

Pedagogies of partnership: What works

A report on the findings of the Higher Education Academy funded project examining how partnership-based pedagogies impact on student learning at the University of Lincoln

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Contents

Section	Page
1. Glossary of terms and abbreviations	4
2. Acknowledgements	5
3. Background	6
3.1 The research team	7
3.2 Project advisory group	8
3.3 Project aims	8
4. Introduction and context	10
4.1 Research ethics	10
4.2 Data collection	10
4.3 Analysis	11
4.4 Symposium on embedding partnership in teaching and learning	13
4.5 Limitations	13
5. Findings: definitions and concepts	14
5.1 Partnership	14
5.2 Student engagement	16
5.3 Summary	17
5.4 Recommendations	18
Case study: Psychology	20
6. Findings: pedagogical practices	22
6.1 Engagement in research	22
6.2 Large group teaching – creating engagement and participation	23
6.3 Use of technology	24
6.4 Interdisciplinarity	25
6.5 Peer learning	25
6.6 Other factors that promote partnership	25
6.7 Summary	26
6.8 Recommendations	26

Case study: History	27
7. Findings: culture	29
7.1 Identity	29
7.2 Time and workload	30
7.3 Activities outside the curriculum	31
7.4 Group size	32
7.5 Summary	32
7.6 Recommendations	33
Case study: Biomedical Science	34
8. Findings: impact	36
8.1 Development of partnerships and their impact over the period of undergraduate study	36
8.2 Skills development	37
8.3 Summary	40
8.4 Recommendations	41
Case study: Media Production	42
9. Conclusion and recommendations for practice	44
9.1 Principles for pedagogic partnership	45
References	48
Appendix A: research instruments	51
Undergraduate student questionnaire	51
Alumni survey	51
Interviews with academic staff	52
Interviews with students	53

I. Glossary of terms and abbreviations

AMRs	Annual monitoring reports
EDEU	Educational Development and Enhancement Unit (University of Lincoln)
ESU	European Student Union
FED	Fund for Educational Development – internal funding at University of Lincoln
HCPC	Health and Care Professions Council
IBMS	Institute of Biomedical Science
Making Digital History	This is a HEA funded project in our School of History and Heritage that helped engage students in creating digital learning resources for their peers. More can be found at: http://makingdigitalhistory.co.uk/
NTF	National Teaching Fellow
NTFS	National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (Higher Education Academy)
NSS	National Student Survey
PASS	Peer Assisted Study Sessions
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
Student as Producer	This is the University of Lincoln's initiative to embed research-engaged-teaching in all undergraduate programmes, using a series of principles as a guide. Much of the development work was supported with funding from the Higher Education Academy between 2010-13. More can be found at http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk
UROS	Undergraduate Research Opportunities Scheme – internal funding at University of Lincoln
VLE	Virtual learning environment

2. Acknowledgements

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3. Background

Nationally, the value of student–staff partnerships and student engagement has been highlighted in the literature as an important factor in the enhancement of both teaching and learning (Gibbs 2010; Trowler 2010). The National Union of Students (NUS) also recognises the benefits of partnership in its *Manifesto for Partnership* (NUS undated).

Engaging with students as partners has broad appeal not just in the United Kingdom (UK) but also in the wider European Higher Education Area, although the UK appears to lead the way in many respects. The European Students' Union (ESU) has recently completed a major European Commission funded study into students' concept of quality higher education. Core to the final conclusion was the notion that students should be considered full members of the academic community and competent constructive partners (ESU 2013).

The University of Lincoln's ethos concurs with this position and the study detailed in this report builds on the ESU's work by providing a thorough, impact-focused case study in practice. The University of Lincoln's commitment to working with students as partners in both their learning and in the wider enhancement of teaching and learning has been materialising for some years. This background put the research team in a unique position to examine the impact of pedagogical developments within the context of an institutional approach.

The University of Lincoln's Student as Producer initiative benefitted from three years' HEA funding as part of the National Teaching Fellow (NTF) projects stream from 2010 to 2013. This ambitious project aimed to establish research-engaged teaching and learning as the organising principle of the University and the basis for all curriculum development. Pedagogies of partnership have underpinned this work throughout. As the initiative has become embedded in the culture, practices and processes of the institution, this means that students have increasingly had opportunities to engage in real research, or to discover the discipline through teaching and learning methods that adopt research-like processes.

The Student as Producer project has led directly to the creation of a dedicated student engagement team, with an associated strategy and network of student engagement champions across all schools and departments. Disciplinary engagement in teaching and learning in the classroom and collaborative research is a core driver for this work alongside the promotion of meaningful partnership with students in all aspects of university life. This includes the design and delivery of teaching and learning activities, research and quality assurance and enhancement processes.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) *Institutional Review of 2012* for the University of Lincoln commended the enhancement of student learning opportunities, and identified both the “systematic engagement of students” and the “impact of the Student as Producer initiative” as features of good practice (QAA 2012, p2).

The research reported on herein builds on current knowledge and practice nationally, and the Student as Producer initiative locally, by conducting an in-depth exploration into what is effective in relation to partnerships in pedagogical practice. Student as Producer focused primarily on processes of institutional change, while this research has enabled an exploration into the detail of pedagogical approaches in the classroom that foster, support

and enable meaningful partnerships and student development across a selected range of disciplines. Using a mixed-methods approach, and drawing on the experiences of both staff and students, including recent alumni, the research team investigated teaching and learning practices that promote student–staff partnerships in their discipline. Four disciplinary areas were selected, covering Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects; an example from the Humanities; and a subject from the Creative Arts: these areas were Biomedical Science, History, Media Production, and Psychology.

The research aimed to understand the impact of pedagogical approaches, set within an institutional framework, that have been established to engage, foster and support students as partners across a selected range of disciplines. Seeking to identify whether students’ understanding of, approach to, and benefit from their learning experience is enhanced or in any way made different through the implementation of teaching and learning that is explicitly intended to foster partnership.

This research contributes to our understanding of the connections between student engagement in learning and students as agents of change in their institutions. As such this resonates clearly with the HEA’s strategic priorities in terms of Students as Partners, but also relates to previous work exploring disciplinary approaches to connecting research and teaching (Healey and Jenkins 2009; Jenkins *et al.* 2007).

In addition, the research set out to examine whether there is change in students’ conceptions of themselves, as they move from seeing themselves as students of a subject to becoming members of a disciplinary community. This form of ontological shift is represented in various educational theories, such as the liminal state described in threshold concepts theory (Cousin 2006) or the crossroads in Baxter-Magolda’s journey to ‘self-authorship’ (2001).

3.1 The research team

The research team is based in the central Educational Development and Enhancement Unit (EDEU). Alongside three members of staff, and in keeping with the ethos of partnership, students were recruited to work on the research team. A postgraduate student was recruited as a part-time Research Assistant, co-ordinating the day-to-day activity of the project. Three undergraduate students took the roles of Research and Project Assistants. All primary data collection was carried out by student researchers with guidance and support from the wider research team.



Left to right: Nicole Hosking, Dan Derricott, Dr Karin Crawford, Andy Hagyard, Linford Butler, Reece Horsley and Amanda Collins

3.2 Project advisory group

A project advisory group was established, consisting of the core research team, key staff involved in the development of teaching and learning strategy, student engagement champions and student representatives from each of the four disciplines and a representative from the Students' Union. The role of the advisory group included guiding and steering the project, providing key information about case study areas, and ensuring that the research did not negatively impact on the students' experience at any time. This group met formally three times throughout the project. As well as the responsibilities outlined above, key areas of discussion also included:

- risk assessment and management;
- the addition of the fourth discipline, Biomedical Science;
- question development, sampling and timing of data collection;
- initial research findings.

3.3 Project aims

This body of work delivers to the wider series of projects run by the HEA looking at the pedagogies of partnership. Together the four projects aim to:

1. increase our understanding of pedagogical approaches that foster partnership, with attention to disciplinary difference and context;
2. provide evidence of the impact these pedagogies have on student learning;
3. offer clear implications for teaching and learning practice linked to proposed project outputs.

As well as contributing to these wider aims, this study was underpinned by a set of specific objectives. The research set out to:

- understand the relationship between an institutional culture of partnership, both pedagogically and in the broader development of the university, and students' approach to their own learning;
- develop an evidence base which establishes the pedagogical practices which have the most favourable impact on a student's approach to their learning that we can use to inform the development of teaching practices, teachers and student representatives;
- develop an understanding of how the linked, but discrete, activities of engaging students as partners in their learning, and as partners in the wider University, manifests in the individual approach of students to learning.

In order to achieve these aims, the research set out to address the following research questions.

1. What forms of pedagogical practice foster and support meaningful partnerships with students in different disciplinary contexts in higher education?
2. What is the evidence that identifies how these pedagogical practices impact on student learning and the student experience?
3. In what ways can an increased understanding of pedagogical approaches that foster partnership be drawn on to enhance teaching and learning practice?
4. How does an institutional culture of partnership impact upon the pedagogical practices within the curriculum?

In reporting the findings of the research, this report is structured to follow the exploration of four key themes established in the initial stages of data analysis, these being: concepts and definitions, practices, culture, and impact. Between these sections, case studies provide insights into the four disciplines focused on throughout the research. Recommendations are embedded throughout the work, outlining areas of potential further work, practical ideas for further embedding partnership in teaching and learning, and points for consideration when approaching developing pedagogic partnerships.

4. Introduction and context

The project utilised a multi case-study, mixed methods approach, working across four case study disciplines. This was a purposive sample, selected firstly to represent contrasting academic traditions (from STEM, Humanities, and the Creative Arts) and secondly on the basis of acknowledged engagement in principles of research-engaged learning and teaching, which lie at the heart of Student as Producer. The areas selected as case studies were:

- Biomedical Science
- History
- Psychology
- Media Production

4.1 Research ethics

Ethical approval for this research was sought and gained from the University of Lincoln School of Education Ethics Committee at its meeting on 31 October 2014.

4.2 Data collection

Questionnaires

An important element of the research required gaining insight from the students within the chosen disciplines. Two questionnaires were developed by the student researchers, providing unique research tools for collecting information from undergraduates and recent alumni.

With the undergraduate questionnaire, current level two and three students were targeted through the virtual learning environment (VLE), Blackboard. Different options were considered for distributing the questionnaire; this method of delivery was chosen due to the already frequent use of Blackboard by students. In addition, the method provided a number of options for creating reminders and providing specificity in selecting students. The questionnaire gained information from 5.4% ($n = 57$) of a sample size of 1,063 students across the subject areas. The low response rate may be predominantly due to the time that the questionnaire was administered as this overlapped with the National Student Survey. In order, therefore, to supplement the data that provided students' perspectives, additional secondary data was collated; this is discussed later in this section.

The alumni questionnaire was hosted using Bristol Online Surveys. The questionnaire was distributed to the past three years of alumni from case study subject areas by the University's alumni team. This method of sending the questionnaire was considered to be the most reliable manner to contact people. The questionnaire was completed by 47 respondents, across a range of the disciplines. Due to the questionnaire being delivered by the alumni team, statistics regarding successful email delivery rate are unavailable.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken to collect data from students and staff from the chosen disciplines. Those interviewed were selected by members of the steering group associated with the case study subject area. This ensured that those selected were representative of the range of opportunities that embed partnership in teaching and learning in those disciplines.

The interview schedules were developed by student researchers from the original research questions; these were subsequently discussed and further developed by the wider research team. Following an initial interview in each discipline, the research team met to review and reflect on the process and to refine the interview schedules for the remainder of the interviews. All interviews were digitally recorded and subsequently transcribed.

Overall, 11 staff interviews took place, three staff in Biomedical Science, History, and Psychology, and two members of staff from Media Production. Five semi-structured interviews took place with students from across the four disciplines.

Focus groups

Focus groups were planned to take place across all disciplines. These sessions were developed around the idea of concept mapping. Unfortunately due to the timing of data collection, recruiting students for these sessions was unsuccessful.

Secondary data

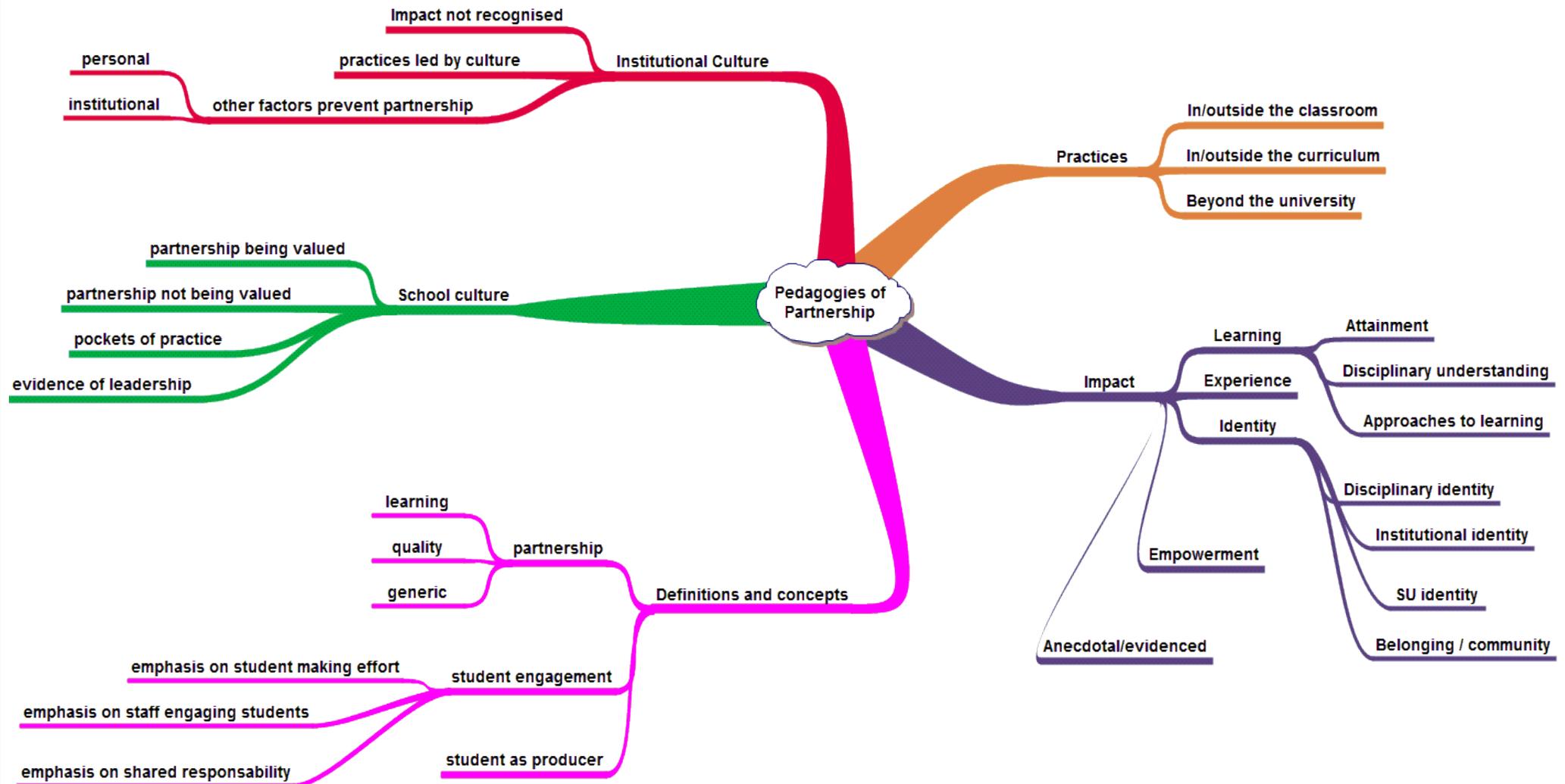
In order to triangulate data and to provide additional sources where primary data collection had not been as comprehensive as the team would have hoped, a range of secondary, pre-existing data sources were tapped. Qualitative data from institution-wide surveys, NSS, a level two survey, external examiner reports, and annual monitoring reports (AMRs) were drawn upon.

4.3 Analysis

During the primary data collection, early analysis commenced and ideas surrounding the data initially formed. In order to explore these themes further, Inspiration 8 software was used to visualise these ideas as seen in Figure 1.

Qualitative data analysis software, NVivo 10, was used as a tool to organise and manage the wealth of qualitative data collected through the research. A thematic analysis was undertaken by the staff research team members initially working together to share interpretations from the data and to make decisions about an initial analytical framework that the whole team then worked from. The coding was then undertaken through an iterative process of individual work and team discussions to ensure collective, agreed understandings and interpretations of the data.

Figure 1: Diagram of initial thematic analysis



Four key themes emerged from across the data; these are reported on in later sections of this report: Definitions and concepts

- Pedagogical practices
- Impact
- Culture

4.4 Symposium on embedding partnership in teaching and learning

On 2 June 2015, the research team hosted a Symposium on ‘Embedding Partnership in Teaching and Learning’ at Lincoln. This presented the initial findings from the research to students and staff from the University and Students’ Union, as well as peers from other institutions.

The event followed the initial themes from the analysis and enabled focussed discussions to take place. Definitions and concepts were unpicked through the use of a question and answer panel debate; the themes of practices, impact and culture were developed in breakout sessions. Overall discussions and potential recommendations developing from the research were brought together and discussed with all participants during the final plenary session. Perspectives and ideas developed from the day have been drawn upon and included within this report. In particular, the recommendations of this report are heavily influenced by the conversations that took place during this event.

4.5 Limitations

The sample size of primary data collection was limited, potentially due to clashes with assessment periods as well as an institutional commitment to ensuring students are not asked to complete surveys during the NSS period. As a result, the research team decided to explore additional secondary data sources to provide further relevant data.

5. Findings: definitions and concepts

In analysing the primary data, the research team began by trying to identify the various understandings of the concepts in question: partnership and student engagement. This was also helpful in articulating the rationale of the four different disciplines for developing partnership working and showing how this differs between the disciplines.

Much of the data discussed in this section was collected through interviews with academic staff in the four disciplines. Questions on defining student engagement and partnership were asked at the beginning of the interview to help frame the rest of discussion.

5.1 Partnership

In asking participants to explore their understanding of partnership working as a feature of learning and teaching, two predominant themes emerged which illustrated some disciplinary differences.

Firstly, in the Arts and Humanities disciplines, there was greater emphasis on working together to create an end product. In History, staff defined partnership as being about different people making contributions to a collective endeavour, be that learning itself, the creation of learning resources and opportunities for others, or the review and improvement of the programme. There was a theme of staff providing a starting point or a frame for the activity, be that an initial teaching input or the focus of reviewing a programme. Similarly in Media it was felt that partnership brings people together to achieve a shared goal, this could be students working in partnership with each other or it could be students and staff. Working in partnership across specialisms is particularly important for Media so, therefore, the process of working in partnership is as interesting as the end result.

In the Science, Social Science and Health disciplines, the emphasis tended to be on challenging traditional relationships, power balances and cultures. In Psychology, partnership is seen by staff as a philosophy and practical form of student engagement that recognises learning is not one-way. While staff suggested that partnership does not necessarily mean a complete departure from current teaching practices, such as lectures, but means adapting them around the principles of partnership; students suggested that a move away from large group teaching might be necessary to achieve partnership:

I suppose when there's a big lecture theatre of students, I suppose it's quite easy to forget that they are individual students themselves, so it would be more working with students individually so tutorial groups, we have tutorial groups, and I think they're really good where our own personal tutor gets to know us as a person rather than a lecturer seeing a lecture theatre full of just students really. So it would be working with us individually. (Interview, Psychology student 1)

Staff participants expressed the thought that partnership in teaching and learning is not equal, in that the teacher is more knowledgeable and it can be difficult to get students wanting power and control dispersed to them in an often consumerist environment.

In Biomedical Science, partnership is seen as a helpful challenge to traditional norms in the teacher–student relationship, and as more of a culture than a particular practice. Whereas student engagement might focus on what the student does or what the member of staff does, partnership focuses on the interface between these and how a collaborative effort can lead to a more positive outcome, be that in the learning process or in quality assurance and enhancement. However, there were some feelings in Biomedical Science that this concept might have limited applicability or

relevance in their discipline which is both constrained by accreditation requirements and under pressure from growing student numbers (with groups of 300+ being taught in single first-year sessions).

In discussing partnership, rather than student engagement, participants focused more on the different contributions that make up the teaching and learning experience. Namely, how the interface and relationship between students and staff, and students and students, can provide a helpful learning experience in itself as well as produce a better quality learning outcome overall.

While there appears to be some consensus that partnership means a more collaborative endeavour, the starting point and framing of partnership differs between disciplines. This appears from the data to be in part informed by the experimental practice through which partnership-based pedagogies have emerged. For instance, in History the 'Making Digital History' project focused on students not just passively consuming knowledge from ready-made artefacts, but rather interpreting the knowledge for themselves and supporting the learning of other students through sharing these artefacts using digital tools. This is a good example of where initial experimental projects have allowed a new approach to learning to emerge, which evolves beyond those projects and begins to influence the culture of the discipline.

For some, partnership stems from an ideological opposition to a consumerist model of higher education as well as forming a very practical method of facilitating learning. This was considered a helpful resistance, but it is worth noting that the participants of this research were selected based on their already demonstrated practice and commitment to partnership. There was also a consensus emerging that working in partnership has implications for traditional approaches to teaching and for the power relations between staff and students. Arguably, partnership is about sharing responsibility and control over the learning experience. However, this was not unanimous:

I think we make the mistake of thinking partnership means moving away from the traditional notion of a 50 minute lecture and I don't necessarily [think] it always does, but it will have to eventually. (Interview, Psychology academic 2)

However, despite the strong feeling that partnership is a concept that challenges power relations and sees a more active role for students, this did not go as far as to say the partnership is equal. To the contrary, the comments on this topic recognised the ultimate limitations of partnership:

Partnership is different in teaching and learning, in that there's not an equal partnership. The person teaching has more knowledge, but then partnership is about getting someone to learn something but at the same time you have to reimagine being the person who discovers it for the first time or seeing a different viewpoint of it. Partnership is a recognition that it's not simple one-way. (Interview, Psychology academic 3)

There was recognition of the challenges encountered when developing partnership too. For instance, there was a recurring emphasis from staff in the interviews on the differing expectations of learning and teaching that students arrive at University with. Staff described this as needing to change the 'mind-set' of students before you can truly engage them as partners. An interesting line of discussion featured throughout the Symposium event too around staff trying to empower students as partners, and thereby divest their own power, only to realise that some students do not want this. Some staff also recognised their own 'nervousness' as a challenge of creating partnership in that they worried about being seen to not know the answer if they went off from a carefully planned teaching session. Building confidence and managing expectations appear to be

important considerations in building partnership which if not addressed proactively could soon become barriers to partnership.

5.2 Student engagement

In the History case study area, student engagement was defined by staff in a basic way as a measure for how much students interact with and respond to the teaching and learning process. This can be understood through interactions between staff and students and through the end result, such as in the student's written work. One member of staff suggested that developing a student's engagement with their learning could have a positive impact on the learning of other students. This was supported by staff in Psychology who view student engagement as a measure of how students respond to learning opportunities and the extent to which they proactively reap benefits those opportunities. Good student engagement is where students assume a more active role in learning. However, students in Psychology had more mixed views, with some placing more emphasis on the role of staff in creating opportunities for students to engage and others feeling the onus was on them to 'get more involved':

so many students are very much content with just going to the lectures, going home afterwards and then kind of like going on by themselves like, but then there'll be the same people who kind of complain there's nothing to do, whereas in reality it's the ones that are not actually doing anything, so there are opportunities but I guess it's ... it depends on the individual. I think a lot of people aren't massively motivated to kind of like engage themselves. No. (Interview, Psychology student 3)

so not just sat in a lecture and being talked to ... (Interview, Biomedical Science Student 2)

Similarly, in Biomedical Science there is a view that, at a simple level, student engagement can be understood and measured through the levels of interaction between students and staff and between students and students, but may also be determined by the student's grasp of the subject and their work. However, there was more of an emphasis on students taking a more active, independent role in their learning and associating this with them enjoying the subject more.

This chimes with views from staff in Media where there is a production-focused curriculum centred on students developing and delivering their own concepts and outputs. This was articulated as students being proactive in their work and determining the next steps or shaping their own approach to the work – albeit from an initial brief set by staff.

There was consensus between participants around student engagement being a concept that understands and measures how active and independent students are in making the most of learning opportunities offered to them. There was clear recognition that academic staff strongly influence how actively students engage with learning through the teaching methods and pedagogies they use. This is helpful in confirming the premise of the research.

Student engagement means when I offer my hand for them to join in they take my hand and do join in. (Interview, Psychology academic 2)

Some staff offered suggestions of discreet approaches to measuring or monitoring a student's engagement with their learning such as monitoring their face-to-face interactions, but it is known from the literature and wider practice that there are other measures too, especially in terms of measuring digital engagement.

The definitions offered here are fairly straightforward and mechanistic in part. This could suggest that while methods for enhancing student engagement in learning can be complex and varied, the end goal of students reaping greater value from the learning experience remains a simple one, and a present one. This is confirmed by an external examiner from one of the subjects who held the opinion that student engagement was proactive in the curriculum and embedded in student-staff interactions (External Examiner Report 2013-14).

5.3 Summary

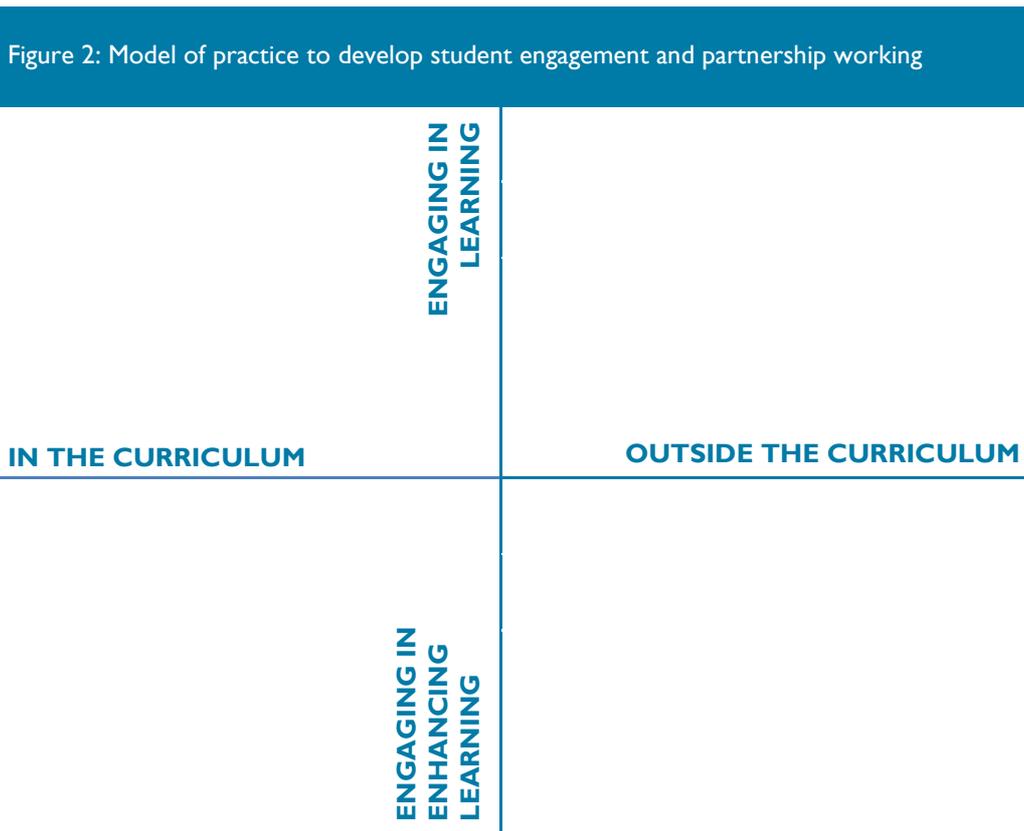
The literature on student engagement and partnership presents a range of interpretations of these concepts, each with different nuances and motives. The views of participants begin to identify some of the same nuances, namely the more active role of students and the tensions around responsibility and equity. However, there are some pre-requisites identified in the literature that did not emerge from our research. The Higher Education Academy's (HEA's) values of partnership are particularly helpful in summarising these:

Authenticity – the rationale for all parties to invest in partnership is meaningful and credible.	Trust – all parties take time to get to know one-another and can be confident they will be treated with respect and fairness.
Honesty – all parties are honest about what they can contribute to partnership and about where the boundaries of partnership lie.	Courage – all parties are encouraged to critique and challenge practices, structures and approaches that undermine partnership, and are enabled to take risks to develop new ways of working and learning.
Inclusivity – there is equality of opportunity and any barriers (structural or cultural) that prevent engagement are challenged.	Plurality – all parties recognise and value the unique talents, perspectives and experiences that individuals contribute to partnership.
Reciprocity – all parties have an interest in, and stand to benefit from working and/or learning in partnership.	Responsibility – all parties share collective responsibility for the aims of the partnership, and individual responsibility for the contribution they make.
Empowerment – power is distributed appropriately and ways of working and learning promote healthy power dynamics.	

HEA Framework for student engagement through partnership (2015)

Nonetheless, participants have collectively articulated a rounded and interesting view of student engagement and partnership as concepts that can be used in designing and enhancing the learning experience. This begins with a focus on how active students are in the learning process and is built upon by considering how collaborative the interface between the student's contribution and the teacher's contribution is.

It became clear during the Symposium event that a typology of student engagement, which suits the University of Lincoln's circumstances, would be helpful in framing the discussions about what we mean by student engagement. Models that simply differentiate between engagement in learning and engagement in enhancing learning provide a helpful starting point, but a further dimension that differentiates between 'in the curriculum' and 'outside the curriculum' is useful in understanding where and how student engagement is happening. However, it was also recognised that practice can be 'on the edge' of the curriculum where it is not formally validated by runs in practice alongside core teaching activity.



The analysis of data collected for this research suggests that activity in each of the quadrants above could benefit activity in the others and that, while something may begin in one area, it could move over time. For instance, an innovative project that began outside the curriculum may, over time, be adapted within the curriculum. On the other hand, more innovative practice may be barred from becoming part of the curriculum for one reason or another.

Throughout the data collected there is an overarching theme around staff retaining control over the learning experience and setting the boundaries of a student’s engagement, or at the very least determining a start or end point. Many of the views expressed by participants suggest that academic staff create learning opportunities and students then choose to engage with those opportunities to a lesser or greater extent. This may be logical in the current landscape of learning and teaching, but if partnership is a construct for disrupting the status quo and rethinking the role of students then this may need to change over time so that students have a greater role in shaping, framing and designing their own learning.

These perspectives provide useful frames for the rest of the research enabling an analysis of practices in the four disciplines, how the institutional culture is aiding or prohibiting this practice, and the impact these practices have on student development.

5.4 Recommendations

Debates about understandings of partnership and student engagement emerging from this research lead to the following recommendations for practice in higher education:

- articulating the shared rationale and aims for embedding partnership into learning and teaching is important as this is likely to differ between disciplines;

- the process of partnership is as important as the end product and this should be given due attention in designing the learning experience;
- further work is necessary to explore the potential for, and implications of, truly challenging traditional power relations in the learning environment.

Case study: Psychology

Understanding expectations of engagement

The School of Psychology at the University of Lincoln is widely recognised as having strengths in student engagement, particularly in peer support, developing community, student-led enhancement and student representation. They aim to “see students engaged in their own learning from day one – viewing learning as something more than what is assessed and credited” (University of Lincoln 2015). This work is regularly disseminated internally and nationally, but the School has recently stopped to consider whether their efforts really are having the intended impact.

The School of Psychology’s approach

Over several years the School has introduced and embedded a comprehensive framework of activity aimed at fostering greater student engagement with learning, community and quality enhancement activities.

This begins as students arrive when they benefit from a second-year student peer mentor who acts as a ‘big brother/sister’ in the crucial first few weeks of settling into university and the programme; and this is complemented by a robust personal tutor system whereby students have a timetabled tutorial weekly. Tutorials are co-ordinated across the school to provide each tutor group with a structured programme of support for understanding their strengths, weaknesses, engagement and ambitions.

In a discipline that is research-intensive, there is a need to ensure a healthy supply of student participation in their peers’ studies and tests. The school has a system of students earning points every time they contribute their time to an activity, and each student is required to earn a certain number of points to draw participants from the student participant pool themselves in their third year.

In addition, students can become involved in contributing to the life of school through opportunities such as organising the final year student research conference, undertaking both voluntary and paid work assisting academics with their research, and attending research seminars. There is a strong history of effective student representation too with student representatives regularly engaging students in the development of their experience, including the re-design of assessment feedback ‘front sheets’ and the redesign of the undergraduate Psychology programmes.

These are just some examples of the wealth of activity and effort invested. As the school redevelops its programmes though, it wanted to better understand precisely what works and has a positive impact on student engagement.

Researching expectations of engagement

In 2014, the School was successful in applying to the University's Fund for Educational Development (FED) to undertake a research project aimed at understanding the relationship between two main threads of the student experience: student expectations and student engagement. The School's Student Engagement Champion, Dr Kirsty Miller, and students Hannah Pitt, James Ferrier and Dan Richardson have led the project throughout the 2014-15 academic year.

The team administered a survey of newly enrolled students on undergraduate Psychology programmes to assess their expectations of how and to what extent they will engage with their learning experience. This was followed up by focus groups to unpick the themes emerging from the initial survey. The project team have since followed up with a second survey of the same cohort, this time at the end of the first year of study, to assess how much students did actually engage with their learning experience.

Over the year, it became clear that expectations did not match up to what students experienced. For example, where students expected that they might ask for help from, and interact with, academics more, this occurred less in reality; and where students expected managing time and learning course material to be difficult, it was in fact even more difficult than expected.

I knew there was a lot of independent work to be done but the amount has really hit me, I've learnt that I need to very self-motivated. (Symposium event, Psychology student from the FED research project)

At the time of writing this case study, the School of Psychology project team are still finalising their findings. However, it is already clear that useful data is emerging from this exercise which can further understanding about whether students expect to engage as partners in their learning and whether they perceive to have done so by the end of the year or programme. The team are exploring how they might collect this data more systematically from students across the University.

More on this project is available at: <http://fedpsychology2015.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk>

6. Findings: pedagogical practices

One of the research questions that underpinned this research asked “what forms of pedagogical practice foster and support meaningful partnerships with students in different disciplinary contexts in higher education?” Through the interviews and questionnaires, students and staff were specifically asked about the particular activities they felt contributed to a culture of partnership between staff and students. This section summarises the key findings from analysis of these staff and student views. Analysis also incorporated secondary data from previous student feedback, staff programme reports and external examiner comments.

6.1 Engagement in research

The strongest finding to emerge from the analysis is the significance of opportunities for collaborative research in developing partnership approaches, both within and beyond the curriculum. Studies elsewhere have identified the role of undergraduate research in students’ cognitive, personal and professional development (Hunter *et al.* 2006), while Spronken-Smith and Walker (2010) also identify the added benefit that inquiry-based approaches can “help to facilitate an academic community of practice including both academics and students” (p738). This research extends these findings by highlighting the potential of collaborative research to change the nature of the staff-student relationship and develop a culture of partnership.

While this may have been expected, given the University’s strategic commitment to research-engaged learning and teaching, the strength and regularity of references to the role of research from both staff and students was striking. Several respondents referred to opportunities through the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Scheme (UROS) programme, an internally-funded scheme offering research bursaries to undergraduate students. This type of scheme can be seen in a number of institutions, and it clearly has a significant impact on the experience of the students able to benefit from it.

it’s through the opportunities that I’ve applied for and volunteered for that I’ve got to know staff rather than just through my course. (Interview, Psychology student 1)

I’m quite interested in the research side of Psychology ... so I was actively looking for that opportunity ... asking lecturers if they’ve got studies they need research assistants for. (Interview, Psychology student 3)

In addition to these extra-curricular opportunities, there are also opportunities for students within the curriculum to collaborate with staff on a research project. This was a particular feature of the Psychology curriculum, where there was evidence of a strong culture of collaborative research opportunities: a feature that has also been commended by the external examiner. Similarly, the external examiner for Biomedical Sciences comments on the “vibrant research culture” which has developed recently.

In survey responses, a number of students highlighted engagement in research as an aspect that they particularly enjoyed:

Being involved in research both as a participant ... and conducting it as part of the Research Skills modules and dissertation

Love that it’s real world, proper research based learning

Being involved with research means I am contributing to the fields of Psychology I'm interested in whilst building my skills as a researcher. (Undergraduate student questionnaire responses)

A feature of several of the subjects involved in the research was the organisation of a 'student conference', either actual or planned. This gives the opportunity for students to present and share their research projects alongside staff, and creating an event that includes students from all levels of the programme as well as local sixth formers. Psychology students become involved in the planning and organisation of the conference, and cited this as an example which developed a sense of partnership.

I helped organise a student conference in the first year so that was kind of a partnership event which I took part in. (Interview, Psychology student 2)

One stated advantage of the student conference was to develop a sense of sharing; making student outputs public rather than private pieces of work only shared with the lecturers who mark them. This is felt to provide students with a more realistic research experience.

they spend all their time doing this research project ... and come out with some great stuff, but it's just us that reads it. (Interview, Biomedical Science academic 1)

there's something to be said about more visibility for their research ... just as historians in general but as students in particular. (Interview, History academic 1)

6.2 Large group teaching – creating engagement and participation

The next section of this report explores culture and describes the importance of group size in developing partnership, with large lecture theatres seen as a barrier to participation. However, in the research interviews, a significant number of staff and students referred to specific techniques and styles used in large group teaching situations in order to create greater engagement and participation by students. By using techniques that required students to become more involved in the lecture, staff felt that the atmosphere could become less formal. A number of staff referred to the development of empathy: remembering what it was like to be a student in a large lecture, and creating greater engagement through a more relaxed atmosphere.

Staff and students referred to the use of humour as a device for creating a more relaxed environment.

Some are more jokey with the students where it feels more of a personal level, and I find it's easier to understand the topic just because of the way they engage with everyone. (Interview, Psychology student 1)

I'm always using humour and stories and anecdotes. I try and inspire and create a sense of wonder. (Interview, Psychology academic 2)

Students described how the simple act of responding to a question in a lecture can be both daunting, and an important element in developing a sense of partnership. There are several examples of techniques to encourage students to respond to questions in lectures, including the use of 'talking partners' in lectures, and allowing longer waiting time before moving on.

You have to make time to allow people to sit on that and I use some traditional methods like talking partners. (Interview, Psychology academic 2)

having small discussions in lectures can help a bit in getting different ideas from the students. (Interview, Biomedical Science academic 2)

A number of staff referred to the actual or planned use of interactive voting tools as a way of allowing greater participation.

Another identified method of creating engagement is to encourage student discovery, promoting the notion that the teacher is not the sole source of knowledge.

Students can be two or three hours' worth of reading away from knowing loads of stuff that I don't know. (Interview, Psychology academic 2)

I give them a paper and they have to tell me about it rather than the other way round. (Interview, Biomedical Science academic 2)

6.3 Use of technology

Several respondents referred to their use of technology to create frameworks for partnership, providing students and staff with collaborative environments that allow richer sharing of ideas and resources. Many of these used technologies which are already familiar to students, such as Facebook and Twitter.

A closed Facebook group is a great way to support social informal relationships. (Interview, Media academic 1)

The same respondent also stated that there are:

comments features which allow you to offer feedback ... a viable option for supporting and facilitating successful collaboration in partnership. (Interview, Media academic 1)

External examiners for Media Production identified the creative use of online collaborative environments as a particular strength of the programme.

The key feature of an online collaborative environment is the option for shared editing and commenting. This feature is present in Google Docs, used and promoted by staff in Media Production, while the wiki tool in the VLE offers an institutionally supported and hosted platform for this.

that is students working together and it's using Wiki Pages and then students can comment on each other, and I can use comments as well to help guide people on the Wiki Pages. So it's a way of [them] doing the learning but I am guiding them through what they need to learn. (Interview, Biomedical Science academic 2)

Technology is also used to support the creation and sharing of resources by students. This is another activity that was referred to several times as an effective way of creating a sense of partnership. The use of technology is particularly relevant in enabling broader dissemination of resources, in addition to the development of students' own digital literacies. The 'Making Digital History' project is a strong example of this (see History Case study for further details).

It's done obviously doing something for themselves and for the module but at the same time they are working with us even to create learning materials and actually adapting tools to support teaching and learning for the future for other students. So I guess that's my idea of partnership. (Interview, History academic 2)

A separate example of students creating and sharing resources comes from Biomedical Sciences, where the 'Peerwise' software is used by students to create and share multiple-choice questions on a particular topic. This is cited by lecturers as an effective way to promote partnership working between students.

6.4 Interdisciplinarity

The Media Production case study, provided later in this report, highlights the benefits of students working on collaborative projects with staff and students from other subject areas, either within cognate disciplines within the college or more broadly across the whole institution. The 'co_LAB' project (see case study on p. 42 for further details) is often referred to as an excellent example of the power of interdisciplinarity to create engagement and partnership. It has been commended by external examiners, with the recommendation that the scheme is extended and incorporated into credit-bearing activities. They also identified interdisciplinary collaboration as an important employability skill. A comment from one of the Media Lecturers involved in co_LAB demonstrates how this type of activity creates a real sense of ownership by students:

a human centred design course where we had mixed student and staff groups, each doing a different design challenge. When staff weren't there, students carried on and took real ownership of those projects. (Interview, Media academic 2)

A workshop, held during the symposium on embedding partnership (2 June 2015), highlighted the importance of enabling collaboration across disciplines, with institutional factors of space and timetabling seen as potential barriers to be overcome. This is, therefore, included as one of the recommendations of this report.

6.5 Peer learning

Staff in each of the four subject areas identified elements of peer learning as practices which promote a sense of partnership. The University introduced a pilot scheme of peer-assisted study sessions (PASS) during 2014-15, and it is notable that each area included in this research project was also a pilot subject for PASS. Since the subjects selected for this study were purposefully chosen for their recognised good practice in student engagement, it is perhaps not surprising that they should also be early adopters of PASS, and serves to confirm the perceived value of peer learning.

Staff in Biomedical Sciences also described the use of peer review, while Psychology has an established peer mentoring scheme alongside its developing PASS programme.

I recruit second year students ... and I consider them to be part of the module team and part of the partnership or the collective effort. (Interview, Psychology academic 1)

6.6 Other factors that promote partnership

Alongside the pedagogical practices that promote partnership, the analysis revealed other contributory factors that are worth noting. The findings on cultural aspects in a later section of this report explain how the use of space was referred to by a number of staff. While several of these comments referred to the requirements of teaching spaces, there were also examples of how removing students from their conventional spaces strengthens partnership approaches.

As soon as I moved the group out of that room we were in, their engagement, partnership, performance, enjoyment, just soared. (Interview, Psychology academic 1)

I want passion from the students, and the only way to get that is to put them in a position where they can experience freely how to develop those experiences. You can only do that by breaking rules and opening up the space. (Interview, Biomedical Science academic 1)

Finally, the importance of early engagement was mentioned by several staff. One Biomedical Science lecturer described the value of debates as a practice which encourages engagement, and organises debates on topical issues during first year students' welcome week, right at the outset of their student journey. A History lecturer described the importance of establishing PASS as early as possible, recognising the first few weeks of a student's experience as critical in setting expectations and establishing behaviours.

6.7 Summary

The data from this project demonstrates that there are a range of forms of pedagogical practice that foster and support meaningful partnerships with students in different disciplinary contexts. Of significant importance is meaningful engagement in research and research-like activities both within and beyond the curriculum, developing curiosity through an enquiry-based culture. Within this, it is evident that opportunities to share and present work publicly support student engagement and development. This section of the report has also considered how it is possible to develop pedagogies of partnership even where the space and class size might be considered as constraints to more creative practices. It is also evident that different technologies can be effectively drawn on to enable collaborative environments that support learning and teaching partnerships. Collaboration within and across disciplines is highly valued by staff and students, although there is recognition that, at times, institutional structures may create challenges in establishing innovative practices.

Collaborative learning, through different approaches to peer learning, emerged as a particular feature of the case studies in this research; not only supporting the development of student–student and student–staff partnerships, but when implemented early in the learning journey, supporting students as they develop as partners in their studies.

6.8 Recommendations

Practices that embed the ideas of partnership between students and staff are central to this research. To further those mentioned, it is important to:

- recognise the importance of learning spaces, including:
 - spaces that encourage more collaborative approaches in large group teaching;
 - spaces for sharing work and allowing for inter-disciplinary work;
 - curriculum space - flexibility of structures and process to allow creative approaches and inter-disciplinary working through, for example, timetable flexibility ('flexible Fridays'), and exploring use of integrative assessment;
- provide opportunities for interactions and collaboration between staff and students, both in technologically supported ways and in traditional face-to-face settings;
- implement curriculum initiatives early and across the board – for example through the incorporation of inter-disciplinary projects during welcome week.

Case study: History

Background

The subject of History is currently located in the School of History and Heritage, within the College of Arts. Recruitment to the BA (Hons) History programme has increased significantly in recent years with over 100 students each year now on the programme, resulting in the recruitment of several new staff and the opportunity to broaden the range of staff research interests.

The programme recently underwent a major revalidation, with a revised curriculum running since 2013. A particular aim of the revalidation was to align the curriculum with the research interests of staff, and a teaching and learning strategy that promotes the notion of 'student as producer of history'. The programme specification describes the

emphasis throughout the programme on positioning the students as active participants in the research process [and] assessment forms [which] involve students as active participants in collaborative or individual research projects. (University of Lincoln 2014, p. 9)
(http://www.lincoln.ac.uk/about/courses/hsthstub_2015-16.pdf)

Evidence of impact

History students have generally high levels of satisfaction, particularly in the area of teaching. NSS scores from 2014 show that 98% of students agree that staff are enthusiastic about their teaching, with other questions on the teaching scale recording 92-94% agreement. (Source: unistats. See: <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/subjects/satisfaction/10007151FT-HSTHSTUB/>)

External examiners recognise that students are encouraged to undertake their own research-focused work from an early stage and welcome the increased breadth and creativity of the work students can undertake.

Staff interviews reveal a strongly embedded culture of student engagement, with an active student engagement champion in the school. Staff describe the active involvement of students in curriculum redesign workshops, with students taking the lead in making suggestions for change. In addition, the newly established PASS scheme is seen as a significant factor in promoting a sense of partnership between students. Of particular interest is the 'Making Digital History' initiative to create and share resources for teaching history in higher education, which staff consider to be the main way in which a partnership approach to learning is promoted through the use of technology.

Making Digital History - <http://makingdigitalhistory.co.uk/>

The project was originally funded through the Higher Education Academy (HEA), with subsequent support from the University's Fund for Educational Development (FED), and is underpinned by the principles of 'Student as Producer'. The initiative involves the use of Xerte

(an open-source tool for the development of learning objects), with students working in groups to research topics and develop online resources.

The project involves assessed work across all levels of the curriculum and in different types of module. Its key aim is to shift students from consumers to active producers/communicators of historical knowledge to audiences beyond academia.

A case study of the project has been included in a recent compendium of effective practice in independent study, produced by the HEA. <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/node/10476>

Summary

The History case study provides excellent examples of innovative approaches to partnership in a Humanities subject, based on principles of research-engaged teaching and learning. Through progressive redesign, the curriculum has been shaped to incorporate staff research interests, while encouraging students to undertake their own research and share knowledge through the creation of learning resources. Students are active participants in their learning, and also in processes of change to enhance the quality of their learning.

7. Findings: culture

Where in other sections of this report, discipline specific differences have been identified, within the analysis of culture, many commonalities occur. It is also evident how the cultures of partnership have been progressed through the work of Student as Producer (Neary 2013).

One external examiner highlighted that student engagement is a key target area in ensuring that the ideas of Student as Producer become embedded into the curriculum. The idea of an embedded culture of partnership is one that presented some of the issues in data analysis. During the interview process, student participants often lacked insight into what was meant by 'partnership', potentially due to its embedded nature. Following HEA funding, as part of the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS), the University of Lincoln's Student Engagement Strategy (2012) highlights a need to move from participation to partnership.

Where previous sections of this report have noted complexities in definitions and meanings around key concepts, and explored pedagogical practices that support partnership development, this section addresses some of the perceived cultural barriers and opportunities in this regard.

7.1 Identity

The issue of how the learning culture fostered through pedagogies of partnership can influence a student's sense of identity emerged from across the data; with experiences at different levels of study being relevant. Managing expectations both during recruitment and subsequent activities plays a crucial role in starting to overcome some of the barriers identified in the research. Although level one students were not a part of the sample in this research, students further into their studies, and staff, reflected on the level one experience, noting differing expectations resulting in a potential lack of awareness of a culture of partnership.

I think first years have a bit too much of a fixed idea of they are coming to be taught by us, not every first year, but quite a lot of them. (Interview, History academic 1)

The idea of identity being gained over time appears through the data collected. Ensuring consistent messages is one element of developing a sense of identity and belonging, however, there are many other attributes to be explored. One external examiner noted that by level three, students begin to demonstrate a mature approach to their subject. As shown, this was not achieved straight away; however, a strong contributing factor was students' engagement with research at an early stage.

Culture is developed and shared among groups, so to be part of it there needs to be a way in. The role of the student representative is noted as providing an opportunity to do this.

Second year. Because ... it started to count plus I started taking part in student rep SU helper so I became more engaged in the course in that way, because when you're a course rep, you're engaging with lecturers, you're taking people's ideas and going to higher levels [sic]. (Interview, Psychology student 2)

Discipline-related identity was explored through data collection; students interviewed were asked their perspectives on how they began to adopt an identity as a student of their subject area. Student respondents talked about a sense of becoming more relaxed with the learning environment being a point at which they began to feel they were becoming a part of their discipline.

When asked: “At which point in your course did you feel like you could identify as a Biomedical Science student?” One student responded:

I kind of felt like – first year it was all very much am I clever enough to be here? Have I chosen the right degree? And then when you get to second year and you go to your lectures and you’re like, “Yeah, I remember that, okay, I understand that” and you start to think that I know where I’m going, I know what I’m doing.’ (Interview, Biomedical Science student 1)

In addition to feeling part of a wider culture of partnership, local practice contributes to this development of identity. For Biomedical Science students, providing hands on practical experience was shown to have a positive impact on becoming part of a wider community of biomedical science students. This reflects commentary by the Teaching and Learning Research Programme (Brennan *et al.* 2009) showing that allowing students to learn through practising their discipline develops a powerful grasp of approaching their subject like an expert.

I suppose when all these opportunities came about, I mean, there’s peer mentors and a lot of these extra, extra things that you can do within the course that helps you ... helps you get more involved. (Interview, Psychology student 1)

Although offering a positive route to engaging and subsequently developing partnerships, it is necessary to be cautious about the repercussions of labelling students and the impact on a wider culture of partnership. One student, when asked about how they would like to contribute to their course, responded that their course representative took the role of communicating with their tutors.

I know we’ve got course reps. I feel like we should have better communication with them because they’re the ones who communicate with the people higher up. (Interview, Psychology student 1)

This statement does not reflect the successes of the representation system, it instead reflects on improvements needed to ensure that students, regardless of role or position within their course, should feel able to partake in the wider conversations and contribute towards the culture of partnership.

7.2 Time and workload

The curriculum as a platform for delivering partnership was considered to have many barriers. The complexities of disciplines including module options and accrediting bodies often pushed many practices outside the curriculum. Subsequently issues associated with developing partnerships outside timetabled sessions impact the development of a culture.

I think involving students in our own actual research as well, how to negotiate that with the curriculum, can that be done within the curriculum? (Interview, History academic 1)

Maintaining a level of research, teaching and enterprise has been identified across all disciplines by academics. One external examiner commented on the importance of staff research interests being brought into learning and teaching in creative ways that will inspire students to engage in their subject.

Students also face problems with having time to explore developing meaningful partnerships. When asked why they did not participate in further opportunities, 26 students (45.61%) responding to the undergraduate questionnaire stated that they did not take part in further opportunities due to time

constraints. This issue warrants further exploration as there are many issues that can impact on perceived time constraints.

While this research has shed light on many pedagogical practices that foster partnership, it is evident that there are perceived barriers in place that contribute to a culture of partnership being difficult in some areas, moving some activities to the edge of the curriculum. Biomedical Science students identified during interview that an uncertain timetable placed pressures on being able to partake in activities that were not directly in the curriculum.

The timetabling is ridiculous. There is no structure and consistency whatsoever and it makes it near on impossible to plan other activities around it on a week-to-week basis. (Level 2 survey, Biomedical Science student)

In addition to time pressures from the academic perspective, students are required to balance part-time work considerations and social activities. Foster *et al.* (2014) draw these conflicts together with the questioning of students putting short-term financial gain through paid work against the long-term benefit of participating in their studies.

While students and staff have to balance their many responsibilities, finding time for practices that develop learning partnerships should be a priority.

7.3 Activities outside the curriculum

As noted previously, there may be barriers to developing partnerships within the curriculum resulting in many of the practices that foster partnership successfully, taking place outside the curriculum and the timetable. From the perspective of culture, this creates many interesting ideas to explore.

Biomedical Science notably identifies using student societies as being a key area of working round limitations associated with the timetable.

I've been involved in setting up a society for biomedics, for example, that they would come to me and say, "tell us what you think would help? How can we make this better?" It's those areas that I think you really see it within science where there are limitations in the curriculum based on external forces. (Interview, Biomedical Science academic 1)

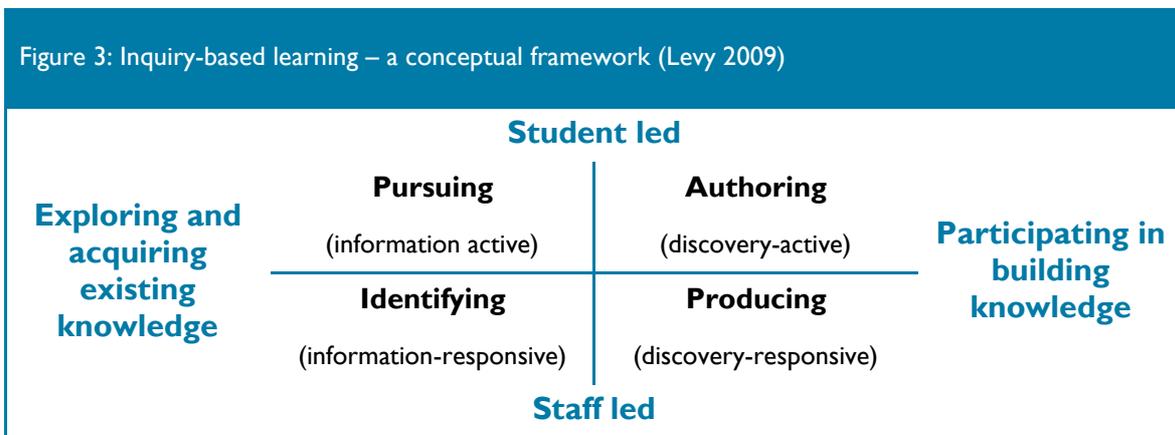
This sees a notable change in the idea of who initiates partnerships; true partnership has to be developed by all parties involved. Much work has been undertaken regarding students in roles of developing curriculum design (Campbell *et al.* 2009). Students are experts in the student experience and as such play a crucial role in the further development of an institutional culture of partnership.

Some of the most effective activities for partnership are those on the edge or outside of the curriculum. (Symposium on Embedding Partnership in Teaching and Learning, participant of breakout session of culture)

As students play a role in developing partnership in the curriculum, academics play an equal role in developing it outside. Recognising skill sets and expertise in differing areas will play a key part in taking partnership in higher education forward.

Healey and Jenkins (2009) explore the role of enquiry-based learning through developing undergraduate research and enquiry using Levy (2009) as a model of displaying activity. This model,

as seen in Figure 3, can also apply to extra-curricular activities. A shift in student-led approaches, such as those seen in societies and student-led projects would move towards a pursuing and authoring student body.



7.4 Group size

Environment plays a substantial part in developing and sustaining pedagogies of partnership. Both group size and learning environment contributed to discussions about confidence and expectation of learning environments.

We're all in the frame of mind of if lectures necessarily are not the best way. (Interview, Biomedical Science staff 2)

The use of large lecture theatres can present as barrier to participation, as noted in the previous section. Across student responses to this research, lack of confidence in both knowledge and presenting ideas in front of a large group of peers were consistent themes in these areas. This links to earlier discussions about confidence and the importance of pedagogical approaches that provided a supportive approach to encouraging interaction in large group settings.

I find it awkward shouting out, I know they expect it, but I feel like you should put your hand up like in a school sort of thing, but in seminars you can feel more comfortable shouting out. (Interview, Psychology student 2)

Within the lecture theatre environment, students are able to gain knowledge, but it is within seminars that students feel that they are able to get to know people and develop skills. A student from History explained in the undergraduate questionnaire about how seminars made them “feel less pressure and more able to perform.”

7.5 Summary

There is evidence that demonstrates existing cultures of partnership within the four case study disciplines in this study. This was to be expected as the research selected areas of which practices within which pedagogies of partnership were known to be in use with a culture developing from this. This section of the report, however, has highlighted the many challenges that are faced by both students and academics in balancing workload and participating in an equal and meaningful partnership.

There is reason to suggest that the earlier students engage in a culture of partnership the more they benefit from it. This creates potential for further investigation about how to develop this partnership at a much earlier stage. To do this, a shared language needs to be used that promotes partnership.

7.6 Recommendations

To further develop the learning and teaching culture so that it supports and fosters partnership practices, analysis of the data from this research leads to the following recommendations for practice in higher education:

- further explore the role of student societies and the part that they play in developing meaningful partnerships as well as developing confidence;
- further explore how technology could provide ways of overcoming some of the possible barriers to developing partnerships in teaching and learning;
- investigate the impact of the roles attached to students, particularly student representatives and the impact this may have on how they, and how students without such roles, perceive their responsibilities in developing partnerships.

Case study: Biomedical Science

Biomedical Science is a programme within the School of Life Sciences in the College of Science. The course aims to provide graduates with the academic qualities and understanding of laboratory-based investigation of human health and disease required for registration by the Health Professions Council (HCPC) as a Biomedical Scientist after a period of training in an accredited laboratory. Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) accreditation ensures that the degree meets academic requirements for registration as a biomedical scientist with the HCPC.

Research-led teaching and learning

Student as Producer underpins the curriculum using the three ideas of discovery-mode teaching: problem, enquiry and research-based learning. This is reflected during staff interviews and external examiner reports who note the level of research informed curriculum as well as extra-curricular activities that support skill development.

Students recognise that practical laboratory experiences provide them with opportunities to work in partnership with academics. These practical sessions allow skill development in a supportive environment; students have the opportunity to practice work that will be useful for their career.

The final year project is one that brings together elements from across the programme. This module has developed from student feedback to provide a platform for students to undertake a research project within the curriculum. Students can follow their area of interest building on the expertise from within the school as a support structure. Following the undertaking of the research, students have the option to document their project in the form of a traditional thesis, or in the format of a scientific journal paper. In addition to this, students present their work to peers, academic staff and external guests during the School of Life Science Poster conference, allowing students to discuss and showcase their work.

Developing partnerships within the confines of accreditation

Accreditation from an external body provides unique challenges in developing practices that both fulfil requirements and develop partnerships in teaching and learning. Having restrictions on the content that is required, this has required programme development to develop the practices to address these restrictions.

Academics take the role of practitioner, facilitating group sessions in the form of workshops and seminars. Students are guided through case studies and present them to peers in small groups. This method of discovery-based learning is also reflected in assignments and the use of technology. Blackboard wiki pages allow students to work together to create a knowledge base together, but also allow support from academics.

Opportunities also exist outside the curriculum and are supported by the programme. The

Undergraduate Research Opportunities Scheme (UROS) provides funding for students to work collaboratively with academics over the summer. Biomedical Science has participated in numerous projects, allowing staff and students to work together within a professional live research project.

Summary

Although Biomedical Science has restrictions in the scope of changes that can be made to curriculum, due to the accreditation by an external body, great efforts have been placed on making changes to ensure partnership exists and can develop. Emphasis is on the discovery mode aspects of Student as Producer, ensuring that students and academics work together to create knowledge and develop understanding.

8. Findings: impact

This research set out to investigate the pedagogical approaches that aim to engage, foster and support students as partners in learning, across a range of disciplines. A key aspect of the project, embedded in the research questions, was a desire to elucidate evidence that identifies how partnership enhancing practices impact on student learning and the student experience. ‘Impact’ refers to having an effect on, changing or influencing, something; making a difference. In the context of this study, this section of this report examines perspectives on how pedagogies of partnership can influence or make a difference to the student’s experience and development in higher education.

Commonly, studies that explore impact in the context of teaching and learning in higher education tend to focus on the impact of educational development programmes, rather than more directly on the impact of particular pedagogies, as is the intention here. In the complexity of the many influences and variations in teaching and learning in higher education, impact is arguably most meaningfully evaluated by developing our understanding of the experiences and perceptions of those involved. Engagement in partnerships that develop learning and teaching may make a difference to all stakeholders, particularly students and teaching staff, but that impact may be immediate, in the classroom, or it may be felt later, even some years later; there may be tangible effects or consequences that are difficult to quantify and articulate. Gunn and Fisk (2013), writing in the context of understanding the impact of teaching excellence, acknowledge that the “impact on student learning has become more abstract. In part this is a result of the difficulties of evaluating how excellence in teaching actually affects student learning” (p. 9). There is, however, research evidence that demonstrates how problem-based pedagogies, that promote active participation in learning, facilitate deep learning by encouraging curiosity, critical analysis, synthesising new knowledge and skills with those previously gained, developing arguments and interest in the topic, taking risks, being reflective and learning from the process (Biggs and Tang 2011; Entwistle 2009; Ramsden 2003).

This section of our report commences by exploring emergent findings on how partnerships develop over the period of undergraduate study and the impact of such developments. This is followed by consideration of how partnership approaches impact on developing students’ skills, in particular, skills in relationship building, networking and communication, increasing confidence and encouraging recognition of the responsibilities of partnership and the value of each person’s contribution. Finally, the conclusion to this section summarises the research findings that further our understanding of the impact of pedagogies of partnership. The discussion about impact of pedagogies of partnership in this section of the report is in addition to aspects of impact that are highlighted through the other three research themes.

8.1 Development of partnerships and their impact over the period of undergraduate study

The analysis of data from this research indicates that, as might be expected, relationships develop gradually over the course of the undergraduate journey. Importantly, however, the impact of these developing relationships is accordingly felt in different ways and at different points along that journey. It is evident that across the subject areas studied in this project, both staff and students hold a perception of the first year of study being a period of settling in; a time to become accustomed to a new environment, new expectations, new friends and peers. As such, some students suggest that they are either not yet prepared for, or are unable to fully engage in

pedagogical partnerships during that early period of their studies. Similar concerns have been highlighted in the earlier section of this report exploring culture and the development of disciplinary identity.

You are developing as well as a person and your knowledge as well. At first year you're thinking "Oh, is this course right for me? Am I doing alright?" The stress of everything. But then the more you are into it the more you are learning and the more you feel like it's the right thing and it's all worth it and you feel like it is the course for you. (Interview, Biomedical Science student 1).

I think first years have a bit too much of a fixed idea of they are coming to be taught by us, not every first year, but quite a lot of them. (Interview, History academic 1)

Furthermore, some staff reinforce aspects of this when reflecting a view that there is a significant change of culture between teaching and learning in different educational contexts, particularly from further education to higher education. The importance of focussing on student transitions, and the induction period to prepare and develop students as partners in their learning, is highlighted through the analysis of this data. There is a significant body of literature exploring 'the first year experience' (see e.g. James *et al.* 2010) and it is recommended that this is given further attention in the light of the desire to develop pedagogies of partnership throughout the undergraduate experience.

In discussions at the research project symposium (2 June 2015) participants suggested that a focus on preparation for engaged, participative learning during transition and induction processes might also support improved retention rates. Some institutions in the UK are known to have developed highly structured first year programmes to aid the transition from further education.

8.2 Skills development

Pedagogies of partnership are experienced by the participants in this research as having a positive impact on how students develop a range of desirable skills; this includes relationship building skills, communication skills, 'learning to learn' skills and underpinning these, a sense of growing personal confidence. For example, when asked in the alumni questionnaire about the skills and experiences gained during degree studies that had prepared them for their chosen career or study, respondents frequently referred to research skills, writing skills, working in teams and gaining work experience and increased confidence.

Working with other people to achieve sometimes hard to reach goals. High levels of confidence in my own abilities. (Alumni questionnaire, Biomedical Science 2014 graduate)

Team work, independent working, the ability to stay focussed on one particular topic. (Alumni questionnaire, History 2014 graduate)

Further to this, for many of the alumni who responded to this questionnaire, partnerships beyond the University significantly contribute to the development of skills, for example through work experience and external visits.

Relationship building skills are also expressed in the data as the skills to work effectively with others, networking, negotiating and collaborating; this may be with other students, academic staff or external stakeholders. Importantly these skills are seen as core requirements for effective preparation for further study or employment on graduation.

I think it's really important for students to be able to work with one another and as they go out into the work it's probably the most important skill that they can have is learning to work with other people. (Interview, Media Production academic 2).

Further to this, referring specifically to partnership approaches enhanced through the use of technology another Media Production academic commented that:

social aspects, social bonding and soft skills needed for a group are actually really important for developing further practice and further relationships between the class. (Interview, Media Production academic 1).

Responses in the alumni questionnaire also confirmed how the skills developed through collaborative learning can impact on confidence in new roles in employment:

I think it helps, as it has taught me how to work with people from different walks of life, during my year at my previous job, I took the lead on a key project which I think I gained skills to enable me from my time at university. (Alumni questionnaire, History 2013 graduate)

Working in a team of new people, specifically in a multicamera studio has helped me a lot as my current role needs me to be able to engage with new presenters and guests daily. Having had the experience already working in this type of environment at university I feel that I was able to slip into my new role quicker and with more comfort. (Alumni questionnaire, Media Production 2014 graduate)

Alongside the development of skills that support effective collaborative and team working, there is evidence that the experience of participation in partnerships for learning encourages students to appreciate and recognise partnership as a joint endeavour, with responsibilities on all parties. "Teaching and learning in higher education is a shared process, with responsibilities on both student and teacher to contribute to their success" (European Commission 2013, p. 18). Pedagogies of partnership develop student awareness of the importance and purpose of actively participating and contributing, and giving value to each person's contribution; students and staff alike having contributions and responsibilities as academic citizens and partners in the academic endeavour.

... contributing in lectures or even after lectures, just being more aware of the content or if I'm unsure and if there's time just to make sure of a few things with the lecturer. I don't normally do that, but I see other people, friends do that, which is really beneficial. It's not just one-way, it's both ways isn't it? Communication does help, I would say. (Interview, Biomedical student 1).

I also believe that as a member of the university, I have a responsibility to help ensure I can take part in whatever I can. (Undergraduate survey, Psychology).

With regard to contributing to the partnership beyond the curriculum and within the University, one of the students responding to this research explained that they contributed to the programme through their evaluation of their experience via feedback forms (Interview, Biomedical student 2). However, other students have broader perceptions of how they can contribute to enhancing the learning experience beyond the classroom.

Just kind of ... part of teamwork to organise the course, I know as part of the rep as third year we have to ... discuss how to change the course content of what was good, what was bad, so we asked the students what was good and what they felt, we then fed it back to higher members of staff that this was good. It's kind of not me personally, but as a group we've contributed to the teaching and methods saying, "Oh people don't like two hour lectures so maybe a suggestion for next year would be have two one hours on different days." (Interview, Psychology student 2).

Also from Psychology, one academic explained their view on the importance of ‘contribution’ as follows:

This is part of a club that you’re being invited to join, that it’s no longer some distant thing that’s just in textbooks, this is a community of learning and thinking and contributing, and who knows what your contribution will be. (Interview, Psychology academic 2).

Peer learning as a pedagogical partnership practice, taking place ‘on the edge’ of the curriculum and firmly within the discipline, has been discussed in an earlier part of this report. The research data, and discussions at the research project symposium, also highlight the impact of peer-to-peer learning, particularly the learning experiences gained through projects such as peer-assisted study skills (PASS), peer statistics support and peer mentoring, and how they result in a range of skills developments for participants. Further to this trans-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary learning is also shown as enabling students to increase the breadth of their experiences, wider subject understanding, partnerships, networks, communication and entrepreneurial skills. Academic staff and student PASS leaders are partners in the learning and teaching of their discipline.

Evidence from both primary and secondary data in this research (e.g. College of Science Undergraduate AMR Action Plans and School Overview Reports) also indicates that effective partnership working can result in students developing more independence and curiosity in their learning, adopting more focussed approaches to study, and finding that they have more understanding of expectations in learning and assessment.

It is not surprising that as skills develop, so students also gain confidence. The impact of these pedagogical approaches on students’ confidence is highlighted frequently across the data, being recognised by both staff and students. With relevance to concerns about induction and transition, described earlier, delegates at the research project symposium suggested that confidence building in the first year is necessary for students who do not expect to be involved in partnerships.

Some students don’t gain confidence until second year or midway through first year. (Level 2 internal survey, Psychology student)

Paradoxically, it is evident that, on the one hand, staff and students agree that a certain level of confidence is required before students can meaningfully engage in partnership work, but on the other hand, engagement in partnership practices develops confidence. Therefore, teaching staff face challenges in establishing the environment that will support the development of, and engagement in, effective partnership learning.

Challenges I’ve faced in creating partnerships with ... students I would say just their lack of confidence, that ... they are not very but they are hesitant to speak. They just don’t have a lot of confidence in their own ability to contribute to things ... just communication, early communication, them not quite knowing that I was meant to be a partner and them also, I think, a little nervous about what the university wanted from them and what they would have to give and stuff (Interview, History academic 2).

Confidence plays a big role in student abilities, be it an assessment practical or assessing their examination. A lot of students will immediately go, “Oh! I can’t do this” so one of the safe ways of allowing them to explore those topics, have feedback, not only from myself but from their own peers because that helps. I can assess their verbal skills, their ability of doing a PowerPoint presentation but if a friend says, “You did that really well” you say, “Yes I did do that really well” where I can say it and they expect me to be nice to them. (Interview, Biomedical Science academic 3)

I do like it because then it gives you a bit of experience of speaking, public speaking, which I didn’t really have before uni. (Interview, Biomedical Science student 2).

Thus there is a need to identify and develop pedagogical practices that empower students and positively impact on their levels of confidence. Importantly, these approaches need to support students to work collaboratively with each other, as well as with staff.

I often find that if I put a question to a student singularly or individually, they feel reluctant to answer that question but once you take away the parameters of speaking out in front of an audience and just get them speaking with each other they actually engage far more with that content. (Interview, Media Production academic 1).

The secondary data gathered for this project supports these views:

[Journalism] students enjoy the practical multiplatform work, the newsroom facilities and free software, the organisation of teaching, good feedback and friendly staff. They also cited the grounding, which helps build their confidence plus the opportunities to take on relevant extracurricular work. (College of Arts School Undergraduate Overview Annual Monitoring Reports and Programme Actions Plans 2013-14)

Similarly, some external examiners' reports for the case study subject areas provide evidence of examiners recognising how, by the final year of study, students develop confidence in learning and undertaking independent research, with one examiner stating that this occurs because students are engaged with research and problem-solving pedagogies from the start of their undergraduate studies.

However, it is evident from the data that it is not only in the classroom, or within the curriculum that confidence and learning relationships can be developed. As discussed in other sections of this report, activities beyond the curriculum, including social events are seen as important and effective arenas for raising confidence and offering opportunities for staff and students to get to know each other. Some examples of these practices are discipline specific and, whilst not in the timetabled curriculum, they are firmly connected to the formal teaching and learning, others are more clearly 'beyond the curriculum'.

Additionally, it is also worthy of note that where staff–student partnerships are effective, students also describe experiencing a more supportive, caring environment.

Helpful, definitely helpful. Supportive. They give good advice and feedback ... Even academic or generic advice I would say is really helpful especially if you are struggling with the stress or workload, getting a diary, just keeping you organised, just basic things that just doesn't come to mind ... They're willing to help which is always nice to know, someone is here to – someone that cares, well, academic studies and you feel more reassured having someone to talk to academically wise. (Interview, Biomedical Science student 1)

8.3 Summary

With the aim of furthering understanding of how pedagogies of partnership can influence or make a difference to the student's experience and development in higher education, this section of the report, drew on the primary and secondary research data to explore the emergent theme of 'impact'. As indicated in the introduction to this section of the report, due to the complexity and range of variables inherent in learning and teaching in higher education, it is not possible to make direct correlations, through quantitative measures, between the implementation of and engagement in pedagogies of partnership and impact on student attainment and progression. There is, however, evidence in the primary qualitative data from this project that engagement in partnership practices through undergraduate studies, can result in students gaining a range of insights, skills and attributes that support progression and readiness for a variety of career pathways beyond graduation. Further

to this, the literature also supports a view that understanding impact of pedagogical practices is not straightforward, although it is evident that practices which “encourage deep approaches are more likely to facilitate higher quality learning” (Trigwell and Prosser 1991, p. 251).

8.4 Recommendations

While the research provides evidence of impact from effective pedagogies of partnership, it also demonstrates that there are ways in which it may be possible to further that impact. Hence the following recommendations emerge for practice in higher education:

- Attention needs to be given to the importance of induction and transition. Being explicit about the differences between learning and teaching in school, further and higher education should involve introducing, developing and enhancing partnerships from an early stage, such as during the recruitment process. Stronger links between conversion activity and first year experience should be developed to ensure a smooth transition process. There also needs to be consideration given to the experience of students, especially international students, entering directly to level two. This should lead to attention being given to how partnerships are developed across the levels of undergraduate study and the role and contribution of students within this.
- Within the variety of pedagogies of partnership, academics and educational developers should further their knowledge and implementation of particular learning activities that can be shown to support the development of students’ confidence.
- Academic staff and students should consider how they can support developing partnerships outside of the curriculum, but within the boundaries of the learning environment.

Case study: Media Production

Background

The subject of Media is currently located in the Lincoln School of Film and Media, within the College of Arts. The BA (Hons) Media Production programme is one of the largest and longest established programmes at the University. Together with cognate programmes in Audio Production and Film and Television, the subject recruits annual cohorts of over 300 students. The School prides itself in its strong relationships with media industries, with social enterprise initiatives enabling students to undertake external commissions while continuing their studies. Students comment favourably on the industry standard facilities, including television and radio studios.

The programmes aim to provide “an educational context in which students develop creative, conceptual, critical, analytical, technical, organisational and research skills appropriate to employment in the media industries” (University of Lincoln 2014, p. 5). See: http://www.lincoln.ac.uk/about/courses/medmedub_2015-16.pdf

Evidence of impact

Media Production performs well in subject-specific league tables, and students have good levels of general satisfaction. In the 2014 NSS, 95% of students agree that staff are enthusiastic about their teaching. (Source: unistats. See: <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/subjects/satisfaction/10007151FT-MEDMEDUB/>)

External examiners reports reveal positive comments, commending the extent of research-led teaching within modules, the level of engagement from students and the quality of their independent work and critical thinking, the use of live and competition briefs, and the active use of online shared environments to enthuse, engage and involve students. The co_LAB project is particularly commended, with recommendations that the School should look to make it credit bearing.

Thematic analysis of student survey responses reveals strong appreciation of the opportunities for creativity, with students enjoying the collaborative nature of teamwork and the programme’s focus on hand-on production.

[I enjoy] working with others to bring a vision to life by being creative.

The technology helps create a nice atmosphere and the teamwork involved is beneficial for the future.

creating an idea and see it come to life through researching and developing.

(Survey responses from Media students)

Staff interviews similarly emphasise the role of collaborative approaches in creating a sense of partnership. The ability to work in partnership is seen as an essential employability skill within the

creative industries. Collaboration is even more productive when it occurs across disciplinary boundaries, with other media-related programmes, or extended across the College of Arts and potentially to other Colleges. Alongside collaboration and interdisciplinarity, the final major theme to emerge with media is the importance of technology in providing a framework for partnership beyond the classroom and the campus.

Co-LAB (<http://colab.lincoln.ac.uk>)

The co_LAB project embodies many of the key characteristics identified as promoting partnership in creative disciplines. The project was funded through the University's Fund for Educational Development (FED), and is widely identified by staff, students and external examiners as having significant impact in developing collaborative approaches. The research project focuses on pedagogy and curriculum redesign, technology within teaching, digital innovation, community impact and international collaboration.

The project has been presented and well-received at a number of internal events and symposia, as well as national and international conferences.

Summary

The Media Production case study provides examples of the pedagogical practices that promote partnership approaches within a creative arts curriculum. The key element is identified as collaborative group projects, ideally involving staff and students from a range of disciplines, and where students enjoy a hands-on approach focussed on the production of media. This reflects the nature of the media industries, where collaborative group working and project management are highly valued as employability skills.

9. Conclusion and recommendations for practice

The research detailed in this report set out to increase understanding of pedagogical approaches that foster partnership, with particular attention to disciplinary difference and context. Set within an institutional strategic framework of 'Student as Producer' which embeds research engaged learning and teaching, and student engagement, throughout all aspects of practice across the institution, this research focussed on an in-depth exploration of pedagogical practices that have been established to engage, foster and support students as partners across four disciplinary areas; biomedical science, psychology, history and media production. Case studies of each of these subject areas are provided within the report. As well as the institutional context set out here, this research has been informed by a range of national and international literature on this topic.

Adopting a mixed methods, multi-case study approach the research gathered primary data from current students, alumni and academic staff. This was triangulated with secondary data from a range of existing sources, including student surveys, external examiner reports and annual monitoring reports. Further to this, ideas and discussions emanating from a symposium held after the research data collection phase have been incorporated into the reporting of findings in this document. Partnership practices were embedded throughout the design and implementation of this research, with student researchers working as part of the project team to develop research instruments and undertake the data collection; this added significant value and depth to the process. However, it is worthy of note that where higher education research aims to access students in order to investigate their experiences and perspectives this is not without challenges. For example, in this project responses to the questionnaires were disappointingly low, despite significant energy being expended on various promotional strategies and extending the time available for responses. It is hypothesised that, in part this is the result of students' 'survey fatigue' and an institutional response to this issue prohibiting institution-wide surveying of students during the National Student Survey period (which clashed with the timeframe for this project).

Four emergent themes provided both the framework for analysis of the data and the structure for the body of this report; definition and concepts; pedagogical practices; culture; and impact. There are, however, in the reality of practice, overlaps across these themes.

The importance of language and meaning is highlighted through the discussion of definition and concepts. This research has provided empirical evidence of how students and staff construct understandings of key concepts, particularly partnership and student engagement. Within this it is clear that the active role of students and responsibilities on all parties to contribute to the endeavour underpins the perceptions that many staff and students have of effective pedagogical partnerships. The research led to the development of a model of student engagement that aims to enable mapping of different forms of partnerships and the contexts in which they occur.

Working with staff and students from across the four case study areas, a range of interesting pedagogical practices were highlighted. Some of these were particularly innovative and others built on established practices but in nuanced and discipline-specific ways. They all, however, were aiming to foster and support meaningful partnerships both within the student cohort and across students and staff either within or beyond the curriculum, with the aim of enhancing learning and student experiences. It is noticeable that, at times these learning opportunities and activities may be just 'on the edge' of the curriculum, but that constraints on time and space within the formal curriculum appear to push aspects of partnership work just out of formal timetabled teaching and learning.

The value of research-engaged teaching, including opportunities to share learning and outputs widely, was particularly apparent. This emerged as the most significant practice in terms of developing partnership, with collaborative research opportunities again occurring both within the curriculum and beyond it. Furthermore, academic staff had initiated practices that set out to overcome the constraints of large group teaching and learning spaces that did not easily lend themselves to collaborative, partnership working. Technology also provides opportunities to develop effective spaces for collaborative ventures. Such collaborative practices do not need to be confined to one discipline as it is apparent that partnerships in learning across disciplines provides further opportunities for student and staff development.

It is evident from this study that pedagogies of partnership take place in a number of contexts:

- within the curriculum, in other words as part of the programme content, within the classroom and timetable;
- beyond the curriculum but still within the subject, even at times just ‘on the edge’ of the formal curriculum, for example optional activities to support and enhance engagement in the subject and participation in subject-related projects;
- within the wider university, where students work in partnerships that support quality assurance and enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment;
- beyond the university, where learning takes place through partnerships developed with colleagues in external organisations and agencies, for example work-based learning and practice learning in professional programmes.

9.1 Principles for pedagogic partnership

As noted, this research has been undertaken in the context of the institution-wide Student as Producer initiative and has informed wider discussions in the institution about the further development of this work. The research findings confirm and validate this work, providing a useful framework for the articulation of key principles for partnership approaches to teaching and learning.

Discovery	Students learn through their own research and inquiry rather than through traditional models of knowledge transmission
Collaboration	Learning is more productive when it is collaborative rather than individual, so students work together to develop knowledge and understanding. Collaboration also occurs between students and staff, with students seen as partners in the production of knowledge and in the life of the university
Engagement	Students become engaged in their discipline through discovery-mode learning, developing their identity as a member of a disciplinary community. Students are also engaged in every aspect of the life of the university
Production	Students are producers of knowledge rather than consumers of education. The curriculum focuses on learning outputs as well as on the achievement of learning outcomes

Pedagogies of partnership relate not only to student–staff relationships, but also to student–student learning partnerships; most starkly evident through developed peer-learning schemes, but also embedded in the culture of learning, teaching and assessment in the curriculum. The research has, however, identified a number of challenges that may constrain the development of pedagogies of

partnership. These include time and workload issues, the regulated curriculum of professional programmes, and pressures of timetable restrictions.

Importantly, while due to the complexity of learning and teaching in higher education it is not possible to make direct correlations between the implementation of and engagement in pedagogies of partnership and impact on student attainment and progression, this research has provided evidence that these approaches can impact on students' development of skills and attributes that will support their futures beyond graduation.

Each of the four themes set out in this report has closed with a number of recommendations that have emerged from the analysis of the data. All of these recommendations are reproduced here for completeness:

- articulating the shared rationale and aims for embedding partnership into learning and teaching is important as this is likely to differ between disciplines;
- recognition that the process of partnership is as important as the end product and this should be given due attention in designing the learning experience; further work is necessary to explore the potential for and implications of truly challenging traditional power relations in the learning environment;
- recognise the importance of learning spaces, including –
 - spaces that encourage more collaborative approaches in large group teaching;
 - spaces for sharing work and allowing for inter-disciplinary work;
 - curriculum space - flexibility of structures and process to allow creative approaches and inter-disciplinary working through, for example, timetable flexibility ('flexible Fridays'), and exploring use of integrative assessment;
- provide opportunities for interactions and collaboration between staff and students, both in technologically supported ways and in traditional face-to-face settings;
- implement curriculum initiatives early and across the board, for example, through the incorporation of inter-disciplinary projects during welcome week; further explore the role of student societies and the part that they play in developing meaningful partnerships as well as developing confidence;
- further explore how technology could provide ways of overcoming some of the possible barriers to developing partnerships in teaching and learning;
- investigate the impact of the roles attached to students, particularly student representatives and the impact this may have on how they, and how students without such roles, perceive their responsibilities in developing partnerships;
- attention needs to be given to the importance of induction and transition. Being explicit about the differences between learning and teaching in school, further and higher education should involve introducing, developing and enhancing partnerships from an early stage, such as during the recruitment process. Stronger links between conversion activity and first year experience should be developed to ensure a smooth transition process. There also needs to be consideration given to the experience of students, especially international students, entering directly to level two. This should lead to attention being given to how partnerships are developed across the levels of undergraduate study and the role and contribution of students within this;
- within the variety of pedagogies of partnership, academics and educational developers should further their knowledge and implementation of particular learning activities that can be shown to support the development of students' confidence;

- academic staff and students need to be aware of the contexts of partnership development (i.e., within the curriculum, beyond the curriculum, within the wider University, beyond the University) and should consider how they can support developing partnerships across these contexts, but particularly outside of the curriculum, but within the boundaries of the learning environment.

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Appendix A: research instruments

Undergraduate student questionnaire

1. Please select your area of study
2. In three words, please describe your experience at the University of Lincoln
3. Within your course, which approaches to teaching and learning do you find most productive and stimulating?
4. Please describe what about these approaches that makes them stand out?
5. Are there other ways that you engage with your course beyond timetabled teaching sessions? Please give examples.
6. Please explain why you engage with these?
7. Are there opportunities that you take part in that you would, or have recommended to a friend? (Y/N)
8. Please provide details about this opportunity, including reasons why you have or would recommend it.
9. Are there any schemes or activities in, or related to your course that you are aware of but do not take part in? (Y/N)
10. Why do you not engage with these?
11. Are you aware of activities in other courses that you would like to take part in? (Y/N)
12. What is it about these that interest you? Please provide us with details about what these are and why they interest you.
13. What are the main reasons for you taking part in the activities that you have mentioned?

Alumni survey

1. Which programme did you study?
2. Which year did you graduate in?
3. Please briefly tell what you are doing now (e.g. occupation, further study)
4. To what extent do you agree with the following?
 - a. Problem solving was a part of my course
 - b. I was given the opportunity to take part in group work
 - c. I have identified issues and questions from a situation presented to me
 - d. I was given the tools to undertake research to develop my learning
5. Please describe how you were given the opportunity to work as a group to create something, whether it be a presentation, event, exhibition or something else.
6. In your current position, have skills such as working as part of a group and working collaboratively with your academics helped you?
 - a. If yes, please describe how this has helped you, if you can think of a specific example please detail it.
7. In your chosen career path, how much value is placed on your ability to critically engage with, analyse and present information from different sources?
 - a. If your ability to critically engage with information is valued, to what extent did your degree programme prepare you for this?
8. Which of the following approaches to assessing your work were used on your course?
 - a. If you selected 'other', please specify:
9. If any, which approaches to assessing your work have been most helpful in developing your approach to working life?

10. Overall, do you feel that your programme actively encouraged and facilitated collaboration with other students and with staff?
11. During your time at Lincoln, did you use online resources created by the University such as online tutorials, podcasts, etc.?
12. The University of Lincoln uses Blackboard as its virtual learning environment. During your time at Lincoln, did you use tools such as discussion boards, wikis or journals with Blackboard?
13. How has your use of technology as a student benefitted you in your working life?
14. Thinking about the physical space you were taught in and worked independently in, how does this compare to your current working environment?
15. How would you describe the nature of your involvement in the evaluation and ongoing improvement of your programme while you were a student?
 - a. If you selected 'other', please specify:
 - b. How does the nature of your involvement as a student compare with the nature of your involvement in shaping your work now?
16. To what extent do you agree with the following in relation to your degree programme?
 - a. I was a part of a community of learners and teachers
 - b. There was space for disagreement of opinion within my course
 - c. Within my course there were elements designed for me to develop leadership skills
17. On reflection, what would have been the most valuable skills and experiences that you could have gained from your degree programme to prepare you for your chosen career path or further study?
 - a. Based on your answer above, to what extent do you feel your degree programme actually prepared you in these ways?
18. Finally, do you recognise these characteristics in the degree programme you studied?
 - a. Learning through researching for myself
 - b. Learning through solving problems
 - c. Encouraging collaboration
 - d. Developing digital competences
 - e. Using technology to enhance teaching
 - f. Using physical space in unconventional ways to facilitate participation
 - g. Student involvement in designing assessments
 - h. Students actively shaping the development of the programme
 - i. Preparing students to determine and create their own future
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Interviews with academic staff

1. Within the context of teaching and learning how do you define partnership?
2. What does student engagement mean to you?
3. Do you believe there is an institutional culture of partnership outside the curriculum?

Please approach the following questions with your idea of partnership in mind.

4. How have you developed partnerships within your teaching?
 - a. Briefly describe this teaching practice
 - b. Why did you develop this approach?
 - c. What challenges did you face?
 - d. What feedback or responses have you received from students (this may be formal feedback through surveys etc., or informal, anecdotal feedback)?
 - e. Have you ever adapted or changed your teaching methods to actively encourage more partnership working with students? If so, please can you describe what happened and the outcomes?

5. What kind of support do you have to develop your teaching?
6. How far does this focus on support for developing meaningful partnerships?
7. What challenges have you found in creating partnerships?
 - a. With students
 - b. In terms of support by the institution
8. Which group of students do you find hardest to create partnerships with?
 - a. How have you attempted to overcome this?
9. Is there practice in other disciplines that you would like to try in your own?
 - a. Note: this could be from within the same school, or other schools or colleges within the university
10. Have you developed your teaching practices based on pedagogical research?
 - a. Note: this could be their own research, reading into the area, from conference attendance
11. Is there anything else that you wanted to talk about/expand on with regard to teaching and learning and the development of student-staff partnerships that you haven't had chance to?

Interviews with students

1. How would you describe your time at Lincoln?
 - a. What activities are you involved in
 - i. in your course
 - ii. outside your course
2. What does partnership in teaching and learning mean to you?
3. What does student engagement mean to you?
4. At which point in your course did you begin to feel you engaged?
 - a. When did you identify as member of your course? (E.g. when did you feel like a media student)
 - b. Why at that point, what happened then? Or, Why do you feel you haven't yet engaged?
5. Within your course, which approaches to teaching stand out?
 - a. Give examples
 - b. Why does it stand out?
6. How would you describe your perfect learning environment
 - a. Prompts: size of environment (lecture/Seminar), activities: group work/independent, use of technology, etc.?
 - b. What is it about the things you have identified that you enjoy?
 - c. Do any of the things you have identified appear in modules that you have taken part in?
7. Looking at the spectrum of relationships you have with staff, describe the traits that you would associate with:
 - a. the relationships with the strongest partnerships
 - b. the relationships with the weakest partnerships
8. How many staff, in your opinion, would say hello to you in a corridor?
 - a. Do these staff know your name and use it?
 - b. What roles do these staff have in terms of your teaching/learning?
9. What happened to create these partnerships?
10. Could you give us an example of a teaching event where you felt you were a partner in your learning?
 - a. Note: ensure the candidate is aware that names will be removed during the transcription process to maintain anonymity
11. What do you feel you have gained from working in partnership with teaching staff?
12. What do you feel has been your contribution to the teaching and learning partnerships?

13. Is there anything that happens in other courses that you would like to take place in your own?
 - a. Describe what takes place.
 - b. Why would you like it in your course?

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