



# Student Agency in Changing UK Higher Education

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How can higher  
education  
change?



How much influence do  
students really have?

# Structural limits to student agency

- Student vs expert mentality
- Student feedback paradox
- Student representatives as adversaries
- The single 'student voice' & 'student experience'

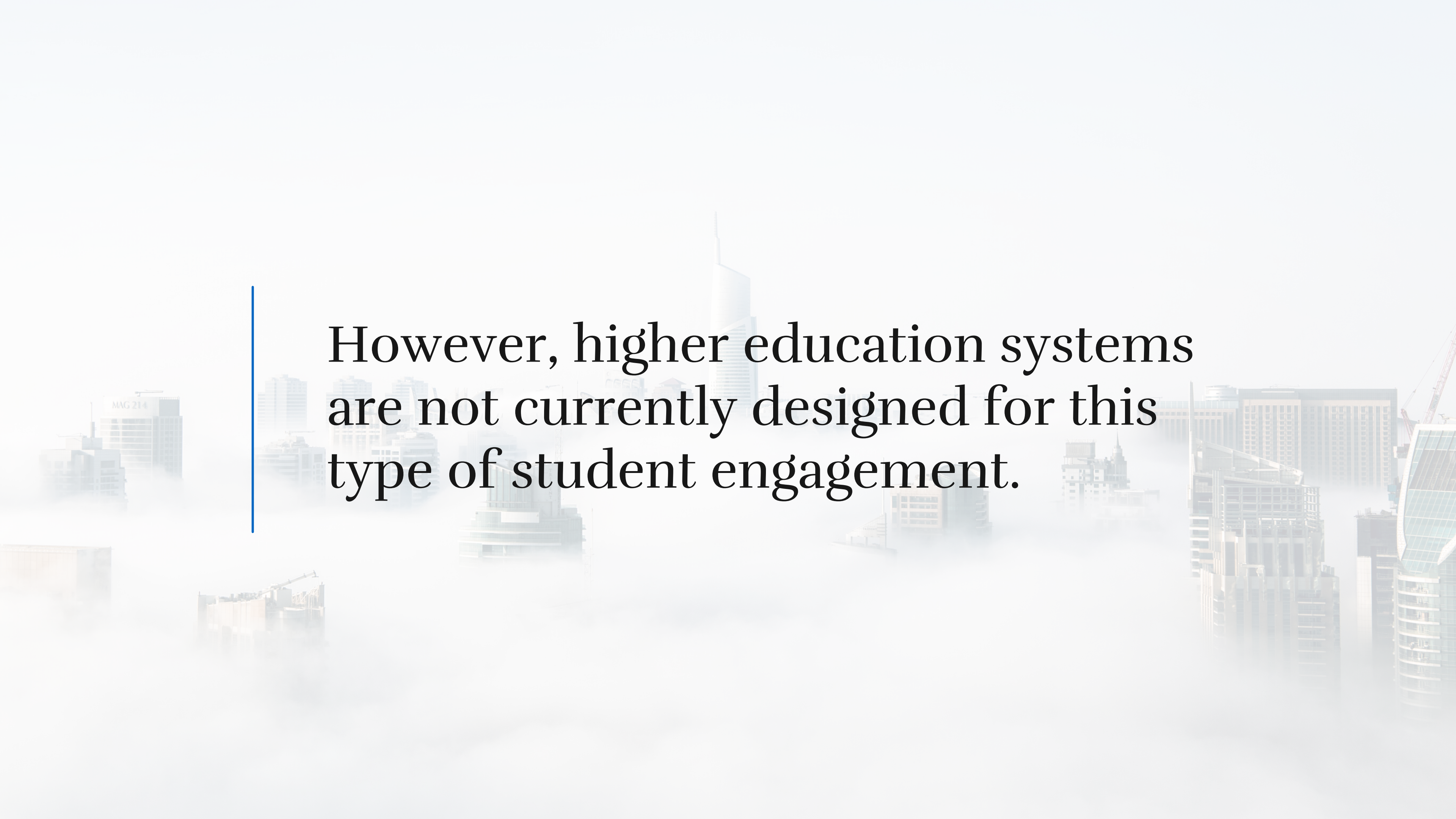
# How did these structural forces change in the pandemic?

- Greater opportunities for change
  - Sudden need for student expertise
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- Importance of the overall 'student experience'
  - Increased focus on quality assurance
  - Students, not adults

# What would student agency ideally look like?

"...a collaborative, reciprocal process through which all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways..."

(Cook-Sather, Bovill & Felton, 2014, p.6)



However, higher education systems are not currently designed for this type of student engagement.

# Conversations to Keep Having

- How do Student Unions and institutions want to work together?
- How can higher education better contribute to the public good?
- What is the value of student agency both within higher education and wider society?



# References

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