

**‘Student Engagement and Student Disengagement:  
Reasons, explanations and a way forward’****Keynote Speaker Biog:**

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Alex Buckley leads university-wide initiatives to enhance learning and teaching at Strathclyde, focused on supporting academic departments to make improvements to assessment and feedback.

Before arriving at Strathclyde in October 2015 he worked at the Higher Education Academy (now AdvanceHE) leading their work around student surveys. This included helping institutions to use the National Student Survey for the enhancement of learning and teaching, as well as developing the UK Engagement Survey (UKES), the first UK-wide student survey focused on student engagement.

Prior to that Alex taught applied and professional ethics at the University of Leeds, after receiving a PhD in philosophy from the same institution in 2008.

Alex’s research currently focuses on conceptual and policy issues around student engagement, staff and student experiences of assessment and feedback, and the development and use of student surveys.

**Keynote Address:**

**“Why there is confusion about the concept of student engagement, and why that’s a problem for practice as well as policy”**

Over the last few years, the phrase ‘student engagement’ has become ubiquitous in higher education. It now features in student handbooks, academic policies and job titles. And wherever it appears, it is always presented as an uncontroversial ‘good thing’. However, despite its popularity, there is quite a lot of confusion and disagreement about what student engagement actually *is*.

In this talk, I will try and do three things. Firstly, I will attempt to provide some clarity about the different things that ‘student engagement’ can mean. Secondly, I will discuss whether or not student engagement is always the positive force that it is taken to be. Thirdly, I will talk about some of the ways in which universities have to change if we are really going to reap the benefits of the new student engagement agenda.