Widening access and participation: has the potential been realised?

Professor Sue Clegg, Leeds Metropolitan University

The third quarter of the late twentieth saw a decisive shift from elite to mass higher education systems in most advanced economies, and higher educations is expanding globally. This expansion has, however, not delivered equal access. While some groups have fared well - women now make up a majority of undergraduates in some systems - some minority ethnic groups have done less well, and students from lower socio-economic groups still have poorer access and tend to be served by less well-endowed institutions. At governmental level the policy rationale for widening access regards higher education as a route to social mobility and the overall justification for expansion is conceived in neo-liberal terms as serving the competitive needs of the ‘knowledge economy’. There is, however, now considerable evidence that there is a break in the linkage between education, graduate employment, and social mobility, particularly among groups who are the targets of widening access policies. Perhaps more insidiously, under the guise of employability, curricula are undergoing changes designed to enhance the skills students are assumed to require in order to achieve this goal. The Australian writer Lisa Wheelahan is one of a number of authors internationally who have highlighted the importance of social and epistemic access to high-status ‘powerful knowledge’: ‘Powerful knowledge is powerful because of the access it provides to the natural and social worlds and to society’s conversation about what it should be like’ (Wheelahan 2010: 10). Other writers have raised questions about whose knowledge and from where. The lecture will draw on experiences from the English context to pose questions about whether aspirations for more equitable higher education are possible in contemporary higher education systems and ask what widening participation might achieve.
Professor Clegg is a sociologist of higher education and her research is informed by critical realism and feminist theory. She has published widely on substantive policy and pedagogical issues such as personal development planning and plagiarism often in collaboration with practitioners. Her theoretical work includes critical analyses of the social and pedagogical significance of the gendering of information technology, information technologies in learning and teaching, the nature of ‘evidence-based’ practice, the relationship between cultural capital, agency and curriculum, the significance of understanding time in higher education, and the possible future selves students can project into the future. She has also taken a critical look at institutional practices designed to improve teaching, analysing the rhetorical repertoire of learning and teaching strategies and exploring how these strategies are mediated in practice. She has researched and written about academic identities. She was appointed as Professor of Higher Education Research at Leeds Metropolitan in 2006 with the brief to establish a pan-university focus for higher education research. She had previously held a Chair in Educational Research at Sheffield Hallam University where she was Deputy Director of the Learning and Teaching Research Institute. She is the Editor of Teaching in Higher Education and she chairs the Publications Committee of the Society for Research into Higher Education.

Afternoon Keynote (3.00 pm – 4.00 pm)
Asa Briggs Hall (C122) Level Five, The Checkland Building

The ecology of Lifewide learning and development

Professor Norman Jackson, Founder Lifewide Education

A learning ecology comprises the processes, contexts, relationships, networks, interactions tools, technologies and activities that provides us with opportunities and resources for learning, development and achievement. A learning ecology is formed around a purpose which stimulates the needs and interests that drives our will. Our learning ecologies are the means by which we connect and integrate our past and current experiences, learning and development. They embrace all the physical and virtual places and spaces we inhabit in our everyday lives and the learning and the meaning we gain from the contexts and situations that constitute our lives. They are the product of both imagination and reason and enacted using all our capability and gaps in knowledge and skill required to achieve our purpose are addressed through the learning ecology. They are one of our most important sites for creativity and they enable us to develop ourselves personally and professionally in all aspects of our lives.
Organised educational settings provide ecologies for learning into which learners fit themselves but outside formal education settings self-created learning ecologies are essential to the way we learn and develop in work, family and other social settings. Recent European Foresight work envisions a future of learning that is lifelong, Lifewide and open with increasing emphasis on the informal, the personal and collaborative nature of learning. The ability to create our own ecologies for learning
and development is perhaps the most important capability we need for sustaining ourselves in a complex, ever changing and often disruptive world and for maintaining our sense of identity and wellbeing. 

The presentation will examine the idea of learning ecologies within the context of Lifewide learning and development and consider the relevance and value of these ideas for universities and colleges. 

References:

Norman Jackson is Professor Emeritus at the University of Surrey, Founder of the Lifewide Education Community and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Between 2006-11 he was Professor of Higher Education and Director of the Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education (SCEPTrE) at the University of Surrey where he developed and applied the idea of Lifewide learning and education in a university environment. 

During a long career in higher education he has been a teacher, course tutor, researcher, inspector, consultant, policy developer, educational/curriculum developer and manager. He has held senior positions with several UK national bodies including - Her Majesty's Inspectorate, Higher Education Quality Council, Quality Assurance Agency, Learning and Teaching and Support Network and Higher Education Academy.

His own innovations in educational practice have focused on students' and teachers' creative development. His quest for a higher education curriculum that would be more supportive of students' creative development was driven by concerns that universities should be doing more to enable students to develop themselves for the complexities and challenges of their life. This journey led him to develop and apply the ideas of Lifewide learning and education and to the formation of the Lifewide Education Community – a social enterprise that champions and supports the growth of Lifewide learning and education in higher education and beyond. Current research interests are focused on two themes - the role of ‘creativity in development’ within the higher education context and the idea and practice of learning ecologies and Lifewide learning. http://www.normanjackson.co.uk/ http://lifewideeducation.co.uk/
Parallel Sessions 1 (10.00 am – 11.00 am)

Conference Room 5 (D510) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Stretching the assessment appetite

Kevin Morton, School of Sport and Service Management

This session will explore how mobile technology and the inclusion of Apps can revamp and transform module assessment practices. It will highlight a number of tools that could be used alongside, or as an alternative to written submissions, to enhance the assessment procedure, making it potentially more appealing and accessible to current students.

New cohorts deliver varied perspectives and preferred methods to tackle assessment. By using ICT in assessment, students may feel greater connection to their assignments and open up prodigious opportunity to explore a more vocational and realistic approach to how they are assessed. As educators, we are constantly looking to be more flexible with our strategies and approach to learning and teaching; assessment is an extension of this, yet this always remains the same.

Conference Room 2 (A501) Level Five, The Checkland Building

The trouble with modules

Jon Dron, Centre for Learning and Teaching

This session aims to provide a forum to question the value of that most basic of university structures, the module (also known as the ‘course’, ‘paper’ or ‘unit’, depending on where you come from). The session will start with a presentation that suggests courses/modules arose for contingent historical reasons that made sense at the time but that have left us with profound motivational issues which, as access to higher education improves, increasingly and adversely affect all learning and teaching. We will go on to discuss ways to overcome the demotivating effects of modules’ inherent rigidity in our current practice, as well as to explore alternative more flexible approaches to education that might enable learners to learn what they need, when they need it and how they need it. By imagining an educational system freed from its historical structural constraints, we may hopefully uncover some unspoken assumptions in our current practices. We will investigate what might be lost and gained were we to get rid of modules altogether, from pragmatic concerns like accreditation, timetabling, costing and resourcing, to more esoteric issues like the importance of ritual, the role of education in society and the value of cohorts in learning.

References: https://landing.athabascau.ca/blog/view/496760/cargo-cult-courses
https://landing.athabascau.ca/blog/view/177831/the-monkeys-paw-effect-in-higher-education
Conference Room 10 (C218) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Studentcentral: new developments

Katie Piatt, Adam Bailey, Fiona McNeill and Marion Curdy, Information Services

This show and tell style session will introduce colleagues to the exciting new features of the recently upgraded Studentcentral and how they can provide new learning experiences via a flexible and modern online environment.

Conference Room 4 (B503) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Students speak

Matthew Chell and Penny Jones, Strategic Planning Office

This session will present a comparison of results from the recent National Student Survey (NSS) and the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES). The feedback provided by students through surveys provides us with opportunities to reflect on practice and refocus our efforts. Students’ lives are changing, perhaps particularly in terms of employment and finance, both during their period of study and their expectations for the future. Our presentation will include overviews of how well Brighton is performing in relation to other universities, and further explore how student views of university life vary across the disciplines. It will also draw out emerging messages from these surveys and together with other evidence attempt to paint a picture of the changing student population: finance, employment and other commitments outside university, and other relevant issues. The session will conclude with group discussions about some of the issues raised and potential responses to them.

Conference Room 7 (E512) Level Five, The Checkland Building

It's all about thinking: a definitive, multi-disciplinary and highly usable critical thinking model

Peter Wells, School of Computing Engineering and Mathematics

A rapidly changing social and technological environment means it is more important than ever we produce graduates who can think critically, solve unfamiliar problems, innovate and adapt (Wilson et al, 2012, p1). Recent research indicates, after two years of study significant numbers of College and University students show little or no overall improvement in their critical thinking skills, (Arum and Roksa, 2011, p12).

This session will focus on exploring the details of the Paul and Elder (2002) model for critical thinking, which provides a highly accessible framework and vocabulary for thinking, reflection and ultimately for sense-making in any discipline. It does this by conceptualising the fundamental elements of thinking, the intellectual standards by which that thinking may be assessed and the intellectual qualities needed to enable us to become more effective thinkers.

The session will be organised initially into nine separate working groups to explore individual components of the model and then into four groups to (a) share what you individually discover about your component with others in your group and (b) to collaboratively use the model to think critically about a given problem. A plenary will then be held to provide an opportunity for you to
share your experience of using the model and to discuss its value in understanding more about the offered problem and more generally as a tool for critical thinking.

**References:**

**Conference Room 6 (D511) Level Five, The Checkland Building**

Critical perspectives on professionalism and inter-professional practices: the challenges and benefits of a group-based presentation module on a multi-disciplinary, part-time, work based programme in the School of Education

**Melanie Gill, School of Education**

This session aims to offer student feedback and evaluation of the 'Critical Perspectives on Professionalism and Inter-Professional Practices' module which is a compulsory module for those on the BA(Hons) Youth Work Year 4 and for those on the BA(Hons) Professional Studies in Learning and Development Year 1, including those on the Early Years Teacher Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway.

The concept of ‘professionalism’ has been redefined through recent policy leading to models of ‘new professionalism’ and ‘inter-professionalism’ as new professions emerge and complex patterns of inter-professional practice become established.

In the context of developing learning communities and the delivery of educational and other support services through multi-disciplinary environments, this module seeks to explore key understandings and processes for maintaining professional identity, whilst developing collaborative networks and strategic and practice based professional partnerships.

This conference presentation will allow students who have recently completed this module to offer their views of the learning gained and problems encountered throughout this challenging and innovative module.
Conference Room 1 (A500) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Supporting students with dyspraxia

Catherine Watts and Angela Tann, Student Services

Aim: to outline the features and experiences faced by students with dyspraxia and offer practical advice on how to support these students on their courses. By responding to the specific needs of those with dyspraxia, the university can enable students to have more positive options for their future when graduating.

Conference Room 8 (E513) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Using digital problem based learning (PBL) triggers to foster self-regulated learning futures

Channine Clarke, Paul Boyle, Sarah Mead, Susan Wheatley and Heidi Von Kurthy, School of Health Sciences

This session gives participants a direct experience of being a student in a problem-based learning tutorial, in small groups supported by one of our team, acting as the tutor. In keeping with the theme of the conference, we will focus on revealing one of the most intriguing aspects of PBL - how students gradually learn to identify their own learning needs, one of the most important skills for life-long learning. Participants will be guided by the structure of PBL, supported with digital material, and gently facilitated by a tutor, to realise what they themselves need to understand before they would be able to manage the particular case/problem. To initiate genuine self-directed learning, we need to be able to specify the multi-subject learning potential that is implicit within every life situation (Firestein 2012), the desire that 'triggers' or motivates deep learning (Sadlo & Richardson 2003). We need to be able to make the theory that is implicit, explicit (Sadlo 2013).

The session will provide direct observation and use of one of our new digital trigger videos, developed within our current HEA staff development project. One of our aims is to demonstrate some of the outcomes of this project, including how we now conceptualise the pedagogic value of each component of the new triggers. The 'tutorial' will end with a list of questions that the 'students' themselves (the participants) have identified as vital to solving the problem, written on a flipchart. Following the experience of the tutorials, we will come back to a plenary where we will discuss the implications and reveal our recent discoveries about digital trigger planning and design, each step created to enhance student engagement.

Sadlo G 2011 Learning through Problems: perspectives from neuroscience. Procedures from the International Conference of Problem-based Learning, Coventry University.

Parallel Sessions 2 (11.30 am – 12.20 pm)
Conference Room 8 (E513) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Today's technology tomorrow innovation: Improving the quality and culture of the learning experience through technology

Wesley Scott-Smith, Brighton and Sussex Medical School, Rob Gallaway, Brighton and Sussex University Hospital, and Natalie Powell, Surrey and Sussex Healthcare

This session will comprise of three snapshots of different approaches to learning using; realistic scenarios, simulation and technology. The presentations will demonstrate that learning does not always take place in the classroom and how realistic scenarios, bedside learning and the use of technology can enhance the learning experience. An innovative group of collaborators from Brighton University, HEI and NHS Trusts, have worked together to begin to change the culture of health education and to provide experiences for learners which allow flexible, realistic and creative learning for both undergraduate and postgraduate health professionals.

Conference Room 7 (E512) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Using a VLE to create a liquid educational experience - the case of 'Overtime'

Simon McEnnis and Ben Parsons, School of Sport and Service Management

The presenters of this session argue that a way of enhancing the learning experience is to empower students through ownership and control of an online space that exists both within and outside the degree. The presenters will illustrate their points with reference to Overtime, which is the student-run website for the BA Hons Sport Journalism course at the University of Brighton. The website is vocationally beneficial to students in that it facilitates journalism practice in a trusted environment and acts as a showcase of work to prospective employers. However, it also operates at a deeper educational level in that it creates the possibilities for peer review and mentoring and the creation of a course community across the entire cohort. This VLE also creates a sense of satisfaction and achievement among the students that suggests traditional forms of learning and assessment have become reductive and insufficient in the 21st Century.

Pallant House interventions: working site-specifically with BA Fine Art Students in a historic house setting

Teresa Whitfield, Northbrook College

The session will explore ways in which BA Fine Art students have extended and adapted their own studio practice approach in order to create site-specific fine art objects that activate the interior of Pallant House and change the way the public engage with the Queen Ann town-house. It will evaluate the students’ ability to retain the integrity of their studio practice whilst achieving the project’s objectives of encouraging the public to think differently about the meanings associated with their chosen location within Pallant House. It will explore how artists can work with historic houses to stimulate new responses to objects of heritage and thereby encourage the development of greater audience engagement.

Using selected case studies the session will evaluate ways in which work produced for the project has also impacted on subsequent work for degree shows and exhibitions after graduation, and will assess the value for undergraduate students taking part in live projects off-campus. The project offers students an invaluable real-life professional practice experience and a chance to exhibit their work in a major British art gallery before graduation. In addition to boosting their confidence, the project provides students with a framework of how to make applications for working site specifically in other public locations in their future career as practicing artists.

Students' financial circumstances: a barrier to learning?

Stephanie Fleischer and Andrew Bassett, School of Applied Social Science

The findings from a longitudinal study of the financial circumstances of University of Brighton undergraduate students has shown how the financial reality of being in Higher Education may affect different groups of students, and have consequences for academic achievement and learning. Moreover, the landscape of student funding has changed dramatically over the last 30 years, with the introduction of student loans for living expenses in 1990, tuition fees loans in 1997, and the recent increase in tuition fees up to £9,000. Therefore, it is important as University educators to have some understanding of the financial challenges faced by our students if we are to help them to maximise their learning experience. This session will use a series of case studies drawn from the research of the financial situation of University of Brighton students, to illuminate how students manage the competing demands of full-time study and their financial circumstances. More specifically, the case studies reveal the reality of balancing paid employment and study; the varying financial support received by students; the impact of living expenses; and what students perceive to be a value for money university experience; and how these factors may reflect certain socio-demographic characteristics of the student cohort.


Conference Room 9 (D222) Level Two, The Checkland Building

Graduate Toolkit: lessons learnt in implementation for Levels 4 and 5

Deshinder Singh Gill, Computing, Engineering and Mathematics and Pamela Coppola, Student Services

Previously at the Learning and Teaching conference we have introduced ‘Studentfolio’ now known as the ‘Graduate Toolkit’ and how this particular Personal Development Plan (PDP) was successfully implemented at Level 4 for the Engineering Degree course. The presenters have again collaborated to undertake a non-funded project to extend the principles of the original implementation to a Management module at Level 5, with a further plan to extend to the Level 6 Management module in the next academic year (2014/15). This session builds on lessons learned and explores how e-portfolios continue to effectively provide a vehicle for students to record and reflect on career oriented objectives. To increase engagement and make this important career development activity more realistic for the students, current projects being run in the XE221 module were used as a basis. The session will also touch upon new innovations for the Graduate Toolkit for Level 4 students preparing applications for sandwich placements (Level 5 2014/15). It is hoped this will assist in setting the scene for future learning and teaching activities using electronic means, and also encourage independent and ongoing learning linked to CPD using technology.

Conference Room 5 (D510) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Being a volunteer: the experience of second year nursing students

Debbie Hatfield, David Bauckham, Kathy Martyn, Warren Stewart and Christine Watson, School of Health Sciences

There are increasing pressures on the National Health Service and an estimated 70 percent of NHS health care expenditure is used to provide care for those with long term conditions (Coulter, 2012). The focus on patient engagement within health care and the growth in third sector community provision is changing the healthcare landscape and challenging traditional health care provision. An optional 10 credit Level 5 Student Community Engagement module has enabled nursing students to gain greater insights into local communities where this care is mostly situated. It comprises 30 hours of volunteering and participation in a health and social care project.
in a not-for-profit organisation. Concurrent classroom teaching facilitates an inductive approach so that students learn about the purpose of their volunteer placement organisation and how this contributes to the health and wellbeing of a community. In particular, the building of social capital and the role of the not-for-profit sector in the newly reformed National Health Service in the United Kingdom (Naylor et al., 2013.) This presentation will explore case studies where students reveal the learning that has taken place and its relevance to their future roles as qualified nurses. It will also provide teacher insights into preparing practitioners who will need to be flexible and adaptable for the world of health care work, and demonstrate how a student community engagement module has helped second year nursing students better understand local communities and the organisations that provide services or help fill gaps in provision.


Conference Room 6 (D511) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Adapting teaching and assessment for students with disabilities: introducing the new process and responding to questions

Annie Beckett and Ian Carter, Student Services

The Variation of Assessment Methods (VOAM) process is currently being overhauled and a new system drafted for introduction in the 2014/15 version of the General Examination and Assessment Regulations (GEAR). It therefore seems timely to offer academic staff an overview of the new regulations, and an opportunity to discuss how flexible arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment can benefit students with disabilities. The aims of the session will be:

1) To introduce staff to the new regulations so that they feel confident in responding to individual student needs and requirements within the academic context and to address some of the challenges that this flexibility inevitably presents.
2) To reassure staff of the robustness of the new systems and to ensure that all parties are aware of their shared responsibilities.
3) To offer staff the opportunity to raise any individual questions about how we adapt teaching and assessment for individual students. How do we balance the needs of the individual with the need to maintain academic standards? Who has responsibility for letting students know about the adjustments that are possible? What evidence must be produced by students before an adjustment is recommended?
4) To explain briefly how the VOAM model fits with Inclusive Practice

The demographics of our student body is changing. We are seeing an increase in students with disabilities entering and succeeding in Higher Education, this session aims to support academic staff and consider practical adjustments they can make to offer a flexible teaching, learning and assessment experience for their students.
Conference Room 1 (A500) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Making presentations and printed materials accessible to students with dyslexia

Catherine Watts and Vanessa Howard, Student Services

Aim: To show how adaptations to the layout and design of presentations and reading materials can benefit students, in particular those with dyslexia, visual stress and other reading difficulties. By using flexible approaches to delivering course materials the needs of more students can be effectively met.

Conference Room 2 (A501) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Experiences of flipping the classroom: reflection on the implementation of flipped teaching in a Built Environment and Civil Engineering module

Hannah Wood, School of Environment and Technology

The session aims to reflect upon the experience of implementing flipped teaching in a level 4 module which has traditionally been taught in a large lecture theatre setting. The term flipped teaching is an approach to teaching that critiques the role of traditional methods of didactic pedagogy, rather than relying on the presence of an academic in a lecture hall and students passively listening, the flipped approach becomes an online lesson which is studied before the face to face session, in which the content can be applied and problem solving undertaken with the academic present to provide support and correct misinformation (Jump 2013). It is important to consider that whilst flipped teaching can be a useful method of delivery, especially to large groups, it often requires more effort from both students and instructors and also to understand that not all students will embrace or necessarily like flipped instruction (Willey and Gardener 2013). The session will discuss how flipped teaching was utilised, the benefits and weaknesses it presented and the lessons learned including the changes that will be made in the future.

References:
Evaluating findings of the HEA’s ‘What Works’ programme: building engagement and belonging for student retention and success in three disciplines

Rachel Bowden, Strategic Planning Office, Julie Fowlie, Brighton Business School, Marylynn Fyvie-Gauld, School of Applied Social Science, Liz Guy, Computing, Engineering and Mathematics, Jennie Jones, Rachel Masika and Gina Wisker, Centre for Learning and Teaching

The Higher Education Academy’s ‘What Works?’ programme is a 3-year project which provides an opportunity to test out recommendations for effective practice in addressing student retention and success in disciplines with different challenges. The interventions cover the key themes of student induction including pre-entry activities, active learning and student peer mentoring. The evaluation methodology includes institutional data analysis; qualitative research through surveys of the participating students, led by Professor Mantz Yorke for the HEA and Paul Hamlyn Foundation; and qualitative research led by researchers in the Centre for Learning and Teaching, using the method of appreciative enquiry within student focus groups. The project is currently in its first year, therefore it is too early to fully assess its impact on retention and success, however the emerging findings are already informing changes for the next phase of the project. This learning will be used to develop further interventions next year in a cycle of reflection and improvement.

One aim of the project is to produce case studies and examples of good practice relevant to undergraduate learning and teaching. In addition, the outcomes of the project will be integrated into the University’s Student Retention and Success Framework. The session(s) on offer will provide an opportunity to learn more about the interventions being trialled, see the early findings from the student surveys and focus groups as the first year of the project ends, and discuss and consider implications for other courses across the University.

References:


Electronic management of assessment

Alan Richardson and Nicholas Smeeton, School of Sport and Service Management

Student development requires effective feedback. In order for us to improve the feedback we give and become more in line with modern feedback technologies we need to consider how best to manage marking online. A University of Brighton Learning and Teaching Scholarship was awarded to look at how well ‘Grademark’ might be the most suitable technology to fulfil these criteria. The project followed the Sport and Exercise Science course (360 students) as it integrated electronic submission and feedback across all modules. Staff and students were asked to complete surveys regarding previous and new feedback technologies. The findings provide valuable information and evidence about the effectiveness, efficiency and processes when using ‘Grademark’ as the sole feedback route. The session will offer perspectives and suggestions on how best to integrate ‘Grademark’ into other modules and courses.

Infographics as assessment products

Vanessa Cornford and Lisa Perry, Northbrook College

We received a Learning and Teaching Fellowship funding for a project investigating the use of infographics as an actor training tool and assessment product. Both of us work in the theatre department at Northbrook College, teaching on Foundation Degree and BA Top Up theatre arts courses.

If you attend this session you will:
Hear us briefly summarise the research project and what we discovered about our own assumptions, how our students felt about the form and its relation to actor training, and how effective it was as an assessment product.
Spuriously or sincerely identify yourself as a digital immigrant or digital native, before you join a group to create your own infographics.
Explore, discuss, how we make, co-create and interpret meaning in this form.
Have some fun!

Hearing the signals in the midst of the noises, to listen to our students’ voices

Catherine McConnell and John Canning, Centre for Learning and Teaching

Student voice comes in a variety of forms. The National Student Survey, staff-student committees, the students union, internal surveys, and various websites, all purport to provide a conduit for the student voice.

This session explores the multifaceted dimensions of the student voice and asks if we are looking in the right places for the sorts of feedback from students which can lead to genuine improvements in the overall learning experience. Drawing on the work of Fielding (2001) we will explore power relationships and ownership of the student voice, who is permitted to speak, who is listening and on what (and on whose terms) does the so-called dialogue take place. The session will explore and critically evaluate a series of ‘case studies’ of the student voice at Brighton and elsewhere articulated through the NSS and by student reps.


Canadian doctoral graduates and a decade of disappearing academic jobs

Sandra Acker, University of Toronto,

Questions about current ‘flexible’ labour market conditions for advanced degree holders are of increasing concern in many countries. In 2001-02, a qualitative interview study was carried out with thirty-one doctoral students – diverse in age, gender, family situation and ethno-cultural background – in one Canadian university department. Ten years later, the researchers had the chance to re-interview thirteen of the group about what had happened to them in the intervening years and how they now saw their doctoral program, the academic labour market and their personal choices. While Canadian academe has a relatively robust tenure system, full-time secure positions are being replaced by contingent ones, creating challenging conditions for job-seekers. Only two of the thirteen are tenured academics, while an additional three are ‘tenure-track’ (i.e. they will be reviewed for tenure after a probationary period) following years in temporary positions, and most of the others are contingent academics. In some cases, the clash of anticipation and reality led to a reframing of ideas about academe and a consequent reshaping of one’s academic subjectivity. Yet participants were generally reluctant to give up their ‘academic habitus’ even when security in the academic field was elusive. What are the implications of this situation for doctoral programs?

References:

**Conference Room 4 (B503) Level Five, The Checkland Building**

**Embedding the intercultural dimension in teaching and learning: a flexible approach**

**Pilar Teran, School of Humanities**

Our students are more exposed than ever before to other cultures, there is a rich mosaic of cultural diversity in our universities and British students are sharing experiences with a large number of international students from all over the world. This is part of a new phenomenon called Internationalisation in Higher Education. Academics must prepare for the internationalisation of the curriculum. Intercultural Communication (IC), as a relatively new field of research provides a theoretical framework from where to start to understand what need to be done, and offer a basis for discussing the aims in teaching and learning in this new environment.

For the last two academic years the module ‘Language and Intercultural Awareness’ has been taught in the School of Arts. The module teaches key elements of IC, students are then required to apply these to certain aspects of the target culture within their main subject of study, which provides them with an intercultural awareness that places them in an advantageous position when having to function in that or any other culture.

The aim of the session is to enhance our understanding of the crucial role that Intercultural Communication should be playing in an increasingly internationalised higher education sector.

This session will be of interest to those who are developing or thinking of developing the intercultural dimension in their teaching. There will be opportunities for participants to share ideas and experiences.


**Conference Room 3 (B502) Level Five, The Checkland Building**

**Why Brighton?**

**Matthew Chell, Strategic planning Office**

The presentation will describe findings from the University’s 2013 Accepters and Decliners survey of particular relevance to academic teaching staff. It will focus on the information sources and media which applicants use in the application process and the main factors they report in making a decision as to whether or not to study at the University of Brighton. Understanding what is important to applicants in deciding on their course of study, how they see Brighton compared to other universities, and how they view the application process will help course leaders to respond
more flexibly, in terms of preparation of information, use of media, and communication, and ultimately in attracting the right students to the University’s developing offer. The presentation will be followed by group discussions where attendees will be invited to contribute ideas about how the University can respond to the issues raised.

Conference Room 2 (A501) Level Five, The Checkland Building

Inclusive Practice: Creative thinking about assessment

Deborah Gibberd and Ian Carter, Student Services

We are all used to individual recommendations for adjustments to assessment made in support of disabled students, but how often do we think about offering assessments that are so inclusive and flexible that individual recommendations may not need to be made?

This session will introduce the idea of inclusive practice within the curriculum and assessment, allowing delegates to think creatively about how they teach and how student’s knowledge can be assessed in ways that respond to various learning styles and disabilities.


Conference Room 6 (D511) Level Five, The Checkland Building

The influence of interprofessional learning on collaboration in clinical practice

Sarah Ofori-Ansah and John Anderson, Brighton and Sussex Medical School

Interprofessional learning is promoted in health and social care education to prepare a work force for collaborative practice (1,2,3,4). A recent study set out to explore the experiences and opinions regarding interprofessional learning and its influence on collaborative clinical practice. An initial qualitative pilot study was conducted with in-depth interviews of seven staff members working within a UK Kidney Unit, emergent themes were used to generate a survey questionnaire which was then distributed to all staff in the unit. Findings from the interviews and survey indicated positive and negative experiences, with an overall positive attitude toward collaborative practice. Suggested benefits of joint learning included improved relations, shared clinical knowledge, stronger interprofessional collaborations and better quality of patient care.

The study also provided an understanding of how participation could by increased by utilizing different teaching strategies and facilitative skills to deliver interprofessional learning.

References:
Parallel Sessions 4 (2.20 pm – 2.50 pm)

Bringing research methods alive: using new technologies to enhance the student experience

Carl Walker and Stephanie Fleischer, School of Applied Social Science

Last academic year, we designed a quantitative research methods module from the beginning for the School of Applied Social Science. We used a number of innovative pedagogic exercises to try to reconstitute the standard experience of research methods teaching. These included replacing lectures with large workshops, student feedback using twitter, the inclusion of quizzes on the module, the use of ‘Just in Time Teaching’, a weekly leader board of quiz performance across the yearbook, a radically alternate version of the student handbook and many other devices. The module won a prize from the Student Union and, for the first time in the recent history of our school, was very well received by the students. We would like to discuss this module and its implications for future teaching.

A Student Partnership Approach to Learning Development

Lucy Chilvers and Joel Roberts, Centre for Learning and Teaching, Chloe Dixon, Nishan Devani and Jasmine Grayling, Student Academic Success Programme

Students’ engagement with the curriculum continues to be high on the agenda (QAA, 2012; HEA, 2013), and involving students as partners and co-producers is currently an exciting practice in Higher Education. At the University of Brighton, the Student Academic Success Programme (SASP) Team within the CLT are trying to challenge the notion of ‘ownership’ through the engagement of students in a range of roles. These student positions of ambassador, mentor, research assistant and work placement, firstly offer students the opportunity to develop, produce, and promote learning development resources; and secondly support their peers and academic and support staff to innovate discipline-specific curriculum design and practice.

This session will explore this work with particular focus on a new ASK Ambassador role which has recently been developed and piloted. ASK Ambassadors are second and third year students who are able to champion and promote student engagement with the Academic Study Kit (ASK) website, resources and events via social media, and by giving presentations to first year students. They work in partnership with PASS Leaders, PASS Supervisors and Course Leaders in order to encourage PASS Leaders to embed the weekly ASK campaign focus into activities in PASS sessions, as well as sharing their own experiences of adjusting to studying in HE and developing the skills required for study success.

Cutting ‘rough diamonds’: first generation students in Higher Education

Julia Hope, University of Chichester

‘Cutting rough diamonds: first generation students in Higher Education’ set out to explore issues, as opposed to attempting to answer a question, test a hypothesis or solve a problem. The inquiry provides a greater understanding of the experiences of first generation students (FGSs) in their first semester (FS) at a case study campus (The Centre). The findings of this inquiry are significant in the context of policy debates regarding higher education (HE) access and widening
participation (WP). Current discourse in UK higher education policy emphasises the need to recruit and retain students to deliver future economic growth and social mobility, rather than creating opportunities for students to ‘participate’.

Access and inclusion in Higher Education

Angela Bah, School of Computing Engineering and Mathematics

The design of learning materials is key to increasing inclusion in Higher Education; this session will explore some ways in which we can improve the accessibility of learning materials for all students. Firstly we will look at how typical learning content is viewed by students with one or more of the following considerations:

- Various vision differences: low vision, partial vision and colour vision variations
- Those for whom English is an additional language
- Those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Then discuss methods and ideas about presenting materials in more accessible formats, using assistive technologies, screen readers and the use of accessible language.

There will also be tips on how to present text and graphical content to be accessible to a greater number of people, for example, graphs can be problematic if they rely on colour differentiation of columns; and the important issue of captioning and alternative descriptions for video and image content will also be discussed.

Engaging with digital literacies at Brighton

Barbara Newland and Fiona Handley, Centre for Learning and Teaching and Jill Shacklock, Information Services

Digital literacies enable you to effectively engage in using digital technology today and in the future. Digital literacies are defined as “those capabilities which fit an individual for living, learning and working in a digital society.” (JISC, 2012) It means competence and confidence with current technology and the ability to keep up to date by evaluating the appropriateness of new technology and acquiring new skills as necessary. For students it is a graduate attribute. For staff it is professional development. For teaching, it is the effective and efficient use of digital technologies in blended learning.

The digital literacies are in the following categories:

- Learning and teaching
- Research
- Communication and collaboration
- Administration

All academics would be expected to have a core level of digital literacies for their learning, teaching, research and administrative work at the University. For all the core literacies academics should know what, why and how the literacy is used. The Framework is an institution-wide one and consequently quite generic. Therefore, Schools will be encouraged to add their own discipline specific digital literacies.

Participants will learn about the Framework, explore the web site https://studentfolio.brighton.ac.uk/diglits/ and identify which digital literacy they will learn next.
Connecting personal and professional learning narratives in teacher education: Implications for policy

Mike Hayler and Keith Turvey, School of Education

This paper is framed by the recent and radical reforms in policy and funding where the political aspiration is to shift control of ‘teacher training’ away from universities and into schools (DfE, 2010). The profound implications of these changes for teacher education are illuminated through the research with analysis of the design, planning and organisation of a new PGCE module for primary school teachers. The paper will also consider the experiences of university-based teacher educators and their students as they struggle to conform to required, practical change while resisting the current government’s discourse of derision about the contribution of higher education to the education of students who are preparing to be teachers.

Traxler, J. (2010), Distance Education and Mobile Learning: Catching Up, Taking Stock, Distance Education, 31(2) 1-6

Accessing education: flexibility for the future

Darren Brand, School of Health Sciences

This presentation aims to explore the findings of a study which examined the barriers for attendance at NHS trust ‘mandatory training’ and education sessions. Key data in the form of staff feedback detailed their feelings regarding mandatory training and provided suggestions as to what could be introduced or changed to facilitate participation.

The findings identified that in order for healthcare staff in practice to remain current and maintain their knowledge to the required standards, the method of delivery for educational updates required review. The main recommendations suggested an enhanced level of e-learning, to introduce flexibility of access, and to introduce appropriately trained key trainers at ward and department level to cascade and co-ordinate education at a local level.

Experiences in using open source software for teaching electronic engineering

Simon Busbridge and Deshinder Singh Gill, Computing, Engineering and Mathematics

Embedded systems and simulation distinguish modern professional electronic engineering from that learnt at school. First year undergraduates typically have little appreciation of engineering software capabilities and file handling beyond elementary word processing. This year we expedited blended teaching through the experiential based learning process via open source
Students engaged with the entire electronic engineering product creation process from inception, performance simulation, printed circuit board design, manufacture and assembly, to cabinet design and complete finished product. Students currently learn software skills using a mix of electronic and mechanical engineering software packages. Although these have professional capabilities, they are not available off-campus and are sometimes surprisingly poor in simulating real world devices. In this paper we report on the use of LTspice, FreePCB and OpenSCAD for teaching analogue electronics simulation and manufacture. Comparisons of software options, types of tasks undertaken, examples of student assignments and outputs, and learning achieved will be presented. Examples of assignment based learning, integration between the open source packages and difficulties encountered will be discussed. Evaluation of student attitudes and responses to this method of learning and teaching will also be discussed.

Evaluating findings of the HEA’s ‘What Works’ programme: building engagement and belonging for student retention and success in three disciplines

Rachel Bowden, Strategic Planning Office, Julie Fowlie, Brighton Business School, Marylynn Fyvie-Gauld, School of Applied Social Science, Liz Guy, Computing, Engineering and Mathematics, Jennie Jones, Rachel Masika and Gina Wisker, Centre for Learning and Teaching

The Higher Education Academy’s ‘What Works?’ programme is a 3-year project which provides an opportunity to test out recommendations for effective practice in addressing student retention and success in disciplines with different challenges. The interventions cover the key themes of student induction including pre-entry activities, active learning and student peer mentoring. The evaluation methodology includes institutional data analysis; quantitative research through surveys of the participating students, led by Professor Mantz Yorke for the HEA and Paul Hamlyn Foundation; and qualitative research led by researchers in the Centre for Learning and Teaching, using the method of appreciative enquiry within student focus groups. The project is currently in its first year, therefore it is too early to fully assess its impact on retention and success, however the emerging findings are already informing changes for the next phase of the project. This learning will be used to develop further interventions next year in a cycle of reflection and improvement.

One aim of the project is to produce case studies and examples of good practice relevant to undergraduate learning and teaching. In addition, the outcomes of the project will be integrated into the University’s Student Retention and Success Framework. The session(s) on offer will provide an opportunity to learn more about the interventions being trialled, see the early findings from the student surveys and focus groups as the first year of the project ends, and discuss and consider implications for other courses across the University.

References:


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