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**Education for Sustainable Development:** interdisciplinary, pedagogical approach to learning, enhancing graduates skills, knowledge and experience to contribute to an ethical society  
**Partnership:** collaborative, reciprocal process where all participants can contribute equally in different areas eg. curricular conceptualisation, decision-making

### AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### CURRENT LEEDS INITIATIVES

- What sustainability focused skills and content students are hoping to gain
- Identify successful mechanisms of student voice and how these could be implemented
- Creating linkages between sustainable practices and curriculum design
- Exploring literature and current University of Leeds initiatives and data collection through focus groups and independent conversations with Leeds' staff and students

- Curriculum Redefined and the Sustainable Curriculum: student opportunities, projects, dissertations, involvement, volunteering etc.
- Embedding in teaching, linking to SDG's and new sustainability-focused teaching methods
- Student voice: offering suggestions, personal tutors, course and student representatives, forums and more
- Student voice examples: reverse mentoring, listening rooms, advisory boards, integrating technology and more

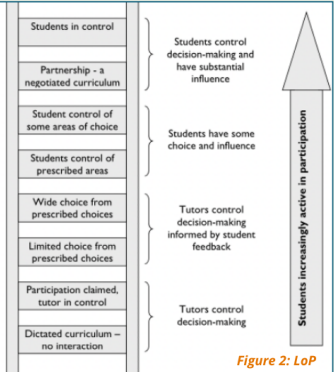
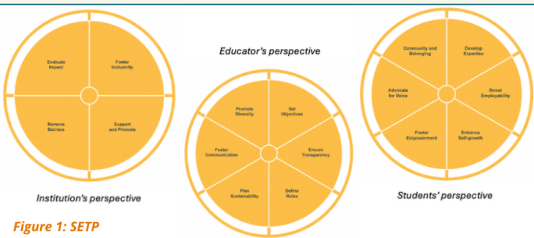
### MECHANISMS OF STUDENT VOICE

#### ONGOING DIALOGUE

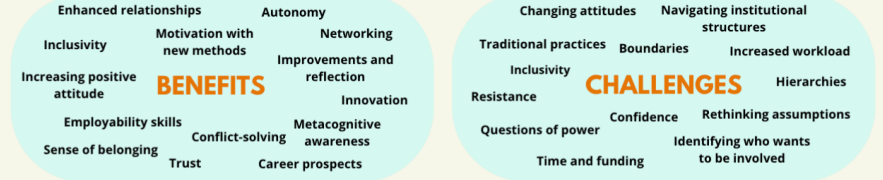
- Importance of accessing input into approval process & encouraging in-person engagement & communication to combat difficulties in response numbers  
**Examples**
- 'Town Hall' initiatives; Advisory boards from Curriculum Redefined; S:S Forums; Altercating modules through integrating technology
- All encouraging more student involvement, interactions between staff and students and inclusion in the approval process  
**Benefits**
- Easy to implement and opens to all in a programme
- Opportunity to share opinions and listened to by staff
- Specific discussions of sustainability and workshopping ideas to expand content from student evidence
- Inclusivity, conflict-solving, reflection, improvements
- Increasing awareness to encourage more people to speak freely and confidently  
**Challenges**
- Fitting into students' schedules from busy lifestyles and email overload of activities
- Time, funding and navigating institutional hierarchies

### KEY MODELS IN LITERATURE

**Figure 1: Student Engagement Through Partnership Framework, Advance HE (2023) (SETP)**  
**Figure 2: Ladder of student participation (LoP) in curriculum design (Bovill & Bulley 2011; Healey, 2014)**



**Figure 3: Benefits and challenges of partnership noted throughout the literature**



**What other ways can we have a conversation with students about what is important for them on sustainability in their curriculum, and their education more broadly?**

### SKILLS AND CONTENT STUDENTS LOOK FOR

From looking at the Leeds Sustainability Skills Matrix, focus groups with Student Sustainability Architects and SOS-UK University of Leeds data...

- Students are focused on **careers & transitioning out of higher education**
  - Acquire skills in sustainability that benefit these career aspirations and employment opportunities
  - Hope to be directed to their **discipline** but also encompass **sustainability as a whole**
- **Work experience, placements and real-life examples**
  - Students want to know how sustainable development works in reality; first-hand skills and real-life content as a way of learning
- Some students feel they **lack knowledge of sustainability**
  - What does it **involve**? How does sustainable development work? What is new and what is important?
  - Students want to be knowledgeable and informed and they are eager to learn in higher education
  - **Only aware of buzzwords** (eg. UN SDG's) – what is beyond that?
- Students **may be uninterested** which is difficult to change but may be due to **lack of education of how sustainability is relevant and achievable**
- **Social issues, ethicality and global challenges** are repeated by students for what they want to learn for sustainability

### CO-PRODUCTION

- Engagement with students to aid producing curriculums
- Singular roles, teams and other methods - co-production in different forms, recognising different tools
- Work experience approved by students as an effective way of learning sustainability  
**Examples**
- Course reps, SSA's and Learning Design Teams at Leeds
- CEOs (Sheffield Hallam), Student Change Agents (Edinburgh), Co-producers (Gloucestershire)
- Course design teams & National Curriculum Teams  
**Benefits**
- Work experience and real-life examples
- Smaller teams more effective for improved engagement
- Career prospects, autonomy, innovation, empowerment and enthusiasm from direct pathway to institution
- Focused audience with clear objectives
- Working with experts relieves workload and provide advice to best navigate barriers  
**Challenges**
- Navigating boundaries & identifying who wants to be involved as not everyone can be involved
- Can increase workloads for both parties
- Questions of power and hierarchies

*Linking to models - SETP Framework: supporting and promoting engagement, defining roles, advocating for voice; Student have control and substantial influence (LoP)*

### CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

**There are benefits for the sustainable curriculum to engage with students higher up the ladder of participation. These include generating deeper exchanges and dialogue, and creating opportunities for students to build up skills eg. for their future employment.**

**What is the potential for greater co-production of the sustainable curriculum at Leeds or bringing sustainability into ongoing partnership activities?**

**Key References**

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