



West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network
14–19 Steering Group Meeting –
Higher Education Providers and Local Authorities

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 15th October 2010
Start time 1330 hours
Finish time 1505 hours

Present: Steve Challenger, Joanne Beaumont, Sue Holland, Jonathan Higgins, Chris Morton, Christine Byrne, Vicky Pointing, Michelle Nall, Rachel Dawson, Peter Swinden, Julia Calver, Neelam Mirza, Paul Butler, and Joanna Puzo (note taker).

Apologies: Chris Roberts, Emma Dunstan, Steve Smith, Dominic Ramsden, Diane Ayre, Wendy Chapman, Ceri Nursaw, Dave Russell, Mohan Mistry, Brian Duffy, Alison Hedley Christine Jarvis, Denis Grainger, Jan Edge, and Rebecca Baldaro

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2010.

3. Matters Arising

All of the actions had been taken forward with no further actions required.

4. Update on 14-19 Diploma Progression Agreement Activities

4.1 Progression Agreements produced, Joanne confirmed that 36, 14-19 diploma progression agreements have been developed by partners through WYLLN funding. Joanne referred members to the circulated list which gave the information about each agreement.

4.3 PA database (website link <http://www.wylln.ac.uk/Default.aspx?PageID=297>)

Joanna presented the database to the group, which is available on the WYLLN website. Joanna showed the group how to search for the 14-19 agreements and the breakdown of the profile. The WYLLN have been monitoring the progression agreements to capture the destination data with our partners. It was noted that since the development of the agreements there has been a change in government and a change in government policy in regard to the introduction of the final three diploma lines and the entitlement requirement.

Neelam informed the group that she had recently attended a UCAS event and reported that nationally 743 learners had taken a diploma at level 3 and 600 of those have applied

to HE, 89% have received an offer and 65% have taken up a place. The popular programmes are nursing, design and computing.

4.3 “The Advanced Diploma: Choose Your Route to Higher Education in West 4.4 Yorkshire” a guide for 14-19 year olds and their parents and carers”

Joanne noted the booklet which had been produced by the group over the summer and that there has been a lot of demand for the booklet by the Local Authority members.

Members discussed linking the booklet to the local areas prospectus.

The various diploma WYLLN events were noted and the subject groups that had worked together at the events. It was **AGREED** to explore developing 14-19 subject groups clustered around the WYLLN sector groups.

JB

5. 14-19 Activities during Year 4

Steve reported that although there was no funding for partners this year there are 4th year targets for partners to achieve, including progression agreements. WYLLN is considering shifting the focus away from diplomas towards 14-19 provision which would include apprenticeship and A level.

At this point the Local Authorities were invited to give an update on the diplomas within their area:

Kirklees, Peter reported that for this September the majority had been recruited at level 2 and the number had increased from last year, there were no level 1 learners. There have been two more diploma lines added. There were mixed messages on the success, many of the learners were struggling with functional skills, which included maths and this is a national issue. Progression from level 2 onto level 3 was fine and some have gone onto A levels. The feedback from learners is very positive, the staff said it was challenging but enjoyed teaching it. The availability of level 3 is an issue and how to work with the local colleges and schools and raise the knowledge and understanding of the diplomas is still a challenge. Further issues arising is the use of BTEC as an alternative/supplement to GCSEs and how this combination is then accepted for progression to level 3 programmes, especially by colleges. As a Local Authority, Kirklees is still committed to the diploma and the funding cuts have not affected the delivery of diplomas.

Bradford, Chris reported that it was a similar picture to Kirklees - there are a number of schools that are really committed to the diploma. There are currently around 20 learners on level 3 diplomas. All the level 3 learners that applied to HE in 2010 were accepted, these were mostly into local colleges.

The progression from level 2-3 is similar to Kirklees. Issues have arising when there are not enough learners to form a college group (15 generally needed now). Chris also highlighted the difficulties with Functional Skills but also pointed out that learners need to be made aware that they can re-take Functional skills if they have failed on their first attempt.

Leeds, Michelle reported that Leeds was similar to Kirklees and Bradford, the level 2 was very strong, with some level 3 and no level 1. Functional skills has also be an issue for Leeds learners.

Wakefield, Paul reported that Wakefield was similar again to the other areas. The change in government and policy has meant that many schools have stepped back from offering the diploma. However, the numbers of diploma lines available have increased to 8 lines, these are mostly at level 2 and some in level 3.

5.1 Wolf Review – Call for Evidence, Joanne spoke to the report and the intention for WYLLN to send a response. Members **AGREED** to send any information to Joanne to be included and Paul **AGREED** to send a copy of Wakefield's submission to Joanne.

LAs/PB

5.2 Advanced and Higher Apprenticeships progression routes, WYLLN is currently looking into developing progression agreements for advanced and higher apprenticeships.

5.3 14-19 Diplomas, building on activities undertaken, Joanne asked members to let WYLLN know where any focused activity is needed to support the development of new progression agreements for level 3 diplomas. The links with Advanced apprenticeships was noted as an area that WYLLN would be focusing on this year.

ALL

5.4 A level progression, WYLLN will be working with Aimhigher to develop activities to support the progression of A level FE students to HE. This has been prompted by discussions with WYLLN partners that has highlighted concerns over the application/conversion rate for A levels FE colleges into certain courses/institutions. An invitation email providing details of the joint project will be circulated to all WYLLN partners and Aimhigher colleagues.

6. Round robin – points of interest/general update from all

Neelam, noted that the UCAS guidance for best practice for diploma students was on the UCAS website. Neelam **AGREED** to send the link to Joanna for it would be added to the WYLLN website progression pages and circulated in the October newsdigest.

NM/JP

Neelam has attended an event where the London Lifelong Learning Network had presented their findings on the perceptions of the diploma from their learners. Joanna **AGREED** to circulate this with the minutes.

JP

7. Any Other Business

There were none

8. Date and time of the next meeting – Friday 4th February 2011