

## **A snapshot of the student experience: Exploring student satisfaction through the use of photographic elicitation**

Student satisfaction is both an important, yet controversial issue within Higher Education, which is typically measured through policy-driven metrics such as the National Student Survey (NSS). However, less is understood about the qualities of a satisfying student experience “as lived” from the perspective of the student, thus questioning the adequacy of such measures. In response to this, the current study used student-driven photographic elicitation as a means of more adequately capturing the holistic student experience. This entailed nine final year undergraduate psychology students who each gathered a series of photos, which formed the basis for discussion in an interview. Thematic analysis of the narratives of the interview discussions revealed several main themes surrounding their experiences. These were: “Learning Environment”, “Work-Life Balance”, and “Wider University Community”. Findings are discussed with reference to the implications of student satisfaction, and national metrics used for measuring it, for institutional policies of recruitment and retention.

### **Dr Linda Kaye**

Senior Lecturer in Psychology  
Edge Hill University

### **Joseph J. McCann**

Research Assistant  
University of Cumbria and Edge Hill University