

**Students at the Heart Conference submission overview booklet**

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# Wednesday 12 June 2024

# Keynote

**Kat Stark, NUS UK Director**

# Block A

## Session 1: (Wednesday 12 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Development of game-based learning resources for teaching chemical literacy using AI**

Jon Ashley, Faculty of Science

The use of AI in academia represents a unique opportunity for teachers without prior programming knowledge to develop new blended learning resources with the aim of supplementing student learning. The use of game-based learning resources has been shown to help improve accessibility to learning and provide students with a safe and private environment, in which they can make mistakes without fear of failure. This allows students to develop their skills in a fun and engaging way. In chemistry-based courses, students are often required to rote learn certain concepts such as organic functional groups, which they often struggle with or lack motivation to memorize. Students can lack confidence in interpreting and extracting information from chemical structures such as molecular weights and polarity.

In this project, we developed several online game-based resources to supplement student learning, encourage chemical literacy and improve learning outcomes on chemistry-based modules. Using ChatGPT, I developed a series of online games including an organic chemistry functional groups flashcard quiz where students identify organic functional groups, a chemical formula game where students must input the chemical formula of a chemical structure to reveal a hidden letter of a chemical element and a game that helps students predict polarity of organic compounds. The games incorporated features such as lives, point scoring and high scores to allow students to get instant feedback and improve over time.

Students were surveyed on their attitudes towards gaming and game-based learning resources and given access to the website. Students were also asked to evaluate the online games to determine the effectiveness of game-based learning in helping students become chemically literate. The results of this study will help to improve the use of game-based learning and expand the online games to other areas of chemistry such as data interpretation of analytical data and calculations.

## Session 2: (Wednesday 12 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**CampusConnect: building a student community**

Ellen Coyle, Student Recruitment Marketing & Admissions

Claire Murphy, Student Recruitment Marketing & Admissions

Megan Birchall, Student Recruitment Marketing & Admissions

Within the wider team of Student Recruitment Marketing and Admissions, our teams of undergraduate recruitment, postgraduate recruitment and International recruitment work collaboratively to make use of CampusConnect as a conversion tool. This is an app which helps develop and cultivate bespoke student communities, through chat groups, live events, networking and the pushing out of targeted content. Current students who work as ambassadors on CampusConnect are crucial in this, guiding prospective students and inspiring them to study here.

* The chat groups are a vital part of the platform, and across our teams here at LJMU, we ensure there is a group for all prospective students. We have peer-led groups that cover a range of areas: courses, accommodations, hobbies, interests and community groups.
* The student community is vital to student recruitment, but our staff community is important too – through collaborating on CampusConnect, we work across teams with people we may not otherwise have met, allowing good networking opportunities. IT Services and CRM play a big part in the running of the app too.

Proposed structure:

* Overview of CampusConnect
* The role of our current students and the coordination of these student ambassadors

CampusConnect ‘success stories’ – a panel of current students to speak and give their experiences. Both home and international ambassadors to share their points of view, from using the app as prospective students to now working as ambassadors on the platform

* How we want to develop our use of CampusConnect going forward – student ambassadors to play a bigger role in starting conversations so nobody feels uncomfortable on the app, pushing out targeted content at key points in the cycle, working with other teams to coordinate Q&A sessions, for example accommodation
* Any questions/comments

## Session 3: (Wednesday 12 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Understanding partnerships in Sport and Exercise Sciences**

Craig Twist, Faculty of Science

Becky Murphy, Faculty of Science

Zoe Knowles, Faculty of Science

Background and content of the session

Partnerships might be defined as institutional arrangements with an external organisation or intra-institutional group and can underpin teaching, research and consultancy activity. The purpose of this session is to describe data from the inaugural School of Sport and Exercise Sciences’ Partnership Survey and explore its relevance to school and institutional strategies.

What did we do?

School staff reported details of their partnerships that contribute to school-based activity using an online survey. Details on the sector, location, domain and nature of the partnership were recorded.

Key findings

Seventy staff identified 255 partners across the private (45.1%), public (42.0%) and charity/voluntary sectors (12.9%). Partnerships are classified as local (i.e., in the Liverpool City Region (LCR); 37.6%), national (i.e., outside LCR; 48.6%) and international (13.7%). Sports performance (n = 178) and education (n = 99) are the most typical, whereas clinical (n = 38), health (n = 40) and exercise (n = 41) the least represented domains. Most partnerships are focused on a single purpose (67%), with undergraduate placements (n = 128), postgraduate placements (n = 68) and funded staff research (n = 45) the most typically reported arrangement. Consultancy (n = 17), funded postgraduate research (n = 26) and undergraduate/taught postgraduate research (n = 29) were the lowest reported purpose of the partnership.

How will the information be used?

This work identifies the school’s collaborative activity and contribution to the local, national and international community. The presentation will explore how these data inform our story for external engagement and support the school’s direction on core agendas that contribute to the strategic aims of the university. This includes the promotion of the school’s reputation to enhance our approaches to; student recruitment; student experience; research impact and to diversify and celebrate our existing relationships with placement providers.

## Session 4: (Wednesday 12 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**'Unsung Heroes' - impact and community building with neurodiverse learners**

Victoria Brennan, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Rory McDonald, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Paula McNulty, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

The Absolute Chemistry Research Group (ACRG) is a cross-faculty group that leads impactful longitudinal interventions for pupils from deprived areas, who often experience barriers to engagement with higher education. Community is at the heart of ACRG activities: programmes work deeply with partner schools to raise aspirations, drawing upon the LJMU student body as role-models.

This session will share insights from a two-day Chemistry Week project (part funded by the Royal Society of Chemistry), designed to support chemistry aspirations and learner engagement at a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) specialist school in the Northwest of England. Staff from APSS and Science collaborated to offer activities to these learners. Through hands-on science workshops, the young people learnt about chemistry in the world around them and participated in art and creative writing activities facilitated by APSS students. These diverse learners explored their interests and influences and celebrated their own identities as ‘Unsung Heroes’ and unique individuals. The learners attended an exhibition of their work in the Student Life Building. LJMU Drama students delivered a devised play to examine the story of an unsung hero of chemistry, Rosalind Franklin, and her determination to believe in herself and the value of her work.

This ‘Unsung Heroes’ project involved the collaboration of colleagues and students from across the university and formed part of LJMU’s ‘Place and Partnership’ strategic activities. It enhanced LJMU students’ education and experience as co-creators. This session will reflect upon recommendations for cross-faculty and/or cross staff-student projects and how to harness the talent within our community for developing aspirations in the future generation. This demonstrates how meaningful partnerships can support more than stereotypical UCAS applicants and working collaboratively can be impactful for the LJMU community.

## Session 5: (Wednesday 12 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Facilitating future skills using Lego ® Serious Play®**

Jane Dowson, Faculty of Business & Law

Rosemary Capper, Faculty of Business & Law

Vicky Farrall, Student Futures

Serious Games, simulation and gamification in education is widely used to motivate and engage students in improving their knowledge, understanding and confidence using real world situations (Mekler et al, 2017; Tews et al, 2020). The demands of complex and uncertain organisational life once leaving Higher Education can be an exciting, yet daunting prospect. Students need to have the freedom and safety to explore their own skills and competences prior to graduating in order to feel confident and competent to meet the real-world challenges they will encounter once they graduate (Ӧzhan & Kocadere, 2020). Lego® Serious Play ® can facilitate the thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills in order to help students build reflexivity, resilience, competence, and deeper learning, supporting immediate action learning (Oxford Analytica, 2016). Lego® Serious Play ® is a facilitated meeting, communication, and problem-solving method, where participants are led through a series of questions, which go deeper and deeper. Each participant builds his or her own three-dimensional LEGO model in response to the facilitator’s questions using specially selected LEGO bricks. These 3D models serve as the basis for group discussion, knowledge sharing, problem solving and decision-making. The session will outline the methodology and process of Lego® Serious Play ® in more detail. The collaborative work undertaken by LBS and Student Futures will demonstrate how it has been employed to support students who have been on Business & Management Placements and those who are seeking to gain important career development skills to support green careers and in sustainability jobs. Insights from the session will be useful to those in academic and student-facing services adopting this innovative and inclusive methodology and will resonate with those who wish to develop student engagement, confidence, reflexivity and impact.

## Session 6: (Wednesday 12 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Designing assessments in higher education: ChatGPT and academic integrity**

*Teaching Excellence Project funded by the Teaching and Learning Academy*

Susanne Zajitschek, Faculty of Science

The 2023/24 academic year was marked by the new, widespread availability of open-access AI tools. This technology offers exciting opportunities for streamlining tedious tasks in personal, research, and teaching settings, as well as assisting in improving the structuring and writing skills of students. However, it also raises deep concerns among educators in Higher Education about the challenge of swiftly and comprehensively updating assessments to prevent cheating. Rapidly changing large language models, highly variable individual technological skills among both teachers and students, and insecurity regarding general guidance for “AI proofing” made it difficult to predict with confidence how susceptible assignment questions and assessment types would be this year.

This TLA-funded project investigates the performance of ChatGPT4 across more than 100 assessments from 40 participating modules in the School of Biological Sciences.

By comparing the grades achieved by the ChatBot with those of the student cohort, we aim to assess the extent to which AI tools may be used as “cheating aid” across different assessments, identify assignment types that are inherently resistant to AI cheating, and uncover subject-specific and universally applicable best practice in assessment design. The modules in the School of Biological and Environmental Sciences offer a wide range of often highly creative assessments, but these have not yet been investigated in a comparative manner. I expect to identify innovative, currently hidden, examples of best practice that extend beyond mere AI-proofing, offering insights for innovative assessment strategies across disciplines.

## Session 7: (Wednesday 12 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Supporting students with quantitative analysis**

Tom Goodale, Library Services

In March the Academic Achievement Team’s maths/stats/data analysis drop-ins become vey crowded. Students come in saying anything from “I’ve collected some data, what do I do now?” through “I’ve been told I need to use something called SPSS” all the way to “Can you just check my write-up in my analysis section?” Ideally students would not be facing these issues at such a critical point. In this session I discuss the common issues we see with students who come to us asking about their quantitative analysis as well as what the Academic Achievement Team offers on a year-round basis to support these students, before opening the floor to a discussion of how the Academic Achievement Team, dissertation module lecturers, and student project supervisors could work more closely to support students.

# Block B

## Session 8 Lightning talks: (Wednesday 12 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**Using a 3D visualisation tool to facilitate flipped classroom teaching**

Nick Bryan, Faculty of Science

Sandra Fawcett, Faculty of Science

Adrian O'Hara, Faculty of Science

This presentation will summarise an ongoing study embedded in Level 5 of the Biomedical Science undergraduate program, exploring flipped classroom teaching, supported by 3D visualisation via the ‘Anatomage’ digital dissection platform, as an alternative to didactic lecture in the teaching of histology.

The value of histology in training clinical and allied health practitioners has been acknowledged for over a century. Classically, histology was taught with students individually observing specimens using a microscope, although constraints imposed by modern cohorts relating to class size, costs and time have driven exploration into alternatives.

These typically involve replacement of ‘hands-on’ microscope time with instructor lead visualisation of tissues using images. Virtual microscopes have been widely explored as an aid for contemporary histological teaching, with comparable outcomes in student performance to traditional methods.

Typically, studies exploring alternative education approaches in histology, use clinical programs, most prolifically medical or dental undergraduate degrees. These cohorts differ significantly to Biomedical Science students in their vocational aspirations, and prior education. Nonetheless, promising findings from these studies validate this approach worthy of further investigation in Biomedical Scientist training.

This study builds on previous work proposing a blended learning approach to histology teaching using flipped classroom delivery.

The study presented herein is exploring student perception to blended learning versus traditional didactic lectures in teaching of histology in an undergraduate Biomedical Science cohort. The approach will focus on flipped classroom delivery supported by 3D dissection, this Anatomage platform is new to LJMU having been purchased in 2022.

These findings add to previous work, bringing techniques for improving quality and perception of histology typically used in clinical training, into Biomedical Science, whilst exploring the value of a novel visualisation tool for flipping a classroom.

**Co-designing a multi professional learning environment for advanced clinical practice programmes**

Joanna Lavery, Faculty of Health

Mark Vann, Faculty of Health

Jiordan McPherson, Faculty of Health

Eleanor Fenney, Faculty of Health

LJMU MSc Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) programmes currently feature two models of programme delivery, apprenticeship, and non-apprenticeship routes. Recent curriculum development and the introduction of an identical core curricular emphasise the requirement to streamline programme design to ensure equity, inclusivity, and parity in student experience. Programmes are mapped to the NHS England (2017) multi professional framework for advancing practice to safeguard competence on completion and both routes are proven to enhance graduate opportunities for employment.

The virtual learning environment (VLE) is a key point of contact for students and thought to act as a social interaction platform to scaffold learner engagement and provide group cohesiveness (Lazareva, 2018). Existing modular and VLE provision for programmes has been variable with the exception of shared modules. Therefore, core modules were independently audited against the LJMU digital learning policy (2019). Recommendations identified areas of strength, such as breadth of resources, methods of communicating information, accessibility, and regulatory requirements. Areas for development centred around the enhanced use of technology to support live capture of synchronous teaching and interactions, electronic reading lists and student usability. Student engagement strategies were instigated to capture individual and group feedback to respond to student challenges and identify opportunities for improvement. Student viewpoints aim to inform co-design of the VLE to integrate and diversify multi professional apprenticeship and non-apprenticeship ACP routes to create a shared community of learning.

References

Lazareva, A., 2018. Factors affecting student engagement in online collaborative learning courses. In Teaching and Learning in a Digital World: Proceedings of the 20th International Conference on Interactive Collaborative Learning–Volume 2 (pp. 349-359). Springer International Publishing.

N.H.S England, (2017) Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England. London: HEE

**Stepping up psychosis: the use of virtual reality in pre-registration education**

Christine Roberts, Faculty of Health

Niall McCann, Faculty of Health

This session will showcase the use of Virtual reality (VR) as a learning tool within mental health nurse education. Blending to the education and student experience theme for the conference and the digital, data and technologies strategy along with the student experience strategy at LMJU the session will highlight innovation within nurse education.

The session will outline how co-creation between academics in mental health and teaching and learning technicians specialising in VR enabled a unique learning opportunity for student mental health nurses. A fully immersive VR experience into the world of person living with psychosis whilst being treated within a mental health facility has enabled the team to support students to have an insight into an areas they could only previously theoretically learn about. Being able to have a short experience of what its like to have this illness has allowed the students to develop deeper empathy and compassion when caring for people living with psychosis, thus hopefully improving patient care once qualified.

This session will be able to show how VR can be utilised to teach topics or support skill acquisition in professional courses that may have before been difficult to replicate.

## Session 9: (Wednesday 12 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**More than just obtaining a doctorate: how good practice can transform a student’s life**

Jagroop Kaur, Faculty of Health

Helen Poole, Faculty of Health

Content covered - In society, we tend to categorise people into boxes based on labels like gender, disability, and more. These labels often lead to assumptions about individuals, shaping our perceptions and interactions. While some assumptions may be accurate, they can also have negative consequences when applied unfairly. This tendency to make assumptions extends to various settings, including universities, where it can significantly impact students with long-term conditions or disabilities.

LJMU's strategy and values - Creating a positive culture - Rupy, our presenter, defied the assumptions imposed on her due to her cerebral palsy. Despite initial bleak predictions about her abilities, she surpassed expectations with the support of her family. Overcoming physical and psychological challenges, she pursued a career in health psychology to bridge the gap between disability and healthcare. Throughout her journey, Rupy faced imposter syndrome and dyslexia, questioning her capabilities. However, with the unwavering support of her supervisors, she persevered and completed her Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology.

Rupy's supervisors played a crucial role in her success by treating her like any other student, providing support, and fostering belief in her abilities. They accommodated her access needs, showed patience, and encouraged her to confront her challenges. By acknowledging her strengths and weaknesses, Rupy learned to navigate her disabilities effectively, both personally and professionally. Her experience highlights the importance of a compassionate and inclusive approach in academic settings, where students with disabilities should be supported holistically rather than through segregated services.

Practice to other LJMU services / Takeaway - The journey of Rupy underscores the significance of approaching education with empathy, curiosity, and accountability. By creating a culture of understanding and openness, universities can empower all students to thrive and feel valued within the academic community. Moving away from assumptions and embracing integrity can lead to a positive and inclusive environment where every individual is supported based on their unique needs and strengths.

## Session 10: (Wednesday 12 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**LJMU engage - connect, collaborate, captivate to create a third space community for public engagement**

Zoe Knowles, Faculty of Science

Gemma Reed, Research & Innovation Services

There is now a considerable body of work showing increased fluidity between academic and associated activities, for example, educational development, knowledge exchange and public engagement, with those responsible for them being employed on both academic and professional contracts (Whitchurch, 2023). This has led to a general movement in the direction of what has been termed ‘third space’ activity (Whitchurch 2013, 2018; Grant 2021; McIntosh and Nutt 2022). LJMU Engage is an innovative, hybrid programme for funded through LJMU by the Research England Researcher Development Fund. It is a purposeful collaboration between LJMU Academic and Professional Services staff and the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement. Attendees gain an understanding of how to define, support, lead and evaluate engaged research and create the conditions for public engagement (PE) practices to flourish. Using creative pedagogical approaches attendees developed skills for facilitating conversations about PE with colleagues, for discussion in PDPR, to cite within conferment/promotion applications and how to establish communities of practice within Faculties and Service Teams. Internal drivers of Place and Partnership, REF expectations on engagement and established KEF criteria make this course timely and valuable to several strategic agendas within and beyond LJMU. We evaluate the programme, hearing from the lived experience of participants including challenges they face, opportunities ahead and its scope towards creating communities from those ‘working in third space’ to represent those of ‘third space professionals’.

## Session 11: (Wednesday 12 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**Enhancing the student community: PGR and student experiences of the Critical Academia Mentorship Scheme**

Connie Pike, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Hilary Currin, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Jessica Elia, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Paul Doke, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

In January 2023, four PGR students from the School of Justice Studies designed a mentorship scheme funded by the Centre for the Study of Crime, Criminalisation and Social Exclusion (CCSE) research centre. The scheme aimed to identify promising Level 5 (L5) students who showed an interest in post-graduate study or demonstrated good ability to grapple with criminological theory who would benefit from dedicated mentoring. Mentees were matched with a PGR mentor to (i) provide consistent support to develop their critical thinking and analytical skills related to criminological theory, (ii) to provide a safe space for mentees to discuss ideas openly outside the classroom, and (iii) to develop confidence and future graduate skills. This scheme was supported by a pedagogical vision to depart from a didactic model of teaching and learning, to an ‘engaged’ (hooks, 1994; 2010) and egalitarian (Sanzen, 1994) approach. The mentorship scheme successfully supported eight L5 students from January 2023 to December 2023, and resumed in January 2024 due to its initial success. The mentors’ intent was to evaluate the scheme to capture the mentees' experiences. Data collection consisted of a quantitative survey at the beginning and end of the scheme, with qualitative data generated through visual and participatory methods. This presentation will illuminate the collaborative student voice in two ways: reflecting the undergraduate voice by utilising the findings from their feedback; and by drawing upon the insight of PGR mentors and their pedagogical reasons for designing and conducting this mentorship scheme. This demonstrates the ways in which a mentoring scheme can enhance the student community through developing a co-learning space (Freire, 1972), whilst simultaneously developing academic skills for both undergraduate and postgraduate cohorts within a diverse student community (Addy et al., 2023).

## Session 12: (Wednesday 12 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**Criminology students and their sense of community: a student-driven assessment of community-building**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching and Learning Academy*

Steve Wakeman, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Giles Barrett, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Criminology as a discipline recruits very large numbers of students. We might assume that large numbers mean a fertile ground for the growth of a discipline-based student community fostering identity and belongingness. However large numbers can also precipitate student anonymity and higher levels of loneliness and isolation. Student interns have undertaken a survey and virtual focus groups with Criminology students to explore the ways in which they experience their academic community and to explore the following key questions:

* + What does the term ‘community’ mean to our students in 2024?
  + Where and under what circumstances do students get a sense of belonging and build connections (e.g., WhatsApp groups, group project work, PT tutorial modules at level 4)?
  + What role does or might the legacy of the covid pandemic play in any efforts to re-ignite criminology social events?
  + The high levels of student mental health problems is well documented – to what extent is mental health and the ongoing cost of living crisis impacting upon the motivations for social events/activities and the format of these connections?
  + What do our students really want by way of social events, if at all, that bring Criminology students from across the levels together?
  + Is there any appetite among the students for a mentoring system or buddying scheme around the themes of student engagement, belonging and identity?

The presentation will reflect on the findings of this research to highlight the ways in which staff-student partnerships can be taken forward to foster a sense of identity, community and belonging, and what mechanisms can be put in place to ensure their sustainability and growth as a collective responsibility. The student voice will be key here in shaping recommendations and action plans to enhance the student experience beyond the curriculum and to support and sustain the Criminology community.

## Session 13: (Wednesday 12 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**Alternate assessments - what do they look like?**

Denise Lee, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

Sian Dunne, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

As an inclusive institute committed to supporting all students throughout their educational journey, we recognise the growing number of students disclosing disabilities and utilising Individualised Student Learning Plans (ISLPs). This dynamic landscape calls for proactive measures from academic staff to adapt teaching and assessments in alignment with these plans. However, there is a notable challenge, as many educators may be unfamiliar with the methods and possibilities available to meet these diverse needs.

This session aims to bridge this knowledge gap and empower academic staff to effectively support students with and without disclosed disabilities. It will not only provide insights into creating alternative assessments but also emphasise the broader aspect of fostering an inclusive learning environment.

The first focus of the session will be on exploring what alternative assessments can look like. Examples may include project-based assessments, oral examinations, interactive presentations, and flexible deadlines. By delving into these examples, academic staff can gain a better understanding of the variety of assessment methods available, ensuring they can accommodate the diverse needs of students while maintaining the integrity of the learning outcomes.

Moreover, the session will delve into strategies for providing effective support to students with and without disclosed disabilities. This involves cultivating an awareness of inclusive teaching practices that benefit the entire student body. By fostering an environment that values diversity, academic staff can create a positive and supportive atmosphere conducive to learning.

In conclusion, this session seeks to equip academic staff with practical ideas for implementing alternative assessments while fostering an inclusive mindset. By better understanding the needs of students with disclosed disabilities and embracing inclusive teaching strategies, educators can play a pivotal role in creating an enriching educational experience for all students.

## Session 14: (Wednesday 12 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**The impact of epistemic beliefs and emotions on students' views of research in professional learning**

Gillian Peiser, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

This presentation will report on the results of a mixed methods study (survey (n=376) and semi-structured interviews (n=14)), which investigated the impact of epistemic beliefs and emotions on student teachers’ views of the research element of their professional learning programme and their relationship with student demographics. Whilst the focus of this study was on student teachers, this study has broader relevance to students studying on other professional learning courses, based in universities, and to students in HE in general.

Epistemic beliefs are defined as theories and beliefs individuals hold about knowing, how they come to know, and the way in which these beliefs influence thinking (Hofer and Pintrich, 1997, p.88). They relate to beliefs about knowledge structure, stability, speed of learning, and preparedness to personally engage with knowledge. Epistemic emotions (e.g. curiosity / frustration) connect with beliefs, since they result from appraisals about the degree of alignment between new information and existing beliefs and knowledge structures (Muis et al., 2018).

The study aimed to answer following questions:

1. Are there significant differences in epistemic beliefs and epistemic emotions relating to educational research depending on student demographics?

2. Do distinct profiles of students emerge based on different epistemic beliefs and emotions?

3. What are the reasons for differing epistemic beliefs and emotions?

Data from the survey was tested for statistical significance between responses and demographics. Latent profile analysis was conducted to profile students into homogenous groups. Semi-structured interviews sought to understand trends emerging from the survey data.

The quantitative analysis revealed significantly different epistemic beliefs and emotions relating to gender, training pathway, and maturity, and four contrasting profiles in terms of beliefs and emotions. The qualitative findings indicated the strong influence of prior academic learning experiences, views about self-efficacy and research value, combined with notable interactions between epistemic emotions and beliefs.

# Block C

## Session 15 Lightning talks: (Wednesday 12 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Understanding how autistic students perceive transitions through University and the impact upon their mental health**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Harvey Stanway, Faculty of Health

Lizzie Coen, Faculty of Health

Background: Being at university is a significant transition period in a young adult’s life. Previous research has shown autistic students often face barriers transitioning into university, such as difficulties adjusting to independent living and study, and sensory and social challenges. Despite many autistic students possessing strengths that correspond with improved academic outcomes (e.g., good memory, and problem-solving skills), 40% do not complete their university studies. With less than 22% of autistic adults in employment, it is imperative autistic students support needs as they transition into, and through their undergraduate study are met to redress the inequalities they face.

Aim: Funded by the LJMU curriculum enhancement fund, this study aims to explore autistic undergraduate student’s experiences of transitioning into university from school/college and through the undergraduate levels. Also, the perceived impact these transitions have upon mental health will be explored.

Content: This lightning talk highlights autistic undergraduate students’ perceptions of the facilitators and barriers to transitioning into, and through, university, and the impact this has upon mental health. Views and opinions pertaining to the accessibility and acceptability of LJMU mental health support provision for autistic undergraduate students is also discussed. This research underscores the core LJMU strategy values of being an inclusive, caring community in which students are the central focus.

Take Home Message: Delegates will gain understanding of the experiences of autistic undergraduate students’ as they transition into and through the levels at LJMU; the perceived impact this has upon mental health, and the perceived suitability of support provision available at LJMU for autistic undergraduates.

Transferability: In the spirit of the core values underpinning the LJMU strategy, by putting students at the heart of everything we do and being inclusive, the findings from this project could inform further development of responsive support provision at LJMU for autistic undergraduates.

**The co-creation of a university sensory resource hub for neurodiverse students**

Ange Garden, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Libby Robinson, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Universities are increasingly recognising the diverse needs of their student populations, including those who identify as neurodiverse. Neurodiverse students, including individuals with autism, ADHD, sensory processing differences, and other neurological conditions, often face unique challenges in academic settings. Creating an inclusive and supportive environment for these students is essential for their academic success and well-being. This study presents the collaborative efforts of LJMU School of Education (SoE), Liverpool School of Art & Design (LSAD) and Lark Lane Wellbeing Hub to co-create a sensory resource hub at tailored to the specific needs of neurodiverse students. Key elements of the co-creation process included a thorough needs assessment to understand the sensory sensitivities and preferences of neurodiverse students involving focus groups, and one-on-one interviews. Neurodiverse students play a central role in the decision-making process, actively participating in planning and design sessions. Ongoing evaluation meant that the co-creation process is an ongoing endeavour, with regular evaluations and feedback loops to fine-tune the sensory hub’s design and functionality. The ongoing outcomes of our co-creation process, highlight the positive impact of the sensory hub on the well-being and academic performance of neurodiverse students. The challenges encountered during the project and lessons learned that can be applied to similar initiatives in other educational institutions. By embracing a co-creation approach, universities can take significant steps towards creating more inclusive and supportive environments for all students, including those who are neurodiverse.

## Session 16: (Wednesday 12 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Igniting aspirations: hackathons paving the way to in-curriculum work-based learning initiatives**

Wendy Johnston, Faculty of Science

Keren Coney, Student Futures

Stuart Philipson, Student Futures

Kaye Richards, Faculty of Health

Higher Education institutions must ensure that students are equipped with the necessary employability skills and literacy to progress to successful graduate outcomes; indeed, these outcomes are often used to measure the quality of university provision (Cheng et al. 2022). A key element of this is embedding employability and work based experiential learning opportunities within the curriculum, in a way that is responsive to the needs of both LJMU students and different programmes of study.

In our programmes (Nutrition, Psychology, Sport Nutrition), we constantly strive to provide excellent student experiences within and beyond the curriculum to enhance graduate employment and to create positive change. We envisioned a distinctive, symbiotic, work-based learning experience to develop career readiness and a sense of community for our students. Working with a combination of industry Mentors, Academics, the Student Futures’ Careers & Employability and Employer Engagement Teams, and the Start-Up Hub, we collaborated to design and deliver our first ‘in curriculum’ Hackathons.

The Hackathons were designed to be a problem oriented, fast paced, fun, active and engaging process, with a view to stimulating students’ curiosity and creativity. Students were presented with authentic, live industry problems, related to their programmes which were designed to challenge them, and which required collaboration, reflection, and teamwork – they had to think outside the box.

By harnessing the collaborative strength of groups of staff working together, Hackathon teams can develop innovative ideas to apply to real world applications, benefitting not only students, but also strengthening industry-education relationships. In sharing our lessons learned, we will reflect on our successes and challenges of developing innovation in these examples of the employability enhanced curriculum. This presentation will illustrate how the learning experiences from our Hackathons can be effectively replicated across programmes within LJMU.

## Session 17: (Wednesday 12 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Education for All -From West Derby to LJMU: using the authentic student voice**

Catherine Shillito, Student Recruitment Marketing & Admissions

John Clark, Faculty of Business & Law

Cameron Askew, Faculty of Business & Law

The Outreach Team has worked with West Derby School for over 15 years, through delivery of sustained widening access programmes - such as the current Access All Areas initiative, targeted at young males from under-represented backgrounds. The presentation will focus on a case study from Cameron Askew, a current LJMU Student in the Liverpool Business School and past pupil of West Derby School. Cameron engaged with multiple widening access programmes delivered by the Outreach Team and will explore the benefits of these interactions and how they prepared him to apply and subsequently succeed at LJMU.

Cameron currently works as a third year placement student within the Outreach Team and will outline how he is actively delivering inspirational sessions to the next generation of West Derby students and beyond. The session will demonstrate the impact of using representative students in delivering outreach to support the university's widening access and student recruitment targets. Evaluation will be covered highlighting how this work links to the university's access and participation plan strategy in line with OFS and TASO guidance.

As widening access programmes seek to encourage broader participation in higher education, the established constructs around human capital and models of inclusivity are increasingly challenged. The session also demonstrates how subject specific widening access initiatives can be tailored to support under-represented groups in Liverpool’s high-school communities evaluate their post-18 options by constructing bespoke experiences built around the individual needs of pupil groups. In celebrating the personal reference points of high-school pupils and linking to elements of popular-culture, the individual needs of marginalised groups are considered in equitable quantity to strategy targets of the university.

The session will further cover how the outreach strategy is informed by Liverpool City Region data that identifies schools with the highest percentage of disadvantaged learners. Through partnership with local school and college contacts, the university directly contributes to the institutional Place and Partnership Strategy, and through its use of the authentic student voice positively promotes the LJMU student experience.

## Session 18: (Wednesday 12 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**The ‘Mistory’ decolonization project: confronting black maternal health disparities with midwifery and history students**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Clare Maxwell, Faculty of Health

Olga Machado-Le Gal, Faculty of Health

Gina Chapman, Faculty of Health

Andrea Livesey, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Eden Woodcock, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Recent studies show that Black women are nearly 4 times more likely to die in pregnancy and childbirth in the UK when compared to white women. Reasons for this transcend physical, psychological and socio-economic aspects, but racial bias is a contributory factor. Nineteenth century teachings on race told physicians that Black women were less susceptible to pain in labour, breastfed easily, and had less emotional connection to their children. This racialized knowledge, developed under slavery, was repeated in medical literature throughout most of the twentieth century, and subsequently still impacts understandings of ‘racial difference’ today.

LJMU History and Midwifery departments are leading a curriculum enhancement internship project, facilitating students across disciplines to work together using historical research to decolonize the midwifery curriculum. This implicitly recognises the value of working across LJMU’s community in addressing all three of the aims in LJMU Strategy 2030 in, first, providing excellent education beyond the curriculum (Education and Student Experience); second, including students in cutting-edge interdisciplinary research (Research and Knowledge Exchange), and finally, including students in a parallel multi-institutional project on Black maternal health (with International Slavery Museum/local artists) in which both History and Midwifery staff play lead roles (Place and Partnership).

In summary, this project provides historical context to racialised ideas around Black women and reproduction, explores how these ideas link to outcomes of Black women in UK maternity services and produce historically informed teaching interventions/resources to help decolonize the curriculum. In this SAH presentation the midwifery and history leads, with the student interns, will discuss 1. The methodology used and applicability for other disciplines 2. Challenges/benefits of working across two very different subject areas, and 3. the value of embracing LJMU’s community and the value of both student, as well as staff, skills and knowledge (key takeaway message).

## Session 19: (Wednesday 12 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Enhancement activity to support student continuation in the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences**

Ian Sadler, Faculty of Science

Juliette Strauss, Faculty of Science

Emma Ball, Faculty of Science

Becky Murphy, Faculty of Science

Student continuation in higher education is a significant issue in the sector. Defined as a student still being in their studies 1 year and 15 days after they started, continuation is a key metric in OfS requirements for institutions to maintain registration. We must also not lose sight of the importance of continuation for the individual student who has made a significant commitment to continued education and personal development. Conceptually, continuation is complex and reasons for non-continuation are multifaceted. Within the School of Sport and Exercise Science continuation has been below benchmark and the subject area seems to be suppressed relative to other subject areas in the sector. This paper identifies a range of approaches that aim to increase a sense of community and belonging, alongside more targeted support for individuals that are relevant across subject areas. Three specific projects are brought together including: 1) a high-intensity peer mentor facilitated induction; 2) an enhanced personal tutor system; and 3) a system for identifying ‘at risk’ students. The impact of these strategies will be evaluated and colleagues will be asked to consider their application and implications for other academic and professional departments in the university.

## Session 20: (Wednesday 12 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Trainee psychological wellbeing practitioners perceptions of wellbeing provision across the training year**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching and Learning Academy*

Michelle Chatterley, Faculty of Health

Jody Squirrell, Faculty of Health

Ella Fitzsimmons, Faculty of Health

The presentation will focus on sharing our small curriculum enhancement project that is currently being undertaken to explore trainee Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (tPWP) perceptions of wellbeing support across their training year. It will consider views of stressors in relation to their academic studies and consider what impact this may have upon wellbeing and resilience. We aim to gain an understanding of the skills students feel they already possess, in relation to managing their wellbeing, and where they feel they could benefit from further support.

It is hoped the data gathered from the project will inform the development of a wellbeing and resilience training programme that could be delivered within the training year.

The presentation will reflect on existing research in this area, share any possible findings from the project and how this could inform future programme content. We will also share expert and specialist knowledge from other teaching staff within the school of Psychology for potential collaboration in the development of such a programme.

We hope delegates will take away from the presentation an awareness of tPWP perceptions of specific stressors to their wellbeing as well as how this knowledge could inform potential content for a wellbeing programme.

Our presentation relates to LJMU's health and wellbeing strategy. We hope that the project would work towards the vision of self-care and resilience by considering ways we could complement existing wellbeing provisions at LJMU to support students to manage their own health and wellbeing decisions. We are also aware that LJMU is an HEI that has signed up to the University Health Charter Framework in making mental health a priority. We feel the focus of our project is also in line with this.

Our project will also consider how a wellbeing and resilience programme could benefit the wider student population.

## Session 21: (Wednesday 12 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**JMSU: building communities, a mid point reflection**

Paul Chapman, Liverpool John Moores University Students' Union

Sarah Latham, Liverpool John Moores University Students' Union

Introduction

JMSU is halfway through a three-year growth project centred around an increase in Block Grant to build capacity within our staffing and activity programmes. Our two primary strategic goals are ‘Expert Representation’ and ‘Building Connections’ both of which underpin our approach to creating a sense of community. We feel we have made significant inroads in expanding our activity and impact within the remit of Student Experience and would like to share this with

This session will:

* Re-state JMSU’s strategic intentions
* Provide an overview of our journey within the three-year growth plan
* Offer an insight into our work and relationship with the University
* Provide current statistics and data that demonstrate our activity
* Highlight future plans for 2024/25 and 2025/26
* Offer an opportunity for participants to feedback and input into JMSU’s plans – in particular supporting wider Faculty and Campus engagement

Outcomes

Participants will:

* Gain an understanding of the work of JMSU
* Identify areas of potential collaboration with JMSU
* Be able to signpost current opportunities through JMSU to students
* Input thoughts and ideas into JMSU’s work
* [Hopefully!] Become ambassadors of the Students’ Union

# Global Collaborative Partner Forum: (Wednesday 12 June 13:50 – 15:35)

# Block D

## Session 22 Lightning talks: (Wednesday 12 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Using writing groups to strengthen the postgraduate researcher community**

Jo McKeon, Doctoral Academy

The benefits of writing retreats for improving motivation, accountability and productivity, are now well established. Research has highlighted their role in improving academic writing output and developing valuable communities of practice (eg. Tremblay-Wragg, 2021; Atchison and Guerin, 2014; Murray, 2009).

Since 2017, LJMU’s Doctoral Academy has coordinated a wide range of writing retreat formats for Postgraduate Research (PGR) students. These have included 2- and 3-day writing residentials, monthly writing days, online, and now hybrid, weekly writing groups. Our experience over the last seven years has convinced us that regular, structured opportunities to write alongside others are a powerful way of enhancing the PGR student experience. Through regular peer interaction, the writing group environment can provide a sense of belonging, something that PGRs often miss out on in comparison to taught students. As some of our participants have described it, a PhD can be ‘a very insular and lonely experience’, but the ‘collegiate atmosphere’ of a group or retreat can provide ‘a renewed sense of why I am doing this research’ or simply ‘remind you that you’re in it with other people’.

Experimenting with the format and frequency of writing retreats in recent years, particularly during and after Covid lockdowns, has shown what an agile and responsive mode of support they can be. This short talk will demonstrate how retreats and groups have enhanced the student experience by providing a sense of cohort for PGRs. It will also show how participants have taken ownership of the format and helped it to evolve over time in response to their needs.

**Understanding the experience of digital learning: a study of LJMU MSc international students**

Vivian Adegor, Faculty of Business & Law

Understanding the Experience of Digital Learning: A Study of LJMU MSc International Students

The rise of digital learning has revolutionized education, providing new avenues for academic growth. This transformation is especially notable for international MSc students in the UK. As technology shapes the learning landscape, it's crucial to understand its impact on students' mental health. This study centers on LJMU's international MSc community, exploring how digital learning influences their mental well-being within the blended learning environment.

Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) has a strategy to challenge itself toward students’ life transformation as evidenced by excellent engagement in teaching and learning experiences, a practical support system, and advocacy for fostering excellent student experience. Subject to this strategy and drive, this proposal explores the digital learning experience and its impact on the mental health of tertiary international students at LJMU, specifically focusing on MSc students.

As an international student, my role as a course representative provided me the opportunity to experience firsthand the struggles international students face engaging with the digital learning experience, the impact, and the LJMU community support. This motivated me to write on this topic. I will be delivering this presentation as an MSc Management and Digital business student, and this proposal is part of my dissertation (The Digital Learning Experience and its Effects on the Mental Health of Tertiary International Students in the UK; A Study on LJMU MSc Students).

The study aims to investigate these effects, identify coping strategies, and enhance support mechanisms. Methodologically, semi-structured interviews will be employed, focusing on students' experiences with digital learning and its mental health implications within the LJMU community.

The findings will not only inform LJMU lecturers on supporting international students but also contribute to fostering an exceptional student experience and supporting communities beyond the curriculum.

**Stupid genius: utilising podcasts to build thriving communities and enhance student experience**

Mollie Bryde-Evens, Faculty of Business & Law

Emily Wharton, Faculty of Science

With digitalisation transforming the way we work in academia technological advancements can be used to nurture communities and engage staff and students both on and off campus. Podcasting, as a means to building community and enhancing student experience, is one creative means of digitalisation that is increasing in popularity. Stupid Genius is a fast-growing academia-related podcast with global reach that strives to disseminate research in interesting and engaging ways, build a thriving academic community and enhance the student experience. With 50 episodes released and over 7000 downloads as of January 2022, Stupid Genius discusses a range of interesting academia-related topics with a focus on enhancing the postgraduate student experience through sharing informal advice and lived experiences. Some of the topics covered include preparing to pass the VIVA, navigating networking, managing conflict with supervisors and becoming a lecturer. Stupid Genius has developed a flourishing online community with approximately 5000 members. The podcast also gives a platform to and promotes the inclusion of underrepresented groups and issues. For instance, it has welcomed guest speakers to discuss their work on dwarfism awareness, LGBT+ equalities, the marginalisation of black women in academia and men’s mental health. The session will include an overview of the benefits of utilising podcasts to build community and to enhance student experience, for those both within and outside of the institution. We will also share qualitative feedback from members of the Stupid Genius community, demonstrating the positive impact podcasting can have in both of these areas. Delegates will take away practical advice on how to begin and sustain a successful podcast that can support their academic endeavours whilst fostering and promoting LJMU’s values.

## Session 23 Workshop: (Wednesday 12 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Improving impact reporting: a game-play approach to understanding theory of change**

Emma Smith, Teaching & Learning Academy

Fenna Boerkamp, Teaching & Learning Academy

Natalie Holland, Teaching & Learning Academy

Elena Zaitseva, Teaching & Learning Academy

This workshop offers an opportunity for colleagues involved in Access and Participation Plan (APP) and broader student experience activities to engage with the game ‘Change Busters’. Through gameplay, participants will enhance their understanding of the stages of a Theory or Change (ToC). The game aims to facilitate better intervention and evaluation design, ultimately contributing to better student outcomes.

Regulation of equality of opportunity, as mandated by the Office for Students (OfS) through the new wave of Access and Participation Plans (2024-2029), emphasises the importance of clear and robust evidence of which interventions are working, and why. Additionally, providing impact evidence of initiatives aimed at enhancing the student experience is also a critical component of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Our recent excellent TEF score indicated that providing more robust impact evidence could lead us to achieve a gold rating. Thus, it is evaluation must form an integral part of interventions designed to enhance the student experience.

A key tool to support intervention design and impact evaluation is the Theory of Change (ToC) model. A ToC provides a structured approach to outline how specific interventions are expected to lead to desired changes. It helps to define the challenges being addressed, the intended outcomes, and the activities planned to achieve these outcomes. Integrating both process and impact evaluations, and establishing measures of success for each stage, ToC can significantly strengthen the design and evaluation of an intervention.

Over the last 12 months, the Student Voice & Evaluation Team, situated within the Teaching and Learning Academy has worked with colleagues across professional services to ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to develop a ToC. This has been driven largely by the interactive game called ‘Change Busters’, developed by colleagues from Sheffield Hallam for Advance HE.

## Session 24: (Wednesday 12 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Beyond accessibility: empowering students through assistive AI**

Sara Mursic, Student Advice & Wellbeing

In our digital learning world, equitable access to technology and the skills to use it effectively are critical for impactful learning and a positive student experience. This presentation dives into Assistive AI, a new SAW programme designed to empower all students, particularly those with disabilities, to bridge the digital divide and leverage technology ethically and effectively for their academic journey.

The programme is designed to equip students with the necessary skills and awareness to utilise AI as an assistive software that can significantly enhance their academic experience. From text-to-speech functions and breaking down bigger tasks, all the way to creating quick lunch recipes or reminders for appointments, this technology has been a game changer for those who discovered its potential. However, leaving students to discover these benefits on their own is not enough. We, as a community, must actively share and teach the skills needed for students to leverage AI for personalised support and independent learning. Beyond equipping students with skills, our project fosters responsible AI use. Through interactive workshops, students explore real-world scenarios and discuss potential risks, building a deeper understanding of academic integrity and safety in the digital age.

The purpose of this presentation is not only to showcase the successful implementation of the Assistive AI project, but also invite collaboration from the wider university community. We believe this programme has great potential to be replicated and expanded across different departments, fostering a more inclusive and technologically empowered learning environment for our whole community. What do you believe? Let’s join forces, because only by fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing, we can collectively ensure that technology serves as a bridge, not a barrier, to success.

\*We aim to include direct student testimonials (or potentially students as co-presenters), but do not have that information yet

## Session 25: (Wednesday 12 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Working in a wellness community: assessing the benefits to student curators in a creative collaboration**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Juliet Carroll, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

The paper will present the outcomes of research that has investigated the impact on student wellbeing of an internship to enhance the public spaces at the new Royal Liverpool Hospital, (RLH).We asked if this contribution to the ‘common good’ enhances the student experience of internship, as opposed to a work experience that is based on ‘private good’ or only of commercial interest. This responds to ‘the philosophy of focusing on the common good as a measurement of wellbeing’ Ahuvia et al,(2015)

The paper has three central aims:

• To enable students to present their insights and conclusions.

• To offer the results of reflection and thematic analysis as an effective methodology

• To submit the results of the research to public scrutiny.

Students have recently participated in a curatorial project at the new RLH. Art works were transferred from the old buildings, prior to demolition, and rehung in the new hospital, building a sense of continuity and community. The response from staff and RLH senior management has been overwhelmingly positive, and we have been offered many art works to develop a phase two, commencing in February 2024.

Positive feedback from students was previously captured informally. In the next phase, we have offered paid internships to eight students to explore the impact of an activity that has a ‘focus on the common good’, i.e., improving the working environment of the community of staff at the RLH. Interns have been tasked to keep a regular reflective journal alongside their curatorial activities and asked to consider specific questions that will allow us to assess the impact on their wellbeing, both mental and physical, using a thematic analysis. This has received a Curriculum Enhancement Grant.

## Session 26: (Wednesday 12 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Community and collaboration: co-creating resources to promote opportunities for disabled and neurodivergent students**

Jennie Tannett, Student Futures

Keren Coney, Student Futures

Refaat Eletr, Co creation Interns

Jack Mousley, Co creation Interns

Jasmine Summerville, Co creation Interns

For many years, studies of the destinations of UK graduates illustrate the disadvantage experienced by disabled and neurodivergent graduates when it comes to employment (AGCAS 2024, 2022, 2021). Employment is recognised as a way in which people find purpose, self-confidence and economic wellbeing (Pratt et al. 2014); indeed, employment is a human right (Nolan & Gleeson 2017). For several years, colleagues in Student Futures have collaborated with disabled and neurodivergent students - those we see as experts by experience - to develop resources to support the success of LJMU students in the workplace. In this fourth year of collaboration, we have been particularly concerned with ensuring that our message reaches current disabled and neurodivergent students, so that they are aware of the resources and provision available to aid their success.

In this session, three students and two careers practitioners from Student Futures will describe the latest iteration of the co-creation internship project. A range of videos, social media posts and other resources were created, which will be shown during the session. In addition, the learning gained from this collaboration will be shared. For the interns, this has included the enjoyment of being able to choose the ways to promote initiatives to fellow students which they deem to be most effective. For the careers practitioners, working with the interns has led to a deeper understanding of the concerns and perspectives of these students, with implications for future practice. This session will describe the achievements of the project, outline recommendations for other staff and highlight the benefits of a deepened understanding and a sense of empowerment for all involved.

## Session 27: (Wednesday 12 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Laboratory efficiency assessment framework “LEAF”, promoting sustainable laboratory practices at LJMU**

Emma Fadden, Faculty of Science

The Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) at LJMU, implemented in 2023, addresses the substantial energy consumption in laboratories, estimated to be 3-10 times higher than regular office spaces. Technical teams play a key role in advising and implementing sustainable practices, facing challenges in altering established norms. The emphasis on small changes is crucial, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility. Overcoming resistance and promoting training contribute to successful implementation. The results are expected to showcase quantitative and qualitative improvements, contributing to LJMU's commitment to sustainable operations and setting an example for other faculties and the community.

## Session 28: (Wednesday 12 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Developing a business clinic approach: collaborative work and value creation**

Jan Brown, Faculty of Business & Law

Track Dinning, Faculty of Business & Law

Fredrick Agboma, Faculty of Business & Law

Boma Omuso, Faculty of Business & Law

In our joint session, we aim to integrate two complementary projects on the value and impact of business clinics in higher education, demonstrating their collective impact on community building, learning enhancement, and value generation. This integrated perspective underscores the role of business clinics in not only fostering academic excellence and real-world engagement but also in contributing significantly to the broader educational and community ecosystem.

**Project 1** offers a comprehensive examination of Liverpool Business Clinic’s initiative in engaging students with external organisations to collaboratively deliver real-world project briefs. This approach is grounded in a holistic view of business education, emphasising the diverse types of value created through such engagements. The presentation will detail a process for conceptualising, mapping, and evaluating value from multiple stakeholder perspectives, thereby contributing to the LJMU’s strategy for place and partnership. The potential for transferring this value mapping process to other stakeholder and its implications for future collaborative research underline the broader applicability and significance of this model.

**Project 2** presents a focused study on an educational intervention within the business clinic framework, highlighting the benefits of cross-level collaboration between senior and junior business students. Anchored in Vygotsky’s social constructivism, this project exemplifies the social dimensions of learning, where community building and collaborative experiences are central. By facilitating interactions that bridge the theory-practice gap and enhance consultancy skills among final-year students while broadening learning perspectives for second-year students, this initiative showcases the value of student-driven projects in creating a supportive academic community and improving learning outcomes.

Together, these projects illuminate the multifaceted benefits of business clinics in higher education, showcasing how holistic value creation strategies and targeted educational interventions can synergistically enhance student experience, community engagement, and organisational partnerships.

# Block E

## Session 29: (Wednesday 12 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**How supported do students with disabilities feel at LJMU?**

Stewart Chidlow, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

Heather Ward, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

Philippa McCabe, Faculty of Science

Recent studies carried out in the UK show that the number of people with mental health conditions is increasing, with approximately 16% of adults suffering from symptoms of depression, and approximately 25% of people aged 17-19 suffering from a mental health disorder (Parliament, House of Commons, 2023). In a similar vein, conditions such as autism and ADHD are becoming better understood, and there is a rise in people who are receiving diagnoses for such conditions or suspect that they may have them, as our knowledge of neurodiverse traits in men and women becomes more complete.

As increasing numbers of students with mental health conditions and disabilities arrive at universities, the onus is on all universities to provide additional services to support students that they may not have traditionally done (e.g., providing in-house counselling services) and on staff to ensure that relevant sources of support are signposted to students so that they know how to access it.

This talk will discuss the findings of a recent project that aimed to determine how well supported students with disabilities feel at LJMU. A questionnaire was designed and disseminated university-wide to ensure that both those who have formally declared a disability to LJMU and those who haven’t could respond and give their views. The results we will present show a significant discrepancy in responses between faculties at LJMU and, in some cases, between students with different disabilities. They indicate that while the overall picture is positive from a university perspective, there is more that needs to be done to support these students to ensure a successful passage through their degree.

## Session 30: (Wednesday 12 June 14:30 – 15:35)

**What happens to academic integrity when we allow students to use GenAI for their assessment?**

Olatunde Durowoju, Faculty of Business & Law

The reluctance of academics to embracing students' use of Generative AI (GAI) in Higher Education (HE) primarily stems from concerns about preserving academic integrity. The advanced capabilities of GAI, particularly its capacity to generate content upon request, challenge the conventional preparatory processes (research and writing) integral to students' assessments. Within the realm of academic integrity, the cornerstone principle of 'ownership of work' demands that students personally engage in research, distinctly clarify contributions made by others, and present their findings in a satisfactory manner. This poses a challenge for institutions that rely on the traditional expectation of students independently producing every aspect of their work to assure the quality of their graduates. However, the essential question remains: does the integration of GAI for assessment purposes entirely compromise the quality that stems from students' independent efforts? To address this query and scrutinize the definition of 'ownership of work' within the framework of academic integrity, we conducted action research. Students were tasked with completing research and writing assignments using prompt engineering with ChatGPT, followed by a debriefing session to explore their experiences and perceptions. This study seeks to shed light on the nuanced relationship between GAI, academic integrity, and the quality of work produced by students in Higher Education.

## Session 31: (Wednesday 12 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**Bringing communities together: The LJMU MA Short Film Festival as an educational, professional, and community-building experience**

Lydia Papadimitriou, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Martin Jones, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Launched in 2021, the [LJMU MA Short Film Festival](https://ljmumashortfilmfestival.org), in an annual international student film festival organised as part of the MA Film in the context of the academic curriculum. While formally taught and graded, the LJMU MA SFF is also a public-facing event, accessible both ‘in person’ to local communities and online to a global audience. In putting the film festival together, the students engage with different roles: programmers, editors, public relations professionals, social media content creators, Q&A hosts, presenters and more. As an educational experience, this not only gives them insights into various professional skills, but it also highlights the importance of teamwork, and the related responsibilities and rewards. The public-facing nature of the festival, and the fact that it carries the brand name of the University underline the necessity for high quality standards to be maintained in the programme and its delivery to the audience.

Film festivals aim to reach audiences, open-up debate and create positive social impact in the context of a heightened atmosphere of celebration that encourages community-building and the sense of belonging. Reflecting such communal spirit, this presentation will bring together past and current MA students who will share with their tutors/paper convenors and the conference audience their experiences in co-organising the festival and helping reach a wider public, both locally and internationally. It will highlight the importance of bringing experiential and public-facing practices in the classroom as educational tools that enhance community within and beyond it. It will provide insights into how to use the festival as a platform for courageous and innovative thinking, as well as how to use creativity and technology to embrace diversity and inclusion.

## Session 32: (Wednesday 12 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**Community, culture and young people: piloting our first work experience programme**

Julia Daer, Human Resources

Beatrice Png, Human Resources

The Diversity and Inclusion Team recently launched a work experience programme for Year 10s working in collaboration with the Outreach Team and local Liverpool schools. From widening access and creating opportunities for young people today, and planning for our workforce of tomorrow, this scheme is one of many community engagement activities that brings together people from different cultures, backgrounds and walks of life. Join us to explore where we started and what’s next, while hearing first hand from young people and LJMU colleagues about this pilot.

## Session 33: (Wednesday 12 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**Fostering inclusive and supportive communities of international students on MSc Management programmes though peer mentoring**

Amanda Mason, Faculty of Business & Law

The challenges facing international students in UK higher education institutions have been well-documented. They can experience culture-shock, loneliness and isolation, financial difficulties, and outright racism, all of which can compound the difficulties of operating in a new academic environment. Peer mentors can play a pivotal role in creating a supportive atmosphere, helping international students integrate into the academic and social fabric of the institution. The mentors themselves can also use the experience for their own professional and personal development.

In an ever-changing international market, we regularly welcome students from more than 20 countries to our MSc Management programmes. To address the diverse needs of these cohorts, we implemented a student mentorship initiative, selecting mentors from students who had completed a year of study at LJMU. As well as providing one-to-one peer support to new students both pre-and post-arrival, the mentors were encouraged to recommend and lead activities and social events during induction and the initial weeks of the semester.

Delivered by students experienced as both mentors and mentees, this presentation provides authentic insider perspectives into the journey of international students transitioning onto MSc Management programmes at LJMU. The student mentors will discuss their roles in supporting peers and reflect on their experiences. They will explore the significance of social events in cultivating a sense of belonging to both the academic programme and the university and reveal ways in which the initiative enhanced their leadership and other transferable skills.

Beyond highlighting positive outcomes, the presentation will provide practical insights and strategies for educators seeking to enhance the academic and experiential journey of international students.

# Block F

## Session 34: (Wednesday 12 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**The hitchhikers guide to the online timetables**

Louise Medlam, Academic Registry

Jenny Kay, Academic Registry

Erika Raffle, Academic Registry

Accurate and up-to-date timetables are key to the student experience, and staff across the university have an essential role to play in helping the central timetable team maintain the live online timetables. Did you know you can search the University's timetables online by room, module, programme or cohort to view the live data? You can also view the individual timetables for staff or students. Staff can use the online timetables to request amendments and changes - such as cancelling an unneeded room, assigning a new lecturer to a session, or requesting an in-person session is changed to online. This introduction the the online timetables will show you how to access, search and view the online timetables in detail, and you will learn how to request changes. Whether you want to look for a room, check a programme timetable or learn how to support and advise students on using the timetables, come along to find out more about everything in the online timetabling universe.

## Session 35: (Wednesday 12 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**Building an LJMU shared assessment and feedback toolkit: resources and strategies**

Jim Turner, Teaching & Learning Academy,

Charlie Smith, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Elizabeth Malone, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Phil Denton, Faculty of Science

David McIlroy, Faculty of Health

Assessment and feedback are essential for improving teaching and learning, yet implementing sustainable, effective practices remains a challenge in higher education. This presentation will outline a university-wide initiative aimed at developing a richer assessment and feedback culture. Grounded in research (Nicol and Macfarlane‐Dick, 2006; Hattie and Timperley, 2007; Winstone and Carless, 2019) as well as practice, a set of guiding principles and practical strategies were co-developed with academics, TLA and Academic Registry. In this workshop we will facilitate discussions to examine, challenge and develop our shared culture of assessment practice.

Our aim is to bring clarity to our assessment and feedback policy and make it more meaningful and alive to the challenges that will emerge over the coming years. This initiative provides a framework for supporting academics in developing, implementing, evaluating and continuously improving assessment and feedback practices to enhance teaching and learning. The presentation will share challenges and lessons from this institution-wide change effort, highlighting effective educational development approaches that empower academics and students. (300 words)

[Assessment and feedback guidance](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/staff/assessment-and-feedback-guidance).

References

Hattie, J. and Timperley, H. (2007) [‘The Power of Feedback’](https://doi.org/10.3102/003465430298487), Review of Educational Research, 77(1), pp. 81–112.

Nicol, D.J. and Macfarlane‐Dick, D. (2006) [‘Formative assessment and self‐regulated learning: a model and seven principles of good feedback practice’](https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070600572090), Studies in Higher Education, 31(2), pp. 199–218.

Winstone, N. and Carless, D. (2019) [Designing Effective Feedback Processes in Higher Education: A Learning-Focused Approach](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351115940). London: Routledge.

## Session 36: (Wednesday 12 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**Shaping futures - collaborative outreach to support the local region**

Kevin Hornblower, The University of Liverpool

Peter Dolan, Student Recruitment Marketing & Admissions

Shaping Futures is part of the Uni Connect programme funded by the Office for Students. Over the last 7 years LJMU has been a key partner to Shaping Futures. The programme aims to inform and inspire learners and their key stakeholders, supporting them to make informed choices about their future. It works collaboratively with 12 local providers of Higher Education to try to reduce the attainment and progression gaps between the most and least disadvantaged within the Liverpool City Region. It also offers specific support to groups currently underrepresented in HE via its communities of practice. In so doing, it supports all of its partners in addressing risks to equality of opportunity and helps to eliminate gaps in access to higher education.

The session will provide an overview of Shaping Futures’ remit, the scope of its activity across the city region and the vital role LJMU has played in its success to date. Delegates will gain an understanding of the importance of collaborative outreach and what this might look like in the future. They will hear about LJMU’s involvement in the project so far and how it contributes to the university meeting its access aims, including those outlined in its Access and Participation Plan. It will also demonstrate how Shaping Futures evaluates its impact and contributes to the Office for Students stated aim of building an evidence base round ‘what works’ in higher education outreach. In addition, delegates will learn how they could potentially get involved in the future.

The session links to 2 of the aims underpinning LJMUs strategy 2030. It helps meet one of the KPIs for Education and Student Experience – Access and Participation. By working closely with schools and colleges in the local region, the project also demonstrates social impact, a KPI linked to Place and Partnerships

## Session 37: (Wednesday 12 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**Utilising ‘Feedback fruits’ to enhance counselling and psychotherapy students understanding of contact work**

Lesley Dougan, Faculty of Health

‘Psychological contact’, one of the six ‘necessary and sufficient’ conditions proposed by Carl Rogers in 1957, is fundamental to the practice of person-centred counselling. However, there may be times when a person may be in a pre-expressive or ‘altered’ state; for example, some people with Learning Disabilities, Dementia, or experiencing psychosis may struggle to achieve psychological contact.

Contact Reflections (CR) were developed by Garry Prouty as a way of developing and maintaining contact with clients by making explicit about something that is taken for granted. They are contact-orientated responses of the therapist that point to the most concrete elements of the shared world, behaviour, and experience of the client.

The development of the resource was prompted by feedback from students who noticed that some of their peers struggled with the concept of pre-therapy and contact reflections and were uncomfortable being introduced to pre-therapy as a role play because either they did not have the experience of people with learning disabilities or found the concreteness of contact work a bit patronising of the other.

Together, the two students, Maddie Hall and Ann-Marie Wilson, and the MA Counselling and Psychotherapy programme lead, Lesley Dougan, explored possible ways of enhancing the teaching of contact work. Maddie and Ann-Marie suggested developing a video with examples of the different CRs. The video was scripted and acted by Maddie and Ann-Marie and filmed in the counselling practice suites.

The short video allowed us to demonstrate not only the different types of CR but also the changing nature of the relationship between client and counsellor because of the use of CR. In the video, the counsellor's use of CR facilitated psychological contact with the client, who was able to move closer, make eye contact, relax, acknowledge, and be in closer proximity to the counsellor.

Concurrently, the Faculty of Health TEL team was trailing Feedback Fruits and suggested that this could provide us with the structure to support students' engagement with their learning.

Lesley filmed an ‘explainer video’ and written instructions to prepare students for watching the CR video. The CR video pauses at key points for ‘in video activities’, prompting students to ask, ‘What type of contact reflection was used here?’ and only proceeds once a response is submitted by the student. Students are given feedback about the accuracy of their answers in real-time and then offered an opportunity to reflect on the material and how it has impacted them.

Year One counselling and psychotherapy students were able to access the resource before the lecture on Pre-Therapy and Contact Work. Students who accessed the resources commented on its positive impact on their understanding of contact reflections.

## Session 38: (Wednesday 12 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**HR Resourcing team in the community and promoting inclusion**

Oliver Sproston, Human Resources

Natalie McCarthy, Human Resources

Michelle Kayll, Human Resources

For the past 18 months the HR staff resourcing team have been establishing links with local community groups to talk about the roles we recruit to within the university and how to apply for them. We want to expand this outreach work to as many groups as possible and share the benefits of working for us to breakdown some of the preconceived ideas about what working in a university is like and reach as diverse a candidate pool as possible.

In our session we will discuss the work we have done so far to promote LJMU as a welcoming, inclusive and supportive employer in the region and reinforce our commitment to being an active community partner. We will showcase the community contacts made so far – we have engaged with the Job Centre, Transform Lives, the Growth Company, and Mersey Care to name just a few of the organisations in the Liverpool City Region. Our wider engagement has also extended to attending various job fairs and we were the only Liverpool based university to have a recruitment stand at Pride 2023. We have held sessions on application and CV writing for individuals returning to work, survivors of domestic abuse and for new mothers who hope to get into part time work.

We want to share the work we are doing with the wider university, and we would love for all students and employees to be ambassadors for the university as an employer to attract as diverse a candidate pool as possible. The employee attraction strategy is an important part of the People Plan and as a major employer in Liverpool, we want to authentically demonstrate our commitment to the community we work and live in.

## Session 39: (Wednesday 12 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**Curriculum for wellbeing: year 2, growth, findings and reflections**

Kalum Bodfield, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Aisling Culshaw, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Eleanor Hadfield, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Andrew Doyle, Faculty of Business & Law

Mollie Bryde-Evens, Faculty of Business & Law

Last year, the Curriculum for Wellbeing was trialled in one module of the Education Studies and Primary programme in the School of Education with the results presented at the Students at the Heart 2023. The Curriculum for Wellbeing was created as a response to the rising number of student referrals to student advice and wellbeing (SAW) within the university and seeks to embed emotional regulation strategies into modules to increase students’ knowledge of how to adaptively manage their mental health and stress. Responses last year indicated that the approach should continue with benefits largely felt by the students taking part. As a response to this the strategy has been embedded in additional modules across a greater number of programmes including cross-faculty work with the Business school. The findings and reflections from the roll-out of this approach will be presented including both qualitative and quantitative data from questionnaires, focus groups and reflections from the students and lecturers involved in the project. Future directions and limitations will be discussed and concluding comments made.

# Thursday 13 June 2024

# Keynote

**Vic Stephenson, Senior Consultant – Education, Advance HE**

# Block G

## Session 40: (Thursday 13 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Students as agents of change: integrating the UN SDGs in Business School curriculum**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Konstantina Skritsovali, Faculty of Business & Law

Sam Davies, Faculty of Business & Law

Amelia Ingall, Faculty of Business & Law

This project reviews, maps and monitors the representation of the UN SDGs in the Business School curriculum. In doing so, it collaborates with students as agents of change to improve teaching and learning experiences. The project challenges the traditional approach of a one-way educational system where tutors have knowledge that can be seamlessly transmitted to students. Instead, students are partners who hold an active role and have a voice in the curriculum design.

The project adopts an action research method to explore the integration of the UN SDGs embedded in the curriculum in a meaningful and inclusive way (Astin and Astin, 2000). Data has been collected with the use of a digital tool that has been designed as a reflexive guide for further integration of SDGs into your curriculum, e.g. assessments, learning outcomes and action-oriented pedagogies.

The project outputs will be used to create a map that exhibits best practices in teaching sustainability and the UN SDGs in business education. Findings will be used as foundations for further reviews in different disciplines and Faculties across the university and, within the sector. Therefore, mapping the UN SDGs in the Business School curriculum is a ‘living lab’ (Rosenberg Daneri et al., 2015) that aligns with the civic agenda of the university and provides benefits for the faculty, the student community, and the wider institution and local communities.

Astin, A.W. & Astin, H.S. (2000) Leadership Reconsidered: Engaging Higher Education in Social Change. Michigan: The Kellogg Foundation.

Rosenberg Daneri, D., Trencher, G. and Petersen, J. (2015), “Students as change agents in a town-wide sustainability transformation: the Oberlin project at Oberlin college”, Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability, Vol. 16, pp. 14-21.

## Session 41: (Thursday 13 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**“Our experience of using weekly assignments with 300 level 4 business students”**

Bob Cumiskey, Faculty of Business & Law

Michelle Spruce, Faculty of Business & Law

Our students today are more diverse than ever and increasingly arriving from underrepresented groups from disadvantaged backgrounds, with large numbers being the first in their family to attend university.

Additionally, today’s students often display high levels of anxiety and stress.

The module was redesigned, and our pedagogies and approach changed to meet our students ever changing needs.

The module, Academic Skills and Digital literacy (4001LBSBW), aims to assist the student with a smooth transition into LJMU, foster a sense of belonging and encourage the development of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that will support them whilst at LJMU, as well as in their future careers.

By building a sense of belonging and camaraderie between students during the module, the hope is that it will also reduce the levels of anxiety and stress that some students experience in their first semester at university.

This session will introduce the delegate to the module team’s experience of delivering weekly assignments to 300 Level 4, Business students and their experience of using the following teaching aids to do so:

• IT Suites

• Allowing the students to build friendships, community and belonging

• LinkedIn Learning

• LEGO Serious Play

• Groups and Teams Work

• Decision Making Skills

• Time Management Skills

• How to guides and Video creation

• Wider LJMU services

Feedback on the module has been excellent and we would like to share our experience of facilitating the transition to Higher education which can be a particularly challenging experience for the new student.

## Session 42: (Thursday 13 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Making personal tutoring work: a focus on non-standard programmes**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Jayne Erlam, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Ester Ragonese, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Bassam Hamadeh, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

Georgia Marriott-Smith, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

This session will be focused on the role of a personal tutor within non-standard degree programmes within LJMU. This is important, as LJMU’s personal tutoring policy is currently under review. This project will help to influence this policy, with the findings being used to build a personal tutor framework to support students of non-standard programmes, such as the Professional Qualification in Probation, Engineering, Policing and Social Work.

This session will talk through the stages of the project, including the methodology adopted, the findings of the project and what literature exists around the area, including what competing priorities between the university and employers exist in regard to duplication of supervision and support systems.

Attending delegates will leave the session with an understanding of what students believe the role of a personal tutor should be on a non-standard programme and how best they can be supported during their student experience. This session will be of particular use to LJMU programmes such as degree apprenticeship schemes, where there are contractual obligations to a provider. Consequently, the session and content will be of benefit to numerous LJMU programmes and staff members.

The session content addresses the theme of ‘Community’ as the project will allow for a more positive sense of community within non-standard programmes, due to student experience being improved. The content links to two values of LJMU’s strategy: Education and Student Experience and Research and Knowledge Exchange. The session links to student experience beyond the curriculum as it will allow students to benefit in areas of wellbeing and wider support. The session will also showcase how to adapt personal tutor practice. The session links to research and knowledge exchange as it is student-led research and aims to be a knowledge exchange within the university.

Session 43: Workshop: (Thursday 13 June 11:05 – 12:10)

**Working with survivors of sexual misconduct to improve the LJMU experience**

Yvonne Turnbull, Student Advice & Wellbeing

Jo Bleasdale, Student Advice & Wellbeing

Alexandria Jones, John Moores Students’ Union

Martha Gaughan, Faculty of Science

There is an increasing regulatory focus on harassment and sexual violence on campuses across the UK, with the OfS looking to impose further conditions on universities in the coming year. Student Advice and Wellbeing have developed a professional and supportive service designed to meet the needs of our students - but the student voice is vital in ensuring that we are providing appropriately focused, trauma-informed services.

The session intends to highlight how the provision of support to students who have experienced sexual misconduct and violence can be further developed and improved by using the student voice on a number of different levels. Included in this session will be the JMSU Survivors society, the VP Community and Wellbeing, and colleagues from Student Advice and Wellbeing who specialise in this work. There will be an opportunity to hear of the many initiatives that are underway to ensure that the university and the student body work together on this agenda.

Delegates can expect to come away with increased knowledge of the work that is done to support students within LJMU, how trauma informed practise is delivered operationally and to have an increased understanding of the impact of sexual violence on our university community. The use of the new Report and Support platform will form part of the session and data will be shared around the numbers of disclosures received and resources will be available to assist colleagues awareness.

This area of work enhances the student experience across all areas. Any incident of sexual misconduct or violence can have a significant effect on the ability of a student to continue with their studies. The university must do all it can to reduce the incidence of such events and, when incidents do occur, to provide swift and effective support for those affected.

## Session 44: (Thursday 13 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Realising a more human city: engaging students with community social infrastructure in Liverpool**

Gerwyn Jones, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Liz Edwards, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Grace Harrison, Local Community Business

Social infrastructure (SI) relates to the spaces and places of public good in our cities which are accessible to everyone. These include libraries, parks, youth clubs, community centres and community businesses. These places are vital for bringing people together, with research showing SI has significant health, cultural, social and economic value (Kelsey and Kenney, 2021; Klinenberg, 2018; Latham and Layton, 2019).

The MA Cities course at LJMUs Screen School introduces students to the concept of SI, the vital role it plays in communities, and the threats and challenges it faces. Enhancing their educational experience, students are taken of field trips to immerse themselves in Liverpool’s spaces & places of SI. Students are then tasked with undertaking applied case study research projects, exploring the role and function of these spaces and organisations in Liverpool communities. Findings from student projects have been used by participating case study organisations to adapt and improve future service delivery and community engagement.

This session will introduce the concept of SI and how it has been used to inspire students to engage with research in real world settings. Liz Edwards will demonstrate this through her own MA and current PhD research, while Grace Harrison, from Kitty’s Launderette, will introduce the work and vital role her community launderette plays in Anfield and how this community business has engaged with LJMUs students.

This paper specifically addresses LJMUs education and student experience and place and partnership strategy themes. Key takeaways include how to design applied student research projects to enhance the student learning experience and engage them with Liverpool’s wider community, helping us to create more human cities.

## Session 45: (Thursday 13 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Making Every Contact Count for Mental Health at LJMU**

Christine Roberts, Faculty of Health

Andy Keegan, Human Resources

Scott Foster, Faculty of Business & Law

In line with the LJMU student experience and wellbeing strategy, Making Every Contact Count (MECC) for mental health sessions will showcase the implementation training for colleagues to enhance their ability to have mental health conversations with each other. As we all have mental health, this training is universally applicable to us all and is not just focused on students but on how we can support each other as colleagues, and stakeholders.

Making Every Contact Count for Mental Health is an initiative written by the Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH)and implemented within the NHS to target the millions of conversations that occur every day within healthcare. With 1 in 4 people experiencing mental health difficulties in their lifetime, this initiative aims to offer prevention through developing skills to have conversations about mental well-being.

Supported by RSPH this initiative has been adapted for use within LJMU to work with colleagues to consider the barriers and fears with having conversations with each other and students regarding mental health. Consisting of 3 modules the aim of the workshop is to explore the concept of well-being and what is mental health. The main objective is to increase the knowledge and skills of colleagues in having a mental health conversation, and finally increase awareness of signposting within LJMU and external providers.

## Session 46 Lightning talks: (Thursday 13 June 11:05 – 11:35)

**Collaborative learning in a multilinguistic and cultural space**

Maureen Royce, Faculty of Business & Law

Amanda Mason, Faculty of Business & Law

Casey Beaumont, Library Services

The session will explore the learning from a multicultural, multidisciplinary European project working with Armenian partners to build a shared knowledge base relating to pedagogic design of teaching. In sharing understanding about teaching practice and the governance of achievement within a module framework the session will review the process of achieving engagement with staff in diverse institutions to achieve collaborative goals. Drawing both on the development of international community building and improving practice in diversity the session will encourage thinking about lessons from the project which can have cross discipline application. The session will highlight the pathway to achieving collaboration and diversity in a complex environment and suggest tools to engage fellow teaching staff in preparing for and responding to times of uncertainty and rapid change.

**Enabling collaborations - a legal perspective**

Lois Wieg, Legal & Governance Services

Ros Leahy, Legal & Governance Services

To enable effective collaboration within a community consideration should be given to the following:

* Confidentiality
* Identity of other party
* Price and Timescales
* Purpose of agreement
* Intellectual Property
* Liability and Risk
* Data flows
* Fall-back provisions/Termination

The session will give a brief overview of each of these headings and what should be considered when successfully negotiating a collaborative contract including examples of RKE contracts/collaborative contracts entered into by LJMU.

**Two minute talks: short vodcasts as a tool for collaboration, co-creation and community learning**

Alex Wilshaw, Faculty of Science

Two Minute Talks (TMTs) are short talking-head informational videos, or vodcasts, of 2-3 minutes in length, that address specific areas of knowledge. Teacher-led TMTs were introduced as an aid to teach human osteology during the pandemic and cover factual topics such as how to side a humerus. However, they could be applied in any subject area from engineering to law. TMTs prove popular amongst students as the videos are accessible, engaging, and break information into bite-sized chunks in a fun way that makes content more memorable. They mimic the way young people in the ‘Youtube Generation’ interact with information and reflect a world in which the traditional lecture is no longer seen as the best approach to dissemination. Short videos offer a range of advantages. Logistically, they are low-cost and efficient in terms of time investment, reduce the digital divide as they function well on smartphones with low data demands, and can be accessed virtually anywhere. Pedagogically, video has a far lower cognitive load compared to traditional ways of learning, such as textbooks, and can be more accessible to those with learning needs. But TMTs can be so much more than just a didactic tool. They offer a vehicle for collaborative learning and co-creation of materials that any student can engage with. The production of student-led TMTs conveys a range of benefits from extending the learning resources available, developing digital literacy, deeper learner engagement with content, increased diversity of voices and approaches, and even the protégé effect. In addition, if stored collectively, they can be used to develop an open-source community platform for knowledge dissemination, whether as part of a module, programme, or even at the university level and beyond, for those wishing to broaden their horizons and take two minutes to learn something about another subject.

# Block H

## Session 47 Lightning talks: (Thursday 13 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**Using social media to increase the community feel**

Sylvia Terbeck, Faculty of Health

In this brief 5 min talk i will introduce how social media could be used effectively to increase students community feeling. Social media is off course already been used, but i wanted to empathise on the specific type of social media. Apparently "Facebook is for old people", so my students told me; and "Twitter is too much to read". So which platform would be ideal for our new generation of students? Which social media can reach a lot of people? Taking into account the psychology of social media posts, I would like to briefly talk about how to best use these technologies to increase interest and engagement.

**Finance training development - finance for non finance**

Phil Murray, Finance

The Finance Dept are currently developing a range of training material to widen understanding of the finance function within HE sector and specifically how finance operates at LJMU.

There is a wide range of training material due to be rolled out in the next few months, but the lightning session will focus on Finance for Non-Finance Training.

Our training programme is aimed at:

* + increasing financial literacy, to support decision making
  + improving confidence in interpreting financial data
  + ensuring everyone can develop finance skills and competencies within their role
  + supporting the university strategy, making better use of resources
  + improved use of financial data, allowing everyone to better understand the processes, controls and policies in operation

Delegates attending the session will take away information about the Finance Depts. training plans, how to access the training and an understanding of our commitment to make finance accessible to all.

This session supports the key enabler to the University Strategy, Financial Resilience.

## Session 48: (Thursday 13 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**Engaging with the community in Liverpool through civic engagement placements**

Raji Thomas, Faculty of Health

Noeleen Ryan, Faculty of Health

Katie Edwards, Faculty of Health

Victoria Graham, Faculty of Health

Jennifer Walker, Faculty of Health

Catherine Smith, Faculty of Health

Gill Langton, Faculty of Health

In this session, we will showcase our approach to building strong relationships with our local community and highlight our community of practice. We will demonstrate how this approach is aligned with the strategic vision of the University-transforming lives and futures by placing students at the heart of everything we do. We will draw attention to the elements that binds our community and University together.

Civic engagement placements were introduced to promote inclusivity and provide valuable student experiences. Through partnerships with organisations in Liverpool, we have built meaningful relationships with our practice partners, fostering empathy and compassion in our future nurses. Experiences such as collaborating with baby hubs, food banks, housing associations and refugee support networks empower our student nurses to communicate with vulnerable populations.

By increasing awareness of support systems, students are developing confidence to social prescribe for their patients. Our seasonal newsletter celebrates the success of our community practice partners and students. When hundreds of businesses closed during the COVID-19 pandemic, charities continued to support people in need.

Civic Engagement placements have become popular with student nurses due to their community focussed nature, providing diverse student experience. The students gain in depth knowledge of social inequalities and the complexities of people’s lives, enhancing their clinical practice. We are equipping our diverse learners with relevant skills and networks which will impact our community for generations.

The allocation of our students to Civic engagement placements, supports our partners to drive positive change within our community. Our student nurses are adopting good practices which create a valuable, more equitable and thriving environment.

Delegates will take away a deeper understanding of how community engagement enriches the educational journey of students which can be experimented by other disciplines in the university. The session will also supply audience an insight of transferrable skills that can be developed through civic engagement placement and have exposure to examples of good practice to supply valuable learning experience for students in community.

## Session 49: (Thursday 13 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**Associate Deans for Diversity and Inclusion: local approaches to embedding inclusion**

Phil Bakstad, Student Advice & Wellbeing

Komang Ralebitso-Senior, Faculty of Science

Denise Lee, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

Olatunde Durowoju, Faculty of Business & Law

Graham Downes, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Positioning a commitment to inclusion and diversity as core to our University’s values reflects LJMU’s history within the Liverpool City Region and our future aspirations for our students, staff and partners. To support this, six Associate Deans for Diversity and Inclusion were appointed in 2023 across our five faculties and Professional Services, providing local leadership for the D&I agenda.

This session will explore how the six AD:DIs have applied area-specific knowledge, networks and best practice to key strategic priorities such as the Access and Participation Plan, Athena Swan and Race Equality Charter. In addition, the team will discuss recent achievements and future developments in the D&I space with a particular focus on shared learning across the University.

## Session 50: (Thursday 13 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**School Of Education Little Book of Hope**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Elizabeth Malone, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Peter Wood, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Sophie Bresnahan, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Jamie Berry, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Aaliyah Owen-McVey, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

This presentation presents a curriculum enhancement project which aimed to illuminate what students found difficult and how they overcame their challenges. By sharing and providing examples of what helped it is hoped that this will equip our students with positive strategies for ‘when the going gets tough’. In this way, instead of simply telling students to ‘be more resilient’ or encouraging them to ‘just keep going’ we can illuminate and share real-life, tangible examples of what students who have come before did.

Our presentation is Student-Centric Focused: enhancing their experience, and promoting a stronger sense of LJMU community. It shows Excellence in Teaching and Learning contributing to a culture of continuous improvement. Diversity and Inclusion: Our research captures a diverse range of student experiences, contributing to a more inclusive LJMU community. Enhancing Resilience and Well-being: directly supports LJMU's commitment to nurturing resilient and well-equipped graduates, fostering community resilience through shared experiences and strategies.

Furthermore, our presentation offers our LJMU colleagues practical insights for curriculum enhancement through Informed Decision-Making: (student challenges and effective strategies for overcoming them). LJMU staff can use this information to make more informed decisions about curriculum design, student support services. Curriculum Improvement: LJMU staff can use this information to refine and adapt the curriculum, ensuring it remains responsive to the evolving needs of students. Promoting a Positive Learning Environment: Strategies shared in the presentation can be incorporated into teaching practices.

In summary, this presentation is a valuable resource for LJMU staff and students, providing actionable insights, fostering a culture of resilience and innovation.

## Session 51: (Thursday 13 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**Artificial Intelligence in the classroom: insights from real-world experiences**

Christos Kontovas, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

In today's digital era, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into the educational landscape has become increasingly prevalent. This presentation discusses the transformative role of AI, particularly the utilisation of natural language processing (NLP) software, with a focus on its application within the classroom environment. Drawing from first-hand experiences during the previous two academic years, this presentation sheds light on the dynamic interplay between AI, lecturers, and students.

Firstly, I will highlight students' perspectives - both the uses and misuses of AI, especially in student learning and assignments preparation. The latter is a particularly important area to explore, as AI holds the potential for misuse and raises ethical considerations. Through reflections on real-world encounters in my modules, the presentation will navigate the ethical dimensions of AI implementation in education, addressing challenges related to academic integrity. These considerations indeed prompt educators to reconsider traditional assignment formats, such as reports, and explore alternative design approaches.

The second part will focus on educators. The presentation will underscore the symbiotic relationship between AI and educators, emphasising how AI-powered language models can serve as invaluable tools in content creation and assessment design. Based on my own experiences, I will showcase the use of AI for designing assignments, particularly quizzes, and explore its potential applications in automatic grading.

## Session 52: (Thursday 13 June 11:40 – 12:10)

**Towards an understanding of how students’ express ideas around participation and engagement in their own learning**

Phil Carey, Teaching & Learning Academy

Fenna Boerkamp, Teaching & Learning Academy

Module evaluation is an opportunity for students to evaluate their learning experience in specific modules. This can help module leaders and/or teams to understand what aspects of the module are working and what may warrant revision. Evaluation approaches that rely on dialogue and discussion can be particularly useful in providing rich information on the student experience. However, anonymous surveys support the collection of information from a wider range of students. They also facilitate benchmarking and comparison over time that can support evidence-based decision making. As such, module evaluation is a key feature of most universities’ student feedback mechanisms (Tschirhart & Pratt-Adams, 2019). However, evaluation surveys can appear overly transactional, with a focus on how students receive or respond to teaching, information and support, as opposed to how they engage with the module. Tutors will rightly point out that a student’s judgement of how challenging a module is, for example, should be considered alongside the effort that they put in. This begs the question of how module evaluation questions can be framed to encourage students to recognise their participation in their own learning. Developing survey items to address this requires an appreciation of how students articulate ideas around participation and engagement. To understand that better, this year’s module LJMU evaluation survey included an additional, open-text question, ‘How would you describe the effort you have put into studying this module?’ There were in the region of 20,000 responses to this question, providing a significant bank of data. This presentation will offer an analysis of this. Alongside considering how such insight can help shape future survey items, the presentation will explore how effort can be expressed as both a positive and negative concept. In addition, analysis suggests that the concept of effort may differ with respect to specific student characteristics including level of study and subject area.

Tschirhart, C., & Pratt-Adams, S. D. (2019). Closing the loop: An evaluation of student-led module feedback at one UK higher education institution. International Journal for Students as Partners, 3(2), 78-90.

# Block I

## Session 53: (Thursday 13 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Assessments don’t have to be essays – using live events to demonstrate learning**

Andy McNicholl, Faculty of Business & Law

Valerie Makin, Faculty of Business & Law

Whilst the essay has long been a staple in higher education for assessing students' understanding and critical thinking skills, this session will highlight the benefit of looking at alternative forms of assessment. Lecturers from the Events Management degree programme will look at how traditional assessments may not always be the best route, especially for vocational degrees. Instead, they will show how students on their programme produce a real live event, going through every element, from concept and theming, to staging and evaluation. Yes, an actual event – not a case study, a simulation or a virtual reality experience! The presentation highlights how this type of practical assessment not only offers an excellent learning experience evidenced in consistently high module evaluations, but also enhances students’ employment prospects, through offering a real-world opportunity to engage with all aspects of event planning and production. Community is very much at the heart of this assessment as it takes our students out of the classroom and into the wider City, liaising with a range of stakeholders from venues and industry suppliers, to local charities that all profits from the events are donated to. It can show first hand to these potential employers the abilities and creativity of our talented students.

## Session 54: (Thursday 13 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**First Year Experience Survey: understanding the experiences of various student groups when joining LJMU**

Natalie Holland, Teaching & Learning Academy

Fenna Boerkamp, Teaching & Learning Academy

A successful transition into Higher Education plays a critical part in supporting students to thrive and progress within university. However, within the current climate, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are at an even greater risk of leaving Higher Education than in previous years. Consequently, understanding the nuances around how students from various backgrounds feel during their transition to LJMU could be pivotal in understanding the potential impacts on continuation rates and achievement.

LJMU designed the First Year Experience Survey (FYES) for the purpose of gaining more insight into the student cohort makeup, their experience of transition to university and their first months studying on the programme. The FYES is an institutional survey sent to all foundation and first year students during their second semester of study. First introduced in the academic year 2021/2022, we now have three years’ worth of data providing a wealth of information.

In this presentation, we will explore this rich data beyond what is covered in the annual institutional reports. We will aim to increase our understanding of the experiences of students from across a wide variety of demographic backgrounds when joining LJMU and the potential risks to continuation and achievement. The conclusion of the presentation will explore what we can do at LJMU to provide better and more targeted support, and to ultimately create an equally safe and welcoming community for all of our students.

Session 55: (Thursday 13 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Digital forensics and cyber-crime taxonomy**

*Teaching Excellence Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Holly Done, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

Áine Mac Dermott, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

This presentation outlines our LJMU Teaching and Learning Academy (TLA) funded project "Digital Forensics and Cyber Crime Taxonomy." Our investigation focuses on the development of an inclusive curriculum for cyber security education and application of student and staff voices to enhance the university experience. Drawing upon the insights collected from focus group discussions (both academic staff and students) and the resultant project deliverables, our project seeks to enrich the pedagogy of cyber security education. Our approaches are designed to foster the development of students' problem-solving and analytical skills.

Through the integration of student reflections, our efforts are directed towards fostering a learning environment that is conducive to diverse learner needs and promotes a nuanced understanding of the subject matter. Thus, our project strives to elevate the efficacy of cyber teaching and learning through the provision of comprehensive instructional resources tailored to the cyber security education.

This presentation would be interesting to staff and students interested in learning more about using reference models, flowcharts, and taxonomies to explain the intricacies of cyber-attacks and to lead learners to giving more in-depth responses. Utilizing flowcharts offers the advantage of visually mapping out processes, enhancing clarity; having prompts and questions at each stages helps develop the level of detail in responses.

## Session 56: (Thursday 13 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Providing AI guidance through COMPASS: did students take the right direction?**

Philip Denton, Faculty of Science

Technological advancements in generative artificial intelligence (AI) have exacerbated longstanding assessment challenges within higher education. Against this fluid backdrop, some fundamental things apply as time goes by. Firstly, the definition of cheating remains unchanged: students who deviate from the published permissions for an assessment should expect an academic misconduct investigation. Secondly, we continue to set authentic assessments framed within meaningful contexts and these will evolve as AI becomes ubiquitous within society. Thirdly, conveying unfamiliar concepts using metaphor is known to influence thinking in profound ways.

It was within this climate that the Faculty of Science developed its protocol for communicating AI permissions in assessment (COMPASS) in summer 2023. Contemporaneous guidance from Monash University advised assessors to select one of four distinct AI conditions; these were assigned to the four cardinal points within COMPASS; N, S, E and W. The most restrictive and permissive directions are N (No AI tools) and E (Every AI tool may be used), respectively. The other directions provide opportunities for nuance; S (Some AI tools) and W (Ways of using AI tools), both having associated caveats. The Monash AI acknowledgement template, that students use to disclose their AI usage, was adopted within COMPASS. The option of a null declaration was added, enabling students to explicitly confirm that they did not use AI. This presentation will report on the outcomes of a Spring 2024 survey of staff and students who were invited to share their perceptions of COMPASS.

Lodge, J.M. et al (2023) Assessment reform for the age of Artificial Intelligence, TEQSA.

Monash University (2023) Policy and practice guidance around acceptable and responsible use of AI technologies

## Session 57: (Thursday 13 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**A case study on level 5 student engagement and participation in a core: new ideas**

Sarah Stirk, Faculty of Business & Law

Fleur Lawrence, Faculty of Business & Law

This session will explore the impact that different teaching patterns may have on student engagement and participation. On the Law degree in 2023-24, we selected two level 5 core modules; one in semester 1 (Equity and Trusts) and one in semester 2 (Land law) to contrast and explore what impacts the lecture and seminar teaching patterns and preparation activities had on students engagement and participation. In the Equity module, the teaching pattern was a ‘2-hour lecture, 2 hour seminar no preparation’ model whereas in Land law, a traditional ‘2 hour lecture one hour seminar with preparation’ model was employed.

This case study will discuss the attendance patterns and engagement in sessions across the semester for both modules as well as student survey feedback. It will also look at overall attainment in both modules to further explore the links between engagement, participation and attainment. We hope the session will provide time for reflection on the traditional teaching models and for exploring new methods and student expectations when delivering core modules.

Session 58: (Thursday 13 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Decolonising maths for a globalised world**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Ivo Siekmann, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

Sandra Ortega, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

James Baker, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

"Applying Mathematics to the things that matter to you" - with this motto, a group of students and lecturers have set out on a journey to decolonise the maths curriculum. The group has been transforming LJMU’s mathematics programme by...

1. ... researching the life of mathematicians from various backgrounds.

2. ... integrating interesting applications of mathematics to important current problems such as climate

change, racial bias in machine learning algorithms, and healthcare inequalities for minority groups.

3. ... exploring the different roles that mathematics plays in different cultures.

The students will showcase work carried out during a curriculum enhancement project. They will touch on topics such as mathematical modelling of climate change, assessment of credit risk in traditional Somalian culture, and the Arabic roots of algebra, as well as identifying the relationship between economic indicators and the crime rates in different suburbs of a city.

This work is student-focused and inclusive, underpinned by LJMU’s core values. It supports the LJMU strategy by a) promoting excellent Education and Student Experience for our mathematics students, b) promoting curiosity and creativity to develop impactful examples inspired by Research and Knowledge Exchange and to infuse them in the mathematics curriculum, and c) embedding views from different cultures, and increasing awareness and visibility with a wider community of students, enabling Place and Partnership.

Our students will present steps towards a curriculum that better reflects how mathematics…

1. … is practised in different cultures

2. … can be applied to address the challenges of a globalised world.

After this talk, delegates will...

1. ... know how a student-centred effort for decolonisation can be implemented.

2. ... be aware of topics that can be included in a curriculum towards the goal of decolonisation.

We expect that our student-led decolonisation effort can be easily transferred to other disciplines.

## Session 59: (Thursday 13 June 12:15 – 12:45)

**Supporting students from diverse communities**

Billie-Gina Thomason, Student Advice & Wellbeing

The Inclusion Team based in Student Advice and Wellbeing support specific groups of students and help them transition into university. These groups include members of the trans and non-binary community, those who are care leavers, care experienced or estranged and living independently. We also support members of the Gypsy, Traveller, Romani, Showmen and Boaters and Young Adult Carers and work with local charities and organisations to support them in their university transition.

In my new role as a Student Inclusion Adviser working with Phil Bakstad, I have been keen to build meaningful relationships and connections within these communities. By offering opportunities for meetups in a safe space other members of the community can come together and support one another. This paper will explore the importance of coming together and how staff can support diverse student groups, helping them to navigate their new experience and time at university – all over a cup of tea and a piece of cake.

# Block J

Session 60: (Thursday 13 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**The disutility of ‘disabled’ as a category in HE analytics: an LJMU case study**

Alex Wilshaw, Faculty of Science

HEIs are striving to understand the experiences and outcomes of their students, particularly those with Equality of Opportunity Risk Register characteristics such as having a disability. Studies have demonstrated that disabled students have worse outcomes than their non-disabled peers, and Access and Participation Plans (APP) aim at reducing the attainment gap and providing support services for such students. However, the use of ‘disabled’ as an analytical unit is brutish and arbitrary. The category encapsulates a range of ‘disabilities’, each of which presents a unique set of challenges. From dyslexia to neurodiversity, or physical and sensory disabilities to psychiatric disorders, how can one category appropriately reflect the diversity of the disabled community? It cannot. The category is so generalised that analytical results lack nuance for different disabilities and the challenges they present for students, set within the context of their areas of study and the differing associated skills required. An analysis comparing the outcomes of 23,000 students from LJMU reveals that for Award GPA, on average, ‘disabled’ students do not underperform compared to their non-disabled peers at LJMU. However, this is not true at the level of specific disability types, masked by the ‘disabled’ umbrella. Those stating Physical Disabilities underperform, those indicating Mental Health and ASD outperform, and those with SLDs (e.g. dyslexia, ADHD) perform in-line with non-disabled peers. Inversely, students registering Mental Health and ASD were far less likely to complete their studies than others. This type of specific, targeted analysis demonstrates that we need to be looking in more detail at our data, to avoid drawing inaccurate conclusions. This has implications for how we support the disabled community and the diversity within it, develop our APP, and identify and provide responsive support to those who may be at greater risk, particularly considering their specific disability type and disciplinary context.

Session 61: (Thursday 13 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Muslim students and the paradox of in(visibility)**

Lila Tamea, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

At nearly 4 million (6.5%) of the population, Muslims are considered one of the largest minority groups in England and Wales. Still yet, there appears to be both a lack of recognition and understanding about Muslims as a community - in education and society as a whole. Why are they, compared to other religious groups, the least likely to go to university, the worst performing at university, and the least likely to go on to graduate level employment / further study?

Building on Nabi’s work on institutional islamophobia (Nabi, 2011), this paper examines the way institutional islamophobia operates within higher education to orchestrate what she terms the Paradox of (In)visibility. It explores the way in which Muslims are simultaneously invisible and hyper-visible, through the existence - and non-existence - of equality initiatives and policy apparatus concerning them on campus. Muslim hypervisibility within higher education policy can, in one way, be illustrated today through the industrialised, regulator-enforced surveillance of Muslims on campus (ie. the Prevent Strategy), where more religiously observing or politically active Muslims are deemed suspect, troublesome or problematic. Muslim invisibility however, can be illustrated by the way that the regulator (and the institutions it regulates) monitor - or fail to monitor – religious inequity, where we find an overall absence of recognition and action toward the Muslim ‘gaps’ aforementioned.

This presentation therefore explores the unmattering of Muslims in higher education discourse; how Muslims often feel ignored, with their needs circumvented through a smokescreen of ‘neutral’ secularism. I argue that this paradox of non/recognition is a symptom of systemic and institutional islamophobia, contributing to a harmful environment for Muslims on campus. I propose that by positively recognising Muslims on campus, through institutional data monitoring, equality initiatives and provision-making, we can work to better facilitate and support Muslim students to succeed.

Session 62: (Thursday 13 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Person-centred communities of practice: challenging hegemonic notions of education and learning**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Freya Wood, Faculty of Health

Deborah Evans, Faculty of Health

Madeline Hall, Faculty of Health

Peter Blundell, Faculty of Health

Communities and groups based on person-centred theoretical principles are often a core part of counselling and psychotherapy training within this modality, yet these groups have not been considered through the communities of practice concept. A community of practice (CoP) can be defined as a group of people who share a common goal or area of interest that they would like to learn how to do better through regular interaction as a group. There has been no exploration undertaken that investigates the impact of these groups when they are run alongside, rather than as part of, the curriculum. This presentation shares staff and students’ experiences of facilitating multiple communities of practice for trainee person-centred/experiential therapists that focused specifically on critical thinking skills. These communities were established with support from the Curriculum Enhancement Student Internship Grant and was attended by students from across three-year groups on an MA in Counselling and Psychotherapy Practice. This presentation will be delivered by students who were interns on the project and the presentation will outline how the community was established on each occasion; share facilitators’ experiences, as well as feedback from group attendees; it will reflect on learning from the community and offer some tentative suggestions for anyone thinking about setting up their own community of practice. This project centres the idea of student-centred learning as a way of challenging hegemonic notions of education and learning within Higher Educational settings. These ideas could be useful for other facilitators or students wishing to set up and facilitate other communities of practice, in counselling and psychotherapy training, or other disciplines.

Session 63: (Thursday 13 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**The use of VLE assessments in the presence of AI technology**

Mohamed Kara-Mohamed, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

The emergence of AI technology, including ChatGPT, creates a challenge for academic practitioners. It requires educators to take extra care when designing assessments and drafting the policies and procedures for these assessments in order to protect the integrity of these assessments. This is especially true when an educator wants to use the modern Virtual Learning Environments (VLE)-based online assessments. With the new AI technology, these online assessments, such as Canvas online quizzes, can be compromised easily and students start to feel that these assessments are an easy way to gain marks with less efforts and less preparation. This presentation shares with colleagues some of the measures that have been taken to protect the integrity of VLE assessments for a level 4 module (Mechatronics 1) of the Mechanical/Marine Engineering programmes. This includes innovative and creative ways of setting and writing Canvas quizzes assessment in the existence of AI technology while at the same time minimising the possible academic misconduct cases and ensure that students are assessed to the best of their abilities. The results of the study include two cohorts for the academic years 2022/2023 and 20232024, and they are of interest to the whole education community. These findings contribute to LJMU's 2030 strategy by fostering positive change within the education community, including both staff and students. This presentation gives an opportunity for sharing best practices and listening to colleagues for constructive feedback on how to improve VLE assessments further. Importantly, it aims to dispel concerns about compromising these valuable assessment tools, making them accessible for use by colleagues across the institution and beyond LJMU. By fostering a collaborative environment, we hope to contribute to the continual improvement of education practices and uphold the standards of academic integrity.

Session 64: (Thursday 13 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**“If I only knew then what I know now”. Listening to the voices of departing students**

Wayne Turnbull, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Steven Altham, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Cathy Brady, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Janine Melvin, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Sara Parker, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Janette Porter, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Within the Faculty of Arts, Professional and Social Studies, the Student Experience Team has been actively listening to and engaging with the Student Voice. Two research projects, both focussing on the experiences of final year students, demonstrate how reflection can inform and enrich not only the experience of leavers but also of subsequent cohorts.

At enrolment we promote the message to new students that engagement is a pre-requisite of their success. There is no more compelling narrative with which to inform new students than through the experience of former students who previously ‘wore their shoes’. The APS Student Experience Team has commissioned final year undergraduate students to run a research project to capture the reflections of 2024 leavers on the question of what advice they would give to their ‘former selves’ about their engagement with the University. In this session we will summarise the outcomes of the research project via a discussion of prevailing themes and consider how best to use this material in scaffolding support and advice for new students.

Following this we will be showcasing the findings of a survey of LJMU graduates who experienced an international trip as part of their time at LJMU. The respondents are reflecting on how they benefitted in terms of their career journey since graduating by assessing to what extent they were able to develop ‘Graduate Skills and Attributes’ during their international experience. They are also evaluating the activities they took part in to prepare for international experience, and the Guidance and Support that they received from LJMU. The purpose of this is to help LJMU academic and professional service staff to improve the provision of preparatory activities and to tailor the support that is given to individual students.

Session 65: (Thursday 13 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Counting fears: unravelling the origins of math phobia and its degree-wide impact**

Philippa McCabe, Faculty of Science

Helen Burrell, Faculty of Science

People have a marmite attitude to maths – they love or hate it. This can impact their ability to do anything from simple sums/budgeting to more technical calculations e.g. statistics. With 40% of school children saying they did not enjoy learning maths, this poses a real concern for the future of STEM subjects. Additionally, the percentage of students passing GCSE Maths at grade 4 or above has dropped from 74.6% in 2020 to 70.2% in 2023.

From conversations within 6101FSBMOL advanced forensic methods, we are being told some are struggling with maths components despite support being offered in the module. There is a clear divide between those students who are comfortable with maths and those who are not. On average there is a 19% difference (range 14% to 23%) in the maths component between Forensic Science and Forensics, Policing and Investigation students from 2020-2023.

By understanding when someone is first exposed to opinion shaping views or experiences about maths, we can try to remove barriers set by those maths phobic students, taking steps to make the subject matter less daunting. Knowing how much of a barrier is in place will enable us to better utilise resources such as the Academic Achievement Unit.

Only through shifting perception can we make maths more accessible. Doing this will make a difference to the lives of those impacted and help foster a community of ‘we can’ instead of ‘I can’t’. This inclusive change will transform opinions about deep rooted insecurities that have far reaching implications both in education and life beyond LJMU.

Our hope is to highlight when someone decided how they feel about maths and what we can do at a university level to help take the courageous step towards changing their opinion and opening a door to a life free from maths phobia.

Attending this session will enhance staff's ability to guide students effectively and assist decision-makers in organising support by grasping the problem's scope and identifying areas requiring attention.

Session 66: (Thursday 13 June 13:55 – 14:25)

**Building community in clinics**

Paula Doran, Faculty of Business & Law

Liz Jones, Faculty of Business & Law

Abighail Weirdu, Faculty of Business & Law

Joshi Jariwala, Faculty of Business & Law

The Legal Advice Centre (LAC) here at John Moores University is open to members of the public, staff and students. It is primarily staffed by students who are supervised by experienced clinic and volunteer solicitors.

The Centre advises on a wide range of legal issues, provides public legal information services and conducts policy and other research. Clinical Legal Education is embedded into the curriculum here at John Moores University at every level of LL.B study.

There is wealth of scholarship around the importance of experiential learning within university law clinics (ULC’s) which enables students to gain practical skills essential for legal practice within a platform which also provides free legal advice for members of the community but little empirical research on the emotional wellbeing of law students undertaking clinical legal education in the UK.

I am particularly interested in what factors contribute to students’ emotional wellbeing, how clinic relationships can be managed, how we develop the competencies of resilience and management of subjective wellbeing within the framework of Clinical Legal Education and what precautionary and protective measures in curriculum design and framework need to be taken into account in order to enable us to support and maintain a wellbeing culture within our Legal Advice Centre.

All our lives were impacted by Covid 19 and we know that these impact have affected our students. At a crucial point in their social development their schooling was disrupted and they were isolated from family and friends.

The [Student Academic Experience Survey 2023](https://advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/student-academic-experience-survey-2023) looked at some of these impacts.

26% of students told the survey they felt lonely all or most of the time, only 45 % of students told the survey they had a sense of belonging at their university.

The concept of student belonging has received a lot of coverage in recent times, with its links to student success being widely documented. This implies that higher education institutions have a key role to play for through helping to provide a sense of inclusion and community.

Anna Jackson, [‘What have we learnt about student belonging and inclusion?’](https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2022/05/23/student-belonging-and-inclusion/) HEPI website, 23 May 2022.

We believe that our clinic programme builds this community and sense of belonging by:

* + Group work – including cross faculty work and outreach projects
  + Careers and Professionals events – includes networking events, professional visitors and local engagement so students feel a sense of belonging in the professional community both whilst at university and once they enter the professional services world.
  + Class clients
  + Teams
  + Use of group Whatsapp for clinic management

Could we be more intentional about this ? Can we do more ?

Ideas:

* + working alongside LJMU Start-up Hub to promote wider engagement of LJMU students and part of the wider student community.
  + Other projects with the business school and other faculties within LJMU
  + Opening advisory hubs in the community to increase outside engagement.

Does it matter?

Students will attend to talk about their own personal experiences of clinic life and offer examples and suggestions for continued improvement to build on community.

# Block K

Session 67: (Thursday 13 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**The further education of care leavers: navigating A-levels and the care cliff**

Chantelle Lunt, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

This session is based on my current PhD Research. It will outline the significant challenges care-experienced individuals face in accessing higher education, and give an overview of the poor educational outcomes of many care leavers, as well as the lifelong impacts of this.

The session will delve into the stark disparities between care experienced people and the wider population through an interactive poll-led discussion. It will highlight the positive outcomes for the few care leavers who access HE and the wider benefits this has for their socio-economic outcomes and argue that post-16 education is one of the keys to improving outcomes for care-experienced people.

This session will explore the significance of further education in the post-care, HE educational trajectory. Specifically, it plans to scrutinise the leaving care systems, policies, and practices that can cause young people in care to disengage with tertiary education between 16-18.

By amplifying the experiences of individuals in care, the session seeks to provide insights into the accessibility of further and higher education alongside care-leaving pathways and the pivotal role of professionals in supporting care leavers' educational aspirations. It further wishes to highlight where universities can support the FE sector with engaging care leavers.

Ultimately, this session aims to foster a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by care leavers in navigating the transition to further and higher education alongside leaving care. By highlighting systemic issues and advocating for targeted support that can work towards a more equitable educational landscape for all care-experienced individuals.

Session 68: (Thursday 13 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – pedagogy in practice**

*Teaching Excellence Project funded by the Teaching and Learning Academy*

Andrea Mallaburn, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Linda Seton, Faculty of Science

Learners from a socially deprived background are underrepresented in Higher Education (Gorard, 2010), experiencing multiple barriers, including low self-esteem and self-efficacy (Simon et al, 2020). Initiatives from the Royal Society of Chemistry (Chemistry for All, 2020) and Uni Connect (Office for Students, 2022) are exploring strategies to diminish these barriers. The Absolute Chemistry Research Group (ACRG) at LJMU, have an aligned ethos and commitment to LJMU’s Strategic Vision, especially in relation to ‘Place and Partnership’, through catalysing ‘social inclusion and change’ within local school communities. The Liverpool City Region is highly deprived, with Liverpool being ranked the 4th most deprived in England. In 2022, 28.9% of children in Liverpool were living in relative poverty – compared to a rate of 20.1% at a national level (Liverpool City Council, 2023).

A cross-university team with expertise in Chemistry, Education and Outreach, have developed pedagogically rich resources, framed by the context of the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (UNSDGs), to promote community cohesion and core values for inclusive education. A group of Level 5 Undergraduate students training to be primary school teachers, will deliver enrichment sessions within local partnership schools. The resource packs were developed by support from a Teaching Excellence Award. They have been designed by the ACRG and a Postgraduate Researcher to support primary level teachers, who often have low self-efficacy and subject knowledge to teach a contextual science curriculum.

We will reflect upon the enriched understanding of the UNSDGs from Undergraduate students and local communities, drawing upon the overall implementation through the context of research, education, and leadership. The experience of contextualised science, will improve learner awareness of where studying science can lead, contributing to positive social change for underrepresented learners. A science education is crucial to face society’s social, economic, and environmental challenges, guiding global efforts toward sustainable development.

Session 69: (Thursday 13 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**Building communities of practice through your module**

Joshi Jariwala, Faculty of Business & Law

Danielle Gore, Faculty of Business & Law

Megan Currall, Faculty of Business & Law

Brogan Ward, Faculty of Business & Law

Imagine!

The programme validation is complete, and your new module awaits creation! Faced with a blank canvas with learning outcomes, a myriad of considerations hover around your creative muse. Student voice, graduate employability readiness, current content, effective use of contemporary technology (AI and VR), critical thinking, a sense of belonging in an inclusive community, transformation of lives and futures, all whilst providing an excellent education and student experience beyond the curriculum and supporting communities. Where to start and where to finish?

Come and listen to the tutor and supporting students talk about how these considerations were brought to life via a museum, and practice insights, all wrapped into formative activities informed by student choice. Listen as the students share their reflections on how this led to the enhancement of personal development and evolvement of communities of practice, Wenger and Lave (1991), through group work and individual contributions.

Teaser comments include this module provided a “great way to expand my network”, our “opinions were valued” and heard, enjoyed a “real insight to real-life issues” and real “student co-creation”.

Further comments around impact included how the module helped extend networks with professionals, bridged divisions between senior practitioners and students looking to start their careers, built student confidence within a supportive and inclusive environment incorporating the student voice, all contributing to the harnessing of a LJMU community.

Imagine!

As a tutor and/or researcher, you are welcome to share and pick up tips on building communities of practice through co-creating module content, with students, widening networks and employability skills, and having some fun in class!

Session 70: (Thursday 13 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**The Role of Academic Liaison Tutors to support Degree Apprenticeship students**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Thomas Dowd, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

Sian Dunne, Faculty of Engineering & Technology

A 2023 Curriculum Enhancement Project worked to understand the specific needs of CBE DA students and the role of the PT based upon the various stakeholders’ perspectives, including the apprentices, the employer and the academic tutor/s and how the role may differ and/or cross over with that of the ALT, which is a specific role designed to assisted the DA and their employer through the particulars of the apprenticeship and compliance with the DA standard/s and associated internal and external regulators.

The project focused upon identifying if apprentices required increased support and then to investigate methods of providing this, all whilst respecting the structure of the DA.

Within the apprenticeship three-way communication between the employer, university and student are considered essential to ensuring all parties are aware of their obligations, act on them, the objectives of the curriculum/standard and that a collaborative support structure is provided.

Questionnaires were developed and distributed to ALTs, employers, and students, obtaining qualitative and quantitative data, to allow for comparability within answers, but also richness and depth to be explored with follow-up questions.

The project produced various recommendations including designing an annual reflective process, of which all parties will provide their inputs and views on the apprenticeship support mechanisms, this will then detail the actions needed to support all parties. Furthermore, the project identified ALT’s would benefit from similar support materials to that of the PT’s, such as the Canvas Module NCTLA39. This resource could also be duplicated/mirrored for the employers workplace mentors, but would require a common data environment/repository for the material to be accessed. The DA students also expressed a preference for the continuation of the ALT throughout their DA journey and employers a consistency in the approach to the ALT role from apprentice to apprentice.

In summary the project carried out a critical analysis of current systems and procedures with an aim of striving for best practice via a commitment to a continuous improvement model of identifying challenges, implementing interventions and reflection.

Session 71: (Thursday 13 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**Seagull Project - collaborating with students to raise digital security awareness for LJMU student community**

*Curriculum Enhancement Internship Project funded by the Teaching & Learning Academy*

Tina Forrester, Legal & Governance Services

Sarah Haynes, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Paula Baines, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Track Dinning, Faculty of Business & Law

This collaborative project, initiated by the Data Protection Officer, is very much about working together across our LJMU community. It aims to understand student attitudes to the increasing real-life issues of data privacy and cybercrime, and to deliver a student focused solution by promoting awareness in an interesting and effective way using digital content designed by our students for our students.

Bringing together professional and academic staff with students from business, law and screen schools, the project highlights the benefits of working collaboratively across various professional and academic areas and with students from different disciplines to produce important information for all students.

The project is innovative in its collaborative pedagogical approach, bringing together staff and students from three discipline areas (business, law and screen school) with colleagues from central services, to tackle the continuous and growing issues related to cybercrime that affects us all in our increasingly digital lives.

Working together has empowered us to make a positive change, not only for our students but also for our staff and provided an excellent student experience beyond the curriculum.

The project’s innovative approach to student-led research will provide valuable insights about student attitudes to privacy and cyber security which will then be applied to generate future solutions for the continuous growth of the campaign and appropriate for the diverse community of LJMU students. The application of student voices has been key to the success of this project.

Staff and students will present the advantages and opportunities encountered in working together for the benefit of the whole student community. Attendees will gain ideas of how they can get involved in the future direction of the project and how this approach is transferable to other projects.

Session 72: (Thursday 13 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**Development - a community approach supporting individual achievement**

Maureen Royce, Faculty of Business & Law

Increasing pressures on resources and demands of metrics alongside the cultural shift in technology and AI, can leave colleagues without the time and resources to maintain their own development and reflective practice. Feelings of isolation may result and this model of encouraging developing practice encourages a safe learning environment and curates time and space for experimentation. Initially, peer support sessions where the use of Canvas tools, for example, could be enhanced by understanding how others were engaging with the technology were the bedrock of an effort to increase and improve digital capacity to create a stronger student experience. This early use of peer exchange was the model drawn upon to create a set of all staff Development Days. Institutional changes and technological innovations supported an evolution whereby support from expert colleagues worked alongside the peer led sessions. The days were a smorgasbord, an eclectic mix of enhancement and governance, informative and discursive sessions all designed to support the student journey. From being an annual event, the pace of change and the communication gains from the Development Days led to a structure where 3 times a year a collaborative mix of elements impacting teaching and learning were drawn together without losing the essence of peer support and enhancement of capacity. The culture was inclusive, using accessible language when discussing IT interventions, for example, and drawing in those who had no previous experience of presenting to peers and colleagues. The impact can be seen in the embedding of the events within the calendar and expectation that these will take place and be part of the review and evaluation of practice. The session will invite discussion about contextualising the process and building a roadmap to support and give confidence about changing practice in a volatile environment.

Session 73: (Thursday 13 June 14:30 – 15:00)

**Engagement analytics to support student engagement and continuation**

Phillip Rothwell, Teaching & Learning Academy

Caroline Robson, Strategy Support Office

Malarvizhi Ram, Strategy Support Office

Sarah Maclennan, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Iona Horsburgh, Student Experience

As the amount of data being created by universities increases Learning Analytics is, in turn, becoming more multifaceted and complex. How we define engagement and disengagement by students is complex, though important to understand if we are to help support student continuation. This presentation will outline the results of a staff consultation and survey, combined with large scale predictive analytics from several systems in order to establish which factors can most reliably predict a student is beginning to disengage from their studies and are at risk of discontinuing.

As important as using data in this manner is ensuring that any insights are actionable, and the data is made available to the most appropriate people to support students to arrest any further slippage in engagement. We will demonstrate a dashboard of the data and suggest possible interventions for staff to put in place for students to be supported to remain a member of their community of learning. In addition to this we will provide support around the data fluency for those engaging with the analytics insights.

This project is a collaboration between the LJMU academic community, Teaching and Learning Academy, Strategy Support Office, Academic Registry, and Senior Strategic Project Manager Student Experience, and reflects an institution wide approach in the use of data to support student continuation and the student experience.

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Session 74: (Thursday 13 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**Discussing the enhancement of the Degree Apprentice Experience through effective tri-partite meetings**

Elizabeth Whitfield, Academic Registry

Suzanne Gapper Smith, Academic Registry

Joanne Fisher, Faculty of Health

Eleanor Fenney, Faculty of Health

Degree Apprenticeships are a rapidly growing route of study in the Higher Education sector, most notably in post 1992 universities. LJMU currently offers twelve apprenticeship programmes, and this number continues to grow. Degree apprenticeships offer an alternative route to higher education whilst developing on-the-job work-based knowledge and skills and by the nature of the mode of delivery, actively widen participation, transforming the lives and workforce of the local community.

However, apprenticeships are a relatively new type of HE programme of study; they are not simply part-time programmes as per the sector standard. Learners enrolled on apprenticeship programmes are full-time employees, and as such have significant demands on their time in both the workplace and the in capacity as an enrolled student. As such it is important to structure apprenticeship programmes to support the learner in achieving the expected occupational standard of knowledge, skills and behaviours and maximise the student experience.

One mechanism through which the apprentice experience can be influenced is the tripartite review meeting however lack of consistency in the approach to these meetings means there is a potential impact on the student experience. Tripartite review meetings require employer representation and rely on suitably trained work-based mentors and adequate preparation of all parties to ensure clarity on what is expected. Here we will discuss what the tripartite meeting is, and what regulatory requirements could be included, how the tri-partite can be utilised to enhance the learner experience and identify some key concepts of best practice to be applied at a cross University level.

Finally we will discuss ideas for evaluating tripartite review meeting effectiveness, sharing best practice and providing suggestions for future practice to ensure apprentices receive a positive learning experience.

Session 75: (Thursday 13 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**Community at the heart: School Industry Advisory Boards - role, challenges & useful lessons**

Beverley Caddick-Kala, Faculty of Business & Law

Jennifer Dean, Faculty of Business & Law

Carlo Panara, Faculty of Business & Law

LJMU's School of Law, like other UK law schools and many business schools, created and operates a School Industry Advisory Board. The Board comprises senior judges, senior legal professionals from the City Region, alumni of the School and academics from Law and other disciplines. The Advisory Board has been useful to us to design new programmes, develop our portfolio of programmes, and identify employability skills relevant to the legal professions. Advisory boards, however, can support other initiatives, such as, networking opportunities for students and staff, recruitment of staff and students, research, external engagement with stakeholders from the City Region. Advisory boards are therefore highly relevant to all the strategic pillars of LJMU (T&L/student experience, place & partnership, research & impact). During our presentation we will discuss the experience from two law school advisory boards, at LJMU and at University of Bolton, and will reflect on lessons emerging from these advisory boards. We believe that these lessons could be useful to other schools and faculties at LJMU and that this presentation could bring useful ideas to the table for strengthening the links between LJMU and the City Region. Attendees will learn how to develop or create their own School Industry Advisory Board which will proactively support the School in fulfilling its Mission by providing advice and guidance to the School regarding its strategy, portfolio of academic programmes of study, and all aspects of its industry and external engagement.

Session 76: (Thursday 13 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**Black in the Ivory Exhibition**

Dominique Walker, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Black in the Ivory Exhibition: Black women in academia

Black in the Ivory project exhibition was designed to explore the impact and effects on Black women in the academy. Often, we are invisible, ignored or chronically underrepresented in the academy. Our Black in the ivory sessions and exhibition sought to explore their experiences using qualitative diary & creative methods. This presentation will explore the intention of the project. We hoped to explore the impacts, the emotional & psychological tolls, as well as positive experiences- structural safeguards, inclusive practices for Black women academics. Our project worked to shine a light on a group that is chronically underrepresented in higher education, of which the research & discussion is sparse. Our Exhibition that took place in April, was curated by the women, entitled ‘Black in the Ivory: Black women in academia’- this was a celebration night for Black women in academia. The pieces curated during our creative writing sessions focused on subverting views of Black women in academia. This exhibition was a site of radical possibility, a safe space. Working to amplify the voices of Black women academics. This project helped to curate a sisterhood within LJMU and was a co-production and collaboration between LJMU, The Goddess Projects and Skywriters LTD. By fusing these community, and education organisations together, we hoped to achieve a culture of belonging and transformational connections between communities, LJMU Staff & students. The Black in the Ivory Exhibition was a visual representation of our collective experiences, bringing our stories to life, this presentation will explore our journeys. Letting you all know we were here!

## Session 77: (Thursday 13 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**Reflections on how student retention co-ordinators can foster a student’s sense of belonging at LJMU**

Amber Pugh, Faculty of Business & Law

Jennifer Graham, Faculty of Business & Law

Increasing attention is being paid to the importance of student retention and continuation in Higher Education and, at LJMU, the removal of barriers to student progression has been identified as a strategic priority (LJMU’s Learning and Teaching Strategy 2023-2030). It has long been recognised that students are at a higher risk of attrition if they do not feel a sense of belonging (Thomas, Hill, O’Mahoney, and Yorke, 2017), but the barriers to creating this feeling of connectedness within the LJMU community have now been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. Increasing numbers of students are commuting, working long hours, and experiencing poor mental health (Holden, 2022; Neves and Stephenson 2023). The practical consequence of this is that students are increasingly removed from campus and, as such, they are losing the opportunities to engage with peers and with lecturers that occur in corridors and outside of teaching spaces. It is becoming more difficult, then, for students to forge the relationships (academic and social) that are crucial to belonging. In recognition of these challenges, this year the School of Law introduced two dedicated student retention co-ordinators (SRC). This paper will reflect upon the SRC’s experiences of supporting students at risk of disengaging, the challenges that they encountered, and their plans to adapt and refine the role moving forwards.

## Session 78: (Thursday 13 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**White, male and first-in-family: understanding student experience and helping them to succeed**

Elena Zaitseva, Teaching & Learning Academy

Matt McLain, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Casey Beaumont, Library Services

Eve Groome, Faculty of Health

White working-class males remain most academically disadvantaged in our country, and many of those who progress into higher education continue to underperform (Hillman and Robinson, 2016). Inequality is often hidden behind ‘white privilege’ discourse, and literature shows that a focus on other marginalised demographic student groups at the expense of this group has resulted in them feeling forgotten (Cotton et al., 2016).

This presentation will share outcomes of a project, supported by LJMU Diversity and Inclusion Fund, on understanding barriers to academic achievement of white, first-in-family male students. The overarching aim of the project was to explore to what extent approaches to learning, patterns of decision making, seeking support, and beliefs about succeeding at university differ within this demographic group, and how various student groups could be supported in their university journey.

The study design consists of three parts: (1) semi-structured interviews with academic and professional services staff; (2) online survey of the student population, and (3) analysis of individual students’ experiences, using Q-methodology. Based on results of the staff interviews (19), student questionnaire (1300 first-in-family male and female students responded) and literature review, a ‘concourse’ was compiled representing different views, experiences, and behaviours of being a first-in-family university student, which was refined into 60 discrete statements. Q Methodology was then used in workshops with students to gain an in-depth understanding of subjective experiences of individual students, revealing areas of consensus and variations between their collective beliefs and views. The methodology is based on correlation and factor analysis of the ranked statements, and interpretation is supported by student commentaries during the sorting exercise and their demographic profile, reported separately.

The presentation will include insights from all stages of the research and proposed recommendations. The discussion will be focused on how the potential of white male students could be enhanced, by both academics and colleagues from professional services.

References

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Cotton, D.R.E., Joyner, M., George, R. & Cotton, P.A. (2016). Understanding the gender and ethnicity attainment gap in UK higher education. Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 53(5), 475-486, DOI: 10.1080/14703297.2015.1013145

## Session 79: (Thursday 13 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**All aboard! Please mind the gap - the development journey for technicians**

Ollie Manton, National Technician Development Centre

John Trantom, Organisational Development

## Session 80: (Thursday 13 June 15:05 – 15:35)

**The who, how, what, and why of participatory research: public engagement practices at LJMU**

Gemma Reed, Research & Innovation Services

Lucious Ofeni, Faculty of Arts, Professional & Social Studies

Jenna Rice, Faculty of Science

Krisztina Rudolf, Faculty of Science

Public engagement and participatory approaches are increasingly being employed as methods to achieve research excellence, and a route to impact. This session will be delivered by three PhD researchers who are currently involving the public in their research, and LJMU’s Public Engagement Officer. Together, we have designed this session to be an introduction to participatory research, a key element of public engagement with research, which supports our LJMU strategic aim: Research and Knowledge Exchange.

Prior to the conference, we will be sending out a survey to all LJMU PhD students, via the Doctoral Academy. The outcomes of this questionnaire will be used to shape the content of our session to ensure it relevance to our students, thus prioritising our LJMU strategic aim: Education and Student Experience.

Our panel represent a range of disciplines, methodologies, and external partnerships which we will showcase at this session. These partnerships are a key part or our LJMU strategic aim: Place and Partnership.

We found that whilst the people we engaged with (our “who”) and approaches (our “how” and “what”) were different, several themes underpin all our work including: building trust, working with communities, and ensuring that participants are listened to and not just heard. These notions form the themes of our session, encompassing the conference theme of Community. We also found that we faced similar challenges in our work, such as how to effectively build and sustain relationships (which takes time) whilst under pressure to deliver results in a short time, and how to speak the right language to effectively engage participants? We hope that by sharing our experiences, delegates will achieve a more thorough understanding of what participatory research is, recognise the value of engagement, and be inspired to join our budding community of engaged researchers!