Eden Centre for Education Enhancement | LSE

Student Partnership: A Review of and Guide to the Literature
Dylan Stevens, Eden Centre Graduate Intern (July 2022).

<u>Overview</u>

This paper has been written to provide staff with a review of the present literature on student partnership, or "engaging students as partners" (SaP). The central aim has been to summarise the major themes within the literature, its reasons for advocating for partnership work, and case studies and examples to inform the development of best practice. It also aims to capture the lacunae, weaknesses, and challenges of both working in student partnership and in the partnership literature more broadly, so that staff may be aware of potential problems to troubleshoot in their own work, as well as areas to encourage further research and partnership practice.

We take a <u>definition of partnership</u> that is open-ended, following Healey, Flint, and Harrington's (2014) example of partnership as "process" of student *engagement* with teaching and learning. In practice, partnership is seen as a reciprocal process where staff and students work together as partners in education, the outcomes of which are not predetermined *ex ante*. As such, we highlight the importance of developing <u>values and principles of partnership</u> between staff, students, and institutions as a priority before commencing partnership work, and as a means to establish a culture and community of partnership within institutions to ensure accountability, cohesion, and potential transformation of the existing structures and roles in higher education.

Our understanding of partnership work largely follows the <u>four-part framework</u> developed by Healey, Flint, and Harrington (2014) which identifies four major (though overlapping) strands of partnership work: <u>learning, teaching, and assessment</u>, <u>subject-based research and inquiry</u>, <u>curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy</u>, and <u>scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL)</u>. Each of these strands is then explored in detail, with reference to case studies, including discussion of the limitations and challenges of work within each strand and gaps within the literature. This aims to provide staff with the opportunity to learn more about a particular kind of partnership they may wish to implement and the relevant sources to consult to gain knowledge of best practice and the current state of research in each area.

We categorise the <u>central issues in partnership</u> as those of <u>inclusivity and scope</u> and <u>resistance and conflict</u>. The former considers how partnership may or may not work to redress inequalities between students, engage underrepresented and under-engaged students in teaching and learning, and make HE institutions more inclusive and accessible to students and staff. The latter is explored on both an institutional level, and at the micro-level between staff and students on a particular partnership project. This section aims to provide staff with guidance as to how to navigate these problems with reference to case studies and research, as well as the present gaps in these areas in effectively addressing these issues.

We conclude with a brief discussion of how to begin the process <u>of implementing or scaling up partnership values and practices</u> within an institution, and how to sustain a culture and community of partnership once established.

Understanding and Defining Student Partnership

Student partnership - or "engaging students as partners" (SaP) – has become an increasingly prominent and field of teaching and learning scholarship since the early 2010s, with many universities in the UK and globally implementing SaP programs, values, and goals at varying levels. Despite a growing consensus among scholars and educators alike on the manifold benefits of partnership, definitions of central values and concepts remain variable across publications (see Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017).

A widely adopted definition of partnership is offered by Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, a "collaborative, reciprocal process through which all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways, to curricular or pedagogical conceptualization, decision making, implementation, investigation, or analysis" (2014, 6-7). In this definition "all participants" refers to students, staff (academic or otherwise) and other significant stakeholders who work in partnership together. However, this definition neglects non-academic forms of partnership that may take place between students and non-academic staff members, or in other areas such as civic engagement, research, and enhancing student experiences. In partnership literature more widely, non-academic partnerships are considerably underrepresented (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017). To avoid being too prescriptive about the outcomes or foci of partnership practices, Healey, Flint, and Harrington instead adopt an open-ended definition of partnership as a "process" of student engagement in higher education (2014, 14) as opposed to an outcome or product. Moreover, while their model is centrally concerned with partnership processes in teaching and learning settings, it is not incompatible, nor restrictive to, non-academic partnership practice.

Values and principles of partnership

Centring *engagement* rather than, for example, academic outcomes or acquiring skills for employment, also reinforces partnership as a project with a particular set of values and principles, ones that usually exist in contrast to established norms in HE. Indeed, the NUS outlined that partnership is "an ethos rather than activity" (2014), one that moves away from models of the student as a "consumer" of their education, and instead as a co-producer and creator (McCullouch, 2009; Neary et al., 2009).

The shift in power dynamics brought about through partnership processes thus asks that staff and students think about their roles and responsibilities in new ways with new values. As Healey, Flint, and Harrington explain, "as a concept and a practice, partnership works to counter a deficit model where staff take on the role of enablers of disempowered students, implicit in some forms of student engagement, aiming instead to acknowledge differentials of power while valuing individual contributions from students and staff in a shared process of reciprocal learning and working" (2014, 15). While the Healey model emphasises *student* engagement in teaching and learning, the idea of reciprocity central to partnership also entails new kinds of staff engagement, not only in relation to students, but also institutions and the wider community of educators and HE professionals (Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2014). For some educators, this is linked to a wider, more critical pedagogic practice (see Friere, 2018; hooks, 2014) and the transformation of HE institutions through teaching and learning practice (Neary et al., 2009; Matthews, 2017; Cates et al., 2018; Peters and Mathias, 2018; Matthews et al., 2019; Gibson and Cook-Sather, 2020; Atkins et al., 2022).

Regardless, partnership in and of itself does not yield inherent outcomes or changes without the adoption of specific values and principles that may vary between institutions. Despite

variation in what these are, Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten (2014, 6-7) centralise respect, reciprocity (see also Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017), and responsibility. Healey, Flint, and Harrington (2014, 14-15) also include authenticity, inclusivity, empowerment, trust, challenge, and community. Partnership processes are always contextual (Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2011; Bovill, 2014; Holen et al., 2020), being highly dependent on institutional structures and resources, as well as on the particular community and culture of institutions (Healey, Flint, and Harrington 2014; Crawford et al., 2015). Moreover, the particular goals of a partnership program may demand the centring of specific values (Matthews et al., 2019; Peters and Mathias, 2018; Green, 2019b; Holen et al., 2021). Staff and students will also have different understandings of partnership values and put them into practice in different ways (Luo et al., 2019; Gravett et al., 2019). Research shows, however, that without clarity on these values (as well as shared and individual goals, responsibilities, and roles) partnership processes can often be challenging or break down (Healey et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2021a; Knaggs et al., 2021). Agreeing on what principles and values of partnership that exist both at an institutional level and to each project may in fact be the best way to begin partnerships between students and faculty, co-creating partnership learning communities by embedding these shared values (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Crawford et al., 2015).

A Framework for Student Partnership: Four Areas to Engage Students as Partners

Building on their definition of partnership as a process of student engagement raised earlier, Healey, Flint, and Harrington (2014 & 2016) provide a framework (Fig. 1) for institutions to begin enacting partnerships, one that has been adopted and implemented as a sector-wide benchmark (HE Academy, 2015; Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017; Ahmad et al., 2017; Matthews, 2021).
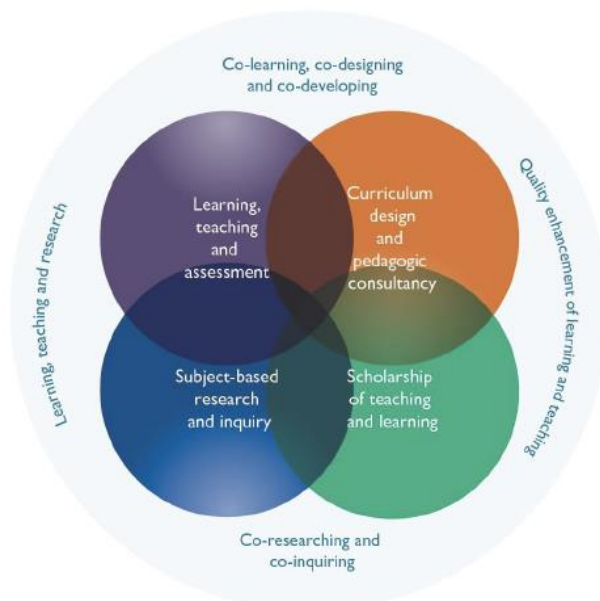

Fig. 1: Healey, Flint, and Harrington's model of ways of engaging students as partners in HE (HFH, 2014, 24)

This four-part model considers partnership from two strands of student engagement in HE: teaching, learning and research, and enhancement of learning and teaching practice and policy (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014, 23). These two strands are further broken down as practices of co-researching and co-inquiring, and co-learning, co-designing, and co-developing. The overlapping nature of these circles shows the blurring of distinctions between kinds of partnership practice, as well as their inter-reliant, dynamic nature. While partnership here is framed as processes of student engagement, central to Healey, Flint, and Harrington's model is their idea of "partnership learning communities" (2014, 26). This is derived from existing scholarship on learning communities and communities of practice, though newly centred

around the specific values and principles of partnership practices, which may not easily map onto existing learning communities (e.g. the traditional student/tutor relationship in a classroom setting). The development, embedding, and sustained support of these partnership learning communities is essential to the success of sustaining and improving partnership practices within institutions, and creating institutional change as a result.

The strand of **learning, teaching, and assessment** reflects partnership's ethos of "deep learning" (McCulloch, 2009, 179) wherein students are engaged in meta-cognitive approaches to learning that consider the learning process itself, as much as what as being studied. As the name implies, deep learning approaches require a deeper engagement with and understanding of what it means to learn something. This kind of active learning is also linked to the development of "self-authorship" among students (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2011; Walkington, 2015; Evans et al., 2015). Students may also act as teachers, such as in peer-learning schemes (Keenan, 2014), or collaborative classroom teaching (Schaefer et al., 2022). Others highlight the ability for students to act as partners in the dynamics of classroom teaching itself, providing different perspectives and knowledge, reinforcing the idea of self-authorship and enabling staff to learn from students themselves (Abbot, 2021; Abbot & Cook-Sather, 2020; de Bie et al., 2019). Of particular note is engaging students as partners in the assessment process, which has been increasingly adopted, particularly given the reporting of several positive learning outcomes, such as greater retention, autonomy in learning, and engagement (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Fluckiger et al., 2010; Millmore, 2021; Smith et al., 2021b; Deeley and Bovill, 2017).

The strand of **subject-based research and enquiry** identifies a distinct way in engaging students as partners in teaching and learning, with "research-rich education" becoming increasingly adopted among educators and institutions (see Fung, 2017; Walkington, 2015; Healey & Jenkins, 2009; Hodge et al., 2008). The goal of this process is to enhance the links between research and teaching to enhance student learning, moving beyond the student as consumer model to narrow the gap between research skills and outcomes and learning and/or teaching responsibilities (McCulloch, 2009; Neary et al., 2009; Hodge et al., 2008). Subject-based research as a partnership initiative is largely directed towards opportunities for undergraduate students (Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017) and can be applied to a select group of students, or mainstreamed to all students (Healey and Jenkins, 2009). Walkington (2015) identifies several forms of research opportunities available in partnership: staff researching *with* students, research-based consultancy, and the use of assignments and teaching approaches which simulate research processes or involve research. These projects can be broken down further by levels of participation: student-initiated projects in consultation with staff, staff-initiated projects in consultation with students, and student consultation on staff research projects. Both Walkington's model and Healey, Flint, and Harrington's discussion of undergraduate research partnerships builds upon Griffiths' (2004) model of the research-teaching nexus. While student research has been increasingly touted as a desirable approach to teaching and learning processes, conducting research *in partnership* remains less common. Critically, students working in partnership moves beyond expectations of the standard "research assistant" role, and demands that students are more actively involved in shaping and executing a research project (Ali et al., 2021; Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017). Unsurprisingly, student researchers working in partnership with staff is most common in pedagogic research projects (Carozza et al., 2022; Maunder, 2021; Hanna-Benson et al., 2021; Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017). This suggests that this particular strand of the partnership framework needs to be clearly distinguished from other forms of (undergraduate) student research opportunities and learning that do not involve the values or processes of partnership.

The strand of **scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL)** involves research, theorising, and communication of how students learn within a discipline. While Healey, Flint, and Harrington claim that this is one of the more neglected areas of partnership (2014, p. 46), a later literature review conducted by Mercer-Mapstone et al. (2017) found that it was, by then, overrepresented in comparison to other partnership strands. Indeed, many published case studies of partnership are primarily concerning student SoTL in partnership with academic staff, often pedagogic and educational researchers (Addy et al., 2022; Maunder, 2021; Cook-Sather et al., 2021; Hanna-Benson et al., 2020; Sotiriou, Tong, & Standen, 2018; Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten 2011 & 2014). The reasons why SoTL is overrepresented – yet once argued by Healey, Flint, and Harrington to be underexplored – is unclear, though Mercer-Mapstone et al. suggest it may be due to limited resources, a bias towards undergraduate students, and the difficulties of enacting partnership in other areas. Educators who have an interest in partnership research are likely to employ partnership practices, and hence their research is likely produced in partnership with students. However, Mercer-Mapstone et al. find that this does not always translate into research *authorship*, which tends to be staff-centric, while the subject and outcomes of research are largely student-centric, "which implies that… partnership is something 'done to' rather than 'done with' students" (2014, p. 15). The benefits of partnership opportunities in SoTL remain relatively unarticulated, beyond the experiential benefit of engaging in partnership and producing research; there may be a deficit in following through on recommendations or findings to enhance teaching and learning presented in partnered SoTL in comparison to the amount of work published. The idea of "students as change agents" has additionally become touted as a more autonomous form of student partnership in SoTL (Reinholz et al., 2020; Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Dunne et al., 2011) yet there remains an unclear relationship between the SoTL and outcomes at an institutional level. Moreover, these partnership programs tend to be both one-off and "boutique" opportunities to a selected group of students (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Dunne et al., 2011).

Finally, the strand of **curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy** comprises the most published area of partnership research and case studies (Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017). Curriculum design, particularly co-creation partnership opportunities, comprised some of the earliest pedagogic research on partnerships (Bovill, Bulley, and Morss, 2011; Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2011; Bovill, 2014). Students providing feedback on their courses, and engaging in departmental student-staff committees is commonplace in many HE institutions, but as Healey, Flint, and Harrington (2014) note, going beyond consulting student voice to engaged student partnerships requires students take both a more active, and deeper role in designing curricula and consulting on teaching and pedagogy. Bovill, Bulley, and Morss argue that partnership in curriculum design concerns a "negotiated curriculum" between staff and students (2011, 205), a process that is complementary to and builds upon existing student voice consultation, as well as research-rich partnership opportunities and SoTL on partnership, as discussed above. As a consequence, this particular strand of partnership is much more likely to be contextually dependent and specific to each institution than others (Bovill, 2014; Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014). Nonetheless, many pedagogues have offered detail frameworks and best practice suggestions for educators considering incorporating this strand of partnership into their teaching and course design (see Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2011 & 2014; Bovill, 2014; Bovill et al., 2016; Mercer-Mapstone and Marie, 2019; Hanna-Benson et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2021a). A particular consideration for academic developers, and institutions more broadly, is whether these opportunities are – like other partnership opportunities – small-scale, course-specific, and/or mainstreamed across departments/disciplines (Bovill, 2019 & 2020). Moreover, the outcomes of this partnership practice can be highly variable. At the largest scale, Neary et al.'s (2009) "student as producer" programme organised curricula at the University of Lincoln essentially around

(undergraduate) students producing knowledge in partnership with staff. More commonly, small-scale partnerships have designed or redesigned courses (Spencer, Tori, and Campbell, 2021; Sohr et al., 2020; Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten 2014; Bovill, 2014), produced digital learning materials (Carozza et al., 2022; Todd, 2021; Rafferty and Matthews, 2021; Luke and Evans, 2021), and advised on classroom teaching practices (Schaefer et al., 2022; de Bie et al., 2019; Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2014).

The widespread adoption of Healey, Flint, and Harrington's framework for partnership has enabled pedagogues, academic developers, educators, and students to structure partnership programs at their own institutions and draw on a wide range of literature in clear strands to organise new and established practice. The above discussion provides an overview of current practice and discourse, as well as identifying significant areas for further research for those interested in exploring or implementing these partnership strands, or the broader model, in their institutions.

Identifying Issues and Problems in Implementing Partnerships

While we've spent a significant amount of time outlining the benefits of student partnership and ways to begin embedding it in institutions, partnership as a process and practice is far from problem-free, and requires the careful troubleshooting of various problems almost by nature. Beyond this, partnership literature itself also has a significant number of lacunae which have been increasingly identified and explored in more critical work recently.

Understanding the challenges of partnership is not novel in scholarship in the area, both Healey, Flint, and Harrington (2014) and Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten (2014) identify several issues in their models and case studies, and extrapolate these further in their publications. Healey, Flint, and Harrington focus on challenges to their broader conception of forming partnership learning communities in institutions, they highlight in particular: issues of inclusivity and scale, issues of power relationships, issues of reward and recognition, and issues of transition and sustainability (2014, 30-35). Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten provide guidance for specific partnership programs or practices, usually small-scale, including: student and faculty vulnerability, inclusivity, power issues, uncritical and inconsiderate language, and resistance (at both a macro- and micro-level) (2011, 133-142). These challenges continue to be considered in the literature, albeit given arguably less consideration then they deserve. Mercer-Mapstone et al. (2017) identified a significant positive reporting bias in student partnership literature, which they consider due to the pressure to "enact an idealized notion of partnership that was aspirational" (15). However, this in turn runs counter to the goals of partnership work, which requires direct confrontation of challenges and issues in order to transform the relationships and structures that predominate HE institutions, which partnership pedagogues allege contribute negatively to both student experience and educational outcomes. It's worth now breaking down some of these broader challenges identified in the literature and considering how they may affect potential partnership work.

First, let's consider challenges surrounding **inclusivity and scope.** As mentioned, when developing partnership programs, faculty need to consider whether they will operate on a broader, "mainstreamed" model or be selective to students, and (usually as a consequence) extracurricular. While resources and institutional cultures will affect what is possible for partnership programs, smaller-scale and selective programs run the risk of remaining "boutique" opportunities for certain students (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014), and the literature has found this usually has been students who are already high-performing academically, and highly engaged both in their learning and in their learning communities (Marquis et al., 2018; Cook-Sather, 2020; Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2021). The formation of

partnership learning communities and the broader institutional transformation that is framed as an aspirational goal of partnership is unlikely to take place if partnerships remain selective and small-scale. There is, in fact, a greater risk that these programs heighten the distance between engaged and high-performing students who are already well-represented, and those who are likely to benefit most from partnership opportunities (Marquis et al., 2018; Bovill, 2020; Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2021). As Mercer-Mapstone et al. argue, "[i]f we seek to understand how such cultural change occurs, then it is important to explore multiple practices that span disciplines within institutions and how those practices signal the manner in which students and staff are enacting SaP as members of partnered learning communities… It is arguable then institutional SaP opportunities should be made available in ways that traverse both curricular and extra-curricular domains" (2017, 17).

Recent work among scholars of partnership has sought to fill this void, such as Moore-Cherry et al.'s work on "inclusive partnerships" (2016, see especially 88-90). These are large-scale, non-selective opportunities that the authors suggest is especially beneficial for introductory courses or inducting students into a new course, where staff are challenged to reconceptualise their learning environments and teaching styles, celebrate and draw upon the diversity of knowledge(s) offered by new students, and students in turn gain a greater sense of confidence in their learning and community cohesion. The process of dialogue between staff and students, they argue, takes a more central role in inclusive partnership programs. The idea of partnerships as working to *redress* institutional inequality has also become increasingly popular (Acai et al., 2022; Marquis et al., 2022; Gamote et al., 2022; Cook-Sather, 2019; Cates et al., 2018) and have seen positive outcomes, yet are arguably placed on stronger scrutiny due to their ambitions towards equitable transformation. For example, Marquis et al.'s (2022) study of a partnership program specifically designed to reduce inequality faced issues surrounding reward and recognition of student contributions, which in turn made this partnership an opportunity unafforded to students who were not as financially privileged. Indeed, as Mercer-Mapstone et al. (2021) note, these partnerships need to be attentive to inequalities that may emerge from an "equality of access" model, as well as epistemic injustice and exploitation by marginalised students, who may be expected to draw on their own experiences to redress their own inequalities themselves (see also de Bie, 2020). Nevertheless, successful examples of inclusive partnership that have worked to both redress inequalities among students and staff, while also engaging meaningfully with underrepresented and marginalised students have emerged and should be drawn upon for best practice (see Addy et al., 2022; Marquis et al., 2022; Gamote et al., 2022; Fisher et al., 2021; Brown et al., 2020; Cook-Sather, 2019 Baxter, 2018).

The second dominant strand of issues and challenges identified concern **resistance and conflict**, usually when values and the practices of partnership contrast against established norms, roles, power dynamics, and expectations in HE settings and institutions. We can think of this conflict at both a macro and micro level, where the former concerns *institutional* or even *sector-wide* resistance to partnership and/or the desired changes and outcomes of partnership, and the latter concerns issues *within a particular partnership*. The former is, perhaps, unsurprising, given that much of the ethos surrounding student partnership is concerned with a transformation of many of the established norms and practices in HE teaching and learning (see Neary et al., 2009; Matthews et al., 2019; Gibson and Cook-Sather, 2020). As discussed, student partnerships run in contrast to the established "student as consumer" model, or what Friere termed the "banking model of education", where "the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat… the scope of action allowed to students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits" (1970, 58). By placing new expectations and roles on students and staff, partnership intends to not only transform the experience of learning (to deeper, more

engaged, and arguably more inclusive forms) but also reconsider the particular roles and responsibilities of students and staff within HE institutions more broadly.

Attempting to establish partnership learning communities and their values within institutions whose existing practices and values may conflict with these new ones has been a well-established issue among scholars of partnership (see Gravett et al., 2020; Cook-Sather, 2020; Matthews et al., 2019; Bovill et al., 2016). Conversely, while scholars are quick to acknowledge the institutional resistance partnership often faces, developing solutions to institutional resistance remains relatively rare, beyond the aspiration that partnership itself has a transformative effect. Bovill et al. (2016) provide a case study of a partnership program that attempted to navigate institutional resistance, though the consequence was that this program operated at a smaller scale. Kligyte et al. (2021) developed what they term a "Partnership Outcome Spaces framework" to map macro-level institutional change, highlighting the importance of staff working in partnership to negotiate and work with institutional stakeholders to act upon recommendations and findings produced in partnership. Simultaneously, institutions may sidestep the particular outcomes and communities of partnership in favour of consulting "student voice" which has an equally important, though distinct role, discounting the benefit of students working *with staff*, further emphasising that partnership is primarily to the benefit of and done to students only (Matthews et al., 2019). In addition, recent work has considered partnership in terms of global higher education, where scholarship has previously remained largely Anglophonic (Green, 2019a). Kaur (2020) has noted the particular resistance to student partnership in Asian HE institutions, which may require new values and ways of working to affect institutional change. Similarly, students from international backgrounds may have differing institutional expectations and identities based upon their previous learning experiences and environments (Zhang et al., 2022; Baxter 2019; Green, 2019b). As such, partnership cannot easily work from shared assumptions or experiences taken to be universal to all students, and implementation requires the careful and considered navigation of these preconceived norms and expectations of students and staff in each institutional context.

A near-universal consideration in the partnership literature concerns issues of resistance and conflict *within* partnership practice, particularly concerning power dynamics and responsibilities held by staff and students. There is a concern that partnership somehow erodes the distinction between staff and student, as students take on more active roles as co-creators and educators themselves, and staff are placed in a position as learners and receivers of knowledge, both of which are in conflict with the typical hierarchies of HE teaching and learning (Smith et al., 2021a; Sohr et al., 2020; Matthews et al., 2019; Murphy et al., 2017). Partnership advocates usually contend that, contrary to this hierarchical dynamic between staff and students, partnership actually involves a deeper and more engaged understanding of the role of student and staff member as a consequence of working together. McCullouch (2009) argues that partnership actually works to narrow the gap between students and their learning, and devolves authority and responsibility from academic staff encouraging their professional autonomy and consistency. The student is no longer considered the recipient of a service, and the academic no longer a service provider, but both parties are instead engaged in knowledge development, dissemination, and application.

Nonetheless, this rarely means that staff and students will easily be able to reconsider their established roles and the power dynamics between them, and partnership is often expected to bring about conflict and dissonance between both parties, the resolution of which is argued to be a generative and transformative process (Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2014; Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Curran, 2017; Cook-Sather, 2019; Matthews et al., 2019; Millmore, 2021). Case studies of student-staff dissonance and conflict during partnership programs

have been published to highlight both the centrality of overcoming this challenge, and to provide guidance as to how it can be mediated in the future (see Knaggs et al., 2021; Pelnar et al., 2020; Murphy et al., 2017; Kehler et al., 2017). Similarly, other studies have shown the importance of establishing shared values, clearly outlining responsibilities and expectations, and centring dialogue and open communication *before* partnership takes place (see Healey et al., 2019; Luo et al., 2019). Still, there remains a dearth of practical advice, particularly for staff, as to how to proceed with partnership in ways that are authentic, reciprocal, and ideally minimal to conflict, as there is a substantial risk that if these values are broken or relationships are damaged, partnership practice may worsen the relationship between student and staff rather than positively transform it (Kehler et al., 2017; Bovill, 2014).

Strategies to Move Forward

Having identified what partnership is, a framework to consider and enact it, and the challenges one might face, educators may be wondering how to begin their own partnership practices or continue supporting a culture of partnership where it may already exist in their own institutions. Scholars almost universally recognise the central importance of grounding partnership practice in shared values, principles, and responsibilities between students and staff (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2014; Bovill, 2019; Spencer et al., 2021; Crawford et al., 2015). Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten (2014) provide a number of steps for staff who are beginning to think about developing new partnership opportunities: start small, be patient, ensure participation is voluntary, invite students (if not mainstreamed across courses/curricula), create shared aims and goals, cultivate support and collaborate with allies, and acknowledge the potential for mistakes, dissonance, and resolution. For staff, networking among colleagues who may have experience in partnership or are interested in partnership pedagogies is deeply beneficial to share best practice, case studies, and experiences (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Bovill, 2019). Personal reflection, especially, has been acknowledged as deeply important to improving and sustaining a culture of partnership within institutions (Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten, 2014; Spencer et al., 2019).

Partnership also works best when it is well-embedded into existing institutional infrastructure and the work already being undertaken by university colleagues (Bovill, 2019; Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014). This may mean that certain strands of partnership following Healey, Flint, and Harrington's earlier model may be more suitable than others at first, and the scale of partnership may be contingent on resources or staff commitments. Mercer-Mapstone and Marie (2019) provide a practical, detailed guide to establishing and scaling up partnerships, from creating values and goals, to gaining funding, and tackling administrative challenges and creating outputs. Case studies and technical reports also provide a wealth of examples of partnership practices at various scales and types, which can be drawn upon to emulate or adapt (see Crawford et al., 2019; Dunne et al., 2011; Keenan et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2014; Walkington, 2015; Pauli et al., 2016; Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014). For students, partnership may work well in collaboration with existing student voice representation like the students' union or student-staff learning committees, as well as identifying existing gaps in students' learning communities and the wider student experience (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014). A central mistake with partnership is to view it as a top-down process, where it is "done to" students rather than "in partnership with" (Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017). As such, students should be consulted transparently, and involved actively throughout the process. This ensures not only that partnership begins on grounds of authenticity, reciprocity, and dialogue, but that a culture of partnership evolves naturally and generatively out of genuine collaboration and cooperation between students and staff.

Bibliography

Abbot, S. (2021). The role of ignorance in student-faculty partnerships. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*, 10−13.

Abbot, S., & Cook-Sather, A. (2020). The productive potential of pedagogical disagreements in classroom-focused student-staff partnerships. *Higher Education Research & Development, 39*, 1396−1409.

Acai, A., Mercer-Mapstone, L., & Guitman, R. (2022). Mind the (gender) gap: Engaging students as partners to promote gender equity in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education, 27*, 18−38.

Addy, T. M., Berkove, E., Borzone, M., Butler, M., Cham, F., deSaussure, A., . . . others. (2022). Student pedagogical partnerships to advance inclusive teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 6*, 81−89.

Ahmad, A., Ali, A., VanMaaren, J., Barrington, J., Merritt, O., & Ansilio, K. (2017). Partnership in practice: Implementing Healey's conceptual model. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 1*.

Ali, X., Tatam, J., Gravett, K., & Kinchin, I. M. (2021). Partnership values: An evaluation of student-staff research projects at a UK higher education institution. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*, 12−25.

Atkins, M.-A., Anderson, E. C., & Khoo, Y. (2022). The healing is mutual: Students as partners in anti-oppressive education. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 6*, 128−136.

Baxter, A. (2019). Engaging underrepresented international students as partners: Agency and constraints among Rwandan students in the United States. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 23*, 106−122.

Bovill, C. (2014). An investigation of co-created curricula within higher education in the UK, Ireland and the USA. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 51*, 15−25.

Bovill, C. (2019). Student−staff partnerships in learning and teaching: An overview of current practice and discourse. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education, 43*, 385−398.

Bovill, C. (2020). Co-creation in learning and teaching: the case for a whole-class approach in higher education. *Higher Education, 79*, 1023−1037.

Bovill, C., Cook-Sather, A., Felten, P., Millard, L., & Moore-Cherry, N. (2016). Addressing potential challenges in co-creating learning and teaching: Overcoming resistance, navigating institutional norms and ensuring inclusivity in student−staff partnerships. *Higher Education, 71*, 195−208.

Brown, K., de Bie, A., Aggarwal, A., Joslin, R., Williams-Habibi, S., & Sivanesanathan, V. (2020). Students with disabilities as partners: A case study on user testing an accessibility website. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 4*, 97−109.

Carozza, L., Kim, A., Zaki-Azat, J., Pham, S., & Liczner, K. (2022). Reflections during a global pandemic: Co-creation of research with student partners in a digital environment. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 6*, 144−152.

Cates, R., Madigan, M. R., & Reitenauer, V. (2018). 'Locations of possibility': Critical perspectives on partnership. *International Journal for Students as Partners*.

Cook-Sather, A. (2020). Respecting voices: How the co-creation of teaching and learning can support academic staff, underrepresented students, and equitable practices. *Higher Education, 79*, 885−901.

Cook-Sather, A., Healey, M., & Matthews, K. E. (2021). Recognizing students' expertise and insights in expanding forms of academic writing and publishing about learning and teaching. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*, 1−7.

Crawford, K., Horsley, R., Hagyard, A., Derricott, D., & others. (2015). Pedagogies of partnership: What works.

Curran, R. (2017). Students as partners—good for students, good for staff: A study on the impact of partnership working and how this translates to improved student-staff engagement. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 1*, 1–16.

de Bie, A. (2020). Respectfully distrusting 'Students as Partners' practice in higher education: Applying a Mad politics of partnership. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 1–21.

De Bie, A., Marquis, E., Cook-Sather, A., & Luqueño, L. P. (2019). Valuing knowledge (s) and cultivating confidence: Contributions of student–faculty pedagogical partnerships to epistemic justice. In *Strategies for fostering inclusive classrooms in higher education: International perspectives on equity and inclusion.* Emerald Publishing Limited.

Deeley, S. J., & Bovill, C. (2017). Staff student partnership in assessment: enhancing assessment literacy through democratic practices. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 42*, 463–477.

Dunne, E., Zandstra, R., Brown, T., & Nurser, T. (2011). *Students as change agents: New ways of engaging with learning and teaching in higher education.* ESCalate.

Evans, C., Mujis, D., & Tomlinson, D. (2015). *Engaged student learning: High impact strategies to enhance student achievement*. Higher Education Academy.

Felten, P., Cook-Sather, A., & Bovill, C. (2014). *Engaging students as partners in learning and teaching: A guide for faculty.* John Wiley & Sons.

Fisher, L. I., Piper, G., & Werthman, H. (2021). Agency through partnership in neurodiverse college learning communities. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*, 14–27.

Fluckiger, J., Vigil, Y. T., Pasco, R., & Danielson, K. (2010). Formative feedback: Involving students as partners in assessment to enhance learning. *College teaching, 58*, 136–140.

Gibson, S., & Cook-Sather, A. (2020). Politicised compassion and pedagogical partnership: A discourse and practice for social justice in the inclusive academy. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 4*, 16–33.

Gravett, K., Kinchin, I. M., & Winstone, N. E. (2020). 'More than customers': conceptions of students as partners held by students, staff, and institutional leaders. *Studies in Higher Education, 45*, 2574–2587.

Green, W. (2019). Engaging "students as partners" in global learning: Some possibilities and provocations. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 23*, 10–29.

Green, W. J. (2019). Stretching the cultural-linguistic boundaries of" Students as Partners". *International Journal for Students as Partners, 3*, 84–88.

Hanna-Benson, C., Kroeze, S., Gandhi, R., Haffie, T., & Wahl, L. M. (2020). Students as partners in collaborative course design and educational research. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 4*, 61–80.

Healey, M., Flint, & Harrington, K. (2014). *Engagement through partnership: Students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education.* Higher Education Academy.

Healey, M., Flint, A., Harrington, K., & others. (2016). Students as partners: Reflections on a conceptual model. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry, 4*, 8–20.

Healey, R. L., Lerczak, A., Welsh, K., & France, D. (2019). By any other name? The impacts of differing assumptions, expectations, and misconceptions in bringing about resistance to student-staff partnership. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 3*, 106–122.

Holen, R., Ashwin, P., Maassen, P., & Stensaker, B. (2021). Student partnership: exploring the dynamics in and between different conceptualizations. *Studies in Higher Education, 46*, 2726–2737.

Hooks, B. (2014). *Teaching to transgress.* Routledge.

Kaur, A. (2020). Students as partners: Challenges and opportunities in the Asian context. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 4*, 145–149.

Keenan, C. (2014). *Mapping student-led peer learning in the UK.* Higher Education Academy. York Science Park, Innovation Way, Heslington ….

Kligyte, G., Van der Bijl-Brouwer, M., Leslie, J., Key, T., Hooper, B., & Salazar, E. (2021). A Partnership Outcome Spaces framework for purposeful student–staff partnerships. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 1–19.

Knaggs, A., Leonard, J., Dharmaseta, C., & Griffin, A. (2021). Partnership status: It's complicated. Reflections on the "undiscussables" in a student-staff partnership. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*, 131–137.

Luke, K., & Evans, G. (2021). Students as partners in digital education: Exploring lecture capture in higher education through partnership between students and learning technologists. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*, 78–88.

Luo, B., Matthews, K., & Chunduri, P. (2019). "Commitment to collaboration": what students have to say about the values underpinning partnership practices. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 3*, 123–139.

Marquis, E., Carrasco-Acosta, E., de Bie, A., Prasad, S. K., Wadhwani, S., & Woolmer, C. (2022). Toward redressing inequities through partnership: A critical assessment of an equity-focused partnership initiative. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 6*, 10–29.

Marquis, E., Jayaratnam, A., Mishra, A., & Rybkina, K. (2018). "I feel like some students are better connected": Students' perspectives on applying for extracurricular partnership opportunities. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 2*, 64–81.

Matthews, K. E. (2017). Five propositions for genuine students as partners practice. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 1*.

Matthews, K. E., Dwyer, A., Russell, S., & Enright, E. (2019). It is a complicated thing: leaders' conceptions of students as partners in the neoliberal university. *Studies in Higher Education, 44*, 2196–2207.

Maunder, R. E. (2021). Staff and student experiences of working together on pedagogic research projects: partnerships in practice. *Higher Education Research & Development, 40*, 1205-1219. doi:10.1080/07294360.2020.1809999

McCulloch, A. (2009). The student as co-producer: Learning from public administration about the student–university relationship. *Studies in higher education, 34*, 171–183.

Mercer-Mapstone, L., & Marie, J. (2019). *Practical guide: Scaling up student-staff partnerships in higher education.* University of Edinburgh.

Mercer-Mapstone, L., Dvorakova, S. L., Matthews, K. E., Abbot, S., Cheng, B., Felten, P., . . . Swaim, K. (2017). A systematic literature review of students as partners in higher education. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 1*.

Mercer-Mapstone, L., Islam, M., & Reid, T. (2021). Are we just engaging 'the usual suspects'? Challenges in and practical strategies for supporting equity and diversity in student–staff partnership initiatives. *Teaching in Higher Education, 26*, 227–245.

Millmore, A. (2021). Hand over the reins… a case study for student-staff partnership in designing module assessments. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*.

Moore-Cherry, N., Healey, R., Nicholson, D. T., & Andrews, W. (2016). Inclusive partnership: Enhancing student engagement in geography. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education, 40*, 84–103.

Murphy, R., Nixon, S., Brooman, S., & Fearon, D. (2017). "I am wary of giving too much power to students:" Addressing the "but" in the Principle of Staff-Student Partnership. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 1*.

Neary, M., Winn, J., & others. (2009). The future of higher education: policy, pedagogy and the student experience. In L. Bell, M. Neary, & H. Stevenson (Eds.). Continuum.

NUS. (2014). *A manifesto for partnership*.

Pauli, R., Raymond-Barker, B., & Worrell, M. (2016). *The impact of pedagogies of partnership on the student learning experience in UK higher education.* Tech. rep.

Pelnar, H., Reyes, G., Sehgal, K., & Cameron, L. (2020). Partners, not peers: Defining boundaries and expectations in student partnerships. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 4*, 138–144.

Peters, J., & Mathias, L. (2018). Enacting student partnership as though we really mean it: Some Freirean principles for a pedagogy of partnership. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 2*, 53–70.

Rafferty, C., & Matthews, K. (2021). Connecting during times of disconnection: student-teacher partnerships in co-designing online education. *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*.

Reinholz, D. L., Pawlak, A., Ngai, C., & Pilgrim, M. (2020). Departmental action teams: Empowering students as change agents in academic departments. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 4*, 128–137.

Schaefer, M., Henson, T., Wells, R., Ezell, S., Holton, J., Pitre, D., & Craven, K. (2022). "Radical TAs": Co-creating liberatory classrooms with undergraduate students. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 6*, 47–63.

Smith, S., Akhyani, K., Axson, D., Arnautu, A., & Stanimirova, I. (2021). Learning together: A case study of a partnership to co-create assessment criteria. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*, 123–133.

Smith, S., Akhyani, K., Axson, D., Arnautu, A., & Stanimirova, I. (2021). The partnership co-creation process: Conditions for success? *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*, 48–66.

Sohr, E. R., Gupta, A., Johnson, B. J., & Quan, G. M. (2020). Examining the dynamics of decision making when designing curriculum in partnership with students: How should we proceed? *Physical Review Physics Education Research, 16*, 020157.

Sotiriou, M., CH Tong, V., & Standen, A. (2018). *Shaping Higher Education with Students–ways to connect Research and Teaching.* UCL Press.

Spencer, B., Tori, K., & Campbell, R. (2021). Undergraduates as course creators: Reflections on starting and sustaining a student-faculty partnership. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 5*, 138–145.

Todd, A. (2021). Democracy in action: students as design partners. *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*.

Walkington, H. (2015). *Students as researchers: Supporting undergraduate research in the disciplines in higher education.* Tech. rep.

Zhang, M., Matthews, K., & Liu, S. (2022). Recognising cultural capital through shared meaning-making in cross-cultural partnership practices. *International Journal for Students as Partners, 6*, 64–80.