



## Inaugural Conference

15 – 16 September 2011, Nottingham Conference Centre

# Engaging students in challenging times

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Student Engagement has been, and is the theme of many recent conferences and now features as an important objective in the strategies of many Higher Education bodies. In the UK the concept of student engagement is relatively underdeveloped in contrast to the US and Australia where there is a long tradition of researching and conceptualising SE. One strand of work in the UK focuses on enhancing the student voice through representation and partnership. We support this, but it underplays the importance of fostering engagement for the individual and for all students, which is essential for both persistence with study and good learning. This is centred in the sense of ‘being a student’ and how they perceive their experience, which can be fostered by creating an appropriate culture - good relationships, cultivating a sense of belonging and enhancing community. Therefore we suggest that promoting student engagement lies at the heart of improving the student experience and delivering the key outcomes for higher education.

This conference provides the opportunity to disseminate research and practice for engaging students with higher education.

### **The conference aims to:**

- Develop conceptual clarity about the nature of student engagement
- Disseminate and showcase evidence informed practice
- Provide networking and professional development opportunities for participants
- Involve students – who are particularly welcome at the conference

### **The conference themes are:**

- Presenting conceptual models based on well founded research about student engagement
- Evaluation of student engagement initiatives at an institutional level
- Evaluation of curricular and extra-curricular developments to engage students in their learning

- Sharing evidence about student expectations, experiences and identity and their impact on engagement

## Keynote Speakers:

Professor Mantz Yorke

Others speakers TBC

**RAISE** is a network of academics, practitioners, advisors and student representatives drawn from the Higher Education Sector who are working and/or interested in researching and promoting student engagement. The network creates opportunities to come together for beneficial scholarly discussion and creating collaborative projects, sharing good practice and lobbying for investment and better policies locally, sectorally and across our international community. Recently we have agreed a working definition of student engagement:

*Student engagement is about what a student brings to Higher Education in terms of goals, aspirations, values and beliefs and how these are shaped and mediated by their experience whilst a student. SE is constructed and reconstructed through the lenses of the perceptions and identities held by students and the meaning and sense a student makes of their experiences and interactions. As players in and shapers of the educational context, educators need to foster educationally purposeful SE to support and enable students to learn in constructive and powerful ways and realise their potential in education and society (RAISE 2010).*

## Calls for contributions

For the forms to use for proposals and further guidance on the format, please go to:

<http://raise-network.ning.com/page/call-for-contributions-1>

**Individual Papers:** each paper accepted for individual presentation will be allocated 30 minutes for presentation and discussion. A 500 word abstract should be submitted.

**Workshops:** each workshop will be allocated 45 minutes and should report on practice-based initiatives and should allow at least 30 minutes of audience participation or discussion. The proposal should clearly indicate how the session will be conducted. A 250 word plan should be submitted

**Symposia:** These provide a one hour opportunity for presentation of related papers on a single theme; the minimum number is 4 and a maximum is 6 papers per symposium. Symposia submissions can be made by one individual and all papers can be submitted together. The symposium proposal should include an abstract of 200 words for each presentation and a covering explanation of the symposia (250 words).

**Poster Sessions:** These provide the opportunity for researchers to present their work visually in the format of a wall poster. Poster displays will be on show throughout the Conference and specific times will be allocated in the Conference programme when poster presenters should be with their

posters and delegates invited to engage in dialogue and informal exchange. Abstract proposals (250 words) should contain a title, originator(s), presenter(s), contact details and a description of the research work undertaken.

## Venue

For details see:

<http://www.nottinghamconferencecentre.co.uk/>

## Booking

Bookings for registration of the conference will open in April. An announcement will be made at that time.

## Contacts

For issues concerning the RAISE conference contact:

[Grace.cooper@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:Grace.cooper@ncl.ac.uk)

For details on RAISE or if you wish to join the RAISE network

[Colin.bryson@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:Colin.bryson@ncl.ac.uk)      0191 222 6389

[Christine.hardy@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:Christine.hardy@ncl.ac.uk)      0115 848 8466