

Social Partnership Network Vision

To establish a network of organisations who have a shared commitment to extending higher education opportunities to all those who can benefit. To work together to develop strategies and activities that lead to the creation of a more diverse HE system - able to meet the needs of diverse learners, support workplace and lifelong learning - and enhance social mobility and promote economic growth

Initial areas of activity:-

1. Reciprocal signposting
2. Collating and promoting learners stories
3. Use of free educational content
4. Developing training content
5. Joint lobbying/campaigning

Reciprocal signposting -To raise the profile of learning opportunities that increase progression, and over time - produce a progression guide for students that includes the transition from informal to formal learning. To support the development of workplace learning with employers and unions to enhance its role and improve skills levels to meet labour market demand.

Collating and promoting learner stories – To collect a range of student stories and learning journeys that demonstrate the impact of our joint efforts to inspire and support new adult learners from key target groups that will help to galvanise our work and produce evidence to influence organisations such as HEFCE, OFFA and SFA. To ensure we capture a broad range of stories including those of students who have increased their employability and labour market prospects.

Use of free educational content – to identify relevant open content materials that will inspire under-represented audiences to access higher education. Examples could include:

- recognising achievements
- providing subject-specific units that provide the interest for learners to continue studying
- developing skills-based units that help students to refresh their skills and build confidence
- developing vocationally-relevant materials that link to chosen careers.

Models of engagement could include use by individual learners or groups e.g. within a workplace with or without the facilitation of tutors.

Developing training content– Training appropriate key influencers such as ULRs, WEA tutors, NUS WP representatives, employers and others to provide high quality advice and guidance to inspire progression to higher education for under-represented groups This could involve using predominately free open content that could be grouped and certified by the award of a ‘Learning badge’.

Joint lobbying/campaigning – To work collectively with organisations such as HEFCE, BIS, political parties and specific high level groups and committees to lobby and campaign in order to raise the importance of strategic social partnerships working towards a shared social justice mission.