Melbourne CSHE public seminar

From opportunity to obligation: Embedding student and staff co-creation and shared decision-making in universities

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La Trobe University

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# Partnership Benefits: Good for Everyone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Benefits</th>
<th>Student Benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved course design, service delivery</td>
<td>Sense of belonging, connection, engagement in coursework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater staff connection to students, institutional mission</td>
<td>Empowerment, self-efficacy, relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduced waste, workload, costs</td>
<td>Organisational knowledge, understanding of workplaces, civic responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to predict future needs and expectations</td>
<td>Ability to help future generations, a legacy</td>
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If partnership is so great, what are we doing about it?
Overview of today

1. Institutional Practice
2. Sector Initiatives and Policy
3. Recommendations moving forward

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But first, partnership, co-creation, or shared decision-making?

Evolution from student engagement, students shift from the ‘objects’ of practice/research to active agents; focus on social justice and pedagogical lens

Originally from business literature; focused on value enhancement; dual mechanisms of user idea generation as well as personalisation post-production

Linked to student representation and governance beginning in the 1960s; ranges from tokenistic feedback and box ticking to authentic shared decision-making
Part I
Institutional Practice

How can we ensure opportunities for partnership aren’t just for the lucky?

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Origins of Student Partnership at La Trobe University

• Supported through the 2018-2022 Student Success and Retention Plan

• Enabler to Student Success

• Launched in March 2019

• Strong support from senior leaders
Designing ‘Whole of Institution’ Student Partnership

All partnership programs and support are facilitated through ‘Student Partnerships’. We offer:

– **Student training, database, recruitment**
– **Staff training and resources**
– **Community of practice**

Supporting school-level student advisory groups and service area SAGs (e.g. Library, Equity)
Centrally-run, scaffolded programs

Students Mentoring Staff Program

Student User-Testing

Student and Staff CoLabs

Student University-Based WIL Placements

Picture: Online CoLab
La Trobe’s Dimensions of Student Expertise

- Teaching and Learning
- Research and Development
- Student Services
- Student Life
- Governance

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Inclusive partnership

Option A
Selected Students

Enhancement of Prior Self-Confidence

Partial Engagement of Student Body

Option B
All Students

Building Confidence; Forging Academic Identity; Developing Trust

Engagement of the Student Body

Summary of La Trobe’s Approach

- Make it easy and accessible
- Include opportunities for everyone and all types of preferences
- Support a scaffolded approach
- Be intentional about inclusion
- Range of programs to support a cultural shift
Other Institutional Examples
School Of Social Sciences
We Are The University: Students Co-creating Change
Western Sydney University Unit Code:
102793.1
Discipline: STUDIES IN HUMAN SOCIETY NOT ELSEWHERE CLASSIFIED
Student Contribution Band: 1
Level: 3
Credit Points: 10
Co-ordinator
Tai Peseta

Unit Enrolment Restrictions
Successful completion of 80 credit points.

Teaching Periods
Nothing on offer.

*If using Safari, Firefox or Chrome to print the Unit Outline, right-click on the Print Unit Outline link.

About this Unit
This project-based unit offers students a chance to learn, negotiate and practice change-making in the heart of this unit is student partnership, curriculum co-creation, and an invitation for students to Western. Working in groups and alongside a university mentor, students will have an opportunity to challenge that might be: (a) commissioned by senior staff of the University; (b) intended to support offer students a chance to undertake a project that advances their existing student leader or repre only receive credit for the partnership work they undertake, the University will have a new way of it

‘Your Education Week’ built upon the momentum of last year’s event, with Programme Reps and Presidents attracting a total of 1,793 responses from students across the University to the four questions posed during this week. The key issues that came out were:

- A desire for more contact time, especially small group contact time
- Issues with timetabling
- A need for better communication and guidance from Schools/Departments
- A desire for more peer support and peer assisted learning opportunities.
Part II

Sector Wide Initiative

How can partnership become a core component of the Australian higher education sector?
Overview: Students in Quality Assurance

1. Post-Dawkins reforms (1989) university teaching and learning surveys
2. Establishment of Australian Quality Assurance Agency (AUQA) in 2001 – interviews with samples of students
3. Establishment of TEQSA (2012), formalise internal governance and support reps

Developing partnership in Australia

Higher education providers, in partnership with their student body, define, promote, monitor and evaluate the range of opportunities to enable all students to engage in quality assurance and enhancement processes. (QAA, UK)

Vs.

All students have opportunities to provide feedback on their educational experiences and student feedback informs institutional monitoring, review and improvement activities (TEQSA, 5.3.3)
## Snapshot of National Organisations or Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>SPARQS in Scotland</td>
<td>Funded by Scottish Funding Council, charity status, oversight of student reps, resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>NStEP in Ireland</td>
<td>Funded by HEA, QQI, USI, national approach, inform policy, good practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSEP in the UK</td>
<td>Collaboration between NUS and Uni sector, funded by HEFCE + QAA, research and resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Voice in the USA</td>
<td>National nonprofit, both high school and university, create resources but focus on advocacy for political change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Voice Australia</td>
<td>Pilot funded through 10 institutions, build capacity, create a network</td>
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End Goal: Designing for Partnership in Policy

- Context-Specific Innovation
- Design for Student Inclusion
- Maintaining Quality

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Part III
Recommendation
Goal: to create informative and supportive environments for institutions to pilot and practice partnership in Australia
Recommendation 1: Explicit guidance note on student partnership

• Development of a guidance note for institutions on the various dimensions where student partnership can take place and the various approaches that can be undertaken.

• Should also highlight importance inclusion, diversity, and making opportunities open to all students

<table>
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<th>Guidance note</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Governance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Integrity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Leadership (beta version)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Quality Assurance</td>
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Recommendation 2: Discuss (re)design of a national organisation

- Collaboration between DET, TEQSA, Universities Australia, perhaps university group, and NUS, CAPA, CISA
- Support each Australian University to develop its own approach to ‘whole of institution’ partnership
- We should share resources freely, co-develop when possible, and create a network to support practice.
Recommendation 3: Consider how student voices can be strengthened in the next HES Framework

- Either through accountability or representation, what features of partnership should every institution meet minimum criteria for?
- Careful to avoid overly bureaucratic procedures that are intrusive but also ‘watch dogs that don’t bite’
Institutional Recommendations

1. Change rhetoric from ‘feedback’ to partnership, idea generation, shared decision-making
2. Provide opportunities for all students and all staff to engage
3. Encourage partnership as a mechanism for SoTL
What’s the role of Student Partnership in post COVID-19 HE reforms?
Find out more:


- Creating in-class student-staff partnership projects and associated curriculum: http://handbook.westernsydney.edu.au/hbook/unit.aspx?unit=102791.1&ulocode=PAR_CTY or speak to Dr Tai Peseta (Western Sydney)

- Creating a whole of institution student rep model: https://flo.flinders.edu.au/enrol/index.php?id=45106 or speak to Kate Walsh (Flinders)

- **Student Voice Australia** (now at University of Adelaide): http://studentvoiceaustralia.com


- **Co-Design Project at The University of Sydney Business School**: https://www.sydney.edu.au/business/about/our-teaching.html

- **Great list of other resources located at UQ ItaLi center**: https://itali.uq.edu.au/about/projects/students-partners or speak to Madelaine Marie Judd