

‘Supporting Refugee & Threatened Academics: The Role of UK Universities’

A Review of the 2006/07 Pathfinder Schemes

at London South Bank University, Eileen House, Newington Causeway, London, SE1 6EF

on 29th June 2007 (10am to 4.00pm)

Workshop Record

Participating Universities and Representatives

Birkbeck College, University of London	Prof. John Annette (Chair morning session)
University College London (UCL)	Dr Hatem al-Delaimi Clare Goudy Brigitte Picot
University of Central Lancashire	Bernadette Rimmer
King’s College London	Terry Jones Dr Kareem Mahdi al Obedy
Glasgow Caledonian University	Dr Hatham al-Jabouri Maggie Lennon, Bridges Programmes
Leeds Metropolitan University	Ting Chen
London South Bank University (LSBU)	Prof. Stina Lyon
University of Nottingham	Emilie Hunter Anna Tkaczynska
SOAS	Dr Nadjie al-Ali
University of Sunderland	Prof. Peter Smith (Chair afternoon session) Mirabel Lavelle Dr Haifa Albeed
University of West England, Bristol	Dr Christien van den Anker Cezara Nanu
University of Wolverhampton	Dr Patricia Bond Andrew Moredon

Council for Assisting Refugee Academics	Prof. John Akker Kate Robertson Roisin Joyce Myrtha Waite Lucy James (recording)
--	--

Apologies

Barbara Bargione, University of Brighton; Anne Lonsdale, University of Cambridge; Sedi Keshavarzi, LSBU; Prof. Gaim Kibreab, LSBU; Professor John Simons, University of Lincoln; David Bagley, University of Central Lancashire; Phil Begg, University of Wolverhampton; Dr Max Farrar, Leeds Metropolitan University; Dr Ruth Whittaker, Glasgow Caledonian University.

AM SESSION: Chaired by Professor John Annette, Pro Vice Master & Dean,
Faculty of Continuing Education, Birkbeck College, University of London.

Item 1. Chair's Welcome

Professor Annette welcomed participants to the event. He highlighted the purpose of the workshop as an opportunity to share and discuss the experience of implementing the first pathfinder grant programmes. He emphasised the importance of this work, given the environment of competing demands and sparse resources facing refugee academics trying to enter the UK's Higher Education (HE) sector.

As in the 1930s, which heralded the start of more than seven decades of CARA's work in support of refugee and threatened academics, there remained enormous good will on which to draw. Today, however, that good will was severely constrained within an increasingly complex and regulated higher education sector, impacting on staff and students alike.

It will be important to capture the lessons from the pathfinder research and initiatives, but the sustainability of these initiatives and the wide dissemination of emerging lessons, models and good practice will be equally important. CARA needs to collaborate closely with university Vice Chancellors, via the CARA/SAR UK Universities Network, to ensure that universities are not complacent about the values of academic and university freedoms that underpin their work and their institutions, and that they recognise their responsibility to proactively defend those freedoms and extend practical support to colleagues at risk.

There are many ways in which this might be done and the environments in which it is done might be improved. University staff needed to be sensitised, clear entry points needed to be established, along with the support systems and infrastructures that would respond to the needs of this very particular client group, amongst which access to university resources, validation of qualifications, training and mentoring, lecturing opportunities, and career support.

Professor Annette thanked CARA for the opportunity the day presented and invited participants to use the workshop to learn from each others experiences.

Item 2. 'Why Pathfinder Research Matters'

Prof. Lyon, Pro-Dean Quality of Student Experience, LSBU

Professor Lyon highlighted the importance of the Pathfinder scheme, not just in increasing understanding of the pathfinder target group – refugee and threatened academics – but in identifying the gaps in university resources and the barriers to the development and provision of such support within the HE sector.

She touched on some of the external factors that influenced the climate in which the Pathfinder programmes were being implemented, amongst which: government immigration and asylum policies, increasingly draconian in the climate of fear engendered by the 'war on terrorism'; the negative media portrayal of asylum seekers and refugees, with implied linkages to terrorism, reinforced by the recent attack on Glasgow Airport by individuals belonging to the professional classes; the increasingly competitive environment in which higher education institutions operated, competing for students, funding and public standing as measured in the various league tables; the resulting pressures transferred to university staff; competing pulls on limited departmental and central university resources; and the increasingly tight nature of the academic job market, increasing number of short-term contracts in HEIs, and resulting insecurity amongst staff.

Given these last, it might not be surprising to hear such mutterings as *"why should we support the very people who may be competing against us in the academic job market?"*, but such attitudes were not in evidence in LSBU. Following a call to LSBU staff seeking support for the mentoring and advice element of the Pathfinder programme, a number had come forward offering their

services. Professor Lyon saw the HE sector as an academic community that encompassed compassionate people more than willing to share their specialist skills.

CARA's and the Network's task was to continue to lobby higher education institutions, to find ways to influence Vice Chancellors and senior management, and to ensure that refugee academics maintained a high profile within the academic community.

The recent trend towards the internationalisation of higher education was one that CARA might be able to profit from. More and more UK universities were developing international campuses and partnerships, including with higher education institutions based in the very countries that generated refugee academics.

League tables were particularly close to Vice Chancellors' hearts, defining their university's standing within the wider HE sector and influencing public and professional perceptions, including those of prospective students, their parents, university staff and funding bodies.

Peer pressure, coupled with a 'naming and shaming' strategy could be a very effective tool, and CARA might investigate the development of an alternative league table based on social responsibility indicators. Professor Lyon had recently seen something similar produced in the Times Higher Educational Supplement.

As little as 25 years ago, environmental impact was a negligible consideration within the corporate sector, but environmental and ethical lobbyists had educated and changed public perceptions, bringing such consideration to centre stage. These were now embedded in corporate policies, with good environmental practice a measure of Corporate Social Responsibility to be extolled in marketing campaigns, influencing investor choice and customer loyalty.

The Higher Education Academy, whose mission was to help HE institutions provide the best possible learning experience for their students, was a keen exponent of wider participation and student diversity and might make a useful ally. It too was frustrated by league tables and their focus research indicators rather than measures of the quality of teaching and widening participation.

Research Councils UK's new 'Beacons for Public Engagement' initiative, launched in early 2007, also shared this focus on widening participation. It sought to recognise, reward and build HEIs capacity for public engagement, which they defined as *specialists in higher education listening to, developing their understanding of, and interacting with non-specialists*, with 'public' defined as *groups that did not have formal relationships with an HEI*.

Clearly, CARA was by no means alone in seeking to widen participation. The growing number of UK universities joining CARA's Network was a positive signal of recognition of their individual and collective responsibilities to defend university and academic freedoms, with the support of refugee and threatened academic an important facet of this undertaking. The Network also increases CARA's capacity to influence and to apply peer pressure, and a second round of Pathfinder grants, coupled with dissemination of first round lessons, will do much to enhance CARA's sphere of influence, increase understanding, and change university practice in relation to this key group.

The Higher Education sector was uniquely placed to give support to this group. Despite organisational obstacles and resource constraints there is good will to draw on and innovative mechanisms through which to harness this support are clearly evidenced through the different projects and their outcomes, which need to be shared and progressed.

Item 3. Sharing Experiences & Issues Arising

Presentations are summarised below with full versions attached as appendices, where these were made available in electronic format.

The title of her presentation 'There are More Questions than Answers' went some way to expressing the considerable learning curve associated with the implementation of UCLAN's Pathfinder project. The project had been run out of UCLAN's 'Centre for Employability Through the Humanities' (CETH) and had benefited enormously from the support of senior management from across the university and the leadership of UCLAN's Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Patrick McGhee.

The aim of UCLAN's Pathfinder project had been to establish systems representing best practice in the development of a supportive and welcoming environment in which refugee academics could flourish. A period of broad consultation followed her recruitment as Project Manager, and included meetings with other Pathfinder universities, CARA, and refugee-mandated organisations such as Refugee into Jobs. These proved crucial to developing a better understanding of the particular challenges and difficulties facing refugee academics seeking to rebuild careers through the UK HE sector, and in helping to define the university support systems and services that UCLAN needed to develop.

The label 'refugee' had been seen as unhelpful so that fairly early on UCLAN had adopted the expression 'displaced scholars' in its discussions.

UCLAN's pathfinder work had highlighted more than any other element the central importance of one-to-one support, not simply as a university-related mentoring service, but as a far wider reaching role, encompassing support and guidance on the difficulties faced by refugee academics in their daily lives outside the university.

Identifying the training needs of university staff was seen as crucial to establishing a comprehensive support system, to the ability to deliver a holistic mentoring service and to instilling cultural awareness and sensitivity. UCLAN adopted the Matrix standard, a quality framework through which to measure effective delivery of information and advice and/or guidance on learning and work, and through which to provide staff accreditation.

Areas of difficulty? There had been some caution at senior level about perceptions of positive discrimination, coupled with concerns over media portrayal. The university did not currently have a major research profile, so that its ability to provide academic support would vary according to the displaced scholar's subject area and, unlike major cities, Preston offered only limited external community support to refugees, a consideration which had also driven UCLAN's adoption of a holistic approach to mentoring.

Despite these issues, UCLAN remained committed to the provision of such support and was currently reviewing the Network's latest 'Action list' with a view to a possible hosting of a displaced scholar.

The University of Nottingham's pathfinder grant programme was being implemented through the university's Human Rights Law Centre (HRLC). Its aim was to develop a university-wide, needs-based research programme for scholars and experts who were considered to be at risk of persecution in their home country, using a human-rights based approach.

Nottingham was looking to pilot a centrally-funded scheme to host a small number of academics at risk through short-term placements and was considering hosting both those with refugee status and those who remained at risk in their country of origin and without UK status.

Nottingham's Pathfinder objective was to submit a report to Senate, supported by the Project Advisers (senior HRLC academics and the Director of the International Office), outlining the research programme and recommending pilot-funding for a three-year period.

Implementation had begun with the identification of university, local community and local government participants, followed by a period of consultation and clarification of core issues. A streamed survey was developed in which university researchers, administrators, professionals, and heads of schools participated, followed by the identification of core issues.

The report to Senate would be submitted following further exploration and clarification of amongst other issues:

- the selection process for identifying at risk academics;
- UK work permit and entry clearance regulations for scholars without UK status;
- hosting costs;
- university-wide support for the scheme;
- the university's capacity to provide appropriate levels of support during placements, particularly in relation to academics without UK refugee status; and,
- possible negative consequences associated with hosting academics at risk.

Further outputs included a dedicated HRLC webpage detailing the project, its processes and outcomes, and a contacts database of project participants, including notes from consultations and documents received.

Findings to date:

- Pending clarification of outstanding issues, a piloting of the scheme appeared viable
- Input from administrative departments had been crucial to clarifying capacity to host
- Transparency in the selection criteria used to assess 'at risk' status would be essential
- A definition of scholar would be required for the purposes of community support
- Costings for research programmes should cover employment costs and indirect costs
- A risk assessment should be undertaken for both the hosted scholar and the university
- Support had also been identified for unpaid opportunities to suitably qualified individuals.

3.iii London South Bank University (LSBU) Professor Stina Lyon

Appendix 3

Professor Lyon extended apologies on behalf of Sedi Keshavarzi, the Project's Coordinator, who was unable to attend today. Sedi had, however, submitted a written update on LSBU's Pathfinder programme, which was attached as *Appendix 3*.

LSBU's programme, known as the Refugee Academic Project, had sought to identify and address the gap between existing university resources and the needs of refugee academics in the UK in order to enhance the level of practical support the university could provide. The programme benefited from the strong community links established by LSBU's Community Outreach Project, through which the project was able to tap into the local refugee community and locally-based refugee academics.

Implementation of the LSBU's Pathfinder programme began with a process of consultation. The Project Coordinator had met with refugee academics to help identify barriers to their re-entering academia and individual career goals; with those LSBU departments whose services were deemed most able to address the identified gap, including the Language Centre and the Centre for Learning Support & Development (CLSD); and, with members staff who had volunteered their assistance for mentoring and advisory purposes.

In parallel with the consultation process and to help raise awareness of LSBU's Pathfinder programme, articles outlining the project and its aims were placed in two LSBU publications 'The Bulletin' and 'Communiversality', both with a wide local circulation, in addition to which direct contact was made with locally-based non-governmental and community organisations.

Seven refugee academics, whose subject areas included economics, education, mechanical engineering and law, came forward to help pilot the scheme and the development of an extensive programme of support, including IELTS and English for Academic Purposes training courses through LSBU's Language Centre, and support and guidance on CV drafting, how to enter the academic job market and with IT training, through the CLSD and their Careers Guidance Manager.

An unexpected stumbling block had been the registration of pilot participants, who neither qualified as staff nor students, in an institution where access to web, email, library resources was entirely dependent on having university ID cards.

Mentoring has been the principal area of support sought by the 7 piloting refugee academics with, four of which were now paired with mentors, with positive reports from both sides.

To support dissemination, two additional articles on the project had been scheduled for publication in the Times Higher Education Supplement and The Voice.

LSBU had now committed central funds to help sustain the programme into the future.

3.iv The University of Wolverhampton, Paul Moredon

Appendix 4

The purpose of the University of Wolverhampton's Pathfinder project was to explore and analyse the support and training needs of the refugee academics in Wolverhampton and the surrounding Black Country, a strategic National Asylum Support Services (NASS) dispersal area. There were an estimated 500 refugees in Wolverhampton, of which 50% were currently unemployed, with a dominant Iraqi refugee population. Our preliminary work would help inform and guide university policy and practice and the development of a user-led support infrastructure to help refugee and threatened academics adapt to the UK higher education sector.

The challenge we faced was the lack of Home Office official statistics on refugee location. Once asylum seekers had been granted refugee status they simply dropped off government radars. They tended to be an extremely mobile and hence difficult population to trace.

The methodology we devised comprised two components. A local mapping exercise to help establish the number, location, skills and talents of academic refugees in the area, followed by a stakeholder consultation process with those refugee academics identified and key individuals within the university, such as heads of schools and the Vice Chancellor.

The purpose of the consultation would be to gain a better understanding of the experiences of refugee academics, barriers to their reengaging in academia and possible associated fears, and expectations, through which support and training needs could be identified.

Consultation with university staff would allow university concerns to be raised and clarify the expectations of those supporting the project.

A major strength of the programme has been the ability to build on existing university infrastructures and the creation of 'University & Gatekeeper Partnerships' a network of links with local refugee-mandated NGOs, CBOs and faith groups, the latter identified through the University chaplaincy.

Consultation interviews were scheduled for July and the question of positive discrimination and the importance of ethical considerations, such as confidentiality and raised expectations, would be addressed as part of the process of establishing clear university policies and directives to underpin the support of refugee academics.

a. Peter Smith

The University of Sunderland saw itself as a civic university with a very strong participation ethos, a university of the city and surrounding region whose mission was very much about working with the city community in all its diverse aspects. The Pathfinder project fitted extremely well with this ethos. We have sought to build community links and use those links to bring refugee scholars to the university and provide them with access to higher education, as a route into employment.

We spent some time identifying the needs of refugee scholars, but the heart of the project has been to establish a Refugee Support Service post within the university. This is the post that Mirabel has taken on and through which the Pathfinder programme has been implemented. Mirabel established links to existing university services to help provide a community-based service for refugees and refugee scholars in the local community.

b. Mirabel Lavelle

Within a week of my arriving in post, we set about establishing contacts that would enable us to build on the work of existing community networks and organisations, benefit from their considerable resources and the good work that they were delivering. We believed that if we brought them on board, they would provide momentum and support our work under the Pathfinder scheme.

We started with the churches, several of which host drop-in advice centres. They in turn introduced us to other relevant organisations and, through the North East Refugee Service's (NERS) database we obtained information on refugee academics seeking employment or looking to obtain British qualifications. NERS brokered introductions, enabling us to discuss individual needs and how we might support those needs.

We also approached the Washington Asylum Seekers Project (WASP), the group through which ESOL training courses were being provided. At that time, however, they faced a dilemma. They had obtained funding to deliver courses, but had no funding to assist with the travel costs of clients who lived outside the immediate region and we were consequently invited to help spend those funds on teachers.

Approaches were made to the City of Sunderland College, the local Women's Centre and the City Library with a view to setting up English language courses. The Library had premises it made available to us free of charge as a teaching venue, and the Women's Centre were able to provide a crèche for women wishing to participate in the classes who were restricted by childcare needs, and with these facilities all located around the city centre, we were able alleviate the problem of opportunity costs.

We developed a further working relationship with Refugees into Sustainable Employment (RISE) who help an average of 40 refugees a year gain sustainable employment, and were able to offer one of their refugee academic clients a six-month placement in the University's IT department. The newly established ESOL courses also enabled us to offer work to a refugee teacher, who will also be pursuing a Masters with us, allowing her to both work and study at the same time.

It was worth noting that when first offered the teaching post, her response had been, "you know, I can work for cheaper, you don't have to pay me that much." A reflection of the loss of self esteem suffered by many of those isolated from the work place for prolonged periods.

The University of Sunderland's English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course benefited several researchers, of which Dr Albeed, a Consultant Ophthalmologist here with us today, who would shortly joins the university's 5-week postgraduate fast track programme, enrolled on a scholarship, to bring her English level up to an IELTS 6.5

The project had, however, identified considerably more asylum seekers than refugees in the community. Sunderland was one of the few universities nationwide to be providing asylum seekers with avenues into education, a decision that has forced the university look at developing policies on asylum seekers students to complement the policies that covered their refugee students. The project had recently identified twenty-seven 15 to 19 year old asylum seekers that the local colleges wouldn't touch. We needed to obtain more information about their rights to higher education, but were looking at the possible development of a fee-waving scheme.

Key achievements to date included the establishing of Mirabel's post within the university; the relaunching of free ESOL provision within the community, helping to alleviate opportunity costs and arranging for the provision of childcare; establishing collaborative partnerships with local refugee-mandated and other support groups and organisations, who were now supporting each other as well as the Pathfinder project; the enrolment of academics on to the university's EAP course and other postgraduate courses to support their continued study; in collaboration with RISE, to support their eventual entry into sustainable employment; and, the extension of the programme and education opportunities to those who were still asylum seekers.

The project had been gaining momentum throughout the implementation period. We are working with the university's marketing department to further publicise the project and to extend the project's reach.

We were still looking for answers and for financial support to sustain this much needed work. The people know who we are and where we are and the project has made a considerable difference.

c. Dr Haifa Albeed

Dr Albeed extended her thanks for the opportunity to speak at the meeting and shared some of her experiences. She had arrived in the UK in October 2006 and was lucky to have been granted refugee status in January 2007.

She had tried to engage with the local college, but this had proved difficult. It was eventually through her English teacher that she met Mirabel in a class made up mostly of asylum seekers. She had then gone to the university to seek her advice on re-qualifying and had eventually been offered a place on the university's Postgraduate course in Community Health.

Mirabel hadn't just assisted her with advice and support relating to the university, but had provided her with extensive support following the sudden withdrawal of her NASS support. Mirabel had supported her through those all those difficulties.

Morning Session Discussion: Key points arising

➤ *Access to HE for Asylum Seekers*

The major issue for asylum seekers looking to access higher education was the question of fees. Asylum seekers were currently classed as overseas students by the majority of HEIs, with overseas fees up to three times the amount of home tuition fees.

There was, however, some movement in relation to the imposition of overseas fees, with a few HEIs beginning to offer limited places at home tuition rates. Scotland was witnessing a similar shift, with the 4 Glasgow universities having agreed to accept the children of asylum seeker on home tuition rates. 11 such places were likely to be offered for this coming academic year.

An area of concern was that HEFCE reserved the right to penalise those not imposing overseas tuition fees, the terms on which the government had provided that funding. There was no evidence, however, to suggest that HEFCE was doing so in practice.

The Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC) had been involved in discussions on establishing a formal Scottish policy not to impose overseas fees on the children of asylum seekers, and had agreed not to penalise the universities pursuing that policy. They would know in 2008 whether the Scottish Executive had decided formally to adopt the policy. Maggie Lennon explained that the reason they had focused on the children of asylum seekers and not adult asylum seekers was partly because their success reflected positively on the Scottish Education system, and because the extenuation of such a policy to adults raised questions of preferential treatment. Similar work was being done in Wales, and she would be very happy to share the Scottish strategy with those interested in lobbying for the adoption of a similar policy for England.

Without dismissing concerns about possible penalties, it was nevertheless important for HEIs to acknowledge the difficulties facing asylum seekers as a result of the failure of the UK asylum system, which had created a legacy of thousands of cases still pending decisions more than two or more years following application. Asylum seekers were being penalised through no fault of their own, with Iraqi asylum seekers a point in case, with few decisions on Iraqi claims since 2004.

➤ *The Question of Positive Discrimination*

The question of positive discrimination had been raised by Wolverhampton, in view of other minority and vulnerable groups within the university's cohort.

Did the Pathfinder programme give refugee academics undue advantage in an era where UK academics were themselves at risk of job losses due to lack of funding and falling student numbers, in an increasingly competitive environment? Although there were evident sensitivities, UK universities already employed a high proportion of international staff, and being qualified for the post remained the primary consideration for making appointments.

Being given the right to work by the British Government as a result of refugee status was not, however, the same as being given the opportunity to work. The Pathfinder programmes were playing an important role in levelling the playing field for those to whom the UK work environment, academe and recruitment culture were alien.

Dr Hatem al-Delaimi shared his own experience of trying to rebuild his academic career in the UK. *"I lost 4 of my colleagues from my department at Baghdad University. It is a disaster. Politicians know how the war started, but they do not know how to stop it. CARA gave me the first step on the long road. I have applied to London South Bank University for 3 different posts, and Cambridge and many other universities. Some tell me I am overqualified so that on my CV I have dropped Professor, dropped Doctor but still it remains the same. I have been working unpaid as a research assistant at King's College for 1 year now. CARA gives grants but they should continue to help us into work. What happens after? It is important to follow these people after grant process or they can lose their way. For me, I have lost my way."*

➤ *Developing Work Opportunities*

Although most were not providing paid employment, the various Pathfinder programmes were developing an incredible resource for refugee academics right across the UK, operating in parallel with the CARA/SAR UK Universities Network. CARA's grantees, also widely dispersed across the UK, had already been able to benefit from the piloting of the Pathfinder schemes. Professor Simons, Dean of the Faculty of Media & Humanities, University of Lincoln (unfortunately unable to join and present at the workshop due to the severe flooding in the region), had recently sent a message (reproduced below) that he had received from one of the Iraqi academics who had helped pilot Lincoln's Pathfinder training programme and since found employment: *"Your help has paid off. Now I can confirm that I have a job offer from the University of Buckingham at the position of Lecturer in Accounting & Finance to commence on Monday 1st October 2007. I am so glad I attended the workshop at University of Lincoln, had a chance to meet you in person and gain that confidence to go out, compete and secure the job I loved the most to under a very rigorous environment. CARA must be pleased to know the positive outcome of that workshop."*

Lincoln had since set up a 3-year PhD bursary as a result of their Pathfinder work and made an offer to an Iraqi academic still in Iraq to start in 2007. Another example of the impact of the various Pathfinder schemes was that of an Iraqi academic who had been offered an LSE fellowship on the understanding that she needed to first undertake an English for Academic Purposes course. Following discussion, UCL has offered to include her on their EAP course as part of their Pathfinder programme, ensuring that she will be able to fulfil that condition.

What was evident was that there really was enormous good will within the academic fraternity and individual academics.

➤ *University Commitment: a Central Factor in Sustainability*

The importance of institutionalising the Pathfinder schemes, to ensure they were fully owned by their respective universities and embedded in university policy and practice, with concomitant funding, had also been raised. This had been central to Nottingham's approach to its Pathfinder hosting scheme, albeit driven by the Human Rights Law Centre, and would be crucial to ensuring delivery of their longer-term programme to host a small number of academics at risk each year.

It had been a requirement of all applications for a pathfinder grant that they be signed off by a senior member of the university's management team and the grants were themselves clearly presented as institutional grants, again to ensure a level of central ownership from the outset. This had also been reflected by the number of Pathfinder universities that had committed university funds to supplement their Pathfinder awards. King's College's own experience supported the importance of ownership at senior level, as the loss of Professor Vaughan Robinson due to sudden and severe illness in the early stages of the implementation process had clearly undermined the projects momentum and compromised delivery within the allotted timeframe.

It was, however, also evident that ownership from below was an equally important factor to successful delivery, particularly in relation to mentoring and shadowing elements, the provision of lecturing and research opportunities and course placements. CARA's own work in trying to secure placements for Iraqi academics stranded in the Middle East region or who remained at daily risk in Iraq, had tapped into this stream of goodwill amongst individual academics and departments receiving offers of honorary research posts or post-graduate opportunity, with associated bench and course fees being waved.

PM SESSION: Chaired by Professor Peter Smith,
Chair of Equality & Diversity, University of Sunderland

Item 4. Chair's Welcome

Professor Smith welcomed everyone back to the table for the start of the afternoon's session. Apologies had been received from Professor Simons, who had led the University of Lincoln Pathfinder programme and had been prevented from reaching London due to severe floods in the region.

Item 5. Sharing Experiences & Issues Arising

Presentations are summarised below with full versions attached as appendices, where made available in electronic format.

5.i. Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU)

a. Ruth Whittaker,

Appendix 6

Maggie Lennon apologised on behalf of Ruth Whittaker, Project Director of GCU's Pathfinder programme, who was unable to join the day's event. She had, however, submitted a written

report on GCU's Pathfinder programme, attached as *Appendix 6*, and summarised in italics below. She was very happy to be contacted should anyone wish to discuss GCU's Pathfinder programme in greater detail.

GCU's Pathfinder programme had been coordinated through the Caledonian Academy, in partnership with the Bridges Programme and Anniesland College. The aim of the pilot had been to develop a Recognition of Prior informal Learning (RPL) profiling, guidance and work experience model to support refugee and threatened academics in gaining employment within the HE sector. The scheme sought to introduce participants to the Scottish HE system, assess formal and informal learning; help develop confidence and self-esteem; assist with English language problems; and, provide careers advice and practical experience of the workplace in the UK. With participants benefiting from the development of a personal professional profile in the context of the HE Academic Professional Standards Framework and the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework and a development plan to meet their career goals.

The three refugee academics who helped to pilot the scheme were identified through the Bridges Programme. Despite extensive liaison with the wider refugee community, only one other candidate had been identified, who in the end had been unable to participate due to other commitments. Two CARA grantees based in Glasgow had not been identified through this initial process, raising the question of how best to locate the client group.

A minimum IELTS score of 5.5 had been set as a requirement for participation which all participants met. Anniesland College provided the IELTS benchmarking with the provision of English language courses had any participant fallen below the minimum requirement. As part of an initial orientation, participants were given temporary IDs and GCU email accounts, allowing access to library resources and online information.

The Bridges Programme managed the work-shadowing, peer support element and the University's Centre for Research in Lifelong Learning (CRLL) was involved in the development and implementation of Glasgow's pathfinder model. Participants worked with at least two mentors from their subject area, to help broaden the range of experience from which they could draw and to spread the mentoring 'burden'.

Although staff from across the University had expressed a great deal of interest in this project, Glasgow also identified the importance of senior management support in identifying mentors.

Anticipated collaboration with other pathfinder universities had been disappointing, but thought to be the result not having identified/agreed areas for collaboration at the planning stage.

The next steps were: analysis of feedback from participating staff and partners; evaluation of the pilot by the project steering group; submission of the final report; and production of a Professional Development Programme Resource Pack.

b. Maggie Lennon, Director, Bridges Programmes (Pilot Collaborator)

Appendix 7

Glasgow, like Wolverhampton, was a NASS dispersal area and an area of considerable social deprivation. The Bridges Programmes have been working with refugees for approximately 6 years, dealing not just with unemployment but the underemployment of refugees, a cause of significant tension. The core of their work was work shadowing and work experience, to reintroduce clients who had been out the workplace for prolonged periods as a result of the UK's asylum system, to their skills.

Confidence and self-esteem have been mentioned a lot today. They are quickly eroded when you have been out of the workplace for so long, a reality clearly illustrated by the story of the ESOL teacher involved in Sunderland's programme who, just grateful to be given the opportunity to work again, was embarrassed by her pay. Cultural differences require individuals to learn how the workplace functions and to understand UK recruitment and interview processes, practices and

skills. The workplace was also essential to the acquisition of practical English language, which colleges say would take someone only learning English in the context of an ESOL course 17 years to achieve a sustainable level.

The Bridges Programmes was very keen to work with a range of organisations involved in re-skilling or up-skilling and recognised the match between the Pathfinder programme and its own goals and practices, with the additional benefit of the introduction of a formal recognition process of individuals' skills, providing a more holistic, rounded approach.

We had no problem getting buy-in at senior level, but the down side was that the commitment to engage was then fed down from VC to heads of schools and on to heads of department, so that by the time it had worked its way down to the lecturer level they were essentially being told that they had to engage. It could take up to three months to really bring on a mentor and get them to understand the importance of the mentoring role and develop commitment, but with the top down approach and limited time, there was not always a total buy in so that not all the experiences were as effective as that of Dr Al-Jabouri. So there are important lessons to be learned there. Someone talked about coming in under the radar and in our experience that is what you have to do, working bottom up. If CEO's buy in to an initiative because it could be include in their annual report and gain them some kudos, that is terrific, but if you are unable to convince those charged with its delivery of its importance, then it will fail.

The issue of fear in the University community about job security is real, but in this instance there was simply not enough time to develop the role with the individual mentors. I kept saying that I needed to get face to face with the individual mentors as early as possible.

We went through all the refugee organisations in the area asking for refugee academics, but nobody else came forward, and even though CARA notified us of a further two in the city they had just not come up on anyone's radar. Very difficult to know where that constituency is. A lot of assumptions were made. Three years ago we had lots and lots of engineers but we have very few now. Knowing your constituent is extremely important, so that the research that has been undertaken as part of the various Pathfinder schemes is very very necessary to understanding who your refugees are and where to find your refugee academics.

We hope to continue working with CARA in the future, either through European funding or through the new Sunrise project, the Home Office's official refugee training programme being rolled out across Britain, in which I believe there is a role for universities to play.

The Bridges Programmes was now looking to work with other agencies, working sectorally. It was in the process of developing a project for engineers and construction workers, looking to draw from the experience of the academic community and its own collaboration on GCU's Pathfinder programme, from which it had learned a great deal.

c. Dr Hatham Al-Jabouri (Pilot Participant)

Appendix 8

I am an Iraqi academic who gained my PhD at King's College, London. I have been a member of teaching faculties and Chair of Pharmacology at medical colleges in Iraq, the Yemen and Jordan. My husband and I planned to return to Iraq in 2003 following a visit to our sons who live in Scotland, however, events in Iraq meant that we never left Scotland, since then I have been unable to put my scientific knowledge to any use.

I learned of the Pathfinder project through the Bridges Programme who I had approached for help in finding work.

Mentoring I was paired with Professor Allen MacDonald of the Department of Biology & Biomedical Science. He was briefed by Maggie Lennon before we all met to finalise details of my shadowing of large and small group teaching, assessments and research supervision. Through this experience I gained an understanding of different teaching styles across a broad student cohort – including under and post-graduates – across two separate modules. I was also

introduced to assessment and marking systems, computer simulation and curriculum design and my involvement in department activities 5 days a week enabled me to gain a full understanding of PhD and MSc projects.

Professional Development This element of the Pathfinder programme ran in parallel over a period of 4 weeks and involved 7 workshops during which we discussed our past professional experiences and were introduced to the Scottish HE teaching framework.

Additional Benefits We were issued with staff ID cards, introduced to the University's Saltire Centre (the library resource centre), with full borrowing rights, and with GGU email accounts for the duration of the project.

Evaluation This project exceeded my expectations, not just as an introduction to the Scottish HE system, but as an opportunity to update my own subject knowledge. I would like to see this project extended to cover a full academic year. Professor Ian Willkie, Head of Department, has agreed to my joining the department as a volunteer in 2007-08.

5.ii. King's College London, Terry Jones

Appendix 9

King's College's Pathfinder vision had been that of its champion Professor Vaughan Robinson, a Professor of Refugee Studies who had recently been appointed as Director of King's Graduate School. Professor Robinson saw the CARA/SAR Pathfinder grant scheme as an extremely important initiative in which King's should be actively involved.

He (Terry) had been brought into the project to help develop ideas, which were not dissimilar to those already presented and discussed today. Like others, they had seen the labour market as a major issue and peer mentoring as central to King's scheme, bringing with it a considerable number of benefits, including those linked to employment. We believed that, if we could create a network of mentors and would-be mentors within the college, we would be building a sustainable resource within the faculty, which would enable us to engage with a large number of academic refugees over an indefinite period. The question of sustainability had been important from the outset.

CARA introduced us to 5 refugee academics. Initial discussion with them challenged several of our fundamental assumptions, including the expectation that we would be dealing with younger and more junior academics who were relatively new to the country. Those we met were relatively senior academics in their fields and, all but one, had been in the UK for a number of years. Another unforeseen factor, given the profiles of our pilot participants, was that they were all professionals – two dentists, a psychiatrist, a lawyer and a doctor – involving discussion with their professional bodies in the UK.

Dr Mahdi Alobedy, an Iraqi psychiatrist and renowned scholar, with a considerable network of contacts both in the UK and beyond, challenged our assumption that mentoring was the appropriate approach for all and led us to consider alternate approaches. He was interested in pursuing a King's MSc in Child Psychiatry or a clinical attachment to help enhance and/or maintain his clinical skills, whilst awaiting consideration of his asylum claim.

The possibility of a place on a King's course immediately raised the question of tuition fees, not just the asylum seeker 'overseas versus home tuition fees' point discussed earlier, but whether fees in such cases could and should be waived. The point was raised by Professor Robinson for discussion at senior management level, but he fell suddenly and seriously ill in late 2006, and has yet to return to work. Although I have tried to sustain the programme in his absence, without his input to drive and champion it, the programme stalled.

Today has been very good for me. It has shown me what terrific work is going on elsewhere. Although I have been waiting for our champion to return, today's discussion has shown me that I

should not wait and given me strength to raise the delivery of the programme directly with King's Principal and our senior management committee.

In terms of lessons learned, there were a number of things that we got wrong. Although King's does not have good community links, or units with a community coordination remit, it does have strong networks of scholars and researchers, and it was these that we intended to pull on. We assumed, however, that a few emails would deliver queues of King's academics who understood the importance of the programme and of the contribution they could make to it. The reality had been a few expressions of interest, which, when followed up, came to nothing.

There needed to be a much bigger investment in raising awareness and understanding of the programme and the problems it was seeking to address, in order to develop cross university buy-in. Discussion today had led me to believe that adopting a two-pronged complementary 'top-down/bottom-up' approach would be important. In pursuing the former, we have a chance of releasing central funds. In pursuing the latter, we gain the buy-in of those who would deliver the mentoring programme with the necessary level of commitment.

A critical future task for King's, who despite the problems encountered remains committed to the Pathfinder programme, will be to develop a training programme for mentors. What I have heard today suggests that my own knowledge and expertise needs to be enhanced by those who have a deeper knowledge of the challenges and difficulties facing refugee academics. Increasing understanding of the plight of refugee academics will also be important to alleviating irrational fears, which can be a significant factor in preventing prospective mentors from stepping forward.

An important question will be to consider whether there should be a formal contract between the mentee and mentor, to help underline the professional nature of the relationship and establish boundaries. We will also need to bring other seniors on board to avoid the pitfalls of a single champion, and to secure longer term funding.

It has been shocking to discover that, despite Dr al-Delaimi being a Visiting Research Associate in our Engineering Department, his situation was entirely unknown to me, even though, in my role as King's College's Deputy Head of Careers, I should be able to respond to several of the concerns he has raised today. What did he say? "I have now lost my way".

Mentoring refugee academics and introducing them to academic networks is clearly important, but equally important is the task of introducing them to employment Networks. I have spoken to UCL today seeking their assistance and believe it will be important to maintain a dialogue of mutual support and collaboration amongst Pathfinder universities.

5.iii. Leeds Metropolitan University, Ting Chen

Appendix 10

Ting Chen extended apologies on behalf of Dr Max Farrar who had been responsible for the development of Leeds Met's Pathfinder proposal, but was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting. It was he who had brought him (Ting) on board. As International Student Support Coordinator at Leeds Met, the Pathfinder scheme echoed both his area of work and his interests and he was given considerable freedom in the implementation of the project.

The key objectives of Leeds Met's Pathfinder project were to identify and collate existing information on support services for refugee academics provided by universities and FE colleges in the Yorkshire and Humber region; survey these services; explore the development a Regional Support Network for Refugee Academics; and, to develop relevant information and web-based training materials from findings. The intention was to involve 10 of the 16 FE providers that made up the Leeds Met Regional University Network (6 excluded due to geographical location) and the 14 HE providers (including Leeds Met) that make up the Yorkshire Universities group, a total of 24 HE and FE providers. The information and training outputs would provide additional resources for the 24 HE and FE institutions involved, as well as local/regional NGOs, CBOs and refugee academics themselves.

Like others this morning, we found that several of our initial assumptions were challenged during the implementation process. We found little, if any, information available on the universities' or colleges' websites to reveal the existence of specific support services for refugee academics. Available information focused primarily on how to determine fee status.

What was also disappointing was the lack of response or engagement from the regional universities and colleges, approached as part of the survey or to discuss the development of a regional support network. They were approached directly, as well as through both the Leeds Met Regional University Network and the Yorkshire Universities offices. This lack of engagement may not reflect an inherent lack of interest in supporting refugee academics, but rather a lack of understanding as to the particular difficulties faced by this distinct group of refugees. It also reflects the difficulty of identifying the critical contact within each institution most able to champion and drive the Pathfinder initiative internally.

The survey elicited responses from two colleges and two universities, with additional responses from 5 researchers from 3 other universities. Although no university support services for academic refugees were revealed by the web searches, they did reveal 3 other refugee-related projects being run by universities, as well as information on external refugee support projects in the region, amongst which the 'Refugee Job Placement Project: Breaking Down the Barriers to Employment in West Yorkshire' and 'Back to Work'.

A series of semi-structured interviews were undertaken with CARA grantees from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Iraq and Somalia, but who were now based in the region. The purpose of the interviews was to try to better understand possible barriers to the provision of such internal support and from which the following possibilities emerged: i. a perception that such needs were sufficiently served via existing local services; ii. a perception that these were deemed to be specialist services more appropriately provided by professionals within the community; iii. a lack of profile of refugee academics; iv. a lack of financial resources where the need was recognised; v. a lack of understanding as to the nature and particular difficulties facing academic refugees, with a concomitant lack of understanding of the Pathfinder project objectives; vi. differing values, priorities, levels of understanding and strategies across the 24 regional institutions.

The following adjustments were made to help maximise the impact of Leeds Pathfinder project on the region: i. it was agreed with CARA that the information collected and collated for the project should expand to encompass support services for the full spectrum of refugees seeking entry into HE, FE, or employment; ii. as noted above, we drew on CARA supported scholars (6 in total based in the region) who helped to increase our understanding of the challenges they faced, their aspirations, and their needs by sharing their own experiences of trying to reenter the world of academe and rebuild careers; iii. we needed to engage with regional NGOs and RCOs to capture relations with the regional HEIs and FEIs.

A couple of suggestions: firstly the need for an in-depth survey into and analysis of the experiences of refugee academics to establish which type of support services had been of greatest use to them, and to explore commonalities and differences; secondly, that the CARA/SAR UK Universities Network facilitate grants to enable collaborations between universities on these issues.

It has personally been a privilege to meet these academics. To accommodate the difficulties of their lives, I traveled to them with an hour snatched for our discussion at a train station café or similar.

What was most encouraging about those meetings was their response to my question "So what would you do differently if you had had the knowledge then that you have now?" Each wished that they had had the information at the beginning of their journey, to help them understand and plan, and to shorten the time it had taken them to get where they were now, and they also wished they had had someone to help guide them through that journey.

My plea would be that we continue the Pathfinder work, to make sure that the information and support is available at the beginning of their journeys. Maybe those that have already made that journey could be part of the support network, becoming mentors themselves.

5.iii. University College London, Claire Goudy and Brigitte Picot

Appendix 11

a. Clare Goudy

UCL was founded in London in 1826 as a research-based university. It had always prided itself on its commitment to social justice, the primary reason for its involvement in the Pathfinder project. The project had allowed UCL to think through how it might offer its exceptional academic services to the academic refugee community.

We have already learned a considerable amount as a result of the Pathfinder process, and were also guilty of making assumptions that we have since realised did not reflect realities. We assumed that the best tool to enable us to reach our target audience would be a dedicated web portal but, in doing so, we would effectively have been saying to the wider academic community “they are different”, reinforcing barriers and prejudice. This realisation has led us to question how best to disseminate information relating to the programme. For the time being, we have fallen back on to general web pages about CARA and UCL’s involvement in the Pathfinder programme, but developing appropriate ways in which to reach out to those refugee academics who benefit from what we have called our ‘Transitions’ Programme remains under discussion.

Responsibility for delivery of UCL’s Pathfinder programme sat with my colleague Brigitte Picot, Director of UCL’s Centre for Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT).

b. Brigitte Picot

The important thing for us has been that support and ownership for the Pathfinder initiative within UCL has come from the top, from Professor Michael Worton, Vice Provost (International & Academic).

How do we describe our involvement in the Pathfinder project? In line with Prof Lyon’s perception of the HE sector, we too see ourselves as compassionate people with specific skills that we can offer to others. Like Bernadette Rimmer, the label ‘refugee academic’ is not necessarily one I find helpful, but I am interested in use of the expression ‘displaced scholars’.

The importance of one-to-one mentoring is undeniable, but I would emphasise the importance of a holistic approach and the two-way nature of the process. What has struck me most as a result of my engagement with this project is how much we still have to learn.

It is by no means a project about them and us, a project for which we have all the answers. This is also by no means a one-size fits all, but, rather, a collaboration between ourselves and displaced scholars. We have adopted an action-learning philosophy to underpin our work and to help us develop a framework together, which is tailored to meeting their individual needs.

UCL’s Pathfinder project has brought together three UCL departments, UCL’s Language Centre, its Learning Technology Support Service and CALT, allowing us to provide access to their services and activities free of charge. However, our main interest has been to ensure that our programme can be tailored to meet individual needs, so that we don’t have to say we can provide any colour as long as its black.

We adopted a simple methodology, an initial one-to-one interview with myself, leading to an informal agreement about a course of action. The range and variety of needs expressed has surprised us and we need to identify ways in which to respond to that diversity of need, amongst which the central challenge of how best to integrate displaced scholars into a professional community of practice. We will need to establish networking opportunities, pull on our research

strengths and research staff, but also look beyond the university to engagement with professional associations, supporting registration with the relevant professional association, something we shall pursue with Dr Hatem al-Delaimi, one of UCL's pilot participants.

We aim to provide specialist one-to-one consultancy to prepare individuals by helping the development of job application and interview skills, an area for which we have engaged a professional radio reporter. We had intended to discuss Lincoln's Pathfinder course with Professor Simon's today, a three day intensive course focusing on those core skills.

The refugee academics piloting UCL's scheme have also been given access to university facilities such as the library for research purposes, internet access and access to printing and photocopying facilities, these last so obvious and yet essential and so easy for us to provide. We are looking to develop and help implement career development plans, which in at least one instance will involve us with not-for-profit organisations in London, who we will target, as appropriate, for internship and employment opportunities.

Although it could be said that displaced scholars are able to do this independently, the moral support and motivation gained from working with a team makes it easier and more likely to succeed and sits at the heart of the action-learning process.

Afternoon Session Discussion: Key points arising

Professor Peter Smith thanked everyone and invited participants to discuss any new points or issues arising from the afternoon's presentations.

➤ *Increasing Understanding: Disseminating Pathfinder Universities' Experiences*

A considerable number of those presenting today have held their hands up to the fact that their original plans were underpinned by misguided assumptions, assumptions that were challenged and revisited as a result of their early research and consultation work, their increased understanding of the Pathfinder scheme's core constituents, the nature of their support needs, and the best strategies to adopt in response to those needs.

Three of the most common 'false' assumptions appeared to have been:

- i. An underestimation of the seniority of many refugee and at risk academics. Although refugee academics may have little understanding or knowledge of the UK academic sector, poor English language skills, a lack job application and interview skills within the UK context, and complex lives with few support mechanisms, in their countries of origin some were distinguished academics in their fields.
- ii. That refugee academics formed a relatively homogenous group. Their origins and 'journeys' are very different and their stories and needs complex and individual, so that incorporating flexibility into Pathfinder programmes to be able customise and deliver according to individual needs, will be central to successful outcomes.
- iii. That refugee academics would be easy to identify and reach out to. The UK government has no statistics on refugee academics and its dispersal policy scatters asylum seekers across the UK pending decisions on their claims. By the time they have achieved some form of refugee status they have often been settled in an area for over 3 years, with children in local schools etc, but little consideration as to the appropriateness of the location relative to rebuilding careers.

The questioning of initial assumptions and resulting adjustments to several Pathfinder schemes, may well have been a factor as to why some refugee academics did not recognise the relevance nor the benefits to them of engaging.

There was clearly a major task of work to be done in rolling out participants' new knowledge and understanding across the higher education and further education sectors. Peer pressure would also be an important factor in bringing others on board. Pathfinder universities shared this responsibility, and if the Sigrid Rausing Trust were to support a further round of Pathfinder grants, sharing your and your universities' first round experiences and new found knowledge with those who followed would be essential to moving the Pathfinder work forward.

➤ *University Placements for Academics at Risk: CARA's experience with Iraqi academics*

CARA has had some success in finding placements for Iraqi academics who were either stranded in the Middle East region having fled Iraq or who remain in Iraq. The priority, however, had not been to get these academics at risk into salaried employment, but rather to help them out of their current predicaments as quickly as possible.

Most were pursuing the Sponsored Researcher route or, in the case of more junior academics, PhD opportunities, with hosting universities waving associated fees in both cases.

Wolverhampton University has been one of the few universities to deliver funding for a salaried post and, although others have been willing to investigate the raising of university funds to cover stipends and/or honorariums, as Nottingham's Pathfinder work has highlighted, securing a commitment from central university funding takes time. In most cases, the waving of fees has been supplemented by CARA fellowship awards, the equivalent of a stipend or honorarium.

There were considerable complexities associated with the UK immigration and asylum system, and although the Sponsored Researcher route did not necessarily provide long-term solutions, or permission to work outside the particular area of research specified in the application, unlike the Academic Visitor visa, it did allow for considerable time extensions. The initial 12-month permit also allowed exploration of internal university funding to support such extensions.

A few had come to the UK under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP), but recent changes in HSMP criteria have limited this option to those whose earnings meet or exceed a specified sum within the preceding 12 months, excluding the majority of those who had fled their posts pre-2006. It was also a considerably longer and more complicated process, with the current failure rate standing at 60%. Although it provided the right to work, it did not guarantee the ability to find work and several Iraqis in the UK under the HSMP scheme had been forced to turn to CARA for support through its hardship funding.

What was clear, however, was that in the case of Iraqi academics short-term placements, such as those offered under UNESCO's 3-month Iraqi fellowship scheme, were simply inadequate to meet the needs of individuals looking for, at the very least, one year's refuge. These were not individuals who wished to claim asylum, although some have been forced to do so for lack of alternatives. It was also important to note that of those who had approached CARA for help in seeking placements in the UK, almost all had existing connections with the UK, having studied here or with relatives living here.

The added benefit to those for whom CARA had found PhD placements was that regulations in England provided them with the right to work for a year following successful completion of studies, which also assisted entry clearance to the UK since the criteria of 'intention to leave', the basis on which so many were being refused entry at the moment, was superseded by the right to work. Scotland's equivalent scheme 'Fresh Talent' extended that right to two years, providing those coming to do PhDs with a possible 5 years refuge. Most of those being assisted already held PhD, gained for the most part in the UK.

➤ *Refugee Academics: Career Options in a Tight Academic Market*

Clarification was sought with regard to CARA's two grant streams. The first, CARA's core grant scheme, aimed to fund re-qualification and/or enhanced qualification for refugee academics

seeking to rebuild careers primarily, but not necessarily, in the UK. For the purpose of this grant, 'academic' was defined as someone who had held a paid post as a lecturer and/or researcher in a higher education or research institution and 'refugee' was defined as someone who had obtained a form of legal UK refugee status, giving them the right to work in the UK. The purpose of the core grant programme was to enhance job prospects by ensuring that individuals were suitably qualified to be able to re-enter the job market at a level commensurate with their level of expertise.

However, although eligibility for a core CARA grant required applicants to have been academics, their future career goals were by no means restricted to the world of academe. The very tight nature of the academic job market, highlighted by several today, often made pursuing a professional career in a looser job market place a more realistic goal. As noted by Trevor Jones, nearly all of King's College's Pathfinder participants were seeking to rebuild their careers as professionals rather than academics. The academic lawyer was re-qualifying as a professional lawyer and working part-time, and the medic was doing the F1 scheme, which, although a step back in terms of his old academic position, would provide him with an entry point to pursue a clinical career.

CARA's second grant scheme, introduced in late 2006 in support of Iraqi academics at risk, waved the need for refugee status and enabled CARA to extend its support outside the UK, a return to its 1930s origins when the rescue of academics at risk and the brokering of suitable university placements to enable them to continue their work, was the driving force.

Pathfinder programmes clearly needed to be able to respond to those seeking to rebuild careers within the professions as well as those seeking to continue academic careers. Spelling out flexibility in relation to occupational choice would be critical to ensuring relevance, take up, and successful outcomes of Pathfinder programmes.

➤ *Mentoring Incentives*

Dr al-Jabouri confirmed that mentoring had been central to her positive experience, a view echoed by all those who had incorporated mentoring as a core element of their Pathfinder programmes. The question of staff development/training as an essential element to establishing those schemes had also been raised by several presenters and Maggie Lennon's 'preparation' of Dr al-Jabouri's mentor before they met had clearly been extremely important to the success of the process.

Maggie Lennon planned to lobby Scottish universities to help develop a network of mentors across Scotland as the wider the net of experience the better. Currently, however, there was no formal recognition of opportunity costs or incentives for mentors, financial or other, despite the evident need to invest in those who volunteered as mentors, not only to help build a standing resource but to ensure the quality of that resource.

Pathfinder universities needed to raise the possibility of a formal time allowance being built in as part of the mentor's standard duty, to avoid reliance on the good will of department head, or the willingness of the individual to commit their spare time. Currently the time commitment involved in mentoring simply increased pressures in an already pressured environment and was a major barrier to individuals volunteering. If the institutions benefited from such schemes through their inclusion in annual reports, then formal recognition for those who currently contributed to their delivery also needed to be acknowledged.

Participants were encouraged to raise the question of formal recognition and time allowance for staff members who took on a mentoring role.

In addition to universities developing clear mentoring guidelines, there needed to be a push to influence the National Agenda on such issues, an area that CARA and the Network Board would investigate further.

➤ *Providing Access to Basic University Facilities: Overcoming Red Tape*

UCL had highlighted some of the simplest ways in which refugee academics might be supported such as access to photocopiers and printers, library borrowing rights etc. but several of those charged with implementing Pathfinder schemes encountered a very real hurdle in their attempts to provide those piloting the schemes with the most basic university access rights, in what are now highly security conscious and regulated institutions. This would be an important lesson to pass on to future Pathfinder universities and again an important reason to ensure the support for programme at the very top, to help cut through institutional red tape, which also impacted on the speed with which some of those recruited to run the projects were able to take up their posts.

➤ *CARA's Support Role*

Supporting Pathfinder universities' collaboration and information sharing

There was general consensus that additional Pathfinder workshops would be welcome and a proposal that Pathfinder universities might take turns in hosting them. It was also proposed that participants seek to develop regional collaborations.

CARA agreed to establish a dedicated Pathfinder university listserv, although warned that it would not have the capacity to moderate a group mailing list other than to add or remove names from the list. CARA was also in the process of developing its website to enable more interactive engagement by CARA/SAR UK Universities Network members, such as the publicising of Pathfinder projects and related or relevant activities/developments.

A Database of Refugee Academics

It was proposed that CARA develop a database of academics refugees. CARA already had a database of CARA grantees, which it was in the process of expanding and updating for its own purposes, and which would also serve to pair refugee academics in need of mentoring or other support with Pathfinder universities.

The Pathfinder programmes had already in less than a year developed a substantial resource with a wide regional spread

Definitions of UK Status

It was agreed that there was insufficient understanding as to the various UK refugee, asylum and immigration statuses and the implications for those wishing to study and/or work in the UK. CARA undertook to produce an information sheet clarifying relevant statuses and the implication of those statuses (affecting both refugee and at risk academics) in the context of study and/or work in the UK. It would also include factors that universities might need to be aware of or have to take account of in relation to dependents. However, it would be a snapshot in time given the ever changing nature of UK asylum and immigration regulations.

CARA would of course be able to notify participants through the listserv of any changes that it became aware of, but this would not be foolproof. CARA's website provided some extremely useful links to refugee organisations, such as the Refugee Council and Refugee Action whose remit it was to remain abreast of such changing legislation.

Item 6. AOB

Second Round Applicants

There were several universities that had expressed interest in applying for a second round grant, should these be forthcoming. Dr Christien van den Anker expressed her thanks to CARA for the opportunity to attend the workshop. They had learned a considerable amount and would be taking away a number of new ideas for consideration by the University of West England (UWE). She also confirmed UWE's intention to apply for a Pathfinder grant should The Sigrid Rausing Trust confirm its support for a second round.

Extending the Final Report Deadline

Kate Robertson would get back to them to confirm whether this would be possible, since their final reports fed into CARA's final report to the Sigrid Rausing Trust.

CARA/SAR UK Universities Network

CARA's Executive Secretary thanked participants for their extremely useful and interesting contributions to the day. These had helped to highlight a considerable number of issues for CARA in terms of developing the Pathfinder work and the broader work of the CARA/SAR UK Universities Network.

Participants were invited to help raise awareness of the Network and its aims across their universities and CARA would be happy to assist in their efforts to embed the Pathfinder work into institutional policy and practice across the university in whichever way was deemed helpful.

This had been an extremely productive meeting.

The Chair also extended his thanks.