

engage: Student Partnership in Quality Systems

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Student engagement in quality

- Period of flux - move towards a tertiary approach and quality framework.
- Building on the established practice that students should be partners in the formulation, operation and evaluation of an institution's approach to enhancement.
- Embedding student partnership at the heart of the new quality framework and arrangements.

Briefing note  Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba 

FAO Vice Principals of Learning and Teaching/ Student Experience, for wider dissemination to all relevant institutional staff

Supporting student engagement in the SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability

In June 2020, the Scottish Government called on the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to undertake a review considering how best the SFC and the sector can fulfil its mission in securing coherent provision in post-16 education.

Since the launch of the review, sparqs has worked to support student engagement in the review, including sessions at our summer training events 'That's Quality' and our respective network meetings for student officers and students' association staff, NEON and SESN. These sessions have aimed to provide context and background to the review and have worked towards building the capacity of officers to ensure they can have a meaningful role to play as the review develops.

In August 2020, SFC put out a call for evidence across the sector, inviting institutions, associations and agencies, as well as other relevant stakeholders, to respond, highlighting what they thought the review should explore further. Over 100 responses were received. sparqs submitted to inform the phase one report. sparqs submitted to [response](#), as well as [NUS Scotland's](#).

sparqs has continued to work closely with the SFC formation of a Student Engagement Advisory Group members, was established in November 2020. The tools and mechanisms for student engagement are contribute to, and influence, the review as it progresses.

We appreciate that the initial consultation period students were not as heavily consulted as the sector and space is given to students to ensure the review as it progresses, and that student officers, chance to contribute to discussions.

Phase One Report

On 20th October 2020, the SFC published their Phase One report, *Sustainability: A review of Scotland's Colleges and Universities*. The report, along with support [website](#).



How are we doing that?



Developing a tool that supports institutions to explore, reflect and evaluate practices of student engagement in quality.



Provide a sector reference point on what student engagement in quality looks like.



Enable conversations around what effective partnership is and how institutions promote partnership working between staff and students across quality arrangements.



Provide a shared understanding of what partnership is and the values and principles around partnership, whilst not defining a single methodology or approach.



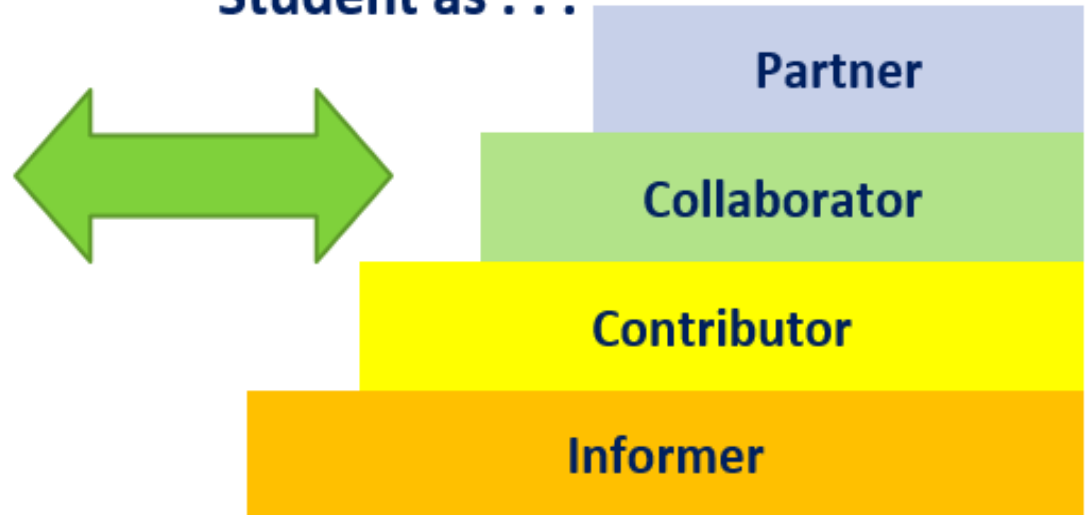
Student Partnership Model

What does student engagement in quality look like?

Student Learning Experience

Dialogue with students
+ feedback and survey data;
+ other evidence of student success.

Student as . . .



sparqs, October 2022



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Exploring the model

Intends to support and enhance student engagement in quality process at all levels of engagement and in **various activities of the arrangements**, such as external reviews or preparing a self-evaluation report.

Recognises that student engagement will be happening across all levels. Expectation that there is more activity taking place at the partner level but that students will continue to **engage at every and all levels, sometimes simultaneously**.

Removes hierarchy: it is not intended to be used like a ladder, where you move up from informer to contributor and so on; rather the levels are like **building blocks**, focusing on the importance of building a partnership approach.



To be used **strategically** to explore the **culture of partnership** across an institution and different levels of staff, such as academics, professional services staff, and senior leaders.

Provides a **coherent and consistent approach to language** in categorising and understanding what student engagement looks like at different levels.

Enables and promotes a self-evaluative approach as part of the quality arrangements and supports institutions to **evidence** their approach to student engagement.



Informer

Students are aware of, and understand, the opportunities that exist to provide feedback and engage in those processes.



Contributor

Students are identified as key providers of insight for specific projects and generate clear objectives that shape change.



Collaborator

Students are recognised as having a role in shaping processes and can identify areas that they have influenced. They will support the generating and using of evidence and data in development, analysis, and action planning.



Partner

Students are actively engaged and involved on an equal basis in all aspects of the process, from co-design to implementation.



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What do you think?



What do you like about the model? What would you change?



Is the language correct? Are the descriptors accurate? Does it work visually?



Does it seem fit for purpose? Is it user friendly?



What additional supporting documents and guidance is needed to support use of the model? What support is needed from sparqs?



How will the model be used this year?

We will work with universities undergoing their Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) as part of the Phase 1 arrangements.

Questions we will consider with institutions:

- What might engagement with the model look like over the next two years?
- How can the model support institutions when thinking about student partnership?
- How does the model support institutions to reflect and evaluate their own practices around student partnership in quality?
- How does the model build on existing structures and processes that supports student partnership in quality?
- Can the model help institutions to develop and enhance practices to see more activity take place at a partnership level?



What next?



We will continue to develop and test the model with staff and students across the sector.



We will work with institutions undergoing QESR this academic year, as well as with colleges and their quality arrangements.



We will produce an end-of-year report evaluating the use of model and impact on student partnership, which will help support the ongoing development of phase 2 arrangements.

