

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Magazine of the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA)



Issue 16.4

December 2015 ISSN 1469-3267

£9.50 Cover price (UK only)

Contents

- 1 **Reflections on the Teaching Excellence Framework**
Pam Parker, Elizabeth Cleaver and Yaz El-Hakim
- 4 **Bridges, fires and map-reading: Metaphor as a means of exploring academic development**
Colleen McKenna and Jane Hughes
- 8 **Hic sunt dracones – Here be dragons: ...**
Simon Paul Atkinson
- 11 **Meeting expectations: The challenge of staff development ...**
Karen Smith
- 15 **The ACU African administrators project**
Ian Willis and Brian Jennings
- 18 **Internationalisation in Higher Education: The intentions ...**
Pollyanna Magne
- 21 **Academic development – A developers' society**
Chrissi Nerantzi and Peter Gossman
- 23 **What has the NSS ever done for students?** Kate Little
- 25 **Can extra-curricular activities help international students create ...**
Maria Kaparou and Ian Abbott
- 27 **Confessions of a SEDA conference interloper** Gail Hall
- 28 **SEDA News**

SEDA

Woburn House,
20 - 24 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9HF
Tel 020 7380 6767
Fax 020 7387 2655
Email office@seda.ac.uk

More information about SEDA's activities can be found on our website:

www.seda.ac.uk

A company limited by guarantee and registered in England, No. 3709481. Registered in England and Wales as a charity, No.1089537

Reflections on the Teaching Excellence Framework

Pam Parker, Co-chair of SEDA, **Elizabeth Cleaver**, Chair of HEDG, and **Yaz El-Hakim**, Co-chair of SEDA

Many across the sector have been debating what the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) might contain and how it will be implemented since the speech of the new Minister for Universities and Science (Jo Johnson) at a Universities UK event on 1 July 2015. The speech included proposals for implementing three key manifesto pledges, the second of which focused on 'delivering a teaching excellence framework that creates incentives for universities to devote as much attention to the quality of teaching as fee-paying students and prospective employers have a right to expect'.

In the speech, Mr Johnson continued to outline some further key details about the need to recognise excellent teaching and provide incentives to make 'good' teaching better. He also made reference to rebalancing teaching and research and outlined some aims for the TEF which include: to ensure students receive an excellent teaching experience; to build a culture where teaching has an equal status to research; and to provide information so that teaching quality can be judged. At this point the only details about the TEF were that it would 'include a clear set of outcome-focused criteria and metrics'. Reference was also made to the TEF assessment process being undertaken by an independent external quality body and an assurance was made that lessons learned from the Research Excellence Framework (REF) meant that any future TEF would be 'proportionate and light touch'.

Since this speech there has been much speculation across Higher Education about what this means and how it might be implemented, with a range of articles published in the *Times Higher Education* (2015). Derfel Owen (2015) suggested the sector should fully engage with the proposals, and that potential data could be centred on three themes: 'input'; 'output' and 'peer judgement'. A Government Green Paper consultation is promised later this autumn.

Discussions from a workshop

Both SEDA and HEDG members have extensive experience in teaching and learning across the sector and in supporting colleagues in the development and provision of teaching excellence. In addition, many colleagues across the sector have been engaged in discussion about the TEF on a range of online forums and through JISC Mail lists. SEDA and HEDG therefore felt that a workshop for discussion of the TEF would create a valuable opportunity for collating feedback in response to the imminent Green Paper consultation and for influencing and

Editorial Committee

Dr Peter Gossman

Manchester Metropolitan University

John Lea

Canterbury Christ Church
University

Chrissi Nerantzi

Manchester Metropolitan University

Steve Outram

HE Consultant and Researcher

Ellie Russell

National Union of Students

Professor Lorraine Stefani

University of Auckland

Dr Karen Strickland

Robert Gordon University

Dr Sue Wilkinson

Cardiff Metropolitan University

Professor James Wisdom

Higher Education Consultant

2015 (Vol.16) Annual Subscription Rates

Individual subscriptions are £38 sterling per year (4 issues) within the UK. Overseas subscribers should add £5 sterling postage and packing for delivery within the EU or £8 sterling for the rest of the world.

Packs of 10 copies (each copy containing 4 issues) are available for £270 sterling.

All orders should be sent to the SEDA Office, either with payment or official order.

NB SEDA members automatically receive copies of *Educational Developments*.

lobbying more broadly. This article will now focus on some of those discussions and the key outcomes from the joint workshop undertaken on 4 September 2015 at Woburn House in London.

The workshop was facilitated by Pam and Liz and comprised 36 participants from both networks and across the UK. We started by creating a mind map of issues that participants wished to raise and debate in relation to the TEF and from this six themes were identified for a world café-style activity. Following this, the workshop drew to a close by summarising the key issues from the day and identifying questions that participants felt remained unanswered. Whilst the workshop focused around six themes, there was overlap in a number of the discussions. As such this article will focus particularly on five key themes: purpose, metrics, comparability, assessment, and risks and opportunities.

Purpose

Initial key questions raised on this table were 'what is the TEF for?' and 'who are the audiences?' The answers to these two questions then frame all other aspects of TEF development. The group debate centred on whether there is one key stakeholder for TEF or many, and 'many' was viewed as the answer.

Enhancing student learning was deemed to be the key purpose of the TEF, particularly if it is to be valued by the sector. Some thought was also given to how this focus might lead to greater emphasis on innovation and improvement as staff seek to explore different ways to engage students in their learning and show the impact of this. Note was also made of the importance of the TEF helping to redress the imbalance between teaching and research. This led to discussions about the importance of linking TEF to the scholarship of learning and teaching and pedagogic research, although some also felt there would be a need for the sector to undertake some development work in this area.

Jo Johnson in his UUK speech spoke of protecting the UK HE brand and having confidence in its standards. Workshop participants agreed that this could be a potential key purpose of the TEF but were concerned about the implication that there had been a dilution of standards; many felt that the UK HE brand already had a reputation for 'good' teaching although there was always potential for further enhancement.

The discussion then explored the resource implications of TEF and whether its introduction could lead to a greater resourcing of teaching *per se*, or only for those institutions that were able to demonstrate 'excellence in teaching'. If the latter, participants questioned what would happen to institutions which were deemed to be 'less than excellent'. With the growing number of private providers gaining degree-awarding powers, the discussion also considered whether the TEF could make it easier for new providers to enter the market.

Overall the group felt that TEF could have a very positive purpose, but that a focus on quantitative data sources that already existed, rather than qualitative data on teaching process and student learning gain, could make it a very blunt instrument. This leads into the second theme: metrics.

Metrics

This discussion focused on the need to use a mixture of input and output measures and the need to have evidence of validity in relation to each specific measure. The group felt that data could be categorised on two scales and axes: from 'most' to 'least' useful and from 'easy' to 'difficult' to assess. This led to some interesting debates around which quadrant you would place particular data items in if these two continua were used. Some examples of the data that were easy to assess but which was the least useful included graduate employment data, QAA reviews, degree classifications and KIS data. The discussions also led to a data blacklist which included items that should not be included at all, for example, external examiner

reports, graduate salaries, question 22 on the NSS 'overall I am satisfied with the quality of my course', league tables and international recruitment numbers.

Data that was felt to be useful and easy to assess was seen to emanate from both staff- and students-related metrics. For students, entry profiles were felt to be useful both to detail the range and variety of backgrounds entering higher education but also as a baseline to do basic explorations of learning gain and retention. Student views from specific NSS questions were also highlighted, particularly questions 1-4 on teaching and 5-9 on assessment. For staff, information about those with teaching qualifications and Higher Education Academy or equivalent Fellowships was felt to be useful as well as other relevant academic qualifications. Lastly, there was a view that as many HE programmes already had professional statutory and regulatory body accreditations, and the reports for these were often detailed in terms of specific teaching activities, particularly around good or innovative practice, these should not therefore be discounted as a source of data.

There were also some views around data that has real potential to be useful, but would be more difficult to collect and assess. This included: student engagement data such as that collected by the NSSE in the United States, because relatively few institutions in the UK at present use this approach; teaching observations and peer reviews which are extremely valuable professional development activities and provide rich qualitative comments but would require analysis; and lastly, learning gain measures as there is currently not one agreed measure of learning gain in the UK. Workshop participants also considered whether capturing excellent practice through case studies that demonstrate impact, in a similar vein to the REF, might be a useful way forward. This links to 'comparability', our third theme.

Comparability

In discussions around comparability it was noted that one size would not fit all and that such an approach would make levelling an already bumpy playing field extremely difficult. Participants felt that there needed to be clear consideration of comparability even within metrics, as HE institutions in the UK are of variable type (public, private, generalist and specialist) and size (from less than 1000 students to over 30,000 students) and have different missions (religious, civic, business oriented etc.). The discussion explored whether these differences might lead to institutional groupings in the TEF or a set of core metrics (TEF 1) and then specific or weighted metrics that could be aligned to or chosen by institutions (TEF 2).

Discussions around comparability also covered how institutions currently support staff in developing excellent practice in a range of ways and how recognition and reward systems differ across the sector. This particularly aligns to the discussions around TEF's purpose in promoting the status of teaching. This theme provided some very thorough and heated discussions and is doubtless an area that will be explored further as the details of the TEF emerge. The issues

of comparability discussed here link well to the next section which considers how measures can be assessed without losing sight of the valuable diversity within the sector.

Assessment

In terms of assessment, discussions were wide-ranging. While metrics were identified, key questions were raised about their reliability and validity. Reference was made to the time span that the TEF would measure and whether it would take place annually or every three to five years. This then led to issues about the size of the task for institutions and an agreement that it was essential this did not become as onerous as the current REF, as acknowledged in Jo Johnson's speech. The benefits that could accrue if TEF aligned to existing annual institutional monitoring and evaluation approaches were discussed; however, the diversity within the sector of these approaches was recognised as an issue.

Who should be doing the assessing was also discussed, but other than reflecting on the need for there to be calibration across the sector (which would mean the need for externally standardised peer review) there was no clear view at this point about the most appropriate approach.

Risks and opportunities

The last theme provided discussion that linked to a number of issues and discussions in the other thematic areas. There were concerns about the risks of TEF focusing only on the teaching rather than the broader educational experience that HE provides (a return to a teacher-led focus) and the impact that this could have on stifling innovation if teachers became risk averse to keep their TEF scores high. Participants felt that it might be difficult to engage teachers in TEF if they believed there were to be more measures of personal performance and targets rather than a focus on student learning enhancement. There were also concerns that on the one hand, students may worry that praising excellent teaching might lead to an increase in fees, while conversely, on the other, that giving negative feedback may lead to some institutions (and awards) losing credibility if a TEF league table were to be produced, which inevitably would happen as it would be publicly available information.

However, the discussion also noted a number of potential opportunities arising from the TEF. The potential for the status of teaching to be equal to that of research was welcomed; many participants have been engaged in discussions around promoting teaching for many years within their institutions and beyond and there is much ground still to be gained. Whilst there has been some movement in the sector to ensure there is recognition for excellent teaching, such as the National Teaching Fellowship and institutional and student-led teaching excellence awards schemes, career promotion opportunities for those who focus on teaching excellence have remained variable within the sector. Many welcome the impetus that TEF may bring. It was also felt that more researchers might become engaged in teaching if recognition and reward was both clear and available.

Outstanding questions

The workshop facilitated some rich discussions and as it drew to a close, participants raised a series of outstanding questions that we had been unable to address either due to time or to limited knowledge:

- What is the actual purpose of the TEF and how will it be used?
- Will it operate at institutional, departmental or programme level and will it include all provision – undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research?
- What is the timescale for introduction?
- Will there be two phases: TEF1 and TEF2?
- Will the results be linked to league tables?
- Will there be some form of judicial review if results are linked to funding?
- Given current other initiatives in the sector such as change to the NSS (2017) and the review of QAA (ongoing), are all the relevant bodies speaking to each other?
- Will results follow the OFSTED model resulting in red, amber and green institutional status or will results reflect a confidence judgement?
- Will existing measures be used or will new ones be developed?

Conclusion

By the time you are reading this article the sector will know what is being proposed for TEF1 and indeed the current speculation around will there be a TEF2 will also be known. The workshop provided an excellent opportunity to discuss together the issues of a possible TEF and draw on some of the contributions many had made through online discussions prior to the event. As the reality and implementation of TEF rolls out there will be other occasions where those across the sector will want to come together as a collaborative

community, so that we can provide a useful and considered contribution. We encourage you all to stay engaged and share your views through any consultation opportunities that are provided.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the 36 colleagues who attended the workshop in London but also those who were unable to attend who have offered views on forums or by e-mail.

References

- Johnson, J. (2015) 'Teaching at the heart of the system', Gov.UK (available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/teaching-at-the-heart-of-the-system>, accessed 18/09/15).
- Owen, D. (2015) 'How to build the teaching excellence framework', *Times Higher Education* (available at: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/how-build-teaching-excellence-framework>).
- Times Higher (4/8/2015) 'Teaching excellence framework (TEF): everything you need to know' (available at: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/teaching-excellence-framework-tef-everything-you-need-to-know>).

Dr Pam Parker is Co-Chair of SEDA and the Acting Director for the Department for Learning Enhancement and Development at City University, London (P.M.Parker@city.ac.uk).

Dr Elizabeth Cleaver is Chair of the Heads of Educational Development Group (HEDG) and is Director of Learning Enhancement and Academic Practice at the University of Hull (e.cleaver@hull.ac.uk).

Yaz El-Hakim is Co-Chair of SEDA, Academic Technologist at Instructure, and Honorary Learning and Teaching Fellow at the University of Winchester (yaz@instructure.com).

Bridges, fires and map-reading: Metaphor as a means of exploring academic development

Colleen McKenna, HE Development, Evaluation and Research (HEDERA), and **Jane Hughes**, University College London

Background

'I have this vision of like a kid...it's her birthday or it's their birthday, they're just waiting at the party for people to come. And they sent out invitations but you're not sure if people are going to come – I feel like that's what it's like sometimes.' (ExILED interviewee)

This is one of many metaphors that we recorded as part of the ExILED (Exploring the Identities and Locations of Educational Developers) project supported by the SEDA Legacy Grant scheme to explore the identity construction and locations of people working in academic staff development.

The aim of the work was to learn more about where those involved with academic development are situated and the impact of location. We also asked about:

- respondents' journeys into their roles
- the nature of the work
- involvement in policy and strategy making

- research/scholarship
- the challenges and pleasures of the role.

Additionally, we asked participants to distinguish between formal and informal aspects of their work. Data was gathered through an online survey followed by 14 interviews.

In this article, we analyse the metaphors that emerged from the research and use these as filters through which to look at related survey themes including:

- location and territory
- conceptions of the academic developer role
- how the role is experienced.

Metaphor as method

Prompted by the literature, we offered interviewees the opportunity to describe their work metaphorically. Our rationale for this was that metaphor potentially enables impressionistic, comparative and non-literal perspectives to emerge, and we thought it might stimulate alternative ways of seeing connections (or disconnections) with colleagues, institutions, policy and scholarship. In recent research, academic developer 'identity' has been conceptualised, figuratively, in a range of ways. Handal (2008) speaks of the educational developer as 'critical friend'; Ashford *et al.* (2004) have drawn metaphorical comparisons such as 'midwife' and 'jester'; and Land (2001, 2004, 2008) has set out a widely cited framework of orientations for academic development which relies on metaphor. Kinash and Wood (2011) explore metaphor (bridges, swimming) to describe their role and suggest that academic developers' sense of who they are is often bound up with others' identities (for example, subject-based colleagues). However, these metaphors (with the exception of those of Kinash and Wood) are generally crafted by researchers to interpret data. In our study, we asked interviewees for their own metaphors.

When analysing these metaphors, we looked for emergent patterns, linking and grouping the images in different ways in order to identify themes. This is an inexact process because

the capacity of figurative language to express multiple meanings meant that a metaphor might be part of more than one thematic group. For this article we discuss three of these clusters of metaphors and we refer back to the Survey data to integrate relevant findings and to validate our interpretation. Additionally, we consider further themes and qualities that cut across these categories and how the use of metaphor has extended (or in some cases challenged) our understanding of them.

Geographical metaphors, location and territories

Geographical metaphors tended to refer to travellers, territories and navigation, and appeared to be invoked to describe ways in which the university structures were experienced and negotiated. One interviewee characterised her/himself as 'a nomad that visits other people's territories'. Another spoke of being 'an experienced map reader' who 'knows the territory'.

The academic developer as traveller is compelling and aligns with many of the more literal discussions of place explored within the study. For example, 60% of survey respondents indicated that location had an impact on their ability to perform their jobs. The majority of respondents (60%) were situated in academic development units, with others in education departments, other subject departments, learning technology units, or human resources.

Additionally, the characterisation of traveller perhaps implies a certain freedom about the role, which was one of the main pleasures cited by survey respondents. They referred to autonomous working in terms of decision-making, choice of activities to pursue and a certain intellectual freedom and capacity to be creative, all of which may be implied, albeit loosely, in the traveller motif.

There is also an acknowledgement of Tony Becher's (1989) work here in the reference to territories, and an implicit theme in the data was the way in which university spaces contribute to or are partly determined by power

dynamics. These observations align with the work of Cox *et al.* (2012) on institutional space in relation to early career academics' experiences of university campuses. Furthermore, many references to physical buildings appeared in the survey responses: participants spoke about architecture, interior design, access, the ability to decorate or arrange internal spaces, proximity (is the unit at the centre and accessible or on the periphery and remote?) – all in relation to enabling or limiting the ability to perform the role. As one respondent observed 'For me, the space is crucial and has affected things hugely'. Furthermore, as Hillier and Hanson argue, spaces are ultimately invested with meaning through human interaction: '... the ordering of space in buildings is really about the ordering of relations between people' (Hillier and Hanson, 1984, in Jessop *et al.*, 2012). The interactions between places, buildings and people appeared to influence how academic development was perceived and enacted.

Returning to the metaphor above, perhaps another side to this nomadic existence is suggested by a further geographical metaphor implying that academic development can be a relatively unmapped or 'unpowerful' place in the university:

'I sit in no man's land, in a space between everyone and the senior management team. This leads to challenges in my ability to influence strategic direction although I believe that's what they want me to do but I don't have a seat at that table in a formal sense although I might be there in the... words I write.'

Here, metaphors ('no man's land'; 'a seat at the table') are invoked to signal a frustration with the limited influence on decision-making. This accords with other survey findings about involvement in strategic direction. For example, the wish to have 'a seat at that table' and the suggested hope of a presence ('be[ing] there in the... words I write') align with the survey findings. Respondents expressed a desire to influence strategy and policy in relation to teaching and learning

but said they often found that this work was not formally acknowledged. Survey respondents tended to suggest that strategic planning was not formally part of their role; however, they signalled that they contributed to strategy and policy-making on learning and teaching informally. Qualitative data indicated that respondents desired more input into this aspect of teaching and learning.

Conceptions of the academic developer role

Another cluster of metaphors illuminated academic developers' conceptions of their role and the ways in which the role might be understood by others. Within this group, some of the metaphors position the academic developer as active and knowledgeable:

'I design learning environments. You can think what a designer does in the world of art and architecture and so on. And you can make parallels because there's a creative, almost an aesthetic element about it. But also, it's a craft. And you have to know the limitations of the environment that you're designing.'

'[I am] a translator'; 'a map reader'; 'in a beehive'; 'the heart [...] pumping blood to the head – senior management – and the extremities – staff with teaching responsibilities.'

The designer image suggests a creative and constructive role but also an awareness of context and constraints. It would seem from these metaphors that the academic developer brings skills and expertise to the role: 'craft' implies skilful building or making; the map reader has expert knowledge of teaching and learning that can guide disciplinary colleagues; the translator can communicate with and between people from different disciplinary or organisational cultures, who speak different 'languages'. Other metaphors touch on relationships with colleagues in the institution. The beehive suggests purposeful activity and shared endeavour. The image of the heart pumping blood portrays the academic developer as essential to the

life of the institution – separate from the 'head' and 'extremities' but active and powerful – in contrast to sitting in 'no man's land'.

The metaphors chosen by these speakers suggest they have a clear vision of their role, a positive view of their work and a certain confidence. Other metaphors painted a slightly different picture:

'I thought there were two [metaphors] in a way – one which is what I think I'm supposed to do, and one which is what I actually do do.'

The survey data revealed a lack of alignment between understandings of the academic developer's role, particularly in relation to issues of compliance and criticality. We found, expressed in metaphor, a similar lack of alignment between the expectations of others and the speaker's own conceptions of their role:

'The administration would see roles like the one that I occupy as a bridge. They definitely want it to be that bridge.'

'I think what I was supposed to do is be like the links in a chain. The idea is that we're connecting people, and connecting people to the centre, ... like spokes going out from a bicycle wheel...[and] coming into the centre, and we're making all those links really. So things are supposedly to go to the centre, and going out to the schools from the centre.'

These metaphors describe a perception of the academic developer as either creating or being a means of communication, acting as a conduit. The two speakers challenge this idea in different ways. The first rejects the idea that the academic developer can achieve the task alone; institutional support is needed:

'But [...] a bridge implies there's infrastructure there [...] There is no bridge if you know what I mean, like I can't be the bridge, I'm just the person on the other side of the bridge. They need to build that bridge.'

This accords with the analysis of the survey qualitative data, in which the most commonly cited 'challenge' was lack of institutional support. However, the image of a slightly forlorn or frustrated academic developer on a riverbank with no connecting bridge adds an emotional element that is not obvious in the survey responses.

Rather than critiquing images of 'links' or 'spokes', the second speaker presents an alternative metaphor:

'The metaphor that I like for myself is this whole notion of like a fire, the whole notion that people want to develop learning and teaching on the whole, and you just need to be able to place some ideas very lightly, and nurture the fire. The thing is you have to sort of hold the space I think, because [...] if you put loads of your own logs on it then it just squashes everything and people then think they can't develop it themselves. But if you don't do anything then the whole thing dies [...] I like to try and create the energy in the situation so that they can develop their ideas.'

Academic development here is about nurturing and encouraging ideas and developments. This conception of the role, which acknowledges disciplinary colleagues' ideas and desire to develop their teaching, was frequently found in the survey data but here, the use of the fire image communicates a passion for the work and also a sense of its delicacy.

Experiential metaphors: inhabiting the role

A related set of metaphors describes ways in which academic developers may experience working in their institutions.

One interviewee describes the role as 'a balancing act', picking up on the requirement to please different interest groups but also suggesting precariousness, danger, the need to tread carefully. Survey respondents, similarly, mentioned being caught between internal and external agenda. Another says it is like 'walking through fog'. The interviewee here has been

describing uncertainty about a way forward in the current employment role and about career progression within academic development generally. Both ideas are also found in the survey data. 19 survey respondents listed the wide-ranging and unfocused nature of the role as a challenge. Additionally, when responding to the question 'are there career progression opportunities in your institution for someone in your role?', 45% said 'no', 36% said 'yes', and 20% answered 'not sure'.

Metaphors such as 'pushing jelly uphill', 'turning the juggernaut', portray a struggle to perform a huge or near impossible task.

Finally, engaging with teaching staff across the disciplines was identified by survey respondents as one of the pleasures of the role but, at the same time, difficulty in engaging these colleagues was one of the top challenges they mentioned. This metaphor describes how this can feel, communicating anticipation, fear of disappointment or rejection and the effort that goes into engaging colleagues:

'I have this vision of like a kid...it's her birthday or it's their birthday, they're just waiting at the party for people to come. And they sent out invitations but you're not sure if people are going to come – I feel like that's what it's like sometimes.'

Discussion

Taken together, what picture of academic development do these metaphors create? As suggested above, metaphorical representations are open to different interpretations – which is one of the appeals of metaphor as a method of exploring identity. Despite this slipperiness, we would offer the following reading of these visual, and frequently emotive, descriptions.

The metaphors, particularly those associated with map-reading and visiting, suggest the complex ways in which academic developers must understand, move between and communicate with colleagues in different domains and academic cultures.

They also hint at certain complexities and paradoxes those working in academic development may experience; they may feel they are:

- simultaneously connected and disconnected
- struggling with a near impossible task
- uncertain of the way forward or of what is expected of them
- on a mission that is different from the role expected of them
- in the centre of a complex web of interactions
- part of the interaction and activity – but also invisible
- treading a challenging path very carefully.

Finally, the extended, vital metaphors (such as the fire and the heart) suggest that respondents see their roles as creative and essential – they are keeping something alive.

The tensions inherent in many of the metaphors align with the broader Survey findings. They particularly confirm a recurring tension between respondents' academic orientation towards their role and their perception of a more service-oriented, compliant conceptualisation of the role frequently held by institutions and colleagues. In this sense, Land's (2008) identity paradox of the academic developer who is engaged in both 'domestication and critique' still obtains for many.

The metaphors also allude to some of the pleasures of the role that emerged in the survey, which included (in order of frequency):

- enjoyment of colleagues
- fostering (our own metaphor) – the supporting of peers, normally disciplinary colleagues (this aligns with Land's (2001) 'Romantic (ecological humanist)')
- having an impact/making a difference
- freedom and flexibility.

They also, perhaps more explicitly, reflect the challenges stated in the Survey, including insufficient institutional support; difficulty engaging colleagues; high workload; others' misperceptions of the respondents'

roles; the unfocused nature of the role; and lack of resourcing.

Finally, the metaphors that address geography and movement (the nomad, map reader, resident of no man's land, traveller, territories) reinforce the influence of spatial organisation upon the ways in which academic development is inscribed and experienced.

What has metaphor added to the work? Our sense of the participants' metaphors is that they have tapped into an affective understanding of people's roles and experiences. There is perhaps a stronger sense of emotion or commitment or enthusiasm or perhaps frustration evidenced through metaphor, which a survey or interview question does not quite capture or, indeed, stimulate. As we have suggested above, metaphor can also offer a conceptualisation or orientation that helps to illustrate more elusive or nuanced aspects of the work.

Finally, the analysis above is our reading of the metaphors. It has been informed by knowing the context – the conversation around each of the metaphors – and the broader data that the study yielded. However, the beauty and the challenge of working with metaphors is that they are allusive and therefore open to (mis)interpretation.

For a full report of the survey, please see the SEDA website: http://www.seda.ac.uk/resources/files/Legacy_Grant_Final_Report_ExILED.pdf.

References

- Ashford, R., Handal, G., Hole, C., Land, R., Orr, M. and Phipps, A. (2004) 'Who are "we"? Who are "you"? Who are "they"?' Issues of role and identity in academic development', in Elvidge, L. (ed.) *Exploring Academic Development in Higher Education*, Cambridge: Jill Rogers Associates.
- Becher, T. (1989) *Academic Tribes and Territories: intellectual enquiry and the culture of disciplines*, Buckingham: Open University Press/SRHE.
- Cox, A., Herrick, T., and Keating, P. (2012) 'Accommodations: staff identity and university space', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 17:6, pp. 697-709.
- ExILED Research Report (2015). (available at: http://www.seda.ac.uk/resources/files/Legacy_Grant_Final_Report_ExILED.pdf).

Handal, G. (2008) 'Identities of academic developers: critical friends in the academy?', in R. Barnett and R Napoli (eds.) *Changing Identities in Higher Education: voicing perspectives*, London: Routledge.

Hillier, B. and Hanson, J. (1984) *The Social Logic of Space*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jessop, T., Gubby, L. and Smith, A. (2012) 'Space frontiers for new pedagogies: a tale of constraints and possibilities', *Studies in Higher Education*, 37: 2, pp. 189-202.

Kinash, S. and Wood, K. (2011) 'Academic developer identity: how we know who we are', *International Journal for Academic development*, 18(2), pp. 178 - 189.

Land, R. (2008) 'Academic development: identity and paradox', in Barnett, R. and Di Napoli, R. (eds.) *Changing Identities in Higher Education: voicing perspectives*. London: Routledge.

Land, R. (2001) 'Agency, context and change in academic development', *IJAD*, 6, pp. 14-20.

Land, R. (2004) *Educational Development: discourse, identity and practice*, Maidenhead, Open University Press, McGraw-Hill.

Dr Colleen McKenna is a founding partner of HEDERA, and **Dr Jane Hughes** leads the Learning Technologies Programme in the UCL Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT).

Hic sunt dracones – Here be dragons: The challenge of supporting educational development in a private university

Simon Paul Atkinson, BPP University

Private providers in higher education appear, by some, to be regarded as devouring beasts, stealing virtue from the fields of academia and feeding on the knowledge of others. I don't see the same dragons as those people. When I am, very occasionally, invited for dinner at nice people's houses, gentility frequently draws out the tried and tested icebreaker, 'So, what do you do for a living?' As colleagues will know, the phrase 'I'm an educational developer' is frequently met with a vacant stare; however, until recently, based on 16 years in higher education both here in the UK and in New Zealand, I found that it was usually enough to say where I worked. In response to the same question, the answer 'I work at the LSE', normally elicited a predictable follow-on question, namely 'Oh, what do you teach?' To this, I had frequently deployed my conversation killer, 'ah, I teach teachers to teach'. Where my roles in the past included a significant amount of educational technology (and if the questioner looked likely to appreciate my lame attempt at humour), then I might reply, 'I teach teachers to teach through technology'.

I rarely now get passed my answer to the first question with 'I work at BPP University'. The follow-up questions, if there are any and a passing tray of canapés doesn't provide a ready excuse for an early exit, are likely to be either 'oh what's that?' or 'what does BPP stand for?' Depending on the tone in which it is asked, my response is either 'it stands for quality professional education' (said whilst doing my best 'Mad Men' impression) or 'it is the initials of the founders, Brierley, Price and Prior who created an accountancy training company in 1976, and it is now a private university...'

The conversation is likely to carry on as follows:

'Ah a private provider. So I imagine you're one of those £18,000 a year lot.'

'No, we provide degrees that are mostly aligned to particular professional bodies but the costs are lower than many in the sector: £6000 a year for LLB, £6000 for a BSc in Professional Accounting, and...'

'But I imagine you rake it in with all of the international students; bet you've got lots of those?'

'Well, they are a growing proportion of the student population. Sixty per cent of our 3000 undergraduates are international and 22 per cent of our 5800 postgraduates. But their fees aren't significantly higher. For the undergraduates, it is £7850 a year...but we also have two-year options and four- or six-year part-time options...'

'Oh, look there's Steve! Sorry, must go and say hello...'

Fuelled by gluten-free *vol-au-vents*, I might also have added that whilst the original BPP Professional Education Group was formed in 1976, it originally specialised in accountancy training until it was listed on the London Stock Exchange in 1986. In 1993, the BPP Law School was formed and in 2007 was granted degree-awarding powers by the UK's Privy Council, becoming known as BPP College. In 2009, BPP University College became part of Apollo Global, an international educational investment company, and in 2013 the College became the first UK private sector organisation in over three decades to be recognised as a University by the UK Government.

BPP University has four schools: Business, Law, Health, and Foundation and English Language studies. Whilst it is owned as a commercial entity by Apollo Global (US), it is very much part of the UK sector and is subject to the same

quality processes, including its academic governance, as the public sector institutions overseen by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). It is a subscriber to the Higher Education Academy and recently a founder member of the Independent Universities Group (January 2015). It is a private provider and there is a profit motive in the Boardroom but you wouldn't know it from the trenches and importantly not from a student perspective.

Educational development at BPP University

I joined BPP in July 2011 as Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching with a particular brief for teaching enhancement. My first task was to understand the internal structures and complex history of BPP. Alongside the University, the business also includes Professional Education, a global provider of accredited professional qualifications, and BPP Learning Media, a publishing business providing learning materials across a wide range of business areas to global markets. The University had only recently created a School of Health (building on a rich history and reputation of McTimoney Chiropractic College) and a School of Foundation and English Language Studies to provide pathway learning into its Business, Law and Health Schools.

One of the first things I did at BPP was to observe teaching across the University (College as it then was). What I saw was what was recognisable as effective classroom management, highly knowledgeable faculty and dedicated tutorial leadership. I witnessed some of the best classroom teaching I've ever seen across the six institutions that I've worked in but I also saw examples of the enduring reliance on teacher-centric learning that pervades higher education.

I have always been a fan of Stephen Brookfield's work. His Four Critical Lenses – Self, Students, Peers, and Scholarship – has always struck me as a very approachable framework with which to develop a rounded academic practitioner (Brookfield, 1995). We can argue about the definition of scholarship – more on that later – but these four lenses served well the design for our faculty learning development strategy and our learning and teaching strategy, both created within the first 12 months of my arrival at BPP.

I set about making the case for institutional membership of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and began designing our own Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Education (PGCPE) that would meet BPP's unique contexts but would also closely align to the UKPSF, not least to begin to introduce faculty to the idea that they belonged to this community. In fact, the UKPSF was slightly modified in between our internal validation meeting for our PGCPE and our external validation board in the late autumn of 2011, and we were able to make helpful adjustments to ensure we remained closely aligned. Our PGCPE is tightly mapped to the UKPSF, not only because I found it a useful framework, but also naturally in order to secure HEA accreditation. HEA consultation advice during the autumn of 2011 also hinted at institutional recognition being introduced and so we began work immediately to develop our internal recognition pathway, dovetailing with the PGCPE and the UKPSF, called Headway. Using

the UKPSF, Brookfield's Four Critical Lenses and my own Student-Owned Learning Engagement (SOLE) Model and Toolkit (Atkinson, 2011), I set about building a structure for teaching enhancement.

Self – supporting reflective practitioner

The Headway scheme and PGCPE are rich in reflective practices but are designed to mirror all of Brookfield's lenses. There are four 15-credit modules, each taking a particular lens as its focus.

The foundational module, 'Foundations in Learning and Teaching', revolves around the self, encouraging faculty to develop reflective practices and to acknowledge their own dependencies. We have challenged faculty with the introduction of new learning technologies, including Voicethread, modelling online seminars and providing extensive marking rubrics by way of example. This first module is aligned to D1 in the UKPSF and leads to HEA Associate Fellowship.

The second module, 'Assessment, Feedback and Evaluation' explores the peer perspective, both with an emphasis on the value of peer observation and in recognising the peer community, validation processes, QAA guidance and professional bodies' insights.

Module three, 'Student Learning', is concerned with self-directed learning and learner autonomy, and the role that technology plays in learning and engagement and, as a consequence, emphasis is placed on in-class evaluation.

The final module, 'Contemporary Contexts in Professional Education', is an opportunity to explore Boyer's wide definition of scholarship in practice. Participants are encouraged to reflect on the very many ways in which they undertake scholarship in their day-to-day practice and to carry out a short action research project.

Each module has eight 'teaching weeks', usually a couple of 'reading weeks' in the middle and a period for assessment preparation at the end, usually four weeks. There are no face-to-face meetings, although the first three modules all use online webinars to sustain motivation and support the learning community. In the final module, online webinars become personal tutorials. Whilst each module takes one lens as its focus, each is assessed via a portfolio that contains core elements. It was designed so that in each module a participant would be observed or be an observer accumulating four peer observations during their PGCPE journey. In each module, they are expected to carry out an in-class evaluation; written assignments must meet academic standards of scholarship and there are also reflective pieces. Module one begins with a teaching philosophy and this is reviewed and revised in module four. An academic CV is outlined in module one and again revised in module four.

Modules one, two and three are carefully mapped to the UKPSF's D2, meaning that participants are awarded Fellowship of the HEA upon successful completion.

Developed immediately following validation of our PGCPE, our internal recognition process, Headway, requires applicants taking the non-credit-bearing route to provide evidence equivalent to that produced by a PGCPE student. We recommend that the same elements be provided because we believe they reflect accurately the spirit of Brookfield's critical lenses. Both within the Headway route and the PGCPE there are always opportunities for evidence to be substituted, making the system flexible to an individual's contexts. Headway panels meet currently between four to six times a year and review portfolios in progress and those completed, providing guidance and feedback for applications. We have a dedicated staff member who serves as Headway coordinator and PGCPE Manager. We also invite external observers to follow our process and to write a critical report on what they find.

The work that created Headway and the PGCPE was also designed to support ongoing implementation and support for practitioners to engage with their critical lenses.

Our PGCPE has grown since its inception in 2012 and has enrolled 124 participants in five intakes to date. Twenty-six have graduated and 49 students are currently registered and engaged. Originally a voluntary programme, the intake is now a mix of volunteers and those whose appointments and probations are contingent on completion of at least module one and achievement of Associate Fellowship. Alongside the PGCPE, there has also been a steady growth in the use of the Headway pathway to fellowship. We now have 67 Associates and 55 Fellows and from none in 2013 we now have six Senior and two Principal Fellows. This represents 130 faculty with a Fellowship status at the HEA, which amounts to roughly 30 per cent of our 430 full-time or part-time faculty or learning support staff.

Student lens

The student lens works differently across our schools, much as it will in most institutions with natural variation depending on context. Our system of staff-student liaison committees (SSLC) works well in capturing students' operational concerns, as will other operational surveys leading up to our first participation in the NSS this year. Such surveys and engagements provide lots of valuable information, although not always directly concerned with learning and teaching. We are currently exploring how to redesign our traditional end of module evaluation to focus on the quality of learning and teaching and to use the benefits of in-class evaluations wherever possible. When I introduced in-class evaluations using the Small Group Instructional Diagnostic (SGID) into the PGCPE, I thought to promote it into wider practice. There have been some satisfying examples of former PGCPE participants carrying out in-class evaluations early on in the term and being surprised by the very positive reaction given by students to this model of enhancement.

Peer lens

Our schools, like most faculties and departments in the rest of the sector, run regular Programme and Module meetings, which serve to monitor quality but also opportunities for enhancement. This is particularly important to BPP

University where we teach the same programme in as many as six centres across the country. Team facilitation of learning around a core curriculum and shared resources requires a different type of support from the 'lone specialist'. Arguably, it is easier for an educational developer to have a greater impact on a wider range of students by working with the teaching team but, in practice, there is often so much experience within any team it can be harder to find a justification for becoming involved.

Again, borrowed from the PGCPE, our templates and guidance for peer observations have served well in general practice. Issued as guidance by the Faculty Learning Development Committee (FLDC), which I chair, and approved by our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Enhancement Committee (LTAEC), this has been adopted across all schools (with varying degrees of adaptation) for developmental purposes. I have recently authored a parallel set of guidance and templates for online peer observation of learning and there is significant interest across different programmes as to their deployment. I have never been comfortable in mandating particular practices in learning and teaching, but rather believe that any professional conversation will result in a positive outcome, namely the enhancement of learning and teaching opportunities.

Scholarship lens

The fourth lens, that of scholarship, has not been attributable entirely to the PGCPE and Headway and its infrastructure. When I joined BPP in the new learning and teaching team, I was joined by a Director of Scholarship who made great strides in a very short period in bringing together existing scholarship practices and creating a recognisable face for the institution. There was a remarkable amount of research and applied scholarship taking place across the schools, often unrecognised largely because it wasn't used as any form of matrices (no RAE), but of huge value to the professions with which it was concerned. Adopting Boyer's (1997) definitions of scholarship –

- of discovery that includes original research that advances knowledge
- of integration that involves synthesis of information across disciplines, across topics within a discipline, or across time
- of application (or engagement) of disciplinary expertise with results that can be shared with and/or evaluated by peers
- of teaching and learning that the systematic study of teaching and learning processes, requiring public sharing and the opportunity for application and evaluation by others

– has led to a conceptual leap in faculty's perception of their own scholarship. I think this, combined with the tools and support for reflective practice around in class evaluation, peer observation, and action research, makes faculty at BPP more comfortable with the label of university faculty. In our annual Scholarship Census for 2013-2014, it was revealed that some 95 per cent of faculty contributed to BPP University's scholarship agenda with: new curriculum and updating existing programme content (95 per cent);

academic or practitioner research (55 per cent); conferences attended (46 per cent); external work engagements (24 per cent); external publications (9 per cent); and BPP Publications (10 per cent).

Polishing lenses and spying new horizons

There are challenges working in any institutional context. There are advantages and there are disadvantages. From my particular role, and the perspective it affords me, I would say that it is to my advantage that I am not constrained by competing School agenda but can focus entirely on anything I believe serves the enhancement agenda; the disadvantage is a relatively weak central function incapable beyond encouraging schools to change practice (like most other HEIs). An advantage is that there are a disproportionate number of faculty who see teaching as the core of their role and are serious about being good at what they do; the disadvantage being a lack of allocated time to such enhancement activities (like most other HEIs!). Another advantage is a nimble and flexible management decision-making apparatus that can take a good idea and resource it effectively; a disadvantage is that I don't personally hold a development fund!

The future for teaching enhancement at BPP University is an exciting one. We are increasingly coming to terms not only with how to service students online but also how to make significant advancements in their learning opportunities using technology. This represents a huge challenge for

me personally as I support all faculty to lift their game in terms of digital literacy. I am currently preparing support documentation for our processes for HEA and Headway 'fellowships in good standing', using Brookfield's lenses once again and encouraging faculty to identify one lens to explore each year in their practice. In our last QAA institutional review in December 2012, we were commended for the opportunities for staff development and I'm confident we will be equal to that recommendation again next time. There are dragons here, but they will be very familiar to colleagues in the public sector.

References

- Atkinson, S. P. (2011) 'Embodied and embedded theory in practice: the Student-Owned Learning-Engagement (SOLE) model', *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 12(2), pp. 1-18.
- Boyer, E. L. (1997) *Scholarship Reconsidered: priorities of the professoriate*, Princeton, NJ: Jossey-Bass.
- Brookfield, S. (1995) *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Simon Paul Atkinson is the Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching (Teaching Enhancement) at BPP University and a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Formerly, he was Director of Learning and Teaching at Massey University, New Zealand's College of Education, and Head of the Centre for Learning Development at the University of Hull. He is the author of the SOLE Model and Toolkit of learning design. Simon's blog is at <http://www.sijen.com>. He is contactable at SimonAtkinson@bpp.com.

Meeting expectations: The challenge of staff development with international collaborative partners

Karen Smith, University of Hertfordshire

In 2013, I was awarded a SEDA Legacy Research Grant to look at the interplay between educational development practice and higher education policy. I chose to focus my study on the then newly published 'Learning and Teaching' Chapter, which is part of the Quality Assurance Agency's 'Quality Code'.

As readers of *Educational Developments* are more than aware, the educational development role is broad and can encompass a whole myriad of responsibilities, including these identified by Shelda Debowski (2011, p. 18):

- academic skills and capability enhancement in the areas of teaching and learning
- research and leadership
- curriculum reform and development
- student support services
- student management
- learning technologies
- educational evaluation and management
- educational research and scholarship
- policy and organisation practice; and university change and system enhancement.

One thread that feeds through much of this work, however, is the emphasis on 'learning and teaching', for, as Sue Clegg has noted: 'academic development is a primary site through which the "subject" of "teaching and learning in higher education" has come into being' (Clegg, 2009, p. 403). In an investigation into how policy messages are played out in educational development practice, a focus on the 'Learning and Teaching' Chapter (referred to as the Chapter from now on) seemed apt.

The research used a combination of textual analysis of the Chapter and

other supporting documents from the QAA, along with interviews with policy developers, and educational developers. The findings from the study focused specifically on the development of the Chapter, the content and structure of the Chapter and educational developers' reactions to it; and the implementation of the challenges that it poses. You can read the final report on the SEDA website.

In brief, though, the educational developers that I interviewed were generally happy with the content of the Chapter and their ability to support their institutions in meeting the sector expectations it contained. They said things like:

'Nothing in here is a surprise, nothing in here is something I have not thought about or don't think is relevant to the student experience.'

'On my reading of it, there wasn't anything that jumped out at me that was, that didn't work for me, or that I saw as a significant weakness.'

'It's a document about learning and teaching, isn't it? And it does address what many people, probably including myself, would see as the most important aspects of learning and teaching.'

'Most institutions would be able to meet the expectations of the chapter, without having to do anything unnecessary.'

'I read this and, you know, a lot of it we are doing, and a lot of it we are probably doing really well.'

There was, however, one particular area which educational developers identified as a challenge both to educational developers and to their institutions more broadly: the provision of staff development to collaborative partners, particularly those situated overseas.

Chapter expectations for staff development

The Chapter makes it clear that everyone involved in teaching and

supporting student learning should be appropriately qualified, supported and developed, and that it is the higher education provider's responsibility to assure themselves that this is the case. The Chapter is equally clear that its definition of staff includes those who are not directly employed by the higher education provider; it states:

'The term "staff" refers to anyone involved in teaching or supporting student learning. It includes, but is not limited to, academic staff, graduate teaching assistants, specialist learning support staff, library staff and technicians employed by the higher education provider. It also includes staff not employed by the higher education provider but who interact with students studying for their awards; for example through a collaborative arrangement or through supporting placement learning.' (QAA, 2012, p. 5).

The case is clearly made that higher education providers support, develop and accredit collaborative partner staff, or at the very least assure themselves that they are already supported, developed and accredited.

Evidence of collaborative partner development

My experience, as researcher, educational developer and transnational teacher, is that support and development opportunities for collaborative partner staff are patchy. If you look at the research literature, there is actually very little evidence of activity in this area. My own research has shown that the development for UK staff involved in collaborative provision was by no means universal, despite calls, more than a decade ago by Kate Gribble and Christopher Ziguas (2003), for more formalised training programmes. There is also very little research into support and development for collaborative partner staff, beyond calls from academics such as Lee Dunn and Michelle Wallace (2008) and Betty Leask (2004) to establish intercultural communities of practice to support the design and delivery of collaborative programmes.

It was clear to me that the Chapter's expectations of universal professional development for all staff might well raise some challenges for higher education providers generally and educational developers specifically; my research confirmed that.

The challenge of providing educational development to collaborative partners

Much educational development work is focused on new lecturers, through the design and delivery of postgraduate certificates in higher education (or the equivalent). Educational developers also play a strategic role in the continuing professional development (CPD) of academic and support staff through their involvement in institutional CPD frameworks (increasingly aligned to the Higher Education Academy's Professional Standards Framework, and accredited by them). Educational developers are, on the whole, confident in their ability to support these kinds of 'traditional' staff.

The educational developers interviewed in my study reflected on the necessity to support all staff, recognising that assuring professional development opportunities for specific groups of 'non-traditional' staff (for example: part-time staff, technical support, PhD students, and international staff) might well prove problematic for logistical and resource reasons.

But by far the most frequently mentioned group of staff were those who worked for collaborative partners. Whether these are located overseas or within the UK, there were issues about ensuring that they were adequately trained and developed:

'We have a lot of partners, collaborative partners, at home and abroad, and it's dizzying because we have so many.'

'QA [quality assurance] with your own staff is always quite challenging. QA of your own awards with someone else's staff is even more challenging.'

'I think there's a real challenge for any institutional partnership working, and I don't think anywhere has really got it quite right, or is having a discussion about getting it quite right.'

'The one thing that I think from my own institution is the greatest challenge from within this document is that it covers all our academic programmes, and as an institution that has a growing overseas delivery, that is a huge challenge, and it's certainly an area that I feel we are not comfortable in meeting the expectations.'

Clearly, the requirement to ensure that all staff receive adequate support and development in learning and teaching places a substantial burden on educational development units. The interviewees reported that their educational development units were not set up to work with non-traditional staff, including collaborative partners, due to a lack of sufficient (usually human) resource. Overall, these interviewees did not feel that their institutions had anything in place that was completely meeting the needs of their collaborative partners. There is clearly a policy-priority space that educational developers can fill.

Opportunities to enhance educational development practice through work with collaborative partners

Perhaps in anticipation of the Chapter's expectation of staff development for all staff, or through educational developers' own recognition of the important role that collaborative partners play in educating their institutions' students, there is a small, but growing, body of work that reports on the practice of educational developers with collaborative partners.

UK-based collaborative partners generally have access to some (if not all) of the home institution's staff development events, its annual learning and teaching conference, and in many cases their postgraduate certificate in higher education. At the University of Hertfordshire, for example, all university staff and colleagues from partner colleges have the chance to present their work in learning, teaching and assessment at the annual conference.

For international collaborative partners, different models of development need to be put in place due to the distances involved (see Figure 1).

Some universities have sought ways to include their international collaborative

partners within credit-bearing postgraduate certificates, offered online. At the University of Bradford, their face-to-face postgraduate certificate in higher education practice was redesigned for online delivery for partner institutions, initially to separate cohorts in Pakistan and Singapore (Stewart, 2012). The University of Greenwich adopted a different approach and incorporated international partner college staff into an existing blended programme, comprising an enhanced virtual learning environment with 'flying faculty' international visits (see 'Case study', overleaf).

Alternatively, educational development courses can be non-credit bearing and bespoke. These can be delivered in the UK during partner visits. While working at Heriot-Watt University, for example, we welcomed colleagues from Tomsk University, who worked in partnership with Heriot-Watt's Institute of Petroleum Engineering, to the Educational Development Unit on the Edinburgh campus. They participated in a non-accredited short course focusing on learning and teaching in higher education. Alternatively, similar short courses can be run in the host country. Roni Bamber, from Queen Margaret's University Edinburgh, has collaborated with Tumkur University in India to facilitate workshops on 'teaching for

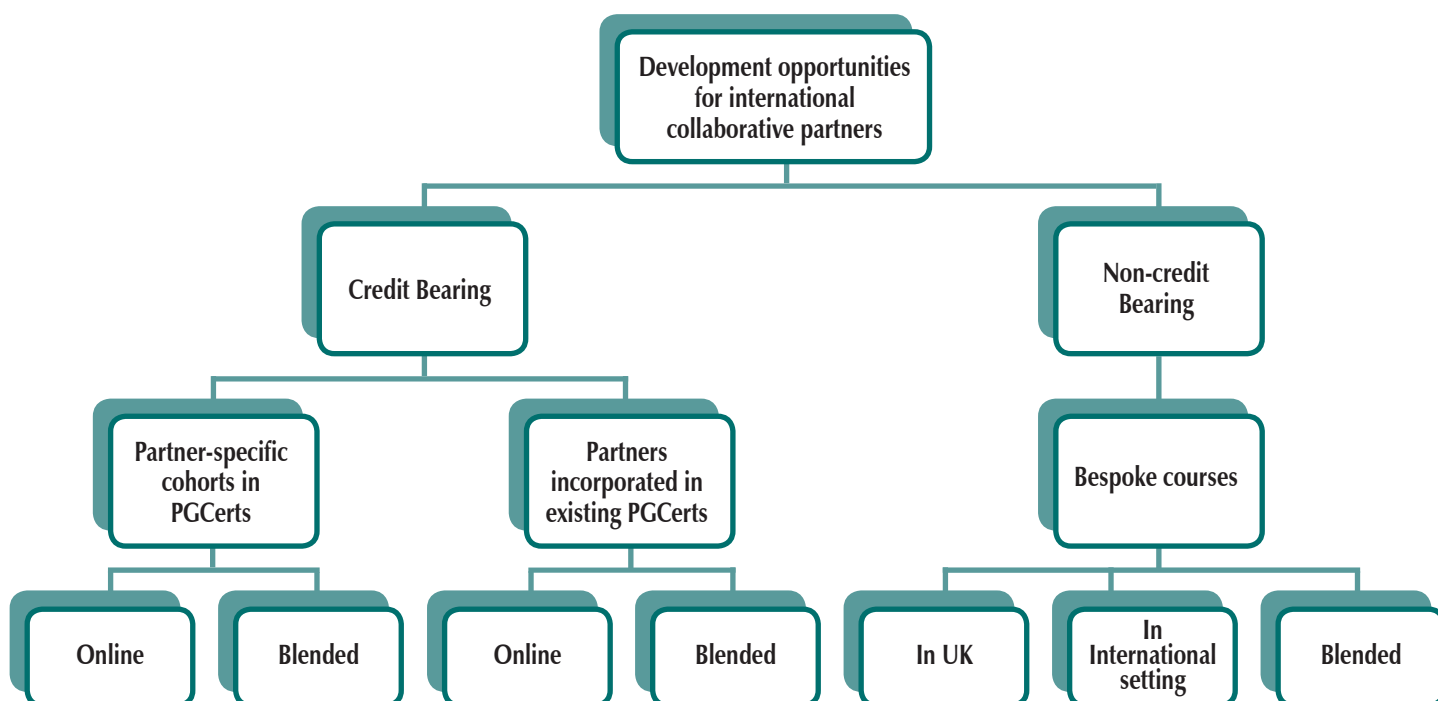


Figure 1 Model of development opportunities for international collaborative partners

learning: implementing effective pedagogic design in higher education'. She has delivered similar educational

development opportunities in other international settings, including: Bahrain, Greece, Morocco, Nepal

and Saudi Arabia. Models that blend bespoke overseas training with online support also exist: a collaboration

Case study

Reflection on delivering the University of Greenwich's Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education to collaborative partners in Trinidad

Sally Alsford, University of Greenwich

The University of Greenwich has offered an online version of its Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education since 2012, in order to meet the needs of staff on a range of campuses, external participants, and UK-based partner institution colleagues. Discussions with international partners led to a small-scale pilot in the academic year 2013-2014, when two participants from Victoria Higher Education Campus in Sri Lanka joined the cohort. Participants were included with and alongside the UK cohort in all programme activities, including attendance online at Study Days, and working online with Study Groups. Teaching Practice Assessments were conducted via video-link and Skype. Some technological challenges notwithstanding, the pilot proved successful and feedback from the participants was positive. This gave the programme team confidence that they could scale-up their international delivery.

In 2014-2015, a cohort of 20 partner institution staff from the School of Business and Computer Science in Trinidad joined 58 UK-based participants. Arising out of 'routine' contact with this international partner and a desire to support their development, this expansion was also seen strategically as having potential to address key institutional priorities in enhancing the quality of our collaborative provision and meeting QAA expectations; this is crucial for the University of Greenwich which has a very large number of international partners.

For UK and Trinidad-based participants alike, the programme operated in online-blended mode – with face-to-face sessions and an enhanced online learning experience. For those in Trinidad, this included three flying faculty visits where Greenwich staff spent time on campus in Trinidad; an online

Study Day; transnational sharing of experience and ideas with UK participants through the discussion forums and webinars; and online personal tutor group meetings.

Ongoing enhancement of the VLE and design of learning and teaching to foster active participation was a priority in any case for the programme, and crucial to making this transnational experience work. Increased support for students' use of technology was needed (e.g. using Adobe Connect, DropBox, YouTube and Skype) as well as: provision of guidance for online group work; a clear personal tutoring system; and an effective system for conducting teaching observations.

Many of the challenges we faced were not specific to transnational delivery, but are challenges in running an online blended programme successfully, for example: ensuring that online activities are accessible, engaging and active; establishing and maintaining online relationships; providing sufficient information in an accessible and timely way, without overloading. Some are challenges inherent in academic staff development, for example: allocating, training and supporting mentors and helping staff to manage their study alongside their own workload.

However, challenges also emerged which are specific to this kind of transnational programme: recognising the UK-centric view of some of the activities and resources; working across time zones; conducting teaching practice assessments at a distance. These all contribute further to the complexity of the programme and the workload of the programme team.

We have identified a number of elements which are crucial to the success of this programme:

- flying faculty visits
- the appointment of a dedicated online tutor to help with

queries, motivate, support use of technology and monitor engagement

- a good working relationship with international link tutors
- online orientation and induction activities
- provision of early, pre-programme information and guidance
- early recruitment and enrolment onto the programme
- front-loading teaching team presence online
- real-time, virtual sessions in Adobe Connect
- tutorials via Skype or Adobe Connect
- student representation and feedback
- a committed programme team and sufficient staff resource.

Participant feedback has been very positive and the feedback from international participants has not differed significantly from that given by UK participants. The whole cohort has appreciated the cross-cultural and international exchange of experience and learning, and many of the Trinidad cohort remain involved in the programme, post-graduation, as mentors. As a programme team we have increased our insight into issues around learning and teaching, quality enhancement and staff development through the growing international scope of the programme. In the QAA Review of UK Transnational Education in the Caribbean (2014) the programme was commended as 'a positive feature' in ensuring and enhancing quality of collaborative provision.

This academic year (2015-16) we welcome a further cohort from Trinidad and a group from Cairo, who join the UK group. We seek to build on our experience so far, and continue to refine and develop our online and face-to-face provision to meet all their needs.

between the University of Glasgow's School of Education, the Learning and Teaching Centre and the Hawler Medical University in Iraq saw the design of an educational development programme to support student-centred learning. It comprised seven days of face-to-face teaching in Iraq (delivered in two blocks, five months apart). During the interim period, students were supported at a distance through a virtual learning environment (Jordan *et al.*, 2014).

Whatever approach is adopted, however, the development opportunities need to be planned early into collaborative ventures and sufficient resources need to be set aside.

Moving forwards

The expectation of appropriate qualification, support and development for all staff, as set out in the Chapter, might well lead higher education providers to look more carefully at how they work with collaborative partners in terms of the enhancement of their learning and teaching practice. This will have implications for the work of educational developers, who contribute greatly to work in this area within their institutions. If the volume of staff development work increases with collaborative partners (UK or international), educational developers should:

- consider how they work with their institutional quality, partnership

and international offices, who will already be working with collaborative partners and might well be offering some staff development opportunities

- see that there is sufficient resource in order to cover the additional workload – all too often, educational developers are given extra work responsibilities without extra resource
- ensure that opportunities for development are written into memoranda of agreement between partners (thus ensuring they are resourced, planned, and that there is clarity about the kind of development that is being offered and partner responsibilities)
- look at the literature relating to the experiences of flying faculty on transnational programmes, as this will be applicable for those who are involved in educational development activity overseas
- see that educational development activities are not too UK or institution specific – the activities should recognise the different cultures within which the partners work
- seek out ways to share experiences of working with partners more widely: through conferences, case studies, published evaluations and research.

References

- Clegg, S. (2009) 'Forms of knowing and academic development practice', *Studies in Higher Education*, 34, pp. 403-416.
- Debowski, S. (2011) 'Locating academic development: the first steps in evaluation', in L. Stefani (ed.) *Evaluating the Effectiveness*

of Academic Development: principles and practice (pp. 17-30), Abingdon: Routledge.

Dunn, L. and Wallace, M. (2008) 'Intercultural communities of practice', in L. Dunn and M. Wallace (eds.) *Teaching in Transnational Education: enhancing learning for offshore international students*, pp. 249-260, Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Gribble, K. and Ziguras, C. (2003) 'Learning to teach offshore: pre-departure training for lecturers in transnational programs', *Higher Education Research and Development*, 22(2), pp. 205-216.

Jordan, L., Bovill, C., Othman, S. M., Saleh, A. M., Shabila, N. P. and Watters, N. (2014) 'Is student-centred learning a Western concept? Lessons from an academic development programme to support student-centred learning in Iraq', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 19 (1), pp. 13-25.

Leask, B. (2004) 'Transnational education and intercultural learning: reconstructing the offshore teaching team to enhance internationalization', Paper presented at the Australian Universities Quality Forum, 'Quality in a Time of Change', Adelaide: Australia.

QAA (2012) 'The UK quality code for higher education: chapter B3: learning and teaching' (<http://tinyurl.com/qa74kxm>).

Smith, K. (2014) 'Higher education policy and the shaping of educational development practice', final report (<http://tinyurl.com/nexkzex>).

Stewart, W. (2012) 'Transforming a face-to-face module for an online environment: a transferable pedagogic model', *Compass*, 3 (<http://tinyurl.com/p32q5p3>).

Dr Karen Smith is the Principal Lecturer in Collaborative Research and Development in the School of Education at the University of Hertfordshire (k.smith27@herts.ac.uk; http://go.herts.ac.uk/karen_smith).

The ACU African administrators project

Ian Willis, University of Liverpool, and **Brian Jennings**, Ghana Christian University College, Accra

In October 2014 Stephen Bostock posted on the SEDA listserv:

'Developing African university administrators

This is a call for interest in helping to develop and deliver a professional development course for university administrators in Africa. This is a partnership between the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) and SEDA, in collaboration with a group of senior university staff from Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana.'

One year later a course has been developed and delivered, and our participants have delivered some impressive outcomes, changes to practice, in a short space of time. It will be accredited by SEDA in the New Year.

The initial impetus came from the ACU and SEDA's realisation that the role of middle-level university administrators is often undervalued and they usually have little access to training opportunities, especially accredited training. They are frequently in a neglected position between

senior management and junior staff; yet they can play an important role in supporting learning and teaching and the wider student experience.

The plan was for a one-week residential course, organised by the ACU, with work undertaken before and afterwards leading to an assessed portfolio that was aligned with the requirements of the SEDA-PDF certificate in Developing Professional Practice (Table 1).

SEDA Award: Developing Professional Practice award recipients will be able to:	Specialist outcomes: award recipients will be able to:
Identify their own professional development goals, directions or priorities	Explain how their role supports the organisation's mission and appropriate strategies, including quality considerations
Plan for their initial and/or continuing professional development	Use their specialist knowledge and skills within the higher education context
Undertake appropriate development activities	Use interpersonal and personal organisation and management skills
Review their development and their practice, and the relations between them	Reflect on and plan to meet their own personal and continuing professional development needs and identify appropriate follow-up activity

Table 1 SEDA-PDF Certificate in Developing Professional Practice requirements

This initial planning put in place critical elements for success: the backing of the ACU and its networks in Africa, the

support of regional leaders in Africa and the prospect of SEDA accreditation and certification. All that was needed now was the programme.

The aim was to develop and deliver a programme for middle-level administrators in African universities so that they can be better able to support learning and teaching within their universities. Ian Willis of the University of Liverpool and Brian Jennings of the Ghana Christian University College responded to the call and, using Skype and Dropbox, set about the design process.

All too often legitimate concerns such as the need for training are addressed by 'running workshops', where good learning may well occur, but where there is little evidence of any subsequent impact. We decided to design this programme so participants would develop a change project to be implemented in their universities. We ran a week-long programme in London for 13 administrators drawn from six African countries. The countries represented were Nigeria, Ghana, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Zambia.



The participants and their tutors

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Introductions Programme Outline Learning Outcomes	Recap & key learning And What do I need to learn?	Recap & key learning And What do I need to learn?	Recap & key learning And What do I need to learn?	Recap & key learning And What do I need to learn?
Programme expectations	Approaches to teaching	Technology enhanced learning	Key ideas in curriculum design Assessment & feedback	Preparation for presentations
Quality in context: East African Quality guidelines	Self-reflection Being an effective change agent	My learning journey Developing personal professional skills	Diversity/inclusion Giving a good presentation	Presentation of enhancement projects
Lunch				
Approaches to learning Planning an enhancement project	Role of context Project development	Project development	Project development	Presentations
Questions & reflection: key learning today	Questions & reflection:	Critical reflection	Questions & critical reflection:	Critical reflection Evaluation – part 1

Table 2 The timetable and the sessions

During the week we facilitated input and discussion on key issues of learning and teaching such as Quality Assurance, Assessment and Feedback, and Technology Enhanced Learning. In addition, there were sessions on professional skills such as communication and giving presentations (see Table 2).

There were plenty of lively discussions and finding of commonalities and differences across the continent. One interesting discussion centred on the notion of 'best practice' and how this cultivated the idea that 'best practice' somehow existed and was to be found elsewhere, often in the West. In turn, this can lead to a search for some ideal and so often overlooks good local practice and development that is well suited to local contexts.



Participants hard at work

We covered project planning from a strengths-based (Solution-Focused) perspective. This turned out to be the right approach as administrators could often be categorised as having lower status roles compared to their academic colleagues, despite their skills, qualifications and contributions. Peer feedback helped to ensure that projects met the key criteria of being concisely described, manageable in a three-month time frame and able to deliver evidence of impact. Projects could be team based or faculty wide. Examples included: moving from a paper-based to electronic reporting system, and implementation of a systematic staff planning process. In order to complete the programme participants needed to implement their projects in the three months following the delivery stage and to critically reflect on their learning.

To support their work and offset the risks of isolation on return each participant recruited a mentor or critical friend in their own university and they had to submit monthly progress reports. They were also encouraged to sign up to the programme's LinkedIn group in order to discuss issues and share progress.

The delivery stage of the programme in London was certainly successful in terms of the content we had chosen, the enthusiasm of the participants and the organisation from the ACU. However, the real test of success is found in the

projects delivered when the participants returned to their universities; before describing the projects, a little more on the participants themselves.

The ACU had a lot of work to do; to find suitable times that allowed the participants to arrange visas and flights. These were logistical and resource challenges that derived from the decision to hold the programme in London. On the other hand, holding a programme in London for a group of staff who normally have little access to development opportunities had considerable appeal. In addition, they were selected by their universities, so they were highly likely to be capable and motivated. Of our 13 participants, two were senior staff from regional networks and as such were important for the future of the programme, but they were not involved in implementing their own projects or seeking certification.

We knew that we had set a tight timeframe for participants to create and implement projects and to gather evidence of impact. However, this also generated momentum following the week in London, and the monthly reporting requirement created one way of 'staying in touch'.

Using one project as an example of a successful outcome:

Opoku Oku-Afari is an Assistant Registrar at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. Opoku's project was to provide 'a guide for students to secure safe accommodation outside the university campus'.

In a situation where lack of resources means that the University was unable to provide secure accommodation for all its students, many students were forced into unregulated and unsafe accommodation: 'Some of the facilities provided by the private hostel operators are nothing to write home about and areas where some of the hostels are located pose security risks for students'. Opoku's initiative has led to 'the setting up of a wider committee by the Vice-Chancellor to deal with challenges related to student accommodation outside the University campus', with this committee reporting to senior management at the end of every semester. In future, a list of hostel accommodation approved by the University will be sent to prospective students each year in order for them to make a selection. The project and the subsequent efforts of the University management have resulted in the Students' Representative Council writing to the Vice-Chancellor 'to express their profound gratitude'.



Unsafe and safe areas

We think that in just three months this represents a really vital improvement to the support offered to students. There were numbers of challenges, not least of which was securing the support and collaboration of others. As was the case

for most of our participants, Opoku was not in a position of power, nor, as a middle-level administrator, was he accustomed to taking the initiative to influence change. This project illustrates something of the capacities of middle-level administrators to make a difference in African Universities. It is reasonable to say that they are helped in this by having received some basic knowledge about student needs, learning and teaching in Universities and change processes and when they are encouraged to act.

Other projects included:

‘To create an electronic system of reporting College activities to the Office of the Dean’. This project has resulted in replacing manual reports to the Dean (and then to Senate) with a Google Drive template that will become standard for the Faculty. The time saving is significant as is the development of skills in using electronic means of working.

‘To develop an automated student evaluation system’. Here the participant researched practice in evaluation systems, piloted a trial version, assuring students of confidentiality and ironing out other difficulties. She has subsequently been asked to prepare a report for Senior Management detailing the findings ‘so that online evaluation could be implemented across the whole University’.

Not all projects were cross Faculty or University; some were seemingly simple such as using Doodle polls for scheduling

meetings, but this led to greater use of electronic systems for routine working. From the project reports, it is easy to document the changes made by participants in their Universities and to identify their learning; both very much part of the SEDA PDF.

Not surprisingly, not everything went to plan. Our efforts to use a LinkedIn group to assist with communication didn’t work that well, perhaps due to a general lack of familiarity with online forums such as LinkedIn. Two of the participants did not submit any work at all. On the other hand nine projects were clearly successful.

Considerable effort and resource went into organising, developing and delivering the programme. The ongoing success of this ACU-SEDA endeavour will only be realised with future iterations that are able to build on the learning materials and processes that have been developed. Certainly it will be important to offer the programme in Africa and to develop African facilitators to deliver the programme. However, as a pilot we are delighted with the achievements of our participants – and it was fun!

Ian Willis is the Head of the Educational Development Division at the University of Liverpool (ian.willis@liverpool.c.uk). **Brian Jennings** is Senior Lecturer in Ethics and Institutional Quality Coordinator at Ghana Christian University College, Accra, Ghana (briankjennings@gmail.com).

Internationalisation in Higher Education: The intentions were good, but where do we take it from here?

Pollyanna Magne, University of Plymouth

Internationalisation is a fast-moving field of research in the Higher Education (HE) arena. The term ‘internationalisation’ first became embedded in the lexicon of HE policy and strategy shortly after the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) proposed that HE should integrate ‘an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution’ (OECD, 1999, p. 16). Whilst this recommendation has far-reaching interpretations, the most immediate and prevalent practice was to increase the recruitment of international students to UK institutions (Hazelkorn,

2008). The recruitment of international students is matched with other equally economically driven activities such as: Transnational Education (TNE) whereby programmes developed and accredited in one country are delivered in other institutions across the globe; and International Branch Campuses (IBCs), which enable Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to extend their geographical reach by running research and taught programmes from physical campuses dotted across various continents. Due to the importance of income generation in HE, these facets of internationalisation are well-researched and supported by a growing body of literature largely

focusing on ways of maximising international student recruitment and developing working partnerships with international partners (Ayoubi and Massoud, 2007; Bennell and Pearce, 2003; Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2006). However, there is an alternative voice emerging of a more socio-liberal stance, which challenges this dominant neo-liberal model and seeks to increase the focus on the intercultural dimension of teaching and learning (Magne, 2015). It is this intercultural dimension of internationalisation which will be the focus of this article.

It may be useful to start by articulating my interpretation of the distinctions

between internationalisation, multinational curricula, and intercultural education. The broad tenets of internationalisation were dealt with in the introduction. The two latter terms have considerable overlap. However, in its most unforgiving interpretation the multicultural curriculum can be conceived of as an attempt to contemporise curriculum content with examples from across the globe. This approach was adopted in a number of schools as early as the 1960s, with the best of intentions and a view to enhancing student awareness of different practices and perspectives, particularly where there were significant immigrant populations (Farrell, 1990). A similar approach has been adopted in some HE curricula, particularly when trying to bridge the divide, for example, between large cohorts of students made up of two main nationalities. Such examples often exist in business and economic degrees which attract significant numbers of Chinese nationals and local, UK citizens (Verbik and Lasanowski, 2007), where attempts have been made, for example, to examine different management styles in the two cultures. This practice may have been applauded as a first step in developing international practice in HE in that it goes some way to waking students up to the world that exists beyond their immediate horizons. However, this approach also attracts considerable criticism. This multicultural content approach, as defined here, has the potential dangerous effect of confirming stereotypes (Roux, 2001) and 'othering', a term used to describe the process of concentrating on difference whilst simultaneously strengthening a sense of one's own cultural norms as correct (Moore and Hampton, 2014).

As the literature explains, this is where intercultural education aims to move beyond the multicultural approach towards a more transformative experience (Robson, 2011), whereby students are challenged to question their own cultural norms and enter into critical dialogue. Rather than focusing its attention on just the internationally mobile or well-travelled students, this intercultural discourse considers what internationalisation means in relation

to the *whole* student population. This paradigm shift away from the economic towards the pedagogic model of internationalisation is increasingly apparent in contemporary publications. The very existence of a journal entitled *Intercultural Education*, and special issues such as 'Exploring Internationalisation of the Curriculum to Enhance the Student Experience' (Foster and Anderson, 2015) and published by the *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice* (JPAAP), demonstrates a growing expertise and dialogue in this field. For example, Lee (2005) examines a useful distinction between 'a multicultural curriculum and an intercultural one' (p. 201) whereby intercultural curricula work through dialogue *between* cultures, rather than simply trying to cover material *about* multiple cultures (my own emphasis). She goes on to defend this position by pointing out that simply recognising diversity is not enough, we must also be able to enhance communication and understanding between those diverse groups. Central to this idea is the notion that intercultural education is a 'moral cultivation' (Lee, 2005, p. 204). Nussbaum (1997) calls this the 'cultivation of humanity' and both authors agree that this form of cultivation must be supported by the ability to think critically. Hence intercultural education moves away from 'othering' and information-giving towards an open and honest critical dialogue which has narrative and reasoning at its core.

So where do we go with this? We can see from OECD's original call that the intentions were good and much more far reaching than the international recruitment, TNE and IBC activities that have thus far been prevalent. However, in the current economic climate and ever-diminishing sources of income available to Higher Education, one cannot blame those who govern and lead HEIs for pursuing those elements of internationalisation which drum up much needed income. So whilst as an Educational Developer I might choose to follow the intercultural education route on the basis of its pedagogic and moral merits, perhaps it is time to use the economic argument to support this fast-growing

element of internationalisation. There are a number of weapons we have at our disposal, or, put in more positive terms, there are some convincing arguments, that might encourage a shift in thinking.

We know for example that employers are looking for graduates who will be competent in a global market place (Adelman, 1994; Bennett, 2002; Wall, 2007). The league tables, which include data about graduate employment drawn from the Destinations and Leavers of Higher Education (DLHE) survey (HESA, 2015), also act as a motivator for universities. HEIs are aware that the more savvy fee-paying student uses the league table data as they weigh up the cost of studying for a degree against the long-term gains, career prospects and potential earnings and opportunities (Cosman-Ross and Hiatt-Michael, 2005). With this in mind the league table competition is now prompting universities to take more seriously the notion of the 'globally competent' (Hunter et al., 2006) or 'interculturally capable' (Crosbie, 2014) student. This then requires a paradigm shift, not only in thinking and rhetoric, but also in daily embedded practice across the disciplines and institutions as a whole. The argument posited here is that intercultural education should be developed in all disciplines, not just in the few obvious programmes such as international politics, or business and economics degrees. And this argument sits alongside the reminder that intercultural education goes beyond a multicultural peppering of the curriculum with examples that only serve to accentuate difference, towards a challenging transformative experience in which students and academics question cultural norms and engage in open and honest dialogue.

The matter of open and honest dialogue is something in itself that requires careful consideration. In the introduction to *Democratic Dialogue in Education*, Burbles (2004) asks important questions about the aims of a 'socially committed classroom'. He challenges the reader to consider whether the socially committed classroom should 'create dialogue,

wherever it might lead', 'challenge and change the views of dominant groups', or 'strengthen solidarity and promote transformative action on behalf of the disempowered' (Burbles, 2004, p. xxiii). In turn the editor and other contributors to this book grapple with these questions. Boler herself states that, 'educators must deal with messy issues that others cannot and do not want to address' (Boler, 2004, p. 4), and Glass (2004) points out that dialogue provides a space for 'cognitive and emotional dissidence [which] are necessary features of the critical consciousness' (p. 15). However, he also notes that this dissidence can feel uncomfortable, something which resonates in my experience in which I have observed academic colleagues searching for the 'right' or politically correct phrases in their attempts to discuss internationalisation and educational cultures.

This creates a tension for us in the academic field. The disciplinary context is often a 'safe zone' in which the academic has the expertise and confidence to engage students knowledgeably in subjects in which they are well versed and passionate about. However, confidence levels often diminish when colleagues are asked to address pedagogic approaches that sit outside their previous experience. The negotiation of intercultural dialogue requires an openness to engage in critical debate. It needs an awareness of the differences, resentments, fears, and power games, both conscious and unconscious, at play (Burbles, 2004). If we are to agree with Garrison that, 'much as some teachers think they can assure a safe space for dialogue in their classrooms...there are no such safe sites' (Boler, 2004, p. 95), then colleagues also need time to build trusting relationships as they prepare students to enter into the challenging realms of intercultural education. Nor should we underestimate the support academics may need to develop the dexterity and confidence to facilitate this transformative approach.

To some this might sound exciting, whereas others may view intercultural education as described in this article

with some trepidation. Yet if we are to address the internationalisation agenda in the way it was originally intended, I suggest that intercultural education must be integral to our approach. It is not just economics and league tables driving the agenda, there are also voices from the domain of social justice which challenge us to become 'progressive educators', and to create space for the unheard voices to be heard (Freire, 1992). As Nussbaum tells us, intercultural education is about inviting people to question their assumptions of the world and intelligently read another person's story with compassion and empathy (Nussbaum, 2002).

So whatever our motivations, if we are to mould or sculpt interculturally competent graduates, there is still some work to be done. Internationalisation is still high on the agenda, so there is an opportunity to be had in shaping how it is taken forward. As a researcher in this area, my intention is to develop a framework of questions and considerations that may help to move the notion of intercultural education into mainstream dialogue. For those working in leadership or educational/academic developer roles, the next steps are: to identify the forums which can act as conduits to introduce and discuss the notion of intercultural education as part of the wider agenda; find existing examples of good practice that can be shared; and plan developmental activities that may help colleagues explore the potential of intercultural education within the curriculum and start to embed it in their practice. This at least gives us a starting point which attempts to readjust the balance between the economic and the pedagogic elements of internationalisation, to make it, as it was originally intended to be, a transformative experience for the whole student population, not just for the well-travelled few.

References

Adelman, C. (1994) 'What employers expect of college graduates: international knowledge and second language skills' *World Education News and Reviews*

Ayoubi, R. M. and Massoud, H. K. (2007) 'The strategy of internationalization in universities: a quantitative evaluation of the

intent and implementation in UK universities', *International Journal of Educational Management*, 21 (4), pp. 329-349.

Bennell, P. and Pearce, T. (2003) 'The internationalisation of higher education: exporting education to developing and transitional economies', *International Journal of Educational Development*, 23 (2), pp. 215-232.

Bennett, R. (2002) 'Employers' demands for personal transferable skills in graduates: a content analysis of 1000 job advertisements and an associated empirical study', *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 54 (4), pp. 457-476.

Boler, M. (2004) *Democratic Dialogue in Education: troubling speech, disturbing silence*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Burbles, N. (2004) Introduction, in Boler, M. (ed.) *Democratic Dialogue in Education: troubling speech, disturbing silence*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Cosman-Ross, J. and Hiatt-Michael, D. (2005) 'Adult student motivators at a university satellite campus', Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada: April 11-15, 2005.

Crosbie, V. (2014) 'Capabilities for intercultural dialogue', *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 14 (1), pp. 91-107.

Farrell, P. (1990) *Multicultural Education*, Leamington Spa: Scholastic Publications Ltd.

Foster, M. and Anderson, L. (2015) 'Special issue on exploring internationalisation of the curriculum to enhance the student experience', *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice (JPAAP)*, 3 (3).

Freire, P. (1992) *Pedagogy of Hope: reliving pedagogy of the oppressed*, London: Bloomsbury.

Glass, R. D. (2004) 'Moral and political clarity and education as a practice of freedom', in Boler, M. (ed.) *Democratic Dialogue in Education*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2.2, pp. 15-32.

Hazelkorn, E. (2008) 'Globalization, internationalization, and rankings', *International Higher Education*, pp. 8-11.

Hemsley-Brown, J. and Oplatka, I. (2006) 'Universities in a competitive global marketplace: a systematic review of the literature on higher education marketing', *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 19 (4), pp. 316-338.

HESA (2015) 'Destinations of leavers from higher education', Higher Education Statistics Agency (available at: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/stats-dlhe>).

Hunter, B., White, G. P. and Godbey, C. C. (2006) 'What does it mean to be globally competent?', *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10 (3), pp. 267-285.

Lee, T. M. L. (2005) 'Intercultural teaching in higher education', *Intercultural Education*, 16 (3), pp. 201-215.

Magne, P. J. (2015) 'Enhancing international curriculum design in higher education', *Optimising Higher Education Curriculum*

Design, London: Understanding Modern Government.

Moore, P. and Hampton, G. (2014) 'It's a bit of a generalisation, but ...': participant perspectives on intercultural group assessment in higher education', *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 40 (3), pp. 390-406.

Nussbaum, M. (1997) *Cultivating Humanity*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Nussbaum, M. (2002) 'Education for citizenship in an era of global connection',

Studies in Philosophy and Education, 21 (4-5), pp. 289-303.

OECD (1999) *Quality and Internationalisation in Higher Education*, OECD Publishing.

Robson, S. (2011) 'Internationalization: a transformative agenda for higher education?', *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*, 17 (6), pp. 619-630.

Roux, J. L. (2001) 'Social dynamics of the multicultural classroom', *Intercultural Education*, 12 (3), pp. 273-288.

Verbik, L. and Lasanowski, V. (2007)

'International student mobility: patterns and trends', London: The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (available at: <http://tinyurl.com/qgt8j8f>).

Wall, J. (2007) 'Advice for engineering students', Purdue Engineering (available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00XzHGn6ezl>).

Pollyanna Magne is Associate Professor and Programme Director of the PGCAP at Plymouth University.

Academic development – A developers' society

Chrissi Nerantzi and Peter Gossman, Manchester Metropolitan University

In the near future in galaxy, near, very near

There is no need for academic developers as a profession in 2525. Everybody is a self-regulated learner (Zimmerman, 1990) and when they transition seamlessly into higher education, opportunities for learning are readily available and accessible to all. Each individual has been taught and has learnt how to learn. Learning happens everywhere and all the time. It is uninterrupted and fully integrated into life.

In fact, everybody is a developer! The world has become a developers' society. Higher education is no longer in existence as we know it. It appears fully integrated into society. It is part of it. It shapes it and is shaped by it. Students and academics are all learners and developers at the same time. They feel and are empowered to learn, develop and innovate for the personal and collective good. Learning and development is truly lifelong and lifewide and wraps around life (Dewey, 1938).

Douglas' and Seely Brown's words echo around:

'The almost unlimited resources provided by the information network serve as a set of nutrients, constantly selected and incorporated into the bounded environment, which provides the impetus for experimentation, play and learning. Accordingly, the culture that emerges, the new culture of learning, is a culture of collective inquiry that harnesses the resources of the network and transforms them into nutrients within the environment, turning it into a space of play and experimentation.' (Douglas and Seely Brown, 2014, p. 12)

So learning is organic, playful and embedded, not an add-on (Illich, 1971). People can be and are supported by facilitators to pursue their learning, when they need to, but also by peers and the wider dynamic communities and networks. At times they are facilitators themselves and help others. All people are developers. People are free to learn at their own pace and in their own time in their very own way. They can gain recognition based on their engagement and learning, which can have been on their own, with others, formally, informally or non-formally.

Personal development routes are constructed and tailored to specific situations and aspirations. Pre-packaged education no longer exists (Illich, 1971). There is a plethora of ways to create multiple personalised development pathways and people maximise on these:

- choice over force
- playfulness and co-operation over competitiveness
- empowerment, activity and engagement over passivity!

The developers' society is active and proactive and the characteristics drive it forward.

Resources and tasks can be undertaken and connections made, they just need to be selected and synthesised to achieve specific goals. Learning and development menus are constructed, shared, connected and interwoven into the fabric of living. In the developers' society, everybody creates, owns, develops and curates a portable lifelong record of their learning and development journey and adventures, progress and achievements. It is constructed progressively and it grows, it travels through life with the individual. It illustrates who they are and who they are becoming. It is shared and is a useful medium to engage with others in a plethora of ways, including learning conversations, constructing narratives, stories and artefacts for themselves and others, through which they learn and develop their understanding about themselves and the

world they live in, on their own and in collaboration with others, in the complex digital and non-digital world that is seamlessly connected. It captures a moment in time and their journeys through time, process and product. People are no longer concerned with credentialing learning and development and this is liberating! It sets them free! They feel empowered and hungry to learn and help others to do so too.

Learning and development has become 'cool' or 'wicked' (or however 'down with it' is characterised in 2525) but most importantly it has been normalised. People recognise the value of learning and are expert, emotionally intelligent, self-regulated learners. They are masters of their own learning (Zimmerman, 1990). They are pro-active, resourceful and resilient when meeting obstacles and they seek help when needed. They follow their own internal voice with criticality and determination to shape their life. They are self-authors of their own lives. They have 'the capacity to internally define a coherent belief system and identity that coordinates engagement in mutual relations with the larger world' (Baxter Magolda and King, 2004, p. xxii). In the developers' society everybody is in charge of their own learning (Deleuze and Guatarri, 1987).

People learn to live and live to learn. They make good use of the myriad of learning resources available, to immerse themselves in learning and development activities that are of value for them. Learners put their own learning menu together and create social learning opportunities for others for the common good. There is individual decision-making with a collective balance.

Resources are shared, as is expertise, and people have come to realise that working and developing together is good, both for each individual and for the wider community and society. Everybody is creative and resourceful, sharing freely and openly, respecting the ideas of others and building on them to make new discoveries, their own meaning and to advance knowledge.

Some of this was already happening as long ago as 2015. Individual voices had been heard around the globe. All people on earth are confident and competent and have access to, and practise, learning. In fact, they are immersed in learning. All know how to learn and how to facilitate others to learn. Facilitating is a reciprocal process. Teachers and learners learn alongside each other and with each other to co-construct meaning based on learning partnerships (Baxter Magolda, 2014). They do this because they recognise the importance that this has for their own learning, development and society.

Distributed, connected and dynamic networks of learners drive learning, knowledge creation and innovation in every aspect of human life. The structure is horizontal. Looking at it from within, one might not see any structure. It is messy and dynamic and it might look a bit rhizomatic in nature (Cormier, 2008). Everybody has a voice and is heard, everybody creates, everybody contributes and collaborates. People manage their own lives, learning and development.

People come together for a while depending on what unites them at that time and go their own paths when their direction has changed. They wonder and wander. The unifying factor is a common interest, a passion for learning and development as well as joy, to create, enrich and transform life and lives.

The atmosphere all around is positive and motivational. The developers' society has become a reality.

Seeing the world as rose coloured? This future had been recognised but not realised before 2015 because of an imbalance between the individual and the collective. The breakthrough occurred when people recognised that their achievements did not have to be recognised or archived at the expense of others.

References

- Baxter Magolda, M. B. (2014) 'The journey to self-authorship and a more meaningful life', *Lifewide Magazine*, 9 March 2014, pp. 8-11 (available at: <http://www.lifewidemagazine.co.uk/>).
- Baxter Magolda, M. B. and King, P. M. (2004) *Learning Partnerships: Theory and models of practice to educate for self-authorship*, Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Cormier, D. (2008) 'Rhizomatic education: community as curriculum', *Innovate. Journal of Online Education*, vol. 4, no. 5, June-July 2008 (available at: <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ840362>).
- Deleuze, G. and Guatarri, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Dewey, J. (1938/1997). *Experience and Education*, Macmillan.
- Douglas, T. and Seely Brown, J. (2014) 'A new culture of learning', *Lifewide Magazine*, issue 11, September 2014, pp. 10-12 (available at: <http://tinyurl.com/psnesy2>).
- Illich, I. (1971) *Deschooling Society*, New York: Harper and Row.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (1990) 'Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: an overview', *Educational Psychologist*, 25(1) (available at <http://tinyurl.com/pe9hgy>).

Chrissi Nerantzi (c.nerantzi@mmu.ac.uk) and **Peter Gossman** (p.gossman@mmu.ac.uk) are Principal Lecturers in Academic CPD at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Information for Contributors

The Editorial Committee of *Educational Developments* welcomes contributions on any aspect of staff and educational development likely to be of interest to readers.

Submission of an article to *Educational Developments* implies that it has not been published elsewhere and that it is not currently being considered by any other publisher or editor.

The Editorial Committee reserves the right to make minor alterations during the editing process in order to adapt articles to the house style and length. Such alterations will not affect the main content of the article. A proof copy will not be supplied to authors prior to printing.

For more information please see: www.seda.ac.uk/publications

What has the NSS ever done for students?

Kate Little, NUS

In the world of higher education policy, there are three little words that you can guarantee anyone you ask will have a strong opinion about. No, I don't mean Teaching Excellence Framework, although this is certainly a strong contender for 'Best Newcomer' in this very specific category. I'm referring to the National Student Survey, which turned ten this year. Originally conceived as an information tool for prospective students about the quality of courses, the NSS was brought in to replace burdensome teaching quality assessments and lighten the administrative load on institutions. It has been used as a proxy for teaching excellence ever since its introduction, and it is likely to form a key pillar of the new TEF. I'm shelving discussions of its utility as a measure of teaching excellence for now: satisfaction does not equal quality learning; the results are rife for gaming by both students and institutions and many of the questions are flawed – we know this from the letters page of any issue of *Times Higher*. Instead I'm going to focus on how it has been used and the impact ten years of the survey has had on students' lives.

It is undeniable that the NSS placed the student voice higher on universities' agenda than it had ever been previously. Current drives towards staff-student partnership and more active student engagement stand on the shoulders of that important first step: getting students' feedback listened to by their higher education institution. Even if the drive to improve scores and thereby league table rankings was only narrowly veiled in a translucent cloak of 'enhancing the student experience', action was still being taken as a direct result of student feedback, and often that action would improve things on the ground for students. If feedback turnaround times are getting quicker, timetabling becomes more sensitive to the needs of students, more is spent on the library or teachers are provided with training, students will see the benefit, whether the institution is really

committed to improving students' experiences or merely massaging their scores.

The NSS has also given students' unions an increased ability to lobby, campaign and influence on bread and butter education issues. Students' unions have used NSS to successfully push for policies around feedback, course organisation, personal tutoring, library opening hours and many more, as well as building and improving student representative structures in order to better respond to the data at a local level. Student activists, even those opposed to the NSS, have used it as a tool to lever improvements to their course: the University of Manchester's Post-Crash Economics Society used poor NSS results to force conversations about curriculum content that their department initially refused to have with students.

So, apart from an increased focus on teaching, more developed student engagement structures and processes, student-centred curricula, improved feedback, more inclusive timetabling, better academic support, more investment in libraries and computers and higher quality learning spaces and facilities, what has the NSS ever done for students?

Well, there's a negative aspect to how the survey has impacted on students as well, although it could be argued that a lot of the downsides have been more about the introduction and raising of tuition fees than about the survey itself. The NSS fits neatly into the 'students as consumers' narrative driven by government since 2010. It has been likened to sites such as TripAdvisor, where consumers of a product or service rate their experience after the fact to inform the purchasing decisions of prospective customers. Where the NSS isn't embedded in a holistic system of student engagement, with students actively co-creating solutions to the problems identified by the survey and the results being fed back, this is very much how the

survey appears to many of the finalists filling it in. It also gives students a potentially inflated sense of power: the idea of the 2011 White Paper was to put students 'at the heart of the system' by empowering them to make better choices, informed by sources including the NSS. As the NUS has addressed extensively elsewhere (see the Manifesto for Partnership, 2012), this dramatically overstates the power students have within our current university system: the NSS gives students the opportunity to comment on what has been sold to them, but not the ability to change or shape their education.

The NSS is many things: a carrot, a stick, a blunt tool, a symptom of the marketisation of higher education – it is not a perfect instrument, and much like magic in the Harry Potter universe, it can be used for good or evil. The NSS has power to make a difference to students' lives if it is seen as the culmination of two, three or four years of continual student engagement, where students see their feedback resulting in changes to their course experience and feel that their opinions are valued. This requires universities and colleges to take the results seriously, not just because of league table standing and reputational risk, but because they are sincerely committed to improving the academic experience for their students.

Kate Little is a Senior Project Officer at the National Union of Students.

Notice to Publishers

Books for review should be sent to:

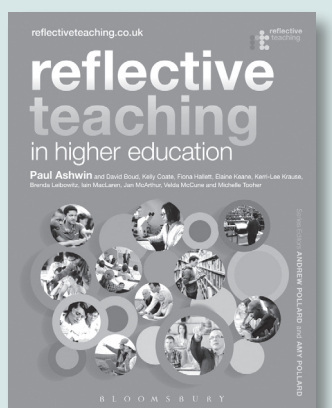
SEDA Woburn House,
20 - 24 Tavistock Square,
London WC1H 9HF
Email office@seda.ac.uk

Book Review

Reflective Teaching in Higher Education

Paul Ashwin *et al.*

Bloomsbury Academic
ISBN-10: 1441197559



On the back cover of this book one of the reviewers describes it as 'substantial' – he is not wrong. The bibliography alone runs from page 377 to 405. The book of 416 pages is constructed in five parts, each of two or more chapters, with each chapter including the main text, research briefings, case studies, key readings, links to associated websites and, per chapter, at least one reflective (or perhaps more simply a thinking) exercise (with most having at least three).

Overarching the whole work are ten principles of learning and teaching and in each chapter's introduction, the principles that apply are noted. Given the comprehensive bibliography it is not surprising to find that principle two, 'effective teaching and learning depends on the research and learning of all those educators who teach and research to support the learning of others' (p. viii), is covered in five (of 17) chapters whilst others are each addressed in three.

An example of reflective activity (9.1, p. 164) is about congruence between learning outcomes, teaching/learning activities and assessment methods. The questions posed, in this activity, are direct and straightforward. For example: *Are all learning outcomes assessed? Are any over assessed?* In other areas (Activity 3.2, p. 49) the questions are broader. For example: *Which aspects of your teaching practices should be investigated and why?*

This work is primarily authored by Paul Ashwin with a further 11 contributing authors. What is especially noteworthy, however, is how even the book is in terms of editing, with chapters linking and referencing clearly to others, giving the material a considered and coherent feel.

The very comprehensiveness of this book raises its own issues. Firstly, it is so comprehensive that it could be off-putting to a novice teacher in higher education, and secondly, that for a competent teacher the depth is not great enough – although the further readings, web links and the bibliography address this. It is therefore hard to pin down exactly who the targeted readership is. The introduction claims that it is for 'anyone interested in further developing their approaches to teaching' (p. vii) – quite a claim! For SEDA readers, however, particularly those who run PG Certs and for students on such programmes, it provides a broad, and perhaps familiar, overview of the field – almost a 'greatest hits' collection. For teachers of PG Certs there is plenty of material that could be used both within and to inform individual sessions, in some cases almost 'off the peg'. For example, the chapter on inclusive practice will feature in the next run of one of the units I teach on this topic.

Two further observations. Firstly I found it odd that any book about reflective teaching in HE did not mention Peter Jarvis and his book *Paradoxes of Learning* in which he suggests how an experience (à la Kolb) can result in i) non-learning, ii) non-reflective learning, or iii) reflective learning which in turn, Jarvis notes, results in a) conformity or b) change. In *Reflective Teaching* the assumption seems to be that reflection, or thinking (and that of course is a debate in itself), results in iii/b. Secondly, and related, I am not sure that the title *Reflective Teaching* is quite accurate (although I appreciate that it fits within a series), as this book is more a suggestion to think about the why and how of your teaching and student learning than about possible processes of reflection for higher education teachers.

Having said that it is worth repeating that some of the exercises (such as the examples noted in this review), if completed, will almost certainly improve your teaching.

Peter Gossman is a Principal Lecturer in Academic CPD at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Copyright

Copyright for all published material is held by SEDA unless stated otherwise.

Contributors may use their material elsewhere after publication without permission, but the following note should be added: 'First published in *Educational Developments*, issue number and date'. Permission is required for use by a third party.

Articles in *Educational Developments* have been refereed for quality and edited for publication by the Editorial Committee. We welcome articles that have been created through open electronic media such as personal blogs and discussion lists. Once published in *Educational Developments*, such articles should be acknowledged in the format described above.

The publishers have endeavoured to find the copyright holders of all material in this magazine. If we have infringed copyright, we shall be pleased, on being satisfied as to the owner's title, to pay an appropriate fee as if prior permission had been obtained.

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy in all published material. However, the Editorial Committee and the publishers cannot accept any liability for any inaccuracy accepted in good faith from reputable sources.

Any opinions expressed are those of the authors.

Can extra-curricular activities help international students create communities of learning within their department?

Maria Kaparou, University of Nottingham and **Ian Abbott**, University of Warwick

Internationalisation in the Russell Group Universities in England has been considered as a top priority for their own planning and development practices. The main findings of our SEDA-funded project are presented in this article, in order to inform educational developers and staff in Higher Education about how a department provides a learning environment for international students to flourish through extra-curricular activities.

The main question addressed in this research study is: What are the most positively perceived extra-curricular activities for creating international students' communities of learning?

Methodology

In our researched case study department, documentary analysis (macro-institutional, e.g. Strategic Vision 2015, and micro-institutional documents, e.g. staff meeting minutes) and Web-content analysis preceded the individual interviews with international undergraduates (UG), postgraduate taught (PGT) and postgraduate research (PGR) students and academic staff (the Director of Research Students and a course leader). Participant observations of departmental seminars and a Qualtrics survey questionnaire were also part of a mixed-methods approach. Using a multiple-methods approach to collect data is a way to enhance triangulation which 'is essentially a means of cross checking data to establish its validity' (Bush, 2007, p. 100) and reliability of the results (Cohen *et al.*, 2001).

Context

The case study department is a department of Social Sciences in a world-leading Russell Group British university with a growing international reputation.

Findings

It seems that most participants are aware of the plethora of the departmental provision of extra-curricular activities, while they stress their contribution to students' internationalised professional, cultural and research learning. Among the most positively perceived activities is the 'Sharing the World' seminars – organised by the department's international tutor – which create internationally focused learning platforms. Professional-based seminars give an emphasis on reflective practices while they are also considered as a resource for the internationalisation of learning:

'I remember that in one "Sharing the World" seminar I learned something really important, that people in centralized contexts rarely welcome observations, both as a research method and practice. This "informal" knowledge is extremely helpful to me, since I am planning to do research in the future in a centralized context.'

[PhD student]

The majority of interviewees, mainly PhD students, highlighted that learning within their community is a way to develop their collaborative and coaching skills and construction of knowledge. Similarly to interviewees' emphasis on intercultural experience – through seminars focusing on England, Korea, Greece, China and Finland – the 63% of survey respondents indicate 'gaining an intercultural understanding' which can help change their understanding of the host country and overseas.

The *departmental Research Seminar series* organised by the Director of

Research Students, and the *Leadership-focused seminars* organised by the Leadership Group (a specialist unit focusing on research and postgraduate teaching relating to educational leadership), are well perceived by the interviewees. In both cases, participants acknowledge it as a conducive learning experience, which contributes to their research growth. A department course leader (PGT1) highlights the positive elements of the exposure of international students to 'hot spot leadership areas', while the majority of students stress the importance of gaining an understanding of issues pertaining to leadership and management.

Cultural-based seminars and social events are also highlighted as effective extra-curricular activities with a significant cultural orientation, while creating a culturally-driven community of learning. The international tutor leads the 'Sharing the World' cultural-based learning, through organising cultural sessions where students from the department's international community are welcomed to make a presentation on Festive celebrations (e.g. Eid, Diwali, Bonfire, Chinese New Year, Carnival, Halloween, celebration of becoming an adult in Japan) in their home countries, in order to develop culturally literate students. As part of the cultural awareness development, the researched department organises social events, such as an International Christmas Dinner Party; International Day with a careers workshop followed by a cultural-based seminar; also, an International Day: Sharing International Cultures.

Among the strategies employed for the creation of peer-communities of learning is the *student-run conference*, organised with the guidance and

support of the Director of Research Students, the International Tutor, other academic members of staff, in addition to the doctoral students' voluntary role. All postgraduate students have benefited from such a conference, since it is open to postgraduate students across the university, 'in order to shape a more inter-disciplinary perspective in our research thinking' (A-PGR). Another doctoral student also mentions that 'it is good for practising our presentation skills in front of a friendly audience. I look at it as a nurturing environment' (G-PGR).

Conclusions

Aimed primarily at university faculties and the educational development community, these research findings provide valuable insight into the nature and impact of these initiatives at the heart of internationalisation. Among the lessons learnt from conducting this research study are:

- The realisation that the department's stakeholders acknowledge the importance of creating a series of extra-curricular activities to support the broader

notion of internationalisation

- The experiential learning of students – in terms of inter-cultural awareness and research sharing from an international perspective – through their communities of learning can be considered as an important element in the internationalisation strategy agenda for departments of Higher Education
- Learning beyond the classroom walls – through international student-run communities of learning – can be an element of enrichment. This supports the argument that 'hav[ing] a diverse student body from multiple cultures and societies [...] enriches our intellectual environment' (Spencer-Oatey and Dauber, 2015, p. 5).

This study is limited by scope and its size. It is recommended to be broadened in scope to include a cross-departmental comparative element in its nature and all students (home students, non-British Europeans and those students coming from continents other than Europe).

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to SEDA for funding this research project. We would also like to

thank the research participants for their time to participate in the study and for sharing their experience and perceptions on the research area.

References

- Bush, T. (2007) 'Authenticity in research – reliability, validity and triangulation', in A. Briggs and M. Coleman (eds.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management*, 2nd edn., London: Sage, pp. 91-105.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2001) *Research Methods in Education*, London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. and Dauber, D. (2015) 'How "internationalised" is your university? Moving beyond structural indicators towards social integration', Briefing paper: Going Global Event 2015, London, UK (available at: <http://tinyurl.com/orfzjw>).

Maria Kaparou is the Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership and Management at the University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus (Maria.Kaparou@nottingham.edu.my).

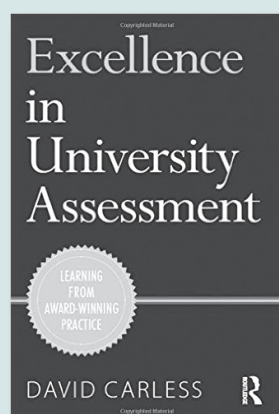
Ian Abbott is the Associate Professor of Leadership and the Director of the Centre for Education Studies at the University of Warwick (I.D.Abbott@warwick.ac.uk).

Book Review

Excellence in University Assessment

by David Carless

Routledge
ISBN-10: 1138824550



This book is an authoritative voice on assessment. David Carless explores all aspects of assessment, from specific design methods to reduce the likelihood of plagiarism to an exploration of the psychological impact of marks on students' sense of self. This is an interesting book, with one of its significant strengths being the wide reference to a plethora of different research. This book will be of interest to:

- those involved with assessment in higher education
- teachers looking for new ways to monitor student progress
- assessors interested in innovative examples of best practice.

The author highlights that feedback is typically rated poorly in the majority of higher education institutions in student experience surveys. Staff involved in improving the student experience could be another interested audience for the improvement techniques and considerations. This book suggests a number of ways to tackle the problem of assessment satisfaction.

A significant part of the book explores the strengths of a selection of award-winning teachers in order to highlight best practice and learn from innovators within the field. The author includes a number of quotes and excerpts from students and teachers which is a particular strength of this book, helping to bring the issues of assessment to life.

A particularly interesting part of the book for me was the analysis of research on cue 'conscious' and cue 'deaf' students and the consequent effects on their academic attainment. Also of interest was the chapter on emotional response to feedback and the discussion of how our

academic results can be woven into our identities, penetrating our perceived worth in others.

What I particularly liked:

- a review of discipline-specific best practice
- looking at innovative assessment, such as photo essays and portfolios
- the summary at the end of each chapter
- and not being afraid to look at the ‘messy’ bits of assessment, such as plagiarism and teaching staff who might not be interested, the emotional responses of students,

facing ‘the dominance of research in unis’, free-riding students or ‘social loafers’ and the ‘sucker effect’, the tricky business of awarding grades for group work, classroom participation, oral presentation etc., online participation, portfolio-based writing and enthusiasm for but the limitations of e-portfolios.

I would have liked to have seen more on the exploration of the use of eportfolios in assessment and more female award-winner case studies.

My favourite quote from the book was one that sums up what good

assessment can look like for the student, one in which the student doesn’t just pass, but learns too:

‘The assessments motivate you to want to learn. If you want to get an excellent result, you have to work on every task, whether your motivation is good grades or really to learn something. And in this course, if you want a good grade, you really have to learn something.’

Sally Burr is a Learning Technologist at the University of Sussex (s.burr@sussex.ac.uk; @burrblog).

Confessions of a SEDA conference interloper

Gail Hall, Leicester College

If I was going to university today I would be considered a Widening Participation student. With a policeman father and clerical assistant mother, I was the first in the family to go into Higher Education. I knew next to nothing about it but had an idea that there was an element of class divide, which, to be fair, was largely based on my understanding of students (and the disparity between them) from *University Challenge* and *The Young Ones*. And so it was armed with this dubious logic that I set off for Sunderland Polytechnic and my BA Combined Arts degree.

Fast forward 30 years to the start of my career in College Higher Education (CHE). I’d sampled various jobs so far but the one thing they all had in common was that I never really shook off the feeling that I’d been appointed by mistake and it was just a matter of time before I was politely asked to leave. That imposter syndrome has never left me and was wrapped around me like a cloak when I arrived at the SEDA annual conference in November last year.

For a Scholarship Development Manager the conference theme – ‘Scholarship and Educational Development: the importance of using an evidence base for learning and teaching’ – was clearly perfect. But as a College HE Scholarship Development Manager? I wasn’t so sure. So I checked out the workshop sessions, received encouragement from the only SEDA person I knew (John Lea) and went online to book. With each hurdle involving credit card limits and purchase orders I began to question myself, my internal voice getting louder: ‘don’t bother;

it’s not meant to be’. But I stuck with it and, issues finally resolved, I allowed myself to get a little bit excited!

Feeling a sense of accomplishment tinged with trepidation I arrived at the conference venue where I was booked to stay for two nights. Or so I thought. The receptionist informed me that there was no booking for Gail Hall. There was one for a Julie Hall, though, so it was probably an error...wasn’t it...? The receptionist apologetically handed me the key to the room, booked in the name of Julie Hall, and I went up to settle in. Except I couldn’t settle in, being too engrossed in debate with the inner voice that knew I was an interloper.

When the call finally came, therefore, to tell me that Julie Hall was at reception it was no great surprise and the inner voice had the smug satisfaction of knowing I hadn’t yet unpacked my suitcase. I scurried down to reception armed with my SEDA booking confirmation and my most deferential countenance. ‘You’re Julie Hall?’, I said to the woman talking to the receptionist. ‘Ah, you’re the problem!’, came the reply. Well I didn’t know she used to be co-chair of SEDA and she obviously didn’t know about my crushing sense of inferiority so I think we can let each other off. Arrangements were made, Julie got a room and I was finally able to unpack my case.

After a solitary breakfast I went warily to register for the conference, booking confirmation at hand just in case. But no! I was on the list – result! Pride partially restored, I pored over the delegate list in search of allies from College HE; a couple of University Colleges appeared but

no full-on FE providers. Not to worry, the next task was to look at the notice boards to remind myself which workshop sessions I had signed up for. None it seemed; I didn't appear on any of the lists. It was hard not to feel a bit flat by this point – I feel quite exhausted just writing about it – but then the conference began with an opening keynote by Professor Keith Smythe on the Scholarship of Educational Development, and I was hooked.

This was followed by a range of useful, engaging and stimulating workshops on partnerships, professional development, and student engagement and before long I was more than convinced that I'd made the right decision in attending the conference. I listened, I understood, and I joined in.

Jo Johnson described teaching in Higher Education as a 'poor cousin' to research; a metaphor many HE staff in FE colleges can associate with. Some might feel intimidated by the idea of crashing a 'proper HE' party, but I would encourage any CHE professional with an interest in educational development to find out more about SEDA and attend one of their events. While I expected to be received as the poor relation at the SEDA conference I left feeling that my contribution was as valuable as what I took away. Well, almost. You don't shrug off a 40-year-old imposter syndrome overnight.

Gail Hall is the HE Scholarship Development Manager for Leicester, Derby and Central Colleges (ghall@leicestercollege.ac.uk).

SEDA News

SEDA Research and Evaluation Small Grants 2016

These grants are intended to support research and evaluation in staff and educational development with the goal of continued improvement in the quality and understanding of educational development practices. For 2016 we will be offering five grants of £1000 each for research into educational development practices.

See www.seda.ac.uk for further details including an application form. The closing date for applications is 29 January 2016.

Roll of Honour

Congratulations to **Mike Laycock** who was recently placed on the SEDA Roll of Honour. Mike has been involved in the pedagogical development of many activities both nationally and internationally and is well known for his work around personal tutoring. Mike has contributed to many committees of SEDA and has always supported enhancing and growing the membership from those involved in educational development, often providing an important network for those who may not have been aware of SEDA. Mike clearly demonstrates all the values of SEDA.



Events:

SEDA Writing Retreat

18-20 April 2016, Woodbrooke, Birmingham

SEDA Spring Teaching Learning and Assessment Conference 2016

Innovations in Assessment and Feedback Practice

11-13 May 2016, The Carlton Hotel, Edinburgh
Registration opens in February 2016

Date for your diary:

21st Annual SEDA Conference

3-4 November 2016

The Waterfront Hotel, Brighton

Call for Proposals to open in early 2016

Committees

We welcome the following new committee members: David Baume, Fiona Campbell, Mary Fitzpatrick, Annamarie McKie and Clare Power, who have joined the Conference and Events Committee and Jennie Winter, who has joined the Scholarship and Research Committee.

Rachael Carkett and Vicky Davies are the new Co-Chairs of the PDF Committee. Our thanks go to former Co-Chair, Jenny Eland, who now becomes Vice-Chair.

We wish to thank the following outgoing committee members: Charles Buckley and Monika Foster (Papers Committee), Yaz El Hakim and Peter Hartley (Services and Enterprise Committee), David Ross (Educational Developments Editorial Board) and Chris Rowell and Clare Taylor (Conference and Events Committee).

Forthcoming SEDA Publications

SEDA Special 38: Student Behaviour and Positive Learning Cultures

Edited by Gillian Janes, Dr Diane Nutt and Paul Taylor
This will be available to order from www.seda.ac.uk

Advancing Practice in Academic Development

Edited by David Baume and Celia Popovic
Routledge SEDA Series
Further details of this publication are available on the SEDA website <http://seda.ac.uk/apad>