

### **The REACT Collaborative Development Programme: Bringing universities together to enhance student engagement activities for the ‘hard to reach’**

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#### **Organisational Change**

As outlined in the funding application to the Higher Education Funding Council for Engagement (HEFCE), the REACT programme was designed to “*support the expansion of context-appropriate interventions to at least ten further universities through consultancy, workshops, mentoring of Student Unions and academic staff in other institutions, and working with students and student engagement practitioners to spread the interventions*” (REACT, 2015). This aligned with other aims of the bid, including that REACT would: *disseminate best practice in relation to the challenge of engaging those outside the usual ambit of Student Engagement (SE) activities; build communities of practice based on strong evidence; and provide consultancy support and proven approaches amongst at least ten UK universities*<sup>i</sup>. This paper highlights how the ‘REACT Collaborative Development Programme’ was designed to facilitate these aims, to build momentum and spread practice beyond the core of Winchester, Exeter and London Metropolitan universities<sup>ii</sup>. All aspects of the programme are outlined, from the initial ‘Expression of Interest’ to the collaborative process of putting together this issue of JEIPC as a final output of REACT.

Institutional change in educational practices has been, and continues to be, notoriously difficult (Trowler, 1998; Trowler, 2008), especially since there is no single ‘best practice’ to be transferred (Vidowich, 2013). Trowler argues (1998: 160) that “*Universities provide the context for multiple discourses and attempts to impose a dominant discourse are likely to result in failure*”. He also describes “*the difficulty of shining visionary light from the top in large, complex organizations like universities*” (1998: 161). In addition, Wilson-Medhurst and Blair (2017) suggest that general ‘resistance to change’ can at times come from experiences of imposed change, which means that any change activity beyond that point is not well-received. REACT was premised on a specific model of organisational change, whereby three universities (to form a core group) were selected for their expertise and success in implementing approaches to student engagement. These approaches were then to be cascaded down, for others in a wider group of associated universities to emulate or translate into their own context. Since REACT was premised on using the expertise from the three core universities to spread innovation and best practice to the larger group, this might have been interpreted as holding the ‘visionary light’ and attempting to flood universities with its rosy glow, with the almost inevitable likelihood of being ‘doomed to failure’ from the start.

So, what actually constituted this ‘visionary light’ in the REACT programme? Why had the specific selection of three particular institutional student engagement initiatives<sup>iii</sup> - anticipated to provide an exemplary core for the REACT programme - been considered appropriate by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE)? The three initiatives are significantly different, each having been devised for the particular context and institutional drivers of its university; all three are considered to be ‘special’ by their respective university and, potentially, a ‘selling point’ for their own institution. Yet, despite their being discrete, different both in kind and in the ways they are managed, they have in common a specific focus on students: on students’ taking responsibility or a leadership role; on students’ helping to enhance the university experience for their peers; on students’ working in partnership with their university or with individual staff or with other students. Each initiative engages students in projects that are beyond their required degree study. Each is perceived as highly positive and as having beneficial impact, both upon the institution and upon the students themselves as individuals – with such outcomes as increased confidence and the possibility of being better equipped for employment, their having rehearsed problem-solving

and people skills. All three initiatives have also been consistently engaging with a wide range of students, including those who might be considered 'hard to reach'.

There were other initiatives known in the UK at the time of writing the funding bid to HEFCE; these had similar values and similar ideas about how students could work in partnership and take responsibility (cf. Birmingham City's 'Students as Academic Partners initiative'<sup>iv</sup> or Lincoln's 'Student as Producer' programme<sup>v</sup>), so it could not be argued that they were unique. The three selected institutions were, however, very different – in factors such as their size, their student intake, their disciplines and their geographical location – and consequently offered to the REACT programme rich variety, their respective approaches being grounded in very particular contexts and student intakes. Such contrasts would no doubt enhance the quality and range of data collected for REACT. In addition, the variety in the universities meant that the composition of the REACT team was a rich mixture of staff expertise, its members having worked in different ways and with different kinds of student group.

### The Collaborative Development Programme

It was decided from the beginning of REACT that any model for supporting change, especially in multiple institutions, would need to be highly collaborative and adaptive (without attempting to impose the student-engagement schemes and ways of working of any one institution directly upon another) and the Collaborative Development Programme (CDP), as its name suggests, set out to guarantee that this would be so. The aim was to create a community of practitioners, involved in 'student engagement' and striving to understand institutional practices better and to improve them, especially when those practices related to so-called 'hard-to-reach' students. The programme drew on the knowledge and expertise not only of REACT's three core universities, but also of the thirteen other universities which made successful bids to join the initiative, thus bringing together a wealth of experience in the arena of student engagement and partnership; it was important that all this, too, should be shared and should inform the development of the programme. It is therefore fair to say that, rather than having any pretension to being a 'top-down' shining light, the programme was conceived in terms of shared expertise and distributed leadership, focusing on a sense of community and with partner universities bringing their experiences and their challenges. In this way, it was expected that participants in the programme would illuminate the pathway as much as the core team itself.

The outline of the CDP was designed early on in the initiative, with timings and events organised by the core team, but also planned so as to be highly flexible, responding to challenges and issues as they emerged and reacting to the ideas and recommendations offered by the wider collaborative partner group. Overall, the plans included:

1. an application and selection process via a detailed Expression of Interest, to gain the required number of university partners willing to run their own project(s);
2. a Steering Group premised on collaboration and openness;
3. an initial 'whole-group' meeting badged as a 'Collaborative Development Day' to include all partners, but repeated in two geographically-different venues to enable greater ease of travel for all participants;
4. a follow-up 'whole-group' meeting, badged as a 'Discussion Day', again offered at two venues;
5. institutional consultancy at no charge, tailored as required to each institution;
6. a website containing multiple open-source resources;
7. the offer of specific dissemination possibilities.

Each of these activities is outlined in more detail below, along with some of the outcomes.

### 1. Expressions of interest and the selection process

As REACT's first public facing presence, the core team took the opportunity of attending the annual RAISE Conference<sup>vi</sup> and to hold a stall in order to begin networking, handing out information leaflets and making the project and the application process known to university staff and students attending. Though accessibility to student-engagement activities had been a topic for previous discussion within the RAISE association (TSEP, 2015; Sims *et al*, 2014), the term 'hard to reach' had rarely featured, so the REACT team began, informally, to draw out delegates' perceptions about 'who was hard to reach' in their context or role. Responses were varied: BME students, postgraduates, commuting students, international students, mature students, students on placement, young males and students from particular disciplines (theology, engineering, and computer science were mentioned). It was immediately apparent that: first, institutional representatives were offering very different responses; second, most of these responses were hunches, or unsubstantiated by any evidence; third, institutional differences were something that would need to be taken into account.

Further advertising for institutions to participate in REACT was achieved through existing student-engagement networks, with feedback suggesting considerable interest in the scheme and enthusiasm for joining it.

The Application Form<sup>vii</sup> required a quite detailed and thought-through proposal for a REACT-supported project relating to 'student engagement' and 'hard-to-reach' students, requiring applicants to give precise responses to such questions as:

- What are the key aims for your Student Participation Project?
- What will be the main challenges for your project?

Other requests on the form, such as those below, were designed to encourage awareness of the need to: be realistic in terms of time commitment; appoint a key link person who could ensure progress over the proposed eighteen months of the project; gain more widespread support and commitment from named stakeholders beyond the single key applicant.

- Please outline your capacity to support student-engagement change agendas in your context (e.g. time available to commit to a change project, the applicant's role in decision-making processes);
- Please list your key institutional project partners (e.g. Student Union, Director of Educational Development).

A final question asked about the 'main aims for the REACT partnership', thereby emphasising the collaborative role expected by REACT of participating institutions. Further to this, the application form drew attention to the date and venue of the first REACT-organised event (the Collaborative Development Day), to take place a month after notification of success of bids.

There was no difficulty in achieving the planned target of ten further HEIs for the collaborative partner group; indeed, thirteen of the applications were of such high quality that all of these were accepted (although two later dropped out owing to the move of a senior figure to another institution). The universities were selected not only on account of their bid, but also because they represented a wide range of different kinds of institution: large Russell-Group through to small, teaching-focused; diverse in their student demographics and levels of current student-engagement activity. As highlighted in more detail in the Introduction to this issue, the thirteen partner universities selected to be involved in the REACT Collaborative Development programme were: Aston University, University of Bristol, University of Brighton, Buckinghamshire New University, Canterbury Christ Church University, Edinburgh Napier University, University of Greenwich, University of Manchester, Newcastle University, Newman, Sheffield Hallam, University of Southampton and University College London.

A flavour of the initial 'Expression of Interest' is given below; it represents, in summarised form, the successful submissions of three collaborative partners, to illustrate the variety, in conceptualisation and focus, of proposed institutional projects.

### **An Indication of different types of institutional project**

**Student engagement at Newman University** Student engagement is a key priority at Newman, in line with its strategic plan: "*strongly encourage the full participation of our students in the [learning] community; working in partnership ... in a spirit of mutual trust and respect.*" Newman has a variety of activities that engage students within different areas, but would like to investigate these and encourage them to be more strategic and inclusive in their approach. The first stage of this project will be to explore with staff and students their understanding of the term 'student engagement' and ascertain what levels of engagement already occur. The second task is to identify students who do not engage, the so-called 'hard-to-reach' students and to determine what 'do not engage' actually means and what are the barriers to engagement. The overall intention is to make student-engagement activities more accessible and visible.

**Cross-institutional peer mentoring; Learning and Teaching Forum for staff and students at Newcastle University** The Newcastle team plans to create a Learning and Teaching Forum, described as "*a new and somewhat 'risky' initiative*". Through this, all staff and students will be able to participate, engage in dialogue to identify an area of common interest and, thereby, support the development of a culture of the scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL). This will be enhanced by means of participatory action-research projects and will be a means of offering a bottom-up approach to building both staff and student engagement, though buy-in from senior staff is critical if the whole process is to be resourced adequately and, by that means, to achieve its aims. Being part of a wider community in a national context is anticipated to provide a significant boost to the perceived importance of this agenda at Newcastle.

**'Creation and Confidence': BME students as academic partners at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU)** This project aims to gain evidence-based insights into the use of co-design processes and peer-learning as possible conduits of confidence-building for and 'belonging' of BME students. SHU has a larger than expected BME attainment gap and the project would need the institution to think differently about explanations of BME underachievement. BME students are taken to reflect 'hard-to-reach' students, in attainment, engagement and progression, but it is also seen as important that the 'hard to reach' nomenclature does not obfuscate further significant issues relating to institutional and attitudinal barriers. In terms of outcomes, it is hoped that SHU will be able to recognise the impact of any specific interventions, use evidence gathered to plan for further development, see increased confidence levels and sense of belonging and reconceptualise the current 'Retention and Student Success Framework'.

What was most important was that projects were planned to fit each specific institutional context, to fit the stage of implementation of student-engagement activity in that specific context and to be appropriate for the particular staff expected to be involved in implementation. Although the REACT aim of focusing on 'hard-to-reach' students narrowed the 'student engagement' agenda somewhat, it soon became clear that the many different aims and anticipated outcomes described in the project bids would need a flexible overall programme wherein themes might be similar, but practicalities and activities would significantly differ between institutions.

The final project implementation and outputs from all collaborative partners can be seen in the accounts in this issue, often with many changes in direction from the initial plans, as project leaders responded to new understandings, reconceptualised their approaches or negotiated around the different agendas of their institution.

### 2. The Steering Group

The Steering Group members, meeting on nine occasions across the two years of the programme, have provided critical feedback at every stage. Members were selected from each of the three core institutions, and beyond, and represented students, Student Unions, academic staff and professional services staff; they ranged from senior managers to interns. Meetings, as well as formally covering such aspects such as budgets and targets (including website 'hits', institutional progress, communication and dissemination), have deliberately been informal and discursive, with members' engaging with practical activities on each occasion, discussing progress and collaborating on future planning. The ethos has again been one where collaboration and openness have been paramount. One of the senior external members commented: "*Steering Committee meetings for the REACT project are proving to be inspiring and thought-provoking. If you have visions of committee meetings being dull and highly structured ways of making sure a project is performing, then REACT is bucking that trend*".

### 3. The REACT Collaborative Development Day

The Collaborative Development Days were seen as flagship kick-start events central to the Collaborative Development Programme, the names for both deliberately representing a specific kind of ethos. They had several purposes, including: allowing the selected university teams to begin discussions about their project and the concept of 'hard to reach'; enabling a briefing to be given on the REACT programme and the offer of consultancy; beginning to develop a community through working together on challenging activities alongside informal networking. Crucially, the purpose was also to allow the REACT team to get to know more about each institutional project and context and for partners to get to know the REACT team. The three core initiatives from Winchester, Exeter and London Metropolitan Universities were highlighted by means of a presentation involving both staff and students and, so that everyone in the room had the chance to talk to everyone else, institutional- and mixed-team activities (such as a card sort on the meaning of 'student engagement' and responding to conflicting opinions on the concept of 'hard to reach') were organised.

Educational change is often pursued by enthusiasts who feel isolated in their institution and have little opportunity for open and honest discussion with like-minded colleagues from different universities, or for sharing practices, issues and challenges. As highlighted above, central to the programme was the creating of a sense of community of practitioners working together to share practice and resolve problems, importantly with a mix of stakeholders from, for example, Learning and Teaching or Professional Services units, Faculties, Student Unions, and students. Projects (as highlighted above and by the articles included in this issue) involved numerous different approaches, such as empowering students and staff to work together on partnership projects, specifically identifying 'hard-to-reach' students, evaluating current student engagement practice and its accessibility and spreading practice beyond one particular Faculty. Throughout the Collaborative Development Day sessions, stakeholders were encouraged to begin frank and open conversations and collaboratively offer ideas, support and help to one another through peer feedback.

A series of checkpoints underpinned the day. The purpose of these was twofold: to enable the REACT team to have a better sense of differences in thinking in each of the partner institutions; to set out for collaborative partners some of the expectations. Answers to

checkpoint questions illustrated, for example: that half of the partner universities did not know who their 'hard-to-reach' students were; that two thirds had student-engagement initiatives, but these were not well known; that half of all projects were expected to be highly exploratory with open-ended outcomes; that there was considerable lack of clarity about who actually led student engagement in any institution; that major challenges to the institutions would be identifying and accessing 'hard-to-reach' students and realistically managing time for REACT.

### 4. The REACT Discussion Days

The Discussion Days were developed in the light of feedback from participating universities who wanted both to hear about progress and practices in other partner universities and to network and share ideas. The REACT team also saw the potential for facilitating peer-to-peer feedback, continuing open and collaborative conversations amongst students and staff about the highs and lows of projects – in particular, about issues and problems that could be shared and addressed by others during the day. Peer learning amongst students is currently popular in universities (Keenan, 2014) and is seen as a cornerstone of the development of academic learning communities (Boud and Middleton, 2003) for both students and staff. The Discussion Day event was again repeated twice in one week, in different locations, to allow as many as possible of the partner universities to attend. Each institution was invited to both days, but was asked to present its REACT project at just one of them, to avoid an overburdening number of presentations and to allow for maximum discussion.

A deliberately-structured approach was used, with each institution asked to prepare a ten-minute presentation, in whatever format they wished, in order to update colleagues on the progress of their project over the preceding six to eight months. The particular focus was to be on any challenges faced or effective solutions to problems. Importantly, each presenter was required to end her/his presentation with a question that s/he wanted discussed by the whole group; for example: What has impeded our progress? How could we do this better? How do we engage new stakeholders? How do we link activities together to show greater impact? How do we evaluate our achievements?

In a post-event feedback survey, the format of reflective discussion after every two presentations was described as '*really effective*'; 62 per cent of participants said it was '*very useful*' to get feedback specifically on their own problem questions. 85 per cent were enthusiastic about hearing about the work of others and working with others to resolve more general problems; this was supported by some of the open responses to the survey which highlighted the '*sharing of practice around mutual themes*' as being useful and achieving an inter-institutional collaboration not achieved by conferences. Participants also valued being able, in a very supportive group context, to tackle challenging issues and said that the day "*enabled us to reflect on each of the projects and thus through them, our own.*"

In such a democratic community environment, the REACT team no longer needed to adopt the role of expert, since the format enabled any participant to suggest, advise or empathise with issues and discussion from across the diverse group of stakeholders allowed for direct problem-solving, drawing shared expertise into a community of practice (Wenger, 1998).

### 5. Institutional Consultancy Visits

Each university participating in the CDP was also involved in a bespoke consultancy visit from members of the REACT team. These visits were extremely varied, but, in general, were designed to enable a number of features, such as reporting back on institutional progress, supporting the implementation of the institution's project on the ground, spreading the word more widely in the university or helping senior managers to develop strategy. During these

visits, as well as in the course of the Discussion Days, several topics frequently surfaced: the difficulty of communication with those groups that are most 'hard to reach', including staff; the sustainability of any changes made, especially if funding or staffing is no longer available; the difficulty of gaining collaboration across an institution, but also the importance of this for embedding change; the issues related to evaluation of initiatives, including the many barriers to that process. Other commonly-voiced concerns were: time constraints; the persistent problem of defining 'student engagement' and 'hard to reach'; the challenge of reaching beyond initial circles of staff and student impact – for example, beyond one Faculty or Department.

Consultancy ranged from running a conference (with a keynote talk and workshop sessions for between thirty and fifty staff from a couple of institutions) to round-table debates with multiple stakeholders, to gaining perspectives from small groups and to spending a day with a single person (in order to map out project processes). On occasion, the discussions were extremely slow-moving, with few areas of agreement between attending stakeholders – though successful project outcomes at a later date suggest that this 'sticky' process helped to overcome obstacles). At other times, discussion was dynamic and enthusiastic, with clear outcomes.

Feedback on consultancy visits confirmed the benefits of the discussions in terms of promoting greater awareness and sensitivity to issues and prompting institutional actions, as outlined below.

*"[The meeting] Brought together all the members of the team (staff and students) to spend some more considerable time than our usual meetings to get to know each other, think through the project and identify next steps. It was a very positive experience for bonding the team and helping us to working effectively. Personally, it really prompted me to continue to think through my own definition of student engagement and, as a consequence, what we mean by 'hard to reach'. It helped us to identify that we haven't defined these terms and are probably working to different assumptions and meanings from each other. It helped us to clarify the purpose of our upcoming staff interviews and come to a shared understanding of what we might want to find out. It supported and gave us all confidence in what we are doing and trying to achieve".*

*"I've confirmed the intention to pay student panel members, I've set up a meeting with the Executive Director of Marketing to discuss how to market engagement opportunities, I'll be folding some things into the University's new Learning and Teaching Strategy and Enhancement Strategy and will continue to think about other opportunities. Also, I've had the name of the new Student Engagement Coordinator changed to Student Engagement Monitoring Coordinator to reflect this role".*

## 6. The development of a website and open-source resources

Resources were designed throughout (in particular, to support workshop sessions for the REACT Development Programme), the majority being activities designed to provoke discussion and debate. All are open source on the REACT website<sup>viii</sup> and available to be used or adapted by anyone, echoing the spirit of collaboration and sharing that has been fundamental to REACT. It was anticipated that ten such resources would be made available with 500 downloads over the two years of the project, but expectations have been exceeded, with sixteen available resources and 5,598 individual downloads at the time of writing. Similarly, website hits have been far higher than the predicted 25,000, with 455,901 gained at the time of writing. In evaluative feedback (Bols and Turhan, 2017), one of the partner institutions commented that it really appreciated the resources available on the website,

especially the student-engagement participation map, with its potential for producing a “*visual representation of your student engagement on a departmental level*”. It was also thought that the resources could be really useful if disseminated more widely beyond the core and partner institutions. It is also intended that the website will continue to generate interest via the numerous case studies from the collaborative partners.

### 8. Dissemination

The resources outlined above represent one form of dissemination. In addition, the REACT team was involved in numerous further activities: well over a hundred meetings, university visits and conference presentations. The outcomes of institutional projects were presented at a national conference at the University of Winchester, where the Vice Chancellor welcomed over 200 registered delegates. All partner institutions gave a paper or workshop-style presentation, often to considerable acclaim. The conference trended on Twitter during the day, as well as gaining a considerable amount of highly-positive feedback on content and organisation. The sense of community was also noted: “*brilliantly organised and the real buzz of an authentic event and community*”. A short video of the conference<sup>x</sup> highlights further feedback from delegates, the final quote being from a student.

*“I think it’s also created an energy ... where students and staff talking openly about the challenges and contexts that we are in, and how we can better work together, has be profoundly energising.”*

*“It’s been fantastic, I’ve learnt a lot, I’ve been really inspired by a lot of peoples’ presentations and also it’s quite nice to know that some of the challenges that we’re facing are actually challenges that a lot of other people are facing, so it’s not just us”.*

Alongside the conference as a major means of dissemination of REACT outcomes, this current issue of JEIPC is also a major vehicle for achieving widespread reach. Each of the partner universities is represented and each captures the essence of its quest to improve student engagement for the ‘hard to reach’. The putting together of the issue has been a highly-collaborative process, with numerous ‘retreats’ organised to enable REACT team members to work together in one place. For one of these, a number of members from partner institutions volunteered to be involved in a two-day, peer-review session of all papers submitted for publication. This was informative and effective, but, above all, maintained peer partnership approaches based on trust and inclusivity within an authentic context. Detailed feedback highlights why the approach was perceived as so successful.

*“The mixture of staff, students at very different stages of their careers together with a mixture of institutions supported a very open and equal process... It resulted in a far deeper understanding of Student Engagement in its multiple contexts, which undoubtedly impacted the way in which we reviewed the articles...”*

*The group dynamic was very positive... Part way through I thought about overlaying the principles of the HEA [below<sup>x</sup>] to the group and found many similarities - which again adds weight and evidence to the ‘bottom-up’ approach of the REACT project...*

*The approach taken was absolutely collaborative and meant a real sense of shared ownership of the process. The ‘open discussion’ sessions on day 1 provided a real opportunity to begin to agree a common purpose in our reviewing approach. Regardless of level of experience, this cannot but have helped to ensure a consistency of approach ... the isolation/possible low confidence when*



*reviewing independently was immediately 'put away' with the model of reviewing you enabled".*

Hence the process of peer-review enabled confidence-building, especially for inexperienced reviewers, a better understanding of issue themes, the ability to be critical of one's own work as well as that of others, all validated by fitting well with a nationally-known framework for partnership in HE. It is a model that is worthy of replication.

### Conclusion

The REACT team has worked with engagement practitioners and champions in a variety of different institutional contexts and roles, as well as with Student Unions and, where possible, with a range of professional services and academic staff. All the initiatives have included students or the student voice throughout, with several students' contributing to the writing of this issue of JEIPC, either individually or in partnership with staff. Context has been shown to be even more important than imagined at the beginning of the programme and this is strongly reflected in the varied and sharply-contrasting projects and the associated different interventions that have taken place. The Development Days and consultancy have explored ideas for change, and the management of change and development, in the varying contexts and have considered issues such as whom the institutional champions need to influence and how stakeholders can help them. Drivers for change and barriers to change have been examined and support given for articulating a vision and developing creative but practical plans for action and outcomes.

Whereas institutions already had a variety of student engagement activities in place, the main issues for many was that it was very unclear who the 'hard-to-reach' students actually were, and whether this was a useful term. These questions have often taken up much of the institutional projects' time. In the words of one collaborative partner:

*"The biggest thing that we've learnt through working with the students on this project is that there isn't specific groups that are 'hard to reach' ...we've challenged some of our preconceived ideas about who the 'hard to reach' students are ... to having to think about every single student having their own needs and their own difficulties. So we've tried to move away from labelling specific groups of students to having an inclusive practice that looks at the needs of all our students."*

For other university partners, it was not clear why particular known groups were not engaging, so this became the theme of the project. Where there were known groups and the reasons for lack of engagement were known, there was still a considerable challenge in addressing barriers to change, including deeper recognition that 'hard to reach' students are 'hard to reach' and that to expect instant success from initiatives aimed at reaching them, especially where attitudes are entrenched, would be unrealistic. The many and varied outcomes, as described in this issue, show that REACT has a continuing, if variable, impact and that changes have been achieved or set in motion that would not have happened without the programme. Importantly, evidence suggests that student engagement is really worth the effort and has the potential for positive impact upon **all** students, including those thought of as 'hard to reach', in terms of retention, degree classification and employment outcomes. This is good news for the many who have believed and observed this, but had no concrete evidence.

Overall, the REACT experience has suggested that focused, cross-institutional learning and mutual support from peers (whether staff, or students and staff together), is an approach to development and change that is worthy of more attention, especially where an ethos of openness and honesty is encouraged. It seems that, as the sector struggles with the

enormous challenge of providing the best possible opportunities for all students, the more that can be learned together in collaboration, the better will be the outcomes, and the more enjoyable the experience, for all involved.

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<sup>i</sup> For a full description of aims see Lowe and Dunne (this issue of JEIPC)

- <sup>ii</sup> For descriptions of practices in the three core universities, see Lowe and Dunne (this issue of JEIPC)
- <sup>iii</sup> As above
- <sup>iv</sup> Birmingham City University <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/business-school/student-experience-and-employability/earn-while-you-learn/student-academic-partnerships>
- <sup>v</sup> University of Lincoln <http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk/>
- <sup>vi</sup> RAISE - Researching, Advancing and Inspiring Student Engagement: <http://www.raise-network.com/>
- <sup>vii</sup> For a full copy, go to <http://www.studentengagement.ac.uk/>
- <sup>viii</sup> REACT website: <http://www.studentengagement.ac.uk/>
- <sup>ix</sup> To watch this short video of the REACT conference, go to the REACT website: <http://www.studentengagement.ac.uk/>
- <sup>x</sup> HEA Principles of Partnership
- Authenticity – all parties have a meaningful rationale for investing in partnership, and are honest about what they can contribute and the parameters of partnership.
  - Inclusivity – partnership embraces the different talents, opinions and experiences that all parties bring, and there are no barriers (structural or cultural) that prevent potential partners getting involved.
  - Reciprocity – all parties have an interest in, and stand to benefit from working and/or learning in partnership.
  - Empowerment – power is distributed appropriately and all parties are encouraged to constructively challenge ways of working and learning that may reinforce existing inequalities.
  - Trust – all parties take time to get to know one-another, engage in open and honest dialogue and are confident they will be treated with respect and fairness.
  - Challenge – all parties are encouraged to constructively critique and challenge practices, structures and approaches that undermine partnership, and are enabled to take risks to develop new ways of working and learning.
  - Community – all parties feel a sense of belonging and are valued fully for the unique contribution they make.
  - Responsibility – all parties share collective responsibility for the aims of the partnership, and individual responsibility for the contribution they make.