Implementing collaborative student and staff project opportunities to enhance research related learning

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Aims

This workshop will facilitate participants to:

- Discuss the opportunities and challenges of a collaborative staff-student project approach

- Consider how to engage with external research partners

- Debate the merits of different types of research based assignments.

Workshop format: 90 minutes

- Introductions
- Setting the scene: pedagogical drivers
- Discussion: opportunities and challenges of a collaborative staff-student project approach
- YSJU approach and experiences including engaging external partners
- Discussion: how to engage with external partners
- Debate: different dissertation assignment formats
- Wrapping up, final comments & questions

Introductions

- Name
- Role
- Involvement with dissertation modules and / or student-staff collaborative research

Students as Co-Researchers

- 3rd year BHSc(Hons) Occupational Therapy and Pre-Registration Occupational Therapy Masters Students.

- Option to Collaborate in SCoRe for their final year project

- Focus is on students and tutors collaborating as co-creators of knowledge

- Provides students with an experience of real world, professionally relevant research and for some projects the whole research process.

Research informed teaching

Teaching can be (Griffiths, 2004):

- **research-led:** content of what is taught is influenced directly by the research interests of the teaching staff.

- **research-oriented**: curriculum places an emphasis on teaching students inquiry skills and understanding research methods.

- **research-based:** curriculum is focused on students acquiring knowledge through inquiry. Students have more control over their learning and the emphasis is much less on traditional transmission of knowledge from staff to students.

- **research-informed:** The curriculum is informed by reflecting on and inquiry into teaching learning and assessment through pedagogic research and evaluation.

Framework series | Student engagement through partnership

How is the framework structured?

The framework illustrates four overlapping areas of focus where partnerships may be fostered. The left-hand side emphasises partnership in student experiences of learning, teaching and research. The right hand side emphasises partnership in the enhancement and scholarship of learning and teaching. Embedding partnership as an ethos requires a holistic approach, with attention to all four areas of focus. Community is integral to developing a culture of partnership. Therefore, partnership learning communities are at the heart of the framework.

Areas of focus

Learning, teaching and assessment: engaging students through partnership casts students as active participants in their learning. Partnership approaches:

· focus on collaborative and active learning (e.g. flipping the classroom, experiential learning, community and work related learning);

· give students a level of choice and ownership;

· place students in different roles (e.g. as tutors, mentors or assessors) and as co-designers of learning materials and resources.

Curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy: students are commonly engaged through programme evaluations and staff-student committees. Partnership approaches involve students in the formal processes of course design, revalidation, and professional development for staff.

Subject-based research and inquiry: engaging students as co-researchers and co-inquirers can involve all students on a programme learning through research, or selected students working with staff on extra-curricular research projects. Partnership approaches:

· involve students directly in knowledge production within their discipline community (e.g. through enquiry and problem-based learning, research based assessments, and 'live projects');

· provide opportunities for students to share their research publicly (e.g. through undergraduate research journals, blogs and conferences).

Scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL): inquiring into learning, teaching and assessment in partnership with students is one of the five principles of good practice in SoTL. Partnership approaches:

· involve students at all stages of the SoTL process; from co-designing research questions to acting on research findings;

· cast students as co-researchers not just subjects of research.

Partnership learning communities

As partnership acknowledges students and staff as learners, scholars and colleagues, it invites critical reflection on existing relationships, identity, processes and structures. For partnership to be embedded and sustained beyond documentation and initiatives, it needs to become part of the culture and ethos of the institution. Developing strong partnership-learning communities is a way of doing this. These communities facilitate deep connections between staff and students and bring partnership values to life. All members should co-create and contribute to the development and direction of the community.
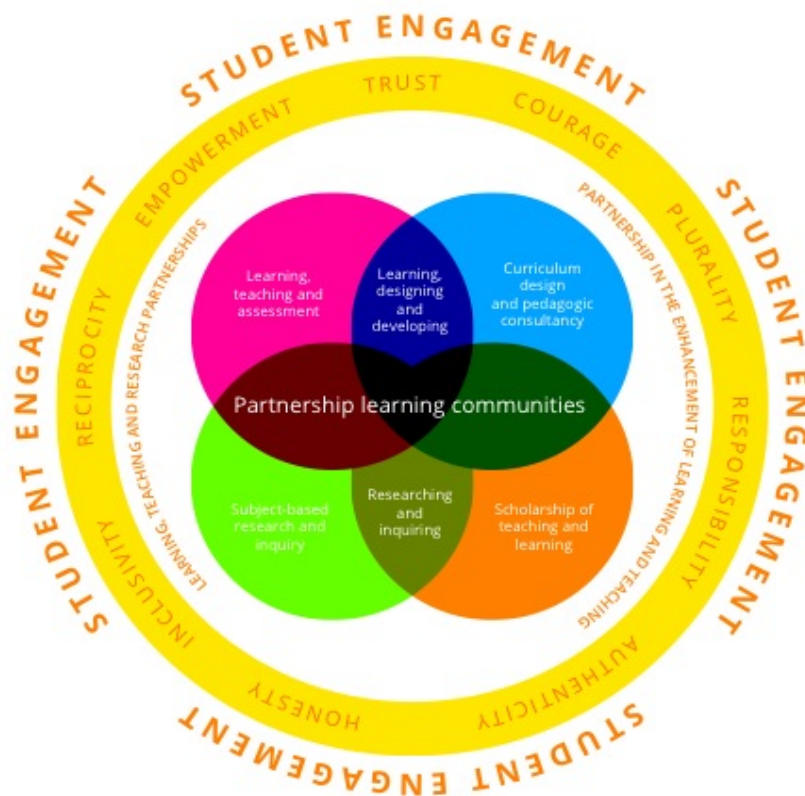
How can this framework be used?

This framework can be used flexibly, reflecting institutional context and priorities, to enhance practice and policy.

Research: framing research into partnership, mapping of current practice and benchmarking across and between institutions.

Review: assessing institutional readiness for partnership and exploring the relationship between an institution and its students' union, association or guild.

Curriculum design: informing validation and course approval processes, reviewing the curriculum and making pedagogic decisions.

Engagement: developing a sense of community among students and staff and developing ground rules for partnership meetings and initiatives.

Planning: developing meaningful strategies and policies and planning or reflecting on specific initiatives.

Professional development: informing professional development for staff, students' union staff and student partners.

Partnership values

The values which underpin successful student engagement through partnership are:

Authenticity: the rationale for all parties to invest in partnership is meaningful and credible.

Honesty: all parties are honest about what they can contribute to partnership and about where the boundaries of partnership lie.

Inclusivity: there is equality of opportunity and any barriers (structural or cultural) that prevent engagement are challenged.

Reciprocity: all parties have an interest in, and stand to benefit from working and/or learning in partnership.

Empowerment: power is distributed appropriately and ways of working and learning promote healthy power dynamics.

Trust: all parties take time to get to know one-another and can be confident they will be treated with respect and fairness.

Courage: all parties are encouraged to critique and challenge practices, structures and approaches that undermine partnership, and are enabled to take risks to develop new ways of working and learning.

Plurality: all parties recognise and value the unique talents, perspectives and experiences that individuals contribute to partnership.

Responsibility: all parties share collective responsibility for the aims of the partnership, and individual responsibility for the contribution they make.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

TRUST · COURAGE · PLURALITY · RESPONSIBILITY · AUTHENTICITY · HONESTY · INCLUSIVITY · RECIPROCITY · EMPOWERMENT

PARTNERSHIP IN THE ENHANCEMENT OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

- Learning, teaching and assessment
- Learning, designing and developing
- Curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy
- Subject-based research and inquiry
- Researching and inquiring
- Scholarship of teaching and learning

Partnership learning communities

© Higher Education Academy, 2015

Framework for Student engagement through partnership

- Higher of Education Academy (HEA; 2015a)

- Partnership = a relationship in which all involved are actively engaged in, and stand to gain from, the process of learning and working together.

- It enables and empowers students to engage deeply in their learning and enhancement.

- For staff, working in partnership with students can help transform thinking about learning and teaching practices.

- Subject based research and inquiry
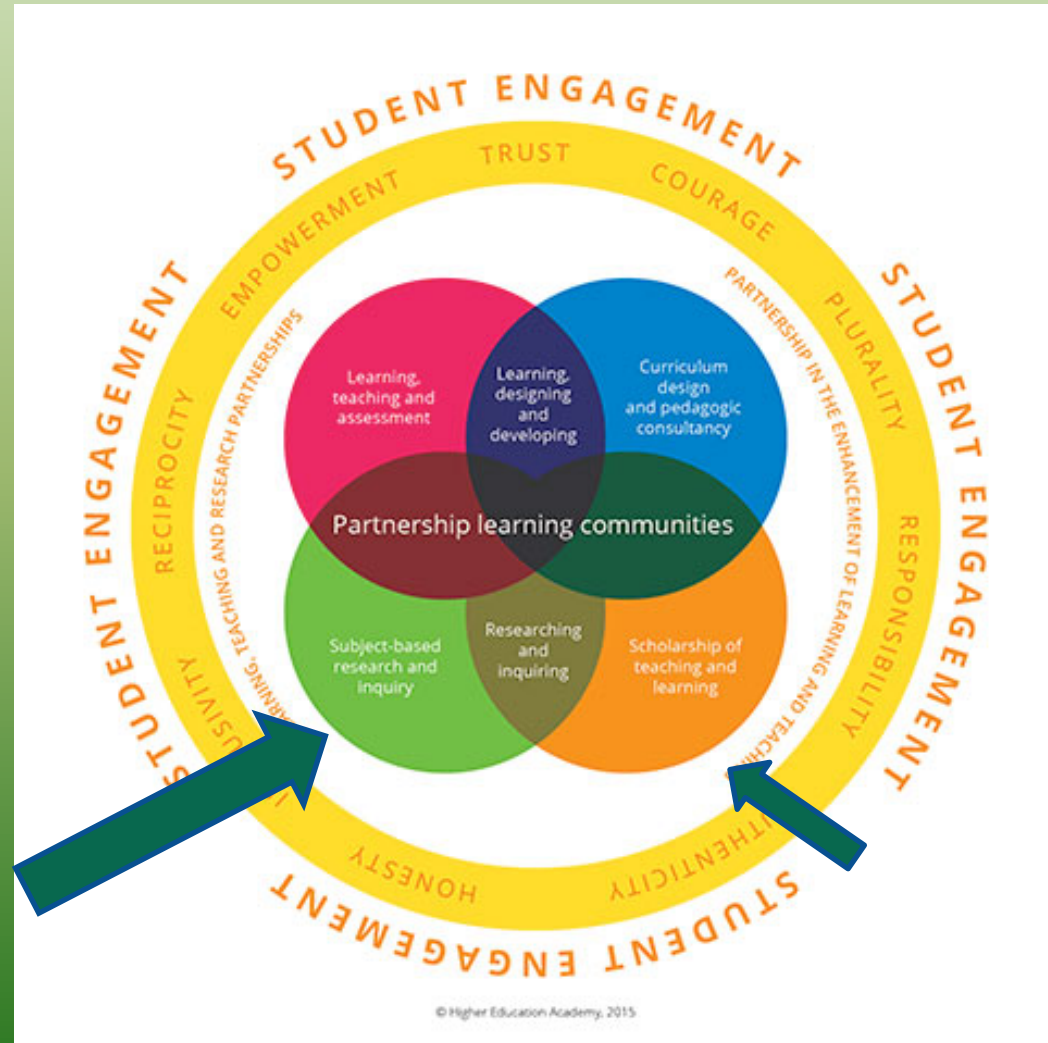
Why is student engagement through partnership important?

Partnership approaches to student engagement are important for:

Student learning
- to enable and empower all students to engage deeply;
- to enhance employability through developing high level knowledge, behaviours and skills;
- to engender a sense of belonging; vital for retention and success.

Staff engagement
- to renew engagement with learning and teaching enhancement;
- to transform thinking about learning and teaching practices as collaborative processes;
- to deepen understanding of academic community.

Transformation
- as a powerful alternative to traditional relationships in higher education;
- to prompt reflection on implicit assumptions about learning processes and the people within them;
- to open up new spaces for learning, dialogue and inquiry.

Sustainability
- to develop self-sustaining communities defined by shared goals and values.

(HEA; 2015b)

- 'All undergraduate students in all higher education institutions should experience learning through, and about, research and inquiry.

- In undergraduate research, students learn and are assessed in ways that come as close as possible to the experience of academic staff carrying out their disciplinary research.'

(Healey and Jenkins, 2009)
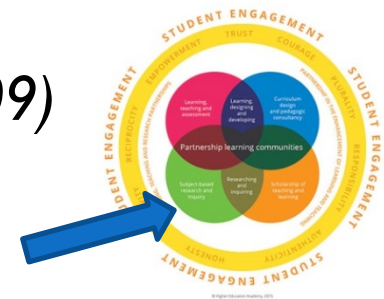
Table 2: Dimensions for framing undergraduate research contexts

Student, process centred	**Focus**	Outcome, product centred
Student initiated	**Motivation**	Faculty initiated
All students	**Inclusivity**	Selective
Curriculum based	**Setting**	Co-curricular fellowships
Team or group	**Collaboration**	Individual
Original to the student	**Originality**	New knowledge
Multi-or interdisciplinary	**Content**	Discipline based
Campus/community audience	**Audience**	Professional audience

Engagement through partnership: students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education

July 2014

Mick Healey, Abbi Flint and Kathy Harrington

(Healey, Flint and Harrington, 2014)

Students and staff disseminating research together

A framework for research dissemination

Spronken-Smith, et al. (2013) developed a framework specifically for the dissemination of undergraduate research and inquiry (see Figure 2 below). The framework has two axes, the first indicates the level of autonomy which the student experiences and this includes the extent to which the research being undertaken is teacher or student directed, or somewhere in between. The framework is intended to appear like a horizontal or table top graph with no sense of movement along the axes implying higher quality research.

Figure 2: A framework for research dissemination
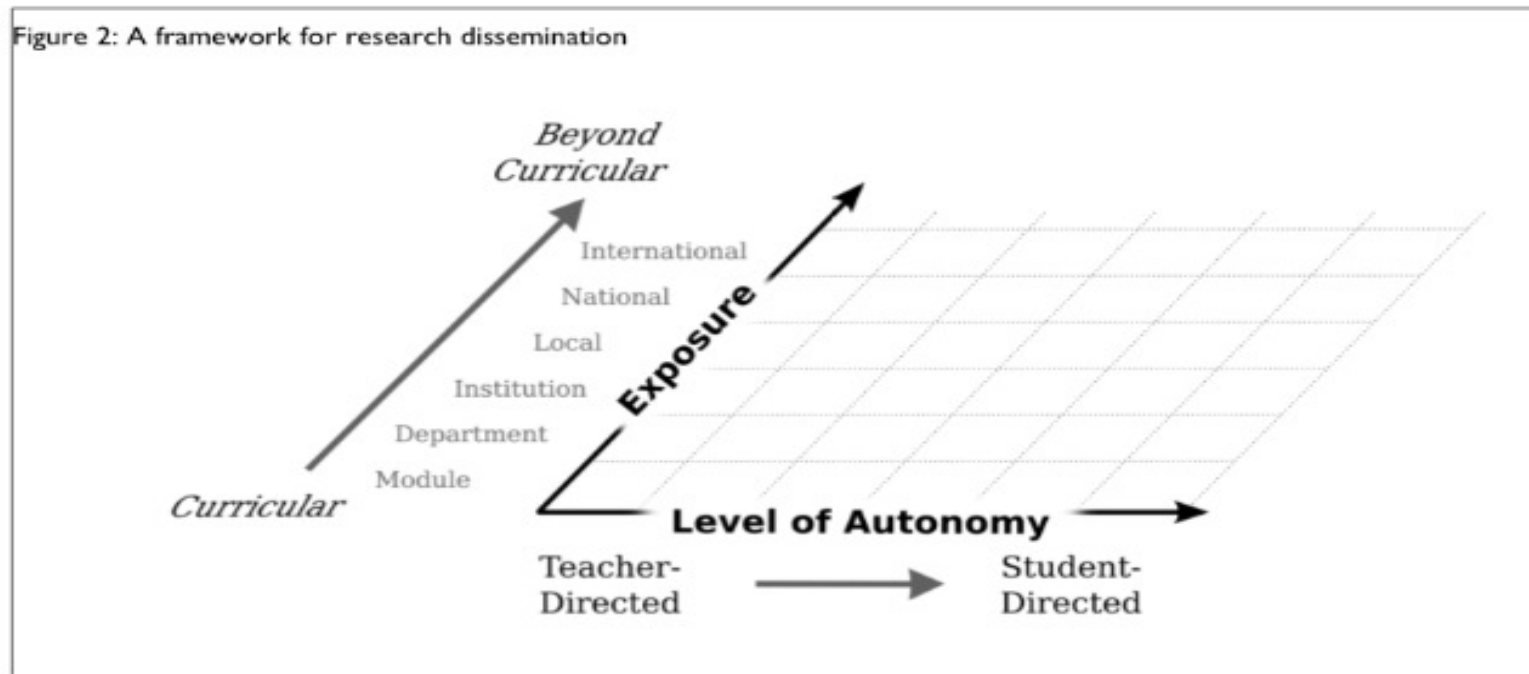
The second axis is the level of exposure that the research is given through the dissemination process. By exposure the authors mean the extent to which a student's work is made public or given exposure to new

(Healey, Flint and Harrington, 2014)

Discussion

➢ Opportunities for ….

➢ Challenges of ….

    a collaborative staff-student project approach

Providing choices for research projects

- **Student as Co-Researcher Projects (SCoRe)**
  Staff projects, some with external partners, undertaken in small groups. Can be:

  - primary research (range of qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies - including service evaluation) or

  - secondary research (e.g. systematised critical literature reviews).

- **Critical literature reviews**
  Student choice with a supervisor interested in the same topic area

- **Student led projects**
  Students suggest the focus and some initial ideas for methodology. Project is supervised by a staff member interested in that topic area / type of design.

Example Partners

SCoRe projects have involved a range of external partners including:

- Age UK York
- Alzheimer's Society
- City of York Council
- Dementia Forward
- Roche Healthcare
- Safe and Secure Homes (SASH)
- York People First
- Yorkshire and Humber Improvement Partnership (YHIP)
- World Federation of Occupational Therapists

"...particularly motivating to be part of bigger international WFOT project"
Student comment

"Working with an external professional on a real and current area of practise"
(2018 Module evaluation: What did you like most about this module?)

How do SCoRe projects develop? Some examples …

- Responding to requests to support service evaluation (City of York Council, YorWellbeing service, CYC Falls prevention service, SASH)

- Contributing to the development of professional guidance (Occupation focussed practice in secure hospitals, COT, 2012)

- Responding to needs identified from practice placements (York People First)

- Responding to policy drivers (Stigma in dementia SCoRe project linked to National Dementia Strategy)

How do SCoRe projects develop?

- Responding to needs identified by clinical occupational therapists / services (e.g. 'Cook and Eat project, the peer Mentoring project with a mental health trust)
SCoRE projects leading into & from staff research:
  ◦ E.g. SCoRe project exploring changes in the occupational engagement of people with dementia and their carers (with Alzheimer's Society) led to the identification of the need for a UK version of the ACS-UK
  ◦ Staff project with HLS research assistant for the ACS-UK content validity study (1 year, OTJR article output)
  ◦ Followed by Score projects to evaluate the face validity and clinical utility (x 2 years) and the reliability (x2 years with 3 groups of students) of the ACS-UK

"I felt proud to be apart of a group of students who were contributing to the evidence base of the ACS-UK" *(level 3 OT student)*

Students' Perceptions of Benefits

- **Transferable skills:** *"I have thoroughly enjoyed completing this SCoRe project with my group and feel that I have gained a lot of valuable, transferrable skills which I will be able to utilise in practice"*

- **Inspiring future researchers:** *"After having the opportunity to take part in research and develop my skills and confidence, I would love to have the opportunity within my career to take part in more research in the future."*

(Quotes from 3rd year YSJ OT students)

Students' Perceptions of Benefits

Employability:

- *"I feel it helped me get a job, I spoke about it in my interviews"*

- *"I think it will be an asset when applying for jobs as it enables you to stand out and demonstrates a variety of skills such as being able to work as part of a team and being able to motivate and dedicate myself to a project"*

(Quotes from 3rd year YSJ OT students)

Discussion
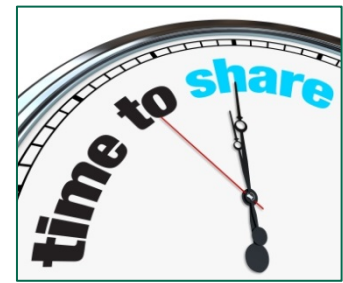
- Discussion how to engage with external research partners

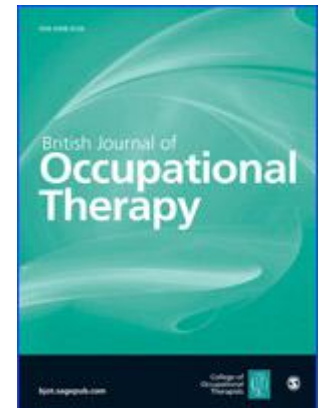# Assignment: Contributing to the evidence base

- 5,000 word written assignment and a 250 word abstract.

- A **journal article**

  Students refer to the authors' guidelines for the **British Journal of Occupational Therapy** (BJOT).

  Or

- A **service evaluation report**

Example Student evaluation comments:

"I am very excited about the possibility of publishing our research into the British Journal of Occupational Therapy."

"With the assignment being a co-authored journal article about our research project I felt I was much more engaged"

"Our sub-group was really motivated by possibility of a paper being published"

"I'd be really excited to turn it into a journal article for publication. …it is a great opportunity that wouldn't have been available to me without this score project. I think doing it as a journal article made sense to people and really helped me get into the project better."

Dissemination examples

> "I was very excited and proud of our research group when our abstract was accepted for the conference. It felt all the hard work was worth it and it helped me to acknowledge that we had created a good quality piece of work which people would like to hear about."

International
WFOT, DSDC, ENOTHE & COTEC conferences

National
BJOT publication, HEA & RCOT conferences, COT National guidance (NICE accredited)

Local
Reports for organisations, YHIP workshop,
Local supermarkets,

Institution
YSJU Talking about teaching conference

Department
3rd showcase Discover events in 2016 and 2017

Module
SCoRe examples used across the curriculum

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Dissertation		
Journal article		
Research poster		
Paper presentation		

Debate: Different dissertation assignment formats

Questions to think about…

- How might you encourage students to participate in co-production of research?

- How do we facilitate and motivate students to engage with research?

- What will the opportunities and challenges be?

- Does this need a culture shift?

Action planning

- Do you have existing research students could partner you in?
- Which students?
- What module?
- When?
- What would the assignment be? Written? Dissertation or article? Poster? Presentation?
- Do you have ideas for external partners?

Wrapping up:
final comments & questions

Thank you for your participation

Some useful texts

- Brew, Angela. (2006) *Research and Teaching: Beyond the Divide.* London

- Healey M, Jenkins A (2009) *Developing Undergraduate Research and Inquiry.* York: Available from: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/developingundergraduate_final.pdf [accessed22 June 2018]

- Griffiths, R (2004) *"Knowledge production and the research-teaching nexus: the case of the built environment disciplines"*, Studies in Higher Education 29 (6): 709-26. [accessed 22 June 2018]

- Jenkins A, Healey M (2005) *Institutional Strategies to link teaching and research.* Higher Education Academy.

References

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https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/enhancement/frameworks/framework-student-engagement-through-partnership [accessed 30 September 2018]

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https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/student-enagagement-through-partnership.pdf [accessed 30 September 2018]

Spronken-Smith, R. A., et al. (2013). Completing the research cycle: A framework for promoting dissemination of undergraduate research and inquiry Teaching & Learning Inquiry. *The ISSOTL Journal* 1 (2) 105- 118.

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