



Regional Visit Report 2 Thames Gateway

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1.0 PASCAL Review Team

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2.0 Introduction

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) joined the PASCAL University Regional Engagement (PURE) review in 2009, studying the Thames Gateway with the first review taking place in March of that year.

At the conclusion of the first review it was noted that there were considerable strengths including excellent examples of HE and FE integration in town centre campuses, good articulation between FE and HE, good analytical resources and strong support from Central Government and its partners.

It was also agreed that further work should be done, possibly through the PURE cluster groups on:

- engagement with the creative industries,
- education led regeneration,
- greater support for SMEs,
- capitalising on Mega events
- raising aspirations to become a leading eco-region.

Since the visit of the first review team in 2009 the Thames Gateway (hereafter referred to as the Gateway) has been affected by the worldwide recession in the financial services and other sectors and as a result DCLG have revisited their objectives in participating in the study in order to address these changing circumstances.

3.0 Objectives

The key objectives in participating in the PURE project are to

- Establish the Thames Gateway as an exemplar of excellence for the way in which higher education institutions engage with each other and wider partners and stakeholders to contribute to the successful delivery of the Thames Gateway ambitions to
 - a. Grow the economy
 - b. Create an eco-region
 - c. Increase skills levels
 - d. Improve participation rates in higher education

- Connected to these overarching ambitions is a focus on
 - a. Creating connections between HEIs and FE colleges with local business, employers and local communities.
 - b. Through those contacts future-proofing skills requirements for the Thames Gateway

4.0 Situation Update

Progress to date in engaging with the PURE project has been disappointing, due in the main to limited resources across a range of stakeholders and limited resources are likely to be a continuing issue for future engagement given the forthcoming election.

The Thames Gateway region has not yet been able to complete the benchmarking or develop an action plan to address the objectives set out above. However the new on-line benchmarking tool being offered by PASCAL will enable this to be completed shortly. The university benchmarking will be led by UEL and the DCLG will coordinate the regional benchmarking.

Since the first visit in March 2009 national and London economies have been hit by the recession. The following statistics give an idea of the various impacts

- June 2009 – economic performance (measured by GDP) 5.5% below peak of March 2008 – national income per head not predicted to return to March 2008 levels until March 2014
- Youth unemployment has grown most
- Number of managers and professionals claiming jobseekers allowance rose by 154% in the year to June 2009. These claimants are concentrated in London
- 20% of graduates from London Metropolitan University not working or studying 6 months after graduation
- Some employers cutting graduate entry jobs by 25%
- Graduates often taking low-paid jobs (bar work etc)
- 1/10 graduates in architecture, building and planning unemployed
- One in five young people (1.2m) not in education, work or training
- 4927,000 16-24 year olds unemployed

Progress more generally through the actions set out in the Thames Gateway Skills Framework (published November 2008) has been more positive and recent successes are set out in the Thames Gateway Annual Report (June 2009).

Implementation and delivery of the actions set out in the Skills Framework continue to be a priority for the Thames Gateway Directorate and the Homes and Communities Agency with whom delivery is shared.

The Thames Gateway Further and Higher Education Action Group (TGFHEAG), which is drawn from a wide range of stakeholders across the sectors (local, regional and national) continues to meet regularly to steer progress. The group also has commitment from government Ministers chairing the meeting once a year.

This support has also resulted in some Thames Gateway institutions being prioritised for funding following a national funding shortfall, allowing some planned new building to continue.

DCLG also consider that given the resource constraints it is important to identify papers, reports and case studies that already exist that could provide a basis for increasing engagement in the project, in addition many of the actions set out in the Skills Framework are being taken forward through TGFHEAG, and it is important that these successes and issues are properly recorded for the PURE project.

5.0 Themes for the CDG2 Visit

Following the CDG1 visit in March 2009 a range of issues were identified which were of particular note and which should in due course be developed and form part of the Thames Gateway/PURE action plan and were adopted as the themes for the CDG2 visit.

- a) The importance placed on education with its cross sectoral links which contribute to student progression, the support for the regional economy and the development of the physical infrastructure thereby improving social cohesion and reducing deprivation.
- b) The importance of major developments and mega events to support the growth of the Thames Gateway and provide sustainable outcomes for the local communities.
- c) The RVR1 identified the good progress made on the analysis of future economic trends and in particular the setting up of the Creative Way to assist HEIs in supporting the creative industries in the Gateway.
- d) The Gateway was a region with aspiration to become an eco/environmental region and that this was an opportunity for the Gateway to develop new skills and best practice for both the region and elsewhere in the UK and worldwide.

6.0 Visit Programme

The visit took place over three days with each day having its own separate theme. Day one concentrated on education and major developments (*a and b above*) whilst day two concentrated on cultural industries (*c above*) and day three on green issue and skills (*d above*)

6.1 Universities, Further Education and other Partners

A meeting was held with representatives from most but not all of the major HEIs, FE colleges and other key partners including the Regional Development Agencies. The PURE team gave an update on the progress with the PURE study from an international perspective with a flavour of some of the critical issues which had been identified in other regions and which had a relevance to the Thames Gateway.

A general discussion then took place with the representatives from the CDG and the HEIs about the developments in the Gateway since the last review, the effect of the recession and the likely impact of changes in government policy over the next decade.

There continued to be strong support for the principle of the Gateway and the view that even if government support changed in the future there would be continued support for joint working by the partners. Some of the relationships established between and among the FE sector and local authorities may be sufficiently deep to be sustainable on their own.

However the Gateway as a concept is not widely understood or recognised outside the immediate area. The Gateway is clearly an area of population growth. It is vital for the future of London and allows the London economy to function effectively and represents untapped demand and huge opportunities for future growth. If the Thames Gateway as an entity adds value and is to have ongoing meaning, some attention will have to be given to “branding” it as such.

Concerns remained about the difficulty of accessing SMEs both from a training standpoint and also from the applied research and knowledge transfer perspective. There was some doubt that the Sector Skills Councils fully represented the needs of smaller employers. HEIs generally appear to be limited in their ability to access business effectively and are not well linked to government policies regarding future proofing. FE colleges perform better in this regard.

Since the last review there had clearly been major moves from the Regional Development Agencies and their HEI/FE partners to tackle some of the difficult issues presented by a low carbon economy and there were significant plans to address some of the energy concerns of the existing housing stock within the Gateway. It was suggested that up to 1.8 million homes could benefit from a retro-fit plan for domestic energy conservation together with a similar programme for businesses. This would require capacity building in energy management, home energy assessment and installation.

There was also progress on the Green Grid to provide the area with interlinked green spaces. This work is being undertaken at the smaller local authority level against a master plan for the Gateway as a whole. Its implication for tourism and the quality of life in the Gateway are obvious.

6.2 Financial Skills Academy

The Financial Skills Academy in Poplar was set up as part of the National Skills Academy Network and has been developed to help people in the East End to find employment in the financial services industry in the Gateway and particularly in Canary Wharf. This project has been designed to support communities who have found it difficult to find appropriate employment in the new industries. The Academy serves the most impoverished borough in the UK and the area is home to 78 nationalities and requires more ESL training than elsewhere in the country. There are currently 140 people attending classes, most of whom are male due in part to the restrictions which affect women in Muslim communities.

The training offered is designed to help local people find work in supporting roles in the financial institutions where they will then have the prospect over time of progression within those businesses. Generally these courses are offered in 4 modules and run for 12 months on a 1 day a week basis and are aimed at non graduates although more recently graduates are also applying to join. The training is to FSA standards and is accredited. The goal is to provide entry into employment, initially in the more junior levels available in the financial services sector.

The pass rate is relatively low although the Academy has evidence that their work has provided people within the community with a greater sense of self worth and a wider range of basic courses are now being offered which may be more appropriate to current needs including tourism and customer care training with a new emphasis on regulation and ethics. There may also be opportunities to link with volunteer and customer services training associated with the 2012 Olympics.

The training is provided by staff that have worked within the financial services sector and in some cases are still employed there and provide their services on a part time basis. The Academy previously received some financial support from one of the financial institutions but this has been withdrawn as a consequence of the recession. Engagement with HEIs is limited.

It was also acknowledged that major employers within the Gateway and particularly in Canary Wharf are so large that they provide the vast majority of their training and development "in house" which limits the scope of the Academy to grow in this area. Moreover these large international firms hire upper management in the national and international markets offering little benefit for local communities and where they have limited understanding of the training needs and potential within the local workforce.

6.3 "The View"

The team visited the viewing centre at Bromley by Bow which is located at the top of an apartment building where they were able to see the marketing tools used to market the Thames Gateway and from where they could see the progress of the London 2012 Olympic facilities in the Olympic Park.

The Olympic structures were impressive and clearly ahead of schedule. They have provided a good opportunity for local employment and skills training programmes have been established locally to support local people back into work. It is thought

that the recession has led to a reduction in construction work elsewhere in London and promises to deliver the Olympics on time and on cost.

It is instructive to contemplate the likely economic condition of the Gateway in the wake of the recent economic downturn absent the opportunities represented by hosting this mega event in 2012. It is striking that the Olympics were seldom mentioned as an upcoming “big opportunity” by the organisations the review team visited. In some cases the potential opportunity of the Olympics was recognised but those we consulted were unclear as to how to realise these opportunities.

The marketing for the Gateway did not place emphasis on the educational strength of the region nor did it give much support for the new industries which are developing and may be expected to draw on the intellectual capital of the educational institutions.

6.4 Trinity/Laban

Trinity/Laban has been formed by the partial merger of two specialist HE colleges, the Trinity Conservatoire of Music and the Laban Conservatoire of Contemporary Dance. The two institutions have separate day to day management structures but share a senior management team. They are both located on the Deptford/Greenwich borders in iconic buildings. Trinity Conservatoire of Music is located in a part of the former Royal Naval College alongside the University of Greenwich whilst the Laban Conservatoire is located in a new purpose built complex which was first occupied in 2002 and has won architectural awards for its style and function.

Both institutions are proud of their work with the local community and whilst the nature of the Royal Naval College limits the use of the Trinity premises for community use, unlike the Laban building, both have very active programmes of community engagement.

The public benefit offered by Trinity/Laban includes evening classes, children’s classes, Saturday events, working with disadvantaged groups (e.g. boy’s hip-hop groups), exercise and obesity classes, teacher training and professional development. Outreach from Trinity has included taking music to 8000 children in over 150 schools.

The combined conservatoires have a high proportion of overseas students with an interesting mix of cultures and the majority of students attain a very high level of academic achievement on graduation. In the post graduation survey undertaken for the HEFC return, Trinity/Laban can show that 100% of their new graduates find employment in a career relevant to their qualifications and training.

There was strong evidence of the conservatoires collaboration with the “Creative Way” team but there were less obvious connections with other HEIs or the creative industries except through the personal contact of individuals within the institutions.

The Governments investment programme supporting this merger has been productive in terms of community involvement and social inclusion. There was a £16m in capital funding from the National Lottery together with additional funds

raised to support the regeneration dimension of the project. Regeneration has no doubt been stalled by the economic downturn but the potential remains that deeper links with related industries should continue to be pursued.

6.5 Creative Way

This meeting built on a meeting with the head of the “Creative Way” at UEL during the CDG1 visit in 2009 and concentrated this time on the way in which the “Creative Way” provides support for those considering a career in culture and the creative arts, giving support to undergraduates and support for the small specialist institutions themselves. It is one of the most successful life-long learning networks in the UK.

So far not all sections of the community are accessing the courses available in creative pathways and four areas have been identified for further work. These are to research why some young people do not progress beyond level 3, determine the additional support needed to raise aspirations and link aspirations to careers, provide more information, advice and guidance via the web and obtain more funding to help curriculum development.

A web-site was demonstrated which encouraged potential students, parents and guardians to gain careers advice, access the links with the HEIs and smaller specialist institutions to the various graduate programmes and allows dialogue between the institutions and the individuals. The CDG were of the opinion that this was the most effective and comprehensive web based tool they had seen and would offer this an example of best practice in this field. With some transition, the web-site may well have global application. (www.creativeway.org.uk)

However whilst the “Creative Way” supports entrepreneurship and assists students with short term work experience there was no comprehensive approach to the creative industries, nor was the web-site used as part of the of the Thames Gateway for inward investment. Links to and from SMEs would make the web-site valuable to industry and provide opportunities to offer current industry perspectives on the skills required in various careers and connect job seekers with potential opportunities and industries with a qualified and interested workforce.

Nevertheless the approach adopted by the “Creative Way” has shown it is a robust model which looks to the future of the economy in the Gateway and it is understood that other sectors (e.g. financial services and green industries) will now be considered for a similar approach.

Note Appendix C Creative and Cultural Skills Academy

6.6 Ravensbourne College

The Ravensbourne College was originally based in Chislehurst, Kent in buildings constructed in the 1960s where the college specialised in creative arts. Over time the college developed its curriculum moving towards design and digital media. The college is now in the last stages of construction of a new purpose designed facilities in the Thames Gateway alongside the O2 Arena, Europe’s largest entertainment centre. The building will represent another iconic structure within the Gateway and has a very high degree of flexibility to accommodate both today’s needs and the

ability to adapt in future to meet new challenges as demands and technologies change.

The college recruits students (1500) through a less conventional approach relying more on aptitude, experience and creativity rather than the more traditional academic requirements of the larger HEIs. This more relaxed approach is also reflected in the way the college provides its teaching using up to 80% part time staff who are also working within industry. Whilst this may pose more management difficulties it does ensure that the teaching remains relevant in a rapidly changing market. Ravensbourne describes itself as trialling a new model of HE which is part lab and part hub encouraging collaboration between business, education and research interests, facilitated by a uniquely flexible building and cutting edge technology.

The college offers foundation degrees and higher degrees with an emphasis on practice within the industry where it works with 500 industry partners. There is a good record of applied research with industry partners and support for spin out businesses. The college also works with other HEIs on combined projects including the Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance and Knowledge East.

The college links with industry are impressive and there are plans for the digital television studios to be available to television production companies who in turn will work with the college students in their productions. College leadership believes Ravensbourne represents the future of HE. It is unashamedly vocationally focussed, links community and business and merges learning, experimentation and industry. The new building itself reflects the approach and is intended to provide a digital destination located in England's creative hub and providing space where both students and business can join forces use and develop the technology.

The College may also act as a possible secondary media hub for the Olympic Games with its' most modern facilities and skilled workforce. There is also the opportunity to develop a 'global virtual university' based around the new campus.

6.7 "The Bridge"

The Thames Gateway Institute for Sustainability and SUSCON

With the support of the three Regional Development Agencies, other public sector partners and the local authorities, a new low energy building was constructed in the Thames Gateway on the Pro-Logis mixed use business park close to junction one on the M25 motorway. The building was intended to host a new organisation that could provide a pan-Gateway step change to create an eco-region

To support the concept behind this project the Thames Gateway Institute of Sustainability was set up with the task of developing a holistic approach to sustainable living and development in the Thames Gateway and beyond. The "Bridge" centre is intended to be one of two hubs planned for the Gateway with others located in Dagenham, each with its own complementary mission.

The Institute has strong support from the private sector and from academic institutions. There is also evident support from local training providers with particular interests in developing green skills.

The Institute has adopted a plan to move from high level policy to a programme of practical implementation within 12 months and as a first project the Institute is working on plans to support the retro-fitting of energy reduction measures in domestic homes. The plan is to undertake a series of pilots in the Thames Gateway, exploring different methods and techniques, with close monitoring and evaluation.

There is also a plan to extend the programme into the public sector buildings and private businesses although this is expected to be more problematic having regard to the life-span of these buildings and economic payback.

It was noted that much of the support for this programme from the academic institutions has been drawn from outside the Thames Gateway and it is unclear why this is so as the Universities and colleges within the Gateway should be perfectly competent to provide this support.

| In parallel with setting up of the Institute of Sustainability, the South East Development Agency has funded the setting up of SUSCON, an initiative to provide skills training for people who require updated and new skills to implement the energy efficiency programmes. The result of an investment of £2m in curriculum development, SUSCON now provides 30 new units of sustainable construction training at 7 levels. This initiative which represents a partnership between business and education will be driven by the local FE colleges and it is recognised that the green skills agenda is mainly the re-skilling of the existing workforce rather than training new operatives. It is expected that 1250 people will be trained for 280 companies in the next 12 months.

Much of the current emphasis is on the more basic skills and particularly on changing behaviour. Courses will be independently assessed before qualifications can be awarded. There may be scope for some rationalising of accreditation methods and quality assurance frameworks employed by SUSCON as the model matures.

SUSCON is currently located in the "Bridge" building but a new centre alongside is due to begin construction shortly. With the successful completion of the pilots the SUSCON model is expected to be adopted more widely.

| There is also the recognition that the retro-fit programme is only the start of the development of the eco-region and the Institute will need to concentrate in due course on areas such as green energy, waste, transport, supply chain etc. The opportunity to link the supply and demand sides, especially through the SME sector, was also obvious.

It was also evident from a recent conference in the Gateway, "Growing a Low Carbon Economy" that financing will be a big issue for both the public and private sectors in delivering these changes. There was also the comment that there was still too little collaboration and exchange of information and possibly an unreasonable expectation that the Institute of Sustainability will do it all

6.8 Birkbeck College

Birkbeck College was established in 1823 by George Birkbeck as the Mechanics Institute and provides evening tuition from 6.00pm daily.

The college has been based in Central London since it's creation and more recently it has offered some of it's courses in the East End through a partnership with the University of East London (UEL).

This extension to the east has proven to be most successful and a new project is now in progress for a shared campus with UEL on the Stratford Island site for completion by 2013 and will include the UEL business school as well as centre for performing arts alongside the Birkbeck courses. The new campus will work closely with the neighbouring Theatre Royal and it will also be a major community facility enabling both Birkbeck and UEL to extend their community outreach. The management teams from the institutions including the Theatre Royal will constitute an academic group, a community and marketing group and a building and finance group.

The Stratford population is growing rapidly with a strong Asian content and particularly Bangladeshi, with strong demands for Further and Higher Education. There is now an increasing need for both entry and graduate level opportunities in employment and this new approach by Birkbeck and UEL is designed to address this at a local level. Even before the Stratford Island site is completed there are over 80,000 web-site hits per annum from interested people. Birkbeck is already a member of many local groups and policy bodies and aims to become embedded in the Stratford Island area. It is clear that the new campus not only brings higher education closer to the community in this part of the Gateway but also complements an already comprehensive HEI provision in the Gateway.

7.0 Preliminary Conclusions

The Consultative Development Group (CDG) were pleased to see the progress that had been made in the Thames Gateway region despite the pressures which had been experienced locally as a result of the economic downturn which has delayed the production of a more detailed action plan and the completion of the benchmarking. It was however noted that UEL would lead on the HEI benchmarking and that the DCLG would shortly complete the somewhat shorter regional benchmarking tool.

The CDG continued to be impressed by the energy and commitment of the stakeholders and noted especially the view that even if the Government focus moved away from the Gateway over time, there was now enough belief and commitment to maintain the partnerships and continue with the development of the region. There was a willingness to take risks to achieve the best outcomes. There was however less understanding about how to get the most out of the 2012 London Olympics and other major events in the Capital.

It was noted that as before not all universities are equally engaged in the Thames Gateway project despite the coordinating role provided through the Thames Gateway Team. It was particularly marked so far as the University of Greenwich was concerned contrasted starkly with other providers both large and small. It was also noted that links with businesses remained patchy particularly with SMEs although the FE colleges maintained wider links than the HEIs. It was also evident that not all the colleges and universities were taking full advantage of the opportunities offered by the Olympics and capturing the legacy of such a major event.

The CDG wish to draw particular attention to the success of the Creative Way and the small, specialist HEIs which have come together in mutual support to provide one of the best websites for students, parents and guardians, providing information on the wide range of creative opportunities available in the Gateway. The CDG were particularly impressed with the facilities and outcomes achieved by these small colleges and also noted their very active outreach into FE, local schools and the wider community. It was however noted that whilst the colleges have good contacts with their relevant industry sectors, their capabilities and collective critical mass to develop skills and undertake research in the creative industries has not been used to actively market these assets to attract inward investment. The web-site in particular would make a good marketing tool with only a little adaptation and could provide links with and for local SMEs in addition to its' marketing potential.

It was also noted that the success of the Creative Way concept had the potential to expand into new fields bringing together other HEIs and FE colleges to work in partnership to develop an even richer programme of education and skills development.

There continues to be a social divide between the high value financial services industries and the job prospects enjoyed by many of the residents living within sight of Canary Wharf. The Financial Skills Academy is a courageous attempt to address the low skills base in East London and to help local people into employment in these large financial institutions and uses trainers from within the industry to provide much of the teaching. However the employment success rate so far is limited and unless the Academy can achieve greater success in the near future it may be more cost effective to use this excellent for training into other trades and professions.

The setting up of the Thames Gateway Institute for Sustainability was most welcome in the way it brought everything together in one place and its future' programme of work was impressive. Their first year of development has brought together both HEIs and FE colleges in the research and development of new initiatives to address the green agenda and green skills and it is clearly ahead of other regions in this respect in the ambition to move quickly into a programme of building adaptation, although unit costs may prove to be a difficult issue to overcome. It was particularly good to see that the local FE providers were coming together with other partners to set up SUSCON however, it was surprising to see that the universities engaged on this bold initiative came largely from outside the Gateway although the nature of work to be undertaken by the universities should be within the capability and capacity of the local institutions.

The CDG also noted that different institutions were partnering to bring very flexible education programmes to the more deprived areas of East London and they were particularly interested to see the joint project between Birkbeck and UEL for Stratford Island and the success already achieved between these institutions in advance of their new centre in Stratford. The CDG was also impressed with the way in which the new Ravensbourne College was going to provide new and novel systems of education with a far greater use of part time staff drawn from industry, offering a more practically based approach to education.

8.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Thames Gateway partners;

8.1 Consider establishing a model of engagement for universities, further education colleges and other partners along the lines of the Office for Knowledge Capital in Melbourne and Manchester to improve cooperation and raise institutional aspiration. *[An Office for Knowledge Capital is a partnership between public authorities, colleges and universities within a region intended to support collaboration across the tertiary education sector to underpin and develop the regions physical and social capital]*

8.2 Develop the Creative Way model to support other university and college programmes and encourage their closer cooperative working which would be greatly assisted if 8.1 above is adopted.

8.3 Develop the Creative Way model to act as a focus for SMEs and to act as an additional marketing tool for inward investment.

8.4 Adopt a fresh approach to achieve better engagement with SMEs and larger employers. Use this engagement to better prepare the new HEI/FE curriculum and skills development programmes.

8.5 Encourage the Thames Gateway Institute for Sustainability to engage more actively with the universities in the Gateway.

8.6 Support the Ravensbourne approach to bring in trainers from industry to support other areas of activity within universities and colleges.

8.7 Make better use of alumni to give advice on careers and raise aspirations in cooperation with the LEAs

8.8 Complete the benchmarking as a matter of priority.

8.9 Review the action plan in the light of this report and the output from the benchmarking.

8.10 Take an active part in the new PURE urban regions cluster alongside Glasgow, Melbourne, Helsinki and Flanders (Antwerp)

Appendices

Appendix A

Presentations by the review team to the Thames Gateway Group

- 1) *The U.S. perspective on current challenges for universities and regions*
Anne Kaplan University of Northern Illinois

Kaplan noted that HEIs in the U.S. are dealing with the consequences of a 20 year period of disinvestment in public higher education. Solutions to structural budget problems (especially those related to pensions) have been postponed, and the public (and most politicians) are now distracted by issues related to the economy, defense and national security, health care, and tax relief. At the same time, the decline in traditional manufacturing industries has resulted in increased unemployment for unskilled workers, and the recent financial crisis has added mid-level and relatively skilled individuals to the growing number of job seekers. There is, therefore, an urgent need for skills training and retraining, lifelong learning opportunities, and continuing professional development. Unfortunately, large numbers of the unemployed evidence very limited educational aspirations, and another significant percentage is made up immigrant populations for whom English is at best a second language. Meanwhile, HEIs, in response to continued funding reductions, have increased tuition, decreased student support programs, and resorted to recruitment priorities favoring students who need less assistance. The country thus faces a massive collision between funding available and the need for post secondary access. Those who recognize the need for further education are finding it increasingly difficult to afford, and a college education is becoming a financial sacrifice for many families or a long-term debt for individual students.

Historically, major educational initiatives in the U.S. have been leveraged by public policy and accompanied by public resources (e.g. the Morrill Act establishing the land-grant colleges, the GI bill, the National Defense Education Act). In the current climate, there is significant opposition to government intervention and additional public expenditure and an increasing willingness to rely on market forces. Market forces drive an emphasis on the utilitarian role of HEIs (getting people into the workforce) and result in a much reduced emphasis on the role of HEIs in producing articulate citizens, capable of reasoned participation in civic affairs. If access to higher education is limited to those with private means of support while the bulk of the population focuses on the pursuit of immediately marketable skills, we risk a potential shrinking of the middle class – a dynamic with enormous social and political ramifications.

There is certainly widespread recognition that the production of creative workers drives the knowledge economy, but there is a mismatch between knowledge creation and regional diffusion in many regions. Key intermediaries work with either business or with universities, with further education institutions or higher education institutions, but rarely with both. Progress has been made on articulation (progression) issues related to 2-year vocational (applied science) degrees, and there is a new focus on “career pathways” - an articulated sequence of connected education, training and support service programs starting at the elementary and secondary level and

continuing through further and higher education. Additionally, there is some movement among HEIs toward a new commitment to service (engagement) to complement existing teaching and research missions. This focus on 3rd mission activities and the emphasis on collaboration and mutual benefits for institutions and their regions should lead to more productive links between colleges and the regions around them.

2) *Work Force development and Benchmarking* *Nicola Blush-Skills Development Scotland Presentation*

Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) presentation by Nicola Blush covered Work Force Development and Benchmarking.

SDS was created in 2007 to implement the Scottish Government's skills strategy 'Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy'. SDS is a non-departmental public body, accountable to Scottish Ministers.

SDS were formed from some of the key players in Scotland's learning and skills sector - Careers Scotland, Learn Direct Scotland, and elements of Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Some of the branded products SDS are responsible for delivering include; Individual Learning Accounts, Modern Apprenticeships, Careers Advice and Guidance, Learndirect Scotland for Business, Training for Work and Get Ready for Work.

Workforce Development

Nicola Blush is the Link Partner for Glasgow's participation in the PURE Study. The role Alison Bowerbank has undertaken in the Thames Gateway. In Scotland a new policy for our approach to Work Force Development (i.e. policy towards up skilling those already in employment) is being developed and we believe our participation in PURE will be helpful in informing this policy.

The challenge in Work Force Development we believe is to create a demand led approach. Skills currently are tackled from the supply side, with lots of provision, which is not particularly joined up, nor particularly linked to demand. Modern Apprenticeships (MA's) are very visible to employers and clearly led by employer demand and shaped by industry agreed standards. This activity totals approximately 30,000 MA's supported by £65 million government expenditure and represents the very visible portion of Work Force Development.

The invisible element of Work Force Development in Scotland has more than 10 times the number of participants. Part time FE and HE (346,000 part time HE and FE students and an expenditure of approximately £214 million) contributes to workforce skills, but it's not obvious to employers how they influence the shape of this, there is a recognised disconnect from demand. In addition, employers

themselves spend c £2 billion on skills in the workplace, dwarfing the public sector spend.

As a response to feedback that employers were confused by the current offer. An Action Group was set up to bring together representatives from the key partners who have an interest in workforce skills. The Scottish Governments Skills Committee who oversee the Action teams work are looking for substantive progress on the tasks of definitional clarity, simplification, visibility, more nimble labour market intelligence, national outcomes and customer satisfaction. The Group has concentrated initially on considering a draft definition and vision for Work force development and mapping current provision including the scope and nature of FE and HE activity. The group found 30% of Scottish FE Colleges are involved in Work Force Development. The group will be using PASCAL/PURE to identify international good practice in using local authority links and to engage with employers. These activities will form part of the PURE action plan for Glasgow.

Public monies for skills investment are reducing we are likely to face budget cuts in the area of skills investment so the challenge is to do more with less and since necessity is the mother of invention we will need to do things differently. It is likely we will be less focused on increasing the supply of skills and more concerned with developing capacity within organisations to help them to help themselves. A bigger role for government in supporting the organisation of work and job design is likely to improve job quality, productivity and begin to achieve the goal of skills utilisation.

Benchmarking “Tips” from the Scottish Experience.

- Use CDG first visit speakers from Glasgow HEI’s and “RV1 Report” to re-establish contact and interest.
- Glasgow University with its links to PURE/ PASCAL Office have made a substantive start on HEI benchmarking.
- Other Glasgow HEI’s were invited to a meeting where Glasgow University outlined the approach they took to benchmarking. Aim of meeting is to establish interest and identify a key contact in each HEI to coordinate each institutions response.
- Benchmarking results are analysed with support from PURE Office.
- In all communications we tried to use existing networks and sell the potential benefits of mapping to for instance funding applications.
- The possibility of a benchmarking tool being made available online will greatly assist in the completion of Benchmarks
- The regional benchmark will be completed after the HEI benchmark. The value of the two benchmarks will be to see where the gaps are if any between regional and HEI perspectives on engagement. This will form a useful basis for future discussions.

3) PURE Project Clusters – David Campbell, Office of Knowledge Capital, Melbourne

Purpose of Clusters

To sponsor open and inclusive discussion and shared knowledge across the participating PURE regions around thematic areas.

7 thematic areas covering:

- Regional Innovation and Renewal
- Social Inclusion and Active Citizenship
- Creative and Cultural Industries
- Green Skills and Jobs
- Tertiary Education Systems
- Sustaining Rural and Remote Communities
- Lifelong Learning and the Learning Region

Background

OECD heritage – previous OECD projects in this field were top-down and focussed on a single visit by an assessment team, a single report, and a critique approach rather than knowledge transfer and shared learning.

PASCAL/PURE project approach – the PURE approach is more bottom-up in that it focuses on shared knowledge, multiple CDG visits which are more inclusive, greater flexibility and the use of the cluster approach across regions to share knowledge and learning.

Process

Clusters are led by a nominated region within the ‘self-selecting’ groups.

The PASCAL website provides a platform for information sharing and dialogue.

The PURE project focus in year 1 is to generate the information base as a starting point.

Feedback from the PASCAL review meeting in Brussels (February 8-9, 2010) was:

- The opportunity to converge cluster outcomes with benchmarking in terms of shared learnings.
- Improving the use of the web platform.
- Allowing for direct region links in a new form of clustering due to interest in multiple thematic areas and potential synergies, e.g. Thames Gateway and Melbourne, Helsinki, Glasgow and Flanders.

Green Economy, Green Skills example from Melbourne

This thematic area is one of three that the Melbourne region is addressing along with Regional Innovation and Social Inclusion. It was included at the request of the Victorian state government which is a major stakeholder in the project locally. The theme reflects the aspirations to achieve future outcomes more than current practice.

In 2009, a series of case studies were developed across 5 different examples in this field:

- Victorian Institute for Climate Change Adaptation Research (VICCAR) – this is a state government funded virtual institute across 4 universities that will fund specific research and education/knowledge transfer activities to ‘fill gaps’ in the adaptation field. It is currently being established in the 2009-10 financial year.
- Carbon Down – this is an initiative of the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) with Sustainability Victoria which is an agency of the Victorian state government. The primary aim is to provide information and advice to SME’s to improve their carbon footprint and enable future compliance with an emissions trading scheme. There is no formal involvement of the tertiary sector with the exception of the EnviroHub SME outreach centre established by Victoria University.
- Victorian Eco-Innovation Laboratory (VEIL) – this initiative is based at the University of Melbourne and is funded by the Victorian state government to converge sustainability approaches with design principles, especially to result in novel planning outcomes. It includes two other universities and three relevant state government departments.
- Horizon 21- this is a regionally focused initiative of Deakin University providing information support to the SME sector in partnership with the City of Warnambool in regional Victoria. Deakin operates across the full spectrum from metropolitan to rural and regional, with campuses in Melbourne, Geelong and Warnambool.
- Green Chemistry and Manufacturing Centre – this initiative has operated at Monash University since 2000, and is an example of how to achieve change with a focussed approach over time. It has been funded with a mix of applied research grants from industry and government focussing on technology development, scale up, and assisting manufacturing industries to develop ‘green processes’.

NBA paper on the above case studies is available from the Office of Knowledge Capital (www.knowledgemelbourne.com) and the PASCAL website. An observation on the Australian setting is that real change the conversion of such initiatives above from aspiration to application will be driven by the introduction of an emissions trading scheme, which is on the political agenda currently.

Appendix B

List of Attendees

Wed 10 Feb	@ Intro Plenary at Eland House	
SEEDA	Mark Thirkell	
Havering College	David Holmes	
University of Kent	Carole Barron	
UCCA	Uwe Derksen	
Anglia Ruskin	Cajiten Da Silva	
University of Essex	Zoe Manning	
UEL	Ray Wilkinson	
CCCU	Liz Hout	
LDA	Kirstin Mcintosh	
Department:BIS	Mercy Addo	
	@ Financial Skills Academy	
	Chris Davies	Principal
	Gerry McDonald	Vice Principal
	Peter Bantham	Consultant
	Adam Hart	Lecturer

Thurs 11 Feb	@ Trinity Laban College	
TLC	Anthony Bowne	Joint Principal
	Veronica Jobbins	Head Prof/ Community Development
	Mirella Bastrip	Director of Studies
	Peter Owens	Business Enterprise Manager
	Kate Atkinson	Education & Comms manager (Trinity)
Creative Way	Judy Kenney	
	Lindsay Pugh	
	Richard Pyle	
	Sarah Williams	
	@Ravensbourne College	
Ravensbourne	Chris Thompson	
Greenwich Council	Kingsley Otubushin	Business Support Services Manager

Fri 12 Feb	@the Bridge	
SEEDA	Katharine Harvey	
SEEDA	Mark Thirkell	
IfS	Terry McGiven	
IfS	Nigel Bradbury	
North West Kent College	Sally Clark	
IfS	Stephen Choi	Head of Training
	Meeting Birkbeck @Eland House	
	Prof Philip Dewe	Vice Master

Appendix C

Creative and Cultural Skills Academy

The Creative and Cultural Skills Academy (supported by public funding of £13m) that will be co-located with the Royal Opera House Production Park will train thousands of people for the theatre industry and provide hundreds of jobs.

It adds to the Thames Gateway area's growing importance as an internationally renowned hub for the creative industries.

This will help to address the anticipated need for 30,000 skilled backstage and technical theatre staff by 2017 and will provide technical accreditation and professional development for the existing workforce..

Work will begin on the building later in the year with it ready to open in 2012.

It will also help bolster a creative quarter at the Royal Opera House Production Park which is helping provide much needed skilled backstage and technical staff for theatres around the country.

The new building will be the setting for thousands of young people and apprentices to access professional training in technical theatre and live music production – part of a live performance industry estimated at to be worth up to £6bn to the UK economy each year.

The National Skills Academy will position the UK as a global leader in cultural skills and training: plug the creative and cultural skills gap and deliver what employers and young people need to boost skills and access jobs in the vital creative skills sector.

It also contributes to the development of a cultural legacy from the London 2012 Olympic Games helping to raise aspirations for young people throughout the UK.

The unique development is bringing Further Education (FE) Colleges, private delivery partners and key employers in the industry together to develop and promote the skills and training for young people at the pre-employment stage, professional development for employees and freelancers already in the sector and skills development for those requiring retraining and re-skilling in the post recession recovery.