

Partnerships: HE in FE partnerships

Purpose of the pack

To allow HEI and FEC staff engaged in the delivery of higher education to understand the contribution to successful student transfer and progression that can be made by effective institutional partnerships.

The pack...

- brings together operational and strategic partnership issues for HEIs and partner FECs that are collaboratively delivering higher education
- focuses on issues which influence the experience of students undergoing progression that also involves an institutional transfer
- is designed to support staff, working on or associated with HE in FE programmes, to undertake their work and to better explain their work to colleagues and students
- contains elements written for staff operating at the programme level while offering an insight into organisational level systems and relationships
- includes details of structures, approaches, methods, case studies, stages, timetables and checklists
- includes short reference and support documents of general use to staff, which can be adapted or customised for institutional specific use

Using the pack in a partnership context

It is important to understand that HEIs and FEC are different and that effective partnerships must be responsive to that. The work and systems used must be compatible but not a mirror of each other.

The applicability of these materials and the customisation required in any one setting will also be determined by the nature of the partnership relationship for example, franchises or validating relationships, simple partnerships or multiple organisation partnership networks .

There may be many triggers to start using these materials, for example:

- When starting a new job or role that includes a partnership element
- When reviewing or developing a new programme of study
- When considering or entering into a new institutional partnership

Whatever the trigger, the pack will be best used collaboratively by HEIs and FECs staff working together. They can be customised, added to or used simply as a guide to issues of concern for HE in FE practitioners.

There is much in the pack about the maintenance and development of academic standards. For consistency the packs are written from the HEI perspective. However, this is not to say that the relationship should not be reciprocal with HEIs having much to gain from FEC practice and experience.

Experience

The pack content is derived from:

- the experience of the University of Plymouth and its partner network
- work to establish or develop academic partnerships in Ulster
- the experience of practitioners including partnership managers, academics and support staff working in other universities and FECs

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Useful references

- QAA: (1999) Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education
- HEFCE 0015: (2003) Supporting higher education in further education colleges: A guide for tutors and lecturers
- HEFCE 0016: (2003) Supporting higher education in further education colleges: Policy, practice and prospects
- Foundation degree qualification Benchmark