

# student as producer

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## Session 1.2

### The journey to partnership: through multiple lenses

*Colin Bryson, Grace Barker, Eugenie Johnson and Kirsty Winter, Newcastle University*

#### Abstract

This session is co-facilitated by students and staff. We consider the question of what does a genuine model of students as partners really look like? Wenstone (2012) has been rather disparaging of current initiatives and claims in this area. She argues for a radical reshaping of the academy to accommodate both collective and individual partnership at the same time; and where the Student Union drives this.

At Newcastle there is an emergent model of students as partners within the context of a large degree. This grew out of an attempt to transform the student experience through adopting a holistic student engagement strategy (Ashall, Furlonger and Parker, 2012). Since 2008 initiatives have been implemented co-designed and led by students; including student led policy making, peer mentoring, co-design of the curriculum and many student led projects to enhance all aspects of the student experience. There are also features of student as producer. This goes some way on the journey towards achieving key principles of student engagement (Bryson, 2011; 2013) and creating a mutual community, but problematic issues are:

- The opportunity exists for students to get involved - but some are not involved.
- Much of student experience remains 'traditional'.
- How much responsibility can students take (or want to take)?
- Whither the role of staff? Do and can staff embrace such roles?

Despite the many good outcomes of these initiatives, not least for the students, particularly those that get involved and become 'super-engaged' we do seem to fall yet short of Wenstone's ideal. So where to now, and how?

#### Presenter details

##### Colin Bryson

Colin Bryson, NTF, has been researching on, and promoting student engagement and partnership for many years. He is practising that at Newcastle where he trying to share 'control' with the students on the degree he works on.

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##### Grace Barker

Grace Barker is a recent graduate of that degree, who participated in this initiative and is now Peer Mentoring Coordinator at Newcastle.

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They will be joined by two current undergraduates, Eugenie Johnson and Kirsty Winter, from the combined honours degree to share their own views on partnership.

