RAISE Conference 2023

Enhancing & Interrogating Belonging to support Student Success

Programme and Abstract Booklet

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Welcome and Acknowledgements

Conference Co-Ordinator's Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to RAISE 2023 on behalf of both the [RAISE network](#) and the University of Leeds [Belonging and Success Research Group](#). Whether you are new to the activities of these groups or a seasoned member, and whether you are joining us in-person, online or as a mixture of the two, I hope you are able to make the most of the community that has come together for the next two days on our lovely campus.

Within a rapidly changing global, educational, political, economical, social and digital context, the research, discussion and advancing of sense of belonging in higher education has become increasingly important. Recognising the impact of students' sense of belonging on transition, attainment, progression, retention and success, higher education institutions around the world have begun putting into place initiatives aimed at deepening the connections between students and the communities of practice that they will encounter. Given increasing social mobility and diversity of students' backgrounds as its consequences, it has become broadly acknowledged for policy makers, educators and student support services to critically reflect on their practices that have been, or will be, implemented in higher education institutions, and to listen with greater urgency to the voices of students. The focus of this conference – to explore ways of 'enhancing and interrogating belonging to support student success' – aims to do just that. I am delighted and excited by the diversity of perspectives, practices and critical approaches that will be presented over the coming days, and look forward to the conversations, reflections and collaborations that will doubtless continue in the conference's wake.

There are many whom I would like to thank for their help and support during the organisation of this event. A full list of conference committee members (both local and national), along with additional reviewers of conference proposals, are listed later; I am indebted to everyone in that list's time, insight, encouragement and endless reserves of patience. Louise Banahene and Paul Taylor, the co-convenors of the University of Leeds Belonging and Success Research Group, and Tom Lowe, the Chair of RAISE, have offered me detailed advice and support throughout. Richard de Blacquiere-Clarkson (University of Leeds) went far beyond the call of duty by designing and administering the platform for submitting abstracts and greatly simplifying the review process. Dave Riley (Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence, University of Leeds) created the wonderful online programme and has worked tirelessly alongside Corin Nanton (Senior Conference Coordinator, University of Leeds) to enable this to be the first ever hybrid RAISE annual conference. Finally, my deepest thanks to all our keynote speakers, panellists and conference presenters, without which this event would not have been possible.

Edward Venn, Conference Co-Ordinator (University of Leeds)

RAISE Chair Welcome

Researching, Advancing and Inspiring Student Engagement (RAISE) is a worldwide network of staff and students in Higher Education who work or have an interest in the research and promotion of student engagement. Founded in 2009 by a group of educational developers, RAISE has grown to become the UK's largest annual conference on student engagement, where we welcome delegates from across the world to discuss, debate and share research. This year our conference focuses on the development theme of belonging, which has returned to prominence in higher education policy post global pandemic, as a proposed solution to greater support student engagement, transition and community building in higher education. At this event, we aim to share perspectives, stories and build our critical understanding of what we mean when we speak about belonging, belongingness, and risks of alienation, in our increasingly complex education sector. For those keen to continue engaging in RAISE, please know this is just the beginning, where our free to join network has an active mailing list, reading group, journal, buddies' scheme and several special interest groups - where details can be found on our website. At our RAISE events, we welcome all stakeholders of higher education from students to senior management, academics and professional services, students' unions and sector bodies. We are all on a learning journey and all of our voices and perspectives matter – so please welcome discussion but respect one another as we all continue to create a student centred higher education for our students.

Tom Lowe (Chair of RAISE)

Student Belonging Good Practice Guide

New in 2023: Following a RAISE-funded collaborative project, we are delighted to announce the pending publication of the Student Belonging Good Practice Guide. Available in Autumn 2023, this easy-to-use guide brings together professional services, students and academics to share case studies, tools and a literature review on the theme of student belonging. The aim of the publication – which will be available to access via the RAISE Network – is to bring together sector insights to support all members of RAISE and beyond in developing their student belonging practice.
For further information, contact Nicola Watchman Smith (N.WatchmanSmith@tees.ac.uk)

Introduction to the University of Leeds Belonging and Success Research Group

The Belonging and Success Research Group brings together colleagues from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives across the institution who have a shared interest in the group's theme. Participation includes academic and professional services staff at all stages of their career alongside students in a supportive environment. A key focus of the group is providing opportunities to collaborate and develop. This has included the inception of student research internships enabling undergraduates to contribute to scholarship, develop skills and networks. We specifically welcome students under-represented in higher education.

Belonging and success is relevant to every dimension of the higher education experience. There is clear evidence that a sense of belonging leads to better outcomes for students and

that students from underrepresented groups are less likely to feel they belong. More research on belonging and success is needed to understand the structural barriers and so address inequity and exclusion. Research aimed at solving this problem requires a multi-disciplinary approach and amplification of those with lived experience of under-representation. There have been limited opportunities for intentional collaboration, development of new opportunities and a space for scholars, regardless of status, to interact, share and support. Traditional research cultures may not be sufficient to meet this need.

Over 40 members of staff and students meet on a regular basis. The group drafted the terms of reference collaboratively and agreed that the opportunity to share research at all stages of development was crucial. It was also agreed that it was also important to model the behaviours known to support belonging and success, including inclusivity, respect, celebration of diversity, and truly create a new kind of research group. Longer term, we believe the Belonging & Success Research Group, with its unique participatory culture, will help the University deliver on its commitment to "Collaboration, Compassion, Inclusivity and Integrity", improve outcomes for under-represented groups and attract further resource and recognition.

Given the theme of the group, ensuring that this is facilitated through a safe space where members feel they are valued and can thrive has been a key area of focus. In just one year, it has enabled partnerships to develop research proposals, collaborate and share methodologies. This has broken down boundaries with academic supervisors and researchers from the professional services as well as enhancing the range of opportunities for students from minoritised groups to participate in related research and the group.

The outputs of the group and the way in which work has been shared has enabled recommendations or actions to be embedded into practice. This has included changes to assessment, diversity in postgraduate study and work to embed belonging. This impact is both institutionally and across the sector. For example, work on diversity in postgraduate students was completed by an undergraduate medical student and this has informed a strategy blueprint developed by a national special interest group. Similarly, work undertaken on belonging has been shared and embedded at Leeds but also several universities across the sector.

Belonging Research Methodologies Group

 This group provides an informal space for discussion and debate around research methodologies used to explore belonging in higher education. It provides opportunity to develop greater understanding of a range of research methodologies; share examples of the application of specific methodologies and share work in progress within an inclusive, supportive environment. The group meets once every 8 – 10 weeks.

 For information on how to join please contact: Louise Banahene (l.banahene@adm.leeds.ac.uk) and Paul Taylor (p.c.taylor@leeds.ac.uk) .

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Louise Banahene MBE, Director of Educational Engagement
Professor Paul Taylor, Dean: Student Education (Experience)

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Student Belonging Community of Practice

The Student Belonging Community of Practice (CoP) provides a space for discussions, the sharing of ideas and best practice for those working within Higher Education, with an interest in student belonging. The CoP currently has more than 50 members from > 25 institutions across the UK and it is growing weekly with the first member from an overseas institution joining just last week!

We have informal monthly meetings where members can present on work they have been doing or are interested in exploring around student belonging and this is then followed by group discussions. The group also provides opportunities for collaboration, for example with an upcoming collection of articles for Times Higher Education Campus+. Anyone with an interest in student belonging within Higher Education is very welcome to join and they can do so via: https://forms.office.com/e/zvNnnEsRgN or by scanning the QR code.

List of Conference Committee Members

Local Leeds Conference Committee	RAISE Conference Committee	Additional Programme Reviewers
Sarah Amin (student rep)	Ella Dyer	Jenny Brady
Louise Banahene	Rachel Forsyth	Hayley Bullard
Richard de Blacquiere-Clarkson	Ruta Furmonaviciene	Helen Durham
Richard Harris	Claire Garden	Clare Mawson
Isobel Kedge (student rep)	Ayoola Johnson	Camilla McCartney
Mike (student rep)	Eugenie Johnson	Emma Peasland
Niamh Mullen	Jill LeBihan	
Rachael O'Connor	Tom Lowe (Chair)	
Christopher Ostrowdun	Ellie Mayo-Ward (Vice-Chair)	
Madeleine Pownall	Cinnomen McGuigan	
Dave Riley	Kevin McStravock	
Paul Taylor	Conor Naughton	
Edward Venn (Coordinator)	John Parkin	
	Nicola Watchman Smith	

Venue, On-line access, and map

All sessions can be viewed on-line, and all delegates can participate in chat, using the following link:

https://universityofleeds.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrcOCuqTwrE9XXYat7BD_p7dGJVKu0fW3O#/registration.

Please note, when you join the online meeting you will be in the plenary lecture theatre. The parallel sessions will be hosted in the Zoom breakout rooms.

In-person registration, along with all sessions and coffee breaks will be held in the Esther Simpson Building.

For those attending in-person, lunches and the drinks reception/posters will be held in the nearby Newlyn Building.

A campus map can be accessed and downloaded by clicking on the image below; the Esther Simpson building is #12 on the map and the Newlyn Building #85. For delegates staying on campus, Charles Morris Hall/Storm Jameson Court is #86 on the map.

Social Events and Poster Exhibition

The main social event for the conference is the drinks reception/poster presentation session on the evening of Wednesday 6th September.

In addition to this, there are two informal social events:

- Tuesday 5th September, from 19.00. Meet at Terrace, Leeds University Student Union
- Wednesday 6th September, from 19.00. Meet at Nation of Shopkeepers Pub

You are also encouraged to make the most of what the campus and Leeds has to offer. Options include (but are not limited to):

- Cafes on Campus
- Art on Campus
- Prayer, Contemplation and Faith-based support on campus
- Public Art Trail
- Campus Biodiversity Walk
- Walks in Leeds

Poster Exhibition: Sense of Belonging: People? Or Space?

Location: Foyer, Esther Simpson Building

The poster exhibition titled: *Sense of Belonging: People? Or Space?* is part of the project "Enhancing Research Culture Open Call" from Research England. It revolved around nine interviews with PGR students conducted by the research team formed by Professor Gehan Selim, Dr. Pam Birtill, Dr Jill Dickinson, and Dr Rebecca Brunk. Through the interviews, students gave us photographs of the places they feel like they belonged, and we discussed their experiences as PGR´s in the University of Leeds. These pictures and quotes are supposed to give us something to think about regarding our community and our university and the relation people have with educational spaces. The exhibition contains 19 posters and was curated by Dr Meng Li and PGR Karen Arzate Quintanilla. The research team thanks the research students who shared their experiences of belonging on campus and they are grateful for their frank and open discussions around difficult topics.

Programme Overview

For the most up-to-date schedule, see https://www.raise-network.com/2023-conference-programme

Pre-conference – Tuesday September 5th

19.00   **Informal Social:** Terrace, Leeds University Student Union

Day One – Wednesday September 6th

8:00–9:30   **Registration** (Esther Simpson Building Foyer)

9:30–10:15   **Welcome and Keynote 1 – Student voice** (Esther Simpson Building 1.01)

10:15–10:30   **Refreshment Break** (Esther Simpson Building Foyer)

10:30–11:30   **Parallel Session 1**

11:40–12:40   **Parallel Session 2 – Workshops**

12:40–13:45   **Lunch** (Newlyn Building)

13:45–14:30   **Keynote 2: 'Exploring the concept of belonging: a journey through super complexity': Claire Hamshire and Elizabeth King** (Esther Simpson Building 1.01)

14:40–15:40   **Parallel Session 3**

15:40–16:00   **Refreshment Break** (Esther Simpson Building Foyer)

16:00–17:00   **Parallel Session 4**

17:00–19:00   **Drinks Reception and Posters** (Newlyn Building)

19:00   **Informal Social:** Nation of Shopkeepers Pub

Day Two – Thursday September 7th

8:00–9:00   **RAISE AGM** (Esther Simpson Building 1.01)

8:00–9:30   **New Arrival delegate registration** (Esther Simpson Building Foyer)

9:30-–10:15   **Keynote 3: Jeff Grabill** (Esther Simpson Building 1.01)

10:15–10:35   **Refreshments** (Esther Simpson Building Foyer)

10:35–11:35   **Parallel Session 5**

11:45–12:45   **Parallel Session 6 - Workshops**

12:45–13:45   **Lunch** (Newlyn Building)

13:45–14:45   **Parallel Session 7**

14:45–15:15   **Refreshment Break** (Esther Simpson Building Foyer)

15:15–16:00   **Parallel Session 8 – Pecha Kucha**

16:10–17:00   **Plenary Q and A** (Esther Simpson Building 1.01)

17.00   **Close of Conference**

Parallel Session 1 (Wednesday 6th September)

	1.01	1.08	2.08	2.10	2.11	3.08
	1A: Imposter Phenomenon and Alienation	**1B: Intersections**	**1C: Partnership for belonging and success**	**1D: Embracing belonging: before and after**	**1E: Inclusive pedagogies for belonging and success**	**1F: Does belonging always mean success?**
10.30–11.00	Stacey Mottershaw (University of Leeds) *Common ground: Using authenticity to make connections in teaching*	Richard Harris, Madeleine Pownall (Leeds) *Intersections of Student Belonging: Reflections from Co-Created Pedagogical Research in Psychology*	Charlotte Boulton (Newcastle University) *Co-creating evaluation of belonging interventions with student researchers, a University-Students' Union partnership*	Lory Barile, Bo Kelestyn, Nikita Asnani (University of Warwick) *Belonging, design thinking and sustainability: the 3Cs approach*	Heather McClean, Olumide Popoola (Queen Mary University) *Inclusive Teaching: Scaffolding for Success*	Maria Moxey (University of Winchester) *Critically considering the role of extracurricular sport at university: does belonging always mean success?*
11.00–11.30	Maisha Islam, Priya Ahmed; Tahnia Ahmed; Musharrat Ahmed-Landeryou; Aniqa Leena; Tia Moin (University of Southampton) *Angaaz sisters - A subaltern space of belonging for British-Bangladeshi female doctoral students*	Biddy Casseldon, Amanda Foster, Lorna Hibbert (Northumbria University) *Using student ambassadors to amplify black voices in Northumbria University library. To be delivered online*	Matthew Tang, Mona Jaber, Ana Cabral (Queen Mary University) *Educators and Learners co-creating practice exam questions: inviting students to the assessment drawing room in transnational education*	Pamela Calabrese, Alessandra Bossoni, Skye Kenny (Edinburgh Napier University) *How was it for you? Student reflections on partnership-working in post-pandemic HE*	Laura Loyola-Hernandez (University of Leeds) *Legos, Posters & Body Mapping: students understanding of community-led pedagogies*	Reuel Blair, Samia Muse, and NTU students (Nottingham Trent University) *"I've got this inner strength from the programme, it has made me feel whole" – Experiences of initiating The Black Leadership Programme at NTU*

Parallel Session 2 – Workshops (Wednesday 6th September)

	1.01	1.08	2.08	2.10	2.11	3.08
11.40–12.40	**2A: Can pedagogic choices support a student's sense of belonging?** Jane Bartholomew (Nottingham Trent University)	**2B: LEAP in(to) Practice: Nurturing Minoritized, High-Performing Students through Co-Curricular Interventions** Charlotte Durham, Tess Hornsby-Smith (University of Leeds)	**2C: Belonging in Co-curricular Spaces: Rise at Manchester Met** John Lean, Matthew Carney, Lorna Colter, Catherine Elkin, C-J Foster, Elle Simms (Manchester Metropolitan University)	**2D: Designing with, not just for: inclusive & design-led student engagement** Tom Ritchie, Tom Baines (University of Warwick)	**2E: Welcome from the start: incorporating a nuanced focus on belonging into pre-arrival work** Jennie Blake, Adam Cooke, Iqra Malik (University of Manchester)	**2F: Belonging and the hidden power of experience as meaningful expertise** Nikita Asnani, Minali Sanghani, Bo Kelestyn (University of Warwick)

Parallel Session 3 (Wednesday 6th September)

	1.08	2.08	2.10	2.11	3.08
	3A: Partnership for belonging and success	**3B: Inclusive pedagogies for belonging and success**	**3C: Embracing belonging: before and after**	**3D: Imposter Phenomenon and Alienation**	**3E: Does belonging always mean success?**
14.40–15.10	Clare Wright, Alison Leslie (University of Leeds) *Stepping Up, Standing Out: Supporting international PGTs to make the most of their year in a UK university*	Laura Keane, Elaine Aylward (South East Technological University) *Exploring the Role of Peers in Supporting Transition*	Laura Conroy, Lauren Huxley (University of Leeds) *Meet Me in the Middle - Exploring Sense of Belonging for Younger Mature Students*	Aimee Cuthbert (Highlands and Islands Student Association), Jeffrey Saddington-Wiltshire (University of Winchester) *Student Activism: An example of belonging and student success in Higher Education?*	Ria Bluck, Erick Morataya Gatica (Nottingham Trent University) *Challenging assumptions of success and how it relates to belonging: Learning from NTU's Student 2025 project*
15.10–15.40		Kelly Sisson, Michael Shaw (University of Lincoln) *What can we learn from apprenticeships? [to be delivered online]*	Helen Williams, Enya-Marie Clay, Jo Blissett, Lynne O'Neil (Open University) *Belonging: Treating students differently to treat them fairly*	Michelle Schneider (University of Leeds) *Staff and student perceptions of the Skills@Library service: Deficit or development?*	David Gilani (Middlesex University) *Student belonging: critiquing simplistic notions of its factors and links to student success*

Parallel Session 4 (Wednesday 6th September)

	1.08	2.08	2.10	2.11	3.08
	4A: Embracing belonging: before and after	**4B: Inclusive pedagogies for belonging and success**	**4C: Partnership for belonging and success**	**4D: Intersections**	**4E: Imposter Phenomenon and Alienation**
16.00–16.30	Ben Jackson, Tom Lowe (University of Portsmouth) *What Does It Mean To Become a Student in Higher Education?*	Tom Muskett (University of Leeds) *Can lectures create spaces where students feel that they belong?: or, how the 41st best stand-up in the world influenced my teaching practice*	Russell Lewis, Cheryl Stephens, Charlotte Wisson (University of Derby) *Interventions for Belonging: A toolkit for student co-creation*	Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka, Dean Smith and Zeinab Smillie (University of Stirling) *Co-Creating an Assessment Marking Rubric for Belonging and Success*	Elaine Aylward, Laura Keane (South East Technological University) *An Exploration of the Transition Process to Higher Education for Students with ASD*
16.30–17.00	Jill Dickinson (Leeds Beckett University), Sam Elkington (University of Leeds) *From learning space to Flowscapes: a person-environment-system framework for belonging in higher education* [To be delivered online]		Daisy Bao (University of Edinburgh) *Embracing and harnessing differentials in student-staff partnership to achieve sustainable belonging: Overcoming power conflict, navigating trust crisis, and building self-authorship*	Jenna Isherwood (University of Leeds) *'Global Community Conversations': Using 'story circles' to explore approaches to intercultural community-building at University of Leeds*	Conor Naughton (Nottingham Trent University) *'Bursaries, Beans and Bali? How the haves and have nots are impacting student belonging and how we can begin to change this?*

Parallel Session 5 (Thursday 7th September)

	1.01	1.08	2.08	2.10	2.11	3.08
	5A: Embracing belonging: before and after	**5B: Partnership for belonging and success**	**5C: Inclusive pedagogies for belonging and success**	**5D: Intersections**	**5E: Imposter Phenomenon and Alienation**	**5F: RAISE Special Interest Groups 2022-2023**
10.35–11.05	Ann Kaegi (University of Hull) *You Belong Here: using equity-centred Design Thinking to design for belonging*	Debbie De (Aston University) *Partnerships for belonging and success: a case study on Aston University's Learning Development Centre*	Tess Hornsby Smith, Charlotte Durham (University of Leeds) *"Engaged and curious minds": Learning from Participants' Experiences of the Leeds Excellence in the Arts Programme*	Ben Jackson, Carola Boehm (University of Winchester) *University 3.0: What Does it Mean for Learner Belonging?*	Jon Down, Alex Ferguson (GRIT Breakthrough Programmes) *How learning from work with marginalised and at risk young people helps with fostering student belonging and community*	Ruta Furmonaviciene (RAISE Special Interest Groups Convenor, De Montford University) *Enhancing student partnerships, inclusive practice and pedagogical research*
11.05–11.35	Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka, Daisy Bao (University of Stirling) *Enhancing belonging and inclusive learning environments to benefit student-staff partnerships*	Helen Sadig and Jiani Liu (University of Leeds) *Breaking down barriers to student belonging and success: An embedded partnership approach to developing students' academic language and skills*	Jenny Brady, Mike Kerr (University of Leeds) *Listening to Disabled Students Priorities for an Inclusive Curriculum*	Salma Al-Arefi (University of Leeds) *Engineering a sense of belonging* [to be delivered online]	Ruth Tudor (Open University) *Care Experienced Students & Belonging*	

Parallel Session 6 – Workshops (Thursday 7th September)

	1.08	2.08	2.10	2.11
11.45–12.45	**6A: Co-creating structures for belonging and community** Rebecca Freeman, Megan Caulfield, Students from the University of Warwick (University of Warwick)	**6B: Before, During, and After: Strengthening evaluations of commuter student support through 'Message Mapping'** Callum Perry and Gemma Standen (University of East Anglia)	**6C: Student Consultants: Collaborators and co-conspirators on building a positive student experience** Chris Birchall (University of Nottingham)	**6D: Revisiting the Forms, Functions and Purpose of Student Residences for Student Engagement in Universities** Zachery Spire (Stanford University). [To be delivered online.]

Parallel Session 7 (Thursday 7th September)

	1.08	2.08	2.10	2.11
	7A: Does belonging always mean success?	**7B: Embracing belonging: before and after**	**7C: Intersections**	**7D: RAISE Special Interest Group**
13.45–14.15	Edward Venn, Karen Burland (University of Leeds) Understanding student sense of belonging: a critical analysis of dominant discourses around belonging and its implications for contextual practice	Jane Bartholomew (Nottingham Trent University) Are students motivated to engage, belong and succeed in HE? - A 'Taxonomy of Self: The motivated undergraduate student' explores refocusing our attention toward developing students' behaviours and competencies	Janet Zheng, Weiwei Su, Bo Kelestyn (University of Warwick) Home away from home: belonging and mattering for the Chinese student community	RAISE Engaging Assessment Special Interest Group (convenors: Kiu Sum and Jagjeet Jutley-Neilson)
14.15–14.45	Alison Voice, Rob Purdy, David Bell (University of Leeds) Inclusive Pedagogies for Successful Transition to University	Jiani Liu (University of Leeds) Assessment literacy and student success: investigating how embedded academic skills in the curriculum develops student assessment literacy		

Parallel Session 8 – Pecha Kucha (Thursday 7th September)

	1.08	2.08	2.10	2.11	3.08
	8A: Partnerships	**8B: Embracing Belonging: before and after**	**8C: Inclusive Pedagogies for Belonging and Success**	**8D: Does Belonging Always mean success?**	**8E: Sense of Belonging**
15.15–16.00	Evolving partnerships: The University of Nottingham Students as Change Agents scheme- Lore Ayonrinde (University of Nottingham)	The transformation of Joint Honours Humanities student belonging and community experience- Rachel Challen (Nottingham Trent University)	Does Belonging drive engagement or does Engagement influence Belonging?- Tosha Nembhard (University of Leicester)	Rethinking module feedback to build a sense of belonging in the classroom- Laurice Fretwell, Corinna Chidley, Lee Pridmore, Sally Akehurst (University of Derby)	The student voice in enhancing learner outcomes: a case study from Scotland's colleges- Simon Varwell (Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland- SPARQS)
	Simulation-based active collaborative learning in Biosciences using the CAE Apollo Patient Simulator: a pilot study on Students as co-creators- Nelson Chong (Nottingham Trent University)	Students helping students: Passing on experience to ease the transition to university for first-year students- Cynthia E. Heiner*, Christine Schnaithmann, Romina Hagen, Nora Kaiser, Birthe Charlotte Hoffmann, Carolin Thiele (Freie Universitaet Berlin)	Encouraging student engagement with assessment feedback through inclusive and forward-facing strategies- Chris Little, Carmel Thomason (Manchester Metropolitan University)	Student belonging and mattering, and the impact on academic achievement- Clair Zawada (Birmingham City University)	How does 'digital shock' impact belonging and engagement among international students?- Sarah Knight, Elizabeth Newall, Diana Andreea Catana (JISC)
	Rising together: Can an effective partnership be built from a 'deficit' starting point?- William Martin, Julie Warden, Tom Robshaw, Maria Azmanova (University of Bradford)	Building Belonging through Group Personal tutoring- Ruth Payne (University of Leeds)	Using AI to support student success- Kellyanne Findlay (University of Strathclyde)		Knowing me, knowing you - the role of the relatable academic for new and existing students- Carole Binns (University of Bradford). To be delivered online
		"I do not Feel Connected Because …": Exploring Students' Perceptions of Belonging Barriers in the Context of Higher Education- Alireza Maleki (Kashmar Institute of Higher Education). To be delivered online.			

Keynote and Plenary Information

Wednesday 6 September

Keynote 1 – Student Voice

Mike is a fourth-year medical student at the University of Leeds. He is a care experienced, mature, disabled student who advocates on a local, regional and national level. Mike has used his lived in experiences for a number of years to champion other care leavers into and through higher education. This talk will be focussed on why the lived in experiences of widening participation students not only enriches higher education but fundamentally the NHS. Now more than ever in the middle of a cost of living crisis, it is essential that our doctors are representative of the communities they serve and how that empowers our patients and NHS trusts. Topics discussed will include systemic barriers in higher education for care experienced students, food poverty and partnerships with higher education institutions to improve outcomes and sense of belonging for all students.

Keynote 2 – 'Exploring the concept of belonging: a journey through super complexity': Claire Hamshire and Elizabeth King

Dr Claire Hamshire is a Professor of Higher Education and the Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor, Education and Student Experience, at the University of Salford, UK. She is also an Advance HE National Teaching Fellow, Principal Fellow and the Vice-President for the European Region of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL). Throughout her career Claire has been instrumental in ensuring that universities puts students' perspectives at the centre of teaching and research developments, with the goal of facilitating their development to prepare them for their future careers. Her research interests include first- generation students' experiences, peer-assisted learning, student engagement and learning transitions and she has published and presented research about students' learning experiences for the last decade.

Thursday 7th September

Keynote 3 – Jeff Grabill

Jeff Grabill is Deputy Vice Chancellor for Student Education at the University of Leeds. Prior to joining the University of Leeds, Grabill was at Michigan State University (MSU) in the United States for nearly 20 years. He served Michigan State University as the Associate Provost for Teaching, Learning, and Technology. In that role, he was responsible for facilitating innovation in learning and educator professional development via his role as Director of the Hub for Innovation in Learning and Technology. Grabill's research focuses on how digital writing is associated with citizenship and learning. That work has been located in community contexts, in museums, and in classrooms at both the K-12 and university levels. Grabill is also a co-founder of Drawbridge, an educational technology company.

Plenary Q and A

Speakers:

Professor Jaclyn (Jackie) Stewart is Associate Dean Academic, Faculty of Science, and Professor of Teaching, Department of Chemistry at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

Ayoola Johnson is the Access, Student Success and Development Coordinator at The University of Manchester and also a Student Committee Member of RAISE. Ayoola has huge interest in student partnership and was previously the Elected Officer at Portsmouth SU where he led on academic representation, student voice and peer-mentoring opportunities.

Conor Naughton is an educational developer at Nottingham Trent University responsible for a portfolio of academic development services, specialising in student engagement and transition. He is a committee member of RAISE, a postgraduate student, and an external trustee at the University of Salford Students' Union. Prior to this, Conor was President of Nottingham Trent Students' Union and a University governor from 2020 – 2022.

Gareth Jones completed his law degree with The Open University in 2022, after starting his studies in 2018. Gareth has been the Deputy President of the OU Students Association since August 2022, and before that was a part of the Student Leadership Team as Faculty Representative for Business and Law.

Dom Smithies is the Head of Influencing and Communications at Student Minds, the UK's student mental health charity. Dom is a part of the senior leadership team within the organisation and leads the directorate responsible for policy, insight, communications and student engagement. He also supports the delivery of the University Mental Health Charter. Dom has been with the organisation for six years and has been involved in a number of sector-wide initiatives to improve practice, including UUK's publications in their Suicide Safer Universities series, as well as publishing a few reports at Student Minds focused on addressing mental health inequalities amongst different student groups.

Sunday Blake is an associate editor at Wonkhe. She has previously held roles in universities in strategic development and delivery with a specific focus on belonging and inclusion, after starting her career as President of the University of Exeter Students' Guild, where she worked for two years after completing a postgraduate degree. She has carried out policy change work both locally and nationally in areas such as sexual misconduct, drug and alcohol use, student sex work, freedom of speech and no-detriment policies. And has published research on belonging and inclusion in higher education. She is interested in widening participation, access and retention, and graduate

Abstracts

Parallel Session 1 (Wednesday 6 September 10:30–11.30)

1A: Imposter Phenomenon and Alienation

Common ground: Using authenticity to make connections in teaching
Stacey Mottershaw (University of Leeds)

This session will outline a work-in-progress project exploring the (un)importance of authenticity in teaching, with a focus on higher education settings. Despite authenticity in teaching being a complex and contested term, staff are increasingly asked to present an authentic teaching identity, ostensibly to improve student engagement with teaching and to enhance a sense of belonging (Johnson and LaBelle, 2017). Little attention has been paid to whether underrepresented staff feel that they can be their authentic selves in the classroom. The vulnerability that the practice of authenticity entails and the burden that this places on staff to find the balance between authenticity and credibility (Brookfield, 2015) has not been explored, particularly in the context of under-represented staff whose experiences may be characterised by a sense of unbelonging (Wren Butler, 2021). The project runs across two phases: phase one explores staff and student perceptions of authenticity and the importance of it in teaching via four focus groups (two with staff and two with students). Phase two will involve a series of semi-structured interviews with academic staff who identify as under-represented, to explore their experiences of practising authentic teaching. The focus group data and interview data will be examined using Thematic Analysis. This paper will outline the project and facilitate critical dialogue with conference delegates on their own experiences of authentic teaching, which will in turn influence the delivery of both phases of the project.

Angaaz sisters - A subaltern space of belonging for British-Bangladeshi female doctoral students
Maisha Islam, Priya Ahmed; Tahnia Ahmed; Musharrat Ahmed-Landeryou; Aniqa Leena; Tia Moin (University of Southampton).

Centered on a doctoral thesis, this presentation aims to explore feelings of (un)belonging from the positionality of Bangladeshi female postgraduate research (PGR) students - a group representing minoritised identities in the most hyperbolic of ways. Where discourses related to belonging privilege 'traditional' undergraduate student experiences (Sabri, 2011), we report on the motivations, experiences and aspirations of Bangladeshi female PGRs and the complexities involved in their doctoral journeys due to intersectionalities based on race, gender and religion. Realising an urgency to belong and be truly understood in a HE landscape so dislocated from our realities, the creation of an informal support network (Angaaz sisters) is described to demonstrate the importance of our developing a subaltern space of belonging. Drawing on participatory and experience-based co-design, our multi-modal presentation will give insight into our experiences, hoping to draw attention to the ways in which racially minoritised PGRs are supported to thrive within academia.

1B: Intersections

Intersections of Student Belonging: Reflections from Co-Created Pedagogical Research in Psychology
Richard Harris, Madeleine Pownall (University of Leeds)

As student engagement scholars have noted across the literature, there is value in co-creating and co-designing pedagogical research projects that actively and intentionally embed student voices. In this paper, we share insights into a co-designed set of empirical studies that explored the multiple intersecting facets of student belonging at university. Each study was co-designed, co-created, and ran with an undergraduate student researcher who identified as being a member of the target group. This considered how intersecting identities related to race, disabilities, gender, and ethnicity impact student's feelings of belonging at university. In this paper, we will reflect upon the experiences of running the co-designed studies, provide verbatim feedback from the student researchers, and share findings from the empirical work on student belonging. We advocate for more reflexive, critical, qualitative methods that centre and celebrate student voices, in order to more intentionally capture diversity of intersectional student experiences.

Using student ambassadors to amplify black voices in Northumbria University library
Biddy Casseldon, Amanda Foster, Lorna Hibbert (Northumbria University).

This paper shares experiences of working with student ambassadors on an internally funded project aimed at amplifying black voices in the University Library. Six black students from across the University were recruited to work with library staff and academics on a variety of small-scale projects aimed at better understanding the barriers that exist for black students' use of the library and identifying ways to make services more accessible to meet their needs. Students worked in partnership with staff examining reading list diversity and providing their own unique perspective of library collections, understanding black student requirements, enhancing the library represented reading collection, and creating innovative materials and podcasts for library users. This paper will share the collaborative approach adopted and consider some of the challenges faced undertaking this project – we will also consider how the student ambassadors and staff benefitted from this experience and identify good practice for future partnership working.

1C: Partnership for belonging and success

Co-creating evaluation of belonging interventions with student researchers, a University-Students' Union partnership
Charlotte Boulton (Newcastle University)

A collaborative approach to evaluation between Newcastle University Students' Union and Newcastle University's Inclusive Newcastle team has embedded partnership working for belonging and success into the evaluation process of a new academic societies funding scheme. The funding, used by academic societies to deliver welcome events in the first 6 weeks of term, intends to improve students' sense of belonging academically and socially through increased engagement with societies.

This paper explores the experience of establishing this new partnership and how co-creation has been facilitated productively between student interns, students' union staff and university evaluation specialists. Themes include prioritising meaningful student involvement and embedding partnership into working practices to enable cultural change. The paper will explore how successful the funding scheme has been in achieving its desired outcomes and ask questions of where university-students' union partnerships could develop to enact further change in students' sense of belonging.

Educators and Learners co-creating practice exam questions: inviting students to the assessment drawing room in transnational education
Matthew Tang, Mona Jaber, Ana Cabral (Queen Mary University)

One of the recurring requests from our learners in the Joint Programme (and Transnational Education in general) is for examples of exercises and exam-style practice papers with suggested solutions. While there is a rich library of past exam papers, many of our learners rely on recitation of materials rather than taking the past exam papers as useful learning resources.

In order to address this issue, we invited learners to co-create practice exam questions They analysed the learning outcomes, marking criteria and rubrics explored examples, drafted answered and reviewed each other's questions, and reflected on the impact of this experience in their preparation for assessment. These practice questions produced by the students will eventually become a useful question bank t that can even benefit prospective students in the same module.

We will discuss the role of co-creation in promoting engagement, belonging and success.and share some delivery materials, evaluation results and reflections of the trial with over 200 students in Spring 2023.

1D: Embracing belonging: before and after

Belonging, design thinking and sustainability: the 3Cs approach
Lory Barile, Bo Kelestyn, Nikita Asnani (University of Warwick)

Using design thinking as an approach to problem solving, preliminary data suggests promising applications and impact on students' sense of belonging and community. We will introduce our experience and framework for engaging diverse groups of students and staff via a real-life sustainability regional challenge, working with the local Council. This approach layers belonging within the learning as well as local community, linking the teaching and learning provision (Curriculum), to values and ways of working and studying on Campus, and the local Community. We call this the 3Cs framework. We will share affordances and challenges of applying design thinking to better understand belonging in an educational context. We will offer an opportunity to reflect on how to co-design more holistic approaches to belonging and education such as the 3Cs, through the lens of sustainability.

How was it for you? Student reflections on partnership-working in post-pandemic HE
Pamela Calabrese, Alessandra Bossoni, Skye Kenny (Edinburgh Napier University)

How was it for you? Student reflections on partnership-working in post-pandemic HE. Post-pandemic, as students and staff navigate new ways of teaching and learning, partnership projects have a key role to play in bringing us closer and demonstrating that students matter. However, under increasing pressure to re-build community in our institutions, there is a risk we inadvertently disempower our student partners by prioritising project aims and outputs over their partnership experiences, 'as if the act of speaking is all that matters' (Thomson, 2011).

Inspired by students, Edinburgh Napier University is taking a student-led discursive approach to explore students' experiences and perceptions of partnership and of the impact and implications of these collaborations. Their reflections will shape a student-led conference session at our Learning & Teaching conference, and will inform the development of a new institutional partnership model. This paper summarises findings from this project.

1E: Inclusive pedagogies for belonging and success

Inclusive Teaching: Scaffolding for Success
Heather McClean, Olumide Popoola (Queen Mary University)

For all academics teaching groups of multilingual students from diverse backgrounds: this workshop is for you! If your students come from different academic and sociocultural backgrounds, their understanding of the expectations of UK Higher Education may be limited or even non-existent, and they may lack the sociocultural competence or linguistic competence to participate actively in the course, resulting in poor engagement and poor outcomes. This presentation will explore several successful strategies proven to make your curriculum and your teaching practice more accessible for students from diverse backgrounds and to improve group cohesion among students, leading to improved engagement and an enhanced student experience for everyone. The scaffolding strategies which will be introduced are widely used in the field of English language education and can be adapted to suit any teaching context.

Legos, Posters & Body Mapping: students understanding of community-led pedagogies
Laura Loyola-Hernandez (University of Leeds)

How do physical and metaphorical understandings of university spaces influence students' learning and sense of belonging at university? In what ways do underrepresented students build community during their time as undergraduates? These are just a few of the research questions which I explore in this paper. I analyse students' multiple meanings of belonging, learning and community through participatory learning and action (plan) techniques in the form of Lego Series Play, alphabet prompting notes, body mapping and poster creations. Working alongside students via workshops and focus groups, it became evident students navigate multiple and often contradictory forms of (un)belonging in their course and university. This ultimately has an impact in the way they learn and interact with peers and staff. Utilising innovative educational techniques allowed students to express what their ideal university would be, one that is community driven.

1F: Does belonging always mean success?

Critically considering the role of extracurricular sport at university: does belonging always mean success?
Maria Moxey (University of Winchester)

There is increasing evidence highlighting the importance of extracurricular activities in enhancing transition, belonging, and overall success. However, the role of university sport is often overlooked. For many, becoming a member of a sports club is central to the student experience and becomes a dominant aspect of their identity throughout university. Reflecting on PhD research findings, this presentation critically considers how for some, the social practices that accompany membership helps students to become part of a tight-knit support network, which is a source of social capital, not only valuable for transition but the entire university journey and crucially, fosters retention. However, the desire to belong can lead to over-conformity and over-committing to the social practices involved with membership, and is exclusionary for those who do not buy-into these social practices. Therefore, this presentation will critically explore university sports club membership and how this influences students' sense of belonging.

"I've got this inner strength from the programme, it has made me feel whole" – Experiences of initiating The Black Leadership Programme at NTU
Reuel Blair, Samia Muse, and NTU students (Nottingham Trent University)

The Black Leadership Programme (BLP) at Nottingham Trent University (NTU) aims to increase confidence, belonging and community amongst our black students. Informed by student voice the BLP offers bespoke workshops, events and mentoring opportunities to provide a platform and environments for students of black heritage to realise their full potential as leaders of the future (Bunce et al., 2021).

Working in collaboration with students, the scheme has proactively enhanced and developed since the scheme's initiation. Evaluation shows statistically significant improvements in sense of belonging for participants of the programme, with participants also reporting increased mattering, confidence, and leadership.

This session will share our journey so far in establishing the BLP, drawing on the experiences of students and staff to highlight the authentic impact of scheme. We will share our challenges, next steps and give opportunities to ask questions about our future.

Parallel Session 2 – Workshops (Wednesday 6 September 11:40–12.40)

2A: Can pedagogic choices support a student's sense of belonging?
Jane Bartholomew (Nottingham Trent University)

This workshop provides lecturers with opportunities to challenge current teaching practice and understand students' motivations to participate and engage in taught sessions. The Pedagogy Action Card game invites a playful, intuitive, reflective approach to explore how students feel, behave and respond to differing delivery styles. Doctoral research outcomes (2022) identified pedagogy as a fundamental factor impacting a student's learning journey; designing a collaborative, participatory learning experience builds students' confidence and contributes to a sense of belonging for all.

The game invites participants to reflect and debate on how inclusive their teaching approaches are and consider how learners engage and react in different ways. It provides opportunities to share inclusive learning practices and discuss new pedagogical ideas that may positively impact existing teaching approaches. Participants will construct their own Pedagogy Action Card to assist the enhancement of their teaching practice with a focus on the learners' experience.

2B: LEAP in(to) Practice: Nurturing Minoritized, High-Performing Students through Co-Curricular Interventions
Charlotte Durham, Tess Hornsby-Smith (University of Leeds)
How do co-curricular interventions contribute to a sense of belonging and success? What practices do we need to note and how can, and how should, we shape these interventions in ways that elevate and encourage students whose experiences of higher education are threaded through, and enmeshed with power relations that intersect with issues of gender, class, race, age, and disability (among others)? This workshop aims to unpack these complex questions in achieving two main outcomes. First, we will interrogate co-curricular interventions as a vital space for belonging. We will look at the Leeds Excellence in Arts Programme (LEAP) as an example, and through which we engage with themes of identity and culture in an activity adapted from a LEAP session run in the 2022–23 programme. Second, we seek to use this activity as a prompt that enables us to intervene into a set of pedagogic practices to nurture and support minoritized, high-performing students. More than this, we will challenge ourselves to reconfigure these practices for our own schools, faculties, and universities.

2C: Belonging in Co-curricular Spaces: Rise at Manchester Met
John Lean, Matthew Carney, Lorna Colter, Catherine Elkin, C-J Foster, Elle Simms
(Manchester Metropolitan University)

Rise is Manchester Met's award-winning co-curricular programme, connecting thousands of students each year with opportunities to develop through a curated range of self-study, workshops, project work and internships. Belonging is central to this; engagement that takes place 'outside' of programmes can often provide a sense of wider community, provide learners with ways of connecting learning to their own contexts, and give students a sense of ownership of their own learning.

Guided by the Rise Experiential Learning team, participants in this interactive workshop will explore Rise as a case study of the connection between co-curricular learning and belonging. Discussion topics will include:

How does co-curricular learning build a sense of belonging?
How do we design and curate experiential learning to meet the needs of all students?
How do we recognise and celebrate the diverse ways in which students can 'succeed' in experiential learning?

2D: Designing with, not just for: inclusive & design-led student engagement
Tom Ritchie, Tom Baines (University of Warwick)

As Higher Education institutions continue to diversify their learning communities, they need to be able to identify and support a growing number, and complexity, of student needs.

Designing with, not just for, students should be focused on students and staff co-leading change to create more inclusive environments and support services. But how might we approach co-designing with students? How might we ensure our design approach and outputs are inclusive?

This is where an inclusive design approach comes in. Inclusive design is a way to engage students in creating positive change, whilst also contributing towards their individual and collective sense of belonging.

In this session, we'll explore what inclusive design means, how universities can use it to increase belonging within their learning communities, and some preliminary evidence of impact of design led student engagement on belonging.

2E: Welcome from the start: incorporating a nuanced focus on belonging into pre-arrival work

Jennie Blake, Adam Cooke, Iqra Malik (University of Manchester)

The expectation to "belong" at University begins long before the rhythm of the semester settles. Universities must put tangible and empathetic effort into the initial conversations they have with their incoming students, carefully considering representation, voice and inclusivity. It is essential that students' own experiences and communities are both honoured and included in this work. This workshop guides participants through activities drawn from adrienne maree brown's facilitation frameworks and asks for reflections on questions of representation, inclusion and student voice. It also demonstrates the content and approach of the pre-arrival resource from the University of Manchester, which saw 1000s of unique users interaction with it 10,000s of times. It will be led by Manchester students and staff involved in the creation of the resource and participants will walk away with the tools they need to develop their own.

2F: Belonging and the hidden power of experience as meaningful expertise

Nikita Asnani, Minali Sanghani, Bo Kelestyn (University of Warwick)

What does it mean to honour students' background in teaching and learning? How do we overcome impostor syndrome in student research? How might we create belonging when co-creating knowledge? Students have the power to show up as experts in the classroom, as researchers, as partners, but often don't.

Reflecting on our research on threshold concepts (Meyer & Land, 2005), we will explore the hidden power of experiences as expertise, and how to ensure students view it as that. In this workshop, we will share our experiences of student led innovation, research, and co-creation.

We will unpack different student personas and experience journeys to then co-create a toolkit of best practice that helps break down different barriers that students face, lift out of the imposter syndrome, and channel lived experience as a source of meaningful expertise through the friendship as a method interviewing methodology (Heron 2020).

Parallel Session 3 (Wednesday 6 September 14:40–15.40)

3A: Partnership for belonging and success

Stepping Up, Standing Out: Supporting international PGTs to make the most of their year in a UK university
Clare Wright, Alison Leslie (University of Leeds)

Building on research into sense of belonging, our study extends the debate to the PGT sector. Evidence shows that international PGTs can face many challenges around academic socialisation and developing a successful sense of belonging (Holliday, 2012; Wright and Schartner, 2013; Spencer-Oatey et al, 2016). Our three-year project aims to find more effective tools to help international PGTs build their confidence, autonomy, resilience and motivation in stepping up to make the most of their time in the UK study setting and standing out as valued members of the university community. In this paper, we will present findings from our first-year survey, which evaluates the extent to which international PGT students can, or want to, identify with the University of Leeds' commitment to valuing student success and belonging in ways which are meaningful for them. This data should help to improve the match between expectations and experiences.

3B: Inclusive pedagogies for belonging and success

Exploring the Role of Peers in Supporting Transition
Laura Keane, Elaine Aylward (South East Technological University)

Transition into university has been identified as a time when students can experience conflicting emotions. Building new supportive social networks with peers, developing a sense of belonging and forming new identities are part of social integration and transition. Belonging in higher education is understood as students feeling valued, accepted and encouraged by both peers and staff. Participating in a peer mentoring programme, which supports forming social connections, appears to impact positively on transition and integration. Drawing on the experiences of students participating in a peer-mentoring programme within an Irish University, this presentation provides a theoretical framework for understanding why membership of social networks and belonging is important during transition. Belonging, social identity, social networks, and social capital are intertwined with and an essential part of student transition.
By providing structured opportunities to form social connection with peers, universities can support individuals develop social identity and a sense of belonging through membership of social networks.

What can we learn from apprenticeships?
Kelly Sisson, Michael Shaw (University of Lincoln)

The Academic Professional Apprenticeship (APA) programme at the University of Lincoln is purposefully built on a foundation of inclusive pedagogy. Apprenticeships are highly regulated and while some practitioners in Higher Education can find this restrictive, we have observed that the learner-centric apprenticeship model of delivery offers something over and above previous undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes that we have worked on.

Utilising the framework for belonging proposed by Blake, Capper and Jackson (2022) this presentation reflects on the Academic Professional Apprenticeship programme across the four foundational areas of connection, support, inclusion and autonomy to share our insights into the world of apprenticeships and identify the elements we feel have been most influential in building a sense of belonging and promoting student success. We conclude with a series of recommendations that can be applied to all Higher Education programmes.

3C: Embracing belonging: before and after

Meet Me in the Middle - Exploring Sense of Belonging for Younger Mature Students
Laura Conroy, Lauren Huxley (University of Leeds)

Sense of belonging for mature students has become a big focus in the HE sector, but what about our students who fall in the middle? Those who feel a little older than their 18-20 year-old peers, but who equally don't relate to, or identify, as a mature student either...

"My course mates always presume I'm a lot younger than I am. I find it difficult to relate to them during their current stages of life. I very rarely engage with the university outside of my coursework as a result."

Hear how Laura Conroy (Student Success Officer) and Lauren Huxley (Student Experience Officer) from the University of Leeds, Lifelong Learning Centre, have been working to understand and support the experiences of younger mature students through a new co-creation project between staff and students, "Middle Ground Network" – working towards filling the gap in provision by providing year-round tailored events and activities

Belonging: Treating students differently to treat them fairly
Helen Williams, Enya-Marie Clay, Jo Blissett, Lynne O'Neil (Open University)

We propose sharing a newly developed coaching and mentoring framework being used to support distance learning students at the Open University. The framework guides a live student support pilot for students from underrepresented backgrounds. The framework is designed to recognise difference, value the student voice and lived experiences, and explore individual needs and thus speaks to the conference theme of student belonging.

The presentation will provide quantitative and qualitative evidence of how coaching and mentoring through an 'equity lens' (Clay et al, 2023) can build student engagement and - above all - a sense of 'mattering' (Advance HE, 2021). It will synthesise student testimonials which have shown the impact of this approach.

Our presentation aims to share the professional journey of practitioners aiming to remove barriers to student success, advance anti-oppressive practice and promote inclusive work – in short, how we can best treat students differently to treat them fairly.

3D: Imposter Phenomenon and Alienation

Student Activism: An example of belonging and student success in Higher Education?
Aimee Cuthbert (Highlands and Islands Student Association), Jeffrey Saddington-Wiltshire (University of Winchester)

Two MA Student Engagement in Higher Education students explore the powerful role which student activism has in developing a sense of belonging and forging social connections as part of the politicising process which takes place at University.

This presentation will first explore the theoretical concepts of activism, collective identity and belonging then look at examples of student activism from differing contexts to ascertain how they validate, or refute, the notion that this mode of organising constitutes belonging in Higher Education.

This presentation will also challenge the notion of 'student success' as feeling part of a social group who challenge educational and social norms at a local, national and international scale are excellent examples of student success which are not typically recognised by a student's home institution.

Staff and student perceptions of the Skills@Library service: Deficit or development?
Michelle Schneider (University of Leeds)

This paper provides an overview of a small-scale research project exploring staff and student perceptions of the Skills@Library service at Leeds University. In particular, whether it is perceived as a deficit service. The project highlighted some key differences with how staff and students talked about academic skills. I will argue that there needs to be a reconsideration of how academic skills development is framed and designed, to ensure that students are not seen as or made to feel like a problem that need fixing, only belonging when they can assimilate into existing structures and academic practices, rather than having the opportunity to influence, disrupt and change those structures.

3E: Does belonging always mean success?

Challenging assumptions of success and how it relates to belonging: Learning from NTU's Student 2025 project
Ria Bluck, Erick Morataya Gatica (Nottingham Trent University)

This presentation will share the methodology and early findings of a unique four year longitudinal mixed-methods research project at Nottingham Trent University (NTU). The Student 2025 project follows 100 undergraduate students, exploring their academic experience, social experience, and sense of belonging through termly surveys and interviews. The project is particularly focused on how different groups of students belong to and engage with NTU, and how this might change over time.

Student 2025 challenges sector definitions of success, and helps to better understand what students think it means to succeed. This session will explore emerging findings in this area, and how success relates to belonging - both in the context of their learning, and more holistically. We will also discuss the intended impact of the project, which is to inform strategic plans that aim to support the reduction of unexplained differences in student outcomes and improve the student experience.

Student belonging: critiquing simplistic notions of its factors and links to student success
David Gilani (Middlesex University)

This session will present a sub-set of the findings from a literature review on student belonging. A systematised, critical approach was utilised to analyse and synthesise results from 210 studies. I will present findings related to the following research questions: 1) What factors affect students' sense of belonging? 2) What are student belonging's connections to student success? 3) How is belonging experienced uniquely by different students? This last question will be focused on to problematise simplistic approaches to the former two questions.

Whilst a synthesis of academic research will be presented, the discussion will focus on the practicalities of how we can utilise these findings in our practice around building belonging. This session will allow practitioners to benefit from the academic research to date, without needing to delve into it themselves. Visual models of the results will be utilised that can help institutions to prioritise their initiatives around building belonging.

Parallel Session 4 (Wednesday 6 September 16:00–17.00)

4A: Embracing belonging: before and after

What Does It Mean To Become a Student in Higher Education?
Ben Jackson, Tom Lowe (University of Portsmouth)

There is no shortage of literature on the importance of the initial transition into university, and a great deal of attention has been paid to the concept of 'belonging' in recent years. Numerous studies have evidenced the link between students' sense of belonging and student retention and outcomes, but it is critical that this 'quick to support' approach receives the same critical reflection as other solutions to address a performance based higher education. This session will hold discussions on several critical questions for colleagues prioritising belonging in higher education, by expanding the focus from the transitions to becoming a student process, which includes potentially disengaging from their pre-university identities, to the implications of imposing top-down belonging as corporate identity. This session will also consider how this idolised sense of belonging may very quickly turn into a sense of alienation where the formation of student groups and cultures does not necessarily benefit all.

From learning space to Flowscapes: a person-environment-system framework for belonging in higher education
Jill Dickinson (Leeds Beckett University), Sam Elkington (University of Leeds)

The proliferation of digital learning technologies in higher education (HE) has changed the possibilities for fostering belonging across inter-connected, digital, and physical environments. While many learning experiences have been digitised, others have involved returning to physical spaces with complex combinations of presentation, simulation, and interaction. This 'hybridisation' encompasses flexible and inclusive pedagogy, the situated nature of learning, and the (inter)relations between learning, belonging, and spaces. Using sociomateriality, (Fenwick et al., 2012), we bring together insights from two separate studies on staff and student experiences. We offer the "flowscape" as an alternative person-environment-system framework for working with hybrid space across different scales and settings within contemporary HE. Through this concept, we reveal how binary conceptions of digital and in-person practice are counterproductive and how multiple physical and digital topologies can support the systems and processes that underpin hybrid spaces and will be core to embedding belonging, engagement, and student success.

4B: Inclusive pedagogies for belonging and success

Can lectures create spaces where students feel that they belong?: or, how the 41st best stand-up in the world influenced my teaching practice
Tom Muskett (University of Leeds)

For an individual to feel belonging, suitable communities must be available to which they can belong. However, identifying what constitutes such a community can be challenging in universities given the fragmentation of and diversity within student populations. Whilst lectures provide an opportunity for learners who have at least /something/ in common (i.e. membership of a course/module cohort) to come together for a shared purpose, previous scholarship of teaching (e.g. Bligh, 1998) suggests these to be ineffective as sites of personal or social adjustment. In this paper, I challenge this view with reference to the transgressive approach to performance taken by British stand-up comedian Stewart Lee. Inspired by his work, I present three themes from my teaching practice (humanistic self-positioning; embodied use of space; "breaking the fourth wall") to argue that strategically-performed lectures can be experienced as sites of community, thereby building social environments in which learners can feel belonging.

4C: Partnership for belonging and success

Interventions for Belonging: A toolkit for student co-creation
Russell Lewis, Cheryl Stephens, Charlotte Wisson (University of Derby)

In a post-Covid landscape, there is no 'magic bullet' to increase student belonging. In this new world, the very fabric of institutions needs to embrace student co-creation to support belonging at all levels of study. This presentation showcases best practice across the University of Derby to demonstrate how student co-creation opportunities can aid student belonging. Attendees will be introduced to our toolkit for student co-creation, that is being used by colleagues to collaborate with students as equal partners, and ultimately seeks to support student belonging. The toolkit has been created in partnership with a student researcher, demonstrating our commitment to the philosophy of student partnership, and evaluated internally using a survey approach. Our hope is to share our experiences of working towards enhancing student belonging using student partnerships with the wider sector, so that students across our sector may also benefit.

Embracing and harnessing differentials in student-staff partnership to achieve sustainable belonging: Overcoming power conflict, navigating trust crisis, and building self-authorship
Daisy Bao (University of Edinburgh)

Student-staff partnership, especially in research initiatives (SSPnR), is not solely a stepping-stone to entering the academic community for students (Lowe & Hakim, 2020), but is considered to help students develop close student-staff and student-institution relationships, therefore elicit a sense of belonging (UCL, 2022).

Although the word 'partnership' is aspirational, it confronts vagueness and conflicts due to its wide use without strictly examining different contexts in the higher education system (Russell, 2007). As such, this research aims to explore how research partnership contributes to facilitating students' sense of belonging. This study investigated four institutional student-led SSPnR schemes in four UK universities. Four data sets involve two-round individual interviews with students, staff, and scheme leaders; three diaries of participants; institutional policies; and personal information. These data sets triangulate characteristics of partnerships with four main themes, including contextual motivations of different stakeholders, cognitive differentials based on roles and understanding, immediate and sustainable benefits, and conflicts arising in student partnerships.

4D: Intersections

Co-Creating an Assessment Marking Rubric for Belonging and Success
Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka, Dean Smith and Zeinab Smillie (University of Stirling)

This presentation will explore how students and teachers co-created and implemented a marking rubric within a Postgraduate Certificate programme where students are also academic colleagues who teach across various faculties at the at the University of Stirling. Teachers intentionally worked to develop an inclusive, student-centred learning environment focused on discussion-based learning and co-creating knowledge. Students were typically given agency over how they wanted to engage with each hybrid session, promoting flexibility and inclusion regardless of location. This presentation describes the wider context of the learning environment created and how that helped to facilitate belonging and engagement specifically with working online to co-create a marking rubric to help students and teachers to collaboratively define the expectations for a formative assignment and an associated summative assignment. Presenters focus on themes of belonging, sharing ownership over assessment by inclusively negotiating standards, clarifying shared expectations, and developing students' understanding of success ahead of assessments.

'Global Community Conversations': Using 'story circles' to explore approaches to intercultural community-building at University of Leeds
Jenna Isherwood (University of Leeds)

Within an 'internationalised' university, fostering connections between students from different backgrounds can have benefits for learning, wellbeing, personal development and sense of belonging. However, students often report experiencing divisions or 'bubbles' that make it difficult to connect meaningfully with others across different groups. A project responding to this context at University of Leeds aimed to gain a better understanding of people's experiences of feeling (or not feeling) part of an intercultural community.

Students and staff participated in story circles, a structured small group experience where people share personal stories and learn from listening to different perspectives. Designed to model the kind of intercultural learning experiences we hope students may encounter, story circles helped participants build relationships and mutual understanding, as well as generating ideas and motivation for action. This talk presents the project's key findings and highlights the potential benefits of story circles for student and staff engagement and community-building.

4E: Imposter Phenomenon and Alienation

An Exploration of the Transition Process to Higher Education for Students with ASD
Elaine Aylward, Laura Keane (South East Tenchnological University)

Having a sense of belonging in an educational context is related to feelings of acceptance, and of being included by and connected to one's institute. This is an important consideration during transition into higher education where a negative experience can lead to not feeling like you belong and social isolation.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental condition primarily characterised by challenges with social communication, restricted interests, and repetitive behaviour. Thus, there is recognition that this cohort of student tend to experience specific challenges with feelings of belonging, which can particularly affect them during adolescence and transition to higher education.

Focusing on the lived experiences of students with ASD in an Irish higher education institution the barriers to belonging will be explored and insight provided into the transition process for students with ASD. It will also answer the call to give a voice to students with autism.

'Bursaries, Beans and Bali? How the haves and have nots are impacting student belonging and how we can begin to change this?
Conor Naughton (Nottingham Trent University)

The picture we paint of University is increasingly at odds with the reality that students face in their daily life. While many students live of beans on toast paid for via bursaries and work full-time jobs to survive they continue to encounter peers who recount summers in Bali and winters on ski slopes. With many students and importantly staff disconnected from the realities faced by countless students in today's world it is essential that both students and academics have the understanding, empathy and skills required to support students and peers to belong and succeed.

This presentation will draw upon my own lived experience as a working-class student in receipt of a bursary, as a former student officer and in my current work as an educational developer to unpack how I challenge, change and support staff perceptions of student belonging to tackle these challenges and achieve positive outcomes for all students.

Posters (Wednesday 6th September)

Exploring the relationship between sense of belonging, and wellbeing among new students at university
Min Yong (University of Bradford), Gladson Chikwa (Manchester Metropolitan University), Javairia Rehman (University of Bradford)

A higher sense of belonging has been shown to be associated with general wellbeing in undergraduates. It has been suggested that sense of belonging with peers, in the classroom, and the wider campus life can affect students' academic achievement, adjustment, aspirations and to an extent whether they will stay in school. A recent empirical study showed that lacking the sense of belonging early in the term is associated with students developing depressive symptoms at the end of term suggesting that those with low belongingness may have increased mental health risk. This qualitative study aims to explore the lived-in experience of students and examine whether factors e.g. sociodemographic, study discipline, and activities relating to social interaction have an influence on their wellbeing and sense of belonging. We anticipate that the qualitative feedback will provide greater insight on what makes the sense of belonging meaningful to students for staff and student services. Helping students to achieve that sense of belonging might provide the boost to their academic achievement which would help develop the graduate attributes needed later at the workplace.

Imposter Syndrome in a Student-Led Humanitarian Organization
Oshish Ungras, Aman Khan (Wilfrid Laurier University)

Opportunities for students to engage in leadership can be rewarding academically, professionally, and personally. However, not all students feel prepared or "deserving" of leadership roles because of internalized fear of failure and self-doubt. While emerging student leaders want to pursue opportunities that provide them with skills development, the lack of feelings of belonging can hinder their participation. In addition, the risks associated with partnership with faculty and staff can require a tremendous amount of trust, vulnerability, and courage to overcome. This poster will detail the journeys of a former student leader, Oshish Ungras, and current student leader, Aman Khan. As the two engage in partnership and leadership training together, they reflect on the important work of recognizing imposter syndrome and engaging in the difficult work of separating it from learning in a safe space. The poster will also articulate the ways in which they face challenges in pursuing a sense of belonging in leadership.

Arden University's Volunteer Lecturing Assistant Scheme: Impact on Belonging for Distance-Learning Students-
Holly Amber Stokes, Kieron Oakland, Bethany Wainwright, Kim Marie Crown, Gemma Pearson, Anuksha Hassan Khawaja, Susanna Johanna Cloete-Jones (Arden University)

Arden University's Psychology School offers their distance-learning undergraduate and postgraduate students the opportunity to assume the role of Volunteer Lecturing Assistant (VLA). This role includes an 8-week placement on a module whereby VLAs facilitate and consolidate students learning, develop their own presentation and resource creation skills and engage in reflective practice. Not only does the scheme aim to upskill and improve employability amongst our Psychology students, it also provides students the opportunity to form stronger connections with staff and build connections across cohorts and degree programmes with students across the world. This was one of the first internal, entirely remote employability opportunities offered to Arden University's distance-learning students. This mixed-methods research project aims to evaluate the impact of the VLA scheme for Arden University staff, students placed on modules as VLAs as well as students studying on modules with VLAs, with a specific focus on belonging and community-building, as well as upskilling and employability.

Sense of School Membership and Psychological Wellbeing in University Students with English as a Foreign Language-
Christina Sotiropoulou Drosopoulou, Emma Motha; Kaja Sieczko; Eaint Hay Man Oo (University of Leeds)

Previous literature has demonstrated that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students have lower wellbeing and sense of school membership compared to control students with English as a first language. However, research is limited and focused on early education, negative outcomes and an Asian population. This study aimed to investigate the impact of self-perceived English language skills and English language confidence on wellbeing and sense of school membership in EFL university students, in relation to control university students. Participants (N=122; 30 EFLs and 92 controls) completed an online Qualtrics survey. Results revealed that, compared to controls, EFL university students do have lower wellbeing and sense of school membership, but this was not significant. Within the EFL group, English language confidence significantly predicted wellbeing, but not sense of school membership. Universities need to look into ways to enhance language confidence in EFL students and therefore improve EFL university students' wellbeing.

Belonging for ADHD Students
Brandell Jeffers, Ruta Furmonaviciene (De Montford University)

This student-led pilot project investigated belonging and support for ADHD students by surveying student opinions at De Montfort university in Leicester. Participants agreed that ADHD students benefit from extra-time allocations and specialised resources. Additional suggested support included specialised mentoring and more opportunities for inclusive, flexible, and creative assignments. Despite our study showed that still there is potential to increase awareness about ADHD, findings of our survey show generally high inclusivity of ADHD students by their colleagues, for example, majority of study participants answered positively to the questions about willingness to take mentorship from a well-established ADHD individual as well as about choice to incorporate an entire group of ADHD affected individuals into their group project. Our study also showed that belonging to mentoring and buddying networks is very important for ADHD students.

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The Impact of Remote Research Collaborations with External Organisations for Distance-Learning Psychology Students
Holly Amber Stokes, Gemma Wood, Biancha Bear, Stephanie Schildknecht, Eva Aleksandra Veskova Jackson (Arden University)

Arden University's Psychology School offers their distance-learning undergraduate and postgraduate students the opportunity to take on the role of Volunteer Research Assistant (VRA) through their VRA scheme. Over the past year, we have collaborated with Rift Social Enterprise, an organisation that aims to empower marginalised groups to pursue self-employment, on three specific research and resource-creation based, student-led projects. A qualitative research project has been undertaken to explore the experience of the VRA-Rift Social Enterprise collaboration from the point of view of Rift SE's employees and Arden University staff working within the collaboration and the student VRAs working on the projects. For this poster, we will focus on how the experience has impacted student VRAs' sense of belonging and community, research methods confidence and skills, and their general sense of employability. Generally, we aim to use the findings to inform the development and improvement of future VRA collaborations with external organisations.

Developing partner university engagement to enhance student belonging and retention-
Jade Kimberley, Lauricia Kabila (University of Nottingham)

The period of online teaching and learning delivery from 2020-2022 caused an interruption in on campus engagement opportunities for international Foundation students hoping to progress onto undergraduate degree courses at the University of Nottingham. While measures were put in place to ensure the learning experience was not adversely affected, students nevertheless reported feeling less of a sense of belonging to the university than previous cohorts, including those who managed to stay in the UK and complete some of their studies in college. This paper will present a Foundation student's experience of completing a Foundation programme during the pandemic and its impact on transition to undergraduate study. It will also discuss the range of engagement activities organised since returning to in person delivery, and the impact these have had on student belonging and successful progression to the University of Nottingham.

The project looked at the impact of working in outreach on student ambassadors' perceptions of university. Students completed a survey and were invited to participate in Listening Rooms. Talking prompts were impact, engagement, skills and identity as identified through the survey and literature search. Conversations echoed findings in relevant research and survey responses. Findings show that being a student ambassador is important to them, particularly in outreach where they feel they are helping others to overcome barriers to higher education. Students felt they had grown in the role, developed wide-ranging skills and were more employable. Some felt part of a team and appreciated the university more. Ambassadors enjoyed being given time to reflect and discuss their thoughts with other ambassadors.

Parallel Session 5 (Thursday 7th September)

5A: Embracing belonging: before and after

You Belong Here: using equity-centred Design Thinking to design for belonging
Ann Kaegi (University of Hull)

The paper reports on the outcome of two innovative case studies that formed the initial, 'micro' phase of an 'EDI First: Co-Designing for Belonging' project currently being scaled at the University of Hull. The project uses a co-design approach to accelerate a much-needed cultural shift from designing 'for' to designing 'with' students. It is committed to applying an EDI 'lens' to learning experience design from the outset and, to that end, is trialling the use of equity-centred Design Thinking to promote a 'liberatory' mindset, rooted in empathy and centred on the need to Notice and Reflect (Stanford d.school, 2021: Liberatory Design) to secure systemic change. The two programmes selected for inclusion in phase one (one undergraduate, the other postgraduate taught) feature divergent challenges to diversity and inclusion that are widely shared, making the project's innovative approach to building a sense of belonging by all students of wider interest.

Enhancing belonging and inclusive learning environments to benefit student-staff partnerships
Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka, Daisy Bao (University of Stirling)

This presentation focuses on how students' sense of belonging can be built by interacting with course teachers. This study focused on key approaches to building effective and inclusive teacher-student relationships that emerged from thematically analysing the narrative data. Specifically, highly engaged students (including both student representatives and students involved in curriculum co-creation) consider effective student-teacher relationships to be those in which teachers help students feel included, respected, valued, inspired, and connected. This research builds on wider research on student engagement for belonging and success to then examine the effect of engagement based on how opportunities are designed and how relationships and learning communities are created. Even though the student representative role often draws on similar principles to curriculum co-creation, sometimes we see stark differences between how student representatives and co-creators may then engage with staff. This presentation explores the values, relationships of belonging, and inclusive environments that can influence the success of student representation and co-creation initiatives.

5B: Partnership for belonging and success

Partnerships for belonging and success: a case study on Aston University's Learning Development Centre
Debbie De (Aston University)

The positive impacts of effective partnerships between students and Higher Education Providers on community (Quinlan, 2011) and academic success (Healey et al, 2014) is recognised. Distinct from hierarchical relationships which often reduce students to a consultative role, true student partnerships are a process involving an open dialogue (Advance HE, 2020). Driven by institutional strategy, Aston University strives to establish an environment in which students actively shape their learning experience (Aston University, 2018). The Learning Development Centre (LDC) facilitates multiple partnerships: peer-peer, student-academic and/or professional service staff, which aim to enhance academic practice, teaching, learning, academic success and belonging. This case study provides an overview of partnership schemes within the LDC, including peer mentoring, Peer Assisted Learning and Student Writing Coaches. By discussing vignettes of interview data, this presentation also provides insights into the perspectives of student partners and identifies good practices for maintaining effective student partnerships.

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Breaking down barriers to student belonging and success: An embedded partnership approach to developing students' academic language and skills
Helen Sadig and Jiani Liu (University of Leeds)

Increasingly diverse linguistic and socio-cultural student communities in HE have led to the development of partnerships between disciplinary lecturers and academic literacy specialists (Maldoni, 2017; Page, 2020; Wingate, 2019). These aim to scaffold linguistic and academic socialisation for students, which develops their sense of belonging by breaking down barriers to accessing the curriculum.

This presentation explores a project to evaluate a new initiative aimed at developing students' academic language and skills through a co-designed partnership between the Library Learning Development and Language Centre English for Academic Purposes teams, with Module Leaders across three MA programmes within the same School. We will also reflect on the opportunities and challenges this partnership has presented.

Initial student feedback indicates that this partnership can better enable students to navigate occluded academic practices, such as voice, argumentation and criticality, both within and though their discipline, and as such, overcome potential barriers to belonging and success.

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5C: Inclusive pedagogies for belonging and success

"Engaged and curious minds": Learning from Participants' Experiences of the Leeds Excellence in the Arts Programme
Tess Hornsby Smith, Charlotte Durham (University of Leeds)

Drawing on a series of focus groups conducted with Leeds Excellence in Arts Programme participants, PhD mentors, and written reflections of the 2022–23 cohort, this paper examines the different ways co-curricular interventions offer a space for intellectual curiosity and academic ambition among minoritized, high-performing students, underpinning and embedding their belonging in a vibrant research culture at Leeds. In line with recent work on belongingness in higher education (e.g. Yorke, 2016; Humphrey and Lowe, 2017), student success (e.g. Cook-Sather, 2018; Chang et al., 2019), and co-curricular interventions (e. g. Glass et al., 2017; Lam and Tam, 2022), this paper prompts a critical reflection on the value of 'stretch and challenge' schemes in the higher education context. In doing so, on the one hand, makes a connection between academic enrichment and success, where success is imagined as negotiated and subjective (as well as enacted in particular ways); and on the other hand, considers the future of co-curricular interventions as vital spaces for belonging.

Listening to Disabled Students Priorities for an Inclusive Curriculum
Jenny Brady, Mike Kerr (University of Leeds)

Across the sector, Universities are seeking to embed inclusive learning and teaching. Despite this, and technological advances enabling enhanced flexibility being introduced through the pandemic, disabled students continue to feel excluded: that the provision is not being designed with people like them in mind. This session will present findings from interviews with 10 disabled students at the University of Leeds conducted and thematically analysed by a disabled Student Project Assistant during 2022-2023. The findings demonstrated the need for cross-institutional, multi-systemic solutions to improve the outcomes and sense of belonging for our disabled students. This session will provide opportunity for colleagues to consider inclusive teaching within their own institutional contexts, and explore some of the challenges of pedagogical design which recognises and embraces human difference. How do we find the sweet spot between designing and delivering inclusively for all, and the need for disabled students to feel heard, seen and understood?

5D: Intersections

University 3.0: What Does it Mean for Learner Belonging?
Ben Jackson, Carola Boehm (University of Winchester)

This session will critically examine learner belonging within the context of Boehm's conceptual framework of University 3.0. Contrasting the policy-driven approach associated with University 2.0 (knowledge curation and learner marketisation), University 3.0 (co-creation of learning/knowledge) aims to transform universities into learner-centred environments built on the cornerstones of partnership, co-creation and learning facilitation.

This session will dismantle traditional student-teacher hierarchies by adopting a more radical approach to how we individually and collectively learn. The question of reconciling our current, largely University 2.0, sectors with pedagogically-driven and learner-led University 3.0 environments allows us to reconsider how we promote the idea of communities of learning, and discuss what impact this may have on learner belonging. This session includes debates about of individual and collective identities and the importance of recognising diversity among learners to create inclusive learning environments.

Engineering a sense of belonging
Salma Al-Arefi (University of Leeds)

Gendered identity is yet perceived to exert the strongest force for marginalisation and underrepresentation in engineering education and workplace. In closing the gendered gap, the impact intersecting identities can have in relation to ignition of interest, participation, formation of engineering identity and hence belonging to engineering learning communities and workplace need consideration. That is because intersecting subjectivities (race, class, or ethnicity) can have its added impact on already minoritized individuals (the 'double, triple, quadrant.... jeopardy'). Coupled with self-concept of own science capital, efficacies, and competences, the formation of engineering identity could arguably be expressed as a direct function of sense of inclusion or otherwise exclusion. This presentation will share the findings of work on progress on exploring sense of belonging for UoL women in engineering students in aim to challenge traditionally homogenised interpretation of belonging to engineering by centralising and contextualising individualised lived experience shaped by woman's intersecting identities.

5E: Imposter Phenomenon and Alienation

How learning from work with marginalised and at risk young people helps with fostering student belonging and community
Jon Down, Alex Ferguson (GRIT Breakthrough Programmes)

Since 2014, the University of Leeds award winning Plus Programme has supported thousands of widening participation students each year. The team focus on easing their transition into HE, finding their 'place' at Leeds, their progression through their studies and on to PG study or employment. Internal evaluation highlights the impact of the scheme, including positive non-continuation and degree attainment in line with peers.

Our key partners include Grit Breakthrough Programmes who use a personal development and coaching approach that uses learning from work with marginalised and at risk young people to tackle imposter syndrome and to generate in students meaningful connections with peers and staff, belonging, self-efficacy and self-belief.

This session will outline how the Grit approach has translated into work at the University of Leeds, and the power of working the 'whole' student and the reframing conversations about help and support.

Care Experienced Students & Belonging
Ruth Tudor (Open University)

In Scotland only 5% of young people in care progress to higher education whereas 40% of young people not in care attend university (The Scottish Government, 2018/19).
Thomas (2015) suggested that a sense of belonging is essential to success and progression in higher education, also believing that those who do not socialise find it harder to engage with education.

Social and financial capital contribute to the ability to belong and without these capitals it may mean finding it hard to achieve a sense of belonging.
Using qualitative methods before and during lockdown, data was analysed using thematic analysis. Data showed participants were achieving success – progression through education despite no feeling of belonging.

This presentation looks at some of the reasons for imposter syndrome/alienation, the contribution to a sense of belonging, or not, and discuss what could be offered to support those students who want to embrace a sense of belonging.

Parallel Session 6 – Workshops (Thursday 7th September)

6A: Co-creating structures for belonging and community
Rebecca Freeman, Megan Caulfield, Students from the University of Warwick (University of Warwick)

The University of Warwick are working in collaboration with students and staff to develop and embed an institution-wide Inclusive Education model to achieve equitable opportunities for all students to achieve to the best of their abilities. This requires structural change within education and other student-facing provision, an understanding of what belonging means for students at Warwick and a shared commitment to change.

The workshop will explore the structural co-creation approach to belonging that we are taking, including:
• Collaboration with the SU to develop survey strategies to understand belonging and community.
• Funded co-creation inclusive education projects in all academic departments.
• Co-creation work with traditionally underrepresented student groups to build knowledge, resources and student support.

Using our framework for understanding the multi-layered approach for structural change and tangible examples shared by Warwick students and staff, the workshop will engage participants to reflect on their own structures and share successes and challenges.

6B: Before, During, and After: Strengthening evaluations of commuter student support through 'Message Mapping'
Callum Perry and Gemma Standen (University of East Anglia)

Regional recruitment is more prevalent as a result of COVID-19, Brexit, and the cost-of-living crisis, applying pressure on universities to adapt their practice to the changing nature of student need. This has exacerbated the concerns for commuter students on widening participation agendas, outlined as one of the most dis-advantaged due to the cost of living (MillionPlus, 2022). Viewing commuter students as a homogenous group would be of detriment to the quality of support needed to support these students; differences between 18-21 and mature commuter belonging are evident (Perry, 2022).

Using an adaptation of 'Message Maps' (Thomas, 2020), attendees will develop their own evaluation of interventions and strategies for commuter student support that can contribute to their Access and Participation planning. The workshop will provide attendees with resources to develop their understanding of theoretical underpinnings to strengthen the quality of their strategies to enhance belonging and support for commuters.

6C: Student Consultants: Collaborators and co-conspirators on building a positive student experience
Chris Birchall (University of Nottingham)

The Faculty of Science at the University of Nottingham has recruited ten student consultants to work alongside staff on events and resources aimed at addressing specific areas of the student experience. These students have worked in small, multidisciplinary teams and worked together as a cohort supporting faculty members by providing feedback and acting as a focus group on several topics.

Our session aims to provide an overview of the promotion, recruitment, and training aspects of this programme. We would like attendees to participate in facilitated small group discussions on the benefits of student collaboration when looking at improving the student experience and how this could be expanded more widely. We will involve our student consultants in the design and structure of these discussions and will invite them to participate and share their experiences during the session if they wish to do so.

6D: Revisiting the Forms, Functions and Purpose of Student Residences for Student Engagement in Universities
Zachery Spire (Stanford University)

Are university provided student residences a key driver of student engagement in and with universities? For many contemporary university students, residential provision is a key driver of their participation in university education. While the presence (and absence) of university provided student residences is key to ideas and ideals of university education, changes in policy, planning and practice aiming to increase access and participation have cast a shadow of doubt over universities as providers of student residences. Considering shifts in policy and planning noted above, are student residences still a key component of how students engage in and with their universities? This workshop will trace some of the historical drivers and tensions relating to university student residences, reflect on contemporary study of university student residences and explore the influence of university student residences for student engagement in and with universities.

Parallel Session 7 (Thursday 7th September)

7A: Does belonging always mean success?

Understanding student sense of belonging: a critical analysis of dominant discourses around belonging and its implications for contextual practice
Edward Venn, Karen Burland (University of Leeds)

This session presents findings from a project exploring the 'dominant discourses' of sense of belonging: the ways in which the scholarly literature models and measures sense of belonging. We will present findings from an integrative review of the scholarly literature (n=896), taking advantage of how integrated reviews examine the subject from diverse angles, and using thematic analysis to tease out key concepts that cut across thinking in this area.

We will demonstrate how the literature is dominated by particular conceptual approaches to sense of belonging and its measurement. When considered as a 'dominant discourse' around sense of belonging, we argue that such approaches constrain how belonging is understood more widely within pedagogical practice and institutional strategies. Through critical examination of this discourse, we conclude the session with ways of thinking critically about sense of belonging and its measurement to place context at the core of policy and practice.

Inclusive Pedagogies for Successful Transition to University
Alison Voice, Rob Purdy, David Bell (University of Leeds)

This talk presents results from a longitudinal study investigating Belonging and Engagement for Successful Transition (BEST) with first year students. This 3 year research project was run across 7 diverse schools, from Physics and Biology, Law, Economics, Finance & Accounting, to German and Design. Students were surveyed on arrival at university to ascertain their expectations in terms of belonging and engagement with their subject cohort. A second survey at the end of semester 1 allowed students' expectation to be compared with their lived experience, and a survey after the release of exam results allowed investigation of correlations between sense of belonging, levels of engagement, exam success and overall feelings about performance.

This project explored intersectionality of the above factors with student demographics (e.g. students entering courses with different qualifications, international students, first generation, mature, those not living in university accommodation, etc.) providing powerful insight for developing inclusive pedagogies.

7B: Embracing belonging: before and after

Are students motivated to engage, belong and succeed in HE? - A 'Taxonomy of Self: The motivated undergraduate student' explores refocusing our attention toward developing students' behaviours and competencies
Jane Bartholomew (Nottingham Trent University)

Transitioning to higher education from a school or college learning environment makes some students anxious and fearful, yet others enthusiastic and excited to experience higher education. The majority of students undertake their studies between the ages of 18-22 which correlates with the psychological development of humans, described as adolescence to young adulthood. How well do institutions and educators understand and incorporate this into course design?

How can all students be supported to develop intrinsic motivations, develop self-awareness, become independent, develop a sense of belonging and engage with their learning to succeed?

The existing neoliberal agenda and the metrification of HE deflect attentions away from time that could be spent developing autonomous students. 'Bartholomew's Taxonomy of Self: The motivated undergraduate student' presents a scheme to refocus attention toward the acquisition of noteworthy behaviours and competencies, irrespective of age or background, for all students as they journey through their undergraduate degree.

Assessment literacy and student success: investigating how embedded academic skills in the curriculum develops student assessment literacy
Jiani Liu (University of Leeds)

Assessment literacy (AL) improves students' understanding of assessments, learning objectives, and the learning process, leading to improved performance, motivation and a sense of belonging (Price et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2013; MacKay et al., 2019; Richardson, 2022). Developing AL requires practice and dialogue between students and staff (Rust et al., 2003). Academic skills teaching embedded in the curriculum and taking an "academic literacies approach" (Lea and Street, 2006, p.370) can facilitate AL development, but it may be perceived as secondary with limited contact time for literacy development.

This paper presents the findings of a Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence (LITE) research project comparing staff and student perceptions of embedded academic skills development and assessment literacy. The research findings provide multiple recommendations for improving support for students to develop assessment literacy and justify embedding academic literacies into the Leeds Curriculum, fostering student success and a sense of belonging.

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7C: Intersections

Home away from home: belonging and mattering for the Chinese student community
Janet Zheng, Weiwei Su, Bo Kelestyn (University of Warwick)

The international student community has been disproportionately affected by the pandemic, with the Chinese student community especially in need of mindful engagement.

The pandemic increased the visibility of the barriers to engagement, impacted how students see themselves within their learning community, lowering the students' sense of belonging and mattering. Existing barriers and gaps have been exaggerated, putting pressure on the students to (re)engage and (re)build.

These acute needs demand novel ways to fostering meaningful engagement that meet the needs of now, and leave space for generative dialogue.

In this presentation, we will share work in progress from a student experience project, aimed at re-imagining the Chinese student engagement. The findings will be transferable to all international student communities, and we hope will act as a catalyst for nurturing different kinds of dialogue with diverse student communities.

Parallel Session 8 – Pecha Kucha (Thursday 7th September)

8A: Pecha Kucha Stream 1 - Partnerships

Evolving partnerships: The University of Nottingham Students as Change Agents scheme
Lore Ayonrinde (University of Nottingham)

In 2014, the Students as Change Agents scheme was introduced at Nottingham to ensure and promote the involvement of student partnership across the university. Nine years on, and the world is a very different place. This Pecha Kucha reflects on how the scheme has evolved, discussing the post-COVID refresh year it has recently undertaken as well as a brief evaluation on its impact in the recent academic year.

This has included projects such as the Science student consultants, launched in 2022. The goal of this project is to enhance the student experience within the faculty of science by co-designing and co-delivering initiatives with recruited student partners.
The case studies will bring about a greater understanding to the different dimensions of student partnership and co-creation, as well as explore how the scheme tackles the challenges of operating across a multi-disciplinary, large scale, 'traditional' University.

Simulation-based active collaborative learning in Biosciences using the CAE Apollo Patient Simulator: a pilot study on Students as co-creators
Nelson Chong (Nottingham Trent University)

Learning through simulations is an effective means to facilitate learning of complex concepts in Biosciences. The CAE Apollo Patient Simulator mannequin with clinically validated modelled real-time physiology offers the closest facsimile to actual patient care. In this project, ex-module students worked with the teaching team as co-creators in designing a clinical case study scenario. New module students will be given this case study before the workshop. To embed peer support and team-based learning, students will work in small groups and share answers with their table and then shared with the class. Each group will apply their pharmacotherapy strategy using the Apollo system to observe real-time clinical outcome. Immediate verbal feedback will be given to students. A Student survey and MCQs were also designed by student co-creators. Student co-creators were very engaging and excited to be involved in this project and curriculum design; qualitative feedback from them have been extremely positive.

Rising together: Can an effective partnership be built from a 'deficit' starting point?
William Martin, Julie Warden, Tom Robshaw, Maria Azmanova (University of Bradford)

The University of Bradford Faculty of Life Sciences Progression and Attainment Team use a data driven approach to identify students 'at risk' of failing their degree. The students that we work with exhibit common symptoms of disillusionment and disengagement that are aligned with their perception that they have been labelled a 'failure'.

This presentation will take delegates through our approach and will tackle head-on the power imbalances that can arise from taking a 'deficit' model as a starting point for developing a learning partnership. We hope to convince you that as the Attainment Team develop learning contracts with students, this power imbalance is mitigated. We use a scaffolded, targeted study coaching model that is closely aligned to the students' curriculum. We aim to move beyond belonging and ensure that our students know that they 'matter'.

8B: Pecha Kucha Stream 2- Embracing Belonging: before and after

The transformation of Joint Honours Humanities student belonging and community experience
Rachel Challen (Nottingham Trent University)

Addressing the lack of belonging and community that can happen in Joint Honours combinations, 17 courses (each with 2 subjects in a set combination) were designed with each course containing the same core modules 'Transformation' at levels 4, 5 and 6. The modules cover the importance of Humanities through the different lens of Agency and Self (Level 4), Agency and World (Level 5) and Agency and Social Change (Level 6) and will be delivered from September 2023.

The session will explore the design of the Transformation modules, which included Institutional strategic targets, School targeted and personalised course improvement measures and personalisation whilst retaining the core elements of the academic subjects. This includes 240 hours of meaningful and relevant assessed workplace / workplace equivalent experience across all three years of study, digital skills, decolonisation, internationalisation, embedded personal tutorials and a scaffolded curriculum which clearly addresses belonging, community and interdisciplinary learning.

Students helping students: Passing on experience to ease the transition to university for first-year students
Cynthia E. Heiner*, Christine Schnaithmann, Romina Hagen, Nora Kaiser, Birthe Charlotte Hoffmann, Carolin Thiele (Freie Universitaet Berlin)

Transitioning to university brings with it many challenges. For instance, students may worry about their level of incoming knowledge and establishing new social relationships. Although these concerns are very common, students often feel they are the 'only ones' struggling. In our exploratory project, we use a social-belonging intervention to help incoming STEM students realise that initial difficulties are common and fade with time. Our team of students and staff used a combination of short interviews and online questionnaires to get students to describe what it was like for them to start university. The team then curated the responses into several student voices for the intervention materials. We will present our preliminary findings and discuss how this intervention might affect the first semester experience by helping incoming students anticipate challenges, accept them as normal, and come prepared with mitigation strategies.

Building Belonging through Group Personal tutoring
Ruth Payne (University of Leeds)

Personal tutoring remains a key point where a sense of community and belonging can develop, including peer-to-peer support and communication; understanding that others are experiencing the same challenges will enhance individuals' understanding that they are not alone.

There are different models of group tutoring, with some using group sessions to convey key information to groups of students, and others being subject-driven and offering an opportunity for interaction between students studying the same programmes.

Here I will discuss feedback on these different approaches to tutoring from both tutees and their tutors, as well as outlining participants' response to the possibility of tutor groups being able to contact their tutor and their fellow group members during the weeks before they arrive to start their programme. In particular, the project asks whether members of under-represented groups find the group tutoring experience beneficial in relation to settling in and belonging.

"I do not Feel Connected Because …": Exploring Students' Perceptions of Belonging Barriers in the Context of Higher Education- Alireza Maleki (Kashmar Institute of Higher Education). To be delivered online.
Student belonging has received an increased attention in the context of a more diverse higher education as a critical issue. This study aimed at exploring college students' perceptions of barriers with regard to student belonging. To this end, a qualitative design based on focus group interviews was carried out with three groups of eight college students. Each group included students from three different universities with three different degrees, namely B.A, M.A, and PhD students. A 70-minute online discussion was held with each group to examine what belonging barriers they faced in higher education context. A pilot group discussion with eight college students was carried out first to ensure the wording of interview questions. The results of thematic analysis revealed that belonging barriers fell into three major categories of professional, cultural, and internal related factors. This study has implications for college staff, policy makers, and educational systems.

8C: Pecha Kucha Stream 3- Inclusive Pedagogies for Belonging and Success

Does Belonging drive engagement or does Engagement influence Belonging?
Tosha Nembhard (University of Leicester)

Students' engagement with their programme is a good indication of success. However, often, attendance is the metric used to gauge engagement. The impact of attendance on success has been well researched (Aucejo & Romano, 2016; Kirksey, 2019; Klein et al., 2022) and as such, lecturers are keen to increase attendance in class. But is that the right measure? Should we look at attendance figures or should we understand student belonging? Belonging is not a metric that is easily measured. It requires a more qualitative understanding of the cohort and an appreciation of the intangible aspects of a module delivery. There are a number of ways in which belonging can be influenced such as through interactive delivery and development of a strong rapport with students. This session will look at an engineering module and discuss the small changes that we can make to the delivery and planning to enhance student belonging.

Aucejo E. M., Romano T. F. (2016). Assessing the effect of school days and absences on test score performance. Economics of Education Review, 55(December), 70–87.
Kirksey J. J. (2019). Academic harms of missing high school and the accuracy of current policy thresholds: Analysis of preregistered administrative data from a California school district. AERA Open, 5(3).
Klein, M., Sosu, E. M., & Dare, S. (2022). School Absenteeism and Academic Achievement: Does the Reason for Absence Matter? AERA Open, 8.

Encouraging student engagement with assessment feedback through inclusive and forward-facing strategies
Chris Little, Carmel Thomason (Manchester Metropolitan University)

Recent research revealed that 78% of HEI's operate on a feedback model which is primarily teacher-focused rather than being learning-focused or developmental (Winstone, 2022). Furthermore, recent reviews report a need to ensure that feedback is learning-focused and future orientated (Sadler, Reimann and Sambell, 2022).

A teaching team in Multimedia Journalism has implemented three teaching strategies to improve student feedback engagement by providing students with:

• Summative assessment feedback in audio form rather than written form.
• Cohort summaries of performance and feedback in the form of prerecorded videos released at the beginning of units.
• An assignment front sheet that encourages a more active and reflective approach to assignments.

These strategies have been employed in four units across two semesters. The project has offered student-centred forward-facing feedback in inclusive ways to encourage a more

active learning and student engagement with summative and formative feedback. This presentation will present preliminary findings exploring the above.

Using AI to support student success
Kellyanne Findlay (University of Strathclyde)

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) continues to evolve, it is important to consider its potential to support diverse student populations in their academic development. Salas-Pilco et al. (2022) have highlighted the potential of AI in promoting an inclusive approach to education. This case study explores the use of ChatGPT, a large language model, in generating practice assessments that were subsequently reviewed by undergraduate students in the UK. The study demonstrates how AI can support inclusive higher education by promoting active student engagement, developing critical thinking skills, modelling academic integrity, and introducing students to tools that have the potential to create a more inclusive learning experience. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on the use of AI in supporting inclusive higher education and provides insights into the benefits of integrating AI into teaching and assessment practices.

8D: Pecha Kucha Stream 4- Does Belonging Always mean success?

Rethinking module feedback to build a sense of belonging in the classroom
Laurice Fretwell, Corinna Chidley, Lee Pridmore, Sally Akehurst (University of Derby)

Sense of belonging can be influenced in multiple ways. The Student Academic Survey (2021) highlighted factors students felt contributed to their sense of belonging, including "approachable/accessible academic staff", "making it clear what is expected of me", and "feeling my views listened to in class". Acknowledging this, in the pilot study herein, we evaluate what can be done at the micro(module)-level to increase sense of belonging through pre and mid-module feedback. It is anticipated that early dialogue, plus follow up a few weeks later, will build an improved sense of belonging with students through establishing closer involvement in their educational journey. Questions ascertaining what students are looking forward to, any apprehensions, and what they expect from the module – along with expectation setting by the module leader and opportunity to ask questions – will enable module leaders to engage students in all aspects of the module and make adaptations to suit their needs.

Student belonging and mattering, and the impact on academic achievement
Clair Zawada (Birmingham City University)

This presentation will explore the concepts of both student belonging and student mattering. Student belonging is a well-researched area within Higher Education and there is a wealth of information on how fostering a sense of belonging in students will improve their experience and willingness to persist in completing their studies. There are also many ideas on how to improve feelings of belongingness in student cohorts. A lesser researched area within Higher Education is the concept of student mattering, and the individual student's

perception that they are noticed and valued.

This presentation will consider the findings of research into belonging and mattering of allied health undergraduate students. The research has investigated correlations between belonging and mattering, a range of student demographics, and also correlation between belonging and mattering scores with the academic achievement of students. This research also considers aspects of belonging and mattering in both the clinical and academic environment.

8E: Pecha Kucha Stream 5- Sense of Belonging

The student voice in enhancing learner outcomes: a case study from Scotland's colleges
Simon Varwell (Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland- SPARQS)

Creating student belonging and successful outcomes are ideally partnership tasks, with staff and students exploring the definitions, expectations, barriers and solutions in retention and attainment. In Scotland's colleges, who deliver around a quarter of Scotland's HE, challenges in post-pandemic learner belonging and outcomes have been identified.

sparqs is working with several colleges to explore how students and students' associations can contribute to understanding and enhancing learner outcomes for particular demographics, courses or modes of study, to further enhance belonging. Activities include:

- Developing a toolkit to explore links between students' perceptions and experiences of modes of learning.
- Creating a student feedback tool in priority courses to include students' suggestions for enhancing future provision and success.
- Identifying case studies and interventions with staff and students to develop specific enhancements to learning experiences and outcomes.
- Collating effective contributions by students' associations to student wellbeing, community and inclusion, recognising intersectional diversity such as widening access, care experience and other protected characteristics.

This presentation will share project findings so far, including in the activities above, and point to opportunities for further development in 2023-24.

How does 'digital shock' impact belonging and engagement among international students?
Sarah Knight, Elizabeth Newall, Diana Andreea Catana (JISC)

Some studies have described the shift from one country's cultural and educational use of digital technologies to another as a 'digital shock' for students, with this settling-in period potentially lasting for months. Often, digital shock coincides with cultural and learning shocks, together impacting a sense of belonging. International students come to the UK with a huge span of cultural backgrounds and differing life experiences. These differences all impact how technology is used in learning. The findings from phase one of Jisc's research

project investigating the digital experience of international students studying in the UK are published in 'International students' digital experience: a review of policy, academic literature and views from UK higher education' (Jisc, April 2023). This presentation builds on these results by sharing insights from the second phase of research in which international students were directly consulted across 23 UK universities.

Knowing me, knowing you - the role of the relatable academic for new and existing students
Carole Binns (University of Bradford)

Increasing numbers of working-class students are attending University. Often, they are the first in their family to do so. Not knowing what to expect, some worry they might not fit in, or fear that they will visibly stand out from other students.

My research revealed that working-class academics are aware of how these students might feel. Based on their own experiences, almost all participants said that they intuitively sensed and predicted such anxieties. Relatable life experiences such as not knowing what was required at a research seminar sometimes lead to fear of exposure.

These academics revealed how they discreetly observed and connected with these students by revealing their own background and sharing how they mitigated their own anxieties. Would students prefer to be allocated to a tutor who is from a similar background to their own? Exploring this question could help locate where good current practice lies or predict where future issues might develop.