Developing Student Engagement

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Director

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Who are we?

- **s**tudent **par**tnerships in **q**uality **S**cotland

- Full-time staff in Edinburgh and Inverness

- Works with all institutions and students' associations in the university and college sector. Provides international consultancy.

- Scottish Charity - members all sector agencies

- Main Funding – Scottish Funding Council

- www.sparqs.ac.uk

Our **Vision** is of:

Students making a positive and rewarding difference to their own and others' educational experience, helping shape the nature of learning and contributing to the overall success of Scotland's universities and colleges.

To make this **Vision** a reality our **Mission** is to

Ensure students are able to engage as partners in all levels of assurance and enhancement activities including:

- Commenting on and shaping their own learning experience.

- Taking an active part in formal student engagement mechanisms, including quality processes and strategic decision making.

- Shaping the development of the student experience at national level.
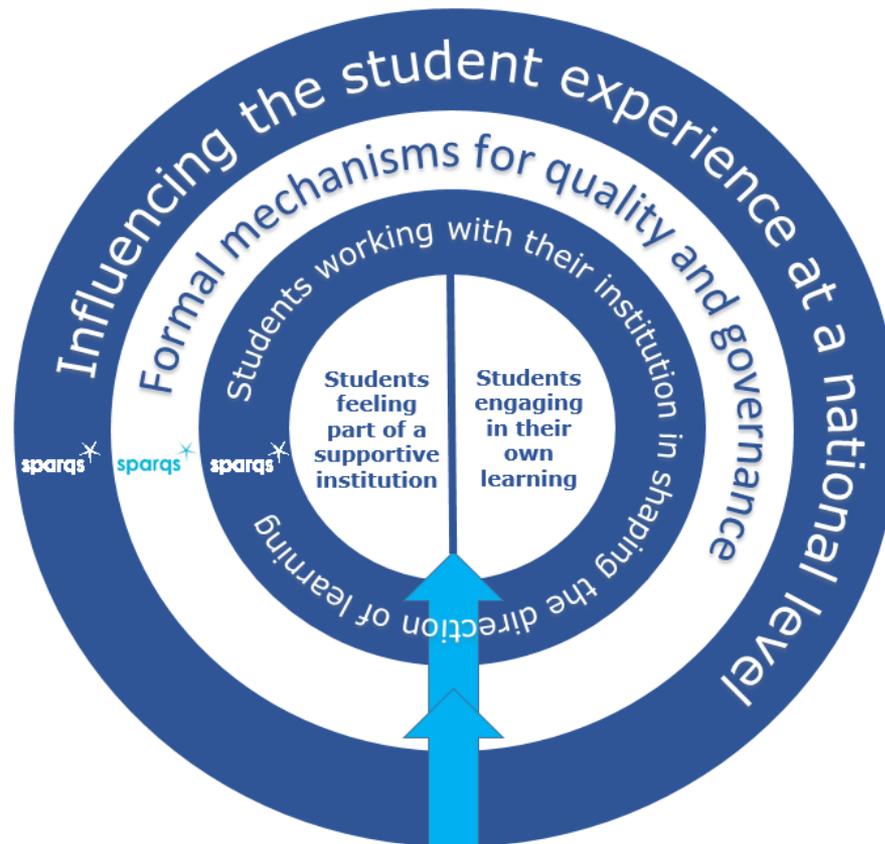
Student Engagement Framework

Focus on enhancement and change

Valuing the student contribution

Appropriate resources and support

A culture of engagement

Responding to diversity

Students as partners

Influencing the student experience at a national level

Formal mechanisms for quality and governance

Students working with their institution in shaping the direction of learning

Students feeling part of a supportive institution

Students engaging in their own learning

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Scottish Student Engagement Framework

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Partnership is a key concept – students have a role in shaping their experience which when fully realised goes beyond feedback, problem solving and membership of committees, to opportunities for real enhancement.

Students as Partners

- Recognise issues relating to position, power and influence

- Different but equally valuable contribution of students as experts

- The role of an autonomous student organisation as a key partner– the ability to deliver a considered student view point based on hard evidence, democratic processes and due attention to meeting the needs of all students
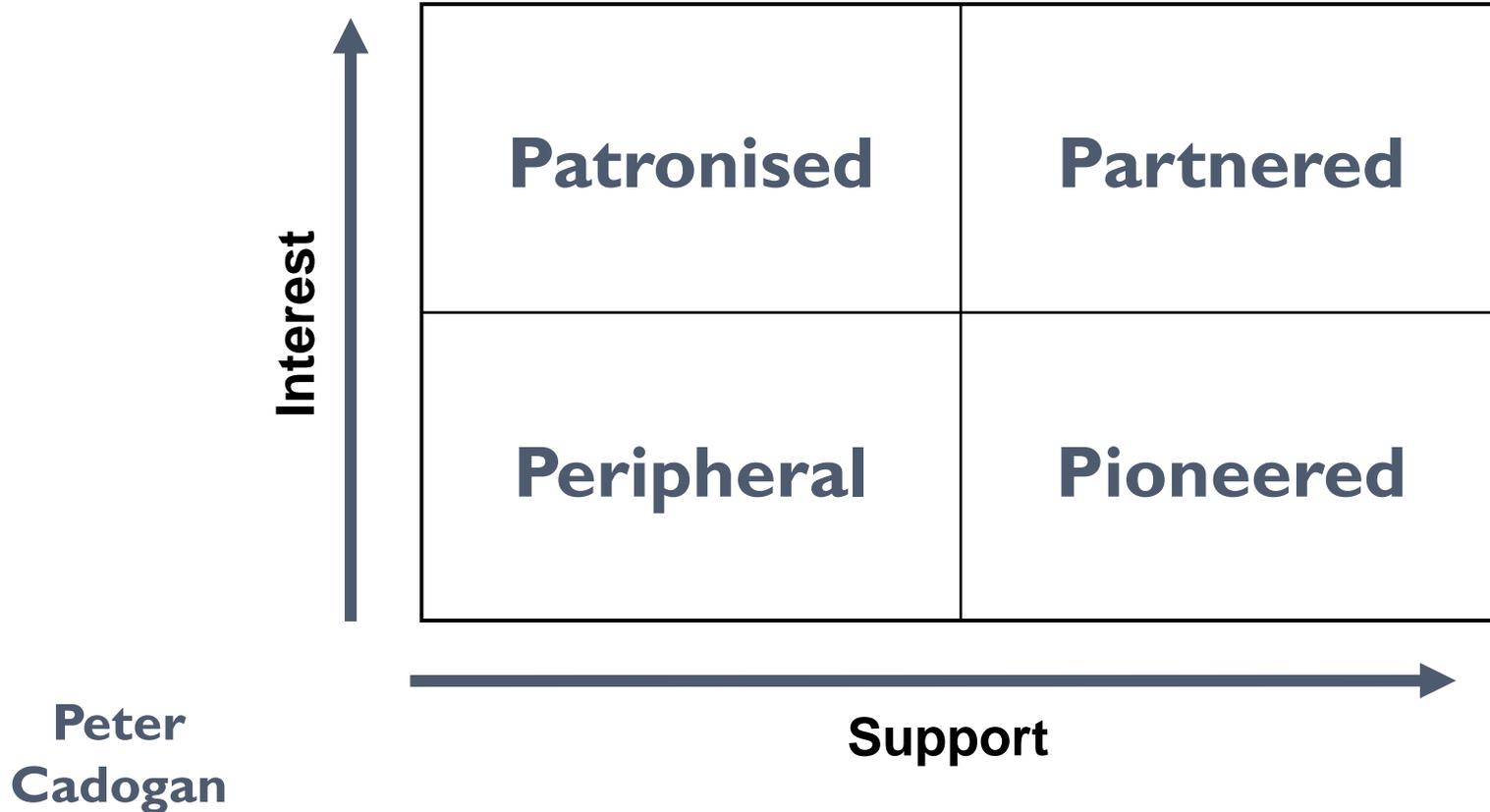
A Ladder of Citizen Participation
- Sherry R Arnstein
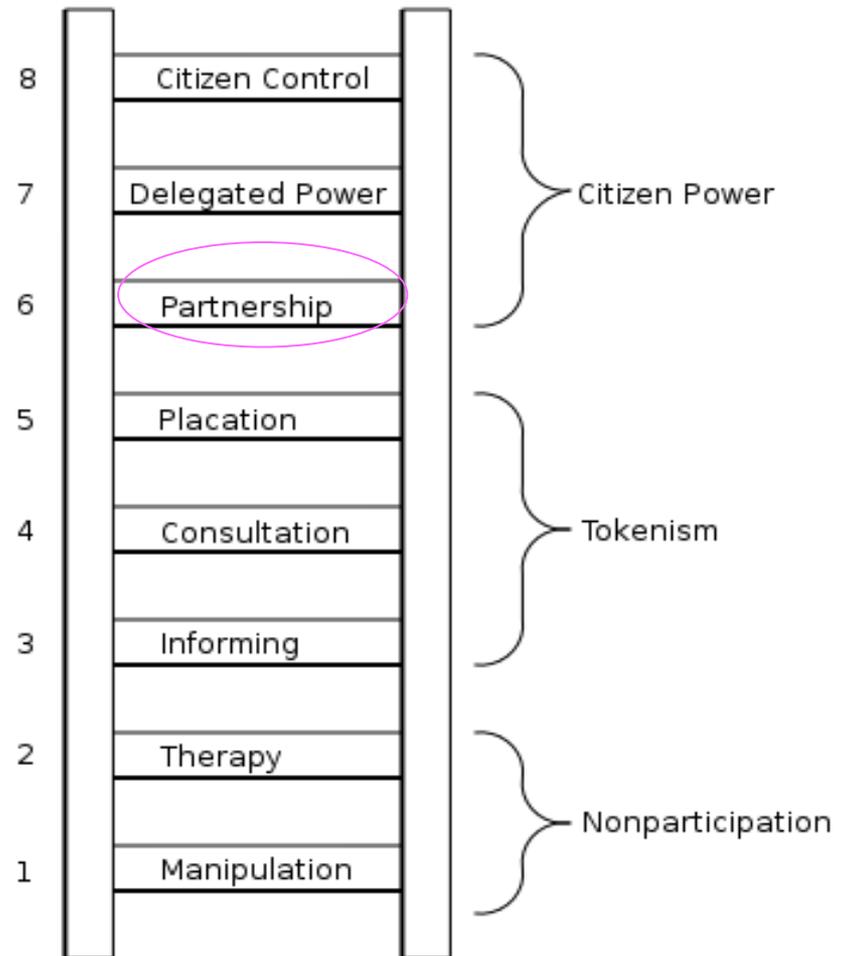
Cadogan Matrix of Institutional / Student Union Relationships

Patronised	**Partnered**
Peripheral	**Pioneered**

Interest

Support

Peter Cadogan

What do you want to work with students on?

- Development of student retention strategy
- Extension of inquiry learning approaches
- Development of student representative roles
- Development of institutional quality processes
- Introduction of graduate skills development programmes
- Distribution, analysis and action planning of surveys at institutional or national level e.g. end of module, student satisfaction survey, graduate destination survey

or

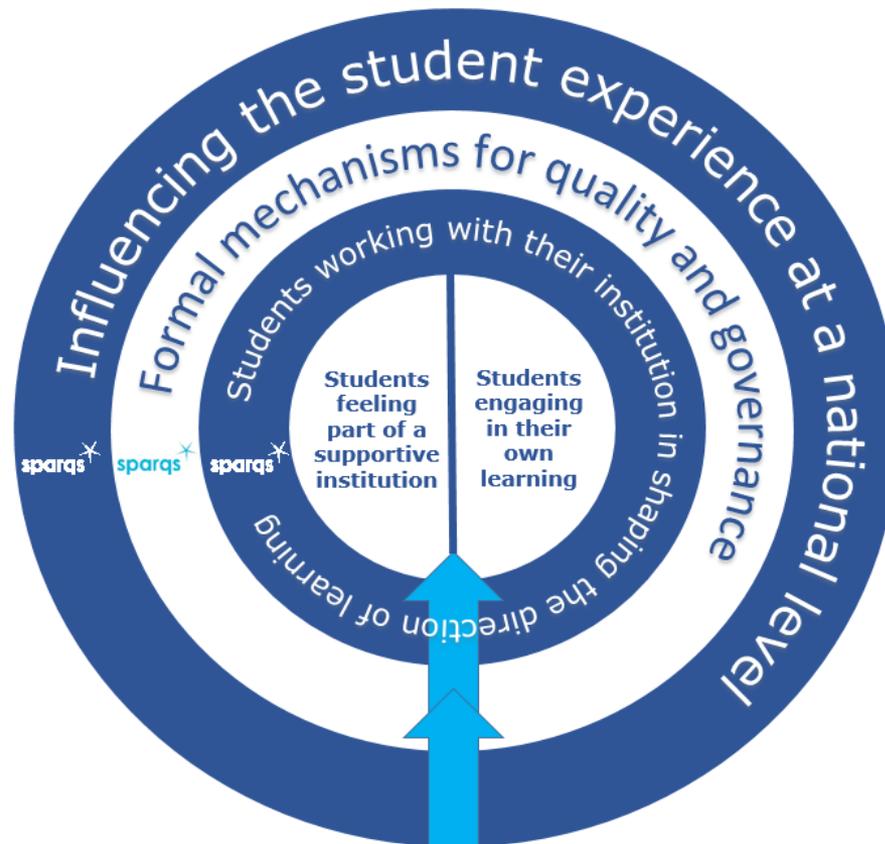opportunity → attendance → engagement

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3. Working with the institution in shaping the direction of learning

- Being able to comment on their learning experience either individually or as a group.

- Ensuring students know what actions, if any, have been taken as a result of their feedback.

- Working in partnership to develop solutions, implement actions and explore/identify future developments.

Example activities and developments include:

- Involving students in the design, collection and analysis of student surveys etc.

- Student-focused learning and teaching conferences and events.

- Student-staff project teams working on specific projects, (e.g. curriculum review, improving feedback etc.).

- Tutor-led activities designed to get feedback and facilitate discussions on improvements in the classroom.

4. Formal mechanisms for quality and governance

- Engagement with rep structures and processes operated primarily by the Students' Council.

- Reps providing an independent voice to work in partnership to enhance the student experience at a strategic level.

- Representing individual or groups in an effective manner providing an informed opinion to work towards compromise with the institution.

Example activities and developments include:

- Systems, processes and events to ensure a link with students and student views emerging from other areas of student engagement, (e.g. faculty-level reps, student conferences).

- Formal representation on institutional committees, and involvement in quality assurance and enhancement processes.

- Informal liaison with senior management, strategy away days, regular Principal liaison groups etc.

- Institutional support for students' association development and activities - joint strategy development groups/events, funding for projects and staff support.

5. Influencing the student experience at national level

- How students shape education policy at a national level.

- Working with others to contribute the success of the sector as a whole.

- Recognising the contributions of action at a local level can make to wider efforts.

Example activities and developments include:

- Developing and supporting opportunities for students to influence the work of sector agencies and their initiatives.

- Involvement with NUS and their activities.

- Student involvement in and learning from external review processes.

- Influencing government strategy on education.

- Helping student leaders inform national policy developments based on student opinion within their own institutions.

Quality processes - ELIR

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- Student Reviewer
- Student Ownership of self evaluation
- Student involvement in contextualisation
- Student Engagement actively investigated

Quality process

- Students joint owners of the arrangements
- Student board member
- Student members of Enhancement Theme – Student – led project
- Student Members of Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee(move from on-line to employability)
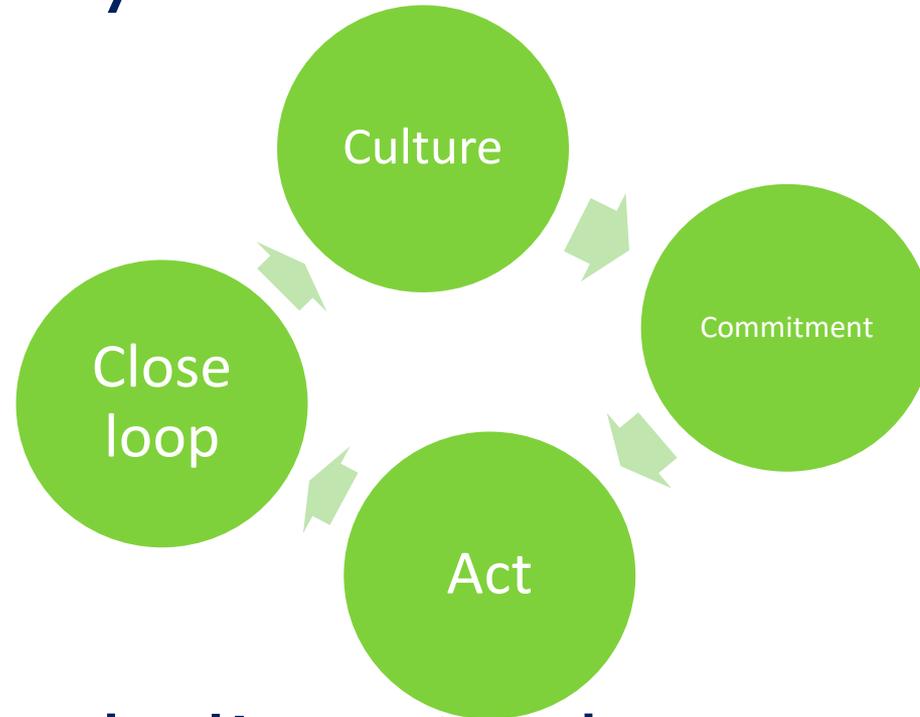- Institution led review

But what about student apathy/unrest?
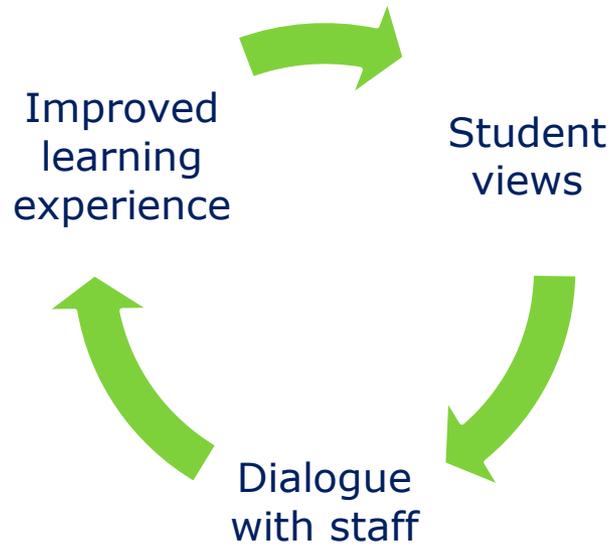
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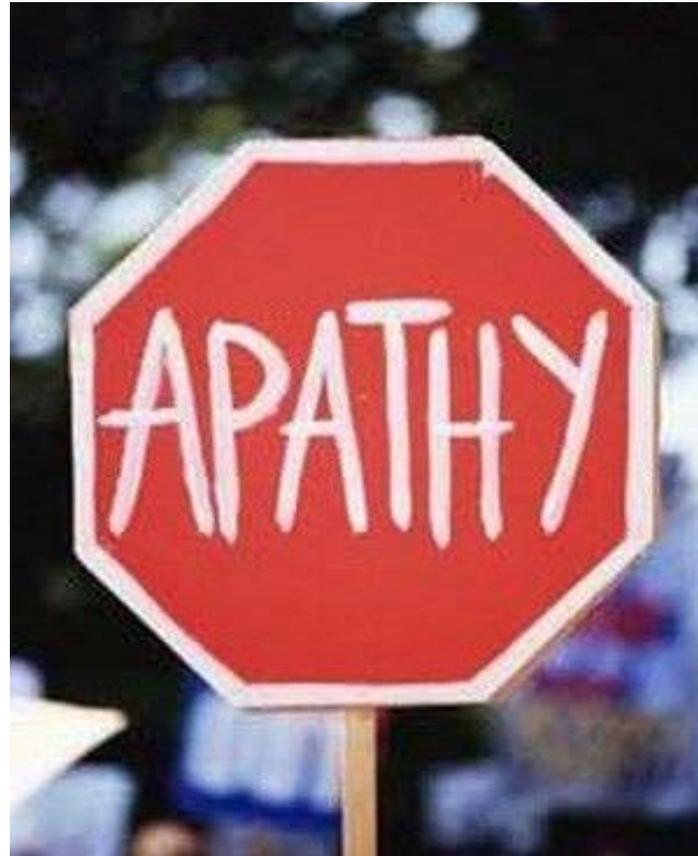
Starting Points

- Believe in your students

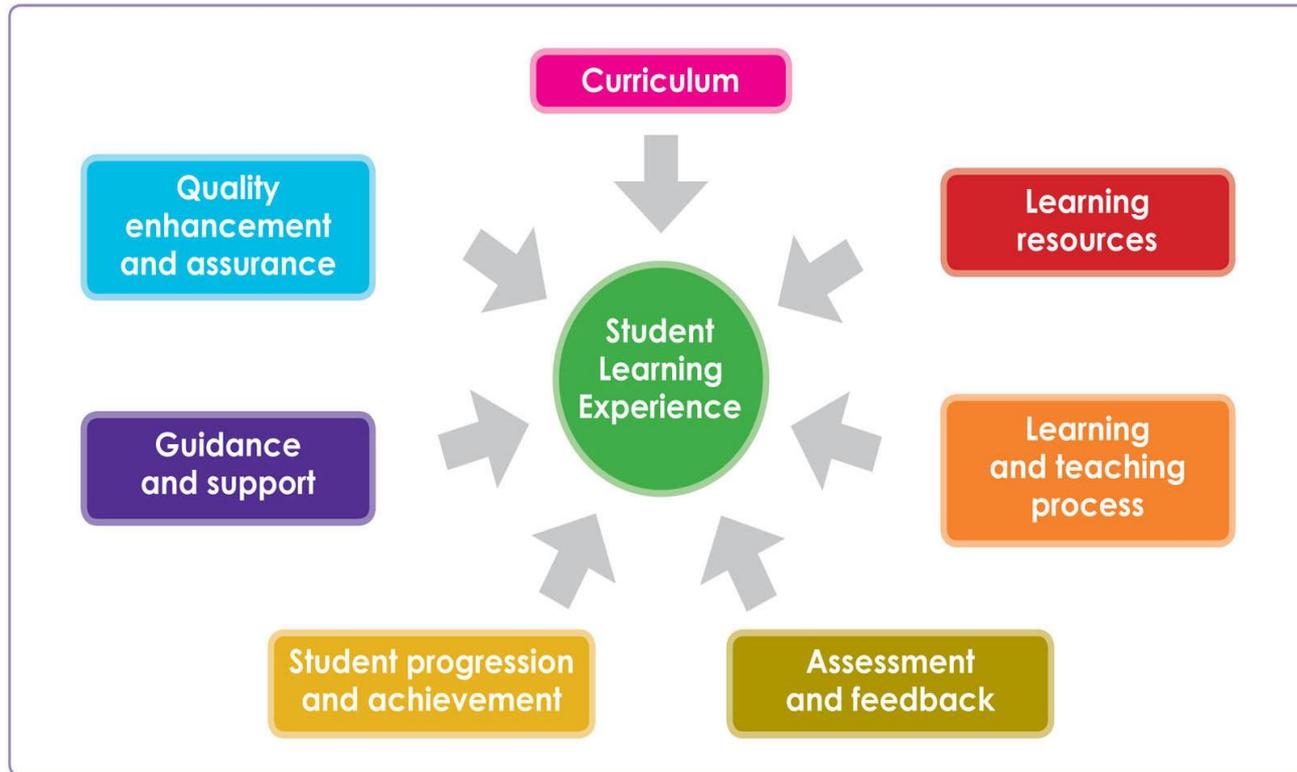- Show you believe in them

Developing Student Expertise
Why is representation important?

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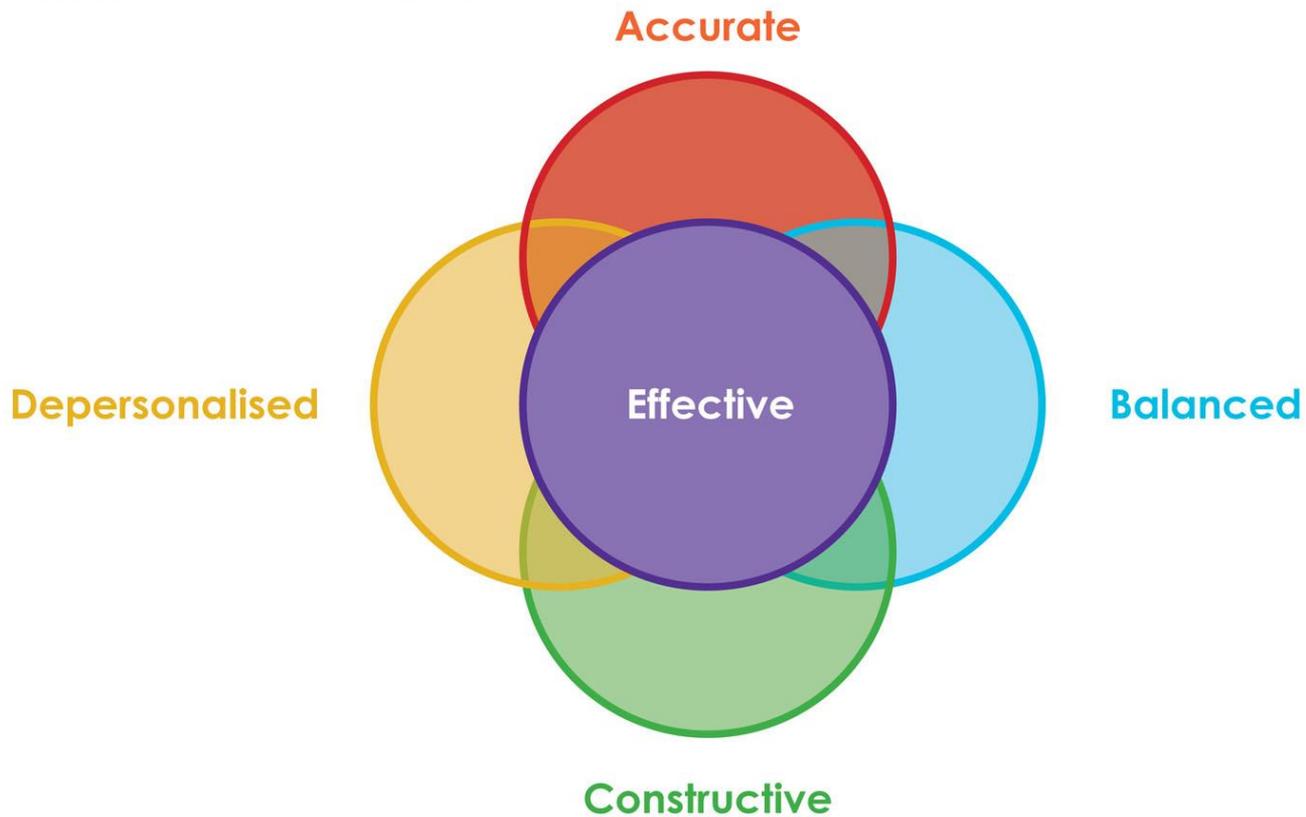Improved learning experience

Student views

Dialogue with staff

YOU ARE THE EXPERT!

The Student Learning Experience – students as experts
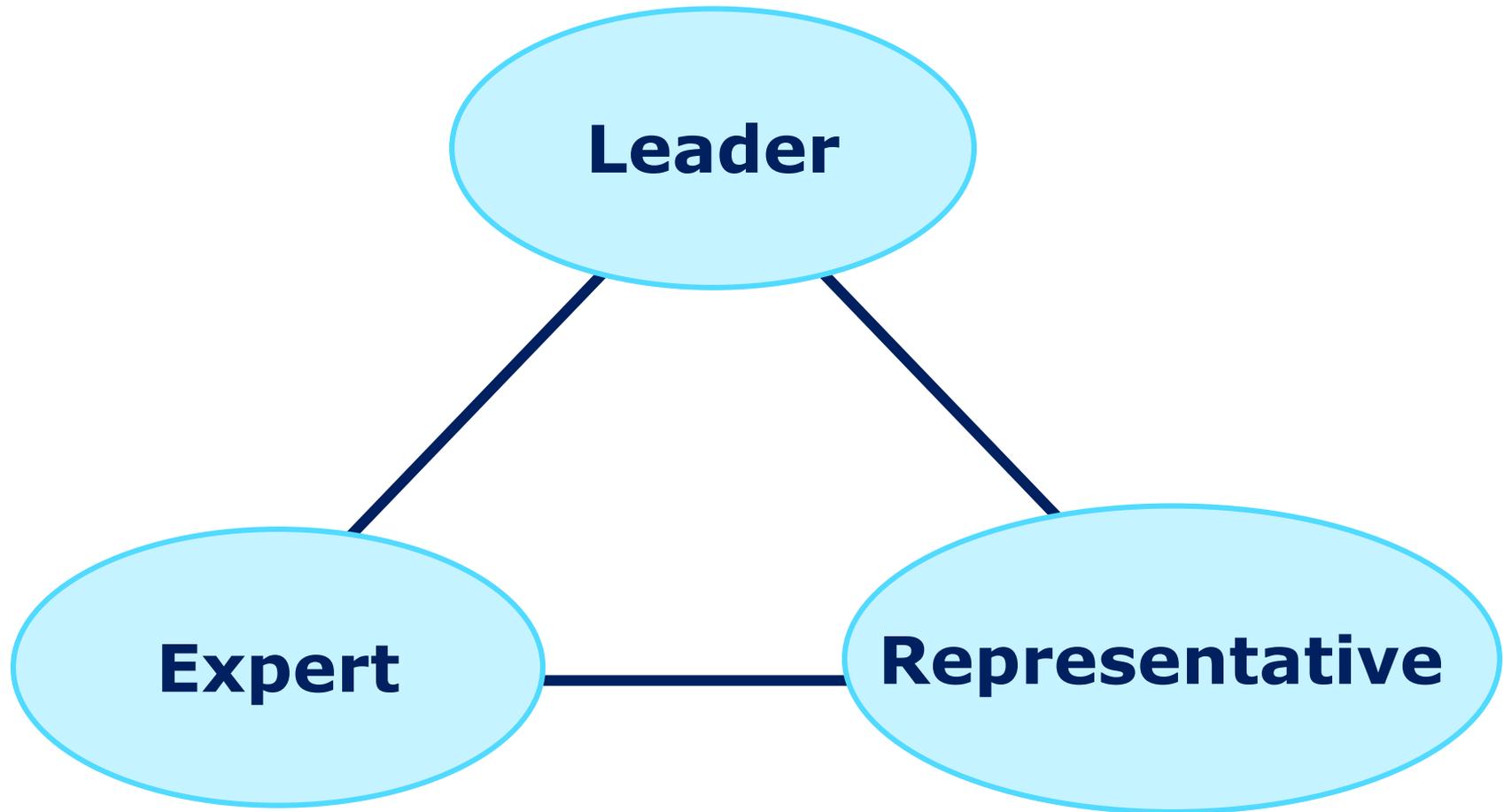
The A,B,C,D of Effective Feedback

Consider the following statements

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- 'Students are experts in their own learning'

- 'Students only know what they want, not what they need'

The role of a student leader

Making Change happen

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Consider the following words – what do you understand by these terms in relation to how students might bring about change? What are the pros and cons of each approach

- Customer
- Volunteer
- Campaigner
- Lobbyist
- Partner/Collaborator

Law for Higher Education in Albania

Students are entitled to

- Participate in the decision – making processes of the higher education institution

- To express their appreciation for the quality of teaching and the work of staff in the higher education institution

Student Councils

- Express opinions and proposals for all problems of general interest of higher education such as study plans and programs, regulations on teaching activities, the right to study, quality of services, tariff setting tuition and other financial contributions to students, preliminary annual balance sheets or the allocation of financial resources, development of various cultural, artistic sporting activities etc.

- Higher education institutions support student councils and fund their activities

Quality processes

- Student questionnaire – end of each semester/exam season for the subjects of each study programme
- Student involvement in internal and external quality assurance processes?

Some things to think about

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- Student questionnaires
- Senate/Faculty – attendance/engagement
- Training – students and staff
- Drivers for assurance/enhancement – how will you know aspirations of law are being met?
- Quality processes
- Beyond feedback – space for dialogue