The Student Voice Toolkit:
A collaboration between Students and Staff

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Today's session

- Introduction to the toolkit

- How has the toolkit been established?

- Our definitions of student voice

- Implementing the toolkit and aims for the future

Introduction to the toolkit (1/2)

- The **Student Engagement team** at the University was formed in Summer 2021, with one of its key aims to focus on our student voice.

- The following summer in July 2022 Emily was elected **VP Education & Democracy** for SUSU, with a mandate to improve student voice opportunities.

- In November 2022, the University began looking at their programme review policies, and we saw this as an opportunity to collaborate on a toolkit to help improve access to and frequency of student voice activities across both teaching and learning and professional services at the institution.

- The Student Voice Toolkit is therefore a collaboration between SUSU and the University of Southampton, and aims to **support academic staff, professional services, and project teams** to **bring the student voice into their work across the institution.**

Introduction to the toolkit (2/2)

- The toolkit covers both definitions of student voice and practical advice for staff looking to engage with this:
  - **Types of student voice:**
    1. Dialogue with students
    2. Co-Design with students
    3. Partnership with students
    4. Student-led initiatives
  - **Why engage with the student voice? (benefits)**
  - **When to engage with students (timelines)**
  - **How to 'recruit' students to engage with (UoS specific)**
  - **Evaluating your student voice work**
  - **Frequently asked questions for staff**

How has the toolkit been established?

- A **variety of staff members** from across both teaching and learning and professional services were invited to **attend a series of 3 workshops** on the toolkit, with the final meeting due to take place later this month.

- Within these meetings, staff have had the opportunity to feed into the development of the toolkit, contributing their **ideas, experience and past examples** to the definitions and benefits of student voice.

- Once an initial draft was created, we presented this toolkit to the **Student Advisory Board** (a group of 25 students from under-represented backgrounds who are paid to consult on projects at the university) and asked them questions around their **experiences of student voice**, how they felt student voice should be heard at the University, what their thoughts on the given definitions and examples were, and what they would want staff looking to work with students to know. The insight from these students then fed into the next drafts.

Definition 1: Dialogue with students

Definition: Students are consulted for their ideas, thoughts, and concerns **after a project, process or change has already begun**. This could be after the initial planning phase or after the initiative has been rolled out. Feedback and insight is gathered in order to evaluate the success of a project, and to include the student voice in future phases or projects of a similar nature. Dialogue indicates a two-way communication process and there is an expectation for outcomes to be shared with students after this consultation, and that the ideas, thoughts, and concerns given will be taken on board and carefully considered.

Examples given so far include:

- Online surveys to collect insight
- In-person insight (surveys on campus)
- Student consultations

- SUSU You Make Change
- Staff-Student Liaison Committees
- Intra-module dialogue

Definition 2: Co-Design with students

Definition: Co-Design partners with students **close to the start of a new project or process** to ensure their ideas, thoughts, and concerns are a part of the initial planning process. Students' contributions can influence and change the direction of a project. These projects and processes are designed with students in a way that is collaborative, rather than consultative.

Examples given so far include:

- Student Co-Design Panel (100 student panel who meet throughout the year to input into major change projects)
- Co-Creation of curriculum and programmes
- Co-Creation of knowledge
- PAIR partners (student participation in improvement to assessment and feedback design within Politics & International Relations Dept.)

Definition 3: Partnership with students

Definition: Students are involved with a new project, programme, or process **throughout its entirety**, helping to shape its plans and outcomes. Students work together with staff to bring their ideas, thoughts, and concerns to each aspect of a new project or process, from initial planning through to creation, delivery and evaluation. This process goes further than Co-Design, as students are partnered with throughout the entire process rather than for the initial stages.

Examples given so far include:

- Student Interns working on projects from initiation through to delivery

- Postgraduate Research (PGR) Student Partner (2023)

Definition 4: Student-led initiatives

Definition: Students propose a new project or process, and are **owners of this initiative throughout**. Staff contributions can influence and change the direction of a project, but ultimately the initiative is directed by the students.

Examples given so far include:

- A programme of halls events are designed and delivered by Student Ambassadors with contributions, advice and budget given from staff

- Students led the creation of a new module, 'Faith in Medicine'
- The Partnership for Education Reform set up by 2 students
- Student-led academic societies

Implementing the toolkit and aims for the future

- The completed toolkit will go on to be shared with both **teaching and learning** staff, **professional services** staff, and teams or departments working on **major projects** (e.g., programme review teams, Change Portfolio office).

- From here, staff will be able **to access existing methods of recruiting students** to their projects, either via dialogue, co-design, partnership, or student-led work.

- We hope to see both an **increase in the student voice used** within projects, and an **increase in how many student voice opportunities are offered** to students.

- In 12 months' time we plan to review the toolkit following a year of its use and hope to add a year's worth of further examples.

YOUR QUESTIONS

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