

# Ensuring Student Engagement in Quality Arrangements has an Impact on the Student Experience

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## **Our Vision is of**

Students making a positive and rewarding difference to their own and others' educational experience, helping shape the nature of learning and contributing to the overall success of Scotland's universities and colleges.

To make this **Vision** a reality our **Mission** is to:

Ensure that students are able to engage as partners at all levels of quality assurance and enhancement activities, including:

- Commenting on, improving and shaping their own learning experience;
- Taking an active part in formal student engagement mechanisms, including quality assurance and enhancement processes and strategic decision making; *and*
- Shaping the development of the student experience at a national level.

# To achieve our **Mission** we develop services and activities that:

- Support students to engage at all levels in enhancing their educational experience;
- Support the development of practices and activities in institutions and their students' associations that encourage and support student engagement;
- Support student engagement with national sector agencies and policy developments; *and*
- Support the development of a culture of student engagement across Scotland.

# Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework

Enhancement Led Institutional review.

Institutional Led Subject review.

Student Engagement.

Enhancement themes.

Public Information.

Underpinned by academic infrastructure which includes subject benchmarks, codes of practice and external examiners plus external quality measures, e.g. professional accreditation.

# Review Features in Scotland

- Quality Assurance
- Quality Enhancement
- Student Engagement expected and reviewed

# Students involved in Reviews

- Students are part of the external review team – sparqs does not support this directly
- Review team speaks to student representatives as part of the review
- Students involved in putting together the materials for review
- Students involved in evaluation processes all the time

# Supporting Institutions through Review

- That's Quality! – Summer Event
- ELIR Briefing days, Now ELIR Guidance
- Enhancement Themes Support
- Institutional-led Review Training
- Consultancy



# That's Quality!

- Summer Event for Education Officers
- Aim to give Education Officers the tools to create change at their university through quality processes
- Explain the Quality Enhancement Framework,
- Allow students to think and create their student learning experience
- Students plan their priorities for the year
- Give students knowledge of where they can find evidence for their priorities

# ELIR

- Enhancement-Led Institutional Review external review
- Assesses both quality assurance and enhancement
- Used to hold ELIR briefing days – this wasn't individual enough
- Currently producing ELIR guidance to explain the process and stages
- Followed by one-on-one consultancy with institutions and their students' associations

## ELIR Continued

- Focus on supporting the students' association through the process of ELIR rather than review itself
- Ensure students' associations used the review report to make change

# Enhancement Themes

- National sector-wide programme
- Students involved locally at their institution and nationally through steering committee
- Sparqs supports Student Network meets 2-3 times a year
- Takes what is happening nationally with enhancement themes and makes it relevant for students within institution

# Institutional-Led Review

- Students members of the review team
- Provide training for those student members through their institution and students' association
- Starting to work with students' associations to take the results of review and work with department on the recommendations, finding solutions.

# Consultancy

- All members of sparqs team consults with institutions on a one-to-one basis
- Consultancy allows for more individual support and identify the needs in a variety of areas
- Primarily works with the students' associations and institutions to identify gaps in the representative systems and how these can be supported better

# Representation

“Representation must never be seen, except in strategic and practical terms, as an end in itself.

Too many union officers see it as a question of communication and merely sitting on the appropriate committee.

The purpose of representation is to secure educational and social change.”

*Digby Jacks, 1974*

# Scotland

Student engagement in quality processes and the effect this has on student engagement in learning is one of the key lines of enquiry

Student Engagement = good quality



# Scottish Student Engagement Framework – key principles

Student engagement is a vehicle for change:

- In the students themselves.
- In the student experience.
- In the institutions.
- Across the Scottish Higher Education sector.

# Student Engagement - not a new thing

- 1986 – NUS produced first class rep training pack.
- 1990's – professionalisation of student academic representative function.
- 1996 – 30 SU staff supporting educational representation.
- Mid 1990's – enterprise in Higher Education project led to more staff development and further focus on training.
- 2002 – Quality Enhancement Framework – student engagement a key pillar.
- 2003 – sparqs.

# Building Blocks for Student Involvement in Quality Assurance

**Informed voice**

**Recognition and reward**

**Training and support**

**External monitoring**

**Feedback mechanisms**

**Opportunities to participate in review**

**Effective representative structures**

**Development and sharing of practice**

**Joint commitment and understanding**

**Opportunities to participate in decision making**

**Equal access to evaluative and management information**

# Some Trends

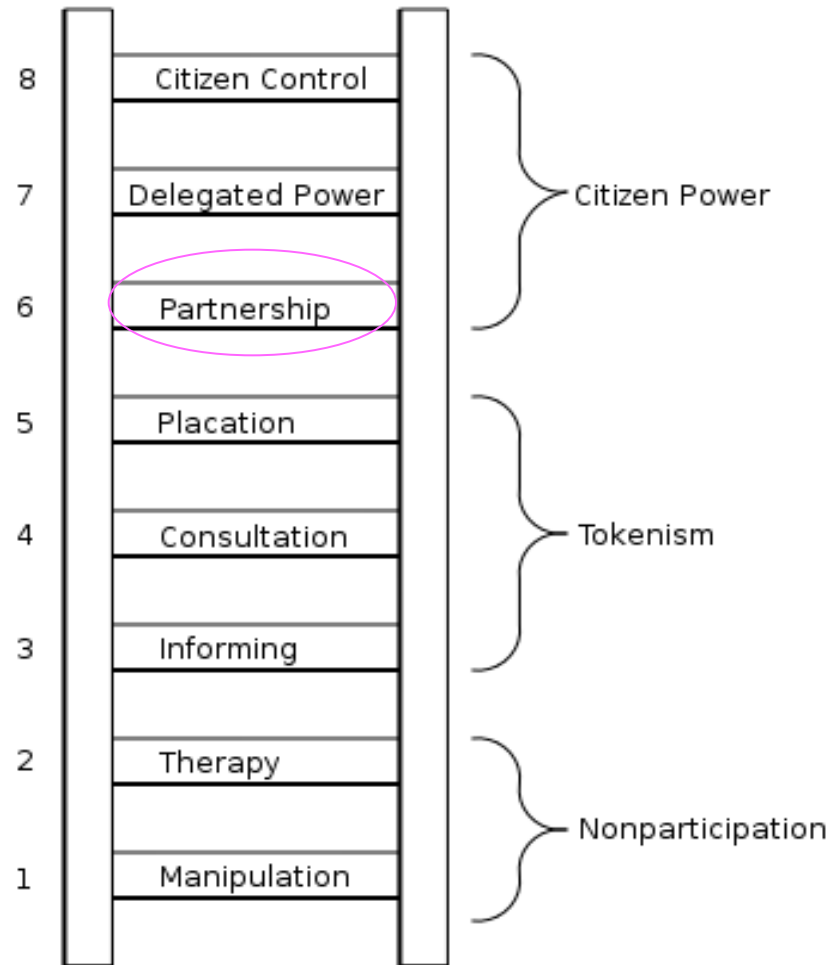
- Started with class rep training
- National training
- Staff support
- Class rep conferences
- New levels of representation
- Attendance – participation – equal members
- Evidence based discussion
- Module feedback, student surveys
- Public information

# **Scottish Student Engagement Framework – key principles**

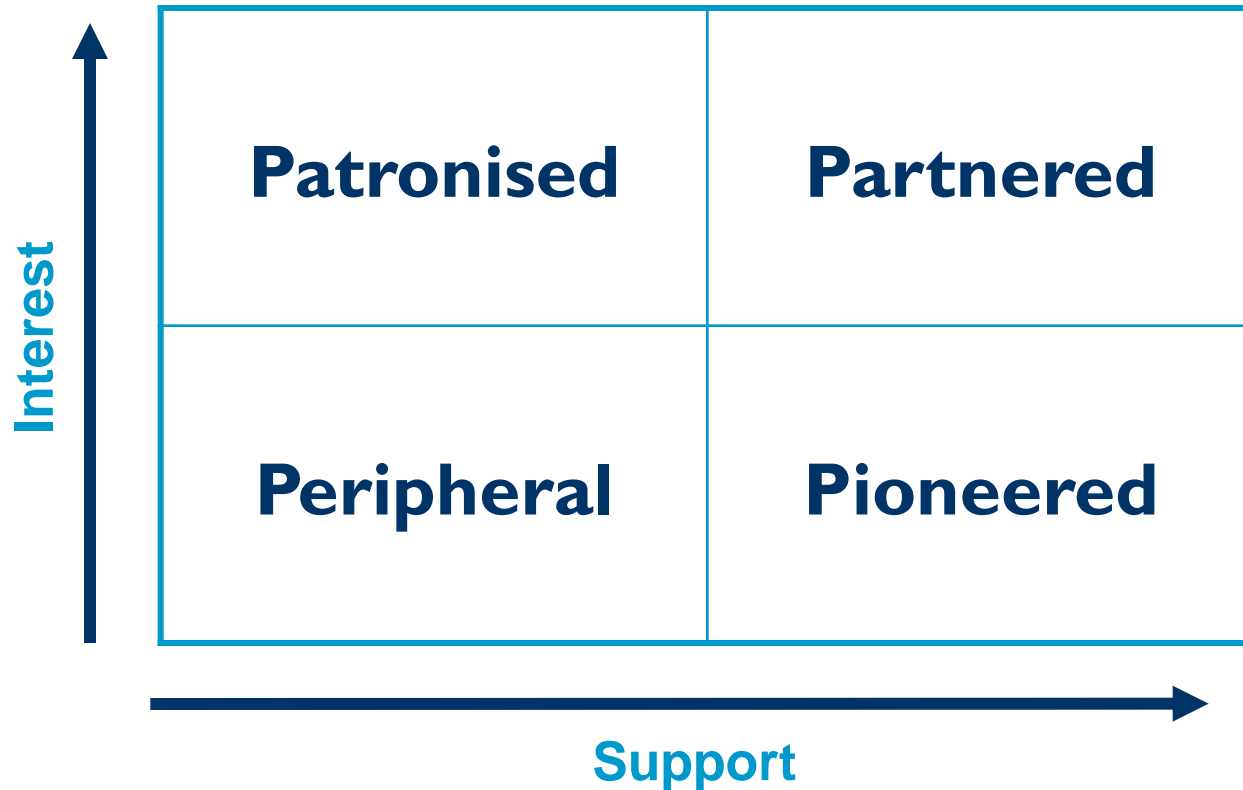
Partnership is a key concept – students have an equal role in shaping their experience which when fully realised goes beyond feedback, problem solving and membership of committees, to opportunities for real enhancement.

# A Ladder of Citizen Participation

## - Sherry R Arnstein



# Cadogan Matrix of Institutional / Student Union Relationships



Peter  
Cadogan

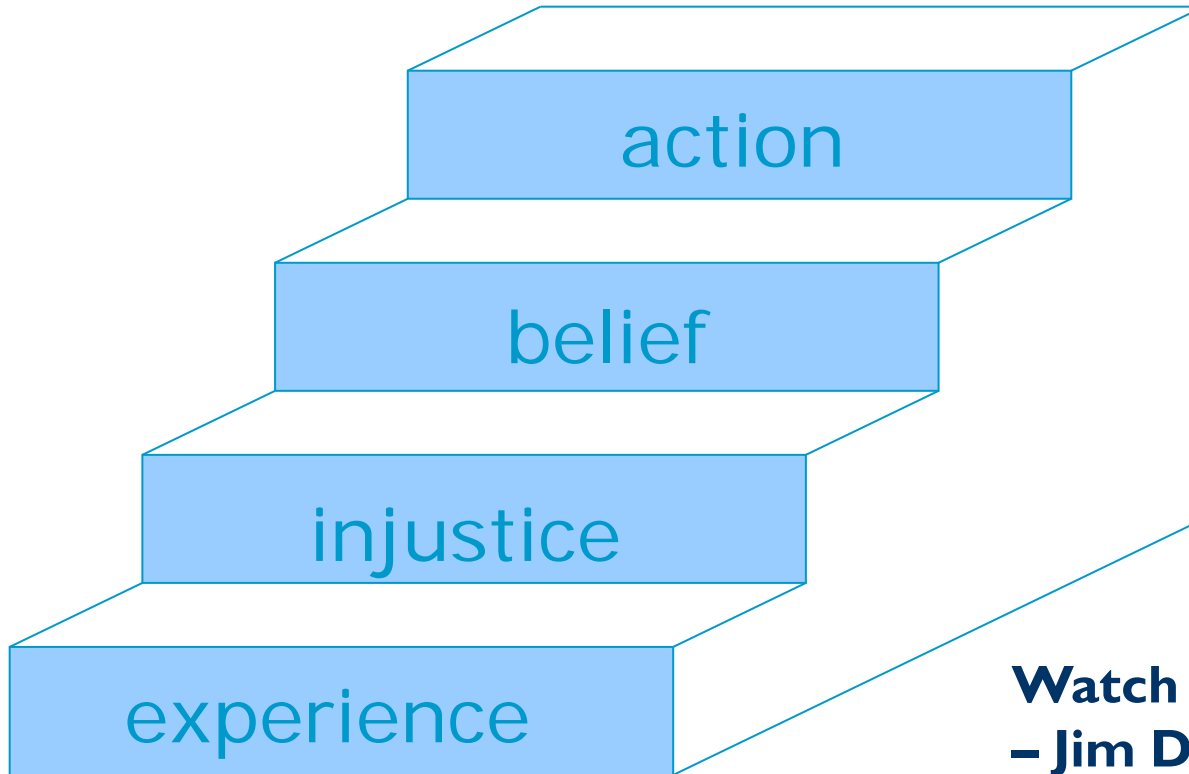
**But what about student apathy?**







# The Apathy Staircase



**Watch on YouTube**  
**– Jim Dickinson introduces**  
**the Apathy Staircase**

# Solutions to increase Student Engagement

- Closing the Feedback loop
- Students need to know they are having an impact
- Not Enough Support and too many meetings
- Keep in mind that it is all about Change