

Student engagement in the context of Commuter Students

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Overview

- Definitions
- Research design
- Analysis and Findings
- Conclusions and implications
- Recommendations

Definitions

- Student engagement for this research was defined broadly as:
 - i. *Academic*: Engagement in learning.
 - ii. *Enhancement*: Engagement in co-curricular and enhancement activities (including representation, curriculum design and leadership roles) which contribute to personal and professional development; and
 - iii. *Social*: Engagement in formal and informal sport, social and leisure activities with HE peers.
- Commuting students for this research was defined as:

Those who travel to their higher education provider (HEP) from their parental or family home, which they lived in prior to entering higher education -rather than having re-located to live in student accommodation (or close to the HEP) for the purposes of studying. This includes full-time and part-time, undergraduate and postgraduate, and in all disciplines and types of institution.

Research design

- Review of institutional documentation
- Sector-wide examples
- Institutional case studies
- Interviews with students
- Participatory workshop
- Ethics

Analysis and findings

- Student engagement
- Defining 'commuter students'
- Data collection
- Commuter students' views on commuting
- Academic engagement
- Enhancement
- Social engagement

Conclusions and implications

- Is commuting a barrier to engagement?
- What are the factors that inhibit engagement?
- Are commuter students unable or unwilling to engage?
- Do commuter students have lower rates of success in higher education?
- To what extent does lower academic, enhancement and/or social engagement explain differential outcomes?

Recommendations from this research

- The recommendations consider both:
 - What can be done to improve commuter students understanding of and ability to engage?
 - And how can and should higher education providers be more inclusive of commuter students?
- They are directed towards specific processes, and those actors who have responsibility for, or interest in them.

Discussion

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