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Encouraging student engagement to increase learning gain

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Outline of this session

➤ **Context**

- The Lincoln-Huddersfield learning gain project
- The University of Lincoln

➤ **How engaged student learning is a factor in strengthening learning gain**

➤ **Approaches to engaging students to maximise learning gain**

➤ **The challenges of measuring student engagement and learning gain**

Learning gain and teaching excellence

Students achieve their educational and professional goals, including progression to further study or employment

Evidence that graduates are equipped with the sorts of knowledge, skills and attributes that allow them to progress successfully to further study or employment (particularly highly skilled employment)

Students acquire knowledge, skills and attributes that prepare them for their personal and professional lives

Evidence of broader educational and professional outcomes - this may include input and output measures

(developed from Teaching Excellence Framework assessment criteria as proposed in the technical consultation May 2016, page 16)

The Lincoln-Huddersfield Learning Gain Project

- HEFCE funded, three-year, longitudinal, mixed methods study – commenced November 2015 - piloting measures of learning gain across the period of undergraduate study;
- Initial sample of seven discipline-specific student groups at Lincoln (Psychology, Business, Pharmacy, History, Fine and Performing Arts, Engineering and Computer Science) and a mixed discipline group at Huddersfield;
- Sample groups include pre-formed tutor groups, whole cohort groups and one specific mixed group of students;
- Collaboration is a key feature; students; academics; managers; professional services; Student Union; employers.

Learning gain project tools and data sources

- Student self-assessment skills audit
- Situational judgement test
- Additional data sources, recognising the wider concept of learning gain

Exploring the impact of engagement in learning in and beyond the curriculum.

Supporting students to gain insight into their skills development and link this with their ability to market themselves and their experiences to graduate employers.

Student engagement at the University of Lincoln

- Learning Gain pilot project is underpinned by, aligns and interacts with the ethos and practices of student-staff partnerships at Lincoln; students as equal partners
- Institution-wide change, long-term strategic approach
- Primary focus is empowering staff to engage students and empowering students to engage
- Engagement at Lincoln and pedagogies of partnership relate to student-staff and student-student learning partnerships;
- Set within the context and history of 'Student as Producer' and a new strategic plan which emphasises importance of partnerships, engagement and graduate success.

How does engaged student learning impact on learning gain?

- Learning is not a one-way process; working collaboratively to discover or critique knowledge produces helpful educational and wider learning outcomes for students;
- Impact occurs in different ways, at different points in the HE journey
- meaningful student engagement can impact on students' development of skills and attributes that will support their futures beyond graduation.

- ✓ Increasing confidence,
- ✓ Valuing and understanding of social contribution and responsibility
- ✓ Building a sense of identity, belonging and community
- ✓ Networking, communication and relationship building
- ✓ Furthering 'learning to learn' skills

Our approach to engaging students and maximising learning gain

- Enabling and empowering students to be active partners across all aspects of the development of their learning experience
- Creating opportunities to share learning and outputs widely
- Collaborative research within and beyond the curriculum
- Creative use of technology to provide effective spaces for engagement and collaboration
- Encouraging and supporting learning across disciplines

Personal tutoring process at Lincoln

	General Academic and Pastoral Support	Responding to academic implications of student concerns; signposting as necessary.
	Study Skills	Helping students identify study skills needs and signposting to appropriate support.
	Assessment and Feedback	Supporting students to reflect holistically on outcomes of assessed work to improve future performance.
	Careers and Employability	Encouraging students to consider career ambitions; signposting to guidance and support.
	Engaging beyond the programme	Guiding students to engage with opportunities beyond their programme; developing transferable skills and social networks.

Some examples of student engagement beyond the curriculum at Lincoln

A few examples of student engagement opportunities;

- Student recruiters
- Student reviewers
- Staff/student insight scheme

Building and further embedding this work through;

- All subject committees (including co-chairing)
- Curriculum co-design through curriculum steering groups
- Joint reviews of teaching practice
- Peer assisted study and mentoring projects
- Further attention to first year experience and transitions

[Short recruiting video](#)

More video clips available at <http://lincn.eu/videos>

The challenge of measuring student engagement and learning gain

Acknowledging 'the difficulties of evaluating how excellence in teaching actually affects student learning' (Gunn and Fisk 2013:9)

Lincoln-Huddersfield Learning gain project –

- Encourages students to be more aware of, identify and provide evidence of their on-going skills development
- Alongside test results, we hope students will gather evidence of learning gain

Thus we are furthering our understanding of the impact of encouraging student engagement in all aspects of their HE experience.



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