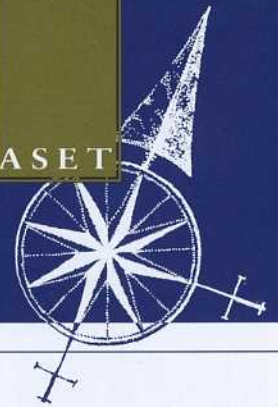


newsletter

ISSUE NO. 20 JANUARY 1999



WORK EXPERIENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Seminar 3 December 1998

ASET was pleased to convene a seminar on 3 December which was hosted by George Mudie, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Life Long Learning.

The 23 attendees included five Vice Chancellors, one VC representative, five senior representatives of employers or employers' organisations, including one from an SME, and members from CVCP, DfEE, CIHE, AGCAS, the National Centre for Work Experience, ASET, and the meeting was facilitated by Stephen McNair who was, at the time, with NIACE.

Edwin Kerr, President of ASET, chaired the entire event which began with George Mudie emphasising the Government's intention to implement the Dearing recommendations in respect of work experience and higher education,

their recognition of the importance of the subject and his willingness to meet ASET again to take this subject forward.

The only paper before the meeting presented a brief background description and a number of focused challenges for universities, for employers and for Government and its agencies. These provided a basis for a lively and wide ranging discussion which was summarised succinctly by the facilitator. When that report is finalised it is hoped to publish both it and the pre-circulated challenges.

Amongst the points made were the paramount importance of developing employability, and related skills, as part of a university education, that work experience is an important but not the only way this can be done, that students are a diverse group and there is a temptation to focus on 18-22 year olds in full time education, who form a minority of the student population, that work

experience covers a very diverse set of activities from a well managed sandwich placement to term time part time work and various models in between.

Issues around quality and accreditation, supply and demand, brokering, the dissemination and implementation of good practice were all discussed and a number of policy proposals were made. Some of the latter looked at particular schemes, such as STEP, some at the development of a 'third leg', to complement research and teaching, some at initiatives, such as Enterprise in Higher Education, but emphasised the need for them not to be short term and some at mechanisms and, in this context, the Regional Development Associations were mentioned.

That there will be follow up actions is in no doubt, but, as of today, it is difficult to be precise what they will be. Full details will be circulated via the next newsletter or separately if necessary.

THE ASET CONFERENCE SUITE - A NEW ENTERPRISE

November 1998 has seen yet another exciting development in the range of services that ASET offers.

The latest service, THE ASET CONFERENCE SUITE is adjacent to the ASET offices in Sheffield, which is easily accessible by road and rail, and now thanks to Sheffield's new airport by air. The suite comprises of three inter-linked rooms, the reception area, the main conference room and an additional room suitable for break out meetings, or the general relaxation of delegates. Decorated to the highest of standards the suite offers all the elements that you could expect to find in a modern conference facility.

For some time now the ASET conference committee has been considering the composition of its one day conferences and has elected to run a complementary programme of one-day, small-group seminars which will enable selected subjects to be explored in much more detail and popular past subjects to be revisited.

Within the new *Staff Development Programme*, each seminar will be facilitated by an ASET team member with specialist knowledge and experience in the area. The maximum number of participants in any seminar will be eighteen, thereby giving the maximum opportunity for individual participation.

The inclusive cost of each seminar will be competitively priced, with a further discount for all ASET members making ASET membership even more cost effective. Early indications are that the proposed programme will be heavily subscribed, so if you or any of your team wish to attend an event, early booking will be essential.

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