

Title: **No pain, no learning gain**

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Session Learning Outcomes

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

- Explore perceptions of teaching excellence and learning gain
- Articulate their own perceptions of these terms
- Consider the differing perceptions of staff and students
- Experience two approaches to experiential learning

Session Outline

The focus of this session will be to explore the interconnectedness (or not) of the notions of learning gain and teaching excellence.

Preliminary research data from online surveys and focus group discussions with 50 academic staff at the University of Bedfordshire, which explore perceptions of the interconnectedness of the notions of learning gain and teaching excellence, will be presented to participants. Some key findings of the HEFCE funded report 'Learning gain in higher education' (2015) will be discussed in an active round-table exercise. Workshop participants will then be guided through two experiential approaches to learning (clustered role play and sculpting) to explore and challenge perceptions of firstly learning gain, and then teaching excellence. Recent literature relating to learning gain will be used to inform each section of the workshop (Arum, R., & J. Roska. 2011; Astin, A.W. 2011; Bowman, N. 2010; Coates, H., & S. Richardson. 2012; Coates, H. 2015; Douglass, J.A., G. Thomson, & C. Zhao. 2012).

The session will conclude with a group discussion which will aim to summarise whether participants feel learning gain and teaching excellence are interconnected, or poles apart, or something else!

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

5 min – Introduction to content and aims of session.

5 mins – Brief overview of preliminary research data.

5 min – Small group card game activity to highlight key findings of HEFCE funded report.

10 min – Experiential activity in which participants will take on different roles in clustered role play of student, academic, parent, employer, DfE to explore different perceptions of learning gain.

5 min – Brief summary of role play.

10 min – Experiential activity in which participants will use sculpting to explore different perceptions of teaching excellence from the perspective of student, academic, parent, employer, DfE.

5 min – Summary and recap of session.

References

Arum, R., Roksa, J., (2010) *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*, University of Chicago Press

Astin, A.W. 2011. 'Data Don't Back Up Sweeping Claim.' *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 14 February, <http://chronicle.com/article/Academically-Adrift-a/126371/>

Bowman, N. 2010. 'Can 1st Year College Students Accurately Report Their Learning and Development?' *American Educational Research Journal* 47 (2): 466–96

Coates, H., & S. Richardson. 2012. 'An International Assessment of Bachelor Degree Graduates' Learning Outcomes.' *Higher Education Management and Policy* 23 (3): 51–69

Coates, H. 2015. *Assessment of Learning Outcomes*. In *Teaching, Learning and Student Engagement*, edited by M. Klemencic & P. Ashwin. Dordrecht: Springer.

Douglass, J.A., G. Thomson, & C. Zhao. 2012. 'The Learning Outcomes Race: The Value of Self-Reported Gains in Large Research Universities. *Higher Education: The International Journal of Higher Education and Educational Planning* 64 (3): 317–35.

Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE) www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/lg/ accessed 15/11/16