

Title: 'Learning our 3Rs' – Review, Revise and Restructure in HE

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Session Learning Outcomes

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

- Appreciate the impact of changing demographics on student expectations on HE provision
- Discuss interventions that improve support for students at risk (retention) and enhance outcomes (success)
- Share and reflect on the implications for practice in their own institutions

Session Outline

As higher education providers look to the future, significant demographic challenges lie on the horizon. While some institutions have successfully broadened their outreach to underserved domestic and international markets, ensuring a sustainable fee income and a high quality student experience has turned our focus on increasing student engagement, retention and success.

Attempts to improve student engagement takes many forms, from involving students in administering and interpreting student feedback or acting as change agents through the student union, to University support for activities that seek to improve the educational provision (Naylor et al, 2017). By engaging students as partners (Healey *et al*, 2015, 2016), we are starting to demonstrate the impact of student engagement on the development, delivery, management and enhancement of their educational experience (Garwe, 2015).

Using more evidence-led approaches for improving the student learning experience, we have generated a strong sense of academic community that more effectively supports student retention and success (Thomas, 2012).

Improving student outcomes (eg satisfaction and degree completion) has relied on reviewing, revising and restructuring a range of practices, both in and out of the classroom.

In particular, we have been developing our Academic Adviser system to provide more personalised learning and better prepare students for the changing work environment, as well as evolve the role of teaching academics as coaches and mentors. Having reviewed

both the staff and student experience of the Academic Adviser system at Kent (eg surveys, focus groups), this session will focus on how we have revised and restructured this system over the past few years. The session will explore the policy changes and specific interventions required to promote a student-lifecycle approach to the Academic Adviser system that better integrates learner analytics, in ways that personalise and improve the outcomes for students, and will highlight the ongoing challenges plus future developments.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

Discussion paper:

Introduction to the 3Rs, as applied to the Academic Adviser system at Kent – 15mins

Small group discussions to consider questions relating to 3 core themes of Academic Advising - 20 mins

Informational – staff training and development, dissemination of good practice

Conceptual – aims, purpose, delivery, coherence

Relational – staff: student relationships and partnerships

Feedback and future developments -10 mins

References

Garwe (2015) 'Student voice and quality enhancement in higher education.' *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 7(2), 385-399.

Healey, M., Bovill, C. and Jenkins, A. (2015) 'Students as partners in learning.' In: Lea, J. (ed.) *Enhancing learning and teaching in higher education: Engaging with dimensions of practice*. Maidenhead: Open University Press. Chapter 6, 141-172.

Healey, M., Flint, A., and Harrington, K. (2016) 'Students as Partners: Reflections on a Conceptual Model.' *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, 4(2), 1-13.

Naylor, L, Lay, Jack and Mattinson, Chris. *Capturing the student voice: creating more effective mechanisms for listening* The Journal of Educational Innovation, Partnership and Change, [Vol 3, No 2 \(2017\): Embedding the Culture of Engagement](#)

Thomas, L. (2012) *Building student engagement and belonging in higher education at a time of change: final report from the What works? Student retention & success programme*. York: HE Academy.

Acknowledgements

Dr Alexander Hensby, Jack Lay and Chris Mattinson