

ECU LIBRARY STUDENTS AS PARTNERS FRAMEWORK

2023



Library Services Centre

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	01
Aims of the framework.....	02
Model for student-library partnership.....	03
Model for student-staff activities.....	04
Future Priorities.....	06
References.....	07

Introduction

ECU Library currently engages, works with, consults and partners with students in a number of ways including employing students; partnering with them to develop resources and services; consulting with them through interviews, focus groups and surveys on current and future Library design, resources and services; and partnering with them on Library projects that support their peers. Developing this framework allows the Library to take stock of how we currently work with students, identify any gaps or opportunities for partnering with students and to outline future priorities and strategies for partnering with students (Healey, Flint, Harrington, & van Dam, 2016).

Defining Students as Partners

CAUL has recently developed a [students as partners toolkit](#) which defines student partnerships and the types of student activities that can form partnerships between students and libraries.

A well-known definition for student as partners defines it as a:

“reciprocal process through which all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways, to curricular or pedagogical conceptualisation, decision-making, implementation, investigation, or analysis.” (Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten, 2014, p. 6-7).

Partnerships should also foster inclusive partnerships, nurture power-sharing relationships through dialogue and reflection and engage in ethical partnerships and enact partnership for transformation (Matthews, 2017).

In focus groups with students who work for the Library, students also discussed partnerships as being reciprocal and equal arrangements and opportunities as well as improving the student experience.

“Develop and improve student experience through engagement and equal opportunity by understanding inclusive and diverse needs, this contributes to positive and reciprocal outcomes.” - Focus group students

There are multiple benefits of student partnerships such as students gaining employability skills e.g. leadership and teamwork, as well as improved confidence in communication; and staff gaining the opportunity to engage with and learn directly from students in order to improve library spaces, services and resources.

Aims of the Framework

The framework aims to set out future priorities and ideas for the Library to partner with students. These priorities include:



Partnering with students to develop services



Partnering with students to co-design Library spaces



Increase opportunities for the Library to hire students, including students from diverse backgrounds



Increase opportunities to collaborate more with students in different areas of the Library



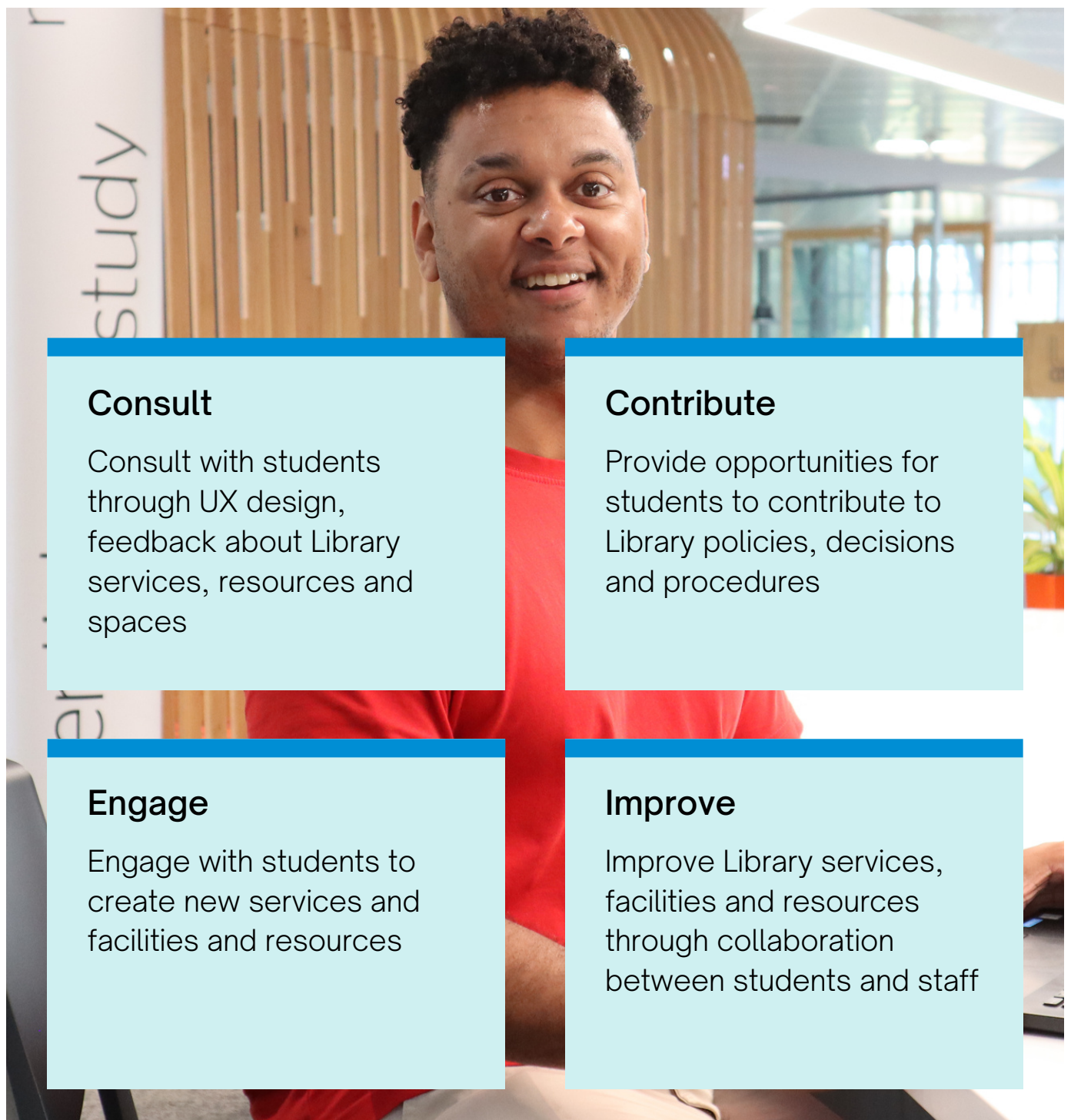
Increase student engagement with library staff and services



Incorporate the student voice in Library policies and procedures

Model for student-library partnership

The Library will Consult, Contribute, Engage and Improve.



Model for student-staff activities

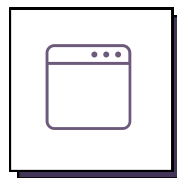
The below model is based on the CAUL students as partners suggested activities.

<https://caul.libguides.com/students-as-partners-toolkit/introduction-to-sap>

Students as consultants

In this approach, student partners are positioned as expert consultants and supported to help provide staff with feedback, guidance, or potential ideas. Consultancy does not need to be ongoing.

UX Design



Usability of resources and websites



Testing new resources



Library space design: Interviews and focus groups

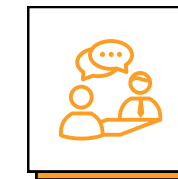
Student feedback



Website forms



Focus groups for new service ideas



Interviews on current services and facilities

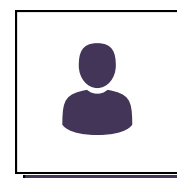


Collection development suggestions

Students as mentors

Students are positioned as ongoing mentors or experts that can, over time, help to mentor staff on what it's like to be a student. Creation of a student advisory group or student reference committee.

Library student committee



Student member on LCC



Formation of Library student committee

Student- staff mentoring



Informational sessions for student staff and Library staff



Ask a Librarian day

Students as co-creators

In this approach students and staff work together towards a specific output or outcome. For example, students and staff could collaboratively create learning resources, marketing materials, or co-draft new policies.

Co-design of spaces



New city campus
Library design



Existing library
spaces



Digital
environments

Co-design of services and events



Co-design of peer
assistant services
and resources



Library events
organised by
students

Students as co-leaders

Students are involved in activities where students and staff share the responsibility in directing, facilitating, or deciding work or initiatives.

Students and staff as co-researchers/mentors



Co-presentation
at conferences

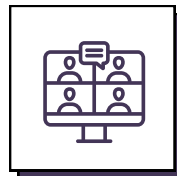


Students
conducting
data collection



Hiring students to
work on research
projects

Students and staff co-facilitating training workshops or events



Learning
technologies
workshops

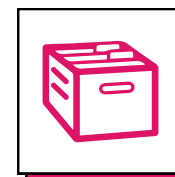


Orientation
sessions

Project work



Development of a
new resource e.g.
library guide



Archive
collection
management

Future priorities



Forming a consultative student Library committee with student volunteers



Developing a list of potential project ideas for student partnership



Reviewing the library peer assistant services for more opportunities for co-leading or mentoring



Employing more students to work in partnership with the Library



Incorporating more student voices in Library governance

References

Cook-Sather, A., Bovill, C., & Felten, P. (2014). *Engaging students as partners in learning and teaching: A guide for faculty*. John Wiley & Sons.

CAUL. (2022). *Students as partners toolkit*. <https://caul.libguides.com/students-as-partners-toolkit/introduction-to-sap>

Matthews, K. E. (2017). Five propositions for genuine students as partners practice. *International Journal for Students As Partners*, 1(2).
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