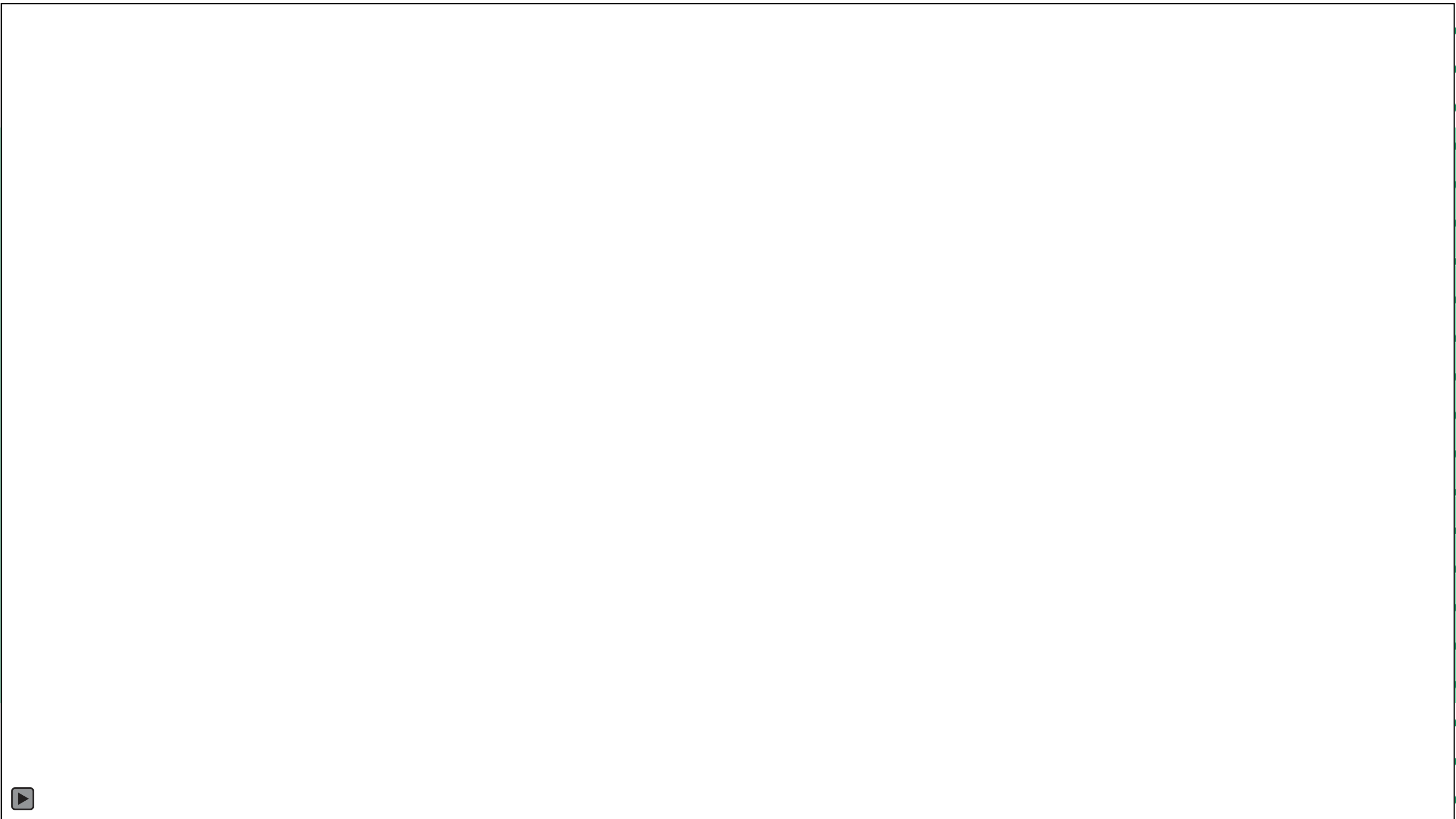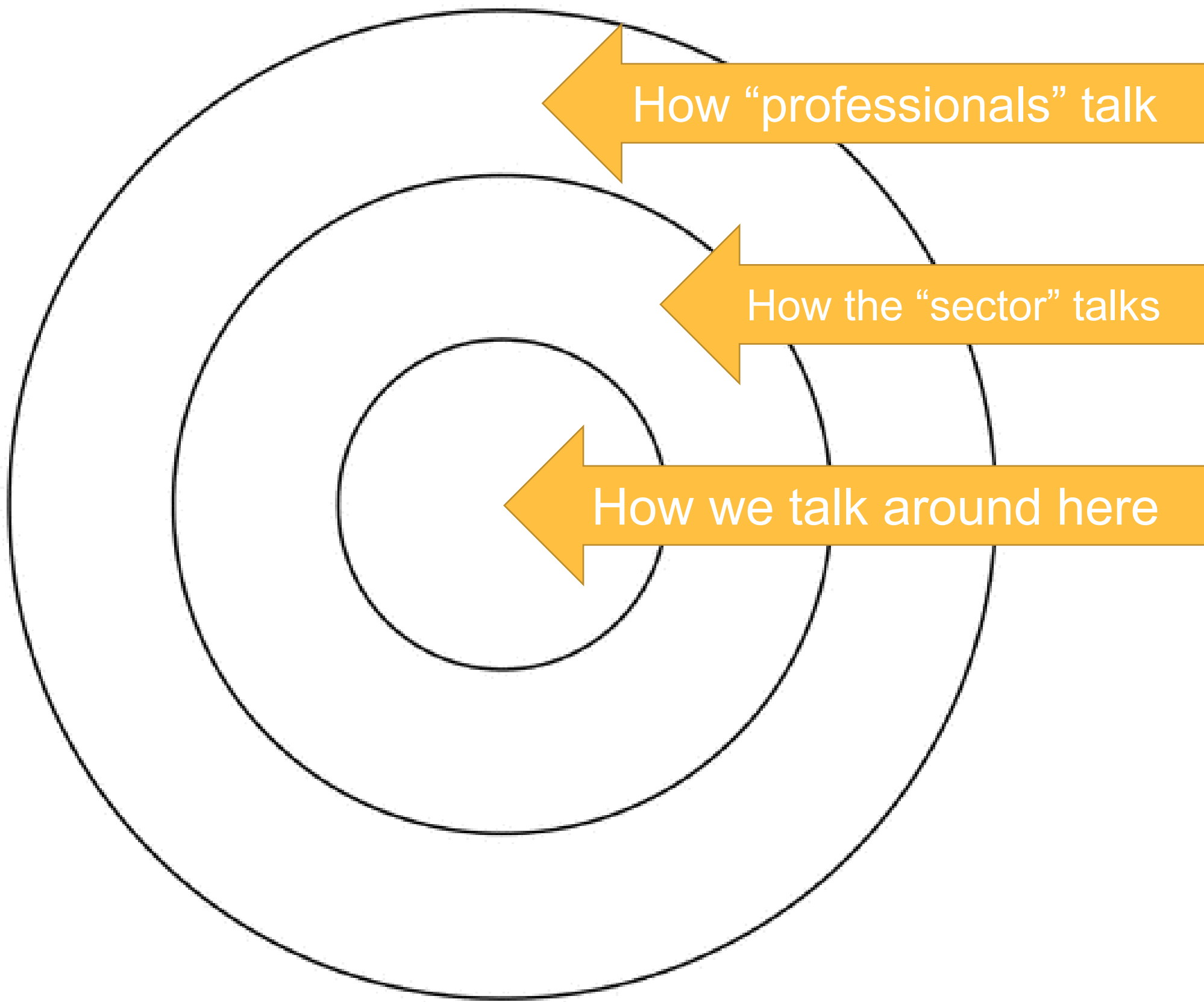# Student voice and what it can tell us

JIM DICKINSON | ASSOCIATE EDITOR | WONKHE
@JIM_DICKINSON | JIM@WONKHE.COM

WONKHE

How "professionals" talk

How the "sector" talks

How we talk around here

'Students should apply for refunds on their fees – at the end of the day, they're consumers'

Universities minister Michelle Donelan explores value for money, ending a culture of silence and being the only child keen on politics

By **Camilla Tominey**, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

21 January 2022 • 9:14pm

"Modern universities have long gone to great lengths, both prior to and during the pandemic, to prioritise student welfare, to ensure that every learner is best able to make the most of their studies and wider university experience. This is just one part of the role these universities play in promoting social justice.

"Modern universities have long gone to great lengths, both prior to and during the pandemic, to prioritise student welfare, to ensure that every **learner** is best able to make the most of their studies and wider university experience. This is just one part of the role these universities play in promoting social justice.

Prof Elaine Chalus @EHChalus · 20m

NikkiC @NicolaCodd1 · 1m

Replying to @EHChalus and @jim_dickinson

Some have managed for two years without them! Maybe they have adapted to the new normal? My daughter definitely wants to attend and does. For the ones that don't attend, the question needs asking as to why?

Marie Coleman @MarieMCole · 5m

I can't imaging delivering let alone attending a lecture at that hour

online in new survey

How to be human: how can I stop making everything about me?

By Leah Reich | Apr 30, 2016, 11:38am EDT

f y ⤴ SHARE

The pandemic has meant most students have been unable to go to lectures - so should they get a refund?

"Views and feedback from students are regularly sought and acted on and providers offer feedback in return"

QAA

WONKHE

"The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience. "

WONKHE

"For example, a student who chooses a short professionally-oriented course may have different views about the need for student engagement activities than a student beginning a three-year campus-based undergraduate course, and providers need to be able to respond to both views."

Office for Students

OfS

WONKHE

"Engagement" means routinely building into the course delivery opportunities for students to contribute to the future development of the higher education course in a way that maintains the academic rigour of that course, including, but not limited to, through membership of the provider's committees, including the governing body, opportunities to provide survey responses, and participation in activities to develop the course and the way it is delivered."

Office for Students

OfS

WONKHE

"We have been helped by constructive engagement with students - particularly through our student reference group

WONKHE

"But we didn't put a student on the panel itself and we haven't said what difference student made to the report

WONKHE

Shawn Graham
@electricarchaeo

Follow

A morning thought.

Students aren't 'consumers' of some 'product' called 'education'. They're not the buyer here.

WONKHE

Philip Darbyshire
@PDarbyshire

Follow

You don't go to university to be 'satisfied'. You go to be profoundly challenged, unsettled, pushed and skilled in the hope that you might think differently and better when you graduate.

4:20 AM - 11 Jun 2019

WONKHE

Students aren't consumers

- "Education challenges you"
- "No-one has a right to a degree, you have to put effort in"
- "You're not buying a degree"
- "Students should be treated as partners"
- "Educational outcomes are co-produced"
- "Who knows how much students will eventually pay"
- "You can't measure value for money"

WONKHE

Philip Darbyshire
@PDarbyshire

Follow

You don't go to university to be 'satisfied'. You go to be profoundly challenged, unsettled, pushed and skilled in the hope that you might think differently and better when you graduate.

4:20 AM – 11 Jun 2019

WONKHE

Jim Dickinson
@jim_dickinson

This is also why I read books, go to the
movies, attend public lectures and watch
"Chernobyl". But if the book has pages
missing, or the cinema is cold, the
lecture inaudible or the streaming poor, I
am legitimately dissatisfied.

KHE

Philip Darbyshire
@PDarbyshire

Follow

You don't go to university to be 'satisfied'. You go to be profoundly challenged, unsettled, pushed and skilled in the hope that you might think differently and better when you graduate.

4:20 AM - 11 Jun 2019

Jim Dickinson
@jim_dickinson

This is also why I read books, go to the movies, attend public lectures and watch "Chernobyl". But if the book has pages missing, or the cinema is cold, the lecture inaudible or the streaming poor, I am legitimately dissatisfied.

Jim Dickinson
@jim_dickinson

I've never met a student express dissatisfaction on the basis that they were educationally challenged, unsettled, pushed and skilled in the hope that they might think differently

WONKHE

Philip Darbyshire
@PDarbyshire

Follow

You don't go to university to be 'satisfied'. You go to be profoundly challenged, unsettled, pushed and skilled in the hope that you might think differently and better when you graduate.

4:20 AM - 11 Jun 2019

WONKHE

Students aren't consumers

- "Education challenges you"
- "No-one has a right to a degree, you have to put effort in"
- "You're not buying a degree"
- "Students should be treated as partners"
- "Educational outcomes are co-produced"
- "Who knows how much students will eventually pay"
- "You can't measure value for money"

WONKHE

Learners	Students
Clients	Citizens
Partners	Consumers

"Lack of support in universities drives deaf students to consider leaving degrees"

- Nearly half of those who needed help at university were still waiting for support when their degree began.

- Of those, nearly three in five (59%) experienced delays of more than two months for the support to be in place – and more than a quarter (28%) waited six months or more.

News > Education > Education News

Lack of support in universities drives deaf students to consider leaving degrees

Undergraduates feel they are wasting £9,250-a-year tuition fees amid long waits for help

Eleanor Busby Education Correspondent • Saturday 08 June 2019 19:21 • Comments

WONKHE

The SE solution

- Point problem out (deaf students not getting required support)
- Point problem out again
- Point problem out with reference to law
- Embarrass institution somehow
- Set up a working group
- Secure student representation on it
- Secure deaf student representation on it
- Expect said deaf student to know every other deaf student at the institution
- Hold meeting but forget to book signer
- Treat deaf student like a world expect on education and disability and all deaf students
- Agree that more meetings need to be held that involve more people because its complicated
- Set long term ambitions
- Rinse and repeat in about three years time

WONKHE

A Vision for Student Voice

JIM DICKINSON | ASSOCIATE EDITOR | WONKHE

@JIM_DICKINSON | JIM@WONKHE.COM

WONKHE

Six decades of student voice

- 1970s: Participation focus
- 1980s: Structure and systems focus
- 1990s: Developmental focus
- 2000s: Partnership focus
- 2010s: Diversity focus
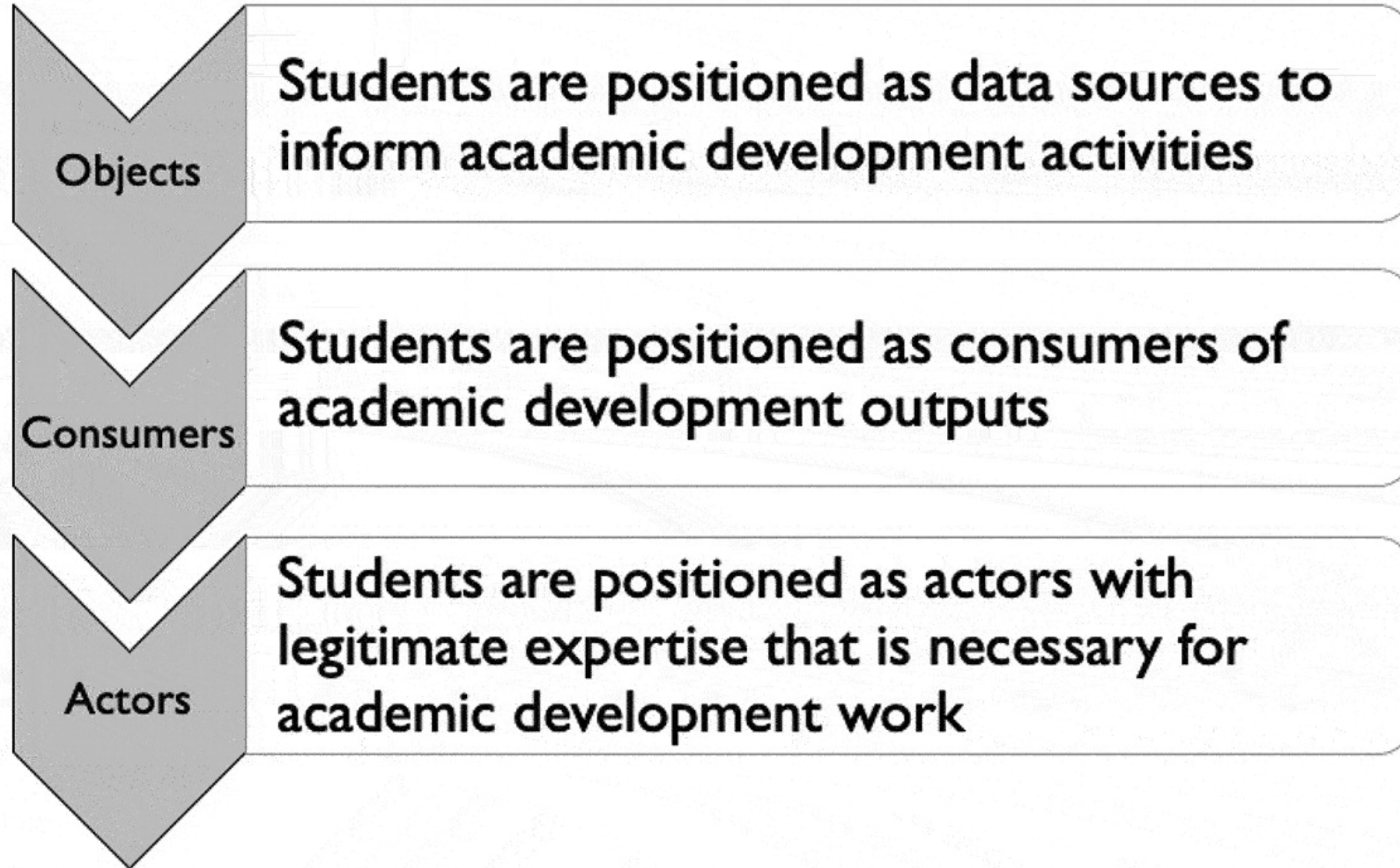- 2020s: The precipice of pointlessness

What has student engagement been for?

- To calm down the student body

- It sounds and looks nice

- Because we need to know what students think

- Because we need to know what leads to particular outcomes

- Reducing the emotional risk of complaint

- To moderate student demands and expectations

- Because father christmas

WONKHE

Some issues

- What do mean when we say "student"?

- What do we think the student in the room is there to do?

- Who thinks it's their responsibility to engage with students?

- Is the student (or SU) in the room as a proxy for proper work/understanding?

- Why do we think the student in the room is always able and willing to work for free?

- Why is all our development of representatives focussed on them learning about how the institution works?

- Representation focusses on averages

- Why are student asks so modest and conservative?

- Some of this is really... hard (data)

WONKHE

STUDENT AGENCY

Objects	Students are positioned as data sources to inform academic development activities
Consumers	Students are positioned as consumers of academic development outputs
Actors	Students are positioned as actors with legitimate expertise that is necessary for academic development work

WONKHE

The ladder of power

- Reflexive emotional consumer
- "Rights aware" consumer
- Representative of group
- Advocate of group
- Targetted advocate of group
- Policy actor
- Partner
- Cheerleader
- Sellout

WONKHE

The next decade

1. A rights revolution
2. Empowering student actors
3. A focus on lives

WONKHE

A rights revolution

- Absolute clarity on rights, entitlements and minimums

- Methods to ensure follow through

- Ways of capturing things that need to be fixed at scale and personally

- Support when complaining that rights not met

- Tackling the power pinch points

- **Three week promise**
- **You'll know why you got the mark you did**
- **You'll get feedback that's useful for your next piece of work**

WONKHE

Empowering student actors

- Give them the data. All of the data. And the capacity.

- Take steps to put them "on the level" with people they are interacting with.

- Let them in on the policy problems.

- Measuring legitimacy in ways other than "they were elected"

- Free labour = trad students and perspectives

WONKHE

Secrets and lives...

- "Students can now learn where and when suits them – technology is an equalizer"

- "The last thing I need is flexibility. University isn't really my priority when I'm at home. Having scheduled classes gets me out of here and allows me to focus"

- "It affects me in different ways. On some modules I spend too much time going over all the material, on others it allows me to avoid it"

WONKHE

A focus on lives

	Close to campus (up to 5 miles)	Far from campus (more than 5 miles)
Live with other students	**'Typical' residential student** • No paid employment • Russell Group • England outside London university region • Aged 21 and under • White • Chinese • POLAR 5 • From rural area	**'Social' commuter student** • 1–9 hours paid employment • Pre-92 • South East outside London university region • 4th year + undergraduates • Black • Northern Ireland domicile • Disability
Live with parents / family / on their own	**'Live-at-home' student** • Post-92 • London university region • Scotland domicile • Asian • POLAR 1-2 • From urban area	**'Full' commuter student** • 10+ hours paid employment • Post-92 • London university region • Scotland domicile • Aged 26+ • First in family

		Nature of organisation	
		Facilitated and programmed	Self-organised or organic
Nature of activity	Teaching and learning	online · A · Contact hours · offline	online · B · Self-directed learning · offline
	Social, extra curricular, leisure, PT work	online · C · Student activities, opportunities and jobs · offline	online · D · ? · offline

WONKHE
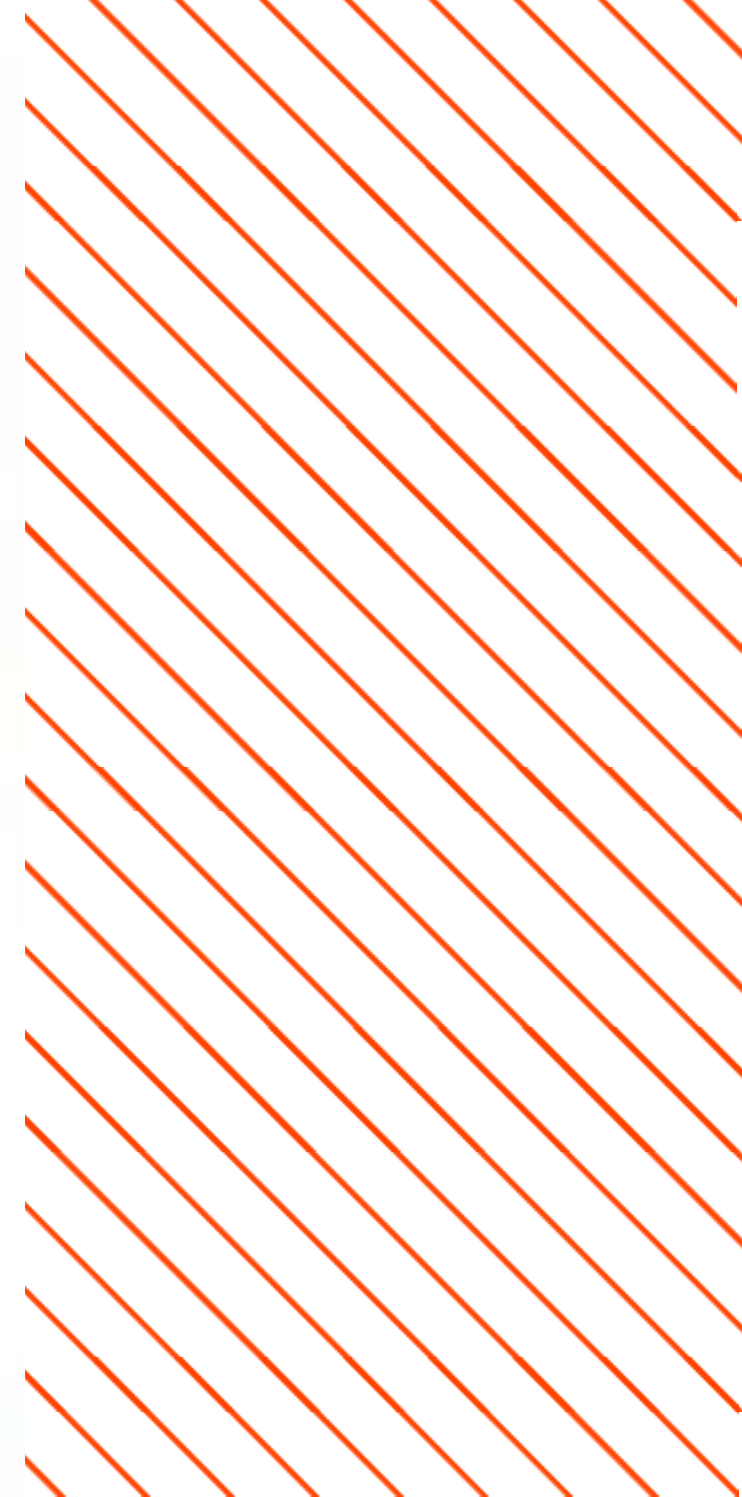
A design for life

- Asking them about them, not asking them about us
- Resetting what is "normal"
- Understanding the compound impact of abnormality
- Telling vivid, illustrative stories
- Winning the argument on feels

'Social' commuter student
- 1–9 hours paid employment
- Pre-92
- South East outside London university region
- 4th year + undergraduates
- Black
- Northern Ireland domicile
- Disability

'Typical' residential student
- No paid employment
- Russell Group
- England outside London university region
- Aged 21 and under
- White
- Chinese
- POLAR 5
- From rural area

Really good student voice tells us when we're wrong

JIM DICKINSON | ASSOCIATE EDITOR | WONKHE
@JIM_DICKINSON | JIM@WONKHE.COM

WONKHE

The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education

Kathryn Ecclestone
ᵢₗ 21.96 · The University of Sheffield

Dennis Hayes

Abstract

The silent ascendancy of a therapeutic ethos across the education system and into the workplace demands a book that serves as a wake up call to everyone. Kathryn Ecclestone and Dennis Hayes' controversial and compelling book uses a wealth of examples across the education system, from primary schools to university, and the workplace to show how therapeutic education is turning children, young people and adults into anxious and self-preoccupied individuals rather than aspiring, optimistic and resilient learners who want to know everything about the world. The chapters address a variety of thought-provoking themes, including how therapeutic ideas from popular culture dominate social thought and social policies and offer a diminished view of human potential how schools undermine parental confidence and authority by fostering dependence and compulsory participation in therapeutic activities based on disclosing emotions to others how higher education has adopted therapeutic forms of teacher training because many academics have lost faith in the pursuit of knowledge how such developments are propelled by a deluge of political initiatives in areas such as emotional literacy, emotional well-being and the 'soft outcomes' of learning The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education is eye-opening reading for every teacher, student teacher and parent who retains any belief in the power of knowledge to transform people's lives. Its insistent call for a serious public debate about the emotional state of education should also be at the forefront of the minds of every agent of change in society from parent to policy maker. © 2009 Kathryn Ecclestone and Dennis Hayes. All rights reserved.

WONKHE

Feels

- We should want students to feel good

- People don't achieve when they feel like shit

- People are less lonely and more collaborative when they feel good

- There's little that feels better than having nailed academic work

- If there are techniques that can be used to make students feel good, from the way we build buildings to the way we run services to the way we teach students – we should use them

WONKHE

Thank you

Twitter: @jim_dickinson
Email: jim@wonkhe.com

WONKHE