

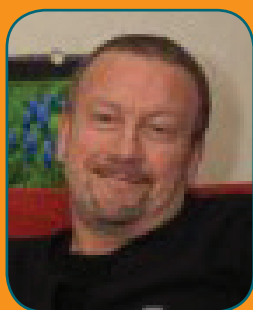


SDF UPDATE

Autumn 2013



Update from the Chair Making the SDF More Open



A number of years ago we ran a survey amongst HE staff developers about the quality of support provided by the SDF.

Whilst generally favourable the comment was made that the SDF tended to be run by and for the 'usual suspects' meaning those that had been around in HE staff development for some time, with the inference of it being a closed shop. At the last SDF Advisory Council a series of measures were approved to finally counter that myth and determine how future appointments are made to posts such as Chair and Deputy Chair. In the future anyone who works in an HEI or HE agency can put themselves forward for any of the two year SDF Executive posts of Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary or Treasurer. In the event of more than one eligible candidate an election will be held through the SDF jiscmail system, and those subscribed can indicate their preferred candidate.

We are hoping that this will encourage those who may be newer in HE staff development to come forward and get involved. So please take advantage of that. A number of executive posts will become available during the coming year and new faces and ideas always welcome.

At the time of writing the SDF is making final preparations for its first November Staff Developers' Conference. You may remember that we traditionally jointly ran an event in November with the LF until two years ago. LF have now ceased involvement in this and we sought to fill that gap – numbers are buoyant and a review of the Conference will appear in the next newsletter. At the same time we are planning our

7th Spring Conference, next year to take place North of London – as soon as details are finalised information will be communicated through the jiscmail list. So two conferences a year, a range of CPD events (currently in planning for 2014) and with an enthusiastic reaction to the Technology at Your Service free events we are in good spirits. If you want to influence the support provided to the HE staff development community do keep an eye out for invitations to apply for executive roles.

**In the meantime,
go well..**

Paul Dixon
Chair of SDF



MMU's 'Gold Fever' – The legacy a year on



Last year's Olympic and Paralympic games certainly piqued my creativity in terms of what was on my mind in 2012. Is it really a year since we were all captivated by those dreams? Much was made of the Olympic legacy, well what of our legacy since achieving IiP Gold in May 2012?

A year on I am delighted to say we have gone from strength to strength, and are now acknowledged as an IiP Champion, the only University to be recognised in such a manner. IiP Champion organisations are a group of role model organisations identified to promote the IiP Framework and its benefits through best practice activity.

Investors in People has been and continues to be a great investment for MMU.

To achieve 'Champion' status an organisation must meet a minimum of 165 criteria and commit to sharing and promoting best practice activities encouraging and promoting others to work with the standard and beyond.

In ensuring our commitment and making our very own legacy, I'd like to take this opportunity to outline a couple of examples of good practice used within MMU.

Graduate Intern Programme

Firstly, our Graduate Intern Programme, which delivers a paid opportunity for MMU graduates to gain valuable and marketable employment skills, whilst assisting departments in being able to recruit

flexibly. It delivers on MMU's strategic objective of delivering an excellent student experience, showing we take the future employability of our students seriously.

All internships have to meet the scheme's rigorous standards and provide high quality graduate level work experience. The Scheme specifically lends itself to those situations where a manager has a project or a group of tasks with a finite duration. All placements must be developmental and managers must be able articulate the graduate level skills they will develop and where they will be positioned. The internships are usually six months but can be on a three, six or twelve month basis. The length is determined directly by the line manager dependent upon the nature of the project or piece of work.

MMU Interns benefit from a bespoke and comprehensive package of development support that includes an intern development programme, a mentor as well as a workplace "buddy", one-to-one coaching, peer-to-peer networking and day-to-day line management from the host department. This management support includes regular reviews with a final review, specifically designed to help them identify the skills and experiences gained. The development programme sessions include Managing yourself and your Projects, Impact and Influence, Presentation Skills, Making Meetings Work and Becoming a Better Candidate.

The Scheme is advertised and promoted by the University's Careers Service and HR Department with a major campaign prior to graduation during Employability week.

A Central Intern Development Fund of £50,000 has been created to support additional internship projects that do not fit neatly within any particular service/faculty plan. These focus on improving the student experience for the whole MMU student population.

The scheme is subject to on-going review and evaluation ensuring it continues to offer a high quality experience and to make necessary improvement. The success of the Scheme can probably best be summarised by one of our interns, who commented:

"Becoming an MMU Intern was one of the best decisions I've ever made. I've enjoyed getting my teeth into my project work that will make a real difference in the University. The development and training has been fantastic - it really feels like my employer cares about me as a person, and not just as a member of staff."

"My experience has been invaluable as a graduate in what is a highly competitive market. I feel my time as an intern has developed my skill set which will give me the confidence to apply for jobs I would not have before."

Mind, Body and Spirit Festival

Secondly our Mind, Body and Spirit Festival, which provides a week long, annual opportunity to celebrate the wealth of skills and experience of staff, whilst supporting a culture of employee engagement. The diverse programme of activities focuses on offering sessions that 'encourage individuals to engage in learning something new, to promote health and well-being and an awareness of diversity and equal opportunities'.

The Festival, made possible by the generosity of presenters who give up their time to pass on their skills and expertise to others on a voluntary basis, are a mixture of staff from around the University and external providers with whom links have been developed since 2008.

Each year the Festival provides an opportunity to take on a particular theme, dependent upon the University's priorities. Recent examples of this include the green agenda and public engagement.

This year's Festival took place in the first week in July and boasted over 120 different activities, including: *NLP and Well-being, Basic Filming and Digital Editing, Sign Language for Beginners, Homeopathy Clinic, Make your own Jewellery, Seated Acupuncture, Table Tennis, Legs, Bums and Tums, Introduction to meditation, The Art of Living and Laughing, Learning to Relax, Get Your Hoop On, Living Well but Dying Matters, Neck and Shoulder or Hand and Arm Massage, Knitting for Beginners, Make Your Own Bag for Life, Lunch Time Jogging, Decorative Enamelling, Making the Most of Networking and A New Perspective, Creating Personal Change in Life.*

To support the Festival, the Vice Chancellor invites all line managers, so far as operationally possible, to provide an opportunity for all staff to attend one session of up to two hours duration during the week. Additional sessions can be attended in colleagues own time. This year, over 600 staff engaged in one of the sessions.

This is quite simply a whistle stop tour of these initiatives. We would be happy to share further and discuss these or working towards the IiP standard and beyond - keeping our 'gold' legacy alive.



Deb Snell
Investors in People Coordinator,
Organisation Development and
Training Officer

Human Resources
Manchester Metropolitan
University

T: +44 (0) 161 247 6748

E: d.snell@mmu.ac.uk

W: <http://www.mmu.ac.uk/humanresources>

A: Manchester Metropolitan University, Room 616,
All Saints Building, All Saints, Manchester M15 6BH

A man in a dark suit, light blue shirt, and blue tie is speaking and gesturing with his hands. He is wearing glasses and a lanyard with a badge. Behind him is a large blue banner for 'Mentoring Scotland 2013'. The banner text includes: 'Mentoring Scotland 2013', 'a conference to promote, share, discuss and disseminate mentoring good practice in the Scottish HE sector', and lists of sponsors and partners including the Scottish Government, HEFCE, and various universities and organizations. In the foreground, the backs of several audience members' heads are visible, showing they are seated and facing the speaker.

The conference opened with a keynote presentation from Professor David Clutterbuck, one of the pioneers of supported mentoring

"Lots of though-provoking material. Very worthwhile event – organisation was excellent. Going home with an action plan!"

The conference was sponsored by Vitae, who provided logistical support in the form of conference web-pages and online bookings. Financial support for the event was provided by the Scottish Funding Council, the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and the Staff Development Forum. Financial contributions were also made by the University of Stirling, the University of Strathclyde and the University of St Andrews.

More detailed profiles of the latest two Honorary Fellows will be presented in the next SDF Update and both will be invited to the Spring 2014 Conference as guests of SDF.

"Mentoring Scotland 2013 was the best staff development event I have been to – extremely well organised, fantastic group of people, excellent use of time and gave me lots of ideas to follow up.."

A day in the life of....

The new Chief Executive of the HEA

Since taking up the position of Deputy Chief Executive (Research and Policy) at the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in January 2012, I intermittently asked Paul Dixon why it was that our two organisations – SDF and the HEA – didn't work more closely together. I was delighted, further to taking up my position as Chief Executive of the HEA to have the excuse to say to Paul "can we now work out how we might work together?" as I was appointed with the promise of 'sector wide partnership working', and assisting the sector 'raise its game, us [the HEA] included'. It strikes me that the membership of SDF are absolutely key in terms of partnership working to ensure that the HEA is able to deliver what you, as key personnel in professional development, require to support your staff. So, a **brief summary of what we do is below**, followed by some ideas Paul and I have contemplated, around which it would be great to hear your views.

- You're probably aware that 20% of academics are Fellows of the HEA – as a result of either of **Accreditation Schemes** (accrediting initial teacher development programmes and CPD schemes), or Recognition (where individuals submit their portfolios for recognition of Fellow, Senior Fellow, or Principal Fellow). This is a major growth area, and one where I believe we should be working more closely with all of

you to ensure CPD schemes align to your broader career transitions programmes. Watch out for calls for assistance on this!

- Two very popular **postgraduate surveys** that we offer are the PRES (Research Experience) and the PTES (Teaching Experience), working with VITAE on the former. We do offer more, but can provide further details of those should SDF members want to know more about them, and how they can be used for enhancement purposes.
- Our **change programmes** – with the main national programme being offered jointly with the LFHE – are primarily thematic eg Leading Assessment and Feedback (to uplift and enhance staff understanding and skills), Reward and Recognition (to benchmark promotions criteria, developing appropriate 'local' criteria to reward teaching and scholarship), Leading Teaching Teams.

How might SDF and the HEA move forward together?

Here are just a few suggestions, but please, do put forward further ideas!

- Linking regional representation of HEA Partnership Managers with SDF Regional groups;

- Regional events for developers (in conjunction with the LF where appropriate);
- Jointly branded CPD events: HEA & SDF (which could assist promotion of eg Associate Fellows to Fellows, Fellows to Senior Fellows, and Senior Fellows to Principal Fellows);
- Joint Projects – to include around the Professional Standards Framework;
- More HEA presence at SDF conferences etc

Those are just a few ideas for starters. You'll get the sense that I think there is a lot for us to explore and, I really do look forward to forging a much closer working relationship in the future. And, I look forward to meeting with you to explore such ideas soon!

Stephanie Marshall
Chief Executive
Higher Education Academy
Stephanie.marshall@heacademy.ac.uk

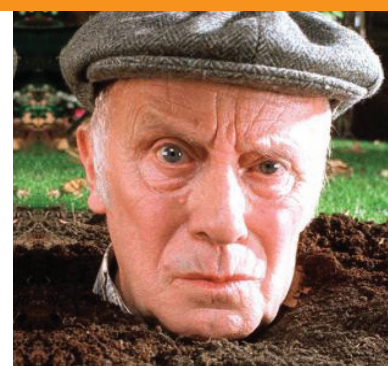


Old Groaners' Corner – is it just me...

...or does anyone else want to reach for a metaphorical Kalashnikov machine gun the next time someone in their institution makes an ill-informed, or in their eyes wise and insightful, statement about the 'culture' in HE and how we need to develop it. Don't get me wrong I think organisational culture is a very valid concept and one worthy of attention for those involved in staff and organisation development practice. We can't deny that culture exists as the sum total of an institution's systems, history, processes, values, beliefs, behaviours and the like or 'the way we do things round here'. I recall some years ago Margaret Thatcher suggested that there is no such thing

as society which was greeted as equally a ridiculous notion. No what gets up my nose is the inane way in which the term is used to explain away the here and now or is used as exhortation for some kind of magical change without the sophisticated thinking that is required to even begin contemplating how to change, modify and influence culture. My current institution is now facing a range of competing claims for what sort of culture we require based on the sectional and narrowly focussed interests of those uttering the rhetoric. Some of my colleagues have begun to suggest we need a 'coaching culture' (although strangely not within my ear shot), our HR strategy suggests we need

a 'Performance Oriented Culture', our student experience people offer a 'Student Centred Culture' – oh and we have begun to tinker with lean and process review: our 'Right First Time, Continuous Improvement Culture'. Has anyone read 'The Long Earth' by Terry Pratchett and Stephen Baxter. The ability to step between parallel worlds seems to be analogous to our search for a defining culture to suit our own interests. Perhaps we could have a different culture on different days of the week – like stepping between worlds. Or perhaps people might pause before they fall into the trap, seduced by their own rhetoric, and think about the bigger picture.



If you want to have a rant about anything to do with staff development in HE let us have your possible contribution to Old Groaner's corner. We promise not to reveal your identity. Send any rants to Paul Dixon: Paul.A.Dixon@manchester.ac.uk or Becky Robson: becky.robson@sdf.ac.uk. Successfully published rants will NOT receive the opportunity to be entered into a prize draw for an iPad.

A warm welcome in the South West

The South Wales and South West of England Staff Developer's Group (SWSWSDG) provides a professional network for Developers in the region. It is a self-organising body that has been meeting for over 20 years and was one of the first UK Staff Developers' Groups to establish itself. It is a thriving group, with membership increasing every year.

For this article I was asked 'What is your secret?' The downside of being such a long-established group can be that you become complacent and take it for granted. So I thought I would pose this question to the members.

"I'm new to HE and have attended two events to date. I wouldn't miss them... they're rich environments through which we can network, share ideas and on both occasions I've gone away with practical information that I've been able to apply immediately to projects and practice in my work environment."

"Add to that ...I've particularly valued the way everyone is so engaging and supportive..... so willing to share ideas and areas of practice in their institution. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet with staff developers, a very valued resource!"

So what is the secret?

I am not sure that there is a magic formula, more a happy coincidence of various factors coming together. To be sustainable the group needs the commitment of its members to take part, engage and share. A virtuous circle is then created where people feel they have benefited from interacting with others and are willing to share. According to our survey, four key success factors emerged:

Pragmatic outcomes:

"It's a great way to draw on ideas of what we could be doing differently, new ways to approach things."

"It's always helpful to hear and share the same difficulties, barriers we need to overcome and hear the stories of colleagues (we are not on our own!)"

As a direct result of the last meeting, Exeter has set up its own Twitter account and we are now looking at the different ways we can work with it.

Relevant themes:

"The topics to be covered differ from meeting to meeting which is good. Getting speakers in is a really good format."

The challenge for the group is that it is so geographically dispersed, from Falmouth (Cornwall) in the south to Gloucester in the north; from Swansea in the West to Portsmouth in the East. A recent survey confirmed that members are not put off by the distance and are primarily motivated by an interesting theme, especially if it is a facilitated discussion.

The Group meets three times a year, twice in the Bristol area and for the third, we go 'on tour'. In addition to updates on LFHE and SDF projects, there are opportunities to find out what others are doing.

Most topics are suggested by members. Recent topics include:

- Academic Leadership and Concepts of Leadership
- Putting the "E" into Staff Development'
- Organisational development: a context and a concept for what we do



- Engaging staff in Organisational Development and Change
- Leadership, communication and networking
- Needs and Values: Essentials in Staff Development
- Mentoring

Ambiance:

"Extremely friendly and sharing group to be a part of."

We also have a 'sister' group of Staff Development Administrators who run their own sessions at the same venue. Where the topic is relevant, they join forces with the Adviser's Group.

"I enjoy meeting my peers, putting names to faces, exchanging best practice, learning what the next big thing might be for a given institution."

"The lunchtimes and sessions when both groups network and talk together are great as it breaks down any possibility of an 'us and them' atmosphere. After all we are all working together for the same purpose."

Thanks to the Staff Development Forum for paying for our refreshments!

Communication

In between the face to face meetings, we communicate through an email group of approximately 47 members, valued as a way of sharing, asking for information/assistance.

"The group emails are incredibly useful. The Performance and Development Review meeting recently was a great example of how one person's query in South

Wales snowballed into two regional meetings for colleagues to share what they are doing around this area".

And finally, a Staff Developer's view:

"I have been attending regional meetings for a couple of years. They are really well planned and run, which means discussions are very topical and there's always something to bring back to my institution for further consideration. As a small institution with no dedicated L&D resource within HR, we find the discussions, both on email and in person, very helpful. The South West group is full of experienced people doing innovative things, and they're very willing to share advice and ideas. In fact, I usually come away from meetings buzzing and then have to take a deep breath and think more realistically about what we have the time and resources to implement! The recent session at Exeter on online learning tools was particularly engaging, and I will be trying my hand at many of them in the near future."



Angie Allcock

Staff Development Manager,
University of Bath.

Email: a.allcock@bath.ac.uk

Synchronised Swimming

or Swimming with the Sharks: Review of CPD Event

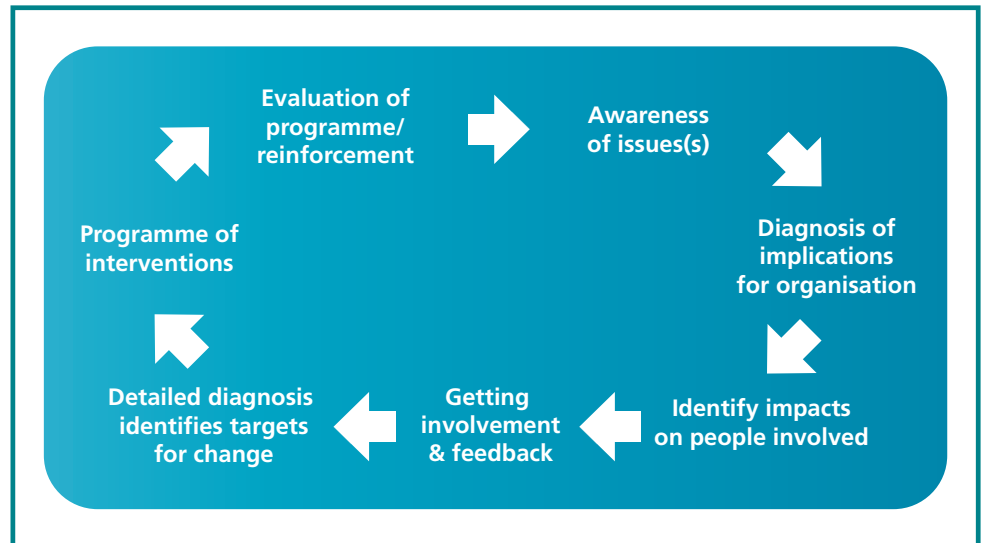
This OD Masterclass was hosted by the SDF as part of the CPD programme and co-facilitated by the Chairs of the HE Organisational Development Network, Meriel Box (LJMU) and Jean Harrison (Westminster). The emphasis for the workshop was about 'doing OD', rather than talking about what it is.

The participants came with a variety of OD experience, from different roles and contexts. The opening session - a 'swimpool' introduction to the group - quickly identified where practitioners were located in their institutions (the majority had roles that reported to HR) and how integrated or otherwise they were from the HR agendas.

The session on 'What OD is - and isn't' reviewed the main principles of OD work, including when to consider using an OD approach. Groups shared what OD work was happening in institutions and how people were faring in their various different roles and looked at whether the work fitted key criteria for describing OD work:

- Planned
- Systematic
- Long term
- All about people and change
- Focus on how organisations function and how they can be effectively changed
- Focus on the way a change process is handled because this has a crucial bearing on the outcome and the costs
- Usually requires a 'facilitator' with behavioural science knowledge and skills to help managers to plan and manage the change process

The OD Approach



The follow up session 'How does OD work in HE and why? (Or not!)', drew on case study work captured by members of the ODHE group and the group discussions about what is being done around the institutions finishing with a session reflecting on 'being an OD practitioner' and sharing what this meant for participants. The variety and depth of experience offered a range of learning opportunities from useful tips to colleagues new to OD work, to shared reflections on practice for seasoned practitioners. The groups agreed unanimously that large scale change projects succeed most often when the most senior leaders are committed to making implementation happen, timescales are realistic and resources are made available. What's your OD Story?

When asked to create an analogy for what it's like to do OD in HE groups came up with "giving birth at home for the first time on your own" and "trying to light a bonfire with a match on a damp day". There was a strong gender imbalance (ie mostly.....) in the make-up of the group which is worth a bit of reflection.

The final session looked at the question 'Is OD different from HR, Staff Development and Leadership and Management Development and is that important?' The predominant conclusion was that there were many different perspectives and the discussion would take much longer than the time allotted!!

Participants gave good feedback on the workshop, they commented that they had benefitted from sharing strategic practice and approaches, they had gained new insights learning from each other and left with a greater sense of purpose and self-belief in what they were striving to achieve in their own HEIs. People suggested that the workshop could be rolled out to a wider range of colleagues, across all levels of management to increase a collective understanding of OD and to share best practice across UK HE.

Please contact Jean Harrison jean.harrison06@wmin.ac.uk or Meriel Box m.box@ljmu.ac.uk if you would like to book a workshop for your institution and/or your SDF Regional Group.





St Mary's University College, Twickenham.

Leadership, Management and Coaching Development – St Mary's Way

St Mary's University College is a Catholic Higher Education institution that is going through a period of unprecedented change owing to the current economic pressures on universities. St Mary's mission is to "provide high-quality academic and professional higher education within a collegial ethos inspired and sustained by Christian values". (www.smuc.ac.uk)

St Mary's recognises that staff is its key resource; personal relationships and knowing each other by name are very important. For these reasons, St Mary's is committed to supporting staff in leadership, management and supervisory roles.

Staff Development at St Mary's University College received Approved Centre Status from the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) in March 2009. Through the Institute's flexible partnership approach, staff development offers accredited programmes in leadership, management and coaching; all of which are tailored to St Mary's needs.

Leadership, management and coaching courses incorporate Action Learning sets and all programmes include 360-feedback and one-to-one

coaching. Equity of opportunity is a key value of staff development and there are equal representations from academic and professional services on all programmes. This balance has also bridged the gap between academic and non-academic staff to emphasize parity of collective leadership experiences across the institution.

The St Mary's Level 7 Award in Strategic Leadership recognises the importance of encouraging leaders to reflect on their experiences and learn from them. The ILM suggests that 'effective leaders are not afraid of making mistakes, only of repeating their mistakes'. Course delegates apply classic experiential learning in the action learning sets in order to help them analyse critical incidents which they have faced, or are facing, at work. The appreciative inquiry approach of building on strengths rather than weaknesses is also embedded in the programme.

Coaching is embedded in the culture of St Mary's, with four cohorts of staff having completed the ILM Level 5 Coaching and Mentoring course. By training cohorts of managers to coach, the culture is shifting towards one of support, reflection and empowerment. Internal coaches complete the ILM Coaching and Mentoring in Management and work cross-departmentally to improve cohesion throughout the University College.

The following feedback has been received from course delegates on the Action Learning Sets, Coaching Course and their coaching experiences:

"I have very much enjoyed the workshops and the discussion time amongst peers from other departments; it has reminded me that I am working with like-minded people who share similar values and a common goal for the success of St Mary's".

Professional Services Manager

"I believe my engagement in the coaching process has been a key part of my learning and development as a manager. In addition to helping me directly in my own role, this experience has led to me adopting a coaching style in my support of those that I line manage".

Academic Manager

"St Mary's as an organisation has offered the management group many development opportunities over the past few years. I think for me the coaching we received during our recent ILM course, 'Leading and Managing the Team' was the most relevant and useful. The course helped me trust in my own work values and recognise the values of others within my management team. It has enabled me to understand how others are motivated and has clearly enhanced communication within the group".

Professional Services Manager

"The action learning set has been one of the great assets of this programme. It has allowed colleagues from disparate disciplines to meet and to share expertise and experience of particular areas of management, which has informed and supported personal thinking. The opportunity to discern within the conventions of the learning set which does not allow for conversational interjections but only for key questioning, has further developed my own listening skills and the patience that is needed..."

Continued overleaf

St Mary's Way continued...

"...but often overlooked, as a key component of leadership. It has brokered important connections and professional relationships beyond the confines of our own work spaces and this can only support the development of the institution as a whole".

Senior Academic Manager

The comments below are from participants in group programmes and those receiving individual coaching:

- as a coping mechanism
- reassuring that we are all in the same boat
- we learn from each other's experience
- it makes you feel better
- it gives you time to think about your role
- allows reflection on how you can improve

From the experience of the Staff Development Team the following planned approaches have enabled continued staff participation and engagement in leadership, management and coaching development:

- Commitment from the Senior Team
- Coaching and Action Learning Sets were embedded in all programme development
- Equal representation of participants from Schools and Professional Services
- Staff that have experienced coaching or attended one of the programmes have become champions/role models within their own School/Professional Service
- Participants have frequently said they have gained a greater understanding and appreciation of different roles and demands across the institution and they feel a much wider collegiality which improved cohesion in the University College

- Development programmes are tailored to St Mary's from the following perspectives: strategic/departmental/individual and linked to the appraisal process
- Staff Development engages with Heads of School/Professional Services to develop programmes and coaching initiatives that add value by raising individual and organisational performance levels

"St Mary's values are set out in the Strategic Plan and taken together these values can describe the culture and ethos of the institution. These values form the drivers for the Staff Development Team. Key to the success has been the team's flexibility and willingness to respond to feedback to accommodate the diversity within each team...."

...St Mary's University College has always maintained a strong commitment towards the support of learning and development. Unique to St Mary's is the sense of community with staff regularly commenting about the sense of belonging. Our staff remain at the heart of St Mary's and the sense of community is strengthened by the investment of the Senior Team in all aspects of leadership, management and coaching development".

Staff Development Manager



Paula Keane
Staff Development Manager
28 October 2013

E: paula.keane@smuc.ac.uk
T: 0208 240 4105



St Mary's University College, Twickenham.



About SDF UPDATE...and a call for contributions

Update is a twice-yearly newsletter for staff developers in Higher Education. Limited numbers of paper copies are distributed to HEIs in the UK, and it is available as a PDF download from the SDF website. We'd love you to share your news or a practical tip or information about a resource, or if you have a suggestion or comment about this issue, we'd really like to hear from you, especially about ways it can be improved.

Contact: Becky Robson, SDF National Coordinator, becky.robson@sdf.ac.uk.

www.staffdevelopment.ac.uk