

# Running a....

## Student scholarship/ research symposium

BA/BSc students, and often final year Foundation Degree and HND students, will usually be required to complete a research project of some nature. In many cases, assessment of these projects includes a presentation to the class group. Putting on a student conference or symposium is an excellent opportunity for students to experience presenting to larger groups and also allows them to get a broader picture of research in their field and to network with peers and perhaps employers.

Where there are small groups and perhaps only one or two courses in a subject/vocational area you might want to consider how you can broaden the scope of your event by either running a symposium for a wider faculty area (for example, creative industries, service sector industries) or working with one or more other colleges in your region. You should think about inviting representatives from local industry; this is an excellent opportunity for your college to showcase higher education activity within your college, build relationships and form opportunities for employer engagement with your curriculum, and for students to demonstrate their talent to potential employers.

You might also want to invite students at earlier stages of their HE study to attend as delegates, and consider the possibility of inviting Level 3 students who are considering progressing to HE courses.

### PROCESS

1. Decide which students will present at the symposium - a group of courses within a faculty area or one course from a number of colleges?

2. Choose date and book venue. Will your event tie in with assessment cycles? Do you need space for presentations and to display posters?

3. Plan the format. Do you want a keynote speaker? Will students present to all delegates or smaller groups? Posters over lunch?

4. Make sure that students have a clear understanding of what is expected of presenters and delegates (see student guidance card).

5. Choose a keynote speaker (if appropriate) and send invitations to students, staff, and external guests.

6. Look at range of presentations and finalise format of event - how many presentation sessions? How will you display posters?

7. Continue to support staff to support students to ensure research will be ready and they feel confident about presenting.

8. Design and produce materials - programme, door signs, evaluation forms. Bear in mind that last minute changes are not uncommon!

9. Symposium day - ensure you have help to welcome guests, handle IT glitches, etc. Encourage a supportive atmosphere and enjoy the day.