Introduction

At a time of great uncertainty and change for the UK HE sector, Higher Education Partnership Network (HEPN) provides a platform for higher education leaders to come together and share their own views and experiences, as well as listen and learn from others in the community.

The HEPN conference will cover all the current major issues in the Higher Education industry, bringing you up to date with the latest research, insight, policy changes and expert advice.

HEPN will expand on key topics including: enhancing student experience, tuition fees, TEF, and digital & learning technology. HEPN is an opportunity for delegates to hear from and engage with experts, as well as network with colleagues and leading industry speakers.

D A Y  O N E

07:45 - 08:40   Registration

08:40 - 09:15   Chairman’s Opening Remarks

Value for money: Where’s the value and how do we embed it?

In this session, Scott will explore how, in light of the increasing financial pressures facing universities today, the Value for Money agenda for taxpayers and students can be met. He will explore the more radical ways in which Universities might position themselves as businesses, and what steps they might take in order to ensure financial sustainability.

Scott Mulholland - Pro Vice Chancellor, Corporate Development.

09:15 - 09:40   Changing our running gear to embrace uncertainty: future-proofing institutional skills, knowledge and capabilities in a paradigm shift.

In his session Sam contends that UKHE is in the middle of a paradigm shift in respect of its shape, purpose and position. As the various drivers behind HE’s value and relevance evolve in a tension-riddled landscape of shifting policy, politics and wider national and international concerns, Sam considers whether our current dominant operating cultures and business as usual models are positioning universities as being ready for the increasingly uncertain and disrupted path ahead. With this in mind, Sam looks at three aspects of universities running gear: performance and talent management, interaction with business and industry, and finally, the notion of entrepreneurial academia, asking: are we fit for the future?

Dr. Sam Grogan - Pro Vice Chancellor, Student Experience

09:40 - 10:00   Networking Coffee Break
10:00 - 10:30  Dragons’ Den - Speed Presentations

Our signature ‘Dragon’s Den’ session allows each solution provider an opportunity to deliver a short pitch, explaining why they are here and how their services can help tackle some of the ongoing challenges within the HE sector.

If you would like to hear more from a particular provider, please tick the relevant box to remind yourself to speak to them during our business meetings and networking breaks.
The influence of standardised English language tests has never been greater due to increased internationalisation and the ever-growing number of EMI courses. Yet while such tests are clearly important in confirming whether students have reached a minimal language competence, as Wingate has recently noted, tests that are largely ‘focused on language proficiency, such as grammar, structure and the use of cohesive devices have been shown to have little predictive value of students’ ability to use language in an academic context.’

So what are the other linguistic skills and competencies beyond language proficiency that need to be gauged, especially for PG entry?

Dr. Karen Ottewell - Director of Academic Development & Training for International Students

Is a ‘perfect storm’ brewing for universities? Consider the rise of populism, slowbalisation and the global movement of talent; consider the lack of social mobility for many students and the lack of diversity in leadership. Now consider the trade tensions, demographic changes and a shift of science and economy towards the East.

What will differentiate UK universities in this market economy of knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation and knowledge commercialisation? As an entrepreneurial scientist and the architect behind Aston Medical School, I would argue creating an entrepreneurial mindset in our students and programmes by partnerships with socially responsible startup businesses.

Professor Asif Ahmed - Pro-Vice-Chancellor & Inaugural Executive Dean

The need to link up higher education and business has never been greater. It’s what students want, and it’s what employers want. The traditional approach is to provide the subject knowledge on a degree in parallel or in sequence with employability, delivered in the form of key skills and placements.

The problem with placements is economic. There aren’t enough of them for a million or so students in higher education. At least, the supply of long placements is limited. The challenge with teaching key employment skills is that employers need to be involved to bring the subject alive.

One solution is to integrate employer engagement and work experience in to the curriculum for all students. This can be achieved by making work-related learning a core feature of degrees and supporting students in applying for opportunities. Recent experience suggests that even relatively small scale work-related learning in the form of mini placements, start up competitions and mentoring, as well as work experience provided on campus, is remarkably effective in terms of employment outcomes after graduation. It also provides a catalyst for stimulating enhanced student and staff enterprise, and helps to build enduring links and collaborations between the university and employers.

Prof. Dominic Palmer-Brown - Vice Chancellor
The speed of change in the 21st century and the scale of innovation is remarkable. We live amidst the fourth Industrial Revolution. The students of today are the pioneers of tomorrow in a world we don’t yet fully understand. And as an educational institution, preparing students for this uncertain future is our greatest responsibility, biggest challenge and most amazing opportunity. How do we balance this responsibility against risk in difficult and uncertain times? How do we stay true to our principles of diversity and advancing social justice, whilst remaining competitive and sustainable?

Dr. Amanda Wilcox - University Secretary
17:50 - 18:15  Closing Keynote - Good degrees and who gets them.

The government is currently focused on grade inflation, and TEF metrics now include a measure for this. At the same time there is a BAME attainment gap across the sector, with black students in particular lagging far behind their white British peers in the award of a first or 2.1.

To tackle this disparity, OfS is now piloting a TEF metric for differential degree attainment in the subject level TEF pilot. Universities are therefore simultaneously charged with holding down grade inflation and reducing the BAME attainment gap. So, what should we do about it?

Dr. Sal Jarvis - Pro Vice Chancellor, Education & Student Experience

18:15 - 19:45  Hotel Check In / Free Time

19:45 - 20:00  Drinks Reception

20:00 - 22:00  Networking Dinner

17:25 - 17:50  The Digital Opportunity – digital resources and the impact on student satisfaction and outcomes

What part do digital learning resources have to play in meeting the expectation of today’s students? How can learning analytics be used effectively to support student success? Access to digital learning resources present a powerful opportunity for institutions to level the playing field for all students.

This presentation will discuss the evolving nature of digital learning resources, the contribution personalised learning has for the student experience, and recent research findings on student attitudes to the impact of digital resources on their learning.

Alice Duijser – Managing Director

The Digital Opportunity – digital resources and the impact on student satisfaction and outcomes

Alice Duijser – Managing Director

Dr. Sal Jarvis - Pro Vice Chancellor, Education & Student Experience
08:50 - 08:55 Chairman reopening event

Scott Mulholland - Pro Vice Chancellor, Corporate Development

08:55 - 09:20 Which interventions have the most impact on student success? UWL uses Big Data and analytics to find out.

The University of West London has been using advanced learning analytics to improve student engagement and retention. A pioneer adopter in the UK of the successful US-based Civitas Learning Analytics, UWL rapidly deployed their “Illume” product across its entire student population, which using predictive big data, enabled us to start identifying those students most at risk.

UWL then trained over 300 academic personal tutors to record their interventions using “Civitas IFA”. Now, using “Civitas Impact”, we are beginning to uncover which of those interventions had the most impact on student success and are now ready to showcase our early findings.

Adrian Ellison - Associate Pro Vice Chancellor & CIO
Mary Cameron - Civitas Project Manager

09:20 - 09:45 Increase engagement with staff and students to improve outcomes

Without focus on the main priorities of the institution, Digital Transformation takes place in a vacuum. How do you link this to increased revenue, improved retention, protection of research budgets and the all-important rankings.

Graham Bell - Director of Learning Innovation
Bas Ten Holter - Director for Higher Education, Europe

09:45 - 10:15 Putting the research into policy, and the policy into practice

In her session, Harriet will discuss the way in which research and policy can unite, to shape innovation in Higher Education and enable organisational change for the benefit of the student experience. In the context, nationally, of the Teaching Excellence Framework, and internally, of an Education Strategy and Operational Plan, and an associated set of Hallmarks of the Portsmouth Graduate, she will discuss the advantages, and disadvantages, of a data-driven, research-informed approach to implementing practical enhancements to the student experience. Harriet will draw on a number of initiatives she has led at the University of Portsmouth, including a novel approach in operating a committee as a research group.

Dr. Harriet Dunbar-Morris - Dean of Learning and Teaching

10:15 - 11:15 Coffee Break and Business Meetings

Please check the schedule on the back of your delegate pass for your meeting timings
11:15 - 11:40  Leading Inclusion in Higher Education

This session will highlight the key diversity and inclusion challenges facing the Higher Education sector today and the role leaders can take to deliver real outcomes for students and staff. Kulbir Shergill, Director of Social Inclusion at the University of Warwick, has worked across the public, third and corporate sectors, leading diversity and inclusion strategies. Kulbir will share best practice that supports the recruitment, retention and promotion of diverse talent, and develops culture, helping us to really leverage the benefits of diversity.

Kulbir Shergill - Director of Social Inclusion

11:40 - 12:25  Closing Keynote - Panel Discussion

How do we implement evidence based changes?

Every university is on a journey to improve, but even when a Gold TEF rating has been achieved, that is not the end of the journey. This Panel Discussion will explore the importance of maintaining high standards of teaching and ensuring excellent outcomes for students.

Dr. Harriet Dunbar-Morris - Dean of Learning and Teaching
Kelly Coate - Pro Vice Chancellor for Education and Students
Dr. Sam Grogan - Pro Vice Chancellor, Student Experience

12:25 - 12:30  Chairman’s Closing Remarks

Scott Mulholland - Pro Vice Chancellor, Corporate Development.

12:30 - 13:30  Lunch
THANK YOU ALL FOR SUPPORTING OUR EVENT