

Student Engagement Staff Network

Thursday 1st December 2022

Welcome!



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Your sparqs team today...



Eve Lewis, Director

Megan Brown, Development Consultant (@sparqs_Megan)

Simon Varwell, Senior Development Consultant
(@sparqs_Simon)

Justin Walker, Development Consultant (@sparqs_Justin)

Gloria Laurini, Development Consultant (@sparqs_Gloria)



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Ok zoomers

- You can use your audio or the chat box to speak.
- Mute your microphone when not talking.
- To speak, type * in the chat window or click the “raise hand” icon.
- If you are having any tech issues, post a comment in the chat.
- **Please change your display name to your own name and institution.**



Agenda



10.00am	Welcome and headlines
10.15am	Latest updates in quality
10.45am	Tertiary enhancement topic
11.15am	Break
11.30am	Student Led Teaching Awards Research Project
12.20pm	Conclusions and informal chat
1.00pm	Close



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Headlines from sparqs



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EYFE, Abertay University, 27-29 June 2023

European First Year Experience Conference



Discovery and Design for Academic and Social Student Success

Discovery

Dialogue

Decolonise

Digital

Deadline for proposals **Wed 25 January 2023**

- 20-minute presentations
- 60-minute workshops
- Lightning talks / provocations
- Poster and demonstrations

Details [here](#) and to follow via SESN Jiscmail

Conference tickets
(from March 2023)

- £350 standard
- £320 early
- £200 student



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Diversity of Course Reps

A sparqs national project



20 + SAs / institutions involved. [Details here.](#)

- Not too late to join in, in the current year.
- Last year's institution-level report.
- National report under development.
- Persistent Inequalities and National Equality Outcomes.



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You may have a new sparqs contact!



- Following our staffing changes, we have new key institutional contacts.
- You will hear soon, or check out our [staff page](#).
- Contact [Simon](#) for all queries if you are unsure.



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Our new jobs board



- A [new directory of SE jobs in our sector.](#)
- Send us your student engagement jobs or governance posts.
- Find and share opportunities.



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Current vacancies



- Glasgow School of Art Students' Association are seeking:
 - [Academic Engagement Coordinator](#) (closes tomorrow!).
 - [External trustees](#) (closes 5th December).
- [Student Engagement Coordinator](#), Forth Valley College (closes 8th December).
- [Trustees](#), sparqs (closes 12th December).



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Latest updates in quality

Megan Brown, Development Consultant



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Updates:

- SLE Model
- Partnership Model
- Institutional quality support and projects

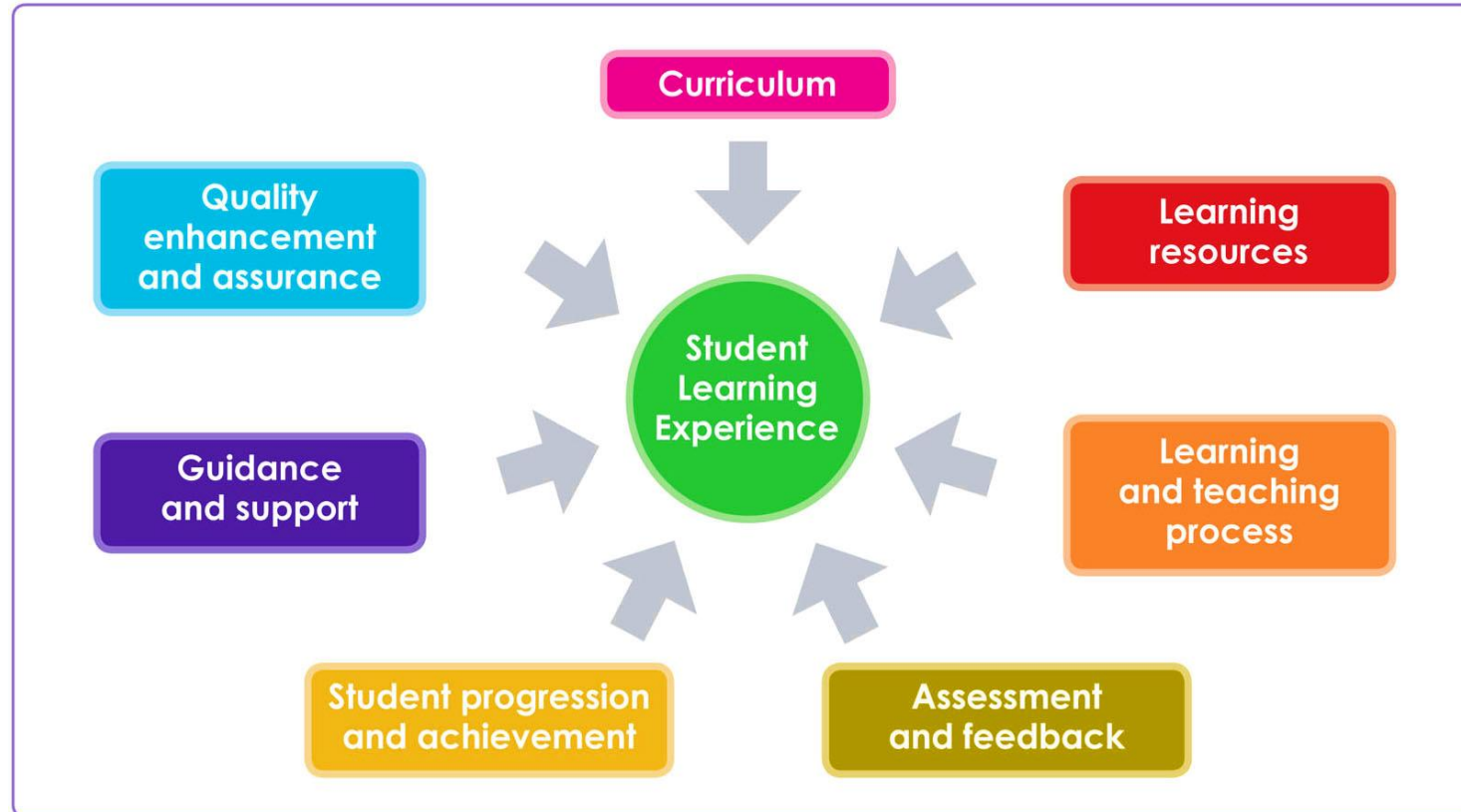


Student Learning Experience Model



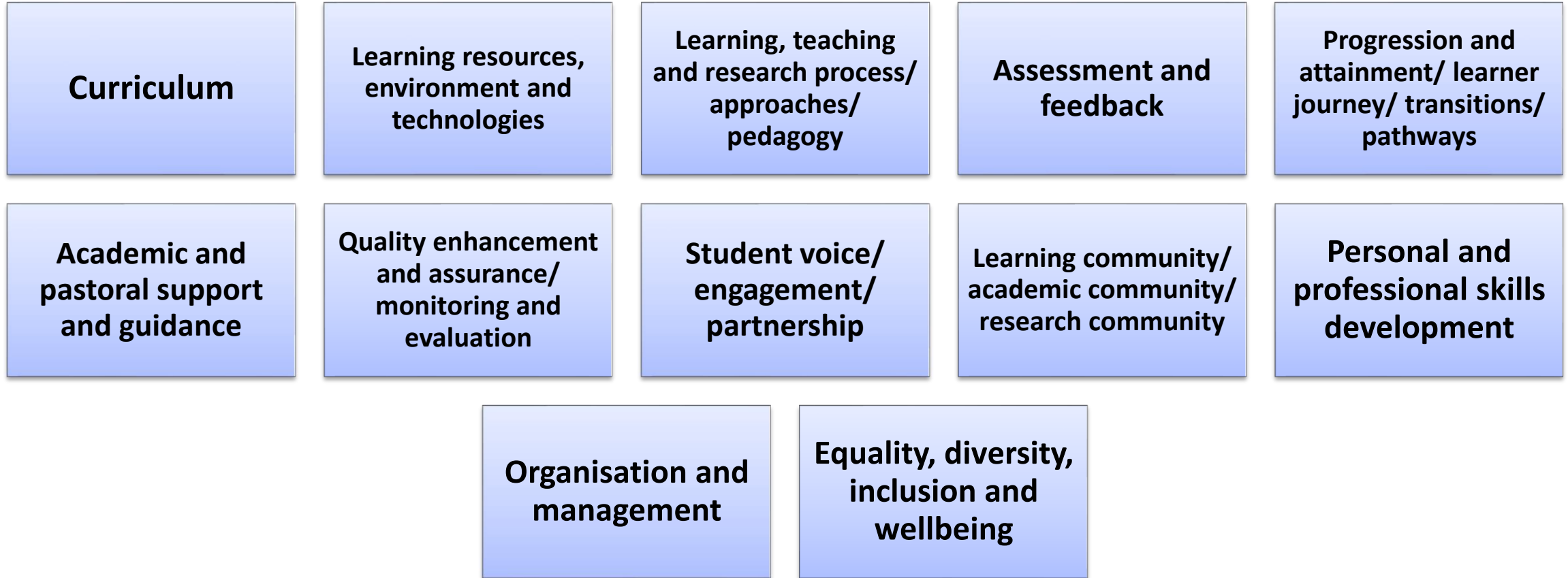
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sparqs' current Student Learning Experience (SLE) model:



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12 building blocks:



Workshops - completed

- Abertay
- Strathclyde
- Heriot-Watt
- West College Scotland
- RGU
- QMU
- Cross-university session
- Cross-college session



Workshops - upcoming

Institution	Date	Institution	Date
Uni of Edinburgh	2 nd December	Uni of Glasgow	17 th January
Dumfries & Galloway College	5 th December	South Lanarkshire College	18 th January
Fife College	5 th December	New College Lanarkshire	23 rd January
West Lothian College	5 th & 6 th December	Uni of St Andrews	23 rd January
UHI Inverness	14 th December	Uni of Dundee	25 th or 26 th January
UHI	15 th December	Uni of Stirling	31 st January
West College Scotland	16 th December		



Phase 2



- We will be establishing a **sector expert group** comprised of students and staff from across the tertiary sector.
- The group will meet in February to consider the data from Phase 1 and begin to develop the draft version of the model.
- Look out for an email from us very soon, asking for volunteers!



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Partnership Model



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Context:

- Building on the established practice that students should be partners in the formulation, operation and evaluation of an institution's approach to enhancement.
- Embedding student partnership at the heart of the new quality framework and arrangements.

Briefing note  Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoinneachaidh na h-Alba 

FAO Vice Principals of Learning and Teaching/Student Experience, for wider dissemination to all relevant institutional staff

Supporting student engagement in the SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability

In June 2020, the Scottish Government called on the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to undertake a review considering how best the SFC and the sector can fulfil its mission in securing coherent provision in post-16 education.

Since the launch of the review, sparqs has worked to support student engagement including sessions at our summer training events 'That's Quality' and our meetings for student officers and students' association staff, NEON and S have aimed to provide context and background to the review and have worked to ensure the capacity of officers to ensure they can have a meaningful role to play.

In August 2020, SFC put out a call for evidence across the sector, inviting students, staff and agencies, as well as other relevant stakeholders, to respond, highlighting areas the review should explore further. Over 100 responses were submitted, and we will inform the phase one report. sparqs submitted to the call for evidence as a [response](#), as well as [NUS Scotland's](#).

sparqs has continued to work closely with the SFC to consider how student engagement can be supported. A Student Engagement Advisory Group, of which both sparqs and SFC members, was established in November 2020. The group helps support the development of tools and mechanisms for student engagement and in ensuring that students can contribute to, and influence, the review as it progresses.

We appreciate that the initial consultation period had a very tight timeframe and that students were not as heavily consulted as the sector would have liked. We will ensure time and space is given to students to ensure their voice is heard in shaping the review as it progresses, and that student officers, student reps and any staff can have a chance to contribute to discussions.

Phase One Report

On 20th October 2020, the SFC published their Phase One Report of the Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability: A Review of Tertiary Education. The report, along with supporting documentation, can be found on the [website](#).

A collage of images showing diverse students and staff members. In the foreground, a woman wearing a black hijab and face mask is looking towards the camera. Behind her, several other students and staff are visible, some smiling. The collage is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue box containing the text "COHERENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY: A REVIEW OF TERTIARY".

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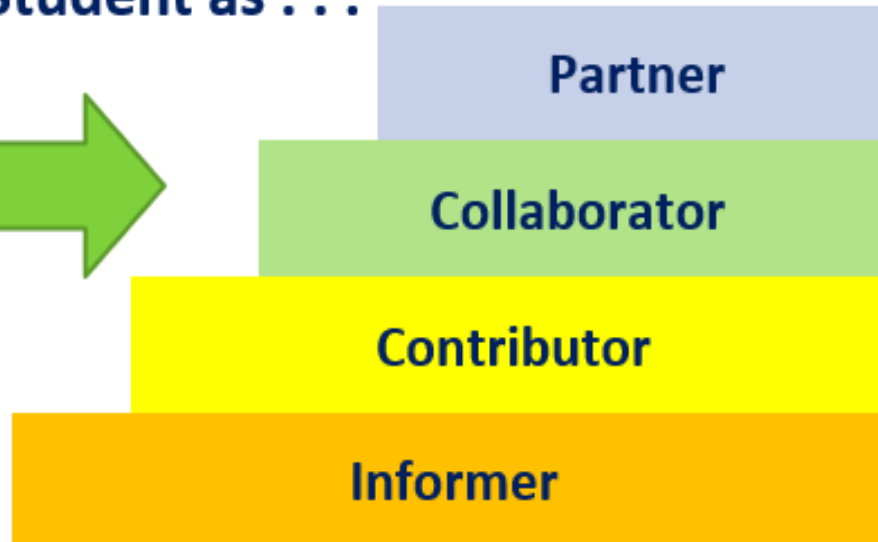
Student Partnership Model

What does student engagement in quality look like?

Student Learning Experience

Dialogue with students
+ feedback and survey data;
+ other evidence of student success.

Student as . . .



sparqs, October 2022



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Exploring the model



Intends to support and enhance student engagement in quality process at all levels of engagement and in **various activities of the arrangements**, such as external reviews or preparing a self-evaluation report.

Recognises that student engagement will be happening across all levels. Expectation that there is more activity taking place at the partner level but that students will continue to **engage at every and all levels, sometimes simultaneously**.

Removes hierarchy: it is not intended to be used like a ladder, where you move up from informer to contributor and so on; rather the levels are like **building blocks**, focusing on the importance of building a partnership approach.



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Developing the Partnership model



- Engage with universities undergoing their **QESR** in AY 2022/23 as part of our ongoing support in relation to the quality arrangements and partnership.
- Engage with a selection of colleges on partnership in their review activity, across **Progress Visits** and **AEVs**.
- Run sessions at the **two networks** for quality managers: one at the **CDN Quality Network** meeting and another at QAA Scotland **The Quality Forum** meeting to test the Partnership model and gather feedback.
- Produce an **end of year report** reflecting on the partnership model and on student partnership in quality during phase 1, and how this supports development for phase 2.



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Supporting institutional quality arrangements



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Institutional support & engagement



- **Briefing** for colleges and universities on quality processes for 2022/23 – and how SAs can use them to make change.
- We're available for **support** – let us know if you need it!
- Edinburgh Napier project.
- Project investigating how **learner outcomes** can be supported through a student engagement lens in colleges.
- **Enhancement Themes** & Student-Led Project.
- **Tertiary Enhancement Topic.**



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College learner outcomes project



- Continuing priorities in learner outcomes.
- See EdS's [2021-22 overview report](#), p9.
- **What role can student feedback, representation and partnership play in enhancement and improvement?**
- We are seeking colleges and SA to work with sparqs in this academic year:
 - Explore ideas for action research.
 - Share practice and experiences.
 - Inform future activity and output.
- Contact Simon for more details!



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How you can get involved:

- SLE workshops: Phase 1 and Phase 2
 - Email Megan.Brown@sparqs.ac.uk to host a Phase 1 workshop.
 - Look out for the chance to volunteer for Phase 2.
- Partnership project: engage with us after your reviews.
- Colleges – volunteer to be part of learner outcomes process
 - Email Simon.Varwell@sparqs.ac.uk



Tertiary Enhancement Topic

Gloria Laurini, Development Consultant



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What is the Tertiary Enhancement Topic?



'The future of learning and teaching: defining and delivering an effective and inclusive digital/blended offering.'

- Briefing on the Tertiary Enhancement Topic published on sparqs website and sent to SAs
- Focus on lessons learnt during forced move to online learning
- Some groups of students learnt better online
- **We don't want you to give you more work! You probably already have the answers to many of the following questions**



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sparqs support and way forward



- Briefing circulated to all SAs and available on the sparqs website from next week
- Sign up for SESN and make sure your officers attend NEON to keep up with updates
- Collect past surveys and data about student experience during online learning



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Conversations with your students/ course reps



What questions can you ask your students, within the context of online learning?

Below, you will find some questions split into areas of the [Student Learning Experience](#) model, which can be useful when having a discussion with your students and course reps about specific elements of their learning experience, related to online learning and possibly blended learning. You can use some of these questions, or all of them, to inform your institution on students' views related to the Tertiary Enhancement Topic.

Questions about curriculum:

- Has your curriculum been adapted or modified in any way to include online learning?
- Is there a curriculum outline provided?

Questions about learning resources:

- Have you been provided with adequate equipment to complete your studies?
- Do you have access to, and have you been supported to use, appropriate learning technologies, including new software and online tools?
- Have you been supported to access subject-specific facilities (e.g., labs, studios, theatres, computing rooms, etc.) or alternatives in an online environment?
- Have you had the opportunity to discuss your preparedness for learning in a digital environment and access appropriate support and upskilling if required?
- If you are studying a practical course, do you have access to the resources/tools/materials you need?
- In courses for which you are not able to access the library on campus, do you have access to equivalent learning materials online?
- How much guidance and support do you get with use of VLE for learning and teaching?
- Are you able to access core course materials (lecture slides, reading lists, notes, etc.) on the VLE?
- Are the lectures and other class learning materials easily accessible?



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Over to you



For the next 20 minutes, let's split into breakout rooms and discuss:

- How did the institution engage you in the decision about which courses were going to return to in-person teaching?
- Is there any particular group of students which has been adversely affected? Has it been particularly good for some group of students? And how did you hear about this?
- What are some of the key issues you can highlight under the topic of online and distance learning?
- Are you doing existing work in this area or have you got anything planned on the topic?



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Over to you



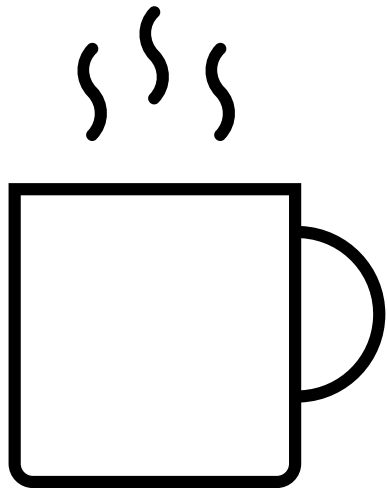
- How has your institution made decision about how much to keep online and how much keep in person? Was it made on the basis of data on student achievement or more practical reasons?
- How has this year been with regards to online and in-person learning? Is there any difference from last year, in light of online learning?
- Is there a clear policy about decisions about online learning?
- Does the institutional policy translate to practice at a course level?
- How were students involved in those decision?
- What are the implications of the decisions that have been made about whether students are happy about the policy or not?



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Break

**Please stay connected,
and be back at 11.30am**



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Student-Led Teaching Awards Research Project

Chase Greenfield, Academic Representation Co-Ordinator
Evgeniya Pakhomova, Teaching Awards Research Analyst
University of St Andrews Students' Association

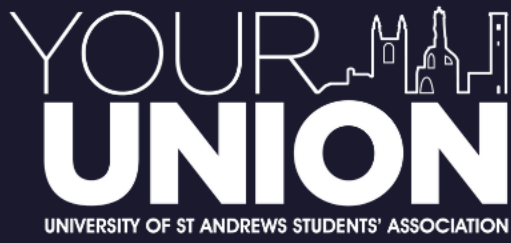


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Enhancing the Student-Led Teaching Awards Process Overview and Findings

Evgeniya Pakhomova, Chase Greenfield





Presentation Overview

1. Introduction – Teaching Awards and the Project
 2. Process and Findings
 3. Enhancing Teaching
 4. Wider Context
- 
- 



Introduction





In the chat

Does your Students' Association run a (student-led) Teaching Awards process?

If so, what does your annual report look like? (What is included?)





Process and Findings





Setting up the project

186 out of 318 nominations analysed

Review

Codes

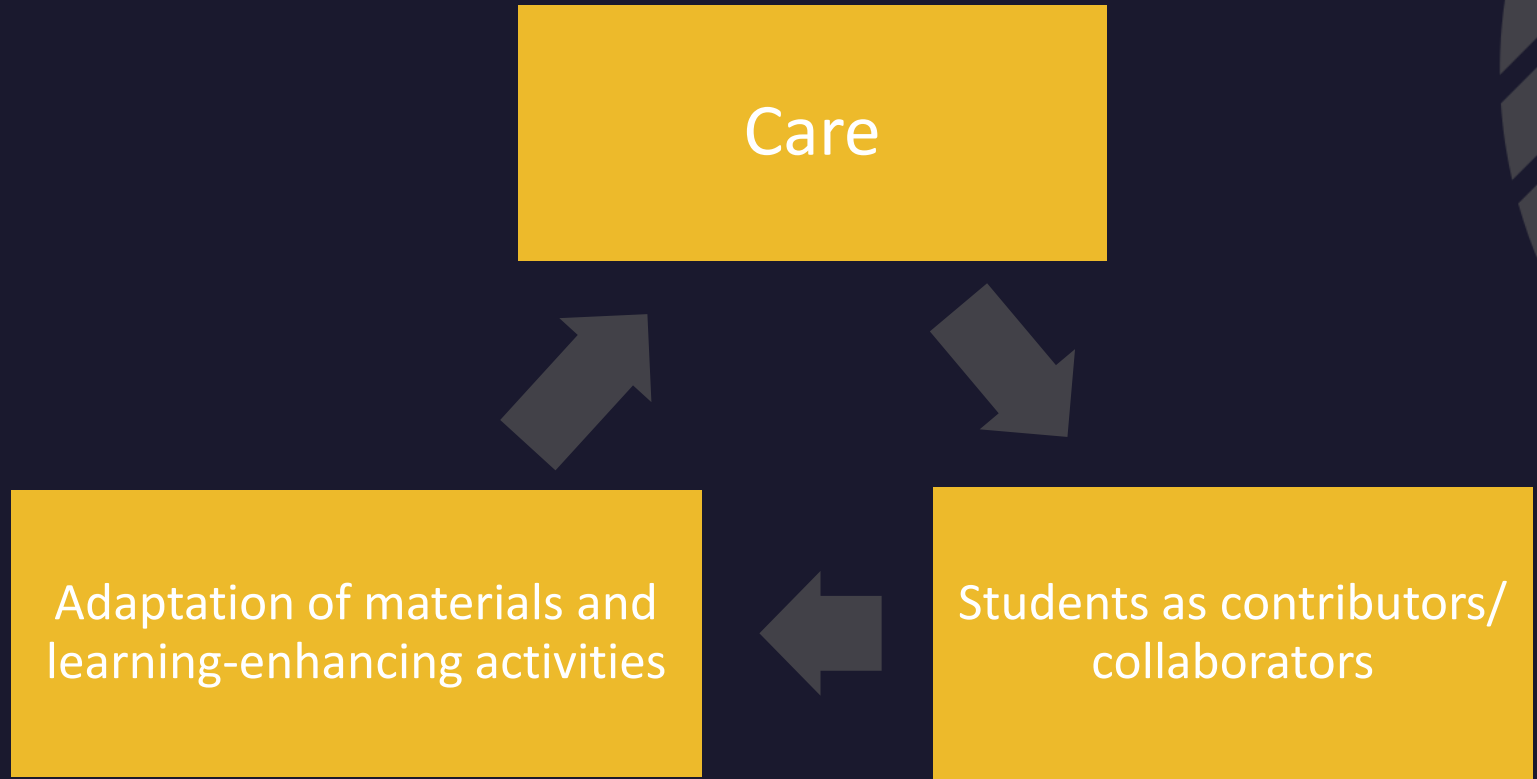
Main
themes

Special attention:

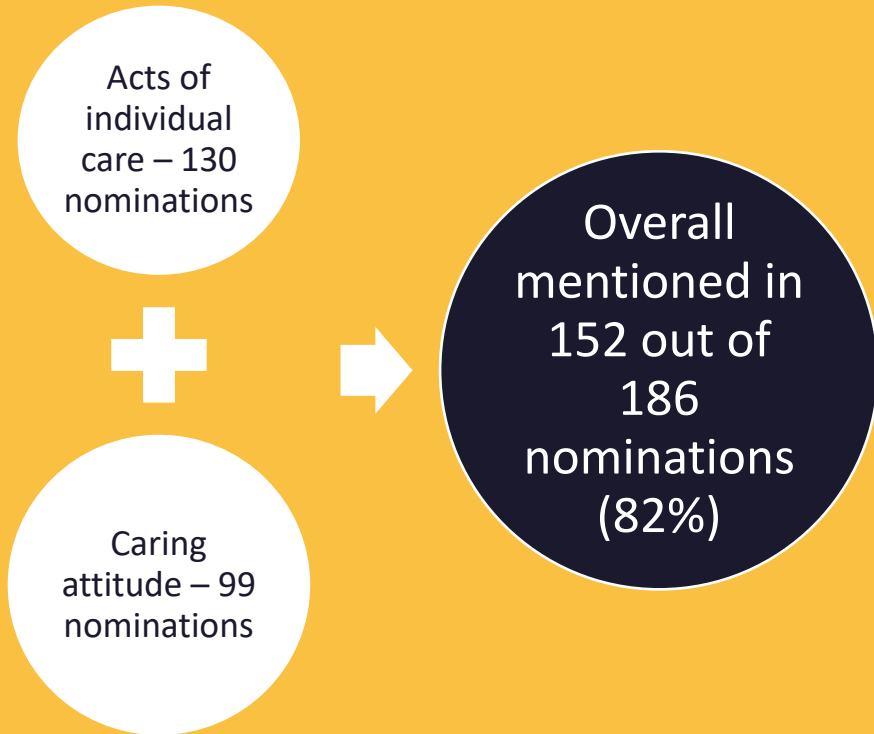
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity
- Online and hybrid teaching



Main themes



Care



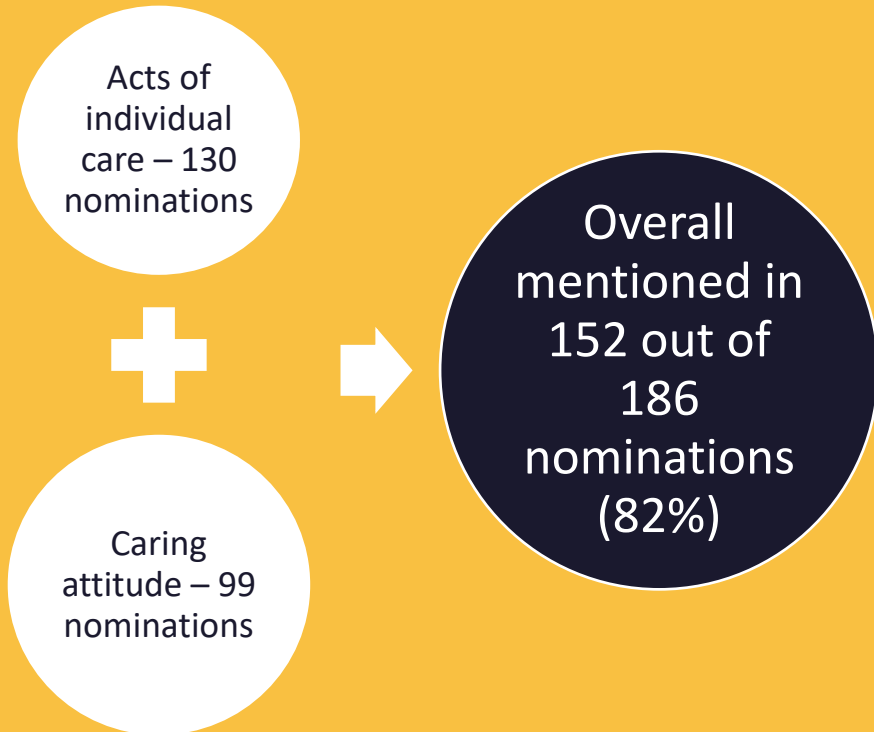
Among the multitude of characteristics and actions that students saw as worthy of the Teaching Award the descriptions of acts of care and of compassionate, understanding approach were usually signified as a top priority.

Sub-themes:

- Responsiveness to emails
- Detailed/useful feedback
- Individual suggestions of further resources
- Care for students in challenging circumstances
- Discussion of individual ideas



Care



Main findings:

Through a caring disposition and acts of care a teacher can create a productive atmosphere for the whole module

Acts of care can inspire students to explore new subjects and to keep pushing through challenging circumstances

Students do not need to receive individual care to perceive their teacher as excellent. What matters is knowing that they can rely on teacher's support if they need to



Students as contributors and collaborators

Sub-themes:

- Teacher treats student contributions as valuable
- Teacher has keen interest in students
- Teacher is approachable
- Democratic environment
- Inclusive environment
- etc.

Overall
mentioned in
129 out of 186
nominations
(69%)

The nominations suggest that students highly evaluate the efforts that teachers put into listening, acknowledging, and fostering critical independent thinking in class.



Students as contributors and collaborators

Sub-themes:

- Teacher treats student contributions as valuable
- Teacher has keen interest in students
- Teacher is approachable
- Democratic environment
- Inclusive environment
- etc.

Overall
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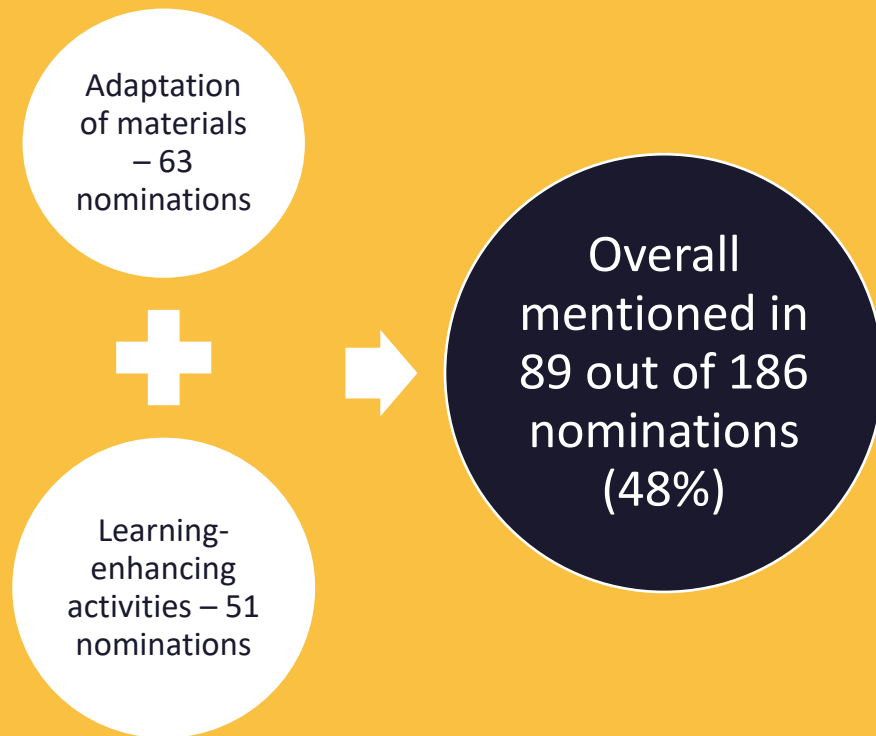
Main findings:

Students making the Teaching Awards nominations highly evaluate active participatory approach to learning as opposed to 'passive' listening and memorising

Collaborative and democratic approach makes students feel comfortable to learn from their mistakes



Adaptation of materials and learning-enhancing activities



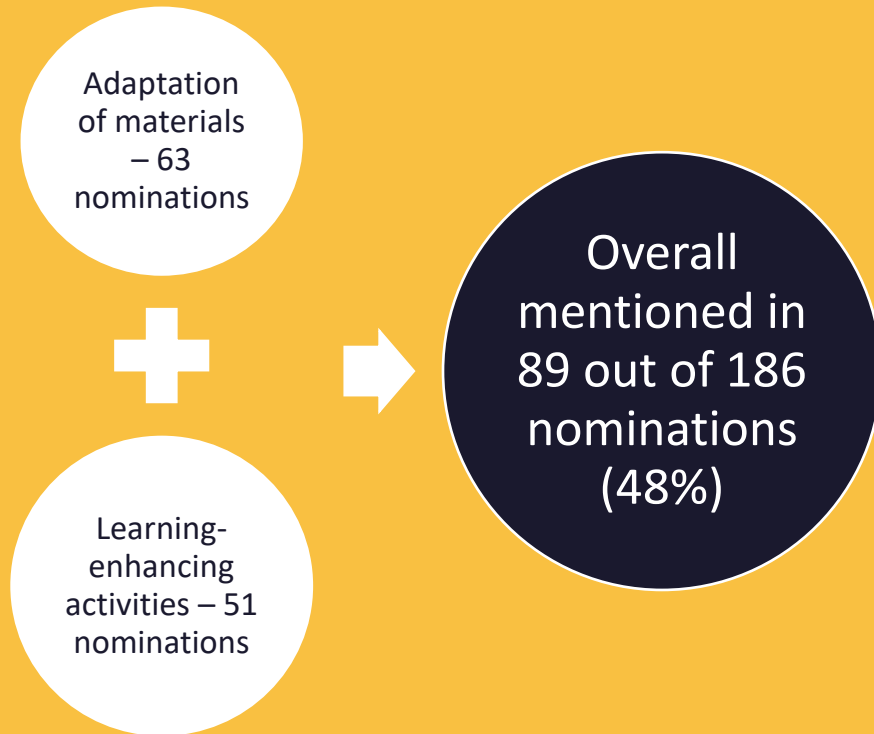
Students often acknowledged staff members' efforts to tailor learning materials and class activities to the objectives of the course, and the effect that this can have on the quality of the education they receive.

Sub-themes:

- Delivery of lectures
- Supplementary learning materials
- Activities which diversify the contents of teaching
- Activities which push beyond the module
- etc.



Adaptation of materials and learning-enhancing activities



Main findings:

Students appreciate materials and activities that allow them to revisit teaching contents and create a strong sense of the module as a coherent 'product'

An excellent teacher is not someone who can come up with creative approaches for the sake of entertainment, but someone who does so in a manner which adds value and depth to the overall learning experience





Care



Adaptation of materials and learning-enhancing activities



Students as contributors/
collaborators



Additional themes

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion

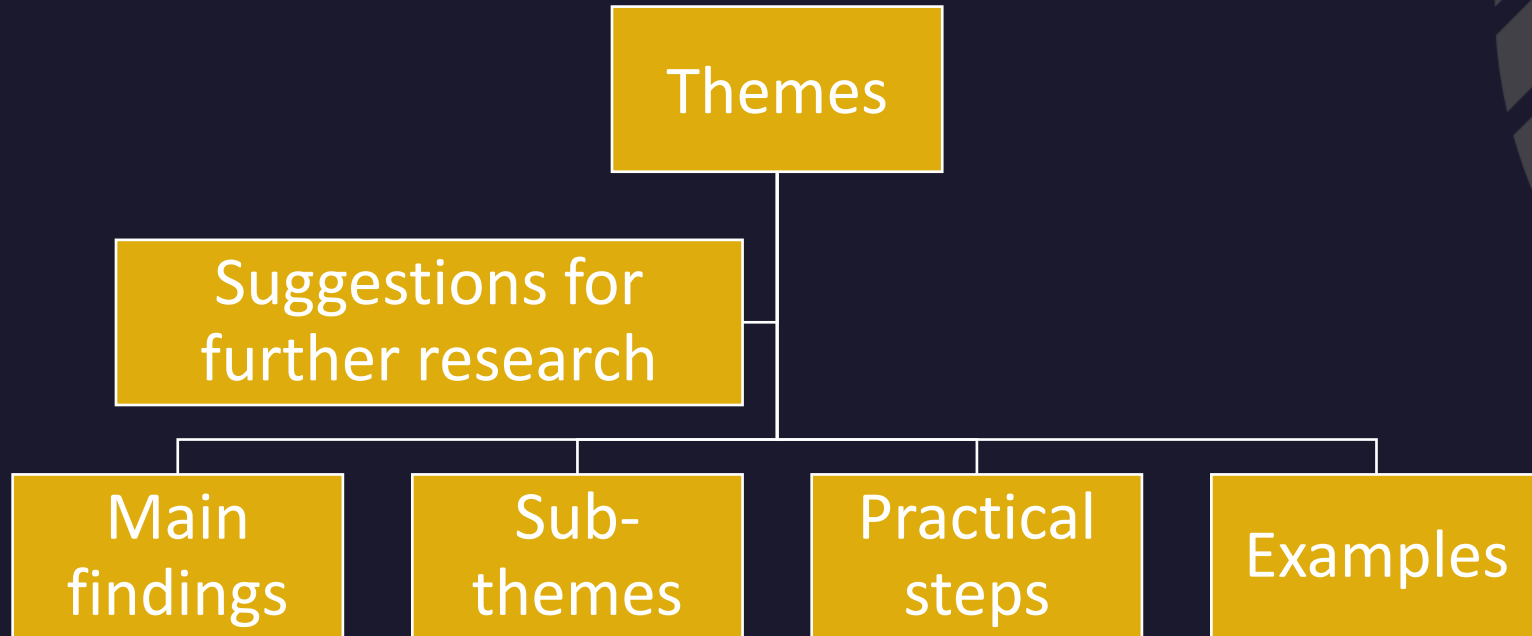
- No ready-made solutions – highly context-specific comments
- Need for additional advertisement for the ‘Outstanding Commitment to Academic Inclusivity’ Award category

Online/hybrid teaching

- Online/hybrid teaching was described as hard to do right or even inherently less favourable than in-person teaching



Writing the report





Enhancing Teaching





Where we are taking our findings

- Enhancement Themes
 - Internal presentation to Enhancement Themes, University of St Andrews
 - Presentation at Enhancement Themes Open Forum
- Academic Representatives
 - Presentation to Education Committee
 - Sharing a condensed version of the report with Academic Representatives



Where we are taking our findings

- Class Rep Training
 - Incorporating Core themes, giving reps questions and focus areas for feedback
 - Providing data and evidence to back-up student reps

- Staff Development and Graduate Teaching Training
 - Pilot in Biology
 - Potentially expanding into an optional training course for staff and Graduate Teaching Assistants
 - Presenting to Directors of Teaching in each School



Where we are taking our findings

- Sharing practice nationally in the sparqs Resource Library.
[Find our submission here](#), including:
 - A guide for Students' Associations to run similar processes.
 - A copy of the final findings from St Andrews in our initial year of running an enhanced SLTA process.
 - A plain-text version of the process guide for accessibility purposes.





Questions?

Contacts us

cmg9@st-andrews.ac.uk

and

ep71@st-andrews.ac.uk



Conclusions and evaluation



Launching the SESN Buddy Scheme



- Sign up to be paired with another practitioner in SE. Just fill in this short questionnaire: [sparqs SES Buddying Scheme Sign Up Form](#)
- Aim: put you in touch with another practitioner who shares many of the same challenges and questions. Talk about ideas, shared experiences, find out more about other contexts of student engagement, provide and receive support. Meeting at least twice an academic year
- Discuss goals, expectations and understanding of outcomes
- The scheme lasts one academic year; sparqs will be in touch to have a discussion about your experience with the aim of improving the scheme going forward.



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Our next SESN meeting

- On Zoom, Thursday 2nd March
- Once again, tell us your ideas for content and for the format going forward.



Before you go...

- Complete the [evaluation form](#)
- (select “December”).
- Sign up to the [sparqs newsletter](#).
- Sign up to the [sparqsSESN Jiscmail list](#) (and do use the list to chat and share!).



Informal chat – over to you!



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