Surveys Conference 2018:
List of Abstracts
Understanding and enhancing the student experience

In partnership with:

In partnership with:

One hour workshops

1. Using analytics to inform evidence-based interventions on live courses
Gerald Evans and Rafael Hidalgo, Open University

In this workshop the presenters will take delegates through a hands-on experience of using learning analytics to inform a real time intervention on a large-scale distance learning course. The Open University use the Analytics for Action (A4A) process, based on research (Rienties et al., 2015), to support teams with understanding how students are progressing on their course and to lead staff to make changes based on the data. Delegates will be guided through use of the A4A process and will use the process to recommend actions or further investigation needs in response to any issues they identify.

2. Data: A driving force for student engagement?
Shaun Stephenson-McGall, University of Bath

This session will outline a 'warts and all' data story from the University of Bath exploring the development and journey of student engagement and the role its data plays at the institution.

Student engagement at the University of Bath has developed and evolved over the years with various highs and lows. However, partnership with the Students' Union has always been at the centre of our story, with our shared data used as a driving force for student engagement activity.

The session will be a combination of presentation and workshop activities with participants encouraged to input and challenge throughout. The session explores how the role of student engagement data has developed at Bath and provides insight for enhancement activities. With the development of learning analytics and big data this session explores that it is important not to lose sight of whose data institutions and students' unions are working with. Different interest groups within an institution and a students' union have differing abilities to shape or influence survey design and construction. This then impacts upon how they act in response to the results and survey data; and ultimately to the future strengthening or weakening of partnership and student engagement. This session will be relevant for colleagues across all levels within an institution as well as from Students' Unions.

3. How are students' expectations and experiences of their digital environment changing?
Ruth Drysdale, Jisc

Universities and colleges are increasingly working in partnership with their students on the development of their digital environment. As a result, students experience a digitally enabled learning experience which better meets their needs and offers them the digital skills they require for the workplace. But do we really know how students are using technology and how are their expectations changing? In this workshop we will hear from staff and their students on how they are using the student digital experience tracker to support the development of their digital student experience. This interactive workshop will provide participants with an overview of innovative approaches colleges and universities are using to gather their students' views on digital and how they are they are using the data collected to inform the development of their digitally enhanced learning and teaching provision.

In partnership with:

4. Student as Customer? Competing constructs of what it means to be a student.

Paul Goddard, University of Lincoln

The Higher Education White Paper (2011) put the undergraduate experience at the heart of the system. This endorsed "student as customer" and the marketisation of HE as courses became products. Other Top-down notions exist such that "customer" can be replaced with similes of the form "Student as _____". We used an innovative Bottom-up Repertory Grid Technique, to find out how identities of being a student were actually constructed by students. In this presentation we show how students identified themselves primarily as University Citizens. An awareness of student identities is essential for promoting student engagement with Learning and Teaching in HE.

In partnership with:

Paper presentations

Parallel breakout sessions 1

Learning analytics

1. Peaks and troughs in the Q-Step year: A longitudinal evaluation of innovative quantitative teaching in practice
Gianna Maria Eick, the University of Kent

How can we examine whether new modes of (quantitative methods) teaching are successful? The evaluation at the University of Kent's Q-Step Centre is one of the most ambitious studies in this field. Through a longitudinal survey of all Kent students linked to administrative data (with student consent) and additional qualitative research, we obtained robust results. Our teaching is making a difference in student's overall performance. This presentation describes how the evaluation was set up in 2015, and the challenges that we must face in a typical Q-Step year: the limited enthusiasm of assessment and actually making an impact.

Using surveys within institutions

2. The evolution of internal student surveys at Abertay University
Alastair Robertson, Abertay University

This presentation will present an overview of Abertay University's evolving approach to internal student surveys since 2009/10. In particular, the university conducted a root and branch review of its internal survey system and associated quality mechanisms in 2016/17 and a series of changes were implemented in 2017/18 including changes to the timing of the survey, questionnaire, administration and, most importantly closing of the feedback loop. This paper will present the review process, outline the enhancements made and, finally, evaluate the implementation of the new arrangements.

3. NSS data analysis to unpick student stereotypes
John Holmes, Northumbria University

The session aims to explore National Student Survey (NSS) data to determine differences between student groups in their perception of the educational experience. NSS data can be split into a number of data sets allowing comparison between genders, ethnicity, mode of study and disability. In most instances, there is little difference between the views of the groups but some questions attract divergent opinions.

Programme leaders are charged with the task of producing an Action Plan to maintain or enhance NSS scores. This research engages with the data and the programme leaders to determine the causes of the divergent views and consider means of enhancing the student experience in future.

In partnership with:

4. Mind the Gap: Using multiple source qualitative and quantitative survey data to challenge assumptions and inform practice

Jonathan Pratt and Cathi Fredricks, Canterbury Christ Church University

We undertook an investigation of multiple source survey data to understand better the differential satisfaction and outcomes for combined honours students at Canterbury Christ Church University. The result provides a case study for utilising data to inform enhancements to teaching and the student experience of belonging. Analysis of survey data led to new insights about the student experience and a cross-institutional teaching and learning research project. Our experience in the project's first stage provides a case study for using survey data to challenge preconceptions and create dialogue about teaching and learning in order improve student satisfaction, retention and achievement.

Holistic views of the staff/student experience

5. Conflicted by 'quality'; the dominance of the labour market vs. emotional well-being

Elizabeth Shepherd, IFF Research

This session will present a review of international research exploring different methodologies used by universities globally allowing greater understanding of what determines a quality higher education experience. 2018 will see the introduction of the Graduate Outcomes record to contribute towards the UK government's mandate for better informed student consumers. The survey presents an innovation in higher education outcomes measurement, in the form of optional questions aimed at quantifying students' "subjective well-being" 15 months post-graduation. A review of contemporary literature will present innovative global solutions identified that successfully engage students in the experience of measuring their experience.

6. 'Transforming Experiences': Illuminating the potential for student self-efficacy as a development metric

Teri-Lisa Griffiths and Jill Dickinson, Sheffield Hallam University

Drawing on the authors' previous work regarding the impact of extra-curricular activities on student self-efficacy (Dickinson & Griffiths, 2017), this session will explore whether student self-efficacy could be a more equitable measure of student success in HE. We suggest that the person-centred nature of self-efficacy measures allow students to view their development beyond the traditional restrictions of academic achievement. With increased political focus on metrics as a measure of HEI success, we advocate for academics to be at the forefront of developing measures which incorporate the social justice aims of higher education engagement.

In partnership with:

Learning analytics

7. Don't Disturb the Student - Investigating Pattern Disturbances with Student Attendance

Cameron Gray, Bangor University

Anecdotally, educators hold that attendance correlates with achievement. The goal being to encourage students to attend our sessions, giving them the best opportunity possible. While examining our learning analytics model (for Bangor University undergraduates), we came across anomalies that we could not explain. We investigate these anomalies and reveal underlying trends when student behaviour patterns are disturbed. We have found a broad detrimental trend within our student body in these cases.

8. Personalized Education using CogBooks Adaptive Learning Technology

Paul Smith, Manchester Metropolitan University

The goal of this project was to investigate how adaptive learning can tailor the educational experience to each individual. Adaptive learning technology allows students to navigate their own personal learning path, typically not possible through traditional lecturing. This study has explored how this approach can improve inclusive/personalised teaching, by allowing learners to self-select the format of materials offered to them using CogBooks software. The aim was to improve student experience/satisfaction in the area of technology-enhanced learning and this pilot study in BSc(Hons)/FdSc chemistry teaching at MMU has shown that this student-centred teaching method can lead to significant educational gains.

Tools and methodologies

9. Updating the Motivated Strategies of Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) for students in a digital age (DSML)

Caroline Hands, University of Liverpool

More than 25 years ago Pintrich (1991) developed the Motivated Strategies of Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) and it is still one of the most widely used measures of motivation in students (Credé & Phillips 2010). However, the measure has been criticised for its poor discriminant validity, particularly in online environments (E.g. Cho, & Summers, 2012). The aim of this study is to provide an initial validation of a new measure, based on the MSLQ and developed to address some of the changes in technology, pedagogical practices and learning theory to more accurately capture student motivations and learning strategies for the 21st century.

10. Use of Kano Modelling to analyse module surveys and prioritise improvement measures

Claire Lucas, University of Warwick

The gap between expectation and satisfaction in consumer products is analysed by Kano modelling which labels aspects of a product as 'essential' (a car must have a steering wheel), 'nice to have' (cruise control), 'neutral' (shiny buttons) or 'delight' (well delivered active cruise control). This session describes the results of this analysis on student module

surveys with an ambition to determine "what in particular caused you to be dissatisfied with this module?". The actual % Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction response to each question is combined with the Kano descriptor to form the 'risk' level of each factor. By plotting drivers of satisfaction against driver of dissatisfaction, the questions can be categorised by Kano descriptors and a strategy for improvement found.

Parallel breakout sessions 3

Learning Analytics

11. Ready for learning analytics? Lessons from the coalface
Kevin Mayles, the Open University

Since 2014 The Open University has been investing in its learning analytics infrastructure, processes and capability in order to leverage this technology to support the student experience through increased personalisation and proactive intervention. The programme of work over this time period has included developing more effective data integration and visualisation capabilities, using advanced analytics to develop models of student behaviour and outcomes and testing the application of those models within existing university processes to impact the student experience. Key lessons learned during this period will be presented with recommendations for other institutions based on experience at the OU.

12. Learning analytics, academic and professional support interventions and student outcome data
Peter Francis and Carly Foster, Northumbria University

Much is written on the impact of Learning Analytics in Higher Education. This presentation reports the findings of a systematic review into the deployment and effectiveness of these methods to improve student outcomes by enabling targeted academic and professional support interventions. Reporting on the methodology and findings, we go on to suggest that whilst triangulating data is a necessary precursor to deploying Learning Analytics, data does not in itself deliver effectiveness nor drive enhancement. To achieve this greater focus is required at the outset on understanding the outcomes sought, the questions posed and intervention proposal.

13. From data to intervention: a realist evaluation of a Learning Analytics pilot project at Northumbria University
Carly Foster, Northumbria University

The presentation reports the findings of a realist evaluation of a Learning Analytics project in 2017/8, including a formative assessment of the impact in relation to a) retention b) the original theory of change and c) utilisation of information by professional and academic staff. Data collected includes qualitative interviews with stakeholders and survey data from tutors; quantitative data are used to measure and validate the impact on retention. The evaluation finds evidence that, firstly, the project promoted cross department collaboration to recommend and deliver data-informed interventions and, secondly, student outcomes improved.

In partnership with:

The digital environment

14. Mind the Traffic! An Exploration of Student Perspectives on their Engagement with Social Media while studying

Sharon Tolaini-Sage, Norwich University of the Arts

This presentation gives an overview of a 2017 research project into students' views on the effects of using social media while they work creatively. Undergraduates studying Game Art and Design at Norwich University of the Arts produced a 'digital diary' as the basis of the central research tool: A survey, providing material for analysis and reflection for students themselves.   The project brings new knowledge of the experience of studying whilst being simultaneously 'elsewhere', ultimately providing content for curriculum design aimed at encouraging reflective critical thinking practices about the student experience and beyond.

Qualitative analysis

15. Towards Qualitative Big Data - Enabling and Enhancing the Analysis of Student Comments in HE Surveys

Steven Wright, Lancaster University

Big Data has been dominated by quantitative approaches, so what happens to all the rich qualitative comments? This session presents an approach developed at Lancaster University to using content analysis tools to categorise, synthesise and interactively explore the comments in the NSS survey. Three packages - Leximancer, WordSTAT and NVivo Plus - were compared. Automated topic extraction and sentiment analysis in NVivo Plus was selected to rapidly organise the comment data allowing departmental- faculty- and institutional- level insight into the relationship between aspects of teaching, learning and assessment and student evaluations.

16. "Your feedback is important to us". Exploring students' ideas of teaching quality through free-text data

Kirsty Hughes and Neil Lent, the University of Edinburgh

We tell students "your feedback is important to us", and to prove it we survey them repeatedly. There are many nation-wide and institution-led surveys that collect free-text student feedback, but how do we actually make use of these pre-existing data sources? Could a strategic approach to existing free-text sources provide useful evidence of teaching quality, and what students value? This presentation will explore the challenges and opportunities of large scale qualitative analysis, by demonstrating how data from multiple sources can be used to provide '360 degree feedback' and provide the most value for making use of student feedback.

17. Measuring student conceptions of teaching excellence: a case study from Newcastle University Students' Union's Teaching Excellence Awards.

Joe Barton, Newcastle University Students' Union

This session considers the challenges of measuring teaching excellence from student-led teaching award nomination data, by providing the case study from Newcastle University Students' Union's 2017 'TEAs Report'. Drawing upon the nomination data from NUSU's 2016/17 Teaching Excellence Awards, the TEAs Report explores the teaching approaches which students most commonly cite as contributing to their academic and personal development. The session not only outlines the Report's findings, but charts the dialogue between NUSU and University academics which shaped its

In partnership with:

methodology, and identifies the obstacles to further deepening the student-staff conversation about how teaching excellence should be conceived and measured.

Holistic views of the staff/student experience

18. Using Q-methodology to understand students' perceptions
Isabel Fischer, University of Sussex

Q-methodology is a mixed-methods approach that allows to analyse students' perceptions by gender, ethnicity, or other factors, as well as their intersectionality. In this session participants will jointly conduct a simple Q-methodology survey from inception through to analysis. Participants will also learn how Q-methodology has been used at the business school of the University of Sussex to gauge students' preferences for study abroad destinations as well as to better understand students' perceptions of factors that determine degree outcomes. By the end of the session participants should have enough knowledge to conduct their own student or staff survey using Q-methodology.

In partnership with:

Poster presentations

1. Diamond Thinking: A web-based critical thinking app to harvest participant views.
   Boguslaw Ostrowski, INTO Newcastle University

2. Evaluating students' recorded experiences
   Victoria Salmon, Central Saint Martins

3. The Combined Honours student experience: survey data and the perceptions of staff and students
   Jonathan Pratt and Cathi Fredricks, Canterbury Christ Church University

4. How do students develop their professional identity?
   Daniel Belton, University of Huddersfield

5. Listening, but not hearing? Closing the Loop on student voice mechanisms
   Andrea Todd, University of Chester

6. Improving student satisfaction scores – becoming a reflective practitioner
   Desiree Cranfield, University of Swansea

7. Insights for Student Success: A quantitative approach
   Catherine Molesworth, University of Greenwich