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Mick Healey –  
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# Engaging Students as Partners in Learning and Teaching

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“Engaging students and staff effectively as partners in learning and teaching is arguably one of the most important issues facing higher education in the 21st century” (Healey et al, 2014, 7)

# Brief biographies

## Mick

- HE Consultant and Researcher; Emeritus Professor University of Gloucestershire; The Humboldt Distinguished Scholar in Research-Based Learning McMaster University; International Teaching Fellow UC Cork; Visiting Fellow University of Queensland
- HEA Principal Fellow; SEDA@20 Legacy Award for Disciplinary Development; International Society for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSoTL) Distinguished Service Award
- Research interests: linking research and teaching; SoTL; active learning; developing an inclusive curriculum; students as partners and change agents

## Ruth

- Associate Professor in Pedagogy in Higher Education, University of Chester
- HEA Senior Fellow
- International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Inaugural Fellow
- Editorial Board member *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*
- Research interests: teaching for social transformation, teaching through debates in small groups, teaching ethics, ethical SoTL, and students as partners and change agents

## Both

- National Teaching Fellows (2000 and 2017)
- Inaugural co-editors of *International Journal for Students as Partners*
- Directors of Healey HE Consultants

## Engagement through partnership: students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education



Mick Healey, Abbi Flint and Kathy Harrington

July 2014



**Cited over 600x**

# Structure

- A. Unpacking the development of future ready talents through students working in partnership with staff
- B. Students and staff as partners in learning and teaching in HE in South East Asia**
- C. Students and staff as partners in learning and teaching in HE in other parts of the world
- D. Principles of working in partnership**

# **Co-constructing future-ready talents with students**

**Developing  
future-ready  
talents**



**Students working  
in partnership  
with staff**

**Both are context dependent**

# Developing future-ready talents

Developing future ready talents in an era of disruptive change is best developed through active and authentic learning. This may involve pedagogies such as:

- Inquiry based learning
- Work based learning
- Project based learning
- Service learning

# Defining partnership

“Partnership is essentially **a process** of engagement, **not a product**. It is a way of doing things, rather than an outcome in itself.”

(Healey, Flint & Harrington 2014, 12)



# Defining partnership

Student-staff partnership is “a collaborative, reciprocal process through which **all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally**, although **not necessarily in the same ways**, to curricular or pedagogical conceptualisation, decision making, implementation, investigation, or analysis.”

(Cook-Sather et al. 2014, pp. 6-7)

# Students & staff as partners in SE Asia

In pairs each skim read a *different* case study (pp.3-10).

1. Engaging students as pedagogical consultants, ambassadors and evaluators p.3
2. Engaging students as co-designers of curriculum p.4
3. Engaging students as teachers, assessors and mentors p.5
4. Engaging students in research and inquiry p.7
5. Engaging students in strategy development, consultancy and public engagement p.8

**Discuss whether any of the ideas may be amended for application in your context.**

5 mins

# Co-constructing excellence with students: the importance of context






- In running workshops and presenting keynotes on students as partners (SaP), one of the most common answers we give to questions is, '**It depends**'.
- We cannot begin to understand the processes and outcomes of specific partnerships without **taking account of the context** in which they operate.

# Expertise

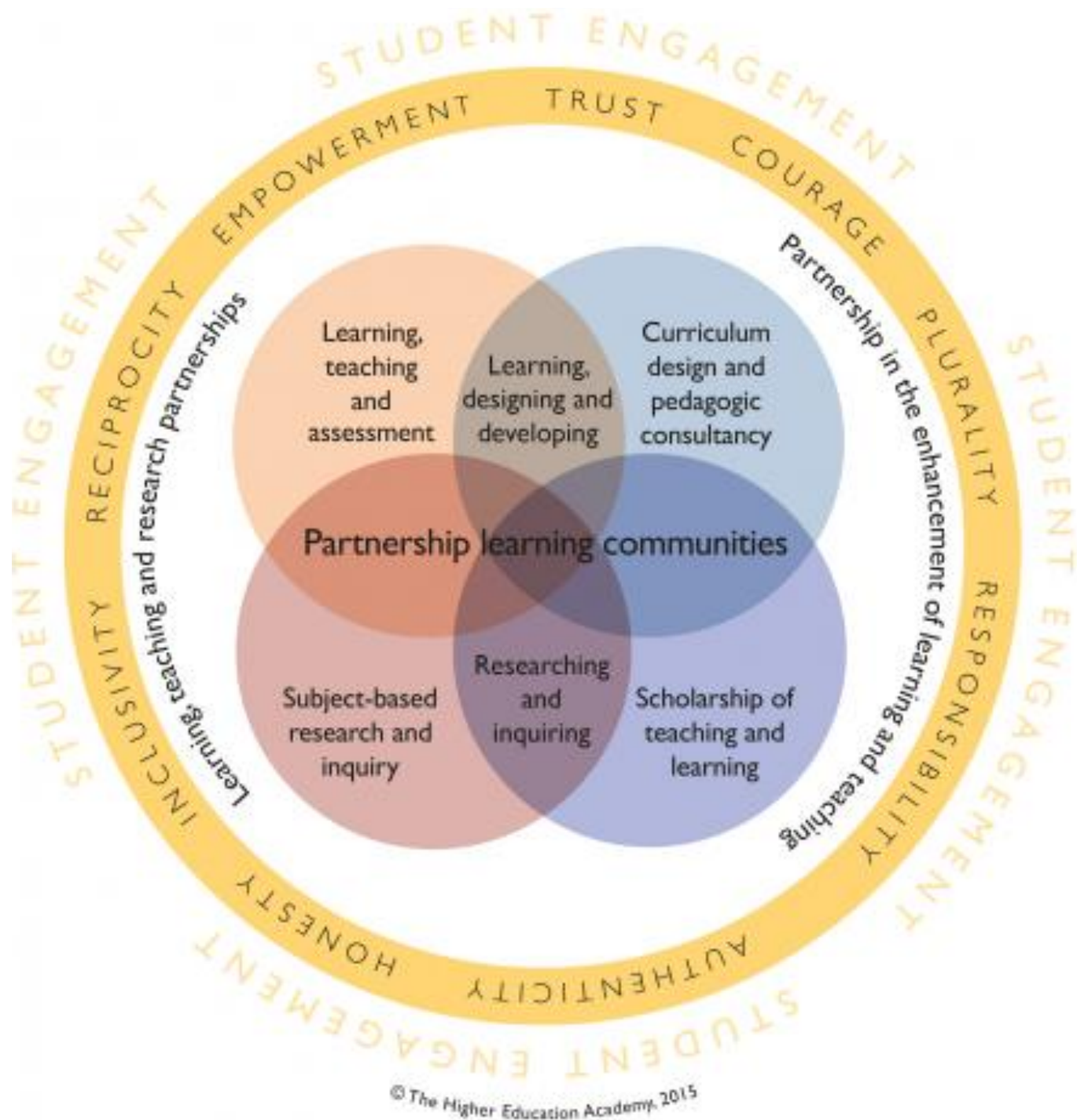
“... students are neither disciplinary nor pedagogical experts. Rather, **their experience and expertise typically is in being a student** - something that many faculty [staff] have not been for many years. They understand where they and their peers are coming from and, often, where they think they are going.”

(Cook-Sather *et al.* 2014, 27)

# Student engagement continuum

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	PARTNER	CONTROL
					
GOAL	To provide students with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and solutions.	To obtain student feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with students throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood.	To partner with students in each aspect of the initiative from identification to solution.	Students design and lead initiatives that matter to them and are in control of final decision-making.
STYLE	"Here's what's happening."	"Here are some options, what do you think?"	"Here's a problem, what ideas do you have?"	"Let's identify the issues and work together to develop a plan and implement a solution."	"You care about this issue and are leading an initiative, how can we support you?"

Adapted by Student Voice Australia from © International Association for Public Participation Spectrum of Public Participation [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)



## Students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education

Source: Based on Healey, Flint and Harrington (2014, 25)

# Students and staff as partners in quality enhancement of learning and teaching

“There is a subtle, but extremely important, difference between an institution that ‘listens’ to students and responds accordingly, and an institution that gives students the opportunity to explore areas that they believe to be significant, to recommend solutions and to bring about the required changes.”

(Dunne in Dunne and Zandstra, 2011, 4)

# Engaging students and staff as partners in learning and teaching

In pairs each skim read a *different* case study (pp.10-18).

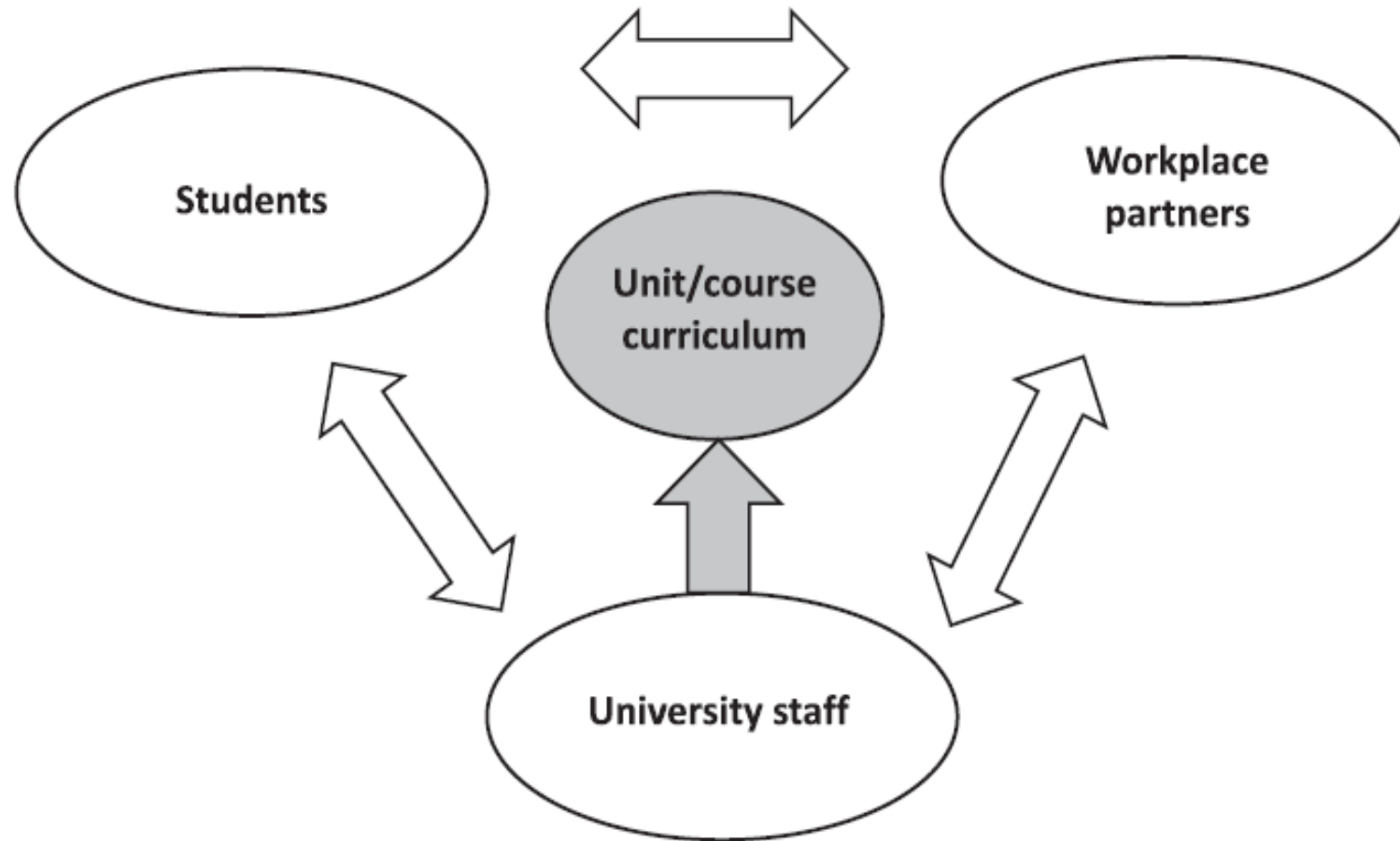
- Learning, teaching and assessment p.10
- Subject-based research and inquiry p.11
- Scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) p.13
- Curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy p.15
- Integrated approaches p.16

Discuss whether any of the ideas may be amended for application in your context.

5 minutes



# Co-creation in work-integrated learning



Model for workplace partner, student and staff contributions to co-creation of WIL

Source: Ruskin & Bilous 2019, 9)

# Engagement through partnership (p1)

**Authenticity:** the rationale for all parties to invest in partnership is meaningful and credible.

**Honesty:** all parties are honest about what they can contribute to partnership and about where the boundaries of partnership lie.

**Inclusivity:** there is equality of opportunity and any barriers (structural or cultural) that prevent engagement are challenged.

**Reciprocity:** all parties have an interest in, and stand to benefit from working and/or learning in partnership.

**Empowerment:** power is distributed appropriately and ways of working and learning promote healthy power dynamics.

**Trust:** all parties take time to get to know one-another and can be confident they will be treated with respect and fairness.

**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.

**Plurality:** all parties recognise and value the unique talents, perspectives and experiences that individuals contribute to partnership.

**Responsibility:** all parties share collective responsibility for the aims of the partnership, and individual responsibility for the contribution they make.

Source: HEA (2015)

## Students as partners

How far may these principles be helpful in working in partnership? Are some more useful than others? How might you use them?

# *International Journal for Students as Partners (IJSaP)*



- Research articles, case studies, opinion pieces, reflective essays and reviews
- **International editorial team of students and staff from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Malaysia, UK, and US**

*IJSaP* explores new perspectives, practices, and policies regarding how students and staff are working in partnership to enhance learning and teaching in higher education

<https://mulpress.mcmaster.ca/ijsap>



# International Institute on **Students as Partners**



## **5th McMaster International SaP Institute (ISaPI)**

**20-22 May 2020 in Hamilton, Ontario**

Where possible pairs of staff and students are invited to participate in **a series of workshops OR**

Alternatively teams of 4-6 faculty and students (at least two of each) from an institution(s) can apply to join **a three-day 'Change Institute'**

Facilitated by an **international team of experienced staff and students**

<https://macblog.mcmaster.ca/summer-institute/>

**Deadline for Change Institute is 24 Feb 2020;  
Early bird registration until 3 April 2020**

## Students as partners: A vision

“ ... it should be the norm, not the exception, that students are engaged as co-partners and co-designers in all university and department learning and teaching initiatives, strategies and practices.”

(Healey, 2012)

# Students as partners: Conclusions

If students as partners and change agents are to be truly integrated into HE then the **nature of higher education will need to be reconceptualised.**

“universities need to move towards creating inclusive scholarly knowledge-building communities. ... **The notion of inclusive scholarly knowledge-building communities invites us to consider new ideas about who the scholars are in universities and how they might work in partnership**” (Brew, 2007, 4).

# THE END

An invitation  
to participate  
and send us  
a case study