

Widening participation and student support

Key partners	Background	Targets / Milestones	Activities 2006–08
<p>Aimhigher, University of Brighton, University of Chichester, further education and sixth form colleges, Learning Partnerships (East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove), Northbrook College Sussex, the Open University in the South East, University of Sussex, Sussex Council of Training Providers (SCTP)</p>	<p>The Sussex Learning Network is committed to 'stimulating and supporting the aspirations and needs of young and adult learners and employers for career-orientated learning, particularly amongst non-traditional and non-participants in learning'. The advent of Access Agreements and variable fees has meant that widening participation activity is increasingly driven by individual higher education institutions and further education colleges. Rather than adopt Sussex-wide targets, therefore, we will concentrate on working with institutions to bring coherence to existing activity. In addition to targets set out in other sections of the plan under each of the areas of our work, we will work towards the following target for our joint working with Aimhigher.</p>	<p>1 A linked programme of work for 2006–08 will be agreed with Aimhigher, leading to a more coherent approach to progression for vocational learners in schools and colleges.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">December 2006</p>	<p>Our joint working will focus on areas such as marketing, information, advice and guidance, and, with Aimhigher, the promotion of vocational learning to those from under represented groups. Our distinctive contribution will be to concentrate on providing pathways for existing vocational and work based learners into and through HE. In the first instance, we will concentrate on our seven priority curriculum areas. The areas of our work that will contribute specifically to our widening participation aims will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum development • Creating new and more flexible opportunities to learn • Marketing • Establishing clearly targeted and jointly planned approaches • Progression agreements • Supporting learners to achieve and progress • Work to create a role for students and employers as ambassadors for vocational learning. <p>Widening participation cuts across all of the activities of the SLN. Given our focus on improvements to the curriculum, our main activity in the first instance will be driven through the SLN curriculum team. The Aimhigher Director will be invited to join this group, which will shape the provision and identify the targets. Beyond this, our most significant joint working will be with those providing IAG, brokerage and outreach activities. Through the practitioner forum to be developed on our web site, and our programme of staff development, we will provide a basis for bringing together those with an interest in vocational progression and access to HE. We will also maintain a link with those responsible for developing widening participation strategies in individual higher education institutions and further education colleges, sharing information to avoid duplication. A member of the SLN core team will maintain regular contact with the Aimhigher Area Co-ordinators.</p>