SEDA Special

Main Title: Student Behaviour in Higher Education

Full Title: Student Behaviour in Higher Education: co-creation of positive learning cultures through partnership and engagement

Alternative suggestion: Positive Learning Cultures and Student Behaviour

Summary:
Amid a changing Higher Education context, student behaviour has become a key issue in the UK and abroad. This SEDA Special offers practical guidance relevant to teaching staff and those who support them by addressing the topic of student behaviour from the perspective of encouraging positive learning cultures. Following an exploration of the relevant contextual issues and key international literature, four case studies are provided that include practical guidance for the day to day management of student behaviour. The case studies describe positive cultures created through strategic use of key data sets, effective student engagement, partnership and a proactive and preventative stance toward this issue. Throughout, the Special balances practical strategies for individuals and teams within accounts of practices and initiatives that have proven successful in diverse Higher Education providers.

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Introduction

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The Higher Education landscape has changed significantly in recent times and continues to shift. This brings new opportunities and additional challenges. Student behaviour has arisen as a 'hot topic' of specific interest across the globe within this changing landscape. This SEDA Special explores issues of behaviour in relation to Higher Education teaching practice and institutional development in a number of contexts with the aim of promoting a better understanding of the issue. It provides examples of practical strategies that can be used at an individual and organisational level to address concerns about student behaviour, both immediately and in the longer term. However, overall the emphasis is on a longer term approach and the shared development of positive learning cultures within departments and universities.

We begin by considering the background and related contextual issues: in particular exploring and defining what is meant by the term 'student behaviour' and discussing some key factors that may have precipitated this debate. The following chapters argue for, and explore the practicalities of, developing and operationalising an inclusive learning community based approach to enable appropriate student behaviour at both local and institutional level. Each of the four chapters presents a specific example of how this type of approach has been implemented, together with 'suggestions for action' for colleagues who may wish to implement something similar.

In Chapter 1, Janes and Taylor explore how co-designed staff-student guidance was used to help develop an inclusive learning community to impact on behaviours. Lawther et al., in Chapter 2, describe how big data is being used to encourage the adoption of learner behaviours that are constructive to success in Higher Education. Morgan, in Chapter 3, describes the Student Experience Practitioner Model and outlines how this can contribute to the adoption of an institutional and inclusive community approach by providing a structured framework to enhance student engagement and experience. Finally, in Chapter 4 Ody and Carey describe a process of 'Institutional Dialogue', for enhancing engagement and partnership with students, which is leading to a wider change of behaviour (amongst staff and students) and develops a culture that benefits students, staff and the institution.

Finally, the concluding chapter identifies key themes for moving forward. It also offers practical ideas to provide interim solutions for staff faced with challenging behaviour. These, together with the 'suggestions for action' provided at the end of each chapter should provide a useful resource for colleagues seeking practical strategies for immediate implementation.

Background

Student behaviour is commonly a topic on which Educational Developers work with individual staff and teams. It is a key issue for both new and experienced lecturers in Higher Education, although there is relatively little empirical research on this topic in UK HE. This is particularly true in relation to behaviour that is inappropriate for the learning environment but does not breach University codes of conduct. Research that has been carried out suggests it may be a common problem for UK Universities (Rivas, 2009; Lee and Hopkins Burke, 2007).

Similarly, empirical research carried out in the USA suggests that incidence is high (Bjorklund and Rehling, 2010; Clark, 2009; Nordstrom et al, 2009; Mckinne and Martin, 2010; Seidman, 2005). A wider domain review on 'student incivility' suggests that this is a global issue (Burke et al, 2014).

The research on 'classroom incivility' identifies the negative consequences of this phenomenon for student learning, achievement, persistence and retention (Bjorklund and Rehling, 2010; Seidman, 2005). 'Classroom incivility' can also have a detrimental effect on staff self-esteem (Nordstrom et al, 2009; Carbone, 1999) and there is further evidence to suggest this also includes staff in non-teaching roles within HE communities (Lee and Hopkins Burke, 2007). Perhaps because of the growing interest in this issue, Burke et al (2014) provided a recent overview of the evidence regarding the prevalence, causes and management strategies for student incivility. However, it is not yet established whether this increasing interest in the topic of student behaviour in the learning environment really represents an increasing problem or if it is rather a greater awareness and willingness to identify and discuss the issue. It may indeed be a mix of both. This is particularly difficult to determine given the lack of formal reporting systems for this type of behaviour (Morrissette, 2001). However, whether there is a real or perceived increase in challenging behaviour, staff in many HE contexts are asking for support and help to address their concerns and manage their experiences.

Terms such as 'disruptive behaviour', 'student behaviour' 'inappropriate behaviour' and 'student incivility' are often used interchangeably, with the term 'classroom incivility' tending to be the US term of choice (Bjorklund and Rehling, 2010; Nordstrom et al, 2009). For the purposes of this discussion the term 'inappropriate student behaviour' will be used along with Burke et al's (2014) definition: *'…discourteous or disruptive verbal and nonverbal student behaviors enacted toward others.'* (p161). For our purposes 'others' will include students and any member of staff within a HE context e.g. teaching, administrative, research and support staff.

Changing context

Changing setting (physical environment)

In many ways higher education is experiencing a significant period of change. This takes a number of forms. For example, the traditional power dynamic of teacher versus learner/student has lessened somewhat. One factor in this may be changes in pedagogy from the teacher as 'expert, empty vessel filler' toward more facilitative teaching practices and increasingly staff/student partnership based approaches to learning. In this frame the teacher is increasingly cast as 'expert facilitator of lifelong learning' and as a result is relinquishing more control and autonomy to students for their own learning (Healey et al, 2014; NUS, 2012; Hase and Kenyon, 2007). Furthermore, societal changes and new tools for learning mean that academic institutions are no longer the source of all knowledge. Context changes in terms of how learning is funded and the growing emergences of HE in FE along with the influences of new disciplines and professional education, previously not part of HE, all contribute to the changing context.

New technologies bring a different context for social behaviour in learning. This could be more problematic, but also provides opportunities to build relationships and enhance communication. Teaching spaces are also increasingly more informal than the traditional lectures where students were less active; supporting social learning and small group or project work. In some disciplines, this is further complicated by the contribution of external partners, such as healthcare users and industry representatives, to learning situations. This adds to the complexity of relationships between staff, students and other partners within the learning environment. Overall, such changes in the theory and practice of learning and physical learning environments potentially alter the traditional power relationship between staff and students.

Changing people: staff and students (personal environment)
Some research suggests that 'classroom incivility' is a consequence of students positioning themselves as consumers of a service, who are thus 'entitled' to act as they wish (Barrett et al, 2010; Carbone, 1999; Nordstrom et al, 2009;). An alternative explanation however, is that there is a lack of common understanding of the norms and values associated with appropriate behaviour between members of HE communities (Anderson, 1999; Bray and Del Favero, 2004; Connelly, 2009; Nordstrom et al, 2009; Barrett et al, 2010; Rivas, 2009). This may be further complicated in that the HE setting now includes a wider range of staff, from different disciplines, some with practitioner rather than academic expertise and a greater range of support department specialists. For example, staff from industry may have different expectations based on industrial experience and norms rather than those traditional to HE. It has also been suggested that staff may be reluctant to address inappropriate student behaviour because there is a taboo associated where this involves adult learners (Rivas, 2009; Seidman, 2005). The importance of ensuring a shared understanding of expectations within all members of the university community is highlighted in the literature as one means of addressing this (Barrett et al 2010; Nordstrom et al, 2009; Anderson, 1999) and chapter 1 explores one initiative based on this premise.

However, the greater diversity of students today may bring a greater range of behaviours, some of which may actually be (or be perceived as) more challenging i.e. generation Y. For example, assertive students asking questions of 'how' and 'why' regarding teaching practice may be perceived as challenging behaviour but could just be them asking for help or support due to personal struggles with understanding. Morgan, in chapter 3 explores these issues in more detail.

Changing perceptions (emotional environment)
Students who are more willing to challenge could be perceived as exerting pressure on the profession or the sector being under attack, and staff may feel 'got at'. Alternatively, perceived changes in student behaviour may be a response to how they are treated (see Morgan, Chapter 3).

In an increasingly globally interconnected sector, students and staff must navigate a range of different cultural norms and expectations. For example, one member of staff teaching traditionally reserved and deferent Malaysian students may see 'cheekiness' as a positive development and a sign of a building relationship, but in a different context this might be perceived as disrespectful.

The continuation of pre-existing relationships within student groups rather than the formation of new relationships is a further, relatively recent challenge linked to increasing numbers of students studying with their local HE provider. One example is the transition of student groups who are already well known to each other from an FE environment onto the same HE programme. This can create specific challenges whereby groups bring 'the dark side of cohort identity' with them e.g. previous behaviour that is not appropriate in a HE environment, negative cohort dynamics or bullying etc. However for these students there is no 'trigger' to change this behaviour such as might traditionally have been the case in joining the new setting of a HEI.

Within this changing context, practical strategies for managing or responding to inappropriate student behaviour when it occurs are important. Some of these are outlined in the 'suggestions for action' in the Conclusion and at the end of each chapter. These provide practical starting points for colleagues. However, we suggest that an overarching theme in this Special is one of relationships: between the institution and the students, students and students, and between staff and students. Therefore, addressing the issues of behaviour, which seem to be concerning many staff, students and institutions, both begins and ends with relationships. The subsequent chapters in this collection provide a range of ways of proactively addressing change in institutional contexts to better support positive relationships – to connect students to their institutions in real engaging ways, to develop institutional behaviours and practice, but also importantly in doing this to create constructive environments where students and staff can work together.

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Promoting a mutually respectful university community: an action research based approach

Gillian Janes and Paul Taylor

Introduction

This paper uses a case study to explore the context, rationale, development and embedding of a proactive, institutional approach to promoting a positive culture in a modern university. This journey started with a focus on student learning then broadened beyond that to be more about promoting a shared respectful culture within the university community, which in turn contributed to creating an enhanced student learning environment. This was achieved by co-production and ownership of university-wide, practical, student/staff guidance using an action research approach. The lessons learned in developing a shared, proactive, learning community based approach to the management of behaviour will be explored to enable others to learn from our experiences.

Background and Context

The stimulus for the initiative came from a number of different sources and a range of very different levels within the University. Although none of these reported serious or widespread difficulties, it did represent a critical mass of student and staff concerns about student behaviour. Our experience mirrored that reported by Burke et al (2014) who claimed the most frequent incidence of inappropriate student behaviours were of 'low intensity', such as minor disruptions and students being late or unprepared for class. In the case study discussed here the first two triggers for action focused on taught sessions. One of these came from new staff in the School of Health & Social Care (SoH&SC), several of whom, during support sessions during their extended induction, raised the issue of how to deal with inappropriate student behaviour. It was not surprising this came from this particular School because as Burke et al (2014) noted this topic appears to be of interest in education for professional disciplines such as health and business. New staff in SoH&SC felt uncertain about how to respond when, in their view, student behaviour was inappropriate. In addition, they were unsure whether the School's senior managers would support any action they took in response. As a result a set of School based guidance and common ground rules were established for staff use in this local context. The second main trigger was the University Academic Board where a similar discussion, but across a wider range of disciplines, took place about the University's approach to dealing with inappropriate student behaviour should it occur. As a result the university department responsible for learning and teaching development was tasked with investigating the issue and developing an appropriate response.

During the initial exploration, discussions with staff across the University clearly supported the need for and timeliness of practical guidance on this topic. For example, Students' Union staff were receiving increasing queries from students about how to deal with other students' behaviour that they found disruptive. Some students had also expressed concerns that they were receiving mixed messages about what could reasonably be expected. Student Services staff had also noticed more queries from colleagues about how to deal with certain student behaviours. At the same time, appropriate student/staff interactions were an interest shared by administrative and other staff groups such as caretaking and catering. Finally, the Library was another area where students and staff were grappling with the practicalities of simultaneously enabling social learning and quiet study space, which had resulted in some students raising concerns about noise levels. These various triggers illustrate the combined 'top down' and 'bottom up' drivers for this initiative that together ultimately enabled the resulting project to succeed.

This critical mass of low intensity inappropriate behaviour warranted a University wide response to provide clarity, practical guidance and support for students and staff to enable effective prevention and management of relatively minor disruptive behaviour, which did not necessarily warrant the use of existing University disciplinary procedures and other relevant policies. Despite original concerns being focused on student behaviour in taught sessions, the student/staff consultation and scoping exercise that identified the issues outlined above indicated a broader approach was appropriate and the development of shared, practical guidance for all students and staff would be timely. The action research project took the original guidance developed by the one School (mentioned above) as a starting point, exploring if and how this could be broadened to ensure relevance to all interactions on campus, not just those related to formal, taught sessions. It was important to take what was already in use and build from there.

As well as building on something practical that already existed e.g. SoH&SC guidance, the approach to the project was based on an understanding of the organisation's existing way of working. A collaborative approach involving the whole university community naturally emerged as the best way to develop and pilot University wide guidance. This reflected the established collegiate culture within the university. The institution has a history of a 'can do', inclusive, solution seeking approach. This encompasses a proactive approach to quality enhancement that was recognised as an institutional feature by external reviewers (QAA, 2009). The positive, friendly institutional tone is a regular feature of feedback from students and staff. This is a result of a long history of working closely with students as part of institutional decision making structures both at a strategic, cross university and individual School level. External peer reviewers have commented on the institution's partnership with students (QAA 2009) and its commitment to its people (Investors in People achievements including achieving IIP Gold). This institutional context meant the collaborative, action research approach adopted for this initiative was not unusual for students or staff. As a result key stakeholders were generally keen to be involved as they could readily see the value of their contribution and the resulting benefits.

The action research based approach

An action research approach was suitable to guide this development because, as stated by Denscombe (2010), an action research strategy's purpose is to solve a particular problem and to produce guidelines for best practice. The approach taken initially brought together a task group to guide the project, identify and work on issues as they evolved. Individual task group members were expected to reflect on developments, consult within their own teams and mutually address issues in order to develop institutional guidance.

The task group was established in order to facilitate and drive progress. It established two key principles underpinning the initiative and any associated outputs, which were: relevance to all stakeholders; and shared ownership.

The aim was to adopt an approach to development and implementation that would help ensure the sustainability of the initiative in the longer term. Therefore it was vital to identify all the key stakeholder groups and negotiate appropriate representation. Task group members had to have an appropriate level of authority and influence to enable timely decision making and progress. They also needed to be individuals who were motivated to participate, normally because they or their departments had something to gain from the project as well as something to offer. These stakeholder groups included:

- Schools/Faculties
- Central departments e.g. Student Services, Library and Information Services, Estates/Campus Facilities, Educational Partnerships, Human Resources
- Student and Student Union Representatives
- Staff Union(s)

Initially the task group considered the 'Acceptable Conduct Guidance' already in use in one School. This consisted of 2 parts. Part 1 contained core ground rules and part 2 staff guidance for supporting the implementation of these ground rules. It was agreed this was a very good starting point. The value of having the widely representative task group was that this enabled and validated a strong consensus that the locally developed guidance could and should be developed (beyond teaching situations) and across the institution into something that would be relevant and applicable to all members of the university community. To achieve this and promote interest and engagement it was important to identify a clear remit for the task group. This was to:

- Function as a stakeholder reference group to develop guidance
- Clarify and agree the status of the guidance in relation to other university documents
- Lead/support piloting of the guidance in own constituency
- Provide feedback on the use of the guidance and related activities in the area they represented
- Contribute to the evaluation of the value of the guidance

Refining the guidance to arrive at the final version for piloting across the university was an iterative process. As a consequence, the guidance developed its unique identity as a potential resource for the whole university community i.e. all staff and students. This was achieved primarily by members of the task group engaging with their constituent groups and seeking feedback on the proposed guidance. Feedback concerned scope, language, structure and usability.

Some of the changes made during this iterative process were major and others appear relatively minor but had huge significance in achieving widespread relevance and subsequent ownership by all parties. One major change was the development of the title, which during early revisions moved from 'Acceptable Conduct Guidance' to 'A guide to promoting positive behaviour in learning environments' but finally became 'A guide to promoting a mutually respectful university community'. This title change reflected the approach of the task group in seeking to develop guidance that was inclusive and relevant to all. The scope was considered to include every place and every interaction *e.g. coffee stops, residences etc* not just classroom or 'traditional' learning environments.

Another major change to the original School guidance was the inclusion of specific student guidance. This was particularly in response to the student voice brought to the task group by the student representatives. The student guidance outlined how they could contribute to promoting mutual respect within the university community. Previously the core ground rules from the original local guidance had been provided to students in the School Handbook. As a result, students could have perceived themselves as passive recipients of these. Therefore one purpose of adding the student guidance section was to make it clear this was a shared resource and achieving mutual respect was a shared responsibility.

A number of apparently minor changes addressed the inadvertent focus on classroom/taught sessions that persisted in the language of early drafts of the guidance. Feedback from task group members, particularly non-academic staff, helped eliminate this and increased the perception of relevance. For example, language changed from 'core ground rules' (a more familiar term for academic staff) to 'core principles' (a more generic term) that were designed to enhance the experience of all members of the university community.

In addition, the language of the principles was revised to be more relevant to the entire university community. For example:

- **'Be respectful'** –originally read: '*ensure that your interactions with all students and staff (administrative and academic) are respectful and professionally conducted'* but was revised into the following core principle *'ensure your actions are always respectful and professionally conducted and university facilities are appropriately used'*

As well as broadening the perceived relevance by the whole university community, other changes to the language used promoted a clear shift from 'just turning up' to actively participating in any interaction. This also placed a greater emphasis on each individual's role in contributing to the achievement of a positive university culture and realising maximum benefit from all interactions. For example:

- **'Be there'** –originally read '*you should attend the full session up until the formal end of the session is reached. In exceptional circumstances tutors may be able to give permission for you to leave early'* but was revised into the following core principle: 'actively *participate to get the most out of the time available.'*

The guidance

The ultimate purpose of the resulting guidance was to provide practical information on how to enable and promote a shared understanding of what is an inclusive and supportive environment for the whole University community.

The guidance comprised three sections: Part 1 - Core Principles underpinning appropriate behaviour; Part 2 - Student Guidance; and Part 3 – Staff Guidance. In the interests of transparency and clarity, all three sections were available to all students and staff. The core principles and associated guidance were designed to complement, not replace, University, School and Department policies and procedures and Codes of Professional Conduct where relevant, as well as the University's Student Protocol and Charter. These already existed and continued to be used to deal with concerns regarding behaviour or conduct where necessary although this was rarely needed. The guidance applied equally to all students and staff, encompassing face to face, telephone and all forms of electronic communication including social networking.

Part 1: Core Principles – this section outlined common core principles for all students and staff. They were written in positive language and designed as a resource to provide a starting point when negotiating ground rules with groups or engaging in one to one interactions (See box below).

Part 1: Core Principles

These core principles have been designed to enhance the experience of all members of the university community, by promoting a safe, supportive and effective environment. They apply equally to face to face, telephone and all forms of electronic communication including social networking sites.

✓ **Be Respectful** – For example, ensure your interactions are always respectful and professionally conducted and University facilities are appropriately used.

✓ **Be Sensitive** – For example, be aware of your language and behaviour to ensure it respects others and recognises diversity.

✓ **Be Understanding** – For example, ensure there is mutual respect by listening to others (be aware your voice may be more easily heard in some venues than others).

✓ **Be Punctual** – For example, make sure you arrive, start and finish on time. Let the appropriate person know if you are delayed. To avoid disruption to others, late entry to a session / appointment may not be possible.

✓ **Be There** – For example, actively participate to get the most out of the time available.

✓ **Be Prepared** – For example, make sure you have done the necessary preparatory work. If insufficient preparation has been done it may not be possible for the planned activity to take place. Students who have attempted but had difficulty with preparatory work should bring this to the attention of the relevant staff member.

✓ **Be Considerate –** For example, use mobile phones and electronic devices with an awareness of how this might impact on others.

Part 2: Student Guidance – this section provided guidance for students on how they could promote mutual respect. This could also be used by staff to establish what they might reasonably expect from students. This part outlined the student's responsibility for familiarising themselves with the core principles, where to express any concerns, as well as identifying other sources of support available.

Part 3: Staff Guidance – this section provided guidance for staff on how to promote mutual respect. Students could also use it as a guide to what they could reasonably expect from staff. This part provided tips for staff to use to help them establish the core principles and specific examples of actions that could be taken if these principles were not being demonstrated, specifically in formal taught sessions.

Addressing potential challenges through a sustainable approach
An important aspect of the action research approach was to anticipate potential challenges from the outset, address them in a productive way to lessen resistance and difficulties when piloting and introducing the guidance. The task group developed and worked with a detailed action plan that set out major milestones for the whole project; strategies designed to meet possible challenges along the way were built in. This action plan also covered pilot implementation of the guidance and acted as a means by which progress could be demonstrated to others within the organisation. This also provided ongoing motivation for the group. A number of the key challenges and the strategies used to address these are outlined below.

One of the main challenges was to establish appropriate ownership of the guidance. Having a widely representative task group involved in the development of the guidance enabled the end product to be inclusive and based on cross institutional engagement from the outset. This not only included key staff groups but very importantly, student representation and a Student Union sabbatical officer. The task group also helped generate a significant number of high level champions for the initiative and the resulting guidance, who understood its background, development, guiding philosophy and aims. Having these champions in place consequently meant the guidance had a relatively smooth passage through the relevant university committee structures to enable formal university ratification and full implementation.

Getting the tone of the guidance right was important. The task group decided early on to follow the tone of the School guidance that it started with, maintain its positive approach and language i.e. 'Be punctual', rather than a more negative or punitive approach concerning what 'not to do' i.e. 'Do not be late'. In addition, the *every individual*, *every interaction* scope of the guidance meant that using language that students and all staff groups saw as relevant to them was key. Having multiple stakeholders input to the initiative from their own perspectives helped to establish the relevance and ownership of the guidance early in the process.

Task group members consulting with their constituent groups, was crucial to effectively manage the change process. This helped raise awareness of the guidance and its purpose. The action plan set targets for dissemination once it had been approved by the university. Task group members were again key to this process by taking the guidance back to their areas and supporting individuals with its implementation. This process promoted understanding of the guidance as an appropriate and supportive addition to current institutional practices. Due to their extensive input and ongoing commitment to the initiative task group members continued to act as champions within their areas. For example, they introduced the guidance to others and signpost staff and students as queries arose.

A further component of the action plan and the action research process was evaluation. This was formally built in from the start and revisited informally throughout the process. The iterative process enabled evaluation of the effectiveness of the initiative on an ongoing basis. However, a formal action research evaluation was undertaken over the academic year during which the guidance was piloted across the university. This evaluated the perceived effectiveness of the guidance from the perspective of different stakeholders and a detailed evaluation report (Hill et al 2011) was produced and further disseminated (Janes et al 2013). This evaluation activity was a key strategy used to support the progress of the initiative as it demonstrated to others a genuine desire to ensure any development was effective and that it was not just change for change's sake. It also provided a balanced perspective i.e. gaining feedback from students and a range of staff.

The evaluation found that staff commonly felt the guidance could, or had been, used effectively to promote positive behaviour in practice. Students commonly felt the guidance was needed, and that the core ground rules reflected the values that should be embedded throughout the University. Some students felt that the guidance should become policy and correctly positioning it within the institution was another major challenge. It was not university policy e.g. disciplinary policy, but was more than other guidance documents e.g. process documentation, quick guides, help sheets and FAQs. However, there was a clear consensus that it should not be policy but should have more 'teeth' than other forms of guidance. To meet this challenge the support of relevant individuals with influence at a strategic university level was key and helped maintain the institutional positioning of the guidance as appropriately situated between other existing policies and guidance.

In addition, as guidance designed for all university community members, to help support them in maintaining a culture of mutual respect, it was a joint venture among university staff (including the relevant trade unions) and students. As such, it was not felt appropriate for it to be owned solely by the human resources department, alongside disciplinary and capability processes, nor one School or Department or the Students' Union. As a result, it became the first university document to be formally jointly 'owned' by two university departments i.e. Human Resources and Student Services who worked very closely with the Students' Union. As there was no precedent for joint departmental ownership of university documents this required negotiation and new practical considerations but as a result of the collaborative partnerships and widespread commitment on which the whole initiative was based, this was achieved relatively easily and the guidance remains jointly 'owned'. As such it was embedded within institutional processes and these formal 'owners' continued to oversee the review and further development, long term implementation and ongoing evaluation of the guidance.

A further aspect of the institutional positioning was to embed aspects of the guidance into existing processes to ensure sustainability. For example, the guidance became part of staff induction. It was also built into the PG Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education programme; mandatory for new staff. Additionally it was embedded in the Student Representatives' training programme provided by the Students' Union.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has outlined the antecedents of and collaborative process undertaken to develop and implement a student/staff resource to support effective partnerships for learning within a Higher Education setting. The factors contributing to the initiative's success have been explored along with the key challenges faced. Some of the strategies used to overcome these challenges have been shared to enable interested others to learn from this experience.

Suggestions for Action

- Find and build on anything you already have. If you want to develop local guidance look for examples from elsewhere in your institution you could draw on/adapt and develop e.g. local school or faculty guidance, and previously successful ways of working
- Take a positive/preventative approach or style rather than a punitive focus
- Work with others to take an inclusive approach to development, implementation and evaluation – this supports widespread stakeholder identification and engagement. For example involve students and non-academic staff wherever possible even when developing local guidance
- Plan for sustainability from the outset e.g. build into institutional and/or local processes such as induction, postgraduate teaching certificates and other CPD, Student Representative training etc
- Think about institutional positioning:
    - consider where ongoing ownership/management responsibility will sit - particularly if working outside institutional norms i.e. shared guidance
    - be clear about relationship to other guidance and policies i.e. not replacing disciplinary procedures etc
    - consider whether you want policy or guidance
- Build in periodic evaluation
- Build in activities to maintain awareness as part of ongoing implementation

Can the Use of Learning Analytics Encourage Positive Student Behaviours?

Sarah Lawther, Ed Foster, Jean Mutton, and Mike Kerrigan.

Big data offers an opportunity to measure a breadth of student activity ranging from recorded student behaviours (such as attendance and assignment submission), systems interactions (such as use of the virtual learning environment), card-based transactions, (such as use of a library card), feedback (such as the UK-wide National Student Survey) and access data (such as door swipes). It is student activity, student involvement, such as student effort, hours spent studying, participation in university activities and the course that are key to student retention and success (Gibbs, 2014), (Astin, 1999), (Trowler, 2010). This data therefore provides a broad and useful indicator of student involvement with the institution that can be available quickly, easily, and in real time, where previously we may have relied on observation (which becomes increasingly difficult in large cohorts) or outputs such as assessments (which may be too late for an early warning of a student in difficulty). Whilst causal relationships are difficult to prove, patterns generated by this data using predictive analytics, often referred to as 'learning analytics' in education, can provide an insight into which activities and behaviours are useful predictors of student retention and success (Mutton & Hibberd, 2012), (Jisc, 2012).

Learning analytics, then, can provide information as to which behaviours are most likely to lead to students achieving their goal of gaining a good degree, and provide an early identification of 'at risk' students who are not exhibiting these behaviours. This early warning is particularly useful as students may not be aware that they are encountering difficulties: the HERE Project, for example, found that male students were far less aware that they might be at risk (Foster and Lefever 2011), so an early alert allows for early conversations with students. A real time indicator to students of their actual behaviour is also useful, particularly in cases where students may overestimate their involvement: Woodfield et al (2006), for example, found that some male students were more likely to overestimate their actual attendance. Where students have been given such information, this appears to have improved attainment and changed behaviour, such as the red/amber/green light 'Course Signals' indicator at Purdue University. Students with low engagement were alerted via a traffic light system and given an intervention schedule with strategies to raise their engagement levels. It was found that once alerted, these students often "addressed behavioural issues to become more successful" and changed their behaviour, seeking help both earlier and more often (Arnold, 2010).

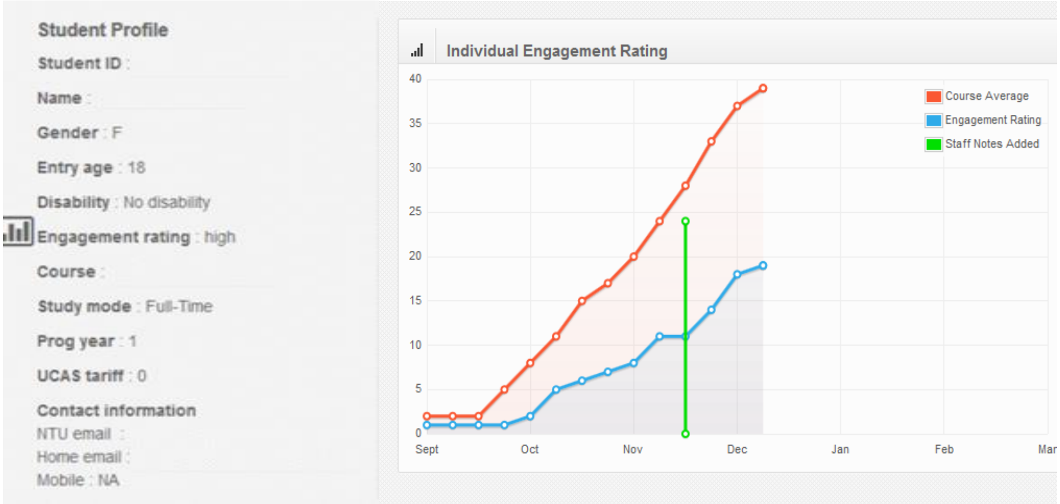
How are we using data to support positive behaviours at NTU?

In 2013, Nottingham Trent University worked in partnership with an external company, Solutionpath.co.uk, to develop a learning analytics resource: the NTU Student Dashboard. The Dashboard was developed with three strategic aims: to improve retention, to increase students' sense of belonging to their course, and improve academic attainment. There was an explicit expectation that providing more information to students and staff would lead to changes in student behaviour and success. The Dashboard was piloted in 2013-14 in three academic schools and introduced across the University in 2014-15. Students and staff have been consulted extensively throughout the process and the JISC code of practice for learning analytics (Jisc, 2015) has proven useful for shaping an institutional framework for the use of learning analytics. The initial evaluation suggests that it is working to support student/tutor relationships and to encourage positive student behaviours.

There are broadly two elements to the Dashboard. Firstly a web page containing a wide range of data about the student, including entry qualifications, some contact details, enrolment status, a student photo and the name of the student's tutor. This data is 'sortable' by tutors. Tutors can, for example, easily create a list of students who are not yet fully enrolled and contact them to offer further support and guidance. The Dashboard also contains information about grades achieved and is currently being developed to include feedback from tutors. The second aspect is the learning analytics machine at the core of the resource. The Dashboard logs every time a student uses their smart card to gain entry to a building, takes out a library book, logs into the virtual learning environment and each time they submit coursework through the VLE's dropbox facility. The developers used anonymised historical data to train the resource to identify correlations between measurable behaviour and student progression. The Dashboard uses analytics to give each student one of four engagement ratings: 'High', 'Good', 'Satisfactory' and 'Low'. In essence, a student with low engagement is most at risk of not progressing to the next year. The Dashboard is configured so that if a student has no engagement for a fortnight, their tutor is sent an automatic email asking them to investigate and see if there is anything that they can do to help. The University took a conscious decision not to include demographic data or prior academic attainment as part of the Dashboard methodology. The only factor, therefore, that shapes a student's engagement rating is how they are engaging with their academic studies on a week-by-week basis. Whilst previous studies have found that student background and entry qualifications do influence the likelihood of student success (National Audit Office, 2007), (Equality Challenge Unit, 2014), during the development period and in subsequent evaluation these factors have been found to be less important predictors of success for our students than their actual engagement.

The Dashboard graphically displays students' weekly engagement rating in comparison to their peers on their course during the year so far. Students are encouraged to log in and look at their own engagement scores. Personal tutors are expected to log in and use it periodically, particularly in preparation for tutorials and one-to-one meetings with students. There is space for the tutor to make planning notes in a free text field and this can be accessed by other key staff such as course leaders, course administrators and those offering student, academic, or careers support. Where tutors have met with a student and written in the notes field, a green line appears on the graphic providing a useful indicator of whether student engagement changed after the meeting.

Figure 1: Individual student and course average engagement rating: the green line indicates staff notes added



Whilst users see identical information, students can only see their own Dashboard, whereas staff have a level of access depending upon where they are employed in the University. In response to feedback during the development of the Dashboard, it also includes space to record extra-curricular activities such as student mentoring and volunteering, as staff were keen for the Dashboard to support a holistic view of the student.

We worked in consultation with both staff and students throughout the development of the Dashboard, using meetings, focus groups and surveys. Student concerns have been less about the general principle and much more about how data will be used. In the focus groups, students described that they are familiar with being monitored in other areas of their lives, such as the black box on their car for insurance, and would find monitoring of their progress at university useful, particularly to support their motivation:

> *"When you can track and see how you are doing it gives you more of a push if you are dropping down and you don't want to drop down"* (Student Dashboard Pilot Focus Group).

Students also felt strongly that they would like to be able to see what the tutor sees about them, *"so there are no surprises…I want to be able to see what is collected on me so I know what they can see about me"* (Student Dashboard Pilot Focus Group). In response to this early research, the Dashboard was designed to be transparent: the student sees what the tutor sees on their own Dashboard, and the University has concentrated on explaining carefully how the data will be used and reassuring students that the Dashboard has been designed to support them.

Is the Dashboard working to support positive behaviours? Early findings.

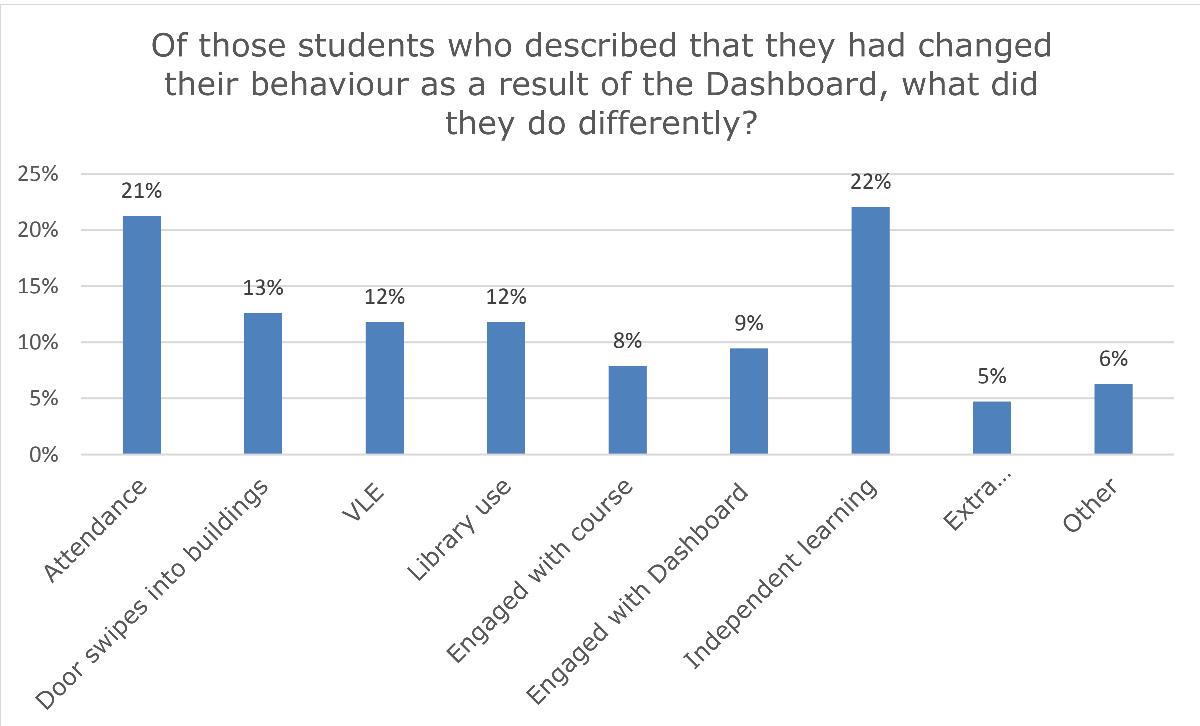
A review of the 2013-14 academic year showed a strong association between engagement rating and both progression and academic attainment. Students with high average engagement were more likely to remain on their courses and more likely to achieve a 2:1 or a first class honours grade at the end of their degree. We can therefore be confident that, although a causal relationship cannot be proved, the combination of behaviours that we are measuring are useful predictors of retention and success in our own context and for our own students. The Dashboard therefore offers a useful indicator to tutors of those students who are not engaging, who are 'at risk', enabling earlier identification and contact with these students.

Qualitative feedback from staff indicates that it is a useful tool to support the tutor student relationship: "*It gives me a quick picture of my tutorial group, which will help support them*"; "*It gives a focus to one-to-one Personal Tutor sessions and an easier and broader understanding of student history*" (NTU staff feedback). Tutors reported that having information easily available made contacting students quicker, and that the holistic view of the student available in one place enabled them to start conversations with students "*much further on*". In addition, course teams reported that the Dashboard enabled a better sense of how the course as a whole was engaging.

What did students do differently as a result of using the Dashboard?

Focus groups and surveys have been used to understand student perspectives on the Dashboard. In the first year Transition Survey (Feb-March 2015) just over a quarter (27%) of the 466 students surveyed described that they had changed their behaviour as a result of using the Dashboard, with some students describing more than one change in behaviour.

Figure 2: Transition Survey findings



Perhaps unsurprisingly, many of the students described those behaviours that were being measured as those that they had changed such as attendance, swiping into buildings, use of the VLE and the library. It appears that by measuring these behaviours students recognised that there was an expectation being set, and that perhaps students were more aware of the importance of 'rules' such as making staff aware of non-attendance in advance:

> *"I increased my attendance and told someone if I will be late or not attending"* (Student Transition Survey).

A small number of students described gaming the swipe system, making sure their door swipe was measured to ensure a good rating. This is an issue that requires watching carefully. A high engagement is indicative of success, but this is not automatic. If a student games the system and takes out, but does not read, a pile of library books, they will be boosting their engagement rating, but are not actually participating in positive behaviour.

We also found instances of students describing independent learning behaviours that they had changed that isn't measured by the Dashboard, such as "*reading material prior to the lectures", "working out the time spent on certain subject areas that need more time for planning assignments*" and "*spent more time working independently when it has shown that my engagement rating has lowered*". These are particularly encouraging findings, as we know that it is not just attendance that supports student success but also student effort, hours spent studying, and the effectiveness of work undertaken during time spent studying that are key to success (Gibbs, 2014).

Students also reported engaging more with their course, such as engaging more with course communications as a result of using the Dashboard, "*I checked my emails from my tutors more*", and participating more in sessions. A small number of students had also increased their participation in extra–curricular and employability opportunities, and we think that this may be that the section of the Dashboard that records this information is setting this as an expectation.

Why does the Dashboard seem to be encouraging positive student behaviours, and how can we encourage this in all students?

The Dashboard provides tutors with holistic information about each student, facilitating early conversations and an individual relationship with students, supporting students' feelings of 'being seen' and 'being known'. This information therefore allows tutors to build early connections with students, to 'head-off' problems before they occur, and to encourage and affirm positive behaviours where they are taking place based on a real-time awareness of current behaviours. In addition, the early warning system to identify 'at risk' students alerts staff perhaps before the student would recognise these behaviours as warning signs, allowing early interventions to take place. Research has begun within the University to explore what works to ensure a consistent and effective response once students are identified as 'at risk'. Research is also looking at whether positive affirmations of individuals' behaviours (such as high attendance) will have an effect on cohort behaviour.

In their pre-university education, students have often experienced clear guidelines for behaviour: teachers are encouraged to display behaviour policy together with sanctions and rewards in class (Department of Education, 2011). Students have also often experienced explicit sanctions and rewards, such as withdrawal of payment of exam fees for non-attendance (Bell and Lawther, 2009) and prizes such as school trips and book vouchers for good behaviour (Department for Education, 2014). Consequences in Higher Education are less immediate and are not usually externally imposed; the reward is usually the final outcome. Students are expected to become more independent in their learning behaviours, to manage their own learning, self-regulate and self-motivate.

The Dashboard appears to support students in the transition into what is expected of them in Higher Education by measuring those behaviours that we would like to encourage, and setting early expectations of behaviour that are clear, explicit and visually represented. It appears that, for some of our students, the Dashboard is also supporting this transition to self-regulation of behaviours, and we are particularly keen to explore further why it is encouraging the student independent learning behaviours in addition to those behaviours being measured. This may be because it enables the student to reflect on their actual engagement, acting as a mirror, an indicator of performance, providing a clear indicator of behaviours needed to reach their goal. Reflecting this student activity back to students in an easily accessible and immediate form is providing a picture of students' actual behaviour (rather than remembered behaviour that may be inaccurate), and how their behaviour relates to their engagement.

Astin (1993) found that peers had a particularly strong influence on values and behaviour change, and peer influence appears apparent in how students use the Dashboard. In both the focus groups and survey some students reported how they competitively compared engagement ratings with their peers, for example *"[I have] become more engaged with the VLE so it shows high engagement rating, and so I'm higher than the class average"* (Transition Survey). The visual presentation of activity appears to be serving as a motivator for students, both engaging students with their own success, and their success in relation to their peers. This is potentially where we have a lever for change and we would like to explore how we can harness this to further support the positive learning culture in our institution.

Interrogation of big data, then, does appear to be encouraging positive student behaviours in a number of different ways. By bringing together current data that exists within the institution about students it provides a useful indicator for staff of student involvement, supporting personal communication with students that begins at each student's starting point: to identify and support low engagers, but also encouraging and rewarding those students with higher engagement. By recording activity, it appears that we are encouraging student involvement so there is potential here to record further additional activities that we know to be of benefit to students (such as additional extracurricular activities). For students, presentation of activity data appears to act as a mirror, reflecting their actual behaviours over time and in relation to their peers. This research suggests that there is further potential to harness this peer influence to encourage behaviours that we know lead to success in all our students.

The development of the Dashboard is ongoing and we will continue to work with staff and students to further increase its potential.

Suggestions for Action

- Use whatever data you have available to build up as holistic a view of students' engagement as possible.
- Consider the range of indicators of student engagement available, including those that may not have a digital footprint. For more information please see Case Study: Engaging with Analytics MacNeill and Mutton (2013).
- Even without a learning analytics tool to drive it, there are some data sources that can function as effective early warning tools. Colby (2005), for example, noted that any absence in the first fortnight functioned as a good indication of likely problems ahead. There appears to be evidence emerging that engagement with VLEs may also correlate with progression. Even without a Dashboard or learning analytics, it may be possible for administrators and academics to monitor engagement and at the very least respond to the lowest engagement.
- Any learning analytics solution is only as good as the action it prompts. Institutions need to think through what they expect to change as a consequence of having the data available. Do you expect behavioural change just because students have more data, or do staff have a role to play as guides? If the latter it will be particularly important to consider staff training, allocating staff time to use and act on any data generated, and integrating university support and tutoring systems.
- Allowing students to see data can impact on their self-regulation and alteration of behaviour.
- Use data transparently so that students and tutors can see similar profiles of engagement.
- Involve students in the development of any learning analytics tool.
- Discuss early with your students their prior experience of expectations of behaviour and consequences, and how this may differ in HE, and set clear expectations through dialogue with students. It may be useful to jointly write these expectations as learning contracts. For more information about co-writing a learning contract please see the HERE Project Case Study 9 (Lawther and Foster, 2011).
- Arranging regular meetings between students and tutors (even where you don't have data) can engage students more effectively in University life and promote positive behaviour.

- Early formative assessment may be a good proxy for learning analytics, perhaps most importantly because it creates an authentic reason for a dialogue between the tutor and student.

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The Student Experience Practitioner Model: adopting an institutional and inclusive community approach to Student Engagement

Michelle Morgan

Introduction

The overall aim of this paper is to suggest the Student Experience Practitioner Model (SEPM) as a practical framework for improving the student experience in, through and out of study for an increasingly complex student body within a bureaucratic higher education (HE) sector by identifying and managing the different 'behaviours' that occur within HE. Firstly, I will offer a definition of the student experience and who is responsible for the delivery of it. Secondly, I will highlight some of the complex behaviours that are generated by institutional processes and systems, staff and applicant/student characteristics. Then I will discuss the behaviours generated by, and responses of staff and students, in each stage of the student lifecycle using the student experience practitioner model (SEPM) (Morgan, 2012). Finally, I will conclude with some suggestions for action to manage these behaviours.

What is the student experience?

The student experience encompasses all aspects of student life (i.e. academic, social, non-academic support) with the academic imperative being at the heart of it. Students fundamentally go to university to 'learn' whether it be 'in' or 'out' of the classroom. If a high quality student experience is achieved, it can reduce withdrawal rates and aid student progression as well as helping attract new students. However, the increasing costs of delivering HE, the reduction in government/ state funding and resource constraints means that delivering a high quality student experience has never been more challenging.

Identifying who is responsible for improving the student experience

There are two key 'contribution' components that make up the student experience. The first is the contribution by the institution. Providing a high quality experience that meets the support requirements of the complex student body participating in HE requires the input, collaboration and coordination of all key service providers, both academic and professional service staff (non-academic staff), at all levels across the institution. Whilst at university, the student's academic home unit (commonly a faculty, department or school and where the primary subject of the student's course resides) and with which they will identify throughout their studies, is central in the process.

The second is the contribution by the student. Every student's experience at university is unique to them. It is defined by their personality and personal circumstances, and their ability to engage and interact with all aspects of university life. We can enhance and facilitate the engagement and interaction of students, but no matter how effective we are in supporting them, some issues will be outside our control. Therefore, it is essential that the institution and student share responsibility in contributing to the achievement of a high quality student experience through identifying and managing behaviours, working in partnership and understanding that a 'one size fits all' model is now outdated and should be abandoned.

Institutional, student and 'study lifecycle' behaviours
Supporting the complex lives of students throughout the lifecycle requires us to consider our behaviours as educators from an institutional and individual perspective.
When I talk about 'behaviours', I am referring to the characteristics of an action/activity or individual. Those characteristics in turn create behavioural responses that need to be taken into account when adapting or developing new initiatives. Below are common examples of institutional and student behaviours and responses followed by those generated by the student lifecycle.

Institutional behaviours
University processes and systems developed to cope with a complex student body can feel bureaucratic, inflexible and not participant driven, presenting a barrier to improving the student experience. For example, the teaching timetabler's main priority and challenge is to ensure all classes are scheduled using the rooms available. However, due to modularity and uncertainty about student enrolments, scheduling classes so that a student on a particular course doesn't have to come in for 9am on a particular day, or ensuring that the timetable is available a few weeks in advance of the new academic year or term so students who are parents can plan their childcare, is very difficult.

Departments/faculties often have a high degree of autonomy in how they operate and individual staff (either professional services or academic) also have varied approaches and attitudes towards the student experience potentially leading to different management and learning and teaching practices within an institution. For example, one department may have a more flexible approach to assessment deadlines than another. This can be viewed as unequal treatment, causing frustration amongst students, potentially leading to challenging behaviour.

Due the nature of academia, staff undertaking academic activities also have flexibility in the learning and teaching approaches adopted. Particular disciplines have certain styles and approaches, but even within disciplines, there can be diversification. For example, different tutors may have different writing styles or referencing techniques and expect students to produce work using their style, which can be confusing and a real challenge for the student.

Due to the size and complexity of a university, it can feel that functions are delivered in a silo fashion and that there appears to be little connectivity between key activities such as learning and teaching and academic or non-academic support. For example, career and employability advice to students often sits outside of the curriculum without academic staff involvement. However, it is becoming increasingly recognised by institutions that this activity should be part of the curriculum with career and employability staff being invited to be part of the curriculum development process and course team.

Student behaviours
The contemporary student is complex, often with a range of characteristics as highlighted below in table 1. We can no longer talk about applicants and students coming from 'non-traditional' or 'non-standard' backgrounds because these have become mainstream characteristics when describing the current student body in higher education.

Although broad student groups have been listed in table 1 along with examples of issues related to each characteristic, it is critical that students are not labelled or stereotyped based on their dominant characteristic. Students are not 'just students' but commonly have to contend with multiple life roles such as having to balance their studies with the demands of caring, often for children or parents; needing to undertake extensive paid work; or having to commute long distances to university. For example, an international student may face language and cultural barriers, but these are not the only challenges they can experience. They might also be first generation and mature. A mature student or veteran not only has to contend with characteristics associated with being an older learner, but they may also be a commuter student. For many students regardless of characteristics, a lack of confidence in their ability and doubts about their worthiness to be at university can often be experienced. As educators, we need to be aware of the multiple characteristics of our student body and the issues (which create behaviours that they may face) when creating and implementing new processes and systems and student support mechanisms.

Table 1 Examples of issues related to each student characteristics

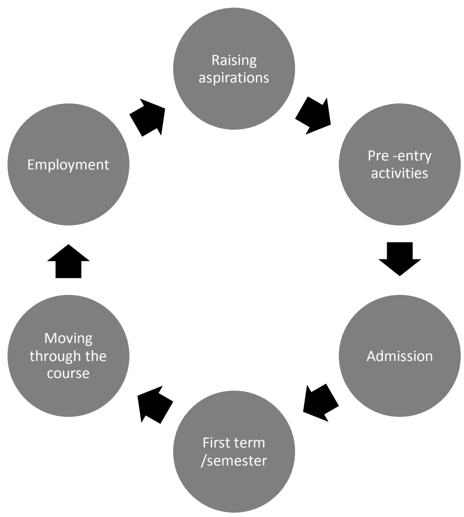
Broad student characteristic	Examples of issues related to each characteristic
International students	Academic, social, cultural and linguistic adaption; psychological distress (high family expectations, awareness of financial sacrifices made by parents, fear of failure, isolation).
Male engagement and feminisation of HE	Low male participation could increase withdrawal rates. Feminisation of HE in both the curriculum and participation can impact on male attainment
First generation	Lack of awareness of how to engage in HE; experience financial issues; lack the insight of how to access educational resources.
Lower-socioeconomic	Less likely to attend prestigious universities; likely to undertake more paid work than second generation students; lack of cultural capital.
Mature	Likely to undertake more paid work than the average student; caring responsibilities (children, parents); lack of support of partner.
Disabled	Fear of being rejected on the basis of their disability; access to specific support requirements (e.g. mental health); physical/structural access (e.g. no ramps); the potential impact of students not disclosing a disability.
Minority	Less likely to attend prestigious universities; fewer minority students participating thus isolation.
Commuter	Travel distances and costs; timetable issues; reduced on-campus social and academic opportunities; unable to develop a sense of belonging with the institution.

Transfer student	Learning a different academic environment in a limited time; have to join an established cohort and settle in so as a result can feel disconnected with the institution and their studies.
Part-time	Lack of time on-campus to engage in extra curricula activities; access to support if they study outside of 9-5.
Veterans	Physical and psychological; adjusting to an academic environment; lack of information regarding financial support.
Care leavers	Lack of access to personal, financial and emotional support; experience greater levels of debt.
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender	Adapting to a heterogeneous environment in the classroom or wider setting; accessing support that is gender based; coping with hate crime or homophobia.
Low entry qualifications	Lack of skills to cope with this level of study; feel out of their depth; unprepared for their new learning environment.

Adapted from Morgan, 2013

Behaviours stimulated by the Student Experience Lifecycle
Not only is it important to take account of the characteristics and behaviours of the institution and student, but we also need to be aware of the behaviours associated with the different stages in the study lifecycle that students' progress through. The traditional student lifecycle (see Figure 1) provides a broad overview of the student journey from raising aspirations at school to post HE study.

Figure 1 Traditional student lifecycle

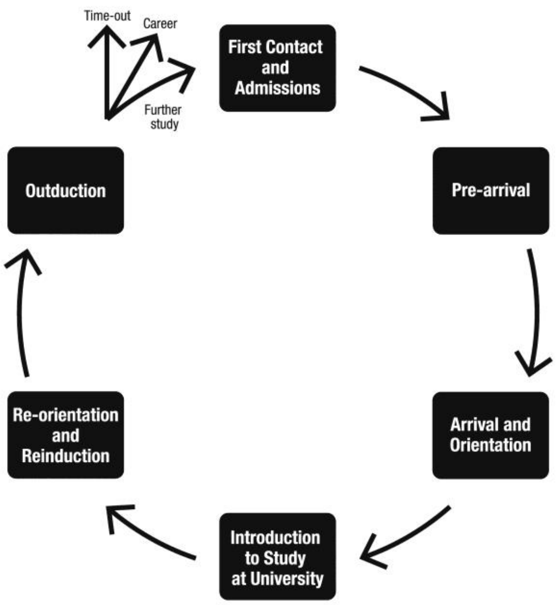


Source: HECFE, 2001

Although this model is still very applicable, as a practitioner within HE, I found that it wasn't detailed enough to help me support students preparing to enter, progress through the different levels of study and make the transition out of HE study. As a result, I adapted the model above to reflect this and I have identified behavioural characteristics and responses generated by each stage.

My Student Experience Practitioner Model (SEPM) comprises of six new, interlinked stages as highlighted in figure 2. Each stage should contain information appropriate for students at that progression point and all information should be consistent. Throughout all the stages, it is important to identify students who are struggling to settle and offer targeted support and advice based on their individual characteristics. Behaviours sought from students and staff in all stages includes positivity, engagement, understanding, working in partnership and what Thomas (2012) calls 'a sense of belonging'. Any difficulties experienced by students in each stage should not be viewed at bad, difficult or inappropriate behaviour by staff, but challenges that students require support to overcome. The different stages are discussed in more detail below.

Figure 2 Student transition stages in the Student Experience Practitioner Model



Source: Morgan, 2012

First contact and pre-arrival
These are the stages where the institution needs to start making the applicant and incoming student feel that they could be or are part of the university, their home unit and learning community. This stage also includes the raising aspirations work undertaken within schools either by the schools themselves or by universities. What is promised here needs to be delivered or behaviours such as disappointment and disengagement can occur later. It is useful at this stage to identify students who may have particular support requirements such as a disability, specific learning issue or are commuter students.

Arrival and orientation
Arrival at university can be a seminal moment in a student's life. This stage can closely shape the attitudes and beliefs of a new student in terms of their self-

conviction to fit into the university culture and succeed in their studies. An unsatisfactory arrival and orientation experience can result in behaviours such as disengagement leading to withdrawal from university within the first few weeks. A successful arrival and orientation experience can potentially encourage the development of positive learning behaviours.

Induction to study
There is a skill to learning how to study at higher education level. Students learn at different speeds and a cohort can have a wide range of capabilities due to different student characteristics. The induction to study stage is critical in helping them lay the foundations for successful study at all levels in their course by equipping them with the relevant study and research skills. This stage takes place over a longer period of time than orientation. If this is not a positive experience it can impact on the later stages of the student journey with behaviours including confusion, stress and disengagement.

Reorientation and reinduction
The levels of study between the first and last are often overlooked, but can prove critical in how students cope in their last year of study. The 'midterm blues' is commonly experienced by students half way through their studies. To help combat this, institutions should not make the assumption that a returning student knows what to expect in their forthcoming level of study, or that study or personal pressures will be less than those of new students. In fact, it is quite common for personal pressures to increase during the duration of study and the academic pressures relating to knowing how to study and what has to be delivered to decrease. These stages remind students of the skills they have developed and how to transfer them into the next level of study, changes that have happened during the vacation period and what they should expect in the coming year of study. For some students such as direct entry students, they will be dealing with the challenges of being a new student undergoing 'induction to study' alongside this stage. Lack of support in these stages can lead to behaviours such as confusion, a sense of abandonment and the mid-term blues.

Outduction
Just as students are inducted to study so they should be outducted and shown how to transfer the skills they have learnt, developed and perfected in their studies to life post-study whether that is in the world of work or further study. Students, who have entered their studies feeling quite immature and inexperienced in terms of knowing how to live and study independently, will have generally changed quite dramatically by the time they complete their studies. For students who have to return home to difficult political or social situations or to families who struggle to adapt to the returning mature graduate, preparing them for these changes is essential. A lack of support and information in this stage can lead to students experiencing stress and worry about their future. Students need a positive exit from their studies to launch them into the next stage of life.

Specific stage issues
Just as the student body is no longer homogenous (see Table 1), neither is the type of student composition at each level of study (e.g. direct entry and intermission students) and this creates further student 'behaviour' characteristics that need support within each stage. For example, a direct entry

student going into the final year of a degree and joining an established cohort, not only has to cope with a new academic and cultural environment, but has to contend with a group that has bonded. Effects on behaviour could include the direct entry student feeling isolated because they do not know anyone and academically disadvantaged because they do not know the academic expectations and rules. The existing cohort, who are under pressure and feeling exhausted after 3-4 years of study, may feel frustrated and annoyed because in their most crucial year of study, they will be expected to undertake key group assessed work with new students they do not know.

The management of behaviours

Behaviours and responses of students, staff and those created as a response to processes as described earlier; have to be managed if we are to improve the experience of all key stakeholders in HE. For staff, whether they are directly engaging with students or are on the periphery in the academic and non-academic spheres, it is important that they understand what is required in delivering a high quality student experience and their role in that delivery. Structures, processes and systems need to keep pace with change and be fit for purpose to prevent issues arising, or potentially escalating. For students it is important that they actively engage in their education and are encouraged to participate at an institutional level. Below are examples and suggestions of actions in managing the lifecycle and institutional behaviours that impact on student behaviours.

Managing student behaviours through the Student Experience Practitioner Model (SEPM)

Throughout the stages of the SEPM lifecycle, student behaviours need to be effectively managed by addressing students' aspirations, expectations and their academic and social integration. Keeping students engaged in their studies and creating a sense of belonging for them can assist them to persist and succeed in their studies (Thomas, 2012). However, this requires staff and students working in partnership to keep the momentum going between the different stages of study, thus communication of information is essential. All information must be appropriate, fit for purpose and accessible for students at all stages of their study. Involving students in developing information and communication approaches can be particularly valuable.

Managing institutional behaviours to create positive student experiences and positive behaviours

Institutional behaviours can be managed via a range of activities that include:

<u>Infrastructure, processes and systems</u>

The infrastructure of an institution needs to be fit for purpose for its student body. Information systems need to be robust and accessible on and off campus. Processes and systems need to be flexible and equitable to ensure a consistent and effective student experience.

<u>Manage student and staff expectations</u>

To succeed in their studies, students and staff need to know what is expected of them. Providing staff development and training so staff are aware of and are able to manage behaviours is essential. Clearly explaining to students their responsibilities and how they can engage can help them flourish to the best of their ability. Students and staff working in partnership, and institutions ensuring that initiatives are designed to add value and be sustainable are essential in achieving successful outcomes.

<u>Break down barriers and ask the difficult questions</u>
Be honest, transparent and fair using effective and various communication techniques. This can be achieved by providing effective student and staff evaluation and feedback processes telling us about their aspirations, expectations and experiences which are fed directly into new initiatives and developments. When developing new initiatives, ask the 'who' the 'what' the 'why' and the 'when' questions (see table 2).

Table 2 Questions to ask when developing an initiative

- What is the aim & objective of the initiative?
- Who needs to be involved in the development of the initiative
- Who is the target group?
- What do they need to know?
- What information is going to be delivered?
- Who will deliver it?
- When is it going to be delivered?
- Is the timing appropriate?
- How will it be delivered?
- What is the cost of the initiative?
- What is the timeline for the initiative?
- Is it financially viable?
- Can the initiative & information be adapted for another group of students?
- How will it be evaluated & monitored?

<u>Design for inclusivity</u>
If students feel that they are not included, engaging and retaining them can be a problem as they may be unable to identify with the environment or material being taught (Heaney, 2008). It is essential to provide opportunities for any knowledge or skill gaps to be bridged and that the institutional environment and curriculum should contain and respect the cultural values of all participants.

Also, it is important to make sure that all university activities such as curriculum and assessment, pedagogy, academic and non-academic support, finance issues and employment are not delivered in silos but are interlinked.

Adopt a proactive approach to support requirements and withdrawal

The support required by a student should be framed as 'support entitlements' rather than 'needs'. This creates a positive atmosphere around the activity. Also, students drop out of HE for a multitude of reasons (e.g. poor subject choice or institutional fit; student demographics; personal reasons, poor university experience). As a result, withdrawal need not be viewed as a negative occurrence, but a positive move for an individual (e.g. a student registered on a course they do not want to do). Providing a proactive and positive approach towards the withdrawal process can enable the student to feel better about themselves and the final decision they make.

Conclusion

In conclusion, improving the student experience in today's environment requires us to think strategically and holistically. The challenges facing us as educators and the contemporary student has never been more challenging. Understanding behaviours of all stakeholders and taking them into account in the delivery of a high quality student experience is critical. We need to be proactive and pre-empt the behavioural responses that can impact in the delivery of a good student experience. Considering behaviours through a framework such as the SEPM and asking difficult questions makes it possible to identify key areas and to structure what we deliver. Supporting students effectively in, through and out of study not only gives them a great experience but also supports institutional retention and success rates.

Suggestions for Action:

- Use all forms of communication to provide information such as newsletters, emails, institutional social networking sites and invitations to appropriately pitch information about university and home unit events;
- Don't overload students with information, but drip feed it to them to maximise absorption;
- Clearly explain what each stage in the student lifecycle involves and the issues they may face;
- Provide students with opportunities to work in partnership with the institution to explain their requirements, how they respond to processes, systems and staff and to make change;
- Explore ways to ensure everyone supports the student experience with the same ethos;
- Don't use a one size fits all approach as all students are different;
- Provide flexible delivery wherever possible to meet the varied support requirements of our complex student body;
- Think about and manage all types of behaviours.

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Creating Positive Partnerships for the Future: *Involving* Students and Staff in Dialogue to Promote Progressive Behaviours and Institutional Development

Marcia Ody and William Carey

Introduction

This paper explores the concepts of student engagement and partnership within an evolving model of practice at The University of Manchester. This model fosters an approach of meaningful student and staff involvement in individual and institutional development within the University community. Defining frameworks and principles for Student Engagement and partnership have gained considerable momentum in discussion and debate within the HE sector (Kandiko and Mawer (2013), Van der Velden (2012), Dunne and Owen (2013), Bryson (2014)) and with individuals, organisations and institutions trying to decide 'what's in and what's out'. The methods discussed here focus on a proactive, not reactive, view of managing behaviours. We believe that positive behaviours are promoted by fostering/demonstrating positive values and principles through shared experiences. We are developing 'mass' methods that impact groups and, as a result, the individual. However, those less engaged in University life are the hardest to reach, and therefore their behaviours are harder to impact.

Student Engagement and Partnership

Student engagement in theory, practice and policy varies, and can include: identity within the subject, creating customised curricula/curriculum, student representation, co-curricular activities, sense of belonging/feeling/being and community development. Trowler (2010) identified three distinct foci of student engagement and presented them in a three-dimensional model, which incorporated examples from the literature. Foci/axes were: individual student learning, structure and process, identity.

A partnership approach within HE is expected. However, by whom, with whom, and for what purposes, is articulated differently both within the literature and by different agencies and individuals within the sector. Is partnership a path to engagement or a path of engagement? Healey et. al. (2014) suggest partnership is a subset of engagement: "Partnership is essentially a process of engagement, not a product. It is a way of doing things, rather than an outcome in itself."(p.7)

The concept, the practice and the intended outcomes that partnership may enable are defined in different ways:

> "The terms 'partner' and 'partnership' are used in a broad sense to indicate joint working between students and staff…. partnership working is based on the values of: openness; trust and honesty; agreed shared goals and values; and regular communication between the partners….partnership working recognises that all members in the partnership have legitimate, but different, perceptions and experiences…." (QAA 2012, p.3)

The National Union of Students (NUS)'s Manifesto for Partnership explores the way partnership is understood slightly differently:

> "Partnership is about investing students with the power to co-create, not just knowledge or learning, but the higher education institution itself … A

corollary of a partnership approach is the genuine, meaningful dispersal of power … Partnership means shared responsibility – for identifying the problem or opportunity for improvement, for devising a solution and – importantly – for co-delivery of that solution." (NUS 2012, p. 8)

Student Behaviours and Values

How a student perceives themselves and how they are perceived influences their behaviours. Sector discussions include:

- Charters: Should these be reviewed? Is nomenclature and content fit for purpose? Is there a commitment to delivery and enactment?
- Role/definition of students: this will be impacted by each individual's expectations, engagements, behaviours and also institutional cultures. e.g. customers, gym members, stakeholders.

The concepts of engagement and partnership move away from the consumerist relationship presenting a constructive alternative in which opportunities arise to foster positive behaviours, and to develop communities within and between students and staff. We believe these behaviours are underpinned and supported by the set of values identified by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) (Healey, et al, 2014, p.14):

- Authenticity – all parties have a meaningful rationale for investing in partnership, and are honest about what they can contribute and the parameters of partnership.
- Inclusivity – partnership embraces the different talents, opinions and experiences that all parties bring, and there are no barriers (structural or cultural) that prevent potential partners getting involved.
- Reciprocity – all parties have in interest in, and stand to benefit from working and/or learning in partnership.
- Empowerment – power is distributed appropriately and all parties are encouraged to constructively challenge ways of working and learning that may reinforce existing inequalities.
- Trust – all parties take time to get to know one-another, engage in open and honest dialogue and are confident they will be treated with respect and fairness.
- Challenge – all parties are encouraged to constructively critique and challenge practices, structures and approaches that undermine partnership, and are enabled to take risks to develop new ways of working and learning.
- Community – all parties feel a sense of belonging and are valued fully for the unique contribution they make.
- Responsibility – all parties share collective responsibility for the aims of the partnership, and individual responsibility for the contribution they make.

These values underpin partnership, which we believe is a component of engagement. When enacted, they become behaviours. Active, positive behaviours are promoted by adopting the values and principles and embedding them within practice, within the classroom and/or outside. This can foster a collegial culture and provide opportunities for all to engage/participate in setting the right expectation, establishing behavioural norms, and developing themselves and the institution. Equipping students and staff with the confidence to disperse and share this responsibility is not easy. However, it can often be done simply, for example by incorporating collaborative learning or taking a facilitative approach in asking questions, or more intensively, for example by changing from a didactic teaching method to a project or flipped-classroom approach.

The University of Manchester approach
Facilitating partnership enables behaviours to be developed across the institution. A recent institutional review of Student Engagement was established to draw these practices together and expand them. Drawing from widespread and longstanding pockets of localised activity, the review identified 'Spheres of Engagement' (The University of Manchester, 2015a). These intentionally do not define a path for engagement or partnership, but suggest areas in which a culture of engagement and partnership can grow.

One evolving sphere is 'Institutional Dialogue' (ID), which will become key to ensuring that Manchester's Student Charter is a living document. In this way, partnership promotes individual and collective behaviours and empowers staff and students to develop a culture of participation, mutuality and collaboration, with the intended outcomes of shared ownership of the development of education, individual identification with the goals of the institution, and increased motivation and connectedness. Manchester's current approach to ID recognises the benefit and value of student voices in areas such as curriculum development/institutional projects and supplements the need for voices in Quality Assurance and Engagement. Our model brings together discrete ID activities, which support students and staff to inform a quickly changing HE landscape. However, the positive by-products of wider behavioural change amongst staff and students, and development culture, was not an initial driver (Ody and Carey 2013).

Meaningful student involvement is neither spontaneous, nor a magical formula or mysterious transaction with students. The challenge is that some students do not understand how to contribute, or to identify the benefits of, such activity. Our emerging model promotes a 'funnelling' approach, supporting those who may be apprehensive or sceptical. Thus, the approach gives individuals the potential to engage and promotes involvement from levels of *feedback* from students about their experiences, through to informing and being *consulted,* through to *partnership,* in which there are shared decisions. Students are empowered to initiate, create change and partner in the development of practice and strategy. The stepped approach creates a normalisation, appreciation of staff and student perspective, and expectation of collegiality in which dialogue is fostered.

As Bovill (2013, p.643) notes, this concept requires mutual respect and different levels of contribution within different contexts:

> "Fundamentally, co-creation…implies a shift in the conceptualisation to a more reciprocal model where students and staff have a role, a voice and agency to influence and meaningfully participate…relative levels of control over decision making and appropriate levels of partnership are likely to

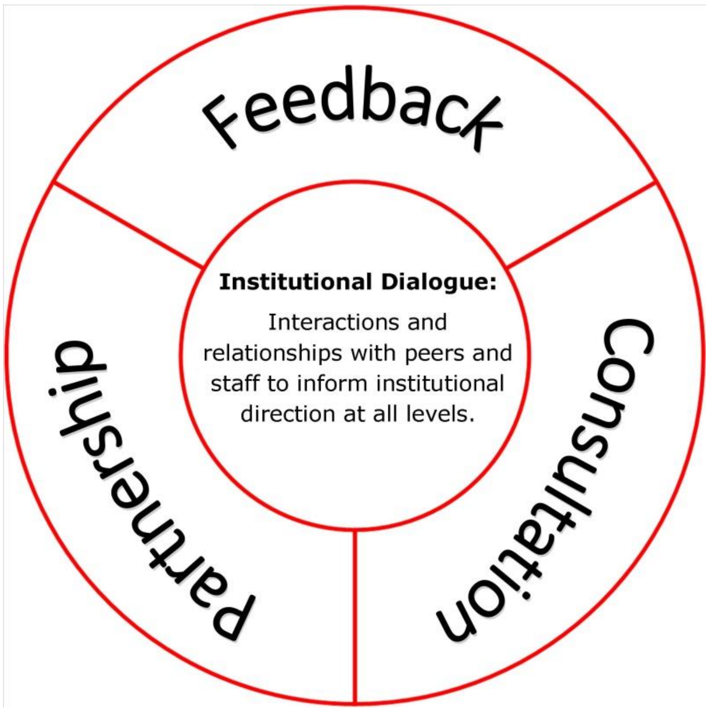
depend upon the context, the level of study, the relative experience levels of the students and the staff, the attitudes of students and staff"

The presented ID practice (Figure 1) is intended to grow and initiate the HEA values by funnelling three different approaches: *Feedback*, to *Consultation*, to *Partnership*. The level of staff involvement/control and structure changes with and within the three approaches and this impacts the intensity of the values and consequently the behaviours. Examples of characteristics for each approach are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Characteristics of Institutional Dialogue approaches

	Feedback	Consultation	Partnership
Characteristics	Transactional	Conversational	Collaborative and equal commitment
	One way dialogue	Connecting, shaping and informing	Critical thinking, discussion, debate
	Gathering individual perspectives	Opportunity to comment on thoughts, ideas and proposals	Developing new ideas
	Institutional ownership of process, focus and outcomes	Institutional ownership of process, focus and shared ownership of outcomes	Shared ownership of process, focus and outcomes from initiation to completion

Figure 1: The University of Manchester's model of Institutional Dialogue



We do not see one approach as ‘better’ than another but instead recognise the value of different ID approaches for differing purposes.

Institutional Dialogue in practice
Figure 2 illustrates the evolving practice of ID (through methods and associated examples described below). These provide opportunities for students and staff to enter into strategic and operational conversation supplementing formalised student representation.

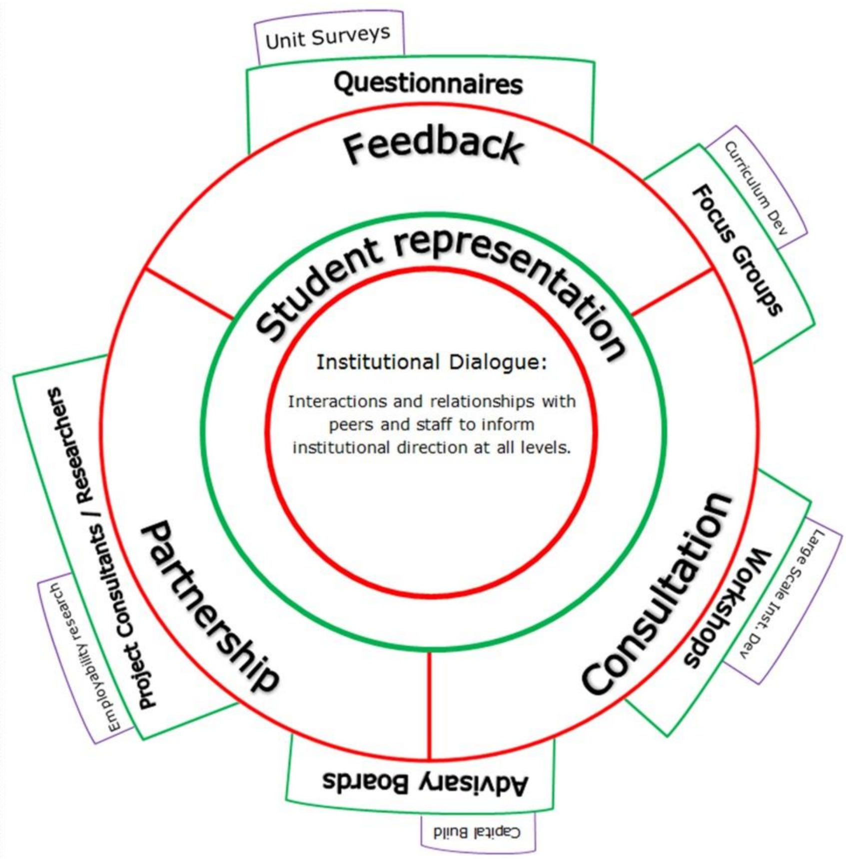


Figure 2: The University of Manchester's model of Institutional Dialogue with methods and examples

Importantly, the level of impact on any individual will vary depending on their existing principles, values and behaviours at the point of their engagement. Our experience is that even for those who are perceived to be most engaged / developed there is still a progressive behaviour journey. The methods used demonstrate an increasing level of engagement with values and impact on positive behaviours and the examples provide a practical insight to a method's application. See the examples below. To ensure consistency and an equitable student experience, a more coordinated approach has evolved with defined roles of Commissioner, Process Manager, Facilitator and, Participant (Ody and Carey 2013). The application of the approaches can be formal and structured or in some cases fluid. Some interaction is one off and some longer term dependent on the focus.

'Feedback' Approach

Method	Questionnaires (online or paper-based) used to gather data/opinions from a large group of students. Limited resource is required, is easily scalable for large groups and can be used to inform further ID.
Example	Unit Surveys Students are invited and encouraged to complete unit surveys twice a year for every unit they study. Rating-scale

	statements and free text questions are asked to obtain feedback on their learning experience.
Behaviours /Values	This example demonstrates how existing practice can be used to introduce the concept and importance of ID, initiating positive values and behaviours through seeing the impact of feedback. Impact requires an active response which promotes a sense of value, breeding further engagement in informing and shaping institutional practice. It is important to be cautious as an unintended feeling of 'taking from you but not giving anything back' can foster negative behaviour and values.

'Consultation' Approach

Method	Consultation Workshops A 'one-off' opportunity to share feedback and ideas about a defined topic/area initially at a visionary stage. Workshops are bespoke and interactive, using a range of techniques to ensure those who commission them receive meaningful and relevant information. Techniques include, group discussions, voting using 'interactive keypads', critiquing a publication and making recommendations about the language of student-facing material. The design and structure is dependent on topic, intended outcomes and the number of participants which ranges from 10 - 100 though typically would be 25 - 40.
Example	Large-scale institutional developments (e.g. Online student portal) My Manchester – A group of approx. 25 students to review and develop the online portal and to prioritise the work schedule including the interactive news feature and mapping of the visual layout and content. Drafts of screen shots were shared to obtain comment on language and to review and revise what should be live for all students; recognising an iterative process to support a two year work plan. Further examples of use have included informing the vision of 'University College for Interdisciplinary Learning, the experiences of timetabling to inform an institution-wide timetabling policy etc.
Behaviours /Values	This method provides an insight into University functions / structures / processes and opportunities for students to contribute to development at an institutional level whilst understanding constraints. It promotes an appreciation of the continual improvement process enabling students to influence what the priorities should be and helps students to establish realistic expectations and respond to new challenges.

	Building a respect and value of each other's (staff and students) opinions and ideas develops a sense of engagement and ownership in the institutional community and develops values such as authenticity, inclusivity, trust, challenge and early stages of responsibility. Appreciating different expertise and experiences is critical to this method, acknowledging that staff don't have all the answers encourages greater two way dialogue and demonstrates the approachability of staff (students may perceive otherwise) thereby developing the students' professional competencies and attitudes.

'Consultation' and/or 'Partnership' Approach

Method	Advisory Board/User Groups This is often a series of consultation workshops with the same participants, members of the User/Advisory Group commit to a longer term project (meeting typically 2 times a semester). Group size varies from 5-40 depending on the nature of work. The Advisory Group typically reports into a Steering Group, ensuring its views are adequately reported as well as sending/receiving questions and sharing agendas/discussion items between groups.
Example	Capital Build Project Approximately 20 students (including Student Union representation) supported the development of the University's 'Learning Commons' building from inception to completion. It followed through the conception, design, build, functional requirements and completion of a large student centred learning space. Blue sky thinking was encouraged to inform staffing and the use of the building.
Behaviours /Values	The method develops a significant commitment to the institution through contributing to major change. In this example, members of the User Group saw 'their building' being built, knowing they were influencing the evolution of the build and how their initial ideas were influencing the end result. It develops the value of empowerment, challenge, community and responsibility alongside the same values of those developed in consultation. As this method retains the same group, a sense of accountability grows to each other, the wider student body and the Steering Group.

	The User Group also experienced additional recognition and reported a sense of pride in the work (reciprocity) from their involvement. .

'Partnership' Approach

Method	Project Consultants/Researchers A group of students (and staff) drawn from different experiences and expertise to work together on a defined project with an agreed brief and timeframe. The nature, process and outcomes of the work is much more open ended with the ownership defined by the group.
Example	Employability research and activity implementation A pilot project using groups of students as 'My Future Ambassadors' in 3 targeted Schools with a minimal initial brief to research and develop project plans to enhance employability awareness amongst students (particularly 1st years) working in partnership with colleagues from Careers and Teaching and Learning Support Office.
Behaviours /Values	All values presented earlier are exhibited here with significant empowerment and responsibility along with development of confidence, interpersonal skills and ownership. This ownership is fostering an increasing level of commitment to the project and impacting students and staff values, principles and behaviours beyond those directly involved through the ambassadors' dialogue with others.

Application of different methods may be at both a macro and micro level ranging from students informing the assessment criteria or methods within a small programme through to students and staff working together to redevelop an institutional policy. Any individual can apply these methods at a local level within their context to promote positive behaviours. An example of such would be setting expectations with students which could be done with a large group of first year students using the methods of a questionnaire or consultation approach to reflect on previous learning experiences and prepare for higher level learning. A more in depth approach could be taken to set expectations with student representatives both for their role and in working with other students. Recognising that setting the right student and staff expectations is important an individual could adopt the method of Advisory Group or Project consultants / researchers empowering students to research the challenges and identify new practices for the future.

Through dialogue and these methods, positive behaviours are developed in a proactive way rather than a reactive approach to challenging/negative behaviours.

Conclusions

The concepts of Student Engagement and Partnership continue to be a healthy academic debate. Would it even be a good thing to reach a definition of Student

Engagement or Partnership? Is it the mere academic discussion which in itself is changing a culture and encouraging current dialogue recognising the HE landscape is not static: today's appropriate engagement, partnership and dialogue may not be tomorrow's. By equipping students and staff with behaviours (rather than rules for partnership) enable them all to own this evolving experience.

It is not expected that ID is a smooth journey and moments of friction should be anticipated, expected and embraced. However, in these 'uncomfortable moments' the moulding of revised behaviours happens, understanding and appreciation of differing viewpoints takes place, with some of the positive, powerful and progressive ideas are developed.

At the heart of this lies an intention that all staff and students are members of a single higher education community fostering a culture in which differing experiences and expertise are shared through the introduction of appropriate approaches resulting in the development of values and behaviours that become intuitive. If successful, these intuitive behaviours become integral to the individual and are taken beyond the higher education community aligned to graduate attributes and citizenship. For Manchester, the distinctive attributes alongside mastery of a discipline include 'critical thinking, higher order reasoning and, analytical skills…preparedness for professional and vocational work; ability to confront personal values and make ethical judgements; preparedness for active citizenship and leadership;… and valuing equality, diversity and fairness.' (The University of Manchester, 2015b)

Suggestions for action:

Develop proactive interventions to promote positive behaviours

The change in the perception of students and as students has been significant and has arguably been influenced by tuition fees, student expectations, prior learning experiences along with massification of HE. We suggest developing opportunities for ID to foster principles and values which lead to positive behaviours and reduce the manifestation of challenging behaviours. The approaches/methods will impact discussions between staff and students.

Have a go and start small

You don't need a model or strategy to implement ID, if you look around you will find existing practice that you can build from and/or others who are keen to work with you. Identify where change projects are happening (e.g. Is your library space being redeveloped? What curriculum change is happening? What policy is being reviewed?) and try out one of the approaches with your students and colleagues. Momentum will increase once you have evidence of the benefits.

Respect contributions, expertise and experiences

"Of course students are not experts in subject knowledge, but they may have expertise that lies beyond the conception of university managers. 'Equality' is as much about respecting each other's views as it is about having similar levels of knowledge. Taking the conversation seriously is the first step towards acknowledging known and prospective forms of expertise that students bring to the table – not least a very clear sense of what is in the student interest." (NUS 2012, p.7)

Take opportunities to demonstrate respect for contributions by sharing how the activities have informed the development of the institution.

Allow different ownership
Areas for discussion, expertise and approaches should dictate ownership and leadership with different players taking a lead at different times. This dynamic approach will enable a shared responsibility.

Provide opportunities for all
Opportunities should exist for all students to contribute to decision making, at minimum through providing feedback so that all feel a valued part of the community therefore nurturing positive values and principles These opportunities should encourage the professional development of institutional staff and increase student involvement and development of positive behaviours.

Hold on to purpose and principles
This area of work is 'in vogue' at the moment, with different drivers (e.g. institutional development, student success, retention, student experience, a need to demonstrate 'working with students'). Keep your principles and beliefs of the intrinsic benefits at the core but allow fluid and meaningful development.

Engage all in the discussion of concepts, purpose and strategy
This type of work will not be sustained if it is done in isolation, connections with others and with institutional culture and strategy is critical. Whether piloting a small ID approach or grappling with developing an institutional model, potential questions you may want to discuss include:

- What are the drivers for ID within your own Institution's context?
- How will you develop a range of opportunities for mass and individual engagement?
- What are the barriers and opportunities?
- Is a cultural change needed? How can you engage all?
- Where are the existing and future opportunities for ID?

Marcia Ody and **William Carey** (Teaching and Learning Managers, University of Manchester) are passionate about student engagement and peer education managing a varied programme of activity promoting student/staff partnerships.

They support the strategic enhancement of student engagement at Manchester, providing consultancy to encourage incorporating partnership approaches into daily practice. Under Marcia's leadership the PASS/SI National Centre was established; as Certified Trainers, they have trained 300+ UK, Irish and other European colleagues to develop peer education practices. Alongside publications and conference dissemination focussing on practical application frameworks, Marcia recently received a National Teaching Fellowship and William, a Teaching Excellence Award.

Conclusion

Gillian Janes, Diane Nutt and Paul Taylor

In this final chapter, we provide a summary of the key themes drawn from the successful examples discussed in earlier chapters, and conclude with a set of practical ideas to help readers with current concerns relating to student behaviour.

Throughout this Special we have suggested that managing student behaviour is most effectively achieved through building relationships and considering the local and institutional context rather than focusing on how to manage individual inappropriate behaviour. Each of the chapters has provided ideas on how to create environments which reduce inappropriate behaviour and support positive engagement. Based on our own experience and that of the chapter authors, we would highlight three key themes.

Firstly, we advocate working from where you are and suggest that, in most contexts, there are already a set of conditions that can help address behaviour issues. Without intending to trivialise the challenges you face, we believe it is important to take the opportunities of your local context, including any existing policies, positive ways of working, and good relationships into consideration. So, for example if you are an individual member of staff with concerns, can you elicit the help of colleagues, the student union or key support staff? Is there a policy, or a charter that you can use to begin new conversations with your students and colleagues? What already exists that might help you? Has any other department or programme come up with useful approaches that you can learn from? Answering these questions means knowing your institutional and local context, and this is a theme in each of the previous chapters.

Secondly, there are practical, achievable things that can be done. Some can be done quickly and relatively easily, while other more substantial changes take time and require you to go through stages towards your goals. The chapter authors all made major changes over time, but identify in their 'suggestions for action' examples of what you might do now to address current issues. At the end of this final chapter, we also provide a set of further practical suggestions to help.

The third, and perhaps most important, overarching theme is working in partnership with others, and in particular working with students. All of the authors included here provide examples of partnership working to enhance student participation, engagement and to address behavioural change through this approach. Whatever your context, finding relevant partners is a vital part of resolving behavioural concerns.

Suggestions for Action

The following suggestions provide some practical ideas to manage challenging situations in your current context, while you explore longer term solutions. They are underpinned by the following principles:

A) Recognise what your role is/what authority you have in the situation and discuss with a colleague to clarify if necessary – you may have more authority than you recognise.

B) Students in HE are adults and therefore any approach should be based on that. Even if students don’t behave like adults, they should not be treated like children.

Preventative actions:

- Get a new perspective from someone from outside your discipline, with a different background experience.
- Get to know your student population/entry route as this can help make sense of their motivations, and any ‘baggage’ they may bring with them (for example they may have studied together before)
- Don’t assume people arrive equipped to understand or manage the university/HE in FE environment & find it easy to articulate what they need
- Be clear about individuals’ responsibility to behave appropriately and the reasons for doing so.
    - Everyone has the opportunity to experience an environment of mutual respect, sensitivity and equal opportunity
    - Ensuring effective learning can take place
    - Everyone has an opportunity to display key transferable professional skills which may enhance employability
    - Codes of Professional Conduct (where relevant) can be met
- Think about setting out some clear guidance for all from the outset. This provides a basis upon which to gently and sensitively raise issues with those who are not behaving appropriately.
- Reinforce/revisit previously agreed ground rules regularly
- Consider why a person is behaving in an unacceptable manner – this can inform how best to deal with inappropriate behaviour.
- Address issues swiftly - delay may be perceived as the behaviour being acceptable/the situation can escalate.
- Familiarise yourself with any relevant local guidance
- Be consistent:
    - People adapt better to new ways of behaving if the same is expected from/by everyone
    - If possible, it is worth working with colleagues to provide a consistent approach across a programme or course,
    - But if you can’t impact at programme or institutional level, work with any colleagues you can.

Dealing with circumstances as they arise:

- Remind individuals/groups that their behaviour influences how they are perceived by others. Attempt to talk directly to those concerned if appropriate. Where appropriate discuss with the group any specific situation where the ground rules are not being kept.
- If needing to raise an issue with an individual/group, consider the following actions, as appropriate to your role:
    - Acknowledge that they are dealing with…. / feeling….. Be clear about what is appropriate behaviour and why.

- Give examples of where their behaviour has been inappropriate and the effect of this on yourself/others. Give examples of good behaviour if possible.
- Ask if there are any reasons for the situation. We cannot know what has led them to this point.
- Explain how it is detracting from them getting the most from their experience.
- Ask if they need additional support and refer as appropriate.
- Explain the limits of your role but what is available elsewhere.
- Explore options and agree a helpful course of action, if appropriate. For example, monitor for two weeks, get together and review how it has been. Use this as an opportunity for positive feedback (Be careful not to ask them to do something that others don't have to do as this could be construed as discrimination).
- Be clear that continued unreasonable behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.
- Be aware of the associated University policies and procedures and any Professional Codes of Conduct that apply.

After a problematic situation:

- Talk to someone about what happened and if appropriate make a record of events in accordance with School/Departmental guidance.
  Consider:
- Seeking support from the appropriate person. For example: line manager, mentor, subject leader, HE in FE co-ordinator, University link tutor.
- Notifying the relevant person. For example: line manager, personal tutor, module leader, programme leader. This may be a pattern of behaviour.
- In the learning environment e.g. in a lecture theatre (subject to local guidance):
  - Following a warning to individuals about their behaviour you can ask those concerned if they would prefer to leave. This can resolve the situation but if not, you can request they leave.
  - If inappropriate behaviour continues consider giving the individual/group a reasonable time (e.g.10 minutes) to modify their behaviour. It may be appropriate to leave the room and return when the individual/group is ready.
  - In exceptional circumstances, if the situation is not resolved after this designated time, consider ending the activity.
  - Security may be called.
- If the behaviour is across a cohort or group this should be recorded in the module box, or equivalent (rather than in every students' record).
- Record details of events on the individual student e-record or equivalent as appropriate.
- Provide a copy of the record for the student(s) concerned.
- In exceptional circumstances (and where relevant) consider Fitness to Practice/Professional Regulations.
- Access local learning and teaching or management support mechanisms e.g. line manager or central learning and teaching department; and ensure students are aware of additional support mechanisms available to them e.g. Personal Tutor

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