

This guide provides some basic advice to help you plan and run an effective focus group with students.

Planning Checklist

Activity	Who is responsible?	Complete?
Which students will I invite? E.g. student representatives, PGT students, final year students, non-finalist students		<input type="checkbox"/>
Find suitable time/s in students' timetables for focus group		<input type="checkbox"/>
Find time/s that are also suitable for facilitator/s. If possible have 2 facilitators, taking it in turns to ask questions and take notes.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrange time slot for focus group (1 hour)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Book suitable room		<input type="checkbox"/>
Invite students		<input type="checkbox"/>
Book refreshments if required		<input type="checkbox"/>
If only one facilitator is available it may be useful to voice record the session to aid notetaking (if so, you must ask students permission). Free voice recording apps are available to download onto your device.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Send reminder email to students the day before the focus group		<input type="checkbox"/>

Facilitation Tips

Welcome individuals to the room

Explain the purpose and process; give assurances about confidentiality

Seek agreement for recording; ensure your recording device is on

Use open-ended questions and avoid questions that require a 'Yes/No' answer

- *'What do you think about...'*
- *'What benefits do you see associated with this...'*

Use a past experience common to all participants

- *'Think back to your induction week...'*

Encourage all individuals to participate

- *'Does anyone have any other thoughts on this...'*
- *'Has anyone had a different experience with this...'*

Clarify meaning and understanding

- *'That's really interesting, could you explain a little more about what you just said...'*
- *'Is this a recurring issue or was it just a single occurrence?'*

Provide an opportunity at the end for participants to raise questions or issues

- *'Is there anything we haven't covered that you would like to mention?'*
- *'Before we finish, is there anything you would like to add?'*

Curriculum Transformation Phase 1 Student Focus Group – Process Sheet



This process sheet offers a framework to support engagement with students as part of Phase 1 of Curriculum Transformation.

Time Questions/areas for comment

Introduction

- 00:00 - 00:05** *Thank you for coming, we value your time and participation in this focus group.*
- We are looking to better understand how we can shape our curriculum offering at the University of Bath and gaining feedback and input from students is important to us.*
- To help in this process, please try to focus your feedback on the course itself, and not on members of staff teaching on the course or on things beyond the course.*
- Your comments will be noted and fed back to Programme Development Teams, and will not be attributed to you personally.*
- Please can we go around the room and say your name, programme and year of study.*

Pre-university expectations

- 00:05 - 00:20**
1. Why did you decide to study your chosen subject area?
 2. What made you decide to come to Bath?
 3. How has your perception of the subject area changed from before you started your programme of study?
 4. Has your experience met your pre-university expectations so far?

Your subject area

- 00:20 - 00:35**
5. What do you think are the key skill sets required for your area of study, both in terms of generic and specialised skills?
 6. What are your goals after completing your programme of study?
 7. In your view, what is the role of your area of study in society?
 8. What are the current challenges for your area of study that you are aware of and how might these change in the future?

Unique aspects of your programme of study

- 00:35 - 00:45**
9. In your view, what are the distinctive/unique aspects that your department could offer its students in the future?

Any further comments

- 00:45 - 00:50**
10. Do you have any further comments you wish to add?

Debrief

Thank you for attending this session. Please be assured that everything you have contributed will be reported anonymously. Your input is highly valued and departmental staff will use this to help ensure the ongoing enhancement of teaching and learning at the University.

If you have any questions or further comments to add, please contact the Centre for Learning and Teaching at curriculumdev@bath.ac.uk