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Engaging Students as Change Agents
Workshop at University of Brighton Learning and Teaching Conference
14 July 2017

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Structure of presentation

A. The nature of students as change agents
B. Case studies II:
  i. Engaging students as pedagogical consultants, ambassadors and evaluators
  ii. Engaging students as co-designers of curriculum
  iii. Engaging students as teachers, assessors and mentors
  iv. Engaging students as SoTL practitioners
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C. Action planning

Case Studies

The following case studies of students as change agents further illustrate students as partners in quality enhancement. They are classified under five headings and many could fit under more than one heading. They are a selection of a much larger set on our website.

1. Engaging students as pedagogical consultants, ambassadors and evaluators

1.4 Students co-led a research project on inclusive practice and ran an appreciative inquiry faculty development session at University of Worcester, UK

A team of three academics and three students led a collaborative project using appreciative inquiry (AI) on what constitutes good inclusive practice in the Institute of Education (University of Worcester). The students collected data on the positive things about the experiences of the Institute from both year cohorts and disabled students, analysed it and presented it at a staff development day. The impact on staff has been particularly powerful because students collected and presented the findings and because AI is a strengths-based approach. Feedback from staff was overwhelmingly positive. For example, they reported AI was a motivator to further develop their strengths and to develop an appreciative tone in meetings. Experience over several projects at Worcester using AI is that there is particular power in hearing students report participatory research which conveys appreciation of work undertaken by academic staff. So far this seems to be a win, win, win situation; with students gaining from their experiences of researching and presenting their findings, educational developers achieving greater staff engagement, and, academic staff feeling empowered to drive their practice forward.

Further information: Chapman (2011); Snell et al. (2012)

1.7 Students act as Ambassadors for Learning & Teaching (SALT) at University of Sheffield, UK

The Student Ambassadors for Learning & Teaching (SALT) scheme aims to influence, improve and develop how students learn and how they are taught at a departmental, faculty and university level. Information, resources and ideas are shared amongst faculty teams creating an institutional overview of Learning & Teaching development which can have a university-wide impact. One SALT is appointed from every academic department each year. They work in Faculty- or institutional-level teams on projects which address high priority learning and teaching issues. The themes of their projects are determined by the University’s Learning and Teaching Strategy,
but it is up to the students to decide how they want to address the topic. This means that, as a team, they design, plan, organise and deliver their own projects, with support and guidance from academic and professional services staff along the way. The students are paid for 50-80 hrs work during the academic year.

- An academic transitions website for Engineering students with hints, tips and guides for before they come to university, while they’re studying and preparing for after;
- A staff-student symposium for Social Sciences, where students and staff came together to debate issues such as employability and share learning & teaching good practice;
- Peer-to-peer advice sessions for Science students, giving information on module choice, research placements and post-graduate study.

_Further information: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/lets/student/salt](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/lets/student/salt)_

### 1.9 Students engaged in evaluating the curriculum at the University of Sydney, Australia

In 2012, in a postgraduate unit of study called _Critical Thinking in Business_ with 560 students enrolled, about 70% of the students were from non-English speaking backgrounds and were grappling with the language and with the concept of critical thinking. Professor Carson drew on her background in deliberative democracy to create an opportunity for the students to give feedback on the unit, and to model a different way to collectively decide in large groups. Building on a summary of mid-semester student feedback, a World Café was conducted in each of the 20 tutorial groups. Students engaged in an iterative conversation about what they wanted to change about the unit of study, both in the current semester and the next one. At the end of the tutorial, students were asked to reach agreement about the two most effective suggestions: one for this semester, one for next semester. A representative from each tutorial group then attended a meeting where the students created a final list of suggested changes. After an hour, the unit coordinator came into the meeting, with the guarantee that she would implement whatever changes the group proposed (with the proviso that the changes needed to be consistent with the university’s policies). The unit coordinator heard what the students wanted, asked a few questions and the students offered additional comments. The agreed changes were reported back to all students in tutorials and in the lecture. Students commented about how the World Café helped them to appreciate multiple perspectives, and how the technique could be used as a decision making tool in the workplace. Tutors also commented that the World Café was one of the highlights of the semester.

_Further information: Bell et al. (2013)_

### 1.10 Students work with staff as ePioneers at Oxford Brookes, UK

Institutional Student ePioneer Partnerships (InStePP) seeks to create and institutionally embed a variety of active partnerships with students and, in so doing, develop, implement and exemplify:

- institutional approaches to partnerships as an integral part of digital literacy development in the curriculum and in employability policy and practice;
- digital literacies contextualized for disciplines and for career development; and
- student roles and activities which support the development of staff digital literacies.

It is part of an institutional strategic commitment to engage with students as agents of change in learning and teaching activities to develop and enhance personal and leadership attributes for employability. The project aims to establish the role of ‘e-pioneer’: partnerships at institutional and curriculum levels, in which students share their digital skills, practices, ideas and expectations with staff at the crucial points at which decisions are made which influence the learning experience. e-Pioneers are supported in working towards professional recognition and/or academic credit for their work. Student staff partnerships help to contextualise digital literacies for the disciplines and to turn these into developmental tasks within course designs, thereby enhancing the digital literacies of both groups.

_Further information: [https://wiki.brookes.ac.uk/display/Instepp/Home](http://https://wiki.brookes.ac.uk/display/Instepp/Home); [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning/developingdigitalliteracies/InStePP.aspx](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning/developingdigitalliteracies/InStePP.aspx)_
1.11 Students are engaged as course enhancement officers (CEOs) at Sheffield Hallam University, UK
As part of the institution’s Academic Quality Framework, course design teams have to evidence how students have contributed appropriately to the design of new and existing courses. Students are commonly asked to comment through e.g. module evaluation forms, questionnaires and focus groups, but this is too late for them to have a significant influence the design of the new and revised courses. In 2012-13 a pilot project titled Course Design Consultancy was undertaken to develop a model and put a structure in place for students to engage ‘early on’ as active agents, partnering with staff in the course design and approval process. This was supported by the Higher Education Academy Students as Partners Change Programme.
The initiative has evolved in 2013-2014 and has been renamed as Students as Course Enhancement Officers (CEOs). This was done to emphasise the student work on the reapproval of existing courses rather than on the development of new courses. Eight students have been recruited by Venture Matrix™ (an institutional scheme that works across academic departments allowing opportunities for students to develop their employability and enterprise skills through real life work-related projects that are accredited as part of their degree) as CEOs to act as consultants to Sheffield Business School for a reapproval of over a dozen courses. Following training delivered by the University’s Student Engagement and Experience Team, the CEOs will contact student course representatives and students on the courses to participate in ‘solution-based’ workshops to develop ideas for course improvement and assess their feasibility for improving the course. An output of the workshops is a CEO Report which will include recommendations based on student ideas taken from workshops. Critically the CEOs are independent of the courses seeking approval. The day-to-day management of this scheme entails a placement student working for the University who has had prior experience of being a CEO.
The initiative is currently being rolled out across the institution with the appointment of CEOs, which provide a work-based learning experience that is academic credit bearing via Venture Matrix™. Students can participate in this initiative on a volunteer basis. These students have the unique title as Course Enhancement Liaisons (CELs). They are usually keen course and faculty student representatives.

Further information:
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/change/SAP/case_studies/SAP_case_study_09_SHU_new.pdf;
https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/see/ceo/course-enhancement-for-course-teams/;
https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/see/ceo/course-enhancement-officer/

2. Engaging students as co-designers of curriculum

2.3 Students are full members of department curriculum teams in national initiative in the UK
In 2009 the Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES) Subject Centre piloted a year-long initiative to support four GEES departments plan changes to their curricula. All but one team had one or two student members. The main feature was a 48 hour retreat where teams were supported by discipline-based experts in educational development. Roughly half the time was spent working on their own projects, while the other half was spent working with other teams and in plenary activities encouraging divergent and creative thinking and prioritizing of ideas. Teams that comprise a ‘diagonal slice’ across departments, with faculty, at different levels of seniority and functions, and students, can be very effective in breaking down status and level differences that can impede change. Students are key, providing creativity and new perspectives, and are less bound by departmental contexts. The groups were full of praise of the important contribution they made to their team’s thinking:

“It was essential to our thinking. Having the students with us has been immensely helpful, and frankly they have played as full a part as any other team member and have been just amazing.”
The approach was based on the ‘change academies’ which have been run for several years by the HE Academy where they support institutional teams developing teaching and learning initiatives. Some institutions have run internal academies where departmental teams work on related topics.

Further information: Healey et al., (2010; 2013); Flint and Oakley (2009)
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/change/change_academy
2.6 Students are engaged in co-design of assessments at University of Derby, UK
Following guidance on basic assessment principles, students on a public sector management module at Masters level with 20 participants, largely middle managers, were asked to create, negotiate and agree the module assessment brief and to tailor the standard university marking criteria. They voted on whether they wanted group or individual assessment. They were also involved in some peer-marking and giving feedback to each other. An action research project explored the responses to the intervention, from students and teachers’ perspectives. Findings were thematically analysed and ‘member checked’ with student focus groups. Most of the participants were in favour of being empowered to be involved in choice of the topic for assessment, which appropriately was ‘choice and voice’. The negotiation took about 4 hrs, about 10% of the module, but as the process was closely related to the topic the students were experiencing aspects of the process first hand. This case study illustrates that engaging students in assessment design, increases the level of understanding of assessment principles and processes, and raise their motivation and results. One of the students subsequently won £750K of Arts Council funding using models learned from the programme.

Further information: Dexter and Prince (2007a, b, c); Dexter (2012)

2.13 Engaging students through empowering them to co-create the curriculum at University of Newcastle, UK
Undergraduates studying multiple subjects face particular challenges to establishing a student identity and a sense of belonging. Combined Honours at Newcastle University had the lowest rate of student satisfaction in the University in 2008. To address this issue a holistic approach to student engagement was taken initially by asking the students what their issues were and what they suggested the solutions were in solving these issues. A key issue was the inability of many Combined Honours students to do a dissertation or a project combining their subjects, as the subjects they studied did not allow this. In response, an Independent Studies module was co-designed with student representatives. Assessment on the Independent Studies module follows a path from formative to more summative; with a balance between assessing the output and the process, assessing the latter through a culminating reflective interview. Authenticity in topic and output are encouraged by connection to the professional world beyond HE with wide scope and format choice. Peer assessment was introduced, which the students now appreciate after some initial reluctance. Support for students is delivered through workshops; with the students choosing the topics and supervision, but there are also peer groups where collaboration is encouraged. Subsequently three further modules have been co-created and designed, focused on developing ‘graduateness’. Student engagement is much higher, all round.

Further information: Colin Bryson (colin.bryson@newcastle.ac.uk)

2.23 Designing and developing courses through staff-student partnerships: processes, experiences and engagement, University of Chester, UK
As part of a broader university strategy to increase student engagement, the Geography and International Development Department at the University of Chester offered students the opportunity to work in partnership with staff to co-design four new courses during the academic year 2015-16. Prior to this students elected to take one core 40 credit content course in either human or physical geography at their second year (this equates to approximately 80 hours contact tuition over 20 weeks). Due to a growing student body (from around 55 students in each year group in 2009 to 120 in 2015), increasing competitiveness between different geography courses around the country, and teaching staff changes, the current provisions at second year undergraduate were no longer considered adequate. The decision was made early in 2015 to split these two courses into four 20 credit courses (two in human geography and two in physical geography – students would elect two from these four). This large scale re-design of the undergraduate geography programme enabled students the rare opportunity to participate in the macro-design of their learning. Four undergraduate students were employed through the project to each work for 50 hours over 5 months in one of two teams (one focusing on the two human geography courses, another on the two physical geography courses). The opportunity was advertised through the university’s student job bank to all second and third year undergraduate geography students. Eight students applied for the role. Those whose applications addressed the main eligibility criteria as outlined in the person specification were interviewed and the four candidates who demonstrated an understanding of the position and the potential to contribute most to the post appointed.

Further information: Ruth Healey (r.healey@chester.ac.uk)
3. Engaging students as teachers and assessors

There is overlap with the previous section on co-designing the curriculum. The emphasis here though is students are engaged in developing teaching resources, and directly teaching and assessing other students.

3.1 Programme co-ordinators redesigned the first year geography curriculum in collaboration with students at University College Dublin, Ireland

The programme enrols approximately 400 students each year. The co-ordinators advertised for four third-year students to apply for the job of co-designing the curriculum with existing academic staff. These students were paid to design a new virtual learning environment based around case studies covering important themes for first-year geography, such as migration and the coffee trade. They then produced written, audio and video resources for the virtual learning environment that first-year students could interact with and use to support their learning. These case studies prompted discussion among small groups of students online and in class. The third-year students then collaborated with the programme co-ordinators to identify examples of good student work that could be used as the basis for teaching sessions. In this way, the current students’ work directly influenced and contributed to the curriculum.

Further information: Bovill et al. (2011)

3.4 Medical students act as educational partners in the development of online resources at the University of Bristol, UK

This initiative involves an extension of the SSC (Student Selected Component) programme which students undertake as an open module within the undergraduate medical curriculum. Since 2003, this programme has offered the opportunity to undertake the development of e-learning materials on a clinical topic of their choice as another option within the SSC, with the intention that these are made available to other students within their peer group and those who will follow in later years. Students identify an area of need, based on existing educational resources, their own experience and from research with their peers and tutors. E-learning materials can be in any media or designs, using tools chosen and frequently learnt from scratch by the students. Typically, the e-SSCs will involve 20 to 25 students per year. As part of the assessment for this component, students write a reflective account of the project and the process of development. An analysis of a sample of these reports (25 from 2007/2008) has shown that through this initiative, students develop a range of skills (literature searching, developing a personal inquiry, IT skills, project management, collaborative team working) and different approaches to identifying and resolving problems. The analysis of reflective accounts also showed that ideas about educational theory and design principles were developing over time as one cohort builds upon the experience of those who have gone before.

Further information: Timmis et al. (2010); Williams et al. (2011)

3.14 Students undertake paid internships as agents of change or educational researchers in biosciences at the University of Leeds, UK

The Faculty of Biological Sciences, University of Leeds has recently begun to run two programmes of non-laboratory based internships for first and second year students. The first, badged as “Students as agents of change” is where students work in groups to develop a resource to enhance the curriculum; it can be something they have identified themselves as being needed within their programme or a project initiated by a member of staff. The second scheme is where the intern contributes (individually) to an educational research project. Examples of ongoing projects include podcasting of research seminars for student/staff use; improvements to educational environment; collation and evaluation of Open Educational Resources for teachers/students. Start-up funding for these internships was obtained from the University of Leeds Academic Development Fund and the Leeds for Life Foundation. These internships are extremely popular, with 63 applications for 18 internships in September 2011. A second tranche occurred in January 2012. Students undertaking Students as agents of change projects agree the number of hours required to complete their project with their supervisor and are paid in installments when they meet defined objectives/milestones. Educational research interns are paid, in two installments, for 75 hours work. For both schemes, academic support and advice is provided, as required, throughout the internship, a true collaborative partnership between the intern and supervisor to meet the
agreed outcomes. Students are required to blog their initial aspirations, reflect on progress and the skills gained throughout the internship and provide an end of internship case study. The Faculty has incorporated the resources into its teaching and its public engagement activities and has committed to the continued funding of the scheme. There is an opportunity for students who are stimulated by these experiences to undertake a dissertation in educational development in the biosciences in their final year.

Further information: Lewis (2011); Lewis and Morris (2012); http://insight.glos.ac.uk/tli/activities/ntf/creativehops/examples/Pages/ExamplesofCreativeHonoursprojectsfromScience,Technology,EngineeringandMathematics.aspx

3.21 Self-organised peer circles supporting cultural wellbeing and collaboration amongst postgraduate students at the University of Tasmania, Launceston, Australia

The locally developed peer circle, “Australian Tea with Di” commenced in 2016 at the University of Tasmania when a first year PhD candidate asked a senior member of the postgraduate community to join international postgraduate students for a weekly cup of tea and conversation in English. The initiative was designed to afford the international students opportunities to talk in English with a ‘native speaker’ in a social setting (Hedayati, Nur, Pavlyshyn & Emery, 2016). The Friday Australian Tea sessions began within one faculty, but soon opened up to the wider University of Tasmania community of Australian and non-Australian postgraduate students, attracting up to 18 participants per week.

Australian Tea sessions became occasions for sharing cultural celebrations from students’ home countries and frequently participants in the peer circle discussed aspects of their postgraduate studies such as progress with meeting various milestones. More experienced students in the group shared their experiences of navigating the challenges of being international students with newer students. Over time the group initiated collaborative scholarly activities devised to enhance students’ cultural capital through such practices as conducting research into the Australian Tea program and co-authoring conference presentations (three papers were presented at the Australian Association of Research in Education 2016 conference by Australian Tea postgraduate student collaborations).

A self-initiated qualitative study of the “Australian Tea with Di” initiative explored ways in which the weekly peer circle supported cultural wellbeing amongst participants. The study found that it provided both international and Australian postgraduate students with opportunities to explore cultural diversity, which resulted in the cultivation of safe space and enhanced emotional wellbeing and social interactions amongst participants (Pavlyshyn, Emery, Nur & Hedayati, 2016). Cooperation and collaboration emerged as a consequence. From the inception of the Australian Tea sessions, the crossing of cultural boundaries became an evolving phenomenon, where from the weekly afternoon tea on Fridays, other activities and practices took place within the postgraduate community, which increased students’ social and cultural capital.


4. Engaging students as SoTL practitioners

4.1 The Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Research Internship Scheme (ULTRIS) introduces undergraduate students to authentic research outside their chosen discipline at the University of Western Australia

By focusing their research on a teaching and learning issue of identified priority for the University, students are able to make significant contributions to the understanding of the problem and provide insights to inform future changes in policy and practice. Beyond the benefits to the institution and the individual students, this model of undergraduate research heralds an opportunity for research into teaching and learning to gain acceptance and interest amongst a new and previously uninvolved cohort of investigators. The second year interns are allocated a supervisor and attend an intensive training period (basic research methods) at the commencement and
throughout the semester long program. Each student is provided a $3,000 stipend to eliminate the need for outside employment. Each student selects a research question from an umbrella teaching and learning topic of strategic importance to the University. In 2009 the focus of research was on staff-student interaction outside the classroom; this was followed by the first year experience, sustainability and internationalisation. The students develop their own research questions and subsequent research design, collect and analyse data, write an academic paper and report their findings both within the university community and at an external teaching and learning conference. ULTRIS was adapted for the new BPhil program at UWA, with 42 new 1st year students exploring sustainable education during the program in 2012.

Further information: Partridge and Sandover (2010); Sandover et al. (2012a)

4.2 Building a network for undergraduates researching into teaching and learning: Connecting students across continents

The Matariki Undergraduate Research Network (MURN) connects undergraduate researchers investigating teaching and learning topics in four universities spread across four countries: University of Western Australia; University of Otago, NZ; Durham University, UK; and Queens University, Canada. The universities are part of the Matariki network and in each institution 6-12 undergraduates are offered internships to explore extra-curricular teaching and learning research projects focused on a common topic (internationalisation in 2012 and 2013). The students start at the same time in June and share an online classroom using web technology to engage in synchronous and asynchronous learning. They are trained locally and globally in educational research methods (with some synchronous sessions) and are supervised locally as they undertake their research. The preparatory workshops are delivered to all students either in a synchronised process via online delivery or by staff in the respective universities. A timeline of activities and events throughout the six month project is used to ensure that students in all universities are experiencing the same program at the same time and are able to meet online to discuss developments, progress, challenges and achievements. The students network on a regular basis to share their learning journeys and research findings. This initiative has grown out the Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Research Internship Scheme (ULTRIS), which has been trialled and evaluated over two years at The University of Western Australia.

Further information: Sandover et al. (2012b)

4.17 Undergraduate interns as staff developers at University of Glasgow, UK

In 2007, seven undergraduate interns at the University of Glasgow were given the opportunity to develop enquiry-based materials for courses that they are taking. Taken from a variety of backgrounds, in terms of subject area and level of study, the interns spent four weeks investigating enquiry-based learning supported by a Teaching and Learning Centre facilitator, before moving on to work with a subject-based staff mentor for the following academic year, of which I was one. Each of the interns worked on a course that they also attended as a student, and developed, with the staff mentor, at least one enquiry-based intervention. In addition to the educational development, the interns were also invited to take part in several conferences, and present their work in their own right.

Further information: Tierney (2012)

4.19 Students involved in international collaborative writing groups through ISSoTL

International collaborative writing groups (ICWG) aim to build the capacity of participants to work and write in international collaborative groups. Eight or nine groups work at a distance to prepare a 2000 word outline for online discussion running up to a International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSoTL) pre-Conference workshop, where groups meet for two and half days. They spend time preparing their draft paper within their groups and in discussion with participants of other groups along with some social activities as part of the workshop. Following the workshop the groups have five to six months to complete and send in their papers for submission to the Society's international SoTL journal, Teaching and Learning Inquiry.

The first ICWG was in 2012-13 linked to the ISSOTL 2012 Conference hosted by McMaster University, Canada. Seventy people from 13 countries took part, spread across nine groups with each comprising at least one
student member. Nine scholarships were provided to subsidize the costs of student members. The 2012 initiative resulted in eight publications in a special edition of *Teaching and Learning Inquiry* along with a SoTL publication evidencing the initiative’s positive impact on participants. The second ICWG is associated with the 2015 ISSOTL Conference in Melbourne Australia involving 61 people from 11 countries with 9 full-time students. Fees for students were waived and all were offered free accommodation and a travel subsidy (for those outside of Melbourne).


### 4.21 Research Student Scholarships for Teaching and Learning, at The University of Queensland, Australia

The Institute of Teaching and Learning Innovation (ITaLI) has started hosting students for a Winter or Summer Research Scholarship – leveraging an institutional scheme that offers scholarships for students to be involved in research projects. The goal of the project is to explore the topic of *students as partners* by involving students themselves in teaching and learning projects. This approach was specifically designed to uncover points about student interaction that might not be immediately obvious to academic staff and other non-students. In 2015, five students were involved. Each of the students set out to explore a particular niche subject, such as employability of international students, which included drafting a survey to find out more about the students’ perceptions on employment in Australia. Similarly, the problem of low response rates to course evaluations was explored, with special interest in uncovering personal motivations behind why students participate in these surveys as a way to increase overall response rates. Personal motivation was also taken into account when looking at how to involve students in improving teaching and learning at UQ, especially when it came to representing the student voice and improving staff-student communication. Likewise, the student-supervisor relationship was considered in a study on how students look for potential supervisors and how this process can be improved. Finally, the issues surrounding dual degree students such as lack of general support, issues with skill transfer and lower perceptions on their graduate learning outcomes were explored in detail. In practice, the idea behind the project is simple. Involving students personally leads to new insights as well as personal motivation for the students involved. This can manifest itself in many ways; as part of this project, suggestions were placed before the Bachelor of Science Review board and a manuscript is being prepared detailing this particular work.

*Further information:* Kelly Matthews ([k.matthews1@uq.edu.au](mailto:k.matthews1@uq.edu.au))

### 5. Engaging students as strategy developers and advisors

#### 5.1 Students engaged in designing the institutional learning and teaching strategy at University of Gloucestershire, UK

The University of Gloucestershire engaged students in both the process and product of strategy development over an eight-month process of strategy development, consultation, revision and launch. The intention was to ensure students’ active engagement in strategy development as well as their active learning through their course of study. It commenced with a period of research into learner empowerment conducted by a network we coordinated of eight special interest groups (SIGs) consisting of staff and students, and one group consisting solely of students. When the draft strategy had been developed, based on the work of the eight SIGs, another group of students, comprising members of the student union executive, led by the Student Union President, were asked to comment on draft questions which would contribute to a student online consultation. The questions had been prepared initially by members of staff. However, as the Student Union President explained “Quite honestly the students wouldn’t have a clue what you were talking about if you asked them like that.” With this in mind they rewrote the consultation questions. Almost 300 students contributed to the strategy through a well-publicised online consultation which sought their views on draft principles and proposals related to teaching and assessment. In developing the strategy, students engaged purposefully in the sometimes heated discussions at the University Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee; they also contributed to discussion at Academic Board and the University’s governing Council when the strategy was submitted for approval. At the Council meeting students were keen to emphasise that their contribution to the
strategy’s development had been genuine and significant; they described with some passion the value they placed in being engaged in the development of the strategy and its proposals to actively engage students in the learning process. When finally, and formally launched at an event in the University in December 2007, the new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy was introduced jointly by the Vice-Chancellor and the President of the Student Union. Two students went on to interview Professor Lewis Elton, the guest at the launch, in front of the delegates.

Further information: Healey et al. (2010)

5.3 Black and minority ethnic (BME) students advise senior managers at Kingston University, UK
The Academic Development Student Advisory Panel (ADSAP) was established in 2011 at Kingston University to advise senior managers within the Academic Development Centre (ADC) on strategies to understand and improve the experience of BME students. Approximately 8 – 10 students are involved with membership altering at the end of the academic year. The work is unpaid. Since its inception ADSAP has engaged in a number of areas including:

- Advising the senior manager responsible for the development and implementation of the university’s Review of the Academic Framework
- Participating in a study tour to one of the university’s partner institutions in the US (University of North Carolina at Charlotte) to learn about and exchange views and experiences on: BME student attainment in higher education; academic mentoring for ethnic minorities; student engagement; and student societies
- Advising the staff team responsible for developing and implementing a new university wide pre-entry summer school scheme aimed at widening participation cohorts;
- Advising the staff team responsible for development and implementation of a new university wide first year academic mentoring scheme
- Providing ten hours of talking head footage (HD quality) of student perceptions and advice for staff and students on: staff-student relationships; transition into first year; final year and post graduate programmes; assessment and feedback; plagiarism; and academic skills centres.

The students have given joint conference presentations and engaged in formal meetings with members of university senior staff including Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Chair of Governors.

Further information: Michael Hill (R.Hill@kingston.ac.uk) 19

5.6 Students pitch ideas on improving the student experience to the VC and other senior staff at ANU, Australia
As part of a VC’s course on Leadership and Influence in a Complex World students work in groups to develop ideas for improving the student experience at ANU. The exercise, which counts for 20% of the course mark, begins with developing individual 500 word proposal which are peer reviewed. Following discussions groups of 3-5 students with similar ideas are formed. A few weeks later each group has to submit a 500-word briefing prior to making a 5 minute pitch of the merits and practicalities of their idea to a panel consisting of the VC and other senior staff. The group will then be asked questions by the panel – anyone at random in the group can be asked a question.


5.8 Students led a project about how SMEs and HEIs can interact more effectively at University of Warwick, UK
Four undergraduate students led by Nicholas Tipple on behalf of the Institute of Advanced Teaching and Learning undertook an HE Academy (STEM) funded research project investigating how small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) could interact with higher education institutions (HEIs) more effectively. The students focused on gathering opinions from students and local SMEs, and they provided fresh recommendations that
HEIs could employ immediately. The project outcomes were a report that was disseminated around HEIs (electronically and in hard copies), a networking barbeque for students that attracted 30 local SMEs and business leaders, and a small grant for a student society to run another event. The local science park was also inspired to continue to interact with entrepreneurial students on a regular basis. This research project engaged students in novel research and factored in the opinions of the wider student body; it engaged local SMEs in a completely new way, and provided evidence-based recommendations. Students functioned, in a performative sense, as part of an experiential earning project, as ambassadors and pedagogical consultants both to other students and to local businesses.

Further information: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/stem-conference/gees/Nicholas_Tipple_et_al.pdf

5.9 Igniting a Learning Revolution: Student-led higher education for sustainability and students as a force for renewal at Uppsala University and Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden

The Centre for Environment and Development Studies (CEMUS) is a student-initiated and primarily student-led university centre, straddling the two universities in Uppsala. Since its inception in the early 1990s, the Centre has initiated and greatly expanded the space for trans-disciplinary student-led higher education as well as research and collaboration that transcends traditional academic disciplines and boundaries between academia and society at large. Around 700 students enroll annually in one or more of the 20 current undergraduate, graduate and PhD courses offered at CEMUS. The courses are organized and led by students, usually recruited from the current pool of students at CEMUS, and are hired on a 9-month project-basis as course coordinators. Often working in pairs of two, the course coordinators lead the process of planning, running and evaluating each course, and do so in close partnership with a selected multidisciplinary group of researchers and teachers as well as practitioners and educational developers, who contribute to the course as guest lecturers, examiners and advisors. Over the years, several hundreds of students have worked as course coordinators, thousands of researchers, teachers and guest lecturers have been engaged and well over 10,000 students have taken one or more of the many courses offered by CEMUS.

The educational model has served as an emancipatory force for students that continue to be amazed at what they are capable of creating when given responsibility and freedom. It has also served as an oasis of creativity and pedagogical experimentation for university teachers that has inspired educational development, including new courses in their own departments.

As CEMUS itself is in constant renewal, with just a handful of permanent staff and between 5 and 10 new course coordinators hired every year, a major challenge has been to maintain sufficient continuity and institutional memory to navigate and manage the evolution of the Centre. In the last two years this has sparked an increased collaboration with a number of new partners, both within and outside the university, nationally and internationally. The two-year project “Active Student Participation in Higher Education at Uppsala University” in collaboration with the Department of Quality Enhancement and Academic Teaching and Learning, and with strategic funds from the vice-chancellor of Uppsala University, aims to inspire and support students to become active co-creators of higher education. The installment of guest professorships and the development of new research fields, inspired by themes from CEMUS courses and made possible by co-funding from philanthropic organizations, is another example. Recent projects also include collaborations with students and educational developers at universities from several different continents.

Further information: Stoddard (2012, 2013); Hald (2011); Nitsch (2014); Rieser (2014)