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Growing a whole institution culture of commitment to student engagement

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Overview

Five themes of our institutional approach to developing student engagement.

Five challenges faced when scaling up and moving towards a culture.



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Your engagement

- Please make use of the chat. We'll pause to summarise and respond.
- Time at the end for Q&A.
- I will also ask you questions.

Is this your first Jisc webinar?

A/1 – yes | **B/2 – no** | **C/3 – where am I?**

Part One

Lincoln's Approach



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Key features of our approach

Moving towards...

'Working in partnership with students to improve the quality of what we do'

Through...

Institution-wide change: a long-term strategic approach to empowering staff to engage students

Meaning...

Every area contributing: a **culture** of student engagement

Building on...

Our context: Student as Producer – research engaged teaching for undergraduates



Culture

'the pattern of shared basic assumptions'

Schein's definition of organisational culture (2004, p17)

while universities may be porous organisations that are impacted upon by the environment they reside in, they are known to retain a great deal of their own organisational identity and culture

(Lacatus, 2013; Kleijnen et al, 2014)

Kleijnen, J., Dolmans, D., Willems, J. and van Hout, H. (2014) Effective quality management requires a systematic approach and a flexible organisational culture: a qualitative study among academic staff. in *Quality in Higher Education*. 20(1). p.103-126

Lacatus, M. (2013) Organizational culture in contemporary university. in *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 76 (2013) p.421-425.

Schein, E. (2004). 3rd Eds. *Organisational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



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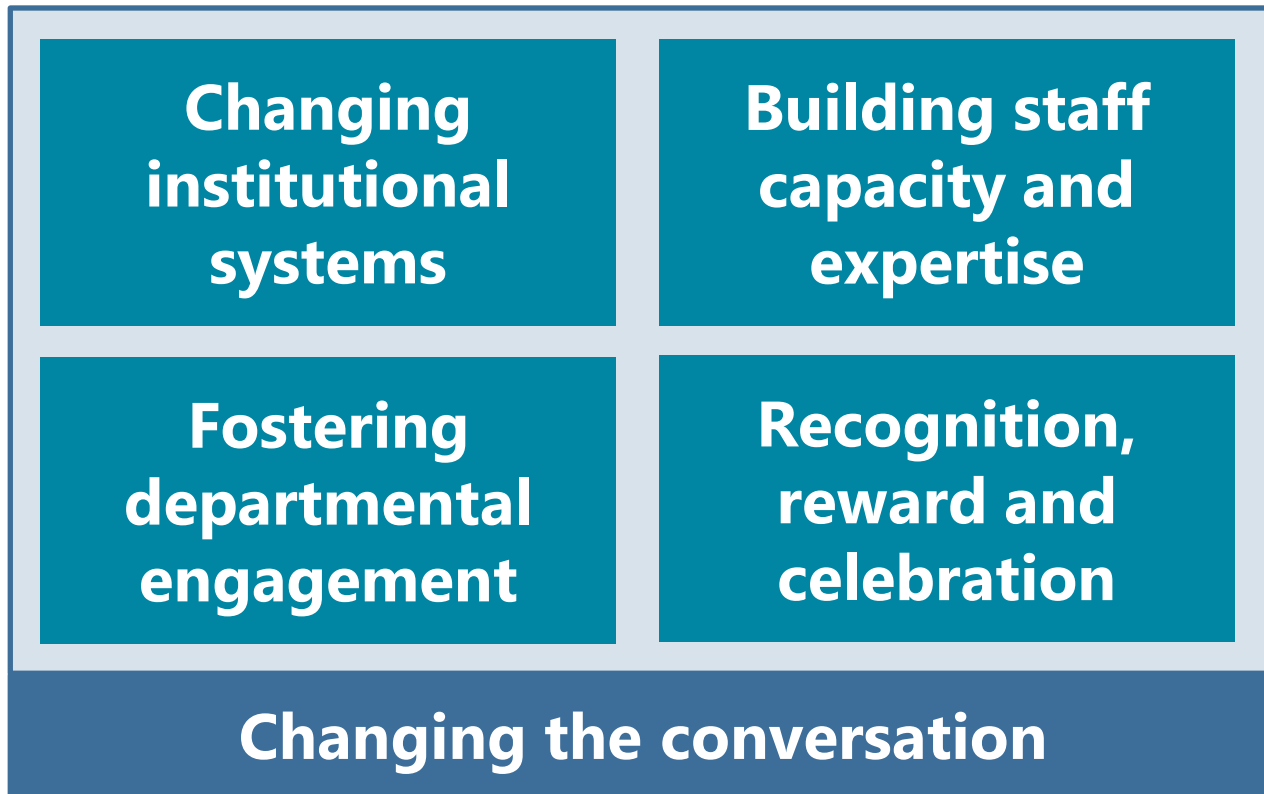
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Five themes



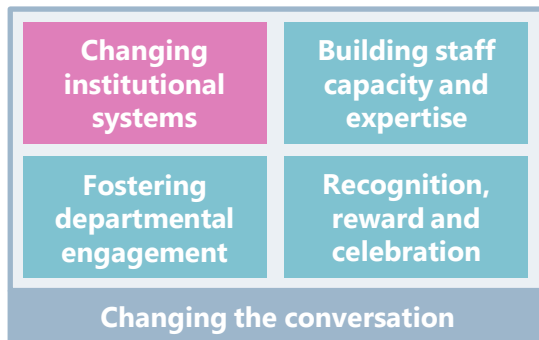
Changing institutional systems

Outcomes:

- Creating examples and quick wins for others to learn from
- Naturally exposing staff to meaningful engagement
- Embedding sustainable engagement

Examples:

- Staff recruitment
- Validation & Periodic Review
- Survey action planning
- Co-chairing committees
- Subject Committees



Changing institutional systems

Poll of webinar participants

How does your organisation take students' views into account when recruiting new teaching staff?

1/a – Not at all

2/b – Some candidates meet students

3/c – There's a student on the interview panel

4/d – They teach a mock session with students

5/e – In other ways



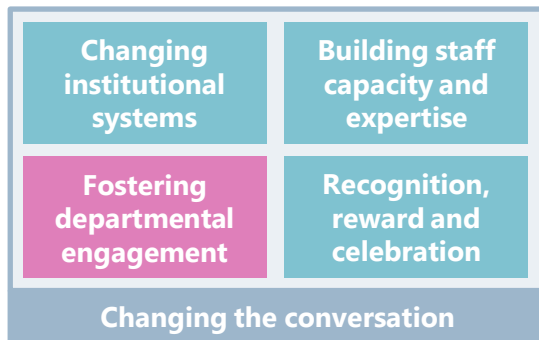
Fostering departmental engagement

Outcomes:

- Each and every part of the University working in partnership
- Establishing staff leadership
- Bottom-up innovation targeting genuine local needs

Examples:

- Student-led re-design of assessment feedback pro-forma
- Co-designed new module in youth justice & BA Drama level 1
- Library development informed by a Student Advisory Board



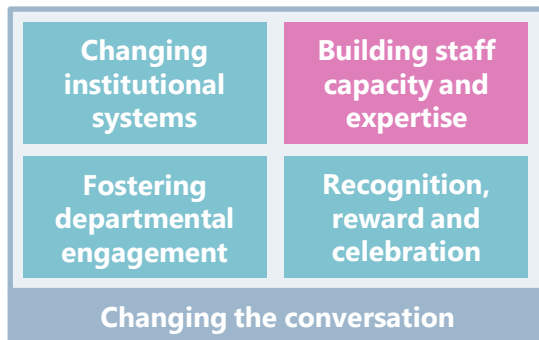
Building staff capacity and expertise

Outcomes:

- A network of change leaders embedded across the University
- Increased capacity for sharing knowledge and collaboration

Examples:

- Regular Champion gatherings
- Peer support between staff
- High profile events to share practice with staff body
- Presenting at external conferences (HEA, RAISE, Sparqs)





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Reward, recognition and celebration

Outcomes:

- Developing student engagement is a credible use of time
- Student engagement is a positive agenda

Examples:

- Academic workload & promotion
- SU annual awards
- Case studies
- Events (DVC drinks reception)
- Personal encouragement



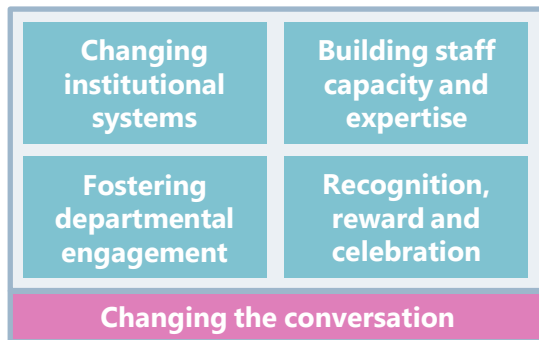
Changing the conversation

Outcomes:

- Moving away from just 'gripes'
- Solutions focussed engagement
- Legitimising students discussing pedagogy and strategy

Examples:

- Subject Committees becoming thematic, forward-looking
- Student Reps co-owning survey action plans
- Students Consulting on Teaching
- VC's Student Reps Reception





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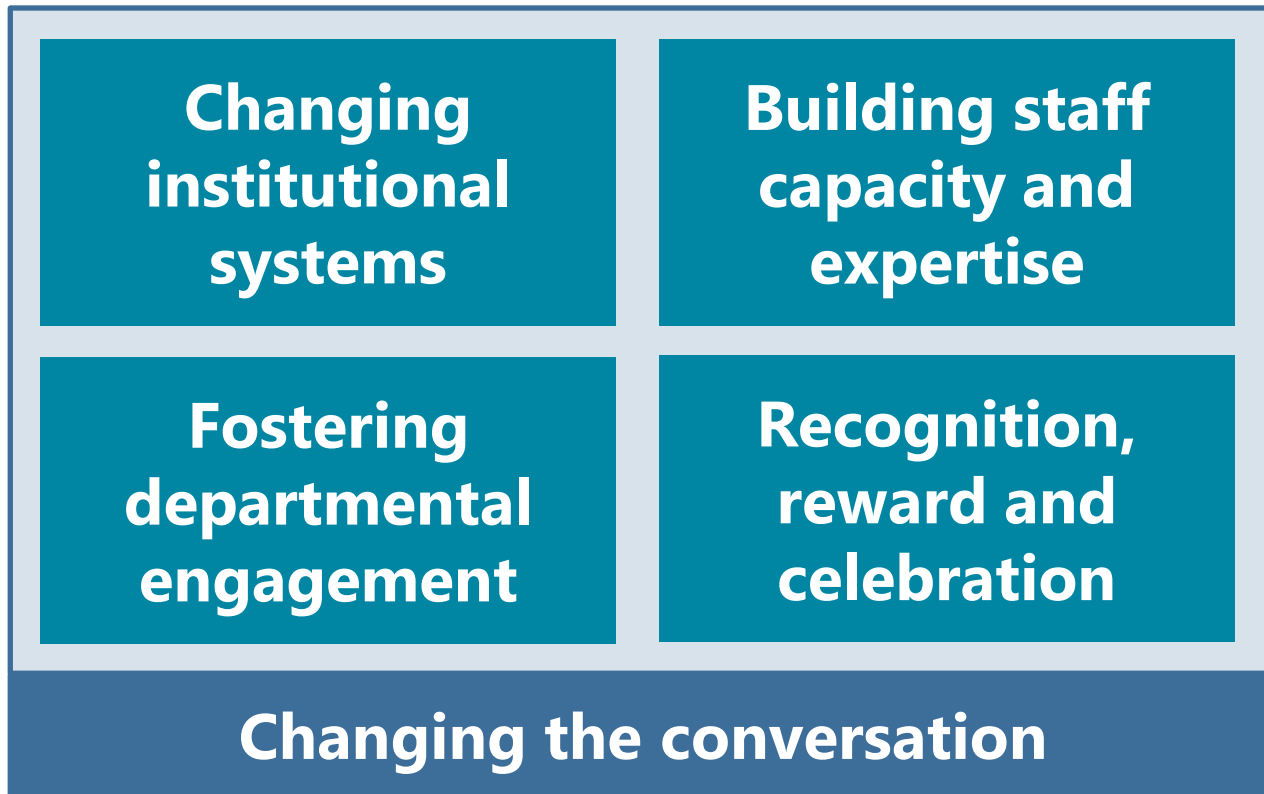
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Five themes



Summing up: where this took us

- Staff around the university have dedicated time to develop student engagement
- It's usual for students to be actively involved in enhancement projects and high-level discussions. It's not unusual for students to take the lead.
- We have a substantial bank of good practice that informs our development.
- New staff are immersed during their recruitment and in their induction.



Discussion

How are you scaling up?



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Part Two

Challenges of Scaling Up

Five Challenges

- Increasing 'take-up' by students
- Student confidence and expectations
- Losing staff momentum
- Limiting the boundaries of engagement
- Focus on priority themes for quality enhancement without losing innovation



Increasing 'take-up' by students

THE CHALLENGE

We focused our efforts on supporting staff to create opportunities for greater numbers of students and now need to get those greater numbers interested.

OUR RESPONSE

Enhancing our personal tutoring and peer support provision to proactively encourage students to 'get involved' early on.

Classifying opportunities for engagement to think about progression routes. Which are good for new students and which will stretch an already engaged student.



Student confidence & expectations

THE CHALLENGE

Our research¹ shows students lack confidence to engage in roles outside of their existing constructs of their role (their expectations).

OUR RESPONSE

We have always implicitly sought to develop student confidence but are looking again at student transitions and the first year experience.

Our students' expectations are set before they reach us, so we are considering how we adjust those with our Marketing team.

¹ Crawford, Karin and Horsley, Reece and Haggard, Andy and Derricott, Dan (2015) *Pedagogies of partnership: what works*. Project Report. The Higher Education Academy. <http://edu.lincoln.ac.uk/pedagogies-of-partnership/>

Losing staff momentum

THE CHALLENGE

3 years in – the novelty has worn off.

Motivation knocked when students don't take up opportunities.

Champions seen as the ones who do SE, others 'need not bother'.

OUR RESPONSE

Refreshing & renewing commitment in our new strategic plan.

Increased focus for new College Directors of Education – provides more hands on support.

We've grown from 6 to 46 Champions and need to stop supporting them as a homogeneous group, but rather tailor what we do.



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Limiting the boundaries

THE CHALLENGE

When staff 'create opportunities' they are automatically defining the boundaries of what students can engage in. This reminds us of the implicit power dynamics preventing partnership.

OUR RESPONSE

Supporting students and staff to collaboratively develop how students engage.

Student Recruiters

- Building on interviews
- Assessing teaching quality in recruitment
- Student-led development of the process and pilots

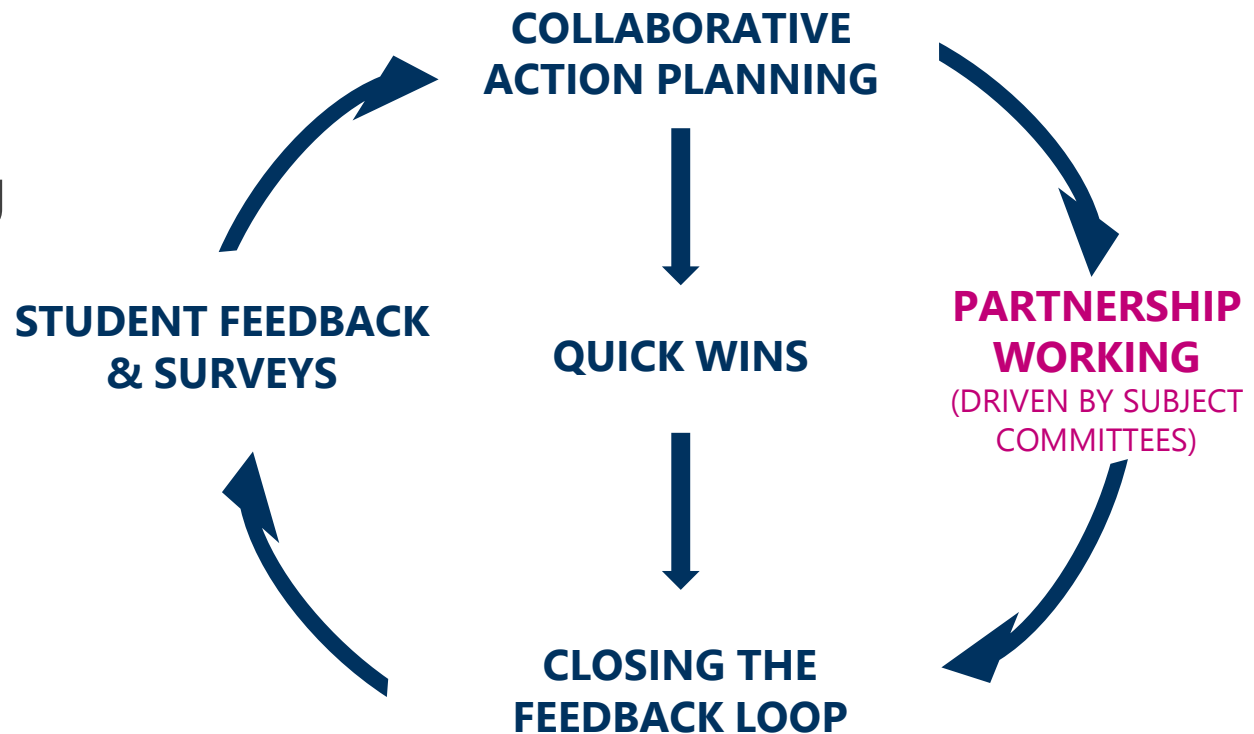


Focus on priority themes for quality enhancement without losing innovation

THE CHALLENGE

So far, the focus of departmental partnership working has not necessarily been on priority areas (e.g. those flagged in student feedback)

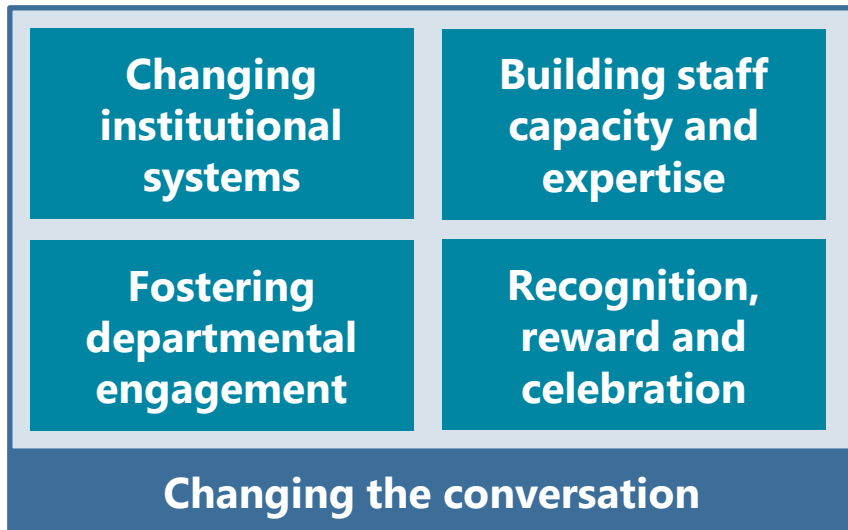
OUR RESPONSE



In summary

Our approach to scaling up and embedding a culture

Five themes



→ Five challenges

Increasing 'take-up' by students

Student confidence and expectations

→ Losing staff momentum

Limiting the boundaries of engagement

→ Focusing on priority themes for quality enhancement without losing innovation



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Find out more



Jisc Change Agents Network Staff and Student Meet Up

Thursday 2nd June 2016

University of Lincoln

+ networking & social event the evening before
£50 for staff | students go free *(2 per one paying member of staff)*

Registration now open at can.jiscinvolve.org



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