Tool 7: Student Focus Group Discussion Guide

Guiding Questions for Student Feedback on Experiential Course Maps

How to Use This Guide

Student focus groups provide feedback on the look and feel of maps from a student perspective. Include a diverse group of students in focus groups to ensure maps resonate with a wide variety of students.

General questions (discuss before looking at a sample course map):

- How did you choose your current programme?

- What resources did you use during the process of selecting a programme? Which were most and least helpful?

- Were there certain resources that you wish had existed, or that existed but were insufficient, that could have helped you select your programme?

- Have you decided on a post-graduation career? How did you choose? Is this different from what you expected when you started university?

- What career planning resources did you use on campus? Which were most and least helpful?

- Do you think your programme will be important in your career choice? Why or why not?

- How important are career outcomes for you when choosing a programme?

- What information do you remember from induction events on choosing your modules and making post-graduation plans? What information do you wish you had learned?

Module requirements section feedback:

- Are there modules we should add or remove?

- What modules help students explore the programme?

- What modules help students get hands-on, applied, or project-based opportunities?

- Are there any modules that students usually take too early or too late?

Tool 7: Student Focus Group Discussion Guide

Guiding Questions for Student Feedback on Experiential Course Maps

Career preparation section feedback:

- What should students be talking about with their tutors each year to help them plan and prepare for life post-graduation?

- When should students meet with career advisors and what should they discuss each year?

- Are there other on-campus support offices or services students should know about?

- How can students work with their programme-specific academic tutor to learn about opportunities after graduation?

- What should students do to build deeper connections with academic mentors that will help them when it comes time to ask for letters of recommendation, networking connections, etc.?

Hands-on experience section feedback:

- What types of volunteer opportunities should students seek out to explore this programme and be more competitive in the job market?

    - When is the optimal time to volunteer?

    - Where should students look for these opportunities?

    - Are there any quirks specific to this field about how students should prepare and apply for volunteering?

- When should students seek out undergraduate research opportunities?

    - What undergraduate research opportunities should students in this programme know about? How do they find them?

- When should students get their first internship?

- What are the most common internship opportunities that students should know about? Where should students in this programme look for internships?

- Do students in your programme need to get work experience in the summer after their first year? What kind of experiences are typical?

- Do most students in your programme follow the same career path? Is it common to go to continue with further study or get additional certifications before starting a career?

- What are the most common places to find jobs after graduation? Are there any field-specific tips they should know about how to create a resume and apply for jobs?

Tool 7: Student Focus Group Discussion Guide

Guiding Questions for Student Feedback on Experiential Course Maps

Global and multicultural experience section feedback:

- What kinds of multicultural opportunities should we include on the map?

- Which study abroad options should we add to the map? Are there opportunities abroad that students should specifically consider if they are interested in this programme or a related career path?

Ensuring maps are inclusive for all students:

- Which clubs and associations are most important for students to join who are coming from nontraditional backgrounds (first-in-family, international, mature learners, etc.) or who are part of an identity group that is underrepresented on campus?

- Are there networking groups specifically for students of colour, women, LGTBQ students, and/or students with disabilities in this programme?

- Did we recommend any activities on the map that certain groups of students won't be able to access; for example, activities where finances may make it hard for students to participate? How can we make these activities more accessible?

- Are there bursaries or fellowships in this programme for students with financial barriers to participating in experiential learning? What should students know before applying?

- What resources (websites, offices, people, meetings) are available for nontraditional students in this programme?