**Student-staff partnerships: the future of learning and teaching?**

*Ruxandra Calin, Cristina Simion, Andreea Balasa and Allan Parsons*

***College of***

***Design, Creative and Digital Industries***

**Academic Year 2018-2019**

**Executive Summary**

How crucial will student-staff partnerships be to the future of higher education? One of the major factors affecting their adoption is staff motivations for taking part in them. This research, therefore, examines what motivates those staff who have already adopted a partnership and co-creation into their pedagogic practice and considers what might conditions might be needed for wider adoption of such approaches. The higher educational context in which student partnerships came to be seen to have pedagogic value is outlined, and staff views on partnership were sought by means of an online survey, a focus group and an interview. The results show that a small enthusiastic group of staff are actively developing partnership projects and are endeavouring to put them into practice in the curricula. They suggest that more time, support and training is needed for them to be able to develop their practice in this regard. How such approaches might work in the context of large modules and courses requires a great deal of thought. The low response rate to the online survey suggests that student partnerships and co-creation is a topic whose profile needs to be raised significantly within the University. The staff made several suggestions as to what kinds of Students as Co-Creators projects might be useful to conduct in the coming year in order to address issues related to the adoption of a partnership approach more fully within curriculum planning. These suggestions include involving students in developing marking criteria; helping students understand how their performance is evaluated at levels 3-7 against national benchmarks; examining the factors affecting students who are experiencing difficulties; and examining the use and interpretation of data and learning analytics in developing pedagogy and assessment. This research did not address the issue of power dynamics in the pedagogic relation, but the horizon in which this is understood could be crucial to further adoption of student-staff partnerships. A number of recommendations are made for the development of the partnership and co-creators programme at the University, such as, updating the Students as Co-Creators web pages; extending the programme to include Professional Services staff; and publishing a register of project topics which groups could bid to fulfil.

**Keywords:** Student-Staff Partnerships; Staff motivations; Incentives; Learning; Assessment; Feedback

1. **Introduction**

***Research question and objectives***

This research contributes to the discussion of the question of how crucial student-staff partnerships may be for the future of learning and teaching in higher education? It does so by examining what motivates those staff who have already participated in such partnerships to do so and what might encourage others, who have not yet participated, to do so. It also considers what the perceived benefits of participating in partnerships are to students and to staff.

Thus, the objectives of the research are to:

* Explore what may need to change for teaching staff to introduce student partnership into their teaching practice; and
* Examine the factors that would influence academic staff motivations for taking part in student staff partnership.

The question of staff motivations arose, in part, from prior practice. The experience of one of the student partners was that the academic partner in a previous project did not participate actively in the research process, being a mere signatory of the process and assuming that was sufficient involvement. She was therefore keen to discover what the reasons might be for such apparent indifference on the part of the academic partner and what the conditions might be for greater participation on their part.

From the perspective of the academic partner, who works in Professional Services, the interest in the partnership approach lies in extending the students as partners perspective beyond partnerships between students and academic or teaching staff. This extension would include the many ways in which professional services staff work cooperatively and collaboratively with students to achieve the educational goals of the students and fulfil the professional commitment of the member of staff.

In order to achieve this extension, a good understanding of how student partnerships are viewed by teaching staff under current arrangements is needed, so that a degree of coordination may be achieved in the future among the different kinds of student-staff partnerships that are possible. Partnership could then provide a linking concept among the different academic and support services offered to the student while at university, all of which, if co-ordinated, could contribute to the educational offer that the university provides to the student in terms of their personal and professional development as well as their ethical, civic and political participation in matters of public and global concern.

***Student-staff partnership***

Partnership is defined in this research as an equitable and reciprocal pedagogic interaction between academic staff and students in which all involved are actively engaged in, and potentially gain from, learning and working together. Following Healey, Flint and Harrington (2014, 7) partnership is understood as *a process of student engagement*, where staff and students learn and work together to “foster engaged student learning and engaging learning and teaching enhancement”. In partnership, all the participants stand to gain from the process of learning and working together. Healey, Flint and Harrington (2014) also argue that partnerships is an effective approach to engaging students, as there are opportunities for authentic immersion in learning, with the potential for transformative learning experiences.

The conditions that prompted experimentation with student-staff partnerships arose in the context of the increasing marketisation of higher education, a process that began, in the UK, in the late 1970s and accelerated from the 1990s onwards (Foskett, 2011). Scullion, Molesworth, and Nixon (2011) analyse factors underlying such marketisation and argue that one of its major outcomes is that students adopt a more passive role in their learning because higher education increasingly comes to be viewed as a commodity, encouraging a “student as consumer” attitude to prevail (Curran, 2017: 2).

Such a view is backed up by research. For example, Burke (2016) mentions a study commissioned by the UK’s Quality Assurance Agency which found that “across all student year groups, institutional types and subjects, students have a consumerist ethos towards higher education, wanting ‘value‐for‐ money’.” (Kandiko and Mawer, 2013). Ronald Barnett (2011), however, suggests that there is a distinction to be made between consumers and customers and that a transformation from ‘consumers’ to ‘customers’ could have some positive benefits. Barnett (2011, 43) points out that, “the customer has a greater influence in a market relationship than the consumer. The provider of services or a product takes account of the customer, knowing that the customers can take their custom elsewhere. For the provider whose services or products are simply consumed, there is much less need to take account of its consumers … characteristically the case in situations where providers wield monopoly power”. The underlying issue is one of structural power and the distribution of power in a field of relationships, whether in a pedagogic context or a market context and, indeed, in a pedagogic context which is also now a market context.

The partnership approach is one technique adopted to counteract the effects on learning of such presumed consumerism, stimulating greater student engagement in learning and greater responsibility for their own learning and decision making, as Bovill et al. (2016) indicate.

***The Students as Co-Creators programme at the University of Westminster***

As Curran (2017) notes, the move towards promoting a partnership ethos between students and staff in the higher education sector has resulted in institutions taking initiatives across various aspects of university life. Within the University of Westminster, student-staff partnership work is undertaken using a co-creation model, which encourages students and faculty to build collaborative and reciprocal relationships of learning. According to the Centre for Teaching Innovation (2019), the Students as Co-Creators Programme is a core element of the University’s partnership work, providing opportunities and resources for students and staff to work together on research projects that enhance learning and teaching within the institution.

Since the establishment of the Students as Co-creators programme, two strands have been added to the initial learning and teaching research collaboration one, as the Centre for Teaching Innovation seeks to expand student-staff partnerships across the University, while moving towards putting co-creation elements into the curriculum. The three strands now are:

* Learning and Teaching Research Collaborations: *Student and staff teams propose research to enhance the learning & teaching environment.*
* Disciplinary Research Collaborations: *Student and staff teams propose research within a specific discipline (or across disciplines).*
* Curriculum Design Collaborations: *Staff propose to develop an aspect of their course or module in partnership with students.*

***Methodology***

The group undertook secondary research into the literature on staff motivation for participation in staff-student partnerships using the databases to which the University of Westminster subscribes as well as open access material on the World Wide Web. This secondary research was supplemented with primary research in the form of an online questionnaire, created using Google Forms, addressed to all teaching staff within the University of Westminster, an in-depth interview with a part-time visiting lecturer and a focus group with full-time teaching staff. All interviewees and focus group participants took part voluntarily and gave their written consent. Curation and analysis of the secondary research was assisted using Mendeley reference management software while further analysis of the primary and secondary research material was assisted using the NVivo qualitative analysis software.

At the level of what might be called ‘theoretical’ methodology, the project follows the educational philosophy outlined in the Oui!Learn learning community (Parsons, 2018-2019). This approach assumes that the traditional research which goes under the name of ‘scholarship of learning and teaching’ could benefit from being supplemented with a range of other lines of inquiry, such as the following.

The literature focusing specifically on the pedagogic relationship as asymmetrical but not unequal, emphasising the ‘double-sidedness of relationships’, such as, for example, Otto Friedrich Bollnow’s writings on “The Pedagogic Atmosphere” and other phenomenologically-inspired educational thought, such as that of Max van Manen. The literature on caritas, or care, but not under the horizon of onto-theology (religion or metaphysics), deriving as much from Dewey as Heidegger and contemporary feminist environmental thinking (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017). The literature on the politics of friendship and on *philia*, critically rearticulating the image of ‘brotherhood’ that underlies that tradition, along with the related literature on the possibility, or perhaps impossibility, of achieving democracy. The literature around post-humanism, where the human is neither central nor exceptional, but is part of the ecological condition of the planet, a phenomenon that may now be problematic and not just for itself. The literature on ontological design (e.g. Willis, 2006). and the politics of ontology (e.g. Stengers, 2018), related to curriculum design (treating curriculum as a design problem). The literature on the ‘worldhood university’ (Nørgård and Bengtsen, 2018), focusing on higher education strategies and frameworks that integrate more traditional forms of higher education curriculum with moral and political awareness, social agency, and economic consciousness,

The reason for including all of these different literatures is because there is a need to question all of the hierarchies and their implicit and explicit power relations which are assumed to be ‘natural’ or ‘essential or ‘necessary’ within the curriculum, in the pedagogic relation and in the relationship between university and society. They are needed to move towards a more co-operative, collaborative, performative understanding of how the world is designed, created, constructed, sustained and reproduced in the educational frame and through the pedagogic relation.

1. **Survey results**

Sixty (60) staff members responded to the survey questionnaire. Given that there are just over 1,000 full- and part-time posts within the University, not counting part-time visiting lecturers, this represents a response rate of less than 5.5%. The results are therefore of a crudely indicative nature only. No generalisations can be made on their basis.

Responses were received from all 12 schools within the University, however, with members of the School of Life Sciences forming the largest group of respondents (11; 18.3%), followed by the School of Architecture and Cities (8; 13.3%) and the School of Computer Science and Engineering (7; 11.7%) and the School of Humanities (7; 11.7%). Fewest responses were received from the School of Finance and Accounting (1; 1.7%) and Westminster Law School (2; 3.3%) and the School of Organisations, Economy and Society (2; 3.3%).

Of the 32 subjects listed on the University's website as being taught within the University, only Criminology and Television, Film and Moving Image did not have any respondents. The subjects with the most respondents were Biomedical Sciences, Biosciences, Business and Management and Languages, each with 6 respondents (10%). Architecture and Interiors, Computer Science and Software Engineering, Property and Construction and Psychology were all well represented, each with 5 respondents (8.3%). Other subjects that were well represented were Journalism, Digital Media and PR and Tourism and Events, each with 4 respondents (6.7%).

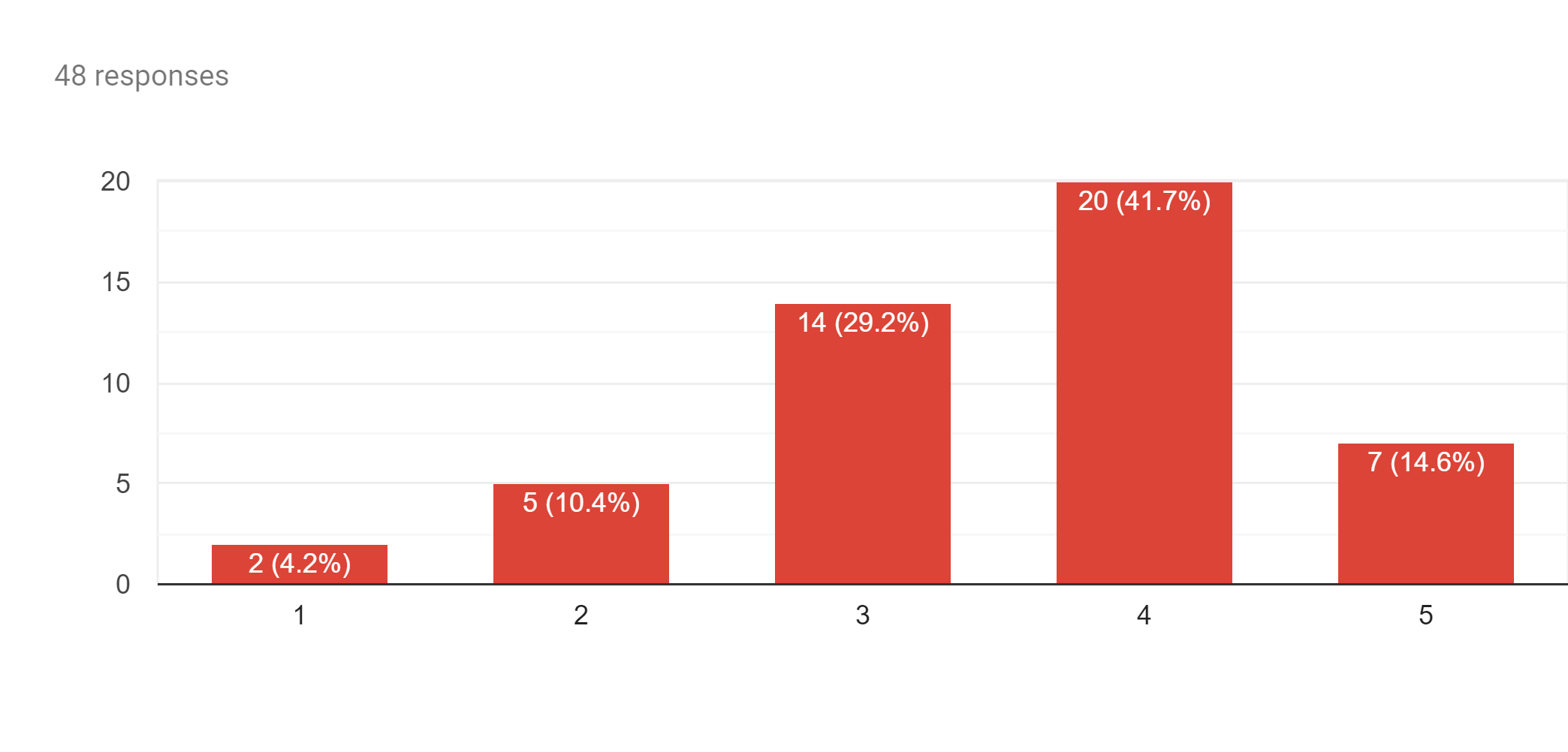
The most popular ways in which courses are delivered are Lectures (56; 93.3%), Seminars (48; 80%), Workshops (39; 65%) and guest lectures (33; 55%), followed by Studios (7; 11.7%), with courses and modules involving a mix of all of them. A dozen or so other means of delivery were also mentioned, including group and individual tutorials (3; 5%), field trips/field work, site visits, external visits and off-campus events (5; 8.3%) and supervised clinical practice (2; 3.3%).

The most popular ways in which assessment is carried out are Exams (45; 75%), Portfolios (48; 63.3%), Essays (48; 63.3%), Reports (35; 58.3%), Group work (35; 58.3%) and Practical projects (31; 51.7%), with courses and modules using a mixture of these means. Other techniques mentioned include blogs, podcasts, field notebooks and clinical skills and competencies tests.

Of the 60 respondents, 68.3% had heard of staff-student partnership. The contexts in which they had become aware of such partnerships were many and varied including, for example, through participating in Students as Co-Creators projects at the University of Westminster, the Teaching Excellence Framework, when studying for the PG Certificate in Higher Education, at staff meetings, as part of course re-design and from information leaflets.

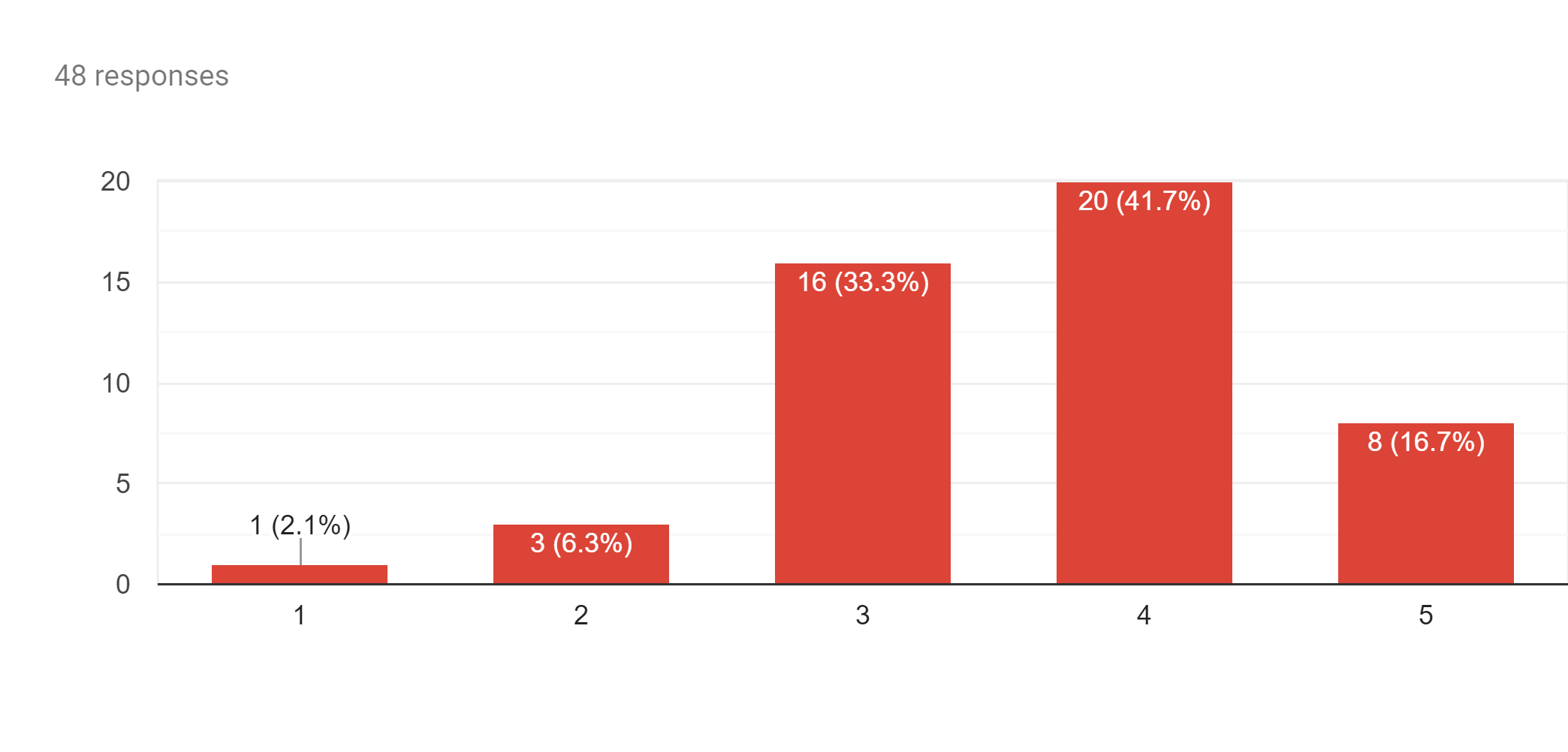
As suggested by the responses to the previous question, two-thirds of the respondents already knew about the Students as Co-Creators programme at the University of Westminster. Of those who are aware of the programme, 20 respondents had taken part in a project in some capacity. Their experience was mixed, with 15 of the 20 reporting a largely positive experience and 5 reporting that the projects had a problematic aspect of some kind.

The majority (80%) of the 60 survey respondents expressed an interest in finding out more about staff-student partnerships. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning not important and 5 meaning very important, 7 respondents (14.6%) of a total of 48 considered staff-student partnerships very important for their academic work in the near future, while 20 (41.7%) considered it important. Two respondents (4.2%) considered it not important, as the Figure 1 shows.



*Figure 1: Responses to the question: How important do you think student staff partnerships will be for your academic work, in the near future? 1 = not important; 5 = very important*

In response to the question of how important respondents thought staff-student partnerships will be to their curriculum development, 8 of the 48 respondents (16.7%) thought that it will be very important while 20 (41.7%) thought that it will be important. One respondent (2.1%) thought that it will not be important, as Figure 2 illustrates.



*Figure 2: Responses to the question: How important do you think that staff-student partnerships will be to your curriculum development? 1 = not important; 5 = very important*

A large majority (89.6%) of 48 respondents considered that staff-student partnerships would be a good addition to their curriculum delivery. The four most important factors that would encourage academic staff to adopt staff-student partnerships are greater student engagement (41 respondents, 95.3% of 43 respondents), improvements on traditional teaching methods (34; 79.1%), positive use of time in the curriculum design and planning (28; 65.1%) and positive expectations about its value (18; 41.9%).

Survey respondents think that the kind of support that would enable them to adopt staff-student partnerships relates to more engaged students (29 respondents; 62.8% of 43 respondents), training (27; 62.8%), being on the same page with other colleagues and working collectively to achieve student-staff partnership (26; 60.5%), and continuous support from staff expertise (22; 51.2%). Other factors, such as increased salary (10; 23.3%) were considered less important. Eight respondents (18.6%) felt that no support was needed. They are open to finding out more.

Finally, 88.4% of 43 respondents are considering incorporating staff-student partnerships in their curriculum delivery in the near future.

1. **Focus group and interviews**

The interview was conducted with a part-time visiting lecturer (PTVL) and the focus group was conducted with experienced lecturers during June 2019. These sessions brought to attention the following issues.

***Staff motivations***

The interview and focus group responses suggest that staff motivations for participating in partnership and SCC projects include the following.

One reason for staff to develop a partnership and co-creators approach relates to the use of emerging media, social and learning technologies in teaching and learning. A partnership approach could lead to a better understanding of students' reception of such technologies and to more effective incorporation of them into learning design in ways that are more specific, precise and student-oriented.

Another reason, related to the first, is that a partnership and co-creators approach could lead to a better understanding, firstly, of what students are taking from what the teacher is offering and, secondly, of how they use what is given to them.

Further pragmatic considerations which a lecturer would take into consideration when considering whether to incorporate a partnership and co-creators approach are how it affects lecturer’s marking workload; how it affects the amount and kind of feedback required; whether it involves additional work for the lecturer and of what kind; and is it too much work, given an already fairly full set of commitments?

Against such pragmatic considerations, if the lecturer is very interested in the topic and has a high level of motivation to explore the outcomes, he or she could well put aside any pragmatic difficulties and find ways to overcome such constraints as lack of time and extra workload. In relation to this point, if a partnership and co-creators approach made the teaching experience more enjoyable, this in itself would create a positive feedback loop, reinforcing their interest, motivation and commitment to the development of their own and their students' learning and teaching.

***Potential barriers to implementation***

Our interviewee commented that it is unclear from the students as co-creators (SCC) programme profile on the University's web pages whether part-time visiting lecturers are eligible to take part in the programme, either as project proposers or project participants. There is also little detailed awareness of the programme among full-time staff, who are therefore unable to provide further information or guidance. This leads to a situation in which it is unlikely that PTVLs will propose projects or become involved with student-initiated projects.

The webpage is primarily oriented to a student reader. To improve staff awareness of the programme, the SCC web pages need to be updated and edited to address both staff and students as potential initiators and participants.

Currently, suggestions for curriculum improvement are usually made at the end of the module or the course and are implemented by the course leader or module leader. This timing prevents staff from experimenting with SCC and partnership approaches within the module, affecting the rate at which staff can innovate, placing the burden at the level of course design and module design. The PTVL staff, in this case, would benefit from training in module design and course design, in order to be able to contribute in an informed way to curriculum development.

The timing of the projects was seen as potentially making it difficult for lecturers to engage with the SCC programme. The project launches in the first and second terms coincide with busy periods for teaching staff. It was suggested that perhaps projects could be launched in the summer term, allowing staff and students to develop the proposal prior to the start of the teaching year. An alternative would be to have a rolling programme whereby staff and students could initiate a project at a time that best suits their mutual availability.

In a related point, it was commented that the SCC projects may work better if staff did not work with students from their own courses, course suites or academic programmes. This would allow the relationship to focus on learning processes while placing subject knowledge in a secondary role, with subject expertise being available as and when required. This avoids the potentially tricky transition in roles when a partner in one context turns assessor in another context.

In the context of encouraging greater participation in SCC projects, it was suggested that a register of projects could be created and maintained, with the projects going out to tender, so that different groups could make bids to fulfil the project brief. This published list would be constructed around significant issues that had been raised within the University and which would benefit from the different perspectives of staff and students on how those issues could be defined, articulated and addressed. This would ensure the relevance of the research being undertaken, as well as reinforcing the importance of the SCC programme for the University's resilience. It was also suggested that a webpage could be created on which project ideas could be presented, as a kind of a marketplace or a bank of ideas, that have been proposed and to which students and staff can volunteer to join, to develop or to form project teams.

***Module and course size and numbers***

One potential barrier to adopting a partnership and SCC approach is that of module and course size. How would it be possible to adopt such an approach within a mega-module with several hundred students? Among large, diverse groups there is a wide range in levels of commitment. It would be difficult to configure groups containing those who are more apathetic with those who are more highly motivated without frustrating both groups and without such integration it is difficult to see how a co-creation project could be driven by those who are more apathetic. This raises the issue of the assumptions in the partnership and co-creation approach concerning degree of motivation, size of group and size of cohort, as well as staff-student ratios.

***Extensions of the partnership framework***

One suggestion that was made was to extend the SCC programme to include outside bodies in the partnership scheme. For example, it would be possible for students in partnership with a small or medium-sized company, which would otherwise not have the capacity, to produce a sustainability report for that company. The difficulties here relate to ensuring that such projects are not simply pragmatic and contain an academic component. Such projects would, however, enable the inclusion of 'authentic assessment' into the curriculum, indicating the potential for the partnership approach to impact the assessment agenda. Such an initiative would require a university infrastructure enabling connections with private companies, the allocation of students into groups, arrangements for initial pitches and final presentations, the development of assessment criteria for this kind of project in which the theoretical and the practical are thoroughly interwoven.

In this way, the staff-student partnership concept is extended to incorporate social partnerships.

***Staff incentives***

From the perspective of the PTVL, possible incentives which would encourage participation in partnership and co-creation projects include payment for extra hours, if this extended beyond their existing teaching hours; accreditation, which could be added to their professional profile, for example, in LinkedIn; the possibility of writing academic papers, for example on such topics as the use of technologies in pedagogic communication; and sponsorship to attend workshops and conferences on topics related to partnership and co-creation.

It is acknowledged that for staff-student partnerships to result in win-win situations, with more engaged students and more engaged staff, both sides need to have an initial motivation to partake. This may require some negotiation of expectations on the part of both students and staff and careful consideration of how such partnerships can be deployed at all levels of further and higher education from apprenticeships, through first and second year academic study, and on to third-year and postgraduate study.

It was noted that, in general, staff participation in partnership and SCC projects is altruistic and driven by a sense of wanting to find something that is going to work in terms of student learning and that this, as noted above, is a matter of interest and motivation, of finding the right motivation. From this perspective, it was noted that in providing incentives to staff to participate there is a danger that staff will volunteer for such projects but will not actively take part. Furthermore, taking into account the many and varied qualities of academic staff, it has to be acknowledged that not all are suited to co-creation. It is better to find the right people for co-creation projects, rather than to incentivise it, which may lead to perverse outcomes.

***Benefits for students***

A partnership and SCC approach was thought to be potentially of value in a number of contexts, all of which emphasise greater student responsibility for their own learning, decision making and choices affecting their future. The partnership and SCC approach was thought to encourage them to think about what they have been taught, encourage them to be more reflective about what they have learned, what they should be studying, what skills they need and what qualities are desirable to enable them to pursue the employment and the lifestyle they seek, including considerations about cultural and environmental sustainability. In that way, they become not just co-creators of academic knowledge but co-creators of the University and the society in which they are active participants.

Involvement in SCC projects might reorient students attitudes towards learning, giving them the ability to reflect on what they have learnt, rather than to focus on what grade they received.

***Suggested Topics for future SCC projects***

When attention turned to the role of SCC projects in curriculum planning, the topics of assessment, feedback and marking criteria, related to student expectations, dominated the discussion.

The potential project topics which were raised include exploring involving students in the development of marking criteria, so that their expectations about their own performance can be modified in line with their greater understanding of the criteria. Further exploration could then be conducted into how these criteria are related to a more explicit benchmarking of what kind and level of learning is expected at each year, from level 3 through to level 7, again with the aim of enabling students to gain a better understanding of how their own performance is being assessed. In this context, by way of benchmarking, the HEFCE standards could be used as rubrics on levels of attainment, as a means of keeping feedback and assessment clear both for staff and students, and as a means of averting grade inflation.

A related project would be to explore what makes a student successful at level 3, at level 4 and so on up to level 7. Such a project may have the capacity to engage with students who are failing and analyse their experience, helping them to understand what factors are affecting their performance. This might lead to improved progression statistics and/or the provision of a new course, whether delivered online or in person, which addresses students' needs, as defined by the project’s findings, and which guides students to available support and resources.

Furthermore, a series of investigations could be conducted into the understanding and use of data from learning analytics: what data is being generated?; how is it being used?; how is it being interpreted?; is training needed into academic use of such data? For example, a project could be organised around a more effective and more informed use of such data so that feedback is delivered in a more timely fashion and in such a way that students in difficulty are addressed prior to their failing.

A more granular investigation could then be conducted into the factors involved in what goes wrong for particular individuals or groups of students. A project within this horizon could focus on the attainment gap for particular student demographics, although it was cautioned that a great deal of information would be needed on the attainment level achieved at the beginning of the students' academic study so that it can be compared to that at the end before any meaningful discussion of an 'attainment gap' could be developed. In other words, part of the project would respond to the question: how do we know there is an attainment gap?

Taken as a group of projects, such investigations could be used to re-frame learning analytics data, grade assessment and feedback from the perspective of co-creation, giving both staff and students greater insight into the appropriateness of particular modes of assessing learning and how those processes might be altered, functionally or intellectually.

Research suggests that assessment should come early and often, so an SCC project to assess the validity of this research conclusion could be conducted which might lead to a change of the University's policy in relation to assessment, i.e. that it happens once and at the end of a module.

***Participation in SCC projects***

The participants in the focus group had all taken part in SCC projects or were about to do so and were keen to add them as a possible way to enable students to take greater responsibility for their own learning. As noted as the beginning of the survey results section above, this is a very small selection of staff, so this enthusiasm cannot be assumed to have a wide base within the University.

1. **Analysis and discussion**

The survey results indicate that a very small group of academic staff are interested in adopting staff-student partnerships but, in order to do so effectively, they would require further support and also training. Our research concurs with that of Burke (2016), who notes that, “All participants were asked in broad terms what they saw as the barriers to partnerships. By far the most common response related to time and resources, particularly in fields where many of the taught modules are very large.”

Staff opinion supports the suggestion that the partnership approach could assist in improving student engagement. Perhaps a future Students as Co-creators project can research the factors affecting student engagement in class, while organising a focus group with students and staff to understand how motivation would rise along with engagement.

The research also indicates that staff consider the partnership approach a valid way to enhance traditional teaching methods; and that it would be a positive use of time to consider ways to include partnership in curriculum design and planning, thereby increasing incentives for adopting student-staff partnership.

Acknowledging this possibility, it is important to leave space for experimentation, when planning and designing the curriculum. There should, therefore, be a certain amount of built-in flexibility in the curriculum to allow for partnership approaches to be introduced as appropriate.

The question that this research project did not engage with, as it sought only to discover staff motivations for taking part in student-staff partnership approaches, is: why would staff relinquish the power they hold within existing understandings of the pedagogic relation? This is perhaps the most pressing issue in terms of making partnership central to education and not simply another fashionable pedagogic technique.

To address the issue of power in the pedagogic relation, it would have to be seen in a wider context of power relations and in the context of the educational and societal missions of higher education. In this case the horizon for co-creation would not simply be that of knowledge, but of social relations going forward and, on a larger scale, opening to the understanding of how a partnership and co-creation approach affects understanding of a world riven with inequality, regional international tensions, mass movements of populations, volatile public opinion and environmental and ecological dynamics that are potentially uncontrollable. It may be worth relinquishing a degree of power in order to create the social and intellectual capital needed to begin to address these larger goals, which can only be achieved collectively.

1. **Conclusion**

It is clear from this research that a small core of staff are very aware of the SCC programme and have already taken part in SCC projects. The very low response rate to the survey suggests that much work may have to be done to interest and engage staff with the partnership approach, especially given already high levels of existing workloads, commitments and ongoing innovations in curriculum, educational technology and pedagogy.

***Further Research***

In the course of conducting this research, and as a result of presenting the SCC programme at the Student and Academic Services conference, it came to the attention of the researchers that it would be beneficial for the students and the University to develop student-staff partnerships with staff working in Professional Services. This would enable a clearer sense of how the Professional Services contribute to students' educational goals and attainment. The counselling service and the careers service have expressed interest in such an initiative. This suggests that, in addition to the research undertaken here on academic staff motivations for taking part in SCC projects, further research is required on the benefits and motivations of staff in Professional Services, particularly those in Student and Academic Services, for partaking in such projects.

In the context of further research with academic staff, one project that recommends itself is an examination of how such staff conceive of power in the pedagogic relation and how might the partnership and co-creation approach be presented in such a way that a reconfiguration of power in the pedagogic relation may be perceived as beneficial, both to staff and to students

1. **Recommendations**

Update the Students as Co-Creators’ web pages need to make it clear that staff and students can both be initiators and participants in projects

The Students as Co-Creators programme should be extended to include partnerships between students and staff in professional services

A register of projects should be created, published on one of the Students as Co-Creators’ webpages, based on the University’s pressing issues, with the projects going out to tender, so that different groups could make bids to fulfil the project brief

Maintain a list of staff willing to take part in Students as Co-Creators projects, so that students can contact them if they do not already have an academic partner.

Create a learning community to develop the practices involved in student partnerships

Incorporate a session or module on the partnership approach in the Post-Graduate Certificate of Education

1. **Bibliography**

Barnett, R. (2011). The marketised university: defending the indefensible. In: Scullion, R., Molesworth, M., and Nixon, E., eds. *The marketisation of higher education and the student as consumer*. London: Routledge, 39–51.

Barrineau, S., Engstrom, A. and Schnaas, U. (2019). *An Active student participation companion*. Uppsala, SV: Uppsala University. Available from http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1286438/FULLTEXT02.pdf [Accessed 14 March 2019].

﻿Bhabha, H. (1994). *The location of culture*. London: Routledge.

Bovill, C., Felton, P. and Cook-Sather, A. (2014). Engaging Students as Partners in Learning and Teaching (2): Practical guidance for academic staff and academic developers. In: *ICED Conference 2014: Educational Development in a Changing World*.

Bovill, C. et al. (2016). Addressing potential challenges in co-creating learning and teaching: overcoming resistance, navigating institutional norms and ensuring inclusivity in student–staff partnerships. Higher Education, 71 (2), 195–208 [Accessed 16 May 2019].

Burke, T. (2016). *Academic staff attitudes to staff-student partnerships: a social practice theory approach* [Part of PhD submission]. Lancaster University, Doctoral Programme in Educational Research.

Centre for Teaching Innovation (2019). Student partnerships. *University of Westminster, Centre for Teaching Innovation*. Available from <http://cti.westminster.ac.uk/student-partnership-2/> [Accessed 15 July 2019]

Curran, R. (2017). *A framework for student staff partnership in higher education* []. University of Westminster. Available from https://westminsterresearch.westminster.ac.uk/item/q0903/a-framework-for-student-staff-partnership-in-higher-education [Accessed 14 March 2019].

Curran, R. (2017). Students as Partners—Good for Students, Good for Staff: A Study on the Impact of Partnership Working and How This Translates to Improved Student-Staff Engagement. *International Journal for Students as Partners*, 1 (2), 1–16.

Foskett, N. (2011). Markets, government, funding and the marketisation of UK higher education. In: Scullion, R., Molesworth, M., and Nixon, E., eds. *The marketisation of higher education and the student as consumer*. London: Routledge, 25–38.

Healey, M., Flint, A. and Harrington, K. (2014). *Engagement through partnership: students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education*. York, UK: Higher Education Academy. Available from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/engagement\_through\_partnership.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2019].

Hawley, S. et al. (2019). Students as Partners in Third Spaces. *International Journal for Students as Partners*, 3 (1). Available from https://doi.org/10.15173/ijsap.v3i1.3980 [Accessed 8 July 2019].

Holmwood, J. (2018). Inegalitarian populism and the university: British reflections on Newfield’s The Great Mistake: How We Wrecked Public Universities and How We Can Fix Them. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 69 (2), 510–617. Available from http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/1468-4446.12339 [Accessed 1 January 2019].

Kandiko, C. B. & Mawer, M. (2013). *Student Expectations and Perceptions of Higher Education*. London: King’s Learning Institute.

Lotz-Sisitka, H. (2012). Conceptions of quality and ‘Learning as connection’: Teaching for relevance. *Southern African Journal of Environmental Education*, 29 25–38. Available from https://www.ajol.info/index.php/sajee/article/view/122256/111738 [Accessed 14 March 2019].

Lubicz-Nawrocka, T. (2019). An introduction to student and staff co-creation of the curriculum. *Teaching Matters blog*. Available from http://www.teaching-matters-blog.ed.ac.uk/an-introduction-to-student-and-staff-co-creation-of-the-curriculum/ [Accessed 14 March 2019].

Mercer-Mapstone, L. and Marie, J. (2019). *Practical guide: scaling up student-staff partnership in higher education*. 1–27. Edinburgh, UK. Available from http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/iad/Learning\_teaching/Academic\_teaching/Resources/Student\_Engagement/MercerMapstoneMarie\_Practical Guide\_Scaling\_up\_student-staff\_partnership.pdf [Accessed 28 February 2019].

Mercer-Mapstone, L. et al. (2017). A Systematic Literature Review of Students as Partners in Higher Education. *International Journal for Students as Partners*, 1 (1), 1–23. Available from https://mulpress.mcmaster.ca/ijsap/article/view/3119 [Accessed 14 March 2019].

Palfreyman, D. and Temple, P. (2017). *Universities and colleges: a very short introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Parsons, A. (2018-2019). Oui!Learn: a learning community. *Centre for Teaching Innovation, University of Westminster*. Available from <http://cti.westminster.ac.uk/ouilearn/> [Accessed 12 July 2019]

Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2017). *Matters of care: speculative ethics in more than human worlds*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Scullion, R., Molesworth, M. and Nixon, E. (2011). Arguments, responsibility and what is to be done about marketisation. In: Scullion, R., Molesworth, M., and Nixon, E., eds. *The marketisation of higher education and the student as consumer*. London: Routledge, 227–236.

van Den Enden, M. (2017). Student–staff partnerships: a what, why, and how guide. *Leicester Learning Institute*. Available from https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/lli/case-studies-and-resources/repository/transitions-toolkit-resources/tools-to-support-students-academic-transition-and-progression-table-1/student-staff-partnerships [Accessed 16 May 2019].