Student Co-Creation for Graduate Capabilities

How ‘Student Co-Creation’ can support Employability

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1. Are our students happy?
2. Are our graduates future-ready?
What we know:

• Higher education is expanding
• Competition is rising
• Students demand more transparency and value for money than ever before

So how do we improve student satisfaction and graduate employability?
What types of activities do we offer students?

- Internships
- Work-Integrated Learning
- Study Abroad
- Student Governance/Groups
- Peer Mentoring
- Social Media Campaigns
- Informing Curriculum
- Student-Staff Projects
- Media-Rich Opportunities

Co-Created
What is Co-Creation?
Shift in Student Roles
Students are **Valuable Resources**

- Knowledge
- Perspective
- Time
- Opinions
- Energy
Linking Co-Creation to Student Experiences and Outcomes

- 10 Case Studies
- Interview (n=35)
- Surveys (n=97)

- What were the characteristics of co-creation?
- What were the issues— and what were the benefits?
Benefits included:

1. Knowledge sharing/transfer
2. Improved relationships with peers/staff
3. Memorable/transformation experiences
4. Employability
5. Self-efficacy and ownership
6. Innovation (i.e. improved activities)
7. University marketing and branding
Quotes relating to Employability:

• For resume building this is a point that I highlight, I applied to a magazine and showed this, and I hope it will be seen as a point of difference... (Student, PUB)

• This has been a great experience for me and something I will speak highly of- and tie back to the university. It’s actually something I will mention in job interviews as well. It’s a chance to show teamwork, throw myself out of comfort zone and so on. I’ll definitely be talking about it (Student, RESO)
Summary of Employability:

- Resume Building
- Mentoring
- Personal Reflection
- Leadership Skills
Quotes relating to Innovation:

• **Sometimes we're a bit detached** from the student experience (our building is off campus) so these student takeovers bring us back in and act as a reminder (Staff, MEDIA)

• Students can bring a fresh perspective to how things can be taught. Every person regardless of age has had unique experiences throughout their lifetime and has their own ideas and knowledge base. Collaboration with students allows institutions to **tap into this knowledge pool** (Student, RESO)
Summary of Innovation:

Development of Service

Fresh Perspectives

Needs Identified

Better Understanding

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Quotes relating to University Marketing:

• The subject is also used in promotional materials feedback from clients that will say things like, ‘the student work in the WIL course was exceptional and on par with contract work that we’ve sent out to professional consulting organizations’ and obviously the faculty loves that kind of feedback and uses that strategically (Staff, WIL)

• Can I be a bit blunt? With the university I think they are looking for something to pull in students and trying to show students that if you are a student here you can do this, this and this... and it’s good to show things where the students and staff are working together because it shows there’s collaboration with the final product. So, it’s a marketing tool to get more students (Student, RESO)
Summary of University Marketing:

- Student-Created Content
- Inclusive Reputation
- Student Ambassadors
- Unique Student Tailoring

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Co-Creation in Higher Education Model

Before
- Staff Aims
- Online

During
- Barriers
- Interactions

Benefits
- Employability
- Relational

Staff Aims
Online

Barriers
Interactions

Employability
Relational

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What Cases Could be Transferred to Your Institution?

1. Students acting as social media ambassadors
2. Students creating ‘communicative’ learning resources
3. Student/staff/alumni producing a global magazine
Potential for International Students?
Questions going forward:

1. How can we motivate and provide co-creation opportunities for students?

2. Do different opportunities (for example, cross-cultural peer mentoring or international internships) lead to different experiences and different student outcomes?

3. How can we support student-staff co-creation opportunities that appeal to a range of student preferences and interests- and also support diverse groups of students?