

SHELL- Senate House

A strategic perspective on links with
schools and colleges in London

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The purpose of the research

- To investigate progression practice with 30 London institutions (20)
- To feed the emergent findings to the SHELL network for future sustainability in good practice.
- Period: May to September 2009

Research Aims

- Identify teaching strategies for learning
- Plan for Information, advice and guidance
- Develop innovative curriculum for level 3 & 4 progression

Potential progression outcomes

- Increased engagement of sector academic staff
- Framework for outreach work
- Shared knowledge on curriculum
- Network of sector staff through subject area collaboration

Research Rationale

- Concentrating on some of the most challenging London school and college environment
- To look at how we might collaborate on the research aims

Methodology

- 7 Academic University Schools each represented by a research field worker
- Each researcher conducted qualitative interviews with subject relevant schools and colleges (23 interview with 20 inst)
- The same format of questionnaire

The Institutions

- 7 Schools, 3 Academies, 3 Sixth Form Centres, 7 FE Colleges
- **Staff interviewed:** Careers staff, Directors of Curriculum & and Post 16 Studies, Vice Principals, Heads of Sixth, Deputy Heads, Heads of A Level subject areas

Emergent themes

- Few examples of academic dialogue
- FE wanted stronger links with Media and Business
- Any links were localised
- Operational pre- entry delivery seen as effective but informal

Emergent themes cont..

- Curriculum development core to engagement- 14-19 Diplomas
- Extended Project & Independent learning- Schools and FE
- Off the shelf work- Academies

Lessons learnt

- Key is resources- too much dependence on project funding
- Too much dependence on individual contacts
- Communications needed to shared within institutions

Lessons learnt cont....

- A need to have a strategic steer on links with school, college and Higher Education links- buy in from all
- Time frames tight- shared calendars for operational work

Concluding findings for good practice

- More differentiation of teaching for learning- strategic subject links
- Independent learning skills
- Need to share progression data and calendars
- Personalised relationship building -key
- Enhanced web sites
- Shared information on sector funding

Sustainability for the future

- More strategic approach- senior level
- Action planning for engagement
- Pairing of departments for a subject focus- tailored curriculum
- Structured approach to communications
- Resource allocation needed!

Staff quotes

- ‘What is HE doing to understand different learning needs? Whilst not dropping standards’
- ‘Catalysts are needed- Regular senior contact- Every faculty is doing something different, so personal dialogue around designing level 4 curriculum’

Models of engagement

- IAG - careers
- UCAS Preparation - admissions
- Direct Faculty Links - skills
- 14-19 Strategic Steer- learning
- Guaranteed offer linked to bursaries-recognising ability

Recommendations

Short term- Investigate 3 models

Long term- Senior Management steer on strategic and operational customised approach- communications-practice—curriculum- IT- data.