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| Title | University of Sussex Employability Strategy 2009-2015 |
| Author | Professor J. Wright/Owen Richards/Linda Buckham/Gill Johnston |
| Type | Strategy paper for discussion |
| Date | Summer 2009 |
| Strategic Context | The Employability Strategy is aligned to the <i>Making the Future</i> strategy |
| Summary | This paper brings together the closely linked set of development threads under the heading of 'employability', which directly supports the aims of the University's Strategic Plan. |
| Risk analysis | See section 6. |
| Resource implications | Yes, to be determined |
| Consultation | Strategy & Resources Committee, Teaching & Learning Committee and Senate |
| Future Action | Action steps as outlined in section 5 and review in 2012 |
| Recommendation | That the strategy be adopted |

1. Strategic Aims

This strategy brings together a closely-linked set of development threads under the heading of 'employability', which directly supports the aims of the University's Strategic Plan, *Making the Future* (2009-2015) and sets out the associated specific implementation approaches that we will be taking. The particular strategy aims addressed by these employability developments include:

- ❖ Delivering institutional growth through expansion of degree programmes;
- ❖ Developing programmes in response to the changing needs of students and employers;
- ❖ Helping students to develop skills that will equip them for graduate employment and lifelong learning;
- ❖ Introduction of the Sussex Plus initiative (which incorporates Personal Development Planning and SkillClouds) and to recognise the commitment and energy of Sussex students.

This strategy is directly geared to achieving the KPI targets associated with the strategic aims above, (including and) especially the specific target to increase the percentage of completing students in graduate-level jobs (see section 4 below).

It is also geared to helping ensure that the University produces graduates with the attributes we aspire to foster, *all* of which are employability-relevant (see Appendix 1). The University's *Making the Future* strategic plan and the University Teaching and Learning Strategy (2009) detail(s) the actions and targets concerned with enabling students to develop skills that will equip them for graduate employment, life-wide learning and enhancing the student experience.

2 The Sussex approach to 'employability'

The Sussex approach to 'employability' is well-encapsulated thus (Knight and Yorke, 2004 and Yorke, 2006):

'a set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations (and opportunities) to the benefit of themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy'. This is very similar to the recent Confederation of British Industry (2009) definition¹.

The Sussex approach to employability seeks to integrate employability into the student experience and is obviously deeply linked to Personal Development Planning (Higher Education Academy, 2009). Although

¹ CBI (2009), *Future Fit: preparing graduates for the world of work*, defines employability as, 'a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy.'

this strategy focuses principally on the 'employability outcomes' aspects, nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge in this overview that the University sees this as part of a broader conceptual model, which relates personal development planning to employability (see Appendix 2). This strategy seeks to improve the life chances of individuals and enhance the value of graduates to the community, providing opportunities for all students (undergraduate, postgraduate taught, and] doctoral students) to synthesize, record, reflect and articulate the skills they will need to maximise to address their own career learning development opportunities and make a contribution to society.

It also seeks to maximise employer engagement and the involvement of public and private sector employers in contributing to skill initiatives, providing information, advice and work experience, internships and placements.

3. The external environment and the business case

Enhancing the University's employability profile in various ways is important for our future success for a number of reasons. In part, it is a necessary response to the external environment as it affects the University and its graduates in the coming years. Those drivers include a very challenging set of economic and employment conditions - which sharpen the need for our graduates to be able to differentiate themselves positively in the jobs market, and demonstrate their work-readiness in their early career positions. Other relevant external factors include:

- ❖ Explicit pressures/incentivisation flowing from Government/HEFCE/QAA, the Confederation of British Industry(CBI) and the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES). Explicit Government incentivisation is also seen in the recent (2009) HEFCE Economic Challenge Investment Fund (ECIF) bid which Sussex has successfully won to deliver 100 internships for the class of 2009 graduates with Wired Sussex;
- ❖ The need to align with best sector practice, and to remain closely aware of sector developments, e.g. the Leitch Review of Skills, the 'HEAR' initiative emerging from the Burgess Review.

But these developments merely continue a well-established direction of travel, i.e. institutions with strong reputations for the employability of their graduates have for many years derived great benefit in terms of recruitment success in relation to both 'home' and overseas students. This works both in a direct promotional way, and also indirectly via institutional position in league tables, which are a strong influence on applicant choice (especially for overseas students) and which all include an employment measure, based in some way on nationally-collected 'first destinations' data for recent first degree graduates.

It is clear that these themes will blend in a strong way over coming years, such that those institutions that are able to position themselves as leaders in terms of graduate destination outcomes, and those offering best-in-sector academic and extra-curricular experience in relation to employability, will be increasingly favoured by applicants and will thereby give themselves greater strategic control over their own destinies, in terms of both growth and quality. This will be the case at postgraduate as well as undergraduate level.

In addition to the student recruitment benefits, institutions with a strong reputation for employability also tend to enjoy spin-off benefits in terms of stronger research links with businesses, and higher research contract income.

Alongside considering potential benefits, a strategy that proposes investing resources to enhance our employability performance must also consider costs: both direct costs and costs that are indirect in terms of the effort needed to adapt and rethink our offerings. The main form of such adaptive costs will lie in the efforts required to better align our academic programmes and practices to the employability agenda and the world of work. There are likely also to be new direct support costs associated with expanding certain kinds of activity (e.g. placement learning).

However, we are fortunate to be taking stock of this area at a time when the sector is exploring a range of new kinds of employability-enhancing activities. These range from relatively short events that give students 'insight' into particular areas of work, through to the range of possible ways in which students can acquire direct and variably 'deep' work experience. Variants here include work shadowing, internships, voluntary and paid work experience through to the traditional sandwich/placement year. In addition, there is the important theme (*Personal Development Planning*) of students reflecting on the connections between their academic experience, their extra-curricular activities and their part-time work, in a way that relates to the acquisition of skills and attitudes relevant to work. This is very much the focus of our emerging Sussex Plus scheme.

By working through the action-points set out in section 5, and deciding what balance of approaches we wish to bring to bear to achieve the aims of this strategy, we will be able to firm up these costs. The annual planning round will take this issue on board and enable us to keep the appropriate level of professional services support under close and timely review.

4. Measures of success (KPIs)

Key performance indicators relating to the Employability Strategy concern improved measures of graduate employment and student satisfaction:

Graduate employment

- ❖ Sussex to be in top 20 of the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey League Tables by 2015 with the percentage of first degree leavers in graduate level jobs six months after graduating (as measured by the DLHE survey published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency [HESA]) increasing from 56%² to (the sustained improvement) of 70%.
- ❖ Achieve top quartile in the Graduate Employment Performance Indicator ³ for the 1994 Group League Table by 2015.
- ❖ Achieve top quartile in the Postgraduate (taught)⁴ and Postgraduate (research) data⁵.

Student satisfaction

- ❖ 100% of subject areas achieving scores of over 4 in the Personal Development section of the National Student Satisfaction Survey by 2015.
- ❖ Improvements in the student satisfaction results of the International Student Barometer from current satisfaction levels for work experience and employability of around 2.8 to 4 (very satisfied) by 2015.

² The University of Sussex Council benchmark used the 2006 Sussex data reported in the *Career Development Survey: A report on the destinations of leavers from Sussex University in 2006*(CDEC), however the figure reported in the *Career Development Survey 2007* is 68%.

³ The Graduate Employment Indicator expresses the number of graduates who say they are working or studying (or both) as a percentage of all those who are working or studying or seeking work and each University is set a benchmark which takes into account subject of study, entry qualifications, ethnicity, age on entry and gender.

⁴ The national HESA data is also collected for postgraduate (taught) students. The *Career Development Survey: A report on the destinations of leavers from Sussex University in 2007*(CDEC) reported that the postgraduate unemployment rate was 4% at Sussex (against a national figure of 3%) and the combined figure of working, studying or a combination of the two was 90% at Sussex compared to the national figure of 94%.

⁵ The same annual cyclical mechanisms for benchmarking postgraduate (research) students results are not available through HESA. Data is collected by the Research Councils at a different point in the year to the HESA annual cyclical mechanisms.

5. Key actions for the successful implementation of the strategy

| Key actions | Strategic and Operational Lead responsibility for action | Targets |
|--|---|---|
| <p>5.1 University Teaching & Learning Strategy The University's Strategic Plan, <i>Making the Future (2009-2015)</i>, (Goal 2, Inspirational Teaching and Learning and Goal 3, Enhancing the Student Experience) details actions and targets outlined in the University Teaching and Learning Strategy (2009) concerned with enabling students to develop skills that will equip them for graduate employment and life-long learning.</p> <p>A Skills and Employability Steering Group (a new Taught Programmes committee which is a sub-committee of UTLC) will be established to encompass the following strands of work: Skill and personal development within the curriculum and Academic Advisory roles; Sussex Plus; Entrepreneurship and Enterprise skills and effective use Emerging Technologies within these strands.</p> | <p>Strategic: Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) reporting to VCEG. Monitored through UTLC.</p> | <p>Process of ongoing renewal for delivery by 2015. New proposals by 2012 across all taught and research subject areas focusing upon the value-added outcomes of the proposals to increase employability across the University of Sussex.</p> <p>Skills and Employability Steering Group, a sub-Committee of UTLC, to be established by 2010.</p> |
| <p>5.2 Schools employability targets Establish employability targets in School's Teaching and Learning Action Plans.</p> <p>Employability targets required for: undergraduate; postgraduate (taught) and postgraduate (research: doctoral).</p> <p>School Management Teams to re-model the curriculum in relation to employability/skill development, including mechanisms for engagement with Sussex Plus which incorporates Personal Development Planning. This includes: reviewing the appropriate involvement of employers in the curriculum (e.g. career forums with employers/alumni speakers) and work-insight⁶ experiences to be offered as part of current and new academic programmes either as part of the curriculum and/or as part of the extra-curricular Sussex Plus experience). Any direct costs and need for advice about portfolio development will need to be addressed centrally and at School level together with the cost for professional services and extra-curricular developments.</p> | <p>Strategic: Heads of Schools Operational: Directors of Taught Programmes</p> | <p>100% Schools by 2015 with Action Plans established for employability and skills for undergraduate, postgraduate (taught) and postgraduate (research doctoral) students.</p> <p>10% increase per new School by 2010 in public and private sector employer engagement with academic departments.</p> <p>Reporting to the Skills & Employability Steering Group and UTLC by 2010 with a clear strategic and operational focus with targets for implementation to identify which current and new academic programmes will include work-insight experiences and whether these are curricular or extra-curricular.</p> |

⁶ The term 'work-insight' is used here to express a range of specific experiences which are either delivered as part of the curriculum (e.g. six month or one year industrial placements) or extra-curricular work experience (e.g. volunteering work placements; work experience and internships during vacations, work-shadowing, work-based learning assignments, part-time work).

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| 5.3 Employability: operational responsibility named individual in each school Review the role, work-load distribution of the Careers Liaison Tutor in academic departments and consider whether a named role to undertake operational departmental responsibility for implementing policy across taught academic programmes (and working with Careers & Employability and other professional services) is required. If the role is kept then it requires a common understanding across schools. Issue to be discussed at UTLC by 2010. | Strategic: Heads of Schools Operational: Directors of Taught Programmes | By 2010: UTLC to have agreed a policy line on most effective academic-link role; By 2011: all schools to have moved to implement new academic link model. |
| 5.4 Academic staff development (including staff who are post-doctoral early career researchers) Embed staff training on employability into a new Academic Staff Development framework to ensure all teaching and support staff understand the University's definition of employability and its relevance to the curriculum. Staff who are designated in the category of 'early career researchers' to be offered access to all staff development programmes and bespoke training needs monitored by Human Resources (staff development unit). | Strategic: Deputy Vice-Chancellor Operational: Head of Teaching and Learning Development Unit, Head of Human Resources (SDU), Head of the Doctoral School | E-Learning resources/workshops on employability and skill development theme fully integrated into professional development activities by 2012. By 2015 to have 80% take-up by academic staff. Review will take place in 2012. |
| 5.5 Employability and academic advising Integrate employability and personal development planning into academic advising processes. | Strategic: Heads of Schools Operational: Directors of Taught Programmes and Student Support | 100% of first degree programmes achieving scores of over 4 in the Personal Development section of the National Student Satisfaction Survey by 2015. Review will take place in 2012. |
| 5.6 Sussex Plus Deliver Sussex Plus and associated personal development planning (PDP) initiative (including linkage between PDP, Sussex Plus, SkillClouds, S3, USSU and other activities). Monitored against equality and diversity targets for participation of core groups. Increase the opportunities for extra-curricular work insights (work experience | Strategic: PVC Education Operational: Head of Careers and Employability Centre | 70% students engaging with Sussex Plus initiative by 2012 with sustainability by 2015. 100% new Schools Employability Road Show organised and achieved by 2012. From the base-line ⁷ to deliver a 100% increase |

⁷ Base Line: Extra-curricular work insights: in 2008, Careers and Employability promoted a total of 442 work insight opportunities made up of vacation placements (198 opportunities); Voluntary work experience (244 opportunities); in addition to 745 opportunities for part-time paid work (of which 148 were on campus).

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| <p>placements/ volunteering and internships).</p> <p>Improvements in the international student satisfaction results of the International Student Barometer.</p> <p>Establish governance, a steering group, as a sub-committee of UTLC focusing upon Skills & Employability (see above in 5.1) including Sussex Plus.</p> | | <p>on the number of extra-curricular work insights offered by 2015.</p> <p>Improvements in the student satisfaction results of the International Student Barometer from current satisfaction levels for work experience and employability of around 2.8 to 4 (very satisfied) by 2015.</p> |
| <p>5.7 Doctoral students (see 5.4 for post-doctoral early career researchers)</p> <p>Ensure structured opportunities for all doctoral students to engage in skills and career development training continue to be provided and supported beyond 2012.</p> | <p>Strategic and Operational: Head of Doctoral School</p> | <p>100% of all doctoral students to be engaged with continuing professional development and using professional development tools (Profolio or equivalent) by 2015.</p> <p>100% of all doctoral students to attend a minimum of 5 training days for doctoral students.</p> <p>Review will take place in 2011 (earlier than 2012 to address possible changes post- Sir Gareth Roberts funding)</p> |
| <p>5.8 Employer Engagement (strong linkage between 5.6, 5.8 and 5.9)</p> <p>Enhance engagement with employers and alumnus both in relation to relationships with major employers but also in relation to graduate business start-up.</p> | <p>Strategic: Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor (Research) Operational: Regional Development Manager, Research and Enterprise with Head of Careers & Employability</p> | <p>Target to increase to 10% by 2015 the % of graduates entering self employment (current baseline 2007: 4%) (Research and Enterprise)</p> <p>50 new 'gold star' business relationships established /Knowledge Transfer Partnerships/employer engagement by 2015. Network of 100 consistent employers taking part at the University Employer Engagement Forum to enable at least 20 to attend annually</p> <p>100 new industrial placements/work experience generated (including Sussex alumni employer relationships) between Careers & Employability and Research and Enterprise by 2015.</p> |
| <p>5.9 Employability Communications</p> <p>Establish a communications strategy to enhance employer engagement with 300 major employers across all sectors and raise awareness with key employer networks, e.g. Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR), Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and Council for Industry in Higher Education (CIHE) about the changing academic employability profile of Sussex.</p> | <p>Strategic and operational: Director of Communications</p> | <p>Establishing sustainable relationships with 300 major employers between Heads of Schools and Careers & Employability Centre by 2012.</p> |

6. Risk Analysis

| Key Risks | Assessment | Mitigating Action | Officer Responsible |
|--|-------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Risks in relation to re-modelling the curriculum to incorporate employability/skills and keeping pace with the strategic and operational implementation of the strategy. | Medium/High | Roll out plan with PVC support of Heads of Schools | PVC Education |
| Risks in relation to the emerging technology/IT and e-learning infrastructure and keeping pace with the technical management and affordability to meet the strategic and operational implementation of the strategy. | Medium/High | Discussion at Technology Enhanced Learning Committee and IT Services Committee | Director of Emerging Technology |

Joanne Wright, PVC (Education)

Owen Richards, Academic Registrar, Linda Buckham, Head of Careers and Employability Gill Johnson, Head of Teaching & Learning Development Unit.

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Appendix 1

The original statement about the attributes of the Sussex Graduate was discussed and endorsed through University Teaching and Learning Committee. For the purposes of this strategy the focus has been upon developing employability across the graduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research levels.

The Sussex Graduate

Those qualified at first degree level from the University of Sussex are typically:

- able to display analytical and problem solving skills engaging with unfamiliar problems, applying information communications technology and, where appropriate, numerical skills to develop appropriate solutions;
- capable of understanding the philosophical and methodological bases of academic work/scholarship, receptive to new research ideas and critiques of established knowledge and able to generate their own ideas;
- able to work independently, accept responsibility and demonstrate organisational and time management skills improving their own performance based on feedback and reflective learning;
- aware of personal strengths and weaknesses, able to articulate and apply the skills and knowledge gained at University to work or further study/training destinations. Able to research a broad range of career options knowing the resources available to support them in their own professional and personal career development;
- capable of participating effectively in group projects showing respect for others, contributing to discussions using clear communication/presentation skills with the ability to produce clear structured written work;
- able to demonstrate an understanding of organisations in the public, private and voluntary sector and have a positive approach to making an effective contribution.

(Employers often use phrases such as “commercial awareness” and “business etiquette” to describe the latter bullet point in employability terms, but it is questionable whether this will be developed in higher education in all levels and disciplines of students without the appropriate range of work experience. The Careers and Employability Centre offers workshops about these topics which are led by employers.)

The Sussex Postgraduate (Taught)

Those qualified at postgraduate taught level from the University of Sussex are typically:

- able to display analytical, research and problem solving skills to deal with complexity and think through the implications of their judgements by drawing upon and critiquing existing academic knowledge, making use of information communications technology and where appropriate, numerical skills to develop appropriate solutions;
- capable of understanding the philosophical and methodological bases of academic knowledge/scholarship, receptive to new research ideas and critiques of established knowledge and able to generate and test their own ideas;
- able to think and work independently, accepting responsibility, displaying good organisational and time management skills with the initiative to improve their own performance based on reflective learning and feedback;

- aware of personal strengths and weaknesses, able to articulate and apply the skills and knowledge gained at University to work or further study/training destinations. Able to research a broad range of career options knowing the resources available to support them in their own professional and personal career development;
- able to work effectively in a team with a range of individuals from different disciplines/backgrounds; demonstrating confident communication and presentation skills, showing respect for others, flexible, willing to accept responsibility and showing a potential for leadership;
- able to apply their scholarship by writing a dissertation which demonstrates the use and understanding of research methodologies/philosophies;
- able to demonstrate an understanding of organisations in the public, private and voluntary sector and have a positive approach to making an effective contribution.

(Employers often use phrases such as “commercial awareness” and “business etiquette” to describe the latter bullet point in employability terms, but it is questionable whether this will be developed in higher education in all levels and disciplines of students without the appropriate range of work experience. The Careers and Employability Centre offers workshops about these topics which are led by employers.)

The Sussex Postgraduate (Research)

Those qualified at postgraduate research level from the University of Sussex are typically:

- able to think and work independently, displaying sophisticated research and problem solving skills to analyse complex problems and generate creative solutions by engaging with existing scholarship and generating new knowledge;
- able to conceptualise, design, plan and project-manage research work (of a substantive project size, over a long time) demonstrating experience in cutting-edge research skills, methods and techniques, influence thinking in their subject discipline and showing scholarly accomplishment;
- able to work with persistence, using initiative/reflective learning and feedback to improve own performance and working effectively with ambiguity;
- aware of personal strengths and weaknesses, able to articulate and apply the skills and knowledge gained at University to work or further study/training destinations. Able to research a broad range of career options knowing the resources available to support them in their own professional and personal career development beyond the academy;
- able to demonstrate confident communication and presentation skills and to communicate complex ideas to various audiences;
- able to work in a self-directed way effectively as part of a group or team with a range of individuals from different disciplines/backgrounds showing respect for others and a potential for leadership;
- able to apply their scholarship by writing a dissertation which demonstrates the use and understanding of research methodologies/philosophies;
- able to demonstrate an understanding of organisations in the public, private and voluntary sector and have a positive approach to making an effective contribution.

(Employers often use phrases such as “commercial awareness” and “business etiquette” to describe the latter bullet point in employability terms, but it is questionable whether this will be developed in higher education in all levels and disciplines of students without the appropriate range of work experience. The Careers and Employability Centre offers workshops about these topics which are led by employers.)

Appendix 2

Personal Development Planning (PDP) Model incorporating Sussex Plus and SkillClouds

Sussex Plus enables employability skills and achievements to be combined and presented in one Sussex Plus webfolio (powered by the e-portfolio PebblePad) for undergraduate students. Students who produce a webfolio considered to be of a good standard (against a transparent criteria) by university careers advisers will receive a Sussex Plus Certificate. Personal Development Planning (PDP)⁸ is central to the *Sussex Plus* initiative and PDP tools are available as part of the web-based Sussex Plus e-portfolio (powered by PebblePad) where students can synthesise, record, reflect and articulate the skills they have developed at University from the (i) academic curriculum, (ii) personal extra-curricular and (iii) work experience strands.

SkillClouds is also a new resource (located in a student's Sussex Direct pages) that provides personalised information about the skills that students are developing within their degree studies. This will help students to recognise and articulate the skills that are embedded within the academic curriculum. Careers and Employability Centre staff have worked with the Teaching and Learning Development Unit to contribute to the development of SkillClouds within the integrated framework of Sussex Plus; there will be continued discussion with academic advisers and academic departments to future-proof the initiative as a whole. The three Sussex Plus elements are not tightly linked in a technical way, however they are pedagogically related and underpinned by Personal Development Planning. This flexibility means that:

- students will be able to access one or two elements independently (if they are unable to participate fully in Sussex Plus), however, it is hoped that 70% of students will participate by 2012.
- as the initiative develops the balance and relationship of the elements can be kept under continuing review;
- each individual element can be enhanced independently of the others, thereby helping to future-proof the initiative as a whole.

At a minimum, by 2009/2010, academic advisers would be expected to:

- be aware of the SkillClouds resource on their students Sussex Direct pages;
- be familiar with the skills typically developed through their degree programmes;
- be able to discuss these skills broadly with students in the context of their degree programme;
- be aware of the Sussex Plus initiative⁹ and the importance of the broader skill and employability development activities on offer.

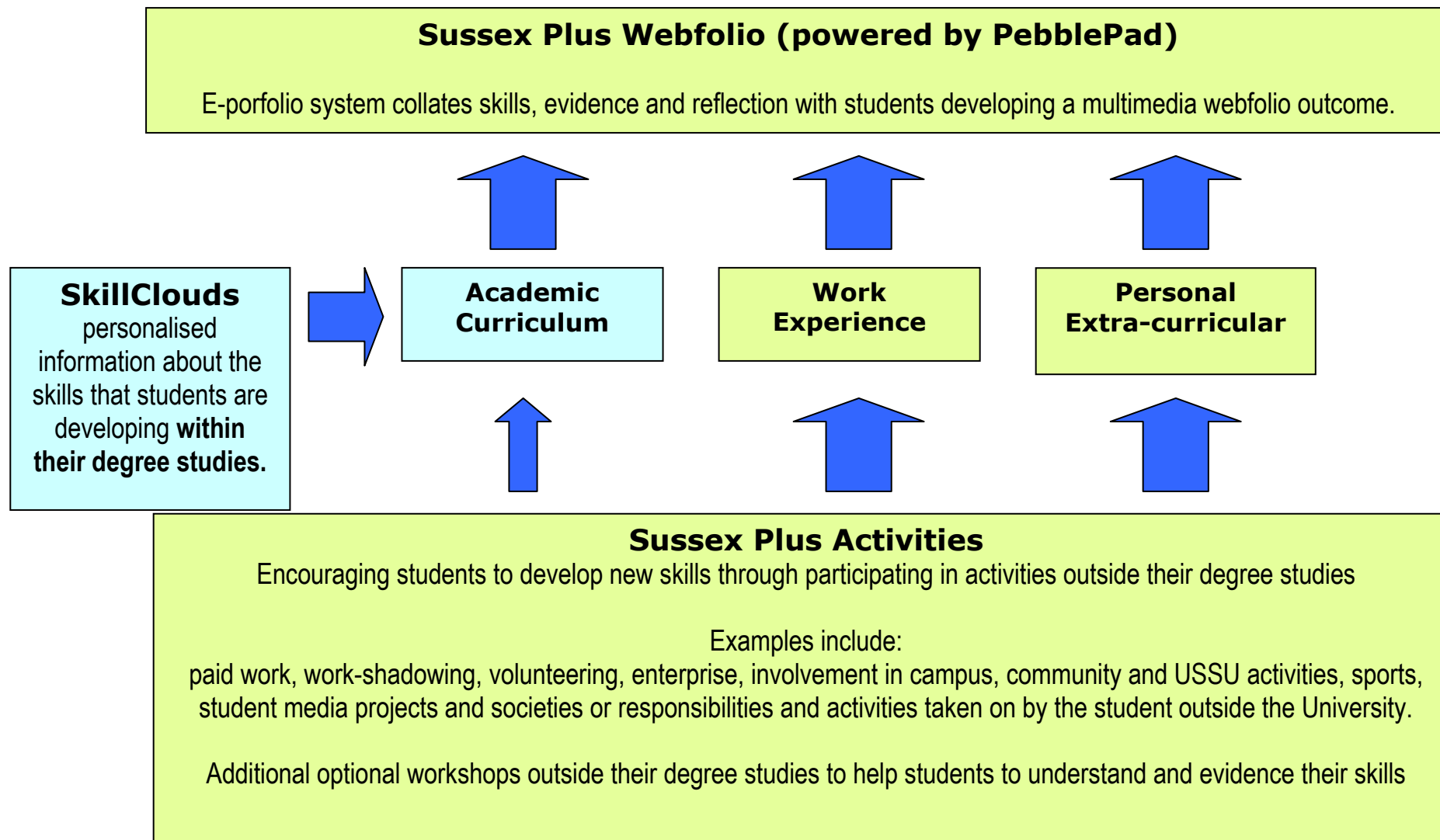
By 2010-2011, academic advisers would be expected to:

- be able to discuss Sussex Plus with all first years and explain the importance of the broader skill and employability activities;
- be able to respond positively to request by students to comment on the Sussex Plus Webfolio content and to potentially make use of the Personal Development Planning tools within the e-portfolio; the implications of this require further discussion with academic staff.

⁸ Personal Development Planning (PDP) is defined as, a structured and supported process undertaken by a learner to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development. It is an inclusive process, open to all learners, in all HE provision settings and at all levels. Effective PDP improves the capacity of individuals to review, plan and take responsibility for their own learning and to understand what and how to learn. PDP helps learners articulate their own learning and the achievements and outcomes of HE more explicitly, and supports the concept that learning is a lifelong and life-wide activity (QAA, 2009).

⁹ In 2009/2010 the Phase 2 Pilot of Sussex Plus will be aiming to work with 1000 students and staff.

The Sussex Plus Initiative



Appendix 2, Diagram 2

The models outlined below are taken from the Higher Education Academy's recent publication, *Personal Development Planning and Employability* (2009), pp 19, 20 and 21) and represent the proposed direction of travel for the Sussex Plus project in the longer term. The **academic curriculum**, **personal strand** and **employability strand** outlined in the pedagogic diagram below represent the integration of work carried out for piloting during Phase 2 of Sussex Plus and SkillClouds:

| Characteristic | Emphasis is on: | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | Academic strand | Personal strand | Employability strand |
| Source of experience | Curriculum | Extra-curricular activities | Work experience |
| Enabling skills and attitudes | Academic skills (essay writing, exam technique etc) and subject-specific skills | Self-management and motivation | Employability skills (team work, presentational and interviewing skills, commercial awareness, etc.) |
| Higher-order skills | Creativity, problem solving, analysis, critical reflection etc. | Meta-cognition and self-regulatory skills | Career management skills |
| Connectivity | Theory and the real-world, and can make connections across modules/levels | Planning route through module choice, balancing wider commitments and study, career choice etc. | Curriculum and real-world 'professional' practice. |
| Ethical emphasis | Academic conventions and codes of practice | Personal ethics and values | Professional codes |
| Preparation for ... | Further study/research | Life | Employment |
| Most likely to emphasise | PDP and the supportive/anticipatory use of materials | PDP as a process | The context within which PDP is undertaken |

Figure 1: Emphasis given to different characteristics by the three PDP strands

The University of Sussex has been approaching the introduction of Personal Development Planning from a 'discrete model' perspective as outlined below. PDP is seen as an additional and discrete part of the student experience. Here students may be provided with opportunities to engage in PDP activities, and encouraged to undertake them, but these activities are optional and additional to the curriculum and students are left to their own, with minimal support to decide whether they should engage:

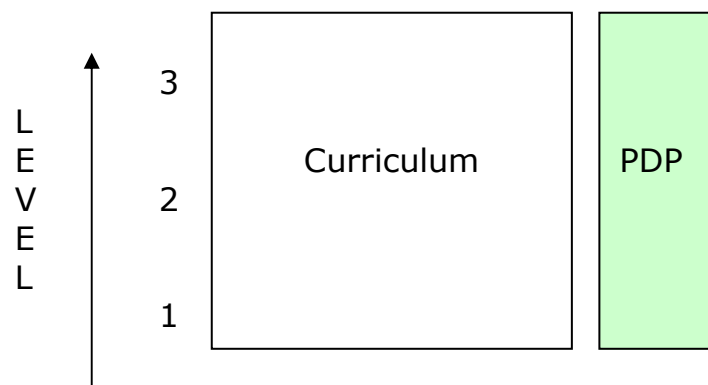
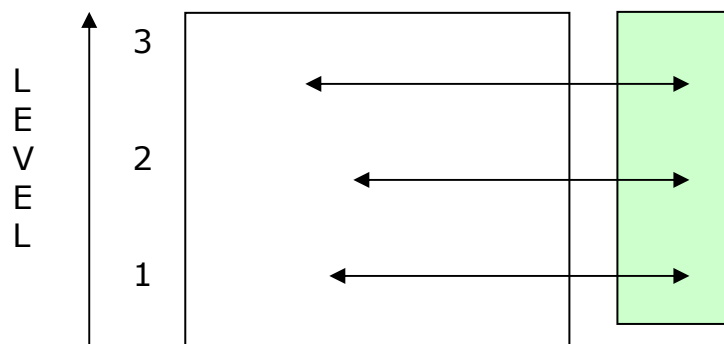


Figure 2: The discrete model

However, as the Sussex Plus project moves forward to Phase III and Phase IV it is anticipated that PDP will be represented in parallel with the curriculum and linked to it so that there is an explicit and supported relationship between the two. The linkages between PDP and the curriculum may only occur at certain points or throughout the curriculum (see example below: The linked model):

Figure 3: The linked model



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