

Scholarship Partnership Case Study

Alpha College

No of HE students (FTE)	450
No of FE students (FTE)	3,000
Length of time HE has been delivered	20 years
Number of directly funded programmes	38
Number of indirectly funded programmes	0
Subject areas offered	Animal Science, Business, Child Development and Education, Computing, Creative Digital Media, Drama and Performance Arts, Early Years Care and Education, Engineering, Events Management, Health Care Practice, Illustration, Law, Outdoor Education, Psychology and Sociology, Science, Sport and Exercise, Three-Dimensional Design, Tourism and Hospitality Management
No of validating/collaborative partners	1
Dedicated HE centre	Yes

The college and the university have a long-standing partnership which has experienced significant changes over the years. It has expanded from HND provision to some full degrees and the college plays a major role in the university's FE college partnership. The college and the university are geographically close which provides greater opportunity for college staff to attend university events, for university staff to attend college events and for students to visit the university. It also creates some problems in terms of the college's perceived competition with the university over recruitment to some courses. However, the university has invested in partnership working as it places significant value on developing its role in the region. It has a central partnership team supported by designated staff in each discipline area.

Support at the curriculum level varies from programme to programme with some university teams pro-active in engaging partner FE staff in their development days over the full academic year and others not engaging as productively as might be desired. The Learning Resources Centre team is very pro-active and their subject advisors update FE colleagues about new materials.

In some subjects, collaborative curriculum development has resulted in some innovative programme design but in other areas involvement is limited to programme leaders with less involvement by the rest of the team. Nevertheless, all staff have access to all teaching materials on their programme as do students.

The university has recently shifted its emphasis in validation of partnership programmes towards research and scholarly activity. This steer has been made clear to middle and senior college managers through their attendance at such validation events. The college plays a central role in the planning and implementation of the university's teaching and learning conferences and college staff regularly presented papers to these conferences often including college students where appropriate.

The university has discipline specific research clusters which FE staff are invited to attend but despite the close geographical proximity few FE staff attend due to their more restrictive workload and the timing of events. It seems to work most effectively where a discipline has a wide set of partners so that the university staff perceive a benefit from partnership working and where university staff have had experience of FE and so understand some of the constraints that their partner colleagues work under.

The university offers discounts on some of its postgraduate awards for college staff and they have taken advantage of this.