

###### Link Tutor Forum

###### File note of meeting held on 1st May 2013

###### 1.

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| --- | --- |
| Present | Apologies |
| Alison Reeves | Alison Proule |
| Bob Parker | Briony Williams |
| Chris Hughes | David Mycock |
| Colin Wood | Gwenda Scriven |
| Daniel Eastough | Helen Taylor |
| Dawn Goodall | Huw Richards  |
| Alan Dixon | Irmgard Tischner |
| Deborah Hodson | Jan Quallington |
| Frances Brett | Jane Perry |
| Gareth Dart | Janet Harrison  |
| Helen Corke | Judith Davies |
| Jackie Musgrave | Lorraine Weaver |
| Karen Appleby | Madeline Burton |
| Karima Kadi-Hanifi | Matthew Jellis |
| Louise Heath | Maureen Gamble |
| Sam Uppal | Rob Herbert |
| Sue Cuthbert | Ruth Hewston |
| Alex Radu | Stuart Currie |
| Sue Dutson | Trevor Wright |
| Sue Lilyman |  |
| Sue Wood-Griffiths |  |
| Wendy Messenger  |  |
|  |  |

Deborah Hodson welcomed everyone to the Forum.

**2. Notes of the last meeting, 24th November 2013**

The notes were approved as an accurate record.

**3. Matters Arising**

The forum was referred to the Matters Arising paper where it was noted that all actions had been completed.

### 4. Worcester Student Union and Connections with Partner Students (Sam Uppal – Vice President: Education of UW Students’ Union)

4.1 Sam Uppal acknowledged the need for greater contact between UW Students’ Union and partner student representatives. Sam is currently working on ways to make it easier for partner students to engage with the StAR (Student Academic Representatives) system. In particular, she has introduced an on-line training package for StARs which should be promoted to partner students together with a StARs handbook and the creation of a Facebook page. The SU currently has a database of all StARs which is utilised to provide support and guidance to reps the database is linked to StARs registration via the SOLE page. If course leaders do not register their StARs via SOLE then the SU has no way of identifying them. Currently no partner StARs have been registered (with the exception of WCT courses) and therefore have not been privy to the correspondence and support available. It was agreed that greater promotion by all parties was needed, it was noted that the online handbook and online training is available via a direct link on the Students Union Website <http://www.worcsu.com/>

**Action: LH to resend process for uploading StARs to all HE Managers, Course Leaders and Link Tutors. Link tutors to remind and encourage course leaders to enter StAR information onto SOLE and remind StARS of the Facebook page.**

4.2Subject to budgetary constraints the SU confirmed they would like to visit as many partners as possible but need to know the courses delivered by each one.

**Action: LH to provide SU with the list of current courses delivered by partners**

4.3 The link tutors advised that a member of the SU attend the inductions at partner institutions where possible. The SU agreed to explore this further.

4.4 It was confirmed that the SU is currently working on completion of a mini film for course leaders in order to promote StARs in lectures and the development of a StARs conference accessible to partner students.

4.5 It was confirmed that an award scheme has been introduced for participation in the STAR scheme, rewarded with bronze-silver-gold awards depending on their degree of participation (see criteria). These awards are then acknowledged in the students HEA transcript it is therefore imperative that course leaders enter student’s Star information via the staff sole page. It was agreed that consideration needs to be given to ensure the capture of achievement for students on externally funded courses whose direct access to SOLE may be restricted.

 **Action: Link Tutors to remind partner course leaders to enter StAR information via their Staff SOLE page.**

4.6 It was agreed that it would be beneficial for Sam to do a session at the Partner Staff Development Day in September 2013.

**Action: AQU to invite Sam to do a session at the next Staff Development Day.**

4.7 It was agreed that in the Annual Collaborative Checklist, Academic Student Rep should be added to the end of the Link Tutor role.

**Action: LH to add the above into the Annual Collaborative Checklist prior to September 2013.**

**5. Academic Integrity Process with Partners and Policy on Turnitin**

5.1 Following several external examiner comments regarding an institutional policy on Turnitin a discussion took place on current practice of partners regarding investigations of cases of learner incompetence and alleged cheating. It was agreed that promotion to partners of UW’s Cheating procedure is imperative and link tutors should reinforce the requirement to refer all cases of learner incompetence and alleged cheating to the Academic Integrity Tutors (AIT).

**Action: Link tutor to promote UW’s Cheating procedure including the requirement to refer all cases to AITs.**

5.2 It was agreed that AQU would circulate the current Cheating procedure and list of AITs to all link tutors and it was suggested that AITs introduce themselves to staff at the start of the year.

**Action: LH to circulate the link to the** [**Procedure for Investigations of Cases of Learner Incompetence and Alleged Cheating**](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/Proceduresforinvestigationofallegedcheating.pdf) **together with a list of current AITs.**

**6. The role of the Link Tutor in contingency plans for staffing**

6.1 Due to the challenges of staffing in partner organisations primarily as a result of the current economic climate a discussion on the role of the link tutor in contingency plans for staffing took place.

6.2 It was agreed that Link Tutors should be conscious of any potential issues and escalate any concerns to the Institute and AQU as quickly as possible upon identification of any serious issues. It was emphasised that it was not for the link tutor to resolve such issues but they should have that awareness and communication with the appropriate people in their institute and the Head of Collaborative Programmes.

**Action: LH to circulate the current list of senior members of staff in each Institute responsible for collaborative.**

6.3Suggestions for appropriately managing staffing difficulties in partners included the provision of case studies and introduction of a risk audit approach where there is an expectation of appropriate programme planning.

**7.** [**Policy for Approving Marketing and Publicity Materials for University of Worcester Collaborative Partnerships and Provision Delivered by Partner Organisations**](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/PolicyforApprovingMarketingandPublicityMaterials.pdf)

7.1 SC circulated the policy to all forum members. It was emphasised that it is a requirement that all draft publicity or marketing material produced by The Partner for University awards or agreements must be sent to the relevant University Head of Institute (or nominee) who will approve the academic and procedural content. This will then be forwarded to the Communications and Development Partnership Account Manager (Jane Brittain or nominee) who will check the marketing aspects of the materials.

7.2 Following discussion the link tutors endorsed the existing process and agreed it was fit for purpose. It was agreed that link tutors would raise awareness of the policy and should periodically check the partner’s website for correct information.

**Action: Link tutors to raise awareness of the marketing and publicity materials policy for collaborative partnerships and provision and check the partner’s website periodically.**

**8. Policy and Progress Updates**

8.a[University’s Access Agreement 2013/14](http://www.offa.org.uk/agreements/University%20of%20Worcester%200046%20access%20agreement%202013-14%20-%20amended.pdf)

It was noted that the University’s Access Agreement for 2013/14 had been published and included fees for the individual undergraduate courses on pages 1-3.

8.b Reminder of Registered Lecturer process

Link tutors were reminded that all partner lecturers teaching on UW courses must first be registered as registered lecturers and Margenka Ramsey is now the key contact in AQU regarding all forms and enquiries. The form and information on the website has been updated.

8.c Expectations in relation to work-based and placement learning

It was confirmed that there had been a recent staff development event on risk based learning which alluded to the challenges of operational arrangements in WBL and achievement of practice requirements that are essential to achievement of the award particularly if these requirements are not embedded within modules. It was emphasised that UW’s preference is for WBL to be embedded within modules, if they are not embedded but are essential to achievement of the award then they should be included within a 0 credit module to enable effective monitoring and recording of the practice requirements. Link tutors were asked to question practice arrangements around achievement and recording to include monitoring and support mechanisms.

It was reported that the WBL [Audit Record](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/WBPLAuditRecord.docx) and [Risk assessment](http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/WBPLRiskAssessmentGuidanceandTool.docx) tool had been shared with partners and should be completed as courses go through approval and periodic review if they have any work based learning elements in them. This is to ensure comparability of student experience and assurance that there is a tracking system and appropriate mechanisms in place for recording and monitoring of all WBL elements.

8.d Amendments to regulations for degree classification for 20 credit module courses

It was confirmed that following the March ASQEC the [Undergraduate Regulatory Framework](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/documents/UndergraduateRegulatoryFramework2007entry.pdf) had been amended to include an additional table detailing degree classifications for 20 credit modules – please refer to section 17.7 and page 30. It was acknowledged that this is unlikely to affect partner courses.

8.e [Peer Learning through Observation Policy](http://www.worc.ac.uk/adpu/899.htm)

It was confirmed that the policy has now been updated. SC reported that she had been advised by some partner staff that during the peer observation requirement of the PG Cert some partner staff are being observed on an FE OFSTED basis and would prefer to be observed under HE. It was acknowledged that such concerns could be a result of how peer learning is presented and how it is interpreted.

8.f [UKPSF](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/UKPSF) and staff development

It was acknowledged that there is an increasing expectation that all lecturers should be fellows of HEA which includes partner staff that have significant involvement in HE. Unfortunately HEA has refused to let UW give partner staff the opportunity to follow the portfolio route therefore they must obtain individual recognition or complete the PG Cert in Learning and Teaching in HE. HEA do not recognise DTTLES. HEA are currently undertaking road shows at larger partner colleges to promote the individual recognition route to HEA accreditation.

**9. Any Other Business**

9.1 The forum officially congratulated Debbie Hodson on her promotion to Head of AQU and it was confirmed that due to the role change this would be Debbie’s last Link Tutor Forum, the forum thanked Debbie for all her hard work.

9.2 [Ethics Policy](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/researchportal/documents/Ethics_Policy_Final_approved_by_AB_4_13.pdf). For information the forum was alerted to the new policy on the ethical approach to research projects recently approved by Academic Board which would be shared with partners. It was reported that the Director of Research Development in the Graduate School would present the policy at the next forum.

9.2 Thematic Audit of Partnerships. The forum was notified that a thematic audit of partnerships would be taking place week commencing 13th May 2013. It was confirmed that it would be a paper based review focusing on the Collaborative policy, recent partnership approvals and how UW manages and works with partners. Link tutor forum notes and HE Manager Forum notes have been requested. It was reported that the auditors have requested meetings with 3 link tutors and DH would be in contact with those identified in due course.

**10. Date of next meeting:**

Wednesday 27th November 2013 at 12:15-14:00, room TBC