

Progress South Central and 14–19 Diplomas

Progress South Central is putting in place a comprehensive programme of involvement with the 14–19 Diplomas in our region, with a specific focus on progression to Higher Education.

As a result of a meeting convened in July 2009 with key Diploma contacts from the region (including representatives from the HEIs, Aimhigher, FECs, Surrey EBP and 14–19 consortia leads), a Diploma Progression Programme for 2009–10 was drawn up which will support the development and delivery of 14–19 Diplomas as potential routes to higher education across

the region. This work will include HE Days for Diploma students at two of our partner HEIs, invitations to relevant events at Universities for Diploma students and distribution of the free Surrey LearnerVoice DVD produced by VT Four S. The DVD is intended to publicise the Diploma to learners and will include interviews with current Diploma students talking about their experiences, the projects they have been undertaking and their progression/career aspirations. A spreadsheet recording diploma lines and contact details for the consortia leads has been posted on our website and will be followed by HE course profiles

where 14–19 Diploma students will be accepted and Additional Specialist Learning requirements progressing students will need to have completed.

It is hoped that work this year will then lead on to the negotiation of progression agreements in 2010–11 from Diplomas to degree-level study, and further research into how the diploma extended projects could support progression to HE.

Please refer to our website for a programme of future events and information: <http://www.progresssouthcentral.org.uk/sectors/14-19-diplomas.html>

Continuous Professional Development framework for NHS South Central

Funded by Progress South Central, NHS Education South Central commissioned Skills Academy for Health to lead a scoping exercise across all 24 hospital and primary care trusts to explore the education and training offered to support staff working in roles which are not professionally regulated. The project covered staff in clinical and non-clinical jobs with a particular emphasis on the Assistant Practitioner role.

The results will lead to a training needs analysis and a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) framework for all support staff within the NHS South Central region, including the development of Apprenticeship programmes.

The final element will be to develop a brief for education commissioners that will inform education commissioning for this important part of the healthcare workforce.

The project was completed in May 2009 and reported in July. In September, all trusts were invited to a workshop to apply the findings to their own situations, to understand the processes involved in planning and commissioning CPD and to develop action plans for their own trusts or job roles.

On 5 November, our Health and Social Care Forum was the means for NHS Education South Central to engage with learning providers, to present the project, to bring

the 'wish list' of requirements and lead a round-table discussion.

The Health and Social Care Forum is chaired by Prof Nigel Seaton, Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor of University of Surrey.

For further information, contact Ann Stainton, Development Manager Health and Social Care on 0118 378 2332 or email k.a.stainton@reading.ac.uk

Diary date

HSC forum
work-based learning
18 May 2010 University
of Reading

Open Day for FE Staff in the Land-Based Sector

In June, 13 staff from local FE colleges with land-based interests attended a bespoke Open Day at the University of Reading. The day was funded by Progress South Central and organised by the University's School of Agriculture, Policy and Development. The purpose of the day was to build and extend links between the University of Reading and Progress South Central's partner colleges.

Staff were welcomed by Professor Richard Ellis, Dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences, and went on a tour that included a visit to the state-of-the-art Hopkins Building with its huge new lab that can accommodate well over 100 students, plus a visit to the Harris Garden and the Cole Museum of Zoology. A presentation from Dr Chris Reynolds of the Animal Science Research Group led to some entertaining discussion of the effects on global warming of the methane gas produced by cows! The delegation was then taken to the University's Centre for Dairy Research, where they were told about the research currently being done with milk yields and then saw cows being milked using high-tech machinery. The day ended with a visit to the Museum of English Rural Life, where delegates were able to explore the museum and the facilities on offer for student groups.

Feedback from the staff was positive, with one delegate commenting "I really enjoyed the day. It was all really interesting. Very worthwhile." The Open Day idea will be extended over the coming academic year as part of Progress South Central's continuing work in the land-based sector, with the development of a training network for college staff working in the land-based sector across the LLN's patch.



Professionalising Admission to Higher Education in Further Education

Progress South Central is delighted to be funding a conference which will offer delegates a better understanding of the higher education admissions cycle and process.

The conference is the initiative of Bob Cozens, Head of Student Recruitment for Bucks New University, one of PSC's partner HEIs. "I have been concerned for some time that the HE sector has taken significant strides to professionalise admissions but our further education partners have not had the same opportunity to develop their admission processes."

With Progress South Central's support we now have a unique opportunity to work with other HEIs and their partner colleges to address key issues

experienced by both universities and further education colleges with the aim of enhancing the student experience and impacting upon recruitment, retention and progression to higher education".

It is expected that the conference will attract delegates such as admissions practitioners, HE co-ordinators, HE managers and Vice Principals with strategic responsibility for higher education within their colleges.

Both SPA (Supporting Professionalism in Admissions) and UCAS (University and Colleges Admissions Service) are very happy to support and participate in this conference and the key note speakers will be Janet Graham, Director of SPA and Mary Curnock Cook, CEO designate of UCAS.

The all day conference will be held at Missenden Abbey, Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire on Tuesday 2 March 2010.

The conference will be free of charge to delegates. A detailed programme for the day and booking details will be available on the Progress South Central website in due course www.progresssouthcentral.org.uk. However, as there has been significant interest already, practitioners are advised to register their details early to ensure a place.

To register or for further information please contact Debby Holmes via Dholme02@bucks.ac.uk 01494 52214 ext 4240.



New model Progression Agreement

PSC has substantially revised its Progression Agreement model. Working to HEFCE's guideline that agreements should offer cohesion, clarity and certainty to students about to enter higher education, the progression agreement offers a range of activities which will help prepare students for HE. By raising awareness and developing appropriate skills, students can prepare thoroughly for higher education and, as a consequence, are better equipped to perform well during the application (and selection) process.

An essential aspect is that both the feeder and receiving institutions work together. A progression agreement will encourage curriculum focused discussion between further and higher education sectors to ensure appropriate progression pathways from FE level 3 into higher education are identified. FE and HE sectors will also be able to liaise on admissions policy and agree clear entry criteria.

Institutions will agree what activities are appropriate and feasible, where and when they will take place and who will be responsible for implementation. A suggested menu of activities is provided on the agreement pro-forma but institutions can modify these to

best suit the needs of students and reflect the nature of curriculum areas.

The first new model Agreement between Strode's College and Bucks New University was signed on 8 October, by Ruth Gunstone (Deputy Dean, Bucks New University) and Frank Botham (Principal, Strode's College). Strode's students in performing arts, music and media will participate in workshops at the University and receive additional guidance in preparation for their progression to higher education.

We believe Progress South Central's new model Progression Agreement is versatile and adaptable to various curriculum areas and could also promote internal progression where higher education is offered in a further education college. It is currently being trialled by Oxford & Cherwell Valley College, whose support we gratefully acknowledge, and interest has also been shown by others in our partnership.

If you would like more information on Progression Agreements please contact psc@reading.ac.uk or visit our website www.progresssouthcentral.org.uk



What do you think of us?

Thanks to all those partners and stakeholders who responded to our recent self-evaluation survey. This gave you the opportunity to feed back on the effectiveness of our communications, on how well you feel we are engaging with key stakeholders in the region and on the impact of the work that we have supported. 88% of respondents agreed that Progress South Central is funding work that is of real value. Comments from individual respondents included:

"We are working in partnership with (Progress South Central) on a number of areas which we have identified as strategic priorities."

"Links with (Progress South Central's HE/ FE Liaison Officer) have generated much partnership working."

"Progress South Central is recognised within our organisation as providing a reliable and valued service."

More detailed results from the survey are available on our website at www.progresssouthcentral.org.uk/sectors/monitoring-and-evaluation.html

Employer booklet

Progress South Central's recently published Employer Guide to Higher Education – *Developing your workforce* sets out to explain why higher level skills, available through work-based higher education, can benefit a business and its workforce. The free booklet also explains the various levels and types of qualification available and where an employer can access higher education locally and regionally.

Designed to be an easy reference to accessing the employer facing services provided by the universities and colleges in our partnership, the employer guide also gives other regional and national links useful to all employers.

There are good business reasons why employers should consider supporting their workforce to achieve higher level qualifications and it is clear from the

range of employer services, courses and qualifications accessible through this guide that the universities and further education colleges in our region are fully prepared to meet employer demand.

A PDF version can be downloaded from our website

www.progresssouthcentral.org.uk



CRISP

Creative Industries is one of our key sectors and in September we launched 'CRISP' the Creative Industries Special Projects fund. This substantial fund, with a total value of £100,000, is intended to support projects, including research, which will directly and indirectly benefit current and future learners studying creative arts, design, media and performing arts.

The parameters of acceptable projects are broad but outcomes should demonstrate potential benefits across the Progress South Central partnership. Although the deadline for submission of CRISP project proposals has now passed, you are invited to contact Godfrey Smith, Development Manager for Creative Industries, if you would like to discuss future funding of projects in this sector:

g.j.smith@reading.ac.uk

IAG Conference

On Thursday 15 October 2009, Progress South Central hosted a free conference for IAG practitioners across our four counties, at Easthampstead Park Conference Centre in Bracknell.

Fifty participants took part in workshops on 14–19 diplomas, foundation degrees, the Qualifications and Credit Framework and heard about the Reading Borough Council E-learning Advisers Course.

The keynote workshop was led by Tony Macfadyen and Carol Fuller from the Institute of Education at the University of Reading. They reported on research they had undertaken into the Information Advice and Guidance provided for Year 11 Students regarding their Post 16 Options, research which was funded by Progress South Central.

More information regarding outcomes from the conference and copies of the Year 11 IAG report can be found at:

<http://www.progresssouthcentral.org.uk/iag/>

Executive Board

Progress South Central are glad to welcome Professor Derek Godfrey from Bucks New University and Dr. Craig Klafter from Oxford Brookes University as the newest members of the Executive Board. They join Professor Rob Robson (University of Reading, *Chair*), Professor Nigel Seaton (University of Surrey), Steve Billcliffe (Abingdon and Witney College), representing Oxford Brookes colleges, Peter Thorn (Berkshire College of Agriculture), representing University of Reading colleges, Pauline Odulinski (Aylesbury College), representing BNU colleges, Iain Wolloff (Farnborough College), representing University of Surrey colleges in providing strategic oversight to the project.

Diary

Professionalising Admission to Higher Education in Further Education

Missenden Abbey
2 March 2010

Creative Industries Forum

University of the Creative Arts
18 January 2010

Health and Social Care Forum

University of Reading
18 May 2010

www.progresssouthcentral.org.uk

The Lifelong Learning Network for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey

Progress

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