Workshop 4 - Higher education and employment: building the connections

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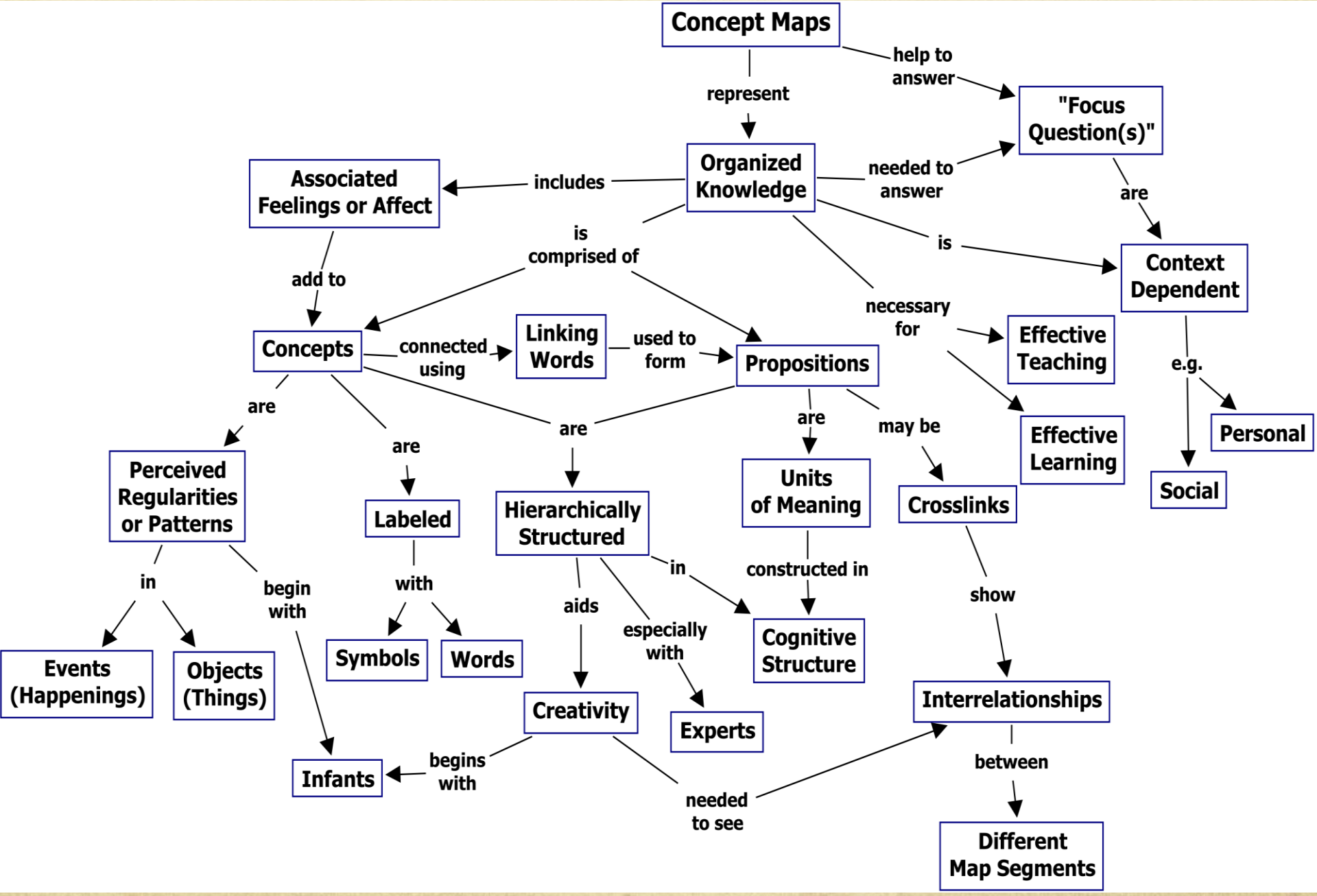
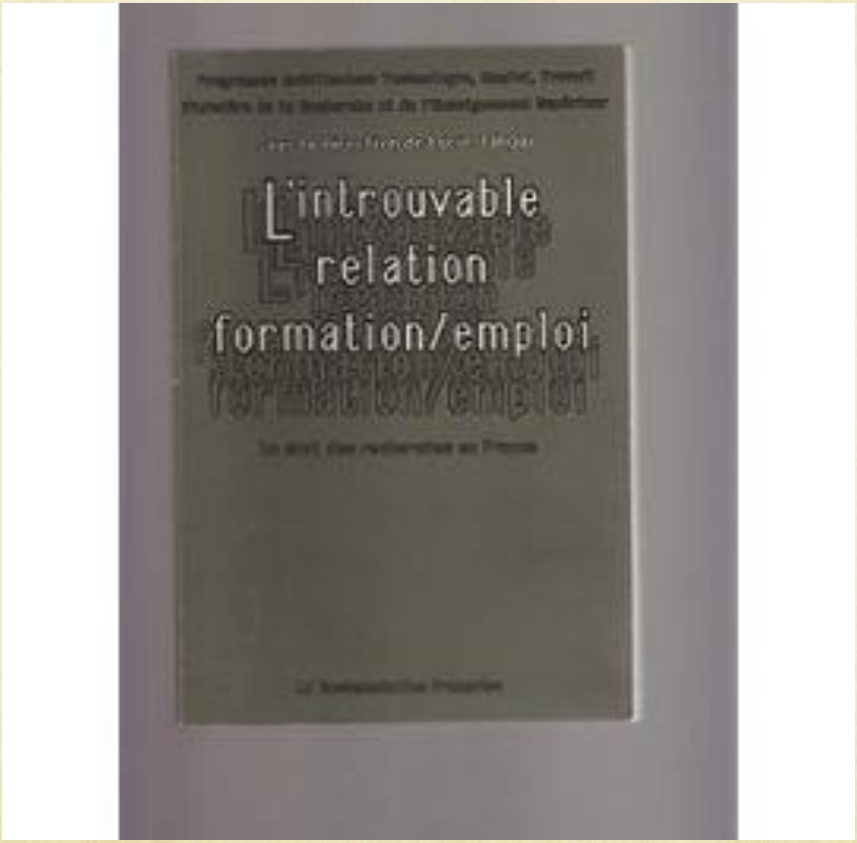
Concept Map Activity I

1. Draw a concept map of “graduates' employability”

1. Include the main issues, concerns and challenges about the topic


Concept Maps
represent
help to answer
"Focus Question(s)"
Organized Knowledge
includes
Associated Feelings or Affect
needed to answer
are
is
Context Dependent
is comprised of
add to
Concepts
connected using
Linking Words
used to form
Propositions
necessary for
Effective Teaching
e.g.
Personal
Social
Effective Learning
are
Perceived Regularities or Patterns
Labeled
Hierarchically Structured
Units of Meaning
may be
Crosslinks
in
begin with
with
aids
in
constructed in
show
Events (Happenings)
Objects (Things)
Symbols
Words
especially with
Cognitive Structure
Creativity
Experts
Interrelationships
begins with
Infants
needed to see
between
Different Map Segments

Higher education and employment: building the connections



Recent trends and concerns

- Bologna reform + focusing learning outcomes
- Are aspects of the Bologna process - such as its social dimension, the fostering of citizenship and democratic values - being neglected ?
- Privatization of HE institutions + students as consumers
- Is "over consumption" of education, credentials and credits in HE a massive strategy ? Is "inquisitive learning" being neglected?

Employability and educational policies

- Finding a balance between the “ivory tower” model and the “responding to the economic needs” model
- Finding a balance between aims of “qualification”, socialization” and “subjectification”
- Developing adequate tools (data, variables, survey methods, ...) to monitor employability

Employability and individuals' trajectories

- The consequences of Bologna ?
- The consequences of the LLL European policies?
- The consequences of the economical crisis ?
- The consequences of new contexts of professional learning ?
- ??? … ???

Are transitions between HE and employment more frequent and extended across all ages ?

Questions?

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- Student expectations and perceptions of higher education: Employability

The Project

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) - funded research project explored the views of students in higher education across the UK in 2012-13, to investigate their perceptions and expectations of the quality of their learning experience and the academic standards of their chosen programmes of study

Methodology

- Concept-map mediated interviews and focus groups were used to elicit students' expectations and perceptions of quality, standards and the student learning experience
- Interviews and focus groups were conducted with over 150 students in 16 settings, across 4 general institutional types (research-intensive, teaching-intensive, regional-focused and special interest)

Analysis

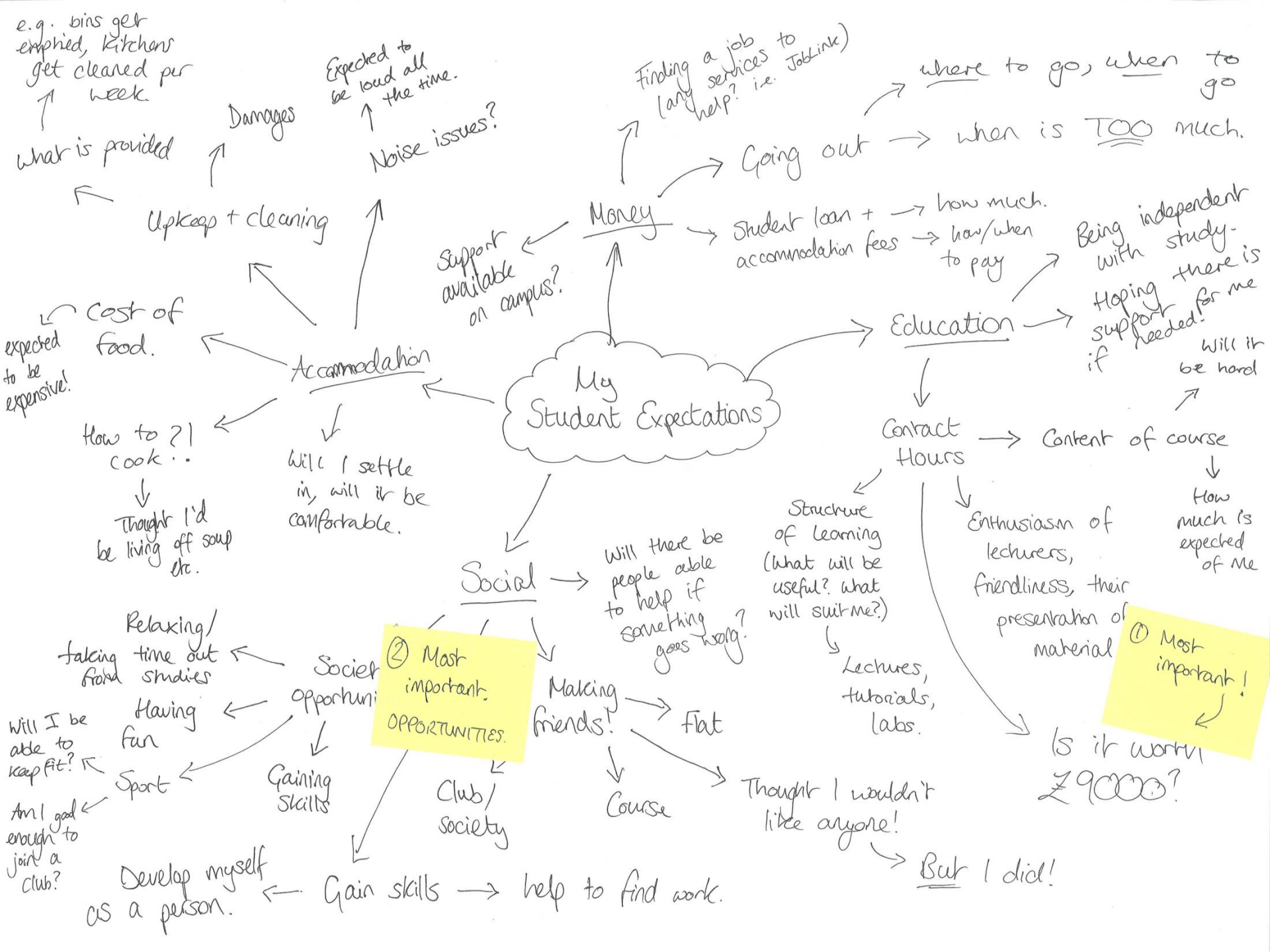
- Interview and focus group data were analysed through open-coding using a grounded theory approach, with codes combined into thematic areas
- Concept maps were analysed visually, structurally and thematically

Findings

- How students frame higher education
  - Ideology
  - Practices
  - Purpose
- Students and their course
- Students and the institution

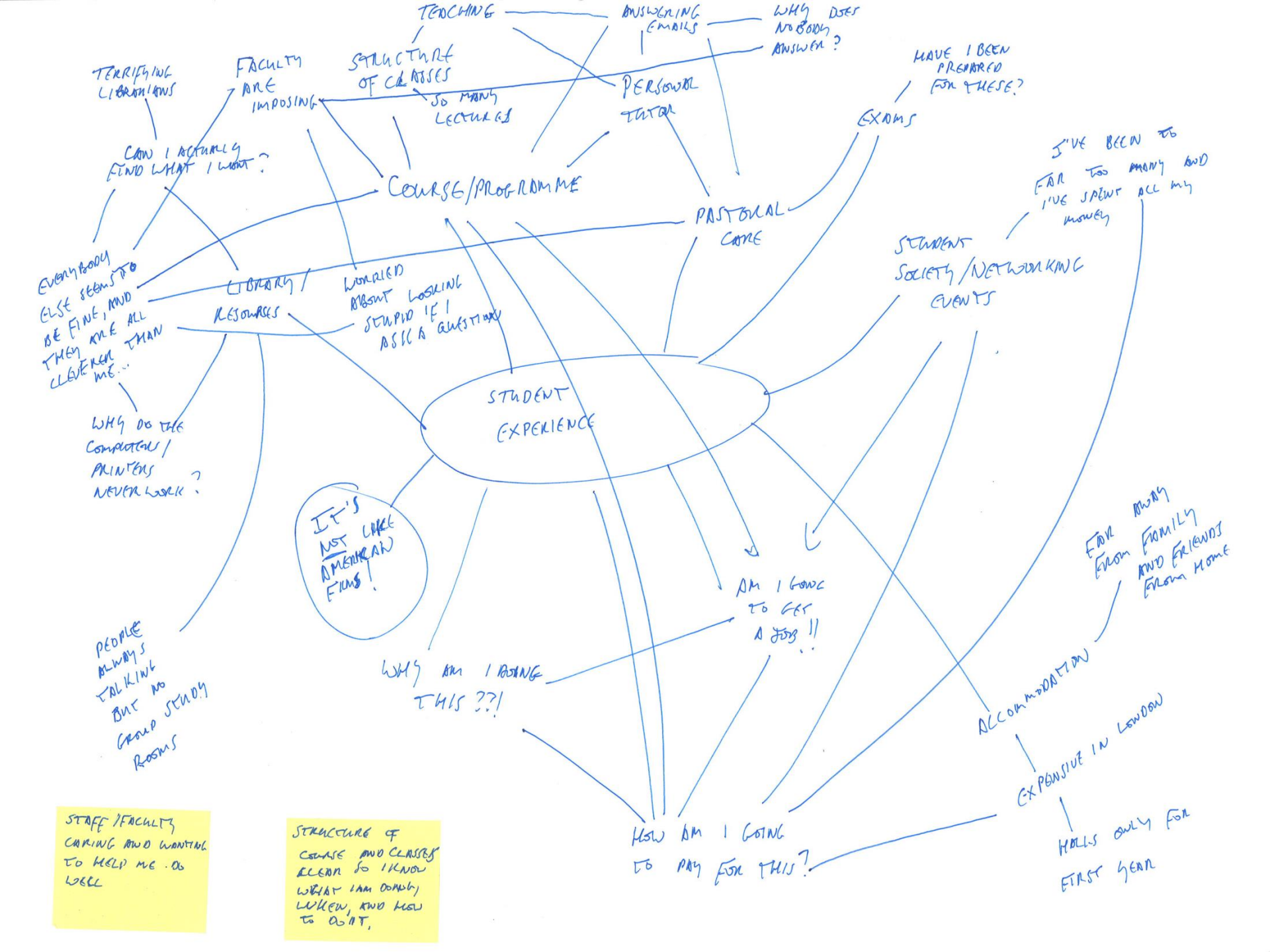
I. Framing of ideology

Consumerist ethos: Student perceptions of value


My Student Expectations
Accommodation
Cost of food.
expected to be expensive!
How to ?! cook..
Thought I'd be living off soup etc.
Will I settle in, will it be comfortable.
Upkeep + cleaning
What is provided
e.g. bins get emptied, kitchens get cleaned per week
Damages
Noise issues?
Expected to be loud all the time.
Money
Support available on campus?
Finding a job (any services to help? i.e. Jobtink)
Going out
where to go, when to go
when is TOO much.
Student loan + accommodation fees
how much.
how/when to pay
Education
Being independent with study.
Hoping there is support for me if needed!
Will it be hard
Contact Hours
Content of course
How much is expected of me
Structure of learning (What will be useful? what will suit me?)
Lectures, tutorials, labs.
Enthusiasm of lecturers, friendliness, their preservation of material
Is it worth £9000?
Social
Will there be people able to help if something goes wrong?
Relaxing/ taking time out from studies
Having fun
Sport
Will I be able to keep fit?
Am I good enough to join a club?
Gaining skills
Club/ society
Making friends!
Flat
Course
Thought I wouldn't like anyone!
But I did!
Develop myself as a person.
Gain skills
help to find work.
② Most important OPPORTUNITIES.
① Most important!

II. Framing of purpose

Student expectations for employability


TEACHING
ANSWERING EMAILS
WHY DOES NOBODY ANSWER?
TERRIFYING LIBRARIANS
FACULTY ARE IMPOSING
STRUCTURE OF CLASSES
SO MANY LECTURES
PERSONAL TUTOR
HAVE I BEEN PREPARED FOR THESE?
EXAMS
CAN I ACTUALLY FIND WHAT I WANT?
COURSE/PROGRAMME
I'VE BEEN TO FAR TOO MANY AND I'VE SPENT ALL MY MONEY
PASTORAL CARE
EVERYBODY ELSE SEEMS TO BE FINE, AND THEY ARE ALL CLEVERER THAN ME...
LIBRARY / RESOURCES
WORRIED ABOUT LOOKING STUPID IF I ASK A QUESTION
STUDENT SOCIETY / NETWORKING EVENTS
STUDENT EXPERIENCE
WHY DO THE COMPUTERS / PRINTERS NEVER WORK?
IT'S NOT LIKE AMERICAN FILMS!
AM I GOING TO GET A JOB!!
FAR AWAY FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS FROM HOME
PEOPLE ALWAYS TALKING BUT NO GROUP STUDY ROOMS
WHY AM I DOING THIS??
ACCOMMODATION
EXPENSIVE IN LONDON
HOW AM I GOING TO PAY FOR THIS?
HALLS ONLY FOR FIRST YEAR
STAFF/FACULTY CARING AND WANTING TO HELP ME DO WELL
STRUCTURE OF COURSE AND CLASSES CLEAR SO I KNOW WHAT I AM DOING, WHEN, AND HOW TO DO IT.

Advice and guidance

- Opportunities for internships, placements and work experience

- Promotion and coordination of student services and Student's Unions activities regarding employability and skills development

Questions?

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Concept Map Activity II

1. Draw a second concept map about: researching graduates' employability

2. Include exploring what data is available, needed, what questions need to be addressed, what matters at individual, institutional, national and regional levels.

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Thank you!