

Session Title:	Student Advisory Panels
Speaker(s):	Joanne McKenna
Chair:	Steph
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Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:	Jo McKenna is a Student Success Officer at Edge Hill University.
Overview/Aim of session:	Student Advisory Panels (SAPs): Student Success and Student Co-Production. Understanding Student Advisory Panels (SAPs) and how to implement them.
Workshop Content	<p>The purpose of Student Advisory Panels (SAPs) is to close attainment gaps and enhance student success while at university. These gaps are complex and result from a range of intersecting factors. SAPs provide a platform for Edge Hill students to offer their feedback, ideas and opinions on the support and services Edge Hill offers its diverse student body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History and Growth of SAPs A one-off panel in 2020/21 was so successful that it was decided to grow the initiative and make it a permanent part of the Widening Participation (WP) offer. As well as specific panels, an intersectional panel was also set up as students wanted to hear different perspectives. How are they done? They are student led and the students are paid for their time. They are continually updating and changing year on year. This year was the first time it was driven as a job opportunity alongside other student jobs. There was cross promotion on student job pages and flyers. Independent promotion was also used. Current panel members advertised to passersby; they also had a stand at welcome weekend. Students applied online with the main aim of the application process being for students to showcase they are enthusiastic to work in this area.

- **Student Benefits**

- Pay £11.58 per hour plus uplift means it just over £12 an hour.
- Can lead to other paid opportunities within the University
- Have their voice heard and see potential changes
- End of year celebration

- **Training**

One off once-a-year mandatory training. There are changes year on year that all panel members need to be aware of. Hosted in person and virtually. This is also a chance to share how actions will be escalated and how Edge Hill will be kept accountable. Students are paid to attend.

- **The run up to a SAP**

There is a 4pm cut off the day before a panel when members must have requested to attend. Allocation for 15 students per panel, however if all 15 attended there would not be enough time for everyone to share their views. Average of around 8/7 panel members attending.

- **What happens at a panel meeting?**

X 2 agenda items allowing 30mins for each item. The aim is for students to find a sense of belonging and this is more likely to happen in person. In the past if a hybrid panel has taken place students must have cameras on and contribute to get paid. Co-produced a code of conduct – thin line to tread. Want the panels to feel informal but they are being paid. Fun/professional. VC is engaged with the panel and the initiative is thought very highly of and fully embedded in the university. Panel achievements are a direct result of student feedback from the panels. Students review the content of WP programmes and much more.

- **In the future**

Moving forward SAPs will no longer be hybrid. With the joint flyer and promotion, potentially the job got lost a bit. Moving forward the team will recruit for the panel separately. Fixed panel dates/Voted on panel dates– pros and cons of each. Giving the students a choice via polls was administratively quite difficult.

Challenge: working with other colleagues. Hit and miss whether staff attend to speak to panel. Even with a staff code of conduct/expectations document being sent to them.

<p>Case Studies/Examples:</p>	
<p>Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:</p>	<p>Questions to spark table discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o How do you gain feedback from current WP students and how do you respond to this feedback? o How do you ensure feedback from students is acted upon, what are the mechanisms for accountability? <p>Warwick has a Student Advisory Group (SAG) that reports directly to the WP committee. On the SAG panel there is a part time WP SU Officer and a member of WP Staff. This then feeds into a WP meeting that the VC attends. VC's presence and engagement is super important when it comes to accountability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Do you have opportunities for current students to collaborate on WP initiatives? o How do you manage the blurred lines of success work when much of the 'doing' sits outside of the central WP team? <p>It was noted that most attendees of this session are not involved with the WP side of things but have been interested to hear this perspective. Many unis seem to have more general feedback initiatives set up to get the general student voice. Getting that representative voice is always going to be a challenge.</p> <p>Student ambassadors were also discussed and highlighted as an area of recruitment. How can we utilise student ambassadors more to get their lived experience? How do you block out the louder voices or the larger areas of the student body to find the smaller groups within? Asking panels members who are already on panels to advertise the role to peers.</p> <p>Challenge of institutions and how compartmentalized different areas of universities are.</p>
<p>Questions and Answers:</p>	<p>Challenge of finding these smaller voices/groups - Since the introduction of intersectional panels there has been a huge drop off in people not going to their own specific panel group.</p> <p>Students who engage in a panel are already quite engaged students – hard to find the hardest to reach students and does this skew representation?</p> <p>Q: How do you get staff on board to participate in the panels? Are there incentives?</p> <p>A: Staff seem to genuinely approach Jo to take part. Jo was not around for the establishment of the panels so there may have been these struggles at the beginning.</p>

	<p>Annual meeting PVC may help to have that influence. Academic staff seem to be trickier to get. They may be working more independently whereas other posts may be focused more on university wide policy. Feeding in from the top level.</p> <p>Q: What is the focus of these groups? Is it to alter the experience of current students or to feed into outreach activity?</p> <p>A: Close attainment gaps and enhance student success while at university.</p> <p>Q: How do you choose agenda items?</p> <p>A: First come first serve. Students mention something in person or reach out via email.</p> <p>Q: Do you have any other committee reporting lines?</p> <p>A: Directly from the panel Jo reports the actions on a log which is shared with the Access and Participation Plan (APP) operations group and feeds into the APP steering group. Share defined actions that come out of panels.</p> <p>Q: Are agenda items shared in advance and do students have to prep?</p> <p>A: Agenda is shared in advance a week before along with reminders for date, time, and room. No prep, students would not be paid for their time.</p> <p>Q: You can't always come back to the students and say that certain things they request or alert you too will change. How do you keep to two agenda items and remain accountable?</p> <p>A: We can guarantee they will be heard but can't guarantee something might/might not go ahead.</p>
<p>Summary/Key takeaways:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student Advisory Panels are a great way for students' voices to be heard but engagement from the wider University is useful to ensure actions are escalated appropriately. - Jo and Edge Hill have provided a good example of how you could implement an effective student panel. It made everyone who attended the session curious about what they do in their institutions and sparked ideas about what they could do moving forward.