

# NEON's Supporting BTEC students Working Group

Wednesday 5th February 2020, University of Leeds

**Attendees:** Chris Bayes (Lancaster University) – Chair, Clare Gartland (University of Suffolk), Daniel Bond (University of Leeds), David MacKay (Pearson), Emily Towler (University of Leeds), Emma Parr (The University of Sheffield), Jen Pekins (University of Cumbria), Kordel Dickinson (Edge Hill University), Laura Brosnan (IntoUniversity), Maria-Anna Petrou (NEON), Matthew Williams (Manchester Metropolitan University), Rebecca Sykes (University of Leeds), Rebecca Foster (UEA), Teresa Flowers (University of Nottingham), Teresa Storey (University of Leeds).

## Introduction:

Chris introduced the meeting and provided an overview of the Working Group to date.

## Feedback from Access Academy and HELOA conference

Chris, Rebecca & Rebecca feedback from the two events that the Working Group took part in.

Feedback from delegates from both events were very positive. The feedback included:

- This session should have been obligatory for everyone, it was FANTASTIC
- Supporting BTEC students' - really interesting and I enjoyed hearing from all the different speakers, especially the tips for effective FE college liaison
- My University is still working on how we support BTEC students so hearing their best practice was super valuable. We can create meaningful outreach and WP now.

One feedback was the there wasn't 'enough focus on non-Russell group'. This is something Chris will look at for future presentations.

**Action:** Maria-Anna to circulate the Working Group LinkedIn page which includes the presentation from the HELOA conference.

Link to the LinkedIn Working Group - <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8805592/>

## Discussion around hosting a BTEC learner themed event

Chris suggested that the Working Group facilitate a BTEC learner themed event. Based on similar principles to a commuter students event that Edge Hill University are running. This stemmed from discussions following discussions around 'Connecting Research and Practice' conference, which Chris co-convened with University of Sussex colleagues (Dr Louise Gazeley & Gino Graziano (now Director of WP @ Southampton) – Programme attached.

Overall, the Working Group seemed keen on the idea of the Working Group running a simple event but ask for more information on the format of the event.

**Action:** Kordel agreed to share the template for the commuter student event with Chris.

## Sub-group feedback

Rebecca and Laura shared a workshop they have created for Year 12s to ensure BTEC students are aware of the challenges and empower students to recognise the skills they have already that will help with transition to university.

Laura and Rebecca are launching a pilot workshop in June/July.

**Action:** All members to share on LinkedIn the resources they might have that can be used or adapted for the workshop. **Resources needed include:**

- A comprehensive skills audit
- A problem solving activity on recognising challenges and advantages
- An interactive game on referencing or academic writing styles
- A practice paraphrasing activity
- Information sheets for students to take away
- Scenario cards and answer sheet for their first week or term at university
- Key words / Jargon sheet
- List of useful resources to access and take home

**Action:** MAP to make an ask for resources in the NEON newsletter.

**Action:** NEON (or Pearson) to create a website/page for BTEC students full of resources from the Workshop.

**Action:** Alex Blower was nominated to look at creating an applied reference / academic writing task.

Once the pilot has been completed, next steps on how to take the workshop forward will be discussed with the Working Group.

**Action:** Rebecca and Laura to look at creating a timeline for launching the workshop and any steps after.

### **Guiding principles – Discussion around theming the following meetings around these**

Guiding principles – five different principles have been developed, including:

- Championing fair admissions practices for BTEC students
- Conducting meaningful outreach activity with BTEC students in schools and colleges –
- Supporting the transition and student success of BTEC students at university
- Understanding the needs of BTEC students through engagement with research
- Developing BTEC students for future employment via career readiness initiatives

Principles has been developed to support BTEC students across the ‘student lifecycle’ journey

Following discussions, it was agreed to take out the ‘Developing BTEC students for future employment via career readiness initiatives’ and instead include one on ‘changing the atmosphere at HEI’.

It was discussed changing the name of the Working Group (one suggestion was vocational students). However, after the in-depth discussion it was agreed to keep the same the same, as BTEC students need to highlight in the name of the group.

**Action:** Chris has changed the ToR to reflect the changes the focus of the Working Group and the meetings going forward will be themed around the ‘guiding principles’. These have also been redeveloped to include a timeframe for the group’s activity moving forward.

### **Next meetings**

June in London, Kindly hosted by Pearson

December 2020 meeting to be hosted by - University of Nottingham

February/March 2021 meeting to be held at Edge Hill University or University of Leeds