



UNIVERSITY OF  
LINCOLN

**The Events Management  
Student as Co-Producer:  
Establishing New Working  
Relationships**

# Introduction - Why Now?

- Recognition of the increasing popularity of academia meeting industry (Sibson, 2011).
- New subject entering the curriculum – UG/PG
- Relative paucity of literature regarding Events Management as a subject and surrounding teaching and learning issues.
- Need to respond to the new student ‘demands’ – tuition fees, economic context and career prospects.
- Pro-active academics
- Beyond Module Evaluations

# 2012 Student Intake

- This research is prompted by a noted evolution in the student character; ‘they are supposed to become unique, successful individuals, making their own choices and plans to accomplish autonomy’ (Harris, 2004, p.6).
- 35 students – eight male students, 27 female students
  - four mature students
  - All Home/EU students
  - None through clearing (actively seeking events)
- Average UCAS points score was above expectations

# Research Objectives

- Investigate students' expectations of the new programme and their future prospects.
- Open up the communication stream between student and educator.
- Reflect on current teaching practices and subject content and respond accordingly.

# Methodology

- Theoretical framework – *co-production*
  - ‘Student, lecturers and others who support the learning process are viewed as being engaged in a cooperative enterprise focused on the production, dissemination and application of knowledge, and on the development of learners rather than merely skilled technicians’ (McCulloch, 2009, p.171).
- Listening to the vulnerable voice
  - ‘At the beginning of their courses, students are on the cusp of the process of becoming. They are open to new possibilities, and this openness makes them vulnerable’ (Batchelor, 2006, p.795).
  - ‘Having a voice partly depends on someone hearing that voice with understanding’ (Batchelor, 2006, p.799).

# Methods

- Potential to be longitudinal study
- Questionnaires – once a year, whole group
- Interviews – twice a year with volunteers
- Focus Groups – twice a year with volunteers
- Participatory activities – one-off with volunteers (e.g. collage)
- Blog – dissemination and comment (on-going)
  - See <http://eventsresearch.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/>

# Findings

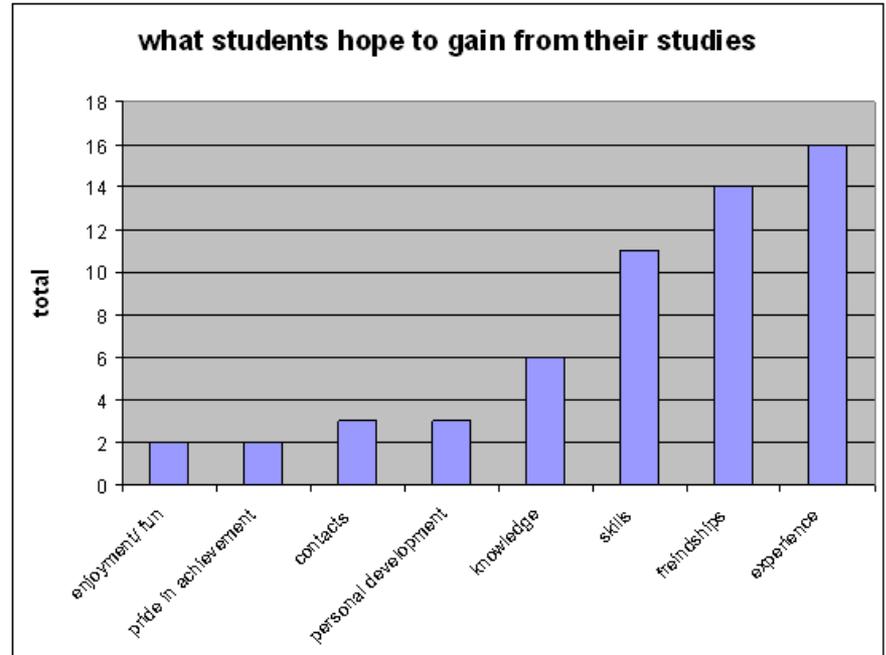
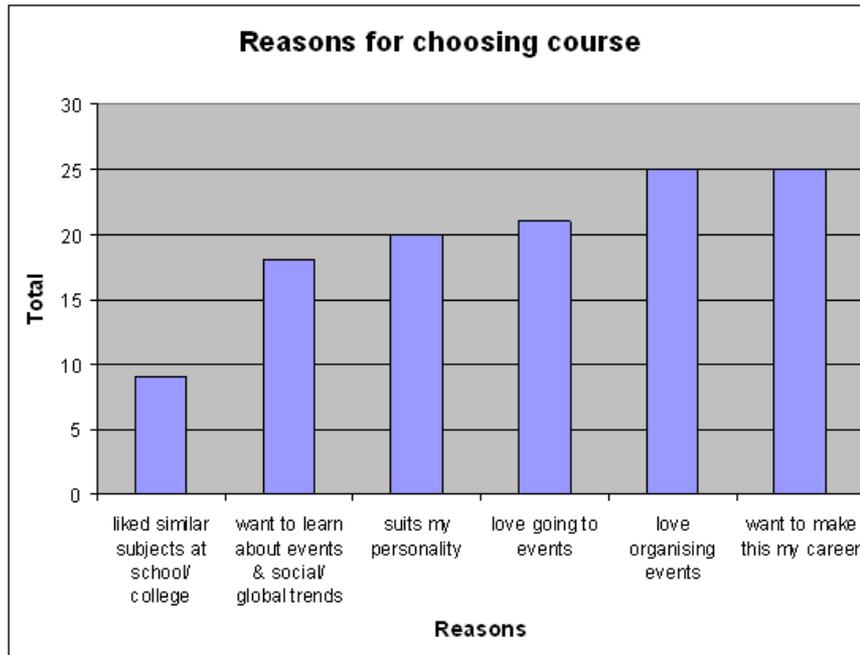
- Highly creative, expressive, gratitude-seeking and vibrant
  - ‘I like to make other people happy’
  - ‘People who like events themselves, like going to events, like having a good time and have a passion for a certain area.’
- High expectations for themselves and their future prospects.
  - One student when discussing the qualification stated [I want to] ‘be able to take it wherever I would like to.’
  - Discussing a luxurious lifestyle ‘If I’m going to work for it, I don’t see why I can’t have it.’
  - ‘the money does come into it, everyone wants to earn a lot of money, live an expensive lifestyle, but at the same time it is that I want to own my own business and at the same time increase my knowledge of events.’

# Findings

- Disappointed with some other students' lack of drive/ ambition
  - 'I feel like some of the people in the class have just done the course because it's something they've just wanted to go to uni for. I've come here for a totally selfish reason for the fact I want to learn and study events management.'
- Passion for the industry and its breadth of opportunities
- Driven by the desire to please others and receive appreciation/gratitude.
  - Not financially driven when describing future careers (job satisfaction and enjoyment).
  - 'I like working in teams.'
- Event Management selected for enjoyment, personality match, breadth of subject
  - 'I knew it was going to be difficult but at the same time I thought it was going to be fun.'

# Findings

- Content analysis of qualitative data collected through questionnaires.



# Findings

- Majority of students have a business studies background
- Organisation
- Students are open to new opportunities/freedom
  - 49% plan to work in events after graduating
  - 48% not sure what they wanted to do

# Actions

- Opportunities for group work and to receive feedback
  - International Office events, group based activities, presentation delivery
- Academic concerns over challenging environment
  - Assignment tutorials, mind maps, new ways of thinking
- Creativity
  - Seminars tailored to engage the students, debates

# Next Steps

- Blogging and research dissemination
- Term 2 research – further interviews, questionnaire and focus group.
- Inductive approach – responding to students’ direction, reflecting on teaching practices and engaging colleagues.
- Working with Centre for Educational Research and Development with regards to the co-production of best practice.
- Disseminate information to colleagues and discuss progress and best practice.

# References

Batchelor, D. C. (2006) Vulnerable voices: an examination of the concept of vulnerability in relation to student voice. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 38 (6), pp. 787-800.

Harris, A. (2004) *Future girl: young women in the twenty-first century*. Oxon: Routledge.

McCulloch, A. (2009) The student as co-producer: learning from public administration about the student-university relationship. *Studies in Higher Education*, 34 (2), pp. 171-183.

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**Questions?**