

Educational Developers Thinking Allowed Speakeasy 1: Students as Partners

Thursday 19th November 2020

Simon Varwell, Senior Development Consultant
sparqs (Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland)



@sparqs_Simon @sparqs_Scotland

Questions we'll explore



- Why bother with partnership?
- Are we equipped for partnership?
- What can we do to build partnership?



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Who is sparqs?



- **S**tudent **P**artnerships in **Q**uality **S**cotland.
- Scotland's national agency for student engagement.
- Funded by Scotland's strategic and funding body for further and higher education.
- Works with all Scotland's universities and colleges, and their students' associations.
- Provides consultancy internationally.



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Our vision is that:



**Students are partners
in shaping the quality of learning,
making positive change
to their own and others' experience,
however and wherever they learn.**



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Who am I?



- Lead sparqs' institutional support and staff development.
- 13 years with sparqs (previous work in two universities and a student officer sabbatical role).
- Studying MA in Student Engagement in HE at the University of Winchester.
- Homeworker in Inverness (even when not in lockdown!)



Simon Varwell
@sparqs_Simon

Off south for a packed day: I'm visiting @PerthCollegeUHI this morning to talk to their Student Engagement Group, then I'm off to @FVCollege's Falkirk campus to present at a @ColDevNet college board member induction session.



7:51 AM · Mar 4, 2020 · Twitter for Android



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Why bother with partnership?



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UK Quality Code for Higher Education



“Partnership working recognises that all members in the partnership have legitimate, but different, perceptions and experiences... Partnerships reflect a mature relationship based on mutual respect between students and staff.”

(UKSCQA, 2018:2)

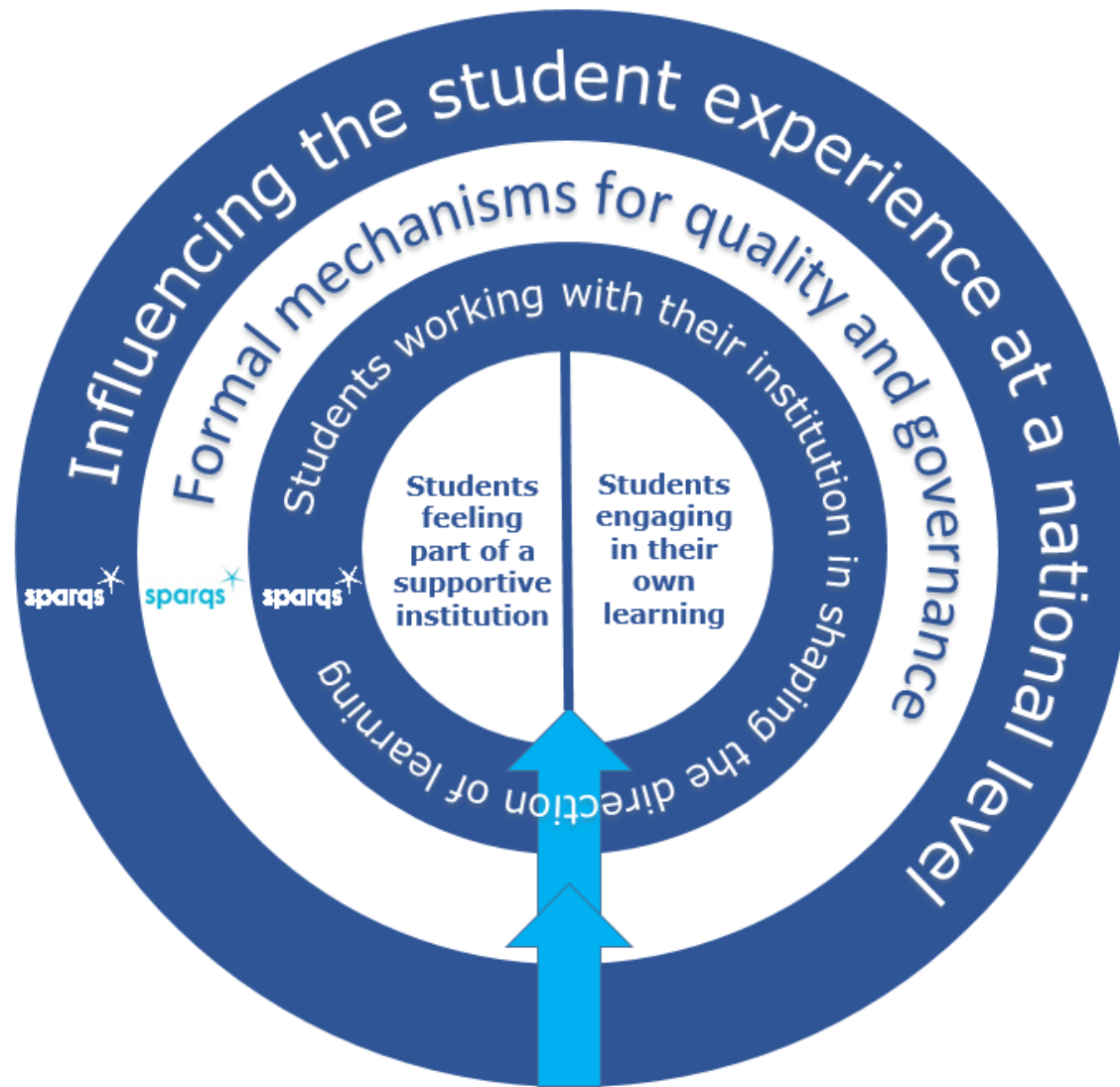


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Focus on enhancement and change

Appropriate resources and support

Responding to diversity



Valuing the student contribution

A culture of engagement

Students as partners

Student Engagement Framework for Scotland



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“Partnership as a process of engagement uniquely foregrounds qualities that put **reciprocal learning** at the heart of the relationship, such as trust, risk, interdependence and agency.”

(Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2014)



“**partnership can create liminal spaces...** for **mutual empowerment among co-learners** with different but equally valuable expertise to bring to higher education.”

(Dollinger and Mercer-Mapstone, 2019:79)



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'...partnership... stands in contrast to the student-as-consumer model... It also **departs from the traditional "sage on the stage"** model of teaching.'

(Cook-Sather et al, 2014:6-7)



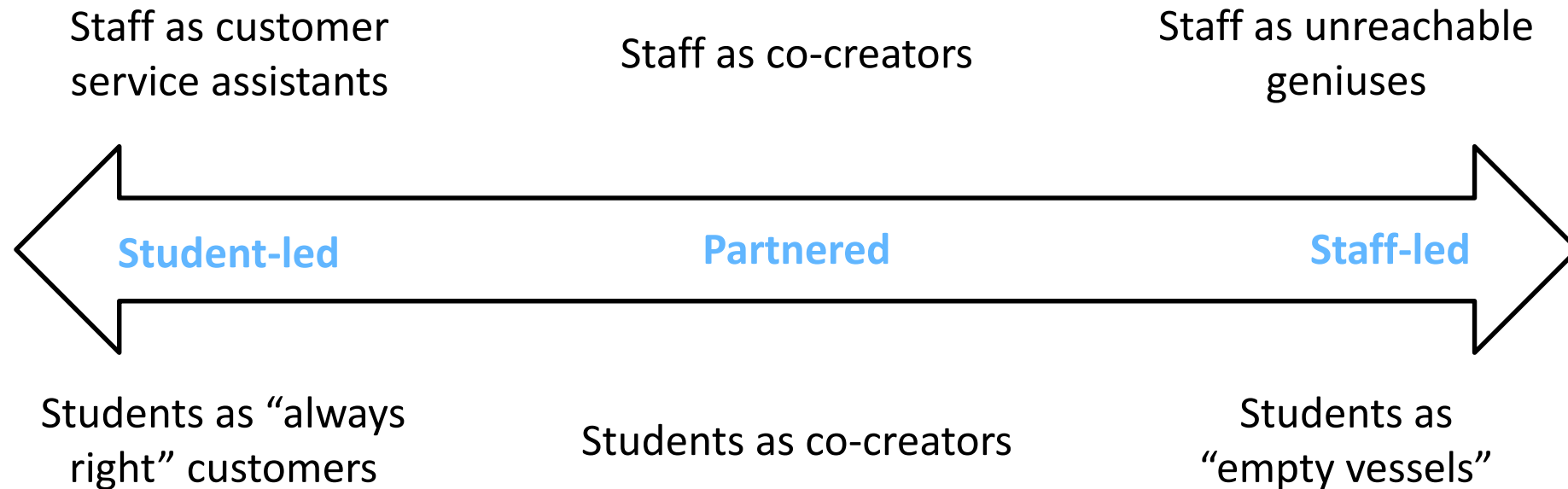
"...everyone is a learner. This does however **not diminish the importance of the teacher's expertise** in their subject area, but holds the learner expertise of the student as equally important."

(Kettis, 2019)



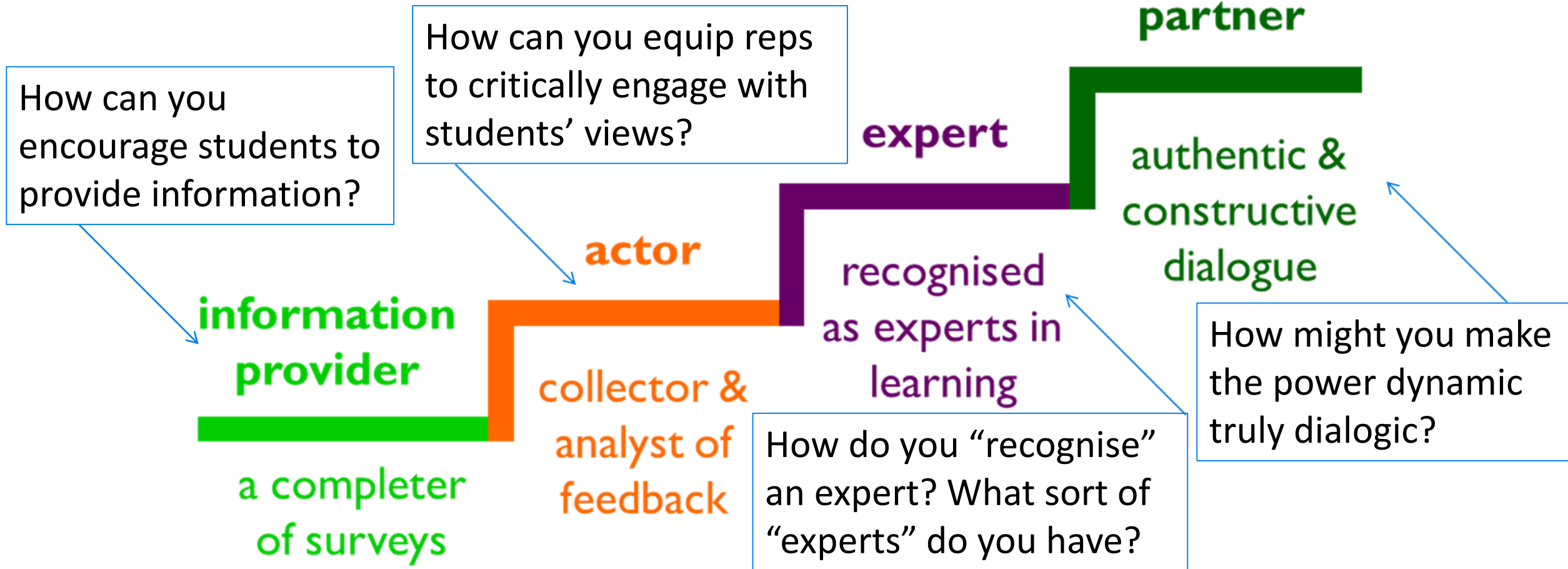
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Partnership: a balance



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Reflect on student roles in re-shaping learning experiences



What is the value of that “authentic and constructive dialogue” to...?



Students	Staff	Educational developers



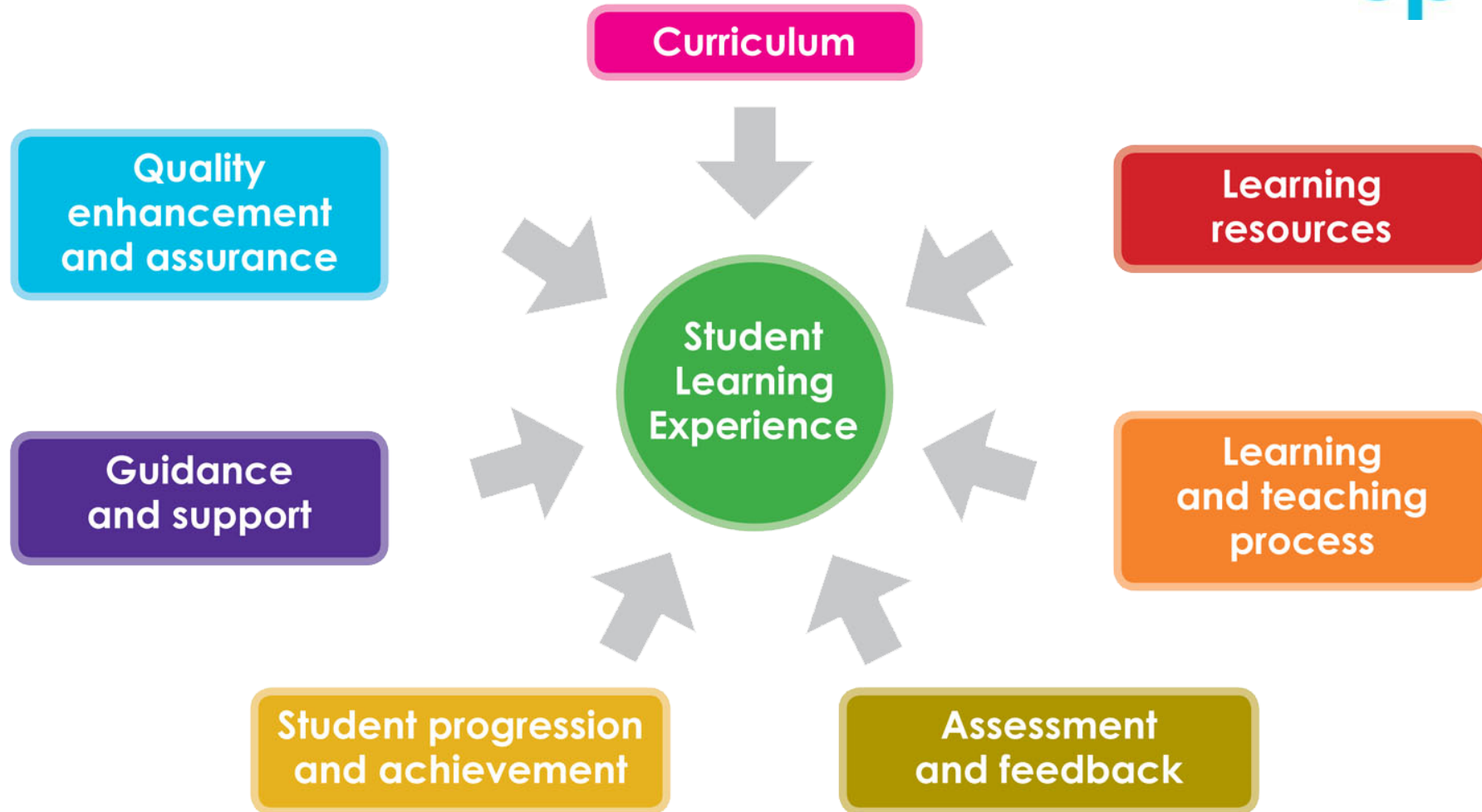
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Are we equipped for partnership?



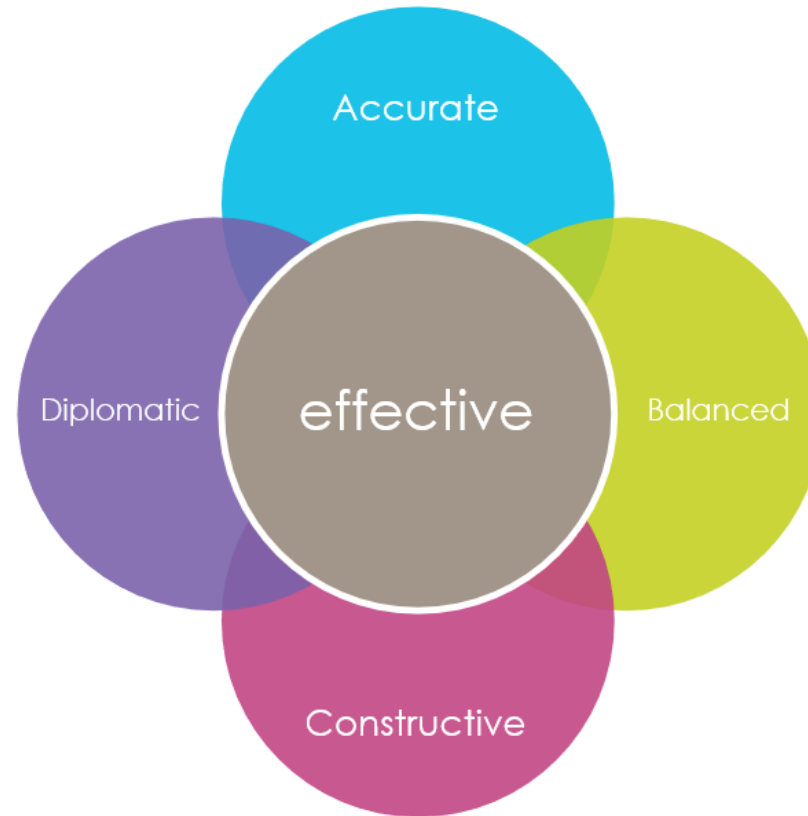
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The Student Learning Experience



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The A,B,C,D of Effective Feedback



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“partnership working with universities is more important than ever”
(Alcock and Ball, 2020)



“The importance of **capacity building and exploration around concepts and practices of student engagement are vital in the time ahead**, however difficult this will be in an environment of transition and disruption. The new narrative of co-creation is one that staff and students across Irish higher education must nurture, **if an inclusive and democratic learning community is to be realised.**”
(Hassan et al/NStEP, 2020)



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Pandemic resources from sparqs



COVID-19 Information Hub

sparqs

sparqs' COVID-19 information hub

Search this site

Menu:

- sparqs' comms
- sparqs' events
- sector resources
- sector briefings and websites

For ease of access, view the [most-recently added information](#) to the hub.

The student voice in quality has never been more important given the current transformation of the learning experience as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. One of our initial priorities is to support current representatives to understand the importance of their role at this time and to help them to carry it out effectively. Through this, we will identify areas where students need to influence institutional and national educational policy decisions and support them to do so, laying the foundations for work in the coming academic year.

The hub will be updated regularly as the COVID-19 situation progresses, and as we receive new resources and information from sector colleagues.

Keep in touch!
To keep up to date with our work, follow us on Twitter at [@sparqs_Scotland](#) and make sure you're on our mailing list...

A STUDENT ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SCOTLAND

Events

Resource Library

Publications

News Articles

Twitter

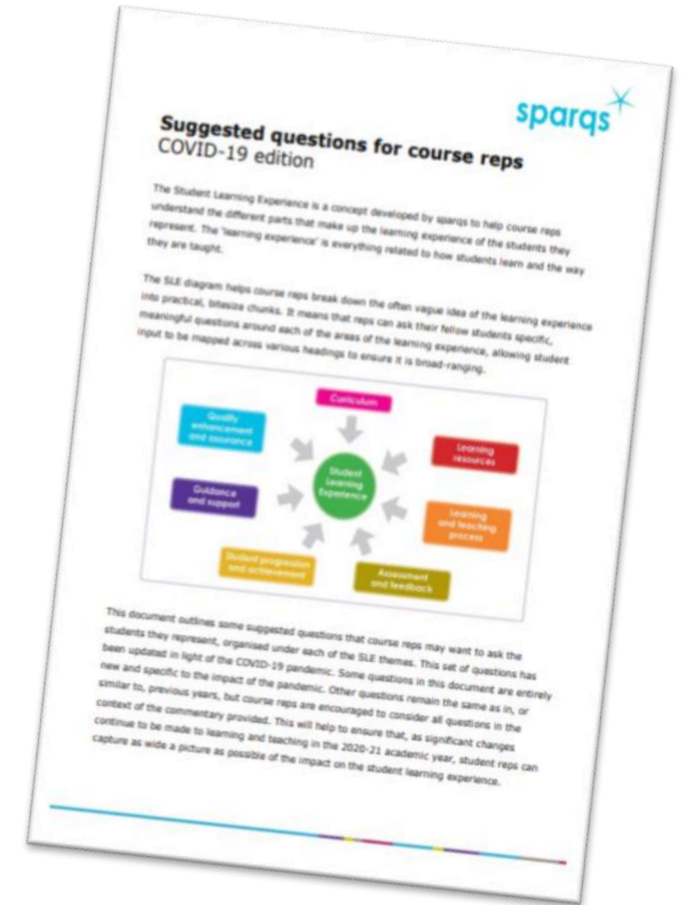


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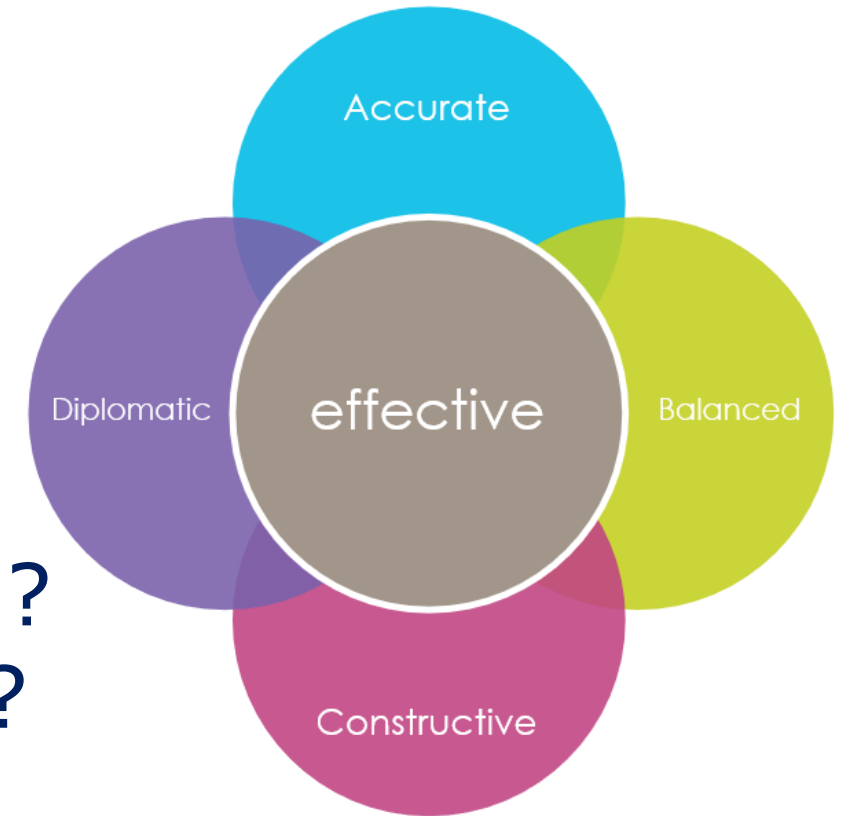
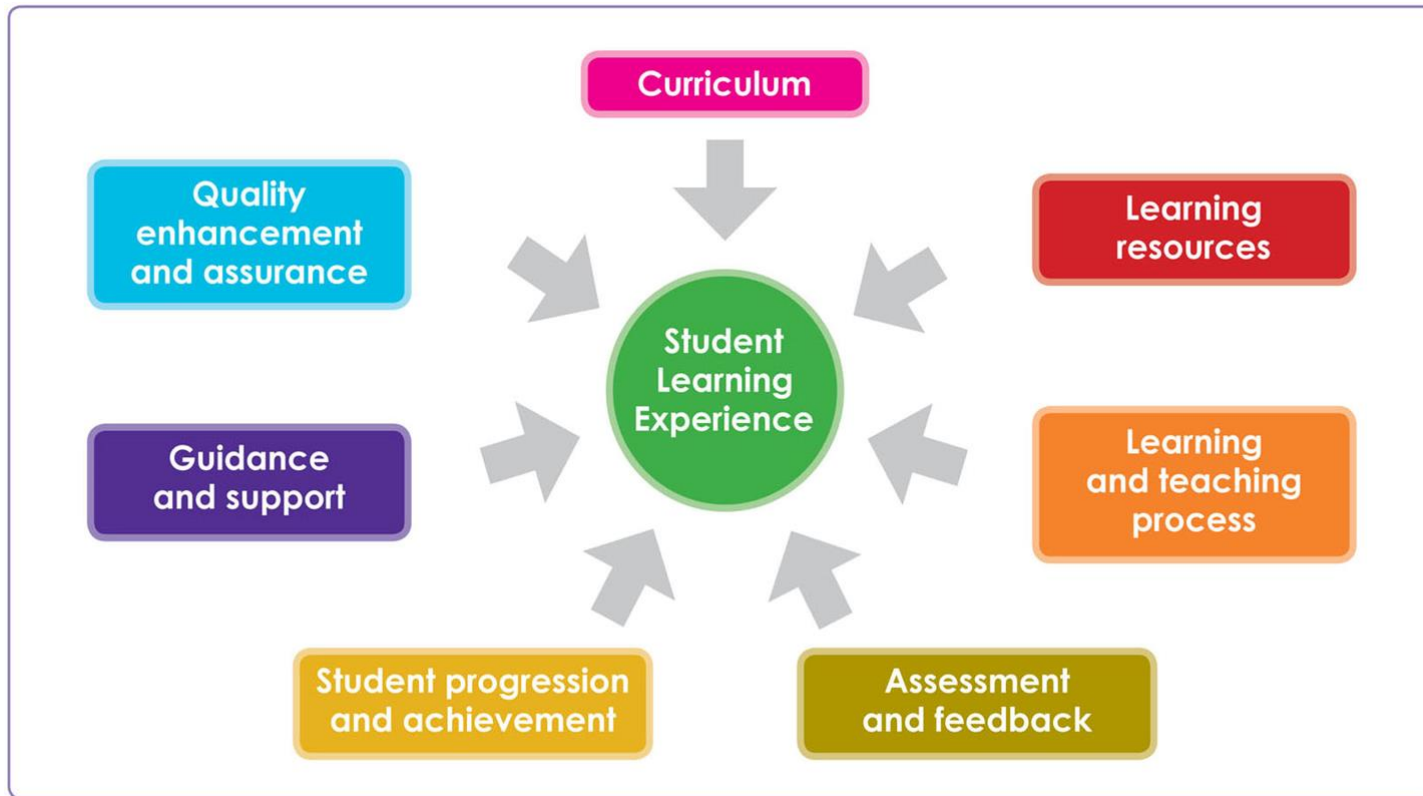
The Student Learning Experience: pandemic edition



- Questions under each SLE heading.
- At the core of 2020's course rep training.
- A tool for staff development:
 - How to generate meaningful conversations.
 - How to shape committees, forums, focus groups, surveys and more...
 - How to benchmark and enhance.



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How is partnership during COVID-19?
 Which conversations are you having?
 Are students being “ABCD”?

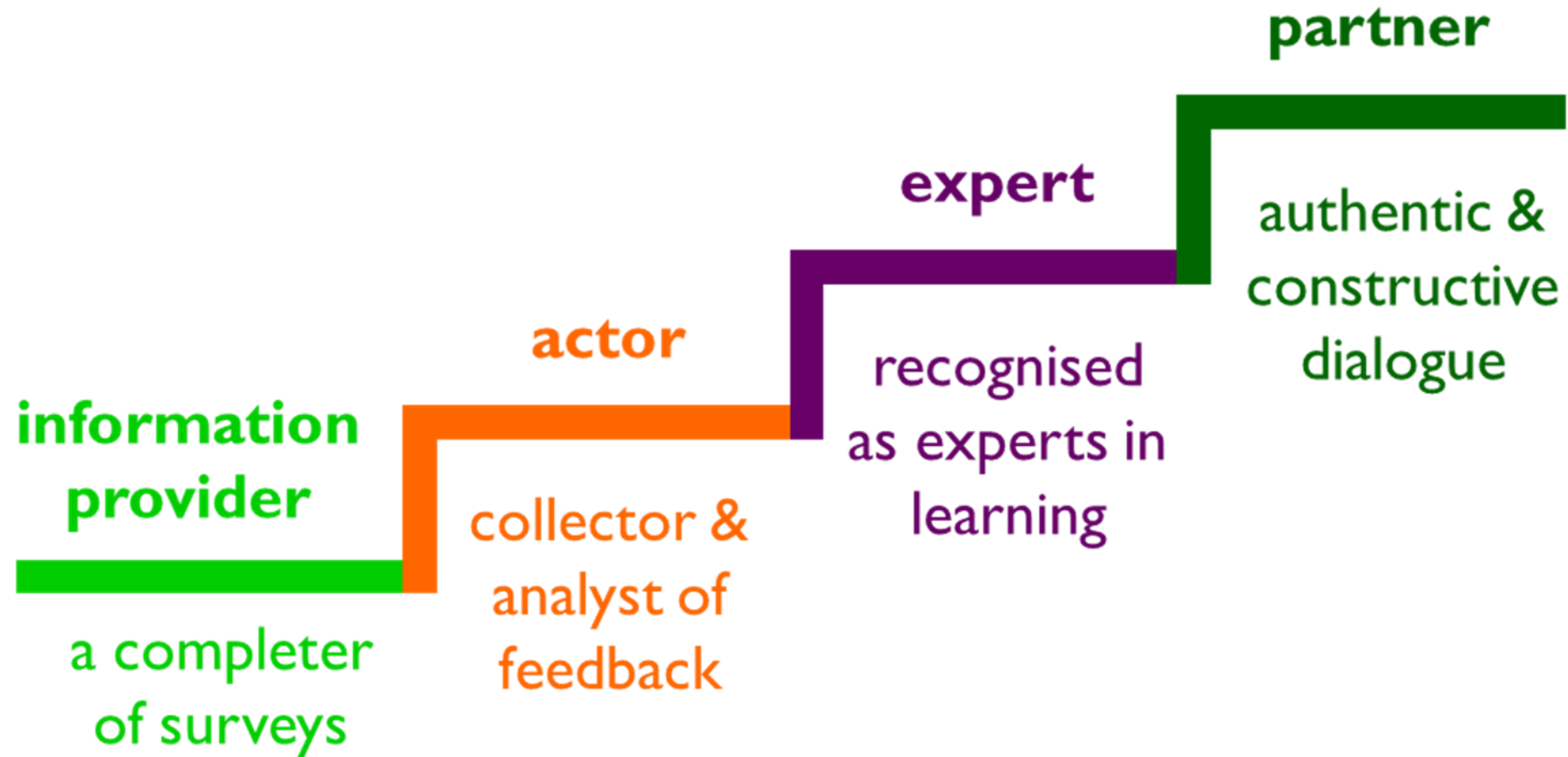


What can we do to build partnership?



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Reflect on student roles in re-shaping learning experiences



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A creative group task...



1. What actions have you identified from today?

- For your own practice or to support others.
- Maybe a big undertaking, or quick like just check out a resource!

2. See the questions under the staircase, for inspiration:

<https://edta.info.yorku.ca/students-as-partners/>

3. Design a poster in groups, to share your actions:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1AiP79KAA53Ub8T-fGMJgl9LgI0vhCl6YqCGHINbET_g/edit?usp=sharing

4. Share your poster and talk to it for a minute!



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Resources on the sparqs website



- sparqs' Student Partnership Staircase.
<https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=254>
- sparqs' Student Learning Experience.
<https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=205>
- Student Learning Experience: COVID-19 edition
[http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/upfiles/COVID Course Rep Questions and Commentary.pdf](http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/upfiles/COVID%20Course%20Rep%20Questions%20and%20Commentary.pdf)
- sparqs' ABCD of Effective Feedback.
<https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=260>
- sparqs' COVID-19 hub.
<https://tinyurl.com/sparqs-COVID-19-hub>
- Student Engagement Framework for Scotland.
<https://www.sparqs.ac.uk/upfiles/SEFScotland.pdf>



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- Kettis, Å. (2019), Students as partners in Swedish higher education: A driver for quality. In Tanaka, M. (ed.) (2019) *Student engagement and Quality Assurance in Higher Education: International Collaborations for the Enhancement of Learning*. Oxford: Routledge, 9-23.
- UK Quality Code: Student Engagement chapter. <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/student-engagement>



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And finally...



“Partnership is not simply an individual practice but an ethos: a dialogic and values-based approach to learning and teaching that has the potential to be transformative, developmental and fun.”

(Gravett et al, 2019)

simon.varwell@sparqs.ac.uk - [@sparqs_Simon](https://twitter.com/sparqs_Simon) - www.sparqs.ac.uk



@sparqs_Simon @sparqs_Scotland