

Activity Round-up

Welcome to the Activity Round-up, a new communication from Higher Futures. The idea is to highlight some of the most interesting and innovative activities taking place across the partnership. It's not possible to capture everything here, but if you think an important activity is missing, let us know and we'll try to include it next time. This first edition covers the period from September 2007 to February 2008.

Learners are experiencing a creative range of guidance support to meet their personal and career needs; capacity building and staff development within the network is really important; identifying the learners and mapping progression routes continues; re-modelling existing courses or developing new curriculum is taking shape; the strength of the network can be measured in how the partners are working together and sharing practice.

New curriculum

- **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** and **Sheffield Hallam University** are developing a Foundation Degree in Control Technology, and are working with Foundation Degree Forward funding to attract and stimulate employer engagement.
- **The University of Sheffield** has appointed its Maths Development Officer to devise a new curriculum to support current and prospective engineering students, and is exploring progression routes into Level 6 for its Foundation Degree in Working with Communities.

Supporting progression

- **The Sheffield College** has co-ordinated our first pilot progression agreement in health and social care, covering all the college partners.
- **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** and **The Sheffield College** are leading the way in producing progression maps, including a visual progression map for health and social care to be used on the Higher Futures website.
- **All partner colleges**, through the efforts of the MIS Group, have pulled together initial data on learner numbers across all sectors - approximately more than 8,000 students - to assist progression benchmarking.

Spreading the word

- **Chesterfield College** has researched and identified its internal training needs to produce staff briefing sessions and a HE admissions guidance pack for tutors.
- **Barnsley College** have updated their HE Learning Resource Centre publications.
- **Sheffield Hallam University** has invited members of the IAG team to sit in on its admissions interviews to midwifery to help de-mystify the process and improve guidance to college learners.
- **Chesterfield College** and **Sheffield Hallam University** have been identifying learner case studies to promote vocational achievement with prospective students.

Putting learners first

- **Chesterfield College** has hosted higher education taster sessions in Events Management and Sport and Fitness.
- **Northern College** is focusing on community outreach work and 'orientation' days to contact potential learners in the community and organise further IAG support.
- **The Sheffield College** (with other college partners) organised our inaugural Careers and Higher Education Conference, which was attended by almost 200 health and social care learners.
- **Dearne Valley College** ran 'twilight sessions' to provide IAG for part-time, evening and work placement students.
- **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** funded 40 student and four staff places at a Child Care and Early Years One-Day Conference.
- **The University of Sheffield** is training former BTEC students on degree courses to act as mentors to college-based vocational learners.

Sharing best practice

- **Chesterfield College** and **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** have worked together to raise the aspirations of potential engineering learners by organising a group IAG session, led by the Engineering Sector Development Officer.
- **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** is taking a lead in sharing best practice nationally by co-ordinating the Lifelong Learning Network National Forum Engineering workstrand.
- **Doncaster College** is running a joint project with Aimhigher to bring FE and HE students together.

Coming soon...

Other developments in the pipeline include developing 'bridging' modules, analysing progression data, a practitioner conference for early years, more progression agreements in engineering and early years, targeting 'hard to reach' learners and information workshops for tutors.