



`Challenging Thinking and Sharing Practice in Work Related Learning in Scottish Higher Education` - Tuesday 10 June 2008

Event Feedback – Discussion Groups

Morning Session

How to enable Graduate Differentiation:

- Help students to recognise the value of all experiences;
- Consideration of `point of realisation` in engaging students;
- Support students on journey to understand who they are;
- Balance between giving guidance to students and giving them time to develop their individuality/creativity.

Employers and Universities Working Together – to ensure students gain skills and experience and get actively involved in WRL:

- Link WRL to Learning & Teaching Agenda;
- Confidence Building;
- Forge links to earlier stages of education system;
- Encourage a variety of work experience e.g. before university;
- Employers should offer a variety of WRL opportunities and these should be embedded in the curriculum;
- PDP as empowerment – reflection, autonomy and reward individuals?
- Imaginative engagement with employers, beyond placements and throughout the curriculum, networking and incentivise employers;
- Incentivise and support university staff in new initiatives.

Policy Makers:

- Long –term dialogue, with a view to sustainability;
- Increase resources – increase placements;
- Value undergraduate labour;
- Increase the political importance of knowledge transfer metrics.

Afternoon Session

Barriers/Issues in developing and embedding WRL in the curriculum:

- Perceptions of WRL (and beliefs and attitudes);
- Lack of awareness;
- Time and Money;
- Research-led environment;
- Diversity of student population;
- Types of reward for staff and students;
- Sustainability – continuation of successful projects;
- Staff and student engagement.

Opportunities for expanding WRL:

- Value what education is about – challenge status quo;
- Do it differently - motivation, creativity and move away from traditional pedagogy;
- Communication – increase awareness and stimulate discussion;
- Focus on future, as well as now;
- Throughout department - link to dissertation?
- Use students to persuade peers;
- Resources – project funding, dedicated staff and external staff?
- Recognition of innovative teaching;
- Clear links between academic staff and support staff;
- Need political will;
- Collaboration, internal and external, (many opportunities and ideas, creative thinking);
- Alumni and Case Studies.

Benefits/Drawbacks to assessing or accrediting WRL:

- Evaluation and measurement – who assesses?
- Clarification of Roles and responsibilities in assessment process;
- Students take it seriously (benefit);
- Over assessment/unfamiliarity with assessment type (drawback);
- How to develop criteria? How to write Learning Outcomes?

N.B There were not enough 'subject' differences to delineate the points per subject