Evidencing the Value of Widening Participation and Outreach Activities

The University of Surrey Schools Consortium aims to provide a coherent programme of aspiration and attainment raising activities that can be evaluated on a long term basis to inform the University’s strategy. Evaluation is vital to ensure that the events and activities that are delivered meet the needs of the pupils and the schools involved in raising aspiration and attainment levels and providing relevant HE related Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).

Both the Office of Fair Access (OFFA) and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) have an expectation that institutions will not only monitor the numbers of students engaged in activities but move to a position where the outcomes of the intervention are the focus of evaluation. The key question at the end of each activity must be: has it achieved the outcomes that were intended and have there been unintended consequences? The emphasis is that evaluation of activities should inform the institutions own strategies and enable the continuous improvement in outreach activities.

The model which has been developed at the University of Surrey has adopted an outcomes based approach for the planning and evaluation of the programme of activities. Meaningful and measurable outcomes have been agreed for key target groups which include; students, teachers and parents/carers. All these outcomes have been mapped against the range of activities to be delivered to ensure that the programme successfully achieves the agreed objectives which then form the basis for any evaluation. The evaluation data is reported on against the intended outcomes for the intervention which allows the activity to be reviewed and modified as required.

The evaluation framework developed for the Consortium is designed to meet the reporting, evaluation and monitoring requirements of OFFA and HEFCE and ensure that the programme of activities delivered has achieved its intended outcomes and is able to inform future strategy and enable continuous improvement in our outreach activities.

Katherine Sela
Research, Evaluation & Data Support Officer

Year 12 Young Persons University Summer Programmes

Engineering

The Engineering Young Persons University ran from 1 – 4 July 2014 with 16 budding Engineers attending for the four day residential programme. The course was a great success with all the students trying out four different types of Engineering (Civil, Chemical, Electronic and Mechanical) in practical lab sessions, as well as attending lectures and seminars. Throughout the week the students also completed a research project to give them a flavour of independent and group learning.

They experienced the social side of university life, staying in halls of residence for three nights, and taking part in evening activities such as climbing and trampolining. The students also had the chance to meet professional engineers from companies such as Peter Brett Associates, BAE Systems Applied Intelligence and McLaren to ask about their personal career history. The feedback from the week was fantastic, with 100 per cent of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that what they had learnt during the week helped their understanding of engineering.

Sian Henderson
Widening Participation Support Officer FEPS
The Business, Hospitality & Tourism and Law Young Persons University residential summer programme ran from 2 - 4 July 2014 and welcomed 8 students from Surrey and the surrounding areas.

Students took part in academic and social sessions covering a variety of topics including ice breakers, learning & success, negotiation techniques, campus orientation, group project work, presentation skills and sport. Sessions were delivered by Dr Andy Adcroft, Deputy Head of the Surrey Business School and Elaine Carter, Tutor in the School of Law and were supported by some of our fantastic Student Ambassadors. The first day ended with an evening session delivered by inspirational guest speaker, Mark Pinnock, successful entrepreneur and one of only three people in the world to have completed the seven summits at the first attempt www.markpinnock.com.

The second evening involved a trip with students from the Engineering Young Persons University summer programme to Gravity Force trampoline park in Camberley. Students enjoyed a couple of hours of mixing with individuals from other subject areas and getting to know each other.

The week was rounded off with the students delivering group presentations on why students should consider going to university. The groups created their own posters and talked through their ideas and were questioned and given feedback on their work by academic staff and their peers.

Below are the logos created by the two teams, which will be printed and distributed to the schools involved in the Young Persons University programme.
The University ran its first ever One Health Young Persons University from 24 June – 26 June 2014. The 3 day residential summer programme included a variety of seminars, workshops and lab sessions focusing on BioMedical, Veterinary and Sports & Nutritional Sciences. Students also went rock climbing at Surrey Sports Park and saw Twelfth Night at Guildford Castle.

The event received positive feedback; students said it had motivated them to work even harder towards their goal of studying their chosen subject at university.

Nursing and Midwifery

On the 16 July 2014, 48 Year 12 students attended the Nursing and Midwifery Young Persons University, a 3 day residential programme where they experienced each branch of Nursing and Midwifery.

The students took part in taster sessions in Mental Health, Child Nursing, Midwifery and Adult Nursing. They also explored basic life support, handling and assessing patients in the simulation suite as well as a team building drumming workshop on the first night and the welcome chance to chill by the lake in very warm weather!

Thank you to all staff in the School of Health Sciences for delivering two fantastic programmes!

Hollie Baker
Widening Participation Support Officer FHMS
Kings College, an 11-18 school located in Guildford, was one of the first schools to become involved in the University of Surrey Schools Consortium and students from a number of Year Groups have been involved in a range of activities in the first year, these have included:

A Biology Revision Conference in April and the Engineering and Nursing & Midwifery Young Persons University programme of residential summer schools in July, for Year 12 pupils. Widening Participation Student Ambassadors attended a Year 11 6th Form Parents Evening and Year 12/13 Parents Evening. A group of Year 11 students also attended one of the half day Resilient Revision Skills sessions in February, involving a carousel of online resources, study skills and time management, and myths and facts about aspects of university.

69 Year 10 students came on campus over 2 days for a short programme of introduction to Higher Education and focus on choices and careers. One student commented “This ….. gives you a massive boost into getting a good education”

80 students from Year 9 attended the Surrey Skills Fair on the 6 & 7 February 2014, held at Surrey Sports Park and had the opportunity to engage in hands on activities and have valuable conversations with employers and student ambassadors. Upwards of 50 exhibitors from a variety of industries, and Further and Higher Education providers were in attendance.

A small Literacy Project over 6 weeks was piloted with a group of Year 7 students with 4 student ambassadors joining their Literacy class for an hour a week and working with them to hear reading, lead discussions about news and assist teaching staff. Initial feedback and evaluation has been very positive and it is hoped the project can continue with more pupils in the future.

Teachers attended Professional Development events over the year, and one of our undergraduate students spent some time at the school over 6 weeks as part of their English in Education Module.

Kate Carriett, Head Teacher at Kings said, “We are delighted at the opportunity we have been able to offer students at Kings via the University of Surrey Schools Consortium. An immersion in higher education experiences at a younger age is resulting in raised aspirations and broadening horizons for so many of our students.”

Jane de la Rosa
Outreach Co-ordinator

Chemistry Experience Day

On Tuesday 8 July 2014, students came on to campus for a one day intensive insight into studying Chemistry at university. The day consisted of a tour of the Chemistry Department, two lectures on Energy Materials and Medicinal Chemistry and two practical lab sessions. The first practical looked at Forensic Chemistry, where students learnt how to take and analyse finger prints, and how the chemistry of the human body helps with this process. The second practical session involved Organic Chemistry, where the students successfully extracted caffeine from tea leaves. The day was a great success and gave students the opportunity to experience different aspects of Chemistry that they would not normally cover during their A Level studies.

Sian Henderson
Widening Participation Support Officer FEPS

Students extract caffeine from tea leaves during a practical lab session.
Revision Conferences 2014

A series of A Level Revision Conferences ran during the summer term. The series was opened with an AS AQA Psychology Conference delivered by Cara Flanagan and Mike Cardwell on Thursday 24th April 2014. Cara Flanagan writes textbooks for A level and undergraduate Psychology. Her main contribution is the Complete Companion series for AQA co-authored with Mike Cardwell. She has a wealth of experience as a teacher and senior examiner. Mike Cardwell has taught psychology since 1975 and has been at Bath Spa since 1997. He is currently Senior Lecturer in psychology, and his specialist area is Social Psychology. He is a widely published textbook author and experienced conference speaker. The conference welcomed 137 students from a variety of Surrey maintained schools and local colleges.

An Edexcel AS and A2 Biology Revision Conference followed on Friday 25th April, delivered by Gary Skinner; writer of Edexcel Biology revision guides and John Stacey; former writer of Edexcel Biology marking scheme and this attracted a total of 125 local school students.

On Tuesday 29 April, an AQA Sociology Revision Conference run by Jill Swale attracted 137 students. Jill is an experienced tutor in the AQA syllabus. The most recent books written by Jill include Barebones Revision Guides and Just Teach Resource Packs. Another recent publication is The Sociology Starters Kit for Linden Lea Publishers.

The series of revision conferences was brought to a close on Wednesday 30th April and Thursday 1st May. The AQA AS and A2 Biology Revision Conferences, delivered by former AQA examiner, Bill Indge, welcomed 164 students in total over the two days.

Feedback from the conferences was very positive and the Department of Widening Participation & Outreach plan to run another series of A Level Revision Conferences in 2015, with the possibility of further subject areas being offered.

Please contact a member of the team should you know of any individuals who may be interested in assisting with the delivery of future Revision Conferences.

Sally Cook
Widening Participation Support Officer FBEL

Year 8 Exploring Higher Education Week

The University of Surrey was delighted to hold its inaugural Year 8 Exploring Higher Education Week during 28 April – 2 May 2014. This event was designed to provide students with an introduction to Higher Education by bringing them on to the university campus, as well as increasing subject specific knowledge. By encouraging cross-school working, students also had the opportunity to develop their team-working and communication skills, as well increase their levels of confidence.

The week was attended by over 120 students from 9 different Surrey Consortium Schools. Activities during the week ranged from a Junior Business Game, where students had the opportunity to run a business for the day; participating in a Drama workshop, and a session on Creative Writing, where students explored their own creativity and developed their own story. Students also ventured onto the Climbing Wall and tried a range of sports at Surrey Sports Park.

Throughout the week, students completed a ‘Memory Book’ which encouraged them to reflect on the activities that they had participated in. One of many positive comments given included, “this week will definitely help me in the future, it has been amazing.”

The week culminated with a University Graduation Ceremony, which was also attended by parents, carers and other family members. Each student was presented with a Graduation Certificate by the University of Surrey’s Pro Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching, Professor Andrea Dlaska.

We are looking forward to hosting this event again during the 2014-15 academic year.

Sarah Linington
Widening Participation Co-ordinator
On Wednesday 9 July 2014, the University of Surrey welcomed teachers from Surrey schools and colleges including Guildford County, Blenheim High and St Peter’s for a Teachers Professional Development event. Delivered by Dr Andy Adcroft, Deputy Head of Surrey Business School.

The twilight session opened discussion and debate surrounding students that ‘know’ and students that ‘do’ as well as identifying potential gaps that need bridging between sixth form/college and university in teaching and learning. A great deal of the session focussed on reflective practice and independent learning.

Further opportunity was identified for schools/colleges and universities to work together to address these issues and support students through the transitional phases in their education.

The Department of Widening Participation and Outreach hope to develop a series of further TPD events following on from this in conjunction with the Surrey Business School and Dr Andy Adcroft.

Sally Cook
Widening Participation Support Officer FBEL

Production Skills TPD Event

On Wednesday 25 June 2014 we welcomed a number of teachers from consortium schools and local colleges for an interactive student-led event.

Matt Veitch, Head of Production Skills at the Guildford School of Acting (GSA) delivered a welcome talk providing a much needed insight into production skills and the opportunities available for future graduates.

The event took the form of a student-led showcase in which current GSA students exhibited their specialist areas. Teachers were able to talk with the current students, learning about the course, placement opportunities, skills gained and future graduate destinations whilst interacting in the numerous hands-on exhibits.

Lucy McDonagh
Widening Participation Support Officer FAHS
Beth Breed (BSc Maths)

I’ve been an Ambassador for almost a year now and looking back; filling in that application form has been one of my best decisions since starting University. During the year I have helped with numerous events from Space Days to Summer Schools and Language lessons to Lab sessions. But it’s not all work and no play in the classroom! Last summer I worked with a fantastic team at the Engineering and Science Summer School and was greatly rewarded with new knowledge across the faculty as well as games by the lake, a disco in Youngs and bowling at the Spectrum!

As an Ambassador I think it’s really important to be passionate about education and this healthy attitude is displayed from the whole team – staff and students. I love being an Ambassador because it provides me with the opportunity to show I care not only about the University of Surrey but higher education in general and I get to inspire young people and influence their lives – hopefully for the better! Knowing I made a difference in someone thinking about attending higher education is invaluable, and seeing the hands of the youngsters flying up at the end of the session when asked ‘who is now thinking about going to university?’ is a really rewarding experience.

Being an Ambassador has had incredible effect on my confidence and personal skills. While preparing for my placement year I have been able to use the skills I have learnt from leading campus tours and other events put on by the University Outreach Team during my interviews as well as gaining important and impressive details for my CV.

I can’t wait to get stuck in with the upcoming events and I’m really looking forward to meeting more of the new Ambassadors and working alongside students from other faculties – meeting new people is definitely another one of the best things about being an Ambassador!

Student Ambassador Celebration Event!

On 23 May 2014, the inaugural Student Ambassador Celebration Event took place, marking an extremely successful year, which saw Student Recruitment, Marketing and Widening Participation and Outreach, join together to form a unified Student Ambassador Scheme.

To recognise the enormous contribution our Student Ambassadors play in promoting Higher Education, Ambassadors were asked to nominate their peers in six categories.

Congratulations to Roshni Kahol and Harry Deards, who have supported numerous Widening Participation and Outreach events throughout 2013-14 and who received the awards for Outstanding Contribution and Exceptional Contribution respectively.

We would like to thank all our Student Ambassadors and wish those who are graduating this summer every future success.

Sarah Linington presents Roshni with a trophy for Outstanding Contribution!
Forthcoming Events

Year 6 Transition Summer Schools
Wednesday 30 July 2014 - Esher C of E School
Wednesday 20 August 2014 - Reigate School
Monday 28 July, Thursday 31 July, Friday 1 August 2014 - Beacon School

Pre-Entry Day - Mature Learners
Wednesday 10 September 2014

Computing TPD Event
Tuesday 23 September 2014

Year 8 Exploring Higher Education Week
Monday 22 September 2014 - Friday 26 September 2014

Year 12 IAG TPD Event
Tuesday 30 September 2014

Year 10 Law Day
Wednesday 8 October 2014

Year 6 Primary 'Mad About…' Fair
Friday 17 October 2014

Mature Learners Day
Wednesday 22 October 2014

Year 11 Revision Days
Tuesday 11 & Wednesday 12 November 2014

Year 8/9 IAG TPD Event
Thursday 20 November 2014

To see a full programme of events for 2014-15, please visit:
surrey.ac.uk/schoolsandcolleges/consortium/index.htm

Want to get involved?
If you would like to be involved in the delivery and support of any of the events listed, please contact a member of the team to find out how you could contribute.

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Inspiring the next generation - raising aspirations and attainment through partnership