

## **NEON – ‘Supporting BTEC students working group’ – 4<sup>th</sup> September, University of Lincoln**

Attendees: **Chris Bayes** (Lancaster University) – Chair, **Dr Mark Smith** (University of Lincoln), **Rebecca Sykes** (University of Leeds), **Alex Reilly** (Brightside), **Alex Blower** (University of Wolverhampton), **Gloria Cheng** (Brunel University), **Natalie Freislich-Mills** (Make Happen – University of Essex), **Xiathong Xiu** (University of Lincoln), **Rebecca Foster** (UEA), **Graduate Intern** (University of Lincoln), **Laura Hall** (Pearson)

Apologies: Katie Peyton-Lister (University of Leeds), Teresa Flowers (University of Nottingham)

### **Introduction**

Chris introduced the meeting, thanking Mark and colleagues for hosting.

Chris provided an overview of the work of the group to date.

### **Overview of Sub-group one**

Rebecca provided an overview of the work of the group to date, providing an overview of the session, which the group has developed based on previous discussions.

The workshop features a carousel of activities covering the following themes:

- Getting University Ready’ – A skills audit which BTEC students can complete encouraging students to recognise their skills and identify how they can use these at university
- A section on ‘Supporting academic writing styles’
- A section on ‘My first week/term’ exploring common themes which students will encounter during their first week and term

We will look to pilot delivery of the workshop in IntoUniversity Centres with BTEC students in the 19/20 academic year ahead of then offering the resources to partners for incorporation into institutional programmes.

The group were asked to give their thoughts on the workshop and next steps.

Alex Blower and Rebecca Foster identified Villiers Park Educational Trust and The Brilliant Club as additional groups with whom we could deliver these activities.

We discussed how it would be good to offer online workshops alongside the face to face sessions - A lot of students benefit accessing resources online – *Brightside could be someone to speak to here*

Discussed the role for FECs within delivering these activities – Potential to use FE providers as a support point to the work in IntoUniversity centres

The group then discussed NCOP – Responsibility for delivery of curriculum within FECs (Essex) – Within NCOPs there are scope for colleagues to develop a bank of resources, which could be utilised

Discussed how we should contact OfS – NCOP conferences – There is scope to present the resources at these forums – *See next steps*

Pearson – Is there scope for this to be sector specific? An opportunity to shape things and to interweave into curriculum – How do we get this detail from pilots?

FECs would be keen to be involved in this activity

Mark Smith – Need to connect academics with outreach activities – Role for NEON WG members in doing this inreach within institutions

Rachel/Rebecca – Pilot activity in centres – Feedback at January and March meetings

Develop a timeframe around how we pilot these resources and then how we feed work at institutional level

Mark Smith – How we move the conversation from next steps to careers preparedness?

Rebecca Sykes – Scope for knowledge exchange aspects in future meetings – *See next steps*

Due to there being no members of sub group 1 at the meeting to break out for the discussions, we will update and review the draft presentation and session plan by email and present an update at the next meeting.

### **Sub Group Two**

Send the Framework back to the institutions and ask them to complete – Adding in details from University of Lincoln

Are institutions are doing things specifically for BTEC students? Crossover with other services – *Ask the institutions to factor this in*

Add in some aspects around Graduate Outcomes and preparedness, career aspiration into this – Using Levels 5 & 6 of NERUPI Framework

UEA – Pre-arrival Outreach IAG – Ensuring that IAG around BTEC/A level or Extended Diplomas is being delivered effectively in schools and colleges

Pearson – Issues around Unconditional Offers – The BTEC is a careers focused programme

UEA – Is there a professional body of Admissions professionals, which this group could engage with?

### **Alex Blower – Prospectus scoping**

Article in Which? University giving indication that BTEC qualification would be a clear pathway into university

Alex did mapping of 30 institutions prospectuses and if and how they detail a clear approach to Admissions relating to BTEC applicants

By way of contrast, IB entry requirements were uniformly featured in 26 out of 30 prospectuses in spite of far less students completing these qualifications

There were some examples of good practice within the scoping exercise – Manchester and Birmingham – Birmingham and Manchester use of matrixes & Liverpool – Reference to BTEC on all course pages of the prospectus

Is there a role for UCAS here around how they can support students in articulating suitability of students for courses?

Pearson – Increased provision of BTEC study in Independent Schools – Data set – Laura to research into this

1 in four (25%) of students going into HE have studied a BTEC?

Pearson would be able to provide data with the group around numbers of BTEC students at an institutional level

Pearson - The coming intake will be hugely interesting as this will be the first cohort of students who study with the exam component – 50% of providers are still offering the old BTEC

QCF BTECs – Final year apart from in some sectors where there is not an alternative

T Levels – Pearson has won contract to deliver phase one (IT & Construction), there are others in phase two and phase three

### **Next steps**

**Becky Foster** (UEA) to support Maria-Anna with LinkedIn page and to talk to Admissions around whether there is an accountable body

Approach OfS to promote work of group via NCOP Chairs and Leads meetings – **Chris to ask Ant Sutcliffe**

**Sub Group One** to reach out to VP, The Brilliant Club and Brightside around how they can deliver the pilots using these organisations?

**Sub Group One** to develop timeline for next steps beyond development of resources

Consider including academics in the conversations in BTECs – Potentially a webinar or a themed meeting – Developing guidance around different qualification profiles – Could this be something which could be led by an academic (Richard Peake) – Association for Academic Outreach (AFAO) maybe an organisation to approach here

Have a 'Knowledge Exchange' section based on institutional activity at each meeting

**Group Two** - Share NERUPI mapping to date with institutions for feedback and then use as a further call to action – Factor in some flexibility for programme/faculty level interventions – **Maria-Anna** to develop a template

Add in Graduate Employability/Career readiness section to the 'guiding principles' – Ask institutions if they want to be part of 'case studies' for HELOA session (Jan) and NEON Symposium (June) –

**Maria-Anna** to share a template for suggestions to support this – Lancaster, UEA, Leeds, Lincoln and Alex all volunteered to be involved again.

Reach out again to Association of Colleges and UCAS to get them to input into group – Discussions around FE/HE interface and transparency around Admissions practices (OfS)

**Laura and David** to share data sets on behalf of Pearson

NERUPI? – Define their role – Discuss with NEON next week – Could we develop something on a cross-institutional level via the Framework

Theme aspects of meetings/Group discussions around guiding principles:

- 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

- Developing BTEC students for future employment via career readiness initiatives
- Understanding the needs of BTEC students through engagement with research

**Next meetings** – Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December – Leeds, March – Liverpool (TBC), July – London, September – London.