INFORM CONFERENCE | 2017

InForm

Innovative ideas for enhanced student engagement

VAN EMDEN Lecture Theatre
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University of Reading
15 July 2017

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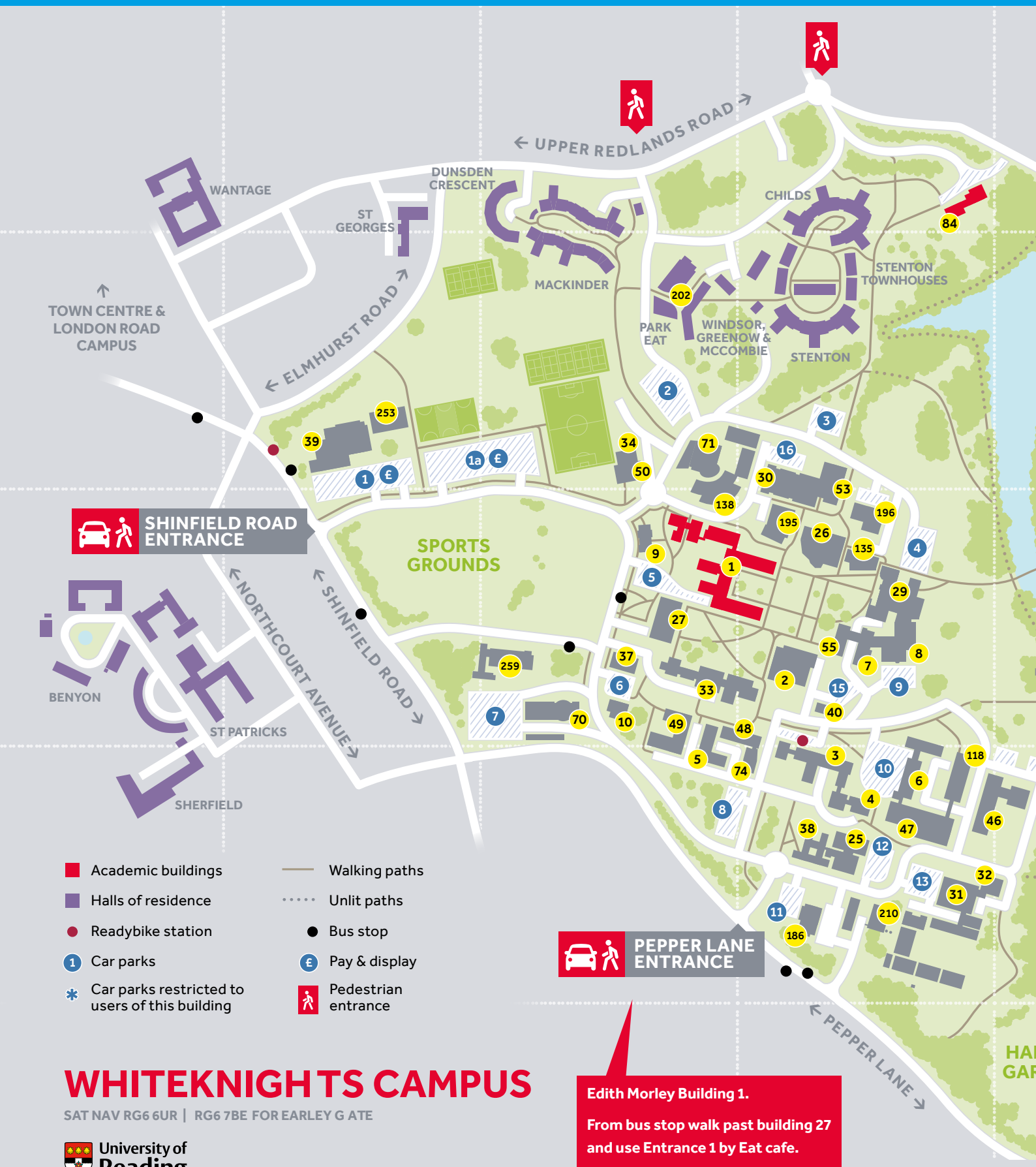

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InForm CONFERENCE 2017

INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR ENHANCED STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The International Foundation Programme at the University of Reading welcomes you to the eighth annual *InForm* conference.

We've had a tremendous response to this year's theme resulting in a varied and stimulating selection of talks. It is excellent to see educators in our sector thinking creatively, using technology and doing research in order to enhance student engagement. With opportunities for discussion and networking this is also a time to reflect on what we ourselves do and to be inspired to try new things.

We are delighted this year to welcome our keynote speakers, Colin Bryson from Newcastle University, chair of RAISE (Researching, Advancing and Inspiring Student Engagement) and Clare Nukui from Oxford Brookes.

An exciting new development this year is the first overseas *InForm* conference which is happening in Malaysia at the University of Reading Malaysia campus. We hope to connect with this conference via video link for the opening UK keynote talk. Indeed the theme of this year's conference was proposed at a meeting of UK university foundation year providers in Malaysia.

We look forward to an enjoyable, thought-provoking and *InForm*ative day for all.

Dr Mark Peace
Chair of the *Inform* Editorial Board

INFORM Conference 2017 programme

Innovative ideas for enhanced student engagement

09.00 **09.30–09.40**	**Registration – Coffee and pastries** **Welcome and conference opening (all delegates)**		
09.40–10.25 **Keynote address 1**	**Realising the potential of student engagement** *Professor Colin Bryson, Director of Combined Honours Centre at Newcastle University and chair of RAISE (Researching, Advancing and Inspiring Student Engagement)* Student engagement policies and practices are now commonplace in education. There is an assumption that we should all be 'doing student engagement'. That can mean that we have rather lost track on what the nature of engagement is, and what influences and develops the sort of deep engagement that enables transformative learning and creating an ethos in which inclusive engagement can flourish. I will seek to explore what that might mean in developing effective practice.		
10.25–10.45	**Coffee**		
10.45–11.30	**Team Competition in a group project: Gamifying learning to enhance student engagement** *Meiko Murayama, University of Reading* This paper shares the findings of a research project which involved the introduction of game features into a summative student group work project. The aim was to enhance student engagement in a business studies module and to record the results. The main data is derived from the observation of students and subsequent structured feedback. The main findings indicate that the features generated a positive learning response and was well received by students.	**Employing student teacher assistants to enhance student engagement: academic and practical benefits** *Dr Sue Teale, BIA, The University of Birmingham* In addition to the demands of improving their English and coping with their academic modules, Foundation students often struggle with the demands of academic culture and life as independent learners. By employing successful undergraduates as teacher assistants, the transition from Foundation to undergraduate course can be enhanced and engagement improved.	**Tracking former Foundation students in Undergraduate study: engagement gaps and ideas to fill them** *Alex Dawson, Cardiff University* Qualitative investigation of two groups of former Foundation students, those performing well compared with 'at risk' who have failed modules, showed that a lack of engagement with feedback, instructions and the structure of courses and modules can lead to failure.
11.30–12.15	**Shakespeare – Globe to Globe: Accessing plays on Foundation Humanities** *Alexandra Corrin, INTO Newcastle University LLP* This session explores innovative ideas to engage students in studying Shakespeare's plays. Methodologies include making the Polonius family contemporary, approaching Romeo and Juliet through kinaesthetic learning techniques, exploiting live theatre and engaging with RSC materials. Shakespeare is indeed not only "for all time" but also for all nationalities.	**Using flipped learning to engage and integrate international students** *Dr Shirley Ashforth-Frost, University of Nottingham* A flipped learning approach to provide an inclusive learning environment that improves engagement and integration of international students has been successfully employed. The technique has evolved over the last few years; the benefits are described and the methods to ensure effective practice are shared.	**Increasing Engagement Through Structured Tutorials** *Mike Groves, University of Birmingham* This presentation will showcase an attempt at the University of Birmingham to increase students' engagement with their university study through the use of structured tutorials. These will be explained, and the results of a student questionnaire analysed and discussed.
12.15–13.15	**Lunch**		
12.15–13.15	**'TED Talks publications drop in session'** *by Abigail Letford* **National Geographic Learning representative:** 'A walk in session on the TED material National Geographic Learning has available for your classroom'		
13.15–14.00 **Keynote address 2**	**Innovations outside the classroom: How new ideas in the areas of administration, co-curricular and welfare matters have enhanced the student experience at University of Reading Malaysia.** *Clare Nukui, Oxford Brookes University* Clare explores how student engagement supports welfare and academic performance; she shares some of her initiatives in the areas of administration, pastoral support and social activities that are now established features of the IFP at Reading and the FP in Malaysia. Clare will also share experience of setting up an overseas IFP.		

14.00–14.45	**Engaging Foundation Learners with a Student-led Magazine** *Jane Sjoberg, BIA, University of Birmingham* This session will illustrate how a student magazine promotes learner engagement in behavioural, emotional and cognitive terms whilst supporting foundation students in their transition to HE study programmes. Practical tips to set up and supervise a foundation magazine project and examples of the finished product will also be provided.	**IFP lecture delivery: maximising non-native speaker student engagement** *Jane Ward, University of Reading* Non-native speaking students, especially those newly arrived at UK foundation programmes (IFPs), face huge challenges in lectures due to their incomplete mastery of the language, and their understanding is no doubt primarily constrained by their listening skills. Proposals are suggested for supporting these students which are grounded in the psycholinguistic theoretical perspective of the listening process. With such support, it is proposed that engagement can be promoted.	**Implementing continuous credit assessments for enhanced engagement: benefits and challenges at The University of Edinburgh** *Kathryn Redpath, The University of Edinburgh* This session will outline how colleagues in English Language Education at The University of Edinburgh thought creatively to provide enhanced opportunities for continuous engagement on EAP courses within Edinburgh's IFP, by designing a series of continuous credit assessments. The benefits and challenges of implementing these assessments will be explored.
14.45–15.30	**The power of drama** *Tina Kirk, University of Southampton* My paper will discuss how drama has been used as an integral part of the academic English module of the Foundation programme. I will outline how the use of drama techniques have had an impact on student engagement and enhanced groupwork and contributed to an increase in confidence in speaking in groups and presentations. I will outline the main aims and outcomes of the component.	**Synoptic Assessment on the International Foundation Programme for Art, Design and Media** *Adam Stewart, University of Brighton International College* At the University of Brighton International College we introduced a synoptic assessment in Historical, Cultural & Contemporary Practice in Art, Design & Media and Skills for Study One and to create clear links between modules. This presentation will explain the rationale, implementation and results of the change in assessment.	**Enhancing IFP Students' Engagement through Pronunciation Peer Practice** *Rina Fokel de Vries and Veronica Raffin, BIA, University of Birmingham* Phonological competence not only enhances non-native speaker intelligibility, it can also build confidence and improve listening skills. Building on Vygotsky's (1978) theory of collaborative, interactive learning, this paper describes how IFP students can practise pronunciation together. The study results show that students find peer practice stimulating, motivating and engaging.
15.30–16.00	**Coffee**		
16.00–16.45	**Enhancing International Student Experience Through Audio Formative Feedback** *Kashmir Kaur, University of Leeds* The impact of formative feedback can be transformative; hence, it is integral for both the learner and the teacher. It is a powerful tool to engage student learning. This presentation outlines how international students' learning experience was further enhanced by audio formative feedback and how it added value.	**From the horse's mouth: students' perspectives of engagement and disengagement on the IFP.** *Amy Moses and Caroline Challans, CEWL, University of Kent* To explore this complex topic and to develop our understanding, we asked the students. The aim of this presentation is to examine what engages students, or not, holistically/ across on the student journey. Together with the student voice, the presentation also draws on findings, literature and case-studies to discuss ideas for us to enhance 'engaging students' and 'students engaging' (Bryson, 2014: 18).	**Engaging a mixed native and non-native speaking group in the learning written genres for Psychology** *Karin Whiteside, University of Reading* A challenge which course designers and materials writers frequently face is to meaningfully engage students within one class whose needs, although overlapping, are also divergent. This paper reports on the development of materials for a first-year Psychology academic writing course and outlines an approach that involves language focus that appealed to both native and non-native speaker students. This experience will have resonance for practitioners on international Foundation programmes developing subject-specific academic skills and literacy materials.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Professor Colin Bryson
Director of Combined Honours Centre, Newcastle University
and Chair and founder of RAISE (Researching, Advancing and Inspiring Student Engagement)

Van Emden Lecture Theatre

09.40 am–10. 25 am

Realising the potential of student engagement

Over the last 10 years or so, student engagement (SE) has moved to centre stage in university policies and practice in the UK. However that has frequently been adopted without considering what the nature of student engagement really might be about. A body of criticism is developing around the mainstreaming of SE (Zepke, 2015; Macfarlane and Tomlinson, 2017) which argues that it has come to serve neo-liberal and managerialist agendas and thus is not beneficial to students nor education. To understand SE requires some examination of the scholarship of SE (e.g. Kahu, 2013). This would show how diverse students are and that engaging students really needs a deeper understanding of the key influences involved in students engaging (Bryson, 2014). I would argue that there is too much current focus on a simplistic practice of 'doing student engagement' on the presupposition that this is sufficient to enhance (some of) the student experience. However deep engagement is a prerequisite to the type of transformative learning that is the true purpose of HE (Johansson and Felten, 2015) - and about 'becoming not having' (Fromm, 1977).

Universal engagement is key- where all students not only are encouraged and supported to engage but also that recognition is given that they bring their own experiences and values to how they want to engage and for what purpose. So how can we be truly inclusive in developing effective practice? What works and why does it work? Working in partnership between students and staff (and others) is likely be a fruitful way forward.

Bryson. C. (Ed.) (2014) *Understanding and developing student engagement*. Abingdon: Routledge.

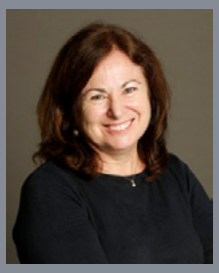
Fromm, E. (1977) *To have or to be?* Harper and Row: New York

Johansson, C. and Felten, P. (2015) *Transforming Students: Fulfilling the Promise of Higher Education*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Kahu, ER. (2013). Framing student engagement in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*. 38(5), 758-773

Macfarlane, B. and Tomlinson, M. (2017) *Critiques of Student Engagement, Higher Education Policy*, 30(1), pp.5-21.

Zepke, N. (2015) Student engagement research; thinking beyond the mainstream. *Higher Education Research and Development*, published online.



Clare Nukui
Co-ordinator of the International Foundation Programme at Oxford Brookes University

Van Emden Lecture Theatre

13.15 pm – 14.00 pm

Innovations outside the classroom: How new ideas in the areas of administration, co-curricular and welfare matters have enhanced the student experience at University of Reading Malaysia

This talk focuses on the issue of student engagement with a particular focus on engagement outside the traditional classroom. A number of initiatives instigated and supported by Reading's International Foundation Programme over the past 10 years will be described. The aim of these initiatives has always been student engagement on a number of levels: peer engagement, engagement with lecturers, engagement with the university and engagement with the country of study.

The presentation will also touch on how these initiatives were exported to our branch campus in Malaysia. Some of the latest research on engagement will be outlined where it supports the projects we have been involved in. The presentation will also raise questions about the role of parents in engagement and ask how we move our students to independence. It is hoped that there will be time for discussion and sharing of ideas towards the end of the presentation.

PARALLEL SESSIONS
Session Outlines

10.45am–11.30am

Van Emden
Lecture Theatre

Dr Meiko Murayama,
University of Reading

Team Competition in a group project: Gamifying learning to enhance student engagement

This presentation shares the findings of the introduction of game features in a summative group work project over two tears and four sample groups. The aim was to enhance student engagement in a business studies module. The summative assessment of a group project consists of 3–4 students conducting market research, presenting their findings and writing a group report.

In order to enhance students engagement (and develop various skills) features of gamification were employed mixed with other enhanced learning tools – such as peer assessment and elements of blended learning. The main data is derived from observation of students and subsequent feedback from the students via questionnaires. The main findings involve how students responded to simple game features such as team competition, ranking and employing points rewards. It appears to have generated a positive response in terms of learning and was well received by students. Overall they enjoyed the 'game' and its competitive feature and students who were less likely to engage without such features responded positively.

More data is needed and a more robust methodology for evaluation to measure student engagement is being developed, however it was clear that the students were more actively participating and this resulted in enhanced student engagement with the learning.

The presentation will be structured as below.

1. Introduction – gamification in teaching / theory
2. Outline of the study project – aims pedagogically, structure and aims in terms of action research
3. Details of the gamification study – approach, design, limits
4. Findings of the study over 2 years – student feedback, assessor reflections, benefits and issues
5. Conclusions and next steps – advice for others, ongoing research and data capture

Edith Morley 125

Dr Sue Teale,
University of Birmingham

Employing student teacher assistants to enhance student engagement: academic and practical benefits

International Foundation students' engagement can be at risk if they feel marginalised within the university structure, which treats them differently to undergraduate students. On the University of Birmingham's postgraduate presessional course, we employ international postgraduates as teacher assistants (TAs) who act as vital links between the departments and the programme. This is by providing subject specific content, knowledge of research skills and more importantly acting as role models and sources of information about departments, modules, assessments and workload as well as survival skills. Such links enhance the sense of belonging to the wider University as well as supporting engagement with study and student life.

By using successful ex-Foundation students in the same way, we could tap into relevant experience and help foundation students to achieve their potential and improve their level of engagement. By embedding this into a Foundation course and making it "integral to the learning experience" (Whittaker, 2008), rather than relying on students to find it voluntarily, it would give them accessible peer-level support and would make their future seem more tangible, less frightening and allow them to feel part of the wider university.

This session will lay out some of the possible benefits of the TA provision from the point of view of students, teachers, TAs and the wider university and also consider some of the potential pitfalls. It will attempt to answer the following questions: could undergraduates be employed to the same effect as postgraduate students? What sessions might they take part in?

Whittaker, R. "Quality Enhancement Themes: The first year experience: transition to and during the first year." (2008). Available from: **http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/pages/docdetail/docs/publications/transition-to-and-during-the-first-year**

Edith Morley 127

Alex Dawson,
Cardiff University

Tracking former Foundation students in Undergraduate study: engagement gaps and ideas to fill them

The presentation will report on research that showed how successful former Foundation students are better able to analyse instructions, engage with feedback and see how different elements of modules and courses link together when compared with 'at risk' students.

Interviews with undergraduate Course Directors supported these findings, as they identified problems with student engagement in terms of feedback and marks (focusing on the latter while not engaging adequately with the former). They also reported a failure to analyse questions well enough, and that 'at risk' students have problems seeing the connection between lectures and reading, and how lectures link together over the course of a semester.

An initiative to address these issues at Cardiff has been the use of personal development plan (PDP) worksheets to set and review targets with an aim to improving skills deficiencies identified in the study. The success of this has led to creating a whole 10-credit module focusing solely on study skills and PDP using students' work across the IFP. Additionally marks are now being awarded for assignment planning.

Future developments to further address issues raised in the study will look at enhancing peer involvement with mentoring schemes and involving Alumni in syllabus design to align with undergraduate study. Internationalisation will also feature more strongly with employability skills being taught in the context of international jobs and multi-national corporations. The student voice and the International Student Barometer will be used to discover student preferences and shape the development of the programme in a way that enhances international student motivation and engagement.

11.30am–12.15pm

Van Emden
Lecture Theatre

Alexandra Corrin,
INTO Newcastle University LLP

Shakespeare- Globe to Globe: Accessing plays on Foundation Humanities

This session examines how to overcome students' possible preconceived notions of studying Shakespeare. Using *Hamlet* as a paradigm I will explore how specific activities appeal to different learning styles, and consider how to engage students in text, live performance, and discussions.

The session will begin by considering how kinaesthetic learning approaches to plays heighten comprehension of language and literary devices whilst bringing spark to seminars and promoting student interaction. Materials will be shared to show how to make the Polonius family contemporary by using practical techniques to establish the relevance of Shakespeare. The session will also illuminate *Hamlet* through an awareness of historical context. Furthermore, Shakespeare's ability to "hold the mirror up to nature" and the potential of a play to create a safe space for debating real life issues will be emphasized. Issues of how to exploit live theatre performances, through priming students with visual materials and prediction exercises, providing evaluative tools, and analysing actor's interpretative choices, will receive consideration.

Shakespearian study, introduced in 2013, has become a flagship for the Humanities module. It is integral to assessment on INTO Newcastle's Humanities pathway. Additionally, it has helped to cultivate interdisciplinary links with the Sociology and British culture modules. Crucially, students have been engaged beyond seminars, through a Dead Poet's Society Literature Club, and acting opportunities in Shakespearian productions. What is more, literature, beyond Shakespeare, has become a major component of the curriculum. Student feedback on their experiences of studying Shakespeare will conclude the session.

Edith Morley 125

Dr Shirley Ashforth-Frost, University of Nottingham

Using flipped learning to engage and integrate international students

During induction, international students quickly congregate into groups based on domicile or first language. Whilst this provides security in the early stages of their HE experience, it can be detrimental to longer term learning and achievement; international students that regularly interact with English speaking students will be more able to manage social, cultural, academic and language challenges.

In this study, a flipped learning approach to facilitate early interaction has been successfully employed. Such an approach involves providing students with material to learn before class, leaving classroom time for discussion and activities to enhance understanding of the material. So students acquire knowledge prior to class which improves their confidence to interact with peers and teachers. It also allows students to supplement provided learning material with other formats, such as websites, videos, and podcasts, to suit their learning style. Initially, students select their own peer groups but later, when familiar with the flipped process, they are put into groups that force them to interact only in English. To incentivise prior learning, each class began with a short quiz that carried a small credit towards the final grade; this was essential to ensure engagement and attendance.

Flipping allowed more time in class to focus on consolidating students understanding of the topic. Student feedback indicated that they prepared more for flipped sessions than others, thus improving their knowledge (and attainment). In addition, building relationships in the classroom provided an inclusive learning environment that improved engagement and integration of international students. The technique has evolved over the last few years; the benefits are described and the methods to ensure effective practice shared.

References

British Council. (2014). *Integration of internationals students: A UK perspective*. Available at: **https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/oth-integration-report-september-14.pdf** [Accessed 12 April 2017]

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). (2017). *Introduction – Students 2015/16*. Available at: **https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/publications/students-2015-16/introduction** [Accessed 30 April 2017]

Edith Morley 127

Mike Groves,
University of Birmingham

Increasing Engagement through Structured Tutorials

For the purpose of this presentation, "engagement" will be taken to mean a developing sense of agency and autonomy on the part of the students, both in the area of EAP and their other content modules. This presentation will showcase a system of guided tutorials in which students combine reading, reflection and discussion with a tutor on a series of topics, selected to enhance the students' level of engagement and agency . The presentation will highlight some of the theoretical background for this approach, including Dornyei's (2009) "ideal L2 Self" conception and also the Dweck's theory of growth (Dweck and Master, 2009). Questionnaire data will be presented and analysed. This questionnaire explores students' engagement with these tutorial tasks and also wider attitudes to study and motivation. Preliminary analysis of the data shows statistically significant relationships between certain attitudes to these tutorials and their wider orientation to study and future life. Lessons learnt and directions for future development will then be discussed.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). "The L2 Motivational Self System." In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9-42). Bristol: Multilingual Matters

Dweck, C.S. and Master, A,. (2009) "Self-Concept" in WB Carey et al (eds)" *Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics* (Fourth Edition), (pp 427-435), (Online) **https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-1-4160-3370-7.00044-4** [Accessed 20-04-17]

14.00pm – 14.45pm

Van Emden Lecture Theatre

Jane Sjoberg, BIA,
University of Birmingham

Engaging Foundation Learners with a Student-led Magazine

This session will explore how at the Birmingham International Academy (University of Birmingham), a student magazine project* helps to promote learner engagement. As pointed out by Kahu (2013), there is considerable discussion as to what the term 'engagement' actually means. In the context of this paper, for practical purposes the magazine project can be viewed as supporting three strands of learner engagement described by Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004, p. 60): behavioural, emotional and cognitive.

Relating to behavioural engagement, we will show how a magazine project can support students who may find it daunting to join university clubs (or who may even be prevented from doing so due to age restrictions) by encouraging them to get involved in a scaffolded activity. In terms of emotional engagement, we will give examples of how the magazine project fosters positive attitudes towards teachers and peers and creates a sense of belonging within the foundation programme. Where cognitive engagement is concerned, we will show how the magazine develops transferable skills and improves learners' interpersonal/intercultural communication alongside more formal academic skills (e.g. awareness of genre, time management, peer review and group-work).

During the session we will provide practical tips to set up and supervise a foundation-level student magazine. We will show a short film where four previous magazine project participants discuss their experience and will also provide examples of the magazine itself.

References

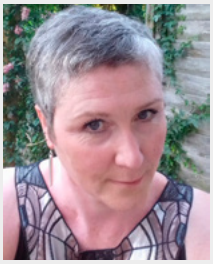
Fredricks, J.A., P. Blumenfeld, and A. Paris. 2004. School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74: 59–109.

Kahu, E.R., 2013. Framing student engagement in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(5): 758-773.

* Previous issues of the magazine can be viewed online here:

http://tinyurl.com/jxzo9ba
http://tinyurl.com/zaq5rjz
http://tinyurl.com/hm3smuy
http://tinyurl.com/nz2xrca

Edith Morley 125



Jane Ward
University of Reading

IFP lecture delivery: maximising non-native speaker student engagement

Recent research has shown that international non-native speaking students new to UK universities understand far less in lectures than we might imagine, and this is likely to affect their engagement in classroom environments.

Their linguistic abilities no doubt improve as time progresses, due to immersion into the English-speaking environment and English language training. However, they are taught and assessed in English right from the start, and their struggles early on are likely to greatly impact their performance. So, how can IFP tutors and lecturers help their students?

Psycholinguistic views of the listening process clearly illustrate why listening is the most cognitively complex of all the four skills, and so presents the greatest challenge to non-native speaking students. With a general understanding of the listening process, it is possible to propose straightforward ways in which lectures (and practicals and seminars) can be delivered which may ease the cognitive load of non-native speaking IFP students, thereby promoting understanding.

This session briefly reviews the speaker's own data regarding breakdowns in understanding during lectures as support for the proposals, and then provides a general background to psycholinguistic theories of listening. Armed with knowledge of the cognitive processes of listening, it is possible to identify ways in which lecture delivery can be adjusted to support students whose understanding, and consequently engagement, may be constrained by their listening skills.

Edith Morley 127

Kathryn Redpath,
University of Edinburgh

Implementing continuous credit assessments for enhanced engagement: benefits and challenges at The University of Edinburgh

This session will outline how colleagues in English Language Education at The University of Edinburgh thought creatively to provide enhanced opportunities for continuous engagement on English for Academic Purposes courses within the Edinburgh IFP.

In the past, EAP assessments were positioned towards the end of each term and this was placing too much pressure on students at particular points whilst not engaging them sufficiently throughout the term.

In response to this, we designed a series of innovative continuous credit assessments (CCAs), which in term 1 include a self-reflection on writing, as well as tasks about referencing, paraphrasing and summarising, cohesion and criticality, and in term 2 are based on the writing of a comparative critical review. Through the CCAs colleagues are now able to: provide students with formalised individual formative feedback at regular intervals on key areas for their academic development; keep them engaged with what they are learning from week to week; provide more scaffolded support for their development in their content subjects, and better prepare them for their summative assessments.

End of course feedback on the CCAs was favourable: students felt they were very useful in terms of their learning on the IFP, and they liked the fact that they could gain credit as they progressed through the term. However, a number of challenges arose with the implementation of the CCAs, such as the impact on staff time, as well as issues around electronic submission and marking. These issues, and how they were addressed, will also be explored.

14.45pm–15.30pm

Van Emden
Lecture Theatre

Tina Kirk,
University of Southampton

The power of drama

This paper will demonstrate how drama can increase students' confidence in communicating naturally and with conviction, how it can develop awareness of all areas of pronunciation, and also enhance team working and collaboration. According to Maley (2005), drama has a positive effect on classroom dynamics and atmosphere, thus facilitating the formation of a bonded group, which learns together. I will describe how my 'drama and confidence' course has enabled shyer students to speak confidently in front of an audience, thereby enabling them to reveal their potential. I will also reveal how it has helped confident students to react collaboratively and emphatically to their less confident peers, improving the potential for all students to work as a team and exchange ideas.

This element of the International Foundation Year's core English for academic study module was developed in response to student feedback, in which many expressed a fear of speaking in front of peers, communicating in a range of everyday situations, and communicating in tutorials with their tutors.

I will outline how drama games, role-play and improvisation can help students not only to collaborate with others, but also to reflect analytically and critically on their personal development and role as a student. I will explain how the course has a positive impact on all areas of study by helping to foster self-confidence, concentration and enjoyment as part of university life. My talk will include video presentations of the students' final group presentation and examples of student-generated scripts.

Edith Morley 125

Adam Stewart,
University of Brighton
International College

Synoptic Assessment on the International Foundation Programme for Art, Design and Media

This presentation discusses the use of synoptic assessment on the International Foundation Certificate for Art, Design and Media. Students on this course take a combination of subject, language and academic skills modules and the college aims to develop clear links between these modules. Skills for Study modules focus on areas such as research skills and essay writing. Feedback from tutors on the subject modules was that students were not applying these skills to their subject assignments; this was leading to problems such as faulty referencing and the use of inappropriate sources in subject assignments. To address this issue we trialled a synoptic assessment between the Skills for Study One and Historical, Cultural & Contemporary Practice in Art, Design & Media modules. Our aim was to increase student engagement by introducing and practising research skills in a context that is directly relevant to their foundation courses, and to the undergraduate programmes to which they will progress. We also hoped that these changes would improve collaboration between tutors and move towards a more programme focused assessment strategy. This presentation will explain the rationale for using synoptic assessment as well as analysing the reactions of students and staff to this explicit linking of modules.

Gorra, A., Sheridan-Ross, J. and Kyaw, P. (2008). Synoptic learning and assessment: case studies and experiences. In *9th Annual Conference of the Subject Centre for Information and Computer Sciences* (pp. 98-101).

Patrick, H. (2005). *Synoptic assessment: Report for QCA*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge.

Edith Morley 127

Rina Fokel de Vries,
University of Birmingham

Veronica Raffin, BIA,
University of Birmingham

Enhancing IFP Students' Engagement through Pronunciation Peer Practice

In IFP teaching, the development of speaking skills is usually geared at promoting fluency – often less time is devoted to pronunciation. Foundation students can greatly benefit from pronunciation practice, however. Not only does phonological competence improve non-native speaker intelligibility, it also enhances confidence and improves listening skills (Reed and Michaud, 2011). This is particularly important for fostering students' engagement in subject classes, outside the safety of the English teaching environment (Parker and Graham, 2009).

Building on Vygotsky's ZPD theory (1978) that L2 learning should be a collaborative, interactive achievement, our presentation describes how students can scaffold each other when practising pronunciation. In this innovative model, the teacher acts as facilitator, giving initial instructions and setting the task to be completed. Students are subsequently put into groups or paired up to implement the knowledge gained and practise actively what they have learnt.

In our study, the target phonological feature was word stress. A pre-test and post-test design was used to assess a cohort of IFP students' performance before and after peer practice sessions. Students were also invited to fill in a four scale-rating questionnaire, to measure their views on collaborative learning. Our study results showed that students felt they greatly benefited from peer practice, finding it motivating, stimulating, and rewarding. Peer practice led to higher levels of engagement, and the recognition that it can be better to work with a partner. This principle could also be applied to other subjects: a collaborative model seems to appeal to students, increase participation and improve performance.

References

Parker, R. and Graham, T. (2009). *The Phonology of English: An Introduction for Teachers of ESOL*. Brighton: ELB Publishing.

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16.00pm–16.45pm

Van Emden
Lecture Theatre

Kashmir Kaur,
University of Leeds

Enhancing International Student Experience Through Audio Formative Feedback

This session will deliver a presentation outlining a pilot case study with respect to audio formative feedback. It will outline the methodologies used to deliver this feedback and explain the results and the way forward.

To progress learning, formative feedback is essential. However, experience shows that international students do not always accord this feedback the attention it deserves. It is sometimes viewed as low stakes because it does not present grades; hence, students do not fully engage with formative feedback. Observation showed that students measured their progress through their grades as these were viewed as concrete evidence of their progression.

This case study responded to this situation in the form of 'audio formative feedback' in an effort to engage international students to interact with their formative feedback, in a concerted way, as a primary tool to enhance their learning and achievement. Embedded is the focus that students develop a robust understanding of their individual academic strengths and weaknesses and take a more marked responsibility for their own learning.

Formative feedback is identified as being specific, detailed and constructive to refocus students on the learning process and re-engage them to the intrinsic value rather than focusing solely on grades.

The frameworks used to help frame this issue are the debates in education concerning the utility of formative assessment (Barram, 2017; Bennett 2011; Shepard, 2008; Kahl, 2005; Marshall, 2005 & Sadler 1989) and studies concerning audio feedback (Hooper, 2010; Lunt & Curran, 2010 & Orsmond, Merry & Reiling, 2005).

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Edith Morley 125

Amy Moses,
University of Kent

Caroline Challans, CEWL,
University of Kent

From the horse's mouth: students' perspectives of engagement and disengagement on the IFP

Introduction

Student engagement is a complex and growing area within HE research; however, how well do IFP staff understand what it is and its impact on students? To open our presentation we will ask attendees to complete an activity to define and consider key influences on student engagement. Based on student research and relevant literature review, the presentation will look at why student engagement is important and reasons for disengagement on the IFP. It is hoped by the end of the presentation we will be closer to defining what engagement means to students on the IFP and if there are innovative ways in which improvements can be made to enhance 'engaging students' and 'students engaging' (Bryson, 2014:18).

Findings

We will present our findings from a questionnaire, student focus groups and literature review.

Discussion & Conclusion

Recognising student engagement iscomplex, Zepke and Leach (2010) set out ten proposals for action for improvement, including enhancing student's self-belief, adapting to student's changing expectations, enabling students to become active citizens and develop their social and cultural capital. Through discussion and based on our findings we hope to devise our own proposals for action and innovative ideas to improve student engagement on the IFP. In conclusion we hope to recognise the value of the IFP experience as one that already enhances student engagement, with both short and long term effects, whilst acknowledging more can still be done to help engage students and ensure students actively engage.

Citations:

Bryson, C (2014) '*Understanding and Developing Student Engagement*' Abingdon: Routledge

Zepke, N and Leach, L (2010) 'Improving Student Engagement: Revisiting Pedagogical Content and Knowledge' *Active Learning in Higher Education* 14 (2) 97-107

Edith Morley 127

Karin Whiteside,
University of Reading

Engaging a mixed native and non-native speaking group in the learning of written genres for Psychology

This paper reports on the development and trialling, across a two-year period, of materials for academic writing workshops delivered to a group of first-year Psychology students as part of a differentiated strand of a core Psychology skills module.

The first-year Skills for a Psychology with Academic Language (PY1SKE) module is designed for students, both home and international, identified as being in need of extra academic writing support (other first-year students complete PY1SK, Skills for Psychology). Students taking PY1SKE have a slightly different assessment structure and attend weekly academic writing workshops in autumn and spring. In autumn, the workshops focus on two genres, the Practical/Experimental Report and Critical Review. In spring, the focus is on the Essay genre and Reflective Writing.

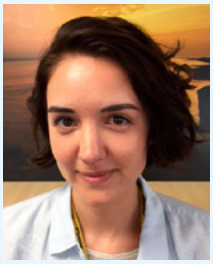
The approach taken within the workshops attends to purpose, structure and lexico-grammatical features of each target genre.

One of the main challenges in developing the workshop series has been to meaningfully engage both native and non-native speakers who have overlapping but also slightly divergent needs. Drawing on and talking around examples from the materials, I will explain the approach that has evolved and reflect on both strengths and areas for further development. The cohort is similar, in terms of the diversity of linguistic abilities, to that found on many international foundation programmes, so the approach developed will be of interest for practitioners on international Foundation programmes developing subject-specific academic skills and literacy materials.

LUNCHTIME SESSION

12.15–13.15

Edith Morley G25



Abigail Letford,
ELT Sales Representative,
National Geographic Learning

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The submission of papers is now invited for the sixteenth edition of ***InForm*** from members of the academic community associated with international foundation programmes. Issue 17 will be published in December 2017.

We are interested in articles related to the variety of academic disciplines commonly found across international foundation programmes and remind contributors that ***InForm*** is not predominantly an English language teaching journal. ***InForm*** also includes a letters page with readers' responses to the articles included in previous editions. Letters should be no longer than 200 words.

Journal articles (of no more than 1200 words) should be sent by email to **inform@reading.ac.uk** by 12.00 pm on 31 October 2017.

For more information and a full writer's guide please visit **www.reading.ac.uk/inform**

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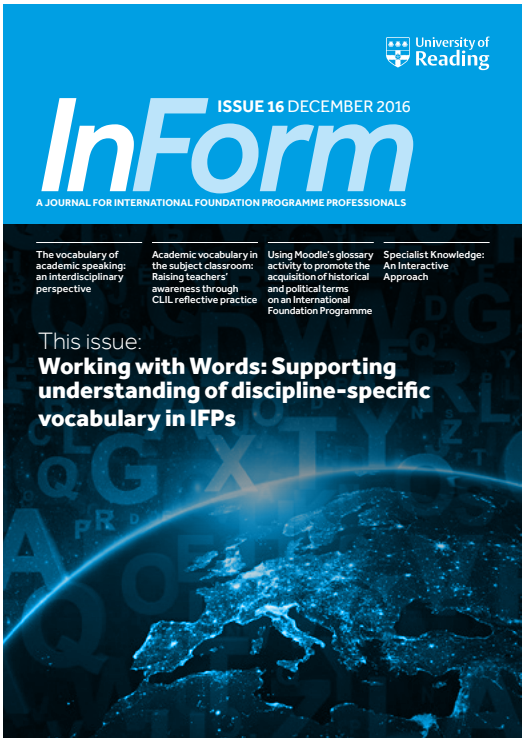

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