

Title: **Challenges, ‘fit’ and impact: online/blended CPD provision for staff international partner staff**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Evaluate the potential of UK HE teaching qualifications for different international contexts
- Examine assumptions about cultural differences, comparing these with disciplinary differences and considering implications for CPD with diverse groups.
- Identify two models of practice, in provision of online/blended CPD for transnational partner staff
- Draw on theoretical models of CPD and cultural difference, to evaluate educational development.
- Consider the interplay between colonial residue and contemporary transnational educational development activity.

Session Outline

How far is UK-based, -designed and -delivered CPD relevant, appropriate and useful within other international contexts?

Building on earlier research about the experience of international partner staff who complete our online/blended PGCertHE/PGCAP programmes (Alford & Compton 2016), this session explores the experience and perceptions of teaching teams of such programmes. As the collaborative provision of UK universities grows (HEGlobal 2016) international strategy must be informed by the drive for professionalism and teaching excellence (O’Mahoney 2014, McBurnie 2008).

Provision of UK-based CPD for international colleagues appears to be both a growing trend (Bovill, Jordan & Watters (2015), Lamers & Admiraal (2017), and anecdotal evidence) and an under-researched area (Smith 2009). Made possible now via online/blended modes, it raises critical issues about the relevance of our CPD in very different cultural and educational contexts, as well as raising practical and logistical challenges for teaching teams.

Using Kennedy's (2005) Models of CPD and drawing on Hofstede and Minkov's (2010) Cultural Dimensions, our research explores how staff teaching these programmes in 2 very different UK universities understand the nature, use and value of this CPD provision in international contexts. Perceptions and experiences of 'difference' and 'relevance' will be discussed, with a focus on the transferability of this provision, and its reported impacts in practice.

The session will draw together conclusions and suggestions from both presenters and participants about degrees of difference between expectations and responses of international participants, and those of UK participants; about cultural assumptions and how 'cultural' difference compare with disciplinary difference; about potential tailoring which might be needed for this pattern of CPD provision; about ways in which we can learn from the participation and experience of international staff.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

Discussion will focus on the following questions:

- What assumptions might we make about the particular perspectives and needs of international partner staff in a typical collaboration based in (for example) Egypt, Oman, Ghana or Trinidad?
- How far is CPD provision in the form of a PGCertHE / PGCAP generic and transferable?
- How far may it need tailoring for different contexts? Do we practice what we teach in relation to internationalising the curriculum?
- How different or similar are cultural differences to disciplinary differences, in their impact and implications for our CPD provision?

Indicative structure:

1. Following an introduction to our research and focus, participants will be asked to consider their assumptions about different cultural contexts through a ranking activity related to theoretical models of cultural difference and CPD, followed by very brief discussion about how cultural differences might impact on international delivery of a PGCertHE/PGCAP.
10 -15 minutes
2. The presenters will then summarise what is particular about their TNE provision, and discuss some of their research findings about their experiences and perceptions of transnational delivery of their programmes.
10 minutes

3. Participants will then be asked to discuss in pairs or small groups the transferability of our 'routine' UK CPD both for different cultural contexts, and for different disciplinary (and other) contexts. Are the challenges of these various differences qualitatively or quantitatively different?
10 minutes
4. Presenters will suggest some of the evidence from our research about the staff and participants' perceptions of the nature, value and transferability of our international programmes.

References

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