

## Literature review: Embedding community engagement in the curriculum: An example of university-public engagement

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# Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Definitions and terminologies of public and community engagement .....	4
3. International and national declarations and manifestos .....	6
4. UK higher education context for embedding community engagement within the curriculum.....	10
5. Influential theories of learning.....	13
6. Research evidence base: Benefits, costs and concerns of student community engagement through the curriculum .....	16
7. Integrating public and community engagement in the curriculum: models and forms	19
7.1 A note on disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity .....	19
7.2 Models of engagement through the curriculum .....	20
7.3 Forms of engagement .....	22
8. Challenges for teaching, learning and assessment .....	26
8.1 Teaching, learning and assessment: policy and strategy .....	26
8.2 Curriculum design, learning outcomes and graduate attributes.....	26
8.3 Facilitating active learning and reflection .....	29
8.4 Assessment and feedback.....	30
8.5 Engaging stakeholders and ensuring quality.....	31
8.6 Developing staff capacity .....	34
8.7 Diversity and equality .....	35
8.8 Developing a facilitative university environment .....	36
9. Summary points, conclusion and further work.....	37
9.1 Summary .....	37
9.2 Conclusion .....	38
9.3 Further work .....	39
References .....	40
Appendix 1: Case studies .....	54

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# 1. Introduction

In setting the context, this review starts by defining 'public engagement' and then reflects on how 'community engagement' sits within it. The term 'public engagement' denotes the myriad ways in which universities engage the public with their work. It is defined by the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) as:

'...the many ways in which higher education institutions and their staff and students can connect and share their work with the public. Done well, it generates mutual benefit, with all parties learning from each other through sharing knowledge, expertise and skills. In the process, it can build trust, understanding and collaboration, and increase the sector's relevance to, and impact on, civil society' **NCCPE, 2011**

Within this broad definition, it is possible to explore public engagement through different lenses. For example, Rowe and Frewer (2005, pp. 254-256) define 3 types of public engagement dependant on the flow of information, described as: (i) public communication; (ii) public consultation; and (iii) public participation. Others explore the territory through different means for engaging with the public, such as workshops or citizenship juries (Rowe and Frewer, 2005; New Economics Foundation; 1999); and others capture the diversity by looking at who is being engaged with (NCCPE, 2011; Abreu *et al.*, 2009).

Public engagement also varies in terms of its setting, and relationship to definitions and understandings of 'community.' For example, the UK Higher Education Academy's *Learning Empowerment through Public-Student Engagement* (LEAPSE) project focuses specifically on public engagement in community settings.

A further way to explore university public engagement is to view it as being integrated within and across the three areas of teaching, research and service. As Goddard (2009, p. 4) argues:

'Engagement has to be an institution wide-commitment, not confined to individual academics or projects. It has to embrace teaching as well as research, students as well as academics, and the full range of support services.'

Writing on what he terms the tripartite mission of universities, Bourner (2008, p. 26) suggests that three goals have persisted as 'common threads' throughout the history of the western university: 'the higher education of students, the advancement of knowledge, and service to those outside the walls of the university.' He concludes that rarely, if at all, have the three goals been in balance and that one has always dominated and shaped the nature of the other two, at different times in this history.

'To specialise in any one part to the exclusion of the others is to become a different sort of institution: a research institute, a college of higher education or a charitable foundation. To give up on any one is to give up on part of what it means to be a university in any historically meaningful sense. This is

what limits the extent of specialisation within the university.' **Bourner, 2008, p. 44**

He suggests that universities today have become more evenly weighted, and value each part of their mission in its own right for the purpose being served. Indeed he proposes that this may be a pre-requisite to what he calls the 'fully-functioning university' where all three missions are not only in balance, but are seen to blend with each other in contributing to the overall purpose of the university.

Whilst the literature on the research element of university public engagement relates to a broad view of 'the public' and deals with matters of communication, participation and co-generation of knowledge (see Barker, 2004) the literature on public engagement within the taught curriculum relates almost solely to the 'community' aspect of the public (for example: community groups, charities, and voluntary organisations), rather than 'the public at large.' Hence it is the 'community' aspect of public engagement which forms the main focus of this review.

Beyond the scope for this review is the literature that focuses almost exclusively on student volunteering as much of this work has already been reviewed elsewhere (see for example Squirrell *et al.*, 2009; Brewis *et al.*, 2010). We note here however, that there is an impressive history of student-community engagement through student volunteering (Brewis, 2010), and throughout this history the 'movement' has sought to make connections with university curricular (see, for example, Barr, 1972).

This review aims to act as a resource to support institutions and academic staff in promoting and embedding public engagement within the curriculum in the UK. It explores a number of definitions which encompass this activity, and outlines the contexts in which it takes place. The main body of the review presents key forms of public engagement in the curriculum, and reflects on challenges related to teaching and learning to be considered to ensure it can be embedded. It concludes with a summary of key points arising from the review and makes recommendations for further research.

## 2. Definitions and terminologies of public and community engagement

No single definition describes or captures the role that public and community engagement play within the taught curriculum across UK higher education. A review of practice at twenty universities across the UK illustrated that practitioners have not settled on a common terminology or definition (Squirrell *et al.*, 2009). Service-Learning, community-based learning, civic learning, scholarship of engagement, learning-linked volunteering are all terms which are frequently used by academics and practitioners in the UK (*ibid*). These are referred to below in Section 7.

The terms 'public', 'community' and 'engagement' all have multiple meanings and definitions within the Higher Education context. Meanings of 'engagement' for example, could include how students engage in learning, their emotional and intellectual commitment, the extent of their knowledge in relation to learning effectively, and how they perform. Likewise the scholarship of engagement described by Boyer (1996) has, in the US, been a long-standing area of activity for staff/faculty in higher education (see section 5). Similarly there is no single uncontested definition of 'public' or 'community'. However, this lack of definition can be considered a strength rather than a limitation, engendering local debate as to what these terms might mean in different contexts. To quote Maddison and Laing (2007, pp10-11), community engagement:

'takes a particular form, and is context-dependent – arising for institutions from their individual histories and locations, and from their view about their strategic position.'

Certainly, there is a vast literature which tackles definitions of public engagement (e.g. HEFCE, 2006; NCCPE, 2011) and community engagement (e.g. Carnegie Foundation 2010; Kellogg Commission, 1999; Annette, 2009.) For example, public engagement in higher education has been defined as the involvement of 'specialists in higher education listening to, developing their understanding of, and interacting with, non-specialists' (HEFCE, 2006, p2). Community engagement may not, for example, even be a physical construct given the prevalence of with mental and virtual constructs (see Coates, 2009).

There is a debate about the spatial dimension of community engagement activities. For example, many activities focus on the local environment of the university campus and the relationship with the community which is on its doorstep. However, a number of researchers have argued that there is a role for universities to consider in a more global sense the communities with which they engage (Ivanov, 2008; Millican, 2008; Watson, 2007). Indeed Watson explores a number of international comparisons of universities' civic and community engagement activities. Chatterton and Goddard (2000) argue that contemporary social and economic trends suggest that it is more appropriate for universities to consider their engagement with stakeholders beyond the campus in terms of regional impacts. Benneworth (2011) argues that the complexity of relations within the university and within the community provide both the challenge and the potential for university community engagement. In the UK specifically, the apparent decline in national-level policy and control, a shift to localism and 'Big Society' agendas, and ideas

of social capital and levels of interconnectedness bring forth a new set of challenges for universities and their partners.

For the university that sees itself as internationally leading in research, local and regional impacts may not be a primary motivation, however as Benneworth (2011) suggests, universities cannot achieve their core purposes without interacting with societal partners. In terms of university public or community engagement, historically the language has been around 'knowledge transfer.' More recently it has shifted to 'knowledge exchange' and 'co-generation' or co-generative learning (see Klein *et al.*, 2011) as less hierarchical language implying mutuality and collaboration. Despite the many challenges referred to above, universities continue to be well placed to tap into local, regional, national and international networks, whether through research, teaching, business related 'third stream activity' and volunteering.

For some, the lack of clear definition and shared language is problematic in terms of promoting university engagement with the public and its communities. Presenting at the launch of the Manifesto for Public Engagement in London, UK, Furco (2010) argued that the names and definitional understandings are crucial to developing a clear understanding of what engagement is being talked about, looked at, or implemented. With reference to service learning, for example, he says (1996, p. 9) the use of a common language or shared definition is key to embedding, supporting, evaluating and researching it. To seek clear definition is not to be reductionist, rather as Butin (2010) suggests, typologies and classifications can play a useful role in helping both 'insiders' and 'outsiders' share understandings.

A common element across definitions of university – community engagement through the curriculum is the emphasis on experiential learning and the need for students to be able to reflect. This, according to Chambers (2005):

'lead(s) naturally to seeing and interpreting things in new ways, to evolving personal practice, and to a grounded confidence on which further learning can grow' **Chambers, 2005, p. 214**

The emphasis on reflection is stressed by the executive director of the US-based *Campus Compact*, saying that community-based learning, research and service 'should not encompass periodic volunteerism without guided preparation and opportunities for deep, collaborative reflection' (Hollander, 2007, p. xix).

An emphasis on collaboration and mutual benefit for university, student and community is another common feature of the many definitions of community engagement within the curriculum. Several writers note that community engagement can have adverse effects if relationships are not collaborative (El-Askari *et al.*, 1998, p. 147).

'Using the community as a laboratory rather than working with the community on jointly useful projects may stunt the development of partnerships that offer continuous benefits to both parties.' **Eyler and Giles, 1999, p. 179**

For the purposes of this literature review, we use the designation community engagement within the curriculum as an umbrella term.

### 3. International and national declarations and manifestos

Before considering specific forms of public or community engagement through the curriculum, it is useful to place such activity within the wider context of calls for universities to connect as partners with wider society. International and national declarations and agreements on university community engagement are strong on rhetoric as indicated in the following examples.

In October 1998, the UNESCO *World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-first Century* stated:

'in a world undergoing rapid changes, there is a perceived need for a new vision and paradigm of higher education, which should be student-oriented, calling in most countries for in-depth reforms and an open access policy so as to cater for evermore diversified categories of people, and of its contents, methods, practices and means of delivery, *based on new types of links and partnerships with the community* and with the broadest sectors of society.' **Article 9 (a) - Innovative educational approaches: critical thinking and creativity, UNESCO (1998)** [our emphasis]

Referring to partnerships with stakeholders, the Declaration stresses that they should be 'based on common interest, mutual respect and credibility [they] should be a prime matrix for renewal in higher education' (Article 17 – Partnerships and Alliances, UNESCO, 1998).

In 2005, the international Tufts Talloires Conference attended by the heads of universities from 23 countries, represented 'the first international gathering of heads of universities devoted to strengthening the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education' (Talloires Network, 2005). Tufts President Lawrence S. Bacow said:

'The university should use the processes of education and research to respond to, to serve, and strengthen its communities for local and global citizenship.....Our institutions must strive to build a culture of reflection and action by faculty, staff and students that infuses all learning and inquiry.'

The conference generated the *Talloires Declaration on the Civic Roles and Social Responsibilities of Higher Education* and the establishment of the Talloires Network. The Declaration included the commitment to:

'Foster partnerships between universities and communities to enhance economic opportunity, empower individuals and groups, increase mutual understanding and strengthen the relevance, reach and responsiveness of university education and research' **Talloires Declaration, 2005**

The mission of the Talloires Network is to support the signatories to the Talloires Declaration in their activities to advance the aspirations of the Declaration, and to build a worldwide 'movement of engaged universities.' The values that institutions sign up to

include 'respect for mutual learning between institutions of higher education and communities and the application of standards of excellence to community engagement work' (Talloires Network, 2005).

Mason O'Connor *et al.* (2011) provide a brief history of relevant UK policy drivers and calls for universities to be more engaged with the public. In 1997, the Dearing Report stated that 'the extent of local and regional involvement of institutions is currently patchy, but that it needs to turn to active and systematic engagement' (National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, 1997, para. 12.7). A year later in 1998, the influential Crick Report was published which looked at the introduction of citizenship education into the national curriculum for schools in England. It is argued by MacFarlane (2007) that the subsequent calls for higher education students to be more active, and the introduction of the Higher Education Active Community Fund to stimulate and support student and staff volunteering, was in part a result from the introduction of citizenship into the English schools' curriculum (Mason O'Connor *et al.*, 2011).

In December 2010, the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement launched the Manifesto for Public Engagement entitled '*The Engaged University*' (NCCPE, 2011b). The manifesto which had 32 signatories in July 2011 (NCCPE, 2011b), called for universities and research institutes to recognise that they have 'a major responsibility to contribute to society', and to commit to 'sharing our knowledge, resources and skills with the public, and to listening to and learning from the expertise and insight of the different communities with which we engage (ibid). In signing the manifesto, universities are required to develop their approach to 'managing, supporting and delivering public engagement for the benefit of staff, students and the public, and to sharing what we learn about effective practice' (ibid).

The manifesto was part of a nine million pound initiative established in 2007, by the UK higher education funding councils, Research Councils (UK) and the Wellcome Trust: Beacons for Public Engagement Project. Experience from other countries has shown that the hard part is for universities to move from aspiration to making the commitment to their communities actually work. In the US, for example, the Wingspread Declaration was launched in 1999 under the title *Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University* (Wingspread Declaration, 1999). Five years following the launch, however, a Wingspread Declaration Report (2004) referring to 'The Challenge of Engagement' emphasised that whilst the rhetoric is easy, the work of engagement is demanding and difficult:

'Unfortunately, a decade of 'calls to action,'... has not produced a flowering of transformed institutions. While 500 presidents and chancellors have signed the Campus Compact Declaration to commit higher education to the democratic ideal and many institutions have created centres for outreach or encouraged professional faculty to partner in new and creative ways, *engagement has not become the defining characteristic of higher education's mission nor has it been embraced across disciplines, departments and institutions.* [our emphasis]

'This is not because engagement does not work—an increasing body of scholarship demonstrates overwhelmingly that it both benefits the academy and community. And it is not for lack of knowledge on how it can

be implemented—case studies for institutions large and small, public and private, provide a wealth of information on how to form partnerships, integrate engagement into curriculum and assess progress. Rather, engagement is difficult work. It gets to the heart of what higher education is about and as such, it requires institution-wide effort, deep commitment at all levels, and leadership by both campus and community.'

The authors of the 2004 Wingspread Declaration Report pose a fundamental question:

'Is higher education ready to commit to engagement? Our goal in calling the question is nothing less than the transformation of our nation's colleges and universities. We believe engagement is the best hope for the future of higher education. A return to a mission in which the advancement of discovery, learning and the common good is fuelled by collaborative partnerships is a vision that is right for our time and for a world that looks to higher education for clear direction.' **Wingspread (2004), p. ii**

In another report, after examining an OECD review of fourteen regions in twelve countries, a conclusion reached by researchers is that:

'a cultural change within HEIs is necessary since regional engagement, academic excellence, and research are often not seen as complementary activities.' **Marmolejo and Puukka (2006), p. 2**

Clearly the challenge is to translate the high level of institutional aspiration through to institutional strategy, and to the level of practice where the academics and the students and others in universities are motivated and supported in their activities to engage beyond the confines of the campus.

Attempts have certainly been made to assist universities to move beyond the rhetoric of aspiration, and to develop tools to contribute to advancing university-community engagement. For example, Garlick and Langworthy (2008) have been developing a national approach to benchmarking how universities engage with their local and regional communities in Australia. The two underlying principles in the construction of their framework are:

- 'It should assist the university and its community partners to improve their contribution to society and the environment through mutual knowledge exchange and action;'
- 'The process of engagement between universities and their communities is a learning process where all participants see themselves as learners' (Garlick and Langworthy, 2008, p. 159-160).

Their five goals for community engagement include: 'to facilitate informed debate and dialogue in the community on issues of local and global importance'; and 'to design and deliver high quality teaching and learning that responds to community needs and produces graduates who are ethical, employable and engaged citizens' (Garlick and Langworthy, 2008, p. 160).

Jongbloed *et al.* (2008, p. 313), linking community engagement and citizenship agendas, state:

'The rise of a community engagement agenda offers universities a range of possibilities to function as sites of citizenship. These include contributing to community social and economic infrastructure, the building of social capital, contributing to the resolution of local issues, supporting equity and diversity, and education for democratic citizenship. In other words, universities are playing—and according to some should play— a broader and more visible role in the educational, social and economic well-being of local communities and the nation.'

In Section 7, we review a number of points which can usefully be considered to move community engagement through the curriculum from aspiration to action.

## 4. UK higher education context for embedding community engagement within the curriculum

In the UK, debates around the social role of universities are taking place within a context of higher education institutions becoming increasingly marketised in relation to competition, choice and labour market policy (Mason O'Connor *et al.*, 2011). Alongside the lifting of the undergraduate tuition fee cap to £9,000 per annum in England, the government is seeking to make course content, student experiences and outcomes more transparent (see for example *HEFCE Consultation on public information about higher education, 2011*). This agenda was established by the previous government in their document 'Higher Ambitions' (Department of Business Innovation and Skills, 2009, p105). In discussing 'Resource efficiency', it states: 'Fee payers, business customers and donors will expect to see a causal relationship between what they pay and outcomes attained.'

A recent UK government report on higher education in England is *Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education – an independent review of higher education funding and student finance*. Its concern is that 'our competitive edge is being challenged by advances made elsewhere' (Browne, 2010, p. 2). In the summary of findings, it is asserted that 'competition generally raises quality' (Browne, 2010, p. 2). Later the point is made that 'Our proposals are designed to create genuine competition for students between HEIs' (Browne, 2010, p. 8). Whilst this discourse of competition seems at odds with that of collaboration (a prime feature of university-community engagement), the emerging narrative from the present government is that the significant benefit which Higher Education affords the individual justifies them making greater private investment:

'It is not just an economic premium... Graduates are – on average – more healthy, more active in the community and more likely to be engaged in the education of their children. The graduate premium evidence further suggests that it is not unreasonable to expect graduates to make more of a contribution themselves' **Willetts, 2010**

Willetts's view that the benefits of Higher Education are life-long is shared by many. However, whilst the benefits of higher education may be life-long for the individual, the benefits of higher education are also collective, civic and social. Mahoney, for example, in his foreword to a report entitled *Dimensions of Quality* by the Higher Education Academy, writes:

'Higher education should be a transformative process that supports the development of graduates who can make a meaningful contribution to wider society, local communities and to the economy.' **Foreword in Gibbs, 2010, p. 2**

Some universities are now explicitly positioning themselves in relationship to community engagement within their mission statements. For example, the University of Manchester states that its:

'Educational mission goes well beyond the development of highly employable professionals, vital though that is, and places equal emphasis on preparing graduates to take personal responsibility, as citizens, for building sustainable civil societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and addressing the great social and environmental issues confronting humankind.' **University of Manchester, 2009**

As indicated earlier, the Browne Review of higher education funding and student finance in England (2010) and subsequent government policy is clearly encouraging a market model of higher education, not least in its avowal of the importance of student 'choice' and 'satisfaction' and focus on skills development and employability. Interestingly the literature surrounding the student experience, and the types of experiences that they would like to invest in for themselves, suggest that students want to make valuable contributions to society as part of their higher education experience.

The Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) has noted that universities need to take into account the full range of student orientations and types of engagement. Many students with increasing financial pressures are effectively 'part time', and are employed during term time in order to support themselves. The TLRP Commentary suggests that Universities need to focus on the 'whole university experience' and life-wide learning, and the range of places in which students learn and develop both within and beyond the curriculum. Recognising that from these different sorts of engagement stems a range of personal development, social capital, and subject and generic development, it is suggested that:

'The employability and skills agenda set down by government may not be fully shared by students. A narrow focus on employability and skills risks neglecting equally important ways in which higher education changes people's lives and the communities in which they live' **TLRP, undated, p. 21**

Community engagement activities may be promoted as important ways of adding value to students' higher education experiences by providing them with a rich range of learning affordances.

'Students come to university not just for education, they come for a student experience. We believe that helping and encouraging them to engage in volunteering will broaden their experience, give them a better experience and they will benefit from that. [It] gives them some of the, more of the skills that employers actually look to in terms of flexibility, self determination, resilience.' **Pro-Vice Chancellor, quoted in Brewis et al., 2010, p. 1**

A recent survey of student volunteering activities at six institutions (Brewis *et al.*, 2010) found that 49 per cent (n=3,083) of the sample had taken part in volunteering during the previous academic year. Of this sample, 38% had been introduced to volunteering *through* their university, but 48% of the sample devoted their time to formal volunteering activities that benefit the wider community while receiving no support from their university. Those receiving support may have been helped to find opportunities, had expenses paid, had help in processing criminal record checks or had support reflecting on their experience. Only about 28% received support from their lecturers, and a similar proportion from their academic departments. The biggest cohort received support from students' unions. This suggests that the potentially important learning experience that volunteering offers has not been fully recognised or valued by universities and their departments. By contrast, Table 1 indicates that volunteering can play an important role in promoting students' subject learning and boosting employability. In addition, a related survey of alumni found that 51% of recent graduates who are under 30 and in paid employment agreed that volunteering helped them secure employment.

Table 1: Views of student volunteers on the impact of the experience

Percentage (%)	Views of experience of volunteering
83	Increased their employment skills in general
61	Changed their experience of being a student for the better
55	Felt more a part of the university as a result
46	Had positive impacts on their knowledge of their degree subject

Source: Brewis *et al.* (2010)

The example of volunteering suggests that supporting student engagement with communities is highly compatible with enriching both their learning experience and their employability. A growing concern may be that increased 'marketisation' of higher education, and consequent institutional tightening of belts, will reduce resources needed to support such activity, particularly where its benefits may be hard to 'measure.'

## 5. Influential theories of learning

This section identifies theories which have influenced (implicitly or explicitly) and inspired the diverse forms of curriculum community engagement discussed in this review. Across the range of practice, it is possible to identify some conceptual commonality, most notably the incorporation of strong elements of reflective, experiential and 'active' learning (Boud 1985, Moon, 1999; Schön, 1983; Kolb and Fry, 1975; Bonwell and Eison, 1991).

In developing his theory of knowledge, John Dewey (1859-1952) was an early exponent and advocate of the kind of experiential learning which underpins much community engagement work, 'The world is not passively perceived and thereby known; active manipulation of the environment is involved integrally in the process of learning' (*The Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2005*). For Dewey, 'the human condition is enhanced when individuals engage in the everyday activity of their social community in a thoughtful and positive way, to the point where they are able to change that community through the force of their own actions' (Glassman, 2001, p. 4).

According to Strand *et al.* (2003):

'Invoking Dewey's treatise (1916) that education is where democratic participation is best learned, educators began to challenge colleges and universities to move beyond traditional courses and curricula to prepare students for democratic citizenship (Boyte and Kari, 1996; Ehrlich, 2000). Increasingly the most widely promoted strategy for citizenship education has been some form of involvement in communities, most typically in the form of volunteering or service learning.' **Strand *et al.*, 2003, p. 3**

Freire's dictum, 'Responsibility cannot be acquired intellectually, but only through experience' (Freire, 2002, p. 16) resonates powerfully with active community based learning. In his introduction to Freire's *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Goulet writes that Freire,

'knows that action without critical reflection and even without gratuitous contemplation is disastrous activism. Conversely, he insists that theory or introspection in the absence of social action is escapist idealism.' **Goulet, 2002, p. ix**

See also, Freire, 1998.

In the last decade of the twentieth century, Boyer, a former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, observed 'I find it quite remarkable that just one hundred years ago the words 'practicality' and 'reality' and 'serviceability' were used by the nation's most distinguished academic leaders to describe the mission of higher learning which was, to put it simply, the scholarship of engagement' (Boyer, 1996, p. 11). Themes of action and reflection from Dewey and Freire are very evident in Boyer's advocacy that:

'The academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic and moral problems,

and must reaffirm its historic commitment to what I call the scholarship of engagement.' **Boyer, 1996, p. 11**

'Campuses would be viewed by both students and professors not as isolated islands, but as staging grounds for action.' **Boyer, 1996, p. 20**

As well as invoking ideas of past 'distinguished academic leaders', Boyer's rallying call for community engagement reminded higher education institutions in the United States of their origins. These, particularly those of the Land Grant Institutions, were grounded in community service and betterment. In the UK and parts of Europe, similarities can be drawn between the Land Grant institutions and the new universities of the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

'After a further fallow period, the next significant wave of foundations took place in the nineteenth century. These grew similarly out of perceived social and economic needs, but in the radically different context of industrialising societies. Examples are the University of Berlin in 1810, the national universities founded by newly-created European states, the late-nineteenth century 'civic' universities in the UK....' **Watson, 2009, p. 10**

There have also been determined efforts since the nineteenth century by some UK universities to make their courses available to the community (Benneworth, 2010).

The ideas of the writers referred to above emphasise the interrelatedness and situatedness of 'theoretical' and 'practical' forms of knowledge. This approach relates closely to Gibbons' concept of Mode 2 knowledge (Gibbons *et al.*, 1994; Gibbons, 2000). In distinguishing Mode 2 from Mode 1 knowledge, he states:

'in Mode 1, problems are set and solved in a context governed by the, largely academic, interests of a specific community. By contrast, *in Mode 2, knowledge is produced in a context of application involving a much broader range of perspectives*. Mode 2 is trans-disciplinary, not only drawing on disciplinary contributions but can set up new frameworks beyond them; it is characterised by heterogeneity of skills, by a preference for flatter hierarchies and organisational structures which are transient. It is more socially accountable and reflexive than Mode 1.' **Gibbons, 2000; p. 159** [our emphasis]

Another means of conceptualising pedagogies of community-based learning is provided in Greenwood's discussion of *phronesis*. Dismissing 'oversimplified dualism between theory and practice' he argues that:

'Phronesis can be understood as the design of problem-solving actions through collaborative knowledge construction with the legitimate stakeholders in the problem' Thus epistemological and practice knowledge 'is joined with knowledge and experiences of the stakeholders in a more solidary and dialogical mix.' **Greenwood, 2008, p. 327**

A further example of pedagogic thinking which informs and illuminates embedding community engagement in the curriculum is Mezirow's (1997) idea of transformative learning which incorporates both experience and critical reflection. According to Mezirow, 'methods that have been found useful include; critical incidents, metaphor analysis,

concept mapping, consciousness raising, life histories, repertory grids, and *participation in social action*.' (Mezirow, 1997, p. 10) [our emphasis]. Mezirow and Taylor *et al* (2009) look specifically at the potential for transformative learning in community engagement settings. Clearly community engagement through the curriculum may be viewed as form of social action which enables the learner's frame of reference to be challenged and developed.

Student learning through community engagement can be envisaged in terms of Meyer and Land's work on threshold concepts. Arguably they share some similar characteristics, such as the new or acquired knowledge and understanding being 'transformative', 'integrated' and 'probably irreversible' (Meyer and Land, 2003 p. 4). In some cases, the knowledge acquired by the student may be 'troublesome.' Perkins (1999) has defined 'troublesome knowledge' as that which appears counterintuitive, alien (emanating from another culture or discourse), or incoherent (discrete aspects are unproblematic but there is no organising principle). He suggests that knowledge might be troublesome for different reasons (Meyer and Land 2003; p. 7). One reason that knowledge may be 'troublesome' is that through their community engagement activity the student's taken for granted knowledge or worldview is challenged in ways that are not purely 'academic.'

Hence, in framing community engagement through the curriculum, several underpinning principles and concepts interweave around reflective and experiential and transformative learning. There are also strong links to the conceptual frameworks that underpin education for sustainable development and effective work-based learning (discussed further in section 7).

## 6. Research evidence base: Benefits, costs and concerns of student community engagement through the curriculum

This review has identified a considerable range of research and scholarly writing relating to the benefits of embedding community engagement in the curriculum for students, staff and communities. The evidence may be synthesised as follows:

- Develops students' critical thinking skills, complexity of understanding, demonstration of subject knowledge, and enthusiasm for a subject (Burack *et al.*, 2010; Contis *et al.* 2010; Deeley, 2010);
- Develops students personal and professional skills such as intercommunication, teamwork and presentation skills (Green, 2010; Deeley, 2010; Astin and Sax, 1998; Eyler and Giles, 1999);
- Provides a foundation for civic and social growth facilitating deeper inter-cultural inter-ethnic understanding, fostering a lifelong commitment to giving (Eyler and Giles, 1999; Brewis *et al.* 2010);
- Has the potential to be centred on meeting the expressed needs of the public, and built on the expertise and knowledge of community partners (Hardwick and Coffey, 2010; Stoecker and Tyron, 2009; Brewis *et al.*, 2010).

For academic staff who facilitate community engagement through the curriculum, a number of benefits or outcomes are reported. For example, the report following a UK survey of practice in Community-Based Learning in Social Sciences across 50 departments noted that:

'the extra workload CBL created for supervisors. However, most felt that they were compensated by the benefits of student attainment, the chance to build and maintain their own networks and the opportunity to keep up with practical developments in their field.' **Cobalt, 1999, p. 1**

It is important to note that, as with any practice, there are costs and concerns that go alongside the benefits. Klein *et al.*, 2011 note that for geographers and geography departments involved in community engagement, barriers can be categorised as: institutional, practical, skills-related, and attitudinal. One of the most frequently reported costs for academic staff and community partners was the extra workload required to facilitate programmes of student learning through community engagement (CoBALT, 1999; Stoecker and Tyron, 2009).

There are also concerns raised by students. For example, in their review of over 2,200 qualitative evaluations of service-learning programmes, Rosing *et al.* (2010) found that the top 3 student concerns were:

- Better preparation, communication and training was required for their placement;
- That the university's choice of placement had been poorly considered;

- Problems around timetabling and scheduling.

Some of the literature is focused on concerns arising specifically from community partners; in their book *The Unheard Voices*, Stoecker and Tyron (2009) write about some of these concerns following sixty-seven interviews with staff in community organisations. They conclude that there are:

'...important cultural differences between the community and the academy...in short [community] organization staff members are more willing to view themselves as learners, to link learning to action and to see learning as a collective activity. Faculty seem more inclined to think of themselves as experts...' **Stoecker and Tyron, 2009, p. 19**

They argue that it is overly simplistic to assume that small and medium sized community organisations are so far stretched beyond their capacity that any additional resources in the form of volunteers or service-learners are too important to pass-up. This kind of assumption masks the effort and time invested by community groups in order to train and work with students, and also some of the difficulties of working to the academic calendar where students disappear for large portions of the year (Stoecker and Tyron, 2009; Brewis *et al.*, 2010). Instead, community organisations declare a range of motives for working with students which Stoecker and Tyron (2009, p. 20) classify as follows:

- **The altruistic motive to educate the service learner** – community staff believe it to be part of their mission to help students understand the issues facing their clients;
- **Long-term motives for the sector and the organisation** – organisations are often worried about the long term support for their work and see students as potential workers or donors.
- **The capacity building motive** – organisations engage service-learners to expand their organisational capacity.
- **The higher education relationship motive** – some organisations take on service-learners to build partnerships with colleges and universities, and hence like to work with faculty staff in shaping, delivering and evaluating programs (ibid, pp. 96 – 115)

In 2001, the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) was established in part as a response to 'criticisms over the lack of evidence to support proponents' claims that service-learning and community engagement produce positive impacts for students in K-12 education, teacher education, and higher education.' (Furco, 2010)

A decade on and internationally, there has been a growth in research, evaluation and scholarly activity examining practices of student community engagement through the curriculum. The research shows opportunities to:

- enhance teaching, learning and assessment;
- develop the knowledge base of disciplines and professions;
- enhance the civic and social purpose of Higher Education; and

- work with communities in ways that builds their capacity to work with universities.

(Bringle and Hatcher, 2005)

Alongside research indicating the benefits of student community engagement through the curriculum, there have been criticisms about the way such research is conducted. A number of limitations were summarised in a presentation at the 4<sup>th</sup> annual International Service-Learning Research Conference (Furco *et al.*, 2005):

- Lack of common definition for service-learning and related research
- Variation in programmatic practices and purposes
- Studies conducted as self-studies by advocates of service-learning
- Studies mostly commissioned by funders with narrow, specific questions
- Few experimental studies
- Limited number of longitudinal studies
- Small sample sizes
- Many studies based on participant self-report
- Data collection often dictated by reporting requirements and expectations

In their examination of over 115 articles on outcomes from experiential learning, Gosen and Washbush (2004) selected 39 studies which they felt most closely met the highest research standards. In their paper, they argue that very few studies meet the 'highest of research design and measurement standards' in particular around the use of validity. They discuss a range of possible explanations for this shortfall in rigour including lack of time and resources, and methodological difficulties that are common across any assessment of pedagogical practices. They argue that the pursuit of robust data is important given that the introduction of experiential learning into the curriculum requires significant time, resources and training, and has implications for both students and community partners. That said, they also point to the commonly overlooked fact that there is a lack of evidence proving the value of lecturers, examinations, experiments, discussions or any other type of 'traditional' teaching methods.

A further critical observation about much of the research into university community engagement is the dearth of work which explores the value for the community partners themselves. Where the dominant research model focuses on the students, much of the research and evaluation measures *their* learning outcomes at the expense of investigating the extent to which community goals are realised (Stoecker *et al.*, 2010). It is important to address this matter, not least so that community learning is itself sustainable.

## 7. Integrating public and community engagement in the curriculum: models and forms

This section reviews international practitioners' and researchers' perspectives on, and definitions of, models and key practices for integrating university community engagement in the curriculum. Before discussing these, it is pertinent to make a comment about disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, as the forms of practice described may be multidisciplinary or discipline specific, as illustrated in the sample of case studies in Appendix 1.

### 7.1 A note on disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity

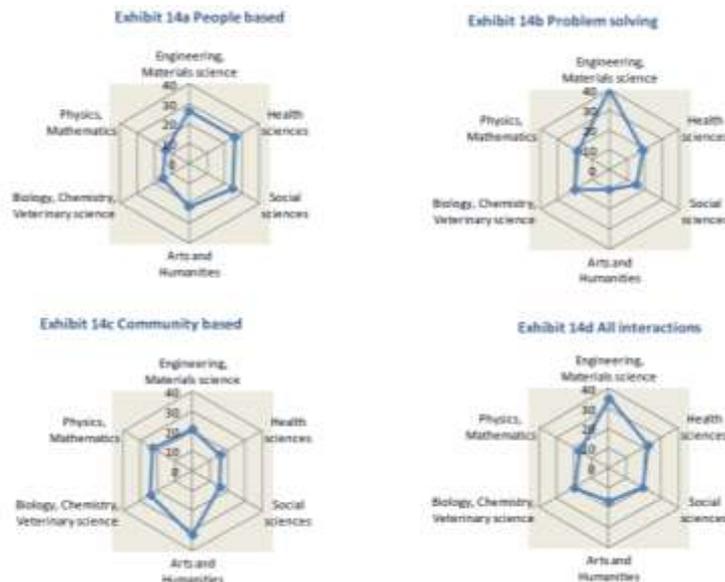
Some authors suggest that community engagement through the curriculum has been more at home within specific academic disciplines. For example, Butin (2006) asserts that traditionally, the so-called 'softer', social sciences and humanities have led institutional initiatives in community-based learning and partnerships, in particular education and social work and social policy. His suggestion is that the so-called 'harder' sciences, such as physics and biology find less value in university-community partnerships. It is not clear, however, whether Butin's claim can be attributable to his own standpoint as a sociologist and therefore the types of community engagement recognised are those that are most similar to his own. Some might suggest that Geography is particularly well positioned to be a hub for community engagement due to its longstanding experience in interdisciplinary working (Skole, 2004; Buckingham-Hatfield, 1995; Dorsey, 2001; Bednarz *et al.*, 2008; Morrill, 2009; Klein *et al.*, 2011). Similarly, students in sciences may be well placed to contribute to citizen science agendas in communities (e.g. Cooper *et al.*, 2007). There are also research literatures on community engagement in several other disciplinary settings, for example, from technology/ GIS/web technologies (Ghose, 2001; Longan, 2007), education (Petersen *et al.*, 2008), sport, arts, and continuing education departments (Shannon and Wang, 2010).

The disciplinary landscape of student community engagement through the curriculum may be compared with the engagement of academics with the public through their research. Abreu *et al.*, (2009) find that user-inspired research, and applied research are the dominant model *across all disciplines*. However, the same study finds that *differences in emphasis exist across disciplines*:

'This report shows that academics from all disciplines are engaged in the knowledge exchange process – it does not simply involve those from science and technology based disciplines but also includes academics from the arts and humanities and the social sciences. And the knowledge exchange mechanisms are wide and varied – it is not simply the codified transfer of science (patents, licenses etc.) but includes many people based, problem solving and community driven activities.' **ibid, 2009, p. 7** [our emphasis]

The diversity across disciplines is captured in Figure 1 below, taken from the same report:

Figure 1: Highly intensive research activities (% of respondents)



Where the community engagement is problem based, a key requirement is for the problem to be generated by or negotiated with communities. For Stoecker *et al.* (2010) centring a program on the dynamics of a community issue, can create significant challenges for faculty staff and students for these problems and their negotiated solutions do not always fit neatly into course structures or disciplines. Others have been more able to explore the contribution of interdisciplinary approaches to key problems for sustainable community development (integrating economic, social and environmental objectives), and resilience in globalisation and climate change contexts (see Klein *et al.*, 2011; Moser, 2009). The focus can be on relationships 'between economic factors and other community elements such as housing, education, the natural environment, health, accessibility and the arts' (see Simon Fraser University Centre for Sustainable Community Development). There is clearly a major challenge for universities to have in place strategies, processes, and, equally importantly, the commitment of academic staff, to enable disciplinary silos to be broken down, or at least connected to facilitate interdisciplinary student-community learning.

## 7.2 Models of engagement through the curriculum

Community engagement through the curriculum is referenced in the research and policy literature under a variety of names, and often inconsistently. In the UK, as with the USA, the differences in learning associated with different terms are often unspecified. 'Community engagement' as a term can embrace community-based learning and research links/knowledge exchange with the community. These research and learning domains can frequently be interlinked/integrated within university-community engagement activities at different scales within the institution (staff and student activity, departmental activity, institutional strategic planning). Indeed community-based research and community-based learning can be synergetic and mutually reinforcing.

Similarly the research literature on both these activities can have mutual benefits to research-informed practice.

Researchers have produced classifications of community engagement approaches and activities (see for example, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010; Driscoll, 2008). Differences can be based on a variety of criteria including the goal(s) of the activity and the beneficiary (ies) of the activities (see Simon Fraser University, undated). There have been attempts to capture the nature of the activities diagrammatically (see Figures 2 and 3), recognising there is overlap between the activities under terms like: 'Volunteerism', 'Community engagement', and 'Service learning.' Activities can be positioned on a variety of continua including the goals and emphasis of the activity (Figure 2), and the stakeholders involved (Figure 3), recognising that stakeholders can have multiple roles.

Figure 2: Model of community engagement, Simon Fraser University, adapted from Bender et al. (2006). See Furco, 1996 for original model.

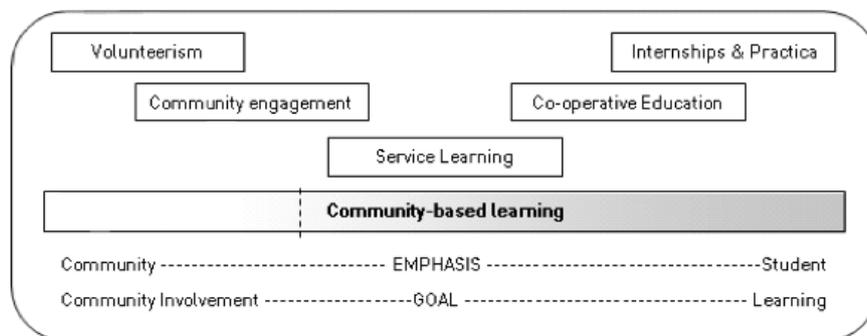
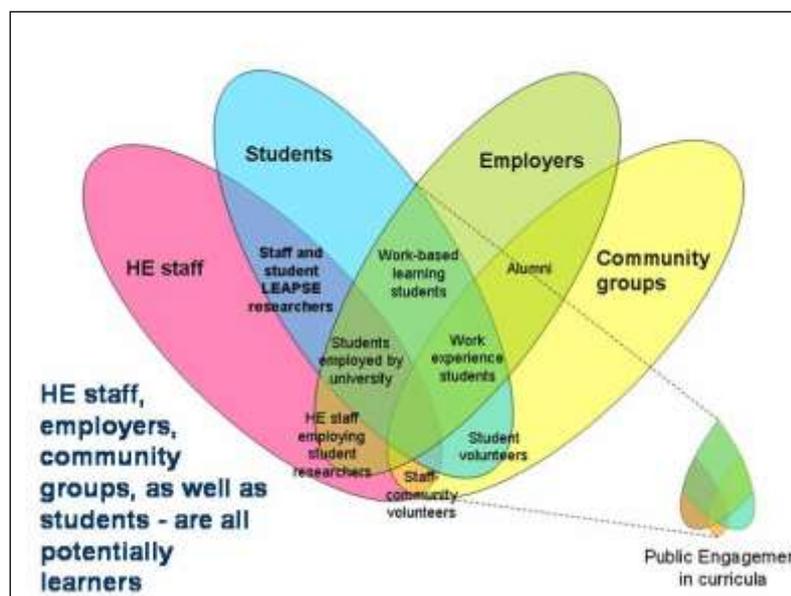


Figure 3: Model of community engagement – Learning Empowerment through Public-Student Engagement (LEAPSE) project (University of Gloucestershire, UK)



It is also possible to draw on research into effective community engagement from other fields and areas of professional practice. These include, for example, The UK

Improvement and Development Agency (2009) which explores the issues in engaging with hard-to-reach community groups. Other authors have looked at community engagement in medical science (Westfall *et al.*, 2009; Popay, 2006). Westfall *et al* (2009) note that community engagement (practice-based research) has become a major contributor to US medical research and they emphasise the need to translate research into practice. Their paper reflects critically on the methodologies for community engagement. Popay (2006) in developing public health programme guidance on community engagement explores the literature on community empowerment. She notes the importance of:

'enhanced agency of communities; the transformation of power relationships between communities, institutions and government; and the removal of formal and informal barriers to effective community action.'

**Popay, 2006, p. 4**

### 7.3 Forms of engagement

This review has identified five principal forms of community engagement through the curriculum: service learning, community-based learning, community-based research, work-based learning and Education for Sustainable Development. It must be emphasised that these forms cannot be described as discrete, fixed, bounded entities; rather, they are permeable and shifting, frequently converging, overlapping, and encompassing one another. For example, referring to the scholarship of engagement, the University of Warwick depicts it as a 'form of *research-based learning* that enables students to develop a civic responsibility dimension to their studies...(it) includes *service learning* in that it is about students learning through activities which advance social justice' (University of Warwick website). [our emphasis]. A keyword search under these different headings brings up distinct but overlapping forms of engagement through the curriculum. It is important to emphasise that each of these forms comes in many guises, as illustrated by Kendall's (1990) observation that there were 147 definitions of service-learning, a term that is used principally in the US. Some brief definitions on forms of engagement are provided below.

#### Service Learning

Whilst 'service learning' continues to be in popular use in the US reflecting its long history and institutional roots, its use has extended more widely. As Annette (2002) points out:

'Service learning is an important form of learning in higher education in the United States and the United Kingdom, and increasingly in universities internationally. Service learning is defined as an experiential learning program where students learn through engaging in service in partnership with a local community. It involves reflective learning activities which enable a student to develop key skills and capabilities, and a greater sense of civic awareness and active citizenship. The experience should be of sufficient length to enable students to benefit fully from it, and they must be challenged to be reflective and to link their learning to their college curriculum.' **Annette, 2002, p. 83**

Bringle and Hatcher (1995, p112) define service learning as:

'a credit bearing, educational, experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.'

A considerable literature addresses the development and implementation of service learning (Kellog, 1999; Furco and Holland 2004; Crump 2002; Howard, 2001; Carracelas-Juncal 2009. Lawson (2002) discusses moving beyond service learning to 'engagement')

### Community-based learning

In terms of community-based learning, there are two broadly different interpretations or orientations. One interpretation focuses, as does this review, on the collaborative effort of students, university and community to provide *students* with opportunities for community involvement and learning. The other interpretation centres on providing opportunities to communities (those outside of the university) for learning and social development in a range of formal and informal settings. In saying this, it should be recognised that definitions of 'students' as well as communities are blurred; discussions on work-based learning (see below) highlight the different ways the term 'student' may be used.

The range of activity under this heading is succinctly captured in Hall and Hall's (1999) response to the question, 'What is community-based learning?' They refer to the:

'Liverpool model of applied research [which] is part of a wider movement in Britain and other countries that brings together a number of different strands of educational development: independent thinking, work-based learning, experiential learning, development of personal skills and or key skills, university-community collaboration, service learning and active citizenship.' **Hall and Hall, 1999**

A type of community-based learning is characterised by Millican (2008) as 'student community engagement' which involves:

'a range of experiential, community-based projects in which undergraduates undertake part of their learning within a community setting... Such projects should provide scope to develop their skills, to apply theory to practice, to reflect on their learning and their abilities and to make a real contribution to their community partner. It [SCE] involves an affective and interactive approach to learning where students participate in the design of their learning programme and are encouraged to interrogate their own perceptions: of themselves, of their role in the world, of others and of the community to which they belong. Consequently it includes the development of skills and attitudes as well as knowledge in the aims of the learning programme and differs from an often more didactic approach to learning.' **Millican, 2008; p. 1-2**

Princeton University refers to their 'Community Based Learning Initiative' as enriching coursework by:

'encouraging students to apply the knowledge and analytic tools gained in the classroom to the pressing issues that affect local communities. Working with faculty members and community leaders, students develop research projects, collect and analyze data, and share their results and conclusions with the organizations and agencies that need the information, as well as with their professors. Not only does the community benefit, but students' understanding of the subject is also greatly enhanced.' **Princeton University Community Based Learning Initiative website**

This view of community-based learning is almost synonymous with community-based research.

### Community-based research

Community-based research (CBR) involves collaboration between research projects aimed at meeting community-identified needs. CBR differs from much traditional academic research in two substantive ways. The first is that CBR is done *with* rather than *on* the community. Instead of treating communities as 'laboratories' and community members as convenient samples, as is more typical in conventional research, CBR holds as a central tenet the involvement of community members in every stage of the research process, from identifying the research question to formulating action proposals that derive from the research results. In some respects this approach mirrors the methodology of some feminist research (see for example, Monk *et al* 2003).

In practice, and for different reasons, community members' actual involvement in the research may be somewhat limited. However, the goal of CBR is to carry out a project that meets some community need which is defined by that community - not by the researcher or other 'experts' - and, on a broader scale, to democratise the production and control of knowledge. This is achieved by recognising the legitimacy of the knowledge and world views of powerless people, and by sharing authority wherever possible in every stage of the research process (Ansley and Gaventa, 1997; Stoecker and Bonacich, 1992).

'The second essential difference between CBR and traditional academic research is that an explicit goal of CBR—indeed, the central purpose for doing such research—is to contribute in some way to improving the lives of those living in the community.' **Strand, 2000, p. 85**

### Work-based learning

Work-based learning occupies a long and well established place within professional education in higher education, for example, teaching, medicine, social work and local policy. It has come to embrace a much wider spectrum of activity concerned with student learning within 'the workplace', including full and part time modes of study where the university places students in the workplace for project work that is integrated with institution-based delivery. A driver for work-based learning has come in various policy initiatives for developing UK global economic competitiveness (Leitch, 2006). Work-based learning is characterised as a powerful means of developing the acquisition

of the higher order enquiry skills and capabilities demanded by the UK economy (Billett, 2008, Lester and Costley, 2010).

The dominant discourse of competitiveness and skills required by employers can obscure other values of work-based learning around collaboration with, and participation in, the community organisations. Annette (2008) observes that:

'An important new area of development in the UK has been how professional education (business, engineering, medical, teaching, etc) has begun to address not only ethical issues but also civic professionalism, by providing community-based learning and research opportunities for its students in the UK to address issues of poverty, social justice and global citizenship.' **Annette, 2010, p. 456**

Speaking in advance of a conference on employer engagement, the chief executive of Foundation Degrees Forward said:

'Institutions should see work-based learning as innovative pedagogy, not something to do with training.. or a bit of work experience....For many it provides an attractive option that contributes to diversity and widening participation in higher education.' **Longhurst, 2009**

Langworthy and Turner (2003, no page no.) conclude that,

'The concept of work based learning has developed from an outcome-driven exercise when universities were preparing students for one job in one industry in one career path. This learning has evolved into a concept of engaged scholarship where students have the opportunity to engage with the community in a multiplicity of ways, thus developing the skills that will enable them to become lifelong learners and community contributors.'

### Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and global citizenship

There is a considerable and growing literature on Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education (Corcoran and Wals, 2004; Gough and Scott, 2007). ESD can be used as an overarching institutional context to community engagement activities, often promoted under the title of citizenship education (e.g. *National Framework for Greater Citizen Engagement*, UK Ministry of Justice, 2009). For example, the Welsh Assembly has promoted Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship through community-based learning in Wales in higher education, notably teacher training. The UK Higher Education Academy states:

'Our vision is that within the next ten years, the higher education sector will be recognised as a major contributor to society's efforts to achieve sustainability – through the skills and knowledge that its graduates learn..., its research and exchange of knowledge, community and public policy engagement, and through its own strategies and operations.'

ESD has implications for students' learning outcomes/ graduate attributes, pedagogies, student engagement, community links, and interdisciplinarity. All can be delivered through community engagement as a form of experiential real world learning that has the potential to link the 'local' to the 'global.' For example, the University of Melbourne model of graduate attributes (see Section 8.3) requires students 'to be well-informed citizens able to contribute to their communities, wherever they choose to live and work.'

## 8. Challenges for teaching, learning and assessment

This section draws on both generic literature related to pedagogy and that which is specific to teaching and learning through community engagement.

### 8.1 Teaching, learning and assessment: policy and strategy

The literature indicates that teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) policy for community engagement through the curriculum has certain requirements. These are summarised below.

- 'All stakeholder' engagement (students, communities, staff) is essential in the development of TLA policy. There is an increasing literature on 'engaging students' (e.g. Healey, *et al.*, 2010). This needs to be further developed to consider how universities best engage their communities (e.g. Bringle and Hatcher, 2002).
- There need to be links between the institution's research strategy and its strategy for TLA so the synergies between community-based research and community-based learning are developed most effectively. Community engagement through the curriculum is best integrated in a wider engagement strategy rather than being framed as a 'left over' or 'bolt on' activity. As Jongbloed *et al.* (2007, p46) state: 'The challenge for those in charge of the university is to achieve a situation where community engagement is realised through the core activities of teaching and research and not have it regarded as a residual activity.'
- Institutional approaches to student learning through community engagement need to be active, experiential, participatory and reflective. Opportunities for interdisciplinary learning are required as problem-based learning in community engagement may need interdisciplinary collaboration. The roles of students, staff, and settings for learning beyond the university all need revisiting in a community engagement context.
- The TLA strategy needs input and evaluation by all stakeholders (students, communities and staff).

Examples of Higher Education institutions that embrace community engagement in their Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategies (linked to Institutional Strategies and Engagement Strategies) are the Universities of Northumbria, Brighton, (Community University Partnership Programme), and Plymouth.

'Community engagement weaves an integrating thread through our activities at the University of Plymouth' (University of Plymouth, Community Engagement Strategy 2009 - 2012)

### 8.2 Curriculum design, learning outcomes and graduate attributes

'Curriculum design and development are core functions of institutions, occupying substantial human resources, enacting institutional identities and values, and constituting a major opportunity to deliver on the institutional mission... Agile curriculum design processes are necessary,

however, if institutions are to bring forward curricula which meet the changing needs of learners, employers and professional bodies.’  
**Beetham, 2009, p. 2**

The term ‘agile curriculum design’ would seem very germane to curriculum design for community engagement given the need to ensure that the curriculum meets the changing and diverse needs and interests of communities with whom students will engage. A similar point could be made in terms of the writing of learning outcomes, a practice which has come to the fore of curriculum design in UK higher education. According to Maher (2004):

‘Learning outcomes enable universities to express student achievement beyond the narrow boundaries of subject knowledge and to articulate other important skills that are developed during the educational process. Key or transferable skills, relevant professional skills and personal qualities, formerly seen as by-products of the educational process, are now regarded as a core part of studying for a degree. Employers have long argued that they are more interested in what students can ‘do’ rather than what they ‘know’ and this added weight to the arguments for the adoption of a learning outcomes approach (Jackson, 2000).’ **Maher, 2004, p. 48**

With its foundations in experiential learning, where real-world experiences provide opportunities to test, trial, revise and develop a student’s subject knowledge, community engagement through the curriculum is often used as a tool to enrich the existing learning outcomes on a course or a module. However, frequently tutors recognise that community based learning can support the emergence of other sorts of learning that are not currently captured or assessed within the course but might be. For example, learning about:

- how to extract meaning from experience;
- ways to apply academic knowledge to real world problems;
- about a specific community, population, geography;
- about expectations, quality, negotiation, client relationships;
- about self, society and context;
- about collaborative working.

(NCCPE, 2011)

Given the growing competitiveness in student recruitment, as well as research which indicates that students seek more than employability and skills from their university experiences, it may be plausible to suggest that a motivation for some universities to embed public engagement within the curriculum serves as a means of meeting market demand.

Student community engagement activity certainly aligns with the types of graduates that universities are looking to produce. One way of framing this is around ‘graduate attributes’:

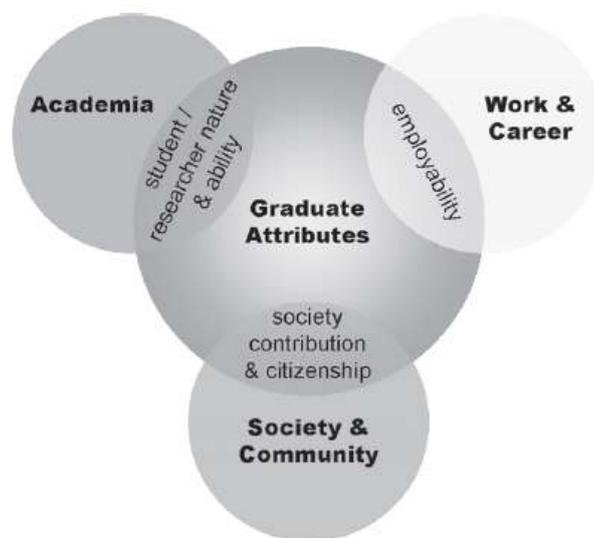
‘Graduate attributes are the qualities, skills and understandings a university community agrees its students should develop during their time

with the institution. These attributes include but go beyond the disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge that has traditionally formed the core of most university courses. They are qualities that also prepare graduates as agents of social good in an unknown future.' **Bowden et al., 2000**

The graduate skills and employability agenda is a growing research and policy area (Fallows *et al.* (2000); Hogarth *et al.* (2007); GHK Consulting (2008); UK Commissions for Employment and Skills; Universities UK and CBI, 2009). In community engagement, particular attention to date has been given to volunteering and the informal curriculum. Anderson and Green (2007) note that UK government policy in 2004 had begun to shape volunteering in line with the aspiration for students (and staff) to 'gain new perspectives, and enable them to develop their employment skills while enhancing the quality of life for others, especially in disadvantaged sections of communities' (HEFCE, 2004, p. 1).

McCabe (2010) outlines how graduate attributes can enhance student research capabilities, employability and society contribution and citizenship (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Mapping graduate attributes



One example of an attempt to link graduate skills to Education for Sustainable Development and community engagement agendas is the 'Melbourne Graduate Attributes.' Here disciplinary setting is important but also opportunities for interdisciplinarity. The Melbourne Graduate Attributes, published on the University of Melbourne website and outlined in brief below combine:

- academic excellence;
- being knowledgeable across disciplines;
- being able to lead in communities [initiate and implement constructive change in their communities, including professions and workplaces; engage in meaningful public discourse, with a profound awareness of community needs];

- being attuned to cultural diversity [be well-informed citizens able to contribute to their communities wherever they choose to live and work];
- being active global citizens.

Community engagement requires attention to the non - traditional skill and affective domains (see Fink, 2003; Figure 5) that normally sit outside formal level descriptors (e.g. SEEC or QAA). This involves the development of personal skills like emotional intelligence, and the human dimension – ‘learning about oneself and others’.

Figure 5: Taxonomy of significant learning (Fink, 2003)



There are some similarities between community engagement and employer engagement in work-based learning, and the need for effective support for employers as stakeholders in that engagement (see McEwen *et al.*, 2011). For example, when engaging communities in curriculum design, attention needs to be given to accessibility and understanding of shared language around ‘learning outcomes’ etc. There are practicalities too, in establishing the criteria for agreeing placements in community engagement, involving agreements between students, community and the University.

### 8.3 Facilitating active learning and reflection

The principal theories informing university community engagement are discussed above in Section 5. Common to all of them are the related themes of active, reflective experiential learning. There is a considerable literature on these dimensions of learning which indicates their value and discusses ways of introducing and developing them in practice (for example, Kolb, 1984; Mezirow, 1991; Moon, 2004). The facilitation of active learning is not without its challenges. Baldwin (2008) notes that with increasingly large numbers of students participating in higher education, it is all too easy for educators to view themselves as actors on stage giving a performance to a group of silent and passive learners. Others critique the notion that active participation (often measured in vocal contributions in group work for example) leads to learning, and that students who choose to participate without speaking are often failing (Remedios, Clarke and Hawthorne, 2008).

In the UK, a Centre for Excellence for Active Learning funded by the Higher Education funding Council for England established at the University of Gloucestershire, (<http://resources.glos.ac.uk/ceal/index.cfm>) has compiled a useful bibliography of active

learning papers and resources (see Healey, 2009). The international *Journal of Active Learning in Higher Education* publishes research and practice in this area <http://alh.sagepub.com/>. An example of an institutional resource is the Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education which aims to support 'University of Surrey's distinctive approach to undergraduate education which offers opportunities in every programme for real world experiences through yearlong or integrated work placements' (University of Surrey, undated). They state that 'what we do as educators and institutions is only one side of the educational equation. Learners are busy preparing themselves for the rest of their lives.' Examples of other case studies of student-community engagement within the curriculum are presented in the Appendix. In the US, Campus Compact have published a wide range of resources for service-learning educators. A recent publication *Looking in, Reaching Out* (Jacoby and Mutascio, 2010) includes detailed chapters on establishing partnerships with community groups, developing assessment plans, and facilitating critical reflection.

## 8.4 Assessment and feedback

A burgeoning literature on effective assessment and feedback in higher education has developed over recent years (see for example, Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2004; Gibbs and Simpson, 2005; Knight, 2005). The following succinct summary of evidence-based best practice in assessment design suggests that it should 'empower' and 'engage' students – two concepts which are clearly germane to community engagement activity.

Table 2: Evidence-based practice in assessment design

- Assessment design should 'empower'
- Engage students actively in identifying or formulating criteria
- Facilitate opportunities for self-assessment and reflection
- Deliver feedback that helps students self-correct
- Provide opportunities for feedback dialogue (peer and tutor-student)
- Encourage positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
- Provide opportunities to apply what is learned in new tasks
- Yield information that teachers can use to help shape teaching
- "Engage"
- Capture sufficient study time and effort in and out of class
- Distribute students' effort evenly across topics and weeks.
- Engage students in deep not just shallow learning activity
- Communicates clear and high expectations to students.

Source: Re- engineering Assessment in Scottish Higher Education, the key messages are that assessment design should both *empower* and *engage* adapted from Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's and Gibbs and Simpson's work referred to above.

A powerful message in the literature is that assessment should align with course learning outcomes or objectives (Brown, 2001). Yet this can provide a challenge for student-community engagement as the 'learning outcomes' may be hard to define in advance, given the uncertainties and exigencies of student work in the community. Furthermore,

the students are likely to be engaging in a very diverse range of community contexts. However, rather than seeing this as a 'problem' it can be regarded positively as a way to generate:

'unforeseen outcomes stimulate(s) creativity and innovation. One of the most profound joys of public engagement is its unpredictability: fresh perspectives, challenging questions, lateral insights - all can help to sharpen thinking, release precious energy and creativity and unlock new collaborations and resources.' **NCCPE Manifesto for Public Engagement, 2010**

To assess such learning, it may be appropriate for the assessment task to focus on the student's reflection on what they have learned rather than what they have 'done'. This lends itself to particular types of assessment, for example, reflective diaries or digital stories.

Another challenge in assessment design bears comparison with assessment of students on work placements and the role of the employer, or in this case, community members, in the assessment and feedback process (see McEwen *et al.*, 2010). Any involvement of community members in these processes needs to be clear and agreed with all stakeholders.

Perhaps the greatest challenge is for tutors to radically re-think their own approaches to assessment and feedback in a community engagement context, and to ensure students are appropriately prepared. Beaumont *et al.* (2008) suggest, 'tutors may declare a commitment to independent learning on one hand, while engaging in feedback practices that safeguard tacit knowledge and inhibit the progressive development of student autonomy on the other (Haggis, 2006; Higgins, 2000; Lea and Stierer, 2000).' At the same time, the expectations of feedback guidance from students "not ready for the demands that higher education is making - or should be making - of them" (Murray and Kirton, 2006, p. 7) might need to be managed more effectively; for example, through the development of peer and self-assessment skills.' (Beaumont *et al.*, 2008, p. 29)

The importance of feedback being timely and formative is emphasised throughout the literature on assessment. In the case of community engagement through the curriculum, consideration needs to be given to the role, and preparation of, community members in providing feedback to students with whom they are working as, well as in the wider area of curriculum and assessment design.

## **8.5 Engaging stakeholders and ensuring quality**

Purposefully involving stakeholders in university community engagement can provide challenge in several respects. The definition of community may be unclear or contested. In delivering learning through community engagement, all stakeholders (students, alumni, communities and HEI staff) need to be engaged not only in curriculum development but also the process of its delivery. Here longitudinal engagement of communities is important as are brokering partnerships and planning for synergies with other university activities. All stakeholders need support through dialogue, discussions around the value of activities and opportunity for reflection and feedback.

A key element in successful community engagement activity can be in capturing the role of staff as champions (see Boland, 2008) by linking their own community engagement activities, whether in research or volunteering, to potential settings for student learning.

Although this review concerns university community engagement through the curriculum, it is pertinent to note Wedgwood's observation that in the UK:

'there are no national 'strategic' quality and esteem measures for measuring the quality of third stream activity on a par with those for research or for learning and teaching... Institutions do not have a means of expressing their excellence in engaging with society through formalised esteem measures that are published 'kite marks' of excellence.'

**Wedgwood, 2006, p. 145**

In discussing matters of quality in higher education, Rowland argues that:

'quality is not simply the property of an object but the relation between object and subject... for example, the question of assuring quality in a university would give much more emphasis to an understanding of the purposes of the university *such as its relation to the society it serves...*

UK universities are measured in terms that produce a plethora of league tables, but any debate concerning the relationships between quality and purposes is almost totally absent.' **Rowland, 2006, p. 8** [our emphasis]

Relational indicators of quality in university community engagement work are evident in Holland and Ramaley's view that community engagement should be:

- mutually beneficial for all parties
- reciprocal in nature
- designed to promote learning and the exchange of knowledge in the search for collaborative approaches to the solution of real-world problems and opportunities

(Holland and Ramaley, 2008, p. 36)

Although in the UK nations, there are no externally regulated sets of quality or enhancement indicators for university community engagement in 2009 the NCCPE published a report which reviewed some of the existing approaches to auditing and benchmarking public engagement (Hart *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore the NCCPE has taken the lead in its recently launched *Manifesto for Public Engagement* by highlighting key issues for higher education institutions to commit to if they are to sign up to the Manifesto. The framework provided by the NCCPE for embedding Public Engagement, concentrates on eight focal points for self-assessment and planning (NCCPE, 2011d) as outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Framework provided by the NCCPE for embedding public engagement within higher education institutions

<b>Mission</b>	Create a shared understanding of the purpose, value, meaning and role of public engagement to staff and students and embed this in your strategy and mission.
<b>Leadership</b>	Support champions across the organisation who embrace public engagement and communicate consistent, clear messages to validate, support and celebrate it
<b>Reward</b>	Recognise and reward staff involvement within recruitment, promotion, workload plans and performance reviews, and celebrate success with awards or prizes.
<b>Support</b>	Co-ordinate the delivery of public engagement to maximise efficiency, target support, improve quality, foster innovation, join up thinking and monitor involvement and impact.
<b>Learning</b>	Provide opportunities for learning and reflection and provide support for continuing professional development and training
<b>Staff</b>	Ensure that all staff – in academic and support roles – have opportunities to get involved in informal and formal ways
<b>Students</b>	Proactively include and involve students in shaping the mission and in the delivery of the strategy, and maximise opportunities for their involvement.
<b>Public</b>	Invest in people, processes and infrastructure to support and nurture the involvement of individuals and organisations external to the HEI

In the US, the Carnegie Institute for the Advancement of Teaching has introduced a Community Engagement Elective Curricular Engagement and Outreach/Partnership Classification whereby institutions can self evaluate their activity against a set of indicators and apply to Carnegie for recognition. The indicators include questions - and require evidence to back up responses - about the following:

- Institutional identity and culture (including vision/mission statements);
- Formal recognition of community engagement through campus-wide awards and celebrations;
- Mechanisms for systematic assessment of community perceptions of the institution's engagement with the community;
- Emphasis on community engagement in marketing materials;
- Establishment of a coordinating infrastructure;
- Provision of professional development for staff;
- Budgetary allocations for community engagement;
- Impact on students, on staff, on community and on institution;
- 'Does the community have a "voice" or role for input into institutional or departmental planning for community engagement?'

All of the indicators can be accessed on the Carnegie Foundation website (Carnegie Foundation, 2010).

It should be mentioned as a cautionary note that not everyone sees university-community engagement through the curriculum in a positive light in relation to quality. See, for example, Fish (2003) who argues that there are dangers in confusing democratic values with academic ones.

## 8.6 Developing staff capacity

The UK has witnessed considerable growth in the provision and quality of educational development support for staff to develop their teaching and student learning (for example, through the Higher Education Academy and the Staff and Educational Development Association). However, there is still work to be undertaken on building staff capacity to engage students in community settings through the curriculum. Whilst the UK 'Beacons for Public Engagement' were created to 'establish a co-ordinated approach to recognising, rewarding and building capacity for public engagement' (Beacons for Public Engagement no date p. 2), the funding of this initiative is reflected in its primary focus on staff capacity for engaging the public in research.

'Reward and recognition are important factors in encouraging staff participation in community engagement through the curriculum, yet it is interesting to note that the word 'community' only appears in relation to 'research community', 'scholarly community' and 'teaching community' in the UK 2009 document, 'Reward and recognition of teaching in higher education.' **Higher Education Academy, 2009**

If staff are to have community engagement activity recognised and rewarded, by, for example, appointment and promotion panels, it does suggest that as well as professional development opportunities for academic staff, there will need to be training for panel members. Recognition and reward for staff is necessary but not sufficient. For some staff, community engagement work with students will involve a considerable shift in their thinking about pedagogy and who the stakeholders in learning might be. It may even challenge their expertise, for example, taking them into applied interdisciplinary realms. Butin (2007) says staff:

'must move from the classroom, a controlled environment where they are the experts, to a messy, chaotic world in which they are not the only source of knowledge. Faculty may have to watch the theories in the textbooks contradicted by the reality on the ground. They may have to face the fact that their lectures do not speak to the situation that students encounter in their community organizations. Or they may realize that their expertise, built up over many years of graduate school and teaching, may be next to useless in situations requiring different skills or more interdisciplinary knowledge than they have developed. Community engagement, in short, forces faculty members to confront the limits of their identity.' **Butin, 2007, p. 35**

According to Holland:

'Too often, faculty assume that in a campus-community partnership, the faculty role is to teach, the students' role is to learn, and the community partner's role is to provide a laboratory or set of needs to address or explore. Academics come to the community from what can seem like a privileged and wealthy context, and the power relationship in partnerships is not equal. Demographics, race, culture and language are often aspects of great difference between campus and community perspectives. This makes it challenging to ensure a free exchange across the partnership and to ensure mutual benefits to all parties.' **Holland, 2005, p. 11**

Writing from the US, O'Meara and Jaeger (2006) propose embedding community engagement work in graduate programmes which are undertaken by prospective academic staff - an observation which could inform postgraduate certificate in higher education programmes in the UK, and especially those whose focus is teaching in higher education.

'Investments made in graduate programs today will bring community engagement to the center of scholarly agendas, disciplines, departments, and institutions tomorrow.' **O'Meara and Jaeger 2006, p. 21**

As section 8.8 suggests, supporting staff requires an enabling and celebratory institutional culture for this kind of work, together with appropriate infrastructure and flexibility.

## **8.7 Diversity and equality**

There is a considerable literature on inclusion, diversity and quality in higher education (Grace and Gravestock, 2008; Chun and Evans, 2008). As in all forms of learning, attention needs to be given to diversity and equality of opportunities for different student and community groups (legal requirements under the UK Disability Discrimination Act for equality of opportunity), for example, mature and part-time students. This applies to both international students studying in the United Kingdom and what UK students experience abroad (e.g. through fieldwork or placement activities).

'This infrastructure for learning through engagement must support not only student learning and faculty scholarship, but also address the specific needs of the partnering organizations.' **Cauley and Sweeney, 2007, p. 43**

The v-inspired project highlights some issues associated with diversity of student groups and volunteering.

'Nearly one-third of all the students who were not volunteering (27 per cent) had not become involved at university because they did not know how to. Further analysis reveals that these students are more likely to be young (i.e. not classed as mature students), first years, non-white, international students, students who had not moved away to attend university and working during term-time.' **Brewis et al. 2010, p. 43**

'International students faced particular barriers with CRB checks and this could limit the type of activity they could get involved with,' **Brewis et al. 2010, p. 44**

Particular student groups may need specific support services (e.g. counselling as support).

## **8.8 Developing a facilitative university environment**

In concluding this section, it is important to recognise that for many academic staff 'teaching' is not separate from 'research' and so-called 'third stream' activity. As Nelles and Vorley contend, 'triangulating teaching, research, and third stream activities reinforces the respective dynamics of each component through their recursive and reciprocal development' (Nelles and Vorley, 2010, p. 341).

However, teaching and learning for community engagement can be facilitated or impeded by the wider institutional culture. Judith Ramaley, President of the University of Vermont proposes that a facilitative environment will include:

- The possibility of reward or benefit for faculty and staff;
- The creation of capacity at all levels of the organisation to support and encourage change;
- Structural openness to external influence through the research agenda and through the curriculum;
- Educational planning and a strategic budgeting model that recognises the value of active and responsible engagement that has a real community impact;
- A willingness to adopt a shared agenda and mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with community members;
- Rigorous evaluation of the quality and impact of community-based activity.

Developing and sustaining such a 'facilitative environment' requires both commitment and careful planning to implement and embed community engagement work across the institution's strategies structures, programmes and processes. Furco's rubric for institutionalising service-learning is one of the few examples of frameworks that have been developed institutionalising or embedding community engagement within the curriculum (Furco, 2002). Further examples, heavily influenced by Furco's work include the self-assessment tool developed by the NCCPE.

<http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support/self-assess>

## 9. Summary points, conclusion and further work

### 9.1 Summary

The literature review has drawn attention to a number of matters requiring committed and clear strategic planning throughout the institution, and in the institution's relationship with its communities.

- The domain of university public and community engagement is complex and contested. Both 'community' and 'engagement' are multifariously defined. Similarly the word 'student' encompasses a broad range of learners, such as part-time, mature and international. Hence student learning through community engagement can encompass a wide range of interconnected settings and learning outcomes.
- Student learning through public and community engagement has become a growth area of activity in higher education institutions in the UK and internationally. The UK experience can draw productively on the long history of teaching and research in the area of engagement, student volunteering and service learning in the United States.
- The literature shows a range of over-lapping models of student learning through community engagement (including volunteering, community-based learning; community-based research and work-based learning). Their associated research literatures can inform the design and delivery of engagement activities, including the identification of good practice.
- There are push and pull factors to the development of learning through community engagement activities in UK higher education. A key parallel is between work-based learning and community-based learning. In a UK recession and in the Government's promotion of localism and Big Society agendas, opportunities for community-based learning may be more accessible and available than traditional industry-based, work-based learning opportunities.
- A key issue in the 21<sup>st</sup> century higher education is how to link and map student learning through public and community engagement explicitly to graduate skills and attributes for employability so that all stakeholders (students, communities, universities and employers) are aware of its value. There are models elsewhere (e.g. Melbourne graduate attributes) that can be drawn upon.
- Many UK Universities are positioning themselves in relation to sustainability agendas. Student learning through community engagement forms a congruent element of approaches to embed ESD in student learning, while having a myriad of other benefits in the positioning of a University within its community.

- Student learning through community engagement requires specific provision for staff initial and continuing professional development. Key issues are in developing the staff role, for example, as facilitator within a tripartite relationship that can differ significantly from community to community, and as a key stakeholder brokering relationships with diverse community groups.
- Student learning through community engagement requires the development and implementation of structures and processes that go beyond traditional learner support mechanisms. The nature of community engagement may challenge personal value systems and make strong emotional demands on the student that require specific areas of specialist support.
- It is important to build capacity and commitment to community engagement within the curriculum - to move from aspiration to action. Tied to this is the need to undertake robust and on-going evaluation of its impact on students, community and university.

## 9.2 Conclusion

This literature review has set out to explore the latest research on community engagement through the curriculum. It has found a wide range of activities that fall within this designation as well as overlaps and inconsistencies of terminology. This, together with the complexities surrounding the activities, implies researching and practising in the field is a challenge, albeit a stimulating one. The complexity in understandings of community engagement in the curriculum emerges from 3 main contextual elements:

- the range of types of higher education institutions involved;
- the range of differences in the disciplinary context of the activities;
- the range of the differences and types of communities universities may encounter.

However, some key principles emerge from the research. Many universities have an explicitly stated aim of becoming an engaged university. As a result community engagement and civic responsibility is a key element in the mission of many universities as they express their desire to make a difference in their constituent communities. Some pursue this mission explicitly and support academics, students and communities in their endeavours.

The CBI and UUK (2009) emphasise the importance of increasing settings for the development of employability skills, in particular the positive role of placements and internships. There is strong evidence to suggest that placements involving community based learning can provide a range of graduate attributes (knowledge, skills and value-systems) that support employability and enhance the quality of student's academic work. Research and scholarship that links community engagement and graduate attributes for employability is thus particularly valuable.

It is clear that community engagement through the curriculum requires a measure of institutional investment in order to support, recognise and reward students and staff, and to ensure optimal benefit to the institution and the community. As of writing, increasing numbers of institutions have become signatories to the NCCPE's Manifesto for

Public Engagement. This growing commitment within the UK is supported by international agreements and declarations whereby universities across the world have pledged to advance and increase their partnerships with, relevance to, and positive impact on, local and global communities.

### **9.3 Further work**

Three significant areas for further work have emerged from this literature review if universities are to optimise public and community engagement through the curriculum. The first relates to student learning, the second to community benefit; and the third to support for staff in the process.

Firstly, the literature suggests that community engagement through the curriculum enhances the quality of academic work, employability and lifelong learning. Whilst this is clearly important for staff scholarship and research, in terms of the student learning experience it is very significant in equipping students for the uncertain futures of a rapidly changing world. Further research is needed on devising and trialling generic community engagement learning frameworks, which capture the essence of the diverse kinds of learning accruing from the range of approaches to curriculum based community engagement presented in this review. These frameworks would aim to encompass the impressive depth and scale of learning opportunities afforded through community engagement - ranging from enabling skills of project management, team work, leadership and use of multimedia for communication, to ethical awareness, relationship building, self reflection and awareness of the impact of one's own style and values on others.

The second area for further work concerns benefit to the community. The review has pointed to the concerns of some analysts that universities might exploit community relations in order to achieve teaching, learning and employability imperatives. The community thus becomes the 'object' of university work instead of an equal partner and beneficiary. The literature has shown that in developing and sustaining long term relations with communities on a range of levels, it is important to ensure that mutual benefits accrue. More research is required to explore and evaluate the benefits to communities of student engagement through the curriculum, and to further identify, develop and share practice in this area.

The third area for further work involves establishing good practice in staff educational development to support community engagement in the curriculum, recognising that this area of pedagogy requires different skills sets and interdisciplinary approaches from those traditionally used by academics. Two of the authors of this report (Mason O'Connor and McEwen) are working on a SEDA publication that addresses this area.

A final point to emphasise is that experiences of the most successful learning through community engagement initiatives require universities and communities to collaborate longitudinally in building trust, understanding and mutual support and to aim to ensure relevance and value for all participants.

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## Appendix 1: Case studies

### **Engaging students in applied research through a community sports development consultancy project at University of Central Lancashire, UK**

The final year Community Sports Development module acts as a capstone module for Sports Coaching students. This module is an optional module which is taken in addition to the honours dissertation. Students work as a project team through a consultancy brief with a partner agency, and recommend strategies that can be employed to support community development through community sport and coaching initiatives. There are normally 8-12 consultancy briefs divided up among the 40-50 students, with students creating their own consultancy teams. Examples of consultancy projects include:

- A 'health check' of football refereeing in Blackburn
- Community Sport and Crime Reduction
- Community Sport ('Street Dance')

The emphasis is upon the students creating professional working relationships with the client organisations in order to carry out primary research that is directed by the clients and supported by the academic staff at the university. Students are expected to hold regular review meetings with the clients; carry out interviews with relevant stakeholders; use secondary research to help analyse their findings; and present their work and recommendations to the organisation through the staging of a mini-conference, where all the partner groups are invited. Representatives from agencies provide the feedback on students' work, judging on the content, feasibility of solutions, and competency in conducting research.

Source:

<http://resources.glos.ac.uk/ceal/resources/casestudiesactivelearning/undergraduate/index.cfm>

### **Geography students at Glasgow Caledonian University, UK, submit reviews for publication made available to the local community**

*Practising Geography*, the second year undergraduate Human Geography module, offers individual students the option of submitting coursework in the form of a briefing paper based on a small-scale, fieldwork-based research project that they themselves have designed and executed. On completion of the module, students can then elect to have their paper refereed by an independent expert (generally a local resident from the field locality or a member of one of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society's Regional Centres). Publication on the project website is conditional on an acceptable referee's report.

Source: McKendrick *et al.* (2003).

## Engaging students in environmental health research and outreach at Allegheny College, Pennsylvania, US

This is an example of combining undergraduate research with public engagement as part of the assessed curriculum. It is also a clear example of a faculty-led project in which students gather data on an issue of interest to the member of faculty. At Allegheny College, the junior seminar is a required one-semester course, in the third year of a four year course that provides a window into the research experience and which allows students to develop a thesis proposal. This course prepares students for their thesis project. All students at Allegheny are required to conduct an independent one- or two-semester thesis project, which allows the student to conduct original research, evaluate it and place it in context with existing professional research. In the interdisciplinary Department of Environmental Science (ES), the junior seminar is taken in the third year, so the students have some cross-disciplinary training, and some early experience into project-based learning. Each junior seminar, which typically has between 8 and 24 students, has a different theme, geared to the faculty and students' interests.

In 2007 in the Junior Seminar in Environmental Health, Justice and Development, students developed and evaluated an environmental health outreach program. This concerned the critical role of indoor home environments on early childhood health in a rural, low-income community. The course leader provided the causes of childhood diseases and health disparities, the class then evaluated effective and ineffective health campaigns. Using this academic foundation, the class planned and implemented an outreach effort. The goal of the outreach was to develop greater awareness among children of health in the home environment. The students compared the efficiency of outreach directly targeted to students in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade (10-12 years of age) to outreach targeted more broadly through family-oriented community events, such as a children's workshops and a Halloween parade.

Both quantitative survey data, addressing how well participants learned and retained information about Healthy Homes, and qualitative assessments from community partners, were undertaken. Additional measures of impact were evaluated as well, including the number of home assessments that were generated from both types of outreach. Students presented their findings in a public meeting to community partners, teachers, school district administrators, local public health officials, campus administrators and ES department faculty and students. Using feedback from the presentation, the students completed the semester with a single written document with report overview, background, findings and recommendations.

The students enjoyed the programme so well that they collectively requested to continue it through independent study, volunteer or outside class projects through the spring semester 2008 and beyond. Enthusiastic comments were also received from the school teachers and community groups involved.

This model is appropriate not only for staff interested in working with to assist piloting new avenues of their research, but also for those who are hoping to find a topic to use and replicate from semester to semester or year to year.

Sources: For further details and a reflection of the issues faced by the course leader see: <http://resources.glos.ac.uk/ceal/resources/casestudiesactivelearning/undergraduate/index.cfm>, For the Healthy Homes-Healthy Children (HHHC) website see: [webpub.allegheny.edu/employee/c/cwaggett/HHHC.html](http://webpub.allegheny.edu/employee/c/cwaggett/HHHC.html)

### **Community Outreach Research Project to Produce a Media DVD, at Southern Cross University, Australia**

Students in *Advanced Screen Production* taken in either the second or third year of the Bachelor of Media or the Bachelor of Arts (media major) undertake research projects involving working for a community group on a community event in accordance with a supplied brief, to produce a DVD. As part of the project, students undertake research into the topic area, the interviewees, the location, equipment and context. As well as submitting the DVD for assessment, students are required to provide regular progress reports, to document the rationale for their project and discuss the process they went through to produce the DVD.

Source: ALTC Teaching Research Nexus website: [www.trnexus.edu.au](http://www.trnexus.edu.au)

### **Community Project Work in Architecture at University of New South Wales, Australia**

A new approach to community-based design projects in the Architecture Program is being trialled by working in association with FBEOutTHERE!, the University of New South Wales, Faculty of Built Environment's outreach programme that engages in community-oriented research and learning. With the real prospect of a selected project being constructed, students are asked to design an 'ageing in place' independent living accommodation project. This project responds to needs identified by a social enterprise group that provides community services for people experiencing multiple intellectual disabilities (service users) in rural New South Wales. With an emphasis on enhancing service users' quality of life, students undertake this task by firstly engaging with the literature, interviewing the service users and staff and visiting the service users' homes to understand their needs. Only after the students have reviewed and evaluated the interviews, home visits and literature are they able to commence the design element of their projects, the progress of which is discussed regularly with the community.

In this way, students design projects with an inquiry and evidence based approach, responsive to community needs. In addition, students keep reflective journals which are intended to help them think about the research findings, their interaction with the service users and their needs, and how these impact upon their design approach to the project. The completed student designs are exhibited. This allows for community feedback on the designs and facilitates discussion about design approaches that best meet the target group's needs. Students receive individual written community feedback about their designs and this collectively informs the interdisciplinary site and context research phase of the project with Landscape Architecture students.

In 2007, 16 students selected this studio project, *Rural Community Wellbeing Enhanced through Design* from a range of design project offerings in the Year 4 core subjects in the Bachelor of Architecture program. Students work in groups to undertake the literature and context/site research phase of the project. They conduct the service user interviews and home visits in pairs. These findings are shared through studio presentations and documented in web folders on the Faculty server. Students undertake the project design individually, informed by shared investigations as well as progressive design studio interaction.

Student evaluations indicated that this course encouraged them to be self-directed learners and to learn how to apply their theoretical knowledge to developing a feasible project.

Source: ALTC Teaching Research Nexus website: [www.trnexus.edu.au](http://www.trnexus.edu.au)

### **Senior Capstone at Portland State University, US**

During the final year each undergraduate student is required to participate in a Senior Capstone, the culmination of the University Studies programme. The Senior Capstone is a community based learning experience that:

- Provides an opportunity for students to apply the expertise they have learned in their major to real issues and problems in the community;
- Enhances students' ability to work in a team context necessitating collaboration with persons from different fields of specialisation;
- Encourages students to become actively involved in this community.

Each student works with a team of students and faculty. Each Senior Capstone must result in some form of summation, closing project, or final product that puts closure to the students' experience. Senior Capstones vary in length ranging from one term to three terms, depending on the specific nature of the Capstone.

Sources: [www.pdx.edu/unst/senior-capstone](http://www.pdx.edu/unst/senior-capstone);  
[www.oirp.pdx.edu/portweb/published\\_pages/prototype/themes/cp/capstone/](http://www.oirp.pdx.edu/portweb/published_pages/prototype/themes/cp/capstone/)

### **Arts of Citizenship Program at the University of Michigan, US**

In this programme students combine learning and research with practical projects that enhance community life. Each year Arts of Citizenship directly sponsor 8-12 projects, and awards grants for another 8-12 projects. Projects in the arts, the humanities, and design are wide-ranging and include:

- In the Underground Railroad project, Arts of Citizenship has collaborated with the African American Cultural and Historical Museum of Washtenaw County to research 19th-century antislavery activism and African American community life in the area. The youth-oriented historical exhibit, *Midnight Journey*, has been displayed to over 20,000 people at schools, libraries, and museums in Michigan and Ontario.
- In partnership with Detroit's Mosaic Youth Theatre, Arts of Citizenship teams used oral history and archival research to help create *2001 Hastings Street*, a nationally touring musical drama about coming of age in 1940s Detroit. The production and an accompanying exhibit were part of the celebration of the Detroit's 300th anniversary in 2001.

David Scobey (2006), the key originator of this programme has now led its adaption to a whole institution initiative, and its adaption to other disciplines - The Harvard Center for Community Partnerships - at Bates College Maine.

Sources: [www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu/](http://www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu/) [www.bates.edu/harward-center.xml](http://www.bates.edu/harward-center.xml)

## Engaging students in planning and pitching workshop for innovative not-for-profit projects in UK

During the course of one day, a group of 21 students from Arts University College Bournemouth, Surrey University and University of the Arts London came together to work on planning, pitching and getting feedback on their ideas for not-for-profit creative projects. Students came from a range of subject disciplines (from Fine Art to Business Studies) and levels (from first year to MBA) and are working on a range of exciting, innovative not-for-profit projects. Together they:

- Visualised their project proposal in a series of creative exercises.
- Created action plans and gantt charts.
- Learned about special considerations for not-for-profit projects, such as applying for funding.
- Presented their project proposals to panels of experts drawn from leading not-for-profit organisations.
- Received advice about their project and how to make it happen.
- Networked with each other and fed back to one another about all the projects.

Source: <http://creativeinterventions.pbworks.com/Planning-and-pitching-workshop>

## Young Design Programme (YDP) case study

The aim of the YDP case study was to conduct an in-depth investigation of creative arts students' *experiences of WRL* during a small-group collaborative project situated within the *public sector*.

The Sorrell Foundation's Young Design Programme (YDP) 'joins up pupils in primary and secondary schools with students at university and designers in industry' (Sorrell Foundation, 2007, 2). The YDP is a 3-6 month annually-run project (since 2005) whereby a group of school pupils act as 'clients' by commissioning *a school design project*, and their 'consultants' are creative arts students at university who, in turn, are mentored by professional designers and architects.

The YDP has been developed and is run through a partnership between London-based *Sorrell Foundation* and the University of the Arts London. The Sorrell Foundation is a charitable organisation that was set up in 1999 to inspire creativity in young people and improve the quality of life through design. During the year 2007-8, six universities and colleges ran the programme: University of the Arts London; University College Falmouth; Leeds College of Art and Design; New College Nottingham; Kingston University and Plymouth College of Art and Design. In 2008-9, ten universities and colleges took part. A central Sorrell Foundation and University of the Arts London YDP team directs and coordinates the programme nationally, while a programme manager in each university or college is responsible for local delivery.

Source: [http://creativeinterventions.pbworks.com/Young-Design-Programme-\(YDP\)-case-study](http://creativeinterventions.pbworks.com/Young-Design-Programme-(YDP)-case-study)

**Participation and Community Engagement (PACE) units are to be a required component of every undergraduate degrees at Macquarie University, Australia**

The new Macquarie curriculum will see staff and students engage with local and international organisations as a part of the Participation and Community Engagement initiative (PACE). By working with community groups, corporations and organisations, Macquarie staff and students will foster personal and professional skills and contribute to community development. 'The aim is to give students experiential learning opportunities,' said Phil Voysey, Executive Officer, PACE, 'and to provide opportunities for them to apply what they learn in the classroom to real world situations. We want to provide a better educational experience for our students, one that's more relevant for them and one that will assist them in their transition from university to work.'

From 2012, Participation units will be a required component of every undergraduate degree. Students will have the opportunity to volunteer around the world, complete work related internships and contribute to research and community development. The units will be firmly grounded in an academic framework and students will have specific learning outcomes to achieve throughout their learning experience. Critical reflection will be an important element of Participation and in the future, Macquarie staff will receive toolkits and attend professional seminars to equip them with the skills to teach Participation units.

Source:

[http://www.staffnews.mq.edu.au/past\\_issues/past\\_stories/2009/2012\\_curriculum\\_introduces\\_participation\\_units](http://www.staffnews.mq.edu.au/past_issues/past_stories/2009/2012_curriculum_introduces_participation_units)

## **National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement**

The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement's vision is of a higher education sector making a vital, strategic and valued contribution to 21st-century society through its public engagement activity. We are working to help support universities to improve, value and increase the quantity and quality of their public engagement and embed it into their core practice.

The NCCPE is part of the National Beacons for Public Engagement initiative, funded by the UK Higher Education Councils, Research Councils UK and the Wellcome Trust.

The six Beacons are university-based collaborative centres that help support, recognise, reward and build capacity for public engagement work, based in: Newcastle and Durham, Manchester, CUE East UEA, UCL, Wales and Edinburgh.