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# Key concepts when working in partnerships: engaging with employers

## Apprenticeship Degrees



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Apprentice Conference

# Context

**Employer engagement is essential for successful course leadership and implementation (Apprentice)**

**This involves having clear processes by which employers (partners) are enabled to support to the contribution of a course.**

**It involves taking a solution-driven approach.**

**Recognises experiential knowledge of partners/employers.**

**Taking a democratic approach to build trust.**

# Key Concepts: paths to partnership

## Feeling 'heard'

High Quality Communication

Building Relationships

Motivating employees

Kriz, Kluger and Lyddy (2021)  
'Feeling Heard'

## Responsive approach

Perceptions of not being heard  
(non responsive)

Clear and transparent  
processes of communication  
(course governance)

Robust strategic planning in  
delivering communication

## Dialogue

Fostering mutual trust and  
respect

Managing tension and  
disagreement

Student communication  
processes

# Listening is multi-faceted

It has effective domains  
(being motivated)

Behavioural domains  
(verbal/non verbal)

Cognitive domains  
(understanding/receiving)

*Listening also involves a storytelling element as it shapes the way an individual sees the world- we have to consider the implications of how previous experiences or tensions can shape the intrapersonal dynamics (Kluger et al, 2020)*

## ***Listening stories:***

- ***building together through conversation, building an idea, building capabilities***
- ***taking relevant action***

"Shutting down"

*"I feel like its heard, but not really. Nothing is ever going to happen"*

*"I think he thought 'this is the way it is done around here, discounting my viewpoint"*

**People generally feel heard when listeners respond appropriately to their exchange (being attentive.)**

**People don't feel heard when there is:**

- **distracted listening (give partners time)**
- **shutting down (shutting down ideas without sufficient reasons for rejection)**
- **superficial listening (described as a failure to follow through on action)**

## Engagement & motivation

- Co-creation where possible
  - Explore new ideas/  
develop solutions
- Joint creation of value of  
various social actors
- Co-construct the educational  
experience



# Responsive & Transparent Approaches: what do we do?

- Monthly or quarterly reports on student progress
- Partnership consortium (with all partners together) every quarter
- Talking with partners when complex problems arise
- As course leader - refer complex problems to curriculum lead and line manager
- Balance the perspectives of partners against university processes in CQEM
- Document and create audit trails of partnership work (Ofsted)
- Regular Partnership briefings )- (when things change)

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# Co- production

In recent decades, co-production has risen to the fore of the contemporary policy architecture (Osborne et al., 2016).

In broad terms, co-production is an approach that places citizens at the centre of public service design and production (Ostrom, 1996).

Involving a broad range of individual and collective perspectives in social work education outside of academic research is gaining increasing recognition as a mechanism for achieving a greater impact in course management.

Sharing power is a key facet of co-production

Seeks to redistribute knowledge based power and replace it with mutual learning between all participants in a collaboration.

Having working groups when developing progress reviews or new proformas/portfolio's and evidence of KSB's



# Co- production: a cautionary note

**Facilitating co-production remains complex.**

**Stakeholders bring distinct narratives or frames (Schon and Rein, 1995) to bear on the decision-making process based on their distinct interests, motives, resources, cultures and social status (Choi and Robertson, 2013; Fung, 2003; Robertson and Choi, 2012).**

**These narratives represent the lived experiences of stakeholders and shape the views they express within the context of Apprentice Education.**

# Solution- driven approach

**Solution oriented approaches are used in educational and social services as an effective way of identifying positive outcomes to complex and challenging issues.**

**A solution oriented approach helps to develop goals and solutions rather than just explore and analyse current problems.**

**Effective facilitation is commonly seen as the key to managing the status inequalities and power imbalances between stakeholders (Emerson et al., 2012; Farr, 2017; Crompton et al., 2017).**

**The balance between inclusivity and knowledgeability (Hong, 2015) can influence the practice of co-production.**



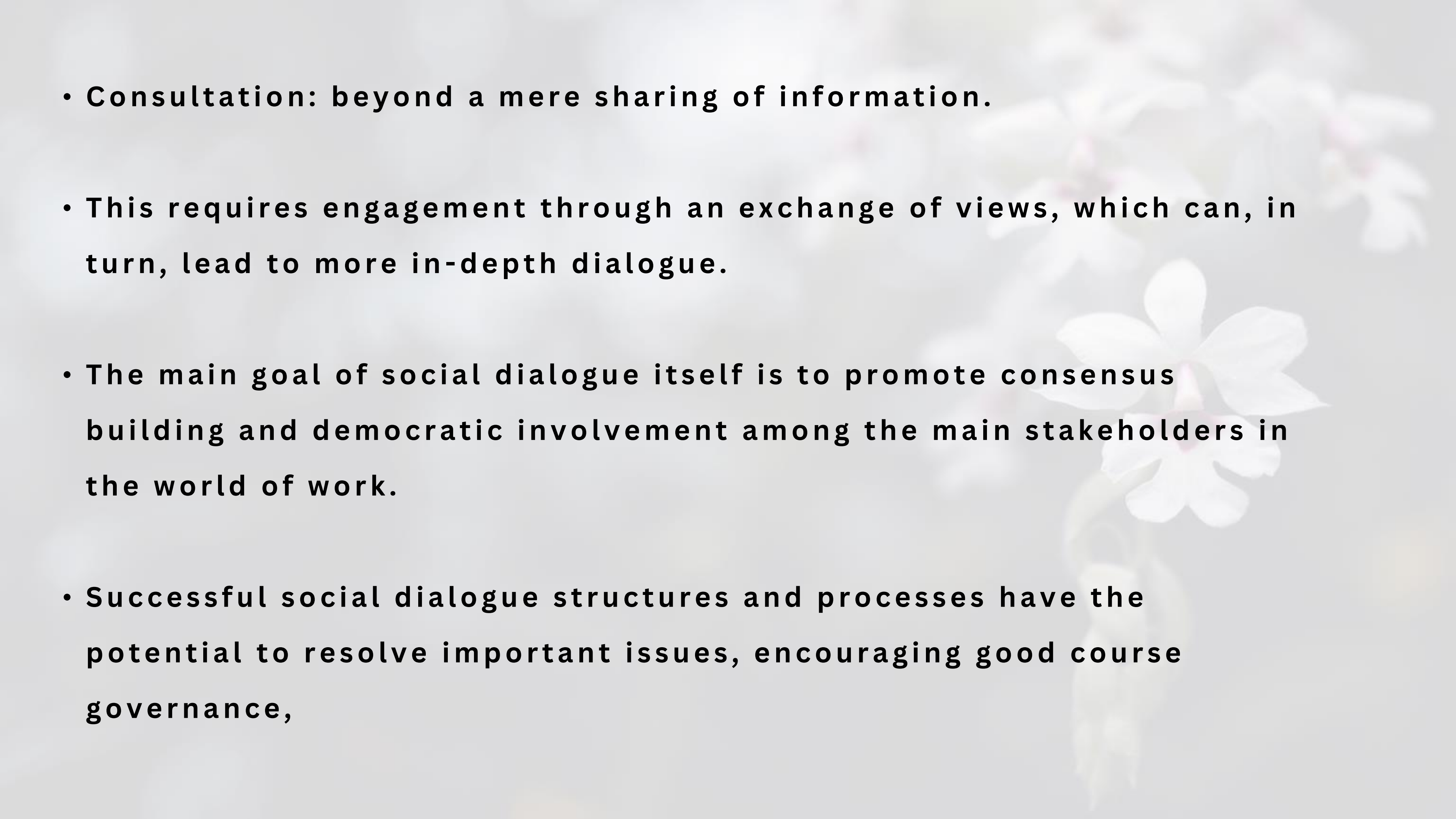
# Dialogue- its key principles and forms

Dialogue here can be defined as a process in which parties with different interests and values at stake in a particular issue work together towards mutually acceptable solutions (Perret 2003)

*Stakeholder engagement assumes dialogue among parties. It is necessary to dig deeply into the relations to create real and effective interactions.*

## Types

- Event/workshop/conference to get input from different stakeholders
- Consultative stakeholder events leading to a specific outcome
- Regular meetings, exchange of experience, development of joint recommendations, opportunity for networking, advocacy for joint interest
- Cross-sector initiative to solve complex problems, to develop joint policy and/or standards, or to achieve jointly agreed-upon objectives

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- **Consultation: beyond a mere sharing of information.**
  - **This requires engagement through an exchange of views, which can, in turn, lead to more in-depth dialogue.**
  - **The main goal of social dialogue itself is to promote consensus building and democratic involvement among the main stakeholders in the world of work.**
  - **Successful social dialogue structures and processes have the potential to resolve important issues, encouraging good course governance,**

## Managing complex dilemma's

Our roles and duties in  
complex dilemmas

Case study example

What would you do?

Q/A about engaging with  
partners

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