

Title: **Students informing the curriculum through participation in revalidation**

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Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify a model which facilitates the involvement of students as co-creators and partners in their learning
- Consider how students can be constructively engaged in discussions to improve their learning experience
- Explore the benefits of how using such a model promotes collaboration among staff supporting student learning

Session Outline

Key issues to be addressed are:

Trowler and Trowler (2010) state that the main focus of the Higher Education's Academy (HEA)'s interest in student engagement is on students being actively involved in curriculum planning. The National Union of Students (NUS) and the HEA collaborated on a joint project (Student Engagement Project 2010) to support institutions and students' unions to better engage students in shaping their learning experiences. The three strands of the project were student feedback, student representation and curriculum design. With regards to the curriculum design strand, the project outcomes state that 'using students' feedback and representation should be key ways to shape the development of the curriculum'.

As students are increasingly being encouraged to be co-creators and partners in their learning, this session will explore how this can be facilitated within institutions in an effective and constructive way. Further, it will discuss when this involvement from students should be sought and how the suggestions could be incorporated into the design of courses.

At Ulster, the Students' Union and the Staff Development Unit have been working together to develop a model of students becoming co-creators through participation in the five-year cycle of revalidation. Students from each subject area are brought together to discuss their learning experience to date. Whilst this is important, the main focus of the session with the students is to encourage and support them to suggest enhancements to the course delivery. Through workshop activities they explore the areas which are most important to students during their journey through higher education and how course teams could improve these. The groups

are guided to provide practical solutions to these and work through how their ideal learning experience could be implemented in reality.

The workshops are currently facilitated by Students' Union representatives; however they are being developed to allow students themselves to lead these within their own courses.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

15min	Introduction and presentation of model
15min	Small group work – participants will use resources associated with the model to engage in a short activity from the perspective of the learner.
10min	Feedback and whole group discussion
5min	Summary and close

References

NUS-HEA Project (2010) *Student engagement project*.
<http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/highereducation/student-engagement-hub/nus-heaproject/> [Accessed 25 March 2011].

Trowler, V. (2010) *Student engagement literature review*. York: The Higher Education Academy.

Trowler, V. and Trowler, P. (2010) *Student engagement evidence summary*. York: The Higher Education Academy.