Staff-student partnership working to effect institutional change in the post-digital age
Sarah Knight and Clare Killen

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The 2014 NUS Report, radical interventions in teaching and learning

‘In order for universities and colleges to foster more inclusive learning environments, we believe that students must be empowered as active and participatory agents, not as mere consumers, so that they can articulate their own conceptions of what makes good learning environments, and work in partnership with academics and administrators to realise these conceptions.’

Report available from bit.ly/1EjAtmt
“Partnership is essentially a process of engagement, not a product. It is a way of doing things, rather than an outcome in itself.”
Consultation

» Opportunities are provided for students to express individual opinions, perspectives, experiences, ideas and concerns

Involvement

» Opportunities are provided for students as individuals to take a more active role

Participation

» Decisions are taken by students to take part or to take a more active role in a defined activity

Partnership

» There is a collaboration between an institution or department or faculty and student, involving joint ownership and decision making over both the process and the outcome

Ways of engaging students in the digital environment

» **Gathering information**
  - Surveys, interviews, focus groups to find out about student expectations
  - Participative / observational methods to explore practices and attitudes
  - Social media – with students' consent – to collect information
  - Analyse existing data e.g. NSS/Learner voice/local surveys

» **Stimulating, gathering and responding to ideas**
  - Interactive and fun e.g. crowdsourcing, hashtags, ideas tree, padlet...
  - Make sure students can share ideas and see how they are acted on

» **Partnership projects**
  - Champions, change agents, digital leaders, student fellows, student ambassadors, student partners, student researchers, co-designers, co-creators, co-developers
Send a text to 07537 402 400 starting with digi

NOTE - if you don’t start the text with digi, it won’t go to our inbox

Q 1 – give an example of how you engage your learners in developing the curriculum/digital environment?
Case Studies

University College London (UCL) – UCL digifest: a celebration of staff and student innovation

The first CAN case study is available in Word or PDF format.

UCL’s digifest was a five day festival of all things digital designed to share and grow innovation across the university. Students and staff collaborated as equal partners to bring the vision for UCL digifest to life. This case study looks at the developmental journey behind UCL digifest, the partnership model, lessons learned and how the work is being taken forward.

Steve Rowett and Janina Dewitz from UCL also talk about their experiences of digifest in a recording of a CAN webinar which is available on the Webinar page of this blog.
Driving institutional change through staff-student partnership

Who in your institution is the most enthusiastic about engaging students as partners?

We got engaged as partners!

That isn’t quite what we meant...

You have students on interview panels? Are they qualified?

Well, they’re qualified to be a student, and it’s students who you’ll be dealing with on this job...

We have appointed student engagement champions...

INSTITUTION

A student engagement strategy can be a framework for facilitating change at your university or college...

This is an opportunity to test new ideas and push boundaries...

Here’s what’s going on!

Transparency, sharing & communication are important...

...and now tell us what you think!

29/06/2015

Driving institutional change through staff-student partnership
Blackburn College has 10 DigiPals who champion the use of e-learning in 3 different ways:

› Student Scholarship DigiPals
› Learning Futures Students
› Trainee teacher DigiPals

“It has been really useful to have DigiPals in class. If you run into any technical issues they are always there to help and they are all very good.”

Student, Blackburn College
Apple ambassadors at Portsmouth College

» All new students receive an iPad mini
» 70 student Apple ambassadors
» Most curriculum areas covered
» Training provided by Apple
» Advise and help staff (and students) to make the most of the iPad minis
» Learners = more independent? Better engaged?

Kayleigh and George, Apple ambassadors
Students as partners in UCL digiFest

» 5 day festival of all things digital
» Designed to share and grow innovation across the university
» Students and staff collaborated as equal partners

“I learned a lot about project management, having to manage the initiative from start to finish. I also learned about working as part of a wider project team and managing myself in that team as well as marketing and ticket management.”

Edward Conder, 2nd year Geography student and president of UCL film society

can.jiscinvolve.org/wp/case-studies/
Institutionally embedded
2009 – present
Funding for around 100 hours student employment,
Around 50 projects a year (339 total to date)

Main project themes:
Development of new content
Consultation
Employability
Thematic
bcusu.com/learning/academicpartnerships/saps/
Students will be given access to research and debate

- About TL&A
- About Learning Technology

Participate in whole staff development days

Run student focus groups

Advise on Learning Technology strategy and implementation

Contribute to induction of both new students and new staff

and more that they will tell us!

For further information:
john.webber@sussexdowns.ac.uk
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16 iChamps work alongside staff partners in academic units and faculties across the university as champions for digital literacies who...

- Partner for promoting digital literacies in the curriculum
- Communicate beyond the classroom
- Develop critical thinking, information literacy
- Exemplify and promote online safety, security
- Create content using web tools

Students are empowered to take an active role in their subject area, students and staff develop sense of partnership, part of closing the feedback loop through partner engagement

[diglit.soton.ac.uk](http://diglit.soton.ac.uk) for further information
Benefits of working in partnership

Benefits for students:

» Gain an experience of leadership and influencing change
» Gain experience of using research to shape change
» Students can gain recognition through awards such as leadership awards, academic credit, extra-curricular awards and awards accredited through external bodies
» Increases confidence and skills (e.g. communication, team-working, management, research skills)
» Enhances networking with e.g. employers, community
» Improved employability and job prospects
Benefits for staff:

‘... the novice-expert dynamic has been overturned. Two years into the project, we have observed and reflected on the fact that it is not us who are privileging the Student Fellows by awarding them with these important roles, but rather we who are privileged because of the insights we have gained from being allowed into their worlds. Student Fellows have given us an honest insight into what goes on behind the scenes when technology is brought into the mix and how re-shaping feedback influences their confidence, self-belief, well-being, subject knowledge and collaborative skills.’

Bath Spa University and University of Winchester, FASTECH project repository.jisc.ac.uk/5597/3/fastech.pdf
In your groups:

› Share how you are working in partnership with your learners?
› Share ideas on how you could work in partnership with your learners
› List any challenges or barriers to working in partnership with your learners

› Make notes on the flip chart
› Feedback one idea and top challenge/barrier
» Develop a digital strategy and engage students in its development

» Support staff to use digital technology in a more innovative way by developing partnerships with students

» Develop a continual process of evaluation - understand how current services meet the needs of students and encourage staff to evaluate technology use in the classroom with an ongoing dialogue with students

» Ensure there are rewards and recognition for both staff and students
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Q2 - What one thing can you do to support student-staff partnership working in your college or university?
How can Jisc support you with working in partnership with students?
What is the Change agents’ network (CAN)?

» The Change agents’ network supports students working as change agents, digital pioneers, student fellows and students working in partnership with staff on technology related change projects

» Over 250 members subscribed to the CAN community mailing list

» Facilitates the sharing of best practice through
  › Face to face networking events
  › CAN monthly webinar series
  › CAN case studies – 10 institutional case studies by Sept 15

» Student partnership toolkit

» Journal of Educational Innovation, Partnership and Change

» SEDA accredited Jisc Institutional Change Leader online course running in Sept 15

[http://can.jiscinvolve.org](http://can.jiscinvolve.org)
Enhancing the student digital experience

New online guide available from:

jisc.ac.uk/guides/enhancing-the-digital-student-experience
Digital students are different

"I expect the technology I use here to be better than the technology I have at home or in school"

Students have a choice about what digital environments they use at home and I expect the environment here to be better.

For more information, visit bit.ly/digitalstudentproject

Digital students are different

"Please don't make IT Induction compulsory - everyone knows that stuff these days"

Students have a choice about how they learn computer science and expect to know a lot of stuff.

For more information, visit bit.ly/digitalstudentproject

Digital students are different

"I want access to my social media and I want to use it alongside institutional services"

Some students have a choice about how they use technology, some don't.

For more information, visit bit.ly/digitalstudentproject

bit.ly/digitalstudentposters
2. How do we prepare students to study in digital settings?

- Before they arrive, students know how digital technologies will be used in their course of study and how they can best prepare for this (with their own devices, skills and services)
- The induction process includes mandatory training in all the institutional and work-related systems students will have to use
- Identify learners who will need additional support to study in digital settings, assess their access needs and provide targeted solutions
- Students have training in the safety and ethical issues involved in participating online (eg. privacy, data protection, IPR and copyright, flaming and bullying)
- Fully or partially online courses have a tailored induction process to ensure learners are up to speed technically and understand the demands of working independently
- Early course tasks make use of digital devices/resources and introduce digital ways of working
- Learners’ digital capabilities are assessed and progressed throughout their course of study eg. using an online journal or e-portfolio to reflect and gather evidence
- Questionnaires, quizzes or other diagnostic tools help students to understand their own digital needs and preferences; they receive personal feedback and signposting to support

Benefits:

First year student: ‘I was worried it was going to be completely different from school but we got a chance to try out the VLE and assessment system before we started.’

Course tutor: ‘Now that I’ve sat in on a few sessions that the library put on for them - about referencing online material, and copyright and so on – I feel more confident to give students the right advice going through the course.’
### Jisc and NUS

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| Communicate with students about their digital experience | » Students know where to go for help with digital issues. Students know what networks, devices and hardware are available to them  
» Students know what digital content and services are available to them | » Students are advised on a course-by-course basis what devices and services they should bring to support their studies  
» Students understand policies affecting their use of digital technologies e.g. fair use, plagiarism and copyright, 'switch it on', netiquette, e-safety | » Students are involved in decisions about digital provision through user groups and other feedback  
» Students reps have a good understanding of digital issues | » Students’ experiences and views on digital matters are regularly sought at course level and around specific issues and developments  
» Students are involved as partners in co-developing the digital environment and the digital experience |
Change Agents’ Network:

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