



BELFAST ■ COLERAINE ■ JORDANSTOWN ■ MAGEE

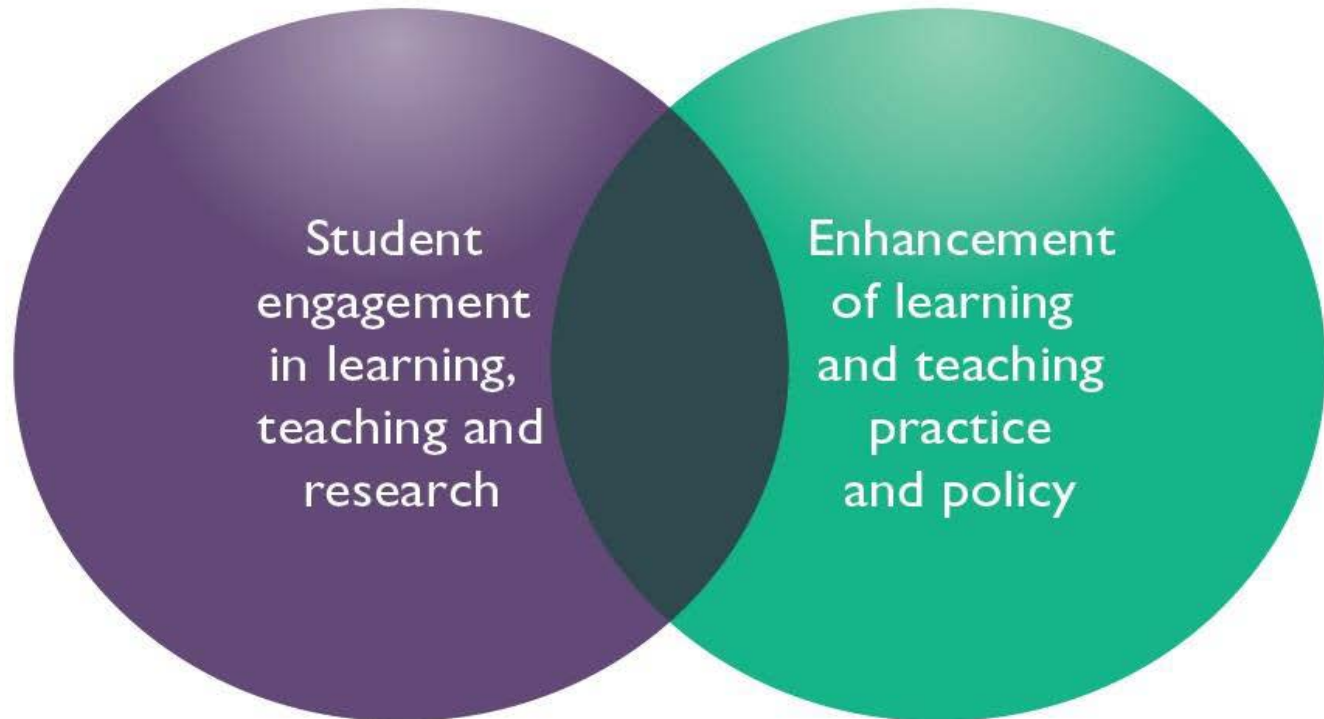
Students as Partners

Professor Denise McAlister

PVC (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)

Approach emphasis:

- student engagement in learning, teaching and research
- enhancement of learning and teaching practice and policy



Student engagement in learning

Engagement in this sense has been proven to improve outcomes:

- Performance
- Persistence
- Satisfaction

Impact on retention

HEA/Paul Hamlyn Foundation: What Works? Project:

- 37% - 45% students consider leaving in their first year
- academic issues
- feelings of isolation and/or not fitting in and concern about achieving future aspirations, are less engaged
- less understanding of the University/HE experience and expectations

The UK Quality Code

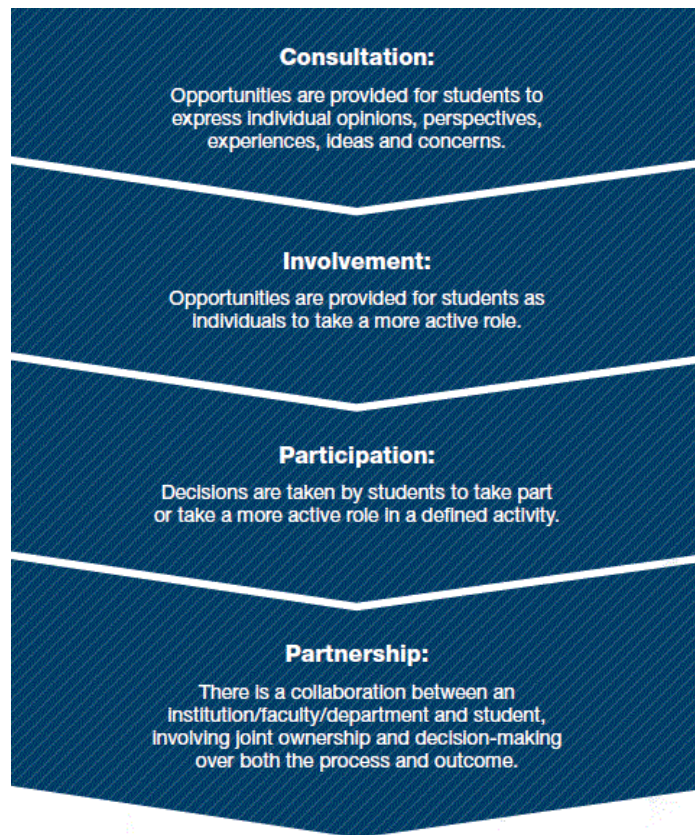
“Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.”

How does the QAA Code define it?

‘the term ‘partner’ and ‘partnership’ are used in a broad sense to indicate joint working between students and staff. In this context partnership working is based on the values of: openness; trust and honest; agreed shared goals and values; and regular communication between the partners. It is not based on the legal conception of equal responsibility and liability; rather partnership working recognises that all members in the partnership have legitimate, but different, perceptions and experiences. By working together to a common agreed purpose, steps can be taken that lead to enhancements for all concerned. The terms reflect a mature relationship based on mutual respect between students and staff.

(QAA 2013, p3)

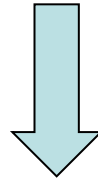
From student engagement to partnership



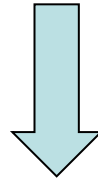
- The 2010 NUS/HEA Student Engagement Toolkit framed partnership as the **goal** of student engagement.
- Need to build up to partnership:
 - Consultation
 - Involvement
 - Participation
 - Partnership

Passive vs Active Engagement

Surveys

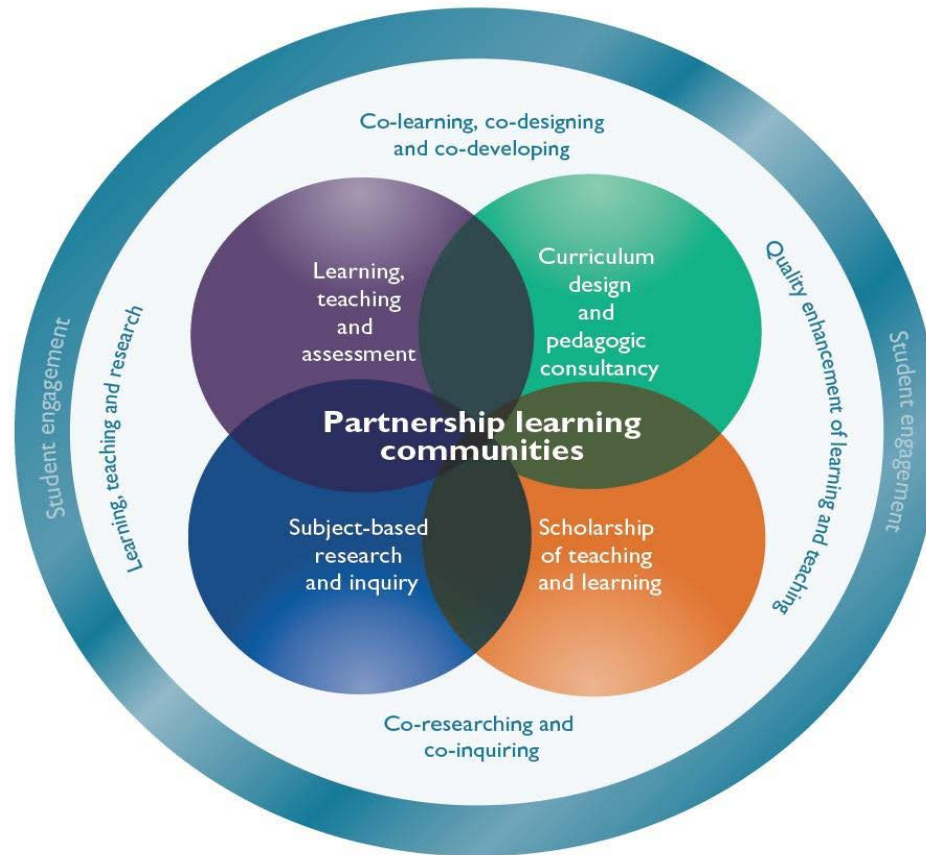


Student representation



Student led change

The framework



Rejecting consumerism

- Student engagement is not happening inside a policy vacuum.
- A narrative of ‘competition’ and ‘choice’ offers students an inflated perception of their power.
- ‘Customer is always right’ devalues the role and expertise of educators.

Rejecting consumerism

“Regardless of whether students agree with the values and characteristics of the funding model in which they sit, they may adopt behaviours we associate with consumerism unless we offer a new and compelling way of thinking about learning”

Things SUs do to engage students in shaping their education

- Represent students on decision-making bodies
- Recruit, train and support course reps
- Research students' experience and interpret student feedback data
- Organise students to campaign for education change
- Work with their institutions on student experience and engagement projects
- Support academic societies

Examples at Ulster

- **What works project?**
- **Peer mentoring and buddying**
- **Student-led teaching awards**
- **Volunteering**
- **Revalidation panels**
- **Teaching excellence awards**
- **Student charters**
- **Course representative training**