

# Liberation for Course Reps

## Workshop Plan (1h30)


The following workshop is an introduction to NUS liberation work and designed to support course reps to understand the concept of education barriers, and look at some of the actions they can take to tackle education inequality.

	<b>Liberation for course reps</b>	<b>Session timing</b>	1 hr 30
<b>Delivery method</b>	Workshop		
<b>Delivered by</b>	Course Rep Coordinators/staff lead		
<b>Knowledge development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduce course reps to NUS liberation and section campaigns</li><li>• Support course reps to understand the concept of education barriers</li><li>• Have participants explore what causes education barriers and how they are interlinked</li><li>• Look at some of the actions course reps, students unions and institutions could take to tackle inequality</li></ul>		
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12 pieces of coloured card (rectangles, 3 per sheet of A4 card)</li><li>• 60 pieces of white card (rectangles, 3 per sheet of A4 card)</li><li>• 10 pieces of A4 red card (cut into hammers, 4 per sheet)</li><li>• Masking tape</li><li>• String</li><li>• Marker pens</li><li>• Flipchart</li><li>• Pens</li><li>• A4 paper</li></ul>		
<b>Session summary</b>	Capital Anagram Icebreaker	15mins	
	Introduce liberation and prepare wall	10mins	
	Identifying barriers	15mins	
	Quick debrief	5mins	
	Connect the issues	15mins	
	Break down the wall	20mins	
	Debrief	10mins	

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Any further important information and data to go in here. Set in Verdana 8/10 bold.

Timings	Resources	Activity
0.0 15mins	A4 paper Flipchart Pens Marker pens	<p><b>Capital Anagrams</b></p> <p>Give all participants a pen and an A4 piece of paper</p> <p>Read out the list below. If participants match the letter, they write it down at the top of the paper in a line.</p> <p>A – You are a man  B – Your parents were born in the United Kingdom or Northern Ireland  C – There were more than 50 books in your house growing up  D – You have never felt unsafe because of your sexuality  E – You are white  F – You have never been stopped and questioned by the police because of your race  G – You have never had ‘jokes’ directed at you about your gender  H – You were never embarrassed because you couldn’t afford the right clothes when you were growing up  I – You have never lived in a council/housing association house  J – You move through the world without fear of sexual assault  K – You have never felt the need to change your accent to be respected more  L – You are reasonable sure you won’t be denied access to jobs or political resources because of your gender, sexuality, race and/or (dis)ability  M – You can enter a department store without being followed by security  N – Your family automatically expected you to go to university  O – You can show affection to all romantic partners in public without fear of violence  P – You have travelled outside of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland  Q – Your parents/carers did not work nights and/or weekends  R – You walk alone at night without generally worrying about your safety  S – You do not have a disability  T – You see people of your race/gender/sexuality generally reflected in your university curriculum  U – At least one of your parents attended university  V – You studied the culture of your ancestors at senior school  W – You have never been the victim of sexual harassment  X – You went on a yearly family holiday  Y – You do not need adjustments in the classroom because of your disability  Z – You have never missed time from university or work because of mental health issues</p> <p>After they have their letters, give participants 90 seconds to make as many words as possible using the letters. They can repeat the letters in each word.</p> <p>Prepare a graph on a piece of flipchart, with the X axis recording how many letters and the Y axis recording how many words. Plot each participant on the graph. You will normally have a line that roughly correlates, with some outliers.</p> <p>Have a conversation about how, no matter how many privileges and cultural capitals you come up with in a list, you’ll always have ones left out – particularly educational capital. If a participant has a score that is not in keeping with the trend, ask if they will talk with the group about why that</p>

Timings	Resources	Activity
		might be – being sensitive for possible reasons. Use these conversations to begin talking about hidden barriers to education.
0.15 10min	Coloured card Markers	<p><b>Introduce idea of liberation and prepare categories</b></p> <p>Ask ppts to name the 4 NUS liberation campaigns (women's, LGBT+, black, disabled) – as they do, write each one separately on a piece of coloured card. Explain why they exist, relating back to the last exercise.</p> <p>Facilitate a very short discussion about how these impact on educational attainment and participation. Then ask group to shout out non-liberation categories of students that might also face disadvantages. If they are stuck, prompt them with the NUS sections campaigns (postgraduate, mature and part time, international). Some categories they might come up with include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working class</li> <li>• students with caring responsibilities</li> <li>• students of faith</li> <li>• distance learning</li> <li>• students who live in the family home</li> </ul> <p>Once they have come up with 12, including the liberation campaigns – ask them to stop, and explain how you could continue going for many more categories, but its illustrative of the issues students face. Steer students away from groups that are not educationally disadvantaged (ie: white students, men).</p>
00.25 15min	Powerpoint  White card Masking tape Marker pens	<p><b>Identifying barriers</b></p> <p>Split the ppts into 4 groups, and give each group THREE of the categories, ensuring each group has one liberation campaign and two of the other categories. Give them 15 pieces of white card per group. Ask them to identify a maximum of 5 barriers to participation in their education or their union for each category, and write a separate barrier on each piece of white card.</p> <p>If they seem unsure, give them an example – such as “Women students may be disadvantaged by sexual harassment”.</p> <p>It's best to get them to complete each category one at a time, allowing them to move on to the next one as they go, but giving them no more than 5 minutes per category to come up with barriers.</p> <p>As they are doing the exercise, stick the completed barriers on the wall as per the attached picture.</p> 

Timings	Resources	Activity
00.35 5min		<b>Quick debrief</b> <p>Debrief the exercise so far – give them a chance to wander around the wall, look at the answers and see if they are similar. At this point, they are usually pretty switched on to what the barriers are and want to talk about how that works in their institution.</p>
00.40 15min	Masking tape String	<b>Connect the issues</b> <p>Explain that all of these barriers are interconnected, and that we can't just look at them as isolated or related to the liberation/section group. Use the opportunity to talk about structural oppression, and how this is coded in the way that educational institutions work. For example, HEA's research that shows that a sense of belonging is the single biggest measure of if students survive and thrive in their education.</p> <p>Get a ball of string and say that as a group, you are going to connect the issues together, doing a relatively challenging example yourself to begin with. Tape the string to an issue under one category – for example, "homophobia in the classroom" under LGBT+, and then take the string to an issue that interconnects. There are a number of options here, explain this as you do so. You could connect to something structurally similar, ie: "racism" under black students. You could connect to something that's related to the environment, ie: "lack of women in the curricula" under women. What matters is that it's related.</p> <p>Hand the ball of string to one of the participants and ask them to make the next connection. For example, if you had connected to "racism" under black students, they would then need to find a link between this and another barrier under another category.</p> <p>Continue doing this until every ppt has had at least one go.</p>
0.55 20min	Red card Marker pens Masking tape	<b>Break down the wall</b> <p>Debrief the previous activity and discuss how many of the barriers for different liberation and excluded groups intersect. Ask the group to reflect on the wall, looking at barriers they may have faced and also thinking of how the themes link for most groups – such as "isolation", "a sense of not fitting in" etc.</p> <p>Break your group into three and ask them to think of one of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In your classroom</li> <li>• In your union</li> <li>• As a whole institution</li> </ul> <p>For these areas, they should write solutions to the barriers on the wall – one per hammer – and stick them on the relevant place.</p> <p>It might be that they stick a hammer directly over a brick. For example – "DISABLED STUDENTS: Can't physically access buildings" SOLUTION:</p>

Timings	Resources	Activity
		Officers lobby institution to invest in estates work to make all buildings accessible. It could also go over a string connection. For example – a string connects between an LGBT+ and Women students’ brick related to campus safety. The hammer on the string says “Run a zero tolerance campaign on campus”.
1.15 10 min		<b>Debrief</b>  Take a photo of the wall, capturing the issues and solutions.  Lead a discussion with reps about how they might ensure they think about liberation and disadvantaged groups when they are leading rep work, and have each rep commit to one change/issue they will take up in their year.