

Education Officers' Network

Thursday 14th November 2019

Glasgow Caledonian University Students'
Association

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Today's Agenda

10.30 – 11.30	Monitoring the Diversity of Course Reps
11.30 – 11.45	Coffee
11.45 – 12.45	College session: How Good is Our College? and Progress Visits – new Developments
	University session: The next Enhancement Theme
12.45 – 13.30	Lunch and tour of students' association/ GCU campus
13.30 – 15.30	Mental wellbeing in the curriculum
15.30 – 16.00	What can you do next?
16.00	Event end



Monitoring the Diversity of Course Reps



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Diversity of the Student Body

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation
- Parents/Carers
- Care Experienced
- Level of Study
- Full Time/Part Time
- Scottish/RUK/EU/
International



What work does your college or students' association currently do with these student groups?

Does the institution or SA collect data on student groups and what is it used for?

The Project

- In 2018, sparqs began a project to monitor the diversity of course reps in institutions.
- Worked with 4 institutions to pilot a diversity questionnaire given to all course reps:
 - Fife College
 - SRUC
 - University of Edinburgh
 - University of the West of Scotland



**So... why should you monitor the
diversity of course reps?**

**What could you use this information
for?**



Why monitor the diversity of course reps?

- It's valuable in its own right, and advances the equality and diversity of student representation
- Creates an evidence-base for supporting future activities and initiatives
- Highlights the need for additional research and gaps in existing data
- Contributes to external policy/practice/drivers:
 - Quality processes
 - Outcome Agreements
 - Gender Action Plans



Practical Next Steps



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If you would be interested in administering the questionnaire at your own institution, please email:

Megan.Brown@sparqs.ac.uk



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General Election 12th December

NUS Scotland is working hard to make sure all students are registered and use their vote on 12th December. To do that, we need your help!

- ✓ Tell us what you're doing to get students registered and engaged with the election, and we will share it on our social media. Our President Liam McCabe can support voter registration activities.
- ✓ Slack channel: <http://bit.ly/NUSGE19> to network students and students' association staff from all across the UK to share ideas and co-ordinate our efforts around the general election.

General Election 12th December

- ✓ 'When Students Lead': our general election manifesto.
<https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/when-students-lead-nus-scotland-general-election-manifesto>
- ✓ On our website you'll find our general election hub for students' associations.
<https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/general-election-2019>
- ✓ Voter registration closes at 23.59 on 26 November, postal vote registration closes at 17.00 on 26 November, proxy vote deadline closes on 17.00 on 4 December. We're promoting the Electoral Commission's Got 5 campaign.

Coffee break

11.30 – 11.45

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University session

Eve Lewis

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New Enhancement Theme

- **A Theme that explores value in higher education. What do students value in higher education? What is the value and role of higher education beyond providing graduates? What do institutions need to do to ensure the continued relevance of higher education and connection with broader societal matters?**
- **Theme on student success focusing on how higher education supports achievement in a diverse student community. This might include personalised learning, learning analytics and broader student welfare support**
- **Theme that helps the sector prepare for managing considerable change in the skills agenda. How will higher education provision change to prepare students for the digital age and multiple career changes? Who will our future students be and in what ways will institutions need to adapt to meet their needs?**



Expanded Theme Leaders group



- Tuesday 10th December 2019
- 9.30 – 16.00 Grand Central Hotel Glasgow
- Agreeing impact of current theme
- Identifying priority topics for next theme



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Focus On: Using Technology in Learning and Teaching.

- What are your institutional priorities for developing policy and practice in this area?
- What are the key tricky areas around which you would welcome support?
- Do you have good practice that you would be able to share?
- What kinds of activities would you like to see as part of Focus On this year? For example, events, webinars, online communities, Twitter chats, publications, other?
- Is there anything else you'd like us to know?



Postgraduate Research Student Engagement



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Background

- sparqs began a project in 2018 to explore and develop practice in postgraduate research student engagement and representation
- The project was supported by a working group comprised of staff and students from across Scotland's universities



The working group identified three areas of activity for sparqs to develop:



- **Development of a PGR Student “Learning” Experience diagram** and tool, allowing for the creation of headings and supplementary questions under which areas of the PGR experience can be explored
- **Development of models of PGR representation**, building on different approaches taken around the country
- **Toolkit on institutional processes**, allowing for co-creation or co-review of policies and procedures relating to PGR support, supervision and development.



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What we would like from you

- All the students from the original working group have now graduated, so we are looking for 2-3 PGR students to join the group
- Email Megan.Brown@sparqs.ac.uk to get involved



College Session

Hannah Clarke



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What are Progress Visits?

- PVs are new for 2019/20 and will take place annually.
- Meetings between Education Scotland HMIs and the college. (They also may include the SFC Outcome Agreement Manager, a Student Team Member or an Associate Assessor).
- The purpose is to explore how the college is working towards the targets in the Enhancement Plan.
- Will last between 2-3 days.
- The college will be informed of the date 6 weeks in advance of the visit.



Progress Visits

- The team will speak to managers, staff, student representatives, other groups of learners and, where required, other key stakeholders.
- The team will provide a verbal report of the findings to the principal, senior managers and student representatives including a provisional statement regarding overall progress.
- Three weeks after the PV is completed, a final written report will be provided to the college and shared with the Board. **The reports will not be published.**
- The outcomes of the PV will inform a refreshed Evaluative Report (ER) and EP (2020-23) due to be submitted by all colleges in October 2020.



“Learner engagement is fundamental to the college’s ability to identify areas for development. Colleges should view students as partners in supporting improvement and should have effective processes for engaging students in contributing to the development of the Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP). ”

“During PVs, HMIs and Associate Assessors (AAs) will engage in conversations with groups of learners to identify the progress they are making and how effectively they engage in and influence their individual learning experiences.”

Education Scotland, Briefing note for colleges: progress visits



What you need to do: before the PV



- Are you familiar with your EREP? If not, read it!
- Do you know what the college's key targets are? Find out!
- Talk through the EREP in detail with students' association staff/Quality Manager/Vice-Principal.
- Be prepared for the college to ask you to find groups of students to talk to the PV team.



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What you need to do: during the PV



- You will meet with the PV team during the visit.
- Make sure you you're prepared to discuss the students' association's involvement in the EREP – did you help write it? Which areas of the EREP are most relevant to the students' association? How is the SA supporting efforts to fulfil the ambitions set out in the EREP?
- You will be present at the end of the PV when the team presents a verbal report on the college's overall progress.



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What you need to do: after the PV

- After the college receives a draft report on the findings from the PV. The college then has 5 working days to send comments/respond. You may be asked to submit your comments to the college's response.
- Three weeks after the PV, a final report will be provided to the college and presented to the Board. You should be prepared to talk about this at your next Board meeting.



Any questions?



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Lunch and tour

12.45 – 13.30



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University for the Common Good

Mental Wellbeing & the Curriculum

Welcome

Please fill in the demographics sheet

Mental Wellbeing & the Curriculum

In the UK 1 in 4 students experience a mental health difficulty

71% reporting that **academic work** from HE/FE is their main sources of stress (HEPI, 2016)

For students, their **curriculum** and engagement with academics are the only guaranteed points of contact with their university

An **inclusive curriculum** that enhances the way students learn and academics teach promotes mental wellbeing (Fernandez et al, 2016)

Universities need to consider the **role of curricula**, including the **role of academic staff**, in supporting good mental wellbeing (Student Minds, 2018)

Nominal Group Technique

2 Powerful Questions

Nominal Group Stages

- 1. Silent ideas generation stage (no discussion)**
 - Write one response per card & place on table
 - 'Piggy back' on others' ideas on flipcharts
- 2. Item clarification stage**
 - Ensure shared understanding; remove duplicates
 - No discussion/debate/defence
- 3. Ranking stage**
 - Complete scoresheet

Question 1

Q. What **academic or study-related factors do students describe that impact negatively on their mental wellbeing?**

e.g. too many assessments; poor placement prep; group work; poorly structured VLE; etc.

Ranking Items



Without conferring/discussion...



Write down on your scoresheet your **top 5 items**



Rank your top 5: **1=most important; 5=least important**



You can have **equal rankings**, e.g. 1=, 1=, 3, 4, 5



Hand in score sheets to facilitator

Question 2

Q. Realistically, what **solutions do you feel could be implemented to address these factors?**

- e.g. clearer assessment feedback; improved group work organisation; fewer presentations, etc.

Ranking Items



Without conferring/discussion...



Write down on your scoresheet your **top 5 items**



Rank your top 5: **1=most important; 5=least important**



You can have **equal rankings**, e.g. 1=, 1=, 3, 4, 5



Hand in score sheets to facilitator

What can you do next?



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sparqs project

Aims:

- to consider how we can support institutions to become more proactive in supporting and promoting positive student mental wellbeing rather than fire-fighting once the issues are already established and more developed;
- to work in partnership with the sector to develop interventions and solutions to tackling some of the identified barriers and challenges;
- to develop small institution-based pilot projects that can test the impact that some interventions and solutions have;
- to produce a number of outputs for the sector to help support and drive work in this area.



- NUS Scotland's Student Mental Health Conference
– Monday 11th May 2020. Deadlines for submission is 4th December.
- Keep up to date on our work on this!
- What do you need to do to engage your reps with this issue? (e.g. training or events?)



Thank you!

- Evaluation forms!
- Let us know about your ideas for topics you'd like to cover at future events and whether you'd be keen to host at your SA.

