**Investigation into service design approach to   
the annual programme review practices**

**Background:**

The study is based on a two-year pilot project that has been carried out in Lancaster University Management School on MSc Management programme. The programme has undergone some significant curriculum changes as a result of an international partnership development. The principal researcher who is a programme director felt that the traditional programme review process was not comprehensive enough and was process-based rather than focused on students and staff experience. With the objective to provide more effective focus of the value of improvements for the programme team, the programme director piloted a series of service design thinking workshops in which students learnt the basics of service design - persona profiling, customer journey mapping and ideation. Students presented the programme journeys to the programme team and followed with ideation about how the programme experience could be improved. The outcome was a student informed and co-created programme improvements that complemented the traditional programme review approach and helped the programme team put in place a more effective method of continuous improvement.

The Lancaster pilot has seen excellent outcomes such as a significant increase in student participation in careers support due to the major redesign of the support, improved assessment profile of the programme, revision of module sequence to achieve more gradual and logical learning, and increased student agency that has resulted in student led initiatives improving the programme brand. Additionally, students have reported a great sense of community and enhanced respect and trust between students and programme team. The initiative was promoted as best practice at the teaching committee as well as highly commended by AMBA accreditation.

**Research aim:**

**To develop a service design approach to aid university programme review and student agency.**

**Research Questions:**

This research project will pursue two related research questions:

1. To what extent can service design approach add value to programme review from the perspective of the programme team?
2. To what extent can service design approach promote students as partners and impact on students’ agency?
3. What are students’ perceptions of their involvement in programme review and do they identify any value of the service design interventions?

The aim is to refine and replicate the service design approach in other institutions in order to identify a design informed framework that can be used to investigate how programme review can add value to staff and students on master degree programmes. In particular, this study aims to assess whether the design-lead approach can help programme teams focus the resources more effectively in the endeavour to improve programme operations and empathise with student experience.

The project puts emphasis on students as partners in HE and explores how the value co-creation can be achieved in order to ensure excellent student experience and learning as well as enhanced student engagement and ‘active studentship’. The project will also explore how staff involved in programme delivery design can benefit from this approach in order to maximise their efforts in collecting and acting on student feedback.

**Data collection and Research Access:**

* **Duration:** If possible, we seek permission to follow the annual programme review and design three to four interventions per year with the programme teams (professional and academic staff) and students
* **Service design workshops:** The main data collection will be two one day service design workshops including students and staff – one half day workshop in January/February, one half-day workshop in July/August (depending on the programme timetable).
* **Interviews:** The complementary collection method will be semi-structured interviews with programme teams staff and students – before the first workshop establishing current programme review practices and after assessing the impact of service design workshops.
* **Participant observation:** There might be a possibility to attend some students staff committees or other for a where programme reviews are discussed.
* **Documentation:** We also ask for access to documentation produced as part of the programme review. This might involve the following documents: Minutes of regularly occurring meetings, presentation slides used to communicate review, annual rolling plans, etc.

**Deliverable to participant Universities:**

* Staff capability building in applying service design in HE
* Presentation of the project outcomes and possible co-presentation at conferences
* Summary report on main findings of the study

**Use of data by the research team:**

The research team will use the data collected for the purpose of writing journal articles and / or other academic outputs. This might involve articles in international academic journals, presentations at international conferences as well as use of the material for teaching purposes. All data will be anonymized. Neither the name of the organization, nor of any individuals will be disclosed to any third parties.

**Researchers**

Principal investigator: *Dr Radka Newton, Senior Teaching Fellow, Department of Entrepreneurship and Strategy, Lancaster University Management School*

Radka is an enthusiastic leader and a skilled facilitator with experience of living and working in multiple cultures with 15 years of senior input into global educational networks with proven reputation for developing collaborative and cross-functional teams. Her overarching research interest is in the deployment of lean methodology and process improvement in service industry with the focus on the impact of service operations on applicant and student experience underlined by analysis of capacity and demand management. In her early research she investigated the application of value stream mapping and lean principles in the University admissions process. Radka has recently launched a Service Design in Education network with an objective to enhance the understanding and application of service design in education.

Co-investigators:

*Professor Diane Sloan, Northumbria University, Newcastle Business School*

Professor Sloan is based in the Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Strategy Subject Group and is the Faculty Head of International Development. She has responsibility for managing the managing the team of staff working with international partnerships, recruitment and study abroad. This role links closely with her Professorial role, involving working with all stakeholders to promote student and staff pedagogical and learning experience across the Faculty and overseas partners. She is a Principal Fellow of the HEA, acknowledging her contribution to both her institution and sector as a strategist, researcher and practitioner. Nationally she jointly convened the HEA Internationalising the Curriculum initiative and contributed to the development of the HEA Internationalising Higher Education Framework. As a member of the Chartered Association of Business Schools Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee she supports the development of learning and teaching strategy and practice within the sector.

*Dr Ksenija Kuzmina, Loughborough University London*

Dr Ksenija Kuzmina is a Programme Director and Lecturer of MA/MSc Design Innovation Programme at the Institute for Design Innovation at Loughborough University London.   
Ksenija’s research is in the field of design and service innovation for environmentally friendly and socially viable futures. She is interested in exploring design’s capability to support change in service organisations at the intersection of public, private and third sectors. In particularly, her research looks at how service design thinking, human-centered design and more recently, big data methodologies can be integrated to enable organisations to review, reflect on and reimagine new service models to promote social innovation, well-being and sustainability. Ksenija is an Associate Editor of the Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation and an active contributor to the Service Design Network - Action Teaching Force (SDN-ATF) and more recently, Service Design in Education Network (SDinEN).

**Participant Institution information sheet**

Project Title: Investigation into service design approach to the annual programme review practices

Name of Researchers: Dr Radka Newton, Prof Diane Sloan, Dr Ksenija Kuzmina

Address: Lancaster University Management School, C53, LA1 4YX

Email: [r.newton@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:r.newton@lancaster.ac.uk)

Tel.: 01524501726

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**Why has the institution been invited?**

We have approached you because you are the directly involved in a programme delivery at the University*.* We are interested in understanding the students experience on your programmes and how students engage with providing feedback on programme experience and curriculum. We would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in this study.

**What will I be asked to do if I take part?**

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can withdraw from it anytime without providing any reason. Should you decide to withdraw from the study after the interview, workshop or focus group, you can do so within 2 weeks after the interview. The recording will be destroyed and the data will not be used. In case you decide to participate, I would like to ask you to read this information sheet, sign the consent form and return it to me. I will then contact you to discuss and arrange an appropriate research engagement at a mutual convenient location.

**What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

By taking part in this study you will be investing time of programme teams and students in the course of one academic year cycle.

**Will my data be identifiable?**

After the interview/focus group/observation or workshop, only the research team conducting this study will have access to the ideas shared with us. Additionally, a professional transcriber who will listen to the recordings and produce a written record of what you have said will access your contribution. The transcriber will sign a confidentiality agreement.

We will keep all personal information about your institution and participants from the confidential, that is I will not share it with others. We will remove any personal information from the written record of your contribution.

**How will we use the information you have shared with us and what will happen to the results of the research study?**

**We will use the information you have shared with me only in the following ways:**

**We will use it for research purposes only. This will include academic and professional journal publications. We may also present the results of the study at academic and professional conferences.**

**When writing up the findings from this study, we would like to reproduce some of the views and ideas shared. We will only use anonymised quotes (e.g. from my interview with you), so that although we will use your exact words, you cannot be identified in our publications.**

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| **How my data will be stored**  Your data will be stored in encrypted files (that is no-one other than me, the researcher will be able to access them) and on password-protected computers. I will store hard copies of any data securely in locked cabinets in my office. I will keep data that can identify you separately from non-personal information (e.g. your views on a specific topic).In accordance with University guidelines, I will keep the data securely for a minimum of ten years. |

**What if I have a question or concern?**

**If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact the lead researcher, Dr Radka Newton.**

**If you have any concerns or complaints that you wish to discuss with a person who is not directly involved in the research, you can also contact:**

**Professor Duncan Angwin, Department of Entrepreneurship and Strategy, Bailrigg, Lancaster, LA1 4YX;** [**d.n.angwin@lancaster.ac.uk**](mailto:d.n.angwin@lancaster.ac.uk)**, phone +441524595167.**

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| This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster Management School’s Research Ethics Committee. |

**Thank you for considering your participation in this project.**

**INSTITUTIONAL CONSENT FORM**

Project Title: Investigation into service design approach to the annual programme review practices

Name of Researchers: Dr Radka Newton, Prof Diane Sloan, Dr Ksenija Kuzmina

Address: Lancaster University Management School, C53, LA1 4YX

Email: [r.newton@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:r.newton@lancaster.ac.uk)

Tel.: 01524501726

**Please tick each box**

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| 1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily | 🞎 |
| 1. I understand that the institutional participation is voluntary and that the institution is free to withdraw at any time during the participation in this study and within 2 weeks after they took part in the study, without giving any reason. | 🞎 |
| 1. I understand that any information given by the institutional participants may be used in future reports, academic articles, publications or presentations by the researcher/s, but my personal information will not be included and I will not be identifiable. | 🞎 |
| 1. I understand that my organisation’s name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentation without my consent. | 🞎 |
| 1. I understand that any interviews or focus groups will be audio-recorded and transcribed and that data will be protected on encrypted devices and kept secure. | 🞎 |
| 1. I understand that data will be kept according to University guidelines for a minimum of 10 years after the end of the study. | 🞎 |
| 1. I agree for the institution to take part in the above study. | 🞎 |

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Name of Participant Institution     Name of the representative

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Date Signature

**I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.**

**Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Day/month/year

**One copy of this form will be given to the participant and the original kept in the files of the researcher at Lancaster University**