



Notes from Collaborative Research Project Meeting

Wed 4 September, 2013
University of Exeter Business School

Initial department survey results

The following presented departmental reports from initial survey results and supporting information:

- Caroline Elliott, Lancaster University
- David McCausland, University of Aberdeen
- Cloda Jenkins, University College London
- Alvin Birdi, University of Bristol

These presentations, where not confidential to a department will be available from:

<http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/projects/research2013>

Next steps

Spring survey

The following was discussed:

- The value of being able to match student survey data to supporting data (e.g. exam results, assignment submission etc). If possible, it was agreed that ethical approval of doing this should be sought by participating institutions. This would also involve for participating institutions:
 - Taking student names/numbers as part of the survey
 - Making ethical approval a question on the survey

Further thought needs to be given to the following:

- Timing of the spring survey – if is just before exams, this could lead to different expectations, perspectives, study amounts etc
- Accounting for 21 year olds in the age question
- Including 'schools' as part of the 'Why did you choose your university?'
- If survey given during a revision class then should ask students whether they normally go to revision classes to account for selection bias
- Limiting the survey to 1st and 2nd years, not third years
- Asking students whether they have had gap year? And how much time they have spent previously working? (to help control for number of hours independent study?)

Focus groups

Running the focus groups it was agreed/suggested that:

- Stratified samples should be used – so for example the focus groups should include: Russell and non-Russel Group institutions; different areas of the UK etc and each group should account for: 1st years and 2nd years; EU, non-EU students etc
- That collaborative partners could run focus groups but in other institutions (so each focus group is run by someone independent)

Questions should include:

- If students are not attending lectures and not working – what are they doing? (e.g. Lancaster)
- What is it about maths that is 'too much' (is it not relevant, too hard etc)
- What are students expecting in terms of: relevance to the real world; skills development; quality of feedback; contact with lecturers
- How are students interpreting 'expectations' – this can be ambiguous as expectations could be low – not the same as satisfied
- How are students interpreting 'independent study'? – needs to be defined (e.g. study outside scheduled classes). (Could ask some students to keep a diary – to find out more about independent study etc)
- For 2nd year students ask about development of expectations – how have they changed