

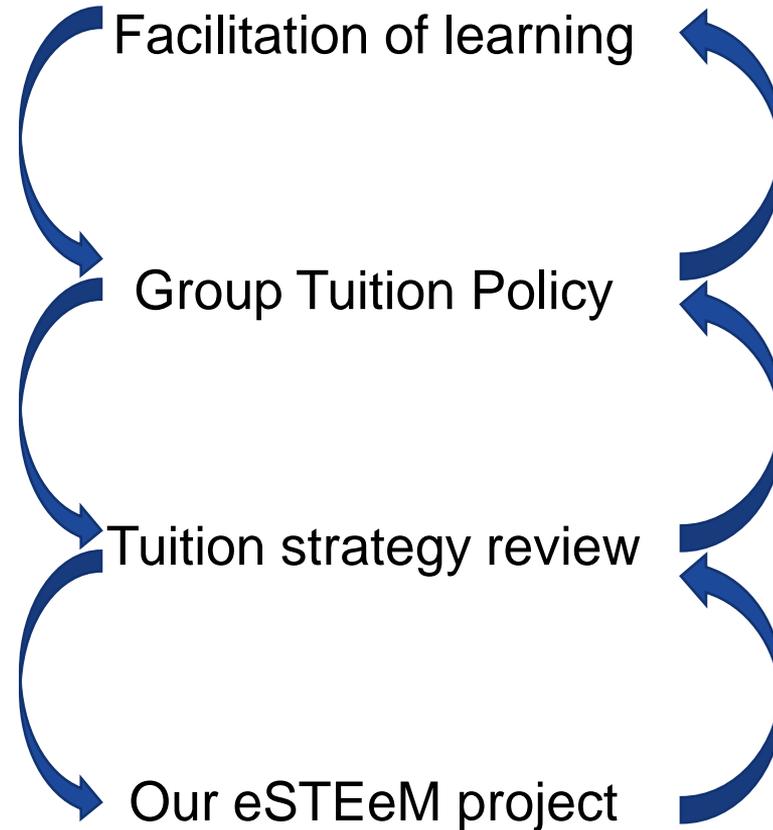
Involving ALs in Group Tuition Strategy Decisions

Sharon Dawes, Simon Savage and Ann Walshe

AL Expertise

We wanted to know how we could learn from the expertise of our ALs

- How did GTP strategy decisions involve you?
- Log in [here](#) and enter one word that describes your thoughts.
- <https://answer garden.ch/926661>



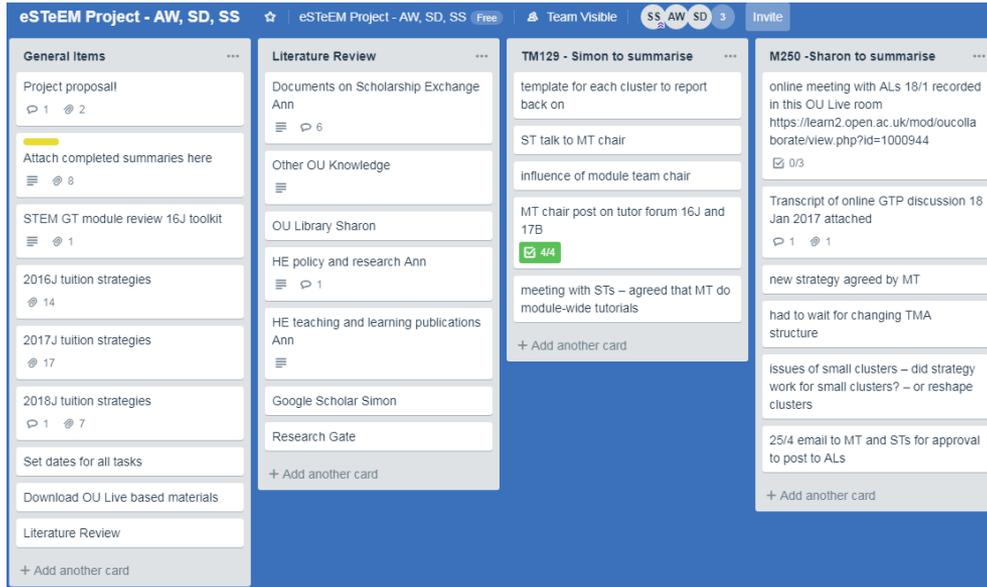
What we hoped to learn....

- How different modules had captured AL views
- How effective the process had been
- What changes had resulted
- What strategy had been the most successful

What the consultation toolkit asked ALs to feed back on...

- the titles and lengths of tutorials
- the student descriptions and purposes of tutorials
- the spread of tutorials
- the balance between online and face-to-face tutorial provision
- experience of collaborating with AL colleagues in delivering strategies
- the effectiveness of tuition

Trello - a tool for collaborative working

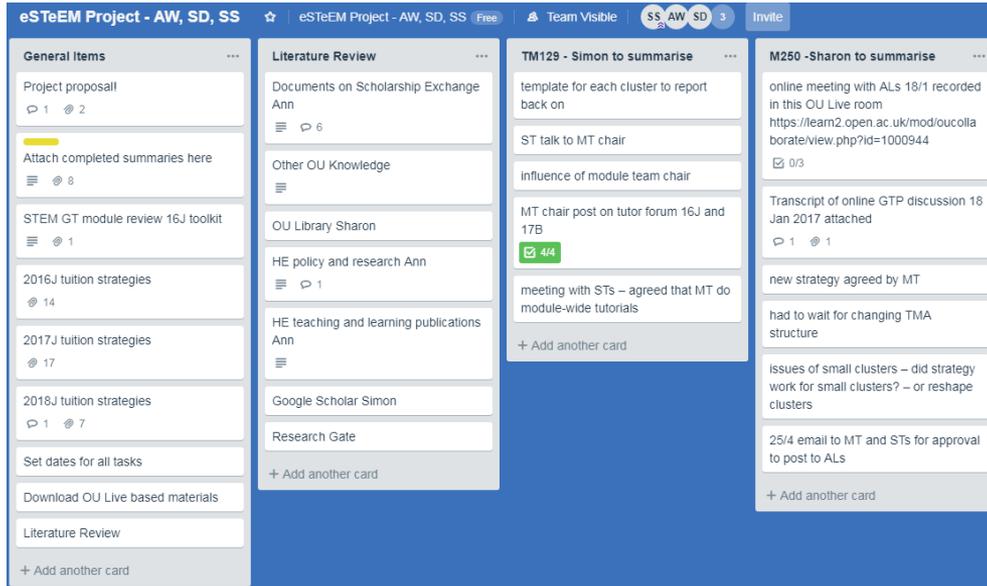


The screenshot shows a Trello board with the following structure:

- General Items:** Project proposal! (1 comment, 2 likes), Attach completed summaries here (8 likes), STEM GT module review 16J toolkit (1 like), 2016J tuition strategies (14 likes), 2017J tuition strategies (17 likes), 2018J tuition strategies (1 comment, 7 likes), Set dates for all tasks, Download OU Live based materials, Literature Review, + Add another card
- Literature Review:** Documents on Scholarship Exchange Ann (6 likes), Other OU Knowledge, OU Library Sharon, HE policy and research Ann (1 like), HE teaching and learning publications Ann, Google Scholar Simon, Research Gate, + Add another card
- TM129 - Simon to summarise:** template for each cluster to report back on, ST talk to MT chair, influence of module team chair, MT chair post on tutor forum 16J and 17B (4/4), meeting with STs – agreed that MT do module-wide tutorials, + Add another card
- M250 - Sharon to summarise:** online meeting with ALS 18/1 recorded in this OU Live room (https://learn2.open.ac.uk/mod/oucollaborate/view.php?id=1000944) (0/3), Transcript of online GTP discussion 18 Jan 2017 attached (1 comment, 1 like), new strategy agreed by MT, had to wait for changing TMA structure, issues of small clusters – did strategy work for small clusters? – or reshape clusters, 25/4 email to MT and STs for approval to post to ALS, + Add another card

- Support for distributed team members
- Enables management ...
- Intuitive to use
- Low band-width requirement
- Low “faff” requirements
- Mobile device support
- Cheap (preferably free)

Trello - a tool for collaborative working



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- Enables management ... ✓
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Collaborative working choices

- OneDrive
- eMail
- SharePoint
- Common folder on the servers
- Other software

How we gathered evidence

- Module Debrief sessions
- AL / Cluster manager online discussions
- AL / Module team forum discussions
- Individual discussions between Staff tutors and ALs
- Hackathon

How we gathered evidence

- Module Debrief sessions - TM355
- AL / Module team online discussions - M250, M269, M258, TM356
- AL / Module team forum discussions - TM129, M269, TT284, T215, T216
- AL / Staff tutors forum discussions - T122, T227, TM351, TM352
- AL led tutor forum thread - TM354
- AL/ Staff tutor individual discussions - TM353
- Hackathon - TM356

- “Staff expertise is the most important asset in a university...” (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2003)
- Teaching excellence is best achieved through “a culture of quality and enhancement, through dialogue and collaboration” (Marshall, 2017)
- AL’s are experienced in delivering tuition; view it as part of their professional identity; and have views on how it should be done (Walshe & Gallen, 2017)
- Voices of academics are not generally being heard but their views should be included in the debate (Crawford, 2010)

Blackmore, P., & Blackwell, R. (2003) Academic roles and relationships. In R. Blackwell, & P. Blackmore (Eds.), *Towards strategic staff development in higher education* (pp. 16-28). Maidenhead, UK: SRHE and Open University Press.

Crawford, K. (2010) Influences on academics' approaches to development: voices from below. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 15(3), 189-202, doi: 10.1080/1360144X.2010.497669

Marshall, Prof. S. (2017) Rising to the challenges of tomorrow, Published 1st November 2017 by Higher Education Academy, Retrieved August 8, 2018 from <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/rising-challenges-tomorrow>

Walshe, A. and Gallen, A-M. (2017) Perceptions, Expectations and Experience of Group Tuition: towards a shared understanding amongst stakeholders. eSTEEeM Final Report 2017, *Open University Internal Report*.

How well ALs participated

- Modules studied had between 6 and 30 ALs; response rates ranged from 27% to 83%
- Responders were self selecting
- Much of feedback concerned how strategies had been implemented
- Some feedback was about other aspects of the AL role

What ALs said

- Some tutorials needed clearer labelling
- Some tutorial descriptions needed to be reviewed and revised
- Descriptions should be sufficiently broad
- AL views on the length of an ideal tutorial differed
- A single tutorial should not try to cover too many topics
- They queried whether the description was important to students or whether they trusted ALs to deliver what was appropriate

What ALs wanted

- Tutorials more evenly distributed across time
- Daytime alternatives
- Resources and guidance to avoid duplication
- Recognition that AL developed resources and approaches must not be restricted
- Pair teaching on large population modules
- Above all: Flexibility

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- Pair teaching on large population modules
- Above all: Flexibility
- Unsurprisingly there were many different views.

How Module teams can learn from this

- Asynchronous consultations allow time for reflection - but a deadline for responses must be set
- Synchronous consultations allow for quick consultations and good discussions
- Forum discussions could be followed up by brief online sessions to clarify opinions
- Review schedules should be set up well in advance to allow sufficient participation

Evaluating whether the tuition strategy review was successful

1 – What were the student perceptions of the revised tuition strategy?

2 – Was there an impact on student results?

3 – How effective do ALs feel the revised strategies were?

4 – Do the ALs genuinely feel part of the process?

<https://answergarden.ch/926661>

Any Questions?



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