



Student Engagement: What to do to make them engaged

Professor Kishor Sharma

EXCELLENCE | EXPERIENCE | EMPLOYABILITY




- Why student engagement?
- What may discourage student engagement?
- What to do to make them engaged ?



AUSTRALIAN
TECHNICAL &
MANAGEMENT
COLLEGE

Why student engagement?

- TEQSA's Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards)
- Positive flow-on effects-- fewer leave of absence, lower attrition rates and reduction in “at risk” student numbers
- Student engagement  success
- Literature suggests a link between student engagement, wellbeing, happiness (Boulton et al, 2019) and success in professional life later

EXCELLENCE | EXPERIENCE | EMPLOYABILITY



AUSTRALIAN
TECHNICAL &
MANAGEMENT
COLLEGE

So, why are they not fully engaged?

- 1) Course/ program does not meet expectations- not challenging – not relevant
- 2) Lectures are not engaging - not linked with real life issues/ challenges
- 3) Assessment items do not provide opportunity for collaboration, higher order thinking and / or they are not relevant

EXCELLENCE | EXPERIENCE | EMPLOYABILITY

What can we do about it?

- Curriculum and assessment design is critical to motivate students
 - Relevant and challenging course material that incorporates:
 - Work integrated learning practices and exercises
 - Discussion of important findings from reports/research, wherever possible
 - Assessment items based around real life challenges are important to motivate students, so that they feel connected, and see relevance and useful



AUSTRALIAN
TECHNICAL &
MANAGEMENT
COLLEGE

- Ensure lectures/ workshops are engaging
 - Limited use of PP slides supplemented by real life experiences and 2-3 minutes authentic video clips
 - Raising questions frequently challenging theories/ assumptions and prompting debate, so that students feel connected
 - Establishing links between the sessions and reminding frequently the importance of topic(s) in the overall course
 - How much resources to provide in online learning platform?

EXCELLENCE | EXPERIENCE | EMPLOYABILITY



- Engaging students through assessment items
 - Assessment items should be the combination of: relevance, higher order thinking skills, autonomy and collaboration (Bae and Kokka, 2016)
 - Too many assessments or assessments based on textbook and lacking challenges discourage student engagement
 - Teacher-led initiatives are crucial:



- Communicating regularly with students- sending email reminders about assessment due dates etc
- Monitoring student performance and inviting poor performing students for individual consultation

In addition:

- Approachability of academic staff
- Allocating marks for tutorial/workshop participation and discussion
- Development of mentorship program

EXCELLENCE | EXPERIENCE | EMPLOYABILITY

REFERENCES

Chris A. Boulton, Emily Hughes , Carmel Kent , Joanne R. Smith , Hywel T. P. Williams (2019). Student engagement and wellbeing over time at a higher education institution. *POLS ONE*. Available at <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0225770>

Bae, S., & Kokka, K. (2016). Student Engagement in Assessments: What Students and Teachers Find Engaging. Stanford, CA. Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education and Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity. Available at <https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/student-engagement-assessments-final.pdf>