The University of Queensland, Australia

From the SelectedWorks of Madelaine Marie Judd

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Students as Partners Initiative, Framework

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Students as Partners Initiative Framework

Students as Partners is a formal initiative whereby students and staff engage in partnership as a means through which to “challenge and eliminate power imbalances, as well as contribute to opening dialogue, and questioning preconceived assumptions about how students and staff interact and collaborate with one another within higher education” (Judd, Sahama, Morgan & Forde, 2019).

This framework is for students and/or staff who are considering implementing a Students as Partners Initiative at their university. This framework seeks to provide some prompting questions to consider when implementing a Students as Partners approach within the university context.
Governance and Strategy

Principle: The Initiative aligns with the values and ethos of the University, and is specifically articulated within the University’s Strategic Plan.

Fundamental questions include:
- Is the Initiative embedded within the University strategy?
- Does the Initiative align with the University values and ethos?
- What approach to partnership fits your University context (e.g. Students as Co-creators, Students as Change Agents etc.)?
- Has a stable funding resource been obtained (e.g. business as usual vs. strategic funding)?
- What University Committee will the Initiative report to?
- How will Student and Staff Partners be rewarded and recognised?
Fundamental questions include:

- What is the scope of the Initiative?
- How many students and staff do you seek to engage in partnership?
- Do you have adequate staffing resources to oversee/manage the Initiative?
- Will the Initiative be managed within faculties or centrally managed?
Fundamental questions include:
- Is there a need/want for information sharing opportunities (e.g. Community of Practice meetings)?
- What training and development opportunities will be provided for Student Partners?
- What training and development opportunities will be provided for Staff Partners?

Principle: A range of networks have been established for sharing of knowledge and collegial support.
Fundamental questions include:

- Have you clearly considered, and articulated, who is going to be in your partnership community (e.g. students, graduates, academic and professional staff, employers)?
- Has the partnership community articulated the ethos and underpinning values of partnership within the context of your University?
- Does the Initiative itself engage in partnership, and is the program iteratively developed/refined in partnership?
- Is there a transparent system in place for selection of partnership engagements (projects) and does this align with University priorities?
Advocacy & Outreach

Principle: The Initiative is supported by University leaders, and partners share knowledge with one another. There is a commitment by all to share success strategies with those new to partnership.

Fundamental questions include:

- Have Staff Champions been identified to share knowledge and provide support for staff new to partnership? How will Champions be acknowledged/supported?
- Do senior university leaders support, endorse and understand the value of engaging in partnership? Do they actively promote this throughout their faculties or within their portfolios?
- Does the Initiative host Celebration and/or Showcase events to provide partners with opportunities to network, share knowledge, and inspire those considering engaging in partnership?
Fundamental questions include:

- Is there budget to conduct the evaluation of the Initiative?
- Have you obtained ethics clearance to conduct research activities?
- What measures will be utilised to determine the impact of the Initiative on the student and staff experience?
- Will qualitative feedback be collected by a person outside of the implementation team to ensure no perceived conflicts of interest?
- Will Student and Staff Partners be encouraged and supported to conduct empirical research in partnership?

Principle: The Initiative is committed to continuous improvement and engages in ongoing evaluation. Partners are supported to engage in empirical research on the impact of partnership.
Definitions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Partnership Community</th>
<th>A network of diverse people (including university staff and students, graduates and industry professionals) who come together to discuss the challenges and strategies for engaging in partnership.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior University Leaders</td>
<td>Staff within the higher education sector in leadership positions. Such positions include, but are not limited to: Faculty Deans, Heads of School, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Vice Chancellors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Champions</td>
<td>A diverse range of university staff who are committed to the partnership approach and seek to share their knowledge with colleagues.</td>
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References


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