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CITIZENSHIP IN THE UNITED KINGDOM HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR: THE OVERLOOKED OPPORTUNITY OF STUDENTS' UNIONS

by ANDREW ALAFON BLUNT

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment for the degree of Masters by Research

The University of Huddersfield

May 2012

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Abstract

The 1998 Crick Report argued for citizenship education to be taught in schools *and* post-16 education – a hope that has never been realised. This work undergoes an investigation into how citizenship education could potentially look within Higher Education Sector and the potential overlooked structure of the Students' Unions in aiding to deliver this programme.

This thesis undergoes a case study on Huddersfield University Students' Union to see if there is potential to facilitate citizenship learning and any evidence of citizenship ideals, practices and skills being learnt. This begins by looking at the academic debate on citizenship and citizenship education, outlining models that fit contemporary Britain and Higher Education, concluding with a communitarian approach with an experiential learning model for Higher Education based on successful programmes in the United States of America.

The organisation is analysed by looking at the purpose and structures of the organisation, cross analysing them with the model of experiential citizenship learning, as well as an investigation into whether citizenship learning can be evidenced to have happened without consciously aiming for it – all to ascertain the feasibility of the organisation's potential.

Ultimately this found that whilst the foundations were identifiable, there was little to demonstrate communitarian values, but instead neo-liberal values of individuality and markets could be seen at work in current structures.

Fundamentally, the findings of this thesis outline that whilst the programme has potential within the organisation, there are some significant road blocks to using the organisation to facilitate citizenship learning, most notably the Institution itself, as well as an acknowledgement that individual Students' Unions run very differently so further research would need to be undergone to ascertain the wider feasibility of the concept.

Introduction

> "If citizenship education is to be accepted as important, not only for schools but for the life of the nation, it must continue beyond the age of 16"
>
> (Section 5.5.8, Crick 1998: 28)

Since a report in 1998 on *Education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools* (Crick), commonly known as 'the Crick Report', was first published, it has set the tone for the teaching and implementation of citizenship, and its education of United Kingdom (UK) citizens for over a decade. However, the quote above is one of the underlying suggestions made by the Crick Report which has yet to be truly followed up. Some moves were made to incorporate some aspects of citizenship into further education (college), but it has never made it to the higher education agenda. This is all despite the report emphasising that "Preparation for citizenship clearly cannot end at age sixteen" (1998:28) and formally recommending that "[citizenship education] is extended into post-16 education and training as an entitlement for full-time students" (1998:28). Furthermore, two years later, Crick wrote that Higher Education should be included in this recommendation, and that he was "far from alone in arguing this" (Crick 2000b:145).

This outlines that in two short years, Crick was followed by a sizeable portion of the academic community in his belief that citizenship education must enter Higher Education. This premise is the prerequisite to this work, as citizens can stay in education up until a minimum of the age of twenty one, sometimes longer, and there is no account of citizenship learning or understanding in the highest sector in which they can excel, that of Higher Education.

Speaking in broad terms, however, citizenship at all levels of education is traditionally a subject-taught understanding and skill set which is sometimes then put into practice, often called experiential learning. This thesis aims to expose the existence of citizenship learning potential in the Higher Education sector as, looking specifically at the fact that Higher Education has the unique dynamic of a fully functioning and

legally required – according to the 1994 Education Act (DfE 1994: Part II, 20-22) – political organisation fully embedded into its structure in that of the Students' Union, which this thesis suggests may be an overlooked opportunity for furthering the citizenship agenda in Higher Education.

This is investigated beginning with Chapter 1 which outlines the citizenship debate in search of the citizenship approach that best fits contemporary society's wants and needs. Once outlining the approach, this thesis moves to Chapter 2 looking into citizenship education in the Higher Education sector, unpicking some of the research from implemented programmes in the United States of America (USA) aiming to create a model of best practice for citizenship learning within the Higher Education sector – as the learning is very different to tertiary education.

From there, this thesis undertakes a case study on the Huddersfield University Students' Union in Chapter 3, looking at the purpose of the organisation to see if the citizenship agenda can fit within its remit. Chapter 4 follows this with a structural analysis to attempt to outline whether the capacity to deliver citizenship learning was theoretically in place, followed by Chapter 5 which analyses some qualitative interviews of highly involved students and full time staff within the organisation to attempt to identify any current practice that could relate to the citizenship learning agenda as evidence for whether the Students' Union movement could take the proverbial citizenship learning torch into Higher Education – all of which is cross broken down in the final Chapter, the conclusion.

Methodology

The research for this thesis aims to outline a more in-depth case analysis of the Students' Union in the University of Huddersfield as the author is in a unique situation where he is on the Trustee Board for the charity organisation so can offer a further insight into the workings of the whole organisation. This could arguably give a substantive further bias towards the research as not only are case studies typically inherently biased (Flyvbjerg 2011), but the author is a representative of the organisation which could create further bias.

Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007) offer an outline of case studies strengths and weaknesses, suggesting their strengths are that typically they are: "illustrative, illuminating/insightful, disseminable, accessible, attention holding, strong on reality/vivid, of value in teaching" (2007:94). These characteristics perfectly fit the purpose of this research, despite the weaknesses, which are described as case studies are typically not "generalizable, representative, typical, replicable, repeatable". Throughout this thesis objectivity has attempted to be maintained during every process, but whilst there are inherent problems with this methodology, it is the position of this thesis that due to the amount of data that needs to be analysed, a case-by-case approach is the best method to begin research into the feasibility of Students' Unions taking on citizenship learning in Higher Education.

As a result of this study undergoing a single case study, as with all case studies, the wider community will appreciate that it will give 'concrete case knowledge' as opposed to 'general theoretical knowledge' that would be achieved by a quantitative study, meaning that the results cannot be generalised beyond the limits of this individual study (Flyvbjerg 2011). However, the purpose of this thesis is not to prove or disprove a theory, but to begin the research into whether Students' Unions are a potential overlooked opportunity for citizenship education within the Higher Education sector and question whether there are any signs that further research should be done.

The case study will work in three separate sections looking to answer the following three questions:

1. Does the facilitation of citizenship learning fall into the purpose of the Huddersfield Students' Union within its Higher Education Institution?
2. Does the student movement have the structures to facilitate the model of citizenship learning for Higher Education?
3. Can evidence of the utility of citizenship learning within the student movement be demonstrated?

Within these questions, the first looks at the strategic documents of the organisation and unpicks how Students' Unions work and whether the notion of citizenship learning can fit in to the purpose of the organisation – pulling on the experiences of the author to give an insight and working knowledge of how, if at all, the notion could fit into the purpose. This is done by a verbal account of how the most recent strategic map at Huddersfield University Students' Union was written, as the author was a key player in the working group that outlined and co-wrote the document. From there, the document and the reasoning behind it – outlined in the verbal account – are evaluated against the theory of citizenship learning, outlined in Chapter 2, to assess whether the purposes of the approach and the purpose of the Students' Union have any correlation. This will also assist in ensuring that the reader has a solid context of Huddersfield University Students' Union and how it works, which is pivotal in case study research understanding (Thomas 2011).

The second question looks at internal and external sources on Huddersfield University Students' Union to outline and analyse the structures within the organisation against the model of best practice for citizenship learning in the Higher Education sector, outlined in Chapter 2 of this thesis. This is done by outlining each structure's use and purpose, analysing how, if at all, this benefits the citizenship learning model and checking that these structures cover all of the necessities outlined by the citizenship learning model. Similar to the first question, this will also add to the reader's understanding of the case study offering further insight into the functionality of Huddersfield University Students' Union.

Finally, the third question analysed the recordings of semi-structured interviews with five involved students and five full time staff members within the organisation – ranging from elected executive officers to the senior management of the organisation (see Appendix 1 for example). These interviews were undertaken during the first term of the 2011/2012 academic year between September and November, but due to the nature of some of the topics, and the positions of those interviewed, their names have been kept anonymous.

The justification for using interviews for the third question is that, to quote Wellington and Szczerbinski, interviews "are the richest source of knowledge about people's understanding of themselves, and the life around them" (2007:91) which is fundamentally what the question aims to explore.

However, a look into the academic debate surrounding interviews paints a picture of disagreement on an ideological and a practical level. The main debate being between two trains of thought – positivist researchers and interpretivist researchers. Whilst it may be a slight oversimplification, the debate – in essence – characterises positivist researchers placing heavy emphasis on the reliability of research, whereas interpretivist researchers place it on the validity of research.

A positivist researcher would be focusing on ensuring that the results of their research are replicable, both scientific and objective and ultimately the results can be expressed in a quantitative form (McNeill & Chapman 2005). This is demonstrated by their strong advocacy of structured interviews with closed questions – this makes research standardised, repeatable with the same stimuli and leaves quantifiable results. Positivist researchers fundamentally disagree with the notion of an unstructured interview as "the possibility exists that somehow during the interview the interviewer influenced the respondent's perspective and responses in some way" (McNeill & Chapman 2005:59) which significantly threatens the reliability of the results.

Interpretivist researchers, however, look towards ensuring that the research brings about the most accurate information at the time of it being taken, not in a quantifiable state, but in as real a state as it can be – as everyone is very different and has very different experiences and opinions. This is demonstrated by their support of the

unstructured interview approach which from their perspective offers much more insight and a greater depth on information, allowing the respondent to say what they want on any given topic rather than having to fit into a predetermined response. Interpretivist researchers argue that structured interviews not only impose views on respondents, rather than exploring opinions, but they fundamentally define what is important in an interview (McNeill & Chapman 2005), whereas unstructured interviews allow for "unexpected, unanticipated and serendipitous responses may be forthcoming which reveal new lines of thinking in terms of relationships or hypotheses" (2005:58-59) allowing the interviewer to probe for a more deeper understanding of responses – something which a standardised responses undermine.

In light of the above debate, the decision was made that semi-structured interviews would be the best option for this research – a half-way house between the two approaches. This is due to the fact that the research aims to ascertain whether individuals who have engaged with the Huddersfield University Students' Union demonstrate any citizenship skills, practices and/or learning in action through their experiences. This will not be easily quantifiable, due to the wealth of different experiences within the student movement of a Higher Education Institution, so the potential that, should there be a need to, the interviewer could probe questions to gain further insight will hopefully bring addition and more valid insight to the research.

The semi-structured interviews will be analysed to identify themes outlined from the literature review in terms of identifying citizenship skills, practices and learning in action and reported theme by theme.

Ultimately the purpose of this work is not to measure whether citizenship learning already happens in all Students' Unions across the country, but instead to investigate whether Huddersfield University Students' Union, in particular, has the potential to facilitate citizenship learning and whether key characteristics could be identified in practice currently with no formal institutional understanding of the concept, to ascertain whether further research into the notion is viable across the wider the sector in the future.

Chapter 1: Citizenship, Citizenship Education and its place in Higher Education

Independent charity group 'Citizenship Foundation' suggests that the definition for active citizenry can be simply interpreted as "taking an active part in society" (Citizenship Foundation 2012), which, although it fits on a bumper sticker perfectly, does not entirely unpick what the term active citizen truly refers to in practice.

The starting point when discussing citizenship is that the term is what is referred to in philosophical discussions as an essentially contested concept, meaning that it is impossible to have one definition of citizenship due to the subjective nature of the term (cf. Gallie 1956a). With that in mind, the next section of this thesis aims to unpick the normative debate around the subject and contextualise this debate around the contemporary discussions and expectations of citizens and the concept of citizenship to ascertain what contemporary society means when they call for active citizens.

However, before we can truly understand the term active citizen, we need to unpick what citizenship is as the contested nature of active citizenship stems from the contested nature of citizenship.

So, what is citizenship?

As the normative political debate is plagued by political idealism – the result of which leads to the contested nature of the term – one of the best places to begin understanding citizenship is that of Ahier et al (2003) who attempt to build a sociological definition that articulates that citizenship is much more than a political theory, but that there are structures within society that shape relationships within society and thus cause citizenship to develop. Their sociological definition argues that citizenship can be codified into 5 fundamental elements: universality, the criterion of exclusion, a set of legally defined rights, a set of legally sanctioned obligations and a set of normatively sanctioned responsibilities.

The first element, universality, refers to the fact that in principle all rights, obligations and responsibilities related to citizenship apply equally amongst all of the citizens of a given society unless legitimately sanctioned. The second, the criterion of exclusion refers to the definition of both the internal and the external limitations of the application of the universality of citizenship, so as an example people who are not a member of society are excluded by being external and the disenfranchisement of criminals in prison being internal – in short it is the definition of where legally sanctioned inequality in citizenship is outlined. The third, a set of legally defined rights refers to those rights that citizens hold dear across western democracies such as free speech, but also includes crucial protections that citizens receive from the state such as civil liberties and in Britain's case the personal safety net of the welfare state. The fourth, a set of legally sanctioned obligations refers to the notion of what is expected back by the state from being a citizen such as paying taxes, the requirement to vote and in some extreme cases the requirement to fulfil conscription where necessary. Finally, the fifth, a set of normatively sanctioned responsibilities refers to the concept of the good or active citizen – what is expected from citizens to 'take an active part in their society' (Ahier et al 2003).

Ahier et al's approach outlines the context of the citizenship debate almost perfectly as it gives a good picture as to what citizenship entails and also helps the user isolate just exactly where the contention lies within the normative debate that makes the term citizenship become an essentially contested concept: namely the last three elements or rights, obligations and responsibilities – how far should they be extended, sanctioned and what exactly does each element entail.

Traditionally there have been two overarching theories of citizenship: civic republicanism and liberalism – both of which have been seen across the world in different time scales and have evolved consistently over time, changing drastically in some instances. Albeit this is significantly oversimplifying a massive debate, this oversimplification is proposed and explained rather accurately by leading citizenship historian, Derek Heater, "something of an oversimplification it may be, but it is most helpful to easy comprehension – not to mention quite fashionable – to distinguish between two traditions and interpretations of the nature of citizenship" (1999:4).

However, to assist us in the clarity on the classification of these theories, this thesis will first look at the approaches that emphasise the third and fourth elements of citizenship, rights and obligations, before then moving on to the approaches that place their emphasis on the fifth and final element, discussing the different approaches to responsibilities.

The rights and obligations debate

To codify all liberal perspectives under one banner to those that know the history of citizenship may well seem almost ludicrous – with both socialist and more conservative approaches all being under the banner of citizenship liberalism, as the theories can disagree almost as fiercely as liberals and civic republicans, however the internal disagreement is not the same as it is with civic republicanism. The internal disagreement is not between the different elements of citizenship as to where the emphasis should be, but within the same element such as the third element of a set of legally defined rights, which then can have a knock on effect of influencing the fourth element of a set of legally sanctioned obligations and even the fifth element of a set of normatively sanctioned responsibilities.

The classical liberalist approach is epitomised by that of John Locke and Thomas Paine who viewed the state as 'ever increasing' during the enlightenment and as a result outlined concepts such as civil rights to life, liberty and property as a means to protect oneself from the "arbitrary political power" of the state (Faulks 2000:56). Civil rights extends to the legal system and the right to legal justice, rights of free speech and to practice whatever religion one should so choose – so in short are to some extent the basis of contemporary rights in society today in our autonomous lives from the state. This approach in essence saw the individual and the community or society as being in opposition and argued that there should be an emphasis on rights to protect the latter from impinging too heavily on the former.

Eventually, with the turn of the 20th Century, the liberal approach saw a rise in political rights being embraced by the citizenry, alongside the well-established civil rights. One of the most instrumental of those was that of universal suffrage in the early-mid 20th Century as well as the formal approval of the ability for any citizen to

stand for public office (Marshall 1992). These developments extend the liberal argument somewhat as the approach is typically embedded in a rights focus. However, with universal suffrage and the expansion of the third element of citizenship of rights, the fourth element of obligations also expanded, with the expectation that all citizens would vote.

From this point liberalist citizenship theory was re-envisaged by T.H. Marshall who saw to extend the arsenal of citizens' rights with that of social rights to enable and in some cases guarantee the civil and political rights that were established previously. These social rights included the right to education, to enable equality; the right to public healthcare, to protect from sickness and enable the right to life for all; and the right of access to the welfare state, to ensure financial security from poverty (Marshall 1992). This shift in ideology saw the systematic expansion of citizens' rights and unlike Locke and Paine's classical concept saw the community and society as a means to protect the individual's rights.

At this point there was limited digression from these two proposals within liberalism – the classical and the socialist approaches – for quite some time, however, it was eventually argued that "at the turn of the millennium… it has become clear that Marshall's theory was overly optimistic about the effectiveness and longevity of social rights" (Faulks 2002:77-8).

This understanding and criticism of social liberalist theory led to theorists Robert Nozick and Friedrich Hayek outlining what is called the neo-liberalist response to the socialist underpinning of social liberalist thinking and attempted to re-define the rights-based argument by suggesting a prioritisation of rights (Faulks 2000). The neo-liberalist concept suggested that civil rights were natural, pre-political rights and that as such they were 'positive rights' for the individual, whereas social rights were 'negative rights' for the individual as there was a perception that they caused what was defined as a 'dependency culture' (Faulks 2000:64). As a result, this suggested re-prioritisation included a slight re-brand of civil rights, arguing that they were in actuality 'market rights' as the neo-liberalist approach enthused a heavy economic important to the individual in the then contemporary society and suggested, to some extent, that citizens should have an inherent individualistic consumer mentality when

interacting with the state. This approach could arguably be broken down to a community of consumerist individuals.

Arguably, these different approaches all have some form of flaw in their core – as the classic liberalist approach was seen wanting by the citizens of the time, it was built upon as an approach and a higher level of society expectation was encouraged through enhanced individual rights, which in turn led to the social liberalist approach. The social liberalist approach created a society where people not only depended on others, but left a perception that citizens seemingly expected society to ensure they had a good quality of life – something with which conservative critics and socialist critics alike disagree with. As a result, a hard right wing agenda came through the rights approach to battle this 'dependency culture' in the neo-liberalist approach. This, however, has seen what some critics have argued has led to a community of individuals once more which was the problem that led to social liberalism bringing citizenship theory and society at large back around in a giant sixty-year learning circle, only with a newly added consumer mentality embedded in the expectations of all citizens be it private or public expectations.

Suggestively, the history of liberalist citizenship thought in Britain has influenced society, our communities, national and local politics, and the welfare state somewhat negatively over time. This could well be attributed to the fact that it has been consistently a never ending battle of polarity – from one extreme to another each time the theories have developed (from individual to community, community back to individual). For this reason, the liberal debate has never truly balanced out long enough to see if it can really work.

The outlining factor of the liberalism debate, however, is that all three approaches emphasise the debate is about the third element of rights – they may differ on what rights and how far the rights go, but the debate is ultimately surrounding the individual rights of individuals within society. The fourth element of obligations equally differs, but mostly as a result of changes to the expectations of rights – ie social liberalism expects more rights to protect the individual and thus reduces obligations as the state picks up the slack, whereas neo-liberalism enthuses fewer

rights (to some extent) and as a result a higher level of obligations are expected from citizens as there is no state to pick up the slack.

The responsibilities debate

Liberalism has in actual fact been the dominant vein of citizenship in politics within the UK since its original creation or interpretation, however as a result of more recent political opinions on the success, or more importantly failures, of a society based on a liberal citizenship, there has been a significant shift in rhetoric of political elites away from rights, on to responsibilities. This rhetoric, in short, has turned towards the adoption of a more responsibility-focused style approach to citizenship, as can be seen with David Cameron's 'Big Society' project which aims to "galvanise social renewal" (Cameron 2009). In citizenship approach terms, this leads to more of a civic republican approach has becoming the central point for discussion and debate when discussing citizenship.

Civic republicanism differs from liberalism in that it does not have easily identifiable, quantifiable approaches, but rather it has evolutionary changes that have occurred from the classic Ancient Greek approach to the more recent break off approaches such as communitarianism. Part of this is that as liberalism has been the dominant force in citizenship debate for quite some time in the western world, there has been a seemingly limited expansion until the late 20th Century where the realisation was settling in that liberalism had, to some extent, failed as a concept for contemporary citizenship.

The classical approach to civic republicanism was founded by Aristotle and furthered by philosophers Machiavelli and Rousseau, but originated in Ancient Greece, introducing the logic that there was no space for apathy within society and in some instances that should a citizen deny their society of their impact on the community, then they were deemed to be betraying their social contract with their society (Faulks 2000, Heater 1999). Rousseau went on to distinguish between the natural citizen, those who achieved via a pursuit of self-interest, and the civil citizen, those who achieved through a pursuit of self-interest merged with public duty (Faulks 1998) outlining the key factor in civic republican thought – the public duty. Rousseau's argument also

furthered the concept that by embracing the civil citizen, the civic republican model of citizenship would disband the old notion of the 'them and us' when referring to government and citizens, a notion that is typical of the liberalist train of thought.

This theory is somewhat dated, however, as it was outlined in its primary form prior to universal suffrage, but the expectation on citizens is well established as including direct political participation in society from all members of society – which whilst it is impossible to do this well in contemporary societies, the theory could well be adapted towards contemporary political processes. Classic civic republicans do, however, emphasise quite heavily that managing the sustainability of the size of communities must be taken in to account under this approach to citizenship (Heater 1999, Faulks 1998). Arguably later theorists such as Montesquieu who influenced the American federal state formation show a systematic attempt to characterise and manage this factor in the civic republican process – and something that could well be attributed to a perceived heightened sense of citizenship in the United States as a result (Heater 1999).

The civic republican theory is best described to be "based upon the premise that citizens recognize and understand what their duties are and have a sense of moral obligation instilled into them to discharge these responsibilities" (Heater 1999:64). Should a citizen not be willing to protect their society, then the society could fall apart around them or be subject to attack from other societies. Should a citizen not be willing to engage in civic affairs, democracy is threatened and the prospect of tyranny may well be allowed to rove free. Should a citizen embrace the obligations of activities such as jury service, they will be reminded of their responsibilities to society through other citizens' misgivings and (in theory) maintain a positive activity in their own lives. Ultimately this approach to citizenship saw the community and the citizen as being indivisible – which is why the approach is so completely different from the liberal approaches which emphasise individual relationships. These responsibilities are what separates civic republicanism from liberalism: enhanced interactivity with society and a direct involvement in the democratic and societal process – all of which place a heavy emphasis towards engaging in your responsibilities within the community (the fifth element of citizenship) rather than emphasising what the

community can and cannot do to you and your life (the third and fourth elements of citizenship).

More recent developments of civic republican theory have moved away from the classic civic republican concept above to a more 'neo-republican' approach which in short aimed to address a perception of political disillusionment, as noted by Benjamin Barber (cf. Sinopoli 1992), as well as a perceived weakening feeling of community in modern societies, deemed to be the fault of liberal citizenship being in practice for so long (cf. Dagger 1997).

The neo-republican approach in essence attempts to galvanise the communities within society into responsibility-focused actions. Organisations such as the Community Service Network who attempted to engage the youth of Britain in community activism are a prime example of this concept in action, as are neighbourhood watch schemes, school governing bodies and local environment protection groups – all of which could arguably be branded as neo-republican ideals-based activities (Heater 1999). The argument for these activities being neo-republican is mostly due to their underlying purpose: firstly each of the activities is intrinsically good for the community – engaging citizens in the safety of their own communities, the governing of their local schools, and the protection of the aspects of society that they hold dear – but further than that they each embed this concept of responsibility-focused action in that it is the citizens' community to run as they see fit, so long as they are willing to give something back in exchange.

Under this notion, should a group of citizens decide that a local environment area should be protected, then they should mobilise and get active towards the initial and prolonged protection of said environment – the same goes for all of the neo-republican activities. This approach is somewhat similar to classical civic republican thought, only it makes a small tweak to the notion of what direct democracy entails as a responsibility of citizens towards society – moving towards a notion of being active within your community and democracy. This tweak to the classic notion of civic republicanism is mostly an update to maintain contemporary relevance of the theory, but still maintaining the train of thought's heavy emphasis on the community above individuality and the fifth element of citizenship.

However, as is noted by citizenship historian Derek Heater, these activities and strategies of neo-republican thought were "only touching the surface of the issue" (1999:77) when talking about both the perception of political disillusionment and the perceived breakdown of society – possibly best articulated by British philosopher Phillip Blond as an "increasingly fragmented, disempowered and isolated citizenry" (2009). As such, other theories such as communitarianism have emerged to deal with the complexities of republican thought to contemporary society – such as that of direct democracy which even in neo-republican thought is still maintained as being essential (although it is under a slightly different interpretation) – which this thesis will now look in to.

The communitarian approach, championed by political thinkers such as Amitai Etzioni and Michael Sandel, is deemed the next big step in the responsibility debate and is often misinterpreted as a part of republicanism, but in fact the two theories are not overly synonymous with each other – communitarian thinkers did embrace the civic republican ideals of community-centric citizenship, emphasising the community over the individual, however omitted the proposition that citizenship is inherently about direct political participation – a pillar stone of civic republican and neo-republican thought regarding citizenship activism.

Etzioni believed that protection of individual rights and aspirations was paramount, but that they should be blended together with a sense of community (Etzioni 1993) ie it is not just the right to your individual free speech, but the right of different ideas, ideals and concepts from the community to speak out to benefit the community and society as a whole. The emphasis on the communitarian approach was to re-balance the scales between the third, fourth and fifth elements of citizenship after what was perceived to be a systematic reduction in civil duty actions after decades of neo-liberalism based citizenship ideology proposing individualism to be above the notion of community (Heater 1999). The notion of communitarianism had underpinnings of restoring family values, emphasising the need for an end to confrontational politics and a further need to emphasise and drive community cohesion and togetherness – creating communities within society (Etzioni 1993). Further to that, Etzioni later emphasised that society relied on three pillars: a somewhat 'maximin' state; well

developed, active markets and a vibrant community encapsulating the concept of mutuality; and that with these three pillars society could truly become progressive and develop in a communitarian way (Etzioni 2000).

The differences between these responsibility-focused approaches is arguably down to the concept of direct involvement in democracy, and what it relates to, and the central republican theme for freedom as Rousseau is famously quoted for that "this means nothing less than that he will be forced to be free" (cited in Russell 2004:633) being a centre-piece of the theory which communitarianism does not necessarily agree with. However, all three of the responsibility-focused approaches do have a similar focus in that their aims are to engage citizens in their responsibilities or civic duties as a part of the wider community that they live in, but differ on how dictatorial (to some extent) their approach is – with civic republicanism and neo-republicanism being much more dictatorial in comparison to communitarianism being much more relaxed about the 'how' (cf. Heater 1999, Aristotle 1948, Rousseau 1968).

Similar to the rights-centric approaches, however, the responsibility-focused approaches have some significant criticism, on both the integration and the functionality of the 'general will' concept, combined with the elitism systematically built into the foundations of the approaches (Heater 1999). As an example, critics that follow the philosophy of the liberal thinker John Stuart Mill would argue that such concepts as the general will would fall perfectly in line with his concept of 'the tyranny of the majority' which argues that in democracy the minority groups are habitually underrepresented and overruled by that of the majority – typically associated with that of the white male citizens (Mill 1991). This tyranny of the majority is made more evident in republican thought as by definition participating in democracy directly (as is expected of citizens through republicanism) is typically perceived as an elitist activity.

Further to this point, all republican, responsibility-focused approaches to citizenship tend to be written and tailored towards men – specifically men of high stature. Formal politics is for the few, and civic republicanism especially does not acknowledge public participation such as pressure group activity, trade union activity or even charity work as contributing towards society. Feminists critics such as Ruth Lister

argue that republicanism is inherently flawed due to its origins and the cornerstone concept of direct democracy participation fundamentally undermines the approach as even the evolved forms of neo-republicanism and communitarianism outline a somewhat patriarchal-sense of citizenship activities such as standing for public office which typically "men find it easier and more congenial to involve themselves" (Heater 1999:74), and excludes the act of housekeeping or child upbringing as an act of active citizenry despite it being essential to nurture the next generation of citizens (Lister 1998, Heater 1999). When this criticism is joined by the rhetoric of family values of communitarianism, some see these approaches as signifying the "retying of apron-strings" (Heater 1999:78) and a backwards step for equality in society the picture of republicanism being effective to contemporary society seems to get even bleaker.

However, with these criticisms in mind, the concepts of communitarianism often shine through in contemporary political rhetoric. As mentioned earlier, the cornerstone principles of communitarianism are essentially: restoring family values, ending confrontational politics and creating communities within society – all based around a renewed, or newly forged, sense of duty towards society. This is not quite contemporary in the precise modern setting, even John Major in his 'back to basics' speech showed a significant move towards some of these values coming through talking about family values and 'neighbourliness' (Macintyre 1993). The rhetoric of ending 'Punch and Judy politics' which came from David Cameron perfectly embodies the notion of ending confrontational politics – another principle of communitarianism – despite the notions seeming unpopularity with the already politically engaged as noted by Olly Grender (2011). Family values is something that both Tony Blair and David Cameron have professed in recent years and the notion of creating communities is rife in the works of Phillip Blond, which has heavily influenced David Cameron's notion of the Big Society (cf. Blond 2009, Cameron 2009).

Where does this take citizenship?

Going through the ins and outs of every type of citizenship could well be a doctoral research thesis in and of itself, but the previous sections briefly discussing the theories

have outlined how some of the most typical approaches apply to the five elements of Ahier et al's theory of citizenship and each have their own merit. However, when you look at the theories in modern day, it is the communitarian approach which seems to fit the needs of society to date, as well as the rhetoric of the political elite. This approach does have some significant criticisms, such as the equality concerns and the perception of what constitutes active citizenry, but more fundamentally the notion of casting a re-balance between all of the elements of citizenship, with an emphasis around the three pillars of citizenship, as stated earlier, of 'a somewhat 'maximin' state; well developed, active markets and a vibrant community encapsulating the concept of mutuality'. Furthermore, this approach seeming to be the most influential to contemporary society stems from a somewhat recent report by the Institute for Public Policy Research, which outlined that citizens do expect more active citizens within their communities and to have opportunities to do so themselves (IPPR PWC 2010), which when tied in to issues with a perceived democratic deficit within the UK found by a recent study which illustrates just how low the level of political understanding is in this country, and demonstrated a sincere lack of trust in the democratic process (Pattie et al 2004) there is definitely a feeling from the research that something needs to be done to improve citizenship engagement in the UK.

With this wider context in mind, it is worth addressing the key criticisms of the communitarian approach, which could well be deemed a subjective concern as from the point of view of this thesis, activities traditionally deemed 'matriarchal activities' such as raising the next generation of citizens is not only an active citizenry act, but a fundamental building block contributing towards an active society – although this stance could well be a testament to just how far the notion of citizenship is truly an essentially contested concept. Essentially, the majority of the responsibility-focused approaches outline the fact that for active citizenship to be instilled effectively within society, the concepts must be taught throughout our upbringing – and arguably the home environment is just as important as the educational curricular towards the overall development of a new mind.

In practice, with the changes in citizenship rhetoric and policy, the citizenry of contemporary Britain is a mixed bag of new age communitarian, mixed with old news neo-liberalist and even older social liberalist citizens – leading towards a split in

society between the stuck in their way ‘me me me’ culture liberalists and citizens enacting the societal change that a communitarianism community asks for. When politicians talk of changing this dynamic, of engaging society and ‘creating communities’ they are in effect talking about emphasising a notion of a good or active citizen that would help enable this change in the citizenry and this is, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, decidedly best placed to happen during our education.

Citizenship Education

The practical notion of citizenship education aiming to create active citizens through our state-provided education system in the UK comes from a report by Sir Bernard Crick entitled ‘Educating for citizenship and teaching of democracy in schools’ which suggests a responsibility-focused approach to citizenship education in the UK curricular (Crick 1998). For Crick, this was an opportunity to revive and ensure the relevance of civic republican theory towards contemporary society, emphasising participation in the community and the discussion of real issues that affect society, whilst adding in some more neo-republican or communitarian pluralist notions of community (Crick 2007) – creating, to some extent, his own form of responsibility-based citizenship.

Arguably, Crick would always have embraced a responsibility-based citizenship approach in his research into teaching democracy as there are very few rights-based thinkers that have ever suggested the notion of teaching citizenship – it is significantly a concept stemmed from, and embedded into, the civic republican, responsibility-based train of thought and often condemned by Liberal thinkers as it is impinging upon a young individuals’ rights by indoctrinating the youth within society (Faulks 2006, Crick 2007). In an objective sense, the same could well be said for all education, but when it comes to political education the subject tends to become more sensitive and emotional. However, from Aristotle and Cicero, to Machiavelli and Rousseau, educating the next generation on being a ‘good’ or ‘active’ citizen has been a fundamental pillar stone of applying responsibility-based theory and realising the potential of a more balanced approach to citizenship – and more active, virtuous citizens (Heater 1999, Faulks 1998, Faulks 2000).

Unlike Crick's initial report, this thesis has chosen to champion the responsibility-based communitarian approach to citizenship – as the civic republican notion has seen significant criticism and in general no longer fits British society as an approach, if it ever did. As a result of this agreement on the communitarian approach the notion of educating tomorrow's citizens is pivotal to the advancement of society and therefore, the notion of active citizenship and citizenship education is essential to how it operates in practice.

The underlying purpose of citizenship education is an attempt at passing on the notion of what a good citizenship is and enthusing the participants in engaging with the processes of 'active citizenship'. Liberal approaches typically argue that a good citizen is one who embraces and upholds their rights (Heater 1999, Faulks 2000), although citizenship historian and political thinker Keith Faulks goes one step further suggesting that a neo-liberal approach would outline active citizenry as the following:

> "a law abiding, materially successfully individual who was willing and able to exploit the opportunities created by the promotion of market rights, while demonstrating occasional compassion for those less fortunate than themselves"
>
> (Faulks 2006:125)

However, the republican and communitarian approaches go much more beyond this concept suggesting that a good citizen, is an active citizen – a direct contrast from the above definition as it could well end up with 'passive' good citizens. This distinction is seen in almost all responsibility-based citizenship approach literature (cf. Etzioni 1993, 2000, Heater 1999, Faulks 1996, 2000, 2006, Blond 2009a) and came through systematically by the mind behind the formal teaching of citizenship education in Britain Sir Bernand Crick.

Crick's original stance outlined a methodology behind ensuring effective education for citizenship – one that comprised of three separate, but inter-related strands. Firstly, ensuring social and moral understandings and behaviour towards authority figures and towards fellow citizens; secondly ensuring the concept of benefitting your community through involvement and service to the community; and thirdly, ensuring contribution

to public life through knowledge, skills and values. These are often summarised as "social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy" (Crick 1998:8) – each of these can easily fall within the communitarian approach towards citizenship. However, these ideals did not come out of nowhere, they were each underpinned by a sizeable amount of research, beginning with T.H. Marshall's three elements of citizenship (1992), investigating how the civil, the political and the social elements of citizenship had been used since their origins – noting a heavy emphasis on the civil, with rights and duties behind at the height of citizenship conversation, and further noting the drastic change in mentality of the political elites from a 'state welfare provision and responsibility' to a more 'community and individual responsibility' approach – which has only grown stronger since the original report. Furthermore, the report notes that the political element of citizenship has seemingly been taken for granted over the year, which has led to a slight democratic deficit as demonstrated in research from Pattie et al earlier in this thesis. The respect for law is something that came through quite clearly in the report, suggesting that not only was an appreciation of law essential for an active citizen, but that an understanding of the difference between law and justice was essential, as was the skill set to appreciate that citizens can change laws where needed if the citizen felt injustice was happening. Finally, Crick noted that for active citizenship to truly work there must be a habitual interaction between the civil, the political and the social elements of citizenship equally – something that citizen education was outlined to aim to address.

Each of these ideals embedded within citizenship education fits perfectly into the communitarian approach as it does the civic republican approach, but the communitarian focus shifts slightly from the politically involved and engaged to the politically engaged, but more community involved – which still fits in to the Crick model quite easily. Citizenship education, however, has been put into practice for quite some time since the Crick report, but the focus of this thesis is not to look at citizenship education implementation as a whole, but more focus towards one aspect, or more one proposition from the Crick Report which in actuality has seen limited progress in the UK – the proposition that citizenship education "must continue beyond the age of 16" (Crick 1998:28). Suggestibly, this proposition could well be interpreted

as Further Education, in the 16-18 age bracket, but arguably this could also relate to Higher Education – an untapped educational resource regarding citizenship.

Chapter 2: Citizenship education in the Higher Education Sector

> "Universities are part of society and, in both senses of the word, a critical part which should be playing a major role in the wider objectives of creating a citizenship culture. I am now far from alone in arguing this"
>
> (Crick, 2000b:145)

As Crick comments just two short years after releasing the Crick Report, there is a wide acknowledgement across the academic world that citizenship education can – and to some extent should – be followed through into Higher Education, with agreements in principle traversing the Atlantic from the UK to the United States (Ahier et al 2003; Ehrlich 2000).

However, this proposition seemingly does not appear on formal policy of higher educational research – even Universities UK and their publication of their 'Universities and Communities' research (CVCP 1994) does not adhere to any form of civic role within the educational structure of Higher Education. Further to that the government white thesis 'the future of higher education' similarly makes no comment on the civic role of Higher Education Institutions, but instead looks at the funding agreement for Higher Education, emphasising business partnerships and increased use of technology within the sector, but nothing on paying back (Annette 2005).

Interestingly, it is often forgotten within the UK Higher Education sector that the particularly Scottish universities, but also some English universities, once placed a heavy emphasis in their education on a graduate's civic role within society as well as embedding moral philosophy into most discourses, lasting until the changes to Higher Education in the twentieth century where educational practice moved to more formal academic disciplines and the eventual emergence of the research model of universities, which changed the landscape even further (Davie 1961, Winch 1978). Arguably, the Robbins Report in 1963 (HMSO 1963) when discussing the expansion of Higher Education maintained a suggestive commitment to the civic purpose of Higher Education – a proposition that was omitted from in the next major document

on Higher Education reform, the Dearing Report in 1997. The Dearing Report did attempt to instil better practice in the teaching of key skills and learning through 'work related or community based learning' (cf. Annette 2005), and even suggested the use of different pedagogies such as David Kolb's experiential learning cycle for learning these key skills – a very distinct move away from the traditional Higher Education approach to teaching and learning, but added nothing to the civic role of Higher Education.

The picture in the UK is somewhat dim in comparison to the work in the USA. Across the Atlantic it is worth noting that the national organisation 'Campus Compact' have done a significant amount of work on the civic role of Higher Education – most fundamentally the organisation established the 'Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education' in 1999 which was co-written by Elizabeth Hollander, the executive director of Campus Compact, and theorist Thomas Ehrlich of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as well as help and advice from various Presidents of Higher Education Institutions (Campus Compact 2012). The declaration is an agreement by all who sign it to embed citizenship teaching into the learning at their Higher Education Institutions and to date has the signatures of five hundred and sixty five different college and university Presidents (Campus Compact 2012).

Critics and proposers alike have watched this programme slowly develop across the USA, with one of the more forthright critics being that of Stanley Fish in his book 'Save the world on your own time' (2008). In his criticisms, Fish argues that the staff of Higher Education Institutions mislead the sector by pushing their own personal goals through the purpose structure of higher education that have caused this shift away from Higher Education's true purpose. For him, the only legitimate goal of a Higher Education Institution is that of engaging its students with new knowledge and ideologies to further their knowledge base. This one legitimate goal is, however, expanded to incorporate the teaching of the skills that students will need to help them engage with these materials, such as analytical thinking.

Nevertheless, Fish does not necessarily disagree with the proposition that higher education institutions can, and do, have attributes of civic duty inherently built into

them that furthers the student experience away from just education in a specific field, instead he simply argues that Higher Education Institutions should not *aim* for these 'illegitimate outcomes', and leave it to happen by proxy as a *bi-product* of empowering their students with knowledge (Fish 2008). Under this understanding, students are free to choose their own purpose after gaining new knowledge, rather than being pigeonholed into championing their lecturer's personal goals.

However, co-founder of the declaration Thomas Ehrlich directly contradicts Fish's stance suggesting that Higher Education cannot just be about acquiring a database of facts, but that "education is not complete until students not only have acquired knowledge, but can act on that knowledge in the world; thus the scope of learning outcomes must include… values-based aspects of competence" (Ehrlich et al 2000:xxix). For Ehrlich, values such as 'occupational competence', 'consideration of judgement', 'the appreciation of ends as well as means' and 'the broad implications and consequences of one's actions and choices' are all integral towards utilising the knowledge that you acquire in Higher Education within society and the wider world.

From this debate, one of the most serious questions of recent events as to whether citizenship education should be a part of Higher Education in the UK goes beyond the theory of academia, but down to a moral question as to the changes in the funding structure in 2012, students would then be expected to foot the entire bill of their Higher Education themselves – with that in mind should they be paying back if no one is paying for them as society has done in the past? When taking Ehrlich's point into account, and that of a number of other academics that would agree to the opinion that without the key skill underpinnings suggested above, the learning process for Higher Education does not bring about the student's potential (cf. Annette 2005), arguably the teaching of citizenship education – and the skill sets involved in such – enhances the student experience whilst studying in a Higher Education Institution and therefore, is beneficial to the 'customer' (as it were). The only question in the view of this thesis, is how this process should be undertaken as, arguably, as a 'customer' the student should have the right not to engage in such activity should they decide to do so – which throws a metaphorical spanner in the works.

How should Citizenship Education work within the Higher Education sector?

The notion of citizenship education within the Higher Education sector is no new concept, there has been numerous studies outside of the UK that demonstrate their use and effectiveness. Therefore, it would be prudent to look at the work currently being done to attempt to ascertain an elective, yet useful and embedded approach to citizenship learning – as well as the best methodology being used to attempt to create a model of what it should look like to analyse against in the case study work later in this thesis. Thomas Ehrlich has suggested that there is sizeable research in the USA as to how this process is undergone and what makes it effective. In fact, during case work research, Ehrlich and Anne Colby have argued that "many colleges and universities have made very serious commitments to this kind of work… [but] have focused their efforts on particular programs or activities that do not affect most undergraduates" (Ehrlich et al 2000:xxxiii) which to some extent outlines what types of programmes would be acceptable in the UK Higher Education sector.

In terms of how these programmes are working, despite being across the Atlantic, they follow a similar methodology to that which Crick refers to in the Crick Report, which is using service learning – based upon the principles of David Kolb's learning cycle which is now embedded into higher education and professional development across the board (Annette 2005). Programmes were also typically founded in the work of John Dewey's pragmatic education, which has seemingly influenced the development of citizenship in Higher Education through experiential learning (Ryan 1997, Annette 2005). As Annette notes: "what is particularly important about this pragmatic tradition of thought is how it has encouraged academics in higher education to periodically rethink the 'liberal education' curriculum and to consider how through forms of active, problem-based, and service learning it can encourage the moral and civic education of undergraduates" (Annette 2005:331).

This approach to teaching citizenship is used at all levels of education and can be called 'active learning in the community', 'community based learning' or 'service learning' (Annette 1999, 2003, 2005), however, irrelevant of the name used it all equates to a similar process, in that the learning happens whilst actively engaging with a subject – and the key element of the learning cycle relates to the reflection on the

activity. In essence, Kolb's learning cycle dictates that there are four stages in the experiential learning process: the first stage is 'immediate concrete experience' this relates to personal experience of something, which then forms the basis for the second stage, 'observation and reflection' of the experience. Upon reflecting on the experience, the third stage of 'abstract conceptualisation' comes into play, which is where the reflections are formed into a theory or hypothesis which then leads to 'active experimentation' on the experience – creating new experiences and better understanding on the concepts involved (Kolb 1984). Arguably for Crick, this process is inept without some form of classroom to tie together the learning as he outlines in an article following up the Crick Report (Crick 2007), but Kolb's original theory does not outline this as an explicit requirement, so long as the activity and the reflections are beneficial.

This emphasis on the beneficial has been outlined by Ehrlich and Colby who undertook formal research in 2003 entitled 'higher education and the development of moral and civic capacity' which has found that citizenship learning happens through 'political engagement' (Annette 2005), a marked distinction from civic engagement. Civic engagement implies more of a community-based volunteering approach that does not necessarily tap in to the political literacy element of citizenship. This gap in the application of citizenship education from the civic to the political is outlined in one of Crick's follow up articles from the Crick Report, 'Citizenship: the political and the democratic' (2007) which outlines what Crick articulates as 'A Goodly Example' of a citizenship project where students in a school-based citizenship project decided to put on an entertainment evening for a local charitably-ran residential home for the elderly. Whilst Crick acknowledges that this project was in fact a 'goodly act' for the local community – it does not have the political underpinnings that would benefit a wider citizenship education objective. Crick argues that this was due to a lack of curriculum-based discussion on the 'whys' regarding residential homes and why this particular one was ran as a charity and not a part of state provision etc (Crick 2007).

Whilst Crick's argument does have a significant amount of validity – suggesting that without the theoretical underpinning the activity will not have the required effect or learning experience, it is the opinion of Ehrlich and Colby that actually utilising different methods will achieve that result so long as structured reflection is adequately

embedded in the project. Some of the methods suggested are ‘student leadership education’, ‘active and problem-based learning’, ‘service learning’ to ‘issues-based democratic deliberative forums’ (Annette 2005). These approaches have been seen utilised in conjunction in the USA as the emphasis has been to forge a link between citizenship education and these approaches within different programmes (Guarasci and Cornwall 1997, Reeher and Cammarano 1997, Rimmerman 1997, Annette 2005).

The key to these approaches, as mentioned earlier, is that of embedding and reflection – Ehrlich goes so far as to suggest that “important advantages are lost unless community service is linked to academic study through structured reflection. Without the reflection, community service often has little lasting impact on students… [and] is often viewed by faculty members as simply one more extra-curricular activity, like sport, not central to education” (Ehrlich et all 2000: xxxix). Arguably, extra-curriculars – depending on the degree – can be appreciated or despised by academics, which Ehrlich et al see as a significant barrier, but also the threat of reducing active citizenship to just volunteering is seen by academics such as Sir Bernard Crick to be one of the biggest threats to citizenship education (Crick 2002).

However, one of the main barriers towards avoiding this ‘threat’ is that which has been seen by research which indicates that young people are increasingly interested in being involved with their communities, but are alienated from formal politics in the USA (Hall and Hall 2002) – something that is backed up by qualitative research from Ahier et al in the UK, which indicated that students within Higher Education Sectors were more willing to engage in their communities, but found formal politics to be inaccessible (Ahier et al 2003). Interestingly, initial findings of the research of Ehrlich et al has indicated that learning skills of “negotiation, consensus building, public speaking, fiscal management, and the like” are not only directly transferable, but are dubbed by the participants to be ‘the most powerful of their college experiences’ (Ehrlich et al 2000:xxxv) which to some extent alleviates the worry of the political and civic engagement divide.

Were Ehrlich et al’s model to be understood to be correct, one of the products of their research has led to a rudimentary model, based on best practice from the various Higher Education Institutions in the USA that they have visited, which could well

help us in defining a model for useful citizenship education strategic planning in the Higher Education sector. Firstly, the concepts of "personal integrity, social responsibility, and civic and political engagement and leadership" (Ehrlich et al 2000: xxxiii) must be strategically linked in to the vision, mission and values of the organisations involved. Secondly, the senior management or governing bodies within the organisations involved must be in agreement of the importance of the projects, and with this agreement be willing to resource them effectively where necessary. Finally, for the citizenship education to be effective it must come from a variety of different approaches overlapping with communication between the approaches to enhance the cohesion of the overall programme. Some of the highlighted approaches by the research are those of: student leadership programmes, student campus and community involvement projects and peer assisted learning systems.

A citizenship learning model for Higher Education in the UK

From the research and the best practice that can be seen within it, this thesis suggests that there are a number of criteria for a successful programme, with a limited number of requirements for it to be both fair and effective. These criteria are as follows:

- Utility of the experiential learning cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation.
- Emphasis on political engagement activity, rather than civic engagement activity, where viable.
- Embedding into a formal academic structure with heavy emphasis placed on the reflection of the activities.
- The activities within the programme should look towards building key skills to assist in citizenship activity in the future.
- A variety of different types of activities to attract a wide audience.
- The programme needs to be embedded, but elective.

This model of citizenship learning within the Higher Education sector should provide the framework for effective citizenship learning – a testament that this thesis will now look to investigate.

Chapter 3: Citizenship and contemporary Higher Education

With the outline of what an effective citizenship learning model would look like, this thesis will now undergo research into contemporary Higher Education and focus on the student movement as an example of citizenship learning in practice. This research aims to ask three main questions:

Firstly:

> *Does the facilitation of citizenship learning fall into the purpose of the Huddersfield Students' Union within its Higher Education Institution?*

Secondly:

> *Does the student movement have the structures to facilitate the model of citizenship learning for Higher Education?*

Thirdly:

> *Can evidence of the utility of citizenship learning within the student movement be demonstrated?*

As mentioned in the methodology section of this thesis, each of these questions shall be looked at within the confines of the University of Huddersfield's student movement, the Huddersfield Students' Union, as this thesis has a unique insight into how the student movement works within the institution and access to all of the information required for an in depth analysis of the organisation.

Can citizenship fit into the purpose of Huddersfield University Students' Union?

Higher Education Institutions typically offer various volunteering programmes within their institutions such as widening participation schemes, local community volunteering programmes and so on, which are open to all students who attend the institution and could arguably offer some citizenship learning in and of itself – but they are not consistent across the sector and thus institutions would offer differing levels of effective citizenship learning. The belief of this thesis, however, is that every Higher Education Institution has one formal active student organisation in common: a

(typically) functioning political entity that is openly accessible to every student within the institution to the point of use – that of the student movement. Sometimes called Student Guilds or Associations, but traditionally called Students' Unions, each offer a variety of political involvement, pseudo-political involvement and society-focused activities for the students within the Higher Education Institution. This next section aims to unpick whether the notion of experiential learning of citizenship can fit into the purpose of Huddersfield Students' Union – which involves starting at the core of the documents within the organisation and the student movement as a whole.

The Purpose of a Students' Union

In general, Students' Unions are an institutional organisation based within Higher Education Institutions that lead and represent the student voice (the opinions and beliefs of students) within the institution to the governing bodies of the institution and beyond – often campaigning or lobbying for the outcomes that the student voice desires or aspires towards. As mentioned earlier, Students' Unions can be called Students' Guilds or Students' Associations, and usually perceive their students at the institution as 'members', rather than simply students (cf. HMSO 1994: Part II, 20). Typically students are 'members' of their institution's Students' Union unless on registration they choose to opt out of the Union. However, legally if a student chooses this option, they cannot be "unfairly disadvantaged, with regard to the provision of services or otherwise" (HMSO 1994: Part II, 22:2c). This in essence means that whether a student is a member of the Students' Union or not, they must still be entitled to almost everything that a member is entitled to – the main, if not only exception, is that a non-member cannot stand for a leadership role within the organisation, or have a say on who fills them. As a result, the Students' Union within an institution is an actuality subject to the needs and opinions of all of the students studying at the institution, irrelevant of membership status – a complicated if not contradictory concept.

Further to their institutional activities, Students' Unions are also generally in a situation where they act as one sole entity at an institutional and sometimes local level, but habitually a part of the broader national representation is in that of the National Union of Students which typically Students' Unions are a member of. The relationship between the national body and the individual organisation is similar to

that of the student and the Students' Union, in that individual organisations can choose to opt out of the national movement should they so choose.

In terms of how Students' Unions are governed, typically they will have permanent staff members, the amount of which is subject to individual organisational funding limitations, as well as some form of elected student representative that legally has to be done elected in a cross-campus secret ballot of all members (HMSO 1994: Part II, 22:2d), but again the amount of which is subject to funding. These elected leaders hold office for no more than two years and are subject to internal governing frameworks outlined in a legally binding, written constitution (HMSO 1994: Part II, 22:2a). As for the functionality of Students' Unions, it is typical for the elected officers to be trustees of the organisation, and as such are members of the organisation's Board of Trustees, which has 'external trustee members' to be the ultimate checks and balances of the organisation. This Board of Trustees will appoint a General Manager or Chief Executive who is a full time staff member who manages the staff and services. However, in a somewhat complex relationship, the elected officers are technically the face of the organisation and the superior decision makers on all day-to-day operations, with permanent staff members there to offer advice and counsel to these traditionally inexperienced, but democratically elected leaders.

As the leaders of an organisation within the institution that represents the student voice, it is the job of these 'elected officers' to work with, or in some instances adversarially against, the institution towards realising the wants and or needs of the student voice. This relationship can be significantly complicated as across the national landscape Students' Unions are usually funded by the Institution, as it is a legal requirement to have one, but are yet separate and work as a kind of watchdog over institutional structures and services.

Finally, Students' Unions are increasingly in recent years filing to be registered charities, under the 2006 Charities Act, as they are in effect aiming to raise money to redirect towards the advancement of education in their members, which falls within part 1.2.2.b of the act (Charity Commission 2006). This was a result of the Charity Commission's guidance paper in 2008 which outlined how Students' Unions could and should register (Charity Commission 2008). This is an interesting change in the

dynamic of Students' Unions functionality compared to the earlier student movement as it consolidates what Students' Unions can and can't do by adding in an 'ultra vires' dynamic – technically cutting off some of the more civic-natured campaigns that Students' Unions have traditionally engaged with.

Case Study: Huddersfield University Students' Union

In the case of Huddersfield, their formal title is Huddersfield University Students' Union and they are a part of the National Union of Students – in fact due to the size of the institution the University of Huddersfield Students' Union actually pays the highest rate of affiliation fees to the National Union of Students due to student numbers. Furthermore, Huddersfield University Students' Union is a registered charity.

The governing of the Huddersfield Students' Union, similar to all Students' Unions, is not an overly simple process. Altogether, the organisation has a team of twenty two permanent full-time staff members, four permanent part-time staff members and some hundred or more part-time non-permanent student staff (Appendix 1). In this they have a Chief Executive and a senior management team of 3.5 staff members who work with five elected student officers towards managing the day-to-day goings on of the organisation. The strategic and longer term planning of the organisation, however, is co-ordinated by their Board of Trustees which sees five trustees who are external to the organisation and the five internal trustees (who are the elected student officers).

Beyond the staffing structure, however, the true purpose and running of the organisation can be garnered from what Huddersfield University Students' Union calls their 'strategy map' (Appendix 2, Appendix 3), which outlines their 'vision, mission and values' as well as their strategic direction. This strategy map is the most important document within the organisation as if an activity, action or function does not fall within those outlined by this document, the implication is that the organisation does not do them. Arguably, the most influential part of the strategy map is the mission statement "working together to make student life better". As with all major charity organisations, the mission statement aims to perfectly outline what the organisation will, or sometimes more importantly, will not do – and Huddersfield

University Students' Union's is no exception as the mantra of the organisation's management structure is that if something we do, or are going to do, does not fit within this statement, then the organisation should rethink whether it should do it or not.

From A to B of a strategy map

One of the unique dynamics to the author's experience of Students' Unions is that as an elected officer within Huddersfield University Students' Union, the current vision, mission and values were outlined and developed during their tenure. The following is an account of how the working group went from start to finish on the creation of their strategy map, and the justification for it. As mentioned above, if an activity does not fall within the strategy map then it is not to be followed, so the map must be analysed to ascertain whether citizenship learning can fit within the structure as this is the fundamental hurdle that the hypothesis of Students' Unions facilitating citizenship learning must overcome.

When designing a strategic plan for a charitable organisation, such as a Students' Union, the foundation of the discussion always begins at the basics – what is the organisation's *core* purpose and what does enabling that core purpose entail? In the author's experience with the discussion in the strategic planning working group, this core purpose was characterised as 'representation', as would be the same for most Students' Unions across the country as ultimately representing students' wants and needs to the University is their fundamental reasoning for existence – not, as a significant portion of the student world would assume, to function as a licensed premise.

With representation – in the wider society and in the world of Students' Unions – comes democracy, as representation must be safe guarded with an element of accountability. Students' Union representation comes in a number of forms – to be further outlined in Chapter 4 – but typically range from course representation, to demographic representation, to representation as a whole. All of these tend to have democratic accountability built in to ensure the fundamental purpose of representation is not undermined, in the case of Huddersfield University Students' Union this comes

in the form of ‘Union Council’ a fully functioning decision-making body which holds the majority of the highest level of representation to account for their actions (Student Voice 2012).

With this core purpose outlined and safeguarded, the next step would be to flesh out the core purpose and truly unpick what it means. Beyond the political representation mentioned above, a key function that almost every Students’ Union offers is independent advice on academic representation within the institution. Although strategic plans rarely talk specifically about what services they offer, the fact that every Students’ Union in the country which has an Advice Centre which at a bare minimum offers impartial academic advice speaks volumes for their importance. Fundamentally, this is a function of representation that empowers the student in question and allows them to understand their rights as a student – from assisting students in making formal complaints against the institution, to supporting students in submitting extenuating circumstance claims and offer a service of almost legal aid when a student is accused of any foul play in their capacity as a student (ranging from academic misconduct to fitness to practice claims). Although several Advice Centres in the country offer more than just these things, every single one that exists offers these as a bare minimum do to their integral importance of empowering and safeguarding students and their rights.

Furthering this notion, the discussion goes beyond just internal empowerment and moves towards a wider context – leading to the majority of Students’ Unions across the country offering advice on a plethora of areas beyond academic representation: including, but not limited to, Housing advice, Health and Wellbeing advice, Financial advice, Safety advice, Travel advice and International student advice (Advice 2012). This is an expansion of representation as the student movement typically believe that they are best placed to empower and safeguard their own members beyond just in their academic circles as, from their perspective, they understand them best.

The notion of empowerment and safeguarding typically becomes more central in strategy maps and expands to include even more aspects of student living – ensuring that their experience prepares them fully for life outside of the academic circle. This is partially covered in the advice element of a Students’ Union’s purpose, but at this

point in the discussion expands to include ensuring students understand the world and engage in the world – ready to become fully functioning graduates.

This can often take the guise of equal opportunity policies or in some instances engage the notion of community and society. After all, University is a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet new people from all walks of life – the student movement sees one of its purposes as being to nurture this expansion of the individual in the form of student groups. Traditionally these could be cultural, religious, political or tradition groups such as sports-based groups, but recently have begun to expand and include bringing like-minded students together for whatever purpose to maximise social capitol whilst at university and empower students to follow whatever end goal they wish to achieve. In Huddersfield University Students' Union's case there are forty six different societies and student groups – ranging from cultural and religious groups to hobby-based groups (Sports and Societies 2012) as well as another thirty six different sport teams.

As a result of this empowerment, and as a useful vehicle for engaging students in the wider context of the Students' Union, this more social element to the purpose of a Students' Union will eventually come full circle to include the likes of the traditional 'Freshers' week' and weekly activities to engage the student body (Events 2012). Although these are seen as being important by the students, it is established quite early when outlining a Students' Union purpose that the predominant reasoning for doing these things, is to engage those that engage for the fun of it into the more core purposes of the Students' Union.

This account of Huddersfield University Students' Union's journey through establishing the foundations of their strategic map, although it may well seem subjective, is in actuality a systematic approach that a significant portion of the national student movement would also follow across the UK, which is why Students' Unions are all somewhat similar despite being miles apart, servicing completely different demographics and in some instances having no formal communication avenues between each other. Fundamentally even though the size of the organisation and the location, or environment of the organisation can differ, they all offer similar services and function in a similar manner, because the purpose of Students' Unions

does not overly change: first Representation and Democracy, second Advice, third Social empowerment, and fourth Commercial and Entertainment as a means to enable the first three. These levels of purpose are what can be seen after reading through and discussing strategic plans from across the country, and becomes self-evident when going through the thought process of developing a strategic plan from within a Students' Union.

Strategic Maps and Citizenship Learning

With a strategic direction in place, the Huddersfield University Students' Union has some core values which are unpicked into strategic aims and objectives which help to give a sense of direction for the organisation alongside their goals (Appendix 2). However, ultimately what this section of research is looking to ascertain is whether citizenship learning fits in to the purpose of the organisation. Working from Ehrlich et al's model on strategic planning, outlined in Chapter 2, this requires three elements to be within the strategic planning of the organisation: the first being the strategic drive for key values within the programme, the second being a working agreement at an organisational level for those involved to place importance on the programme and fund it accordingly, and the final element emphasises the diversity of engagement levels required for it to succeed.

The first element is best placed to be measured against Huddersfield University Students' Union's strategic map (Appendix 2), which outlines the full article that came about as a result of the verbal account in the section above. The key values outlined by the organisation are:

- Democratic and Accountable Student Leadership
- Inclusive & Accessible
- Ethnical & Sustainable
- Innovation
- Quality & Continuous Improvement
- Partnership

Ehrlich et al's First Element

Ehrlich et al's first element of their model outlines key values that were necessary to a successful programme – namely 'personal integrity', 'social responsibility' and 'civic and political engagement and leadership'.

The programme value 'civic and political engagement and leadership' can be seen across the board in terms of the activities and values that the Huddersfield University Students' Union strategy map outlines. 'Democratic & Accountable Student Leadership' is a core value to the organisation – put first because it is of the highest importance as outlined by the working group. When this value is broken down into objectives that off-short from the value the map paints the picture of engaging students politically in decision making, as well as ensuring that members of the student population at the institution are behind the steering wheel of the organisation by influencing policy, scrutinising their representation and ultimately encouraging more people to step into representative roles and even more people to vote on who fills those roles. Beyond this first value, the 'Partnership' value also offers some insight into addressing the programme value – especially in the civic sense of the value (Appendix 2). The 'Partnership' value is unpicked to emphasise developing and delivering on a community strategy – which will assist students in engaging and participating within the local community of Huddersfield. This is namely done through a mass of volunteering opportunities within the local area – trying to get students to pay something back to the town that is helping them further their lives and careers (as well as boosting their CVs with extra-curricular activity) and through charitable fundraising of the Raise and Give (RaG) group which chooses a minimum of two local charities each year to fundraise for and organise support for them with student volunteers.

This 'Partnership' value furthers its significance with another programme value of 'social responsibility' as it paves the way of ensuring that students who are engaged with the Union have their eyes opened up to both the benefits and the importance of giving something back to the area that you are in. The last programme value of 'personal integrity' is less implicit in terms of its relativity to the strategy map as it is not mentioned directly. Objectively, all of the value correlation is indirect and more

implicit than outlined – as can be expected from a non-citizenship organisation – but the notion of 'personal integrity' can be seen in the values of 'Democratic & Accountable Student Leadership', with the expectation that representation is done properly and with the students' needs in mind. The value of being 'Ethical & Sustainable' similarly ties in as the ethos within the Students' Union is around making the perceived *right* choice, which is not always the easy choice – a life lesson embedded into the decision-making of the organisation.

Looking at the full picture of the first element, Huddersfield University Students' Union does have indirect, implied correlation with the values expressed by Ehrlich et al in their model, but the question lingers as to whether implicit values are truly sufficient to balance the first element of a citizenship programme. Whilst the ethos within the student movement does have a lot of cross over, the expectation of a citizenship programme would be that those that go through it leave with these values guaranteed to be instilled in them to become good, active citizens and at the present moment it is unclear as to whether this is truly satisfied as part of the programme.

Ehrlich et al's Second Element

When looking at the second element of an agreement at a senior management level over the importance of citizenship learning, whilst Huddersfield University Students' Union does not actively mention citizenship learning, the core focus on student interaction with the Students' Union does emphasis similar skills through the structure of their STARS (Student Training And Recognition Scheme) programme (STARSa 2012) which shall be investigated in depth in Chapter 4. The STARS programme offers a variety of skill sets that the Students' Union trains their volunteers to possess and is funded exceptionally well by the Senior Management team both in finance and in staffing resources as it is seen as an essential part of the strategic enablers of the strategic map 'Developing & Supporting Our People' (Appendix 2). Furthermore, the Students' Union puts a sizeable amount of funding into a Student Activities budget for sports and societies, as well as two full time and two part time members of staff who are purely there for driving involvement in the numerous activities offered – not including the five elected officers whose raison

d'être is furthering member participation – there is a significant amount of resources put into student involvement.

However, the caveat to Ehrlich et al's model is that the senior management of *all* involved organisations agree with the importance of the programme and are willing to finance it accordingly. Whilst Huddersfield University Students' Union does finance the relevant aspects of their organisation rather well – a financial decision that the institution agree with and support wholeheartedly – there is no agreement of importance. Fundamentally, a Students' Union's most important work is on representation, which citizenship learning does not fall within. The institution, similarly, does not place a high importance on the readying of active citizen graduates as part of the student experience. As a result, whilst the potential is there in the agreement of financing the projects, the agreement on the fundamental purpose of these projects is more likely to be around employability than it is about creating active citizen graduates. Therefore, for this element to be fully actualised the conversation and agreement between the Students' Union and the institution would have to be undertaken and enthused – the chances of which are probably slim considering the changes to the sector, and the challenges that have come with them.

Ehrlich et al's Third Element

Finally, the third element emphasises the need for a variety of different approaches towards activism: something that the Students' Union has a significant amount of – for students that interact with it. As outlined earlier, the value 'Democratic & Accountable Student Leadership' outlines the aim to increase student engagement in all aspects of the Students' Union, but beyond that the values 'Partnership', 'Inclusive & Accessible', 'Innovation' and 'Ethical & Sustainable' all outline the aim to further involve students in a plethora of different activities within Huddersfield University Students' Union (Appendix 2). Further to that, as mentioned earlier in this Chapter, the Students' Union has some forty six different student societies and groups, with a further thirty six sports teams (Sports and Societies 2012), all of which are gateway activities towards the more citizenship-relevant activities within the organisation.

The off-shoot explanation of the value 'Inclusive & Accessible' shows a breakdown of how students interact with the Students' Union outlined as 'Being Inclusive, Involving and Innovative' (Appendix 2) which describes the levels of interaction, each of which relates to different levels of the Students' Union purpose.

Level 1: Service Users

Service Users refers to those students who use one of the Students' Union's services on a transactional basis – typically this refers to the commercial operations of the Students' Union, namely the Bar, the Café or the Shop, but it can also refer to the Advice centre. The interaction with these students is exceptionally low. They simply get what they need from the Students' Union, when they need it.

Level 2: Active Participants

Active Participants refers to those students who actively engage in the goings on within the Students' Union – from being a member of a student group, sports team or society, being a volunteer either within the community or for RAG events, to engaging with their democratic processes such as their Union Council or their Annual General Meeting. These students have varying levels of interaction with the Students' Union, as they may well come in to the building to sign up to their sports team or society and never return, or may be a frequent visitor of the groups and democratic forums.

Level 3: Responsibility Takers

Responsibility Takers refers to those students who help with the organisation of some part of what the Students' Unions offer – be it from being on a formal committee role within their sports club or society, being a chair of a student group or running an event for the RAG group. The level of interaction with this level is significantly higher, as there will be consistent contact with, as well as support offered to, the student in their role by the Students' Union. This Level in essence facilitates the engagement of the Level 2 users.

Level 4: Leaders

Leaders refers to elected representatives on the Students' Union's Union Council, as well as the Chairmen or Presidents of sports teams or societies – the students who lead a number of Level 3 users and countless Level 2 users. The interaction with this group is to a level where they are embedded in the goings on of the Students' Union, to the extent that they have the potential to steer the direction of the organisation.

The importance of these levels is that it furthers the notion of the variety of opportunities to become active within the organisation – and how active/involved each level or activity is – but beyond just acknowledging that, the strategic element to this aspect is that Huddersfield University Students' Union strategises towards driving students up the levels towards ensuring more students in the higher user levels. Granted this is not always a successful exercise for any Students' Union, Huddersfield especially in some instances, but the fact that further activism is strategised for suggests that there is potential for the Students' Union to fit within the third element of Ehrlich et al's model – especially as the mantra of involvement at Huddersfield University Students' Union is "if enough students want to do it, we'll resource it the best we can", which is why the options for student activities has sky rocketed in recent years.

Does Ehrlich et al's Model fit?

The common finding across this section – looking at all three elements of Ehrlich et al's model is that the foundation of the elements can be seen to some extent on all accounts, but they are not formalised. The programme values of the first element can be seen in different aspects of the strategic map of Huddersfield University Students' Union, but not explicitly which whilst is demonstrates potential it does not justify that the programme could be rolled out tomorrow. Similarly on the second element of institutional and organisational agreement of importance and funding for the programme, whilst the relevant aspects are funded quite well and it is agreed by all involved that they should be funded – fundamentally the justification is not for citizenship learning. Ehrlich et al's model is explicit that this must be the case for the

programme to work, so whilst the foundations are there, a change of culture would have to happen for the notion of this thesis to be realised.

The final and third element is the only aspect that is addressed to the fullest, in that Huddersfield University Students' Union not only identify engagement and involvement, but they strategise to improve it and the expansion of the variety of routes to involvement are outlined consistently across the strategy map across a multitude of different organisational values.

All in all, the question of whether the facilitation of citizenship learning can fall within the purpose of Huddersfield University Students' Union within its institution comes up with an unclear response. Whilst the Students' Union has the foundation to follow that activity through – there are questions as to whether it would be able to achieve the end result that Ehrlich et al's model outlines is a necessity for a successful programme without a culture change in the senior management of both the University and the Students' Union – something that given the current state of the higher education sector is probably unlikely.

Chapter 4: Are the Structures in place for citizenship learning to happen at Huddersfield University Students' Union?

Students' Unions typically have a significant amount of structures aimed at increasing involvement and activism – it is something that is essential for their rudimentary functionality to get student activism to enable effective productivity as an organisation. The following section will aim to outline each structure and its functionality, and then undertake a more in depth analysis of how the structure's fair against the criteria for citizenship learning within the Higher Education sector.

Structures within Huddersfield University Students' Union

The structures within the Huddersfield University Students' Union each offer different levels of activism and involvement for students within the institution. The structures are as follows:

Campaigning

One of the core functions of the student movement and an effective activism and involvement structure is that of formal campaigning – on an internal and external basis. Internally speaking this could be campaigning for a change within the Higher Education Institution or within the actual Students' Union itself, such as their recent 'Shape Your Education Survey' (HSU 2012a) which aimed at engaging students in the thought process of what to ask, followed by going out and asking the wider student community exactly what they want out of their time at Huddersfield – the results of which will be negotiated with the University as an attempt to give students what they want. Externally speaking formal campaigning can refer to local community based campaign; such as their accommodation research undergone in November 2011 (HSU 2011a), which aims to lobby local businesses to drive quality in accommodation for students in the region; and national campaigns (in conjunction with the National Union of Students), such as the work done by three of the elected executive team who successfully lobbied Conservative MP Jason McCartney to vote against his party on the tuition fee vote in 2010 (HSU 2010b). This was a smaller part of the wider

campaign which took some two hundred Huddersfield students down to London to march against the hike in fees one month earlier (HSU 2010a).

Campaigning offers students the opportunity to get involved with something and get active about the issues – be they based in outlining student expectations of their education to disagreeing with the hike in fees, there is always something that Students' Unions are campaigning about.

Democratic Groups and meetings

One of the other activism activities is that of what are typically dubbed the 'democratic groups'. The democratic groups each fall within one elected executive or more's formal organisational remit to ensure productivity of them all as a unit of democratic fora. The Board of Trustees approved a suspension of a number of sections within bye laws of the Constitution to trial run a new democratic system for a year which is outlined in an advertisement video on YouTube (HuddersfieldSU 2011). At the beginning of the 2011/12 academic year Huddersfield University Students' Union implemented the trial system aiming to enhance the attendance to the democratic involvement, but as a result there is no formal paperwork that signifies said changes. However, the current groups are the 'Media Group', the 'Student Activities Group', the 'Welfare & Equalities Group' and the 'Education Group' – each of which aim to get students who care about a certain topic, talking about the topic to drive change.

The Media Group has worked towards changing the way student media runs within the organisation, after talking to students that are interested and involved in student media which has resulted in a new format to improve student involvement and ensure students get the skills necessary for journalism in the future (HSU 2012b). The 'Shape Your Education Survey' mentioned in the campaigns section was the product of an Education Group which had over seventy students in attendance discussing their education in small focus groups, and then once the survey was ready to launch approved by just under forty students in another Education Group. The accommodation research mentioned in the campaigns section was the product of a Welfare and Equalities Group with some twenty students in attendance discussing

their accommodation and approving the recommendation that the Students' Union undergo research to lobby local businesses over prices and quality of accommodation. The Student Activities Group in general is an opportunity for various sports and societies to discuss the wider issues that affect them all. This group was used to outline what Huddersfield wanted out of their varsity sporting event against Bradford University (HSU (2012c).

The democratic groups offer students who care about a certain topic to engage and influence how that topic happens within the confines of the University and the Students' Union. Similarly, the democratic meetings are there for the same purpose, only they fit more formal criteria. In essence this falls within the Students' Union Council as outlined in the advertisement video as it functions within the democratic groups. Students' Union Council in essence offers students a chance to have a say on the direction of the organisation as a whole as they are members of the organisation. It also offers students the opportunity to ask questions of the elected executive team and provides a formal democratic space for their actions to be held to account by students and other elected officers alike (HSU 2012d). The other democratic meeting of note is that of the formal Annual General Meeting, which is branded as 'the big meeting' (HSU 2011b). The Annual General Meeting offers any student the opportunity to ask questions of budgets, hold elected executive members to account and suggest formally binding policy for debate to be voted on.

Voting Mechanisms

Beyond the voting that happens within the democratic groups and meetings, the Students' Union has two formal voting mechanisms which aim to heavily engage students. First, there are the Students' Union elections, which elects a sum total of thirty seven different positions within the organisation as outlined in bye-law seven, section two of the Constitution which are as follows:

- Sabbatical Officer Trustees [5];
- Union Council Chair [1];
- Newspaper Editor [1];
- Radio Station Coordinator [1];

- RAG Coordinator [1];
- Campus Association Committee positions [8];
- 2 First year Union Councillors, elected in term 1;
- 5 Student Union Councillors elected in term 2;
- School Representative Members of Union Council [7];
- Delegation members to NUS conference [6].

(HSU Constitution: 47).

However, beyond voting for a person to fill a role, there is also an opportunity to hold an institution-wide referenda to vote on a given policy as outlined in bye-law seven, section nine and ten of the Constitution (HSU Constitution: 50) and despite being very rarely used, can be used to add authority and authenticity to the outcomes of campaigns as the 'Shape Your Education Survey' has pledged to put the findings of the research to referenda for approval (HSU 2012e) – engaging everyday students in a variety of political decision making through voting.

Liberation and Student Demographic Groups

This structure is similar to the democratic groups, only specifically about furthering the cause of different student demographics within the student movement. In Huddersfield's case this includes:

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT);
- Students with Disabilities;
- Postgraduate & Mature;
- Part-Time Students;
- International Students;
- Women's;
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME);
- Ethics and Environment;
- Inter Faith

(HSU Constitution: 40)

These groups offer students the opportunity to meet other students from a similar background and ensure that no minority goes unheard (technically) within the Students' Union movement.

Representatives

The representatives structure covers a plethora of different types of representative: from Course Representatives and Hall Representatives, to School Representatives and Group Representatives, to Union Councillors and First Year Representatives. These students each hold an active role within some form of representation and range from being elected by students, to being appointed by the Students' Union, to being appointed by the University. Every type of student representative mentioned here is a volunteer within the organisation and as such falls within the 'Student Training And Recognition Scheme' (STARS) which the Students' Union runs (STARS 2012a).

STARS

The STARS programme in essence offers formal introductory training for all volunteers within the organisation – made specifically for each type of role – as well as offers a substantive amount of elective training sessions aiming to give the students involved in the programme the skill sets needed to undergo the role effectively, as well as boost their CVs (STARS 2012a). The programme is graded in three accreditations: Bronze, Silver and Gold and attempts to drive students towards improving themselves and the areas that they represent whilst studying at the University. These accreditations are assessed by looking for a personal log that each STARS participant is digitally registered on to within the University's online e-learning resource UniLearn – which is reflection-based. Students are graded by the work they undergo in their role, or roles, and the reflections on how they managed their achievements – what skills they used and so on.

Volunteering

This structure explicitly refers to volunteering in the community through the Students' Union (HSU 2012f). As a structure, volunteering in the community is significantly

lacking in comparison to other institutions and is very much an admitted development area for the Students' Union, but it does offer some opportunities for students who want to volunteer, as well as placing all volunteers on to the STARS programme to increase the benefits to the student.

Raise and Give Group

Known as the RAG group, offers students the opportunity to raise money for charity whilst studying. The RAG group chooses four charities to support each year and has an elected co-ordinator who works on an appointed committee to run the mini-organisation for the year. RAG offers students the opportunity to get involved in pre-planned event and volunteer (RAG 2012), but also offers students the opportunity to run their own events – an activity which is supported by STARS training sessions, such as 'Planning a Successful Event' (STARS 2012a), to ensure any student who wants to run an event, can.

Student Activity Groups and Committees

Student activity groups have recently hit just under one thousand, five hundred student memberships in the academic year 2011/12 – a 63% increase on the previous year's membership levels. These groups offer students the opportunity to meet like-minded individuals and increasingly do more with their time at the University – a number of the student groups at Huddersfield Students' Union do charity work and community work as part of their agreement on funding with the Students' Union.

Of the eighty two different sports teams and societies on campus, each is ran by a committee of involved, committed students. The organisational skills behind organising one of the student activities is not too dissimilar from running a small business – with fiscal management, bidding for funding and general organising of games or events, as outlined in bye law eleven of the constitution (HSU Constitution: 63-65). All student activity committee members are booked on to the STARS programme, they go to a day-long training conference which outlines what is expected of them (as well as being given some skills to meet expectations) and they spend a sizeable amount of their spare time going about doing it. The Annual Planning and

Budget Pack for sports and societies can be found in the toolkit online (Toolkit 2012) and is some twenty six or twenty eight pages of work that needs to be done before a student activity can even begin at the beginning of an academic year.

Elected Office

Albeit as a structure it has a limited capacity, the seats for elected office offer a sizeable amount of involvement and activism. As with all other volunteer roles, the part time elected roles are booked on to the STARS programme, but the five elected executive officers are sent on training by the National Union of Students which aim to develop officers and prepare them for the level of work expected. Each of the elected positions offer a leadership role within the organisation, and significant development opportunities as an individual.

Students' Union Structures vs Citizenship Learning Criteria

As outlined earlier in the thesis, the criteria for a successful citizenship learning programme are:

- Utility of the experiential learning cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation.
- Emphasis on political engagement activity, rather than civic engagement activity, where viable.
- Embedding into a formal academic structure with heavy emphasis placed on the reflection of the activities.
- The activities within the programme should look towards building key skills to assist in citizenship activity in the future.
- A variety of different types of activities to attract a wide audience.
- The programme needs to be embedded, but elective.

This section aims to unpick each criteria and analyse whether the structures can facilitate the needs of the model and how far, if at all, they already do.

Utility of the experiential learning cycle

The STARS programme; which covers the five structures of: Representatives, Volunteering, Liberation and Student Demographic Groups, Raise and Give Group, Student Activity Groups and Committees, Democratic Groups and Elected Office; follows the experiential learning cycle as its basis for ensuring student participants have understood the training sessions. The STARS training sessions put students in experiences and give them the skills to navigate and influence them, requiring them to reflect on their experiences and constantly re-evaluate what they are doing, how they are doing it and why they are doing it that way until they find the way that fits best for them.

Whilst the STARS programme does not cover every involved member within the Students' Union, it was re-launched at the beginning of 2012 to include any student on campus who wants to engage with the process or training and learning whilst volunteering in some form (STARS 2012b), so the focus towards the future is aiming at achieving this level of involvement.

However, whilst the experiential learning cycle is utilised by the STARS programme, the cycle is not centred around citizenship ideals and understanding – more often than not in fact the cycle is based around furthering the individual's employability. This is down to the changing landscape of the Higher Education sector and a renewed emphasis being put on employability of graduates. With this in mind, whilst the learning cycle is present in the structure, it is not focused towards the goal of the citizenship learning model. Despite the fact that citizenship-based skill sets are being learnt through the structure, without tying in that learning to the wider issues of citizenship, community and society, from a citizenship point of view the learning is null and void.

<u>Emphasis on political engagement activity, rather than civic engagement activity, where viable</u>

The civic engagement aspects of Huddersfield University Students' Union's structures can be seen in that of Volunteering within the local community which, as mentioned in Chapter 3, is tied in to the launch of a community strategy to bring students back

into the local community in Huddersfield. Similarly, the Raise and Give group is a prolific civic engagement tool and sees a significant number of members each year donating their time towards fundraising for local and national causes. However, in both examples the justification is (as with a lot of Students' Union engagement) purely an employability-based improvement mechanism, rarely being advertised or characterised as anything else. Unlike these two structures, Student Activity groups are increasingly being pushed towards paying forward by volunteering to teach their sport/activity to local schools in the Huddersfield area. This is a move brought about by an elected Executive officer who wants to see sports teams creating links with the local community to raise aspirations in poor areas and to broker a relationship with the local community where members of the public see students as being beneficial to the local area.

Beyond the civic, one of the fundamental political engagement activities is that of the structure of voting mechanisms. Students are asked to cast a vote numerous times through any academic year – from electing their Course Representative within the first few weeks (if academic staff allow for a vote to take place), to voting in a Student referendum on any given subject that has come through one of the structures which brings students together to discuss topics, to voting for volunteer positions such as representatives for first year students or the Co-ordinator of the Raise and Give society, to electing the five Executive officers which oversee and run the Students' Union. Similar to the wider society, however, the voter turnout is not exceptionally high so whilst the structure is there it is not capitalised upon effectively to truly engage more students in the political process.

Effectively the majority of Huddersfield University Students' Union's structures have a political element embedded into their very existence. Campaigns are all about political empowerment of students – getting them to realise the political clout that they have as a student and, in some instances, as a citizen. This can be seen in the likes of campaigns like the 'Shape your Education Survey' (HSU 2012a) mentioned above which aims to empower students to begin thinking about where their money goes for their education and whether they are truly getting the experience that they want. This enthuses the notion to the would be graduate-citizen that when you are not happy with a service that you receive from a public sector service they can have their

say, speak to their representatives and have their voice heard – an important citizenship ideal and life lesson.

Liberation and Demographic Groups as well as Democratic Groups are similar in their intentions as they are utilised as a means to get students talking about what they think about certain subjects and then empower and them to become active on the issue and see actions taken to make the change that they want to see in their community. Representatives are more often than not a student-life equivalent to a society-based representative like a local councillor. The representatives themselves will see significant engagement activity on a political and a civic level, as they are mentored and trained towards acting on issues which usually means utilising problem solving skills to address wide scale issues – an important citizenship ideal and lesson.

Whilst all of these structures offer some form of civic or political engagement activity for students to engage in and learn from, a fundamental undermining aspect of these structures is the level of engagement from the student body with them. On any given structure you will be lucky if you see a maximum of around 20% of the student body engage at any one time – which typically is for the Executive officer elections, other structures see even fewer.

Embedding into a formal academic structure with heavy emphasis placed on the reflection of the activities

The STARS programme is an embedded structure within the online academic learning environment of the institution and is deemed as an extra qualification – something that staff within the institution are beginning to push their students towards for employability gains – and as mentioned earlier, a heavy emphasis is placed on the reflection of activities for the grading to assess the level of accreditation that the student has achieved – as well as looking at what achievements the individual students achieve.

Whilst this programme is embedded into a formal academic structure and does have a heavy emphasis placed on the reflection of the activities, the reflection is not based within the confines of citizenship – a fundamental flaw in the use of the system.

Further to that, whilst the STARS programme does fit the bill, it also only services around four hundred students in any given academic year to date. Therefore, whilst the structures are there to facilitate this criteria of the citizenship learning model, it is not in a position where it could easily facilitate the citizenship learning of all twenty four thousand students.

The activities within the programme should look towards building key skills to assist in citizenship activity in the future

Again, the STARS programme offers students the opportunity to build skills through training skills sessions. As they currently stand, there is a session entitled 'Winning a Verbal Tug of War' which outlines key negotiation and influencing theory and how to put it into practice to gain consensus agreements with staff and students. The Student Activity Group Committees conference training sessions receive significant amounts of fiscal management, as do a number of the students in an Elected Office and the Raise and Give Group, to ensure everything runs smoothly internally. These skills are those outlined by Ehrlich et al (2000:xxxv) and more in some instances. The training offered is there to make the students the best they can be within their role, but also to be able to carry these skills into their future lives.

However, as mentioned in the above section, due to the engagement and/or capacity limitations of the STARS programme, this criteria is similarly not fully realised in the current structures of Huddersfield University Students' Union.

A variety of different types of activities to attract a wide audience

Just by example of the various different activities offered through the structures, arguably the Students' Union has this criteria met with over ten different structures for students to engage in on an involvement or activity basis including: campaigning, democratic groups, voting mechanisms, liberation and demographic groups, representatives, volunteering, raise and give, student activity groups and elected office.

Engaging in these multiple structures is not limited, nor do they truly have a uniform capacity problem across the board as the STARS programme does which in essence means that on face value this criteria is met somewhat sufficiently by Huddersfield University Students' Union's structures. However, when you look deeper into the culture of students and their Students' Unions, there can be significant roadblocks which make attract certain segments of the student audience towards Students' Union activities. For instance, students who are extremely anti-politics will tend to not have anything to do with a Students' Union on principle, as can extraordinarily right wing students who do not agree with unions as a concept, never mind a Students' Union - a problem common amongst the international student groups. On the other side of the spectrum, a Students' Union can often be associated with sports and alienate the non-sporting sections of the student body, or even more worryingly Students' Unions can often be seen as little more than a licensed premise which alienates a significant portion of students from different religious communities and backgrounds which again reduces the student audience.

All of these problems can be addressed in different ways – Huddersfield University Students' Union works very hard to change their persona depending on the demographic that they speak to enthusing their mission statement of "making student life better" (Appendix 2) as often as possible in an all-inclusive way. However, this does not undo the fundamental inclusion problem which can appear when you look at the criteria closely leaving the notion of potential to achieve rather than actualisation of this specific criteria of the citizenship learning model.

<u>The programme needs to be embedded, but elective</u>

Not only is the Students' Union as a movement elective (as students can opt out of the Union if they so wish), but one of the core elements towards activism and involvement within the organisation – that of the STARS programme – requires the student to step into a role or request to be booked on to the scheme to be enrolled. Therefore, the building blocks towards involvement and activism are elective – a student can simply join a student activity group and not advance any further if they have a hobby, however, if they wish to develop in that hobby the Students' Union can offer the student that opportunity.

However, in terms of the programme being embedded, Huddersfield University Students' Union falls short of the criteria. Whilst the STARS programme and involvement in the structures within the Students' Union is advertised, it is not positively encouraged – which is where a programme truly embeds into a structure. Without the positive reinforcement that would need to come from Ehrlich et al's three element model discussed in Chapter 3, the notion that Students' Union activities are truly embedded is hard to agree with.

Can the Citizenship Learning Criteria be demonstrated?

Fundamentally, this Chapter has aimed to address the question as to whether the student movement has the structures embedded in itself to facilitate the model of citizenship learning outlined in Chapter 2, namely: the utility of the experiential learning cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation; emphasis on political engagement activity, rather than civic engagement activity, where viable; embedding into a formal academic structure with heavy emphasis placed on the reflection of the activities; the activities within the programme should look towards building key skills to assist in citizenship activity in the future; a variety of different types of activities to attract a wide audience; and the programme needs to be embedded, but elective.

The most common theme that emerges across the analysis of the structures and the citizenship learning criteria is that whilst the foundations and the suggested building blocks are present and the Students' Union structures has the potential to meet the criteria – all of those structures are currently co-ordinated towards completely different ends than would be required for a programme to be successful at the institution. More often than not the structures are tailored towards employability gains rather than the individual understanding the benefit of what they are doing to society at large or even how the skills they are learning could benefit them as a graduate citizen. Further to that, the main structure that addresses the criteria is that of the STARS programme which has a significant capacity issue considering the breadth the programme would require should the institution formally back the idea of encouraging citizenship learning through the Students' Union.

Therefore, whilst there is a capacity to facilitate the model of citizenship learning, it would not be able to be rolled out tomorrow should the agreements be made today – it would take some sizeable institutional and organisational change for it to comprehensively meet the criteria as well as, one would imagine, a budget shift to support the expansion of the STARS programme. In this cultural change, there would need to be an agreement with academics that students would be positively encouraged into the structures of the Students' Union to engage a wider proportion of the student body as the programme would not be successful were it to maintain such relatively low involvement levels.

Chapter 5: Can evidence of the utility of citizenship learning within the student movement be demonstrated?

As it would appear that the purpose of Huddersfield University Students' Union fits that of citizenship learning, and there is a somewhat significant correlation between the structures in place and those necessary for citizenship learning to happen, this thesis aims to unpick whether there is any evidence of this process happening within being targeted.

For this, five heavily involved and engaged students and five full time staff members within the organisation were interviewed to get an idea of the goings on of the organisation. One of the key themes that was found within these interviews after some analysis was that of citizenship learning. The next section of this thesis aims to break down the citizenship learning themes that came from the interview analysis by establishing the nature of the theme, the frequency of the theme and outlining the range of experiences that the theme refers to – combined with some quotes to help emphasise the point.

Citizenship Learning Theme analysis

The first layer of themes that came through the citizenship learning theme of the interview analysis include: engagement, personal development, activities, and skills.

Engagement

The engagement theme refers to a plethora of different types of citizenship learning and whether, to some extent, it can happen within the confines of the structures. This theme saw two further layers: understanding and involvement.

Understanding saw thirty two references from a multitude of interviewees in total, which break down into four subcategories: process understanding, strategic understanding, understanding relevance beyond the university, and political understanding.

In total, there were five references to ‘process understanding’ which emphasised that students were engaged with the outlining the processes the institution, the organisation and the wider community – giving the students an understanding of how things happen. As one of the participants outlines in reference to the Annual General Meeting and its purpose, “our sports teams along with Course Reps… it shows them a bit of the process”. This subcategory refers to the citizenship learning element of civic engagement as well as building key skills, as understanding the processes of how organisations work is a valuable asset for future engagement.

Strategic understanding is in a similar vein, but saw some ten references in total, outlining how students were engaged in the financial management and strategic direction of the organisation and the benefit this had on their own planning skills. Again, a participant outlines this succinctly suggesting that the engaged students understand “how to abide by strategic directions so looking at what is our main purpose and trying to stick with [it]” as well as “how much money there is and how much this or that means to everybody if everybody asks for quite a lot of money and it makes people really budget”. This subcategory also refers to the civic engagement and key skills building elements of citizenship learning as it instils in the minds of the engaged students what implications can arise from not planning effectively – again a valuable asset for engaging in the wider community.

Understanding the relevance beyond University mostly refers to the comparably limited acknowledgement that being engaged in the Students’ Union was amassing capital for use after graduating, which saw a total of twelve references. “Some of the skills around are skills for that future public life arena in some way” commented one participant when outlining how students benefit from being engaged. This acknowledgement of future use of the skills could arguably be so low because citizenship learning is not strategised for, so the bridging knowledge is missing, but the slight acknowledgement does demonstrate a limited understanding – although a significant amount of this acknowledgement was employability-focused rather than community-focused.

Finally, the political understanding subcategory saw five references in total and outlined how students who were engaged found their political voice "through having opinions and having ideas and needing people to see my point of view, and I have developed almost entirely through being involved in the Students' Union" – as one participant suggested, the open platform that students are given galvanises the thought process of being heard – a valuable asset for future political engagement. However, despite being of extreme important to citizenship learning, the significantly low result of references to the subcategory would suggest that this process is not as widely engaged with as would be hoped for.

The second layer within engagement, that of involvement, saw a lower rate of some nineteen references ranging from being involved in multiple activities, issue-based reasoning for getting involved and a worrying suggestion that involvement was forced. The subcategory of being involved in multiple activities happening saw the majority of this layer's references with fourteen and pointed out how students often started in one activity and then expanded into others – as suggested by one participant referring to student activity groups "they work with rag, they then work with the radio station… they work with the newspaper… to get their individual messages out and about". This shows a significant nod towards not only that there are different activities to engage in, but that students tend to get involved in multiple activities – which falls in line with the citizenship learning criteria.

The subcategory regarding issue-based reasoning for getting involved refers to a total of four references which suggest that students tend to find an issue, and engage in an activity that reflects that issue or deals with the issue appropriately. As one participant suggests when discussing why students get involved "Most of the time it's because that student feels passionate about what it is we're fighting for". This offers an interesting take on the justification behind engagement in activities as well outlines that justifications and routes to involvement is an important avenue to investigate.

Finally, the last subcategory of involvement outlines a suggestion by a participant that "I'd say they're forced, and I'd say they don't like or want to get involved in things beyond their own society or club" when referring to the engagement in Annual General Meetings. Student activity groups are told that they must send one

representative to the meetings to ensure they are represented in all decisions, but as a result there is significant criticism (albeit only voiced by one participant in this study) that involvement can be forced. This offers a significant road block towards the final criteria of the citizenship learning model, in that 'The programme needs to be embedded, but elective' and forcing participation goes against this.

Personal Development

This theme unpicks the opinions that seemed to come through almost every participant that student involvement is a big part of their personal development and not necessarily for any wider purpose. This does not necessarily undermine the citizenship learning process, but it warrants investigation enough to be outlined and has been broken down into two second layers: Individual development and career development.

Individual development saw seventeen references refers more to the opportunity to develop as a person, rather than for a specific goal and breaks down into two subcategories: experience and learning process. Experience refers to the vast amount of experience that students are open to whilst being involved in the Students' Union – as mentioned in the engagement break down there are a significant amount of experiences that students undergo. In total, the experience subcategory saw fourteen references, possibly best articulated when describing the opportunity of the elected executive "Certainly being a sabbatical officer is an absolute transformational process for people… because it exposes you to so many responsibilities, gives you so many opportunities". This exposure arguably goes further than just the top five student roles, but expands the horizons of the students involved at all levels giving them a significant amount of skills beyond what their course offers.

The learning process subcategory saw three references in total, ranging from how peer-evaluation is a part of the Students' Union process, but also outlining that "It's a really good kind of safe… place to get involved with the Union because if you do make a mistake… [there are] chances for it to be turned around now if you do that in the real working world you'd probably be out on your ear on a lot of chances", suggesting to some extent that the Students' Union environment offers students the

opportunity to trial their skills before entering the wider world where there is no safety net – a significant bonus towards citizenship learning.

The second layer of career development was highly referred to with twenty nine references in total and can be broken down into: CV development and contact building. CV development is arguably a bi-product of the employability focus of the STARS programme, but it is widely agree that being involved "gives you a massive boost… I mean it's great for your cv… It gives you that extra string to your bow". As is the case for contact building, which saw four references, even the advertisements for standing in the elections emphasise that you will get to "move in high circles" (HSU 2012g). This shines through in the interviews outlined perfectly by the suggestion that students get to meet "high up staff who… have a career path that you [might] want to follow in".

Whilst personal development is not typically a citizenship learning goal in and of itself, arguably the fact that this development shines through in the interviews could well suggest that as employability is what the current focus is, employability shines through – therefore, were the focus to change to citizenship learning, so could the understanding of what students are achieving (although this would require substantive research to prove).

Activities

A variety of activities is one of the criteria for a successful citizenship learning programme, and as such this theme has been outlined to build on the previous section of this thesis and illustrate the wealth of activities that students can get involved in whilst at Huddersfield University Students' Union, seeing some sixty five references to activities.

These activities included: student media, student activities, student activity committees, RAG, democratic meetings and groups, elected office, STARS programme, working within the Students' Union part time, the elections, being a representative, liberation groups, and campaigning. The highest mentioned were student activities at eleven references, democratic meetings and groups at nine

references and the STARS programme at seven references, however, each saw a sizeable amount of reference into the variety of ways for students to get involved with the Students' Union and become more active.

Skills

Another key criteria for a successful citizenship learning programme outlines building towards key skills that assist citizenship activity, which came through in the interviews in some sense, although not framed as citizenship activity, but as increasing and benefitting student activism. This theme saw a total of forty nine references to the learning and development of skills in total.

These skills included: lobbying, financial management, organisational management, meetings, elections, communication, networking, understanding bureaucracy, planning, representation, making change happen, confidence, leadership, teamwork, and public speaking. The most frequently mentioned were communication skills at nine references, leadership skills at eight references and planning skills, financial management and organisational management at four references. This acknowledgement of the skills involved as well as an understanding that they should be something that the Union strives towards as outlined by one participant in that "you're learning all the time and everybody's really helpful to encourage you to develop as a person" as the Students' Union sees this as an investment in their members. The significance of these findings suggest that student skill development is integral to the organisations functioning and that the expected key skill development from citizenship learning is happening currently with students engaged in the Students' Union.

Can citizenship learning be evidenced?

Arguably this analysis of the interviews with members and staff within Huddersfield University Students' Union suggests that whilst some of the criteria for a successful citizenship learning programme are evident to some extent, they are generally under a different guise from the citizenship learning mantra, such as having a more employability focus – a reoccurring theme across all three research questions. There is

an element of understanding that “the Students’ Union ought to always be the vehicle to effect change be that small on campus or about talking around the bigger issues” and a good number of references towards the use of these skills beyond the students time at university could well show a correlation between the internal understanding and the wider citizenship learning experience. Furthermore, there are a variety of political and civic engagement activities and a sizeable amount of key skill development examples – but there is no public or strategic link between everything, which fundamentally undermines some of the findings in this research.

Conclusion: What does all of this mean for citizenship learning in Higher Education?

The research within this thesis has taken you through the contemporary debates on citizenship, outlining the responsibility-based communitarianism approach to be the best fit for contemporary day and from there looked into citizenship education implementation to see whether the UK Higher Education sector could further the citizenship education cause which is a part of communitarianism. This led to a model outlining what citizenship education would look like in a Higher Education Institution and this thesis attempted to ascertain whether the formal, functioning political entity of the Students' Union within the Higher Education Institutions could facilitate this citizenship learning on three fronts: whether the theory fits in terms of strategic direction, whether the structures exist to facilitate the theory and whether citizenship learning can be demonstrated in the organisation without the conscious attempt to attain it. Due to the complexity of the research, this thesis followed a case study on Huddersfield University Students' Union looking at the purpose of the Students' Union and whether the criteria for a successful citizenship learning programme could fit within it. Then the research moved to take a look at the various structures within the Students' Union to attempt to identify whether in theory citizenship learning could be facilitated, which then led to interviews with engaged students and staff at the Students' Union to ascertain whether citizenship learning was already happening to some extent.

The research findings

The findings on each of the three research questions show a bit of a mixed picture, as whilst the results consistently show the potential for a citizenship learning programme to fit in to existing structures, in every case it requires a significant amount of work for it to be effectively workable.

The first research question found that whilst there was potential agreement in the direction of Huddersfield University Students' Union's strategy map and the strategic requirements of Ehrlich et al's model – there was a notable gap in the detail.

Similarities could be interpreted in a number of values and strategic aims, but without it being expressly outlined it was not true to the logic of Ehrlich et al's model. The second research question also ran into similar road blocks in that whilst the structures existed that could easily be used as the vehicle towards activating students into active citizens, they are currently tailored towards and focusing on employability of the graduate rather than how they could benefit society as a graduate. Further to this, there was a realisation in the analysis that the majority of the criteria were addressed by one structure which runs within and around several of the other structures, that of the STARS programme. Whilst this is a positive, as it identifies the real driver of a potential citizenship learning programme, it is noted that the sheer capacity of this programme hamstrings the notion that a citizenship learning programme could effectively be rolled out to any and all students who want it.

As a result of this, it is noted that the effectiveness of the concept would rely on the Institution, who would have to fully embrace the notion of citizenship learning within it and place a significant importance on developing active graduate citizens for it to work, as well as significant funds – which as noted in Chapter 3, considering the current climate of the higher education sector it is doubtful that a shift away from resources enthusing employability attributes would be likely unless the dual benefits of an active citizen could be effectively demonstrated.

The interviews showed significant promise in citizenship learning in action: identifying engagement, personal development, activities and skills as clear themes that emerged within the analysis of the interviews. However, the reasoning behind the involvement and interaction came about to be significantly off that which would be expected from a communitarian-based citizenship. The focus was on the individual and employability – in essence more of a neo-liberal approach based around markets and individualism. This outlines a significant blow to the underpinnings of the research in that whilst communitarianism is the citizenship focus that fits with contemporary politics, arguably the citizenry is still widely showing neo-liberal-based traits towards citizenship-based activities, which also shines through in the citizenship research that whilst communitarianism is what is in political rhetoric, this does not mean that policy and actions have moved away from our neo-liberal past. This is not necessarily a blow to the entirety of the research, however, as there is nothing that

says personal gain cannot be a driver for enthusing citizenship ideals, so long as there is an understanding and appreciation of the wider importance of the activities.

Fundamentally, should the University of Huddersfield choose to engage in this concept of a citizenship learning programme within a Higher Education Institution the building blocks are suggestively there for citizenship learning to take place insofar as cultural change is acted upon. However, this would entail embedding the notion of engaging in a Students' Union activity within every course at a curriculum level so that students are positively encouraged into engaging with the activities that would enable citizenship learning to take place. Granted on paper this goes against the citizenship learning model outlined in Chapter 2 in terms of the programme being elective, rather than mandatory, but if the first instance of engagement was to be embedded into the curriculum, it would be on the Students' Union to further that engagement and on the student to make that conscious choice to engage in the programme in full once they had a taste of it. Not only would the notion of curriculum engagement come into play, but so would the notion of ensuring that whilst employability can still be a focus, there has to be classroom and reflection-based acknowledgement of the relevance of the skills to the wider community and society that the students are a part of for it to be truly effective and viable.

The interesting aspect to this would be that this could have a knock on effect of politically awakening students as well as empowering them to become active citizens as a student and once they have graduated, which would make a significant impact on British society at large – something that should an institution be willing to engage with the programme in full would be an insightful opportunity for further research in the future.

Things to note of the research

One of the key criticisms to this research is undoubtedly the subjectivity of the research in that it is a qualitative case study. Whilst this does outline that the findings of this research are not applicable to other institutions, one of the key findings in the view of this thesis is the massive importance, if not necessity of the STARS programme for this project to be successful. This actually outlines even further how

these findings cannot be applied to other institutions as the STARS programme is a somewhat unique structure within the wider Student movement as maybe half a dozen Students' Unions have any form of similarly put together programme. Various Students' Unions are working on similar types of programmes, but without in depth analysis of each programme against the criteria for a successful citizenship learning programme there would be no evidence that it could work beyond the walls of the University of Huddersfield.

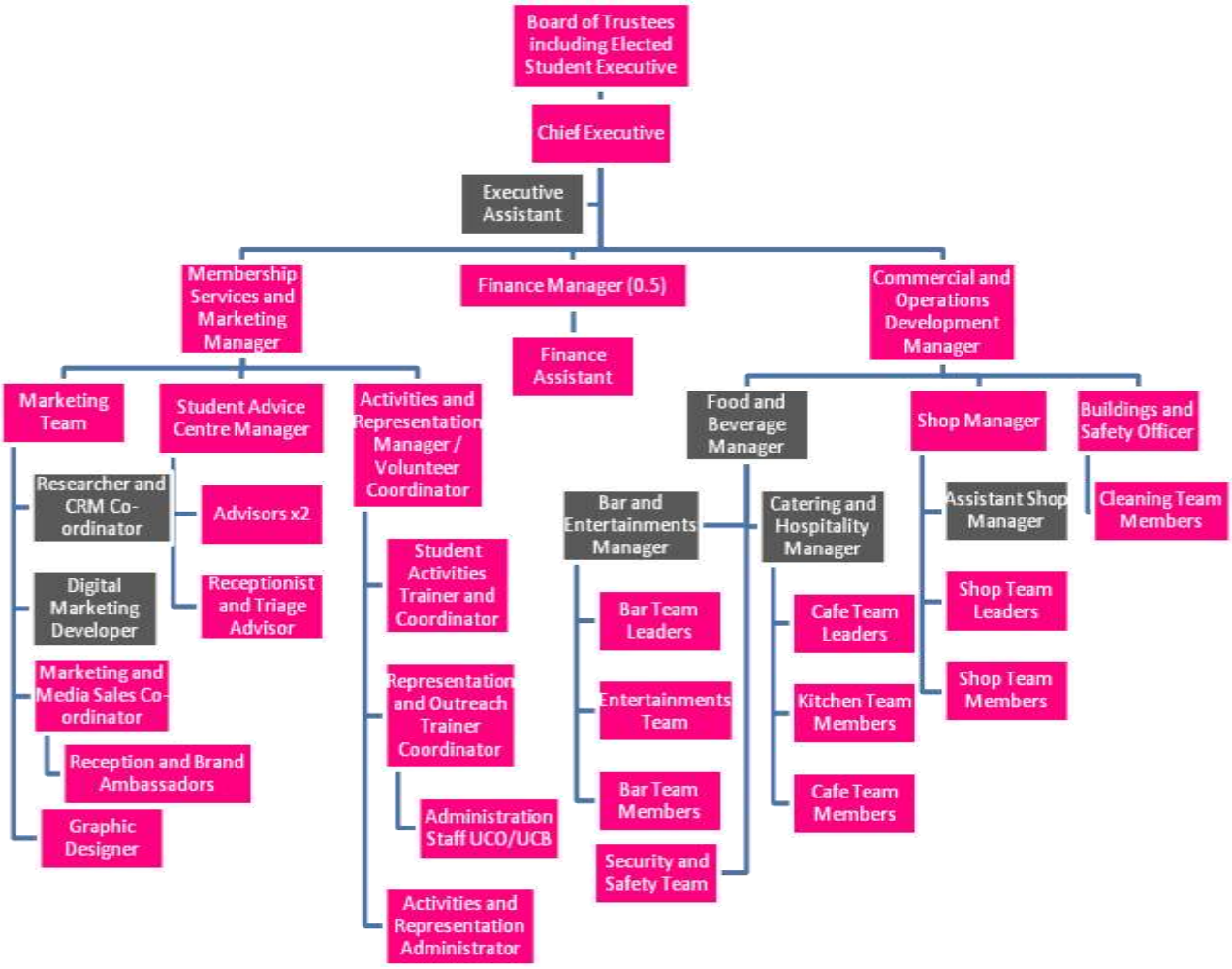
Furthermore, a typical criticism of Students' Unions in general is how wide reaching they actually are. As commented within some of the interviews, some students typically will not engage with a Students' Union by nature of its name for ideological reasons, other students may well feel like they do not have the time to engage with the Students' Union due to personal reasons, however there are certain sections of the student body who feel alienated from the student movement. Typically Students' Unions are perceived to be exclusive; despite the organisations strategising and working towards inclusivity; as is the nature of the organisation, which can alienate a substantive amount of students within an institution. The focus around alcoholic drinking can drive mass segments of the student body away on religious grounds, the political activist nature may drive other students away who 'don't do politics', so there are a significant amount of reasons why students would not get involved with the Students' Union, which would undermine the concept of utilising the Students' Union as the be all and end all of citizenship education within the Higher Education sector.

Overall, these findings and things of note would suggestibly recommend that further research needs to be done into the STARS programme, into rolling out some form of national equivalent as well as more research on several different institutions within the sector to understand whether citizenship learning could happen within the Higher Education sector, as well as a significant amount of research into involvement with the Students' Union to ensure that students are not alienated from the potential of becoming an active citizen. However, in the meantime were the University of Huddersfield to decide that this was a focus point for their development, this research has evidenced that the foundations are in place for such an activity, with the foundations of the model of citizenship learning, as well as an acknowledgement that

students engage in different ways. Further work must be done for the results of this thesis to begin to become significant to the sector at large, but for Huddersfield this could be continued with a small amount of further research, possible a pilot of a citizenship-based programme and some agreements in principle for institutional change – the real question at that point is whether this is where the University, or even the government, would like to take their efforts on furthering citizenship learning to the highest levels of education in the country.

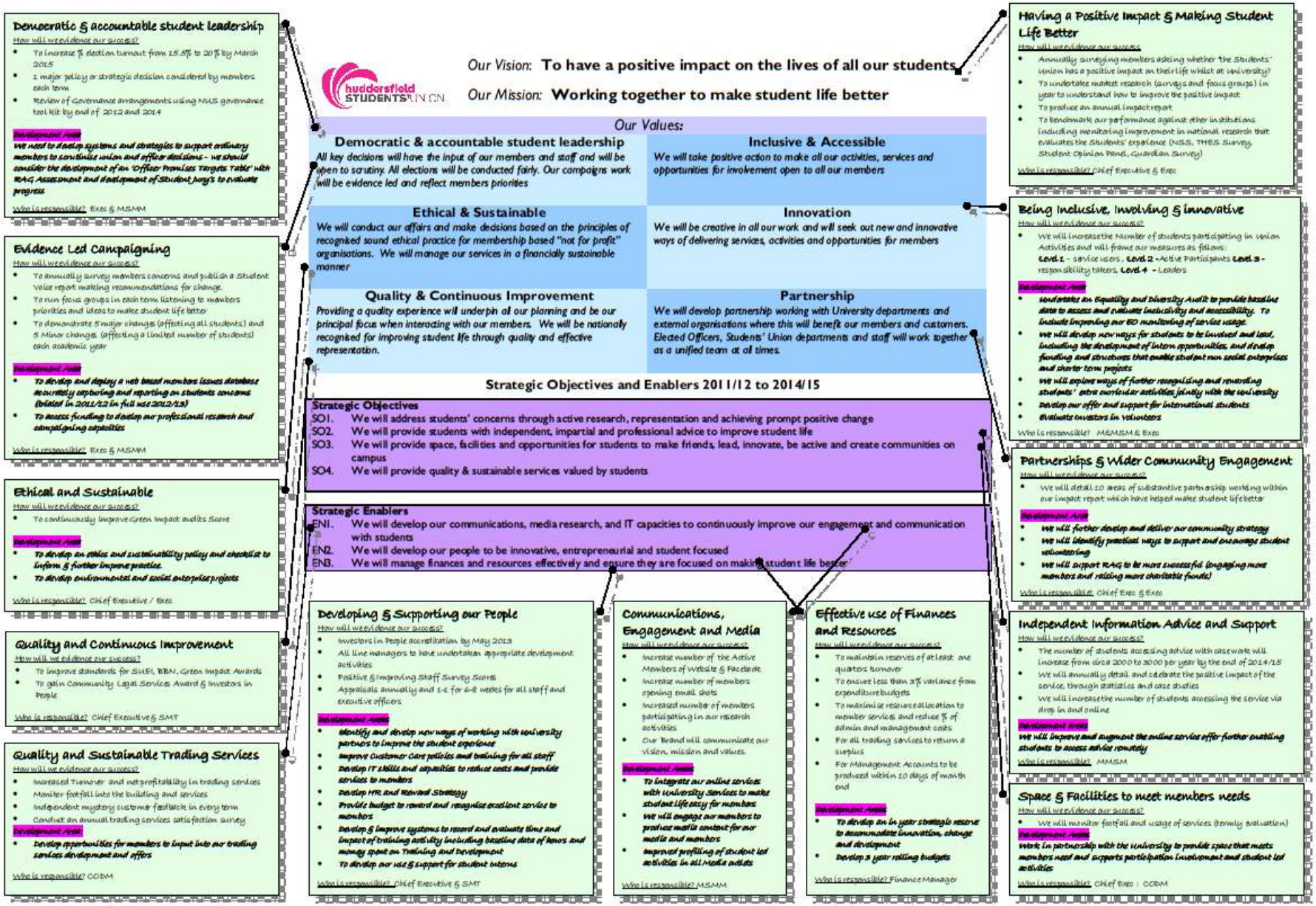
Appendix

Appendix 1



Huddersfield University Students' Union Staffing Structure March 2012

Appendix 2


Democratic & accountable student leadership
How will we evidence our success?
To increase % election turnout from 15.5% to 20% by March 2015
1 major policy or strategic decision considered by members each term
Review of Governance arrangements using NUS governance tool kit by end of 2013 and 2014
Development Area
We need to develop systems and strategies to support ordinary members to scrutinise union and officer decisions - we should consider the development of an 'Officer Promises Targets Table' with RAG Assessment and development of Student party's to evaluate progress
Who is responsible? Exec & MSMM
Evidence Led Campaigning
How will we evidence our success?
To annually survey members concerns and publish a Student Voice report making recommendations for change.
To run focus groups in each term listening to members priorities and ideas to make student life better
To demonstrate 5 major changes (affecting all students) and 5 Minor changes (affecting a Limited number of students) each academic year
Development Area
To develop and deploy a web based members issues database accurately capturing and reporting on students concerns (Initiated in 2011/12 to be full use 2012/13)
To access funding to develop our professional research and campaigning capabilities
Who is responsible? Exec & MSMM
Ethical and Sustainable
How will we evidence our success?
To continuously improve Green Impact audits Score
Development Area
To develop an ethics and sustainability policy and checklist to inform & further improve practice.
To develop environmental and social enterprise projects
Who is responsible? Chief Executive / Exec
Quality and Continuous Improvement
How will we evidence our success?
To improve standards for SUSI, BBN, Green Impact Awards
To gain Community Legal Services Award & Investors in People
Who is responsible? Chief Executive & SMT
Quality and Sustainable Trading Services
How will we evidence our success?
Increased Turnover and net profitability in trading services
Monitor footfall into the building and services
Independent mystery customer feedback in every term
Conduct an annual trading services satisfaction survey
Development Area
Develop opportunities for members to input into our trading services development and offers
Who is responsible? CODM
huddersfield STUDENTS' UNION
Our Vision: To have a positive impact on the lives of all our students
Our Mission: Working together to make student life better
Our Values:
Democratic & accountable student leadership
All key decisions will have the input of our members and staff and will be open to scrutiny. All elections will be conducted fairly. Our campaigns work will be evidence led and reflect members priorities
Inclusive & Accessible
We will take positive action to make all our activities, services and opportunities for involvement open to all our members
Ethical & Sustainable
We will conduct our affairs and make decisions based on the principles of recognised sound ethical practice for membership based "not for profit" organisations. We will manage our services in a financially sustainable manner
Innovation
We will be creative in all our work and will seek out new and innovative ways of delivering services, activities and opportunities for members
Quality & Continuous Improvement
Providing a quality experience will underpin all our planning and be our principal focus when interacting with our members. We will be nationally recognised for improving student life through quality and effective representation.
Partnership
We will develop partnership working with University departments and external organisations where this will benefit our members and customers. Elected Officers, Students' Union departments and staff will work together as a unified team at all times.
Strategic Objectives and Enablers 2011/12 to 2014/15
Strategic Objectives
SO1. We will address students' concerns through active research, representation and achieving prompt positive change
SO2. We will provide students with independent, impartial and professional advice to improve student life
SO3. We will provide space, facilities and opportunities for students to make friends, lead, innovate, be active and create communities on campus
SO4. We will provide quality & sustainable services valued by students
Strategic Enablers
EN1. We will develop our communications, media research, and IT capacities to continuously improve our engagement and communication with students
EN2. We will develop our people to be innovative, entrepreneurial and student focused
EN3. We will manage finances and resources effectively and ensure they are focused on making student life better
Developing & Supporting our People
How will we evidence our success?
Investors in People accreditation by May 2013
All line managers to have undertaken appropriate development activities
Positive & improving Staff Survey Scores
Appraisals annually and 1-1 for 6-8 weeks for all staff and executive officers
Development Area
Identify and develop new ways of working with university partners to improve the student experience
Improve Customer Care policies and training for all staff
Develop IT skills and capacities to reduce costs and provide services to members
Develop HR and Reward Strategy
Provide budget to reward and recognise excellent service to members
Develop & improve systems to record and evaluate time and impact of training activity including baseline data of hours and money spent on Training and Development
To develop our use & support for student interns
Who is responsible? Chief Executive & SMT
Communications, Engagement and Media
How will we evidence our success?
Increase number of the Active Members of Website & Facebook
Increase number of members opening email shots
Increased number of members participating in our research activities
Our Brand will communicate our vision, mission and values.
Development Area
To integrate our online services with University Services to make student life easy for members
We will engage our members to produce media content for our media and members
Improved profiling of student led activities in all Media outlets
Who is responsible? MSMM
Effective use of Finances and Resources
How will we evidence our success?
To maintain reserves of at least one quarters turnover
To ensure less than 3% variance from expenditure budgets
To maximise resource allocation to member services and reduce % of admin and management costs
For all trading services to return a surplus
For Management Accounts to be produced within 10 days of month end
Development Area
To develop an in year strategic reserve to accommodate innovation, change and development
Develop 3 year rolling budgets
Who is responsible? Finance Manager
Having a Positive Impact & Making Student Life Better
How will we evidence our success
Annually surveying members asking whether the Students' Union has a positive impact on their life whilst at university?
To undertake market research (surveys and focus groups) in year to understand how to improve the positive impact
To produce an annual impact report
To benchmark our performance against other institutions including monitoring improvement in national research that evaluates the Students' experience (NSS, THES Survey, Student Opinion Panel, Guardian Survey)
Who is responsible? Chief Executive & Exec
Being Inclusive, Involving & Innovative
How will we evidence our success?
We will increase the Number of students participating in Union Activities and will frame our measures as follows:
Level 1 - service users, Level 2 - Active Participants Level 3 - responsibility takers, Level 4 - Leaders
Development Area
Undertake an Equality and Diversity Audit to provide baseline data to assess and evaluate inclusivity and accessibility. To include improving our BD monitoring of service usage.
We will develop new ways for students to be involved and lead, including the development of intern opportunities, and develop funding and structures that enable student run social enterprises and shorter term projects
We will explore ways of further recognising and rewarding students' extra curricular activities jointly with the university
Develop our offer and support for international students
Evaluate investors in volunteers
Who is responsible? MSMSM & Exec
Partnerships & Wider Community Engagement
How will we evidence our success?
We will detail 10 areas of substantive partnership working within our impact report which have helped make student life better
Development Area
We will further develop and deliver our community strategy
We will identify practical ways to support and encourage student volunteering
We will support RAG to be more successful (engaging more members and raising more charitable funds)
Who is responsible: Chief Exec & Exec
Independent Information Advice and Support
How will we evidence our success?
The number of students accessing advice with case work will increase from circa 2000 to 2200 per year by the end of 2014/15
We will annually detail and celebrate the positive impact of the service, through statistics and case studies
We will increase the number of students accessing the service via drop in and online
Development Area
We will improve and augment the online service offer further enabling students to access advice remotely
Who is responsible? MMSM
Space & Facilities to meet members needs
How will we evidence our success?
We will monitor footfall and usage of services (termly evaluation)
Development Area
Work in partnership with the University to provide space that meets members need and supports participation involvement and student led activities
Who is responsible? Chief Exec : CODM

Appendix 3

huddersfield STUDENTS'UNION

our ideas for

making student life BETTER

Strategic Map 2011-2015

v1.1 August 2011

huddersfield STUDENTS'UNION

Huddersfield Students' Union
Queensgate. Huddersfield. HD1 3DH • 01484 538156
students.union@hud.ac.uk • www.huddersfield.su

Huddersfield Students' Union is a Registered Charity 1137401

Join us online **@huddersfieldSU**

A more detailed version of our Strategic Map is available online

our vision mission & values...

This strategic map will help guide staff and elected officers in achieving the Students' Unions mission, vision and values over the next few years.

In the changing Higher Education sector, we have purposefully focussed on continuous improvement; allowing us to be able to react to students evolving needs and we will pro actively look to our members for involvement and guidance in further developing the strategy and its implementation.

Our Vision: To have a positive impact on the lives of all our students

Our Mission: Working together to make student life better

Our Values:

Democratic & accountable student leadership
All key decisions will have the input of our members and staff and will be open to scrutiny. All elections will be conducted fairly. Our campaigns work will be evidence led and reflect members priorities

Partnership
We will develop partnership working with University departments and external organisations where this will benefit our members and customers. Elected Officers, Students' Union departments and staff will work together as a unified team at all times.

Quality & Continuous Improvement
Providing a quality experience will underpin all our planning and be our principal focus when interacting with our members. We will be nationally recognised for improving student life through quality and effective representation.

Ethical & Sustainable
We will conduct our affairs and make decisions based on the principles of recognised sound ethical practice for membership based "not for profit" organisations. We will manage our services in a financially sustainable manner

Inclusive & Accessible
We will take positive action to make all our activities, services and opportunities for involvement open to all our members

Innovation
We will be creative in all our work and will seek out new and innovative ways of delivering services, activities and opportunities for members

Add **your** ideas...

email us with your ideas to makehudbetter@hud.ac.uk

TBC

If you have an idea on how the Students' Union could make student life better - for you & your classmates or for future generations of students please let us know.

Assessing our
Quality & Improvement
1 Benchmark against other institutions to understanding how we can improve.
2 Annual surveys & market research
3 Improve our nationally recognised awards for:
• Students' Union Evaluation Initiative
• Best Bar None
• Green Impact
4 Quality assurance with Community Legal Services Award
Independent Advice & Support
1 Use case study to celebrate and promote the service impact
2 We will support 3000 students with casework
3 Improve remote and drop in access
democratic & accountable student leadership
"Review Governance to enable student voice & scrutiny"
"20% turn out in elections"
"Student led decisions on major policy"
"Research to reflect all student views"
"Student voice reports securing 5 major & 5 minor changes each year"
Services & Facilities
Quality & Sustainable
Use mystery customer & annual satisfaction survey to continuously improve
Increase footfall & users of services
Increase turnover & net profitability to support future
Design space that meets students needs and promotes student led activities
Finance & Resources
3 year rolling budgets
Reduce admin costs
Reserves of one quarter turnover
Fund innovation & development
Allocate reserves for future innovation
our ideas for making student life
BETTER
Community strategy
Student volunteering
Raise and Give
We will develop
Partnerships
with University departments and external organisations working as a unified team
ethical and sustainable
Improve Green Impact score
Develop an ethics & sustainability policy
Support environmental & social enterprise projects
Communications, Engagement & Media
>>>Use website & Facebook & new social media
>>>Broaden & develop participation in research
>>>Integrate with Uni for student centred approach
>>>Support student led media activities
>>>Develop innovative & entrepreneurial staff
Inclusive
Accessible
Innovative
Welcome, engage & integrate home & international students
Positive & innovative action to involve all students
Accessible funding for student led projects
Student activity participation increase
Reward extra curricular involvement
Achieve Investors in Volunteers
Equality and Diversity Audit
WAY AHEAD
Developing & supporting our People
Achieve Investors in People
IT skills & capacities
Reward excellent service
Student Intern opportunities
Build staff satisfaction
New ways of working with the Uni
WWW.HUDDERSFIELD.SU

Appendix 4

Interview transcript example

Bold text writing: interviewer
Non bold writing: interviewee

Names have been changed to protect identity of participants
This is basically about citizenship and students' Unions, it's about your opinions, nothing more. I need you to be as honest as possible, it is entirely confidential and you have the right to withdraw at any point during and after (I have to put that in)
So: kick off with a nice broad question, how did you get involved in the Student movement?
As a student I guess, as a student through the University I went to, I played in a sports team, and then through the sports team obviously being connected to the Athletic Union, which is obviously part of the Students' Union, as I got more involved in the hockey club and more involved in the things the SU did with that sort of thought 'actually, its quite good', took on extra roles and responsibilities so went from say the president of a club to the chair of the athletic union, and then as the activities officer
Right,
So that's kind of the pathway up
You went the same route as Danny
Yea…Probably, yea cos he would have gone from
Because he went from President to chair to… good times! Alright… What do you think the Students' Union is there for?
A whole host of things really, I always say first and foremost representation so looking out for the rights, needs and wants of students, so making sure that's not only with their education, so through the standard of teaching they get, the standard of academic support they get, the standard of resources that go with that through to I suppose a more extra curricular stuff that might not directly impact on their education, as in on their exact course, but where might further their career in other ways so playing In a sports team is building your sort of team based skills – you work together those sorts of things, you then take on the leadership role of those clubs - then you are managing people, you're managing budgets, and a whole host of sort of other things that add in a different way towards your sort of – I suppose what makes up your CV then
Alright, kind of flipping the question on its ass a little bit, what do you think that students think that the Students' Union is there for?
In all honesty it sort of depends what sort of student you are. I think that depends on what you want to know as well. As much good that the Students' Union can do, and no matter how pretty the things are they offer, no matter how justified the things are they offer, some students don't see what its there for. I think the majority of people would straight away… especially the younger age straight away associate it as a bar,
Right,
And I think in a sense the older older students as well, they probably see the SU as something for the younger kids, coming out of school.
Right, fair enough,
Which obviously anyone in the movement would defend and say we are there for everyone and we always try to adapt, but you know the likelihood that a lot of our services are aimed to people who might not have a family to look out for or other

dependents or a job somewhere else, a part time student, you know those sort of things they just… I suppose a lot of the things we do, it is quite hard to fit.

Alright, why do you think students get involved in the Student movement?
Probably because its exciting, I think theres a lot of things that happen across the country in SU's that are quite common. So if you went from your school and you went to an SU in Edinburgh and you went to an SU in London, you'd be doing similar things and you would come back and tell stories and those sorts of things so I think that's one reason.
Another reason is that you might have a prior interest in say a society or a sports club or you might have been your head boy or head girl at school, and you like getting involved in those sorts of things, so you will go and seek it out and generally they're the sorts of things a Students' Union can give and deliver.
Then I suppose a flip side to that is you get involved because you need to, so you might have a particular problem, you might have, you know whether that's at home, maybe with your accommodation, maybe with your academic studies and you feel that you have to, you need to, because without the extra support the SU can give, then you I suppose you're missing out or you might not be represented quite as well.
Right, Okidoke. Right. We're kind of going into more institutional so its looking at our fun organisation here in Huddersfield. To what extent does your organisation encourage participation in the Students' Union?
So here in Huddersfield?
In your impeding environment
My opinion? What do we do?
Kind of… how far do you think we do it? Do we do it well? Those kinds of things.
I think we try to do it well, and I think as probably many students' unions find it's never quite enough and the percentage of students that probably come to the campus and the percentage that we deem as involved are probably quite low. But you know we do always try to adapt, we do always try to do things slightly differently, obviously having the whole officer side of things means that things cant really stand still because the officers generally don't let it, so they might come in with a new idea, or a new way of approaching the same idea, about how to get the messages out, sometimes I think we might rely on the building we work in, so people should come to us, were the students' union, were here, were us, and sometimes no matter how pretty you make the building look or a poster look or those sorts of things its not reaching the people who you want it to reach all the time.
Which, you know we get better and better and I thing the developments in technology also help the students union reach further and wider and from back in the day when I started university in 2003, and a lot of the stuff that you interacted with both with the students union and the university at the time would have been on a notice board so to interact with the SU you would have to come in because you would want to check the notice board, or you weren't bothered and you didn't want to go and you would never see the notice board.
Whereas obviously today you have things like social media side of things like facebook, twitter, where actually just following or becoming a fan make it so much easier to get threads of information through to you, maybe not all relevant all the time, but there's a greater likelihood that a students' gonna pick up on something that's happening. So I think in terms of that there's been a large development and the

developments gonna continue doing … you know along with websites, bits and pieces like that.

Alright, kinda looking at specific types of students as it were – Obviously we've got student activities, we have clubs, sports teams, societies; how far do you think, or to what extent do you think that those students engage in different areas, democratic areas or anything like that?

Here at Huddersfield or…?

Yup… here at Huddersfield.

I think its improving. When I first started working here 2009 or whenever it was, there was a bit of a trend you know like obviously I think the sports officer or societies and Activities as it is now generally came from a sports club or society so by becoming that officer they got involved in other areas of the union. There's obviously various requirements that we try to enforce upon a club or society to say you know come to the AGM, and those sorts of things. I think the biggest thing that would help improve that and would continue to develop that is our relationship with each individual student as they come through their lives here at Huddersfield so you know from the word go when you meet them at freshers fayre to them feeling a part of a club or society, then say you know you could be good at this, sort of empowering them to self discover in a way but sort of put a sign out that points them in the right direction. You know we have quite a few that would gradually cross over you know, they work with RAG, They work with the radio station, they work with the newspaper to get maybe their individual messages out and about, I'd say they generally have a better perception of the other aspects of the union you know, speaking to the officers and just being in the building and seeing things that happen and hearing from their team mates and society mates that something else has happened and they have been involved in something else that's been really good and its sort of word of mouth sort of, is probably one of the most important things with that aspect of getting involved with other aspects of the union, if you don't tell someone then they'll never know so… if that makes any sense.

It does… it's alright. Kind of a completely different student group but with regards to course reps; to what extent do you think course reps engage in democratic or other areas of the union?

I think course reps are slightly different and my reason for that is that they don't have to come into the SU to do their job or to be a part of that particular group all the time. Theyre obviously there to represent the students on their course, they've come to the training which gets them in initially, but there isn't.. I don't know… maybe there is, maybe there isn't but the same interaction with other people from either similar same courses whereby not only is it the job you do but it's the mates you have, the social life that goes with it which then sort of gets discussions flown more around other things that you're involved in whereas I dunno I have limited interaction with course reps anyway but that sometimes isn't as apparent and they will be very focussed on the job they need to do and do it very well, but maybe that other side you know that they are doing something extra to their studies and there are other people doing things similar and learning from each other I dunno maybe it doesn't happen quite as much, but maybe it doesn't need to.

Fair enough, right. Slightly more strategic question, to what extent does the organisation encourage further participation from students in terms of do we strategise for it? How do we strategise for it? How do we actually, you know, someone comes in and buys a coffee from the shop, how do we try and get them to be an officer as a kind of, obviously I imagine there is a couple of steps in

between, but in your opinion how far do you think we do it? How do we do it? And do you think we do it well?
Its kinda hard to answer for the SU in general because obviously I only work in one section
Yup
So for someone buying a coffee in the café, I don't really know what their talking is but from that side of things I should imagine that if someone's a regular customer you open up more conversation and more conversation leads to other things but that doesn't necessarily mean it happens because the member of staff behind the coffee shop might not know that's how we work because they've not been in the same suppose strategic way of viewing how the students union progressing.
In terms of where I am, and sort of my involvement within sort of the izone and things like that, I think we do do it, definitely. If someone shows an interest or someone shows maybe a little glimpse of they could be good at that, I think we do encourage them but I suppose we don't, I dunno, sometimes we don't go out of our way to do it as much as we possibly could maybe but then again they need to self discover that that's where they want to go in their life, their career, and in our office anyone would take the time to sit down with anyone who was asking questions about, you know, where's the union going? What does that mean for me? And how do I become a part of that shaping? So yea. I'm sort of losing what I'm talking about there.
It's alright, it's the strategy to some extent to getting students involved.
I mean I suppose in terms of its quite easy from myself, being an ex officer and an ex-involved student and things like that I can see the pathways through, and I know that for instance john in the office as well, we see things because hes been there and done it, so he knows what sort of person would be quite good or might be interested in it to sort of, I dunno, I suppose pick people out and ask people
Identify
Yea… identify the people and say you know, have you ever thought about doing this? I think would be good at it, here's some information, go away and think about it sort of thing.
But do you think it's clear to students? In terms of how to get involved?
Again, I think for the ones we work with in our office on a day to day basis, those involved in clubs, societies, course reps, those sort of things that maybe through some sort of formal training, some sort of interaction with others, I think by the time they, maybe not in their first year, but certainly by second or third year, id expect them, the majority of them I think would have known you know, there is an election, there are students that stand in that election, every other student votes for them, and who ever gets it, who ever wins becomes the officer of next year. Do they know how to get involved in that? Yea, I think so.
Alright,
Those I interact with I think they do and if they didn't, I think they would know where to ask which is sometimes just as important, that you know are 'what do those guys do?' and they would know possibly where to come and ask
Alright, the next one is a little bit more tricky, I'm not gonna lie; do you think that there are any barriers for student getting involved and if so what do you think they are?
Involved in any particular level of the union? Because it's very…
The democratic side so campaigns, elections, council, student groups, things like that. Do you think there are any barriers to basically get their voice heard?

There's always barriers. Always barriers. No matter what type of student you are there's gonna be something that means you have to go out of your way to get involved, now whether that's simply turning up to a meeting at a time, rather than going to the library or going to the pub, you know, there's a sort of, for me there's a level of sort of responsibility from the student on overcoming barriers along with us making it as easy as possible. I think theres some areas where you have to break down barriers, you know, if we say we want to engage student parents, or mature students or post graduate students, those sort of things, we need to be very aware of what their life style is like, what their timetables like, what other commitments they may have in life, so you know, holding a meeting at you know half past four in the afternoon, five o'clock, when if they have got children, they would have been picked up from school at three o'clock and then they'd be having their tea, and putting to bed, well they're never gonna make it back to campus to be involved in that sort of thing. But you know, there is always one of those things where that one size is never gonna fit all and I think its not always about breaking down each barrier for each individual area and each individual thing, its more about how many different ways can we interact on the same topic or... so not just relying on a meeting to form, again this is just my opinion, but not relying on a meeting solely to count towards council – is there any way that other people can interact with that forum? You know, could part of it go online for a little bit? You know, trying different little bits and little bits that might – yes, come back to the meeting afterwards, but rely on that interaction with councillors, with representatives, those sorts of things.
I suppose the other side of that is if you want to get into an elected position and you're expected to attend, then that's gonna be a massive barrier straight away so I dunno… its definitely a balancing … because also, you try to bring a bit of consistency into what you do so I know we've looked at doing Tuesdays as democratic Tuesdays because it brings consistency across a whole range of forums, so everyone will know there's something representational going on on a Tuesday evening generally around 5pm. There's some sort of group forum, council, that sort of things. But, by doing that then you alienate anybody that has any commitments on a Tuesday evening.
Yup
So, yea… whereas consistency might boost one side of things, it might then sort of hinder the other side.
So consistency in and of itself can be a barrier to some extent?
So yea, consistency itself could be a barrier but yea, as I say, its what goes along the side of that consistency I think that helps remove those barriers that are obviously a positive in the consistency area so…
Alright, next is more kind of personal to some extent, but how do you think you personally have benefitted from being involved in the student movement?
How have I benefitted?
In terms of skills, so on and so forth
I think the easiest thing for me to say is Every job I have ever applied for, I've got… and I've got through talking about my involvement as a student, with the students' union, with the university, so I think there's definitely a direct correlation for learning different skills alongside my academics that has resulted in me being employed. A) in this job as its still within the students movement, but also being employed in other areas like I was employed by HSBC bank and they took me straight on and all I did was talk about was my interactions with students and students' Unions, and the hierarchy of the university and things like that. I think that's benefited me throughout. Even when I was a student itself having started off in the hockey team, having a group

of mates I can always fall back on, then by leading those groups of mates, then by leading the lots of different groups of mates in each of their individual clubs and societies, and the skills that go along with that you know, your organisation, your leadership, your ability to communicate, you know all these things come from just me wanting to get involved in say for instance sport, and that's through the Students' Union.
So then moving onto getting involved in the democratic, the representational things that sort of came after for me, but equally became kind of exciting and sort of new and learning lots of different things and lots of different skills that came along on that side of things, you know I'd never been told you know, your gonna be a representative, you're gonna do this and do that, which I think maybe, maybe and this is just a thing off the top of my head is kind of a bad way a students union would try and get a student involved in the SU is by telling them how its good for them rather than them telling us what they're interested in, how they wanna get involved, that we try and go here's the mould; fit into it. Whereas you know I suppose my way and I'm sure I think Danny's is probably the same way is that actually we had an interest somewhere else and something we wanted to achieve and then we all sort of grew into the mould and some of the other stuff came later but you know depends what sort of person you are.
Alright, Last one – how do you think that students that get involved benefit on a personal level in terms of development skills so on and so forth? How do you think that being a committee member or playing for sport, course rep, being involved in council, in the forums, running for election, or whatever it is, how do you think they actually benefit?
Them? How do they benefit?
How does it benefit them, individualism, very opposite of altruism .
Its hard to know where to start you know, they benefit in all sorts of ways, experience, knowledge, knowing how where to find things and different bits and pieces, are you wanting sort of specifics skills? So…
Just kind of the ones that stand out the most for you to some extent
Communication, organisation, I suppose a reliance on trust gets in there as well that you know we rely on them to be involved and they rely on us to support them to be involved, and that sort of thing, communication… said that, leadership is obviously a big one, working as part of maybe smaller teams within a bigger team, which I think as a student movement as a whole is lots of little teams and areas that all move together as one sort of thing. What else… they learn… I'm on the spot…
Yes, Yes you are
I think you learn to also maybe sell yourself and sell a… you know, whatever the student movement is to them to other people, as I was saying you know word of mouth and that communication is key and I think by telling people maybe how good they found it, how much they picked up, you know I find talking to people who want to get involved in elections myself, you know I will say its irreplaceable what you can pick up just by doing something you're interested in… but yea… I cant really think…
It's alright, we can call it there. Thanks very much for your time and that was great! Thank you very much

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