

STUDENTS AS CO-CREATORS - DEVELOPING METHODS FOR INCREASED STUDENT PARTICIPATION

About the project

The library received funds in 2014 for an educational development project to examine user participation methods that could be used in our teaching. We wanted to develop our teaching, and thought that the quality would be better if students participated more actively in the design of teaching activities around information searching. The project is also linked to the Malmö University strategy which states:

- Malmö University educational programmes shall be based on student learning by using student-active forms of learning and knowledge development, with the purpose of developing skills that are in demand in the global community.
- Malmö University students shall be actively stimulated to develop an ability to identify, initiate and lead processes of change that meet the challenges faced by society.

The project ran throughout 2014 and consisted of five librarians and two students who were paid for their work on the project. The project consisted of two parts: learning more about user participation and methods through reading and field trips and testing some of the methods on selected student groups.

Those highlighted were trialed during the project

Level of participation	Method examples
<p>Information Oneway communication, no room for students to suggest changes</p>	Information on the web, lms, printed material, e-mail etc.
<p>Consultation Students are allowed to have and express their opinions, and share their experiences and ideas. Teachers can use that as a basis for designing teaching.</p>	<p>Think-tank, questionnaire (as a basis for course planning), focus groups, evaluation after class (eg quick evaluation done by peer student on Facebook)</p>
<p>Dialogue Students are more active in expressing their opinions. The purpose is to have a dialogue where everyone can be heard.</p>	Reference group, unconference
<p>Collaboration Students participate in designing teaching, can take part and try things out. Students control some parts but not everything.</p>	Idea workshop/future workshop, students as part of working teams/project teams , courseplanning with teachers and students together
<p>Partnership Joint ownership. Students have the same overview and control as teachers.</p>	Student-led teaching, students develop and lead courses.



Think-tank
Questionnaire
Quick evaluation done by peer student on Facebook

Students as part of the project team

Why is it so difficult?

- Students not used to participating
- No participation culture
- Students need to have a view of learning that incorporates participation
- To participate students need to have a desire to invest in their education
- Librarians/Teachers need to have a "participation mindset"
- The library needs to have a clearer role as part of the education
- Big need for trust between teachers/librarians and students, students and students

What have we learned/gained?

- Lots of new ideas from our think-tank on how we could design our teaching
- Getting a student perspective if you're a librarian/ getting a teacher perspective if you're a student
- Exchange of knowledge and experiences between students and librarians