International Foundation Student Conference

Maggie Holmes

Anthony Flint

Wendy Altinors
Limits of classroom presentations

Good preparation for undergraduate programme?

• Familiar audience
• Familiar environment
• Overly supportive?
• Cosy, routine events
Undergraduate conference 2010

Foundation students out of their depth:

- Language level
- Sophisticated presentations & discussions
- Evidence of high stress levels

BUT clear benefits

Answer between classroom and undergraduate conference?
2 Foundation conferences
January 2011 & 2012

- Conference organisation
- Group presentations
- Preparation
Example presentations

• Sponge balls as flood relief tool
• Wrist device showing hydration levels
• Reflexology slippers
• ‘Flashing t-shirt’
• Super safe car tyres
• USB translating pen
• Bubbles - car cleaning services
• Warming body lotions for a cold climate
• Fair trade cacao from San Tome
Benefits

Perspective  Authenticity

Group-work  Engagement
Benefits

Perspective
HE the same everywhere in the UK

Group-work

Authenticity

Engagement
Benefits

Perspective
HE the same everywhere in the UK

Authenticity
bridging the gap competitive element

Group-work

Engagement
Benefits

Perspective
HE the same everywhere in the UK

Authenticity
bridging the gap competitive element

Group-work
mirrors future programmes learning to be ‘professional’ employability

Engagement
Benefits

Perspective
HE the same everywhere in the UK

Authenticity
bridging the gap
competitive element

Group-work
mirrors future programmes
learning to be ‘professional’
employability

Engagement
motivation
camaraderie
confidence
Benefits for staff

- Shared ideas & practice
- Straightforward to organise
- Fun!
Our Challenges

• Conference theme to fit all our contexts
• Task type appropriacy
  - sufficiently ‘academic’?
  - too business oriented?
• Engagement / assessment / student numbers
Our Challenges

- Timing
  - end of Semester 1 or 2?

- Data protection issues
  - examples for future students

- Organisation

- Costs
Students’ Challenges

• ‘The Unknown’
  - unfamiliar audience (students and tutors)
  - unfamiliar environment
  - managing stress

• Timing on programme
  - maintaining gains
Students’ Challenges

• Study skills
  - preparation
  - time management
  - group working skills

• Conference environment
  - behavioural norms
Conclusions

• Successful events - further conferences planned

• Relatively easy to organise, but timing and scale crucial

• Clear gains for students

• Extremely positive feedback
Sample presentation ‘Flashing T-shirt’

- [http://video-2.leedsmet.ac.uk/Asx/?mswmext=.asx&id=4418%7C4r%7CSCdAPyf2*](http://video-2.leedsmet.ac.uk/Asx/?mswmext=.asx&id=4418%7C4r%7CSCdAPyf2*)