



enhancement
themes

Undergraduate Post- Placement Transition to University: Contested Identities within Communities of Practice?

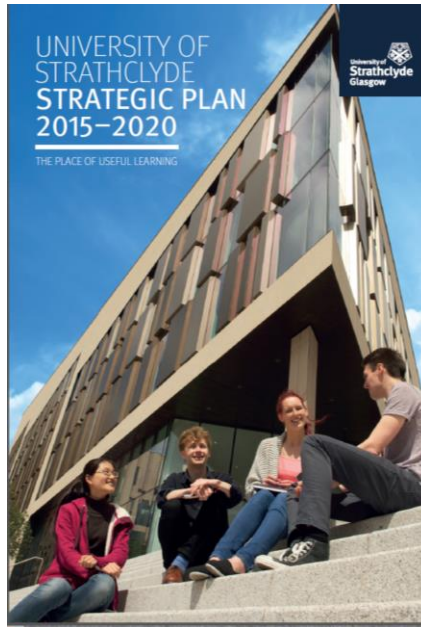
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(b) Student Interns

3rd International Enhancement in Higher Education Conference 2017
Inspiring excellence - transforming the student experience

Outstanding student experience



Enable greater student participation in internships, placements and employment opportunities with industry, public and third sector partners, including international experiences

[\(https://www.strath.ac.uk/whystrathclyde/strategicplan/outstandingstudentexperience/\)](https://www.strath.ac.uk/whystrathclyde/strategicplan/outstandingstudentexperience/)

Theoretical Lens

- Situated learning theory reflects the fact that *meaning is negotiated*, and that *knowledge is transmitted through social relationships*; it is thus held that all knowledge is to some extent bound to context.
- Lave & Wenger (1991)

Two key constructs

- Legitimate Peripheral Participation

This is a way of understanding learning, as opposed to a framework which may be implemented. According to this theory, learning is not a process of mere knowledge acquisition, but is bound up with the formation of identity in a social context.

Two key constructs

Community of practice (COP)

- mutual engagement
- joint enterprise
- shared repertoire



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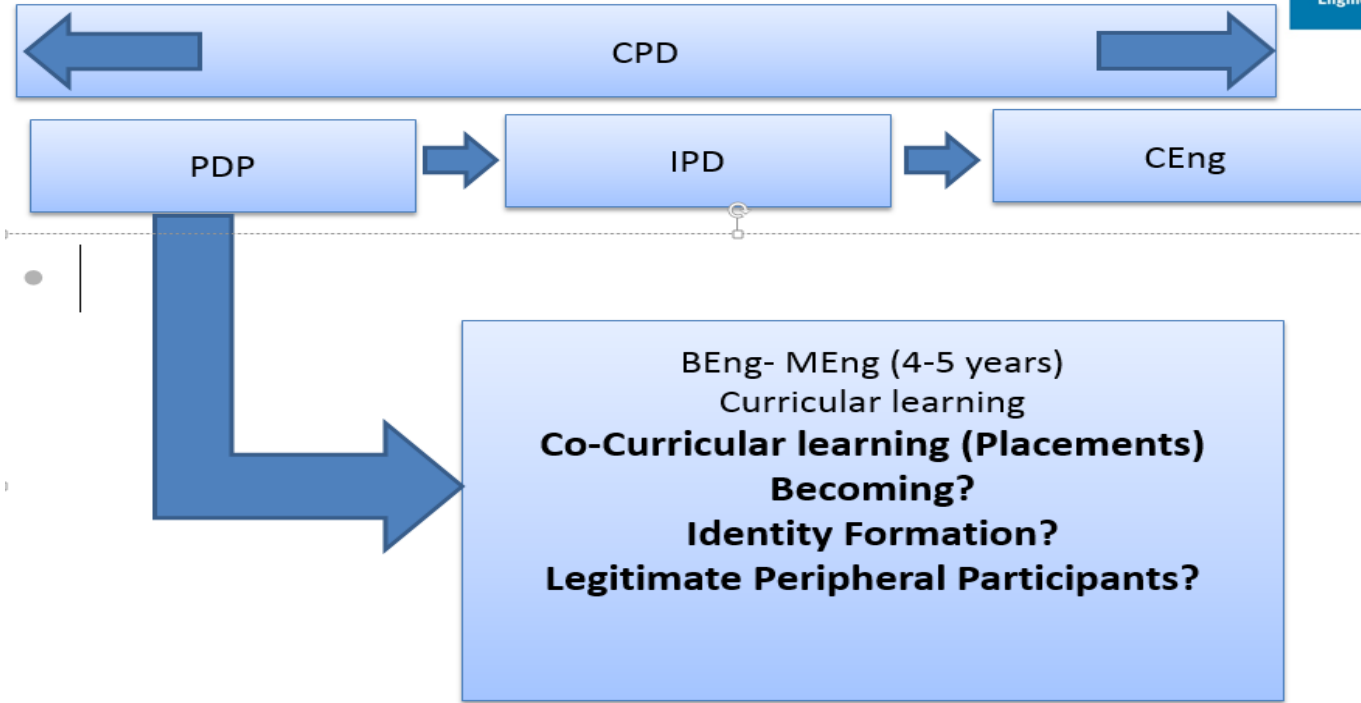
Community of Practice ?



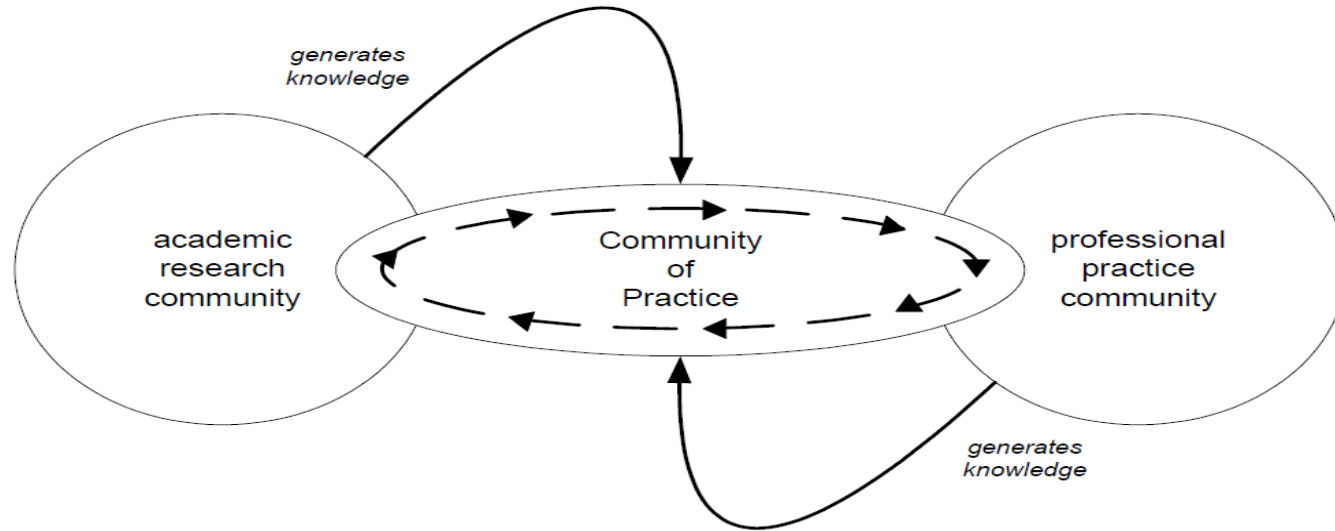
Tension in Transitions?



A series of Transitions



A Student-academic CoP?



(Johri and Olds,2011)

- Over the summer, the students have been able to ***shape their identities*** as engineers and to witness the ***repertoires of engineering practice***

(Hill, 2009)

- There is evidence to suggest that students can continue their *‘progression through legitimate peripheral participation* during their course and not just [during] placement’

(Auburn, 2007)

- Providing these students with a curriculum that *meshes both placement experience and academic knowledge* can be considered troublesome and faculty have control over the utilization of this placement experience within the formal curriculum.

Identify formation during placement

- *Then it was really interesting to be in that meeting and be able to start understanding the language that was being used. So when you start understanding the language of engineering, I suppose you start feeling more like you are an engineer. (# 1)*
- *He took his name off and put my name with 'project engineer'. So that kind of felt like you are a proper engineer because my name was there and it wasn't 'student', it was 'project engineer. (# 2)*

Opportunities for identity formation post transition

- *So independent work like my fourth year dissertation, and even team work like the fourth year car park project for structures, they really helped enhance that identity that I'd formed because I was able to use some of the stuff I'd learned on placement in the project. (# 13)*
- *Ok, so it's CE4R and they generally give a lot, a much closer, and much better representation of what actually is happening out on site. Obviously every workshop is different but I've had a much better experience in terms of reinforcing what I've done on a project or on the summer placement, all these. They are much more real-life orientated I'd say. (# 6)*



Barriers to identity formation post transition

- *If a good lecturer speaking to a student as an equal and as a civil engineer instead of as a student who, you know, just want to get rid of for this year and not see them next year or whatever, then I think, yeah, if you have a good lecturer who speaks to student as an equal, it can help form an identity of a civil engineer. (# 4)*
- *I feel the lecturers are just like scientists – they are told to teach you x, y, z but they are not engineers. We've got a handful of people who have actual experience in the field, everyone else is a scientist or lecturer. (#10)*

HEA Frameworks

- **Transforming assessment in higher education** enhancing assessment for learning and intergrading assessment literary into course design
- **Embedding employability in higher education** engaging employers in the students transition from industrial to academic COP's
- **Student access, retention, attainment and progression in higher education** promoting peer-led learning and developing and reviewing curricula in partnership with students
- **Student engagement through partnership** self-sustaining communities defined by shared goals and values the engender a sense of belonging
- **Flexible learning in higher education** work-place learning and pedagogy that encourages life-long learning.

BIS. (2016). *Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice.*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523546/bis-16-265-success-as-a-knowledge-economy-web.pdf

