

CONFERENCE PAPERS

Delegate List

Paivi Allen, University of East London
p.allen@uel.ac.uk

Em Bailey, Heriot Watt University
e.i.bailey@hw.ac.uk

Birgit Bangskjaer, The Danish Confederation of Professional Associations
BBA@ac.dk

Sue Beckingham, Sheffield Hallam University
s.beckingham@shu.ac.uk

Rhiannon Birch, Sheffield Hallam University
r.birch@sheffield.ac.uk

Kayleigh Blackstock, Coventry University
aa4292@coventry.ac.uk

Rachel Bowden, University of Brighton
r.c.bowden@brighton.ac.uk

Edward Bressan, Oxford Brookes University
ebressan@brookes.ac.uk

Ruth Brown, London South Bank University
ruth.brown@lsbu.ac.uk

Julie Brown, Glasgow Caledonian University
Julie.brown@gcu.ac.uk

Alex Buckley, Higher Education Academy
Alex.Buckley@heacademy.ac.uk

Stefan Buettner, University of Tuebingen, Germany
stefan.m.buettner@web.de

Keith Burley, Sheffield Hallam University
k.burley@shu.ac.uk

David Cairns, Q A Research
David.cairns@garesearch.net

James Cannon, Kingston University

J.Cannon@kingston.ac.uk

Rita Castro, Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana, Brazil

ritasilvacastro@gmail.com

Rachel-Ann Charles, Birmingham City University

Rachel-ann.charles@mail.bcu.ac.uk

Yuraisha Chetty, University of South Africa

chettyb@unisa.ac.za

Erjon Curraj, European University of Tirana, Albania

Erjon.curraj@gmail.com

Neil Carrant, Oxford Brookes University

ncarrant@brookes.ac.uk

Vesna Dodikovic-Jurkovic, Agency for Science and Higher Education, Croatia

vdjurkov@azvo.hr

James Dunphy, Robert Gordon University

j.dunphy@rgu.ac.uk

Sarah Edwards, University College Birmingham

S.Edwards@ucb.ac.uk

Yaz El-Hakim, University of Winchester

Yassein.El-hakim@winchester.ac.uk

Marie Falahee, Worcester University

m.falahee@worc.ac.uk

Kirsten Forkert, Birmingham City University

Kirsten.forkert@bcu.ac.uk

Rachel Forsyth, Manchester University

r.m.forsyth@mmu.ac.uk

Keith Fortowsky, University of Regina, Canada

kfortowsky@gmail.com

Nicholas Freestone, Kingston University

n.freestone@kingston.ac.uk

Dilly Fung, CALT, UCL

d.fung@ucl.ac.uk

Mark Gittoes, Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
m.gittoes@hefce.ac.uk

Joke Hageman
ftjhageman@avans.nl

Katie Hartless Rose, Coventry University
ab0007@coventry.ac.uk

Valerie Harvey, Higher Education Authority
vharvey@hea.ie

Matt Hiely-Rayner, Kingston University
m.hiely-rayner@kingston.ac.uk

Abigail Hirschman, Coventry University
Ssx324@coventry.ac.uk

Graham Holden, Sheffield Hallam University
g.j.holden@shu.ac.uk

Kate Irving, Chester University
c.irving@chester.ac.uk

Anita Jackson, University of Westminster
jacksoa@wmin.ac.uk

Natasha Jankowski, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA)
Njankow2@illinois.edu

Tansy Jessop, University of Winchester
Tansy.Jessop@winchester.ac.uk

Anna Jones, Glasgow Caledonian University
anna.jones@gcu.ac.uk

Penny Jones, Brighton University
P.F.Jones@brighton.ac.uk

Lidiia Kamaldinova, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow
kamaldinova@yandex.ru

David Koehler, Coventry University
ab1955@coventry.ac.uk

Hugh Lafferty, Sheffield Hallam University
h.lafferty@shu.ac.uk

Anthony Lewis, Brighton University
A.R.Lewis@brighton.ac.uk

Hanlie Liebenberg, University of South Africa
liebeh1@unisa.ac.za

Helena Lim, Higher Education Academy
Helenalim_mall@me.com

David Mackintosh, Kingston University
D.Mackintosh@kingston.ac.uk

Anitha Majeed, University of Liverpool/ Coventry University
Anitha07@liverpool.ac.uk

Muriel Masson, Queen Mary University of London
mmasson@qmu.ac.uk

Mohammad Mayouf, Birmingham City University
mohammad.mayouf@mail.bcu.ac.uk

Struan McCall, UVA, The Netherlands
s.g.mccall@uva.nl

Ian McDonald, Birmingham City University
ian.mcdonald@bcu.ac.uk

Neil McKay, Sheffield Hallam University
n.mckay@shu.ac.uk

Aisling McKenna, Dublin City University
Aisling.mckenna@dcu.ie

Andrew McLaughlin, Queen Mary University of London
a.m.mclaughlin@qmul.ac.uk

Sue Milward, Exeter University
S.A.Milward@exeter.ac.uk

Calli Mistry, Kingston University
c.mistry@kingston.ac.uk

Kenechukwu Ochonogor, Birmingham City University
Kenechukwu.ochonogor@mail.bcu.ac.uk

Kevin O'Fee, University of Regina, Canada
kevin.ofee@uregina.ca

Mark O'Hara, Birmingham City University
mark.o'hara@bcu.ac.uk

Kiyotake Oki, Waseda University, Japan
okikiyo@waseda.jp

Karen Patel, Birmingham City University
Karen.Patel@bcu.ac.uk

Maree Pather, Tshwane University of Technology
ptherm@tut.ac.za

Vivienne Patterson, Higher Education Authority
vpatterson@hea.ie

Gary Pavlechko, Ball State University
gpavlech@bsu.edu

Nicola Poole, Cardiff Metropolitan University
njpoole@cardiffmet.ac.uk

Anna Preston, Warwick University
a.preston@warwick.ac.uk

Andrew Reynolds, Northampton University
andrew.reynolds@northampton.ac.uk

Cynthia Sam, Oxford University
Cynthia.sam@pharm.ox.ac.uk

Mariano Sanchez-Luppi, Exeter University
M.Sanchez-Luppi@exeter.ac.uk

Ian Scott, Oxford Brookes University
i.scott@brookes.ac.uk

Rhona Sharpe, Oxford Brookes University
rsharpe@brookes.ac.uk

Alan Smeaton, Insight Centre for Data Analytics
Alan.smeaton@dcu.ie

Rich Stewart, Brighton University

R.Stewart@brighton.ac.uk

Marie Stowell, University of Worcester
m.stowell@worc.ac.uk

Fahad Sultan, Birmingham City University
Fahad.sultan@mail.bcu.ac.uk

Wayne Turnbull, Liverpool John Moores University
w.turnbull@ljmu.ac.uk

Deon Tustin, University of South Africa
tustidh@unisa.ac.za

Hendrik van der Sluis, Kingston University
h.vandersluis@kingston.ac.uk

Dion van Zyl, University of South Africa
vzylhjd@unisa.ac.za

Amber Verrycken, Avans Hogeschool, The Netherlands
Amj.verrycken@avans.nl

Paul Waller, Kingston University
Paul.waller@kingston.ac.uk

Karen Webber, University of Georgia, USA
kwebber@uga.edu

Marion West, University of Wolverhampton
M.West2@wlv.ac.uk

Catherine Whalley, Oxford University
Catherine.whalley@admin.ox.ac.uk

Karen Wigley, University of Southampton
k.wigley@soton.ac.uk

James Williams, Birmingham City University
James.williams@bcu.ac.uk

Harvey Woolf, Worcester University
Harvey.w@blueyonder.co.uk

Mantz Yorke, Lancaster University
mantzyork@mantzyorke.plus.com

Elena Zaitseva, Liverpool John Moores University
e.zaitseva@ljmu.ac.uk

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Tansy Jessop

Dr Tansy Jessop is the Head of Learning and Teaching at the University of Winchester. She leads the 'Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment' (TESTA) National Teaching Fellowship Project, which started small in four 'Cathedrals' Group Universities' and is now being used in more than 45 universities in the UK, Australia, India and the USA. Tansy is the project manager of 'Feedback and Assessment for Students with Technology' (FASTECH), a JISC-funded project which has led to the embedding of 60 undergraduate student fellows working on educational development projects at Winchester. Tansy has given more than 30 keynotes, guest talks and workshops in India, Australia and the UK, mainly on whole programme assessment, but also on curriculum design, appreciative inquiry and narrative research. She began her career as a secondary school teacher in South Africa, and completed a PhD on teacher development in rural primary schools in KwaZulu-Natal. For background papers: <http://winchester.academia.edu/TansyJessop>

Alan Smeaton

Since 1997, Alan Smeaton has been a Professor of Computing at Dublin City University where he has previously been Head of School and Dean of Faculty. His early research covered the application of natural language processing techniques to information retrieval and this broadened to cover content-based retrieval of information in all media, text, image, audio and digital video. From 2013 to 2019 he is Director of the INSIGHT Data Analytics Research Centre at DCU, a €70m+ centre funded by Science Foundation Ireland and by industry, representing the largest single investment in research made by the government of Ireland. Alan has published over 550 refereed papers, has more than 9,300 citations and an h-index of 46 (Google Scholar). He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy, and a Senior Member of the IEEE. In 2012 he was appointed a member of the Irish Research Council.

Yaz El Hakim

Beginning his career in 2003, as an hourly paid lecturer in Sport Psychology at the University of Chichester, Yaz El Hakim has experienced many aspects of Higher Education. He became Programme Leader of Sports Studies at the University of Winchester in 2005 and Director of Learning and Teaching in 2008. Yaz worked as part of the team led by Dr Tansy Jessop with Professor Graham Gibbs, which successfully secured HEA-funding for the project TESTA, (Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment) which ran between 2009-2012. This project has spread internationally to over 45 Universities through consultancy and other workshop/training activities. Over the six years as Director of Learning and Teaching, he has focused on institutionally developing (with colleagues): Assessment and Feedback, Research Informed Teaching, Technology Enhanced Learning and Student Engagement and Opportunities. Nationally, Yaz has led or co-led 5 externally funded research projects, whilst studying an EdD at the University of Southampton on Student Engagement in Educational Development. He has recently been appointed as Vice-Chair of the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA), is an Associate of the HEA and was, until recently, the treasurer for the Heads of Educational Development Group's (HEDG) planning committee.

Mark Gittoes

Mark Gittoes has worked at the Higher Education Funding Council for 13 years, and has been their Head of Quantitative Analysis for Policy for the last 6 years. He forms part of the UK Performance Indicators Steering Group secretariat and has assisted in the recent fundamental review of those indicators. He also manages HEFCE's work on participation measures, and is the author of HEFCE's 2014 Differences in Degree report which examined

the extent to which a student's background affects their chance of obtaining an upper second or first class degree.

Alex Buckley

Dr Alex Buckley works in the Student Surveys team at the HEA, and leads on their support for institutions around using undergraduate survey data for enhancement. In 2012 he published *Making it count: Reflecting on the NSS in the process of enhancement*. Since 2013 he has been coordinating a national pilot of selected items from the National Survey of Student Engagement. The first year was reported in *Engagement for enhancement: Report of a UK survey pilot*. The second year of the pilot has involved 36 institutions, and results will be published in October. As well as student surveys, he also works on conceptual and political aspects of student engagement.

ABSTRACTS

Kayleigh Blackstock, Coventry University

Using blogs as a reflective tool for learners to engage in academic employability modules and enhance the student experience

Employability and digital literacy are high on the agenda for Higher Education Institutions in the United Kingdom. Modules regarding employability are embedded into courses and often involve reflection on personal development. Knight and Yorke (2004:30) state that to be employable a person must be interested in life-long learning which encourages reflective practice and learning from experiences. This will prepare students for the demands of practice in graduate employment (Schon, 1987).

Students are becoming more digitally literate and concerned with their online profile/presence. Ollington, Gibb and Harcourt (2013) highlight this as important; employers use social media sites and blogs during the recruitment process. Gvaramadze (2012) stated that using online or digital resources allows students to enhance and develop general competences which will benefit their employability. Encouraging students to blog to reflect on development should allow them to engage in reflection, enhance employability and prepare them for a digital society. This potentially could enhance the overall student experience.

This session will discuss a study in which students will be asked to set up blogs and use them for personal development reflection. Exploratory research, in the form of focus groups and in-depth interviews, will be gathered from students with regards to their development and employability. The study will also discuss whether this has a positive impact on the overall student experience.

Rachel Bowden, University of Brighton with/on behalf of Julie Fowlie, Marylynn Fyvie-Gauld, Liz Guy, Jennie Jones, Rachel Masika and Gina Wisker

Evaluating the HEA's What Works? programme: building engagement and belonging for student retention and success at the University of Brighton

The HEA What Works? programme made recommendations about how to build student engagement and belonging at a time of change in HE in order to improve student retention and success. The University of Brighton is one of a number of HEIs participating in a longitudinal evaluation of the What Works? model, through the development of interventions in three different disciplines.

The project is an opportunity to test out recommendations for effective practice in addressing student retention and success in disciplines with different challenges. The interventions cover the key themes of student induction including pre-entry activities, active learning and student peer mentoring.

The evaluation methodology includes institutional data analysis, quantitative research through surveys of the participating students and qualitative research, using the method of appreciative inquiry within student focus groups.

This session will provide an opportunity to learn more about the interventions being trialled, review the early findings from the surveys and focus groups, and discuss and consider implications for others.

Julie Brown, Anna Jones, Glasgow Caledonian University

Joining the dots: Making connections between institutional research, HE research policy and practice

Institutional research sits in a liminal position in the field of higher educational research. Although empirically based and producing relevant findings the outcomes of institutional research are often overlooked. Arguably, this could partially be due to the localised nature of the research and its intended audience, thus excluding the research and subsequent findings from influencing broader educational research conversation. While institutional research is conducted within institutions, the pathways between the findings and its enactment in practice are sometimes tenuous. Sensitivity and confidentiality of Institutional research can have a serious impact upon the potential of these research findings for other HEIs. In addition, institutional research is not always well grounded in the literature or theoretically bound. Often there is a need for brief and untheorised findings.

This paper argues that there is a need for 'joining the dots' between institutional research, higher education and pedagogical research, HE policy and practice. The session will explore current relationships between institutional research, higher education or pedagogical research policy and practice with a view to examining how the value of institutional research can be captured and how it can influence (and be informed by) wider HE research, policy and practice.

Alex Buckley, Higher Education Academy

Voice or data? Surveying student engagement in the HE sector

Data from student surveys can play an important role in institutional efforts to improve learning and teaching. In response to the growing interest in surveys that explore students' active engagement with their course, the Higher Education Academy has developed and piloted the UK Engagement Survey (UKES), with 36 institutions participating in 2014. Based on the National Survey of Student Engagement (US tool now widely used around the world) UKES marks a departure from the historically dominant survey models in the UK, that – like the National Student Survey – focus on students' perceptions of what they received rather than the kinds of effort they have invested. This presentation will describe the background to the survey and key findings from the first pilot year in 2013. The 2014 survey closes in July, and it is hoped that preliminary results will be available for presentation.

The introduction of surveys that evaluate students' levels of engagement raises a number of challenges. The presentation will focus on the tension between the dual roles of student surveys: as both methods for collecting valid data about educational quality, and as tools for facilitating the student voice. Engagement surveys are particularly well-suited to the former, but are arguably less appropriate for the latter; traditional surveys like the NSS are more likely to give students a sense that they are being listened to. This tension has implications beyond the realm of surveys, as it mirrors the complex (and at times confused) interpretation of the term “student engagement” in the UK, as applying both to students' active involvement in their own learning, and also their participation in governance and decision-making.

Stefan Buettner, University of Tuebingen

Enhancing institutional effectiveness & student experience through usage of university operational data

Day by day Higher Education Institutions gather large amounts of operational data that, except for national higher education statistics, is rarely used but could be of great use in times of tight budgets, lack of space and overall slim resources.

In this session, I will give a number of examples how evidence-based decision making has advanced the operations of a traditional research university that counts to the best in the country.

Examples span from micro organisational issues on department level (e.g. room/capacity planning), over improvement of academic programmes (e.g. managing interdisciplinary programmes and student experience), enhancing university service providers (student and staff satisfaction and strategic planning) and decision-making based on geo-data (competition for prospective students and alumni strategy).

Working on the basis of P. Terenzini's 'On the Nature of Institutional Research and the Knowledge and Skills it Requires' (Research in Higher Education, 1993), gradually analysing using more of its operational data on all levels not only leads to an increased understanding of the organisation, but also shows lots of opportunities how to improve its operations and strategically evolve further.

Stefan Buettner, University of Tuebingen

Integrating Institutional Research into University Curricula and Increasing Institutional Effectiveness

In most organisations – higher education, private firms, public services and in particular in the interaction between those – there is potential for improvement and further development.

This session focuses on the role project seminars can play in optimising strategies for institutions without a formal IR department or with few staff, while promoting knowledge about what IR is all about within the institution. At the same time, they can serve as a screening and recruiting pool for future IR staff or student assistants.

At one traditional research university, for-credit project seminars for students, teaching institutional research and investigating improvement potential in specific areas, have become a small but impressive success story.

In these seminars, students learn about the principles of institutional research relevant techniques, software skills and case-study exercises. They then move on to apply these skills in a one-stop-shop exercise aimed at improving the performance of a project partner, usually a university service provider.

This outcome presents a win-win situation for institution, students and instructors alike. Since spring 2007, the project seminars have run six times, with the practical component focussing on enrolment services, university libraries, the Language Centre, the Computing Centre, dining services, and sports services.

As a consequence, even an originally IR-resistant administration has begun to understand and apply the benefits of IR activities. For institutions with a pre-existing IR office, the project

seminar concept delivers a platform for Human Resources signalling and screening: drawing interested students to the field while looking for potential new student assistants and staff.

Rita Castro, Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana, Brazil, Maria João Pires Rosa and Joaquim Costa Pinho, University of Aveiro, Portugal

Empirical analyses of stakeholder's importance and influence on HEIs internationalisation: a contribution for the discussion of their role in improving academic quality

This session presents a study developed in order to understand the importance and the influence of different types of stakeholders on the rationales for, strategies developed to and benefits obtained from internationalisation. These results are based on empirical data collected in HEIs from Portugal, Brazil and The Netherlands, through a questionnaire adapted from the 2nd and 3rd International Survey Questionnaire on Internationalization of the International Association of Universities. The questionnaires were sent to the person responsible for the internationalisation issues in each one of the HEIs. The answers obtained were then analysed resorting to descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The results show that the more importance that is given to stakeholders by HEIs, the more motivations there are to internationalise, more strategies are developed and more benefits are collected from it. It seems that stakeholders do indeed influence some internationalisation facets, which confirming some of the themes discussed in the internationalisation and stakeholders' literature. The results obtained contribute to the body of knowledge concerning stakeholder theory in higher education field.

Yuraisha Chetty, Elizabeth Archer, Kerry de Hart, University of South Africa

A baseline study of Open Educational Resources (OER) at an Open Distance Learning (ODL) university: An example of institutional research embracing 21st century developments in higher education

Higher education in the 21st century has been faced with game-changing developments impacting teaching and learning. Massive open online courses (MOOCs) and Open Educational Resources (OER) are two notable initiatives gaining momentum globally. These initiatives are furthermore enabled by the rapid development of various information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media. The University of South Africa (Unisa) is committed to harnessing the potential of OER. Unisa's strides in developing a new organisational architecture to support the shift towards open, distance and e-learning (ODEL) have given impetus to undertaking a nuanced investigation into OER at Unisa. A baseline survey was commissioned to gather the experiences and views of academics and key support professionals. The primary focus was to determine the uptake of OER at Unisa. The research explored: a) awareness and knowledge, b) reuse, redistribution, revision and remixing c) communication channels, d) challenges and obstacles, and e) benefits. This study demonstrates that institutional research (IR) must be agile to innovative developments to further enhance its impact in providing evidence-based decision support. The data from this study will inform discussions at various university structures to support decision-making and planning.

Erjon Curraj, Blerjana Bino, European University of Tirana

New dynamics in the interrelations between research and policy in Albania in the context of Triple Helix

This paper explores the ways in which the management of research in higher education governance in Albania is being affected by the transformations underpinning the mission of the university from education towards entrepreneurship as envisaged in the Triple Helix model. The role of university as centre of education, training, research and knowledge-creation in driving innovation and development processes has been significantly affected by the transformations in the knowledge production system and the new dynamics in the interrelation and communication networks between university, the government and business. In this light, the management of research has become an essential matter, particularly so in academic settings that lack appropriate management and research legacy such as in Albania. This article explores the dynamics of entrepreneurial approaches to the management of research in university settings in Albania. The paper adopts a qualitative methodology approach of focus groups and documents analysis. The article argues for a new paradigm on the ways in which research is managed in university in the context of the Triple Helix, thus finding ways to inform and impact policy making. Research project management and effective communication strategies need to be developed in universities in Albania in order for research to inform and impact policy.

Neil Carrant, Oxford Brookes University

Belonging: Addressing concerns of black students in their academic experiences in a predominantly white university – Lessons from qualitative institutional research

There is a growing body of research into understanding the range of factors that impact on Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students' completion and attainment in higher education. However, despite this research and many interventions, the lower rates of completion and attainment for BME students has remained largely unchanged over the past decade.

A sense of belonging has been identified as a crucial element of completion and success (Thomas 2012). This paper draws on in-depth interviews with black students to identify the challenges faced in 'belonging' in a largely white academic community. Harper (2009) describes the idea of 'onlyness' to capture the experiences of many black students at institutions where they may be the only person from their ethnic group in their class.

This paper will argue that the academic experience needs to acknowledge the role of race in student belonging in order to help address the completion and attainment gaps for BME students.

**Vesna Dodiković-Jurković, Jasmina Havranek, Goran Briški, Davorka Androić,
Agency for Science and Higher Education, Croatia**

Quality Enhancement at Public Universities in Croatia

Croatian HEIs are expected to develop efficient internal quality assurance systems that could enable realisation of their vision and better recognition at national and international levels.

In the first cycle of external audit, which started in 2010 upon the adoption of the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education, the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) assessed the efficiency of the internal QA systems of all public universities in the Republic of Croatia. Two of seven evaluated public universities have met ASHE requirements in accordance with ESG and ASHE Criteria, and received audit certificates valid for five years. QA systems of other public universities will have to undergo a re-audit within 18 months.

It has become evident that creating learning community with stakeholders' engagement is a time consuming and challenging task. The main findings of external audits indicate that there is a need for capacity building of institutional leaders and QA managers as well as all stakeholders. New technologies have increased the forms of data collected and analyses thereof, but these are still not adequately used for policy changes, strategic thinking and communication within HEIs.

Sarah Edwards, University College Birmingham

Enhancing Teaching and Learning through Distributed Leadership – from Doctoral Research in Education to practical application

This workshop highlights the outcomes of a study that aimed to identify how the Distributed Leadership approach is evident in Higher Education practice and specifically how it enhances the teaching and learning function in a specific Higher Education setting. The research aimed to identify parallels of teacher leadership theory with that of activity in a Higher Education sector setting. The research drew upon theoretical and empirical literature. An interpretivist stance was used to collect predominantly qualitative data through a mixed methods approach, which was used to engage with staff in both formal leadership and academic positions. Findings indicated that formal leadership assumes that there is a fostered environment that facilitates the Distributed approach and that specific activity allows for elements of distribution. However, there is a perceptions gap of how the overall vision, mission and teaching and learning strategy is communicated.

This gap needs to be reduced in order to provide an 'Effective Leadership framework' in which leadership of teaching and learning may be enhanced. Many aspects of leadership activity among academics drew parallels with teacher leadership theory. Many staff undertook activities that it can be argued are leadership functions such as networking, developing subject expertise and initiating projects that arguably enhance the student experience. However, this was 'pulsating' in nature and not sustained activity. Opportunities for leadership needed to be extended to more academic staff, the majority of whom had considered applying for leadership roles. The sharing of practice and the development of the Professional Learning Community was seen as an important element of encouraging a Distributed Leadership approach. Issues relating to engagement persist, however. Not all students demonstrate an understanding of the process which can produce unreliable results. There has also been some resistance from staff to the 'one size fits all' approach.

Keith Fortowsky, University of Regina, Canada, Dr Thomas Loya, University of Nottingham, Silvia Gonzalez Zamora, Deloitte, Canada

Governance – the connector between managerial data and action

IR Offices' roles have largely centred around "historical" data. Although there are challenges in properly maintaining such data, most institutions do so reasonably successfully. In part due to this success, many IR offices have the capability and have taken the lead in providing "managerial reporting": the use of data for day to day decision making. Such usage initially appears to simply present higher levels of existing challenges (definition, quality and dissemination).

However, there is a significant new factor: reports and their data become contentious. There are also new balances to be struck between the costs of access, security control, and the benefits of genuine transparency and openness.

"Governance" is how an organization establishes what versions of data and analysis will be the 'single source of truth' for its decision-making. Organisations that are highly centralised can generally establish this 'truth' by fiat, at least for a time. But Universities generally require a much higher level of consultation and communication.

The Panelists will share their direct experience in the challenges of implementing defined Data Governance in Universities.

Nicholas Freestone, Kingston University

Institutional Collaboration in the context of Physiology Teaching in the UK

It has been proposed that physiology teaching is in decline in the UK. This study sought to ascertain the potential for collaboration between different institutions in order to sustain physiology as a separate discipline.

Sixteen institutions offering physiology and five other institutions which had recently merged their physiology departments with other disciplines were sent a questionnaire. This asked for information concerning numbers of students studying physiology, numbers of staff delivering the programmes and the proportion of time allotted to lectures, tutorials and practicals at each institution. Furthermore, information on any current or future plans for collaboration was gathered. To give a deeper insight into the data, five semi-structured interviews were conducted with Heads of Physiology Departments.

Analysis of the data revealed that 60% of respondents felt that there had not been a decline in the number of students enrolled on physiology degrees at their own institution.

Paradoxically 70 % thought that physiology education generally was in decline. 60 % of the respondents indicated that collaboration with another HEI could be a way of safeguarding the future of physiology teaching in the UK. However, only 30 % of the respondents reported any plans to enter into such collaboration in the future.

Mark Gittoes, Higher Education Funding Council for England

Performance Indicators for Higher Education: What are they and where are they going a UK perspective?

The UK Performance Indicators (UKPIs) for higher education (HE) provide information on the nature and performance of the HE sector in the UK. They aim to measure how higher education providers perform objectively and consistently. A fundamental review of these indicators was carried out in 2013 which involved a wide range of interested bodies and organisations. Mark will talk about the findings from the review, the response from the group responsible for their development (the UK Performance Indicators Steering Group), and the role and future direction of the indicators.

Katie Hartless Rose, Abigail Hirshman, Coventry University co-authors Alun Evans, Stacey Tilling, Coventry University

Improving Student Satisfaction: Coventry University's experience of adopting a whole-institution strategic enhancement approach

This session will explore the institutional, strategic enhancement approach to improving student satisfaction that Coventry University adopted in 2010. It will look at the benefits, drawbacks and fallout of adopting such an approach and will encourage discussion and feedback from delegates from other institutions.

The survey process is entirely centralised and satisfaction scores are tied in to the development and performance reviews for academic staff. All modules are subject to evaluation and the standardised questions provide comparable data across the university. These produce a mix of qualitative and quantitative data, which enables the research department (CUREs) to produce university-wide statistics as well as useful feedback to module leaders.

The move to in-class delivery using paper questionnaires has resulted in a significant increase in response rates. This has helped to provide accurate and comparable data that helps with the decision making process in relation to changes to teaching and module content. Coventry University has seen a general increase in student satisfaction since 2010. Issues relating to engagement persist, however. Not all students demonstrate an understanding of the process which can produce unreliable results. There has also been some resistance from staff to the 'one size fits all' approach.

Natasha Jankowski, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA)

Decisions about student learning: To what do we turn?

Evidence to inform decisions takes many forms and has more or less weight and credibility depending on the specific audience involved and their meaning making process. This paper explores the roles and skill set needed of institutional researchers in translating research and data about student learning into evidence for different audiences. The universe continues to expand of audiences interested in learning more about what our students know and can do, and subsequently using that information to inform policy, practice, and pedagogy. This paper presents a framework for engaging with the various constituents, and not just supplying a variety of evidence but serving an educative function in helping weight and consideration to be placed on inclusive student voices and evidence types. It begins by exploring the different evidentiary needs of audiences with which institutional researchers engage, and how similar data might be used in very different ways to present evidence for possible actions. The paper also examines the use of evidence in crafting arguments about how to proceed, what actions might give rise to change, and how different audiences view the mechanisms by change within an institution may occur. The paper concludes with the presentation of a framework for using evidence in decisions and for creating evidence-based arguments upon which decisions may rest. Implications for practice are also explored with examples from institutions in the United States presented.

Tansy Jessop and Yaz El Hakim, University of Winchester

Dispelling myths and challenging traditions: Evidence about assessment from TESTA five years on

This paper uses evidence from research with 45 degree programmes in 15 universities, mainly in the UK, to reflect on common assessment and feedback myths. Programme-level evidence has been gathered through the 'Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment (TESTA) project, originally funded by the Higher Education Academy, but now self-sustaining. The first myth is that modular design, even within robust quality assurance and 'programmatically' processes, necessarily leads to a coherent *programme* of study. The presenters argue that modular packaging may work better for furniture than for student learning. The second myth has been perpetuated by a largely summative assessment diet, spawned by a modular systems and transferable credits. This is the myth that assessment is mainly about 'us' measuring 'them', a process driven by hierarchical judgements about performance, and marked by feedback as the final word. A third related myth is that neither students nor academics can realistically engage in formative assessment because of its time-cost, and its low value in a culture that rewards performativity. The fourth myth that the presenters reflect on is the myth that feedback is a one-to-one written monologue from tutors to students, which, only exceptionally, individual students may turn into a dialogue. The final myth addressed by the research is the idea that students engage in self-directed study without ample and cleverly constructed scaffolding.

**Lidiia Kamaldinova, National Research University Higher School of Economics,
Moscow**

Entrants Survey Data Usage To Improve the Admission Campaign

Each summer universities in Russia offer to admit students to undergraduate programs. Legally the application period is available from the 20th of June to the 25th of July. Applicants have to apply paper documents with personal signature to universities: most of them prefer to bring it in person.

NRU HSE as one of the leading universities attracts large number of students: in 2012 Moscow campus had 9011 applications. Due to the large flow each year, universities face difficulties with the admission campaign organization. Competition between universities is strong, so, as HSE entrants survey data show, the atmosphere of admission campaign might influence student final choice.

The Institutional Research Office (HSE, Moscow) provides an annual entrants survey for the purpose to assess the admission campaign organization and reveal the main difficulties that applicants face.

For example, 2010-2011 survey results showed that NRU HSE lost its main competitors in the speed of documents application, what is closely linked to the queue size. It provoked the creation of special online service in 2013: an applicant can fill personal information and choose the time to visit the admission committee. In 2013 the estimation of documents application speed and the queue size were significantly improved (including the comparison with the main HSE competitors).

David Koehler, Coventry University

A discussion of the efficacy of student-led seminars for encouraging critical thinking and confidence in dealing with difficult theoretical texts

A new approach to teaching critical theory and thinking was designed for an English and Journalism 'Democracy and the Media' module, in which students were asked to lead seminars by introducing the topic (a pre-set critical theory text) for each week in the form of a 10 minute (group) presentation and then taking part in a 30 minute open discussion based on questions suggested by this presentation. The seminars were perceived to be a success by the tutors and course leader for the module, and this was reflected in positive feedback from the Module Evaluation Questionnaires. These results were further triangulated with a focus group in which the students freely discussed their opinions about the seminars with an independent facilitator. This paper presents the results of this action research project, which show that students not only value the chance to take control of their own learning situations but also believe that this improves the quality of their learning and helps with critical engagement with difficult theoretical texts. It is hoped that this paper will encourage discussion about the value and practicalities of student-led learning and may provide a possible model for other teachers to try in their own classrooms.

Hugh Lafferty, Keith Burley, Sheffield Hallam University

What is wrong with CBM?

CBM is Certainty-Based Marking scoring of quizzes. Quizzes are exemplified by 4-option MCQ-only stems and the scoring for CBM is

Miss		C=1	C=2	C=3
0	Correct	0	2	3
	In-correct	1	-2	-6

The 1st thing that is wrong applies in general. Quizzes which are scored by CBM do have space for the answer to the stem to be explained. So, if the quizzes *claim* that they are measuring *understanding* then they are **in-valid**.

The 2nd thing that is wrong with CBM scoring is that the scoring allows you to pass when you should have failed.

The 3rd thing that is wrong is that negative marking is used haphazardly in CBM.

The 4th thing that is wrong is that the scoring the scoring should vary with the type of quiz.

Davies's variation of CBM is similarly flawed.

Hanlie Liebenberg, Dion van Zyl, University of South Africa

Does Student Attitude Determine ICT Altitude in Higher Education

Educational institutions and national systems have had to tackle the challenge of using ICT effectively to benefit students, educators and countries. According to Lanerolle (2012) the demand for online educational resources is strong and educational institutions are vital means of connecting for many. One of the important discourses in higher education in general and more so in open distance learning is regarding the importance to continue to probe student's access to technology and their capabilities in the use of technology.

This study draws on results obtained from an ICT survey that focussed on the role of attitudes in contributing towards levels of ICT maturity. More specifically, attitudes were investigated across the dimensions of confidence, affection and cognition. The empirical results are complimented from the literature. A structure questionnaire served as data gathering instrument. Alongside measuring attitude, it also measured elements of ICT access, ownership, ability and levels of ICT sophistication and maturity. Data analysis comprises various levels of exploration and model building.

This study offers valuable insight for educational practitioners and addresses elements of an ever changing educational environment. From these insights recommendations and intervention strategies to address the gap between students' attitudes and ICT skill levels amongst students in an open distance learning environment are made.

Anitha Majeed, Brinder Rajpal, Coventry University

Using a Dialogic Process in Case-based Learning

This paper outlines the use of case studies in a 'risk-free' collaborative environment, since it cannot be assumed that assigning a case-based task will "imply that learning will take place" (Ramsden 2003:113). Historically business schools have been accused of failing to stress the interrelationships between subjects whilst lecturers have been criticised for being immersed in their own disciplines. Case studies are frequently employed by instructors to negotiate this issue, however, we highlight that it is not the case study alone that achieves this but rather the way in which it is used.

We discuss the outcomes of employing a dialogic approach to case-based learning in a Corporate Financial Strategy (CFS) module on a postgraduate course.

Anitha Majeed, Professor John Taylor, University of Liverpool

**An analysis of the financial performance, rankings and age of the United Kingdom
Higher Education Institutions (UKHEIs)**

This research has three strands consisting of the financial performance, rankings (a.k.a. league tables) and age of the UKHEIs. Currently, there is a gap in the literature linking these three strands with each other or/and collectively as a sum in order to analyse the performance of a HEI. Thus, the novel contributions of this thesis to the existing body of knowledge on the aforementioned three strands of literature are to identify the effects these strands could have with each other or/and as a sum in order to determine a HEI's overall performance in a new way.

**Mohammad Mayouf, Rachel-Ann Charles, Kenechukwa Ochonogor, Sophie Rowe,
Fahad Sultan, Ian McDonald, Kirsten Forkert, Karen Patel, Birmingham City University**

Establishing a postgraduate research community: a response to postgraduate research consultation

At many new universities research is often seen as a fringe and/or niche activity, which falls well behind learning and teaching in the list of priorities of such institutions. This has major effects on the research experience of postgraduate research (PGR) students, especially when the research community is small and fragmented across campuses. This raises the necessity to create a university-wide research community that aims to enhance PGR students' experience throughout their studies. This paper aims to investigate the influence of a PGR network (PGRNet) on PGR students' research experience across various faculties at one post 1992 university in the UK. Questionnaires and workshops were conducted across six faculties at Birmingham City University, to gather feedback from PGR students regarding their overall needs. Results were used to develop a framework that reflects research values for PGR students in alignment with the University's core values. It will also highlight common issues faced by PGR students across the faculties involved in this study. Findings of this paper may not necessarily apply to other universities, as all institutions are different, but a number of the principles are transferrable. This paper provides a good model to enhance the overall experience of PGR students.

**Aisling McKenna¹, Aoife Flanagan² & Maura McGinn³ Dublin City University¹, NUI,
Galway², University College Dublin³**

**Implementing the ISSE – Perspectives of Institutional Researchers Involved in the
Design, Fieldwork and Analysis of the pilot Irish Student Survey of Engagement**

In 2011, the newly elected government in the Republic of Ireland published its Programme for Government. Within it was a commitment for a national student survey within the Irish Higher Education sector. In March 2013, fieldwork for the pilot Irish Student Survey of Engagement (ISSE), based on the NSSE and AUSSE surveys, was conducted.

The implementation of the ISSE pilot was governed using a partnership model between key higher education stakeholders and government. This paper examines the involvement of Institutional Researchers at each stage of the project delivery, from questionnaire design and communications planning, to data analysis and publication of the final national report. Three institutional researchers, from University College, Dublin (UCD), NUI, Galway (NUIG) and Dublin City University (DCU) will present and discuss the contributions made by Institutional Researchers in the implementation of this national project, and involve delegates in a discussion on the options for ISSE and other national surveys to drive national policy, and institutional quality enhancement

Kevin O'Fee, University of Regina

National Norms: Utilizing the Comparative Financial Data of Universities and Colleges in Canada Decision Making

A useful tool informing decision-making at Canadian institutions is the Financial Information of Universities and Colleges Canada, an annual publication prepared by Statistics Canada for the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO). The publication is a comprehensive reference source for the financial data of universities and colleges.

The University of Regina's Office of Resource Planning plays a significant role in the institutions budgeting and financial reporting processes. Comparative institutional financial data provides information relevant to the university budget cycle and for the purposes of benchmarking.

First and foremost, our fundamental use (and outcome) of the tool has been a comparison of expenditure levels, as a percentage of the norm for a peer group of institutions, for fundamental cost drivers: size of enrolment and overall operating revenue. The presentation provides examples exploring 'national norms' according to differences in institutional size and level of research intensity. Additionally, we will discuss limitations with respect to accounting standards and complexities arising from the University of Regina's federated college structure and seek input institutions in the UK and Ireland.

Mark O'Hara, Lynn Fulford, Tehjuana Dawkins, Robert Pascall, Birmingham City University

The menu is not the meal: Unpacking qualitative data from the NSS

This workshop reports on the use of spreadsheet software to facilitate the analysis of qualitative feedback on their university experiences by students at Birmingham City University reported through the UK's National Student Survey (NSS)

The concept of 'student satisfaction' is a powerful one in all universities in England and Wales. Students can be viewed, framed as it were, in many ways. As consumers is one such model (McMillan & Cheney, 1996), but there are others such as producers (Neary, 2012), partners (Wenstone, 2012), and co-creators, collaborators and producers (e.g. Bovill et al, 2011). Crude judgements, calculated in percentage terms and made from the results of a single question about students' overall satisfaction with their learning experience may not be the best way to approach the task of enhancing students' experiences, learning and growth. It is our contention that such percentage outcomes limit our ability to enhance student satisfaction or to engage with students' feedback and work with them as partners to improve their experience.

Our research concerns the open-ended responses that many students provide within the NSS. The narrative data provided by the NSS is potentially extremely useful but in its raw form it can appear repetitive, inconsistent, contradictory on occasion and difficult to analyse in any meaningful way; hence the use of the software. The aim of our work is to assist in the task of making meaning from such rich and diverse data in order to better identify the key issues, concerns and priorities of our students, establishing in the process where, as an institution, we need to target resource and strategic initiatives.

Maree Pather, Tshwane University of Technology

Convergence of Management-Planning Endeavours in Higher Education

This paper examines common management-planning endeavours - including Strategic Planning, Quality Management and Risk Management - in Higher Education Institutions, to establish a 'core-mechanism' for converged-planning.

Standards-based approaches to management-planning are compared to ascertain common semantics, practices and desired-outcomes. The setting of goals, objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) are central to management-planning. Effective tracking of KPIs – typically, on electronic dashboards reporting on real-time appropriately-selected information (mined from aggregated/processed data) is, in turn, a key desired-outcome of management-planning.

To what extent are the KPIs in Strategic Planning the same as those tracked in Quality Management and Risk Management? Notwithstanding the various related concepts and approaches (e.g. Quality/Risk/Performance Assessment/ Assurance/Management; Monitoring-and-Evaluation, etc), there appears to be sufficient common ground for converging the management-planning 'system' to accommodate the core management-planning requirements of Strategic Planning, Risk Management and Quality Management.

It will be argued that 'Monitoring-and-Evaluation' is an appropriate description for a 'convergence perspective' of often-divergent management-planning systems. A common approach for implementing such a perspective is proposed.

Gary Pavlechko, Kathleen Jacobi, and James Jones, Ball State University, USA

Enhancing Student Learning Through the Interactive Learning Space Initiative

The purpose of this paper is to convey the results of a student and faculty Post Occupancy Evaluation for those involved in Ball State University's (Muncie, Indiana, USA) Interactive Learning Space Initiative (ILS). Designed and implemented by the Office of Educational Excellence (OEE), the Interactive Learning Space Initiative began in AY 2011-2012. OEE collaborated with Steelcase Education Solutions to gain insight into the student (n=227) and faculty (n=17) perceptions of the learning experiences in our ILS classrooms. Addressing the quality of the educational experience, the Spring 2013 Steelcase/Ball State University Post Occupancy Evaluation's statistically significant results provide examples of student and faculty strong preferences for the ILS environment compared to a traditional classroom. How interactive learning spaces supported specific elements of the program, such as collaboration, engagement, participation, feedback, and learning enrichment, will be described. From data gathered thus far, Interactive Learning Space Initiative appears to have had a positive impact on student and faculty perceptions of their time in the active learning classrooms as well as the quality of teaching and learning to enhance the student experience. Data for Spring 2014 is currently being gathered that will be combined with the Spring 2013 for further analysis.

Cynthia Sam¹ and Nicholas Freestone², Oxford University¹ Kingston University²

Research collaboration in pre- and post- 1992 universities

Previously, it has been shown that the undergraduate student experience is enhanced by collaborative teaching between institutions across the 1992 divide (Freestone et al., 2012). Postgraduate experiences during PhD programmes were hypothesised to be similarly enhanced following collaboration across institutions.

This study investigates the views of PhD students regarding collaboration between institutions. PhD students from a pre-1992 institution, the University of Oxford and from a post-1992 institution, Kingston University, were randomly chosen and semi-structured interviews, questionnaire responses and field notes were used to elicit views on the postgraduate research experience. The opinions with regard to attending two collaborating research institutions were positive and optimistic from both groups, however, the reasoning behind these views differed. Kingston University was perceived by its students to have a more relaxed attitude in terms of its research community and working ethos. Collaborative institutions were favoured greatly due to the more specialised and “professional” laboratories, however the time to travel between institutions was thought to be a problem

PhD students from the University of Oxford regarded collaboration between institutions as a means of networking within their research field, to be more exposed to other experts in their particular area of study. However, the disadvantage here seemed to be about intellectual property rights. Furthermore, the collaborative institutions, which were usually pre-1992 institutions, were held to be attractive to prospective employers and hence employment prospects might be enhanced.

Ian Scott, Oxford Brookes University

A case of the wrong KPIs

The use of key performance indicators (KPIs) as a means to measure achievements and improvements in the quality of a Higher Education Institutes provision has become common place in Higher Education Institutes. . Key performance indicators should be used to measure an organisations success with reference to its stated purpose. KPI like all objective measurements need to be both valid and reliable.

Gaither (1994) attributes the emergence of performance measures in HEIs to a crisis in confidence in the quality of Higher Education along with a general call from some sectors of society for more accountability from publicly funded bodies. How universities account for the resources that they spend should if possible reach to the heart of their raison d'être. If this is not the case, then any measure is likely to be superficial and derided by those subjected to it.

A good KPI, not only links to the heart of what the organisation wishes to achieve but is also strongly reflective of what the organisation does, that is, as far as possible it should reflect variables and actions inside the organisation rather than what happens outside the organisation.

In this workshop we will analyse some commonly used KPIs in UK HEIs and seek to evolve measures more reflective of universities' missions.

Alan Smeaton, Insight Centre for Data Analytics, Dublin City University

How much can we mine from a mouseclick? Data Analytics on VLE Access Data

A catchphrase of the modern era is that we live in a data-driven society, but what does that actually mean? It means that decisions made in so many parts of our society are not now driven by planning, or logic, or reasoning, but are driven by statistics and patterns derived from raw data. Insights into consumer behaviour, transport, healthcare, entertainment, sports, the stock market, and many more, all are shifting to a model of operation where data, information derived from sensors or from purchasing transactions or from the movement of people or from whatever source, are the drivers for decision-making. So what about data-driven education? Predictive data analytics is a form of data science where historical data from some activity can be used to predict future activity. In this presentation I describe work on-going at Dublin City University where we are mining past student engagement with a virtual learning environment, to predict behaviour and outcomes for current students. I will outline the kinds of insights that can be derived from just a single mouseclick and how that can be used as input into incentivised interaction with educational content, almost gamifying the interaction. Concrete examples of the work we are undertaking in Dublin will be used to illustrate the presentation which may just be taking us close to a form of data-driven education.

Marie Stowell, University of Worcester

Introducing a University Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey: lessons from Year 1

Following considerable discussion, the University of Worcester ran a student satisfaction and engagement survey in 2014. Based on the NSS, with additional questions related to institutional priorities, and including student engagement questions from the HEA pilot of NSSE, the survey achieved a 'respectable' 30% response rate, although at course level this varied from 0% to 80%+. Managing the introduction of an institutional survey proved challenging in a number of respects; results were 'revealing' and raised issues at all levels of the University.

This presentation considers the lessons learned, and in particular focuses on how the survey was used for quality enhancement purposes. Different perceptions of the purpose of the survey and its validity, how it interacted with institutional responsibilities and management cultures were all key to its impact in relation to 'enhancement'.

A short presentation will provide a basis for wider reflection and discussion of the issues involved in generating and using institutional survey data for the purposes of enhancing the student experience. The discussion will focus on identifying key principles for success.

Marie Stowell, Harvey Woolf, Marie Falahee, Wayne Turnbull, Student Assessment and Classification Working Group

Managing and Regulating reassessment for student success: the possibilities and limitations for evidence based policy

The Student Assessment and Classification Working Group's (SACWG) recent research on institutional assessment regulations related to the first year of Honours degree programmes revealed considerable variations in the requirements for passing modules, for retrieving initial failure, and for progressing to the second year of study. The analysis of different regulatory regimes led to the characterisation of institutional approaches to assessment regulation as more or less stringent. In exploring the impact of regulatory changes on student success rates, SACWG came to the conclusion that seemingly minor changes to institutional policy can sometimes have disproportionate and unintended impacts on student success.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the extent to which institutions develop coherent and principled arrangements for reassessment that align educational, academic and pragmatic concerns with evidence based decision making. The paper raises questions regarding the educational and academic rationales underpinning regulations related to 'passing' reassessment and progression, and the extent to which changes to regulations are prompted by evidence. A particular consideration is how the recently revised UK Quality Code might impact on regulatory policies at institutional level.

The session will provide opportunities for participants to reflect on policy and practice within their own institutions through structured discussion.

Deon H Tustin, University of South Africa

Telecommuting academics within an open distance education environment of South Africa: More content, productive and healthier?

Research on telecommuting practices within a higher-education environment is fairly sparse, especially within the higher distance education sphere. Drawing on existing literature on telecommuting and the outcome of a valuation study on the success of an experimental telecommuting programme at the largest distance education institution in South Africa, this paper will present discerning findings on telecommuting practices. In fact, the paper will build on evolutionary telecommuting assessment methods of the direct or indirect effect (work based) and affective impact (emotional) on multiple stakeholder groups. The paper will also reveal high levels of support for telecommuting practices that are associated with high levels of work productivity and satisfaction, lower levels of emotional and physical fatigue and reduced work stress, frustration and overload.

The paper will also reflect on higher student satisfaction with academic support from telecommuters. Overall, the paper will present insightful findings on telecommuting practices within an academic setting, which clearly signal a potential for a shift in the office culture of higher distance education institutions in the years to come. The paper will intend to make a contribution to a limited collection of empirical research on telecommuting practices within the higher distance education sector and will guide institutions in refining and/or redefining future telecommuting strategies or programmes.

Hendrik van der Sluis, Kingston University

Tag to track? Analytics to measure the impact of educational policies?

Analytics or the utilisation of user data to enhance education derives from business intelligence and has received considerable attention over the last few years (Cooper, 2012; Katz, 2005). In the context of institutional research it is argued that data can aid the decision making, implementation and analysis of policy and change (e.g. Saupe, 1990), and that new forms of online data collection makes the incorporation of educational data more accessible and analysable for this purpose (e.g. Campbell & Oblinger, 2007)

A London based HEI recently introduced two educational policies to enhance the student experience which had considerable implications for the use and uptake of technologies to support learning, teaching and assessment (LTA). Longitudinal user data from one of the core technologies the virtual learning environment (VLE) to support LTA has been collected, using customized page tagging and traditional methods, which allows a comparison before and after the introduction of the policies and to visualise its impact.

This presentation/paper will present some of the findings which indicate that the data collection methods used demonstrate the impact of both policies. The implications and various degrees in which this is visual will be explored in more detail together with a discussion on the findings.

Dion van Zyl, University of South Africa

Investigating the relationship between ICT Sophistication and student success in an ODL environment

Access to ICT is becoming an increasingly important link between student learning and student success in open distance learning. However, access to ICT only constitutes one dimension of a more complex and elaborative construct, namely that of ICT sophistication. This study investigates this construct and contemplates the contributing areas of big data and learning analytics.

As part of the study the literature was reviewed to identify possible dimensions of ICT sophistication. Furthermore, the relationship between ICT sophistication and student success was explored through the analysis of secondary data available from past student profile and ICT studies. This paper shares some of the insights gained from the literature review (i.e. the conceptual). From an empirical perspective the results and findings from the explorative data analysis as well as final modelling are presented. A stepwise process of construct measurement was followed, involving inspecting of variations, reliability analysis, factor analysis and index development. Elements of institutional and cultural challenges are argued and possible recommendations to overcome these are made.

Paul Waller, co-authors, Calli Mistry and Karen Whiting, Kingston University

Using 'Continuous Assessment' to Improve Student Engagement

'Continuous Assessment' has been employed in an attempt to address/improve student attendance and engagement, and consists of short weekly assessments of varying formats. As students are not informed of the summative or formative nature or format of assessments in advance, this provides them with an incentive to keep engaged with teaching and directed reading.

Preliminary analysis of final and second year marks indicates a significant improvement in pass rate from 79% to 92% and 62% to 76% respectively. Average second year marks were also improved from 43% to 50%.

We have recently moved to an academic framework with an emphasis on preparatory formative assessment; however our perception is that students do not engage fully with non-summative assessments, increasing the necessity of this type of approach.

In this workshop we will give a detailed description of the 'Continuous Assessment' programme, and a summary of our initial analysis of its impact, and then invite critical discussion on the following topics;

- What factors influence student attendance, and does attendance relate to engagement?
- Can students' engagement be influenced without 'incentives', or will they always be tactical learners?
- How can the impact of changes in teaching methods be measured and demonstrated to a wider audience?

Karen Webber, The University of Georgia, USA

Institutional Research, Planning and Quality Assurance in the World Around Us

Although our tasks may go by different terms - Institutional Research, Planning, or Quality Assurance – many of us dedicate our work lives to decision support in colleges and universities around the globe. In this panel session, presenters will discuss the roles, strategies for effective practice, and challenges ahead for institutional research. This discussion stems from an upcoming book on Global IR and Planning to be published by Routledge Press/Taylor & Francis in late 2014/early 2015. Panelists will be Karen Webber, Steve Woodfield, and Mantz Yorke,

This session will begin with an overview of the field of institutional research and the broad set of tasks and responsibilities that may be included. We will discuss:

- What is the status of IR in the UK/Ireland, the US, and other regions
- What are the challenges ahead for IR professionals
- How do we move more individuals toward Terenzini's third tier of intelligence.

We will develop a series of interaction questions that guide discussion with the audience.

Questions include:

- What is your role in IR?
- What is the breadth and scope of IR at your institution?
- What are the key challenges you face?

In this session we will facilitate a lively discussion with the audience to deeply consider the state of IR today, how to strengthen the current role within higher education institutions, and identify the ways to strengthen our individual roles in Institutional Research.

Karen Webber, The University of Georgia, USA

Student Loan Default in the US: What Contribution Do Institutional Characteristics Play?

College student debt and loan default are growing concerns. For each institution in the US, the federal government is now reporting a cohort default rate (CDR), the percent of students who defaulted on their loan, averaged over a three year period. Previous studies have amply shown that student characteristics are strongly associated with educational debt and one's ability to repay student loans; however few studies have deeply examined the relationship between institutional characteristics and student loan default. This study examined characteristics of 1,399 four-year not-for-profit US institutions, and found significant differences in the 2010 federal student loan cohort default rate by some important institutional variables, including admissions yield rate, HBCU status, institution control (private v. public), endowment, and percent of students receiving financial aid. These institution-wide factors are important as they may affect resource distributions that in turn affect student debt and student success. Findings related to institutional characteristics can illuminate our understanding of the student loan default puzzle and have implications for student success, academic policy, and resource allocation decisions. These issues will be discussed in this presentation.

Marion West, University of Wolverhampton

Supervising undergraduate dissertations in Humanities and Social Sciences

Students' needs for both autonomy and guidance should be balanced with tutors' expert perspectives and pedagogic interventions. But how can tutors best address the "inherent ambivalences" (Vehviläinen 2009) of the supervisory encounter? Svinhufvud and Vehviläinen (2013) urge more "recurrent agenda talk" so that the student is more in the driving seat.

Findings to date from my conversation analytic study in a post-1992 institution are that students display more uptake of advice if they have requested it. They are more likely to resist tutor-initiated advice. Tutors use various strategies to minimise resistance, wrapping it up as general informing ostensibly for other students and using accounts in various positions (Waring 2007). Advice is softened with mitigation including 'I think' and modal verbs like 'you could' and 'might', while directives and stronger modals like 'you need' are used when there is no leeway.

There is mileage in raising awareness of interactional resources, including linguistic choices, as has been found with training for medical communication (Heritage 2011). Implications for practice include flagging up common hurdles on the supervisory racetrack using anonymised data, discussing possible alternatives and encouraging lecturers to record and reflect on their own practice, with student permission.

James Williams, Birmingham City University

Modular Evaluation: Challenging the status quo?

This paper shares the results of a project that explored experiences and perceptions of modular feedback of staff and students within a university faculty. The aim of the project was to identify what methods work best for staff and students with a view to developing an approach to modular evaluation that is more reflective and engaging to both groups.

Across the sector, commentators have long noted the increasing use of questionnaire surveys for modular evaluation and called for better methods of collecting feedback on the classroom experience. There was concern in this faculty, too, that modular evaluation was little more than a box-ticking exercise.

This project was designed as a qualitative study as the most appropriate way of exploring experiences and perceptions of modular evaluation. The project used depth interviews with key informants and focus groups with students from the three schools within the Faculty.

The project found that there were many assumptions about modular evaluation. Staff and students had made an assumption that modular evaluation was conducted because it had to be, whereas the reality proved to be different. However, although institutional requirements were generally vague, different disciplines were also influenced by external requirements.

Mantz Yorke, Lancaster University

Is there a relationship between staffing profile and students' ratings of their programme?

This presentation examines data from post-92 institutions that run studio-based programmes in Art & Design, since the relatively low ratings given in the NSS to Art & Design provided the stimulus for this study. Studio-based programmes in Art & Design are mainly to be found in the post-92 institutions, and focusing the analysis on post-92 institutions ensured a broad commonality of institutional culture.

Part-time staffing levels (from data provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency) were set against ratings on ten NSS items where staffing profile might have an impact. Subjects included in the analysis were:

- Nursing
- Biology
- Computing
- Business Studies
- Media studies
- History
- Art & Design

Although the match of HESA staffing to NSS ratings is rough (it was the best that could be achieved from the data available), the analyses suggested that higher levels of part-time staffing were associated with lower ratings on the selected NSS items for Art & Design and Business Studies, but for other subjects this was not the case.

Elena Zaitseva, Martyn Stewart, Liverpool John Moores University

Back to the 'Basics': What module level evaluation can tell us about course, institution and Higher Education policies at national level

English universities saw the introduction of a sharp fee increase in 2012 and students paying the new £9k annual tuition fee are starting to progress their way through the system. Recent findings of a national UK Student Academic Experience survey by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI-HEA) revealed that students paying the higher fees report similar levels of overall satisfaction to pre £9k fee students, but dissatisfaction with the value for money that universities are providing. The survey also revealed that for students concerns lay in the immediate teaching experience, not in the improvement of resources or infrastructure that are typically prioritised by institutional leaders.

Meeting the challenge of perceptions of value for money of university education in the high fee regime is anticipated to become the leading challenge for universities in the coming years. A major source of student feedback currently for universities is the institutional satisfaction survey, typically the National Student Survey or similar local variants, which collects data at the level of the programme.

Based on institutional analysis of qualitative comments left in the Module Appraisal Survey (MAS) in 2013 and 2014, and triangulation of the findings with those of the course level evaluation outcomes collected via National Student Survey (NSS), this presentation will explore the 'information value' of the feedback that students give at the module level.

The interim findings demonstrate that MAS delivers much more than a feedback on a single module. Students provide varied contextual information on their individual learning styles and academic interests, their interaction with peers, course cohesiveness and their perception of the University and its mission. Impact of a particular module on the whole university experience and satisfaction with it was also seen.