Title: **Student Knowledge in Learning and Leadership: How an active and collaborative approach can help students articulate the skills they gain throughout Higher Education.**

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Session Learning Outcomes

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

- Develop ideas for the future development of SKILL and similar programmes.

- Identify how the effectiveness of such programmes can be improved.

- Discuss the role that SKILL has in developing undergraduate students.

Session Outline

There is currently a major emphasis on partnership work within Higher Education. The value of student-staff partnerships has been highlighted as an important factor in the enhancement of teaching and learning (Nygaard et al, 2013). Students are considered as the core of Higher Education and they play a valuable role in facilitating and supporting learning (Fry et al, 2009). This can be done through a number of different ways such as when students bring in their previous experience or ambassadorial activities in to the classroom (Nygaard et al, 2013).

Birmingham City University runs a SEDA accredited course which focuses on Student Knowledge in Learning and Leadership (SKILL). The programme aims to provide an introduction to the philosophies and values that underpin student learning. It also aims to help student articulate on how they have developed during their time in Higher Education. There is a strong emphasis on reflection and students are encouraged to critically analyse their perceived strengths and weaknesses as well as their own experience throughout Higher Education.

Key values such as partnership and collaboration underpin SKILL. A unique factor of the course is that students across a range of different disciplines are involved. Through the use of Peer Learning Groups we aim to develop Communities of Practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) across different disciplines. Students are also encouraged to develop this community through collaboration in the future. An online network is set up in order to facilitate this.

This session will reflect on the impact SKILL has had on students at Birmingham City University. It will also aim to share experiences of delivering SKILL with the wider sector and help us identify other examples of good practice which we could apply in the future.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is a follows;

10 minutes – Introduction to student engagement initiatives at BCU and the SKILL course.

10 minutes –How did we help students meet the outcomes for SKILL? What impact did SKILL have on students who completed the course?

15 minutes – Group discussion - Working in small groups, participants will discuss the following questions:

1) How could we improve the impact SKILL has within our institute?

2) Are there any elements of this model which could apply to your own practice?

3) How can we attempt to engage the wider student community with programmes such as SKILL?

10 minutes – Based on feedback from colleagues throughout the session and our own evaluations, we will discuss how we could improve the course in the future.

References

Fry, H., Ketteridge, S. and Marshall, S. (ed.) (2009) 'Chapter 8: Teaching and Learning for Employability' in *A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Enhancing Academic Practice.* 4th ed. London: Routledge

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991) *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nygaard, C., Brand, S., Bartholomew, P. and Millard, L. (2013) *Student Engagement: Identity, Motivation and Community.* Oxfordshire: Libri Publishing.