

# How do we know our students... and does it matter?

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# My (meandering) thoughts

- Learning Developers = developing learners
- Therefore students' needs are fundamental to our role
- But, do students know what they need?
  - How can they know what they need?
  - Even if they do, can they articulate it?
- Can I know my students for them?
- What does 'know' even mean here?

# For UoE

- IAD Taught Student Development team's remit includes all UG and PGT
- Student factsheets available at:  
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/strategic-planning/facts-and-figures/university-factsheet>
- Students by Level, Method, Gender, Age, Domicile, College, School
- So for AY 2020/21...



# A UoE student is likely to be...

- UG
- Full-time
- F
- 18-20
- Overseas
- CAHSS
- ECA/MHSES



# A bit more granularity...

## UG

- Full-time
- F
- 18-20
- Other UK
- CAHSS
  - ECA (8.2%), LLC (7.7%)



## PGT

- Full-time (53.8%)
- F
- 25 and over (53.4%)
  - 21-24 (46%)
- Overseas
- CAHSS
  - MHSES (16.5%)



# QAA Enhancement Themes

‘A number of different people at  
different times in our lives’

*And theirs.*

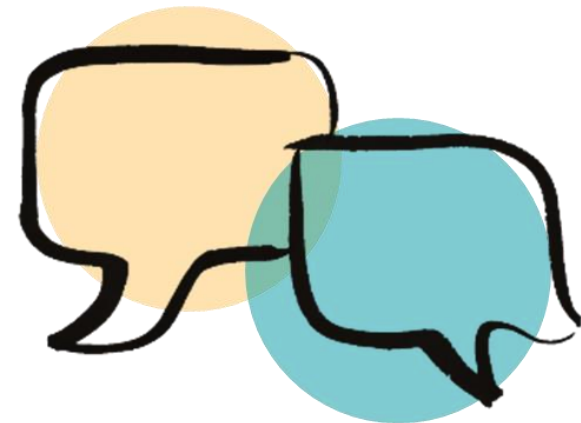
‘No such thing as a stereotypical  
student’

(I’m very ashamed to say I cannot find my notes about who said this – but it was definitely in *one* of the online sessions Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022)

# What else?

Beyond Level, Method, etc. what else do we as Learning Developers need to know?

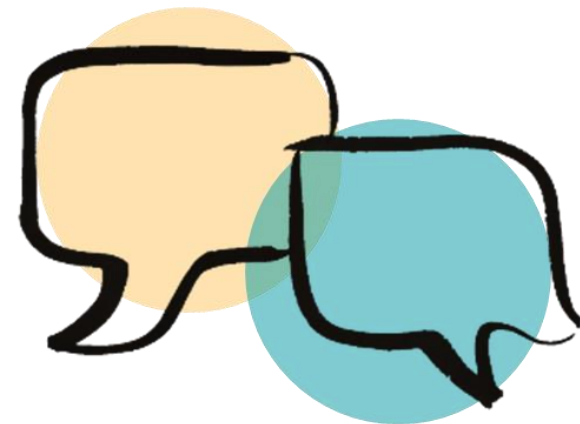
1. For yourself, use a separate stickie note per point. Write as many as you can think of.
2. In your group, collate, all your 'what else's' and have a go at categorising them.
3. What did you come up with?



# How?

Thinking about your role, how do you get to know your students?

1. For yourself, use a separate stickie note per way. Write as many as you can think of.
2. As a group, collate and have a go at categorising them.
3. What's effective?





# Does it matter?



# Research suggests yes

- Students who feel like they belong, do better
  - E.g. Pedler, M. L., *et al.* (2022) ‘A sense of belonging at university: student retention, motivation and enjoyment’, *J. Furth. High. Educ.*, 46(3), pp. 397-408. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1955844>
- Perception is reality
  - Cooper, K. M., *et al.* (2017) What’s in a Name? ‘The importance of students perceiving that an instructor knows their names in a high-enrolment Biology classroom’, *CBE Life Sci Educ.*, 16(1), ar8. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1187%2Fcbce.16-08-0265>