

Evaluation of teaching support towards retention and success

-a work in progress-

Steve May

Structure of session

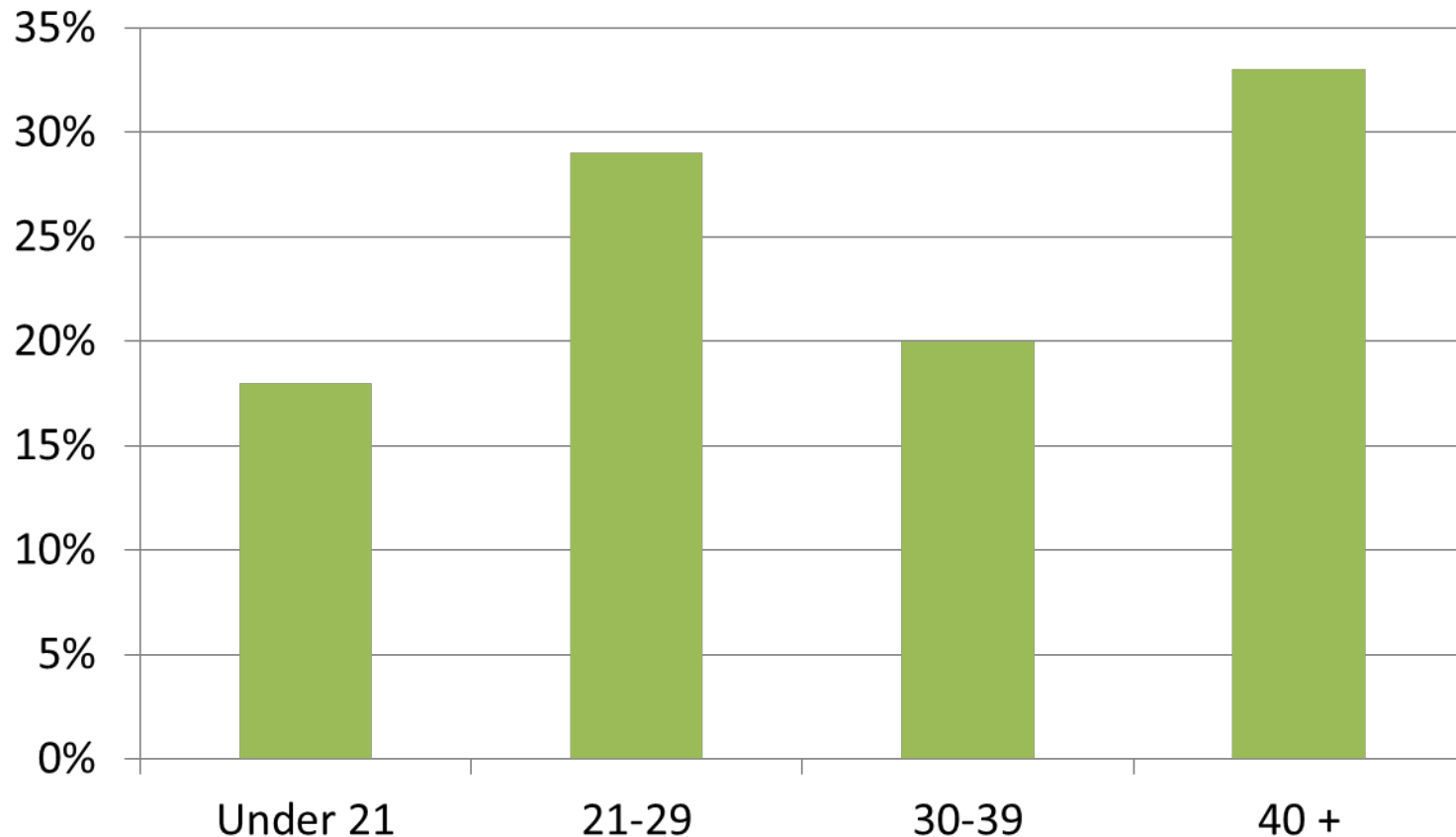
- GSM London – An alternative provider
- Organisation, staff and student profiles
- Strategic direction – growth and strengths
- The teaching development programme
- The literature and evaluation model
- Methods
- Early findings
- Next steps

GSM London: an alternative provider

- Not publically funded
- For Profit
- Similarities to Career Colleges in the US
- Very different profile from more traditional HEIs
- Students more diverse
- Teachers more diverse
- Issues around retention and achievement
- High staff turnover
- Very rapid growth

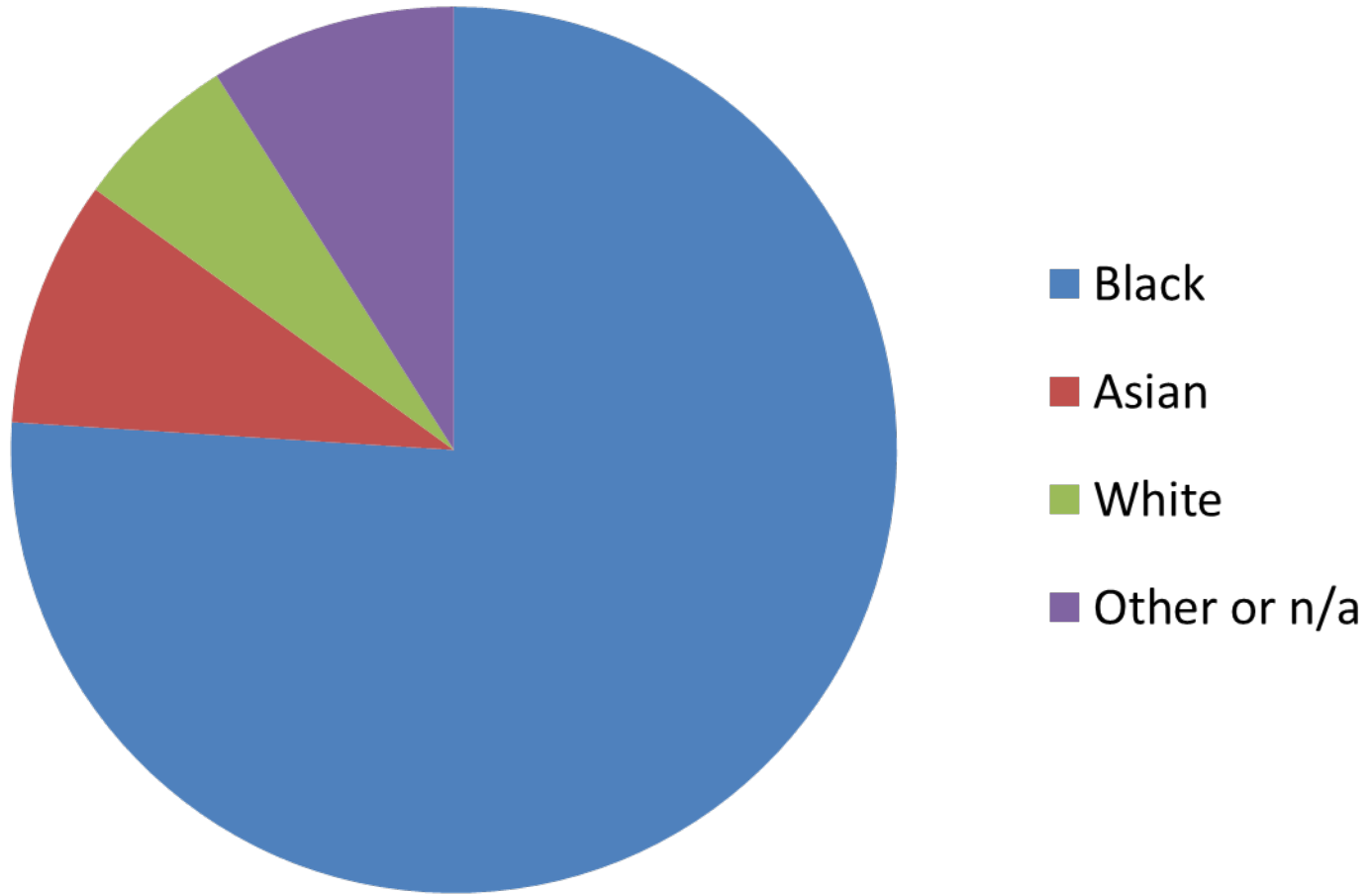
- GSM London is one of the largest providers of two-year accelerated undergraduate programmes in the UK
- Fees: £6,000/year for GSM London vs. £9,250/year for traditional providers
- Three intakes each academic year: October, February and June
- Entry level: 57% of students enrol at level 4, while 43% of students enrol at level 3 (year 0)

Student profile: Age on entry



Average age = 32yrs Female = 48% Male = 52%

Student profile: Ethnicity



Staff profile:

Permanent academic staff (~ 100):

- 12% are external examiners
- 23% hold HEA Fellowships (**with a further 42% currently undertaking an accredited programme**)
- 65% are members of professional bodies or learned societies
- **70% plus from minority ethnic groups – similar to the student body**

Strategic direction:

Growth:, 1,000 to 7,900 students over the last six years
(enrolled on nearly 40 programmes)

Away from a deficit model in which Students have ‘gaps’ or ‘significant weaknesses’ and need to spend most of their time in their areas of weakness, in order to achieve.

Towards a strengths model in which each student is recognised as having a number of naturally existing talents which are empowering and make it possible to master particular skillsets and move to higher levels of excellence and toward the fulfilment of potential (Gallup strengths model)

Building on IR towards a Strengths based approach

- In Support of Appreciative Inquiry (Bowen-Jones et al, 2014)

“seeks out the best of ‘what is’ in order to prompt the collective imagination to envision ‘what might be’”.

- Learning from the Best: Identifying the bright spots in university teaching (Bartle and Wilson, 2016)

‘Bright Spots’ approach to identify and disseminate good practice across Coventry University.

- A strengths based approach to widening participation students in higher education (Krutkowski, 2017)

“...not remediation but a strengths based approach has the strongest potential to enable students to better manage their weaknesses and become independent learner”

PGCHEP – Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice

Masters level programme accredited by the HEA, Module 1 – aligned to HEA Associate Fellowship; Module Two – aligned to HEA Fellowship

Structure

Module delivered in 3 blocks of 2 days each to accommodate the 3 semester model.

Learning outcomes:

1. Improvement of lecturers' skills
2. Improvement of lecturers' conceptions of teaching and learning
3. Consequent changes in students' learning

Evaluation – background literature Summary

- Deep learning in students beneficial to learning outcomes (Marton and Saljo 1984; Trigwell and Prosser 1991)
- Approaches to Teaching inventory developed and improved (Trigwell et al 2005)
- Training teachers can result in deeper approaches to learning for both teachers and the students they teach. (Gibbs and Coffey 2004).
- Surface approach to learning associated with teachers transmitting knowledge; deeper approach associated with a focus on changing student conceptions. (Trigwell et al 1999)
- Positive effects of pedagogical training identified in terms of student centred teaching and self efficacy for year long training courses but a small negative effect for short courses (Postareff et al 2007)
- Need for the use of a multi indicator strategy (Trigwell et al 2012)
- Formal recognition schemes for teacher training reinforces commitment to teaching and support student learning (van der Sluis et al 2017)

Evaluation Timetable

Date	Module 1	Evaluation of Module 1
Dec-16		Ethical approval sought
Jan-17	12-13 Jan T&L in HE Workshop	Approaches to Teaching Inventory QA for pre course perceptions
Feb-17 to Mar 17	Teaching log/peer observation +	
Apr-17	26-27 April T&L in HE Workshop	
May-17 to Jul-17	Teaching log/tutor observation +	Ethical approval granted
Aug-17	24-25 Aug T&L in HE Workshop	Approaches to Teaching Inventory QA for post course perceptions. Interviews with selected participants. Analysis of reflective logs
Sep-17 to Nov- 17		Analyse qualitative data using NVivo software.
Dec- 17		Final report for module 1 evaluation

Research Questions

Research question	Data source
1. What are the key issues perceived by participants to have an impact on their teaching?	Interview, reflective logs
2. In what ways has the programme changed participant planned approaches to teaching?	Approaches to teaching inventory, interview
3. What is the likely impact of the programme on engagement of students?	Interview, student records, NSS
4. What is the actual and perceived impact of the programme on the professional development of participants?	HR data, interviews

Approaches to Teaching inventory

Developed and improved (Trigwell & Prosser 2005). Questions designed to measure whether teaching tends towards being more information transmission/teacher-focused or conceptual change/student focussed. There are 22 questions in all.

Participant completed the questionnaire as the module started and again on completion. Result will be analysed for changes in approaches to learning.

Student Focussed Examples:

- I encourage students to restructure their existing knowledge in terms of the new ways of thinking about the subject that they will develop
- In teaching sessions for this subject, I deliberately provoke debate and discussion

Teacher Focussed Examples:

- In this subject my teaching focuses on the good presentation of information to students
- My teaching in this subject focuses on delivering what I know to the students

Reflective logs and interviews

- As part of their course, participants keep a reflective log to record issues, challenges and successes as they arise.
- These are being analysed using Nvivo software for themes related to the research questions.
- Interviews have been held with 6 participants during which ways in which the module has affected their approaches to teaching were explored.

Early Findings

- Wide variation in teacher/student focus
- Many other factors seem to influence perceptions
- Block structure not a problem
- Issues with autonomy
- Strong recognition of benefits to professional development

Next steps

- Results of ATI, interviews, and reflective logs are being analysed
- Module 2 to be evaluated next year
- Focus on student outcomes and actual professional development
- Findings to inform pedagogic development in GSM London context

References

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Questions?

Thanks for engaging!

For further information please do contact me...

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