WHAT HAS HIGHER EDUCATION DONE TO SUPPORT THE DIPLOMA?

17 September 2009

DELYTH CHAMBERS CONSULTING

What HE says it wants of the education system

- Students with better ‘generic’ skills and no need of ‘remedial’ support
- Students with more experience of in-depth, extended study
- Less ‘atomised’ and more synoptic assessment
- More help with differentiation
- Qualifications and curriculum designed with their needs in mind ie better articulation between HE and pre-HE curricula
- Help to widen participation

What will the 14-19 reform programme mean for HE ?

In 2010, virtually all young people entering higher education will have had a different education experience from those who have come before: different content, different learning styles, different assessment methods and criteria

14-19 Reform: the challenge for HE

Teaching and learning

- the skills and knowledge of incoming students
- Possible mismatches in the experience of assessment
- Possible mismatches in learning styles
- the HE curriculum: what is being taught and how it is assessed

Student recruitment

- patterns of demand for subjects in HE
- Expectations of what, and how it is delivered
- Admissions entry requirements

Young People Directorate

14-19 HE Engagement and Diplomas

Delyth Chambers

HE Advisor

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The Higher Education Engagement Strategy

- Universities and colleges of HE, have a very strong pull effect and influence strongly the choices that 14-19 year olds make
- The more HEIs understand and are involved, the more likely they are to be positive about new qualifications for progression
- Balance needs to be right: first cohorts will be small, therefore concern about some institutions not seeing many students with new qualifications
- Encouragement to schools and colleges to use local networks to involve HE in their planning and to provide real examples
- Encouraged HEIs to provide entry requirement information in good time for student choices

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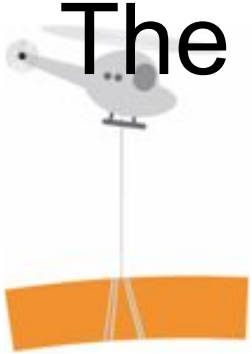

The Higher Education Engagement Board

now

Higher Education Progression Board

Chairs: Prof Deian Hopkin, London South Bank University and Ian Valvona, Deputy Director, Young People's Division, DCSF

Universities UK
Guild HE
HEFCE
Higher Education Academy
HE group representatives (RG, 1994, Million+, University Alliance)
UKCES

QCA
DIUS
AoC
UCAS
Foundation Degree Forward
Sixth Form Colleges Forum

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What has the HE engagement project been doing?

- Communications activities to raise awareness
- Encouragement of engagement activities
- Research

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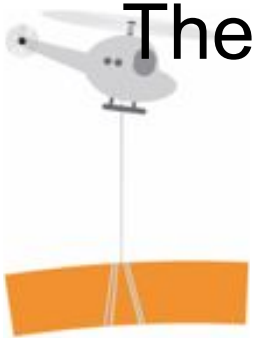
The Higher Education Engagement Strategy



- Information and communication programme:
  - Early regional conferences to raise awareness
  - Information pack
  - Timeline of actions for HE
  - Newsletters
  - Website with resources
  - Press and PR: use of case studies, champions, local information
  - University briefing sessions
  - Regular input to meetings of HE staff eg. Academic Registrar's Council, UCAS/DCSF Curriculum Development Group

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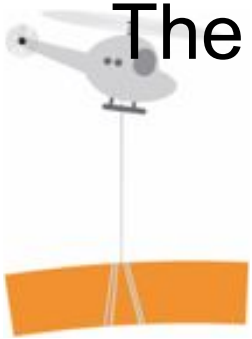
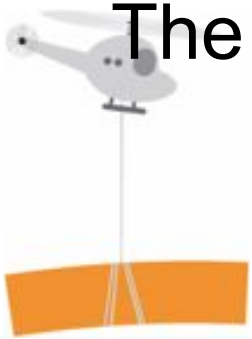
The Higher Education Engagement Strategy



- Engagement programme
  - HE contributions to Diploma Development Partnerships
  - Higher Education Academy Subject Groups
  - HEI contributions to Gateway Partnerships
  - Encouraging HEIs to work with colleges and schools
    - Offering resources for EP students – libraries, museums
    - Offering CPD on teaching research methods
    - Student mentoring programmes

The Higher Education Engagement Strategy



- Research programme:
  - 1994 Group research, HEFCE LLN projects
  - Research on attitudes to A* and Extended Projects
  - Progression route mapping
  - NFER report

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Opportunities for HE engagement

- Curriculum design
- Extended Projects: resources, mentoring and supervision
- Information and guidance – course level requirements
- Progression agreements – Life Long Learning Networks
- Delivery – particularly high level
- Continuous professional development for teachers eg. Teaching of research methods, how to supervise research projects
- Mentoring – students and staff
- Assessment and quality assurance

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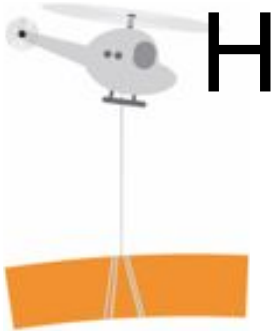
Benefits cited by HE for being involved

- Develop contacts and enhance reputation locally and regionally
- Contribute to recruitment
- Contribute to widening participation
- Provide relevant focus and experience for undergraduate and post graduate students
- Foster close working relationships between staff
- Communicate IAG to feeder institutions
- Influence preparation for HE



HE engagement: is it working?
Actual engagement

- Emergence of different models of engagement
- Contributions to DDPs
- 79 institutions are members of diploma consortia in Phase 2, expected to rise for Phase 3
- Joint IAG activities with Diploma deliverers
- CDP modules for teachers eg. On teaching research methods for extended projects
- Undergraduate mentoring of diploma and extended project students

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Engagement examples: Creative and Media Diploma

- Trinity Laban – admissions to specialist music and dance colleges
- University of Sunderland – CPD modules
- University of Teesside – Bridging Module
- Bournemouth Media School – MA
- Thames Valley Uni. – Extended Project
- Central School of Speech and Drama – celebration of applied learning – 3 July Embassy Theatre, London
- UKADIA / NALN – communication, web site development
- Nottingham Trent Uni. & New College Nottingham – bridging module with CPD

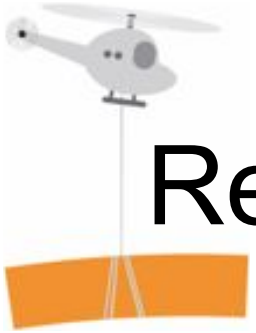
HE response to Diplomas

- Diploma statements on UCAS website
  - All universities
- Prospectus and website entry requirement info available
- 2010 Course Search data available for Phase 1
  - Over 80% of courses state Diploma as appropriate entry qualification
  - Including ~60% Russell Group, ~75% 1994 Group
  - Positive Universities UK report

HE response to Diplomas

NFER research:

- HEIs of all types are strongly supportive of the breadth of learning and range of skills that Diploma students develop.
- University Vice Chancellors are confident that Diplomas will deliver the qualities they want in undergraduate students: flexible, independent working and experience of a work placement.
- Universities are enthusiastic about the Extended Project – a crucial component of the Diploma – and felt it developed the learning skills universities look for: critical thinking; analysis; and research skills.
- Universities welcome the opportunity to widen participation to higher education, commenting that Diplomas will bring new types of student and new styles of learning into higher education



Reactions to Extended Projects :

- general enthusiasm
- likely to be useful indicator of motivation and potential
- potentially useful for differentiating between applicants at both offer stage and clearing

Want to know more about:

- Assessment criteria
- How will be delivered
- Example projects from pilot phases
- How can ensure that students gain maximum benefit from the experience

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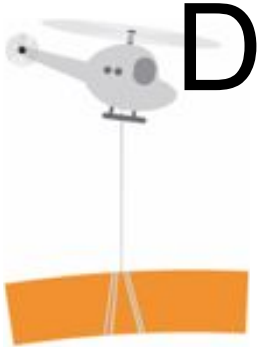

Diploma options for entry requirements

- Specific Diploma, specific ASL eg named A-level or any A-level
- Specific Diploma, any ASL
- Any Diploma, specific ASL
- Specific Diploma, specific ASL ***PLUS*** additional qualifications

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THE UNIVERSITY of York

Department	Advanced Diploma acceptability	Diploma grade requirement	ASL grade requirement	ASL qualification/ subject	Additional information
Archaeology	Yes	B	B	A level	
Biology	No				
Biochemistry	Yes	B	A	A level Chemistry	
Chemistry	Yes	B	A	A level Chemistry	
Computer Science and Engineering	Yes	B	A	A level Mathematics	

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Diplomas and University Admissions

- First applications for 2010 will come through from now
- Small numbers will mean that some institutions will receive very few or no applications
- Small numbers will allow institutions to consider applications carefully and to ‘try out’ the qualification
- Many courses want an A-level as ASL, but will look carefully at students who chose ASL before entry requirements were published
- ASL requirements vary by institution type and course subject

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In summary: What has HE done to support the Diploma?

- Become engaged in a variety of ways
- Contributed to its development
- Providing on-going support to delivery
- Gained awareness and undertaken careful consideration
- Accorded it equal status with A-level (NFER research)
- Provided extensive information on entry requirements for applicants

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Being optimistic:

- The reforms will deliver better prepared students to higher education:
  - Knowledge
  - Skills
  - Motivation
- The reforms will allow greater differentiation between students
- Diplomas will become a ‘standard’ route into HE
- Diplomas will be the preferred entry route to some programmes

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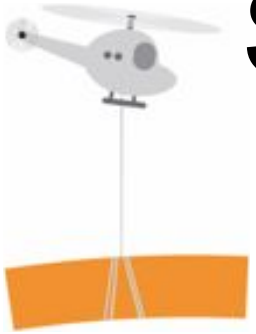

Sources of information

- www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19
- www.ucas.com
- www.universitiesUK.ac.uk

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