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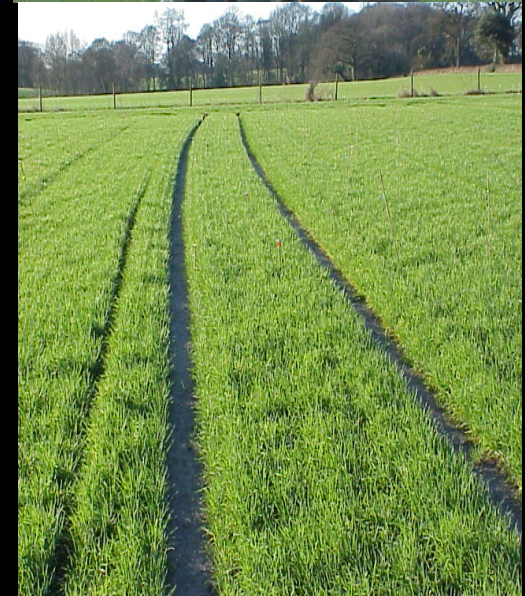
Manchester Metropolitan University

Students and Staff Staff – Research Research in Tandem

Background

Crucial relationship between research and learning. Needs to be positive/inclusive link

Requirement for strengthened visibility in many HE curricula (documentation / 'students eyes').

Conflict between viewpoints (e.g. "Do best researchers make best teachers?").

Case studies from a university for teaching and research(?)

(1) Research-based residential course used to develop pedagogic and subject research

(2) Final year U/G 'consultancy' unit

(3) Publishing from student projects

(1) Field Course

Students from 2+ universities
Staff from 3+ universities

Ecology, Environmental Biology, Behavioural, Biomedical etc.

Student projects and oral presentations

Staff write/edit/review papers together

L&T data generated several AML publications (PA/EBL)

Staff release (DS; research fellow at Edinburgh Uni)

During student research projects, staff openly carry out on research whilst there:

- writing papers

- primary data collection

- analyses ('new' software used for students from different universities)

 - subject and pedagogic

Current Work

In addition to subject research into spiders etc….

Continued insights into peer and self assessment (e.g. gender differences) and oral presentations

Incorporation of Index of Learning Styles (4 ordinal axes) into research into staff-student networks

Examining how Enquiry Based Learning works for different students, relate to (for e.g.) self evaluation and tutor/ peer fidelity. Use of 'Network Analysis'

Examples of 'key' moments

Introducing our research (enthusiasm, commitment, 'civilised')

Peer and self assessment - Meeting with random selection of students to devise assessment criteria (involvement/ experimental design)

EBL – Revealing ILS questionnaires, talking to students on completion of study

Perceived benefits

Observe networking

Busy staff during student projects

Hear / participate in discussions about research

Involvement with pedagogic research

Research-informed teaching

Realise staff interest in pedagogic research as well as subject research

Student Feedback

Generally very good for own work and participation in staff research (positive learning environment)

Enjoy autonomy of own projects but sometimes 'lost' at the start

Develop interests in staff research (final year projects)

Sometimes surprised (but pleased/ interested in) at pedagogical research

Publishing from student work (?)

On the plus side,

- Motivating
- Raise the bar
- Future prospects
- Own research

However,

- Quality
- Trust/ experience/ integrity
- Additional time

Successes on notice boards

69E3101
Agricultural Ecology

Built up over last decade

Students work for 'end-users' (and report back to them)

'Live' clients and questions
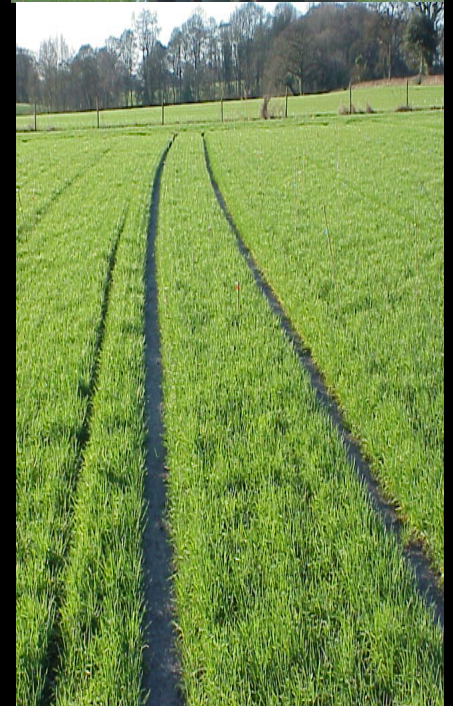(round table meetings – 'meet the suits')

Write using 'Instructions to Authors' (self and peer reviewed)

Unit used to develop new, funded research projects that students manage when course completed

Led to industry funded PhDs and several short (successful) consultancy projects

Vital experience (need experience to get experience)

Conclusions

Many students (and staff) respond well to being in a 'research environment'

This can be created in residential formats (and other?)

Research-centred teaching motivates some students (scares others?)

Teaching is a good forum to carry out research (e.g. pedagogy) particularly if used to aggregate staff / researchers from several institutions