

BMAF Key Contacts Symposium

Wednesday 4th March 2009
Aston University

Introduction

Key Contacts are the primary link between the Subject Centre and the Business School or relevant Department of each University. All our Key Contacts were invited to attend a Symposium and evening reception on 3rd and 4th March.

Attendance was good.

The agenda for the Symposium was as follows:

- The Student Learning Experience: Current Issues in Higher Education Institutions and in Business Schools
- BMAF: A critical review of its activities, services and products and their impact on the student learning experience
- Agreed action: By BMAF and by Key Contacts

The following summarises the issues raised, and gives some suggestions for agreed action.

1. The Student Learning Experience: Current Issues in Higher Education Institutions and in Business Schools

- Assessment standards
- Research focus
- Choice (too much?) in modular programmes
- International student issues
- Teaching large numbers
- Recruiting appropriate staff
- Global market place
- Managing student expectations
- Students' academic writing skills
- Plagiarism
- Full time working by students
- Growth in taught masters
- Dealing with disabilities

2. BMAF: A critical review of its activities, services and products and their impact on the student learning experience

- Profile of BMAF
- Clarification of Key Contact Role – Ambassadors for BMAF (see website)
- Agenda for Key Contact meetings – focus/content/theme/ownership
- Sharing of BMAF’s Strategic Plan, Operational Plan, Advisory Board (minutes etc.)?
- Website – content/vehicle for communication/interactivity
- Material dispatched to Key Contacts – quantity/timing/what do they do with it?
- Projects/Papers/ etc. - Criteria for selection?
- Resources – how can these be made more accessible?
- Level of attendance at Key Contact Meetings – timing and location
- Conference – recording of paper sessions/workshops
- Clarification of the ABS/BMAF partnership
- Sharing of best practice and facility to ask for advice etc via BMAF website.
- Celebrating success

3. Action

- Distribute notes of Symposia to Key Contacts.
- Review and update information regarding Key Contact role on the BMAF website.
- Contact those who were unable to attend and invite their comments on the issues raised.
- Review and update Key Contacts list to ensure we have appropriate representation for each HE Institution. Where necessary invite Heads of Department/Deans to appoint replacement Key Contacts.
- Where appropriate, share strategic and operational plans, together with advisory board matters with Key Contacts.
- Send a letter/email to Key Contacts to accompany BMAF materials, indicating purpose, circulation etc.
- Consider producing a monthly/quarterly newsletter for Key Contacts – celebrating BMAF successes, and including KC contributions.
- Remind Key Contacts of the deadlines for contributing to BMAF magazine.
- Provide induction/training for new Key Contacts.
- Make follow-up visits to Universities at the request of Key Contacts and to those Institutions joining the Key Contacts Symposia for the first time.
- Review the operation and benefits of the partnership with ABS.
- Encourage key contacts to meet informally (i.e. at local universities), between the Key Contact Symposia, and to feedback their discussions to BMAF.
- Focus future Agenda on one or two of the specific themes identified by Key Contacts

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