

27.11.25 - Intellectually Stimulating Teaching and Learning



Chair: Erin Gerard [EG] - VP Education

Student Attendees: 13 comprising of 1x School Rep [HITS, PBS], 6 X HITS Reps, 6 x SAC Reps

Introduction and Welcome

Introduction to Lunch and Listen and its purpose, as well as overview of the topic: Intellectually Stimulating Teaching and Learning.

Purpose of the session is to explore the feedback course reps have been collecting, as well as their own ideas and opinions, to get a representative perspective of the student body and their academic experiences. Introduction to VP Education and school reps.

Update from VP Education:

- Spoke to exam timetabling team regarding the feedback from last lunch and listen – Addressing issues with exams being too close together.
- Attended NUS conference and workshops were useful, intellectually stimulating was a prioritised topic. This is across institutions and explains why this is a term we are seeing a lot currently.
- Library Update – discussions are happening around academic tutors under academic success (which will become a student job), and lengthening opening times of both libraries.
- AI Update – Working with JMSU President and Sustainability teams around environmentally friendly usage of AI, LJMU Assist and Canvas AI chatbot that summarises resources and learning materials. Being added to controllable AI policy.
- Assignment Feedback – Beginning a consultation around standardising feedback across faculties.

Summary of Minutes

Topic 1: What does great teaching look like?

Students feel great teaching comes from passionate, caring lecturers who communicate clearly, create safe and inclusive spaces, and use creative methods that challenge thinking. Consistency and preparation help build trust, though large cohorts can make creativity harder. Some students noted a disconnect between

current learning styles and older teaching habits, and the transition from school to university can be difficult without support.

Topic 2: What makes students disengage?

Disengagement happens when teaching is not stimulating - such as reading from slides, irrelevant digressions, or inconsistent teaching styles. Poor learning materials, limited access to resources, and logistical issues like distant facilities or unsuitable library hours also play a role. Students feel overwhelmed by tight deadlines, lack of support (including disability support), and pressures from work or personal circumstances, all of which reduce motivation to attend or engage in learning.

Topic 3: What makes students look forward to learning?

Students feel motivated when they love their subject, learn from academic staff who are experts in their field, and feel part of a supportive community. Access to good resources, relevant and modern content, and strong industry links creates excitement and a sense of purpose within their course. Students look forward to learning when they feel heard, can engage in independent research, and have access to opportunities that connect their learning to real-world impact.

Mentimetre Summary

Overall, reps reported that students mostly understand the term 'Intellectually Stimulating', and agree that their course is this most of the time. They found practical sessions being the most stimulating learning environment, with seminars being the least.

Good learning experiences were marked by **supportive, passionate lecturers** who were clearly invested in student understanding and structured their teaching clearly and thoughtfully. Students valued **practice exams, review sessions, Vevox quizzes, and opportunities for discussion**, which helped consolidate learning.

Students feel most engaged through **interactive, discussion-based, and hands-on learning**, that utilises tools like **Vevox** and use **exam-style questions** to help reinforce understanding. Engagement increases when lecturers communicate with students rather than at them, show confidence in student capability, and link lectures to follow-up practical sessions.