

Activity Round-up

Welcome to the fourth Higher Futures Activity Round-up, a briefing newsletter designed 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 is the first Round-up of 2009, and the information is taken from partner activity reports.

Curriculum development

- **The University of Sheffield** is awaiting approval for the Landscape, Heritage and Conservation Degree, which is expected to launch in September 2009.
- **Dearne Valley College** and **the Sheffield College** each began development of Public Services Foundation degrees.
- **Sheffield Hallam University's** fast-track pilot for the Early Years Foundation Degree has been very successful, with all 11 participants successfully achieving 120 credits at Level 4.
- **The University of Sheffield's** work on the Working with Communities Foundation Degree top-up year is almost complete. The top-up route is expected to receive its first cohort of students this summer.

Supporting progression

- The Sector Development Officer at **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** has completed a progression map of engineering programmes across the partnership.
- **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** has also opened dialogue with SEMTA, ECUK, IMechE, Foundation Degree Forward, EBTA, Corus and Sheffield Forgemasters to establish routes to professional engineer status and accreditation of workplace learning.
- Sector Development Officers at **the Sheffield College** have started work with Sheffield Primary Care Trust on a similar progression agreement to the one they forged with Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, which was introduced to give employees the opportunity to progress to the Advanced Diploma Nursing Studies.
- **The University of Sheffield** has undertaken work with MASH (Maths and Statistics Help) and engineering departments to provide maths support for first year engineering students.



Sharing best practice

- **Barnsley College** received such positive feedback from their Parents' Information Evening that other departments now look set to run similar events.
- **Chesterfield College** produced a personal learning journal for their CACHE and BTEC students, which was shared across the network. Other partners are now looking to adapt the journal for their own use.

Putting learners first

- **Chesterfield College** sent transitional support postcards to more than 600 learners, who were due to progress to higher education in September or may consider applying later. These generated a number of enquiries and provided destination data for their Managed Learning Environment team.
- **Dearne Valley College** held a careers and progression event for Level 3 NVQ work-based learners in Children's Care, Learning and Development.
- **Doncaster College** facilitated workshop sessions and activities with higher education staff for 50 of their CACHE Level 3 health and social care students.
- **North Nottinghamshire College** has seen a 12 per cent overall increase in UCAS applications, compared to last year's figures, and the number applying early (before Christmas) has risen by 87 per cent.
- **Thomas Rotherham College** provided a bridging course for all new vocational students to develop the skills to succeed in higher education, using external trainers to deliver workshops on how to become an independent learner.
- **The University of Sheffield** teamed up with college IAG staff to deliver progression opportunity sessions, covering all priority sectors, to students at partner colleges.
- **Chesterfield College** has seen the number of students taking advantage of educational visits has risen by 55 per cent.

Spreading the word

- The Higher Futures brand is increasingly becoming a focus for the engineering sector, and the Sector Development Officer based at **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** has seen a five-fold increase in enquiries from employers.
- **Barnsley College** and **Thomas Rotherham College** secured coverage of Higher Futures in internal publications, with features in the Aimhigher newsletter and staff e-magazine.
- **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** and **Sheffield Hallam University** jointly ran two engineering employer events to raise awareness of Foundation Degrees and vocational progression routes.
- **Chesterfield College** hosted the first Higher Futures Early Years Forum, 'Raising standards through partnership working', which was attended by 30 delegates.
- **Sheffield Hallam University** and **Dearne Valley College** held a successful event for part-time NVQ learners to promote the university's Early Years Foundation Degree, which is being delivered at the college.