Reacting to the ‘hard to reach’ through Student Engagement Initiatives
Housekeeping

Today’s buildings are:
• Keynotes and refreshments – Stripe Auditorium
• Parallels Sessions – St Aphege Building 001 & 003
• Lunch and post-conference networking – University Building

Evacuation Assembly Point is the Dytch Playing Field
Housekeeping

Tweet using the hashtag #REACT17

Photographer and Videographer Present
  - Interviews wanted

We went your feedback, please visit our feedback wall
Professor Joy Carter DL
Vice-Chancellor
The University of Winchester
Realising Engagement through Active Culture Transformation: An Introduction

Liz Dunne, Tom Lowe & Cassie Shaw
2nd May 2017
The University of Winchester

www.studentengagement.ac.uk  #REACT17
REACT Core Institutions

www.studentengagement.ac.uk

#REACT17
Our Team

Liz Dunne
Director of REACT

Tom Lowe
Project Manager

Dr Stuart Sims
Lead Researcher UoW

Wilko Luebsen
Researcher LMU

Chris Guggiari-Peel
Researcher UoE

Cassie Shaw
Researcher UoW

Jack Hancock
Graduate Intern

Rebekah Street
Project Assistant

www.studentengagement.ac.uk #REACT17
A University of Brighton
B University of Bristol
C Buckinghamshire New University
D Canterbury Christ Church University
E University College London
F Edinburgh Napier University
G University of Exeter
H University of Greenwich
I University of Manchester
J London Metropolitan University
K Newcastle University
L Newman University
M Sheffield Hallam University
N University of Southampton
O University of Winchester

#REACT17
Core Aims

• **Aim 1:** To enable a thorough investigation of **student engagement** in the case of ‘hard to reach’ students, looking into key areas such as retention and attainment
Student Engagement

Can you define Student Engagement?

Does your institution (University / Student Union) have a definition of Student Engagement?

‘We could define student engagement in any way we want.’
(Finn & Zimmer, 2001)
Student Engagement: An Explosion of Practice

Many initiatives in the UK and across the world:

Students as Partners          Student Fellows
Student Partnerships          Student Colleagues
Student-Staff Partnerships    Students as Champions
Students as Researchers       Students as Producers
Students as Co-Researchers    Students as Change Makers
Students as Learners and Teachers Students as Co-Producers
Students as Change Agents     Students as Co-creators
Students as Co-constructers

(Dunne, 2016)
Core Aims

• **Aim 1:** To enable a thorough investigation of student engagement in the case of ‘hard to reach’ students, looking into key areas such as retention and attainment.
‘Hard to Reach’

Do you think the following groups are ‘hard to reach’?

- Commuter students
- BME students
- Engineering students
- White male students
- Students from Low Socio-Economic backgrounds
Systematic Literature Review of ‘Hard to Reach’

• 284 Relevant titles and abstracts

• 101 Included in the literature review

• 28 different descriptions of ‘hard to reach’

• Some articles produced more than one definition
Systematic Literature Review of ‘Hard to Reach’

- 30 - No definition
- 23 - BME
- 20 - Low SEC
- 13 - Young+ (Black, Mother, Females, Offenders)
- 12 - Disability
- 10 - Undereducated
- 4 - Distance, 2 Mature, 1 Commuting students
- 27 - No method to engage

www.studentengagement.ac.uk  #REACT17
## ‘Hard to Reach’ in practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WP students in general</th>
<th>- International students, including INTO students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Mature students</td>
<td>- Minority groups - BME, young white male, LGBT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Part-time students</td>
<td>- First in family to go to University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Return-to-learn students</td>
<td>- Students part-time on campus, though full-time students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Students with disabilities and/or mental health issues</td>
<td>- Those from a low socio-economic background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Non-traditional/under-represented groups</td>
<td>- Specific disciplines: medics/nurses; engineering; theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Postgraduates</td>
<td>- In some subjects males participate actively less than females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student parents/carers (including young carers)</td>
<td>- Estranged students (who have lost contact with their family and therefore aren't financially supported by them)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Care leavers</td>
<td>- First year students in private accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Those commuting locally/regionally (particularly those from low participation neighbourhoods)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘Hard to Reach’ in practice

Warnings

- This is a continuum...
- We are wary of any sort of deficit model
- Differences between ‘hard to get hold of’ : ‘hard to communicate with’ : ‘hard to engage’...
Core Aims

• **Aim 1:** To enable a thorough investigation of student engagement in the case of ‘hard to reach’ students, looking into key areas such as retention and attainment
What outcomes are important?

Institution  Retention / Attainment  Individual

www.studentengagement.ac.uk  #REACT17
What outcomes are important – Identity?

A more holistic approach to student engagement

Motivation – Identity

Learning environment

Ethos of the University

Social

Belonging

Academic

Personal

Success

#REACT17
Core Aims

- **Aim 1:** To enable a thorough investigation of student engagement in the case of ‘hard to reach’ students, looking into key areas such as retention and attainment
Aims

- **Aim 2** To gain understanding of what works, how and why - through quantitative and qualitative research, staff and student voices and in-depth case studies.

- **Aim 3** To ensure a variety of outcomes that improve practice and benefit students, academics, student unions, academic developers and institutions as a whole.

- **Aim 4** To share best practice nationally and enable institutions to learn with and from each other, by developing and sharing open resources, strategies and frameworks and acting as a supportive community of practice.
Project Streams

Collaborative Development Programme
• Development Days
• Discussion Events
• Consultancy Visits
• Journal Reviewing Retreat
• Dissemination (RAISE Symposium, JEIPC and REACT Conference)

REACT Research Project

Raising Awareness and spreading practice

www.studentengagement.ac.uk  #REACT17
Project Streams

Collaborative Development Programme

REACT Research Project
- Demographic analysis of engaged students in SE roles
- Analysis in comparison to retention and attainment
- Student Engagement Motivation Study
- Comparison study across 3 HEIs

Raising Awareness and spreading practice

www.studentengagement.ac.uk  #REACT17
Project Streams

- **Collaborative Development Programme**
- **REACT Research Project**
- **Raising Awareness and spreading practice**
  - Creation of a website for the sector
  - 33 paper Special Issue of JEIPC
  - Discussion events at conferences /REACT Conference 2017
  - Consultancy to HEIs seeking to expand SE practices

[www.studentengagement.ac.uk](http://www.studentengagement.ac.uk)  #REACT17
More REACT...

Special Issue of the Journal of Education Innovation, Partnership & Change
Case studies from all Universities involved in REACT
Additional articles from the REACT team
Additional Opinion Pieces from experts in SE

Release date: 1st August 2017

REACT Website
Interviews with staff and students
Open resources for the sector
Online blog open for contributions
www.studentengagement.ac.uk

www.studentengagement.ac.uk  #REACT17
Enjoy the conference!

Tweet using the hashtag #REACT17

Share practice, network and collaborate as peers

Any questions, please ask a member of the REACT Team

www.studentengagement.ac.uk  #REACT17