opportunities related to employment, such as paid internships, training sessions and mock assessment centres. It was highlighted that the aim of this scheme is to encourage students to stand out to prospective employers.

The University’s Employability Week was also highlighted, with it noted that this event provides a week of activities aimed at raising awareness of the future skills and experience required for employment. It was reported that the most recent Employability Week had seen 5,700 students attend events across the week, at both
the Canterbury and Medway campuses. It was also reported that next year’s event will be an Employability festival, offering a range of activities over a four week period.

Detail was also provided on other areas of innovation which come under the Kent Experiences of Work (KEW) offer. Innovations highlighted included a work-experience bursary, ‘B-KEW’, which provides funding aimed at targeting widening-participation cohorts; and ‘KEW-NET’, an online mentoring scheme allowing current students to benefit from advice, work-experience and CV checks from alumni.

A work-study scheme, WS-KEW, which allows students to gain paid work on campus, was also discussed.

In terms of future developments it was noted that CES were working with Academic Schools closely to identify how employability can be incorporated into the design of programme curriculums.

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 were invited to provide updates on any significant developments since the last forum.

- National Centre for Circus Arts – Tim Roberts reported that all full-time teaching staff at the National Centre had now been able to access the PGCHE at Kent.

- Canterbury College – Michael Poraj-Wilcynski reported that Canterbury College had applied to participate in the Higher Education Review of HND Business to look at the development of employability tools.

In addition to the updates provided by attendees, Malcolm Dixon placed on record his thanks to the staff and students from a number of partners who had supported the recent Higher Education Review, including those from the London Contemporary Dance School, Rambert School of Ballet & Contemporary Dance, Northern School of Contemporary Dance and the Partner Colleges.

8. Workshops

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

i. Placement Learning – What could go wrong?
ii. Making the Most of Module Specifications.
iii. SDS Replacement Project.

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

9. Any Other Business

9.1 There were no further items of business that were tabled for consideration.

Malcolm Dixon closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

Date of the Next Meeting – 10th March 2016