

What Works? Student Retention & Success



Supporting student success: Strategies for institutional change

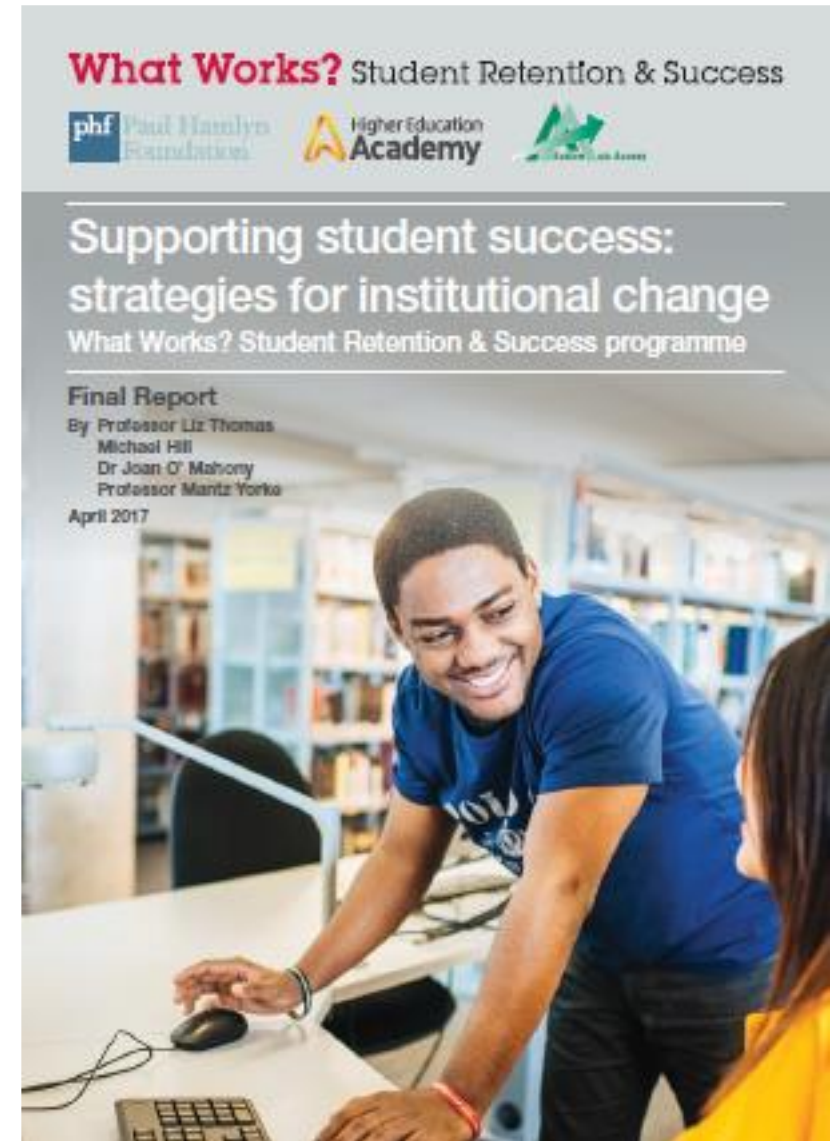
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Overview of presentation

Key messages about:

- Maturity and a whole institution approach
- Outcomes
- Evaluation
- Groups with lower levels of engagement and belonging
- Effective practice
- Implementing change
- Sustainability
- Instructive case studies



What works? Student Retention and Success Programme

What works? Student retention and success change programme is a Paul Hamlyn Foundation initiative working with the Higher Education Academy, Action on Access and 13 UK Universities across 43 discipline areas.

- Birmingham City University
- Glasgow Caledonian University
- Newman University
- Staffordshire University
- St Mary's University, Twickenham
- University of Brighton
- University of Chester
- University of Glasgow
- University of Salford
- University of South Wales
- University of Ulster
- University of Wolverhampton
- York St John University

Development of understanding about retention and success

First generation: Retention

Fixing up students through bolt-on interventions



Second generation: Success

Engagement and belonging in academic learning



Third generation: Excellence

Whole institution approach

Whole institution approach

- Leadership at all levels
- Culture
- Policies
- Systems and processes
- Student involvement
- Wide staff engagement
- Data and evidence



Student outcomes include:

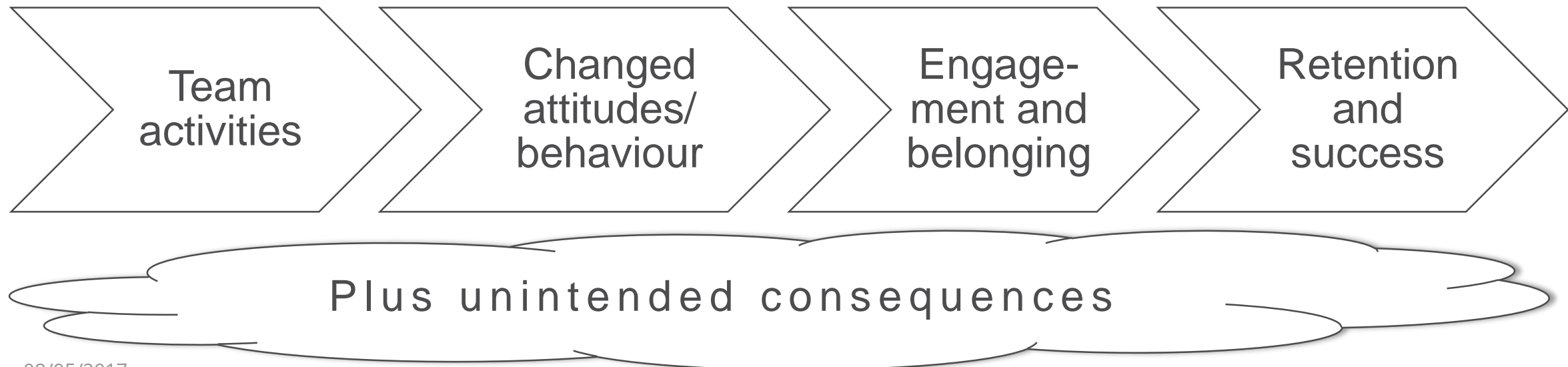
- First year continuation and attainment levels improved.
- Increased number of assessments completed.
- Increased success at first attempt (in assessment) and first year failure rates were reduced.
- Increased levels of engagement, belonging and confidence.
- Increased internal transfers (rather than withdrawal).
- Reduced attainment differentials between black and minority and white students.
- Fewer extenuating circumstances forms submitted.
- Fewer student complaints.
- More satisfied students.
- Enhanced employability and positive feedback from employers.

Institutional outcomes include:

- Greater understanding of the issues impacting on retention and success.
- More integrated and up to date student data made available to staff to inform their decision-making.
- Increased staff capacity to work across the institution and bring about change.
- Greater student voice integrated into work across the institution.
- Wider policy developments informed by learning from the programme.
- Effective initiatives rolled out across the institutions.
- Other discipline teams joining the process of implementing and researching change to improve student experience and outcomes.
- More pedagogical research outputs.
- HEA fellowships awarded.

Evaluation

- Programme level impact evaluation: Institutional data and survey of engagement, belonging and confidence.
- Programme level qualitative evaluation exploring the process of change and context of change.
- Institution/discipline level evaluation.

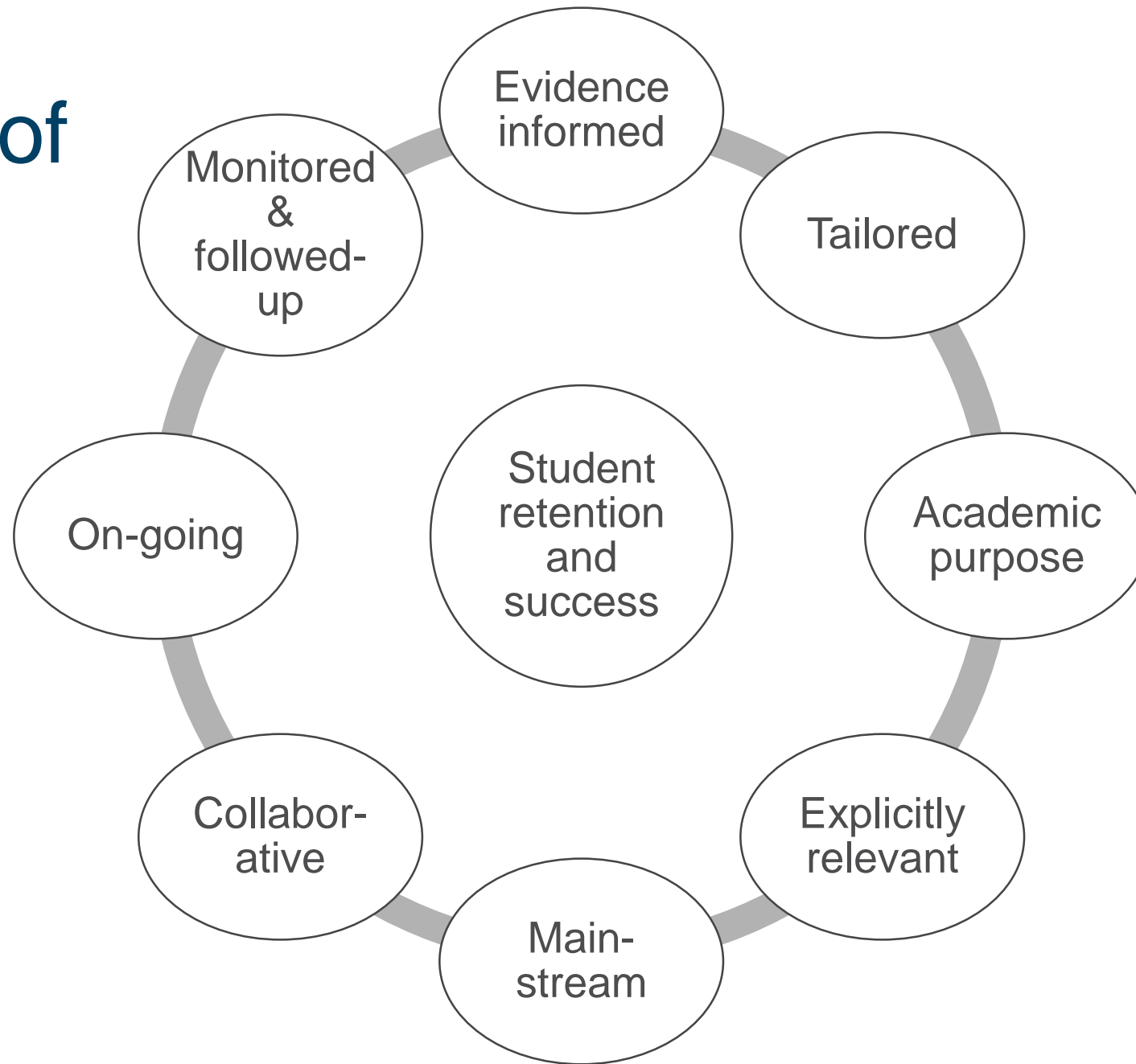


Survey: Impact of 'disadvantage'

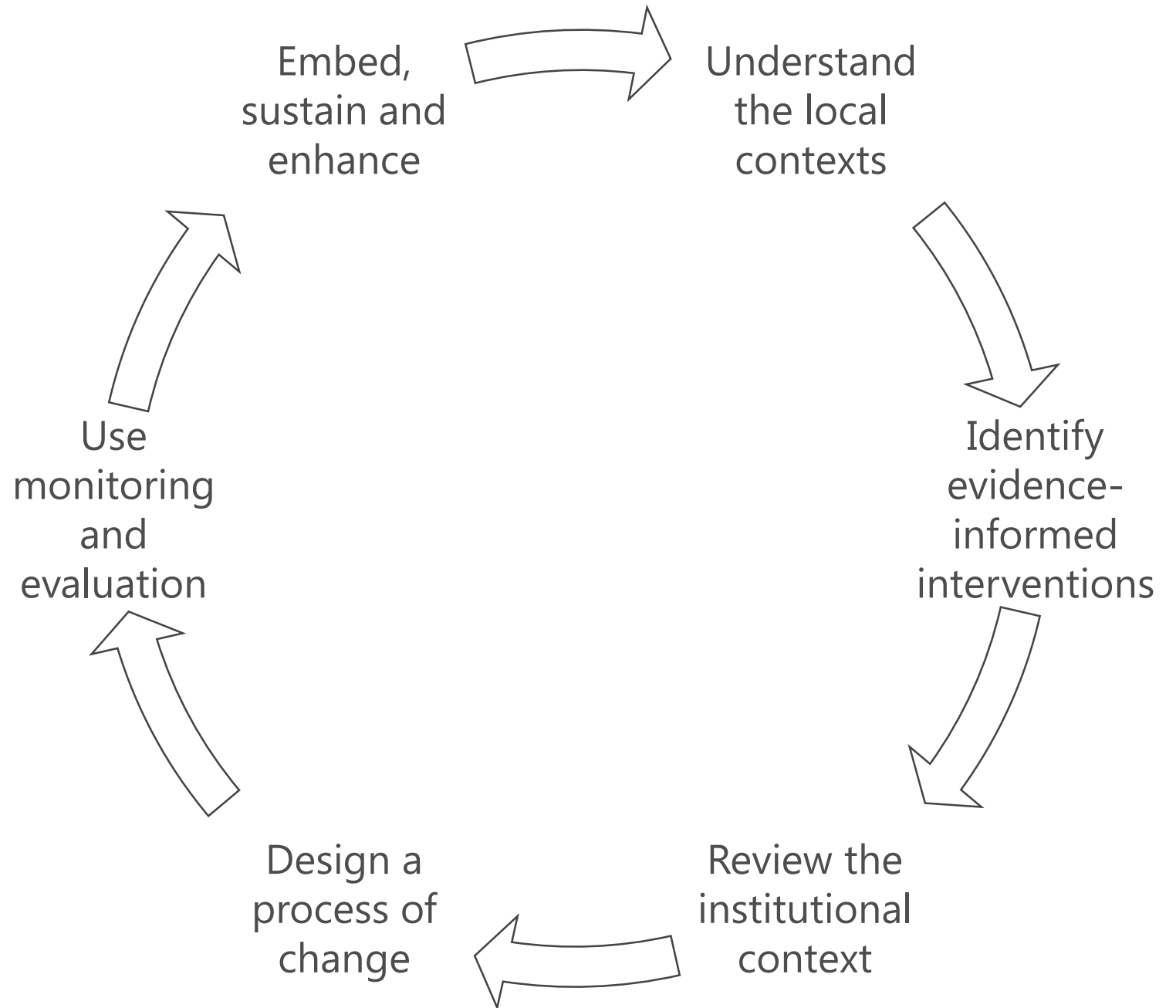
- Having a part-time job whilst studying
 - Travel time to/from the university
 - Care for dependants
 - Having a quiet place in which to do academic work
 - Declaring a disability.
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- Travel /commuting has impact on academic belonging.
 - Having a quiet place to study has an adverse effect on engagement, self-confidence and belonging.



Features of effective practice



Process of change in the context of complexity



Managing change

- Understand the local contexts: Identify disciplines, courses, modules; student groups or characteristics; understand the specific challenges.
- Review institutional context for readiness for change: Leadership at all levels, alignment of policies, staff engagement structures, data provision.
- Design a process of change: Structure and timeframe, cross-institutional team, student engagement, staff engagement, senior management support.
- Use monitoring and evaluation: Monitoring student engagement, formative evaluation, examining impact on individuals and specific groups.

Sustainability

- Continuing and embedding interventions – most institutions
- Transferring learning about interventions and processes
 - Engaging other disciplines in the process of change, e.g. BCU
 - Rolling out interventions, e.g. UOW
- Wider institutional development
 - Using learning to inform institutional policies, e.g. UU
 - Staff capacity to implement change e.g. UOB
 - Further research and funding, e.g. NUB



Instructive case studies

- Demonstrated impact on students experience and outcomes
- Useful learning for others
- Spanning different types of activities: Pre-entry, induction, active learning, assessment, personal tutoring/academic advising, peer mentoring, process of change
- From a range of institutional types and disciplines: art and design, built environment, business, drama, education, engineering, inter-disciplinary studies, media, music and performance, music technology, nursing, sports science.

Thank you for listening.

Enjoy the conference, read the reports and case studies.

Improve the success of your students and your institutions.

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