Introduction

This checklist has been developed to support universities who wish to consider stimulating and supporting student-led activity within their own institution. Student-led activity is voluntary extra-curricular activity started up and run by a group of students. The aim of this checklist is to provide an easily accessible overview of areas that need consideration when embarking on such activity. The steps are not compulsory and the order is not prescribed. Institutions should interpret the checklist as best fits their needs.

How to use this checklist

Use the first column in the checklist to understand the probable steps involved in developing and implementing student-led projects. The second column provides clarification and more detail on each item, while the third column describes key resources. An electronic version available at http://cede.lboro.ac.uk/studentledactivity provides the links to the resources; these are indicated in this version by §. There is also a related discussion list https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/student-led which enables contact to be made with other people interested in this topic.

Ensure:

That your university has the capacity to deliver such a programme

• Enablers and barriers are discussed in Case Study 14; Lamb, Bamforth & Perkin, 2012 §

Check:

Any professional development needs are addressed

• Background reading of Student-led, employer-focused, extra-curricular activity: a method of enhancing employability at Imperial College London and Loughborough University; Lamb, Perkin & Ahearn Engineering Education 2012 §

• Relevant research from the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement: a research project on student volunteering (benefits p8); literature review (benefits pp20-22); research into impacts of volunteering §

• Your bid for funding to get student-led activity started (if applicable)

A Before you start

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The Centre for Engineering and Design Education

This checklist has been developed by Fiona Lamb and Glynis Perkin, Centre for Engineering and Design Education at Loughborough University and Alison Ahearn, Faculty of Engineering at Imperial College London. Designed by Glenda McMahon. It has been produced to support universities who wish to consider stimulating and supporting student-led activity within their own institution. The demand for such a tool has arisen through activity funded by the National HE STEM Programme and the Royal Academy of Engineering.

“I see the checklist as an incredibly useful thing to develop ideas with”

(Workshop delegate testing a draft version of the checklist)
Establishing projects

**Establish:**
An initial group of supporting academics, employers, professional bodies, other stakeholders.

- Gain support from colleagues drawn from groups such as academics, employers, professional bodies, career staff, volunteering organizers. These are the people who will be able to provide some initial ideas for projects, advise student bids and mentor groups.

- Focus on the timelings – these may be tricky to get right with the restrictions of the academic year.
- Encourage students and student union officers regarding timelings.

**Develop:**
A project plan

- A sound project plan involves a student-led project symposium, process and projects:
  - Exemplar student and academic feedback forms
  - Student reports

- Gather:
  - Inviting your university’s marketing/communications staff to a. 
  - Consider:
    - Contact: Is there an existing core of keen students? Can they help recruit others?
    - Focus on the timings – these may be tricky to get right with the restrictions of the academic year.
    - Gain support from colleagues drawn from groups such as academics, employers, professional bodies, careers staff, volunteering organizers. These are the people who will be able to provide some initial ideas for projects, advise student bids and mentor groups.

- Provides:
  - Students with support to write bids

- Review:
  - Student bids

- Support:
  - Student groups to get started
    - Encourage students to seek additional funding and support
    - Point students to appropriate internal training events or other resources

Supporting the projects

- Consider:
  - Legal and financial issues

- Provides:
  - Student monitoring and support

- Support not least: Engage the students do that themselves!

- Cultivate:
  - Your steering/advocacy group

- Gather:
  - Student reports

- Evaluate:
  - Process and projects

- Hold:
  - A student-led projects symposium

- Consider:
  - Future years

- **Establish:**
A group of interested students

- Ensure the students do this themselves!
- Support not lead:

- Student bids

- Review:
  - Stakeholders: employers, professional bodies, other

- Provide:
  - Legal and financial issues
  - Consider:
    - Students with support to write bids
    - Hold an event to stimulate interest
    - Project case study: Shrewsbury and extending student-led projects using a ‘commercial activity’.

- Support:
  - Examples of student projects at Loughborough and Imperial

- Hold an event to stimulate interest
- Project case study: Shrewsbury and extending student-led projects using a ‘commercial activity’.

- “The best things were that our ideas could be brought to reality and make a real difference to people’s lives” [student quote]

- “The most meaningful thing I learned was to trust the students’ enthusiasm and never to ‘squelch’ it” [staff quote]

- “I haven’t done my undergraduate study in the UK so I used this opportunity to improve my teamwork skills as well as interacting with UK undergraduate students” [student quote]