



## **INSTITUTIONAL POLICY FOR THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ELEMENT OF PROGRESS FILES**

### **1. Introduction**

Edge Hill regards personal development planning – the continuing process of review, reflection and action-planning - as an integral part of each learner's overall development. The institution's policy for personal development planning (PDP) has been formulated within the context of the report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, 1997, headed by Sir Ron Dearing, which recommended the introduction of Progress Files for all students studying within the higher education awards framework. The policy has also been informed by a number of other guidelines including the joint policy statement on Progress Files issued by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, the Committee of Scottish Higher Education Principals, the Standing Conference of Principals, and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2001); the Guidelines for HE Progress Files published by the QAA in 2001, and updates issued in 2004 by the Progress File Implementation Group, a body which includes the Higher Education Academy.

### **2. Progress Files**

Progress Files are intended to 'help make the outcomes, or results, of learning in higher education more explicit, identify the achievements of learning, and support the concept that learning is a lifetime activity'. Progress Files 'should consist of two elements: a transcript recording student achievement which should follow a common format devised by institutions collectively through their representative bodies; (and) a means by which students can monitor, build and reflect upon their personal development' (National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, 1997). The overall concept contains:

- the transcript: a record of an individual's learning and achievement, provided by the institution. The transcript provides a comprehensive verifiable record of the learning and achievement of an individual learner. Transcripts should also provide learners with a record of their learning while they are studying; a formative statement that should help students monitor and reflect on their progress, and plan their further academic development;
- an individual's personal records of learning and achievements, progress reviews and plans that are used to clarify personal goals and can provide a resource from which material is selected to produce personal statements (e.g. CVs etc) for employers, admissions tutors and others;

- structured and supported processes to develop the capacity of individuals to reflect upon their own learning and achievement, and to plan for their own personal educational and career development. The term Personal Development Planning (PDP) is used to denote this process.

Institutions' responses to the transcript element of the recommendations were required to be in place by 2002-2003. It is expected that policies and instruments for the delivery of the PDP element will be in place in all higher education institutions by 2005-2006.

### **3. PDP at Edge Hill**

**3.1** Edge Hill's policy for PDP embraces the recommendations of the lead bodies and draws on the good practice already established within the institution, much of which pre-dates the Dearing Report. Edge Hill offers a distinctive range of academic and professional programmes across the three Faculties. While maintaining an overall coherence, the policy is intended to be flexible enough to enable the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Health to incorporate the specifications of, for example, the Teacher Training Agency's Professional Standards and the General Teaching Council's Professional Code of Values and Practice for Teachers, and the Nursing and Midwifery Council's Code of Professional Conduct, Standards of Proficiency and Guidelines for Portfolio Development. The policy takes account of the fact that while having common purposes, the relevant elements of the respective curricula may be known by other names (Professional Development Portfolio, for example).

With equivalence of opportunity as the key principle, Edge Hill's policy aims to provide a framework of minimum requirements. These should be seen as guidelines for the continued review and development of PDP as appropriate to individual programmes and the needs of the students, rather than prescriptions.

### **3.2 Minimum Requirements**

- i) Faculties are responsible for ensuring that every student following a programme leading to an award within the higher education awards framework will have appropriate opportunities for PDP at all levels of their programme as part of a continuous process of personal review and development.
- ii) Such opportunities for PDP will be developed and monitored within the context of the QAA Guidelines (2001), and any subsequent guidelines.
- iii) The primary objective for PDP will be to improve the capacity of individual learners to understand what and how they are learning, and to review, plan and take responsibility for their own learning, helping them:
  - become more effective, independent and confident self-directed learners;

- understand how they are learning and relate their learning to a wider context;
- improve their general skills for study and career management;
- articulate personal goals and evaluate progress towards their achievement;

and encourage a positive attitude to learning throughout life.

### **3.3 Minimum Outcomes**

Every Faculty will need to ensure that on completion of their programme, students will have the opportunity to engage in PDP at all levels of their programme, including post-graduate degrees. As such, with appropriate support, students would be able to:

- i) create records containing information on the qualities and skills they can evidence and use for purposes such as applying for a job or a further course of study;
- ii) reflect upon, review, act upon and where appropriate record, their personal and academic development and related action plans.

### **3.4 Information**

- i) Every Faculty will need to ensure that the rationale for PDP and the opportunities for PDP are made clear in the programme specification.
- ii) At the start of their programme, students will be informed about:
  - the rationale for PDP and the opportunities for PDP that the programme provides;
  - the ways the outcomes of PDP will be recorded, and where appropriate, accredited;
  - the support that will be provided.

### **3.5 Quality Assurance**

Every Faculty will use established quality management and enhancement mechanisms to assure themselves that PDP is being implemented effectively.

### **3.6 Timescale**

Faculty responses will need to be in place by the start of the 2005-2006 academic year.

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