

PROGRESS FILES STRATEGY. Approved by LTA Committee, 1/05/01

A Tool For Student Personal Development Planning And A Personal Record Of Learning.

Introduction.

The Progress Files task group has been charged by the LTA Committee to propose how the university should ensure that personal development planning (PDP) is part of all students' experience at Northumbria through the introduction of Progress Files for all students. This is in line with QAA requirements.

Our work in the task group builds on the work of previous projects (PADSHE) and has taken place in the context of a wide range of existing mechanisms and structures promoting personal development planning across the university. There is a context of much existing good practice that means that from the outset we propose a mixed "economy" of Progress Files at Northumbria. The university will describe clear expectations in relation to all student experience of PDP across all courses and programmes but will not prescribe a particular model.

In such an "economy" we expect that some existing models and mechanisms will continue as they are, that some existing models will need to be adapted and built upon and that in many areas new structures will need to be introduced.

Consequently the Task Group have addressed the following issues;

- Policy re. Progress Files
- Strategy for implementation across the University
- Different examples of best practice
- Issues for implementation
- Time-scales

POLICY

The University of Northumbria expects all students to participate in PDP and all students will be given the opportunity, resources and support to do so as an integral part of their academic and/or vocational course. Usually this opportunity will be built around a Progress File and the support of the Guidance tutor. However in some programmes PDP is integral to the academic curriculum and in these circumstances much of the content and process of Progress Files will in fact be resourced as part of teaching. We anticipate that the move to introduce Progress Files will see some courses review the way in which teaching hours are articulated in unit descriptors. Whatever the model adopted to support Progress Files in different academic programmes the following are minimum expectations and standards;

A. Context

1. A Wider Context.

Students will have the opportunity to consider their learning at the University of Northumbria in the context of their wider learning before and during their period of study. This will include the full range of their work and life experiences. They will also be encouraged to think about their development at the university in relation to their plans for the future and in particular to career planning and future employment.

2. *Learning how to learn.*
Students will have the opportunity and support to reflect upon the process of learning. Students will have the opportunity to learn about the process of learning and to develop their own learning strategies.
3. *Lifelong learning skills in Higher Education.*
Lifelong learning skills are those skills that can be transferred to a wide range of situations and in particular to the workplace. Students will have the opportunity to identify the explicit connections between the development of these skills during their course of study and the wider world.
4. *Review and planning.*
Students will be supported and encouraged to plan, reflect and review their progress and learning. Part of this process will be to keep a record of their academic results.

B. Process

- Guidance Tutor training (and Induction) in relation to PDP
- Allocation to all students a Guidance Tutor or similar who follows the student throughout the period of study
- Early introduction to PDP and the progress file by the Guidance Tutor
- Electronic or paper based resource to facilitate PDP
- Individual meetings with Guidance Tutor as defined in Guidance Tutor policy
- Continuing support for Guidance Tutors and students.

C. Content

Progress Files or their equivalent will normally contain;

- Written guidance and support material
- Review of learning prior to joining University of Northumbria
- Semester by semester planning and review sections
- Framework for career planning and the development of a C.V.
- Reflection on placement, work and “life” experiences.
- Reflections on key skills development
- Transcript recording academic achievement

However it is not appropriate to be prescriptive about content of Progress Files. Progress Files are for all students at the University of Northumbria and “one size” will not “fit all”. The best Progress Files will be tailored around particular courses of study and will often complement elements of the academic programme. Clearly approaches taken with part-time students, post graduate students, research students or professional/ vocational students will need to take into account those students’ particular needs to ensure that the Progress File is relevant and useful.

STRATEGY

Heads of school will be responsible for ensuring that PDP and Progress Files are integrated into all academic and vocational courses. Usually this will be implemented through the Guidance Tutors.

Faculty (and School) Quality Committees will be responsible for monitoring the quality of provision and should routinely agenda PDP when they meet.

**PROGRESS FILES GUIDANCE PACK
PROGRESS FILES TASK GROUP
LEARNING, TEACHING & ASSESSEMENT COMMITTEE**

LTA Coordinators will advise Quality Committees where necessary in relation to these requirements.

LTA Coordinators will organize and support workshops for Guidance Tutors on implementation. In doing so they will work closely with Tutorial Advisors.

The Progress File Task Group will also offer faculty based workshops if there is a demand from academic staff who need to adapt existing material or who need to design new frameworks for PDP/ Progress Files.

The Progress Files Task Group will act as a consultant and support group for course leaders seeking help in developing new or existing material.

The Student Advisory Services and the Careers Advisory Service will offer specific and general help and advise to support the implementation of Progress Files and both services have a long term commitment to their development.

There will be two "ready to use" PDP/ Progress File frameworks available to adapt as appropriate. One of these will be available for electronic delivery. These will include guidance notes for students and Guidance Tutor.

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IMPLEMENTATION AND TIMESCALE

February 2001	LTA Committee Discusses Draft paper Consultation and feedback
May / June 2001	LTA Committee and QIAS ratify final documentation Circulation for implementation
September 2001	Support available for introduction of Progress Files where possible
June 2001 – May 2002	LTA coordinators support, train and offer consultation
September 2002	Schools have strategies for full implementation by Sept 2004/2005 Implementation for all new cohorts of students
September 2002 – June 2003	LTA coordinators begin review, monitoring and evaluation of implementation to date.
June 2003 onwards	Regular evaluation reports to LTA Committee.