EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT POLICY 2018-19

Policy statement

Raising aspirations and self-esteem is an integral part of achievement, and is important in supporting all students to achieve their full potential. The development of employability skills is an essential element of the Learner Journey, which all students are entitled to receive. The purpose of this policy is to ensure there is a consistent approach to the development of employability skills across the South Thames Colleges Group, with all students having access to the same material and messages. All Colleges run programmes to inspire, motivate and prepare students for progression either into employment or further study (work experience, going to university etc.).

Furthermore, this policy looks to ensure that all students engage with employers linked to their main qualification in order to gain skills and knowledge to further their employability. For all students on Technical Qualifications there must be a clear and accurate plan for employer engagement.

Key principles are:

- An agreed 18/19 programme of employment, enterprise, entrepreneurship and enrichment activities that support progression and employability skills development for all students.

- Improving satisfaction scores for careers information, advice and guidance before and during the course, and employability skill development in the annual student surveys with validation from focus groups and student councils.

- All students on study programmes undertake work experience or some form of work related training as part of their study programme (non qualification) activity.

- All students on 16-19 study programmes without a GCSE at Grades 4-9 will continue to study English and maths qualifications.

- All students will be offered the opportunity to participate in Employability weeks to include sessions delivered by relevant and appropriate employers.

- Sustained education, employment or training at the end of each course, e.g.
  - University destination for Level 3 students, including Russell Group
  - Progression from Level 1 to Level 2 and from Level 2 to Level 3 (including progression for SEND learners)
  - Employer satisfaction feedback – a comprehensive procedure and system for capturing employer feedback (CRM)

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The policy will be implemented as follows:

- Students on one-year study programmes will undertake a period of vocationally relevant work experience with the exception of those students studying their final year at Level 3 with HE, Apprenticeships or employment as the intended destination.

- All students will participate in at least four meaningful encounters with employers during cross college Employability weeks. Further sessions should be made available in individual curriculum areas.

- Students will be given the opportunity to undertake a range of work related training and enrichment activities including team building, interview skills and mock interviews with active sessions led by employers as well as activities including CV writing and interview skill preparation.

- All students will have access to the cross college enrichment activities delivered by the Student Services team including Freshers Fayre, HE Fair, Careers Fair.

An Employability and Enrichment Award Scheme (Gold, Silver and Bronze levels) will recognise the achievement of students through their participation in a range of employability and enrichment events.

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Annex 1

Requirements for Technical Qualifications (Pearson)

- There must be a clear and accurate plan for Employer Involvement for the new Technical Qualifications for individual learners

- All activities undertaken with Employers must be "meaningful" (as defined below)
- To assure that individual learners and participating employers are clear on activity aims and objectives
- To be part of an audit trail of learner employer involvement achievement records
- To provide feedback to inform centre quality improvement of employer involvement

Definitions/Terminology
Examples of 'meaningful activity' include:

- structured work experience or work placements that develop skills and knowledge relevant to the qualification
- project(s), exercise(s) and/or assessments/examination(s) set with input from industry practitioner(s)
- units delivered or co-delivered by an industry practitioner(s) - this could take the form of master classes or guest lectures
- industry practitioners operating as 'expert witnesses' that contribute to the assessment of a student's work or practice, operating within a specified assessment framework - this may be a specific project(s), exercise(s) or examination(s), or all assessments for a qualification

Aim
- Employer involvement in the delivery and/or assessment of technical qualifications provides a clear 'line of sight' to work, enriches learning and raises the credibility of the qualification
- To ensure a designated lead for Employer Involvement (which will be the Programme Lead unless stated otherwise)
- Requires all learners to undertake meaningful activity involving employers during their study
- To ensure that there is an accurate and detailed recording of meaningful employer involvement for every individual learner
- The contribution of meaningful activities to the qualification must be significant and relate to the qualification as a minimum

In order to do this, the programme lead for each Technical Qualification will:

- Produce an Employer Involvement plan at the start of the programme that reflects the meaningful activities that contribute to the technical qualification

- Produce a clear and accurate meaningful activity plan that covers all learners

- Establish and agree milestones with employers to develop, execute and review meaningful activities for learners

- Confirm learner engagement against the defined meaningful activities identified

- Ensure effective, reliable and accurate tracking / recording of individual learner involvement in meaningful activity in relation to the individual learner field of study

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- Prepare the learner to engage actively and positively with opportunities offered with employer involvement

- Accurately record employer involvement using both Pearson required paperwork and following the college requirements for ProMonitor

- Share good practice between all Technical qualification teams in reference to employer involvement

- Ensure that all staff teaching on Technical qualifications understand the requirements and importance of meaningful employer involvement.

- Provide resources to ensure effective employer involvement and accurate monitoring and recording.

- Review employer involvement as part of the MOT process to ensure that activities are meaningful and appropriate and enhance all future employer involvement

- Secure records of all activities are maintained

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