

## Minutes of meeting – NEON Working Group – Supporting BTEC students

### University of Suffolk – Monday 28<sup>th</sup> January

Attendees: Sasha Anderson (UEA), Chris Bayes (Lancaster University – Chair), James Beardsmore (Kingston University), Rachel Cutress (IntoUniversity), Clare Gartland (University of Suffolk), Annette Hayton (NERUPI), Heather King (UEA), David MacKay (Pearson), Mark Smith (University of Lincoln), Charlotte Steggall (NEACO), Rebecca Sykes (University of Leeds)

CB introduced the meeting

Attendees introduced themselves via roundtable introductions

CB shared reflections on previous meeting

#### ToR review

The group conducted a review of the Terms of Reference for the Working Group – See document for agreed changes

#### NERUPI presentation

CB introduced Annette Hayton (NERUPI)

Annette introduced NERUPI (Network for Evaluating and Researching University Participation Interventions) framework

Started by touching on tension between academic and vocational education within the UK

Annette highlighted how OfS and third sector organisations don't have access to research portals in order to inform practice

Touched on the 'journey' regarding monitoring and evaluation of WP activities – APP returns, NCOP returns – HEFCE (funder) to OfS (regulator)

Discussion on what we are being measured on – Numbers – How many participated? Was it worth it (VfM)?

Annette brought in some examples from Goldsmiths and Bath – Maths support – Pre-arrival

Kingston and 'Transforming Transitions' – Have highlighted the ability of BTEC students to work in teams, the project based, practical nature of BTEC students is "valued by academics", but often not assessed via courses

Professor Roger Kneebone (Imperial College) – A Level students in medicine have academic ability, but not capable in terms of the practical nature required for this course

#### 'Jigsaw of evaluation'

- Monitoring (Counting) – The numbers of students participating in interventions

- Tracking and statistical sources – Services such as HEAT able to provide information about engagement with activities and destinations

- Process Evaluation – Not considered as important, but things like this enable us to understand things about the participants – allergies, room bookings etc and content - to enable us to improve practice

We need insights from both academics and practitioners to contribute towards the discourse around evaluation – ‘Theories of change’

Important for the sector to move beyond descriptive research, but ‘theories of change’ being currently presented are too simplistic and linear

A lot of new academics teaching within UK universities aren’t from the UK and therefore have little or no idea about the UK education system – Discussed this “Gulf of knowledge” as a group with reference to BTEC qualification

Impact evaluation – Discussed how OFFA funding enabled Annette to bring in an Evaluation Officer @ Bath – Reference to the document in presentation

Theory – ‘Pedagogies of the oppressed’ – Paulo Freire and Bourdieu – How different aspects of culture are valued – Example of how this is ascribing to the privileged classes rules

Sharon Gewirtz – ‘Cloning the Blair’s’ - New Labour's programme for the re-socialization of working-class parents -

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02680930110054353?journalCode=tdep20>

Cleft habitus – <https://clefthabitus.com/>

#### The NERUPI Framework

- Social and Academic capital
- Habitus
- Skills capital
- Intellectual & Subject capital

Enables staff to have a shared approach to practice

#### On track to Bath

Annette delivered a slide on this giving the example of how this worked in practice

#### Action research reflective cycle for WP

Brookes Engage – Evaluation

Related the difficulties faced in WP with ‘development studies’ – Development of third world countries

NERUPI Event – **11<sup>th</sup> March** – The capability approach: Beyond the deficit model for student success – Look again in the book ahead of this

#### Actions

CB to ask colleagues who have attended the first two meetings to map out an intervention targeting BTEC students using the NERUPI framework ahead of the next meeting in Leeds

Looking to use the institutions in a small WG to map their practice

Look at which institutions are currently members of NERUPI and how these could be part of a sub-group of the WG

Into University (Rachel Cutress)

Rachel delivered a presentation based on the idea of developing a set of resources for BTEC students, which can be delivered in pre-arrival phase

Would be good to have NERUPI underpinning this work

Existing projects such as 'On track to Bath – BTEC' – Could be delivered in IntoUniversity centres – Difficulty of logistically accessing each college in a geographic area – This would build on existing work with Into

Look to develop an ambassador pool model – Using students who had entered HE via a BTEC pathway and to celebrate their successes – Use these to develop case studies on a national basis

Discussed the need to give teachers more information and signposting around the BTEC programmes

Give ourselves a longer-term period to deliver this

### **Actions**

Rachel to lead a subgroup made up of a small number of institutions

Colleagues interested in being involved to notify RC ahead of Leeds meeting

### **AOB**

David MacKay - Pearson – David stated he would be happy to come in and deliver presentations at institutions and to teachers

James Beardsmore – Discussed teaching differences between A Levels and BTECs and what the differences are – How the Working Group could support this – Brunel and Sheffield

NCOPs could potentially using their funding to support 'buy-out' of FECs

Mark Smith and Clare Gartland felt we should create a 'depository of information' – via the NEON website to help us complete an audit – JISCmail

### **Action**

Mark to liaise with Maria-Anna on this