

## Student as Producer

research-engaged teaching, an institutional strategy

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## Key words for report

- student engagement; learning landscapes; curriculum development; research-engaged teaching

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### **Student as Producer is a Forever Project!!** (Member of Senior Management Team)

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## Executive summary

Student as Producer is a curriculum development project that has been ongoing at the University of Lincoln since 2007. The aim of the project has been to promote research-engaged teaching as the organising principle for teaching and learning across all subjects and all levels of taught provision at Lincoln. While there are many examples of research-engaged teaching in higher education what makes the curriculum distinctive at Lincoln is that research-engaged teaching is the default position for all teaching and learning at the University.

While Student as Producer has been under development at Lincoln since 2007 this report focuses on the period 2010-2013, when the University of Lincoln received funding, £200,000, from the Higher Education Academy to develop the programme. The main focus of this report is the embedding and implementation of Student as Producer at Lincoln, but as Student as Producer extends beyond Lincoln to involve other higher education providers the report will also pay attention to the external national and international impact of Student as Producer across the higher education sector.

Student as Producer was conceived during momentous times in the history of higher education in this country, including a massive increase in student fees and the withdrawal of public funding for teaching the Arts, Humanities and Social Science. For a brief moment in time English students were at the forefront of protests across Europe against the financialisation of higher education and the politics of austerity (Bailey and Freedman 2011). Throughout this period academics involved with Student as Producer have written publications that have provided a consistent and clear position against the notion of student as consumer (Boden and Epstein 2006) and the pedagogy of debt (Williams 2006).

### Research Methods

This evaluation has been conducted using a Theory of Change evaluation method (Hart et al., 2009). A key characteristic of the Theory of Change method is the way in which it seeks to develop an understanding between expectations and outcomes of those involved, including unexpected outcomes, as well as contextual features and the availability of resources that may influence the short term and long term impacts. The empirical aspect of this evaluation framework was developed at the beginning of the project with Prof Mick Healey and staff and students involved with Student as Producer ([http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/files/2010/11/Lincoln\\_evaluation\\_framework\\_v3.pdf](http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/files/2010/11/Lincoln_evaluation_framework_v3.pdf)).

This empirical framework has been substantiated by a conceptual understanding of higher education derived from the writings of academics at Lincoln involved with Student as Producer (Neary and Winn 2009, Neary 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Neary and Amsler 2012; Neary and Haggard 2011; Neary 2013; ). This conceptual framework is based on an engagement with the work of Ernest Boyer (1990, 1998) through the writings of Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) and other critical social theorists. This conceptual work emphasises the dysfunctional relationship between teaching and research that lies at the core of higher education, and how this dysfunctionality might be re-engineered to create a radical form of higher education based on a more democratic relationship between students and their universities.

### Key findings in this report are:

Student as Producer has delivered on all its main aims and objectives: establishing an institutional framework for research-engaged teaching across an English University, providing a model that can be adopted by other higher education providers, and has been part of establishing a national and international association for the promotion of research-engaged teaching in the UK, as well as creating an informal international network to support the ongoing development of Student as Producer. Student as Producer is fully embedded across the University, as a central component in University strategies, as a key factor in institutional quality protocols and procedures as a core aspect of curriculum design (see section 3.4 and 4-4.5 and 6).

Student as Producer has been at the forefront of promoting student involvement and engagement to the point where it has now become mainstream practice in British higher education institutions. It has provided a language and a framework for staff to engage with students on curriculum design and development as well as

collaborating around the production of research and Student as Producer has had a very considerable impact on higher education providers nationally and internationally.

There are high levels of engagement and support for Student as Producer among academic staff, within the University of Lincoln, with examples of experimental teaching and learning impacting on curriculum development across the University's schools and colleges. These findings are supported by a Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Institutional review in 2012 which commended the University's support for learning enhancements, much of which is based on the principles of Student as Producer, as well as recognising Student as Producer as an example of effective practice. There is high level of support and encouragement for Student as Producer amongst the Senior Management Team and other senior leaders at Lincoln, some of whom have been directly involved in its implementation and development (see section 5.3).

This reports shows evidence of high levels of support for research-engaged teaching and learning by students at Lincoln. Students see the benefits of skills learnt from participating in research-engaged teaching for their learning, for future employment prospects and for dealing with real life. There is some evidence that students are choosing to come to the University of Lincoln because of Student as Producer(see Section 5.2).

### **Challenges**

While Student as Producer has been successful in achieving its main aims and objectives as set out for the HEA funding, there are some challenges for the project. These include:

- Staff are involved in the development of practice and principles of Student as Producer, but need further support and professional development to enhance their academic practice in this area.
- There are good levels of awareness about Student as Producer among support staff, although some uncertainty as to the meaning of the concept.
- Student as Producer frames the notion of student engagement at Lincoln. However, there is some confusion as to the relationship between Student as Producer and Student Engagement.
- Student as Producer is not compulsory, rather it challenges and invites academics to consider the implications of research-engaged teaching on their academic practice and to design their teaching programmes accordingly. This message needs to be clearly communicated to staff and students.
- It is important that this radical position is maintained so as to provide an intelligent and critical response to the current government's policy for higher education.

Towards the end of this report there is a section which has a series of recommendations for dealing with these challenges and taking Student as Producer forward (see section 7).

After seven years in the making, there is no sign of project fatigue. Student as Producer remains as popular as it ever was at Lincoln, although there is a sense of disappointment among some staff that not more has been achieved, that the momentum has been lost, and that the project has become so embedded that it is no longer at the top of the University's agenda.

This report shows that the momentum has not been lost, and that there is still a strong commitment to Student as Producer at Lincoln. The University is planning to create a new Educational Development and Enhancement Unit to take Student as Producer forward across the university.

At the end of the report there is a framework for other institutions can put Student as Producer into practice. This section covers a number of areas under the headings: Idea, Evidence, Art and Language, Change –sublation, Students, Bureaucracy, Teachers, Learning Landscapes – teaching for complexity, Experiment and Unfinished. The point about the final heading: Unfinished, is that work of this kind of development work is never finished, and in order to maintain its theoretical and practical integrity Student as Producer must

continue to reinvent itself as yet another form of higher learning. Student as Producer is a recognition of higher education's critical impulse: 'Student as Producer and the University cannot be contained'.

# I. Background

Student as Producer did not emerge fully formed in 2010 at the time of the HEA funding but was based on work that was ongoing at the University since 2007.

The original idea for linking teaching and research at Lincoln had been to create an undergraduate degree by research. This was to be known as the 'Magna Carta Degree', with links to the concept of academic freedom and the Bologna Declaration 1999, which set out the need for a strong relationship between teaching and research as a fundamental principle for the modern European University.

Following extensive consultation across the University this idea proved to be unworkable, as it may have created a divisive two-tier degree system. Following this consultation the link between research and teaching was reconceived to create a framework for curriculum development that applied to all programmes across all levels and all subjects, within which research-engaged teaching would be the organising principle. This did not mean that all teaching and learning at Lincoln was to be research-engaged, but that research-engaged teaching was to be the default position.

Not all aspects of teaching and learning at Lincoln are based on the principles of research-engaged teaching, nor are all academics at Lincoln expected to agree with the assumptions on which Student as Producer is based; rather academics are challenged to consider the implications of Student as Producer for their own teaching and research activities (see section 3.4.1).

Student as Producer was grounded in work that was already going on across the sector in the area of research-based or inquiry-based learning, particularly work that had been funded as part of the Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) initiative, including:

- CETL-Applied Undergraduate Research Skills at Reading,
- the Centre for Inquiry based learning in Arts the Social Sciences at Sheffield (CILASS),
- The Reinvention Centre at Oxford Brookes and Warwick (The Dean of Teaching and Learning at Lincoln from 2007, Professor Mike Neary, had been the Director of the Reinvention Centre at Warwick 2004 -2007)  
and
- other CETLs, e.g., LearnHigher, which included the University of Lincoln as a participant.

Much of this work was inspired by, amongst others, the writings of Mick Healey and Alan Jenkins (2007, 2009).

An important problematic for these CETLs had been around the issue characterised as the imbalance between teaching and research (Boyer 1990, Boyer Commission 1998). Key to Student as Producer has been the concern to address this imbalance, with the aim of raising the status of teaching.

During the period 2010-2013 Student as Producer has been fully developed at Lincoln by working with students, academics, professional and support staff and senior managers to create a sense of ownership and awareness about the project across the University. This means promoting undergraduate research as a key component of curriculum design for all programmes and at all levels across the university. This model of teaching and learning is referred to as research-engaged: students learning through involvement in research and research-like forms of learning, where undergraduate research is produced in collaboration with other students and with academics as part of the curriculum and extra-curricular activity. Research-engaged teaching is a development of research-informed teaching, which focuses more narrowly on the research interests of the teacher. Research-engaged teaching is identified by educational research as an effective form of teaching in higher education (Kuh et al 2010).

A working definition of research-engaged teaching and learning is:

A fundamental principle of curriculum design whereby students learn primarily by engagement in real research projects, or projects which replicate the process of research in their discipline. Engagement is created through active collaboration amongst and between students and academics.

There is nothing unique about research-engaged teaching or academics collaborating with students around the production of knowledge and meaning. The distinctive nature about the work at Lincoln is that research-engaged teaching has been institutionalised at the level of the institution, so that it becomes the organisational principle around which all aspects of teaching and learning revolve. IN this case Student as Producer offers a model for change in the sector.

A key aspect of Student as Producer is that students are regarded as part of the research culture of the university, raising fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of higher education, 'the idea of the university' (Maclean 2006). The relationship between teaching and research is integral to debates about the future of higher education. As Angela Brew (2006) argues:

*'The relationship between teaching and research is intricately embedded within ideas about what universities do and what they are for. It is fundamental to what is understood as higher learning and to ideas about the nature of the academy. Understanding this relationship raises substantial questions about the roles and responsibilities of higher education institutions, about the nature of academic work, about the kinds of disciplinary knowledge that are developed and by whom, about the way teachers and students relate to each other, about how university spaces are arranged and used, indeed, it raises fundamental questions about the purposes of higher education' (Brew 2006: 3).*

This means teaching and research is not detached from other aspects of the student experience or student engagement; rather, the way in which the relationship between teaching and research is framed as an organising principle has a decisive impact on academic and student life in all of its manifestations.

## 2. Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the Student as Producer project has been to establish research-engaged teaching and learning as an institutional priority at the University of Lincoln. This means that research-engaged teaching and learning has become the dominant paradigm for all aspects of curriculum design and delivery, and the central pedagogical principle that informs other aspects of the University of Lincoln's strategic planning including teacher education, spaces for teaching and learning and technology for education. Research-engaged teaching and learning aims to connect research and teaching in ways that enable students to learn through active engagement in research processes and outcomes.

By engaging at the institutional level, this strategy is reinventing the university as a place where students become part of the academic project of the university, and producers of knowledge of real academic value, rather than passive consumers of information (Neary and Winn 2009). Furthermore, as a process that engages students in real world situations giving them real responsibility for learning, research-engaged teaching and learning enhances students' employability skills.

Although focused on one institution an important aspect of this project is its impact at the sector level. As noted in section 1, the project has engaged with other Higher Education Institutions through network connections as well as with key individuals at the local, national and international level. The project originally built on the work of a number of Centres of Excellence for Teaching and Learning involved in the development of research-engaged teaching and learning in terms of the pedagogic knowledge and rationales that they have developed. Student as Producer has worked to consolidate already existing networks and create a national association of research-engaged teaching and learning as well as an informal international network of academics and students committed to the notion of Student as Producer.

Taken together these activities have provided the basis for three key developments:

- A strategic framework for research-engaged teaching at the institutional level that can be adopted or customised by other institutions;
- A fully operationalised model for implementing research-engaged teaching across a Higher Education Institution;
- A national and international network for the development of research-engaged teaching and learning.

## 3. Project Methodology - Implementation

### 3.1 Project Methodology: organic and gentle: no 'Big Bang'

Student as Producer has been operating as a working programme since the second year of operation, 2011-2012, of the HEA funding. The first year 2010-2011 was spent putting the framework in place by which the project could be operationalised. There are further ongoing plans for development and implementation of the project over the forthcoming period (see Teaching and Learning Plan 2011-2016, Digital Education Plan and Student Engagement Strategy). Student as Producer has not been initiated in one 'big-bang' but is part of a 'gentle' organic and developmental process of institutional transformation. The effects and impact of Student as Producer will become apparent over the medium to long term, although some short-term benefits are very clear.

This process of implementation has involved colleagues working at all levels in the Faculties (now Colleges) as well as service and support departments, including the library. Externally, links were made with local colleges, e.g., North Lyndsey College, nationally, e.g., the University of Hertfordshire and the University of the West of Scotland, and Macquarie University in Australia.

The student voice and presence has been key to the working of Student as Producer. Students have been engaged as ambassadors for the project: *Student Producers* and as members of the Project Management Group. One of the significant features of Student as Producer has been the way in which student engagement has emerged as a key feature of the project.

#### Year 1 (2010 - 2011)

The first six months was an initiation process, preparing the business and academic case. This involved setting up the institutional team for delivery, including a Project Management Group reporting directly to the University's Teaching and Learning Committee and Academic Board. Links were established with other key committees and connections with institutional strategic priorities. This period saw the establishment of a Steering Committee made up of colleagues from other Universities with experience of research-engaged teaching: the University of Warwick, the University of Reading, the University of Sheffield, Bishop Grosseteste University as well as Macquarie University in Australia.

Key aspects of the initiation phase were:

- Working closely with Faculties (now Colleges) and students through appropriate committees and directly with Principal Teaching Fellows;
- Developing relationships with key external agencies, including HEA, JISC, HEFCE and the QAA;
- Reviewing existing programmes to gauge current research-engaged teaching activities and identifying activities that already involve undergraduate students in research and research-like activity;
- Engaging with external members of the Steering Group through online meetings and with other external partners, including universities, schools and colleges.

The initiation included:

- Running staff training sessions on research-engaged teaching and learning;
- Communicating with the University and externally through the University's in-house magazine, community radio and the project website;
- Creating new quality assurance documentation to support validation of new and re-branded programmes;

- Holding an internal Teaching and Learning Conference at the end of the academic year with the theme of research-engaged teaching.

## **Year 2 (2011 - 2012)**

The main focus of the second year was the implementation process. Work included:

- Ongoing staff training through workshops;
- Continuing to review and develop existing programmes and to establish new programmes through revalidation and validation;
- Communicating messages across the University of Lincoln and the sector through press, TV, print media and online;
- Continuing to engage directly with students through the Student Union and directly with student representatives and recruiting students as Student Producers;
- Developing Quality and Standards procedures, set against sector measures such as the Quality Assurance Framework and QAA benchmarks.

## **Year 3 (2012 - 2013)**

The aim of the third year was to consolidate and sustain Student as Producer across the University, informed by ongoing reviews of the project as well as research and development.

Dissemination of Student as Producer continued through:

- Workshops, internal and external across the sector e.g. masterclasses at the University of the West of England in 2011 and 2012 and at Liverpool John Moores University in 2014;
- Conference presentations and publications, e.g. at the HEA conference at Nottingham in 2011
- International conferences hosted by the University of Lincoln in 2013 and a Teaching and Learning Festival at Lincoln in 2012;
- Development of national and international networks, for example, the British Conference for Undergraduate Research and the Australian Conference for Undergraduate Research;
- Working closely as consultants with other Higher Education providers, e.g. the University of Hertfordshire on promoting research-engaged teaching in the Business School.

### **3.2 Principles for Student as Producer**

At the start of the project there was a move away from pilot programmes referred to in the funding application. These pilot programmes were replaced by the desire to implement Student as Producer across all programmes. In order for this full-scale implementation to take place there was a need for a series of principles that could be applied across all programmes at all levels.

These key principles were developed by work done through the Project Management Group and relevant university committees. These principles proved to be very important in helping staff and students understand and make very concrete the real nature and purpose of Student as Producer.

There are 8 key principles:

1. Discovery: Student as Producer;
2. Technology in Teaching: Digital Scholarship;
3. Space and Spatiality: Learning Landscapes in Higher Education;
4. Assessment: Active Learners in Communities of Practice;
5. Research and Evaluation: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning;
6. Student Voice: Diversity, Difference and Dissensus;
7. Support for research-based teaching through expert engagement with information resources;
8. Creating the Future: Employability, Enterprise, Beyond Employability and Postgraduate study.

These 8 principles will be discussed in more detail in the following subsections:

### 3.2.1 Discovery: Student as Producer

New programmes or modules should be presented in a discovery mode, which in Higher Education is usually characterised as one of the following 3 approaches to learning:

#### i. Problem – based learning (PBL)

A student-centred approach where students collaboratively solve problems and reflect on their experiences. Characteristics of PBL are:

- Learning is driven by challenging, open-ended problems;
- Students work in small collaborative groups;
- Teachers extend their role to become facilitators of learning;
- Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their group and organise and direct the learning process with support from a tutor or instructor;
- Library staff will provide support to ensure effective use of information resources by students and staff.

#### ii. Enquiry – based learning (EBL)

EBL describes an environment in which learning is driven by a process of enquiry owned by the student:

- Starting with a ‘scenario’ and with the guidance of a facilitator, students identify their own issues and questions;
- Students examine the resources they need to research the topic, thereby acquiring the requisite knowledge. Knowledge so gained is more readily retained because it has been acquired by experience and in relation to a real problem.

#### iii. Research – based learning (RBL)

Research-based learning is an approach to programme design and implementation in which students have the opportunity to make intellectual and practical connections between the content and skills that characterise their programmes, and the research approaches and frontiers of the underlying disciplines. This includes:

- Systematic introduction of disciplinary related research into the course content and teaching;
- Inclusion of research methodology courses in the undergraduate programme;
- Design of learning activities based on authentic research problems in the public domain that involve engagement with the wider community;
- Access to support and instruction in the use of information resources.

### 3.2.2 Technology in Teaching: Digital Scholarship

Research-engaged teaching implies a change in the relationship between tutor and student. This changed relationship is facilitated by on-line technologies, and is evident in various web-based activities, for example, commons-based peer-production ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commons-based\\_peer\\_production](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commons-based_peer_production)), and Personal Learning Environments based on user choice of available tools to complete educational tasks <http://zope.cetis.ac.uk/members/ple>.

The changing relationship between tutor and student and the emergence of the concept of Digital Scholarship can be facilitated by on-line technologies. Tutors can demonstrate their use of technologies in teaching by the ways in which they use the Blackboard VLE at Lincoln and other web-based technologies, enabling digitalised scholarship and collaboration between tutors and students. These might include the use of online tutorials, and the embedding of information and resource learning objects in the teaching process.

Research-engaged teaching and learning is not dependent on technology, but, rather, is predicated on the importance of developing effective working relationships between students and teachers. In this context technology is regarded as an enabler rather than an essential ingredient of the teaching and learning process, facilitating an engaging intellectual relationship between students and staff.

### **3.2.3 Space and Spatiality: Learning Landscapes in Higher Education**

The use of space and spatiality in teaching is recognised as an important aspect of the higher education learning landscape (Dugdale 2009, Neary et al 2010). In programme and module planning tutors can show how they intend to use space in their teaching practice so as to:

- Facilitate participation and collaboration;
- Engage with the community outside of the campus;
- Make use of formal and informal spaces;
- Ensure their teaching is accessible for students with diverse needs;
- Engage with spaces in the Library and elsewhere on and off campus to deliver enhanced teaching experiences.

### **3.2.4 Assessment: Active Learners in Communities of Practice**

Tutors should show the ways in which their assessments reflect the discovery mode of teaching and learning, taking account of learning development support provided by the Library, so as to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their research skills, techniques, findings, outcomes and outputs.

The assessments should be designed to engage students so that they make sense of academic assessment and marking criteria, and by involving them in the process of designing assessments as well as in marking through peer assessment, group assessment and self-assessment, as well as feedback (<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/matrix.>)

Research-engaged teaching is inherently practice-based. Practice – based subjects should demonstrate the ways in which research is incorporated into their assessment criteria.

### **3.2.5 Research and Evaluation: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**

Evaluation of teaching practices includes student feedback, but can go beyond the collection of feedback by involving staff and students in a programme of pedagogical research into their own learning and teaching experiences.

A key aspect of research-engaged teaching is that it is informed by pedagogical research into the effectiveness of this form of teaching and learning ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scholarship\\_of\\_Teaching\\_and\\_Learning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scholarship_of_Teaching_and_Learning)).

Tutors should demonstrate the way in which they intend to research their research-engaged teaching activities, based on research methods and methodologies.

Tutors should demonstrate the way in which this research will be disseminated across the University of Lincoln and the sector so as to achieve maximum impact. This can include ways in which this work can be used to apply for external funding.

### **3.2.6 Student Voice: Diversity, Difference and Dissensus**

The issue of student leadership is becoming increasingly important in the Higher Education sector. The issue is related to policy imperatives to develop a new style of politics and citizen engagement within which the student voice is not only heard but amplified.

The emphasis on the Student Voice reflects the ways in which Student as Producer is dedicated to developing a community of learners and teachers which is respectful of diversity and difference, allowing for the space of dissensus and disagreement, driven by engaged and participatory pedagogies.

Programmes should identify specific ways to amplify the student voice, and to develop ways of working with students by giving them responsibility for the management and delivery of their own learning. Programmes should also demonstrate ways in which students might support the learning of other students.

### **3.2.7 Support for Research-Based Teaching and Learning through Expert Engagement with Information Resources**

Programmes should seek to engage with the University Library service to integrate the development of skills in and the use of information resources in their programmes. Academic Subject Librarians are trained and equipped to work with academics to support this process.

### **3.2.8 Creating the Future: Employability, Enterprise, Beyond Employability, Postgraduate study**

Student as Producer retains a clear focus on the experience of students when they leave the university. Student as Producer supports the career preparation and aspirations of students, in the form of a traditional route into graduate jobs and the professions, creating a new start business, finding employment within the growing third sector or going on to further study.

Student as Producer maintains that research-engaged teaching and learning is more likely to result in graduates who are better prepared to cope with a globalised labour market, which is characterised by ever-changing technology and working practices which include:

- Project working;
- Networking & collaboration;
- Judgement by results;
- Distance working;
- Less formal anything;
- Enlist support rather than command and conquer.

Research-engaged teaching can provide the skills and qualities that will be useful to students when they leave the University to prepare them for a world of uncertainty and complexity, where they need to find forms of existing and living outside of the traditional formats, and in ways that lie beyond what a mainstream education might normally prepare them for (Barnett 2000, Brew 2006).

Wrapped around all of this a more fundamental question at the heart of Student as Producer: it asks academics to address the question how do their programmes enable students to see themselves as subjects rather than objects of history and to recognise themselves in a world of their own design (Debord 1994).

## **3.3 Self-assessment exercise**

In early 2011, towards the end of the first year of the project, a self-assessment exercise was conducted across all Schools in the institution, based on the key principles identified above. Each School was asked to identify existing examples from their programmes where each of the eight key principles of Student as Producer was met, describe planned future developments in each area, and provide a numeric rating of how well the principles were embedded. The purpose of the exercise was two-fold: firstly to provide useful benchmarking information to the Project Management Group on existing good practice and areas for improvement, and secondly to promote discussion and reflection with disciplinary teams.

Response to the survey was excellent, with around 90% of Schools contributing to the exercise, and enabled a rich picture of activity across the institution.

Originally this was intended to be a yearly exercise, providing a record of continuous development and reflection. However, subsequent iterations of the self-assessment report were met with noticeably lower levels of enthusiasm, and a feeling from Heads of School that this was simply one more reporting requirement. Since self-reporting of the impact of Student as Producer has been incorporated into standard annual programme monitoring processes (see section 3.4.1), it was agreed that the full self-assessment was no longer required.

### 3.4 Strategic Framework

A core aim of Student as Producer has been to establish a strategic framework through which Student as Producer could be embedded and operationalised across the whole institution. This was established across the university by the creation of a range of infrastructural platforms. These platforms have been established through debate and discussion within Schools, Colleges, the Student Union and by working through the University's Committee structures over the first year of implementation. These infrastructural platforms are: Bureaucracy, Student Engagement, Teacher Education, Learning Landscapes in Higher Education, Technologies for Education, and by providing an intellectual framework to consider the concept of Student as Producer through a series of ideas and provocations for critical debate.

#### 3.4.1 Redrafting QAA protocols in the way of Student as Producer

Student as Producer is not compulsory. Academics are invited to consider the implications of research-engaged teaching for their own academic practice. This is done through the way in which the QAA protocols have been redrafted in the way of Student as Producer. This radicalising of bureaucratic structures at Lincoln is an organic process intended to engage administrative staff, academics and students in debate about Student as Producer (Winn and Lockwood 2013). These procedures include:

- External Examiner Reports;
- Annual Monitoring Reports;
- Subject Committees;
- Periodic Academic Reviews;
- Validations and revalidations.

During the process of programme (re)validation academics are asked to show ways in which the courses will include the 8 principles: research-engaged teaching, consider issues of space and spatiality in their teaching practice, describe how they will write up their teaching as a scholarly research project, illustrate the ways in which they will use appropriate web technologies, demonstrate the extent to which students are involved in the design and delivery of programs and courses, and show how the course enables students to see themselves having a role in creating their own future, in terms of employment, and by making a progressive contribution to society.

External examiners are asked a series of questions relating to Student as Producer on the External Examiner Reports forms, e.g., the impact of research-engaged teaching on the student learning experience.

Periodic Academic Reviews offer a planned cyclical process whereby Student as Producer is considered by staff and academics for all programmes across the University.

Each year programme staff are asked to set out as part of their Annual Monitoring Report the extent to which Student as Producer is active across all courses and subject areas. These reports are reviewed by central university committees creating a sense of collective intellectual endeavour (Neary and Saunders 2010).

At the heart of this bureaucratic process is the attempt by Student as Producer to reclaim the concept of bureaucracy as an ethical and moral framework for organisations. In this case, Student as Producer, following the work of the German Sociologist, Max Weber, seeks to recover the practice of bureaucracy as a progressive moral and ethical organisational principle grounded in academic values, against the populist networked amoral practices of an overly determined 'business ontology' (Fisher 2009, Kreiss et al 2011).

#### 3.4.2 Student Engagement: students producing the University of Lincoln

Drawing on the principles of Student as Producer, namely around student voice, the University has increased the focus on and investment in developing student engagement in assuring and enhancing the quality of the student experience. This has been approached as an extension of the HEA funded Student as Producer project to empower students as producers of the wider university as well as of their individual learning and research experience.

To facilitate this process the post of Student Engagement Officer was recruited to in July 2012 with a view to stimulating debate on the best approaches to engaging students in this way. The University's first Student Engagement Strategy (SES) was developed shortly after and approved by a meeting of the Academic Board. The strategy focussed on developing a range of exemplar opportunities for students to engage in key processes, such as staff recruitment and programme approval, and on supporting Schools and professional support departments to consider how they could open up their evaluation, planning and development activity to student input.

In the period since work began on implementing the SES much progress has been made. In terms of developing institutional exemplar opportunities there are now students as full members of about 90 staff recruitment panels per year and all programme validation and revalidation panels. There are also now more student representative seats on university committees than ever before and half of the Executive Board has been allocated a student mentor to shadow and consult with on the 'lived' student experience. This has been complemented by a growing range of events bringing students and staff together to discuss how best to develop teaching, learning and the wider student experience such as the Students' Union's annual Staff and Student Conference and Vice-Chancellor's Receptions for Student Reps – the outputs of which feed into quality enhancement projects.

Following the development of exemplar opportunities to demonstrate the value of engaging students in this way each of the Schools and professional support departments has nominated a colleague to become a Student Engagement Champion and consider their own approach to engaging students. The focus of this engagement is on improving the quality of the education provision or service offered by Schools and support departments, respectively. The thinking of the department together with reflections on engagement to date is captured in departmental student engagement plans which all Schools and professional support departments have been asked to develop. An important feature of this approach has been to include all professional support departments in the work and recognise that everybody at the University has a role to play in creating a supportive learning environment and student experience.

Examples of activity in 2013-14 include:

The Secretariat team working with International Students Society to develop new approaches to supporting international students in understanding student contention processes and making them as accessible as possible.

The School of Psychology adding students to their Undergraduate Programme Review Group and working in partnership to redevelop the curriculum and incorporate best practice as identified by students and staff together.

The School of Social and Political Sciences working with students to redevelop their Subject Committee meetings so that they become more productive, focused and discursive for both staff and students. This is drawing on an innovative model developed by the School of Sport and Exercise Science's Student Engagement Champion and shared through the Champions' Network.

The Library team undertaking a major evaluation of access to electronic resources after this was flagged as an area of concern by students engaged in their permanent Library Student Advisory Group. Students not only inform this evaluation but also steer it and help develop solutions.

There are 37 Student Engagement Champions across 33 areas (some job-share the role) reflecting the critical mass of time and effort now invested in working in new ways with students at Lincoln. Each school and professional support department approaches this work in a different way; however they are each proactively working with students to 'produce' the future of their education or service provision. The work has also led to organisational changes in several departments such as the creation of a new student focused team in the Finance Department and the introduction of a Senior Academic Subject Librarian post in the Library to lead

on student engagement. Where changes are not so explicit, it is still noticeable that revised job descriptions sometimes include a reference to student engagement.

The University has recently affirmed the activity encouraged by the Student Engagement Strategy as a key driver for enhancing the quality of teaching, learning and the wider student experience by investing in three additional support roles to create a Student Engagement Team. This team continues to drive the Student Engagement Strategy based on the principles outlined through Student as Producer together with the network of Student Engagement Champions and the Students' Union.

This work will continue to feature a mix of central and local initiatives that explore new ways of challenging organisational norms and engaging students. Collectively this mass of activity and enthusiasm is changing the culture of the institution to a community that is accepting of diversity, difference and dissensus; the desired attributes of Student as Producer.

Student Engagement at Lincoln was recognised as an area of good practice by the QAA 2012 institutional review (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/ImprovingHigherEducation/GoodPractice/Documents/GPKB-case-study-Lincoln-2.pdf>)

### 3.4.3 Teacher Education and Support

The University now requires that all teachers and those involved with supporting teaching will have PGCE Higher Education Teaching Qualifications or HEA fellowship recognition. This policy was decided on following extensive consultation with staff and was agreed before the recommendations of the Browne Review (2010). It is expected that 100% of academic staff at Lincoln will have or be working towards a teaching qualification or HEA recognition by 2016. These teaching programmes are not just about achieving qualifications or professional recognition but provide the space for academics to discuss and critically reflect on their teaching practice as well as develop critical and creative forms of pedagogic practice.

As an academic working on the PGCE programme explains this is what this looks like in practice:

#### Academic 1

One of the projects looked for ways to connect the university with the world outside of the campus. Staff and students wanted to demolish all of the commercial space on the opposite side of the Brayford and build a public space, with a very wide bridge, like an amphitheatre for public speaking. The bridge would have a permanent warm area for homeless people, not to fix them as homeless, but to recognise them as a legitimate community. One of the academics involved, a person not prone to emotion, said she nearly cried at the quality of the student work. And how utopian it was, not at all consumerist.

Teacher education support includes the creation of an informal space for teachers to talk freely about teaching and learning outside of the normal institutional procedures. This space, known as the Teaching Academy, is run by colleagues in the Centre for Educational Research and Development, operating as a way of learning from each other about theories and pedagogies and as a place to discuss matters of concern, e.g., immigration rules for international students. An important principle of the Teaching Academy is that it is to be owned by all of those who are involved in its operation. While the aims of the Teaching Academy have yet to be fully realised it is seen as an important resource across the University:

'By creating autonomous spaces for the public exploration of institutional practices and policies within the university, the Teaching Academy aspires to find ways of helping academic educators and their students to find their voice in these processes, and to be heard. Just as in decision-making, so as in discourse – understanding what teaching and learning mean, and why they matter, to whom and for what, must be defined through practice and dialogue between educators, students, publics and institutions. Presently, in the UK particularly but increasingly globally, there is a powerful hegemony of externally-produced discourses of "teaching and learning" which often constrains possibilities for alternative conceptions to flourish. The Teaching Academy will seek ways to cultivate and encourage the articulation of such alternatives; in particular those that recognise the deep subjective and social importance of teaching, the significance of higher education to individual and collective development, and the beauty of learning and inquiry as arts, sciences and crafts' (Amsler <http://teachingacademy.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/2012/12/09/the-teaching-academys-first-steps/>).

The Teaching Academy is still a work in progress, but can play an important role as a site for critical reflection about pedagogic practice, as an academic involved with the Academy explains:

#### Academic 1

The Teaching Academy has provided the space to think about teaching not just as a set of techniques, but as a practice with its own scholarly history and practice. Some academics seem to have an over-determined attitude where they talk about the impossibility of doing different stuff, even before they have tried. I am trying to get them to think about this more and to try different things so they can see it is possible to do experimental stuff with a bit of effort.

This academic makes clear links between the Teaching Academy and Student as Producer:

#### Academic 1

Student as Producer has given people a licence to develop challenging practices and through the work of Walter Benjamin and other work associated with critical pedagogy and popular education to radicalise their practices around the notions of productivity and creativity.

I understand a lot of work was done through committees in getting this stuff to be taken on by the university, setting up structures and the normative context. I get the sense that there are still academics on the PGCE who don't get it, and if not critically minded tend to blag it a bit. I would like to see more cultural work across the university to promote and extend this. More in public, as a political intellectual idea; but you know, even if you don't take on the Walter Benjamin bit, Student as Producer is grounded in some pretty basic ideas about what constitutes effective teaching. What is very clear is that students want to do more of this and academics want to do more of this.

Future plans for the support of Teacher Education at Lincoln are based firmly on principles of Student as Producer. This is very apparent from a recent paper setting out the future direction of support for teaching and learning at Lincoln:

#### Enhancing Education at the University of Lincoln, paper to Education Committee January 2014

While the drivers for change...may be regarded as essentially pragmatic, it needs to be stated with some vigour at the outset that this does not mean that in proposing a new structure for integrating and strengthening educational enhancement, student engagement and academic staff development that all considerations of educational philosophy have been jettisoned. On the contrary, this proposal seeks to build upon the foundations of our existing strategies, which are underpinned by sound pedagogical theory and practice. Student as Producer is central to this and in many ways this outline proposal is intended to build further upon the achievements of this central organising principle of the University's educational delivery. To put it another way, this proposal is the next logical step in the development of Student as Producer since it brings together all those elements of support that will help promote and support collaboration between staff and students that enable us not only to co-create knowledge but also to co-create, develop and improve our University.

#### 3.4.4 Learning Landscapes at Lincoln

Student as Producer is not only about curriculum design but includes an awareness of the importance of the learning and teaching environment.

In 2008-2010 Lincoln took the lead on a HEFCE funded research project into Learning Landscapes in Higher Education. The research looked at effective learning space design, with a particular interest in spaces that promoted research-engaged teaching (Neary and Saunders 2011). Learning Landscapes in higher education is part of the University of Lincoln's Masterplan (<https://learninglandscapes.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/>).

The implementation of Student as Producer through the Estates' strategy is facilitated by meetings of a Learning Landscapes Working Group, chaired by the Dean of Teaching, with members from across the university, including students. The Estates' strategy is enhanced by setting up workshops with academics and students to generate innovative thinking for classroom design. All of this is sustained by an ongoing cycle of reviewing existing facilities.

The Estates department at Lincoln are using Student as Producer as a framework to articulate classroom design, as a Space Manager explains:

#### Space Manager

Student as Producer is a key design principle for our learning and teaching spaces. One of the main issues is providing places for students to self-organise their own learning spatially. This is evident in the classrooms we have refurbished which are designed for students to succeed without an academic in the room, but will be further enhanced through an academic presence. More than that, the rooms are designed so that they can be transformed into different sorts of learning environments quickly by staff and students. This is possible because of the mobility and multi-functionality of the furniture, especially the chairs and writing surfaces, to create a liquid-like fluid and dynamic environment. A lot of this work has been done with students, starting with the staff-student conference in 2012, when the students participating in design workshops confirmed the work that was done on the Learning Landscapes in Higher Education project (2008-2010). The Learning Landscapes in Higher Education project argued for rooms that expressed participatory learning pedagogies in their design: non-hierarchical, dynamic, complex, democratic spaces: a sort of classroom without walls or barriers between the teacher and the student, designed for the production of knowledge and meaning, rather than for filling students with information.

### 3.4.5 Technologies for Education

From 2009 staff at the Centre for Educational Research and Development initiated a programme of work utilising the skills of students as computer developers to produce useful technologies for research and teaching at Lincoln. These projects were funded by JISC to the amount of £600k. These projects were supported by the University through the consolidation of this work into the LNCD (Incd.org) project in collaboration with the Library and ICT, with funding for student interns and funds for research and development. This was written up as case study for JISC

([http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/topics/openeducation/JISC\\_LincolnsCaseStudy.pdf](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/topics/openeducation/JISC_LincolnsCaseStudy.pdf)) and formed the basis for a number of peer review articles and book chapters making a link between the concept of 'hacking' and Student as Producer. JISC adopted the model of using students as developers and the slogan Student as Producer for a funding programme for students to develop education technologies across the higher education sector. The focus of this work at Lincoln was on individual projects and did not impact at the strategic level of the university. The non-strategic nature of this work has now been resolved through the implementation of the University's Digital Education Strategy, which incorporates lessons learnt during this period as part of the implementation plan. Key work areas planned for the new Digital Education Strategy involve setting up an interdisciplinary Masters in Research on 'hacking the university', a research project looking into alternatives to lectures through the re-imagining of pedagogical time and space, as well as educational programmes for students and academics to enhance their digital literacy. This work is being consolidated at a strategic level through a steering committee reporting to the University's Education committee, chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Teaching Quality and the Student Experience. In the meantime Computer Services have continued to employ students as developers and as support staff for students and academics with very positive results.

The progress made by involving students is confirmed by a senior manager:

#### Senior Manager

Student as Producer has given both students and staff permission to break through the traditional boundaries between service departments and students to explore how students and staff can collaborate in developing the teaching and learning environment. Staff within ICT have taken this to heart so that the default method of working is collaboration with students. It has become much more than simply providing work experience, including students at the core of our work directly informs the development of the ICT service and staff believe in the value of collaboration with students and the benefits this can provide.

### 3.4.6 Intellectual framework for critical debate: 'the idea of the University'

Student as Producer challenges, provokes and invites academics to get involved in debates around the complexity of links between teaching, learning and research in higher education. These debates are contextualised around the meaning and purpose of higher education: 'the idea of the University'.

Student as Producer is based on the understanding that research and teaching have become disengaged in ways that are detrimental to academic and student life (Boyer 1990, Boyer Commission 1998). Student as Producer is not simply about teaching and learning, but asks fundamental questions about the nature and purpose of higher education: promoting 'the idea of the university' as a radical pedagogical project. Student as Producer is derived from a critique of 'academic capitalism' (Slaughter and Rhoades 2006) and is an act of resistance to the concept of student as consumer (Boden and Epstein 2006) and the pedagogy of debt (Williams 2006). At the forefront of this debate about the idea of the university is that higher education is a significant political as well as economic project.

To promote the re-engineering of the relationship between teaching and research Student as Producer returns to the radical history of the modern university, with reference to Wilhelm von Humboldt's University of Berlin in 1810 and the student protests of 1968. Humboldt's plan was to establish 'the idea of the university' as a progressive political, liberal humanist project, and the basis of civilising the population as part

of the process of building the emerging nation-state. This would be done by connecting teaching and research in a programme to promote the expansive creation of new knowledge, so that the university becomes the highest level of consciousness of liberal society.

1968 was a powerful example of student engagement, with students at the heart of a major political event, with significant consequences for the future of higher education, including the democratising of university life and impact on curriculum development, e.g., the idea that students are capable of carrying out research through their own independent projects. An important aspect of this event was the demystification by students of the elite practice of the production of knowledge with 'research becoming something that anyone can do' (Ross 2002).

The radicality of Student as Producer is further underlined by its affinity with the writings of Walter Benjamin, notably 'Author as Producer' (1934), in which Benjamin addressed the question to the Society into the Study of Fascism in Paris 'how do radical intellectuals act in a moment of crisis?' Following Brecht and the Russian Constructivists, Benjamin argued that progressive social revolution depends on the transformation of the social relations of capitalist production, and for those who are normally regarded as objects of history to see themselves as subjects of history, as teachers, writers and performers, rather than students, readers and spectators, and to be able to recognise themselves in a social world of their own design.

Not all academics at Lincoln are revolutionary Marxists, nor do they all concur with the political philosophy on which Student as Producer is constructed. However, many academics have sought to implement Student as Producer by reinterpreting it through their own subject disciplinary customs and traditions at the level of their own teaching practice; and at an organisational level by customising Student as Producer to fit the culture of their particular School, Department, Faculty or College. Student as Producer has come to have an intellectual life of its own. This is an important aspect of its success: asking academics to think about the conceptual and practical complexities of Student as Producer in ways that fit with their own teaching philosophies. What connects all of this practice is the attempt to infuse an approach to teaching and learning with the dynamic sense of enquiry and experimentation that applies to research activity; recognising that research, by its very nature, is an inherently subversive activity (Kuhn 1962, Neary 2012).

Academics involved with Student as Producer have published peer-reviewed articles, as well as book chapter and books expanding on the theoretical underpinnings of Student as Producer (Neary 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Neary and Amsler 2012; Neary and Hagyard 2011; Neary 2013; Neary 2014). This work emphasises the dysfunctional relationship between teaching and research that lies at the core of higher education, and how this dysfunctionality might be re-engineered to create a form of radical form of higher education based on a more democratic relationship between students and their universities. Work is now beginning to be done by academics and students outside of Lincoln which deals with Student as Producer as a substantive intervention in the debates about higher education (EliSS 2013).

## 4. Outputs and Findings

### 4.1 Undergraduate Research Opportunity Scheme (UROS) and the Fund for Educational Development (FED)

#### 4.1.1 Fund for Educational Development (FED)

The University of Lincoln has a long history of dedicated funding to support innovation in curriculum design and delivery. From 2003 to 2009 a significant part of the university's central funding for teaching quality enhancement was allocated to an internal teaching fellowship scheme, which granted project funding to small projects in recognition of excellence in teaching and learning.

With the end of ring-fenced funding through the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund, the Student as Producer initiative and the HEA grant proved timely in enabling funding for teaching and learning projects that could directly contribute to the implementation of Student as Producer.

For each of the first two years of the project, funding was allocated to support five projects. Project bids were invited and then reviewed by a panel against published criteria, relating directly to the project objectives.

There are several examples of FED projects resulting in a significant change in practice within schools and across the institution. For example, the School of Psychology Student Conference was supported through FED in 2012, as a whole School event involving students across all three undergraduate levels. The event was so successful that it is now an established annual event, and is described by the School as one of the highlights of the year.

Another FED project within the College of Social Sciences aimed to explore student ways of promoting student engagement in subject committee meetings, allowing students more say both in setting the agenda and also in developing a more collaborative workshop-style approach to the running of meetings. Lessons learnt from this project have had a significant impact across the institution, with several university committees now adopting formats which encourage more open and in-depth discussion of key issues identified by students. Outcomes from this project have also been shared externally at the Researching, Advancing and Inspiring Student Engagement conference <http://raise-network.ning.com/>

Full details of all FED projects are on the project website at <http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/funding/>.

#### **4.1.2 Undergraduate Research Opportunities Scheme (UROS)**

The idea of creating a bursary scheme to allow undergraduate students to participate in university research projects was first developed as part of the University's learning and teaching action plan in 2006, aiming to meet the HEFCE objective of promoting 'teaching informed and enriched by research'. The UROS scheme was modelled on similar research bursary schemes that had been set up elsewhere, for example at Imperial College and the University of Warwick.

After a successful pilot in 2007, around 30 bursaries of £1500 were awarded in 2008, allowing undergraduate students the opportunity to work alongside a member of staff on a genuine research project over the summer period. The scheme was hugely popular and seen as a great success, with many students going on to present findings of their projects at national and international conferences, and have articles published in peer-reviewed journals.

Student as Producer funding from the HEA allowed the UROS scheme to be pursued for each of the first two years of the project, and following its success, further funding has now been secured to guarantee its continuation.

Research on the impact of UROS (Hagyard and Watling 2012) confirmed the significant impact of the UROS experience on students, in terms of their understanding of the discipline and the development of research skills. Students also commented on the benefits of working collaboratively with staff, with evidence of a shift in their conception of their role as a student. Across the sector there is also evidence that participation in research schemes has a positive effect on the likelihood of progression for postgraduate programmes (Hampton-Reeves 2013).

However, while acknowledging the success of the UROS scheme, evaluation also concluded that the benefits of collaborative research projects should be extended to all students, not simply the few who are able to apply for bursary schemes. As a result, Student as Producer attempts to 'mainstream' undergraduate research by using UROS as a template for collaborative research within the curriculum, in a way that does not require dedicated funding.

The UROS scheme continues, and plays an important role in contributing to the 'buzz' around undergraduate research, but it is only one aspect of a co-ordinated drive to embed research in the curriculum. While some Schools have incorporated the notion of staff-student research into the curriculum, others have provided

their own funds or sought alternative funding, alongside UROS, to develop a programme of research within the School.

Full details of all UROS schemes are available from the project website <http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/funding/>.

#### **4.2 Student as Producer Festival of Teaching and Learning 2012**

The University held a Festival of Teaching and Learning on the 31st of March, 2012. The purpose of this event was to showcase for academics, students and professional services and support staff, the high quality of teaching and learning that is a feature of the Lincoln student experience. The Festival was designed to cause minimum disruption to existing teaching timetables, while providing maximum exposure for the effective teaching and learning activities across the university. This was not a Festival to which people were invited simply to attend set-piece events; rather, it was a day in which colleagues and students were invited to participate, i.e., to organise their everyday teaching and learning practices in ways that highlight the principles of Student as Producer and to share these practices to each other. An important part of the day was to invite professional services and support staff from across the university to take part in classes, labs, demonstrations, lectures and seminars.

Photographs from the Festival of Teaching and Learning can be seen at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/studentasproducer/>.

The Festival Timetable, showing the extent of activity across the University, can be viewed at <http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/events/festival-timetable-2012/>.

The final part of the day featured a keynote presentation by Dr Monica McLean, from the School of Education, University of Nottingham, and author of 'Pedagogy and the University: Critical Theory and Practice', published by Continuum in 2008. The subject of the talk was 'Student as Producer and the Public Sphere'. The audience was a mix of students and teachers as well as colleagues from other professional and support services (Link to keynote presentation - <http://goo.gl/e9yBTA>).

#### **4.3 Student as Producer Conference 2013**

The Student as Producer Conference was held at the University of Lincoln from 26th- 27th June 2013. The event marked the end of the funded period of the Student as Producer project and represented a significant component of the project's dissemination plan: intended to showcase project activities and outcomes, as well as sharing the experiences of colleagues nationally and internationally who are engaged in similar work. The event was designed to serve the dual function of an internal teaching and learning event as well as a forum for sector-wide debate and sharing of practice (<http://saspcnf13.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/> and blog #saspcnf - <http://saspcnf13.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/live-blog/>).

The themes for the conference were:

- Curriculum design to embed discovery-led, research-based approaches to learning;
- Enhancing student engagement through meaningful participation in quality processes;
- Conceptual interpretations of student engagement;
- Students as Producers of the world they will live in: social justice and social enterprise;
- Organisational change to re-engineer the relationship between students and staff;
- Recovering the meaning and purpose of higher education: 'the idea of the University'.

A call for papers was issued in December 2012, with a deadline of 18 February 2013. 27 proposals were accepted for inclusion in the conference as either 30 minute paper presentations or 60 minute workshops. Of these, 18 were presented by external delegates and 9 by colleagues at the University of Lincoln.

In addition, there were 2 external keynote speakers:

Professor Philippa Levy, Deputy Chief Executive of the Higher Education Academy and Professor Stuart Hampton-Reeves, Professor of Research-informed Teaching at the University of Central Lancashire and chair of the British Conference of Undergraduate Research.

Professor Mike Neary, Director of Student as Producer, gave a keynote address on the institutional perspective, while Dan Derricott, Student Engagement Officer at Lincoln, spoke about the student perspective.

All available resources from the conference, including presentation slides and videos of the keynote addresses, are available on the conference website at <http://saspconf13.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/>.

The event attracted 110 delegates, of which 58 were staff and students of the University of Lincoln. Internal delegates were not charged a fee, while external delegates were charged on a 'break-even' basis, with optional additional charges for accommodation and the conference dinner, held at a local hotel.

### **Reflection and Evaluation**

The general feeling was that the conference was extremely successful, and many delegates commented on the 'buzz' of excitement and enthusiasm that was generated.

Many externals expressed surprise that there were not more delegates. The response from the sector confirms that there is considerable interest in Student as Producer as a concept, and the experience at Lincoln of implementing an institution-wide strategy of research-engaged teaching and learning. A more concerted attempt to promote the event nationally could almost certainly have attracted many more delegates.

However, space constraints were a particular concern, as the refurbishment of conference spaces in the University meant that at the time there was a shortage of suitably sized rooms for a larger event, while catering would have become problematic with larger numbers. In addition, there were difficulties arranging accommodation with local hotels. The numbers present actually contributed to the more intimate feel of the conference and did not generally detract from the quality of the experience of those who attended.

An online evaluation was circulated after the event, and received 20 responses. Asked to rate the general organisation, keynote speakers and workshops, over 90% of respondents rated each of these 3 aspects as either excellent or good, with no ratings of poor or very poor.

When asked what was most useful about the conference, typical comments included:

'For me the best aspect was seeing the reality on the ground of an institution which has this philosophy embedded in its processes and strategies - the chance to see that messiness and contestation is actually part of the process.'

'The relaxed resilience of the leadership team was both reassuring and inspiring.'

'The vibe - it seemed like a genuine and shared endeavour, not a simulacrum or paying lip service, which is all too common I think. Participants appeared to have a deep stake in the meaning and value and complexity of Student as Producer.'

Suggestions for improvement focused largely on more delegates, and more time and space for discussion – as well as a few comments about signage and catering. Other comments included:

'I had thought there would be more participants from other universities but perhaps I am naive. I wondered if more students presenting from Lincoln might have been interesting. I really valued the students from other universities contribution in the workshops.'

If space and time had allowed, a bigger and even more internationalised conference would have been good, with wider student and non-academic representation from external (to Lincoln) institutions.'

#### 4.4 Dev XS

DevXS was a BarCamp / Hackathon - style conference that aimed to recognise the progressive ideas and talent that students can bring to the development of higher education services. DevXS was organised jointly by the University of Lincoln's Student as Producer project and the JISC-funded DevCSI project, run by UKOLN at the University of Bath. It began as an idea of two students at the University of Lincoln.

At the core of DevXS was a two-day developer marathon, where 180 student delegates were encouraged to team up and build cool things that contribute to university life. It was about students sharing their ideas, mashing up data and building prototypes that improve, challenge and positively disrupt the research, teaching and learning landscapes of further and higher education. Prizes were awarded to the best ideas, prototypes and collaborations.

DevXS was open to undergraduate and post-graduate students across the UK and beyond. It was a conference that was principally aimed at student web developers, computer scientists and journalism/media students who are increasingly expected to engage with data on the web. Participants did not have to have programming skills to attend, but needed to be enthusiastic about working with developers by sharing ideas, pulling together data from various sources and working collaboratively to solve one or more of a number of challenges which were announced before the start of DevXS.

DevXS was a continuous 30 hour 'hack day', a pressure cooker for innovation — an intensified period of Research and Development that months of traditional work could not replicate. It provided space, support, incentives and stimulation to students who wanted to be more than just consumers of university services and build digital tools that make further and higher educational institutions better, learn something in the process and meet other like-minded students across the UK.

DevXS was a response to what 'The Edgeless University Report' called a 'time of maximum uncertainty and time for creative possibility between the ending of the way things have been and the beginning of the way they will be'. At a time when the higher education sector is undergoing significant change and students are increasingly expected to assume the role of consumer, Student as Producer encourages students to challenge this role through a critical engagement with their social world, where they are encouraged and supported to become more than just student-consumers during their course of research and study. DevXS was a disruptive learning experience, a pedagogical intervention for students that was intended to challenge the traditional institutions of learning.

DevXS was an example of how the University of Lincoln has embraced the different themes of openness, such as open source, open data, open education and open access. The organisers of the event were mindful that this contributes towards a greater strategic priority of reconfiguring the nature of teaching and learning in higher education and encouraging students to become part of the academic project of the university and collaborators with academics in the production of knowledge and meaning.

This approach is grounded in the intellectual history and tradition of the modern university and visible in an understanding of and approach to openness at the University of Lincoln. However, for Dev XS, it is not the case that those involved are consciously working towards openness, but rather they are working towards defending and maintaining the core academic values from which recent notions of openness are largely derived.

For further information see link to Dev XS website - <http://blog.devxs.org.uk/>.

#### 4.5 Special Edition of Journal - Enhancing Learning in the Social Sciences

The HEA published a special edition of the journal Enhancing Learning in the Social Sciences. The edition was devoted to Student as Producer, featuring work done inside and external to Lincoln by academics and students - <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/journals/eliss/volume-4-3.page>. It was edited by two academics from Lincoln, Dr Jill Jamieson and Dr Katie Strudwick.

#### 4.6 External Impact

One of the key issues for Student as Producer has been impact on the external higher education environment nationally and internationally.

Academics from Lincoln notice this impact of Student as Producer from attendance at networking events:

##### Academic 7

Student as Producer is the signature pedagogy at Lincoln. It is remarkable how much people know about what we are doing at Lincoln in terms of our approach to higher education. This is a topic of debate among academics even at non-teaching and learning conferences.

and:

##### Academic 4

I feel like Student as Producer has put Lincoln in the forefront of this kind of exciting pedagogy. I am always hearing about it when I go to conferences and external events.

Student as Producer has had a significant impact on external HEI providers nationally, for example, at Warwick University Student as Producer is the title for an annual funding scheme for undergraduate researchers and at Liverpool University the theoretical approach developed by Student as Producer has been used to underpin undergraduate students carrying out work in the community, at Nottingham Trent the model has been used to develop a fund for undergraduate research and internationally, at Vanderbilt University in the US where Student as Producer provides the framework for the Students as Producers project (<http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/2013/09/students-as-producers-an-introduction/>), and at the University of British Columbia in Canada where it used as a concept to describe Flexible Learning across the institution (<http://flexible.learning.ubc.ca/showcase/ubc-course-offerings-feature-students-as-producers-of-content/>). Student as Producer was cited as an example of significant future trends in higher education by the influential NMC report on higher education in the US (NMC Horizon 2014:15).

An important point to note is that Student as Producer is not to be regarded simply as an exemplar of Student as Partners in higher education, but that Student as Producer over a prolonged period, at Warwick since 2003 and at Lincoln since 2007, working with other staff and students in other Higher Education providers on similar projects, has played a key role in promoting the notion of student engagement and Student as Partners. What was a radical idea has become mainstreamed.

This was acknowledged by Phil Levy, Deputy Chief Executive of the HEA: *'At the HEA level there is clear evidence of the direct impact that Student as Producer has had as a powerful inspirational and practical impact across UK and international higher education'*.

Professor Levy underlined the importance of the impact of Student as Producer across the sector in her remarks as keynote speaker at the Student as Producer conference, Lincoln 2013 <http://tiny.cc/43f91w>. Professor Hampton-Reeves, another keynote speaker at the Student as Producer conference, spoke about the importance of the lead taken by the University of Lincoln on research-engaged teaching <http://tiny.cc/43f91w>.

Other academics speak about the impact of Student as Producer in their own institutions

Professor Joy Jarvis from the University of Hertfordshire:

*'The impact that Student as Producer has had on educational practice at the University of Hertfordshire has been substantial...this ongoing relationship with Lincoln will continue to have a significant impact on the development of our education policy and practice in the future.'*

Dr Louise Hardwick, the Director of the Interchange Project at Liverpool University acknowledges that *'there is no doubt that Student as Producer has helped us develop and understand the critical pedagogy underpinning Interchange modules'*. (<http://www.liv.ac.uk/interchange/events/>).

David Kernohan, e-learning Programme Manager at JISC, said: *'The Lincoln Student as Producer project played an important part in JISC work around Open Educational Resources (OER)...and acted as a beacon of practice across the sector.... To say that this was influential in the UK OER community is an understatement - the work coming out of Lincoln transformed the critical and theoretical landscape of the programme, and was warmly welcomed by globally significant writers and practitioners in the field.'*

Staff involved with Student as Producer at Lincoln have been invited to give keynote presentations and run workshops at more than fifty teaching and learning conferences in the UK and internationally (for a full list see <http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/blog/>). In 2014, staff involved with Student as Producer ran workshops and gave keynotes at Middlesex University, Nottingham University, the University of Brighton, the London School of Economics, King's College London, Durham University, the University of Warwick, the University of Chichester, a Higher Education Academy Seminar at Westminster University as well as presenting at the HEA Pro-Vice-Chancellors' network, and giving keynotes at the prestigious events like the Society for Research into Higher Education's annual conference and the Society for Educational Developers' conference.

A key aspect of external impact has been the high volume of positive national press coverage about Student as Producer, particularly the Times Higher Education and the Education Guardian (See <http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/2011/10/19/585/>).

All of this work is consolidated nationally and internationally through Student as Producer's role as a founding member of the British Conference for Undergraduate Research ([bcur.org/](http://bcur.org/)) and its involvement with the newly formed International Steering Committee for the Australian Conference for Undergraduate Research ([acur.prg.au](http://acur.prg.au)).

#### **4.7 Consolidation of Student as Producer across the curriculum**

There are high levels of engagement and support for Student as Producer among academic staff, with examples of experimental teaching and learning, impacting on curriculum development across schools and colleges. An account of this can be found below at Section 6. Findings. These findings support the 2012 QAA review, which commended the University's support for learning enhancements, much of which is based on the principles of Student as Producer. The QAA review recognised Student as Producer as an example of effective practice.

#### **4.8 University Strategies**

Student as Producer has been written into several of the University of Lincoln's core strategies. These include:

Teaching and Learning Plan 2011-2016

<https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/media/universityoflincoln/globalmedia/documents/Teaching.and,Learning,Plan,2011-2016.pdf>

Digital Education Plan

<https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/media/universityoflincoln/globalmedia/documents/Digital,Education,Plan,-,Web,version.pdf>

## 5. Findings

This section of the report shows the extent to which Student as Producer is embedded across the curriculum at Lincoln by extending the evaluation to include reports of interviews with staff and students from across the university as well as documentary analysis of relevant papers and reports.

### 5.1 Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 150 students from across all levels of taught provision at Lincoln. The student interviews were based on a two different methods, firstly, a convenience sampling method: talking to students from across the university and at all levels of taught provision to the point of saturation: reaching a state at which no new information was forthcoming, and secondly, by self-selecting focus groups using semi-structured interview techniques.

Finding out the extent of research-engaged teaching across the University from academics was done through the use of purposive sampling methods. The evaluation focused on work being carried out across the three university Colleges: Arts, Social Science and Science, looking at two schools in each of the Colleges, in the Arts: History and Media Production, in the Social Sciences: Psychology and Social and Political Sciences, and in Science: Life Sciences and Computing.

<b>College of Science</b>	<b>College of Arts and Humanities</b>	<b>College of Social Science</b>
Life Sciences	History	Psychology
Computing	Media Production	Social and Political Sciences

Purposive sampling means selecting certain Schools because of the creative and sustained ways in which they are engaging with research and research-like teaching and Student as Producer. This does not mean to suggest that other creative and sustained work is not going on across the university, but in an evaluation of this nature a selection has to be made. All of the interviews with academics involved with teaching in the report, apart from interviews with staff in the Centre for Educational Research and Development, are from these Schools. Other staff and students interviews are based on the specific roles undertaken by staff in relation to the implementation of and engagement with Student as Producer.

The interviews are presented in this evaluation report by extensive quotations to give a strong sense of staff and student voice, without too much editorial intervention. This method of giving space for those interviewed to speak gives an enhanced sense of life and vitality to the report in line with the Theory of Change evaluation method.

### 5.2 What students say

More than 95% of students in this survey, which involved 150 students, said they appreciate the benefits of research-engaged teaching for their learning and see the advantages for employability and for real life. They want more of it.

About 50% students in the survey said they had heard about Student as Producer and about half of those were able to make strong statements about it. These findings are further consolidated by surveys carried out by Lincoln's Student Union and through Student Representative forums.

In addition to this survey as part of the project evaluation, evidence is emerging from marketing surveys and focus groups at Lincoln, which show that students are choosing to come to Lincoln because of Student as Producer (Student as Producer Marketing Report 2014).

Student as Producer is also featured prominently on the University's website, under Top Ten Reasons to Study at Lincoln (<https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/studyatlincoln/top10reasons/>).

An extract from the Student as Producer Manifesto is included in the Features section for every taught programme on the University's website.

### **Students' specific comments**

Students are overwhelmingly positive about research and research-like teaching and learning at Lincoln

*'I love it (research). I can't think of any better way to learn than finding out about it yourself.'* (Level 3)

One student spoke about the way in which students are shaping the science community at Lincoln:

*'Student as Producer is a prime way of showing that the University of Lincoln values the opinions of their students and takes them on board as future possibilities for the next course to come in after us. It has enabled us to have a hand in shaping the University of Lincoln's science department, through the collaboration with lecturers making us feel as though we are part of a science community'.* (Level 2)

And that this takes place outside as well as inside the curriculum:

*'There was some surprise among academics and staff that undergraduates should be doing primary research, when it is seen as postgrad thing. One of my housemates asked if the work was being graded and when I said no he said "isn't that a bit pointless". But it's what I came to University to do. Only I didn't expect to get the chance to do it, not so soon, and maybe at level three'.* (Level 2)

Students appreciate research-like teaching as being more effective than lecture based learning:

*'You get told to do stuff and then go out and do it yourself. No way are we spoon-fed. I think research-based learning is a good way of learning. I struggle to concentrate if I have to sit still in lectures with ridiculous amounts of other people. I tend to fall asleep in lectures. I need to keep awake and motivated. I can't do listening for an extended period. I like theory, but I like it to be mixed with the practical. I feel more motivated when other people are relying on me. I learn more when I am left to my own devices. I can teach myself when I am bored and have nothing else to do. I don't learn much in class. I am the University's worst nightmare. I need more opportunities to learn outside of class'.* (Level 3)

Students say they want more research-engaged teaching and learning:

*'We do problem solving, the process of how to get to solutions. It's a good way of learning. I would like more of it. It means students have a more active role'.* (Level 1)

Although a few students felt there is too much:

*'About 90% of our course is research-based. Sometimes I think we do too much independent learning. I think there should be a bit less go away and find this out, and more explanation.'* (Level 1)

While some students felt research-like learning works for them but maybe not for everyone:

*'There is a fair amount of independent learning on my course. You basically teach yourself programme languages and then apply that to real problems by producing apps and other software. It's a good way for me to learn, although other people struggle with it.'* (Level 1)

The extent to which Student as Producer features in course material is variable:

*'A lot of the course material that we are given talks about Student as Producer and in the handouts. It is quite prominent and it gets mentioned.'* (Level 1)

And,

*'It was mentioned in first year when we did transferable skills. I have seen it on Blackboard and posters and had emails about it. I think it gets a bit glossed over.'* (Level 3)

There was very little sense of any consumerist attitudes among students from the interviews. One of the few students who raised the issue of fees found their own way of rationalising their financial relationship to their tutors and the course:

*'Other students complained when lecturers did not give them loads of stuff, because they were paying they thought they should be spoon fed. I always said my fees is paying for access to resources and access to lecturers.'* (Masters Level)

There was a clear awareness of the relationship between their future professional lives and the importance of having a research-like learning experience:

*'As evidence-based is a key part of what we will do in our profession, we learn a lot about research. We chose a piece of research and write a critique of it, including the methods, qualitative and quantitative, used and how they were used. It's about accountability. We need to know what we are dealing with. They talk a lot about Student as Producer on our course. I think they are quite good at it.'* (Level 2)

While comments about research-like teaching and learning by students are overwhelmingly positive, there were some negative remarks:

*'You do get told that there is loads of research going on and there are opportunities to collaborate with lecturers, but there's not really.'* (Focus Group)

*'I wanted to do some primary research for my dissertation, but I was talked out of it because it would be really hard to get ethical approval.'* (Focus Group)

### **5.3 What academics say**

Student as Producer is not student-led or student centred, rather it works on the principle of cooperation and collaboration between academics and students, grounded in the values and ethics of academic life.

This section shows how academics have been developing Student as Producer in their own academic practice, as active participants in the making of Student as Producer at Lincoln.

The section focuses on two subject discipline areas from each of the three Colleges: Arts, Science and Social Science. The method used was Participatory Action Research, using a purposeful and non-probability form of theoretical sampling. The material presented here has been gathered from loosely structured interviews with academics, Annual Monitoring Reports, Self-Assessment Reports and External Examiner reports.

### History - Students as Producers of History

'Students as Producer of History' has been written into the revalidated learning and teaching strategy for the History degree programme. As part of this development students will be encouraged to create and display digital artefacts in a team project funded by the HEA. The newly validated modules contain a wide range of assessment methods that encourage students to pick topics and undertake their own research. For instance, in Themes in American Cultural History students produce individual projects with feedback at the midway point including a formal bibliographic review and a presentation to their peers, before completing the work for final assessment. This enables students to determine much of the seminar and study content for themselves. Other modules are equally flexible, while the increased optionality of the programme enables students to design a programme of study to reflect their strengths and research interests. The earlier hand-in date for the Independent Study has proved helpful since students continue to report that they can better concentrate on their final assignments. The Independent Study lies at the heart of the 'Student as Historian' agenda and gives students the opportunity to develop further and showcase their research skills (AMR Report 2012-2103).

As one history academic put it:

#### Academic 2

We want to create the sense that this is an intellectual passion that we all share and we are part of the academic history community as historians. This is only anecdotal, but it seems to be paying off, students are engaged and putting in the work, going beyond the minimum requirements in terms of bibliographical sources; there is more of a sense of genuine intellectual curiosity.

Staff demonstrate high levels of engagement with and commitment to the concept and practice of Student as Producer in their teaching programmes:

#### Academic 3

It went really well. We did this with a first year cohort, of almost 100 students. We were a bit scared, but we tried it and it worked. It was amazing, really positive, the students really enjoyed it. First years, can you imagine making digital historical objects, working in small groups of 4-5, using primary sources. We recommended to them that they should imagine a different audience from the usual academic who would be assessing their work, so as to make a user friendly object more accessible for someone reading about a medieval sources.

Student as Producer - this is why we are here as University teachers, connecting teaching and research. It's great seeing how far the students are able to move and have come, making and building their own experience.' [see <http://makingdigitalhistory.co.uk/>]

This history academic speaks about the support they got for developing research-engaged teaching from senior colleagues and how they plan to extend it:

#### Academic 4

We got support from senior colleagues in the department. They wanted to align the work of the department towards Student as Producer; our work helped them to do this. On reflection they trusted us a lot to get on with it and to make something work. Plans for the future are to extend this work to more modules across the department. We should include more scaffolding support for the students, to check they are going in the right direction during the term.

And, more than that, this academic wants to engage students with the more political aspects of Student as Producer:

#### Academic 4

I would like to engage with students in the more over-arching ideology and politics of Student as Producer. About how students engage with the idea of actually producing knowledge, and their relationships with us as teachers. This would be very valuable for them to think about not only as reflexive historians, but as people.

From this evidence Student as Producer is in the process of being written into the History programme. External Examiners stated that currently evidence for its visibility was not high. Under the regulations existing at the time, the External Examiners would not have seen the First Year work referred to above. It will be interesting to see how their impression of the History programme changes as Student as Producer becomes more embedded across the history curriculum.

#### **Media Production**

There is a clear commitment to Student as Producer: the ethos of student-as-producer in relation to student-led project learning and research-engaged teaching has always been a core element of Media Production and a principal backbone of the course philosophy. This was also a key principle in the development of the Documentary Production course. Students are encouraged to develop as independent learners as they progress through the course and are required to develop their own ideas through research and produce these as creative media works, academic texts, reports and presentations. (Annual Monitoring Report 2012-2013).

On the BA Film, Design and TV programme at the Hull College of Art and Design all aspects of the learning and teaching experience are based on a partnership between staff and students. The individual interests, abilities and needs of students are central to programme planning and delivery. Learning and teaching is diagnostic and collaborative, with final outcomes shaped by an ongoing dialogue between students and tutors. By investing value in the independence and credibility of the student as academic and practitioner, students become confident in engaging in projects and research as professional practitioners. (AMR 2012-2013)

On BA Audio Production the teaching team have fully adopted the 'student-as-producer' ethos in terms of research-engaged teaching, and project initiation and leadership. This is seen in, for example, developments such as students choosing to lead or run seminars on some specific subject, or to lead sessions with their own independent research findings. The Schools' Radio project at level three enables students to guide, teach and mentor, using their own designed learning materials, as well as deal and lead on their own professional negotiations on access, time, planning etc. Further, there are a number of 'external' projects such as, for example, the Gravity Fields (Issac Newton) Project in which, year 3 students were asked to take on organisational 'executive producer' roles guiding year 2 students in the production of the audio/radio drama side of the project. This required development, negotiation and agreement with Creatives from funded bodies and the BBC. (AMR 2012-2013)

Staff in Media Production have taken the political and theoretical issues that lie at the core of Student as Producer and expressed this in their academic writing:

Lockwood, Coley and O'Meara 2011

One of the exemplary writings for Student as Producer is the essay 'The Author as Producer' (1934) by Marxist thinker, Walter Benjamin. In that essay, Benjamin argued that, in times of great urgency, well-meaning political correctness on the part of authors is utterly inadequate. The revolutionary author must innovate technically, must be willing to experiment with form towards the functional transformation of the organization of production. Benjamin conceived a "meltdown" of forms, of machines and apparatuses into an "incandescent liquid mass from which the new forms will be cast". And this must occur as a function of a community. This insight can fuel the urgent task of transforming the production of knowledge in the context of higher education. The agenda must be no less than the functional transformation of education for an alternative society. In the terms of the business logic which is the conformism of current university culture, the student is cast as a consumer, an appendage to the process of knowledge production. Inspired by Benjamin and others, Student as Producer urges collective, social teaching and learning which contributes to the experimental production of something that we will not be able to know ahead of time; that is, the production of the new. The organizing principle of Student as Producer is collaboration of student and lecturer together in the production of the new. The individual teaches and learns for all. Let's put this bluntly in relation to our own specific case. In the study of Media Production, fostering Student as Producer must mean overpowering the conformism that serves the exigencies of the so-called Creative Industries. This brings us to the pulse of Student as Producer – it is about nurturing a community that is willing and able to seize the potentialities of the current situation and challenge the notion that There Is No Alternative.

The embedded nature of Student as Producer in Media Production programmes is further evidenced in External Examiner reports where they comment on how it is integral to the courses they have reviewed. The External Examiners confirm that courses are making links with the concept of production and the pedagogical process, with students at the heart of the process of production, working independently often with real world clients. So much so that in these modules tutors seem to work more as mentors, offering advice and support but requiring students to solve problems themselves and with their peers. The External Examiners report that while the staff do take pride in their supporting role in projects, it is clear in talking to them that the students are required to make their own decisions and deal with the problems they face. This feels entirely appropriate in a way that will build employability and enterprise. Furthermore, Student as Producer is clearly evidenced through the quality of the finished films, most of which have levels of depth and meaning that can only have been achieved through the students' active engagement with research.

## **College of Social Science**

### **School of Psychology**

Throughout the School of Psychology, the curriculum is underpinned by research. All staff are involved in research and teach modules from their own area of expertise, at all levels. At level 1 students learn research skills, and other modules adopt 'discovery-mode' learning. By level 2, all students work with a member of staff in a small group on a real research project, paving the way for the major 'Independent Study' at level 3. (Self-Assessment Report 2012 -2013)

This academic talks about the way in which undergraduate research is a core feature of teaching and learning in the Psychology department:

## Academic 5

*Student as Producer or research-engaged teaching is in the DNA of the Psychology degree. Large amounts of the undergraduate degree is research based, where students are encouraged to write academic papers. Students like this way of working, although some to prefer to be spoon fed. We do all of this to create an academic culture. We tell students that they are an integral part of the Psychology research community, and nurture the notion of academic citizenship.*

*'The student research conference is an excellent example of Student as Producer, where students get to present the research they have been working on to other students and academics and invited external visitors. They have prepared these research projects in research seminars with tutors outside of the teaching timetable; it's like a 5th module. Inside the curriculum we have developed the concept of UROS, only without the funding, as well as creating academic internships where students work alongside academics, supporting research. We do all of this to create an academic culture. We tell students that they are an integral part of the psychology research community, and nurture the notion of academic citizenship.*

Another academic talks about his commitment to Student as Producer, but is disappointed that it has not achieved more. Nor did he like the way in which it was rolled out across the university as a bureaucratic process. He is positive about the fact that while research-engaged teaching was already a key feature of academic life in Psychology, with Student as Producer giving academics the licence to do more:

## Academic 6

*I am a big fan and real advocate of the idea of Student as Producer. It did a lot for me in 2007 when I joined the university. I was very excited but I was disappointed by the way in which it was rolled out as a top down managerial roll out. So that it hasn't got to where it could be yet. But it is not the kind of thing we can ever give up on. We need to do it all of the time. What a wonderful university we could be.*

*'I would rather find a group of enthusiastic supporters and make it work together so that it looks brilliant and inspires others and light more bush fires so that the whole thing catches fire. It seemed to go from a small group of believers to a management roll out, so by the time it got to me, it was a series of bullet points I had to match up to. I found this very disappointing. I believe in the ideology, but didn't enjoy the way in which it was implemented. I didn't change much in Psychology because it is ingrained in what we do, but it did chime very closely with what we do and gave us licence to do more.*

External Examiners comment on the way in which alongside traditional elements of teaching and learning students are encouraged and able to become producers of their own learning experience and to produce research orientated work. Aside from the final year dissertation (research project) and practical lab classes, there are modules which specifically embed the ideal of Students as Producers in their content and assessment. External examiners report that they have spoken with students outside of the programme and they tell them that they value this aspect of the learning process and enjoyed their engagement with research-engaged teaching.

## School of Social and Political Science

The School of Social and Political Science actively and explicitly promotes the principles of Student as Producer. The School's webpage includes the following in its opening paragraph:

*'We provide a friendly and supportive environment and a great deal of our work bears the characteristic hallmark of co-operation and interdisciplinarity. This bears fruit within our distinctive curriculum and also in our collaborative research, as we view the two as intricately connected. We align ourselves closely with the University's 'Student as Producer' agenda and there is an active mentoring and placement programme running alongside many of our courses'.*

Within the curriculum, all students complete an intensive 'Applying Research' module at level 1, with modules at levels 2 and 3 providing opportunities for students to showcase research and for students to generate their own collaborative projects.

The School has a strong ethos of student participation in research and in quality assurance and enhancement activities. Students are contributing to a Fund for Educational Development project evaluating the 'Criminology in the Professions' module, as well as a number of other externally funded projects. (AMR 2012-2013)

As one academic in the School put it:

#### Academic 7

There is a lot of Student as Producer type activity going on in the School. I have always supported it. We are very good here at dissemination, letting other students and staff know what research we are doing. I did have some students interested in doing their own research some years ago, funded by Student as Producer. They were going to go to Egypt to look at the political situation with some Egyptian exchange students. But then the Arab spring started and they couldn't go. The point there is not only that real world events can get in the way of real research, but if you want to get students involved in research you need to do it as early as possible in their studentships. In the end these students ran out of time and couldn't pursue it.

A recurring motif among academics is the sense of 'intellectual buzz' created by including undergraduate students in the academic project of the university, even though this is being carried out in a challenging policy context:

#### Academic 7

What is really great about Student as Producer is that it gives them a buzz for what academics do, and that buzz is the best part of our job, discovery and critical thinking...it's a sort of intellectual high. One of the problems is that government policy wants to perpetuate the myth that students are consumers of higher education. Not everyone in the university is committed to Student as Producer. I am not sure why. Whether it takes them out of their comfort zone, or it is against what they consider to be traditional university teaching. This is a new approach: we are not force feeding students information, but encouraging them to create new knowledge. This used to be something that happened at post-graduate level but now we are doing it with undergraduates.

Another academic comments on their students' positive attitude and aptitude towards research-engaged teaching:

### Academic 8

I have been impressed by the students' commitment and attitude towards the project. They spend at least two full days a week on the project and have even worked with me over the weekend via Skype. Whilst initially the students were a little ham-fisted in their application of research methods they were very quick to pick-up on how to conduct research in practice and it was not long until it felt like I was working on a research project with fellow academics rather than undergraduate students. Moreover, they have been professional and shown a mature attitude throughout the research. I have really enjoyed working with students in this way and I felt a real sense of collaboration as we worked on the project. The students are hoping to write up the experience of working together in this way at the end of the academic year, with me, and attempt to get it published.

External examiners report that the principles of Student as Producer are embedded across the programme. Students have regular opportunities to engage in problem-based, enquiry-based and research-based learning.

## College of Science

### Computing

All students in the School of Computer Science are exposed to research work in the school through a number of formal and informal means. Several taught modules are based on the work of research centres, and student projects at level 3 are largely aligned with staff research projects. Further engagement is encouraged by in-house summer placements. Students are also encouraged to attend staff research seminars, and regularly contribute ideas. This spirit of collaborative research has led to a number of joint staff-student publications and conference presentations. Staff in the school actively promote the principles of Student as Producer in applicant days, open days and welcome week talks. Student engagement is also embedded in all aspects of school organisation, including the joint production of assessment documentation in order to better clarify student expectations of assessment. (AMR 2012-2013)

For some academics Student as Producer is about much more than teaching and learning, it gives students a strong sense of being part of an academic community:

### Academic 9

These events are an excellent way to engage with students and for them to learn robotics, but more than this the students learn what Higher Education is all about, to take the lead in their own learning, and take ownership, and if their aim is to get a job it looks great on their CV. But even more than that it gives them a sense of belonging to a community. When you study as a regular student there is a sense in which the community is imposed, but with this kind of learning event the students are creating their own community. And for those students who do these activities you see them do well in their regular courses. These events are great for 1st years, for introducing them to higher education, even for high school students who are also invited. It is very inclusive.'

Academics are able to say that Student as Producer has had a very positive impact on the way in which they engage with students in their School; and, more than that, it has helped colleagues to consider some bigger questions about the meaning and purpose of higher education:

## Academic 10

Student as Producer has been very useful because it gives you a framework for explaining what we do and why we do it, and it is a great strength to be able to be defined by your teaching practice. It works in our department because it eases the tensions between research active staff and staff who are not research active. It is a guiding light to new members of staff and to existing members of staff about who we are as a school. It has been almost invaluable. It has completely shifted how we deal with students. Now right from Level 1 we have them thinking about and preparing to be a Level 3 student, where the expectation is that they will do a research project with a research active member of staff. It has provided us with a new paradigm which we have put into practice through our use of Constructive Alignment methods. It is now fully embedded in what we do, so much so that we tend not to talk about it much anymore. I think that is a sign of its success. We have used the practices and principles of Student as Producer to confront the fees issue. We say clearly to students that you are not here to be provided with information, but your degree is what you make it, and what you get from your experience as a student will contribute towards your career, This is not a vocational degree, we are supporting you to think critically and analytically. We have undergraduate students writing and presenting papers with academics and presenting at major international conferences. It has helped us to consider the bigger questions about what universities are and what they are for. It has also helped us to think about what students are!

External Examiners comment on the way in which Student as Producer is now being implemented by referring to the fact that projects are already more challenging than in previous years and that there is sufficient research-engaged teaching and learning in the programme.

## School of Life Sciences

The School of Life Sciences has embraced the philosophy and practice of student as producer, and actively promotes it to students. Academics report 'a wonderful "buzz"' about research in the undergraduate population, with many students believing that this could only happen at Lincoln because of the open approach to undergraduate involvement in research. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of all of this is the engagement of undergraduates in every aspect of the research that takes place in the School. Within the curriculum the use of problem-based and student-led seminars is widespread. The assessment for one module involves students producing a scientific paper, and this has received positive comments from the External Examiner. From the first term, students are encouraged to use the primary literature and to attend research seminars. (AMR 2012-2013)

Students help to teach each other using the PeerWise assessment tool, and are also taking the lead in improving their own experience, for example by setting up a Science Café, creating a Biology blog and establishing a Life Sciences society. Staff and students in the School have benefited significantly from the UROS scheme, with similar initiatives being developed within the School. Around 50 students took the opportunity to work over the summer on informal research placements or funded bursary projects, with experienced students encouraged to support and train more junior students. Several undergraduates have presented at conferences, or had papers published in peer-reviewed journals. (AMR 2012-2013)

One academic gives students the opportunity to lead their own research projects, with impressive consequences:

### Academic 11

'I like to give students the opportunity to lead their own research projects. I do not approach any particular student, but I offer all students the opportunity to be a part of my research and to work as part of my research group. Most of the work that they have done is their own work, for example the Biobunch website (<http://biobunch.blogspot.co.uk/>). They are now doing original research, writing up manuscripts and answering outstanding questions with regard to evolution. Also I am advising on a new BBC documentary on nature and evolution. The programme is using the work my students are doing to explain some interesting natural phenomenon. Students are only half way through their first degree and the BBC is using their work as content for a programme that will be seen globally.'

External examiners confirm that there are research-engaged activities within the curriculum but more could be done. For example, they suggest that Student as Producer could be more explicitly referred to in some grading criteria and feedback, as well more novel forms of assessment to further embrace this process, perhaps through the production of podcasts, blogs etc.

### 5.4 What Quality Officers say

The Quality Officers at Lincoln report low levels of academic resistance and the feeling among staff that Student as Producer is an interesting project. They also talk about the important role played by External Examiners:

#### Quality Officer 1

'We have not encountered resistance, not recently, there might have been a little at first, but not now. I think everyone is fully engaged. The attitude by academics has changed during the period of implementation. It definitely feels as if things have really developed since it started. Initially there was that "what is this? Is this a bit of a fad?" As time has gone on people have started to see that actually this is something interesting. Another significant aspect is the engagement by External Examiners who are asked to comment on Student as Producer in their reports to the University. Some of the externals examiners have got better ideas about it than some of the academics. They make recommendations that say "have you thought about doing this? Or, that?"'

### 5.5 What the Librarian says

The Librarian refers to a theme that emerged from the research: the desire for students to do more than was being required of them in the studies. He wonders why this might be the case:

### Librarian 1

The Library is still learning how best to respond to Student as Producer and the changing nature of students. Part of our response has been the introduction of a "More Books" scheme where students are able to recommend books which the Library will purchase. There is a sense that the attitude of students towards their work has changed too, but it's hard to quantify and respond directly. But it is clear that students are definitely more demanding and more engaged. I can't be certain what the basis of this is, whether it is because they are coming in with higher A level scores, or the debt they are incurring makes them determined to get the most out of the university experience, or Student as Producer; maybe it's about all of these things!

## 5.6 What the Student Union and staff supporting student engagement say

Elected student representatives and staff dealing with student engagement offer pertinent and insightful comments on Student as Producer:

### Student Officer 1

The university needs to do more to explain what Student as Producer means for students, particularly for some international students who may not be used to interactive teaching styles and independent learning. An effective way to promote Student as Producer is through schemes that have been funded by Student as Producer for undergraduate research: the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Scheme, and through funding for curriculum innovation, the Fund for Educational Development.

Some staff supporting student engagement comment that the language of Student as Producer was not student friendly, and that student representatives did not get the support they needed. There is a concern that despite its claims to be voluntary, Student as Producer is being imposed on staff, who are treating it as a tick-box exercise. More work needs to be done to recover the original sense of purpose and momentum of Student as Producer.

An interesting point is that that while Student as Producer is being extended by the work of Student Engagement there is some uncertainty and lack of clarity about the relationship between Student as Producer and Student Engagement:

### Student Officer 2

My focus was using the principles of Student as Producer to try and inform my work around Student Engagement. Taking Student as Producer beyond the curriculum, beyond the learning itself: the co-production of the wider university and programmes. The day-to-day running, the business processes of the University, we have tried to get students involved in those processes more and more so the students feel confident that they can challenge, critique and making sure that staff are ready for that. This is a challenge to people's power. I work with Student Engagement champions and programme leaders and they have programmes coming up for revalidation. Maybe it is the way that I work with them, but they talk about how they engage students in developing those programmes. I suppose that is Student as Producer, but they are not using those words: Student as Producer, so much anymore, they are using Student Engagement, but perhaps that's because they are talking to me.

Another Student Officer reports a very positive experience about their involvement with Student as Producer. They revel in the challenging complexity of Student as Producer's practices and principles. They

comment on the special nature and quality of 'the gentle' support and encouragement they received and how much they have learned about higher education from their involvement with Student as Producer:

### Student Officer 3

Student as Producer created a platform for Lincoln (and others) to talk about student and staff collaboration, research-informed teaching, learning spaces and other things. These discussions did not take place in fear of a QAA review, they were part of a research project and those closely involved were genuinely interested in what could be created. This process was not about NSS results or using that information to change a lecturing style, it was simply to have the discussion. This was invaluable at a time when government was turning information into Key Performance Indicators and concentrating on students as numbers rather than learners. After two and a half years it was clearer to understand Student as Producer as an overarching set of themes rather than any one intensive project and whilst this made it more difficult to communicate, it felt less invasive for staff and that's an important feature when looking towards the future. With regards to staff, the project gained acceptance and support from staff at different levels. It wasn't being forced upon anybody from the top, it was being gently nudged by academics, professional support staff and interested students alike. This gentle approach cannot be underestimated; too often projects need lots of concrete evidence and 'intense' action to be seen as a success.

## 5.7 What the senior management team (SMT) and senior leaders say

There is a general agreement among Senior Managers that Student as Producer is now fully embedded with high levels of buy-in by staff, although not in all areas. For some managers it is regarded as having been too academic, and that it needs to provide more of a framework for implementation rather than setting itself up as an organic organisational principle. There is a strong sense that the project is far from finished and that more work needs to be done in certain areas, particularly in the dissemination of effective practice. Another emerging theme identified in this group of interviews is the restrictive aspect of organisational issues, e.g., timetabling, that limit the development of research-engaged teaching. There is a real sense of being at a defining moment in the life of the project with important decisions to be taken as to where does Student as Producer go next. There is a recognition that in order to make decisions about the future for Student as Producer senior managers, with responsibility for student education, need more evidence and data about Student as Producer's effectiveness.

Senior Managers directly responsible for making sure Student as Producer has been fully embedded across the institution at the strategic and policy level are satisfied that Student as Producer forms the core principle for teaching and learning at Lincoln as well as student engagement; and that all of this is underpinned by the University's QAA processes and monitoring requirements, including External Examiner reports and Annual Monitoring Reports. There is a recognition that more now needs to be done *'as a way of revitalising Student as Producer over the coming years by driving it down through heads of schools, committees, staff development programmes, in particular programme leaders, Mentoring would be a really good way of developing Student as Producer. I think one of the initiatives that really hasn't come off is the teaching and learning academy where academics can come together and discuss Student as Producer and provide case studies'* (SMT 1). There is an awareness that it is important to provide support for staff to make sure that their practice is as well as informed as it might be. An important part of this increased support for staff is the university investment in an Educational Enhancement and Development Unit, with the appropriate staff expertise and resource to carry through with the University's ambitions for Student as Producer.

There is an understanding that Student a Producer is a long term initiative which has become a permanent feature of life at Lincoln, helping to consolidate the notion that students have rights and responsibilities as part

of an academic community. An important aspect of this work is developing the relationship between Student as Producer and Student Engagement:

### SMT2

Students are equal citizens within the community of the university and are contributing to new knowledge as active learners and not passive recipients of information. Student as Producer is a forever project. It is never finished. The main thing that we have achieved is that people know it is not going away. The students have bought into it. People are relaxing and starting to allow students to influence what they do.

What do I think has taken us to another level and made us significantly ahead of the game? I think it is student engagement. Actually I have got a poster over there that says “Student Engagement is underpinned by Student as Producer”. What it means is that without student engagement you can’t have student producers. So unless students are engaged in their learning and engaged in the university transformation and active citizens of this community you won’t get it. So you put the two together and then it becomes really powerful.

Other members of SMT agree, Student as Producer is now fully embedded and mainstream:

### SMT2

Student as Producer has a very clear philosophy although the title may have become a bit clunky. We have worked to make Student as Producer mainstream, although it is stronger in some subject areas than others: the staff are wedded to the notion of working with students rather than filling them full of information. So now the situation is I think you would be hard pressed to find academic staff who did not think that students were at the centre of the institution; and, if we have done that, I think that is an enormous shift.

There is a positive recognition of the organic and developmental nature of how Student as Producer has become part of the life of the university, with more work to be done. The idea of ‘gentleness’ expressed in the remarks below is a theme that emerged in other interviews:

### SMT2

Student as Producer is embedded in the university’s structures and strategies. The team brought papers to the Executive Board and Teaching Committees for people to listen, consult and shape. The concept of Student as Producer evolved during the consultation process in a gentle but challenging way...so that now Student as Producer has good levels of buy-in by staff and central backing by the Senior Management Team. People have engaged with Student as Producer with enthusiasm but we need to ensure that momentum continues and more could be done to embed it further. This means more critical reflection and analysis and publicity and dissemination of good practice. Student as Producer has been a huge success, but where will it go next?

An enduring idea is that Student as Producer has provided a framework and a language for the core activities of higher education. But again, there is a sense of work to be done, and critical reflection on aspects of Student as Producer that have not gone well; and how things might be arranged so that Student as Producer will endure:

### College Senior Leader I

What I get a sense of and what we have really done well is re-badge everything and bring everything together so we have a common understanding and common culture. I think it has been really good in giving everyone a framework to validate and value what they are doing. I worry that the radical ideas on which Student as Producer is based are not supported by the university's structures, like timetabling. So that I think we are doing a lot but within constraints. Certain things have fallen flat, for example, my attempt to promote the dissemination of good practice did not get the support it needed. The concept of Student as Producer has not been extended to include enough students and staff and students need more support to be able to see and do what is and what is not possible. However, I get the feeling that it's not top of anyone's agenda anymore, but that might be because it has become everyday practice. This is a key moment in the life of Student as Producer. We need to make a decision about where we go next with Student as Producer. We need to have those discussions to support it. There is a risk that it might fade away and people won't talk about it.

Student as Producer manages to convey a sense of astonishment and excitement, combined with a sense of realism and even disappointment, mixed with an awareness of future possibilities:

### SMT2

When it first happened I didn't think it would work; I didn't think that the University would be big enough to go through with it. In particular, I worried how this would relate to the University's quality processes, largely because as an educator I have always felt constrained by bureaucracy. But despite its theoretical sophistication Student as Producer is a discourse that students understand, breaking down hierarchies and demarcations. I am pleased to see the practice matches the rhetoric. I think Learning Landscapes has been part of it and I think that has been revolutionary in terms of the interaction with students. I think that colleagues welcome the philosophy and are starting to feel comfortable with it, although for others it feels like a "bolt on". There are tensions within the model: I think that there is a real conflict between the university as a business model and Student as Producer. They are two conflicting concepts. I think some of the frustrations are around timetabling. I would like a bit more time with the students. More needs to be done in terms of sharing best practice across the institution, as well as workshops for staff and students on Student as Producer, as well as communicating with new students and new members of staff; and all of this aimed especially at reluctant or previously sceptical colleagues so that students are able to drive change, with us, alongside us, in partnership with us.

Another manager takes a more pragmatic approach, and asks for more evidence and data so as to be able build on the as yet unfulfilled potential of the project. They prefer a more directed approach than the developmental intellectually challenging nature of Student as Producer:

## SMT5

I am very positive about the inspirational possibilities of Student as Producer but it needs to help people translate that into reality. It was too academic. It was too up in the sky, although it is improving. Student as Producer talks about the curriculum, but not other ways for students to be involved. I think Student as Producer should broaden itself out more. I think student engagement has helped because it has given us the nuts and bolts. In order for the Senior Management Team to support Student as Producer more effectively we need to see evidence and data. Student as Producer is potentially something that is a unifying agenda. It's not something that is exclusively academic or exclusively professional services. One of the things that I am keen to do is looking for those opportunities of working together. Where can areas work together when they might not necessarily do so?

## 5.8 What the QAA says

The University of Lincoln received a commendation from the QAA Institutional Review (2012) for its support of learning enhancements, underpinned by the practice and principles of Student as Producer. Student as Producer was also recognised as an example of effective practice (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/ImprovingHigherEducation/GoodPractice/Documents/GPKB-case-study-Lincoln-2.pdf>).

## 5.9 What the HEA says

The Higher Education Academy has identified Student as Producer as an example of good practice for teaching and learning ([http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/aboutus/case-studies/student\\_producer\\_lincoln.pdf](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/aboutus/case-studies/student_producer_lincoln.pdf)).

# 6. Outcomes

Student as Producer was always an ambitious project, seeking to influence the teaching and learning activity of a whole university, and to have an impact across higher education in the UK and internationally. This report shows that whatever the various forms of critical insight and differing perspectives of staff and students, Student as Producer has been remarkably successful in terms of its internal and external ambitions as set out under the term of the HEA funding: creating a sound institutional framework and being part of the establishment of national and international networks to promote research-engaged teaching. Student as Producer has created an outline framework 'How to Do Student as Producer, for those working and studying in higher education to consider how they might undertake a similar project (See Section 8.). Student as Producer has greatly enhanced the reputation of the University of Lincoln, based on its progressive and radical approach to teaching and learning.

Student as Producer has been successful in meeting a further set of internal targets established at the beginning of the HEA project as part of the Theory of Change evaluation process. These targets include redrafting quality assurance and enhancement documentation in the way of Student as Producer, providing genuine research opportunities for students, creating a culture that accepts the importance of undergraduate research and the role of undergraduates in producing the university inside and outside of the curriculum.

Student as Producer has identified the essential nature of higher education, the dynamic yet dysfunctional relationship between teaching and research. Student as Producer has provided a language and a framework through which this dynamic and dysfunctional relationship might be reconsidered, not as a template or a set of prescriptive targets, but as an open-ended project, whose limits are defined by the custom and tradition of

subject disciplines. The intended outcome of such a developmental model is that higher education will be transformed in a way that does not undermine the essential attributes of what constitutes the modern European university. This project is not yet complete, and the extent of its completeness is uncertain. Student as Producer is a forever project.

Student as Producer was conceived at Warwick and later fully developed at Lincoln during a period when 'the idea of the university' was being constrained by the principles and practices of 'academic capitalism' (Slaughter and Rhoades 2006). This has been a time of momentous upheaval in higher education in the UK, and particularly in England. Following the economic crash of 2007-2008 the politics of austerity and the marketisation and privatisation of public life have been consolidated, casting students as customers in a traumatised rational choice world invented by Chicago School economists (Klein 2008). The student protest movement which emerged in response to government policy, including the Occupations which saw the development of new forms of higher education provision, e.g. Tent City University, was successful in constraining government intentions, forcing further Higher Education legislation to be postponed and maintaining the cap on student fees (McGettigan 2013). Throughout this period Student as Producer, through research produced by academics engaged with the project, has presented itself as an act of resistance to the notion of student as consumer and the pedagogy of debt ( Neary and Winn 2009, Neary 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Neary and Amsler 2012; Neary and Hagyard 2011; Neary 2013).

The radical democratisation of higher education has not yet been accomplished (Fielding and Moss 2008), and lies outside the remit of this HEA funded aspect of Student as Producer. And yet, a more radical institutional framework for higher education have been established in Lincoln: the Social Science Centre, as a form of free co-operative public higher education (<http://socialsciencecentre.org.uk/>). The Social Science Centre has no formal connection to the university, although it is based on pedagogies that draw meaning and purpose from Student as Producer and is ran by academics and students from the University of Lincoln and other universities (Winn - <http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/2014/04/12/student-as-producer-and-the-cooperative-university/>).

Since 2012 there has been a process of considerable institutional restructuring at the University Lincoln which has hampered the ability of the Centre for Educational Research and Development, the unit tasked to deliver Student as Producer, to carry through with this responsibility. This restructuring process is nearly complete and has resulted in greater resources being allocated for the support of teaching and learning at Lincoln through the setting up of a new Education Enhancement and Development Unit. This new Unit will be able to prioritise the ongoing development of Student as Producer across the University.

Student as Producer is now fully embedded at the University of Lincoln, and has had a significant impact externally. The danger is that the radical agenda of Student as Producer will be overwhelmed by the managerialist business logic that puts pressure on all universities to focus on financial survival to compensate for the re-profiling of public funding. It is important that the radical sensibility that lies at the heart of Student as Producer is maintained at Lincoln. This report is offered as a device by which that debate can be carried on at Lincoln and elsewhere across the higher education sector.

Finally, in the context of increasing privatisation of higher education it is quite remarkable that the slogan for teaching and learning at an English University is derived from the work of Walter Benjamin, a 20th century avant-garde Marxist. It is to the enormous credit of colleagues and students at Lincoln that this radical discursive framework has been able to endure across the institution. The success of Student as Producer at Lincoln recognises, in a very substantive way, the critical instinct that lies at the heart of higher education and which cannot be denied.

## 7. Recommendations for further action

- More support is needed for academics who would like to develop research and research-like teaching activities. This can be in the form of practice-based workshops as well as an on-line teaching tool with relevant resources, and exemplar case studies. There is a clear need to collect case studies about Student as Producer, including experiences where Student as Producer projects have not gone so well, for learning purposes. This should be a key priority for the new Education Enhancement and Development Unit.
- There is a need to raise the level of awareness among students about Student as Producer. This can be done at the University level through the Student Induction and Transition programme, building on the work of 'Getting Started'. Levels of awareness can be raised by increasing the profile of Student as Producer through activities run by the Student Union, e.g., Staff-Student Conference.
- Student as Producer is not compulsory, yet we need academics and students to engage critically with its principles and practices so that it can be regularly revitalised. This report is part of that process. We need Heads of School, as well as Directors of Professional and Support Services, University leaders and student representatives to develop ways in which this process of critical collective collegiate endeavour can be carried out.
- Student Engagement at Lincoln is based on the principles of Student as Producer. The links between these two projects should be made much clearer. Moving the Student Engagement Officers into the new Educational Enhancement and Development Unit will greatly enhance this process.
- There is evidence from the University's Marketing Department that students are choosing to come to Lincoln because of Student as Producer. Communications around Student as Producer need to be developed which capture the complexity and theoretical sophistication of Student as Producer in ways that generate curiosity among prospective students.
- Develop opportunities for Student as Producer to impact further across the higher education sector, including influence at the policy level. The current policy context in higher education maintains a damaging separation between teaching and research, intensifying the dysfunctionality between the core activities of academic life. Student as Producer should maintain and develop its national and international networks to promote the integration of research and teaching and the recognition of students as part of the academic and intellectual project of universities.
- The University should set up a series of base-line metrics and other measures as a way of recording the impact of Student as Producer on student success and achievement. These measures and metrics can be based on the NSS, good degree profiles as well as other samples of student engagement.
- There is a need to refresh and revitalise the quality documentation relating to Student as Producer. For examples, the eight principles defined in the validation documents need to be reflected upon critically based on the experience of putting them into practice.
- This report should be one of key documents for debate and discussion around the University of Lincoln's vision for 2020.
- Student as Producer has had an impact on the practices of higher education in the UK and internationally. What was a radical idea in 2003 has now been mainstreamed. It is important that this radical impulse is maintained through engagement with social movements, community organisations, politicians and policy makers, who are working to create a form of higher education that is relevant for the many global emergencies with which humanity is confronted, and which Universities have a responsibility for addressing. This includes building on Public Engagement at Lincoln by working with the concept and

practices of Student as Producer to protect and defend the principles of public intellectual life in an increasingly privatised market based society.

## 8. Lessons Learned: How to do Student as Producer

*‘...this is not plagiarism, this is progress (after Guy Debord, Society of the Spectacle, 1967, Chapter 8 section 207)*

This is a guide to building or making or hacking your own version of Student as Producer, based on its core themes and ideas. It's given away as a gift: an 'excessive offering' (Mauss 1967) in a spirit of abundance (Kay and Mott 1983): 'from each according to their ability, to each according to their need' (Marx 1875). The spirit of abundance is the horizon scanner that just might get us into the future (Dean 2012). Find your own way. Do it yourself with others. No one will ever do it the way we have done it.

### 8.1 Ideas

Have some; not just 'good' or 'novel' ideas, but ideas self-consciously grounded in the intellectual traditions out which they have emerged. It is these intellectual traditions that give ideas substance, providing rich encounters for those who seek to investigate them fully. Student as Producer is derived from a Marxist critique of orthodox Marxism: a negation of the negation (Hegel 1874) - the positive power of negative thinking (Noys 2010). You are working in an academic environment so your ideas do not need to be consensual; indeed they should be uncompromising, Brutalist even (Meades 2014), to provoke challenge and critique. Avoid the overuse and under theorisation of affirmative concepts like 'innovation', 'excellence', 'enterprise', 'co-producers', partners' and 'engagement'. Only use these notions once you have discovered the full extent of their intellectual provenance and the assumptions on which they are based; otherwise they are likely to be seen as management fads and be unsustainable in the long term (Birnbaum 2001). You may have to defend your ideas, and you should welcome it.

### 8.2 Evidence

Students are taught to mistrust and critique evidence and data. Science knows that facts do not speak for themselves. All data from the natural and social sciences is the outcome of the assumptions of the scientific tradition on which it is based. It is important that all data, including management information, is subject to the same rigorous application as your own experimental science, maintaining a sense of 'dynamic enquiry' (Fuller 2003). Produce your own evidence based on your own scholarship of teaching and learning, grounded in your own scientific assumptions, explaining why you have chosen your methodology and methods against other forms of investigation. Remember, data is only science to the extent that it is falsifiable (Popper 1977).

### 8.3 Art and Language

Learn from the Arts and Humanities. Think hard about how you present yourself and your work: write a narrative or story or draw a picture to express the current state of play with regard to your teaching and learning plans. Use painterly and writerly techniques: montage, cut ups, streams of consciousness. Express what you know and what you have produced in a critically intelligent way, reflecting the ethics and values of your work, with a sense of its own emotional aesthetic. Artists and writers know that not everything has to be explained, but can be left unsaid, to provoke and incite, all of which add to the intensity of the experience of higher education. The Student as Producer aesthetic is taken from Jacob Epstein's 'Rock Drill' (1913-15). Remember, teaching can be your greatest work of art (Lambert 2011).

### 8.4 Change – sublation

Do not try to change your institution; much better to affirm what is special about your institution and celebrate it. At Lincoln we had a Festival of Teaching and Learning not as an event to which staff and students were invited, but by opening up our classrooms, labs and lecture theatres to each other and inviting staff and students to join with what we are all doing. Not just teaching and research staff, but colleagues from Finance and the Secretariat and Student Services and Estates and Catering as well as the porters and cleaners: the full range of academic labour. Find your own ways to express the uniqueness of your own institution as a place of higher learning, and then make it more. At the same time, embrace the contradiction that lies at the heart of higher education: we may have different institutional histories and cultures, but what we all have in common is that we are all concerned with the production of knowledge and meaning. It is only through commonality that solidarity and real change occurs, not simply at the level of the institution but at the level of society. Remember, 'Philosophers interpret the world the point is to change it' (Marx 1845). This is what is meant by sublation.

## 8.5 Students

Students are a special life-force, but they are not at the heart of the university system. Student as Producer has identified the heart-beat of the system as the production of knowledge and meaning. Knowledge and meaning can be produced in collaboration with students through the teaching and learning process. Academics maintain their authority but gain stature by presenting themselves as part of a 'mass intellectuality' (Hall and Winn 2014) and the 'general intellect': knowledge at the level of society (Neary 2012). Students can advise us and be consultants about teaching and learning and how we can improve their experience (Crawford 2012), but academics cannot expect them to know the nature and purpose of higher education: that is our responsibility as academics. And remember, academics are students too, with much to learn from other students about how to be students and how to be teachers (Freire 1970).

## 8.6 Bureaucracy

You will need to build, repair and refurbish your infrastructures to provide a firm foundation for your project so that it can be embedded across the whole institution. Start with your bureaucracy, not simply as a system of technical procedures, but as a moral and ethical framework. Following the work of Max Weber (1864-1920), reinterpreted through contemporary sociology, bureaucracy is 'a site of substantive ethical domain' (Du Gay 2000: 2) and 'a particular ethos ... not only an ensemble of purposes and ideals within a given code of conduct but also ways and means of conducting oneself ... the bureau must be assessed in its own right as a particular moral institution and the ethical attributes of the bureaucrat be viewed as the contingent and often fragile achievements of that socially organised sphere of moral existence' (Du Gay 2000: 4). In this way, the bureaucratic environment contains its very own rationality and sense of purpose (Du Gay 2000: 75) against the amoral networked principle of our contemporary digitised society (Kleiss et al 2011).

## 8.7 Teachers

Your teachers will need support, probably more than you will be able to give them. Create formal spaces and time for teachers to discuss and show their work to each other outside the normal performative events that exist within the audited university. This can be done inside staff development programmes and by encouraging staff to take teacher qualifications, particularly the Post-Graduate Certificate in Higher Education. The qualification is an important recognition of your professional accomplishments; but, more significantly, these programmes can provide time for rigorous critical reflection and review of our own academic practice on our own terms. You can enhance what support is provided formally by creating informal networks of teacher support. eg., like the Teaching Academy at Lincoln. These (in)formal spaces enable connections to be made with conscientious and committed teachers who may have become disaffected with the commercialisation and heavily audited nature of academic life, characterised by performance measures, student as consumer and the pedagogy of debt. Harney and Moten (2013) have identified this group of academics as 'the undercommons', who are 'always at war, always in hiding'. You should find ways to connect with these colleagues, they have much to offer.

## 8.8 Learning Landscapes - teaching for complexity

The learning environment starts from the curriculum, but this needs to be enhanced by the design of learning and teaching spaces, where it is possible for you to do this, at the real (spatial) and virtual (temporal) level: to create a new pedagogy of space and time (Neary and Amsler 2012). What kind of classroom space might reflect the democratic and collaborative practices and principles of Student as Producer? Such a classroom already exists: The Reinvention Classroom at the University of Warwick. This space is profoundly utopian-modernist in its sensibility, Brutalist, even (Hatherley 2011). It was created as 'a machine for teaching' (after Corbusier), as a 'psycho classroom': or a work of art (Lambert 2011 after Beuys). One national newspaper reported it as: 'The Learning Mould is Smashed!' (Independent Education Section 2007). The room was designed to dissolve the distinction between student and teacher, i.e., to remove the 'power-point' from the classroom, providing a fluid and dynamic democratic complex space, certain of its sense of architectural and critical intelligence; and profoundly anti-flexible (Neary and Saunders 2011).

## 8.9 Experiment

Student as Producer is an experiment, grounded in an inductive (empirical) and deductive (non-empirical) methodology. It makes no claim to be new or innovative, seeing itself as a brief moment in the radical history of the university (Williams 2006). Scholars write their own histories of higher education, ours begins with the University of Berlin (1812), fast-forwarded to Universities in Paris and Italy in 1968 when students were not merely engaged, but were 'revealers of a general crisis' (Ross 2012), and brought up to date by Occupy and the student protests in the UK in 2010-2011 (Neary 2012). What can we as educators learn from Tent City University (Stanistreet 2012). A part of this experiment is teaching ourselves the basics of our own radical history. You should experiment based on what you know about your own institutions and what other universities have done. Look for the history of experimental science outside of your institution. At Lincoln we found the astonishing figure of Robert Grosseteste (1175-1252), Bishop of Lincoln and first Chancellor of Oxford University. Grosseteste is recognised by medieval historians as playing a key role in the development of rigorous (falsifiable) research methods within a sound conceptual framework based on the origin of light, i.e, Grosseteste established the basis for inductive and deductive research methodologies (Neary 2012). What light can you throw on the unrecovered history of your own institution and its location?

## 8.10 Unfinished

Following Mathiesen and his 'politics of abolition' (1974), your work to reinvent your institution through experimental science is never finished. Mathiesen argued that 'the alternative lies in the unfinished: in what is not yet fully existing. The "finished alternative" is "finished" in the double sense of the world... The alternative is "alternative"...in so far as it contradicts and competes with the old system [as a form of] competing contradiction' (p.13-14). Starting from 'the unfinished' does not mean that Student as Producer is forever, but that the form in which Student as Producer is produced will itself be transformed [sublated] in ways that are appropriate to the moment in which it has come to subsist, or it will die. In other words Student as Producer must reinvent itself as yet another subversive form of higher learning if it is ever to be fully realised. Student as Producer is a recognition of the critical impulse of higher education: Student as Producer and the University cannot be contained.

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