

# Student-led interviews



Engaging students in the interview process is a really good way to get honest learner perspectives.

Student-led interviews are good for:

- Getting learner perspectives throughout the evaluation process
- Getting genuine peer engagement from learners
- Generating deep qualitative data



## **PREPARATION:**

Recruit and train student team; design interview questions.



## **TIMING:**

15-30 minutes per interview plus analysis time.



## **EQUIPMENT:**

Digital recorders; budget to pay student team.

1

## RECRUIT STUDENT TEAM

Depending on the scale of your study, you will need a student team of between two and six people to carry out your interviews. They can be recruited through contacts in your department or through the University student employment service. They will need to be paid so you will have to have some budget available.

2

## DESIGN QUESTIONS

Once you have identified the key areas you want to investigate, the question scripts should be designed in conjunction with the student team. A good way to do this is to combine a training workshop on interview skills with a question design workshop where the students explore the key areas and generate the types of questions they would ask peers.

3

## RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS

Depending on the student population you want to recruit, the student team are a great resource as they can recruit peers in the department (although you have to be careful about friend bias). Getting colleagues to recruit their students is another good approach. Incentives, such as vouchers or food, are also helpful. The number of interviews required will depend on what you want to know, but 10-20 is a good ballpark figure.

4

## CARRY OUT INTERVIEWS

Your student team will carry out the interviews but it is important that you are on hand in case they need any support, so blocking out a time with several interviews happening at once is an efficient use of your time. Arrange private rooms for interviews, and for interviews to be audio recorded (you will also need to consider ethics and transcription). Thirty minutes is a good length, but this will depend on your questions.

5

## ANALYSE DATA

This step can be done by yourself or with the student team. Review your transcripts and look for evidence that answers your key themes. You can use coding of statements to draw similar ideas together and look at how common themes are in the data set. Identify insightful quotes that exemplify dominant themes.

6

## DRAW CONCLUSIONS

Ensure that you share your conclusions with the student team and give them the opportunity to comment and add their own perspectives to the conclusions, which will increase their validity.

7

## EVIDENCE

When reporting your findings from student-led interviews, make sure that you give detail about the characteristics of the students recruited, and the degree to which the sample, and the opinions generated, are representative of the population in general. Direct quotes are a good way of giving colour but you should provide evidence of the representativeness of the ideas expressed.

8

## FURTHER INFORMATION

