

To: Wendy Robinson - Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education
From: Harrison Stewart – Education Officer

Student Consultation in CTP

Dear Wendy,

I am writing to you to express the concerns of the student body regarding the university's approach to student consultation throughout the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP). CTP is by far the largest project Lancaster University has embarked on in recent history, yet the extent to which students have been involved in decision-making has been extremely poor.

In recent years, Lancaster University has engaged with students as an external and periphery stakeholder. Consultation, where it has occurred at all, has been momentary, transactional, and undertaken far too late for any feedback to have a material impact on proposals. Regrettably, Lancaster does not have a culture of meaningful engagement and inclusion of students as a valued and important internal stakeholder. In this regard, the institution is failing to future-proof change and is falling drastically behind sector norms.

This behaviour can be viewed throughout CTP. At institutional level, student consultation has been minimal. The university's efforts so far have been almost solely in the appointment of 'CTP Champions', who have been given trivial tasks like writing blog posts. Senior university staff members have attended some Faculty Forums, but the level of contact these people have had with students here is radically disproportionate to the scale of CTP. At departmental level, the approach to student consultation has been massively disparate, with many academics unaware and afraid as to what they can say to students due to poor communication institution wide.

Departments are not mandated to consult students when designing new programmes. As we rely solely on the goodwill of a few academics that recognise the importance of our voice, this disparate experience is set to continue. Further, with the university's reluctance to allow students to form part of the approvals process for new programmes, these programmes are likely to be waved through regardless of their shortcomings.

In light of the above, I formally request the following actions to be taken.

1. All departments must be required to have consulted students to a meaningful and substantial extent in the design stage if their new programmes are to be approved.
2. Students must be allowed to form an integral part of the approvals panel for each programme.

CTP continues to move at a dramatic pace, and so a swift approach to action is crucial to ensure that students are not failed again. I look forward to your response by Thursday 27th March.

Yours sincerely,



Harrison Stewart
Education Officer