

# **Student-centred learning and quality in higher education: What? Why? How?**

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**11th European Quality Assurance Forum  
Ljubjana, Slovenia  
17-19 November 2016**

# Structure of the presentation

## Student-centred learning and quality in higher education:

- 1) What are we talking about?
- 2) Why is it important that we talk about it?
- 3) How should/can we take it into consideration?

# 1. What are we talking about?

## a) What is learning?

Various ways of seeing learning since the beginning of research on the topic (in psychology of learning, cognitive sciences or learning sciences)

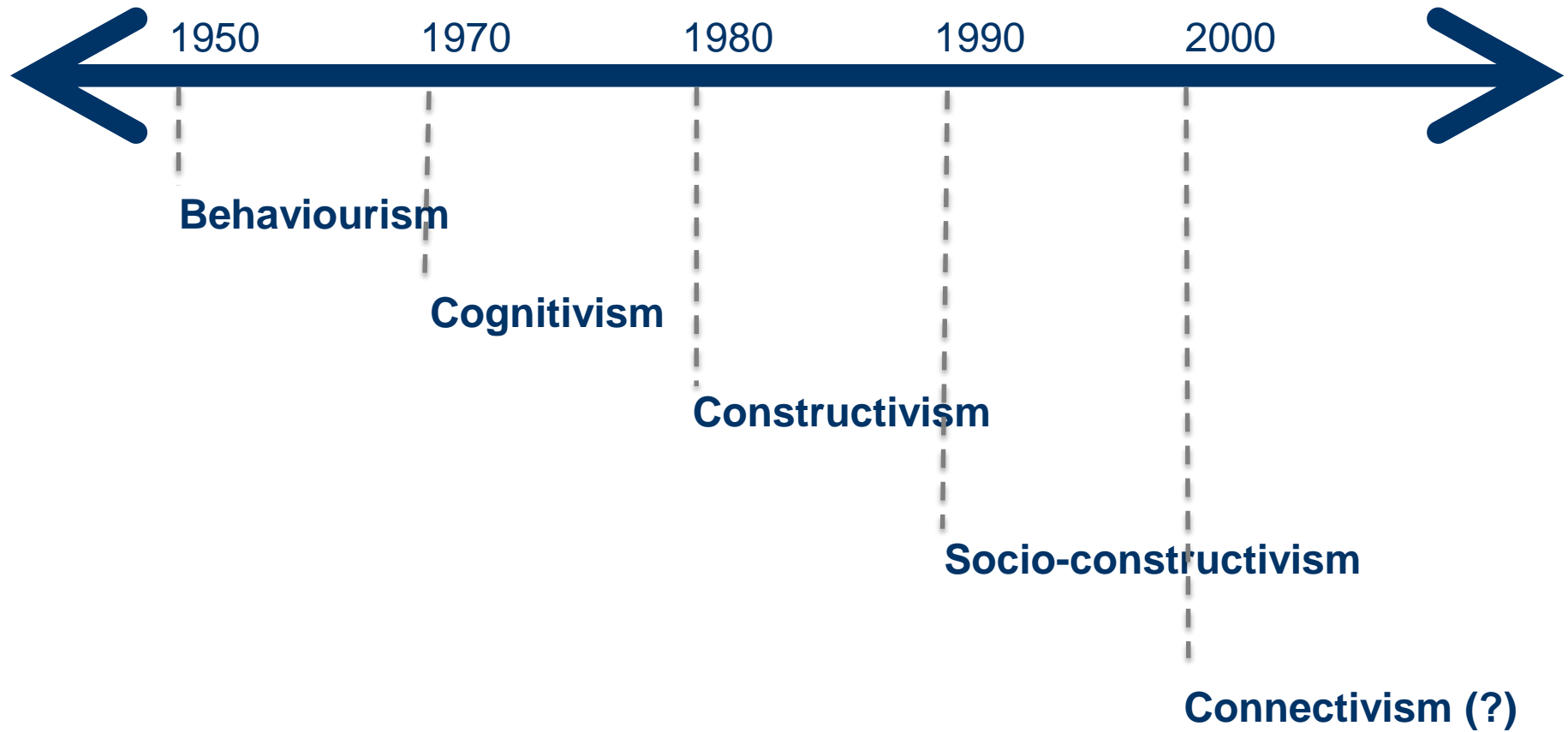
Because of our increased understanding of learning, what is expected of the teacher and the learner has evolved

The notion of quality in relation to teaching and learning has also evolved

“Student-centred learning” is today’s illustration of quality teaching and learning

# 1. What are we talking about?

## a) What is learning?



# 1. What are we talking about?

## a) What is learning?

Paradigm	Learning means...
Behaviourism	Reacting in a given situation
Cognitivism	Being able to retrieve and use information
Constructivism	Developing one's own understanding of something
Socio-constructivism	Developing one's own understanding of something through interaction
Connectivism	Developing one's own understanding of something through interaction, in particular virtual interaction

# 1. What are we talking about?

## b) What is student-centred learning?

In the higher education literature → “learning-centred teaching” → every decision about instruction is made with the learner’s needs in mind

Learner’s needs → concept of the learning experience or student experience of learning or student experience

In a post-cognitivist paradigm, the learner is:

- Active
- Engaged
- Consulted
- Collaborative
- Connected

# 1. What are we talking about?

## b) What is student-centred learning?

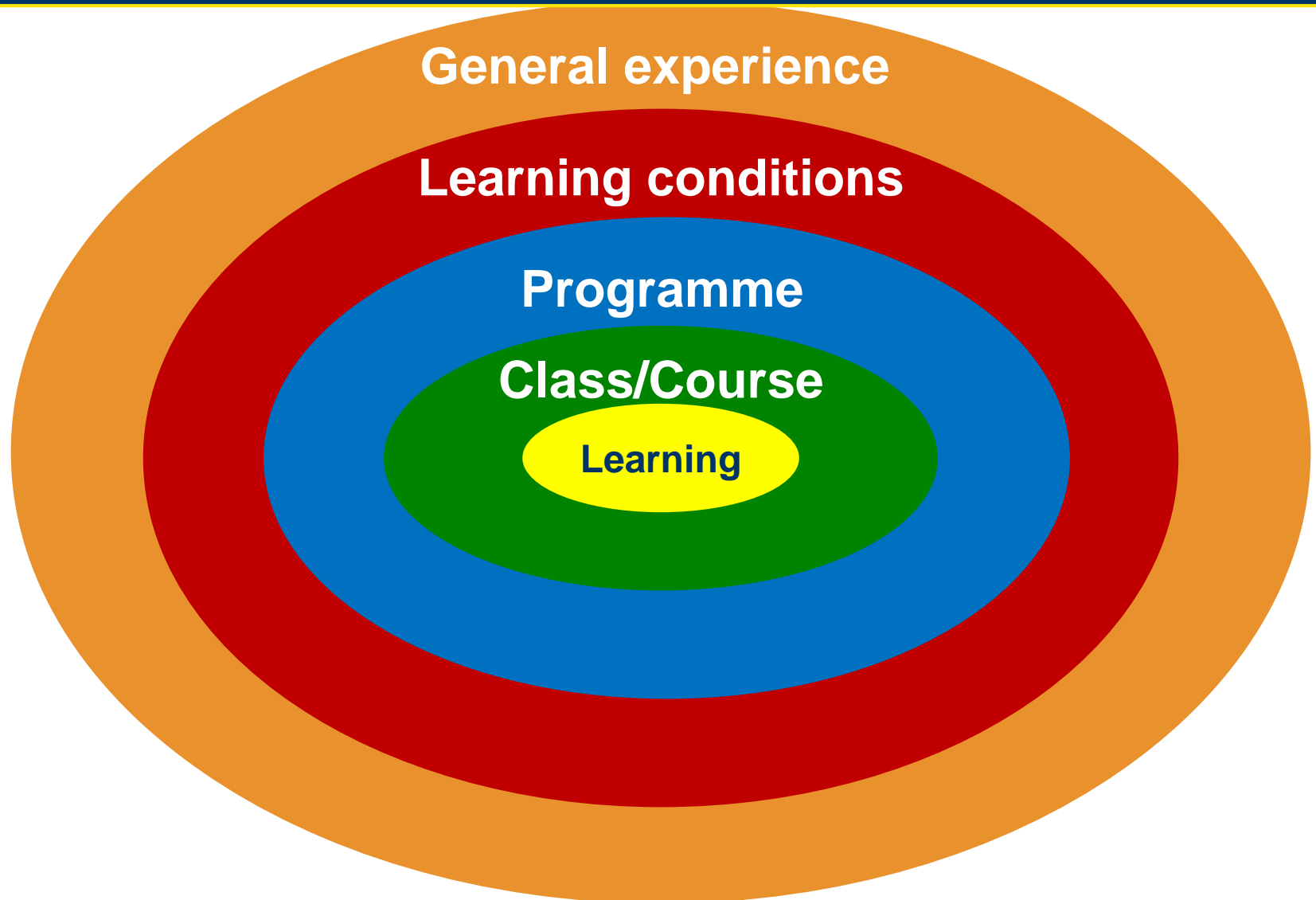
**This means that the learning experience of students goes beyond the classroom.**

Four levels:

- class/course: student interaction with teachers
- programme: general organisation of studies
- learning conditions: learning-related services/activities
- general experience: physical/environmental conditions

# 1. What are we talking about?

b) What is student-centred learning?





# 1. What are we talking about?

c) What is the relationship to quality?

**Quality depends upon our vision of learning:**

Behaviourism: speed and accuracy of actions by learners

Cognitivism: ability to retrieve/use information adequately

Constructivism: ability to learn autonomously

Socio-constructivism: ability to collaborate for learning

Connectivism: ability to form virtual learning networks

# 1. What are we talking about?

c) What is the relationship to quality?

**Quality depends upon our vision of the learning experience:**

Class/course: learning activities chosen by teaching staff

Programme: coherence amongst the various courses

Learning conditions: induction and support activities

General experience: infrastructure, accessibility, resources

## 2. Why is it important that we talk about it?

a) Why is student-centred learning important?

More realistic and adequate representation of the teaching and learning process

Shows that not everything rests on one actor (teacher, student, academic manager, employer)

Helps us refine what we should look at and how we should look at it (**→ move beyond student rating of instruction**)

## 2. Why is it important that we talk about it?

### b) Why is the link with quality important?

One way of looking at the quality of education is through impact on students, their development

Student development not solely related to what happens in the classroom (various levels of the learning experience)

Depends upon a variety of actors and factors (in particular in the Bologna system)

**Need to document student development at various levels and from various viewpoints**

### 3. How should/can we take it into consideration?

a) How can we evaluate the impact of teaching?

#### Four ways of looking at training programmes

(Kirkpatrick, 1996):

- 1) During: pleasure and satisfaction
- 2) At the end: satisfaction and competence (felt)
- 3) Some time after: competence (proven), implementation
- 4) Some time after implementation: impact on others

### 3. How should/can we take it into consideration?

b) How can we evaluate student-centred learning?

	Level 1 During	Level 2 At the end	Level 3 Some time after	Level 4 Much later
Class/Course				
Programme				
Learning conditions				
General experience				

# Conclusion

How can we evaluate quality through student-centred learning?

**By clarifying what the common or predominant learning paradigm is within the HE institution**

→ *What is our teaching and learning concept?*

**By making explicit what we wish to look at in relation to the various levels of the student learning experience**

→ *What do we do to support learning?*

**By collecting valid and reliable evidence to be used for decision making in relation to the learning experience**

→ *How do we know we are doing the right things?*

→ *What should we be doing?*

# References and further readings on the topic

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