Enterprising Further Education 2008 – 2011

Evaluation Report

Background

The Enterprising FE Network was established in 2008 as part of the Yorkshire Forward funded Embedding Enterprise in Education programme. The aim of the network was to increase the number of FE students considering self-employment as a viable career path by building the capacity and capability of colleges in Yorkshire & Humber to support enterprise education. The project was managed by YPEF Services Ltd (now known as Youth Enterprise Services) who contracted Leeds City College to run the network.

The network has provided funding for activities, a website for the exchange of good practice and news, a CPD programme, a self-assessment framework and the support of a network coordinator.

Membership of the network includes 24 of the 25 colleges in the region and has been overseen by a steering group made up of representatives of colleges from each of the 4 sub-regions.

In June 2011 a questionnaire (Appendix A) was sent out to the key contact at each college in order to evaluate the impact of the network and its activities. This evaluation report is based on the responses received.

Enterprise Strategy and Impact

All the colleges who replied to the questionnaire have an enterprise strategy in place which has been seen as instrumental in raising the profile of enterprise at a strategic level, defining roles and responsibilities, and in one case securing a full time Enterprise Coordinator post.

Respondents agreed that, while there is currently a lack of hard evidence in regard to the impact of enterprise at a strategic level, there are a number of areas that enterprise, as part of a range of interventions, can positively influence:

a) Improving employability skills

b) Raising the aspirations of students

c) Increasing participation and attainment

d) Influencing career choices

e) Increased employer engagement

f) More young people going onto Higher Education

g) More young people obtaining employment

h) More young people starting a business

Senior Management Support

All respondents felt that they had support from senior management for embedding enterprise. The evidence for this was the inclusion of enterprise in strategic plans leading to the prioritisation of resources, including posts, and in some cases responsibility for enterprise at senior management level.

Practitioner Support and CPD

Enterprise champions believe that they have benefited from being part of the network in a practical sense – developing practice and formulating ideas for enterprise activities – as well as through the opportunity to influence and contribute to advocacy. The funding which has been available for network members required recipients to measure impact and to report on outcomes. This has had a positive effect on improving practice and embedding a more strategic approach to the planning of enterprise activities. The emphasis on learning from others to inform improvement was seen as a key benefit of participation in the network.

Barriers to Implementation

Respondents cited the lack of both time and resources as practical barriers to implementing the improvements they would recommend as a result of their learning from the network. In most cases respondents also suggested that the lack of buy in from some colleagues was a barrier to embedding enterprise in all curriculum areas.

Enterprise Activities

The range of enterprise activities being delivered in the colleges has expanded since the network was established and now includes the following:

- Business engagement (speakers)

- Global Entrepreneurship Week

- Business mentoring

- Funding for start-up

- Competitions

- IT based business simulations

- Tracking of student skills' development

- Enterprise Qualifications

- Tutorials

- Business advice from external providers

- Financial education

- Test-trading

- Incubation

Respondents reported that they had added to their range of enterprise activity provision as a result of exposure to new ideas via the network and CPD events.

Enterprise Framework

The enterprise framework which was developed as an outcome of the initial evaluation of the network in 2009 has been used by all the respondents. The use of the framework as an internal audit tool to identify both good practice and gaps in provision was cited as a positive outcome by all respondents. The opportunity to capture achievement through the development of case studies and to focus on areas for improvement as part of forward planning were seen as significant to embedding enterprise. Respondents suggested that they would re-visit the framework as part of their internal review processes.

Future support needs

The need to continue to improve practice through sharing information was highlighted by all respondents. Championing the need to collaborate through sharing practice and engaging in cross-college CPD was seen as the key role for the network going forward. Ideas for new ways of working included peer mentoring and buddying. Information needs included lesson plans for enterprise and CPD "train the trainer" events.

Future Plans

YES is currently in discussions with regional and national bodies to secure continuation support for the network. The ERDF funded NET 315 project offers some network members an opportunity to continue to build upon the work of the Yorkshire Forward-funded Enterprising FE Network.

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Evaluation form

Interview details

College: _____

Contact Name: _____

Job role: _____

Q1   Is your college part of the YPEF Enterprise Network?

Q2   If not why not?

Enterprise coordinator

Q3   Are you the designated Enterprise Coordinator in College?

Q4   How long have you been in this role for?

Q5   How many hours a week do you have to undertake the Enterprise Coordinator role?

Q6a   How has being part of the Enterprise FE Network helped you in your role?

Q6b   Is there anything else the network could have done to support you more?

Enterprise Strategy

Q7a   Has the college created a policy/strategy/mission statement for Enterprise Education?

Q7b   If yes, has this made a difference to your role?

Q8   How much does Enterprise Education contribute to the following in your college?

[Scale 1-5, with 1 meaning 'no contribution at all' and 5 meaning 'great contribution']

a)   Improving employability skills

b)   Raising aspirations of students

c)   Increasing participation, and attainment

d)   Influencing career choices

e)   Increased employer engagement

f)   More young people going onto Higher Education

g)   More young people obtaining employment

h)   More young people starting a business

Q9   In your opinion, how much does the Senior Management Team get involved in Enterprise Education in your school / college? Please provide examples

[5 scale:1 Not that involved ☐ 5 Very actively involved]

Q10a Has the Enterprise FE Network helped you to develop/embed the enterprise strategy with the college?

Q10b If Yes, How?

Q10c If no, what support could the Enterprise FE Network provided you to support you with this strategy?

Q11   What do you think are the main barriers to Enterprise Education in your college?

Enterprise Activities

Q12   What does your college currently do/offer for Enterprise Education?

Q13   Do you deliver your enterprise activities In House/ by an external delivery provider?

Q14a Has the Enterprise FE Network helped you to develop enterprise activities within the college?

Q14b If Yes, How?

Q14c If no, what support could the Enterprise FE Network provided you to support you with the development of enterprise activities within the college?

Q15   What enterprise activities is the college planning to offer in the future?

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Q16　Have you taken part in any of the CPD activities provided by the Enterprise in FE Network?

Q17　If yes which CPD events?

Q18　On a scale of 1 to 5 how would you rate the CPD training for?

[5 scale: 1 Not very valuable ☐ 5 Very valuable]

a)　New approaches/ideas

b)　Resources

c)　Quality of speakers

d)　Content of workshops

Q19　How would you improve the CPD training?

Q20　What further CPD training opportunities would you like to see?

Q21　In your opinion, how useful do you think that CPD for enterprise education has been for developing enterprise in your college?

 [5 scale: 1 Not very useful ☐ 5 Very useful]

College network

Q22   Rank in order of importance what you get out of the network:

1.   Resources

2.   Funding

3.   Networking

4.   Ideas

5.   Information

6.   CPD

7.   Partnership working

8.   Regional Coordinator Assistance

Q23   Can you give an example of when/where you have worked in partnership with another college(s) in the network?

Q24   Are you part of other enterprise networks?

Events

Q25   How many of the Enterprise FE networking events have you attended?

Q26   Do you think that the Enterprising FE Events should be?

Sub regional, regional, National, mixture of all

Q27   On a scale of 1 to 5 how would you rate the events for?

[5 scale: 1 Not very valuable □ 5 Very valuable]

e)   Contacts/networking

f)   New approaches/ideas

g)   Resources

h)   Quality of speakers

i)   Content of workshops

Q28   How would you improve the events?

Q29   What topics or speakers would you like to hear about at future events?

Website

Q30   Have you visited the Enterprising FE Website?

Q31   How would you rate it?

[5 scale: 1 poor □ 5 excellent]

Q32   What other information and resources could be put on to the website to improve it?

Q33   What other enterprise websites do you use for support, help and guidance?

Enterprise Framework

Q33   Are you aware of the Enterprise Framework?

Q34   Have you completed it?

Q35   How will your college use this information?

Q36   What could be done to improve the framework?

Q37. Other than funding, what additional support do you require to further develop enterprise in your college?