

student as producer

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Conference 2013 – June 26th – 27th

Session 4.2a

Challenges, Tensions and Barriers to Emancipatory Models of Student Voice

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Abstract

The demands and values of the neo-liberal market economy in western universities has changed the terrain of higher education, re-structuring managerial practices and processes and affecting the role and functions of the university and the beliefs about who can participate (Lambert, 2009). The resulting model of mass higher education is accompanied with increasing demands of students and the ideology of the student as a paying 'customer' or 'consumer', directly impacting on pedagogic practices, principles and relations between staff and students.

The 'student as consumer' model limits the role and participation of student voice and has come under increased scrutiny with a number of other models or metaphors suggested to help define the student–university relationship such as 'students as co-producers' or the concept of 'communities of practice' in learning (McCulloch, 2009; Streetling and Wise, 2009).

A co-producer model encourages reflection and cultural change to approaches in teaching and learning and quality enhancement processes; at an institutional level to decision making and policy formation; and a subject level to direct participation and membership of committees, review panels and validations. The extent to which students 'buy-in' to work as partners with staff in enquiry and the willingness of staff to engage in 'power sharing' are key determinants in redefining the student–lecturer relationship (Bishop et al., 2012).

This presentation will explore and discuss the challenges, tensions and barriers facing emancipatory models of working, for what is ultimately an institutional responsibility for managing ongoing improvement.

Presenter details

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