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STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN LEARNING AND TEACHING

Tyne Wear Tees

3 RIVERS CONSORTIUM

North East Regional Learning and Teaching Conference 2015

Student Engagement

Hosted by:

University of Sunderland

27th March 2015

The Higher Education Academy | INSPIRING TEACHING, TRANSFORMING LEARNING

This event is recognised by the Higher Education Academy

Forward

The conference programme celebrates the work of our teaching staff and the different ways in which ***students engage with learning in higher education*** during:

- ***student transition into higher education;***
- ***student development and transformation;***
- ***student retention, progression and completion;***
- ***and student futures beyond higher education.***

The aim of the day is to engage academic members of staff in the concept of student engagement through a range of plenary and workshop sessions intended to provide practical examples of teaching practice that:

- *develop the regional understanding of Student Engagement in Higher Education;*
- *share effective learning and teaching practices;*
- *and demonstrate the value of designing student engagement into the curriculum.*

We encourage all staff to explore opportunities to develop their teaching practice and contribute to a range of discussions throughout the event.

The 3 Rivers Consortium comprises one member of staff from the five regional universities.

Sunderland	Mark Proctor	academic.development@sunderland.ac.uk
Durham	Bob Matthew	Robert.matthew@durham.ac.uk
Newcastle	Rosalind Beaumont	Rosalind.beaumont@newcastle.ac.uk
Northumbria	Scott Burgess	scott.burgess@northumbria.ac.uk
Teesside	Richard Sober	R.Sober@tees.ac.uk

This event has been organised by the Three Rivers Consortium in collaboration with the Event Management Arm for Sunderland University (sharon.olver@sunderland.ac.uk | *(0191) 515 2666* | www.unispacesunderland.com) and supported by Information Technology, Facilities, and other university services as well as ARAMARK catering.

External Keynote Speaker:

Professor Susan Orr

Dean of Learning, Teaching and Enhancement

(National Teaching Fellow), University of the Arts London.

Professor Susan Orr *is Dean of Learning, Teaching and Enhancement at the University of the Arts London. Before this she was Assistant Dean in the Faculty of Arts, Computing, Engineering and Science at Sheffield Hallam University; prior to this she was Deputy Dean at York St John University and before this she was the Teaching and Learning Coordinator at the London College of Fashion (part of the University of the Arts London). In 2009 she was awarded a chair in Pedagogy in Creative Practice.*

In 2010 she was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship.

Two key research interests

Assessment: Susan's doctoral thesis was entitled 'Making marks: the artful practice of assessment in fine art'. In this thesis she developed a theorised account of art and design assessment practice that has been used widely as a means to bring greater reflexivity to the assessment practices adopted across the Art and Design HE sector. Working from a social constructivist perspective her research identifies that assessment discourses are interlocked with narratives of identity and power relations. Susan has created new ways to understand the concept of assessment rigour in Fine Art assessment.

Writing in an arts based curricula: Susan's research in this area subverts the visual/textual binary by recasting writing as a practice that has much in common with studio practice. The title of one of co authored paper, 'Designing Your Writing, Writing Your Design' reframes the binary as a nexus.

Susan is a member of the GLAD Group (Group for Learning in Art and Design)

She is on the editorial board for the following journals:

Art, Design and Communication in Higher Education.
Journal of Writing in Creative Practice, Media Education Research Journal and Teaching in Higher Education.

The North East Universities (3 Rivers Consortium) Learning and Teaching Conference

Friday 27th March 2015, Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St. Peters, University of Sunderland

Student Engagement

8.30 – 9.00	***Arrival and Registration:*** *lobby area of the Prospect Building*
9.00 – 9.20	***Conference Opening and Introduction to Conference Themes:*** *Tom Cowie Lecture Theatre* *Professor Julie Mennell, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), University of Sunderland* *The Student Engagement*
9.20 – 10.00	***Keynote Address:*** *Tom Cowie Lecture Theatre* *Professor Susan Orr, Dean of Learning, Teaching and Enhancement (National Teaching Fellow), University of the Arts London* *Assessment in HE: 'Who's engaging us?'*
10.00 – 10.30	***Student Panel:*** *Tom Cowie Lecture Theatre* *Student Perspectives – Experiences of Students Engagement in Higher Learning* *(shifting identities, achieving aspirations, and having impact)*
10.30 – 10.50	***Q&A Session & Discussion:*** *Tom Cowie Lecture Theatre* *Using Student Engagement to enhance teaching, learning and the student experience* ***Chaired by Paul Taylor (Principal lecturer in learning and teaching, Teesside University)***

10.50 – 11.15	***Refreshment Break:*** *RegVarding Building 4th Floor Rooms 405 and 414.*					
11.20 –	***Student Engagement Workshops***					
11.20 – 11.50	1a. Foundation Press – Student Engagement in a Research Active Curriculum by Woodhouse J.(Staff), Phillips, A.(Staff) and Fell, M.(Student) from the University of Sunderland. (RegVardy Rm 404)	1b. Extending current approaches to student engagement: Engaging with 'pre-student' partners in course design and delivery - lessons learned and future implications by Janes G. (Staff) and Lunn W. (Student) from Teesside University. (RegVardy Rm 405)	1c. Supporting transitions - working with students as partners to develop innovative approaches to pre-arrival provision by Nolan S. (Staff) from Durham University. (RegVardy Rm 409a)	1d. Teaching fashion design students business concepts using visual narrative by Smith, A. (student at Northumbria University; also staff at Harrogate College). (RegVardy Rm 412)	1e. Does engaging students in the assessment process impact upon their development? - A view of the journey from the halfway point by McGrath R. (Staff) and Rodgers G. (Staff) from Teesside University. (RegVardy Rm 414)	1f. Transforming learning and student engagement: a critical consideration of the potential of 'students as partners' by Bryson, C. (Staff), Rinaldo-Langridge, F. (Staff) and Petie, O. (Student) from Newcastle University. (RegVardy Rm 416)
11.50 - 13.00	**Lunch** (RegVarding Rooms 405 and 414.) **, posters** (RegVarding Rooms 404, 409a, 412 and 416.) **and networking**					
13.00 – 13.30	2a. Improving student statistics skills by Dawson B. (Student), Case G (Staff) and McKenzie, K. (Staff) from Northumbria University. (RegVardy Rm 404)	2b. Digital Reflexivity or Digital Storytelling: A hybridity of creative reflective practice by Armstrong, P-A. (staff), Lamb, S. (Student) and Wade, J. (Student) from the University of Sunderland. (RegVardy Rm 405)	2c. Improving student writing: working in partnership to produce an online academic literacy tool by Becker, S. (Staff); Kennedy, L. (student) and Spence, N. (student) from Teesside University. (RegVardy Rm 409a)	2d. Mind the Gap: the impact of pedagogies of partnership on the student learning experience, an investigation into the transition of UK 6th Form students to Level 4 undergraduate study by Sloan D. (Staff), Manns H. (Staff) and White K. (Staff) from Northumbria University. (RegVardy Rm 412)	2e. Student engagement in Postgraduate Taught Studies: Preliminary findings from the Postgraduate Experience Project (PEP) at Teesside University by Nutt, D. (Staff) and Nixon, C. (Staff) from Teesside University. (RegVardy Rm 414)	2f. Engaging with academic writing in the University Business School: supporting transition through the Academic Writing Skills for Business programme by Nathan P.B. from Durham University. (RegVardy Rm 416)

13.40 – 14.10	3a. Student transition to and through a chemistry degree by Robson, J. M. (Staff) and Tyson, A. (Student) from Durham University. (RegVardy Rm 404)	3b. Trying it on for size! Using supported self-reflection, without the need for assessment, to motivate student development by Ferrie, L.J. (Staff) from Newcastle University. (RegVardy Rm 405)	3c. From INERTIA to BEYOND: achieving cognitive engagement and social mobility through international experience by Pearce, A. (Staff), Powell, L. (Staff) and McGrane, A. (Staff) from Northumbria and Sunderland Universities (with students Hurst, J., Costello, J., Oh, S. and Cho, J. of Northumbria University, Kyungpook National University and Chonnam National University appearing on video) (RegVardy Rm 409a)	3d. Proposing autoethnography as a method of facilitating critical reflexivity for Professional Doctorate students' by Hayes, C. (Staff) from the University of Sunderland. (RegVardy Rm 412)	3e. Knowledge to transform student teaching and learning? Understanding student interpretations of intellectual stimulation by Allin L. and Fishwick L. from Northumbria University. (RegVardy Rm 414)	3f. "The PASS programme has been fundamental to my experience as a first year": engaging learners through peer support by Myer, S. (Staff) and Cotton, Y. (Staff) from Teesside University. (RegVardy Rm 416)
14.10 – 14.35	***Refreshment Break:*** *RegVarding Building 4th Floor Rooms 405 and 414.*					
14.40 – 15.10	4a. "Skills gap, what skills gap?" Making employability and professional skills development relevant to part time students by Bishop, G. (Staff), Morahan, M. (Staff) and Braithwaite, R. (student) from Teesside University. (RegVardy Rm 404)	4b. The development of fictional narratives as part of a blended learning approach to nurse education by Corkish, C. (Staff) from Northumbria University. (RegVardy Rm 405)	4c. Investigating the perceptions of professional psychologists that students in further and higher education hold. By Swann, L. (Student), Orme, E. (Staff) and Ingwersen, J. (Staff) from Northumbria University. (RegVardy Rm 409a)	4d. Peer to Peer support – Exploring student nurses perceptions of peer mentoring within the Student Buddy Scheme by Wheatley, M. (Staff) and Hitchen, J. (Student) from Teesside University. (RegVardy Rm 412)	4e. Academic literacy and the transition to studying architecture by Bramley E. (Student), Holgate, P. (Staff) and Welch, H.(Student) from Northumbria University. (RegVardy Rm 414)	4f. Exploring the impact of Social Anxiety on student performance in Higher Education by Bushell, M. (staff) from the University of Sunderland. (RegVardy Rm 416)

15.20 – 15.50	5a. Using narrative pedagogy to promote collaborative learning by Telford, M. and Senior, E. from Northumbria University. (RegVardy Rm 404)	5b. Who's values, which values? A preliminary consideration (phase 1 of 3) of a doctoral study into the relationship between non-cognitive admissions criteria and the students' journey through a physiotherapy degree programme? By Trevor Wynter (Staff) from Northumbria University. (RegVardy Rm 405)	*5c. An evaluation of an online experiential learning tool to develop skills for professional practice by Llewellyn, A. from Teesside* University**.** (RegVardy Rm 409a)	5d. Preparing Students for their Futures: Music Enterprise at Newcastle University by Nolan, J. (Staff) and Galvin, I. (Student) from Newcastle University. (RegVardy Rm 412)	5e. Student Engagement in final year independent project work by Knowles, M. (Staff) and Dixon, D. (Staff) from the University of Sunderland. (RegVardy Rm 414)	5f. Engaging with Autonomy: reconciling independent learning and student expectations by Sober, R. (staff) and Hogg E. (student) from Teesside University. (RegVardy Rm 416)
15.50 – 16.00	***Conference Closing:*** *Closing remarks by the Chairs of the conference - on behalf of the Three Rivers Consortium* *(In the workshop rooms)*					

Keynote - Abstract.

Keynote speech by Professor Susan Orr.

Dean of Learning, Teaching and Enhancement

(National Teaching Fellow), University of the Arts London.

Assessment in HE: 'Who's engaging us?'

An exploration of the link between transforming ourselves and transforming our students (Blackie et al 2012).

In this keynote Susan Orr will share her work on creative practice assessment in order to surface and explore the links between student and staff engagement. She will argue that the current emphasis on assessment textual artefacts (the learning outcomes, policies and guidance) has served unintentionally to draw our focus away from the central act of assessment which is still -even when mediated by a screen- a human being making a judgement about the work produced by another human being. Rowntree's (1987:4) words still serve us when he reminds us that assessment is 'a human encounter'. Susan will explore the practices of assessment, the emotions of assessment and the needs to balance this human dimension with high standards of rigour and equity. Her key argument will be that if we are being serious about student engagement we need to, at the same time, look at our own engagement.

Student Panel and Q&A Session.

The **Student Panel** precedes and provides stimulus for the subsequent **Q&A session**.

Student Panel – 'Student Perspectives – Experiences of Student Engaging'.

This session will provide an opportunity for each student panel member to provide a brief vignette of their experience of being a student engaged in our higher education institutions, outlining a specific example(s) and perceived benefits to them as individuals.

Q&A Session – 'Using Student Engagement to enhance teaching, learning and the student experience'.

This session will provide an opportunity to ask questions, on L&T issues, of a panel comprising students from across the region and our invited Keynote Speaker.

Panel and Q&A session members: Student Representatives from all 5 Universities, plus Susan Orr (External Keynote Speaker).

Chair: Paul Taylor (Principal lecturer in learning and teaching, Teesside University)

Poster Presentations Over Lunch.

You are encouraged to grab your lunch from RegVardy rooms 405 or 414, then join us in RegVarding Rooms 404, 409a, 412 and 416 for a series of three minute mini-poster presentations.

The aim of this area of the programme is to offer you even more opportunities to hear about learning and teaching experiences from your regional community.

Each presenter in the series will give you a three minute overview on an aspect of their work with the aid of an electronic poster (which is one powerpoint slide).

Once you have heard a series of presentations, the presenters will be encouraged to spread out across the room to enable you to take part in informal discussions with them until 12:55.

The session will be conducted by a Chair to make the experience as enjoyable and as useful as possible. We have asked the Chair of your session to restrict questions to the end and also to be a ruthless timekeeper, so please be aware of this as you sit back and enjoy a series of 'rapid-fire' mini-presentations

Abstracts.

1a. Foundation Press – Student Engagement in a Research Active Curriculum by Woodhouse J.(Staff), Phillips, A.(Staff) and Fell, M.(Student) from the University of Sunderland.

(Student transition into higher education)

The experience of studying within a University is enriched by students' exposure to and involvement in research.

This paper will reflect on a project, Foundation Press, initiated within the Extended Art and Design Foundation Year at the University of Sunderland. Foundation Press is a publishing facility based around a Risograph machine, run by staff and students within the Foundation Art and Design Programme. Visiting artists and designers, including staff practitioners, have worked alongside stage one Art and Design students to develop print projects and publications. Outcomes have included students exhibiting alongside international artists and designers, as well as a series of residencies held within the Foundation studios at the university. Work produced within the department has been included in a number of high profile exhibitions including prints and editions shown as part of Print In Practice at the International Print Biennale, Does The It Stick by Joanne Tatham and Tom O'Sullivan at Bloomberg Project Space, London and CIRCA Projects Exhibition at Workplace Gallery, Gateshead.

The paper presents an example of active learning being utilised in order to immerse our entry-level students within the research active curriculum. Programme Leader Joe Woodhouse will explore how Foundation Press encourages students entering the university to become active participants, learning in 'research mode' and engaging them as 'producers' rather than 'consumers' of knowledge. Foundation Press has been integrated within the programme and has lead to outcomes ranging from experimental prints, zines and publications made by students (including the student-led catalogue project) to editions and publications of visiting practitioners and staff. Students begin to consider how their work enters into circulation including broader arts' networks, exhibiting and selling opportunities.

Joe Woodhouse will reflect on how this approach to curriculum design has stemmed from an interest in engaging students in professional practice, wider arts' networks and also the notion of the 'permeable art school' as explored by Q-Art and others . The responses to education and models of knowledge transfer in the area of relational aesthetics will also be explored . Visual evidence will include examples of printed matter, exhibitions and the exciting range of art and design publications that the press has supported.

Academic Tutor and Co Director of CIRCA Projects, Adam Phillips will focus on specific workshops and sessions that utilise constructivist teaching methods . Through visual examples and a slideshow of these sessions, he will show how these teaching methods assist learners to form their own identities as emerging artists and designers.

Following the commentary by Joe Woodhouse and details provided by Adam Phillips, Foundation student Megan Fell will give the learners' perspective for the Three Rivers Conference.

The project will offer an opportunity for delegates to:

- consider pedagogical approaches, utilising and shaping research to engage students in the ‘research active curriculum’.
- identify the parallels between active learning methods and learning in ‘research mode’.
- examine the use of constructivist teaching methods to help students form their own identities as emerging artists and designers.
- reflect on the relationship between learning in ‘research mode’ and professional practice or ‘graduateness’.

References

1. foundationpress.org

2. Rowles, S and Allen J. 15 Methods: 20 Questions: Interviews with UK Art and Design Educators Uncovering the Process, Value and Potential of Art Education. London: Q-Art, 2013.

3. Bourriaud, N., Relational Aesthetics. Paris: Les Presse, 1998.

4. Brooks, J.G. and M.G. Brooks. In Search of Understanding:The Case for Constructivist Classrooms. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1993.

1b. Extending current approaches to student engagement: Engaging with 'pre-student' partners in course design and delivery - lessons learned and future implications by Janes, G. (Staff) and Lunn, W. (Student) from Teesside University.

(Student transition into higher education)

UKPSF: A1, K1, V4,

Students as active partners in learning is a recent policy priority in Higher Education (NUS, 2012; HEA, 2014; QAA, 2013) which is dominated by the experiences and interests of full-time, undergraduate students and strategies for partnering with current or past students. The relationship between universities and students remains contested (McCulloch, 2009).

Student engagement is a broad term and not all student engagement is partnership (HEA, 2014), although there is consensus that partnership with students is an ethos, not merely an activity (NUS, 2012) or purely outcomes focused (HEA 2014).

HEA (2014) provides a pedagogic rationale for partnering with students to enhance student success and engagement. Andragogy has long dominated Higher Education theory and practice. A recent shift to a Heutagogical, or student directed (McAuliffe et al 2009), approach has occurred although Hase and Kenyon (2007, p115) note '…only a modicum of good research to support it.'

This case study will be used to illustrate how the principles of Heutagogy were adapted and used to effectively partner with a 'pre-student' through programme development to validation and delivery of a new Masters programme. This is an example of a student partner working in collaboration with interested parties, to determine what needs doing, why and how (NUS, 2012). However despite offering benefits for all parties (HEA, 2014), there are implications that warrant further exploration.

Based on the reflexive analysis of a 'pre-student'/academic duo, lessons learned and top tips for others contemplating a similar approach will include:

- Accessing 'pre-student' partners;
- Benefits for programme viability;
- Impact on curricula;
- Managing multiple, shifting identities;
- Impact on cohort identity;
- Issues of power;
- Benefits for 'pre-student' partners;
- and Implications for policy and practice

References

Hase S and Kenyon C (2007) Heutagogy: A child of complexity theory Complicity: An International Journal of Complexity and Education 4(1) pp111-118

HEA (2014) Framework for Partnership in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education York Higher Education Academy

McAuliffe M, Hargreaves D, Winter A and Chadwick G (2009) Does pedagogy still rule? Australasian Journal of Engineering Education 15(1) pp 13-18

McCulloch A (2009) The student as co-producer: learning from public administration about the student-university relationship Studies in Higher Education 34(2) pp171-183

NUS (2012) A Manifesto For Partnership London National Union of Students

QAA (2013) The UK Quality Code for Higher Education Gloucester Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

We would like to acknowledge the members of the MA Advancing Quality Safety & Governance in Health & Social Care Critical Friends Stakeholder Support Forum, Teesside University and North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust for their support.

1c. Supporting transitions - working with students as partners to develop innovative approaches to pre-arrival provision by Nolan S. (Staff) from Durham University.

(Student transition into higher education)

UKPSF: A1, V2, K4

A recent report from the HEA (1) detailed the importance of belonging to a community for student retention and success. Student belonging is achieved through:

- Supportive peer relations;
- Meaningful interaction between staff and students;
- Developing knowledge, confidence and identity as successful HE learners;
- And a HE experience relevant to students' interests and future goals

The collegiate system and academic departments at Durham University have a proven and successful track record in supporting students when they start their degree study; however, as noted within the report, pre-arrival support is a key area that can be overlooked.

Bain (2) describes university as "one continuous classroom without walls", and pre-arrival engagement underpins this shift in outlook. He argues that every conversation that students have, all the interactions with peers and staff, and everything they read, all contributes to developing their learning and thinking skills. Facilitating these kind of interactions with other students and staff for an additional period before the start of the course helps students to make that adjustment earlier than previously possible in their learning journey. In this way, students are able to maximize learning opportunities from the very first day of the face to face delivery of the degree programme.

In this presentation, we will discuss two projects which support students in making the transition into higher education. The first project developed a new student generated pre-arrival web-based support system for new students from the Foundation Centre at Durham University. This site prepares both local mature students and international students for studies at Durham and engenders a sense of community in a virtual landscape. This portal has been popular with students, and we will present both qualitative and quantitative evidence to show how it has impacted on the student experience.

After exploring the success of this project, we will conclude this presentation by looking at its successor "Transitions into HE". This project is developing an innovative e-learning course to support all incoming first year students before they start at Durham University. The course is designed to help students develop study skills and to successfully make the transition into higher education. This pan-University initiative includes collaborators from all Durham faculties, together with support services, DSU and colleges.

The presentation will detail how these web-based resources were developed through working with students as partners and will focus on the rationale, the solutions being created and the impressive student response to the sites.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank summer students Sarah Learmonth, Fran Weetman, Katherine Hurst, Jason Hutsby, and Stephen Brayson for developing many of the resources. The author would also like to thank the staff collaborators: Steve Leech, Megan Bruce, Eleanor Loughlin, Malcolm Murray and Elaine Tan for supporting the management of these projects. In addition the author would like to express thanks to Durham University's Centre for Academic and Researcher Development (CARD) for funding this work.

References

(1) Sanders, John, and Louise Higham. "The role of higher education students in widening access, retention and success." (2012), Higher Education Academy

(2) Bain, K, "What the Best College Students Do", (2012), Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

1d. Teaching fashion design students business concepts using visual narrative by Smith, A.(student at Northumbria University; also staff at Harrogate College).

(Student futures beyond higher education)

The continuing failure of start-up businesses within the fashion industry has been a topic highlighted by Creative Skillset UK's recent research data (2011) and the UK Fashion & Design Council bodies reports in recent years. Just a handful of educational institutions have started to consider that the failure may be in part due to the way they provide learning about business skills.

The author's doctoral research is grounded on the idea that the lack of an appropriate, engaging and sustained entrepreneurial and business skill, undergraduate fashion education, with relevant teaching material to match the learning styles of creative visual learners means graduates launch start-up businesses when they are unprepared and under-skilled.

Integral to the author's Doctorate of Design Practice, 10 learning sessions have been developed using a brigolage methodology encompassing Action Research (Koshy V, 2010) and Design Practice, underpinned by discourses on design thinking, learning styles and pedagogy in the modern age (Beetham H & Sharpe R, 2007). The sessions comprise a module called "Getting on with Business", which deliver teaching and learning materials in an innovative visual narrative format to creative students.The main focus is to enable them to better grasp the complexities of business skills and acumen (Cousin G, 2006) to encourage sustainable entrepreneurship within their specialist arenas.

For this conference I would like to offer a workshop demonstrating how this method of teaching, and learning materials that will be utilised within the sessions, are delivered to and with students. As this approach to teaching is new and a pilot scheme will be in progress, the opportunity for feedback this conference can offer the author would be very valuable for future development and shared practice.

References

Beetham,H. and Sharpe,R Ed (2007) Rethinking Pedagogy for a Digital Age. Designing and delivery E learning.Routledge London.

Cassidy, S. (2004) Learning styles: An overview of theories, models and measures. Educational Psychology Vol 24 ,No 4 August 2004 (retrieved June 2014). Carfax Publishing Company

Cousin G, (2006) An Introduction to threshold concepts. Planet, Issue 17 December 2006,HEA Journals

Creative Skillset UK – data http://creativeskillset.org/assets/0000/6032/Sector_Skills_Assessment_for_the_Fashion_and_Textiles_Sectors_in_the_UK_2011.pdf

Koshy, V. 2nd Ed (2010) Action research for improving Educational Practice. London: SAGE

1e. Does engaging students in the assessment process impact upon their development? - A view of the journey from the halfway point by McGrath R. (Staff) and Rodgers G. (Staff) from Teesside University.

(Student development and transformation)

UKPSF: A3, K2, V2

Does Engaging Students In the Assessment Process Impact Upon Their Development? – A View of the Journey from the Halfway Point.

Attendance at a workshop delivered by Phil Race in 2008, stimulated an interest in use of different approaches to assessment and feedback, in particular, student self-assessment. Race suggests that self-assessment can enable understanding of the tutor feedback and thus enhance learning (2005, 2014), and that students will naturally under mark when self-assessing. This became the starting point for this research project, initially a small-scale study, which has now been developed into a study series, variables being added each year to examine their impact upon learner development. Participants are from two discipline areas: BA Early Childhood Studies and BSc Crime and Investigation. Both programmes have a strong employability focus, future employers requiring a level of knowledge and confidence which may be developed via presentation skills enhancement. Thus in-course assessment comprising a presentation was selected as the focus for the study.

Initially intended as a small-scale study over one academic year, the researchers are now in their third year of a projected five year study exploring this self-assessment task, and mapping the impact of introducing staged variables over a period of four years. Students self-assess in one specific summative assessment task – the Presentation.

An interim report summarising the journey to date is the focus of this presentation.

Overview of Study.

- Year One - Level 4 and Level 5 students were given a marking criteria guide developed by the researchers, and encouraged to reflect upon their personal performance. Participants undertook the self-assessment, awarding themselves a grade and completing an action plan. 60% of Level 4 participants assessed their performance at a higher level than the assessors; approximately 50% of Level 5 students marked themselves higher. During analysis researchers felt this was a one-dimensional process, not developing the learner to their full extent (Race, 2014; McMillan and Hearn, 2008), thus deciding that to ensure students had a greater level of understanding, and engagement they would develop their own marking criteria.
- Year Two – Level 5 students developed their own marking criteria, and used it to plan their presentations (Race, 2014). Again the tendency was towards over-assessing performance.
- Year Three – Level 6 students were encouraged to revisit feedback from the previous year, informed the same marking criteria would be applied, with an additional reflection following receipt of tutor marks (Brown, Bull and Pendlebury, 1997). This data collection will not be completed until February 2015.

This paper will explain the progression of the study so far, including interim findings, and show examples of the tools used in the self-assessment process. It will include video comments by participating students. It will also introduce the variable planned for the next academic year in which the self-assessment mark potentially becomes the final mark for the assessment.

References

Brown, G., Bull, J., and Pendlebury, M. (1997) Assessing Student Learning in Higher Education. Abingdon: Routledge.

McMillan, J. H., and Hearn, J. (2008) 'Student Self-Assessment: The Key to Stronger Student Motivation and Higher Achievement'. Educational Horizons. V87 n1 p40-49.

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Race, P. (2014) Making Learning Happen: A Guide for Post Compulsory Education. London:Sage. 3rd edn. London:Sage.

1f. Transforming learning and student engagement: a critical consideration of the potential of 'students as partners' by Bryson, C. (Staff), Rinaldo-Langridge, F. (Staff) and Petie, O. (Student) from Newcastle University.

(Student development and transformation)

Despite the recent emphasis on student engagement (SE) in UK HE recently, engaging students more deeply has been more problematic. This strong engagement is required, arguably, to enable students to learn transformatively and more fully realise all the opportunities to develop graduate identities – 'becoming' (Bryson and Hand, 2007; Fromm, 1978). Dubet's (1994) contention that integrating strongly into university, and nascent evidence from students themselves about their emerging and strengthening engagement when they take on such roles, indicates a possible catalyst to strong engagement (Bryson, 2014); the 'students as partners' approach.

Does this offer a way forward? Thus far there is little research and scholarship on partnership. Wenstone (2012) has presented a compelling argument that partnership has many virtues, not least because it counters the sterile position and transactional ethos of 'students as consumers' and the commodification of education, ultimately an alienating experience for both staff and students (Mann, 2001). The concept also builds on the work of such leading educational thinkers as Dewey (1916) and Frieire (1968).

Healey et al (2014) have presented a typology of partnership activities and advocated 'partnership learning communities' as the way to embed this. However few studies offer the perspective of students (Little, 2011; Bryson, 2014 are exceptions) and do not investigate, rigorously, how a sense of partnership is developed and what factors influence this. Critically, they also do not yet demonstrate evidentially that partnership fosters strong engagement in the individual, and/or lead to transformational learning and outcomes.

Through a holistic student engagement approach within a complex degree setting for more than five years, we have introduced practices where students are partners, in terms of the approaches described in the literature. Staff and students work together to encourage an ethos of community, involvement, co-inquiry and co-developing. We moved beyond curricular co-design into co-determination, co-developing modules that are project and practice based, allowing students to develop their own creative ideas and produce outputs that are authentic to their aspirations and interests. All these modules are now conducted in partnership mode, with the students co-determining assessment tasks, weighting and criteria inter alia.

This paper presents our evaluative research into students as partners, through a longitudinal, qualitative study drawing on interviews with participant students. A pilot study showed that engagement was enhanced for at least some students. However not all were, and interim findings from the more systematic investigation will be presented and discussed. It is clear that the perspectives, dispositions and aspirations that students bring are highly salient. There is also all sorts of practical impediments to enabling the student experience to be a partnership in sufficient measure to enable students to 'feel like partners', despite the fact that some of these students were involved directly in several forms of what is deemed to be partnership activity at once.

Therefore it would appear that realising partnerships is not straightforward nor is delivering all its argued benefits. However there are profound benefits, even viewed through a crude indicator such as the NSS (which showed improvements from 73% to 100% since the strategy was introduced).

The point that two of the presenters, Fae and Olivia, have experienced these practices as students adds authenticity to this discussion.

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2a. Improving student statistics skills by Dawson B. (Student), Case G (Staff) and McKenzie, K. (Staff) from Northumbria University.

(Student development and transformation)

UKPSF: K1

Background

Many students experience anxiety about, and problems with, using statistics, despite these skills being a key requirement for many graduate jobs. These difficulties can also impact on retention and degree classification [1]. There are many excellent external online resources that are available to students, but currently the students must find these themselves and evaluate whether they are good and reliable sources of information.

Project Aims

The project aimed to create a suite of high quality online statistics resources by collating and integrating existing external resources, which have been tailored by the project group to meet identified student needs. These resources can be made available to the wider student body at the university, thereby positively influencing teaching practices and the student learning experience at an institutional level. This approach is consistent with the good practice recommendations made in the recent Higher Education Academy report 'Mathematical Transitions' (2014) [2] and wider government policy to improve mathematical and statistical skills of students [3].

In the initial stages of the project, the research team (including two current MRes students) worked with students to identify the areas where they felt access to additional statistical resources and examples was required. We identified good quality online resources that met these needs. The project then provided access to these resources in a structured and coherent way that is consistent with the learning needs of the students at different stages of their undergraduate and postgraduate educational journey. The second phase of the project aims to assess student evaluation of the resources, working with student groups to identify their needs in relation to statistical knowledge at key stages in their learning, then make the resources available to the wider student population and increase student skills and confidence in using statistics (with the ultimate aim of improving retention, degree classification, and employability).

Methods & Results

Quantitative (comparing student confidence in using statistics before and after accessing the resources) within participant design, and Qualitative (evaluating student feedback about the resources). Preliminary findings and themes emerging from the data will be discussed.

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2b. Digital Reflexivity or Digital Storytelling: A hybridity of creative reflective practice by Armstrong, P-A. (staff), Lamb, S. (Student) and Wade, J. (Student) from the University of Sunderland.

(Student futures beyond higher education)

The use of digital storytelling (Lambert, 2007) and digital reflection (Kirk and Pitches, 2013) gives the user the 'tools' of critical expression and reflection. This allows for those who have a preference for visual/aural reflection (Doloughan, 2002; Kirk and Pitches, 2013). Critical reflection can capture understanding and knowledge in the form of sketchbooks, photographs, videos and audio recordings (Nelson, 2009). In this research, I have embraced the use of e-portfolios as a creative multi-layered tool of digital reflection (Armstrong, 2011b; 2013a; 2013b; 2014b; Armstrong, Pilar and Donkin, 2011; Armstrong, Belias and Douglass, 2014); video and sound collages as digital reflexivity.

Session Description

'A portfolio without reflection is just a multimedia presentation or a fancy electronic resume or a digital scrapbook' (Barrett, 2000, http://electronicportfolios.org, accessed 3rd December 2014).

This research draws from a range of debates on the construction of critical reflection of identity (Gardner, 2009; 2014; Rolfe, Jasper and Freshwater, 2011) embracing the uses of e-portfolios (e.g. Pelliccione and Raison, 2009) which promote reflection which also gives space for engagement in scholarship.

This is possible through drawing a repository of artefacts which can be used for different purposes (Andre, 2010: 120). The construction of professional knowledge through artefacts can capture tacit knowledge and identity which act as a tool for professional identity development.

E-portfolios facilitate the professionals and learners to present their reflections using multiple media (Milman and Adamy, 2009). The embracing of digital text as a living resume can as proposed by March (2003) and Trent and Schroff, (2012) act as a catalyst for capturing the fashioning and refashioning of identities.

There are limitations and barriers to using e-portfolios, these include: the perceptions of technology (Trent and Sheriff, 2012); they are time consuming (Andre, 2010); and they can become a digital scrapbook (Barrett, 2010) leading to reflective reproduction (McIntosh, 2008; 2010).

I propose e-portfolios give a user (a professional and or a learner) the space to express their voice and identity which is personal and allows for the embedding of digital artefacts. Digital reflexivity promotes scholarship; it allows a professional and or learner to express their subconscious layers of self through creative expressions just as you can through text (see Hunt, 2013). The use of digital reflexivity is not confined to e-portfolios. I argue it is also represented by video and sound collages as forms of artful auto ethnography (Barlett, 2013; Finley, 2005; 2011; Pelias, 2013) which embody reflexivity.

This session will present case examples of the digital reflexivity (e-portfolios, video and sound collages) for a range of modules which embrace a creative learning pedagogy on the Business and Management Applied Route of programmes.

The applied route includes a one year internship where the learners complete a two-stage critical reflection (stage 1 while in employment as a digital storyboard using a e-portfolio) and stage 2 (final year as digital reflexivity using sound and or video collages; digital storyboards).

Outline of Session.

- Introduction to theoretical and methodological groundings for the research.
- Case studies of Digital storytelling and Digital Reflexivity.
- Discussion and Debate with participants.

Session Outcomes.

1. A critical application of research informed pedagogy within a creative learning approach to reflective practice.
2. Demonstrate examples of digital storytelling and reflexivity.
3. Critically debate the praxis research and the implications of digital reflexivity for learners as an invitation to reflection.

The session will include the space for the participants to co-construct a dialogue with the researcher by sharing experiences, and expertise as a reflexive dialogue for teacher talk (Cohen, 2010).

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2c. Improving student writing: working in partnership to produce an online academic literacy tool by Becker, S. (Staff), Kennedy, L. (student) and Spence, N. (student) from Teesside University.

(Student transition into higher education)

This paper will outline development and pilot evaluation of the SALT (Student Academic Literacy Tool): an online resource to enable students to develop their academic writing skills.

Developing an appropriate academic writing style is crucial in achieving success on undergraduate degree programmes. KIS data for Teesside University Psychology Undergraduate programmes in common with other undergraduate programmes indicates that written assessments contribute 90% of the total assessment load. Interest in student literacy and writing skills has highlighted the need for discipline specific as well as specialist English Language support (Gunn et al, 2011). Funded by a University Learning and Teaching Innovation grant Dr Sue Becker has worked in partnership to produce the SALT with student researchers from across all undergraduate levels. Combining a self-rating scale used by students to measure the accuracy of academic writing; and a glossary of terms for those lacking specialist knowledge of the English language, the tool was launched in September 2014 to all level 4 psychology students. Feedback from 140 first year psychology students indicates that the tool is accessible and the team will present pilot evaluation results.

Feedback also supported the development of the pilot booklet into an online resource to facilitate students continuing engagement with the tool. (Mort & Drury, 2012). The team will also discuss findings from an impact evaluation following the cohort's first written assessment and their experiences of partnership working.

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2d. Mind the Gap: the impact of pedagogies of partnership on the student learning experience, an investigation into the transition of UK 6th Form students to Level 4 undergraduate study by Sloan D. (Staff), Manns H. (Staff) and White K. (Staff) from Northumbria University.

(Student transition into higher education)

The relationship between establishing a level of sensitivity and understanding between tutors and students has been identified by Ridley (2004) as a significant factor in student problems when enrolling at university and therefore has a direct link to successful transition and retention. This research is therefore important as it focuses on researching the transition challenges and issues of students entering first year undergraduate study from secondary education and is particularly concerned with the pre-arrival preparation of students for study in HE. The focus will be on appropriate pedagogic and study skills preparation.

Although universities increasingly provide extended induction processes designed to facilitate students social and academic transition into HE, experience suggests that these programmes are generally designed in isolation from and without reference to any preparation undertaken in School. The literature suggests that a discourse exists between both the learning styles and teaching methods adopted at secondary and tertiary levels causing inconsistencies for both staff and students (Brinkworth, McCann, Matthews, & Nordström, 2009). Our early discussions with teachers, suggest a lack of awareness amongst both sets of educators of the differences between study practices at School and those at University. Basic skills that we perhaps assume, such as note taking in lectures, may not be developed and the coping strategies needed to move from being 1 of 30 in a class, to 1 of 300 is not considered.

Northumbria University Student's Union have recently identified Transition as a key theme in their learning and teaching strategy which has been developed from a series of focus groups with students aimed at identifying what is important to them. This research will address a gap both in the literature and in the sector as a whole by working with a sample of North East 6th Form tutors and students to identify the nature of their pedagogic preparation for undergraduate study.

Aim:

Identification and understanding of the academic transition challenges faced by Sixth Form students on entry to University.

Objectives:

- Identify approaches schools use to prepare students for University and teacher /lecturer perceptions of student academic transition needs.
- Understand student academic transition concerns and how these are dealt with by Schools and Universities.

Need:

The proposal builds on existing literature suggesting that disconnect exists between both the learning styles and teaching methods adopted at secondary and tertiary levels causing inconsistencies for staff and students (Brinkworth, McCann, Matthews, & Nordström, 2009).

Methodology:

The research will present the initial findings of focus groups with:

- schools exploring teacher's perceptions of transition needs and identification of current actions
- lecturers exploring transition needs from a university discipline perspective

Researchers are currently working with a small group of local schools that act as feeders to programmes at Northumbria University to develop an understanding of the generic and discipline specific transition activities already in place. This will allow us to identify potential disconnects and then to determine appropriate interventions that will be jointly developed and delivered.

The output will be the development of transition interventions (materials, workshops etc.) in partnership with Schools to support student pre-entry preparation and a guide aimed at 6th Form and first year undergraduate tutors supporting design and development of appropriate materials.

Attendees will made aware of the current literature informing the debate on student transition, understand the issues presented from the preliminary focus groups with 6th Form School staff and leave with an appreciation of how these are impacting on Level 4 student performance.

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2e. Student engagement in Postgraduate Taught Studies: Preliminary findings from the Postgraduate Experience Project (PEP) at Teesside University by Nutt, D. (Staff) and Nixon, C. (Staff) from Teesside University.

(Student retention, progression and completion)

Despite a growing body of evidence looking at postgraduate student experience (e.g. Hallett, 2010; HEA's PTES survey; Tobbell & O'Donnell, 2013), there has been little research attention given to exploring barriers to participation in Postgraduate Taught Study, understanding student and employers expectations of PGT study, identifying student progression and retention issues, and appraising post-study outcomes. The STEM Postgraduate Experience Project (PEP), funded by HEFCE and led by Kingston University aims to address these issues, and has engaged 11 universities across the UK to participate in this research. The PEP Entry to Study Survey provides a starting point for examining some of these issues; in this paper we share findings from Teesside University's institutional data, focusing specifically on students' expectations of, and attitudes towards postgraduate study.

Drawing on themes of engagement identified by Trowler (2010) we discuss Teesside University's institutional findings within the context of student engagement, examining students' reasons for undertaking PGT study. Our key aim is to highlight students' expectations of postgraduate study and the ways in which they expect PG level study to differ from UG level study. In doing so, we aim to identify practical outcomes that can be used within planning and interventions aimed at student engagement, retention, progression and completion.

'Engagement to improve learning' for Teesside University survey respondents, 'interest in their chosen subject' and 'the development of more specialist or broad ranging skills and knowledge' were among the most commonly cited reasons for undertaking PGT level study. Further examination of the data showed that a large majority of students agreed that PG level study required more independent study than UG level study, although a similar proportion of students also expected a more personalised study experience at PG level than at UG level. Within the theme of 'engagement to improve learning' we examine students' preferred methods of feedback on their academic work, highlighting differences and/or similarities between UG and PG feedback preferences.

Key concerns and anxieties that students have about their academic and non-academic study experiences at PG level, and the types of support that students would find helpful, will also be summarised.

'Economics of engagement'

For Trowler (2010) "concerns about 'value for money' – both from public funding bodies and from fee-paying students – are more pressing than ever" (p.27), and Morgan (2012) has highlighted how the 'massification' of undergraduate degrees creates further demand for postgraduate qualifications as the advantage of an undergraduate degree in the current labour market declines. Our findings reflect these concerns, and, as almost three quarters of survey respondents expected 'more value for money at PG level than at UG level', we suggest that the 'economics of engagement' are more pertinent for postgraduate students in the current economic climate. Furthermore, recent HEFCE research on 'widening participation' highlighted that the North-East of England "is the region of the country where young people are least likely to go into HE" (HEFCE, 2013).

This is supported by our institutional research findings where 57.6% of Teesside University survey respondents were 'first-generation' students. Also, as "improving my employment prospects" was cited by 79.8% of survey respondents as the most important reason for PG study, and 80.6% of students believed that employers would value a PG qualification more than an UG qualification, we discuss issues of economic engagement within the context of widening participation in the region.

A further issue we examine within the 'economics of engagement' theme is funding; we explore the various ways in which students are funding their PG study, and how this is shaping their decisions about undertaking PG study. We also identify differences and similarities between students who were in receipt of a PEP Scholarship and non-Scholarship students in the context of student engagement.

The Postgraduate Experience Project has been undertaken to provide practical outcomes that help sustain the PGT market, enhance student engagement in postgraduate taught study and to explore and better understand the experience of postgraduate students particularly on STEM programmes. It is anticipated that the findings presented here will have relevance not only for postgraduate students at Teesside University but for other HEIs and employers, regionally and nationally.

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2f. Engaging with academic writing in the University Business School: supporting transition through the Academic Writing Skills for Business programme by Nathan P.B. from Durham University.

(Student transition into higher education)

Student engagement requires successful transition (Trowler, and Trowler, 2010: 12). However, the transition from pre-university to university study has been widely recognised as comprising a difficult experience for students (for example Smith, 2004; Goddard and Beard, 2007). In addition to the challenges of acquiring disciplinary content knowledge and understanding, undergraduate students entering the University are faced with the need to develop and acquire knowledge and understanding of the academic communication conventions within their disciplines, in particular through the academic writing which forms a core element of expression of their disciplinary voice as well as comprising a core element of their university assessment.

For native speaker students entering the University, the vast majority are moving from A-level study to university study, this transition requires some important changes in their approach to, and realisation of, academic writing, in comparison to their A-level writing, both in terms of product and process. For many non-native speaker students, this transition into university requires a significant shift from the writing encountered and generated through their IELTS or other language testing examinations (e.g. Moore & Morton, 2004) or in relation to the writing within their home culture, if they are to successfully master their university academic writing. Changes required for both native and non-native speakers are likely to include the need for more formal systems of citation and referencing, which must be visibly demonstrated in their writing (Nathan, 2014 unpublished) and the requirement for more independent research and unsupported writing (e.g. Briggs *et al.*, 2012). The challenges of this transition from pre-university to university academic writing apply across all the disciplines.

Within the Durham University Business School, in order to support undergraduate business students through their transition into university academic writing, the Academic Writing Unit, situated in the University's English Language Centre, delivers an extended programme, now in its fifth year of operation, known as the Academic Writing Skills for Business programme. This course is offered in the first term of academic study to undergraduate students. Through this programme, students are encouraged to engage with conventions and lecturer expectations in regard to academic writing in their discipline.

Students on the academic writing programme investigate the different forms and genres of academic writing required of them on their degree programmes, including business reports and the different forms of essay writing. The range of different academic writing conventions which students must meet through their academic writing are highlighted and discussed with students experiencing and analysing, for example, text models for the presence of conventional forms and structures and other core aspects of this writing.

This presentation provides a detailed description of the Academic Writing Skills for Business Programme and its role in supporting the business student transition into university writing. The background to the programme and its implementation are discussed: in relation to transition as well as student engagement with academic writing and the conventions and cultures of their disciplinary context.

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3a. Student transition to and through a chemistry degree by Robson, J. M. (Staff) and Tyson, A. (Student) from Durham University.

(Student transition into higher education)

UKPSF: K3, A2, A4.

The preparation and development of independent study skills, vital for university study, is widely regarded as being lacking in A-Level qualifications. Universities are therefore required to incorporate the learning skills, that students once entering university already possessed, into the transitional process.[1] [2] However it is important that institutions do not give into the temptation to lower standards in order to ease student transition and ultimately lose sight of where students are meant to be transitioning to.[3] [4] [5]

It is vital that institutions do not become blindsided and forget the bigger picture. Throughout the course of a science degree, students are expected to develop a comprehensive understanding of scientific principles, theory and experimental practise in order to be able to use their scientific thinking and learning approaches to advance the scientific field throughout their careers.

Facilitating this transition from student to scientific thinker and independent learner is not only important for the science sector but it is vital in producing engaged, informed, employable and responsible participants in society. Successfully helping students to transition to university in the first year is pointless unless students are able to successfully transition through university and emerge the other side as a scientific thinker and employable graduate.[1] [3]

Yet, student approaches to learning is still riddled with misconceptions, and there is little focus on student approaches within science.[6] It is commonly assumed that the approaches students adopt towards a task is predetermined by student characteristics beyond the influence of lecturers. Conversely, students are able to adopt any approach, regardless of their ability. Indeed, students may have a predilection for a particular learning approach, but this does not mean that other learning approaches cannot be adopted when actively encouraged.[7] Learning, and the approaches to it, is as much a function of the teaching environment and tasks as it is student characteristics.[8]

Knowledge and understanding about how students approach learning, and the various factors that can alter that learning, is vital for universities to be able to teach for successful learning.

This presentation will discuss the current findings of a project looking at constructing a student profile of chemists learning approaches at Durham University to understand how students are currently approaching their studies. Two cohorts of students were studied: first year students during their transition to university, to try and understand the skills and learning approaches of students on entering higher education; and third years in the last weeks of the first term, in order to appreciate the skills gained through the transition to graduation. Whether Durham is successfully providing the employability skills needed by students was also considered.

This talk will present the ‘student profile of transition to and through a chemistry degree’. Using this profile, the initial findings and recommendations will be discussed, with conclusions for how lecturers, at Durham and beyond, may encourage a deep approach to learning through their teaching - particularly targeting weak points in order to ease the transition to and through university, and aid students’ transformation into independent learners and employable graduates.[6]

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3b. Trying it on for size! Using supported self-reflection, without the need for assessment, to motivate student development by Ferrie, L.J. (Staff) from Newcastle University.

(Student development and transformation)

The process of effective self-reflection is a difficult skill for most to learn but its importance for future learning is without question (1-3). A plethora of textbooks, literature and web based learning materials exist to support someone wishing to use self-reflection as an aid to learning (4,5).

However when we look at the learning journey of an UG bioscience student often the pressures of a high assessment load mean that the motivation to truly engage in this form of personal development (PD) is lacking. This learning barrier is compounded further by the traditional behaviour of science based subjects whereby the emotive process of self-reflection is often not a formalised, recorded and/or monitored process. The question therefore must be; how do we engage our students in the process of self–reflection as a means of PD if there is no professional or academic drive to do so?

Within the School of Biomedical Sciences at Newcastle University we have introduced two subject specific electronic PD activities to the first stages (1 and 2) of our undergraduate degree programmes. Here we can report the cumulative student satisfaction levels gathered over 6 years regarding the content, usefulness to student learning and development and future impact of our stage 2 My e-Careers activity. Providing such a unique, structured and subject relevant interface for students to “try on” self-reflection in relation to employability skills development has not only encouraged but motivated our students to engage with PD. The positive use of this system has prompted us to integrate a second PD activity within stage 1 to not only address a key issue at this stage (feedback transition) but to support students in developing a long term self-reflective attitude to their learning. Preliminary student responses have clearly shown the student demand and the likely benefit this system will have for our students learning.

What can be seen from the initiatives outlined above is that the addition of simple but subject specific electronic PD interfaces can add quality to any undergraduate degree programme by motivating engagement with reflection without the need for professional or academic credit. These activities will not only support but encourage students in making the transformation to confident and self-directed learners, a key skills outcome for any undergraduate programme.

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3c. From INERTIA to BEYOND: achieving cognitive engagement and social mobility through international experience or how we engage students to transform themselves by going away and coming back again by Pearce, A. (Staff), Powell, L. (Staff) and McGrane, A. (Staff) from Northumbria and Sunderland Universities.

(Appearing by video: students from Northumbria University, Kyungpook National University and Chonnam National University: Hurst, J., Costello, J., Oh, S. and Cho, J.)

(Student development and transformation)

Overall session aims

1. Contribute to the regional development of understanding how to build, support and exploit an international partnership.
2. Share L&T practices effective in supporting local students to engage with international opportunities, by analysing a specific, highly successful case.
3. Contribute to or create a support network specifically for internationalising experience for regional students.

Specific session objectives

1. To present our ongoing research into a highly successful international, multilateral collaboration (runner-up 'Best International Collaboration' THES Awards 2014) which has transformed students' ambition to study in an unexpected country, making it the most popular exchange destination in the university and the university the most successful of all seven collaborative partners.
2. The presenters, all 'blended professionals' (Whithurch, 2009), are conducting a longitudinal study over 5 years, following 3 student cohorts, into student engagement with the opportunity to work and study in this foreign country and the effects beyond graduation.
3. The session will present our early findings from the first 2 years:
    a. Engagement before going to live, study and work abroad
    b. Support while away
    c. development after returning
4. Emerging elements of a new theoretical framework for student engagement will be presented.
5. Attendees will gain insight from a "warts 'n' all" honest presentation of implementation challenges, pitfalls and mistakes, as well as successes that challenge assumptions, while also being invited to comment on and contribute to emergent L&T theory and practice developed specifically in and for the region's internationalisation.
6. We have invited both outgoing (local) and incoming (international) students to take part in a Q&A at the end of the presentation to provide a platform for the authentic 'student voice'.

Relevance

Contribution to the Theme and Importance to Literature

We have defined engagement as 'individual student learning' and students' engagement with 'structure and process' (Trowler, 2010), focussing on engagement for equality and social justice. Humanistic and constructivist approaches to education (eg Freire (1972), Piaget (1970)) and a 'holistic' approach to internationalisation (Robson & Turner, 2007) underpin our personal philosophies of L&T.

Dewey's (1916) ideas about democracy and social reform through education provide guiding principles: HE not only as a way to gain knowledge, but rather as a way for a student to learn how to live, realise their full potential and use their skills for the greater good. Dewey proposed that a university is a social institution through which social reform should take place. This was particularly important for us, working in a provincial, post-1992 university where a third of students are from the NorthEast, a third from working-class homes and 15% from areas with little tradition of HE. 91% come from state schools.

The need for intercultural understanding and international knowledge has become an urgent priority (Bartell, 2003). International competence is now critical to a nation's health – "a generalized necessity rather than an option for the tier of societal elites as in the past" (p.49). We equate international mobility with social mobility and believe that developing global citizens is one way universities contribute to society.

Experiencing 'inertia' (Krause, 2005) in students' behavioural engagement (Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004) with international opportunities, we used emotional engagement to help students invest in their learning, go beyond expectations and relish the challenge of studying and working abroad: cognitive engagement. Achieving this through the 'scaffolding' L&T approach (Bruner, 1960), and best practice developed by Kruse & Brubaker (2007), we pinpointed a series of 'support points' required by a student in the process of application / preparation and identified the importance of guidance from a teacher or more competent peer as students entered their 'zones of proximal development' (Vygotsky, 1978) to consider and manage living abroad. This builds on Mann's (2001) identification of individual staff interventions as crucial to student engagement, and our roles as 'blended professionals' (Whitchurch, 2009) are analysed.

Our work also focuses on developing the student experience by working with students as partners through peer-to-peer learning and university communities of practice. This entails their participation in challenging academic activities and enriching educational experiences. We facilitate formative communications between students and academic staff. Coates (2010) found that student interactions do not necessarily align with organisational structures: we built new processes with them.

Explained in this session will be how this work addresses seven of Krause's (2005) ten working principles to enhance student engagement.

1. Monitor and respond to demographic subgroups
2. Set explicit and responsive expectations
3. Foster social connections
4. Acknowledge the challenges
5. Provide targeted self-management strategies
6. Use assessment to shape the student experience
7. Use complex engagement, including beyond graduation

and all six scales of the National Survey of Student Engagement: academic challenge, active learning, student/staff interactions, enriching educational experiences, supportive learning environment, work-integrated learning.

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3d. Proposing autoethnography as a method of facilitating critical reflexivity for Professional Doctorate students' by Hayes, C. (Staff) from the University of Sunderland.

(Student development and transformation)

UKPSF: A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5; K2, K3, K5 and K6; V2, V3 and V4

This session opens the debate of whether auto ethnography can be regarded as a therapeutic and reflexive means through which Professional Doctorate students can formulate narrative accounts of their historical contribution to professional practice. How they can deliberately and consciously embed themselves within theoretical perspectives and perhaps more significantly the application of these perspectives to practice will be explored by the opportunity of comparing traditional processes of reflection with autoethnography. As students become critically reflexive and introspective in their explorations of personal contribution in their career trajectories the need for a degree of scientific rigour in assessing the trustworthiness and authenticity of personal accounts is imperative. Autoethnography provides a valuable mechanism for developing autobiographical narrative accounts of personal experience, practical interventions and personal perceptions of what their contribution to a professional field of practice actually is. This workshop will provide an insight into how autoethnography might be used as a qualitative method of facilitating critical reflexivity for students undertaking a programme of study leading to the award of Professional Doctorate. As a methodology, autoethnography has a clear relevance to vocational and experiential learning and the pre-requisite skills required to devise a portfolio of evidence linking prior achievement to current professional credibility. Despite this, there are still key tensions in how this methodology might acts as a dynamic driver of change for professional practice and future career progression and the session has been designed to stimulate debate for academics as to its potential use in situating narrative accounts of experience and in framing key contributions to professional practice.

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3e. Knowledge to transform student teaching and learning? Understanding student interpretations of intellectual stimulation by Allin L. and Fishwick L. from Northumbria University.

(Student development and transformation)

Krause and Coates (2008) argue intellectual stimulation is key to student engagement and that unless students are challenged and challenging themselves to learn, they are not likely to form meaningful or long lasting commitment to their studies.

Intellectual stimulation may also be linked to the notion of ‘threshold concepts’ and transformational learning through 'troublesome knowledge' (Meyer, Land and Baillie, 2010). However, little attention has been paid to student interpretations of intellectual stimulation or student views of the teaching and learning practices which develop this.

This session presents the findings from research with students that aimed to explore these areas in more depth with a view to enhancing practice.

Fifty students across levels 4 and 5 on the BA (Hons) Sport Development with Coaching programme were invited to discuss in pairs and write their responses to four questions relating to intellectual stimulation and their experiences of this. Qualitative analysis of the data suggests that many students differentiate between academic challenge and intellectual stimulation, and that teaching that promotes motivation to learn is a key component. The audience will have an opportunity to discuss the implications of the findings in relation to student engagement and enhancement of practice.

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3f. "The PASS programme has been fundamental to my experience as a first year": engaging learners through peer support by Myer, S. (Staff) and Cotton, Y. (Staff) from Teesside University.

(Student development and transformation)

UKPSF: A2, A4

This presentation will discuss the introduction of Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) at Teesside University.

This initiative was adopted as part of an evolving learning development service, the Learning Hub, which aims to provide an innovative and strategic approach to learning support (Teesside University, 2015).

PASS is an internationally recognised scheme whereby student volunteer leaders are trained to support the learning of students in lower years. PASS sessions are a partnership between the participating students who decide on the content, and the PASS Leaders, who use innovative techniques to facilitate the sessions (Ody and Carey, 2009). The leaders are supported by academic co-ordinators and PASS supervisors, who train leaders and administer the scheme. In 2013-14, PASS was piloted in two subject areas, English and Physiotherapy. In 2014-15, PASS has been extended into Psychology, Engineering and Computing.

The pilot scheme was evaluated using data from focus groups and surveys. Both PASS leaders and participating students were extremely positive about their experience. PASS leaders gained increased confidence and sense of self-worth. They also developed in areas such as presentation skills, time management and leading groups. For some leaders who had aspirations of becoming academics, the experience gave them a valuable opportunity to engage with students' learning. For participating students, sharing with their peers in the sessions enabled them to improve their subject knowledge, developing a deeper understanding of the curriculum. Participants also improved their study skills, by experiencing different learning methods and problem solving techniques.

The presentation will consider the future for PASS at Teesside. We will reflect on the advantages and challenges of our approach, especially the opportunity for other institutions in the region to introduce a similar scheme.

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4a. "Skills gap, what skills gap?" Making employability and professional skills development relevant to part time students by Bishop, G. (Staff), Morahan, M. (Staff) and Braithwaite, R. (student) from Teesside University.

(Student development and transformation)

UKPSF: K5, V1

The School of Science and Engineering (SSE), Teesside University, recently introduced a common employability assessment framework across all engineering undergraduate programmes offered within the school. Part of the approval process involved gaining support for the framework from the SSE Industrial Liaison Panel, a group of senior managers of employers who guide the Deanery of the school on the relevance of curriculum for the students' future employment. The SSE Industrial Liaison Panel endorsed the proposals without reservation, and in fact commented on the relevance of a core assessment practice where our students were to be assessed upon their reflection of the skills development process. The employers regarded reflection to be an important skill for part time students, many of whom they sponsor on our programmes, so that they can improve their performance in the workplace.

The implementation of the 2nd year professional skills module was not well received by the part time students. Module evaluation has been carried out on an annual basis with student focus groups facilitated by a member of the SSE Industrial Liaison Panel. Feedback from part time students indicates they readily appreciate the importance of employability and professional skills development for full time students, but as they are already in employment then skills development has been perceived as not to be relevant to themselves. Our part time students have tended not to appreciate that they need any skills development, or indeed that continuing professional development will eventually become a key feature of their professional careers post graduation.

It became clear to the module team that an underpinning principle of employability had been missed by the part time students. Focus group feedback showed part time students regarded employability as getting a job instead of realising that it can support their capacity to function in their current job and move between jobs (and employers) (Yorke 2005). According to the Knight and Yorke's USEM model (2002) the part time students' metacognition, their self awareness with regard to learning from the module and their capacity to reflect, was low.

In order to raise the students' level of metacognition, the module team now make strong overt links to the professional practice as a chartered engineer by emphasising the role of Continuing Professional Development for the professional engineer, a mandatory process that needs to be undertaken if graduate engineers are to achieve and maintain chartered status. Reflective essays that were previously evidenced by Personal Development Plans are now replaced by CPD proformas adapted from engineering professional institutes to help students see the relevance of the assignment to their future careers. Some of the lecture delivery pattern has also been changed to a CPD workshop format that employers typically adopt for professional training (using external experts and small group sizes on a specialist skills for example). In order to empower the students the choice of CPD workshops was immediately preceded by an individual skills gap analysis and perceived self confidence

questionnaire adapted from Sander and Sanders (2007). At the time of writing, the module is in progress and interim student evaluation is very positive. Part time students are now engaging positively with the module and more readily appreciate the importance of skills development to their current job role and future careers.

This paper will be of value to module and programme teams who wish to improve the engagement of students resisting employability and professional skills development.

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4b. The development of fictional narratives as part of a blended learning approach to nurse education by Corkish, C. (Staff) from Northumbria University.

(Student development and transformation)

The rapidly changing nature healthcare influenced by more complex patient needs, transformations in health economics and a diverse student population (Dieklemann, 2001; Ironside, 2003; Walsh, 2011) have created a range of challenges for nurse education. To keep pace the need to prepare students critical thinking skills, especially in complex evolving situations, has occupied nurse educators in developing innovative strategies (Vanetzian, 2001). However, Ironside (2003) noted that there is limited evidence that their efforts have resulted in improvements and cites some authorities (Duchster, 2003; Pacione & Pacione, 1997) that suggest student's critical thinking deteriorates during their training programmes. Traditional methods of higher education teaching have commonly adopted a behaviourist stance whereby educators, acting as expert leaders of learning, provide a central source of knowledge and that this, once installed into the minds of the students, creates a foundation to learning how to think critically. According to Ironside (2003) central to this are the assumptions that content knowledge has a corresponding association with its application to practice, that the correctness of the 'best' answer is unassailable and that students who are able to utilise knowledge in the classroom are inevitably also able to do so in a clinical environment. Whilst the nursing knowledge base is important for practice this alone is inadequate due to the increasingly complex nature of practice. Rather the provision of skilled nursing care is dependent on the clinicians' ability to think critically in highly dynamic and complex health care systems (Simpson, 2002) whilst being cognisant of the patient perspective on health and the context of care delivery.

More recent reforms shift away from instructional teacher focussed pedagogies to ones where there is a greater focus on extending the learners' thinking skills (Brown, 2008; Dahlberg, Ekebergh & Ironside, 2003). With a greater emphasis on constructivist strategies teaching influenced by interpretivist pedagogies that are primarily learner centred with a greater emphasis on students critiquing knowledge and exploring ways of knowing. Diekelmann (2003; 2004) identified that these pedagogies concerned enabling students to interpret, deconstruct and search for meanings thereby creating new insights. However, whilst the interpretivist pedagogies differ at a fundamental level from the traditional instructional models Deikelmann (2001) identified that, despite the contrasts, both possess educational value and can coexist. The use of narratives* within blended learning is an example of an approach that can embrace both traditional and reformist higher education traditions. The emphasis is on teachers and students jointly working to consider a range of perspectives including utilising knowledge gained from competency and content focussed curricula. Narrative pedagogy employs stories, either fictional or biographical accounts, that are used to stimulate dialogue between students and academics and, through the insights gained, develop an interpretation and understanding or meaning. The approach provides a learning environment that allows students an opportunity to develop deep ways of thinking as described by Entwistle (2009).

The educational value of narratives to transform student thinking can be considerable because the audience can be imaginatively involved with the characters. Stories* posses the ability to provoke an empathetic response promoting engagement. According to Rossiter (2002) their effectiveness as teaching tools arises from the human experiences portrayed which the audience can readily perceive as possessing realism and familiarity. Rossiter and Clarke (2008) argue that learning through narratives is multifaceted because as well as engaging the audience at a cognitive level they are also able to stimulate imagination, illicit emotional responses and impact at different layers of consciousness.

Consequently individuals are afforded opportunities to explore the multiple layers of meaning naturally present in stories, activate different ways of knowing and participate in original problem solving ways of learning (Denning, 2000). In particular Walsh (2011), citing research by Rubenfield and Scheffer (2005), identified the association between critical thinking skills and the interpretation of stories. For instance, using stories in higher education to gain knowledge and understanding allows the student to employ analytical skills through discerning between those elements that have value and those that are less important. Moreover students can seek deeper meanings within stories prompting other routes of enquiry as a way to extend understandings. With this in mind a number of fictional narratives, inspired by the authors own experiences, were constructed around core programme learning outcomes. In this instance the intention was to adress how theoretical perspectives applied to practice by linking key themes and ideas within the narratitves. A number of central fictional patient characters form the core of the stories which describe their life experiences from birth to death. These ‘descriptions’ are told from the multiple perspectives of the central characters and those who they come into contact with. Students access these narratives via the module e.learning portal site, as part of their preparation for in-class learning activities.

*The terms 'narratives' and 'stories' usually possess different meanings but are used equally and interchangably here.

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4c. Investigating the perceptions of professional psychologists that students in further and higher education hold. By Swann, L. (Student), Orme, E. (Staff) and Ingwersen, J. (Staff) from Northumbria University.

(Student development and transformation)

UKPSF: V4; the presentation focusses very much on students identifying with the profession

The presentation will focus on students' identification with psychology as a profession pre- and post- enrolment on an undergraduate course. The data has been collected in collaboration with Teesside, Sunderland and Newcastle universities (as well as at the host-institution, Northumbria). A current MRes student at Northumbria has driven the analysis and interpretation of the data, and will be presenting it. It is hoped that the presentation will involve audience discussion of some of the data, and how the identified barriers could be overcome in order to increase students engagement with the profession.

Overview of the Talk

Psychology is a very popular degree subject, but only around 20% of psychology graduates pursue a career as a professional psychologist [1]. This may indicate a lack of understanding of the discipline at the pre-application stage, and perhaps highlight potential barriers in undergraduate students' identification as a professional psychologist. Although quantitative methods have identified some misconceptions in perceptions of psychology [3], such methods arguably fail to penetrate this in a manner which provides a representative perception of psychologists as professionals. Using a technique proven to be successful in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects [4] this series of studies aims to establish an as yet unexplored understanding of perceptions of a psychologist. A-level students (psychology and non-psychology) and undergraduate psychology students from a range of institutions across the North East were asked to draw a professional psychologist. A modified version of the Draw a Scientist (DAST) checklist [5] was employed; this is an established tool used in the measurement of perceptions of some wider sciences. Participant drawings were individually scored for the prevalence of stereotypical perceptions in a content analysis. A further thematic analysis of the drawings was conducted in order to (1) capture an intricacy of meaning in the data set unexplored in the quantitative analysis, and (2) validate the neoteric checklist developed in this study. Themes emerging from the data will be discussed, identifying factors that contribute towards student perceptions of professional psychologists and the extent to which they identify with such professionals. Contrasts are drawn with STEM subjects, which show an inverse gender-bias and greater issues with the supply of subject-graduates.

Some considerations of the study implications, limitations and potential avenues for future research are discussed, as well as the extent of reliability and validity of the task and checklist and its potential for contribution to future investigations in the field

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4d. Peer to Peer support – Exploring student nurses perceptions of peer mentoring within the Student Buddy Scheme by Wheatley, M. (Staff) and Hitchen, J. (Student) from Teesside University.

(Student development and transformation)

The concept of peer mentoring has the potential to address many of the issues that students face embarking on a higher education programme. White *et al.* (2010 p.601) acknowledges that a formal method of mentoring has often been documented in the literature as a means of supporting and retaining nurses within the profession. However; Dennison (2010 p.340) discuss an alternative method referred to as peer mentoring as a strategy to address the challenges specific to student nurses within their educational programme. There are a variety of ways that peer mentoring can be implemented into an educational programme whether that be an academic focus, or socialising students into a group and assisting with students personal and professional development.The concept of mentoring, peer mentoring and peer support is utilised within higher education. Terrion and Leonard (2007 p.149) acknowledge that many universities have implemented a form of peer mentoring as a means of supporting students. However, Hamrin et al (2006 p.39) state that there is limited research of such support groups within the field of nurse education. Dennison (2010 p.340) agree that peer mentoring is not a new concept as a method of support, However; its history has been embedded in the field of business and management rather than nurse education.

There are fundamental differences between a traditional mentoring model and that of peer mentoring. Terrion and Leonard (2007 p.150) discuss that a traditional mentoring model consists of a hierarchical relationship. Boyle et al (2010 p.116) acknowledges a more “formalised” mentoring process where an academic offers support either to a group or an individual. Kram and Isabella (1985) offer peer mentoring as an alternative to this more formalised approach of mentoring and recommend that peer mentors and mentees are matched according to their age, experience and an evenly distributed power balance within the mentor/mentee relationship. Dennison (2010 p.340) explore that peer mentoring supports leadership and team building promoting the necessity to encourage a student-centred and student- focused approach. Peer mentoring can also adopt a purely academic focus or simply promote socialisation of individuals and subsequently attempt to assist the personal growth of an individual.

Primary research was conducted for an MA in Education to explore student nurses perceptions of peer mentoring within the buddy scheme as part of their pre-registration nursing programme. The participants were student nurses who volunteer on the student buddy scheme at Teesside University. Punch (2009 p.162) acknowledge that the choice of sample within qualitative research is very important and discuss the term purposive sampling. This form of sampling dictates a deliberate purpose to the choice of participant involved in the research. In deliberately choosing the participant there should give rigid focus to the study. The student buddy scheme is open to all student nurses undertaking their pre-registration nursing programme. The scheme is university based and offers support and guidance to student nurses from student nurses. Data was collected using focus group interviews and analysed using thematic content analysis.

The data obtained was synthesised and linked to evidence from the literature to inform recommendations for future research and practice. Three key themes emerged from the analysis. The themes were:

We are all in the same boat, Informal....but....formal and We are role models.

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4e. Academic literacy and the transition to studying architecture by Bramley E. (Student), Holgate, P. (Staff) and Welch, H.(Student) from Northumbria University.

(Student transition into higher education)

UKPSF: A4, V1

This small-scale inquiry focuses upon efforts to develop an improved understanding of student learning experiences in the transition from secondary to higher education, with respect to the undergraduate course of architecture at Northumbria University.

Increasing student tuition fees, coupled with business focused academic management, may appear to communicate the idea of higher education as a passive 'transaction' in lieu of a learning opportunity to develop life-long skills. This inquiry seeks to establish and develop the latter approach in this particular context, seeking to embed concepts of student ownership of their own higher education. In terms of student engagement, the long term aim of the inquiry is to develop shared expectations (between staff and students) of active learning and self-authorship in the undergraduate learning journey. These aims are derived from theories of assessment literacy (Price et al, 2014) and academic challenge (Bovill et al, 2011) in the first year of teaching.

Second-year architecture students, from a diverse range of educational backgrounds, participated in a focus group which sought to consider lessons learned from their first year learning experiences. Participants were asked to consider themes of design studio teaching, lectures, feedback literacy, reading and research, and peer working, as well as to reflect upon their learning journey and transition to HE, adapting the approach employed by Sambell & Graham (2010). This focus group was conducted by Masters level architecture students, who were formerly undergraduates at Northumbria. This served the purposes of putting participants at ease in terms of contributing candid opinions, as well as re-framing the inquiry's themes in a language comprehensible to all parties. Analysis of these comments will be used to inform the development of the first year curriculum in supporting students towards active learning and the acquisition of higher level academic skills.

This inquiry contributes additional case study material in the canon of approaches to promoting student engagement across the region. It highlights the diverse range of backgrounds and educational experiences of students entering higher education in the region, and argues that an appreciation of individual learning styles and backgrounds is required to engage with this diversity.

The inquiry also highlights a willingness and appreciation on the part of students to contribute actively to co-creating curricula in partnership with staff. This factor may also lead to the inquiry being conducted annually as part of a longer term action research cycle, to gauge if incremental improvements to shared understandings of learning are being enacted.

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4f. Exploring the impact of Social Anxiety on student performance in Higher Education by Bushell, M. (staff) from the University of Sunderland.

(Student futures beyond higher education)

Social Anxiety has been identified as a ubiquitous problem, ranked as the third most common mental health issue in adults and young people (Furmark, 2002). In a 2013 study conducted by the National Union of Students (NUS), 55% of respondents reported having experienced anxiety whilst at their current place of study (NUS, 2013). Despite this, the field of educational research is lacking in its attempts to investigate the impact of social anxiety on student performance within the field of higher education specifically. There is a wealth of evidence to support the assertion that high levels of worry and anxiety impair working memory (Eysenck et al, 2007) - a crucial feature for the mediation of learning and information retention/recall. Additionally, Sarason (1988) found that high levels of worry are often associated with low levels of performance.

A 2008 study found that between one third and one quarter of a sample of 478 university students reported anxiety related distress in “seminars, lectures, group-learning and shared use of IT facilities in descending order” (Russell, 2008:51). Reported coping mechanisms included missing classes as well as other avoidance based behaviors including swapping modules to avoid presentations and other public speaking scenarios (Russell, 2008).

The central tenet of this study is that the effects of an ongoing social anxiety problem can result in significant impairments to student performance and consequently impact on retention rates within the sphere of higher education. The study will attempt to elicit a more detailed insight into the dynamics of social anxiety and student performance by employing a range of methods including a survey and qualitative analysis.

According to work conducted by Kashdan & Herbert (2001) there is often an unwillingness to report or seek help for social anxiety for fear of ridicule by peers and there is an assumption that students within higher education may be particularly vulnerable to this. The 2013 study conducted by the NUS found that only 38% of students would recommend their institution as a support service for mental distress. Therefore, the study will also examine student attitudes towards existing support mechanisms within the institution and the perceived efficacy of these from the student's point of view. Social Anxiety can be an extremely debilitating condition and constitutes a significant barrier to students' learning progress. If this research can help shape our understanding of the extent and character of the condition within the context of higher education, the findings could help to inform institutional policy on the spectrum of support offered and the means by which this is delivered.

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5a. Using narrative pedagogy to promote collaborative learning by Telford, M. and Senior, E. from Northumbria University.

(Student development and transformation)

UKPSF: A1, K4 & V2.

Students who have undertaken this element of a wider module have made the following comments on their enhanced experience of interprofessional learning (IPL):

" This method of teaching was imaginative and really helped me to engage with the module as I was able to see how certain behaviours can influence other areas of a person's life. "

"A large part of the module focused around inter-professional practice within public health, personally I found this very engaging, as second year students we had started to establish an identity within our own fields of nursing and health care practice. This module facilitated collaborative working; showing how as a team we could offer different, but complimentary, contributions to care plans was fascinating, really showing the value of collaboration in health care practice. "

We aim to give a brief overview of the effective teaching and learning strategies adopted in the module. Followed by an interactive workshop recreating the student IPL experience. Demostrating the e-learning materials utilised and engaging the audience in interprofessional exploring one or more of the narratives.

IPE is defined as 'occasions when two or more professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care.' (The Centre for Advancement in Interprofessional Education (CAIPE) (2002). From experience we know that pre-registration students do not evaluate the IPL element of the curriculum positively. The challenge, for this module was how to build on the competences of IPE/L and integrate theory and practice with recognition of other professional's knowledge and skills. As well as the need to move students from knowledge acquisition, to a deep understanding of teamwork reflecting quality teaching. To achieve this, an additional learning technique was adopted; virtual learning, a method involving computer-assisted artificial environments to mimic real-life practice based scenarios which are applied to IPE focusing on working relationships between professions (Kenaszchuk, MacMillan, van Soeren and Reeves (2011) and Walsh and van Soeren (2012). A virtual community was the focus of the IP sessions, it involved an on line teaching application comprising of a fictional community with multiple characters with intersecting stories (Giddens, Fogg and Carlsen-Sabelli 2012). Walsh and van Soeren (2012) state that in order to be an effective educational tool; the virtual community needs a pedagogical stance.

This was provided by the use of narrative pedagogy.

Diekelmann (2001) developed the concept of narrative pedagogy, suggesting that teaching should focus on interpretation of the experiences of people and exploring their collective meanings and understandings. Narrative pedagogy is therefore concerned with the appreciation of the lived experiences of participants (Diekelmann, 2003 and Ironside, 2006).

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5b. Who's values, which values? A preliminary consideration (phase 1 of 3) of a doctoral study into the relationship between non-cognitive admissions criteria and the students' journey through a physiotherapy degree programme? By Trevor Wynter (Staff) from Northumbria University.

(Student transition into higher education)

UKPSF: A4, A5, V3

Session Aim

The session will report the preliminary findings (Phase 1 of 3) of a professional doctoral study, into the non-cognitive characteristics (values and behaviours) of a sample of physiotherapy students. The initial interpretation of the data will consider the potential contribution of these criteria to the students' recruitment and progress through their programme. This first phase of the study has investigated the build up to their application, recruitment onto the Physiotherapy programme and the first year of study. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews, with an emphasis on the students own narrative. Data was analysed adopting a 'Framework approach' originally developed for applied social policy research (Ritchie *et al.*, 2014, p.21; Ritchie & Spencer, 2002, p.305). This was considered highly appropriate to the 'Pragmatic' world view adopted in the development of, and during the study; and the rationale behind 'Professional Doctorate' study', with its applied 'action' driven focus. The pragmatic view is built on the assumption that interpretations are true if they result in, or assist in, actions producing desired or predicted results (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 14), and have the primary focus on the research question rather than the method. An underpinning aim of the research study is to gain a better understanding the importance of non-cognitive criteria in recruitment to and progression though a health and social care (HSC) professional education programme (Physiotherapy).

The expectation is that this will lead to improvements in the recruitment process and the on-going support of students throughout the programme

Background

Successful recruitment is crucial to organisational performance ensuring the right people are brought in to fulfil the aims and objectives of the organisation or service (CIPD, 2012). The United Kingdom (UK) higher education (HE) admissions processes are designed to match the abilities and aptitudes of applicants and the demands of each programme against transparent and justifiable criteria (Schwartz, 2004).

Health and social care (HSC) education programmes have a particular responsibility in the HE sector, of admitting students with the potential, not only to successfully complete degree programmes, but to uphold the professional and ethical standards of their chosen profession. But, more than this, Health Education England (HEE) have tasked 'Admissions Tutors' with recruiting students that have "individual values and behaviours [that] align with the values of the NHS constitution" (Work Psychology Group, 2014, p. 4). Therefore these programme providers take on not only the educational role, but vitally, a gate-keeping role for the profession they represent (Ryan, McCormack & Cleak, 2006). The National Health Service (NHS) have the aim of safeguarding service-users and promoting "effective team working" to deliver "excellent patient care and experience" (Work Psychology Group, 2014, p. 4).

Quality HSC professional education begins with the admissions process (Hepler & Noble Jr., 1990), screening out the unsuitable and selecting those deemed to have the potential to succeed academically and develop into competent, effective and ethical practitioners. Access to HE is largely based on the previous academic performance of the applicant. Cognitive, or academic, criterion (actually, in the UK, a set of criteria, encompassing both compulsory education and post-16 education performance) has been demonstrated, in both the UK and the USA, to be predictive of future academic performance (Utzman, Riddle & Jewell, 2007). However, the link to the development of clinical skills and post graduate professional performance is less clear (Parry et al., 2006, Guffey et al., 2002) and represents a clear gap in current knowledge.

Current literature suggests both cognitive and non-cognitive data have an important role in HSC education programme recruitment. However the precise predictive value of such data, particularly with respect to clinical practice performance is not well understood. Aptitude tests such as The Health Professions Admission Test (HPAT) and the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) are controversial as predictors of such performance; and their "fairness and validity" are questionable (Yates & James, 2013, p. 1; Halpenny et al., 2010). Despite this, non-cognitive criteria have recognised face validity and are seen as desirable components of recruitment to HSC education programmes (Parry et al., 2006; Guffey, et al., 2002; Ryan McCormack & Cleak, 2006).

Most HSC programmes have non-cognitive criteria as admission requirements, although they may vary from institution to institution and programme to programme. This is because, although a range of non-cognitive criteria have been identified as desirable, which are most valuable and why, is not well understood. These criteria include, professionalism, interpersonal competence, empathy, conscientiousness, team working, ethical behaviour, cultural and diversity sensitivity, to name a few (Boak, Mitchell & Moore, 2012). Non-cognitive criteria have been recognised as having some face validity in the future role of the HSC professional, but no consensus exists on the specific characteristics that should be included in admissions processes; how they should be assessed or, to what extent they can predict future academic and professional performance (Parry et al., 2006; Guffey et al., 2002; Ryan, McCormack & Cleak, 2006). Indeed, there is an acknowledgement that pre-admission assessment is fraught with "compound difficulties" (Boak, Mitchell & Moore, 2012, p.26). This constitutes further gaps in the evidence base.

Presentation and discussion of Phase 1 findings

The session will present the key findings of the phase 1 interviews and the preliminary analysis, presenting an opportunity to discuss these and consider implications for recruitment and student support. This phase investigated the students' perspectives on their level of preparedness for the HSC programme and their future professional role. The stories they have told may illuminate personal attributes that relate to successful progression or indicate the need for better, more focused support from the HE institution. The analysis highlights some non-cognitive criteria (values/beliefs) used to recruit the students'; and interpretation considers their value as indicators of successful progression. The narrative approach used during the interviews was to encourage the participant to reflect on their experiences. The role of the researcher was to facilitate the telling of 'their' story primarily through active listening and narrative questioning, avoiding directing the story, but providing opportunities for elaboration (Elliott, 2005, p.32).

The session content corresponds to all of the conference themes, although, as the research is not yet complete and the material covers phase 1 of 3 the primary conference theme is ‘student transition into higher education’ and ‘student retention, progression and completion’. It is acknowledged that the ‘completion’ aspect of the latter theme cannot be addressed fully. The session maps onto UKPSF dimensions A4, A5 and V3. It offers the opportunity to discuss a range of related issues including:

- the role of the admissions tutor and robust admissions processes in selecting students with the potential to succeed in all the dimensions demanded of health and social care professional education (academic, clinical, professional and organisational (NHS));
- and the non-cognitive criteria (including values and beliefs), that have a positive or negative impact on recruitment, retention and progression.

Additionally discussion could include:

- the differences between professional doctorate and traditional PhD study;
- and methodological underpinning and methods used

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5c. An evaluation of an online experiential learning tool to develop skills for professional practice by Llewellyn, A. from Teesside University.

(Student development and transformation)

This presentation reports on an action research project evaluating an online experiential learning tool for developing professional skills.

The focus of this research is on the use of an immersive learning tool in a virtual learning environment, which has been developed as an authentic student learning experience that aims to integrate theories with practice and provide an environment for objective and subjective situated learning in a safe context.

The problem that was identified for this research was that traditional pedagogic approaches are not preparing students effectively for social work practice in complex situations. There are concerns about the preparation of newly qualified social workers and their readiness to practice in complex and emotionally challenging situations (Munro Report, 2011). The educational preparation for professional practice has also come under scrutiny from social work academics (Orme et al, 2009; Parker, 2010; Wilson and Campbell, 2013), with questions being asked about the pedagogies that underpin social work knowledge and ways of preparing students for practice.

Developments in technology provide opportunities for new learning spaces and interactive approaches to learning that can offer a situated learning experience. In conjunction with an experiential learning company, I developed a photorealistic virtual learning environment to provide social work students with an authentic experiential learning experience in the area of child protection. A digital storyboard provides an interactive learnscape where student practitioners act as a qualified social worker within the virtual learning environment, following the process of a child protection case. Learners interact with real life characters and learning is developed through observation and engagement with a case study, with formative and summative assessment points embedded throughout to test knowledge and understanding.

Feedback loops are provided for remediation and further development of knowledge and understanding. This provides an authentic scenario, which situates the learner in the work based setting so that they can experience real time activities similar to ones that they may encounter in practice.

This new learning tool has been utilised with pre-qualifying social work students within a blended learning context, with the aim of changing pedagogical practice. An action research framework was an appropriate approach to the research inquiry, as it merges action with the research process and acknowledges the position of the practitioner-researcher within this process. Analysis of 100 questionnaires and 12 in depth interviews demonstrates the substantial impact that this online tool has had on student learning. Students report enjoyment in using the learning tool as well as increases in their levels of confidence, contextual understanding, knowledge and skills for child protection.

“The Learnscape was the best learning experience that I have had since being on the course. On completion of it I felt more competent and confident than I ever have done before” (SA, MA Year 2 Student).

The case study will be used to illustrate how principles and techniques of this learning tool can be transferred to a wide range of other discipline areas (e.g. engineering, other areas of health and social care and business and management) to develop practical, team working and decision making skills. It responds to current student-centric pedagogical principles and priorities in that it is designed so that it can be used at a time, place and pace that suits the learner and uses technology to enable situated learning which can be used within a blended learning context or flipped classroom scenario to construct knowledge and integrate theory and practice.

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5d. Preparing Students for their Futures: Music Enterprise at Newcastle University by Nolan, J. (Staff) and Galvin, I. (Student) from Newcastle University.

(Student futures beyond higher education)

UKPSF: A4, K2 and V4.

Music enterprise is an innovative undergraduate module which embeds enterprise in the curriculum to help prepare students for their futures after graduation. In music and the creative industries, students need to prepare for self employment, freelance or portfolio careers as well as for employment. The module has been featured as a case study in a new best practice guide from the Higher Education Academy (HEA, 2014).

This session will outline the approaches used by the module, and will include the student voice. It will also reflect on the application of similar approaches in other contexts, drawing on the presenter's experience as an enterprise educator working across a number of disciplines with both undergraduate and postgraduate students, at Newcastle University and in the interdisciplinary UK-Japanese RENKEI Researcher Development School. This may enable attendees to adopt similar approaches in their own discipline.

Music Enterprise engages students with enterprise and entrepreneurship through the real world experience of event management. The module uses experiential learning, which is student-centred and which adds to personal resilience and professional development, with an emphasis on learning by doing and reflection. Engagement with the challenging authentic experience of creating, managing and delivering a musical event, is supported by lectures and small group activities during Semester 1 which provide students with both theoretical and practical knowledge and the opportunity to practice the skills required. In addition, visiting speakers provide realistic and inspiring first hand information drawn from their experience of working in the music industry. The module provides a learning environment in which students enhance their knowledge and skills in team-working, idea generation, project planning, finance and budgeting, negotiation, networking, marketing, promotion, social media and making presentations.

Students are highly engaged by the module. They stage a wide range of events in a variety of venues across Newcastle and Gateshead during Semester 2, which result in opportunities for significant learning and reflection on experience. The module leader provides ongoing formative feedback and mentoring to the student event teams.

Music Enterprise uses innovative and appropriate pedagogies and assessments aimed at creating an enriched learning environment in which deeper level, active learning can occur (Biggs and Tang, 2011). In terms of David Rae's (2007) definition of enterprise in an academic context, students on Music Enterprise apply the skills, knowledge and attributes needed to apply creative ideas and innovations to practical situations, including initiative, independence, creativity, problem solving, identifying and working on opportunities, leadership, acting resourcefully and responding to challenges. This develops self efficacy and confidence (Bandura, 1977; 1997) through learning by doing and by being a reflective practitioner.

Student feedback is extremely positive. The experience gained enhances students' CVs and they can build their professional networks through the module. The Student voice will be represented by Isobel Galvin, who took Music Enterprise in 2013-14. Isobel has found the experience and the learning from Music Enterprise helpful in gaining an internship during her final year and it has made a positive impact on her development, her CV and her career intentions.

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5e. Student Engagement in final year independent project work by Knowles, M. (Staff) and Dixon, D. (Staff) from the University of Sunderland.

(Student development and transformation)

Final year projects are a common component of many degree programmes and often contribute heavily to final award marks. In addition to providing students the opportunity to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have developed during the course of their studies, final year projects also allow students to exercise a wider set of employability and professional skills. This means that in many disciplines, projects are significant in the transformation of students into professionals.

Despite the significance of final year projects they have received very little attention in terms of student engagement. Student engagement with project work is critical given the independent nature of many final year projects. It is important that students not only appreciate and understand the technical or subject specific requirements of a given project but also appreciate the wider needs of a significant piece of independent work such as: project management and control; objective setting; and evaluation of both the outcomes of the project and the process undertaken to achieve this.

In this paper we will review three types of student engagement, namely: cognitive engagement; behavioural engagement; and emotional engagement - with final year project work based on the three-part model of student engagement proposed by a number of authors (Appleton et al 2006, Fredericks et al 2004, Jimerson et al 2003). Based on this review and evidence gathered from monitoring the progress of an entire cohort of students, we describe an approach for structuring final year project work without compromising the degree of independence required from the students or degrading the opportunity for them to progress on the transition from student to professional.

References

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5f. Engaging with Autonomy: reconciling independent learning and student expectations by Sober, R. (staff) and Hogg E. (student) from Teesside University.

(Student retention, progression and completion)

The QAA claim 'The introduction of fees has increased attention on what students, and their parents and supporters, perceive that they are getting in return for their financial investment' (1) whereas Gibbs maintains 'The number of class contact hours has very little to do with educational quality' (2)

This paper will outline research into student perceptions of their learning in the context of Kis data statistics, notions of value for money, increased fees and higher student expectations.

The progression towards more independent learning is seen by many to be essential preparation for the transition to employment, however, this pedagogic good practice is often in direct conflict with media representations of higher education contact hours and Kis data promises. Therefore this paper will highlight the need for strategies to enhance student understanding of, and engagement with, autonomous learning and will outline research into student perceptions of how they learn at different stages of their programmes in terms of both delivery and assessment and whether transparency in the learning process could foster a more active partnership and investment in learning.

This presentation will be based on results from student questionnaires and focus groups and will conclude with a selection of video diaries compiled by the student researchers.

The paper will be co-presented by students sharing their perceptions and personal reflections on learning skills and development.

References

1. QAA (2011) Explaining Contact Hours,P9
2. Gibbs, G. (2010) Dimensions of Quality,P21

We hope you have enjoyed the 3 Rivers Conference 2015. If you have any comments to make we will be pleased to hear them, you will be emailed a link to a brief survey at the end of the event to ask for your opinion.