The Student Voice in a Complex Student Population

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Monday 28th April 2014
Overview

- The Student Voice – Concepts
- Student and Institutional Characteristics – An ITP perspective
- Complexity – Contribution and decision making in a complex world
- Issues and approaches in capturing the student voice
- Using the student lifecycle as a framework
The Student Voice - Concepts

- Partnership – the ability to influence teaching and learning and institutional decisions
- Participation – engaging with and gaining perspectives that are representative of a complex student body
- Process – multiple events and processes linked to student lifecycle and effective institutional quality enhancement
The Student Voice – ITP Characteristics

- Older more diverse student mix
  - Maori, Pasifika, International
  - Range of academic preparedness
- High proportion of part time, short programme and episodic learners
- First in family
- Financially constrained and time poor
- Wide range of modes – distance, practice based, blended, contract
- Distributed student population
- Range of programmes and levels
Levels of Study in ITPs

![Bar chart showing levels of study in ITPs across 2009 to 2012. The chart displays the proportion of students enrolled in different levels of study, including Level 1–2 Certificates, Level 3–4 Certificates, Level 5–6 Certificate & diplomas, Level 7–8 Bachelor’s & postgrad, Level 9–10 Master’s & doctorates, and Participation. The chart indicates a general increase in the number of students enrolled in ITPs across the years, with a notable increase in enrollment at the Level 1–2 Certificate level and a decrease in enrollment at the Level 9–10 Master’s & doctorates level.]
Dealing with Complexity

- One size does not fit all
- Range of processes appropriate to:
  - Age
  - Ethnicity
  - Community/whanau engagement
  - Curriculum design and delivery
  - Intended outcomes
- Interpretation and measuring impact and effectiveness
The Challenge of Capturing the Student Voice

- Fragility of many traditional approaches and measures – authenticity
- Dealing with perceptions and prejudices
- Challenge of variable length of programmes – sustainability
- Impact of regionality and socio-economic factors – conflicting expectations, demands and priorities
- Use of different approaches for different populations.
Strategic approaches to capturing the student voice

- Thinking strategically about student feedback as an integral part of teaching and learning strategy
- Understanding barriers to involvement in representation
- Contributing to teaching and learning – Strategic relationship with the Student Association/Council
- Institution-wide approaches
Key elements

- Community feedback and input through School, community, Iwi, hapu relationships
- As part of strategies e.g.
  - Maori Engagement
  - Youth Engagement and Community Outreach
- Dialogue through Student Association
- Across different stages of the Student Lifecycle
- Appropriate and relevant methods – tailored to subjects, cohorts, programme length etc.
- Staff development for all staff in accessing the Student voice
Strategic Approaches to capturing the Student Voice – Feedback on Teaching and Learning

- Induction and orientation and assessment of needs – First impressions
- Teaching and Learning experience
  - Focus groups/whanau groups
  - Informal feedback
- Student Satisfaction Survey
- Graduate Destination Survey
Capturing the Student Voice - Using the Student Lifecycle

- Raising Aspirations
- Pre Entry Support
- Admissions
- Post graduation
- Progression
- Moving Through
- First Semester

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Factors influencing success in capturing the Student Voice

- Recognising the complexity of the student population
- Establishing a close dialogue with learners
- Recognising ‘one size does not fit all’
- Avoid ‘death by survey’
- Methods appropriate to the wide range of programmes and learners
- Cultural initiatives
  - Bicultural development advisor
  - Whanau groups
  - International students
- Strong relationship with Student Association
- Robust representative systems
- Sharing effective practice
- Whole of institution approach
The Student Lifecycle

Raising Aspirations

Capturing feedback from potential learners in Schools, ITOs, PTEs and Wānanga to understand their feedback on the value of e.g. vocational pathways to learning progression.
Feedback on the value of information, advice and guidance and pre-entry activities in helping students to make the right study choices.
Feedback on Recruitment and admission processes to gauge support given and the extent to which they have enrolled on a programme appropriate to their needs, skills and career and study aspirations.
The Student Lifecycle

The usefulness of orientation, induction and diagnostic testing to identify their learning needs – First Impressions Survey
The Student Lifecycle

- Post graduation
- Progression
- Pre Entry Support
- Admissions
- First Semester
- Moving Through

Gauging student feedback on their programme of study, teaching and assessment, learner and pastoral support; wider social activities. Assessing their perceived benefit from their study.
End of programme evaluation and assessment of value in supporting further steps in learning or moving into employment – Student Satisfaction Survey
The Student Lifecycle

Assessment of support received in the period following graduation in particular in relation to employment opportunities – Graduate Employment Survey

Post graduation
Pre Entry Support
Admissions
Moving Through
First Semester
Progression
Raising Aspirations

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Summary and Challenges

- Diversity and Complexity of learners and programmes
- Large number of part-time learners
- Length of many programmes
- Methods appropriate to the learner groups
- Need for effective institutional planning and buy in
- Sharing effective practice with other ITPs (e.g. comparative data, benchmarking, etc.)
- Need to assess effectiveness of approaches used for capturing and evaluating feedback
- The dangers of only concentrating on what can be measured.