Introduction - The context and case for partnership

• Definitions of partnership between students and staff
• Drivers for partnership
• High impact learning activities

• Building a model for partnership in learning and teaching
• Putting partnership into practice

Discussion & feedback
Partnership is a process of engagement

Student engagement correlates with positive learning experiences and outcomes for students

Partnership in learning and teaching is one aspect of the larger picture of an institution-wide ethos and practice of partnership

Pedagogical case for learning and working in partnership
A model for partnership in learning and teaching

A new conceptual model (see image on front of work booklet) distinguishes four broad areas in which students can act as partners in learning and teaching:

- learning, teaching and assessment;
- subject-based research and inquiry;
- scholarship of teaching and learning;
- curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy.
Engaging students in partnership means seeing students as active participants in their own learning, and although not all active learning involves partnership it does mean engaging students in forms of participation and helps prepare them for the roles they may play in full partnership.

Engaging students as teachers and assessors in the learning process is a particularly effective form of partnership.
Partnership isn’t rocket science

it’s about treating learners as capable and intelligent human beings

most of the ‘partnerships pedagogies’ aren’t new pedagogies
  • experiential learning
  • active learning
  • peer-education
etc have been around ages and are well evidenced as effective approaches.
Tensions, challenges and suggestions

Students and staff

Students and staff will have different motivations for engaging in partnership, and the different positions occupied within organisational structures give rise to tensions around differentials in power, reward and recognition of participation, identity, and responsibility for partnership work. Working and learning in partnership is rarely automatic and can present significant challenges to existing ways of being, doing and thinking.
Suggestions for addressing tension

• co-develop partnership values with the people you want to partner with, and think about how behaviour and attitudes embody these values;

• consider the scale of your partnership initiative, and how to reduce barriers to participation, especially among marginalised or traditionally under-represented groups (e.g. part-time students, international students);

• be honest about when partnership is not appropriate or desirable;

• explore possibilities for joint professional development for staff and students;

• embed partnership approaches in postgraduate academic professional development courses for teachers;

• consider how partnership can be used to explore dimensions of professional practice outlined in the *UK Professional Standards Framework* (UKPSF).
There is potential for an inherent tension between partnership policy and partnership pedagogy in that policy is about determining the direction and shape of work in advance, whereas partnership pedagogy is about being (radically) open to and creating possibilities for discovering and learning something that cannot be known beforehand.
Addressing this tension:

- remain aware of the tension while creating policy that values the flexibility and openness of partnership;
- consider how partnership is (or is not) described in institutional policies and strategies (e.g. learning and teaching strategies, student charters, partnership agreements, marketing materials);
- consider implementing staff and student engagement surveys to provide a more nuanced picture of the views, priorities and experiences of potential partners to inform local policy;
- use participatory and whole-system approaches to the development of strategy and policy in ways that seek to embody partnership in practice.
The usual sticking points …

- Engaging students as partners in assessment - beyond giving peer feedback

- Taking risks in pedagogy in the context of measurement - i.e. sometimes students don’t welcome partnership and this can be reflected in evaluations.
Definitions of partnership between students and staff

QAA

• joint working between students and staff,

• based on the values of: openness; trust and honesty,

• agreed shared goals and values,

• regular communication between the partners,

• the terms reflect a mature relationship based on mutual respect between students and staff.
Definitions of partnership between students and staff

The National Union of Student’s

• investing students with the power to co-create, not just knowledge or learning, but the higher education institution itself

• a partnership approach is the genuine, meaningful dispersal of power

• partnership means shared responsibility – for identifying the problem or opportunity for improvement, for devising a solution and – importantly – for co-delivery of that solution.
Drivers for partnership

• to design and deliver engaging student learning experiences;
• to make higher education more accessible and inclusive;
• to align with personal beliefs and values about learning and teaching;
• to develop a sense of community and belonging;
• to develop student and staff knowledge and capabilities;
• to address some of the challenges currently facing higher education;
• to offer a constructive alternative to consumerist models of higher education;
• to align with national policy imperatives which place engagement and partnership as key to quality enhancement;
• as an ethical responsibility to students and staff;
• as a response to the current multi-faceted challenges facing HE.
High impact learning activities

1. First-year seminars and experiences
2. Common intellectual experiences
3. Learning communities
4. Writing-intensive courses
5. Collaborative assignments and projects
6. ‘Science as science is done’ – undergraduate research
7. Diversity/global learning
8. Service learning, community-based learning
9. Internships
10. Capstone courses and projects

(source: Kuh 2009, p. 21)
High impact learning activities

- Self assessment evaluation/designing assessment
- Designing out passive approaches to learning
- Learning leaders
- Reducing class sizes
- E portfolios/blogs/wikis
- Long thin/short fat/extra curricular
- Co-construction – artefacts – learning
- PBL /enquiry based learning/ project based learning
- Induction – inclusion of previous cohorts/alumni
- BYOD/GEL
Building a model for partnership in learning and teaching
Putting partnership into practice