

Title: **Enhancing the student experience by enriching performance measures**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Critically discuss the limitations of current metrics for measuring value added enhancements from extra-curricular activities
- Have an informed discussion of alternative self-evaluative methods for measuring holistic academic and personal enhancements.

Session Outline

As Higher Education Institutions grapple with the measurement of learning gain, this presentation explores a case study of how we measured student perceptions of the development of their personal and academic skills. The case study focuses on the Students as Researcher's Scheme that has been running at Teesside University since 2011. Recruitment is limited by the amount of funding available, although there is a strategic plan to grow the scheme. In 2016/17 18 student researchers were appointed and this has increased to 33 in 2017/18. This is an extra-curricular activity that gives students the opportunity to participate in authentic discipline or pedagogical research projects under the supervision of experienced researchers (Healey, 2005).

The scheme is an opportunity for undergraduate students to gain valuable research skills, knowledge and experiences and is designed to develop learners as co-creators, rather than consumers of knowledge (Bryson, 2016). Participating students develop and enhance a number of transferable skills, which will benefit them in their post-University careers (Stuart et al, 2009). They also develop core personal and academic attributes such as confidence, critical thinking and articulation.

Widely used measures of student performance do not adequately measure the gains from this activity (Greatbatch and Holland, 2016). To evaluate the learning gains from participation in the scheme, we devised a framework where students use a spidergram to rate their perceptions against core attributes pre and post their role as a student researcher as well as writing a reflective narrative of the skills they have gained. The model is transferable to evaluation of learning gains within the curriculum, but the extra-curricular activity is the specific focus of this project.

The presentation will explore this evaluation through the lens of one participant, arguing that more holistic performance measures can help students measure their personal growth and improve self-confidence and the simplicity of enriching performance measures aid academic growth.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

Introduction and discussion of core metrics – 5 minutes

Presentation of the evaluative framework and personal learning journey – 20 minutes

Conclusion – 5 minutes.

Discussion and questions – 15 minutes.

Questions:

How can we use holistic measures of learning gain to more effectively hear the student voice?

Can such measures help us to more effectively represent teaching excellence?

References

Bryson, C. (2016) [Engagement through partnership: students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education](#), *International Journal for Academic Development*, 21(1), pp

Greatbatch, D and Holland, J. (2016) *Teaching Quality in Higher Education: Literature Review and Qualitative Research*, London: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Healy, M (2005) [Linking research and teaching to benefit student learning](#), *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 29(2), 183-201

Stuart, M., Lido, C., Morgan, J. and May, M. (2009). *Student Diversity, extra-curricular activities and perceptions of graduate outcomes*. York: Higher Education Academy. p1.