

## Sharing Good Practice Newsletter - June 2010

### Cross College Good Practice

#### You said.....We did.....

We are continuing to improve this part of our processes for obtaining feedback from our stakeholders. Boards to hold cards and to take comments are now in place at each of our three main campuses. Complementing the process are monthly sheets which identify what 'We did.....'

Plans are in place for further improvements with agreement that both the College and Heriot-Watt will use the same 'comments' card. We have also agreed that both the Borders College and Heriot-Watt Student Associations will take a bigger role in this process.

A number of staff within the College have undertaken some excellent training delivered by SPARQS on 'how best to obtain constructive feedback from students'. Further sessions are planned including 'how to engage with harder to reach groups'.

#### Feedback from students and other stakeholders identifying good practice.

The Curriculum Development and Literacies Officer for the Scottish Borders praised the inputs from staff in respect of Adult Learning. This was particularly evident when HMIE carried out an inspection of the 'Learning Community' for the Earlston area when the Access department were recognised for their effective working in partnership with the other local organisations which make up this group.

An NC AIT student commented "I am thoroughly enjoying my work placement. It is without doubt the best placement I have had"

The Course Development Officer for Access to Industry praised staff for their joint working when inputting to the Prepare to Care Course

A PhD student at Heriot-Watt praised the 'electrical' section for their "consultancy and help" when repairing a broken machine urgently required for project work.

The secretary of the Lavender Touch praised students for their work on the Calendar which raised £635 for the charity

A PDA Dyslexia student said "I was amazed at the depth, range and quality of work in the course", and went on to say that this was "the most relevant course" I have ever done.

The Treasurer of the Bowden Village Committee praised students for their continuing maintenance work on Bowden Common.

An Earlston resident praised the work by Landbased students who re-turfed her garden at Newtown St Boswells.

Schools Plus students were thanked for 'rescuing the residents of Frank Scott Court' by clearing the snow away and getting the residents walkways.

The Business Department were praised for their work with the Principal Teachers of Business in the Borders in respect of help with Curriculum for Excellence.

Students like our use of Focus Groups saying "they give everyone a chance to comment during the year" and Graffiti Walls which mean you "can put something up when you think of it".

Sharon Johnston said "Having completed my PDA in Dyslexia last year, I felt that academic staff could benefit from an overview of dyslexia and the effects it can have on individuals and lecturers.

I gave a presentation on this subject to the Business Department and from the feedback I received, they found it very informative and useful".

Staff were provided with good practical examples of how to support learners with dyslexia.

If any other departments feel that they would benefit from this session please could you contact Liz Sanderson.

#### And some comments from External Verifiers included:

"A good practice was the assessor's use of 'story board' activity in an innovative way for the Creativity unit to support reflective practice with candidates.

Candidates identify the processes they have gone through and the skills they have gained and identify areas for improvement to achieve the final 'look' assessment to complete the unit. This is further reflected in the Employability unit where candidates have engaged fully identifying, setting and working towards goals and targets."

"The external verification visit enabled a meeting to take place with candidates. The candidates expressed general satisfaction with the learning experience",

"The systems employed for internal verification were robust. The College seems to have a comprehensive system in place, fully operated by the section team responsible for the units considered".

And the SQA EV for Carpentry and Joinery identified the following areas of good practice:

Candidate Unit Evaluation forms

Individual Candidate Assessment Plan Agreement

Class meetings documentation

He also made positive comments about:

The occupational expertise of Assessors and Internal Verifiers; the provision of a realistic working environment; maintenance of the 'Knowledge Evidence' folders and our actions to support Health and Safety.

## Good practices from around the departments

### Access

Students from the Access Department are being provided with highly effective placements in the local community and as far away as Sweden.

For example students on the Workwise programme visited Eskilstuna in Sweden in May 2010 for two weeks of work experience at the local zoo and with the local parks department. This was a challenging and exciting trip for everyone involved and will hopefully pave the way for future placements.

The department said: "Work and local employment training schemes value this work. The outcomes include support for transitions from College to work".

The Education Centre of the BGH is looking at implementing blended learning as part of their corporate induction process in NHS Borders. Don Gowans and Liz Sanderson facilitated a visit to share information and look at a range of assistive technologies to help with accessibility for their on-line training.

### Business

Students completing Local Investigations at Hawick have used a Blog and a Wiki to communicate with each other regarding their Local Investigations Project.

At present students completing this unit have to complete a very laborious paper recording exercise in order to be assessed. In Block 1 the Business Department is starting to assess students for this unit by looking at the Wikis and Blogs for their local investigations. This is the first time that students have used a Blog and Wiki for this unit.

Helen Huddleston used a Wiki to keep in touch with NC Business and IT students regarding a fund raising event that they organized.

Daniel Kellet of the HNC AIT class took up a placement at the Volunteer Centre Borders. This was to help them create an audit of all volunteer organizations in the Borders.

## Community and Open Learning

The work with the Scottish Borders Council Community Learning and Development Unit (CLD) is proving particularly successful providing a range of levels of ESOL delivery. This course is offered in a number of locations across the Borders by staff from the College and CLD. The suite of courses meets the needs of learners with different levels of needs.

## Technology

First year Carpentry & Joinery students (09TDNCC1A) recently assembled and installed a pitched roof for the Plumbing section of our technology department. The roof will be fitted with Solar panels donated to the College by the Worcester Bosch Group to promote learning on the installation process.

This will also make our students more aware of the renewable technology available that can be incorporated into their working environment.

In June a 'girls only' brick work taster day was provided for the local schools. This had a good turnout and helps to raise awareness of the jobs that are available for students whatever their gender.

## Care

In January 2010 Heather Anderson and Jayne Gracie attended a meeting with staff from the Open University.

Following on from this meeting Lore Gallastegi, Education Staff Tutor, Open University attended a meeting with Early Years staff at Borders College along with Margot Black from the Scottish Borders Childcare Partnership on Friday 30th April 2010. At the meeting Lore passed on information about access to Open University material on study skills and resource materials developed by the Open University that are now freely available to College staff with no copyright issues. ([www.openlearn.open.ac.uk](http://www.openlearn.open.ac.uk)).

Afterwards Lore spoke to a group of HNC Early Education and Childcare students (full time and part time) about the opportunity to do a 6 month online course "make your experience count" to enter onto a SCQF Level 8 course with the Open University. Lore is interested in Borders College students taking part in a pilot for this course and will be returning to Borders College in August 2010 to determine the level of interest.

This opportunity allows good progression opportunities for students wishing to move onto College/University courses.

## Landbased

Borders College Newtown Campus was a hive of activity on Saturday 28th May with staff and students busy on site from 8am making final preparations for the “Country Fair”.

This new event combined the ever popular annual sale of plants grown by Horticulture students with a fun dog show organised and run by the Animal Care students. An informative exhibit from Master Composter David Scott-Aiton and a display of dry stone dyking by Grant Morrison helped to emphasise the all round country theme.

Local animal charities were well represented with the Scottish Borders Donkey Sanctuary offering a raffle prize of “adopting a donkey for a year”, Arthurshiel Rescue Centre brought an abandoned baby owl and both Arthurshiel and Borders Animal Welfare Centre had large photo displays of rehomed pets – as an extra happy ending one of the dogs “Skye”, brought to the show on Saturday, has now found a new home.

Working with RFU and Hawick High School, the Sport & Exercise section has devised an innovative SCQF rated qualification. This course, which targets individual performance improvement in Rugby (Union), aims to be delivered in schools and provide completely new opportunities for youngsters in sports development.

### Service Industries

The Hairdressing and Beauty section are aiming to capture the interest of future learners as early as possible. As part of this process help was given to Priorsford School Nursery to set up and run a Hairdressing salon for nursery children. This made excellent use of the Curriculum for Excellence philosophy of responding to learners needs in that the original idea had come from the children.

A ‘secret postcard’ sale was held in May. Staff, visitors and students had the opportunity to obtain their own original mini art work. All sales of the cards went to the Borders Art Therapy unit. In June the art and design and the visual communications staff and students staged their end of year exhibition. The exhibition took place, over four days, in the main lecture theatre following an opportunity for a private view on the 1st of June.

### Good Practice taken from HMIE Reviews

You can look at all the reports produced to date in full on:

**(Including our own report following the visit of an HMIE team in March !!)**

- [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk)

## Useful Websites

- [www.jorum.ac.uk](http://www.jorum.ac.uk)
- [www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publications/eqafsc..html](http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publications/eqafsc..html)
- [www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue45/](http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue45/)
- [www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications)
- [www.futureskillsscotland.org.uk](http://www.futureskillsscotland.org.uk)
- [www.mori.com/ontrack/](http://www.mori.com/ontrack/)
- [www.ascol.org.uk](http://www.ascol.org.uk)
- [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk)
- [www.iipscotland.co.uk](http://www.iipscotland.co.uk)
- [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info)
- [www.nln.ac.uk](http://www.nln.ac.uk)
- [www.coleg.org.uk/coleg/55.html](http://www.coleg.org.uk/coleg/55.html)
- [www.commoncraft.com](http://www.commoncraft.com)
- [www.teachertube.com](http://www.teachertube.com)
- [www.videojug.com](http://www.videojug.com)
- [www.pixlr.com/app](http://www.pixlr.com/app)
- [www.flickrcc.bluemountains.net](http://www.flickrcc.bluemountains.net)
- [www.delicious.com](http://www.delicious.com)
- [www.sdenetwork.org](http://www.sdenetwork.org)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/southscotland/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/southscotland/)