

Student Engagement and Quality

*Getting students to contribute in a way
that really makes a difference.*

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Workshop plan: 15.10 – 16.00

- What do we mean by student engagement?
- Why do we do it?
- What makes it work?
- Debate and discussion





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Some disclaimers

- Most examples come from Higher Education
- No detailed knowledge of Ofsted requirements
- Broad principles
- Ask questions throughout



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Student engagement in HE

**What does it mean to
you?
(1 min)**



Student engagement in HE

What does it mean?

The dictionary is not much help....

- Student = someone who studies
- Engagement = the act of engaging
- Engaging = charming or attractive!

Within Higher Education

- An increasingly popular term...a buzz word?
- Learning theory: 'time spent on educationally purposive activity'
- Often used differently in different places – can encompass a wide variety of things....car parking!?



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Why are people talking about it?

- Students moving from publically funded learners to customers – in both AHE and HE
- Colleges/Unis competing for a larger pool students
- Reaction to purely market driven philosophies e.g. NUS Manifesto for Partnership
- Governments desire for more and better public information and improved 'choice' for students
- Positive experience of engaging students in institutions and national agencies in Scotland/Europe
- Ofsted focus on learner voice/learner views e.g. Survey for learner groups



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Hang on though, what do you really mean?

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVrRIAFH_3U
- Students having a meaningful voice and influence over their own education ranging from:
Curriculum, course design, structure, assessment methods, decision making, quality assurance and enhancement
- But also sometimes beyond this to governance, college policies, student union campaigns etc.

“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.”

Benjamin Franklin



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“Higher education providers take **deliberate steps to engage all students**, individually and collectively, as partners in the **assurance and enhancement** of their educational experience.”

UK Quality Code Chapter B5 Expectation



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OK so why do we do it?

- ✓ A more involved learner is a more motivated, successful and satisfied learner
- ✓ Students are experts on their own educational experience
- ✓ How can you be involved in delivering teaching and learning if you don't involve your learners?
- ✓ It leads to better educational outcomes improving retention and progression
- ✓ It can help manage expectations = A more satisfied student body
- ✓ Student engagement can be seen as the old fashioned model of university education – a community of learning based on common endeavour



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Smiley happy students!





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So how do we feel about it?

Exercise



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What makes it work?

- See it as a rolling process of involving your students in quality assurance and enhancement – not just a confirmatory process
- Use structures that already exist e.g. Student Unions/Reps. What support can you/college offer?
- Speak in terms students understand & make engagement easy/the done thing
- Close the feedback loop-even if it seems silly doing so
- Apply these key principles:

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- HE Providers with their student body define and promote opportunities for any student to engage in educational enhancement and quality assurance
- HE Providers create and maintain an environment within which students and staff engage in discussions that aim to bring about enhancement
- Arrangements exist for the effective representation of the collective student voice at all organisational level, and these provide opportunities for all students to be heard
- HE Providers ensure that reps and staff have access to training and ongoing support
- Students and staff engage in evidence-based discussions based on mutual sharing of information
- Staff and students disseminate and jointly recognise enhancements made
- Effectiveness is monitored and reviewed at least annually

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A translation:

- Make sure all students are encouraged to get involved – tell them how!
- Make it easy for them – and not a one-off – part of what is the norm/culture
- Have effective representative systems in place
- Train and support your reps and the people that support the reps!
- Always use evidence and make sure its shared
- Tell people what has happened as a result and recognise achievements
- Check it is working – review regularly



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