**Supporting Additional Support Tutors and Assistants**

**Report from the Practitioners event held Wednesday 2nd July, 2014**

1. **What are the main issues/concerns that you have in your additional support role?**
   * **For students**

* Improved systems to ensure entitlements are accessed e.g. extra time in exams
* Application of ‘reasonable adjustments’
* Non ring-fenced funding
* Learner support not on OFSTED radar
* Lack of focus on life/social/employability skills
* Support staffing levels
* Post 18 – undiagnosed (adult learning)
* Lack of support in class unless there is funding
* Differentiated learning
* Schools have been unsupported their needs, creating barriers to learning
* Funding changes – money may not be available for the learners needs
* Students are on a ‘merry-go-round’ – repeating the same level year after year
  + **For Staff**
* Under recognition for specialisms
* Achievement based payment – results are measured by attainment not distance travelled
* Lack of funding for LSA or SW in class
* Supported learners are on the rise
* Limitations of roles
* Reduction in funding for adult learning
* Lack of awareness of support roles
* Lack of communication – ie sharing of data may be a support need / safeguarding issue
* Basic awareness training needed for all staff
* Lack of training on specific needs
* Lack of experience
  + For Staff with their own individual support needs they may be embarrassed about their needs or feel threatened by redundancy so scared to admit areas of need and especially for vulnerable workers ie agency workers

1. **Are there any areas of good practice that you can identify in the place/s that you work in supporting students/staff with additional support needs?**
   * Key support tutor for vocational areas
   * Key workers support tutors in vocational specialist areas (they are used at the interview process)
   * Supplement needs assessment – ongoing
   * Transition management
   * Focus on meaningful individual reviews
   * Holistic approach – building confidence and self-esteem as well as study skills
   * Network groups
   * Key department/faculty support tutors
   * Share successes e.g. useful websites and information for families
   * Flexible delivery
   * Access to text to speak software (assistive technology)
   * Networking and sharing information
   * Learning support plans fed through to all levels of education (T/A/Teacher/tutor/curriculum manager)
   * Using strategies that help students ie. Voice recordings of discussions that can be emailed as evidence
   * Staff are give a list of strategies that have been discussed with students/parents, access abilities department
   * Use the same materials for all learners ie. Yellow paper/PPT slides etc, handouts on moodle – access available outside of learning environment
   * Pro-monitor – highlights (needs) and given to all staff, includes up to date behaviour (positive and negative)
   * Informal support of staff with additional support needs

**3. What more could UCU do, to help you with your role?**

* Campaign for a recognition of role: status, pay etc
* Facilitate networking; parents, young people, practitioners etc.
* Escalate funding campaign – (including budget for additional support)
* Produce more factsheets
* Support networking/information sharing
* Campaign on:
  + 1. Funding cuts – staffing levels etc.
    2. Privatisation
    3. Banish 0 hours contracts and casualisation
* Offer incentives to agency staff to encourage them to join
* Campaign for an increase wage for LSA workers (some paid less than cleaners)
* Raise awareness of successful cases/situations via email/text notification/website
* Negotiate with employers for CPD to be available to all - ie full time, HPL contractors, p/t workers, agency (paid for)
* Negotiate with employers for more specific needs training ie autism, aspergers, dyslexia, visual impairment
* UCU could deliver feedback via course deliver, possibly update on blog – purely for SLT teams for a different perspective

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