That’s Quality 2016 Colleges

Wednesday 10th August
College Development Network

@sparqs_Scotland #TQ16college
Housekeeping and getting started

- Toilets
- Fire alarm & exits
- sparqs staff
- Workbooks & materials
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.00 – 10.15</td>
<td>Introduction to the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.15 – 11.15</td>
<td>What is partnership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15 – 11.30</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.30 – 12.30</td>
<td>Panel Discussion – Why is student engagement in quality important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.30 – 13.00</td>
<td>Understanding the new college review process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.00 – 13.45</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.45 – 14.30</td>
<td>An introduction to quality tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.30 – 15.15</td>
<td>Student engagement in college self-evaluation: examples from colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.15 – 15.45</td>
<td>Using the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey and other data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.45 – 16.45</td>
<td>What do you want to achieve?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.45 – 17.00</td>
<td>Conclusions and close</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objectives

By the end of the event you will:
• Be familiar with the different organisations that support quality in colleges
• Understand the national arrangements and procedures that make up the quality framework for colleges
• Understand the quality tools you can use to enhance your students’ learning experience
• Understand how to develop an action plan for the year ahead using national and college quality arrangements
What is partnership?

David Scott
Institutional Support & Development Manager

@sparqs_Scotland
#TQ16college
sparqs (Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland) was created in 2003 and is funded by the Scottish Funding Council.

Work with:
- All colleges and HE institutions throughout Scotland.
- Students’ Associations.
- Individual students.
- Other sector agencies.
Our **Vision** is of:

Students making a positive and rewarding difference to their own and others’ educational experience, helping shape the nature of learning and contributing to the overall success of Scotland’s universities and colleges.
To make this Vision a reality our Mission is to

Ensure students are able to engage as partners in all levels of assurance and enhancement activities including:

-Commenting on and shaping their own learning experience.
-Taking an active part in formal student engagement mechanisms, including quality processes and strategic decision making.
-Shaping the development of the student experience at national level.
What we do:

• Training and support for **student** reps both within institutions and at a national level.

• Support for individual **institutions** to enable them to develop effective structures and support for student engagement.

• Support for **national** development of student engagement and to support students at this level.

• Input into the **development of student engagement** through research, policy development and sharing of practice.
Supporting Students

• Training of Course/Class reps
• AT training and support
• IAT training and support
• Accreditation and Recognition of class reps and officers
• Support staff who organise Course Rep Training
Supporting Institutions

- Support the work of the 2015-2017 SFC funded SA development project
- Staff development
- Development of Student Partnership Agreements
- Support development of lead/faculty reps
Supporting the Sector

• Supporting the review of college quality processes (Education Scotland, Action Learning Pilots)
• Supporting the student voice on transition/articulated programmes
• The student voice in e-learning/e-assessment
• Support the student voice in the use of national data – Student Survey
• Apprentices
Supporting a culture of engagement

• Student Engagement Framework

• sparqs conference

• International work: New Zealand, Kosovo, Armenia, Ireland
National policy

*External Quality Arrangements for Scotland’s Colleges* three key principles:

- High quality learning.
- Learner engagement.
- Quality culture.

How well are learners engaged in enhancing their own learning and the work and life of the college?
A Student Engagement Framework for Scotland

There are six features of effective student engagement:
1. A culture of engagement.
2. Students as partners.
3. Responding to diversity.
4. Valuing the student contribution.
5. Focus on enhancement and change.
6. Appropriate resources and support.
A Student Engagement Framework for Scotland

There are five key elements:
1. Students feeling part of a supportive institution.
2. Students engaging in their own learning.
3. Students working with their institution in shaping the direction of learning.
5. Influencing the student experience at national level.

The use of the term ‘learning’ throughout the framework can apply to learning, teaching and assessment.
Scottish Student Engagement Framework

**Partnership** is a key concept – students have an equal role in shaping their experience which, when fully realised, goes beyond feedback, problem solving and membership of committees, to opportunities for real enhancement.
A Ladder of Citizen Participation

(Sherry R Arnstein)
Students as Partners

- Recognise issues relating to position, power and influence.
- Different but equally valuable contribution of students as experts.
- The role of the autonomous Students’ Association as a key partner – the ability to deliver a considered student viewpoint based on hard evidence, democratic processes and due attention to meeting the needs of all students.
The Student Learning Experience

- Curriculum
- Learning resources
- Learning and teaching process
- Assessment and feedback
- Student progression and achievement
- Guidance and support
- Quality enhancement and assurance
Panel Discussion: Why is student engagement in quality important?

Alison Cook, Scottish Funding Council
Margaret Rose Livingstone, Education Scotland
David Killean, Borders College
Rob Henthorn, NUS Scotland
Understanding the new college review process

Margaret Rose Livingstone
Education Scotland
Lunch
Afternoon agenda

13.45 – 14.30  An introduction to quality tools

14.30 – 15.15  Student engagement in college self-evaluation: examples from colleges

15.15 – 15.45  Using the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey and other data

15.45 – 16.45  What do you want to achieve?

16.45 – 17.00  Conclusions and close
An introduction to quality tools

Simon Varwell
Development Consultant
Quality tools

- Student Partnership Agreements (SPAs)
- Outcome Agreements (OAs)
- The Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students’ Associations
Student Partnership Agreements

• First proposed by the Scottish Government
• A document created by institutions and SAs
• Updated annually
• Focusses on partnership in learning and teaching
• Part A: tools of engagement
• Part B: projects
Outcome Agreements

- Required by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)
- Developed by each university and college
- Students’ association involvement expected
- Outlines what will be done with public money
- Includes what learning will be provided (and how, where etc)
Questions to discuss for each tool

1. How much has your SA worked on these tools?
2. What conversations or ideas have they created?
3. What are your concerns or priorities?
4. What do you need to do to create your case?
5. How can you take them up with your college?
6. And who specifically would you need to involve?
College SA Framework

• The Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students’ Associations
• (Most folk just call it the College SA Framework!)
• Developed by the Scottish Government, SFC and NUS Scotland
• A crucial tool for colleges and SAs to engage with in partnership
Student engagement in college self-evaluation: examples from colleges

Nick Murton, Edinburgh College & Conor Murray-Gauld, ECSA
Dougie Smith, City of Glasgow College
Course Team Self-Evaluation

Engaging students in self-evaluation – Edinburgh College Experience
Purpose of today’s session:

• 10 mins presentation:

• Introduce Edinburgh College’s new approach to SE
  • Discuss: how we engage students in SE at Edinburgh College.
  • Consider: why are we involving students?
  • Lessons learned – our experience & challenges

• Discussion & questions
What is self-evaluation?

• Looking at evidence/data/information;
• Deciding from the evidence:

• What’s good?
• What’s bad?
• What do we do now?
  • To fix the problems (improvement)
  • To do more of the good stuff (enhancement)
• Devising a SMART action plan do to just that
• Evaluating the IMPACT of the actions we’ve taken – “so what?”
What is SE at Edinburgh College?

• Putting the right people in the right room (Jan/June)

• Giving them the data they need

• Keeping it simple: asking three questions

• SMART action plan agreed by ALL participants

• Impact of actions evaluated at start of each subsequent session – a continuous cycle of evaluation & planning
Why this approach?

• Old approach = report-driven & tokenistic; didn’t drive improvement or enhancement & failed to connect with staff or students.

• “learner voice is fully and systematically represented in review, self-evaluation and action-planning for improvement at [course] level.”
  • Education Scotland Review of Edinburgh College 2014

• Months of consultation with academic managers & visit to Ayrshire College
Why this approach?

• Desired alignment with Education Scotland Action Pilot key themes:

  • Ownership: “strengthen ownership & responsibility for SE ... as the route to real quality improvement.”

  • Challenge: “Ensure credibility is built into college SE by embedding independent, external, critical, challenging voices into evaluation process.”

• Only way for this to be real: put the people that matter together in a room & give them data & ownership of evaluation & forward-planning.
Our experience and challenges

• Worked with ECSA to invite reps into the room, on the day.
  • Belief #1 ECSA doing the asking gives exercise credibility
  • Belief #2 Students at the heart of the improvement/enhancement conversation is meaningful route to real student engagement & real actions.

• Inviting Class Reps – Process & Lessons Learned: the ECSA perspective
  • Ensuring class reps are trained/engaged before meetings and aware of the purpose
  • How does this work feed into the core work of the SA and self reflection
  • Having an SA involved in SE or QE requires staffing and resourcing because it’s a lot of work – how do we ensure we have that resource - LEF

• Inviting Class Reps – Process & Lessons Learned: College perspective
  • Where reps attended, they were valuable ‘critical friends’ and staff valued their input/insight.
  • Timing is everything: meetings have to take place in non-teaching time, but means class reps are not in college #WinLose
Acknowledgement

• #1 Huge thanks to Ayrshire College – gave of their time and shared all their learning with us: huge boost in developing what we have done.

• #2 We have a long way to go: we’ve started this, but it’s by no means perfect - need to boost student and stakeholder participation & skill of staff in critical evaluation & SMART action planning.
Questions?
Questions to think about...

1) How might the students’ association be more involved in evaluating quality at your college?

2) What are the challenges and what might the students’ associations need to be able to do this?
Using the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey and other data

Hannah Clarke
Development Consultant
Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey

• National survey for colleges
• 10 questions
• Pre-pilot ran in 16 colleges in 2015-16, and eventually will be delivered to all colleges
• Involvement of students’ associations
• Sharing the data
SSES activity

In groups look at the SSES data you’ve been given. Discuss –

1. What are the issues that need to be addressed?
2. What questions would you want to investigate further with quality department/college management?
3. Which other sources of information will you need to triangulate the data?
What other data could you use?

- Reports from previous Education Scotland reviews
- Internal student feedback data (Learner Satisfaction Surveys or Pre-exit surveys)
- Minutes of internal college meetings
- Evaluation questionnaires
- Staff/student liaison committee reports
- Data from any SA campaigns e.g. student-led teaching awards
- Course rep feedback
- Conduct your own research – focus groups, GOAT, SA surveys/opinion polls
Using data for enhancement

How do you use this information to make change?

• Identify areas in which you can work in partnership with the college
• Inform students’ association priorities and campaigns
What do you want to achieve?
Action Planning

Morven Stewart
Development Consultant
Tools for effective action planning
The Student Learning Experience

Curriculum
- Quality enhancement and assurance
- Guidance and support
- Student progression and achievement
- Assessment and feedback
- Learning and teaching process
- Learning resources
SMART Objectives

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Achievable**
- **Realistic**
- **Timely**

All objectives in your plan should be SMART
Project Stages

1 – Concept
2 – Research
3 – Design
4 – Implementation
5 – Close and review
1 - Concept

An idea occurs to you, or a problem presents itself

• Is it a problem which affects students?
• Is this something I can fix?
• Is fixing it the best use of my time, or could some other solution be found?
• Who would I need to work with to fix it?
• Do we have the resources to fix this now?
2 - Research

You need to find out the scale of the problem:
• How many students does this affect?
• How does it affect them?
• Is this something people have tried to fix before/elsewhere? Could I ask them for their advice?
• Who do I need to convince to take this forward as an issue?
3 – Design

You’ve identified the problem, you might have some ideas what to do about it. Now you have to design your solution:
• What resources do I need to make this work?
• Who else should I be involving in the project?
• How much time might it take?
• How will it fit with my workload?
• Could this be handled by other groups of students?
4 - Implementation

You’ve sorted out your plan (and some contingencies), now you have to make it work;

• What’s my role at different points of the process?
• How can I support those around me in the work?
• How can I make sure that students are as involved as possible?
• How should I start the project? What level of work is required at each stage?
5 – Review and Close

All projects come to an end: you need to plan how this will happen, but also what changes you want to see and how you’ll know these have happened:

• When will the project come to an end?
• Will there be a winding-down process or will it just finish abruptly?
• What changes do I want to see after this?
• How can I make sure these changes are recorded?
Project Planning: Recap

• Make sure your plan accounts for each of the 5 phases
• Ask yourself how students can be more involved at all stages
• Remember sources of support; staff, colleagues, students, other officers
• Ask for advice or guidance if you need it
• Stay grounded and optimistic!
Note taking

Take a few minutes to decide what projects you want to plan.

Note your ideas and work with the group to generate more.

Use the project stages as a guide for your thinking.
Timelines

Now that you have your notes made and your project more defined, you should put together a timeline.

If you realise you’ve missed things, or there are problems, don’t worry – just go back to your notes and discuss it in the group.

Put your timeline together for the project, considering if it could link together with other projects.
Timelines

• Be flexible! Make sure things get the time they need

• Be realistic! Just because you can do something in a week doesn’t mean it will happen

• Be considerate! Think of other people and their work – this might not be their biggest issue
Proposal writing

Whenever you come up with an idea it helps to put together a brief written summary of it, and how you’ll implement it.
Proposal Writing

Remember:

• What do you want to do?
• Who will it help?
• What do you need to do it?
• How long will it take?
• How does it fit with other projects that are going on?
Conclusion
Thank you!

Please keep in touch –

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