The Development of a Framework for a National Student Survey System (NSSS)
Summary of Steering Workgroup Meeting
20 October 2011

Summary:

1. Minutes of previous meeting/ matters arising

Defer confirmation on letter of communication to the Presidents, Registrars, executive teams and Students Union Executive of each institution until next meeting.

2. Registrar Concerns

The group was briefed on concerns raised by the Registrars over the makeup of the steering group.

Lewis Purser to deem if it is appropriate to seek a nominee from the Registrars to join the survey group.

It would seem on reflection that the IoT sector is under represented on the group. Muiris O’Connor is to approach the IOTs to seek a nominee from the Teaching & Learning/Registrar area

It was agreed that each member of the group would brief their Registrar on progress after each meeting.

3. Workpackage Updates

Workpackage groups met in the morning and reported progress to the steering group

a. WP2 Survey Development

From an analysis of established survey instruments the group outlined a number of survey topics and demographics required.

Aoife Flanagan is to circulate topic framework and each member is to add any questions from their institutional survey instruments to the framework supplied.

On the subject of benchmarking, it was agreed that it is not necessary that all sections of the survey need to be benchmarked.

It was agreed that the length of the survey is paramount and the survey should not be unnecessarily burdensome on participating students.

WP2 will issue a survey template for consultation among the wider stakeholder community.

Some concerns were raised about costing and the maintenance of the survey instrument, these will have to be factored in to WP3.

It was agreed that a pilot survey needs to be prepared for completion by students in March.

The survey tool needs to be valid and reliable; Vivienne Patterson is to obtain a quote from statistical consultancies used by the HEA for other projects.

b. WP3 Resource Acquisition & Technical Development
The original project proposal showed this package running from January 2012 to March 2012, it was agreed to change this timeline to cover the six months from November to April 2012.

The group is to build a matrix of frameworks currently in place in each of the institutions. Natalie Nic an Ghaill will issue a survey to all members for completion. The survey will seek details of the timing, survey software used, and any licence agreements institutions are currently locked into.

It is acknowledged that there is a substantial body of work in the solicitation of system requirements. These are to include:

- Ease of use; should not require a systems administrator in each institution
- Reporting requirements need to be specified and should include reporting across institutions and ISCED level 2 codes.
- System should be accessible and bi-lingual
- Should be cognisant of the possibility of producing KPIs from the data produced.
- While module reporting is technically possible it is not the remit of this survey group and is to be seen as a separate exercise.
- Survey instrument should be accessible via web and smart phone
- Need to consider how to deal with students on joint programmes
- Determine demographics required for reporting, e.g. age, programme, year of study etc. Need to liaise with WP 2 on this.
- Reporting tool should facilitate immediate reporting once the survey has closed.
- Methods for reporting results to students need to be included.

WP3 will develop a policy around contact with students and explore the possibility of using the HEANET survey tool.

There was some discussion about the incorporation of module level reporting. Since the survey is aimed at student satisfaction and engagement, module level analysis is seen as a separate exercise.

**Frequency:** It was agreed initially to run the survey every year with a review after two years.

**Date of next meeting:** 24th November