![Midlands Staff Development Partnership logo — Supporting Professional Development in Higher Education](logo)

# MSDP Meeting: Wednesday 01 December 2021
**Hosted by Birmingham University**

**In attendance:** Aston, Birmingham, Harper Adams, Nottingham, Nottingham College, Oxford Brookes,  Worcester, AdvanceHE.
**Apologies received:**  Birmingham City, Keele, Lincoln, Nottingham Trent, Staffordshire, Wolverhampton.

## MSDP Updates

**Meeting dates for 2022**
- Wednesday 02 March 2022 Zoom meeting (online host Aston) (10:00  - 12:30).
- Wednesday 06 July 2022 Host to be confirmed
- Wednesday 07 December 2022, University of Birmingham (10:00  - 15:00).

## SDF Updates

- The **SDF Festival of Learning** attracted 108 participants. Content from all sessions will be shared to delegates and then to the wider network, probably in the New Year [via AdvanceHE Connect](#).
- Highlighting two Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
  - Advancing Women's Leadership (SIG) [(link here)](#)
  - Curating and Commissioning Online Learning (SIG). Watch out for more SIG launch announcements from the SDF with proposed dates below.

| Date | Theme |
|---|---|
| 10th February 2022 | Introduction to the SIG. What are your current online learning strategies? |
| 6th June 2022 | How to solve the issue of compliance content |
| 29th September 2022 | Curation masterclass, vetting for your audience |
| 24th November | Commissioning at the right price (inc speaker from external company) |

## AdvanceHE Updates

See [presentation attached from Lucy Madahar](#) AdvanceHE

**Drawing your attention to**
- Global Leadership framework being launched in new year ([see objectives for the initiative](#))
- Connect Benefit Series
  - Leading change through team and networks (Nov – Jan)
  - Organisational wellbeing (May 2022 – Jul)
- Collaborative Fund open for applications (deadline 21 Dec)
- Quick summaries from latest research reports
- Key challenges across the sector in return to campus/hybrid working

## Return to Campus/Hybrid Working – what are the key challenges across the sector?

Everyone is struggling, no-one feels the balance is quite right, feels like an iterative process.

Need to maintain sense of kindness towards each other established during pandemic.

Stop/start workload management approach – needs to come back, don't necessarily need to resume all workstreams.

People development and support for hybrid working.

Focus on supporting leaders to prioritise wellbeing and mental health

Leaders and managers experiencing a loss of control – as felt during the pandemic and again now.

General lack of reflection on the **why**:
+ Tension between purpose-based approach to return to campus (i.e. come in when there's a reason / need to do so) and percentage-based approach (i.e. all staff must be on campus 60% etc.) Staff and managers asking for a percentage / days per week, but equally requesting a flexible, purpose-based approach.
+ Many references to 'creating a vibrant community' being the rationale for just *being* on campus – about volume of bodies, rather than what people are doing - presenteeism.

## MSDP what's top of mind

## Emerging themes from the round table conversation

| Piloting hybrid working (various approaches) | • Stipulations for working onsite varies widely among institutions from complete flexibility to number of days stipulated.<br>• Pilots present opportunity to engage with good design thinking.<br>• Importance of dealing with people's hygiene factors to engage in the change.<br>• Important use of language required to describe zoning<br>One example: Concentrate, Collaborate, Communicate.<br>• Articulating the process in deciding the need to be on campus<br>1st The beneficiary (avoiding term customer) 2nd Team 3rd You.<br>• Differentiate the terms hybrid and agile (a cause for confusion). |
|---|---|
| The range of required mandatory training is on the increase | • Satisfying the demands for various mandatory training is on the increase. This is time consuming in setting up and maintenance. The stipulation for regular refresher is also on the increase. |
| Popularity of creating and launching tool kits | • Manager tool kit (Keele)<br>• Managing people tool kit (Birmingham) |
| Various initiative to support values, culture, and capabilities | Developing Digital mindsets  Bereavement Support  Carbon Literacy  Tackling Sexual violence  Commitment to you (avoids 'customer' tag)  Developing Coaching Cultures  Resolution Policy & Grievance Procedure |

## MSDP Gives and gets

Here are a few links to useful or insightful information I gleaned from our gives and gets session

- Have a look at e-learning courses run by National Centre for Diversity
- Think Productive (ninja training) (running at a couple of universities)
- Raise the Bar being used for coaching apprenticeships via the Levy
- Digital strategy framework for university leaders (JISC)
- The Carbon Literacy Project (staff committing and stipulating their carbon savings target
- Cruse bereavement support
- Everyday Sexism Laura Bates, "Chapter 4 Young women in learning" is a hard read from an HE perspective.

Chair Ian Whiting.