

## **The Higher Education Staff Development Agency (HESDA) London Regional Meeting**

NOTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 24 September 2003 at 1000hrs in Senate House

Present: Judy Barnett (IC), Ursula Blumenthal (LSHTM), Ken Bromfield (KCL), Jane Crichton (Richmond), Alison de Lord (Roehampton), Jo Dipple (LBS), Lucy Farnes (City), Kris Leslie (London Inst), Jacqui MacDonald (IofE), Eszter Molnar Mills (SH), Sue Oke (RHUL), Jo Price (SOAS), Steve Rathborn (IC), Susan Small (HESDA Regional Co-ordinator), Dara Sugrue, (Central London LSC), Stephen Tarling (Birkbeck), Andrew Taylor (UCL), Neil Walford (ICR)

Apologies: Janet Barker (UEL), Emma Bicknell (QMUL), Chris Connelley, (LSE), Shelagh Hill (Brunel), Judith Taylor (UCL), Linda Westaway (LSE), Jennie Wyatt (Middlesex)

### **Union Learning Representatives**

Dave Cook from ACAS delivered a presentation, introducing the work of ACAS and went on to speak about Union Learning Representatives. Detailed information about the role and employers' responsibilities is available from the ACAS website. Copies of the presentation were handed out to those present.

Points raised in the discussion following the presentation included concerns about increased demands on training and development resources and the need to provide equal opportunities and access to training for staff who are not members of trade unions. ULRs are also seen as providing the opportunity of cascading information to staff who may otherwise not gain access to training or feel that it is not for them. This may be especially relevant in the case of basic skills training for example.

The TUC currently provide a 5-day training course for prospective ULRs, which may become available on-line. It was suggested that in-house induction is provided to ULR's before they start work within their institutions, which would also encourage a positive relationship between the ULR's and staff development professionals.

Union learning representatives are already active at UCL and LSE. In the case of less active trade union branches, the TUC may be able to run sessions, or ACAS could come to talk to union reps. It was agreed that for overall success high level 'buy-in' was necessary within the institutions.

### **Learning and Skills Council – London Central**

Dara Sugrue from LSC informed the group about the pilot projects currently running or planned within higher education. She explained that she is no longer responsible for liP assessments and is now concentrating on developing projects within education, with some funding opportunities.

The current pilots include a coaching project ran in partnership with HESDA at LSE - detailed information about its outcomes will be presented at the HESDA conference.

A new standard for advice and guidance services within Student Services divisions is introduced through the Matrix project. LSC will provide support to volunteering departments and will assess them against the standard after 6 months, also providing the opportunity for staff to achieve an NVQ level 3 or 4 in advice and guidance.

This pilot project will start in January 2004, departments have to be willing to be assessed within a short period of time and take part in subsequent promotion of the project.

A Maintenance and Operations NVQ pilot is also starting in January 2004, to be run in conjunction with CITB and Lambeth College, training staff in general maintenance and 'caretaking' tasks. 15-20 individuals can take part in the pilot from January, further information on the standard is available on the QCA website.

Ken Bromfield from KCL described a multi-skilling project planned at Kings to enable staff to carry out maintenance duties from start to finish.

Andrew Taylor from UCL mentioned that a CITB card will soon be needed for all construction trade workers, and that CITB may provide free training if an institution joins.

### **Coaching at LSE**

Unfortunately no one from LSE could attend the meeting, but feedback from the pilot will be available at the HESDA Conference.

### **Any Other Business**

Susan Small reported that no further information was available on the future of HESDA. She said that the new University of London website was now up and running, including the HESDA regional pages at [www.lon.ac.uk/HESDA](http://www.lon.ac.uk/HESDA), and asked for feedback on its contents.

Ken Bromfield suggested that it would be more useful if the links to member institutions led directly to the staff development pages, rather than the university's homepage. It was suggested that a generic virtual link could be added – "...ac.uk / sd" for example, to reach these pages directly at each institution.

Andrew Taylor reported that UCL's basic skills pilot was successful, detailed report to follow at the HESDA Conference.

The technician programme for next year to be planned before Christmas. The attendance numbers are generally low on the programme, but there is a wider range of institutions participating.

Ken Bromfield offered to run a seminar based on a paper he had written on macro-changes in HE and their effects on staff development, with emphasis on positive change management and maintaining staff morale. Ken Bromfield will circulate an outline for a planned interactive session, which will be held in addition to scheduled meetings.

The briefing paper on the topic is available on the HESDA website. Susan Small offered to send the paper to non-members.

### **Dates of Future Meetings**

It was agreed to meet again on Wednesday 25 February and Tuesday 15 June 2004.

Topics would include:

- HR Strategy 2
- The future of HESDA

Ursula Blumenthal from LSHTM proposed the topic of development of research staff. It was agreed that an additional meeting would be held on Thursday 4 December 2003 at 10 am, focusing on this area. Judy Barnett from Imperial will be running a training session on the topic in October and will report on its outcome. As the University of Sheffield ran such a pilot project, and presented it to a previous HESDA conference, it was suggested that they be invited as guest speakers.

29 September 2003