

# Developing a sense of community through cross-level engagement



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## Background

Developing a Sense of Community has been shown to increase retention and progression (e.g. Boston et al., 2010).

## Aim

Pilot four innovative programme level blended engagement events that aim to create a community of learners across a qualification.

Evaluate how an emergent Community of Inquiry at programme level facilitates retention and progression.



The pilot is funded by the School of Engineering and Innovation and will run across the 17J and 18B presentations of U101, T217, T218 and T317

## Pilot 1

### Cross-level Design Fair at OU campus.

ALs and Central Academics set up stalls and run mini workshops in which students work hands-on and do mini projects using innovative approaches (e.g. Hackaton, Design Narratives) that build on the academics' expertise.

Some fair activities will offer focused synchronous or asynchronous remote engagement with students who cannot attend the event face to face

## Pilot 3

### Cross-level Design workshop at Imperial War Museum, Manchester

Under the theme of 'design utility' AL's will be using the museum's exhibits to stimulate collaborative student projects on Design for Austerity in the UK in 2018

## Evaluation

A pre-event survey will be administered to all students to investigate the expectations.

A post event survey will investigate whether or not students who attended the events perceive a change in their sense of community and pathways across the programme.

Analytics for Action data will be taken into consideration in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the events.

Interviews with students attending the events will be held, recorded and analysed qualitatively.

Individual event activities will be recorded and analysed for social, teaching and cognitive presence. Evidence of features of an emerging Community of Inquiry and progression pathways will be sought.

An exhibition of the events and their outcomes will be held at Campus and online on SAW.

## Pilot 2

### Cross-level Design Field Trip to Design Museum in London

One AL will be offering a guided visit of the exhibition "Beazley Designs of the Year" in the Design Museum, engaging students in observation through sketching and critical discussions.

An online exhibition of the work produced at the day on SAW will facilitate remote engagement after the event.

## Pilot 4

### Cross-level Talks: Designers Talking

Complementing the face-to-face events, a series of online cross-level sessions entitled "designers' talking" will be organized, presenting industry and academic projects by central academics, ALs, STs and 'visiting' professional designers.



Boston, W., Diaz, S. R., Gibson, A. M., Ice, P., Richardson, J., & Swan, K. (2010). An Exploration of the Relationship between Indicators of the Community of Inquiry Framework and Retention in Online Programs. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 14(1), 3–19. Retrieved from <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/53527/>