Developing and Supporting a Flexible Curriculum

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Welcome and introductions

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Viewpoints: a framework/process to support change

» Originally developed by the University of Ulster

» Funded by Jisc Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme (2008-2012)

» Original focus on curriculum design, assessment and feedback

» Adapted to different contexts e.g.
  › Flexible Curriculum
  › Student Partnerships
  › Digital Literacy
  › Work-based learning

Viewpoints: a framework/process to support change

Provide specific learner guidance and support for flexible learning

- To what extent do learners understand the importance of being an effective and efficient flexible learner?
- To what extent are flexible learning capabilities incorporated into academic, personal and professional development planning and reflective practice?
- Do learners have access to tools and resources to diagnose and develop their flexible learning capabilities?
Viewpoints: a framework/process to support change
Two new Viewpoints Toolkits

1. QAA (Scotland): Flexible Curriculum Toolkit
   Developed as part of the QAA Enhancement Theme programme
   http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/

2. Jisc Change Agents’ Network (CAN): Student Partnerships Toolkit
   CAN: a network of staff and students developed and funded by Jisc to support curriculum enhancement and innovation
   http://www.changeagentsnetwork.ac.uk
"A practical guide to providing flexible learning in further and higher education"

John Casey and Pam Wilson
Aiming to help staff and students to reflect, review and plan:
- reflect on drivers and needs for flexible provision
- review current practice in flexible provision
- enhance practice to respond to changing needs and drivers

The toolkit:
- a set of (good practice) “Viewpoints” cards (practice points/indicators of flexibility)
- a web-site with resources – linked to the Viewpoint cards http://tiny.cc/qaafco01
- a proposed methodology for using the toolkit

A community of practice:
- helping to inform and shape the toolkit
- using it (piloting........ embedding)
- refining it and maintaining its currency
## QAA (Scotland) Flexible Curriculum Toolkit

### STAGE 1: REFLECT on changing drivers and needs

**Seven dimensions of drivers and needs**

- Student needs and expectations
- Key Government drivers
- Key institutional drivers, goals and priorities
- Globalisation and internationalisation
- Employer and employer body needs and expectations
- Changes in what and how we teach
- Recruitment and retention

### STAGE 2: ENHANCE practice

**Four dimensions of curriculum flexibility**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Key areas of focus</th>
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</table>
| **External engagement and partnerships** | • Engaging employers and other stakeholders to customise curricula to employer and employee needs and contexts and to influence currency and relevancy of curricula.  
• Aligning curricula with changing sector / professional needs and contexts. |
| **Anytime, anywhere learning** | • Learner flexible access to technologies, training and tutors  
• Using technology-enhanced learning approaches to underpin new flexible pedagogic approaches.  
• Learner skills and support in flexible and technology-enhanced learning |
| **Entry, transition, progression and exit** | • Flexible learning pathways and timings e.g. entry, progression, exit.  
• Options for negotiated curricula and assessment.  
• Flexible means of accessing guidance and support throughout the learner journey including development of graduate attributes and employability |
| **Learning model, personalisation and learner engagement** | • Developing flexible pedagogies using e.g. social and open learning and assessment for learning approaches.  
• Personalising learning to develop self-directed learners.  
• Using blended learning approaches on/off campus.  
• Learner engagement with flexible curricula design/delivery. |
‘Students as partners is not just a nice-to-have, I believe it has the potential to help bring about social and educational transformation, as long as we know what we are trying to do and we maintain a critical attitude about the ways the concept is adopted and used.’

Rachel Wenstone, Vice President (Higher Education), NUS

A Manifesto for Partnership (November 2012)
Change Agents’ Network – Viewpoints Toolkit

» Supporting staff and students in:
  › setting up and implementing partnerships with students (including students as change agents)
  › developing student and staff capabilities (including implementing accreditation)
  › evaluating and sustaining student partnerships

» The toolkit:
  › a set of (good practice) “Viewpoints” cards (practice points/top tips)
  › a web-site with resources – linked to the Viewpoint cards http://www.changeagentsnetwork.co.uk
  › a proposed methodology for using the toolkit

» A community of practice:
  › helping to inform and shape the toolkit
  › using it (piloting......... embedding)
  › refining it and maintaining its currency
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership set-up</th>
<th>Partnership implementation</th>
<th>Capabilities, development and accreditation</th>
<th>Evaluation, impact &amp; sustainability</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Carry out a baseline study to research current position.</td>
<td>• Establish, implement and monitor a project plan (based on agile methodology)</td>
<td>• Define core student capabilities, attributes and development frameworks for student innovation and change activities.</td>
<td>• Identify the rationale and need for evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establish the case for student partnerships and align with strategies and policies.</td>
<td>• Develop a set of principles of good practice to follow for student partnerships</td>
<td>• Develop/acquire courses and training/learning resources for students and staff</td>
<td>• Choose appropriate qualitative and quantitative evaluation approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establish motivation, reward and recognition options for students and staff</td>
<td>• Allocate significant time and resource for stakeholder engagement and communications</td>
<td>• Implement student personal &amp; professional development planning using reflective practice and e-portfolios</td>
<td>• Adopt a range of data collection techniques to support evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Devise novel recruitment and induction approaches for students.</td>
<td>• Develop/acquire guides, toolkits and resources</td>
<td>• Develop academic and professional body recognition and accreditation opportunities for students</td>
<td>• Identify impact on a range of stakeholders and the institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify a partnership model that encompasses options for different student roles together with a range of stakeholders.</td>
<td>• Clarify detailed student and staff roles, responsibilities and activities.</td>
<td>• Provide student/staff support</td>
<td>• Develop case studies for use with stakeholder communications and engagement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Identify an outline project plan including resources and funding</td>
<td>• Identify risks and how to manage them</td>
<td>• Provide relevant staff training and link to CPD</td>
<td>• Develop recommendations for sustaining student partnerships as part of evaluation</td>
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<td>• Identify and learn from exemplars and case studies of student partnerships</td>
<td>• Establish/join external and internal communities of practice</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Explore options for institutionally embedding student partnerships.</td>
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</tbody>
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www.changeagentsnetwork.co.uk
Opportunity to experience the Viewpoints toolkits

Choose which toolkit to use:

1. QAA (Scotland): Flexible Curriculum Toolkit
2. Jisc Change Agents’ Network (CAN): Student Partnerships Toolkit
Scenario
Several employers have asked if a particular programme can be delivered to allow their employees to study more flexibly in the workplace and at home. Use the cards to plan enhancements to the programme.

Choose which set of cards to focus on:
- External engagement and partnerships
- Anytime, anywhere learning
- Entry, transition, progression and exit
- Learning model, personalisation and learner engagement

Scenario
Your VC wants to improve your NSS ratings and believes that student partnerships can help this and has tasked you and your colleagues to take this forward. Use the Viewpoints cards to create a prioritised plan.

Choose which set of cards to focus on:
- Partnership set-up
- Partnership implementation
- Capabilities, development and accreditation
- Evaluation, impact and sustainability
Would the Viewpoints toolkits be useful in your institution?

Do they need amending/developing further?

Would you want to customise them?

Share your ideas at http://tinyurl.com/vpointsideas
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http://www.changeagentsnetwork.co.uk

http://tiny.cc/qaafco01