

This work has been submitted to NECTAR, the
**Northampton Electronic Collection of Theses and
Research.**

<http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/3706/>

Creators: Burnapp, D., Zhao, W., Boteju, D., Jament, J., Feng, Y., Li, S., Powis, C., Klimes, C. and Mallam-Hassam, Y.

Report title: The strategic implications of different forms of international collaboration in Higher Education: Case studies.

Date: September 2011

Case study title: CS 10: Staff development in the UK. The development of a Post Graduate Certificate for Staff Development.

Case study author: Burnapp, D.

Report to: the Higher Education Academy.

Also funded by: National Teaching Fellowship Scheme.

Originally published by: The University of Northampton.

The InterCollab online tool which accompanies this work may be found at:

<http://nbsbitesize.northampton.ac.uk/intercollab-tool/interactivetool-intro.php>

Example citation: Burnapp, D. (2011) CS 10: Staff development in the UK. The development of a Post Graduate Certificate for Staff Development In: Burnapp, D. *et al. The strategic implications of different forms of international collaboration in Higher Education*. Northampton: The University of Northampton.

Version of item: Case study accompanying project final report

CS 10: Staff development in the UK.

The development of a Post Graduate Certificate for Staff Development

Author: Dave Burnapp

Summary

This case study first summarises the need for Higher Education institutions to train staff to operate mindfully in internationalised settings. It then describes an underpinning theoretical framework for staff development in this area, and describes the development of a Post Graduate Certificate developed at the University of Northampton.

Key learnings up front

- **CS 10.1.** Staff training in internationalisation requires participants to engage in ongoing reflective practice (with a focus on the practitioners themselves), to analyse their own roles and encounters, rather than on learning details of other cultures, (the 'how to understand your Indian students' approach).
- **CS 10.2.** Staff training requires an across-the-institution strategy; all stakeholders, including support staff as well as academic staff, need to recognise the links between their own individual areas of activity and the learning experience of all students, and to consider how their own workings will be affected by different forms of collaboration.
- **CS 10.3.** Each staff member should engage in a process of constant improvement by examining best practice and evaluation of their own interventions, firmly based on good quality research, conducted by others and by the participants themselves.
- **CS 10.4.** The outcome of staff development should be an open stance, a recognition that things can be done differently, for example it is necessary to look at communications with students, such as when giving assignment instructions or sending pre-arrival

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

information, and to recognise that some details assumed as 'given' may in fact need to be unpacked.

- **CS 10.5.** Effective training will allow participants to make amendments which will be improvements for all, and not just for international students.
- **CS 10.6.** It is essential however, in any amendments to their operations which the participants plan, that professional standards are recognised

Background to the problem

Recent developments have involved ever greater diversity: in types of collaborations; in methods of course delivery; in origins of students; in expectations of students and their sponsors, in needs of provision of support and administrative services; and crucially diversity in methods of quality assurance whilst maintaining standards of quality. This can be appreciated by considering the different training needs created in the following illustrative scenarios:

Scenario One

A UK university has an existing top-up degree related to financial services, and now wishes to offer this course using supported distance learning in Hong Kong. The students will use a VLE to access the materials, so the course needs to be adapted for this mode of delivery. The students will get some support from tutors in a study centre there, but assignments will be marked by tutors in the UK. Members of the faculty in the UK will travel to Hong Kong to run weekend workshops.

Scenario Two

Two universities (one in the UK and one in India) have received funding to develop jointly an undergraduate module aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills and intercultural communication. The module needs to be jointly validated by the two universities and the lecturers of the two universities are to develop the content together. The course will be delivered via the VLEs of the two universities and the students will be form working groups where each group contains students from the two universities. The careers advisory services of both universities must be consulted during the development of the module.

Scenario Three

A university is designing a training package concerning logistics for middle-level managers of state-run enterprises in a North African country. This course will be funded by their government. The participants' will come for a twelve week block which will include lectures, visits to industry, and short work placements. Accommodation must be in home stay with two students allocated to each host family. All the participants will be males. A social programme must be included, and this must respect the social, cultural, and religious backgrounds of the participants.

Scenario Four

A faculty of Environmental Science is going to collaborate with several European universities to develop joint activities related to waste management. This will be a complex network with a range of activities including joint research (for which they will collaborate in seeking funding), student exchanges for periods of various lengths, development of teaching materials (reusable learning objects), joint supervision of PhDs, and the organisation of dissemination activities including workshops and conferences.

It can be seen that each of these collaborations will have different impacts on different parts of an institution, and that quality provision will require staff training.

Key issues

The following points summarise the underpinning theoretical framework which should inform the development of such training:

Mindfulness

The outcome should be the development of an open stance, a recognition that things can be done differently. Without such understanding there is a constant danger of confusing *one* way of doing things with *the* way of doing things, and so to assume that certain expectations and requirements are obvious and do not need explanation. For example it is necessary to look at communications with students, such as when giving assignment instructions or sending pre-arrival information, and to recognise that some details assumed as 'given' may in fact need to be unpackaged.

Reflective practice

Hence reflective practice is a suitable approach, leading each participant to analyse their own roles, their own encounters, and the conventions of their communities of practice. The reason for this training is to allow participants – via the reflective/action cycle – to make amendments to their activities which will be improvements, possibly improvements for all and not just international students.

Research based

As the intended outcomes are changes in behaviours these changes should be firmly based on good quality research, conducted by others and by the participants themselves, as part of their ongoing professional development, so the training materials should prepare the participants for such small-scale research.

Adherence to professional standards

It is essential however, in any amendments to their operations which the participants plan, that professional standards are recognised. The training course should ensure that the participants refer to the relevant standards when considering amendments to their activities, for example:

- National Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education.
- Professional Standards relating to Information Advice and Guidance professions (IAG)
- Continuous Professional Development Framework for staff working in Professional Services in Higher Education

What was done

For several years workshops and materials were developed in collaboration with the *Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies*, including the creation of online staff training materials which are available for download from <http://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/mb/2968> Various presentations were given around the UK to demonstrate these materials, and in response to demand a *Postgraduate Certificate in Enhancing the International Student Experience* was developed with the following aims:

- To enable participants to operate as reflective practitioners in an internationalised environment in Higher and Further Education.
- To enable participants to develop a systematic understanding of knowledge and a critical awareness of complex issues relating to internationalisation and globalisation of Higher and Further Education at different levels: globally; nationally; within their own institute; within their own subject area or area of professional activity.
- To enable participants to develop an understanding of the links between their own individual areas of activity and the learning experience of all students.
- To enable participants to recognise how differences in cultures of education (including values, beliefs, conventions and language use) affect perceptions, expectations and behaviours of all stakeholders in Higher and Further Education institutions.
- To enable participants to be able to participate in the creation of effective institutional environments (for example programmes of study, and/or student support activities) which will foster an internationalised environment.
- To enable participants to incorporate research, scholarship, and/or examples of best professional practice concerning internationalisation and globalisation of Higher and Further Education into their own professional activities.
- To enable participants to design and plan original interventions in their own areas of activity based on relevant techniques of research, (for example programmes of study, and/or student support activities) which will foster an internationalised environment.

Key outcomes and impact

The culmination of the course is an action research report, where each participant describes an amendment to their own activity which incorporates the themes identified earlier (research based; mindful; respectful of best practice within a community of practice). Several of these reports have been collected into a special issue of the University of Northampton's journal: **Enhancing the Learner Experience in Higher Education**¹. These articles are briefly glossed here as an indication of the range of outcomes which an effective staff development strategy can yield.

¹ <http://journals.northampton.ac.uk/index.php/elehe>

Strategic Implications of International Collaborations in Higher Education

1. To review the induction experiences of Imperial College London's collaborative PhD students, in order to reflect upon the significance of university induction for international students, and, at a more practical level, the form and content of a successful induction process.
2. To assess the extent to which an online pre-arrival study skills package impacts on the academic success of international students undertaking an MSc in the UK: how far the study skills intervention enhances students' understanding of course content, students' progress; students' adaption of learning styles; students' confidence; and academic staff appreciation of, and response to, the learning needs of international students.
3. To evaluate assessment strategies with reference to Black African social work students, comparing the bewildering 'other world' of less familiar assessment processes which demanded a deeper level of critical thinking skills with forms of assessment more familiar to them.
4. To enhance the international student visa advisory service at Edinburgh University, with reference to the University's internationalization strategy of increasing the number of international students and embedding globalization into the ethos of the institution.
5. To explore the use of buddy schemes in Aston Business School, focussing partly on incoming exchange students, and examining one cycle of the ongoing improvements.
6. To improve the provision of pre-arrival information and support to international students arriving at University College London via the use of online resources.