

1.1 Good practice in setting up student partnerships should:

Carry out a baseline study to research current position

- » To what extent are there already student engagement initiatives across the institution?
- » To what extent are students and staff “ready and motivated” to work and learn in partnership?
- » To what extent are institutional practices, policies and processes “ready” for student partnerships?



Carry out a baseline study to research current position

- » Areas to research include:
 - › Policy and strategy
 - › Institutional processes and systems
 - › Infrastructure
 - › Support services
 - › LT&A practice, expertise
 - › Staff CPD (inc. digital literacy)
 - › MIS and infrastructure
 - › Communications, stakeholder needs, views and expectations
 - › Other institutional initiatives
 - › Student employability skills, graduate attributes and digital literacy
- » Use base-lining to inform planning at project and institutional levels
- » Develop a set of impact indicators and measures of success to allow change and impact to be evaluated and measured
- » Use both qualitative and quantitative approaches
- » Use research/evaluation data from a range of sources e.g. student surveys, data from research projects
- » As well as established research techniques (e.g. focus groups, surveys), use multi-media/technology-based approaches e.g. process maps, rich pictures, video interviews, social media
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1.2 Good practice in setting up student partnerships should:

Establish the case for student partnerships and align with strategies and policies

- » Is there a clearly identified rationale and case for student partnerships?
- » Which institutional policies and initiatives will student partnerships benefit?
- » Will student partnerships support employability skills and graduate attributes?



Establish the case for student partnerships and align with strategies and policies

- » Identify drivers and needs for students, staff, the institution and others stakeholders such as employers
- » Identify potential benefits and impact for students, staff, employers and the institution
- » Map the potential benefits and impact to institutional strategies and policies (e.g. relating to student experience, employability, career planning, LT&A enhancement)
- » Don't be afraid to "think big", though ensure there is buy-in to a clear vision
- » Engage stakeholders from across the institution in establishing the case for student partnerships
- » Engage employers and professional and sector bodies in establishing the case for student partnerships
- » Where possible, try to keep partnership voluntary and focus on recognition and rewards (e.g. enhanced employability and potential accreditation)
- » Establish cross-institutional approaches to working collaboratively
- » Ensure issues and opportunities identified in base-lining are considered
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1.3 Good practice in setting up student partnerships should:

Establish motivation, reward and recognition options for students and staff

- » To what extent have the pros and cons of different ways of motivating and rewarding students and staff been considered?
- » To what extent should recognition for student partnership work support students in gaining employment and in developing their employability skills?
- » To what extent should a student partnership initiative align with the work of other institutional departments which focus on e.g. employability, careers



Establish motivation, reward and recognition options for students and staff

- » Identify incentives for students, such as:
 - › Remuneration
 - › Improving job prospects
 - › Developing personal, academic and professional skills
 - › Working with employers
 - › Academic and professional accreditation and recognition

- » Consider the pros and cons of alternative ways of engaging students e.g.
 - › Paid interns
 - › Casual employees of the institution
 - › Unpaid volunteers
 - › Participants on an accredited module of study
 - › Participants on a co-curricular programme which contributes to e.g. a graduate award, e-portfolio or HEAR record of achievement
 - › Participants engaged in research projects as part of scholarly culture

- » Work with partners to establish recognition pathways for students e.g. professional institutions, HE/FE sector bodies and aim to build on established accreditation frameworks

- » Work with institutional employability and careers departments to join-up approaches and initiatives

- » Ensure there is mutual benefit for both staff and students

- » Provide multiple opportunities to allow students to showcase their achievements, including with external audiences such as employers and professional bodies

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1.4 Good practice in setting up student partnerships should:

Devise novel recruitment and induction approaches for students (1)

- » Have the skills and attributes for students been defined?
- » Are traditional recruitment processes suitable for identifying students with the appropriate skills and attributes?
- » To what extent have suitable guidance and induction resources been developed to help students decide whether they want to engage in partnership work?



Devise novel recruitment and induction approaches for students (1)

- » Define the skills and attributes of students that are wanted e.g.
 - › A diverse skill set
 - › A high degree of intrinsic motivation
 - › The ability to work autonomously and communicate with a broad range of stakeholders
 - › Ability to work as a dynamic member of a research team and across disciplines and academic years

- » Set-up and facilitate an online social media forum to support student recruitment and networking

- » Design recruitment processes to allow students to demonstrate their strengths, attributes and abilities e.g.
 - › Effective working in diverse groups
 - › Motivation to work on a project
 - › Ability to research and present new ideas in a clear way using a variety of digital tools

- › Ability to show initiative, creativity and working in a range of situations

- » Develop contract and compliance documents covering e.g. data protection, H&S, privacy, ethics, copyright, IPR etc.

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1.4 Good practice in setting up student partnerships should:

Devise novel recruitment and induction approaches for students (2)

- » Have the skills and attributes for students been defined?
- » Are traditional recruitment processes suitable for identifying students with the appropriate skills and attributes?
- » To what extent have suitable guidance and induction resources been developed to help students decide whether they want to engage in partnership work?



Devise novel recruitment and induction approaches for students (2)

- » Develop clear briefing guides and resources to explicitly describe the why, what, how, when, where, who of the project covering e.g.
 - › Needs and benefits
 - › Remuneration
 - › Activities
 - › Roles and boundaries
 - › What can be expected from others such as staff
 - › Reward and recognition
 - › Making use of digital tools

- » Develop and run briefing sessions for students, building on the briefing guides and resources

- » Instead of traditional recruitment techniques consider techniques such as:
 - › Asking students to prepare some artefact for a defined purpose (e.g. a video, web-resource)
 - › Participate in workshops where they have to engage with teams to carry out a range of activities (using digital tools)

- » Consider branding student-led initiatives (e.g. the University of Greenwich Interdisciplinary Research Group - IRG)

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1.5 Good practice in setting up student partnerships should:

Identify a partnership model that encompasses options for different student roles together with a range of stakeholders (1)

- » Have a range of different student roles been considered?
- » Have a broad range of opportunities for student partnerships been identified?
- » To what extent will student partnerships align with employability agendas and initiatives?



Identify a partnership model that encompasses options for different student roles together with a range of stakeholders (1)

- » Identify at what level to set-up partnerships e.g. institutional, faculty, disciplinary, cross-disciplinary
- » Identify who should be involved e.g.
 - › Academics
 - › Professional support staff
 - › Students
 - › Alumni
 - › Prospective students
 - › Employers,
 - › Local community
 - › Employer/sector/professional bodies
 - › External experts
 - › Mentors and assessors
- » Review the various models of student partnerships that different institutions have adopted and develop an appropriate model for the institutional and/or local contexts – which may be phased
- » Integrate with employability agendas and activities
- » Develop an academic lead/champion at each local level
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1.5 Good practice in setting up student partnerships should:

Identify a partnership model that encompasses options for different student roles together with a range of stakeholders (2)

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- » To what extent will student partnerships align with employability agendas and initiatives?



Identify a partnership model that encompasses options for different student roles together with a range of stakeholders (2)

- » Identify a broad range of opportunities for student partnerships in educational innovation and change to focus on e.g.
 - › Curriculum design and delivery
 - › Assessment and feedback
 - › Digital literacies
 - › Library and information services
 - › Student experience, support and guidance
 - › Digital resources
 - › Staff development
 - › Learning resources
 - › Student records, administration, management and information systems
 - › Institutional processes e.g. QA, induction
 - › Institutional policies
- » Based on the defined partnership model, develop options for different student roles e.g.
 - › Student as researcher
 - › Student as resource creator
 - › Student as expert
 - › Student as mentor
 - › Student as change agent student as trainer (staff and peer trainer)
 - › Student as evaluator
 - › Student advisor
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1.6 Good practice in setting up student partnerships should:

Identify an outline project plan including resources and funding

- » To what extent has the development of a project plan been a collaborative exercise?
- » Have measures/indicators of impact been identified?
- » Are there appropriate governance measures in place?



Identify an outline project plan including resources and funding

- » Develop an outline project plan for setting up and implementing student partnerships
- » Use the practice points from this guide as a check-list for the project plan
- » Adopt an agile and flexible approach to project planning – in order to allow the project to adapt to problems, emerging opportunities and changing contexts
- » Ensure that the project plan has clear overall aims and objectives as well as defining outputs and outcomes – particularly potential impact on institutions, sector and individuals
- » Aim to develop indicators of impact, though this might need to wait post-baselining
- » Ensure representatives of all key stakeholder groups help to develop the plan
- » Place considerable focus on stakeholder communications and engagement – both formal and informal - and using social media to underpin this
- » Develop appropriate governance structures including the formation of a steering group that represents a broad cross-section of roles and interests (including external representatives)
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1.7 Good practice in setting up student partnerships should:

Identify and learn from exemplars and case studies of student partnerships

- » To what extent have experiences and lessons learnt from other student partnership initiatives been researched and contextualised?
- » To what extent have these experiences and lessons learnt been shared with all stakeholders?



Identify and learn from exemplars and case studies of student partnerships

- » There has been a considerable number of student partnership and engagement projects undertaken by institutions and much can be learnt from their experiences, therefore it is worthwhile taking the time to learn from these to supplement this guide
- » Identify likely issues and challenges and how other institutions and projects have addressed and managed them
- » Look for partnerships in your own institution - these are not always actively promoted
- » Use the lessons learnt to inform the development of your “principles of good practice” in student partnerships
- » Ensure you share the lessons learnt from the exemplars/ case studies with all those involved with setting up and implementing student partnerships - and facilitate dialogue on how such lessons can be adapted to you own needs and contexts
- » Maintain a shared online resource of links to exemplars and case studies
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