

Engaging Professional Staff in the Discourse of Engagement

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Abstract

The shift in Higher Education, away from traditional, transactional service models and toward innovative, transformational approaches, has led to a reframing of professional identities. At USC, the creation of the Student Engagement team in 2015 took a learner-centred, theory driven and evidence based approach. However, the new team has been drawn from diverse backgrounds and is building a new, shared identity. To create a common language and understanding of practice in the team, the theory and scholarship of higher education was integrated into team leader discussions. These staff participated in a series of discussions, were encouraged to apply this learning to their daily practice in work with students and in communicating and contextualising their work among staff. The participants have shared their perspective on this new approach and results indicate that while we are successfully achieving some objectives, the initiative can be adapted to become more effective.

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