University of Sussex
Law, Politics & Sociology

The Higher Education Academy

Student Retention and Success across the Disciplines

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HEA Project - overview

- New project examining: *retention* and *attainment* ***by subject area***
  - To produce discipline level reports for 28 HEA subject areas
    - Based on quantitative data from HESA
- and by range of student characteristics:
  - Ethnicity
  - Socio-economic classification
  - Gender
  - Disability
  - PT/FT
  - Age
  - entry qualification type
  - Locality etc.

And HEI type

- For example…
  - University Alliance
  - Russell Group etc.

Why discipline?

- Often get important variations that prompt further targeted enquiry
  - Can improve understanding of differences between student groups *and* orientate discussion to HEIs and common practices (which we can address more easily)
    - e.g. Male attainment of Firsts
    - Mature students' employment success
    - ECU report on male and female use of academic and pastoral support services in HE
  - Revealing areas qualitative research can then drill down into
    - Perhaps revealing areas of both best and less good practice

Continuation and non-continuation

- Of interest:
  - ***Those who left with no award***
  - ***Those who left with lower award than intended***
- Reasons for leaving:
  - Academic failure/left in bad standing/not permitted to progress
  - Transferred to another institution
  - Health reasons
  - Financial reasons
  - Other personal reasons & dropped out
  - Gone into employment
- ***And those who left because they qualified***

Attainment

- Because of the nature of data, success defined as achieving award and then type of award:
  - Degree pass
  - Firsts
  - ‘Good degree’ pass etc.

Some preliminary findings - *Retention*

- Non-completion of intended course **varies** e.g. from 11.3% for ‘Other’ (broad-based courses) through to 9.4% for Computer Science and 3.7% for Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences
- **Women** less likely to be in category of withdrawing without intended award in all subject areas but: Economics, History and Philosophy & Religious Studies
  - ECU work – men prefer certain services
- **Part-time** students less likely to complete their intended course in every subject area - especially in some

Some preliminary findings on *attainment*

- **Women** getting more ‘good degrees’ across all discipline areas except: Computer Science, Engineering, Nursing, Philosophy & Religious Studies and Politics
- **Students from SEC 12 backgrounds** more likely to get ‘good degree’ in all subject areas but trend especially strong in ‘**traditional**’ areas:
  - Economics, English, GEES, History, Languages, Maths & Stats, Philosophy & Religious Studies etc.

Workshop

- More detail on preliminary findings
- What are the likely explanations for patterns?
- What strategies may address discrepancies?
- Most useful outputs for subject areas
  - What do you already know?
  - What would you like to know/know more about?

Workshop – further preliminary findings, retention

- **Significant** variation across subjects in percentage of students leaving because of poor academic standing/failure
  - This accounts for around a quarter of losses in some subjects including:
    - Languages, Computer Science, Engineering, Finance & Accounting, Hospitality, Maths & Stats, Physical Science
- **'Personal reasons'** account for over 20% of student losses because of 'personal reasons':
  - Art & Design, English, GEES, Health, History, Languages, Media, Dance and Drama, Sociology, Social Work & Policy, Psychology, Politics, Media, Marketing

Workshop – further preliminary findings, attainment

- Mature students less likely to achieve a ‘good degree’ in all but: Art & Design, Built Environment, Languages, ‘Other’, Social Work & Policy
- ‘BME’ less likely than ‘White’ to achieve ‘good degree’ in all subject areas

What Works Conference (HEFCE/ PHF)

University of York

28-29 March 2012

UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON
KNOWLEDGE • INNOVATION • ENTERPRISE

Inclusive learning and teaching

Engaging students, engaging teachers

Professor Christine Hockings
Institute for Learning Enhancement
University of Wolverhampton

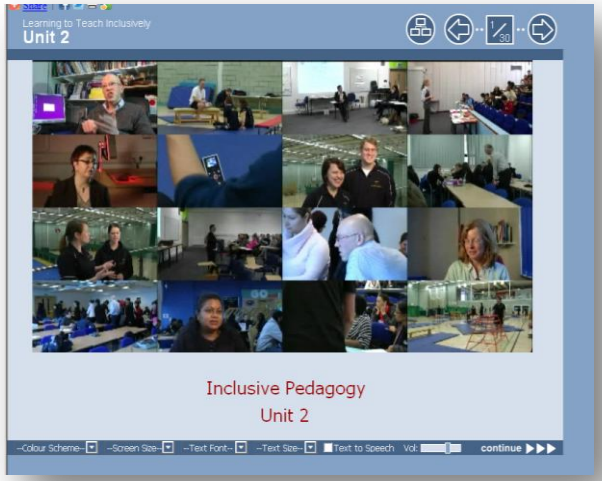
What works? Key messages

- Academic issues are a primary reason why students think about leaving.
- Effective interventions …have an overt academic purpose, & develop peer and staff/student relations.
- Good quality learning and teaching is essential to student retention and success.
- **It is reliant on staff engagement: awareness, understanding and change. *The Learning to Teach Inclusively* resources support this**

(Liz Thomas, 2011 Learning to Teach Inclusively Project Conference, Wolverhampton)

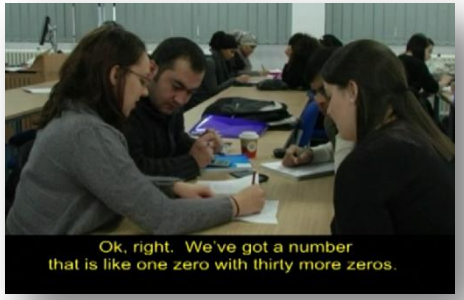
Challenges for teachers and academic developers: *awareness, understanding, change*

- How teachers academically engage *all* students within diverse groups
- How we create inclusive learning environments
- How we influence policy and practice in university teaching to support the above.



Release of these resources has been supported by the Higher Education Academy/JISC Open Educational Resources programme

Engaging students, engaging teachers workshop



- Consider some of the principles of engaging learning and teaching (ESRC WP project)
- Take a look at the Learning to Teach Inclusively resources (OER OMAC project)
- Explore with colleagues how the principles and resources could be used to engage staff and students (JISC/HEA Embedding project)

Workshop highlights the need for

Craft & principles of engaging L&T

Safe space for experimentation & development

Voice to influence policy and practice, co-ordination & change

Workshop Room RCH / 250 at: 14:30

Artisan teachers retain and engage more students in learning that is relevant and meaningful to them.

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Designing an Inclusive Curriculum

A musical introduction to a kaleidoscope of opportunities not forgetting the bamboo!

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/inclusion/Disability/Inclusive_curriculum_design_in_higher_education

Centre for Disability Research CeDR

REAP Researching Equity Access & Participation

Musical Interlude

- Let’s start at the very beginning
- Beg, steal or borrow
- I get by with a little help from my friends
- A Kaleidoscope of opportunities
- Old, new, borrowed and blue

Don’t forget
No bamboo

Let’s start at the very beginning …

- You
- Your students
- Your institution
- Your discipline

- Inclusive Curriculum Design

Beg, steal or borrow

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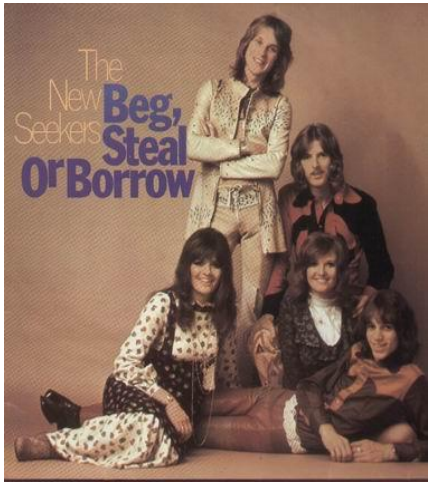
Inclusive Curriculum Design guide provides:

- **Wealth of ideas from the sector**
- **A resource on which to build**
- **An opportunity for institutional and discipline discussion**



With a little help from my friends

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Who will you involve in the process?

- Students
- Colleagues
  - Discipline
  - Other disciplines
  - Teaching Development
  - Specialists
  - Central services
- Stakeholders

Kaleidoscope of opportunities

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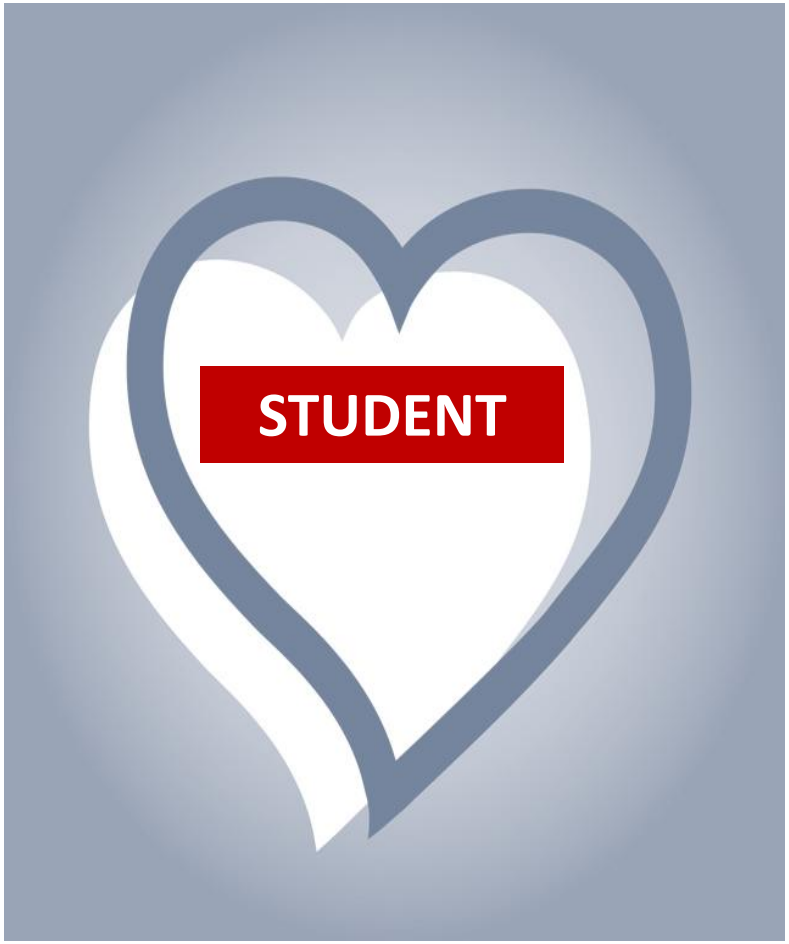
Inclusive Curriculum Design contains:

- **Principles**
- **Questions for course design**
- **General considerations**
- **Discipline considerations**
- **Ideas**
- **References**

Inclusive Curriculum Design …

- Recognises **Multiple identities**
- Avoids compartmentalising solutions based on specific 'need'
- Adopts holistic approach to meet **entitlements**



Guiding Principles

- Anticipatory
- Flexible
- Accountable
- Collaborative
- Transparent
- Equitable

Making a case

- Value positions
- Business case – equality legislation
- Shared ownership and partnership
- Quality enhancement
- Student satisfaction surveys
- **Student retention and success**

Generic Considerations

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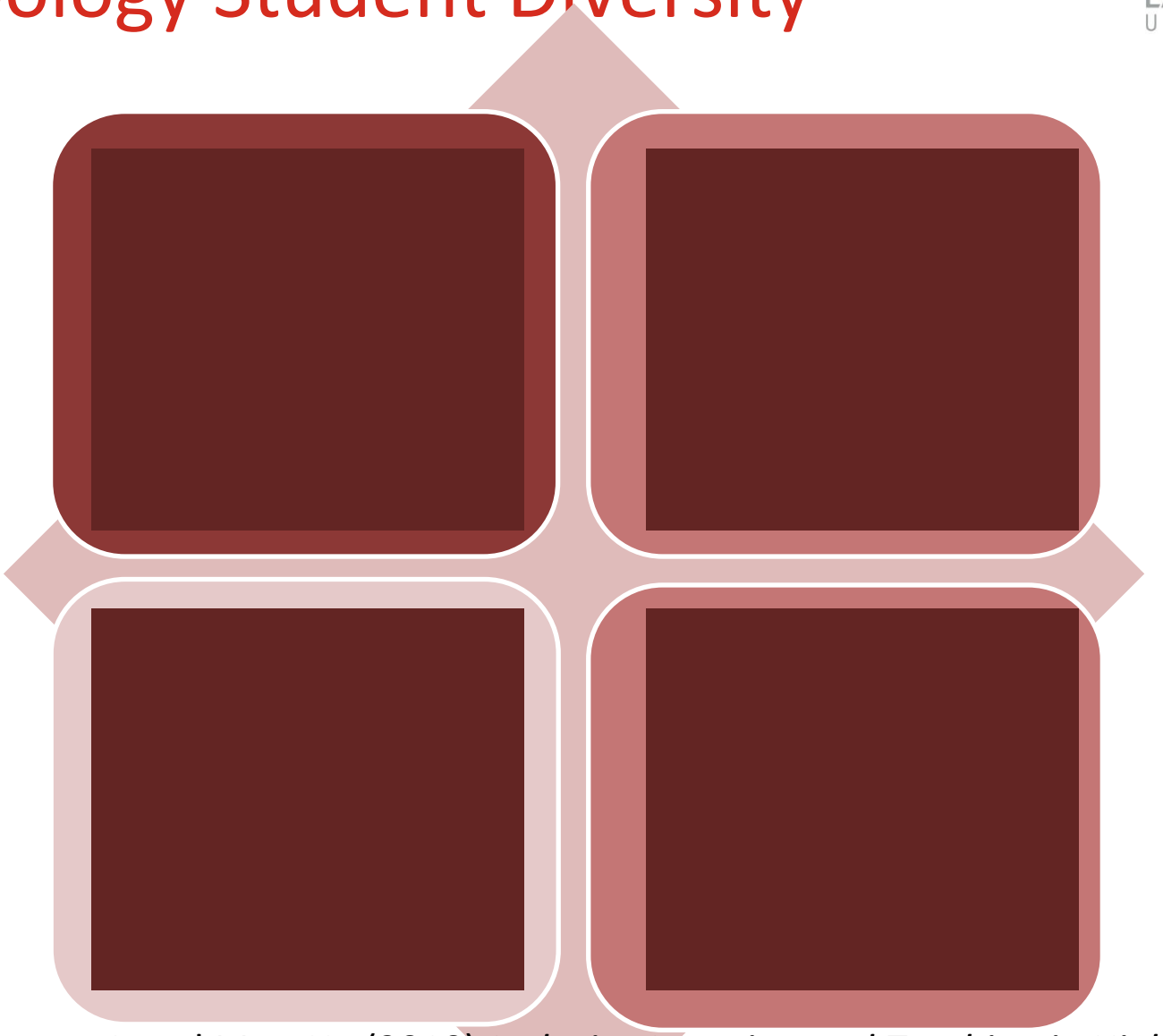
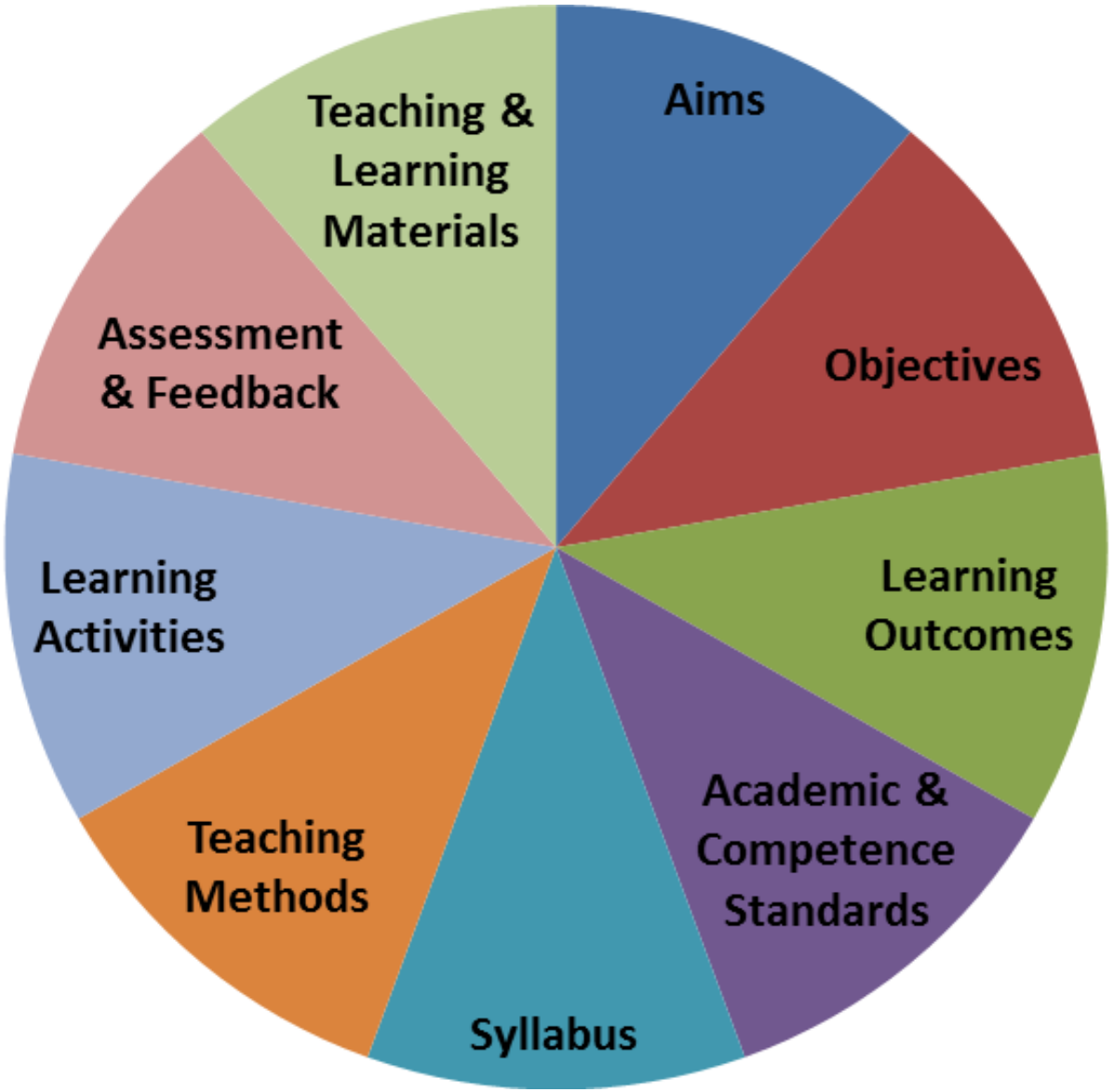
- Considering **cost** and financial implications
- Embedding student and staff **well-being**
- Promoting **student engagement**
- Use of **technology** to enhance learning
- Responding to different **approaches to learning**
- Avoiding stereotypes and celebrating **diversity**
- Making **reasonable adjustments**

Typology Student Diversity



From Thomas, L and May, H. (2010) *Inclusive Learning and Teaching in Higher Education* York: Higher Education Academy (p9 of ICD guide)

Questions about Components



Something old, new, borrowed and ~~blue~~ ... no bamboo

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Inclusive Curriculum Design provides:

- An approach to address generic considerations
- A framework of principles that provide benefits to the:
  - Individual
  - Institution
- A starting point
- **No Bamboo**

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http://www.lancs.ac.uk/shm/study/doctoral_study/dclinpsy/new/events/

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