



# Student Voices in Higher Education Conference Programme

AMPLIFYING STUDENT VOICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: The  
Power Student Feedback and AI



## About Explorance

[Explorance](#) empowers higher education institutions with next-generation feedback analytics to accelerate the insight-to-action cycle. As a collaborative partner, Explorance aligns with institutions that embrace a feedback culture, where open and courageous conversations are encouraged to drive purpose, impact and growth.

In an AI-driven world where feedback is a critical tool that can lead to improved decision-making, Explorance stands by the philosophy of “Feedback for the brave”. Committed to amplifying the voices of students, staff, and faculty, Explorance tailors its solutions for institutions to advance vital initiatives through student and employee feedback: Teaching Effectiveness, Learning Excellence, Student Experience and Staff Engagement.

To learn more, please visit [Explorance.com](https://Explorance.com) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [X](#).

We are excited to host the Student Voices in Higher Education conference, now in its second year, which provides a unique space for academic, professional and administrative teams to share best practice, insight and lessons learned from student voice initiatives, and ensure we all take active responsibility to gather and truly listen to student voices.

This conference brings together contributors and delegates with responsibility for strategic planning, teaching and learning, student experience, satisfaction and voice, quality assurance and enhancement, as well as course and module evaluation.

## Keynote Speakers



### **Eve Alcock, Director of Public Affairs, QAA**

As Director of Public Affairs at the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), the UK higher education sector's independent expert quality body, Eve leads the organisation's policy, stakeholder relationships and communications work. She has previously chaired QAA's Student Strategic Advisory Committee as an independent board member. Her background in the higher education sector comes from two years as President of the University of Bath Students' Union where she was also a governor of the University and Chair of the SU's Board of Trustees. She is also a Fellow on Aspen UK's Rising Leader fellowship programme.



### **Dr Charles Knight, Assistant Director, Knowledge & Innovation, AdvanceHE**

As Assistant Director of Knowledge & Innovation at Advance HE, a member-led charity of and for the sector that works with partners across the globe to improve higher education for staff, students and society, Charles leads a team of consultants to deliver thought leadership content, reports, events and consultancy services to various global university partners. Charles is an academic leader with a proven track record in delivery in the areas of learning and teaching. Prior to joining Advance HE, he was Associate Dean (Student Experience) at Salford Business School where he worked with colleagues to introduce a series of innovative practices including short technical qualifications, block teaching and an increased emphasis on the use of simulations and experimental learning. He was previously Associate Director (Learning & Teaching, Student Experience) at Edge Hill University.

# Agenda

Tuesday, 16 April | Day 1

Time	Session	Where
10:00-10:30	<b>Registration &amp; Morning Refreshments</b>	
10:30-10:45	<b>Conference Welcome</b> John Atherton, VP Sales - EMEA, <b>Explorance</b>	Main Room
10:45-11:15	<b>Keynote Address:</b> <b>Assurance and enhancement: effective student engagement, and why student voices matter</b> Eve Alcock, Director of Public Affairs, <b>QAA</b>	Main Room
11:15-12:00	<b>Shaping the Future of Education with Feedback Analytics</b> Samer Jaffar, General Manager - EMEA, <b>Explorance</b>	Main Room
12:00-13:00	<b>Networking lunch</b>	
13:00-13:45	<b>Enhancing the student voice at the University of Buckingham</b> Professor Harriet Dunbar-Morris, Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic, <b>University of Buckingham</b> Toluwani Osamolu, Vice President – Student Voice, <b>University of Buckingham Students' Union</b>	Main Room
13:00-13:45	<b>Integrating module evaluation at Kingston University</b> Rebecca Hampstead, Student Voice Manager, <b>Kingston University</b>	Breakout Room
13:45-14:00	<b>Networking break</b>	
14:00-15:00	<b>Leaders' Panel: How can we ensure that student voices inform and impact institutional strategic priorities for enhancing teaching effectiveness and student experience?</b> Professor Cassie Wilson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience), <b>University of Bath</b> Professor Harriet Dunbar-Morris, Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic, <b>University of Buckingham</b>	Main room

# Agenda

Tuesday, 16 April | Day 1 – Continued

Time	Session	Where
15:00-15:45	<p><b>Effective student feedback from a student perspective: issues, challenges, instruments, and opportunities</b></p> <p>Fiona Mcneill, Reader            Nikola Popovic, Senior Lecturer            Daisy Bao, PhD Student  <b>University of Edinburgh</b></p>	Main room
15:00-15:45	<p><b>What we learned from piloting a ‘one-stop shop’ approach to Student Voice</b></p> <p>Dr Richard Telling, Principal Lecturer (Student Experience Lead)            Jenny Paxman, Principal Lecturer (Food and Nutrition Subject Group Leader)  <b>Sheffield Hallam University</b></p>	Breakout room
15:45-16:00	<b>Networking break</b>	
16:00-16:45	<p><b>Next generation of feedback analytics</b></p> <p>Chris Slack, Solutions Engineer, <b>Explorance</b></p>	Main Room
16:45-17:00	<p><b>Day 1 closing remarks</b></p> <p>John Atherton, VP Sales – EMEA, <b>Explorance</b></p>	Main room
19:00	<b>Social event</b>	Main Room

# Agenda

Wednesday, 17 April | Day 2

Time	Session	Where
09:15-09:30	<b>Registration &amp; Morning Refreshments</b>	
09:30-10:00	<b>Keynote Address:</b> <b>Enhancing T&amp;L for student and institutional success: how AI can create unprecedented drivers for change</b> Dr Charles Knight, Assistant Director, Knowledge & Innovation, <b>AdvanceHE</b>	Main Room
10:00-10:45	<b>Student Representatives Panel: How can student voice can lead to more powerful solutions that address learning excellence, teaching effectiveness and student experience?</b> Lulu Chen, Education Officer, <b>Newcastle University Students' Union</b> Georgia Stephenson, Student Voice Coordinator, <b>University of York Students' Union</b> Simeon Anyalemechi, President, <b>University of Salford Students Union</b>	Main Room
10:45-11:45	<b>Structured networking break</b>	Main room
11:45-12:30	<b>Big data and learning analytics to support the student experience</b> Dr Camille Kandiko Howson, Associate Professor of Education, <b>Imperial College London</b>	Main Room
11:45-12:30	<b>An integrated approach to reflecting and acting on student voice; Strathclyde's Learning and Teaching Improvement Framework</b> Brian Green, Deputy Associate Principal (Academic Quality and Student Experience), <b>University of Strathclyde</b>	Breakout
12:30-13:30	<b>Networking lunch</b>	

# Agenda

Wednesday, 17 April | Day 2 – Continued

Time	Session	Where
13:30-14:15	<b>Explorance MLY: Leveraging AI to amplify student voice</b> Chris Slack, Solutions Engineer, <b>Explorance</b>	Main room
14:15-15:15	<b>AI Panel: Unlocking the power of open-ended student feedback for better decision making</b> Dr Charles Knight, Assistant Director, Knowledge & Innovation, <b>AdvanceHE</b> Sue Attewell, co-leader of National Centre for AI in tertiary education, <b>JISC</b>	Main room
15:15-15:30	<b>Networking break</b>	
15:30-16:15	<b>Using alternative implementations of surveys to support student voice</b> Carolyn Moir, Head of Student Evaluation and Enhancement, <b>University of Worcester</b>	Main Room
15:30-16:15	<b>Revolutionising student engagement through personalised feedback ecosystems</b> Nyasha Mutembwa, DUSA President, <b>Dundee University Students' Association</b>	Breakout room
16:15-16:30	<b>Conference Close: summary, key takeaways, Explorance World</b>	

## Descriptions: Keynote Speeches

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Assurance and enhancement: effective student engagement, and why student voices matter</b>
<b>Keynote Speaker:</b>	<b>Eve Alcock, Director of Public Affairs, QAA</b>
<p>This keynote will provide an update on QAA strategy 2023-27, particularly around Assurance and Enhancement. Within this, Eve will share her perspectives on effective student engagement, core practices around engaging students in the quality assurance and enhancement of their educational experience, and guiding principles on capturing student feedback through survey and course evaluations (including reporting outcomes back). She will also explore input to academic standards and institutional enhancement, as well as providing reflections on her time at the University of Bath Students' Union.</p>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Enhancing T&amp;L for student and institutional success: how AI can create unprecedented drivers for change</b>
<b>Keynote Speaker:</b>	<b>Dr Charles Knight, Assistant Director, Knowledge &amp; Innovation, AdvanceHE</b>
<p>This keynote will provide an update on AdvanceHE strategy, particularly around its commitment to enhance teaching and learning for student and institutional success. Within this, Charles will provide perspectives on the growth of AI and information revolution and how these create drivers for change, and how AdvanceHE is supporting individuals and institutions to develop digitally-enabled student learning experiences. He will explore why student voices and student feedback matter, including through surveys and programme evaluations, and promoting inclusive student success strategies that enhance the student experience and outcomes.</p>	



## Descriptions: Forum Discussions & Sessions

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Shaping the future of education with feedback analytics</b>
<b>Presenters:</b>	<b>Samer Jaffar, General Manager - EMEA, Explorance</b>
<p>In 2024, against the backdrop of a labour shortage and lower-than-usual enrollment, Samer Saab, the founder and CEO of Explorance, envisions a strategic turning point for higher education. This pivotal moment urges institutions to redefine their brand and attract students effectively as they grapple with the pressing need for change in the face of a continually dropping student enrollment landscape. Here are three pivotal trends subsequently identified by Samer Jaffar, GM - EMEA at Explorance, that will shape the educational landscape for the coming year.</p>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Enhancing the student voice at the University of Buckingham</b>
<b>Presenters:</b>	<b>Professor Harriet Dunbar-Morris, Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic, University of Buckingham Toluwani Osamolu, Vice President – Student Voice, University of Buckingham Students’ Union</b>
<p>At the University of Buckingham we have introduced a new role of Vice President Student Voice. The Vice President – Student Voice is working with the SU and the University to develop new approaches to capturing the student voice and feeding it into university and decision-making bodies. The new Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic, who brings experience of championing the student voice from her previous institutions, is working with the Vice-President Student Voice to draw on new ways and means to gather student feedback. This includes investigating the use of university survey mechanisms, AI, and other approaches in a university which is known for being a small, independent and disruptor institution. We will present our plans and our lessons learnt.</p>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Integrating module evaluation at Kingston University</b>
<b>Presenter:</b>	<b>Rebecca Hampstead, Student Voice Manager, Kingston University Dr Gavin Roffe, Planning Manager (Institutional Performance &amp; APP Metrics Lead), Kingston University</b>
<p>This session will look at Kingston University’s integrated approach to Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs). MEQs are an important means of collecting data and student feedback on modules and the student experience. But how best to use this data? At Kingston we take an integrated approach to systems, data and metrics. We will look at how the University has integrated the Explorance Blue software with our data warehouse, student records system and Canvas; how we have integrated MEQs into the Annual Monitoring and Enhancement process; and how we have integrated MEQs into the wider institutional conversation around metrics, both internal and external. Our approach has improved access to and understanding of our MEQ data, and how we have been able to improve the student experience as a result.</p>	

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Leaders' Panel: How can we ensure that student voices inform and impact institutional strategic priorities for enhancing teaching effectiveness and student experience?</b>
<b>Presenters:</b>	<b>Professor Cassie Wilson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience), University of Bath Professor Harriet Dunbar-Morris, Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic, University of Buckingham</b>

Are universities taking a robust and strategic approach to course/module evaluation and other student voice surveys? Does this approach explicitly support wider initiatives around student satisfaction, student engagement and the student experience? Is this creating a culture of continuous improvement across their institutions? This panel discussion will explore the views of senior leaders who are tasked with devising strategies around student voice. It will consider differentiated approaches to capturing, and responding to, student feedback, specific challenges and how these are being addressed, and seek to identify best practice on student voice policy and practice. It will make a case for consistency of approach to feedback and evaluation within institutions and across the higher education sector.

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Effective student feedback from a student perspective: issues, challenges, instruments, and opportunities</b>
<b>Presenter:</b>	<b>Fiona Mcneill, Reader, University of Edinburgh Nikola Popovic, Senior Lecturer, University of Edinburgh Daisy Bao, PhD Student, University of Edinburgh</b>

The provision of feedback to the institution has become a normal part of university life for students worldwide. Yet students often seem hesitant to feedback, as evidenced by poor engagement with feedback processes. This disengagement poses challenges for improving the student experience, building sustainable learning communities, and developing more humane institutions overall. We will present results of our recent Principal's Teaching Award Scheme-funded project, aimed at engaging stakeholders to share their own perceptions of feedback and co-create mechanisms for amplifying the student voice and closing the feedback loop. An integral part of the project, led by student interns, was the sampling of student perception through focus groups with students drawn from Schools across all three Colleges in the University. We will display and interpret findings from our focus group data which has been interwoven with insights gathered from interviews with key staff in the University.

<b>Title:</b>	<b>What we learned from piloting a 'one-stop shop' approach to student voice</b>
<b>Presenter:</b>	<b>Dr Richard Telling, Principal Lecturer (Student Experience Lead), Sheffield Hallam University Jenny Paxman, Principal Lecturer (Food and Nutrition Subject Group Leader), Sheffield Hallam University</b>

For the first time in the 2023-24 academic year, level 4 modules were taught sequentially in one department at Sheffield Hallam University. This decision was high risk but provided academic leaders with an opportunity to reimagine student voice processes. The department therefore piloted a half-day 'development session', a one-stop shop approach to all things student voice-related, midway through the semester. This presentation focuses on what the department learned from staging this intervention. Focus groups were conducted among level 4 students to learn whether they perceived the intervention

to be a useful one in raising, and responding to, their course-related concerns. To allow comparison, focus groups were also conducted among level 6 students for whom student voice mechanisms were administered business as usual. The intervention was delivered in February 2024 and we plan to share the outcomes, which we anticipate to be both positive and significant.

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Next generation of feedback analytics</b>
<b>Presenter:</b>	<b>Chris Slack, Solutions Engineer, Explorance</b>

Coming soon

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Student Representatives Panel: How can student voices can lead to more powerful solutions that support academic excellence and improve student experience?</b>
<b>Presenters:</b>	<b>Georgia Stephenson, Student Voice Coordinator, University of York Students' Union Lulu Chen, Education Officer, Newcastle University Students' Union</b>

Why is it important that universities invest time and effort in capturing student voice? How can they ensure that all student voices are heard? Do students understand how their feedback is being used, and does it make a difference? This panel discussion will gauge student leaders' own experience of course/module evaluation and other student voice surveys, how universities approach capturing student feedback, and what institutions could do differently going forward. It will also explore their expectations of universities in terms of responding to the student voice, how module evaluation feedback is being used to support quality assurance and quality enhancement processes, and the extent to which universities and student union teams are working in partnership on this agenda.

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Big data and learning analytics to support the student experience</b>
<b>Presenter:</b>	<b>Dr Camille Kandiko Howson, Associate Professor of Education, Imperial College London</b>

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and analytics are all the talk in higher education—causing the sector to rethink assessment and fret about plagiarism. But AI and learning analytics also offer the potential to address key questions about students' experiences—without having to survey them. This session will explore how data can unlock insights into how students are engaging on campus and on digital platforms, identify patterns of under—or over—engagement, and how sentiment analysis can be used to support student mental health and well-being.

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Explorance MLY: Leveraging AI to amplify student voice</b>
<b>Presenters:</b>	<b>Chris Slack, Solutions Engineer, Explorance</b>
Coming soon	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>AI Panel: Unlocking the power of open-ended student feedback for better decision making, and application to the NSS and beyond</b>
<b>Presenters:</b>	<b>Sue Attewell, co-leader of National Centre for AI in tertiary education, Jisc</b>
<p>One of the major challenges facing universities in capturing, and acting upon, student feedback is how they effectively analysis qualitative comments and open-ended feedback, and in doing so allowing institutions to act quickly. AI is transforming higher education at speed and for student voice presents a new opportunity in feedback analytics. Tools which distill data-driven actionable feedback from huge amounts of unstructured comments are emerging and being welcomed by the sector. This panel will explore AI to make a difference in teaching and learning. It will include universities' perspective on Explorance MLY, and how this is being applied to student voice surveys including module evaluation surveys, student intervention reviews and the National Student Survey (NSS).</p>	

**Title:** Using alternative implementations of surveys to support student voice

**Presenter:** Carolyn Moir, Head of Student Evaluation and Enhancement, University of Worcester

End-of-module evaluations are a sector standard for capturing student voice, however one size doesn't always fit all. The University of Worcester has been piloting some alternative approaches to module evaluation, including running a course rather than module-level survey, and taking a different approach to survey timing. The intention is to reduce the administrative effort required to chase response rates, and facilitate better access to surveys for large professional courses. The presentation will cover the approach taken in the pilots, together with an overview of outcomes to date and lessons learned. It will cover feedback from pilot groups and plans for further enhancements to the process.

**Title:** Revolutionising student engagement through personalised feedback ecosystem

**Presenter:** Nyasha Mutembwa, DUSA President, Dundee University Students' Association

Embark on an exhilarating exploration into the future of education, where the convergence of compensation, AI, and student-led initiatives forms a groundbreaking hypothesis for reshaping higher learning. Join us in unravelling the transformative potential of compensation as a catalyst, igniting an era where active student participation becomes the cornerstone of institutional development. Dive into the world of AI-driven personalised feedback ecosystems, envisioning a landscape where every student's journey is meticulously guided, correcting pitfalls in real-time and creating a dynamic learning experience. Picture a campus where incoming students are not just welcomed but immersed in projects championed by their peers, collectively shaping campus expectations. This session promises to spark your imagination, leaving you inspired by the prospect of an education system where every feedback loop is not merely closed but propels us towards an exciting future of continuous improvement, innovation, and student-centric excellence.



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