

Introduction to Student Partnership – brief overview (Screencast) #2

Transcript

0:00

Welcome to our brief overview of student partnership and its relevance to Scottish tertiary education.

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This resource aims to provide a brief introduction for colleagues who are new to student partnership and it covers the following elements.

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So, what is student partnership, some definitions and principles, potential benefits and challenges, its role in Scotland's quality processes and some related terminology that you may come across.

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And we've also produced a linked resource that goes into more detail about student partnership, and references key literature for each of these elements.

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So the green book icon that you'll see throughout this presentation represents links to this resource.

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And the acronyms that we've used are listed here for you.

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And we've also shared a QR code to our sparqs Acronym Buster, which you may find helpful as you navigate terminology within the Scottish tertiary sector.

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So let's start by considering what is student partnership.

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Well, it's an evidence-based approach which has potential benefits for students and staff, and as a result, it's had an increasing profile and importance internationally.

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And this quote from Healey may provide a useful starting point if you're new to the concept.

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So as you read it, you'll see that it highlights a move from traditional models within higher education in which staff may have simply responded to students' comments.

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And instead it emphasises a move towards collaboration, towards shared decision-making and exchange of ideas between staff and students.

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And in this commonly-cited definition from the peer-reviewed literature, Cook-Sather and colleagues state that we define student-faculty partnership as a collaborative, reciprocal process through which all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways, to curricular or pedagogical conceptualisation, decision-making, implementation, investigation or analysis.

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So some of the key principles associated with student partnership are recognising the expertise that students bring and having an openness to their new ideas or approaches, embedding collaboration and shared decision-making, as well as genuine sharing of power and control, and fostering a culture of partnership through trust and mutual respect.

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And the literature emphasises the three R's in terms of respect, reciprocity and shared responsibility between students and staff.

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And also cautions staff to think about their position, their power and their influence and how this may impact on partnerships.

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And when these principles are followed and student partnership is done well, it can result in a range of potential benefits for both students and staff.

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So these can include increased student engagement, motivation and confidence, the development of enhanced relationship and trust between students and staff, the creation of new or better teaching and curriculum materials, and for staff, the development of new learning and teaching beliefs, which can ultimately lead to enhanced practice.

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And we should also mention that there are some potential challenges.

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So from the student perspective, these can include embedding inclusive approaches and whose voice is represented.

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And for staff, battling an institutional culture can be challenging.

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But we encourage you to be brave, to start small, and to find allies as you start out on your student partnership journeys.

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And Scotland is recognised internationally for our reputation as leaders in student partnership

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And we've worked hard as a sector to develop our approaches over the last 20 years, particularly in terms of student partnership and quality processes.

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And we've achieved this through a range of approaches, including embedding and building on tools such as the sparqs' Student Engagement Framework.

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And student partnership is now embedded as a core pillar within quality processes for Scottish colleges and universities.

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And this is known as the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework, or TQEF.

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The TQEF was launched in 2024, and it's represented by the graphic on this slide.

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And the six pillars of the TQEF include student engagement and partnership.

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And you can see that the framework places students at the heart of what we do as a sector.

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And before we conclude, it's useful to be aware of other terminology that has relevance to student partnership.

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So you may see the term students as partners, co-creation, students as change agents.

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And there are some key differences between these.

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You may also be aware of student engagement, student voice and student participation.

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Again, all related, but do have differences between them and student partnership.

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However, please don't let terminology differences put you off engaging with the overall concept of working in partnership with your students.

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So, in summary, we hope that you now have an awareness of these key elements associated with student partnership.

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And again, we'd encourage you to engage with our linked resource for more detail and key literature for each of these elements.

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And we'll conclude by sharing the reference list for this resource so that you can explore these in more detail.