

Building a positive campus environment: Workshop Outline

Unpicking unconscious bias on campus through a temperature line of attributes, activities and characteristics

Overview

Use a series of workshops to help students unpick bias and preconceptions about what makes a positive campus environment.

Staff will use the workshop format below to conduct a series of workshops with different participant groups to identify how the interpretation of an attribute or characteristic can be interpreted differently dependent upon the group making the assessment and their collective background and experience.

These workshops can be conducted with

- Students
- University staff
- Local community groups

Sessions can be formatted into an exhibition to provoke further discussion among the university community. A curation team will be needed to complete set-up and event management.

Workshop/Salon Delivery

It is recommended that a minimum of three workshops are delivered to gain a range of views on the campus environment and what leads to it being a positive space. Each workshop should be comprised of different groups (these can be a combination of the groups noted above, or different 'teams' from one of the cohorts). All participants should complete the same activities and use the same set of attribute words to allow comparison and complexity to be drawn as part of the outputs.

Group format

There will be 9 - 12 participants in each group, supported by two scribes and two facilitators.

Scenarios for sessions

Each workshop will consider three campus scenarios, applying judgements on the attributes provided to the scenario considered and placing it along a temperature line with most negative at one end and most positive at the other. Attributes can be co-located. The scenarios can be varied according to institution. A base set of scenarios is provided below:

- Individual Study
- Group Study
- Social Campus

As groups complete the sessions please note that:

1. Spacing between attributes does not have to be constant along the line.
2. It is expected that groups will have different perceptions. There is no right or wrong answer, just individual and group interpretation of the assigned scenario.
3. Attributes can be co-located (parallel) on the line, if regarded as a unit or of comparable importance. An example of this may be food and drink.
4. The group will have opportunity to move attributes in the final activity, but reference to the starting point of the attribute should be kept so it can be noted if it moves up or down the line.

Equipment

- 3x attribute sets, laminated and colour-coded (the attribute word set used at Teesside can be found at Appendix 1)
- 3x 6m lines to place attributes on
- Enough floor or table space to complete the lines
- 3x line recording sheets to note where each attribute falls on the line
- Flip chart to record outputs of discussion

Session timings and activities

	Activity	Outputs	Timings
1	Icebreaker		5 mins
2	Review of the session terminology and agreed meanings (What is meant by...) and introduction of the temperature line	Session definitions	10 mins
3	Small group work (three small groups each considering one of the selected scenarios, each with an assigned facilitator) identifying where each set of words will go	Group identification of where words sit and why Identification of contestable items	15 mins
4	Group feedback to workshop on the line placement. - 3x groups to deliver feedback	Explanation of thinking behind placement	15 mins
5	Re-evaluating line placements and discussion - Group discussion on 3x lines, including movement of attributes as agreed - Opportunity to add in new attributes by consensus	Agreed final line placements of all attributes – discuss how attributes can be interpreted in different ways	15 mins

At the end of each session, photograph or write out each completed temperature line, with spacing recorded ready for delivery into the exhibition.

Make notes of any particular discussions around words to use as information bubbles alongside the main exhibition installation. Discussion points to guide this activity can be found at appendix 2

Creating your exhibition

Equipment

- 3x arches
- 6x balls of wool (2x 3 colours)
- Laminated and hole-punched attributes (9 sets, colour-coded by scenario – 3 of each)
- 9x temperature lines, approx. 6 metres each
- Laminated group identifiers: + end (red) and – end (blue)

Constructing the exhibition

1. Set up your arches
2. String the nine temperature lines along the arches to create the frame
3. Assign each temperature line a designation (individual/group/social, 1/2/3) and place the identifying placards at each end, one negative (blue) and one positive (red)
4. Using the line record sheets from the workshops, place each set of attributes along the corresponding attribute line. Ensure that each environment type (individual/group/social) has a consistent colour assigned to it.
5. Where words/attributes have been assigned equal importance by the group, these should be connected together on the temperature line to show parity. This can be done through creating an attribute triangle (connecting the words so they create a triangle from the same point), or creating an attribute ladder (words are hung from each other, and all then connected to a single point on the temperature line).
6. Once all nine lines are complete, use matching coloured wool to connect each individual attribute in each category, for example, the word 'food' may be connected by red wool to identify where it lies for each group in terms of individual study. Separate lines would connect the word 'food' for each of the social and group study lines. This will build the campus environment 'web'.
7. Once the web is complete, you may elect to place indicators for words that have been moved by group consensus. If placed, these should be in a fourth colour.
8. Complete exhibition information boards and place these with your exhibition.

Appendix 1

Attribute word set

1. Alcohol
2. Alone
3. Ask for help
4. Communication
5. Community
6. Connectivity
7. Debate
8. Diet
9. Drugs
10. Engage
11. Exercise
12. Faith
13. Family
14. Fight
15. Following
16. Food
17. Home
18. Inclusive
19. Media
20. Respect
21. Sleep
22. Study
23. Questioning
24. Quiet
25. Waiting

Appendix 2

Guiding the group discussions

1. Select two or three attributes for the group to discuss to get conversation flowing. It can be beneficial to use more controversial items in the list of attributes, such as 'drugs' and 'following' to open discussion.
 - a. Identify that words can have multiple meanings, and someone may interpret this differently from others. For example 'drugs' can be a reference to prescribed medication and so may not be viewed as negatively by some as others. The confusion that can arise from different word usage is part of the formation of the positive environment.
 - b. 'Following' is often regarded generationally, to follow someone can raise question about being followed home, but can as easily be a reference to linking up with someone on social media. Group understanding and interpretation of these attributes will contribute to their placement on the line, so this should be discussed at the end of the session.
2. Allow the participants to provide information on placement and movement and for others in the group to question prior to leaning on any particular attributes
3. Consider what cultural norms different participants bring to their interpretation and understanding of the attributes
4. Consider and identify any overarching institutional usage that can colour responses to the attributes in use.