

Group Listening



Learning Enhancement for Active Student Community Engagement (LEAPSE)

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Key words for report

community engagement, employability, citizenship, service learning

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Executive summary

This project explored the potential of public-student engagement to enhance the student experience through active community and public engagement activities. The project evaluates existing models of public engagement activities to build capacity in both the University and communities to gain greater benefit from the potential such co-generative relationships can provide. This project focused on one university with the intention of complementing this primary activity with collecting case study material from a range of contexts. The context for graduate employment is rapidly changing and there is evidence that students derive benefits when their programmes include opportunities for authentic engagement with real-world problems. There is evidence to suggest that communities can benefit from genuine engagement with universities and their staff and students.

Over a two-year period at the University of Gloucestershire, the project team worked with academics, students and community groups with the aim that universities and communities can make the most of the relationships and in particular to enhance the students' experience. This exciting and innovative project worked closely with the National Coordination Centre for Public Engagement to ensure transferability of the project outcomes and to promote outputs from the project.

It finds that an estimated 63% students at the University of Gloucestershire are engaged in voluntary work of some kind (63% nationally), of whom, 22% have arranged this through the University or the Student Union (SU) (38 % nationally). Work carried out as part of a project to log voluntary and community engagement across the university involving staff and students has found that approximately 10,000 hours of voluntary work has been carried out in the 2012/13 academic year. The range of work makes understanding and planning this kind of engagement complex. This comprises

- Individual self-organised voluntary work, such as brownie or cub scout leadership.
- Individual volunteering through a university programme, such as a sports programme working with local teams, or a school mentoring programme (though some of these are paid and therefore not included here).
- Individual or team volunteering through Student Union brokerage, such as the SU-run VolunteerShop, campus-based community gardens and an annual tea dance for elderly residents living near the university.
- Individual voluntary work within the context of an internship or placement, which may or may not include work for academic credit, such as for a local community project or voluntary organisation, such as the for sports clubs.

However, this does not include undergraduate community based research as part of a module that can also account for a considerable contribution of time, effort and expertise.



Background

This project aimed to explore the potential of student-public engagement to radically enhance the student learning experience through active public engagement (PE) activities. This project has critically evaluated the extent to which this can empower students as learners, enhance their employability, and involve them in co-generation of knowledge with external partners.

The project addresses UK Government policy priorities related to lifelong learning, employability, employer engagement and developing sustainable communities. It seeks to create opportunities and processes for transformational learning. This is achieved via learner empowerment and co-generation of knowledge through public-student engagement. As DIUS (2008; p8) notes: *'We must ensure that everyone's skills and talents are developed throughout their lives so that we have a world-beating workforce.'* Similarly, the Prime Minister emphasises *'empowering communities and citizens and ensuring that power is more fairly distributed.'* (Brown, 2008; pi). Student-public engagement learning activities may counter the trend identified by the Ministry of Justice (2008) that young people are characterised as politically and civically disengaged.

Through student PE in situated learning, as opposed to 'transfer learning' (see Bailey and Peel cited by Newton et al, 2008), the project aims to contribute to 'connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems' (Boyer, 1996; p 21) and progress 'the reciprocal application of community experience to the development of knowledge' (Eyler and Dwight, 1999; p 13).

The project critically explores how students and other stakeholders learn actively through PE to benefit both individual learners and communities - whether 'local' to UK HEIs or elsewhere in the world. By trialling and evaluating participatory methods of student PE, the project identifies generic skills and capacities for sustainable individual and community learning. It set out to develop an institutional approach to facilitating and accrediting student PE as a model that other institutions may adapt.

The pedagogy informing this project is rooted in the emancipatory tradition of Paulo Freire (1998). It aims to optimise learning generated by student PE by developing an institutional framework exemplifying Holland's (2006) 'full level of integration' of student 'service-learning and community-based learning... across the curriculum'. It builds on existing projects and research on student engagement (e.g. Scholarship of Engagement for Politics FDTL project (Warwick), Centre for the Study of Voluntary and Community Activity (Roehampton) and Institute for Volunteering Research (East London)).

The project extends the international research literature on higher education and PE: 'Universities must... better understand ... opportunities to engage with communities in developing new knowledge, more active and lifelong approaches to learning, and productive involvement with community members' (Krause, 2007, p.5).

UoG has a tradition of service learning (Eyler & Dwight, 1999) and broader public engagement, linking students and communities in local, national and international settings (eg: international field projects with partner institutions; student placements; distance learning for students working in communities, Students' Union-facilitated volunteering and student involvement in public arts and science festivals). The project team members were assembled

for their experience in these activities. The project has evaluated the potential of such engagement as transformative experiences that enhance students' knowledge, skills, capabilities and confidence.

UoG is publicly committed to empower students through active research-focused learning (see Healey *et al*, 2008). Roberts & Roberts (2007) includes fourteen chapters exemplifying Gloucestershire student engagement in local, national and international partnerships, and during 2008 UoG was recognised as a Regional Centre of Expertise in the United Nations University Education for Sustainable Development network. At the time of proposing the UoG hosted the greatest number of Knowledge Transfer Projects in South West England indicating strong relationships with employers and communities, plus involvement with a number of faith communities (eg Scott-Baumann, 2007; Bessant *et al*, 2009). In addition, during the duration of the project:

- One of the project team served on the Advisory Board of the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement,
- Three of the project team joined a NCCPE discussion network,
- The UoG won funding from JISC's Business and Community Engagement Programme to lead a project called *Co-generative Toolkit for curriculum development with Business and Community partners* (CogenT).
- Two members of the team led a Staff Educational Development Association (SEDA) project on developing academic staff capacity for community engagement. This resulted in a SEDA special publication (Mason O'Connor & McEwen, 2012; 2013) and a SEDA workshop to be held later in 2013. These examples contribute to a robust institutional platform for this innovative project with links to existing innovative and exciting projects.
- One team member led the development of the Gloucestershire Framework, a framework for personal and professional development designed to obtain university recognition (credit) for small "bite size" chunks of learning, such as attending a training course. There is scope for offering this to voluntary organisations where human capacity and training is an issue. These are currently a part of on-going discussions with a range of organisations initiated as part of the LEAPSE project.

Aims and objectives

In the original proposal document three aims were articulated:

- The project team will work with academics, students and community groups with the aim that universities and communities work together to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.
- To explore the potential of student-public engagement to radically enhance the student learning experience through active public engagement (PE) activities.
- To optimise learning generated by student PE by developing an institutional framework.

The objectives were therefore to carry out a mix of research and action activities, developing new community and public engagement initiatives and embedding such activities in the institution while capturing data on the impact and experience of this. While the operation of these objectives did not follow the design of the project as articulated in the document due to operational issues in the university, the project team were able to carry out a wide range of activities that have allowed it to broadly meet the three aims above.



Methodology

Whilst public engagement in higher education is variously defined and contested (eg: Kellogg Commission, 2001; Annette, 2003), this project defines it as: 'working with the public in community settings'. We recognise that engagement between students and communities is an interactive process, taking place in local, national and international settings. We therefore refer to 'students' and 'learners' interchangeably. In this context, key stakeholders - HE staff, employers, community groups, as well as students - are all potentially learners. Hence their roles overlap (Fig1).

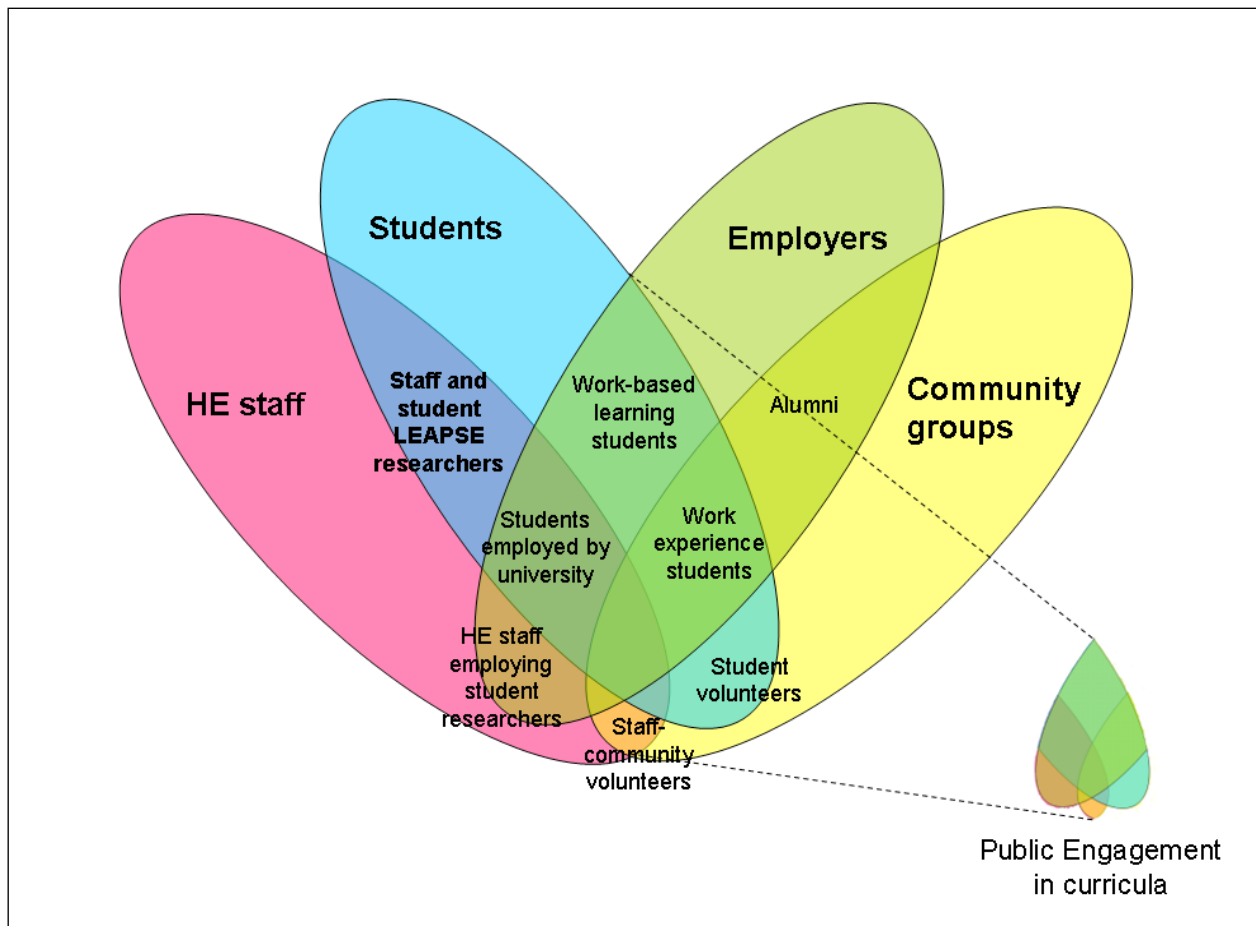


Figure 1 Overlapping roles of stakeholders and indicative public engagement typologies.

Universities are re-examining their relationship with communities and re-casting their focus in light of national and international agendas (eg US: Kellogg Commission 2001; UK: DIUS, 2008). This was true at the time of writing the proposal and is still the case with the introduction in UK higher education of full student fees and of the concept of impact in research funding and evaluation. However, benefits and costs of learning through PE activities have not been comprehensively appraised nor the learning systematically accredited. This project sought to investigate the potential value of experiential and active learning through supporting and accrediting authentic achievement.

Integrating PE into curricula creates opportunities to qualitatively deepen learning and enables students to articulate to employers skills and qualities that are developed. Enabling progression of students' understanding of engagement through involvement in PE throughout their study period can provide robust and transformative learning opportunities.

The project therefore aimed to test these assumptions. In addition, the project sought to identify characteristics of sustainable relationships between university and community groups. We also explored opportunities for members of the public, by working alongside students, and where appropriate becoming students themselves, to gain accreditation for their learning from PE partnerships.

The project methodology as planned therefore involved two intertwined strands: educational development and pedagogic research. We conceptualised these as a double helix with continuous and iterative planning, experimentation, reflection/analysis and revised planning phases, together with personal and institutional progression. The educational development strand aimed to establish new PE partnerships locally and globally (including with alumni), sustained personal development programmes with stakeholders inside and outside UoG, organise engagement activities, and accredit resultant learning.

The pedagogic research strand aimed to develop and evaluate a transferable typology for effective PE activities, exploring student, stakeholder and institutional experiences, to inform future practice. Both strands are accommodated within the academic year. Students were intended to broker many of the crossover points, as they perform roles both as researchers and researched. More broadly than this, all the stakeholders may occupy multiple roles, as indicated in Figure 1. Table 1 illustrates the phases of the proposed LEAPSe activities using a sporting-leaping metaphor. Although presented linearly the process is iterative. Tutor-led quality assurance is integrated at all methodological stages.

Table 1 The Activities

	Educational Development	LEAPSE phases	Pedagogic Research
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify participants and stakeholders (locally, nationally, internationally) for pilots, and initiate stakeholder meetings Establish Stakeholder Advisory Group Develop and support students as researchers and trainers Validate PE accreditations framework 	Get into shape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review relevant literature Update internal audit of PE activities across UoG (and partner institutions) using typologies and evidence of participant learning and performance
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students interview alumni with course experience of PE, and (where possible) their host organisations. Initiate PE projects at different scales and in different communities with evaluation mechanisms. 	Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core team develop understanding of dimensions of PE and a typology
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project team and students run International Showcase for stakeholders and other HEIs 	Run Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant observation of showcase adds to typology



	Educational Development	LEAPSE phases	Pedagogic Research
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Students to establish online resources for stakeholders. 		
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and tutor mentors in partner organisations Add existing practice examples to websites 	Prepare for take off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning styles inventory for student, staff and community/employer participants
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students begin PE programmes 	Take off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use participatory research methods to empower stakeholders in research process
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and other stakeholders in engagements maintain reflective dialogue 	The Great Leap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student researchers maintain contacts
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and other stakeholders complete public engagements 	Back to earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students capture post-experience feedback from stakeholders
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' and stakeholders' PE activity is assessed against agreed outcomes 	Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student researchers critically evaluate experiences of participants and stakeholders to identify good practice Project team revisit typology and critically evaluate criteria for success.
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arena event for stakeholders Good Practice Guide for HEIs and stakeholders Website case studies of PE, including digital stories Student Guide on PE, with SU Explore the possibility of an M Level unit on community and PE for Academics and community workers 	Celebrate and broadcast results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 peer-reviewed publications, 3 conference presentations, Wikipedia
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust UoG approach and PE guidance materials to reflect good practice and QE adjustments Dependent upon timescales, initiate another PE round 	Plan for future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate institutional learning in UoG and elsewhere, including impacts such as on sustainability policy, validation processes and curricula.

Implementation

The team worked very hard to develop a carefully planned approach. However, within months of receiving the project funding, several members had their posts placed 'at risk', two of these members resigned their posts, the students union representative resigned to take up a new post and a replacement was not made, the project coordinator's role changed substantially and as a result the institution request he absorb both the administration and research assistant roles within his contribution to the project. As a result several of the planned research activities became impossible and the integrated approach became challenging to deliver.

The project team quickly realised that in order to achieve the intended outcomes some new approaches were needed and as a consequence the following actions were undertaken:

- Integrate the project activities with a number of institutional objectives
- Use the project time and investment to add value to existing community engagement initiatives or to add community engagement dimensions to existing academic activities through investment of project time.

Some activities as proposed could continue as planned. For example the project was able to write two literature reviews, one for publication in a peer reviewed journal (Mason O'Connor et al, 2011) and one for publication in association with the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (Mason O'Connor et al, 2011). A number of coordinating meetings took place with interviews with a range of staff across the institution and with local community organisations.

This had the advantage that many of the activities that have been supported by the project connected more with external national agendas and with existing and continuing academic activities than might otherwise have been the case. The project was less of an initiating force and more of an adapting and encouraging influence. This has arguably had the effect of integrating into existing programmes of activity and changing them gradually rather than having a transformative impact on the institution. For example, at a national level LEAPSE supported the University of Gloucestershire contribution to the *Bursting the Bubble*, the project of the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement and v-inspired, the youth volunteering agency. Also at a national level, LEAPSE contributed to NCCPE and v-inspired activities, such as leading a workshop on future scenarios of student volunteering (See Appendix 1), leading a workshop on three-way partnerships between university, students and community based organisations. LEAPSE contributed to a Change Academy project on employability, changing the focus to include not only traditional internships, but voluntary and third sector voluntary work as a key component. The result was in February 2012 the University launched *DegreePlus*, an innovative and exciting initiative aimed at supporting student in getting the most from their time at university, in particular to prepare them for life after graduation. A key element of *DegreePlus* is the offering of a range of opportunities of short internships with a wide range of organisation across the community both within and outside the University. The LEAPSE knowledge and experience had a profound impact on the development of this programme. Within the institution, LEAPSE supported a range of projects across the curriculum. LEAPSE contributed to an institutional project to log voluntary and community based activities by staff and students throughout an academic year. LEAPSE contributed to the development of networks and workshops around the institution



with outside partners in the public and community and voluntary sector about the relationships that could structure engagement. Some have developed into regular meetings to review the university's relationships and plan for the future.

Many of these initiatives continue after the life of the project (see Outcomes). The research activities can be grouped into the following:

- Desk based literature review of university-community engagement.
- Contribute to the National survey of student volunteering in spring 2010, resulting in 554 responses from students at the University of Gloucestershire and several focus groups at the university engaging students who volunteer, students who do not volunteer and voluntary organisations that have students as volunteers.
- Contributed to coordinating sessions on Geography and community engagement at the national and international level in the UK and the US. In the US, McEwen co-convened a session at the 2011 Annual Conference of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) in Seattle, entitled [Learning for sustainability: geography, community engagement and citizenship](#). Lynch and McEwen co-convened a Panel Discussion entitled: [The 'engaged geographer': geography, community engagement and citizenship](#). Both these sessions were sponsored by the International Network for Learning and Teaching Geography in Higher Education (INLT). In the UK, McEwen and Lynch convened a session at the Royal Geographical Society's Annual Conference in 2010 entitled *Geography Community Engagement and Citizenship* (See Appendix 2 for full details). This was followed up at the 2011 Annual Conference, when Lynch helped the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement organise a workshop entitled: *Impact Through Engagement* at the 2011. This was the first time the NCCPE were able to facilitate such a workshop at a national discipline annual conference.
- Lynch & McEwen revolutionised a final year capstone module on the BSc Geography programme making community based research a key component of the learning and assessment. A paper on this will be presented at the 2013 Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference in London in August.
- McEwen Edited a JGHE Symposium called Geography, Community Engagement and Citizenship published in the *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, in 2013, Issue 1 of Volume 37 (see McEwen, 2013).
- Lynch contributed to a Leadership Foundation for Higher Education Change Academy team in 2010/11. Activities for this included a survey of 211 undergraduate Level 5 and 6 students at the University on their views and experience of volunteering and employability during their studies.
- Lynch organised and facilitated a workshop with 51 participants from university, public sector and voluntary sector to discuss issues around university-community engagement and some of the preliminary findings from the other activities (see Lynch, 2012b).
- Lynch and Derounian co-led with Prof Adam Hart the '10,000 Hours Campaign' project. This was a campaign to log voluntary and community engagement by staff and students across the university in a single academic year. The focus was on logging hours, but the project had two additional aims: firstly, to gather information about the types and range of activity, and the level of engagement and secondly, to raise the profile of public and community engagement. This has been very successful achieving the 10,000 hours target in the middle of June 2013. A report is under preparation on the outcomes and where to take this in the future.

- James Derounian has become a blogger for the Guardian Professional network, blogging on issues about community development and higher education and occasionally both where the issues overlap.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/james-derounian>
- The team have continued a series of ongoing meetings with external public and voluntary sector organisations including NHS 2gether Foundation Trust, Barnwood Trust, Cotswold Canals Trust, Makhad Trust, Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce, Fair Shares Community Time Banks, Tewkesbury Borough Council Community Engagement Unit, Hester's Way Neighbourhood Project (see Lynch 2012a), Cheltenham West End Partnership. The latter resulted in a collaboration with the Director of the CWEP on a workshop entitled the Three-Legged Stool at NCCPE's Engage 2011 Conference (See Appendix 4). These are focused on discussing strategic approaches to engagement activities clarifying what each organisation can offer the other and how best to cooperate or collaborate. This has ranged from identifying training programmes or research projects that the university can offer, to finding short term internships or simply site visits for students.

Outputs and findings

The results of the time and the activities funded by the LEAPSE project are varied because of the disparate nature of the activity on community engagement in the institution. The University of Gloucestershire has a declared commitment to engaging its communities locally and abroad and has a history of working in this area. However, on close analysis, this is an underpinning ethos of the university, rather than an area strategic activity that attracts investment from the university or management facilitation. The result is a large number of academics, either individually or in course or subject teams work in various ways with local communities.

The project collected evidence of the student experience of voluntary and community engagement. This highlights a number of key findings. In a number of surveys we have conducted we have found that a large proportion of the student population seem to be actively engaged in volunteering if some kind. In Table 1 the results of a survey in spring 2010 show that more than 60 per cent of students respondents have ongoing experience of some kind.

During the spring term 2010 v-inspired – the National Young Volunteers Service - and the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) commissioned the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) to lead research on student volunteering. Georgina Brewer, formerly of the Institute for Volunteering Research and Prof Claire Holdsworth of Keel University led the research. The team adopted a combined quantitative and qualitative approach to the data collection. They conducted online surveys of current students and graduates, focusing on 6 HEIs, including the University of Gloucestershire together with East London, Keele, Leeds, Oxford and UWE, but opening participation nationally. They also engaged local student peer-researcher teams in each of the six focus institutions to carry out participatory workshops and focus groups in each of the universities. The results of the nationally aggregated data are available through the report *Bursting the Bubble*. Published jointly by the NCCPE and IVR and is available in full report and summary report form on the NCCPE website (www.publicengagement.ac.uk).



The University of Gloucestershire advertised the online survey through a range of channels locally and was successful in eliciting 554 responses from students registered at the University. This is an excellent response from one of the smaller universities participating in the study. During 2012, LEAPSE contributed to a Change Academy project, supporting a survey of returning Level 5 and 6 students in September about their views on employability, work experience and volunteering. The response rate was 212. The following presents the initial descriptive data collected for Gloucestershire for the 2010 national survey and the 2012 survey results (see Appendix 3 for the survey form).

Table 2 Engagement in voluntary work during academic year 2009/10

Frequency of voluntary work	%
At least once a week	17.3
At least once a month	14.3
Less than once a month	18.6
Don't know	12.3
Total volunteers	62.5
None	37.5
Total	100.0

Source: NCCPE/v-inspired Survey 2010, University of Gloucestershire data.

Table 2 presents the responses in relation to the question of voluntary engagement amongst the student body at the University. The data suggests a relatively high level of engagement at the institution. However the frequency of work is fairly evenly split between once a week, at least once a month and less than once a month, with 12 per cent entering a response of 'I don't know'. Interviews and discussions with staff in the university and the Student Union suggest that some volunteering may be infrequent, such as assisting at particular events, such as an annual tea dance with elderly local residents, assisting at festivals or sporting events, and therefore the frequency would not fit the other options. This said, the comparison with the national data from the same survey suggests a similar level of engagement, with the national response suggesting 63 per cent of students had taken part in formal volunteering.

Table 3 Engagement in paid work during academic year 2009/10

Timing of paid work	%
No	16.0
Yes, during term time only	4.6
Yes, during vacations and term time	53.8
Yes, during vacations only	25.6
Total	100.0

Source: NCCPE/v-inspired Survey 2010, University of Gloucestershire data.

The 2010 survey did not ask about the source of advice about volunteering opportunities and how best to use them. This however, was a question asked of the smaller survey of returning Level 5 and 6 students in September 2012. The result of this is illustrated in Figure

2. These sources are categorised and the response rates are presented in Figure 3. This shows as above a wide range of sources of advice and information about voluntary opportunities. This in itself is not a negative thing. However, the concern is that students may not be aware of the range of opportunities available to them, may not be making the most of those opportunities and could benefit from preparation and support. This is particularly the case since the HelpZone, accounting for 40 per cent of the responses, is intended purely as a student service to assist students who have some kind of course-related problem and the JobShop (12 per cent) and Placement Office (1 per cent) are specific services focused on paid employment and 12 month paid placements related to specific courses where this is a requirement. This can be contrasted with a clearer understanding of where students can obtain advice on employability skills which is discussed below. However, this is not as clear cut as it might be and the HelpZone is still appearing as a key resource, accounting for 53 per cent of these responses. Tutors, course leaders and the careers service are not appearing as strongly as might be hoped. Nationally, the 2010 survey found that the most useful volunteering experiences were ones where the university or student union mediated between the student and the organisation in some way, ensuring some level of matching students to appropriate experiences and that the experience was in some way developmental.

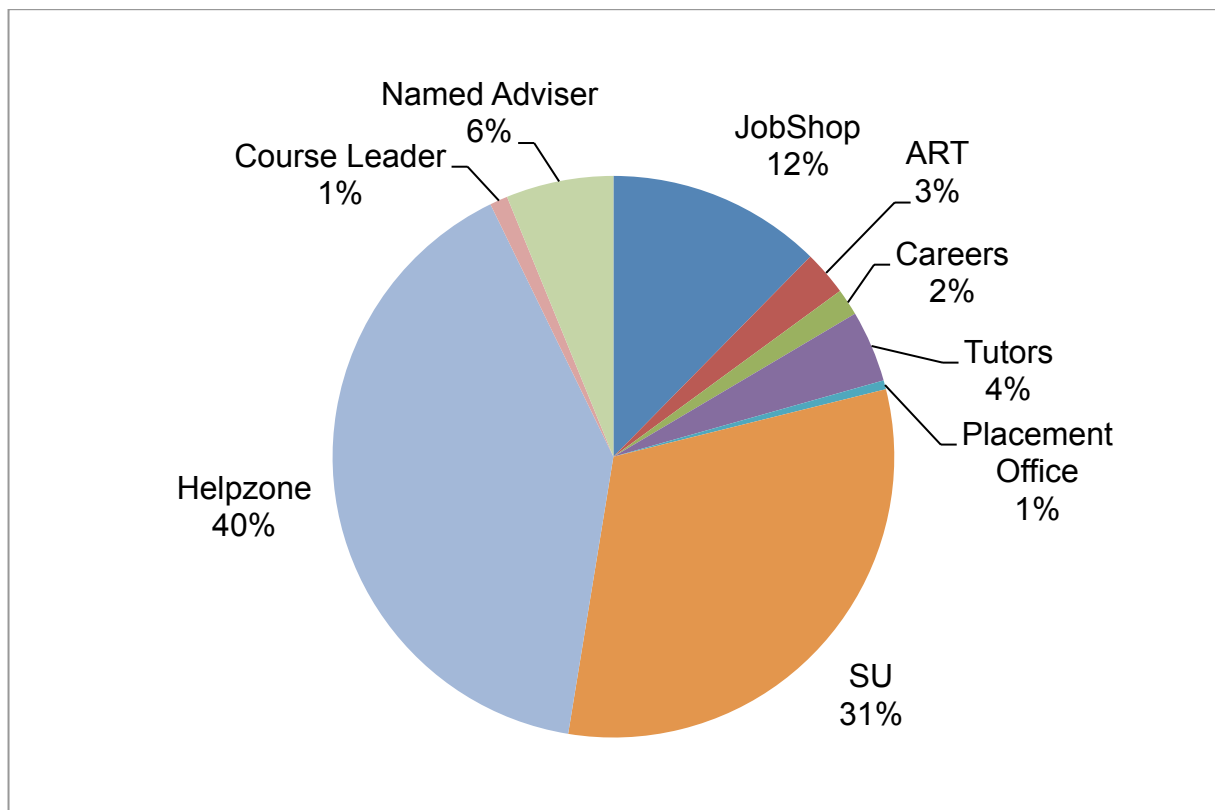


Figure 2 Source of Advice about Volunteering 2012

Note: Named adviser is a particular coordinator of the SU VolunteerShop a voluntary placement agency run by the SU. HelpZone is a one-stop-shop for student advice in connection with problems with their course programme. ART stands for Academic Review Tutor which is described as a personal tutor in some institutions. SU stands for Student Union. JobShop is an employment service run by the SU.

Source: University of Gloucestershire Change Academy Survey, 2012



In addition to these main sources of information, other entries that students provided included the following:

Sports Officers, Charities, Friend/relative, SportsCVs a student-run agency run as a project within the School of Sports and Exercise Sciences and do-it.org and other online sources.

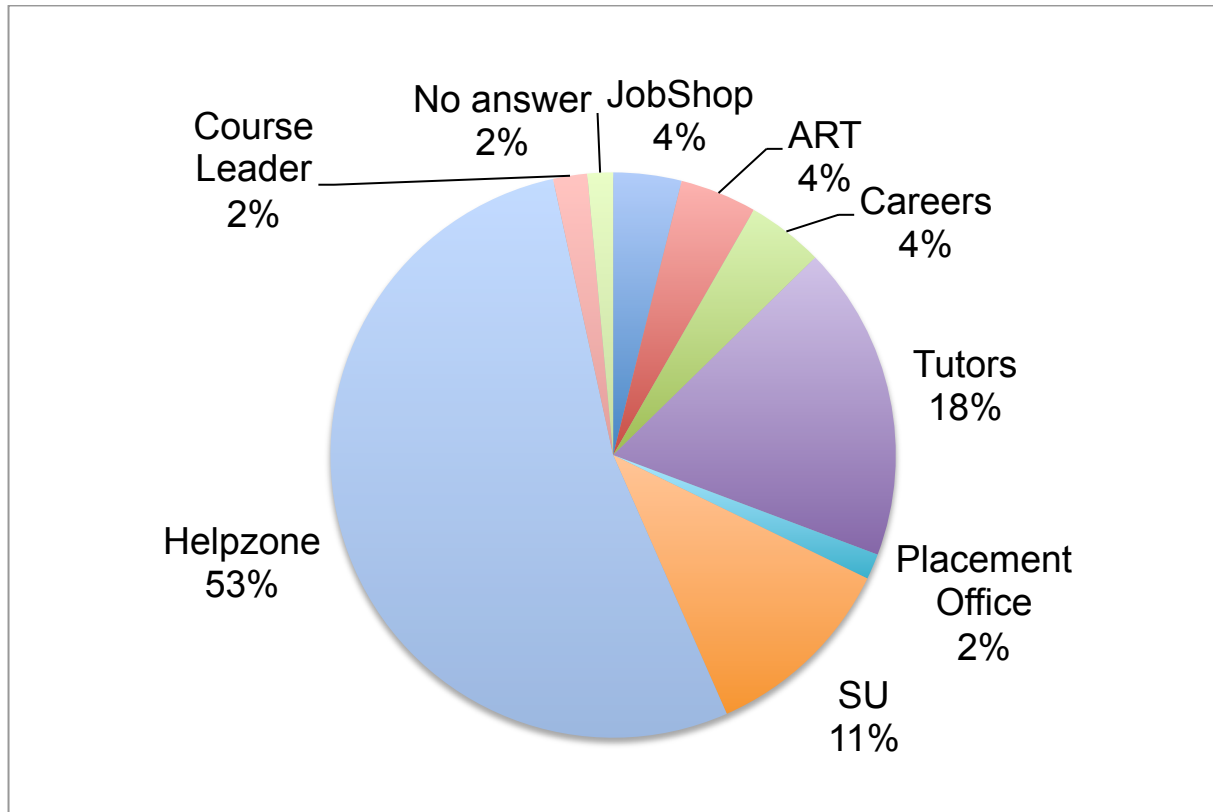


Figure 3 Source of Advice on Skills Development 2012

Note: HelpZone is a one-stop-shop for student advice in connection with problems with their course programme. ART stands for Academic Review Tutor which is described as a personal tutor in some institutions. SU stands for Student Union. JobShop is an employment service run by the SU.

Source: University of Gloucestershire Change Academy Survey, 2012

In connection with the 2012 survey, one of the most surprising outcomes related to the percentages of reported engagement in a range of extra-curricular activities. The first students participating in this survey were selected deliberately from amongst a group of early returning students at the end of the summer vacation. They were those who were attending training sessions in connection with commitments they had made to be sports captains or leaders, residential assistants or Superstars who were volunteers who had offered to help settle first year students into their halls of residence. By definition, they were doing something voluntarily, but a low percentage of them had indicated that they volunteered. Overall this survey of 211 found that 40 per cent of the respondents indicated that they volunteered, illustrated in Figure 4. This is low, but some other categories may account for some of what might normally be considered volunteering, such as SU work, sports officer or student representative. However, this does also link to findings elsewhere that students often do not see things they do as 'volunteering' or voluntary work. The concern here is that they may not be able to effectively reflect on the value of this activity during their time at university and as a consequence may struggle to articulate this during life

after graduation, in particular in efforts to find employment. This was one of the strands for the proposal to launch a service to address this issue.

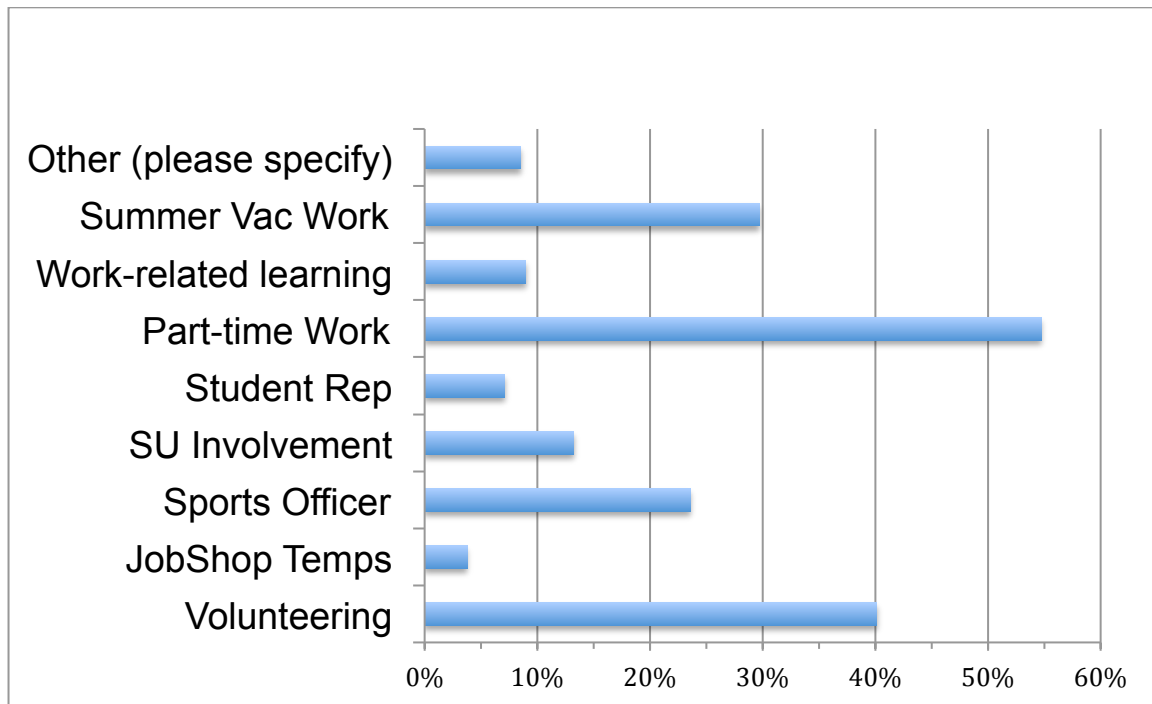


Figure 4 % Engagement in Extra Curricular Activity 2012

Note: SU involvement, included a range of representative roles in the Student Union (SU), JobShop Temps are paid employment jobs found through the SU employment agency, JobShop.

Source: University of Gloucestershire Change Academy Survey, 2012

In the literature research suggests that volunteering can have two contrasting effects on the young person: it can either ‘stimulate a more critical approach to society and to particular political issues’ or, ‘in other contexts and circumstances, they can act to entrench a much more conservative agenda’ (Brooks, 2010). Holdsworth and Quinn label these as ‘deconstructive’ and ‘reproductive’ effects respectively. According to Saltmarsh (1996) reflection and articulation of the experience of volunteering is very important to the student being able to make the most of the experience. “Without fostering reflective thinking, learning cannot move beyond conditioning...the connection between thought and action is dissipated...further action is lost.” There is a well-developed body of conceptual work that could be adapted to suit the task of preparing students for this. For example Figure 5 illustrates a typology of community engagement that issued at Simon Fraser University. Placing an experience, internship or placement in a conceptual framework like this may help students articulate their experience, learning and achievements.



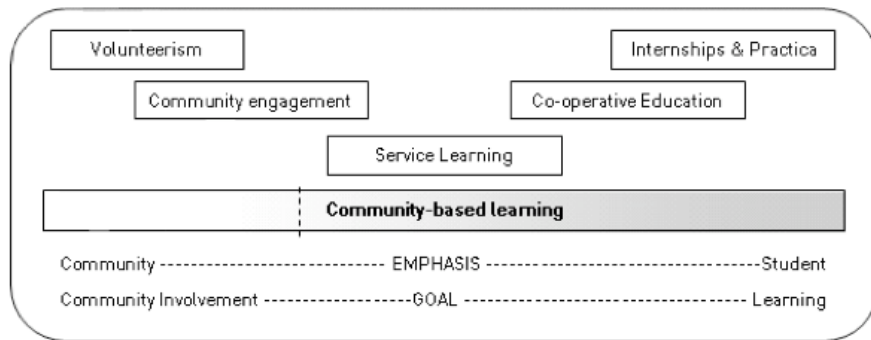


Figure 4 Model of community engagement, Simon Fraser University, adapted from Bender (2006)

Students who were asked in the 2010 survey about their perceptions about the impacts of identified benefits such as improving things or helping others, team working skills, leadership organisation, confidence.

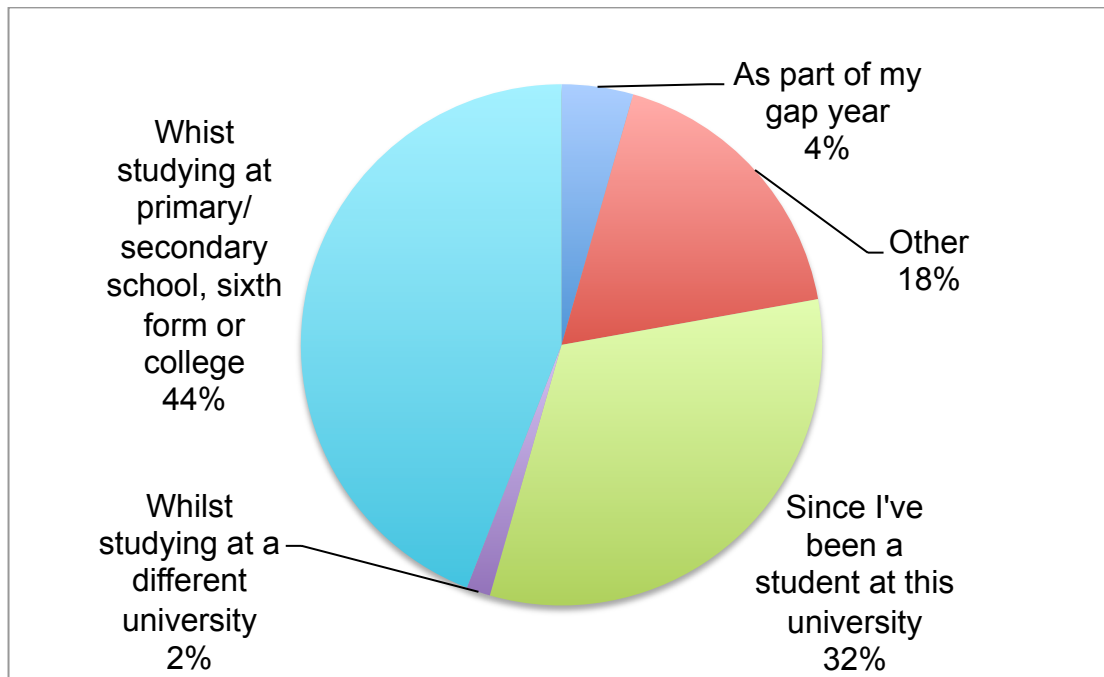


Figure 5 When students volunteer 2009/10

Source: NCCPE/v-inspired Survey 2010, University of Gloucestershire data.

There is some evidence to suggest that the first introduction to voluntary work is an important factor to the experience and the future willingness and interest in participating in similar activities. For example the Commission on the Future of Volunteering (2008) expressed concern about the initial barriers to first volunteering experiences. The 2010 survey therefore was keen to know about the first experience of the student respondents. Figure 6 shows that although schools are crucial to introducing voluntary experience, although most respondents will only have been at university a short time 32 per cent were introduced to it since going to university.

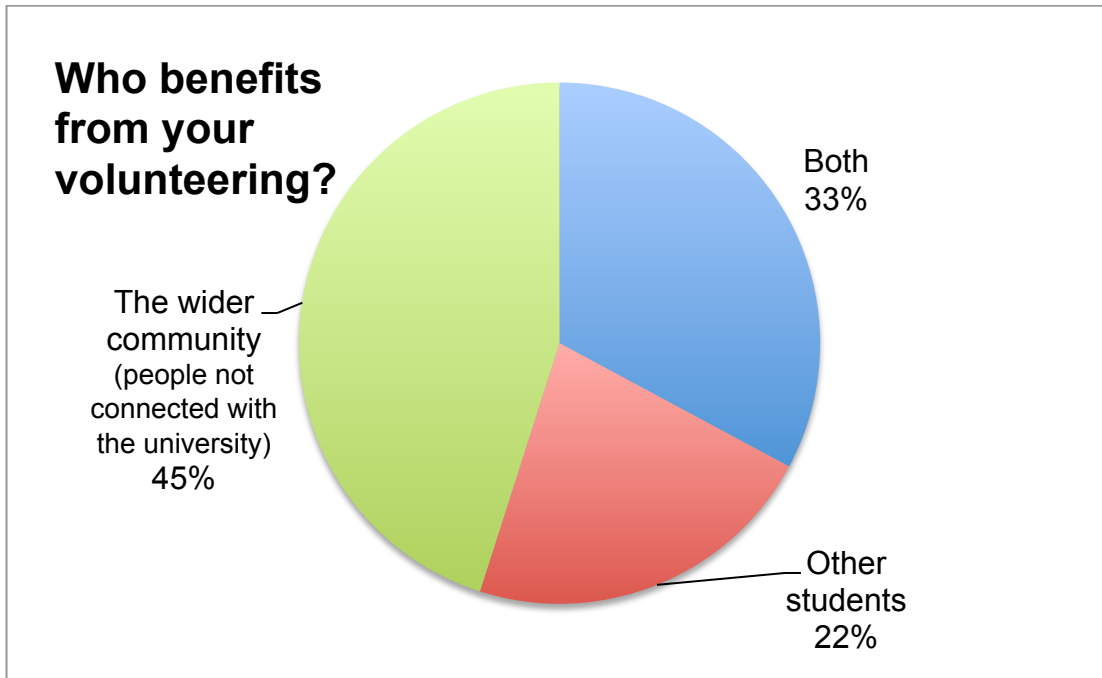


Figure 6 Beneficiaries of student volunteering 2011/12

Source: NCCPE/v-inspired Survey 2010, University of Gloucestershire data.

The NCCPE/v-inspired survey was deliberately open and inclusive in its definition of voluntary activity. Therefore in order to distinguish between volunteering that focused on university life, such as sports, society or other activities linked to the university, and voluntary activity that was focused on some aspect of service to the local community a question addressed the beneficiaries of the voluntary activity. This is presented in Figure 7 and shows that of those that did volunteer a large proportion of student were engaged in activity that was targeted at the wider community or at the wider community and other students.

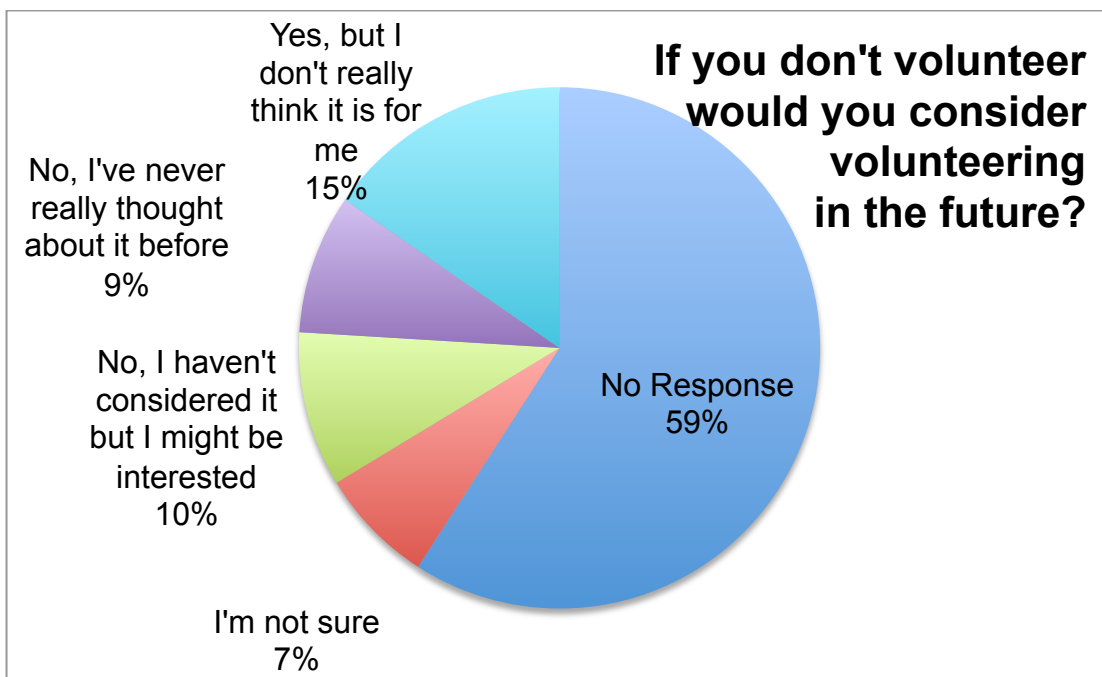


Figure 7 Non-volunteers views of whether they would volunteer 2009/10

Source: NCCPE/v-inspired Survey 2010, University of Gloucestershire data.



In the research literature, some of these themes are taken up by researchers nationally and internationally. Community engagement and community based learning are promoted by a number of authors as an important way of adding value to higher education, providing students with a number of additional affordances from their learning experiences (cf Mason O'Connor et al 2011). There are a number of reasons that are advanced that can be highlighted as advantages of this dimension of the experience, but there are also challenges.

'Students come to university not just for education, they come for a student experience. We believe that helping and encouraging them to engage in volunteering will broaden their experience, give them a better experience and they will benefit from that. [It] gives them some of the, more of the skills that employers actually look to in terms of flexibility, self determination, resilience.'

(Pro-Vice Chancellor, quoted in Brewis et al, 2010)

The national NCCPE/v-inspired survey of student activities at all 6 institutions (Brewis et al, 2010) found that 49 per cent (n=3,083) of the sample had taken part in volunteering during the previous academic year. Only 17 per cent of the sample had taken part in volunteering arranged through their university or student union. 61 per cent of the students reported that their volunteering had changed their experience of being a student for the better. In the University of Gloucestershire almost 56 per cent of the student respondents reported that their volunteering experience changed their student experience for the better

Traditionally, the so-called 'softer', social sciences have led institutional initiatives in community based learning and partnerships, in particular education and social work. The so-called 'hard' sciences, such as physics and biology find less value in university-community partnerships (Butin 2006). A recent report on a survey by Campus Compact (2009) of 731 of its US-based member institutions, which include colleges and universities found that 33 per cent of students had taken part in service learning during the previous academic year

Zlotkowski (1996) highlights the need for the engagement of the academic staff in successful university community engagement. Butin (2009) argues for an intellectual movement that embraces the power and potential that service learning offers and the range of activities it describes. Zlotkowski and Butin among others argue in favour of learning that is based in communities, whatever it is termed, because they identify evidence that community based learning provides valuable pedagogy for enhancing learning and the student experience. Brewis et al (2010) demonstrate that students who are supported in their volunteering by their university or their student union are more satisfied with the experience and feel that they gain greater benefit from the experience. However, Butin (2007) points out that for many academic staff community-based learning may not offer an obvious development,

'They must move from the classroom, a controlled environment where they are the experts, to a messy, chaotic world in which they are not the only source of knowledge. Faculty may have to watch the theories in the textbooks contradicted by the reality on the ground. They may have to face the fact that their lectures do not speak to the situation that students encounter in their community organizations. Or they may realize that their expertise, built up over many years of graduate school and teaching, may be next to useless in situations requiring different skills or more interdisciplinary knowledge than they have developed. Community engagement, in short, forces faculty members to confront the limits of their identity' (Butin, 2007, 35).

This suggests that there are staff training and professional development issues that need to be addressed if the best is to be made of community engagement activities. Members of the project team, McEwen and Mason O'Connor, have pursued this with a follow-on project that is a development from the LEAPSE findings which specifically addresses this issue (cf. McEwen & Mason O'Connor, 2012).

In addition to the results reported above, the project has produced a website where more details are available, where there are links to two films created for the project on YouTube, the literature review for *Education + Training* and the literature review for the NCCPE website and the report on the workshop with 54 participants, around half from University and half from public and voluntary sector, with some who represented both.

Outcomes

This project has initiated discussion and gathering of data across the institution. The results of the analysis, knowledge and experience has fed into the development of a number of new initiatives including:

- A new service for students called *DegreePlus* launched in February 2012 at the University of Gloucestershire. This comprises a significant investment for the University, including staff, and offices with a visible presence, as well as publicity campaigns. The services aims to help students find ways to get the most out of their time at university. Thanks to LEASPE input, engagement with the community sector is a key strand of this work.
- During 2011/12 the University of Gloucestershire carried out a survey of student views on volunteering and employability which obtained 212 responses.
- During 2010 the University of Gloucestershire contributed to a survey of student views on non-academic activities while at university which was aimed at collecting data on engagement with volunteering. This survey obtained 554 responses.
- The proposal of the '10,000 Hours Campaign' to log hours of community and voluntary service by university staff and students was accepted by the university Executive in September 2012. The campaign was launched in January 2013, achieving 10,000 hours of logged community service with over 150 organisations locally and abroad by June. This has provided a rich set of information about existing engagement with a range of communities and organisations and raised the profile of this both inside and outside the institution (See *Times Higher Education* 12th July 2013, Campus Roundup p.14).
- Ongoing dialogue with a range of community and public sector organisations as initiated by LEAPSe, and has been informed by the LEAPSE project outcomes. Some of these have developed into specific initiatives such as internships, placements, student research projects, collaborative partnerships with community organisations.

Conclusions

The objectives of this project were to explore the potential of student-public engagement to radically enhance the student learning experience through active public engagement activities.

As a result of the evidence gathered, a number of key conclusions can be drawn:

- A substantial proportion of students volunteer.



- Many students obtain volunteering opportunities independently of their institution
- Motivation to volunteer as reported by students is often linked to their values, their interest in meeting other people, rather than the employability or learning value that such experience can offer.
- Many students could be supported to understand and articulate the value of voluntary and community engagement more effectively.
- Around the UK and internationally there is substantial practice in this area and a growing body of literature on which to draw. Voluntary and community engagement experiences negotiated through universities or student unions are more highly valued by students and the institution can add value to these experiences by encouraging, supporting or requiring reflection on the experience.
- Significant time investment is required to develop, support and enhance voluntary and community engagement activities. The benefits can be considerable to the University, the students, the staff and the beneficiary community.
- There are valuable volunteering opportunities available that benefit other students as well as wider communities.
- The issue of time is an important barrier for students who do not volunteer.
- Students are unclear about the best source of information and advice about appropriate volunteering or other experience opportunities.

Implications

The results of this work have shown that voluntary and community engagement has considerable potential to provide mutually beneficial results to universities and public and voluntary sector organisations. However, there are a number of implications of the work that should be considered:

- Any consideration of voluntary and community engagement must take account of the wide range of activities that could be involved.
- Significant time is required in dialogue to ensure that all parties understand their mutual needs and benefits, this is particularly important to prepare students to get the most from engagements, to ensure university staff and students understand the community/organisation needs and vice versa

Volunteering and community engagement work identified as part of this project comprised a very wide range of activities, including staff and students in learning, research and/or intervention activities. For example:

- ad hoc and one-off for no academic credit and limited learning value
- substantial commitments to voluntary engagements through appointments as leader, trustee, governor or other regular roles
- voluntary internships which may or may not be directly linked to the course
- voluntary placements in which students learn a great deal, acquire considerable experience and responsibility and can also acquire academic credit if such work can demonstrate learning within a programme's assessment brief.
- In-course activities such as research projects, training or participatory projects that teams of students complete as part of an assessment, for example, field work, undergraduate research project or a community learning activity
- Project collaboration which could involve staff and student time in return for experience, learning or access to facilities

- Partnership with a community organisation with mutual and shared benefits

Recommendations

Recommendations for Universities

- Reflect on the opportunities voluntary and community engagement could offer the university
- Reflect on the most effective way of engaging with community and voluntary organisations and other public sector organisations that work with them.
- Reflect on the voluntary engagement of their students and the value of this to them and their communities

Recommendations for academic departments and course teams

- Reflect on multi-disciplinary programmes of engagement. Obvious areas of collaboration around a particular disciplinary focus can have significant value added if combined with other disciplines. For example a number of projects encountered during this project were focused on student placements focused on particular disciplines, such as social or youthwork for particular organisations. However, the organisations also had a opportunities for work on HR, events coordination or public relations or media-related work.
- Consider working with university support departments, students unions and other linked organisations where there may be opportunities to coordinate activities
- It may be possible to combine a range of activities, such as student internships, student research projects linked to coursework, staff research projects employing students as paid assistants or volunteers or intern researchers

Recommendations for Students

- Reflect on volunteering as a means of gaining valuable life experience
- Seek advice from University tutors, careers advisers and students union advisers on volunteering opportunities available
- Volunteering can be extremely rewarding experience
- Volunteering can help students place their studies in context
- However, if not carefully selected and thoughtfully entered into, volunteering can have less value

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* Asterisks indicate input from project team members.

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Appendix I Scenario building for student volunteering

Kenny Lynch, University of Gloucestershire, *School of Natural & Social Sciences*.

This handout was used to structure a workshop held at the National Council for Voluntary Organisation's office in London. 28th February 2011 as part of a conference on the future of student volunteering.

Stakeholders with a responsibility for or interest in student volunteering have expressed a high level of uncertainty about the future and what this means for their area of work. These uncertainties include but are not limited to:

- The impact of the cuts of the capacity of organisations to manage volunteers;
- The opportunities, threats and ambiguity of the Big Society agenda;
- Will the changes impact on the Browne review and its implications for student expectations and relationships across universities;
- A potential shift in student attitudes towards civic engagement.

This activity is about considering what a future might look like. It will develop and explore potential futures, possible futures and preferred futures, encouraging participants to identify potential hazards, options and choices, fostering an environment of creative thinking in order to find ways of addressing future challenges.

Futures Thinking

We should all be concerned about the future because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there.

Charles F. Kettering, Inventor

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way! On a quiet day I can hear her breathing.

Arundhati Roy, writer and activist

Introduction

This activity is about considering what a future might look like. It is about applying methods of *future studies* to build scenarios

In order to develop an understanding of what the future might hold it is important to break the task down into a number of influencing ideas. The aim is to develop potential futures, possible futures and preferred futures. One way of achieving this is to build scenarios. There are a number of factors which are influential in scenario building. These are summarised below. Use these to complete scenarios on the matrix overleaf. You may find spider diagram a useful alternative to the matrix.

What are Scenarios?

Scenarios are pictures or stories of the future. They are used for strategic planning in a number of organisations to identify possible options, hazards and choices. It is always useful to consider a number of scenarios. Scenarios are not predictions or forecasts, but based on them, scenarios suggest how the world might turn out. They use - and encourage others to use - imagination and creative thinking to address future challenges. In order to prompt scenarios it may be helpful to consider the following:

Paradigms

Paradigms are "unwritten assumptions", they form the backdrop for everything else. For example, the "Washington Consensus" was a paradigm - there was no formal statement on how it would influence many sectors of the economy, but it clearly had some influences. What are the next paradigms and how will the shift affect your scenario?

Trends and driving forces

Collecting individual trends and grouping them into a few (4-6 or so) driving forces (e.g., economy, social/political, technological) allows you to get a good impression where we are heading if current conditions continue. They can be prioritised.

Wildcards and uncertainty

To build a scenario you need to know your assumptions [*known knowns*] (and they should be explicitly stated). You need to know what you don't know that is important, and find more information about those topics [*known unknowns*]. You need to recognize the uncertainty that exists, especially if you go very far into the future. And you should expect wildcards to occur (unexpected events that could have a big impact) [*unknown unknowns*].

Table 1: Important drivers of change for Civil Society

Social	Political	Technology	Economic
Rising individualism	Shift from uni-polar to multi-polar world	Falling cost of technologies	Growing socio-economic inequalities
Increasing importance of well-being	Rising disengagement from formal politics	Rise of pervasive technologies	Increasing concentration of corporate power
Ageing population	Rise of single issue politics	Rise of 'digital natives'	Increasingly fluid working patterns
Increasing complexity of family structures	Increasing visibility of the security state	Shift from media consumption to media production	
Increasing migration	Growth of the surveillance state		
Increasing cultural and religious diversity		Environment	Organisation
Shifting sense of identity (identities)	Increased regulation of civic life	Increasing pressure on global resources	Increasing role of Third Sector in public sector delivery
	Increasing importance of rights agenda	Scientific consensus on human-created climate change	Increasing professionalisation of Third Sector organisations
	Increasing role and influence of devolved government	Increasing private and public response to climate change	

Source: Commission of Inquiry into the Future of Civil Society (2007)

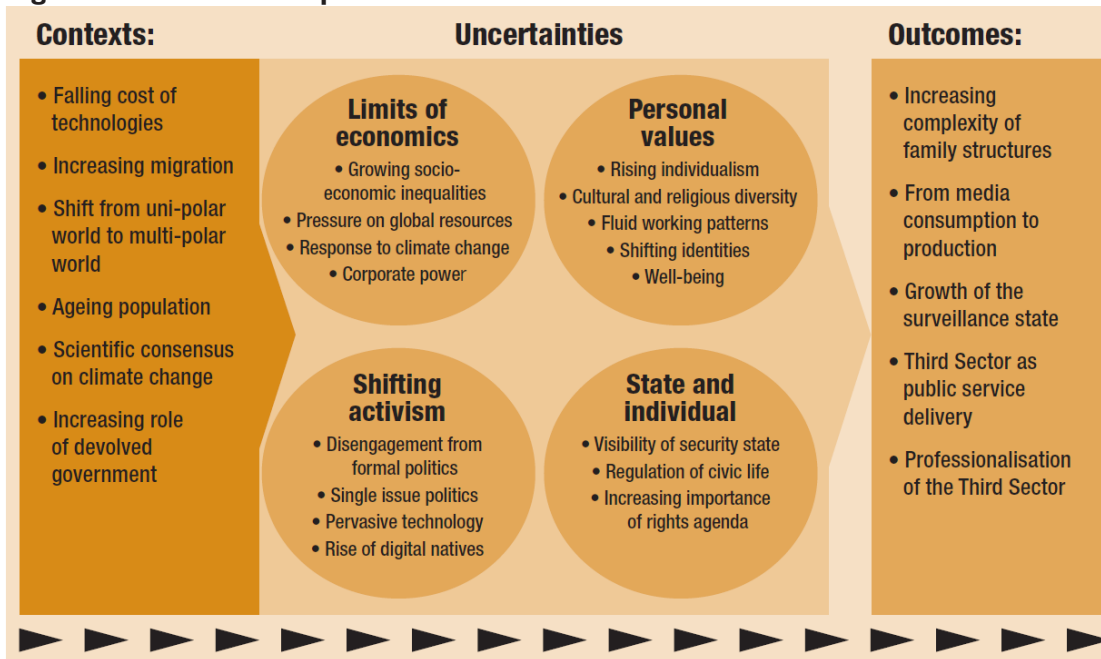
Make some notes in the boxes on the back page of this handout for Paradigms, Trends Driving Forces and Wildcards. Once you have completed this, spend some time considering future scenarios based on these

Once you have completed your consideration of the scenarios, you may wish to reflect on the following questions:

- How do values influence future scenarios?
- To what extent can we influence the future to bring about the preferred futures?
- Which are the institutions that will bring about the preferred futures?
- What are the implications of preferred futures?



Figure 1: Schematic of prioritised drivers



Source: Commission of Inquiry into the Future of Civil Society (2007)

Additional Resources

Commission of Inquiry into the Future of Civil Society (2007) *Scenarios for Civil Society*. Carnegie Trust <http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/getattachment/06ab0cc6-0b71-404c-b73e-b994dbaef6f9/Scenarios-for-Civil-Society.aspx> [accessed: 24/02/11]

This report is based on a collaboration between the Carnegie Trust and a research centre specialising in futures studies. This report describes four scenarios in detail and explains the basis of them and the implications.

NCVO (undated) *Third Sector Foresight; Strategic insight and planning tools for the UK voluntary and community sector*. National Council for Voluntary Organisations, London <http://www.3s4.org.uk/> [accessed: 24/2/11]

This is a website of resources for strategic planning. If you register (for free!) it gives you access to more resources and a network of third sector organisations using the resources for strategic planning.

ODI (2009) *Visioning Scenarios: Showing the Future*. Overseas Development Institute, London [accessed: 24/02/11] http://www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Tools/Toolkits/Communication/Visioning_scenarios.html

Voros, J. (2008) Integral Futures: An approach to futures inquiry. *Futures*. Vol. 40, No. 2, , Pp. 190-201.

See also:

Shaping Tomorrow
<http://www.shapingtomorrow.com/>

Glimpses (free registration required)
<http://www.glimpses.community.librios.com/>

Foresight
<http://www.bis.gov.uk/foresight/>

Appendix 2 Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference Paper Session

Thursday 2nd September 2010

Theme: Geography, Community Engagement and Citizenship

Affiliation: Higher Education Research Group

Convenor(s): Kenny Lynch (University of Gloucestershire), Lindsey McEwen (University of Gloucestershire)

Chair(s): Lindsey McEwen (University of Gloucestershire)

1 Learner Empowerment through Active Public-Student Engagement (LEAPSE).
Kenny Lynch (University of Gloucestershire), Lindsey McEwen (University of Gloucestershire)

2 Seeing a wider world – reflecting on volunteering experiences from the silos of modularity.
Richard Spalding (University of West England)

3 Engaging Geography students in participatory action research with communities.
Rachel Pain (Durham University)

4 Up-skilling for a Sustainable Future – generating ‘sustainable alumni’.
Elise Toogood (Kingston University), Rosalind Taylor (Kingston University)

5 Community engagement between the Global South and the Global North.
Gill Miller (University of Chester)

Appendix 3 Student Experience Questionnaire September 2012

We are keen to know a little about your wider experience as a student.

1. What Level/Year are you?
Level 2 Level 3 PG

2. What course are you doing?
.....

3. What is your campus?
PK FCH OX

4. Are you engaged in any of the following activities beyond your course:
 - a. Volunteering activity
 - b. JobShop Temps
 - c. Sports club officer
 - d. SU involvement
 - e. Student rep
 - f. Part-time work
 - g. Work-related learning
 - h. Summer vacation work
 - i. Other, specify

5. Where would you go for advice about volunteering opportunities?
.....

6. Where would you go for advice on work experience?
.....

7. Where would you get advice about skills development?
.....

Thank you!



Appendix 4 The Three Legged Stool: Student-employer-lecturer dialogue and community based learning



Engage 29th November 2011

The Three legged stool; Student – employer – lecturer dialogue on community based learning

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“daily life is not a backdrop to education, but education itself...students need to carefully and critically examine what exists under their feet and outside their front (and back) doors.”

(DeLind & Link, 2004)

Handout

The following is a summary of the discussions we have had based on experiences from the perspective of student, community practitioner and academic.

Before

Student

- Feeling nervous, worried, anxious about how this may go. This is natural – use it as a motivator. You don't know everything about this job, so being too confident will limit your learning abilities. Have an open approach, be prepared for the unknown (this is why you're nervous!)
- Jumping between extremes about what the practitioner expects/demands – find a balance between them
 - I'll be standing around like an idiot not knowing what to do or being given anything to do, they have staff so don't need me
 - What if they give me so much to do that I can't cope? Does this mean I'm not cut out for this work? Am I good enough for what they'll ask of me?
 - I'm doing a degree in this, I know more up-to-date practices than they do. I can give them a wake-up call about what people want *today*.
- Learn as much about the organisation and the job role as possible before attending the placement. You'll have a head start, and you'll be able to really get stuck into it in the short time you have there.

- Speak to other students who have done placements, or research online blogs about this. Find out the things that other people wish they'd known before they started.
- SWOT analysis - Evaluate your own strengths and weaknesses, identify opportunities, and set yourself targets. This simple structured approach can mean that from the first day you're engaging in the ways you want and need – which also means the employer will get good work from you. But don't be afraid to let this change when you're there – you can't predict all possibilities, especially about a place and job you don't know.

Practitioner

- Meet with them prior to the placement to make sure that you suit each other.
- Try to get an idea of what interests the student has (either related to their studies or generally)
- Find out what skills needs the student has identified. (their learning objectives)
- Plan specific tasks, or a project, for them to do – don't just use them as cheap labour.
- Set realistic expectations on both sides

Academic

- **Prepare students** by discussing ethics and professionalism in practice
- How to provide a **decent experience** that fits with module/assignment content?
- Explaining to the community-based organisation that this **isn't about 'slave labour'**
- Making sure the student is **properly supported** & they know what they are doing
- **Warn students** of 'known knowns', 'known unknowns' etc [illness of key worker/host, not enough work to do].

During Student

- Don't be afraid to ask questions or tell someone you don't understand – you are there to learn and develop, and you won't be looked down on for this. It's better to ask and get it right than to power off in the wrong direction.
- Do your best – this is a fantastic opportunity for you, and there's no point in not giving it your all. It will greatly benefit the community/organisation you are working for, but it will also be fantastic for you – develop skills, get experience, build confidence, network, and truly engage in the working world.
- Never turn a job down or act as though you're above it. No matter how big or small, do your absolute best. If you think something is below you, then do it so well that they wonder why they ever assigned it to you, or do it beyond their expectations to prove your worth. But at the same time, look for jobs that you would like to do, or ways to add value to an existing project someone else is doing.
- Be polite, respectful, approachable and network – some students go on to work in the organisations that they complete their placements in, so give the best impression you can. And if you don't get to work in the same place, they can still provide a good reference that could set you apart from other applicants.

Practitioner

- Provide a real world working experience
- Provide supervision and support



- Ensure that they feel part of the team
- Try to get the placement to work over a longer period. i.e. one day a week for five weeks is better than five days in one week
- Make the most of the experience

Academic

- Are they **happy** (personally & professionally) with the community-based learning?
- Any **issues**? Personalities, support? Clarity of tasks? **Process and progress**
- **Equity** across hours worked by individuals across 'placements' / community-based organisations
- Does the student know what is **expected of them**? And can they deliver in the time available with the community-based organisation?
- Invite host organisation to **participate in or view presentations / assignments**

After

Student

- Evaluate what you have done and achieved whilst it's still fresh in your mind. It's amazing how time can gradually diminish your enthusiasm, your pride for something you achieved, or affect your memory.
- Speak with your careers/skills department to see how this everything you've done can be presented to future employers.
- Obtain testimonials from your employer or colleagues, or contact details and permission to be referees.
- Stay in touch with key contacts that you've made – offer voluntary work, or find part-time work that keeps you connected. A successful placement will open a door for you, so keep it open and maintain relationships. Don't let your good work be forgotten.

Practitioner

- Provide them with future work references if appropriate.
- Give honest feedback (positive and negative) – two way. Learn from each placement to improve for the next time
 - Did the student have a positive experience? (if not why not?)
 - Did the organisation achieve what it wanted from the placement? (if not why not?)
 - Did the student achieve their learning objectives? (if not why not?)
- Keep in contact.

Academic

- Importance of student-staff-host **reflection** on the community-based learning – good, bad and/or 'ugly' & **how value can be added** to the activities/relationship
- **Opportunities** for the student (and staff) to capitalise on the community-based learning e.g. contributing to relevant lectures & sessions....
- Keeping the host organisation, potential future hostings 'warm'
- Enabling the student to extend their community-based learning experience in to dissertation, job interviews, CV etc.
- **Student and organisation feedback** on the experience, impact & any future changes

Benefits

- Helps with community cohesion especially in communities where there is a high level of student accommodation. Residents see a positive side to students rather than the demonised version.
- Helps with community cohesion if a student with no previous experience of deprived areas has a placement in such an area and is able to see ordinary people not the demonised version.
- Students can bring a young persons perspective to what you're doing.
- Community organisations can get projects carried out that might not otherwise be done.
- If the student continues to live in your town and their experience with you has been positive, you may be lucky enough to get an ongoing volunteer commitment from them. Including potential to get them onto you board as a trustee, which would be good experience for them too.
- Students can add to their CV – which may set them apart from other students.
- 'Real world' experience for the students which can open their minds to reality of work and society, and applying skills and knowledge to real situations; allows greater understanding as puts theory into practice; contextualizes learning; might highlight a career you never knew you'd like
- Enables fresh perspective for the students and young enthusiasm from the students into community projects – you can leave a lasting impact on something, and can take pride in your achievements – no one has, or ever will, do exactly what you've done. Community based work is very rewarding and volunteering/placements in this sector can benefit all.
- Opportunities to build relationships with local organisations, with a view to outreach, community based research and other engagement opportunities.

Top Tips

Students

- Be open and willing and have a positive attitude
- Embrace it – it's a great opportunity, so don't let it go to waste
- Network and make contacts – this could be the first step for your career
- Enjoy it!

Community Practitioners

- Don't expect any two students to be the same. Each placement will be different, with different needs and different expectations.
- Set realistic expectations so that you both know from the start what you each expect from the other.
- Help them to use the experience to develop some employment basic skills – such as answering a telephone, writing letters, time management, etc.
- Providing them with strong supervision and support will both keep them on track during the placement and prepare them to be managed when they get a job after graduation.
- Use the opportunity to dispel some of the myths about the voluntary/community sector so that they take it with them into their future career. (i.e. how professional the sector is; how voluntary doesn't mean that everyone working in it is a volunteer; how hard it is for the sector to survive without funding, etc.)



Academics

- (Ideally) establish a relationship with a community-based organisation **before** you ask them for anything
- Ensure that the relationship with a community-based organisation is of **mutual benefit**
- Ensure that the community-based learning is purposeful and relevant to the student's module/study area e.g. no photocopying!
- Provide support for students' preparation
- Discuss expectations, learning objectives and outcomes with the students and the community practitioners
- Be flexible – the realities of community based experience are difficult to manage compared with most learning situations.
- Ensure regular contact and support for students undertaking community-based learning – make sure they do not suffer in silence
- Foster links with community-based host organisations to ensure *sustainability* – that is repeat hostings of student placements etc

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