Focus On: Enhancing Professional Services Partnerships event

7th April 2022, The Studio, Glasgow
The Focus On: Enhancing Professional Services Partnerships event was intended to provide an overview of the work to date on the Focus On 2021-2022 project along with presentations from institutions about their experiences and approaches to professional services review (PSR) and partnership working. The second half of the day was designed to offer institutional teams attending the event a chance to evaluate their current practice and to work through identified challenges to enhance and enable effective partnership working across their professional services.

The event team from QAA Scotland were delighted to welcome 71 delegates from 18 institutions comprising Quality professionals, Student Association staff, student representatives and a wide range of professional service staff including roles in student engagement and student services, employability, business improvement, estates, strategic planning, registry and academic policy.
Welcome!

- The event opened with a welcome from Caroline Turnbull, Acting Director of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, QAA
Focus On 2021/22 project overview

Caroline provided an overview of the 2021-22 Focus On project – following from recent Focus On successes.
Focus On: Professional Services Review Report

Ann Cotterill, Quality Enhancement Specialist, QAAS gave an overview of the Focus On Professional Services Review report, via a recorded presentation.

Click here to view the recording.
Student Insights into PSR and Perspectives on Professional Services

Ruth Burchell, Quality Enhancement Specialist, QAA, introduced student perceptions of Professional Services and partnership through a conversation facilitated by Ondrej Kucerak, Vice President, Education, Students’ Association, University of Aberdeen.

The student videos are available here.

A summary document is also available with broad themes from the conversation and reflective questions for providers to consider.
Break Time

The morning break provided an opportunity for the delegates to circulate and network.
Discussion: Perspectives on Professional Services

- Does the snapshot of student perspectives ring true for your Institution?
- Thinking about projects or internal reviews of practice in your own institution, how do you identify who you need perspectives from?
Discussion: Perspectives on Professional Services

- How and when are these perspectives incorporated into the process? Is it a formal or an informal process – i.e. is it written down who is involved or is it a knowledge base exercise?
Focus On PSR: GSA’s Journey and approach, what we have learned, and what we want to learn

Mark Charters, Head of Learning and Teaching, Glasgow School of Art, presented GSA’s PSR journey, lessons learned and what is still to be learned in partnership and student engagement – illustrated with beautiful images from GSA students/practitioners
Reaching Out at Glasgow – professional services in partnership

Catriona MacIsaac, Assistant Director, University of Glasgow, Simon Varwell, Senior Development Consultant, sparqs and Megan Brown, Development Consultant, sparqs presented ‘Reach Out’ – their partnership approach at the University of Glasgow
Lunch

Let’s Do Lunch!
Evaluating practice and mapping future projects

The first afternoon task was an opportunity for the institutional teams to consider what had worked well and not so well in a previous project.
Evaluating practice and mapping future projects
Evaluating practice and mapping future projects
Break
Mapping your next collective project
Mapping your next collective project
Mapping your next collective project

Evaluation Perspectives
- Full vs disjointed stakeholder engagement
- Process beneficial to learn about areas/knowledge gaps
- Need to focus on views from outside review area
- Ensure right range of stakeholders are involved
- Evaluate: did it work? Where to next?

COMMON THEMES
- Need for dissemination of information
- Need for appropriate representation in groups
- Communication is key
- Need to ensure the scope is achievable and concise, and realistic
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- Volume (and potential duplication) of work
- Keep it aligned with strategy
- Need for effective collaboration
- Involvement in planning process required
Caroline closed the day....

“Thank you to all our speakers, to all our participants and to the team that brought us all together today.

Safe travels and see you again soon!”