

1994 Group

Engagement with 14 -19 reforms

Project Proposal

Background

The 14-19 education reforms are designed to encourage more young people to continue learning for longer and to gain the qualifications they need to progress into further and higher education or employment.

The reforms are responding to the needs of Higher Education by ensuring better preparation of young people for HE study. The changes to existing qualifications and new qualifications are in direct response to the sector's concerns about the education of our young people.

It is essential therefore that the HE sector can have confidence in the outcome of the reforms and is able in the future to welcome students progressing to HE from the new system and with new qualifications. That means engaging the sector now in the development of the 14-19 reforms.

Aim for the Project

To engage members of the 1994 Group at all levels in the development of 14-19 education reforms, to ensure the end results meet the needs of the sector.

Proposed Terms of reference

- To raise awareness and improve understanding of the reforms by senior managers, admissions tutors, and academics throughout the 1994 Group;
- To develop an understanding of the extent of potential involvement of member institutions in the reforms;
- To collate and feed back to the DfES views, concerns, and suggestions of member institutions; and
- To use the understanding and involvement in development of the reforms to articulate the 1994 Group's attitude towards them.

Proposed Project Remit

To take this project forward, the 1994 Group proposes to establish a project team with members drawn from the 1994 Student Experience Policy Group, experts from member institutions, and led by a senior Education Professor drawn from a member institution supported by a full-time researcher. The project would last for one calendar year in the first instance: 1 January-31 December 2007.

In addition to the research undertaken by the Project Team, the project would involve awareness and project dissemination events to be held at member institutions. At a national level, Neil Stewart Associates have indicated that they would be interested in running a one-day conference around the 14-19 reforms. If this goes ahead, the 1994 Group would present a report on this project and would expect to act as a co-sponsor. Neil Stewart Associates have indicated that in addition to this event there might be other opportunities to promote the project at their events. UCAS have also

indicated that they would wish to include a report on the project on the Agenda for the Annual Admission's Officers Conference.

A final report would be produced detailing the outcome of the project.

Specific tasks to be undertaken:

- Develop a broad overview of specialised Diploma learning outcomes and curricula; provide feedback on possible progression routes;
- Map two specialised diploma lines against example HE entry requirements to identify gaps and changed skill sets, and to inform HE curriculum change;
- Detailed consideration of the reforms to A-level and introduction of stretch and challenge to predict likely change in the skill profile of incoming students and provide feedback to DfES and HEIs on the potential impact on HE curriculum and assessment change;
- Develop an understanding of existing progression accords between pre-HE institutions and HEIs, to determine best practice, and consider whether there is a possibility these might be extended across institutions; and
- Develop an understanding of existing examples of specific HE modules in member institutions which build on the achievements of Diploma students, to determine best practice and to consider whether there is a possibility these might be extended across institutions.

21 November 2006