

Scotland's Ambition for Student Partnership

Amy Monks, Development Consultant, sparqs
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sparqs is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation funded by the Scottish Funding Council. Registration number SC046172.



Who are we?



- student **partnerships** in **quality Scotland**.
- Full-time staff in Edinburgh.
- Works with all institutions and students' associations in the university and college sector.
- Scottish Charity - members all sector agencies.
- Main funding from the Scottish Funding Council.
- www.sparqs.ac.uk



Consider...



**“What does student
partnership mean to
you?”**



Scotland's Ambition for Student Partnership



- A shared vision statement developed for the sector.
- 8 Features of Student Partnership to help institutions and students to reflect, improve and grow
- Supports continuous enhancement and ensures student voices are empowered.





Genuine dialogue

Partnership creates opportunities for **genuine dialogue** and requires a relationship between the institution, the students' association and students, which values equally the contribution each brings.

Evidence of this could include:

- There are student members on decision-making forums at all levels, including board, faculty, programme and professional services. Students actively participate, share and present on the agenda and have influence over the decisions made in these spaces.
- Students are a part of informal spaces and pre-committee meetings where key topics and decisions are discussed and priorities for enhancement are set.
- There are regular and established communication channels between chairs of committees and student representatives.
- At all levels of the institution, spaces exist where students and staff can engage in exploring difficult challenges, participate in ongoing dialogue and progress their ideas.
- Self-evaluation and enhancement planning processes create opportunities and support for students and staff to work together to reach a joint understanding of institutional strengths and weakness and develop action plans.
- Students and staff effectively negotiate and compromise to reach jointly-owned decisions.
- The Student Learning Experience model helps frame discussions to identify areas of enhancement in both formal and informal spaces.



Indicators of Practice





Diversity of student voices

Partnership values the **diversity of student voices**, their backgrounds and their lived experiences. All students who wish to should have the opportunity to participate fully and take on a partnership-level role, and opportunities exist for students to be involved at a level that suits them.

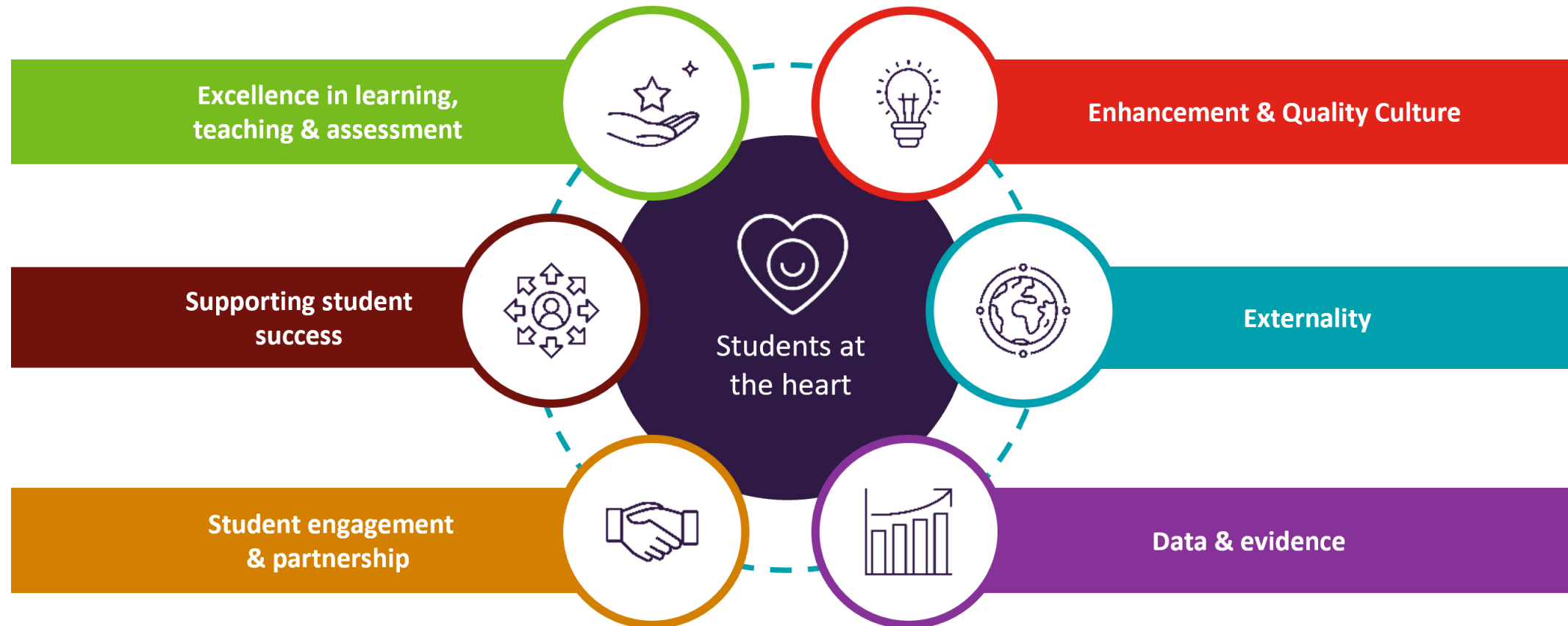
Evidence of this could include:

- Students and staff understand the diversity of their student body and take steps to ensure that their approaches to decision making and partnership utilise and consider this diversity.
- The diversity of those involved in partnership activities is monitored, groups who are underrepresented identified, and actions to include these voices taken.
- Partnership activities and mechanisms are designed to be accessible to all students to the greatest extent possible. This may include considerations of timing, location, cost, and mode of engagement (e.g. online/ in-person).
- There are specific activities with groups of students who may face additional barriers in accessing education or who are traditionally underrepresented in tertiary education, ensuring that diverse students are key partners in decisions that affect them.
- Partnership activities with students focus not just upon addressing inequalities and removing barriers to learning, but on actively enriching the wider student experience and valuing the ideas that diverse individuals bring.
- There are multiple opportunities for students to engage with partnership processes at a level that suits them. Students can choose to take part in engagement activities such as filling in a survey or contributing to a focus group, as well as taking on more substantial roles.



Indicators of Practice

So what?



Why is Student Partnership Important?



Students

- Develop confidence, communication, and leadership skills through active collaboration.
- Feel a greater sense of belonging, improving engagement and overall success.
- Students are experts in their own learning experience; this can help drive enhancement and changes.

Staff

- Benefit from student insights that help refine teaching and support practices.
- Build more positive, trust-based relationships with learners.
- Collaborate in creating innovative, relevant approaches to curriculum and delivery.

Institution

- Enhances quality and effectiveness through continuous feedback and co-creation.
- Strengthens reputation as a student-centred, responsive organisation.
- Improves retention, satisfaction, and outcomes by fostering a collaborative culture.

Consider...



**“How can enhance
student partnership in
my role?”**



Academic Development Toolkit



- Enhancing quality assurance (QA) and quality enhancement (QE) priorities at course, programme, and institutional level.
- Embedding student partnership within professional practice in Scotland's colleges and universities.
- Developing critical reflective practice within taught academic development programmes.



Contact us



sparqs key contact:

Chase Greenfield, Development Consultant

chase.greenfield@sparqs.ac.uk

Amy Monks, Development Consultant

amy.monks@sparqs.ac.uk

