



## **Advance HE Surveys and Insights Conference 2019**

**8 May 2019**  
**Mercure Holland House Hotel and Spa, Bristol**

**Session Abstracts**

## Keynote

9:45-10:20, Forest Room

### **An abundance of graduates, but too few skilled workers? Investigating Higher Education labour market alignment**

Ms Elizabeth Shepherd, IFF Research

The UK Higher Education sector is under increasing scrutiny to demonstrate evidence of successful progression of their graduates into the labour market. Employers, on the other hand, continue to highlight the shortage of workers with the skills they require. The complex process of aligning higher education and the labour market is often underestimated, reduced to a simple input/output process as part of a chain of supply and demand. This is not helped by a complex data landscape, multiple definitions and changing sector jargon.

In this session we will present a comprehensive definition of labour market alignment, and a practical framework for operationalising higher education and labour market configuration via analysis of several national survey data, including NSS, DLHE, the Employer Skills Survey and Working Futures.

## Workshop

Parallel Session 1, 10:25-11:25, Forest Room, Session reference 1.1

### **The Royal Holloway 100: Providing a large-scale platform for student voice**

Miss Chloe Humphreys, Royal Holloway, University of London

The student voice is high on the HE agenda and ensuring that institutions listen and respond to feedback from their students is crucial to improving student-facing services. Royal Holloway have been facilitating a large focus group of 100 students from our student body to ensure students are consulted on the implementation of strategic change projects across the breadth of the student experience. Participants at this session will be introduced to the RH100 project; see how students are recruited and trained; and explore the ways the focus groups are run. Participants will then have the opportunity to experience first-hand some of ways of facilitating large focus groups.

## Workshop

Parallel Session 1, 10:25-11:25, Willow Room, Session reference 1.2

### **Survey methods for global 21st-Century competences**

Dr Diana Pritchard, University of Bedfordshire and Mr Jonathan Neves, Advance HE

The University of Bedfordshire is involved in the evaluation of a UK government programme which finances nine transnational partnerships in developing countries to enhance higher education provision. The facilitators of this session will outline the challenges of designing a

student evaluation tool which is valid across discipline and cultural contexts, and measures competences which are relevant for students before the changes and disruptions of emergent global megatrends. They will describe the mixed-method approach they adopted, including items from the UK Engagement Survey. Interactive activities will enable delegates to consider how to measure 21st-Century skills and create their own measurement tool from different survey-based methodologies

## Workshop

**Parallel Session 1, 10:25-11:25, Hawthorn Room, Session reference 1.3**

### **Seeing the universities' digital environment through the eyes of staff and students**

Mrs Ruth Drysdale and Mr Mark Langer-Crame, Jisc

Universities make large investments in their digital environment, including their physical campuses, but how is this environment evaluated to ensure it actually enhances the overall student experience? This fun and interactive workshop allows delegates to start the process of thinking about how they can map, as well as capture their students' digital journey throughout their time at university. This will allow participants to share ideas and start to think about how they can improve their students' digital experience and so realise the benefits of the digital investments that are currently taking place in their institutions.

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 2, 11:40-12:40, Forest Room, Session reference 2.1a**

### **Engage. Survey. Enhance. Repeat.**

Dr Simon Beer and Dr Matt Fraser, University of Chester

Engagement, feedback and enhancement. This session aims to show how each of these processes can drive one another through the case study of postgraduate research students at the University of Chester. Through the examples of the PRES and a range of enhancement initiatives, this presentation aims to ask not only what role can surveys have in maximising student development and enhancement, but also what role can student development and engagement have in maximising student feedback?

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 2, 11:40-12:40, Forest Room, Session reference 2.1b**

### **Postgraduate, taught, and 'on their own': Identifying the needs of a PGT cohort via survey data triangulation**

Dr Elena Zaitseva, Liverpool John Moores University

This session will draw on a recent institutional research project exploring factors that may have contributed to reduced PGT student satisfaction in some PTES 2018 categories. Data analysis and triangulation of three survey-based datasets: longitudinal demographic profile of PTES respondents, PTES free text comments, and module evaluation comments from the same cohort of students, were undertaken to provide a more nuanced understanding of taught postgraduate student needs. Recommendations and enhancement activities developed as a result of this research will be outlined. Participants will be invited to discuss the research findings and applicability of the methodology in their institutional contexts.

## **Oral Presentation**

**Parallel Session 2, 11:40-12:40, Willow Room, Session reference 2.2a**

### **Centralising the evaluation of teaching: Lessons learned**

Mrs Julie Mulvey, Durham University

Julie Mulvey from the Durham Centre for Academic Development will talk about her experiences of moving from a decentralised culture of student evaluation (each School and Department devising their own questionnaires) to implementing a centralised approach. She will explore the drivers behind this process: quality control; the need to be able to compare and aggregate data across programmes, schools and across the institution; and a sensitivity to potential questionnaire fatigue amongst the student body.

## **Oral Presentation**

**Parallel Session 2, 11:40-12:40, Willow Room, Session reference 2.2b**

### **Using MEQs to inform teaching excellence**

Dr Tim Linsey, Kingston University

The presentation will provide a brief overview of MEQ implementation at Kingston, describing how the system has been focussed on enhancing teaching practice and building on the student voice.

## **Oral Presentation**

**Parallel Session 2, 11:40-12:40, Hawthorn Room, Session reference 2.3a**

### **Taking a collaborative approach to successfully measure student engagement in higher education: An Irish case study**

Dr Sioban Nic Fhlannchadha, Irish Survey of Student Engagement

The Department of Education and Skills in the Republic of Ireland, in 2011, published the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, which contained a recommendation to develop and implement a national student survey, with results to be published and effective feedback mechanisms put in place. A unique collaborative partnership of institutions, state

agencies and students' representatives was established and from this partnership came the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE). This national student survey now operates on an annual basis and is offered to students in the first and final year of taught undergraduate programmes and to students in taught postgraduate programmes in 27 institutions nationwide.

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 2, 11:40-12:40, Hawthorn Room, Session reference 2.3b**

### **Untangling the evidence! How well do we understand the international PGR student experience in the UK?**

Dr Rob Daley, Heriot-Watt University and Dr Dely Elliot, University of Glasgow

The international PGR experience in the UK is poorly understood and under researched. This interactive presentation will share an analysis of recent PRES data, comparing international and home responses, and contrast these findings with a range of case studies from the literature. We will highlight some of the challenges facing researchers working in this area and explore some of the possible ways forward.

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 2, 11:40-12:40, Aspen Room, Session reference 2.4a**

### **Transforming the digital space: A model for enhancing student engagement with VLEs**

Ms Claire Hiscock, University of the Arts: London

This session will propose a working model for involving students in creating a dynamic virtual learning environment space. The methodology triangulates student focus groups with photovoice, a participatory research methodology where participants can “identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique” (Wang and Burris, 1997: 369), and interviews with experts in digital learning. It is hoped that the project will result in a tool that can be adapted by any HE department for exploring students' views of VLEs and incorporating their ideas into the design of departmental digital spaces.

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 2, 11:40-12:40, Aspen Room, Session reference 2.4b**

### **Widening participation: Narrowing the gap, virtually...**

Mr Anthony Aylmer, Mr David Millward and Mr Lee Ward, CU Coventry

This presentation will focus on the findings of some primary research conducted at CU Coventry into the unique manner in which virtual learning environment (VLE) engagement can affect pass rates amongst widening participation (WP) students. Using the POLAR3

definition of WP, the presentation will take the audience on a journey through the research conducted, focusing on how a VLE may potentially be a useful tool to effectively bridge the gap in cultural capital widening participation students may face studying in higher education, and how engagement with the VLE can have a direct impact on pass rates of WP students.

## **Oral Presentation**

**Parallel Session 3, 13:40-14:40, Aspen Room, Session reference 3.1a**

### **Using UKES to enhance staff-student reflection and engagement**

Ms Juliet Winter and Ms Cassie Shaw, University of Winchester

This presentation will outline a project aimed to enhance and enrich staff and student engagement with the UK Engagement Survey (UKES). This is original approach used UKES as a reflective tool to increase the pedagogic literacy of staff and students, and also to enable students to better understand their learning gain. Workshops were developed and delivered that engaged students with critically reflective activities, framed through the thematic areas of the UK Engagement Survey. We will outline the interactive nature of this approach, the effects this has had on the survey (including response rates) and lessons for the future.

## **Oral Presentation**

**Parallel Session 3, 13:40-14:40, Aspen Room, Session reference 3.1b**

### **Student-staff interactions: Lessons from UKES 2018**

Miss Megan Kelly, Roehampton University

Led by Advance HE since 2015, the UK Engagement Survey (UKES) offers insights into student engagement in higher education. The results of 2018 show that areas for improvement include student-staff partnerships and interacting with staff. This session seeks to discuss the lessons from the UKES 2018 results, and how effective personal tutoring may be one solution. We will invite the audience to discuss their experiences of personal tutoring, with regards to personal development and/or survey evaluation by students of personal tutors. Resources for educators are also provided.

## **Oral Presentation**

**Parallel Session 3, 13:40-14:40, Willow Room, Session reference 3.2a**

### **Utilising module evaluation data to explore outcomes from the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) subject level pilot**

Dr Natalie Holland, Liverpool John Moores University

The Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) Subject Level pilot, currently within its second year, intends to provide a measure of teaching quality and student

outcomes across higher education institutes (HEIs) at the subject level. A feature of the TEF Subject Level pilot is the identification of any differences in performance against benchmarks across different groups of students at the subject level. This study aims to use module evaluation survey data to explore the experiences of these groups of students in more detail to understand how we can inform change at a practical level.

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 3, 13:40-14:40, Willow Room, Session reference 3.2b**

### **Student voice: The results of - and lessons to learn from - a pilot approach to closing the loop on student feedback**

Mrs Andrea Todd, University of Chester

This session will share the outcomes - and lessons to be learned - from one department's pilot approach to closing the loop on student feedback. The aims of the session are: 1. to appreciate the importance of closing the loop on student feedback and its link to TEF outcomes; 2. to discuss the findings of qualitative and quantitative research undertaken with one department's students and staff on how best to close the loop; and 3. to share the lessons learned from a one-year pilot approach which resulted in a significant increase in student satisfaction and agreement with NSS question 25.

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 3, 13:40-14:40, Hawthorn Room, Session reference 3.3a**

### **“Please not another mental health app”**

Dr Mark Passera, KSA, Kingston University

This session will present details of a sprint completed in the summer of 2017 that used Agile techniques to try and help students understand and start solving the problem of student well-being. The basis of this sprint was to try and use techniques taught in class to help universities first contextualise the problem and secondly move towards constructing solutions. The core conclusion was twofold: firstly, student well-being was marginalised; and secondly, an app was the last thing that could help students. The sprint revealed that student well-being underpinned student confidence and the ability to complete the student journey. Student well-being included – learning adult skills, dealing with friends (and loneliness), social media, group work, assessment planning, money, cooking, physical fitness, sexual health, working and ultimately managing time and responsibilities.

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 3, 13:40-14:40, Hawthorn Room, Session reference 3.3b**

### **Do students suffer digital hangovers when transitioning to HE?**

Professor Emma Bond, University of Suffolk and Professor Andy Phippen, University of Plymouth

This session explores the start of the undergraduate journey as students transition into higher education, and the role online technology plays in risk and harmful behaviour. The session aims to lead a debate around the responsibilities of HEIs to ensure their students are equipped to deal with online issues. The session will: question whether this is something students, as adults, should be addressing themselves; consider a model and guidelines to allow a more holistic understanding of the digital transitioning issues students face; develop ideas for best practice in how HEIs respond to online safeguarding; and consider how students might be better supported.

## Poster

**14:40 -15:15, Forest Foyer & Orchard Room**

### **How can we improve student course committees?**

Mrs Sarah Della Rocca, Mrs Katharine Pearce and Miss Rachel Edden, Nottingham Trent University

The aim of this poster presentation is to show our research evaluating staff and student opinion on our existing process of gathering termly student feedback on undergraduate course provision. We will then go on to outline our strategy for the 2019-20 academic year to try different methods of obtaining student feedback which we hope will widen student participation and engagement with this process. In doing so we hope to ensure that staff are better informed as to how to develop and enhance course provision and a constructive dialogue is better established with students.

## Poster

**14:40-15:15, Forest Foyer & Orchard Room**

### **Addressing the BME attainment gap: Social Work case study**

Miss Nabeela Talib, Oxford Brookes University

British university students from Black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds are less likely, to achieve a 'good' degree classification than White students. Focus groups were conducted with 17 BME students at one university to examine their experiences of learning and teaching. Self-determination theory was applied, which proposes that environments that help to meet needs for relatedness, competence, and autonomy support students' motivation and experience of wellbeing. Thematic analysis revealed that BME students encountered



obstacles inhibiting fulfilment of these three needs. Findings discuss how universities can support BME students and begin to reduce the attainment gap.

## Poster

**14:40-15:15, Forest Foyer & Orchard Room**

### **Student fear of public speaking in higher education: A qualitative survey**

Dr Rob Grieve, University of the West of England

Module assessments in higher education often include an oral presentation however, evidence indicates that public speaking has been identified as a common cause of anxiety and stress for HE students. The main aim of this session is to present the findings of a recently conducted qualitative survey that has provided further evidence and insight into HE students who have a fear of public speaking. A further aim is to identify and discuss how we, as academics, can offer support to enable student development in relation to public speaking and improve their student experience.

## Poster

**14:40-15:15, Forest Foyer & Orchard Room**

### **Product Design students' perception of project planning and skills confidence before and after completing their final year design project**

Ms Elaine Mackie, Aston University

The aim of this survey was to ascertain whether Product Design students in their final year of study, implemented any of the project planning stages introduced within the CDIO group modules and/or kept a detailed record of their work within logbooks. The objectives of this survey were therefore to contain questions that would prompt the students about their planning approach and use of CDIO framework as well as finding out about how they viewed the role of their project supervisor in the execution of their project. The survey was completed by 20 students representing 70% of the total cohort.

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 4, 15:15-16:15, Aspen Room, Session reference 4.1a**

### **Academic boredom, engagement and the achievement of undergraduate students at university**

Professor John Sharp, University of Lincoln

As hard as it might be to imagine, students really do get bored at university. In this session, findings from a recently completed boredom survey identify the most commonly associated sites and triggers as well as the coping strategies employed by individuals as a result. For those students measurably more prone to academic boredom than others, the

consequences of actually getting bored on a regular basis are far from trivial and not to be overlooked. The implications arising from findings, including suggestions for boredom mitigation, are presented and considered.

## **Oral Presentation**

**Parallel Session 4, 15:15-16:15, Aspen Room, Session reference 4.1b**

### **Enhancing student motivations for attending university: An Anglo-American research partnership**

Dr Alexander Marchant and Ms Kirsteen Couper, London South Bank University and Dr Mitchell Colver, Utah State University

Recent research has demonstrated that student motivations for attending university are an essential feature of progress towards graduation. Some students attend university for intrinsic reasons - to experience deep learning and challenging opportunities. Other students see university in a more market-oriented light, with future employability more of a focus. Still others are not quite sure why attending university is valuable. This session will highlight how each style of motivation associates with meaningful student outcomes. The session will also explore how universities can work to enhance student motivation through autonomy-supportive interventions.

## **Oral Presentation**

**Parallel Session 4, 15:15-16:15, Willow Room, Session reference 4.2a**

### **Automated tools to bridge the gap between student comments and improved teaching across multiple institutions**

Dr Stuart Grey, University of Strathclyde and Dr Claire Lucas, University of Warwick

The aim of this session to demonstrate tools for the automatic categorisation of student free text comments using machine learning. This is with a view to supporting staff, in both large and small classes, to improve their teaching practice and assist them in writing responses to the students that cover the key issues raised. Results will be shown from the surveys carried out at the University of Strathclyde and the University of Warwick in the academic year 2018-19 and will include a breakdown of the key themes raised by students in the context of teaching excellence.

## **Oral Presentation**

**Parallel Session 4, 15:15-16:15, Willow Room, Session reference 4.2b**

### **Using the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure to understand the allied health undergraduate student journey**

Dr Eric Chua, Singapore Institute of Technology

Four allied health degrees were recently introduced in Singapore. To track students' perceptions of the learning environment, the DREEM survey is being administered longitudinally to the first two cohorts of 490 students. In this session, we will share results from the first two years of this study, including both cross-sectional and longitudinal results. The results provided the faculty with insights on factors and issues along the student journey, while serving quality assurance purposes. This study may provide a useful example in using surveys to understand undergraduate students' journeys.

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 4, 15:15-16:15, Hawthorn Room, Session reference 4.3a**

### Enhancing teaching by closing the feedback loop

Dr Sarah Williamson and Miss Andria Iacovou, Loughborough University

At Loughborough in 2018-19 we have implemented a new online Module Feedback system for all modules that includes closing the feedback loop as an integral part of the system. This has resulted in the release in the first week of Semester 2 of reports that both outline the outcomes of Module Feedback to students and also include a response from the module leader to the feedback. An additional benefit has been that it has encouraged staff to reflect not only on their modules, but also on their roles as teachers and how to strive for excellence in teaching and learning

## Oral Presentation

**Parallel Session 4, 15:15-16:15, Hawthorn Room, Session reference 4.3b**

### Empowering students to use their voice to make institutional change

Miss Precious Taylor and Mr Jas Thindal, University of Derby

Given the ever-changing climate of higher education, the student voice is a key tool in our armoury ensuring that we are responsive to the changing needs of our students. We want to talk about the ways we capture student voice as a Student Experience Team and the successes of listening to the student voice.

## Keynote

**16:15-16:45, Forest Room**

### What does the latest HEPI research tell us about the student experience?

Miss Rachel Hewitt, HEPI

What do students think of the critical issues of today? HEPI regularly publishes research looking into students' views on a whole range of issues, from Brexit to the financial health of universities. In this session, Rachel Hewitt will talk through the latest HEPI polling, plus the

results of the annual HEPI/Advance HE Student Academic Experience survey, to give the perspective of today's students on the most critical issues in higher education.