

Review of Literature Regarding: Academic Leadership at Off-Shore Campuses and Internationalisation of the Curriculum

A review of literature was conducted to find relevant information regarding: subject convenors or program coordinators at offshore campuses who show leadership; and academics' understanding of the term "internationalisation of the curriculum". No papers specifically discussing staff at offshore campuses AND distributed leadership were found. However, literature relating to each topic was found, and both are presented in separate sections below.

Much of the literature regarding teaching staff at off-shore campuses seems to focus on: the experiences of teachers at offshore campuses; the importance of preparation needed prior to Australian staff leaving for an offshore campus; the importance of support which should be given to Australian academics in offshore campuses; and the importance of local teaching staff at offshore campuses to student learning.

Regarding taking on leadership roles, the literature presents an idea that, rather than being in a position to be proactive, academics at offshore campuses are a step beyond, and work to simply manage the roles expected of them. This is due to a number of reasons. For Australian academics at offshore campuses, other difficulties, such as cultural uncertainty and maintaining the quality of a unit which has been adapted for an international market; whilst academics and tutors from the host country play a subservient role to Australian academic and do not consider to act proactively.

This preliminary literature review concludes by considering the various understandings of the term "internationalisation" in a Higher Education context, describing the evolution of the concept and concluding with a critique of the definitions which have been most popular in recent decades.

LEADERSHIP AT SUBJECT CONVENOR/PROGRAM COORDINATOR LEVEL

Roberts, S., Butcher, L. & Brooker, M., 2010. *Clarifying , Developing and Valuing the Role of Unit Coordinators as Informal Leaders of Learning in Higher Education*, Australian Learning & Teaching Council. Retrieved 23rd December, 2010 from:

<http://www.altc.edu.au/system/files/resources/LE8-824%20Murdoch%20Roberts%20Final%20Report%202011.pdf>

This report of non-formal, unit coordinator-level academics who take leadership roles came about as a result of a gap in the area of research. The report is primarily based on academics in Australia, and not those at offshore campuses, though offshore situations are briefly discussed in the section regarding internationalisation (pg 58).

The authors note that Unit Convenors have a number of tasks which make their roles complex, such as handling first year students, often in large classes; managing sessional staff; and maintaining unit quality, to name a few. [For staff at off-shore campuses, added to this can be cultural complexities and internationalisation of the curriculum.]

The report concludes with a number of outcomes. As a result of the research, the following was created:

- an evidence-based job description which clarifies the Unit Coordinator's role;
- a person specification of the competencies and capabilities needed to perform the role effectively;
- recommended induction and development modules;
- a revised set of criteria for use in probationary, performance development and promotional evaluations that will potentially enhance recognition and transparency of process; and
- a list of leadership training available for academic and general staff at universities across Australia.

Cohen, L. & Bunker, A., 2007. Exploring The Role Of Unit Coordinators Within Universities. In *Enhancing Higher Education, Theory and Scholarship, Proceedings of the 30th HERDSA Annual Conference, Adelaide, 8-11 July 2007*. Adelaide, South Australia: Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia, p. pp111.

The research conducted looks to identify the role of unit coordinators at an Australian university (Edith Cowan University). The researchers note that there appears to be little or no training for positions such as that of a unit convenor. The tasks identified as part of the role include:

1. Organisational skills (eg. not conducting research during semester; when managing large numbers of students, limiting the time of availability to them),
2. Designing curriculum (requiring current understanding of the discipline and current/future issues in the profession),
3. Managing teaching staff (communicating, coaching, team building and managing conflict with teaching staff),
4. Supporting students (communication and counselling skills, knowledge of student responsibilities and university services),
5. Dealing with systems (requiring knowledge of current procedures and systems).

Although the paper doesn't discuss unit coordinators at offshore campuses, consideration of the other complexities they manage (cultural issues, quality assurance etc) on top of those listed above, is worthwhile.

When comparing the Edith Cowan description for unit coordination, all of the tasks undertaken by the coordinators were listed, and many tasks were not, such as counselling students. The researchers argue that this, combined with the engagement of a role for which coordinators do not often receive adequate training or induction, suggests the coordinators take on roles of leadership.

Jones, S., Applebee, A., Harvey, M. & Lefoe, G. (2010). Scoping a distributed leadership matrix for higher education. In M. Devlin, J. Nagy and A. Lichtenberg (Eds.) *Research and Development in Higher Education: Reshaping Higher Education*, 33 (pp. 359–369). Melbourne, 6–9 July, 2010. Retrieved June 3rd, 2011 from: http://www.herdsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/conference/2010/papers/HERDSA2010_Jones_S.pdf

This paper, noting the lack of research into distributed leadership within Higher Education, brings together the findings of four recent ALTC funded project regarding distributed leadership within a tertiary context.

STAFF AT OFFSHORE CAMPUSES

Debowski, S., 2003. Lost in Internationalised Space: The Challenge of Sustaining Academics Teaching Offshore. In *Australian International Education Conference*. Retrieved 23rd December, 2010 from: http://www.aiec.idp.com/pdf/DebowskiFri0900_p.pdf

Recognises the difficulties for academics, most often senior, teaching off-shore and the often lacking support provided by the universities. The numerous roles often taken on with an offshore position alongside teaching (such as course co-ordination and moderation, ensuring offshore unit quality) can add extra demand. Personal cost is also charged through disruption of lifestyle and a lacking emotional support from friends/family and missing participation at the home university. Discusses 'mechanisms' in place (e.g courses for cross-cultural communication, curriculum design, career/time management etc) to support offshore academics, though uptake of these is low. Recommends development of off-shore work policy.

Leask, B., 2004. Transnational Education and Intercultural Learning: Reconstructing the Offshore Teaching Team to Enhance Internationalisation. In *Australian Universities Quality Forum 2004*. Retrieved 21st December, 2010 from: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.114.9090&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Discusses the differing roles and pressures placed on teaching staff in off-shore campuses (in this paper, it's a campus in Hong Kong), largely dependant on whether they are Australian staff teaching at the offshore campus or local staff working as tutors. The paper states that the Australian staff provide "two intensive face-to-face blocks of teaching time" with the following tutorials being presented by local teaching staff who "take on the role of cultural mediator and translator". This paper could benefit by explaining why local tutors may NOT show leadership as, at least in the example given, they are considered the "ground force" who "finish off and clean up" as subsidiaries after the Australian staff have provided the main teaching. The paper argues that the current structure and power relationships do not allow for local tutors to take on such a role.

Smith, L., 2009. Sinking in the sand? Academic work in an offshore campus of an Australian university. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 28(5), pp.467-479.

Provides results of research conducted at an Australian branch campus located in the UAE, and regards the external influences on assessment and transnational education and the way academics permanently based at the institute perceive their roles. It concludes by emphasising the importance of carefully maintaining a relationship with the off-campus academics, especially local academics who may have had no previous contact with the home institute or experience with the home education system as this will also have an impact on the quality assurance. Although home institutes are responsible for quality and benchmarking, the paper notes the increasing involvement the host country has in the accreditation process.

Dunn, L. & Wallace, M., 2006. Australian academics and transnational teaching: An exploratory study of their preparedness and experiences. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 25(4), pp.357-369.

Discusses transnational teaching in all forms (whether institute has branch campus or block teaching by Australian academics through affiliates) focussing on academic development. Briefly provides data from an empirical study relating to academic teaching in transnational environments, focussing on 'teaching practices' and 'induction, orientation and professional development'. Concludes that academics need to be better prepared for transnational teaching; the expertise of the host countries tutors is an untapped resource; and curriculum was the same as presented in Australia with local examples and case studies – this needs to be changed to be more relevant to the host country.

There isn't text specifically related to leadership but instead it discusses how academics could be better prepared for transnational teaching.

Gribble, K. & Ziguas, C., 2003. Learning to Teach Offshore : Pre-Departure training for lecturers in transnational programs. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 22(2), pp.206-216.

Discusses the benefits of having program leaders or course co-ordinators accompany lecturers who are embarking on their first off-shore teaching experience, to help them adjust to the new location. They also suggest that lecturers already established in the host country can be off great benefit to the newly arrived lecturer.

International Education Association Of Australia, 2008. Learning, teaching and the student experience. Chapter 6. In *Good practice in offshore delivery: A guide for Australian providers*. Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Retrieved 21st December, 2010 from:
http://export.business.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/40752/TNE_Good_Practice_Guide_2008_pdf.pdf

The chapters from this book that would be of most relevance are chapters 6 (this) and 7 (below). This chapter discusses the requirements of teaching offshore. It covers topics such as: proper host-country accreditation required; internationalised curriculum; intercultural communication; delivery in English and other topics.

International Education Association Of Australia, 2008. Staffing and professional development. Chapter 7. In *Good practice in offshore delivery: A guide for Australian providers*. Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Retrieved 21st December from:
http://export.business.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/40752/TNE_Good_Practice_Guide_2008_pdf.pdf

Both of these are related to staff and staff preparation/reward for off-shore teaching but neither discusses leadership or innovation of those academic staff. The authors suggest that it is "essential for institutions to recognise and reward staff appropriately for their TNE teaching".

Macdonald, I., 2006. Offshore university campuses: Bonus or baggage? In *29th HERDSA Annual Conference*. Perth, Western Australia. Retrieved 21st February, 2011 from: <http://www.herdsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/conference/2006/papers/Macdonald.pdf>

Presents branch campuses as a relatively new approach to offshore education, in comparison to Australian parent institutes providing intensive block teaching through a local institute in the host country. Lists the benefits of branch campuses (e.g. cheaper education for the same degree; often more relaxed visa restrictions allowing more students to study). Discusses quality assurance offshore; the make-up of the academic staff (including how to attract, retain and develop them); and career planning and support.

UNDERSTANDINGS OF INTERNATIONALISATION OF THE CURRICULUM

Comparison and evaluation of definitions

A singular and agreed definition of the term “internationalisation of the curriculum” is complicated. This is due to its use as an umbrella term for varying activities and ideas. As the activities and ideas have matured over the years, their differences have become increasingly apparent. Consequently, the term is now used for different purposes and benefits dependant on which stakeholder is using the term. For example, those who focus on teaching may prefer a different definition than those who use the term for marketing or recruitment purposes. Leask (2005) explains:

On the one hand we have descriptions of approaches to internationalisation focused on the preparation of graduates for participation in an increasingly globalised society. On the other hand we have those who argue that internationalisation in higher education is primarily concerned with the recruitment of fee-paying international students by universities in the developed rich part of the world to the immediate and long-term detriment of universities in the developing, poorer parts of the world. [p. 1]

In more detail, Knight (2004) explains the variety of different meanings people take:

For some people, [internationalisation] means a series of international activities such as academic mobility for students and teachers; international linkages, partnerships, and projects; and new, international academic programs and research initiatives. For others, it means the delivery of education to other countries through new types of arrangements such as branch campuses or franchises using a variety of face-to-face and distance techniques. To many, it means the inclusion of an international, intercultural, and/or global dimension into the curriculum and teaching learning process. Still others see international development projects and, alternatively, the increasing emphasis on trade in higher education as internationalization. Finally, there is frequent confusion as to the relationship of internationalization with globalization. [pp. 5-6]

An Evolution of Definitions

Knight (2004) provides an overview of the evolution of the term and concept of *internationalisation*, explaining that, in the context of education, it gained popularity during

the 1980s. The first attempt at a definition was provided in the early 1990s by Arum and van de Water¹ who provided a description for activities or programs which already existed. This definition provided a label to the “activities, programs and services” which were already internationalised by nature and of their own volition. Recognising that this definition neglected the idea of promoting incorporation into existing curriculum, Knight² proposed a definition that was considered practical. This definition suggested that the internationalisation of a curriculum was a process which could allow all parts of a curriculum to be internationalised. However, both of these definitions were considered to limit the concept of internationalisation as they institutionally-based (Knight 2004). Van der Wende³ (1997, cited in Knight, 2004) expanded the definition to allow a greater global outlook by including issues such as globalisation in relation to the important elements of “societies, economy and labour markets”. However Knight (2004) argues that this definition loses emphasis on institutions and therefore “does not context internationalization in terms of the education sector itself” (p.10).

OECD Definition (1995)

Caruana, V. & Hanstock, J., 2003. Internationalising the Curriculum: From Policy to Practice. In *Education in a Changing Environment 17th-18th September 2003*. Salford: University of Salford. Retrieved 2nd February, 2011 from:
http://www.ece.salford.ac.uk/proceedings/papers/vc_03.rtf

Of the numerous definitions that have been provided over the past few decades, two in particular are favoured by Australian universities. The OECD definition (Bremer & van der Wende, 1995, as cited in Caruana & Hanstock, 2003), or an adaptation of, is used in official documents by the Charles Sturt University (n.d.), Flinders University (2010), University of Queensland (2009), University of Southern Queensland (Galligan, 2008), Victoria University (Woodley & Pearce, 2007) as well as others. The OECD envisages internationalisation as:

Curricula with an international orientation in content, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally/socially) in an international and multicultural context and designed for domestic students as well as foreign students (p. 4).

This definition gained preference as it described the idea of internationalisation as more than just a professional or academic concept, but also as a social one. It suggests that internationalisation should teach skills that go beyond that of a professional nature by also preparing students socially for an international stage. Furthermore, it also suggests that internationalisation is not only designed for domestic students but “foreign” students also.

However, the OECD attempt is limited by its own definition as it states that it is the *content* of the curricula that should be internationalised. This neglects to address all that goes on in

¹ “[Internationalisation is the] activities, programs and services that fall within international studies, international educational exchange and technical cooperation” (Arum & van de Water, 1992, cited in Knight, 2004, p. 9).

² “[Internationalisation is the] process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution” (Knight 1994, p. 7).

³ “[Internationalisation is] any systematic effort aimed at making higher education responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalization of societies, economy and labour markets” (Van der Wende, 1997, cited in Knight, 2004, pp. 9-10).

an education institution outside of the curricula such as the social aspects, functions and operations of an institute. Furthermore, although multiculturalism was present in the definition, this could simply refer to using different cultures as examples in the internationalised curricula and, although beneficial, does not go as far as the concept of internationalisation could.

Knight Definition (2003)

Knight, J., 2004. Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, and Rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 8(1), pp.5-31.

The short-comings of the OECD definition were addressed by the other most commonly used definition - that offered by Knight (2004). This definition is a revised effort of her previously quoted 1994 definition and can be found to be in use by the Australian Catholic University (2009), Curtin University (2007) and Griffith University (2009) to name a few. Knight (2003, as cited in Knight, 2004) proposes that internationalisation is:

The process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education (p. 11).

This definition is favoured by some as it broadens the concept of internationalisation, shifting its institutional focus to a sector-wide one (Sanderson, 2009). Knight (2004) argues that, as the use of the concept is more widely adopted, so to is the variety and diversity of institutions adopting it and requiring an applicable definition. For this reason, specific terms such as *teaching*, *research* and *service functions* which were used in the older definition are replaced by the more generic terms *purpose*, *function* and *delivery* (Knight, 2004). The emphasis regarding where this occurs is changed from *the institution* in the earlier definition to the broader term of *post-secondary education* in this updated version. By replacing these specific terms, the definition can encompass and be relevant at a sector level and institutional level. Furthermore, and unlike the curricula-centric OECD definition, Knight's use of the more generic terms suggest that internationalisation should move beyond just the curricula and encapsulate wider aspects of an institution, such as the culture of an institute.

What is also included in Knight's (2003, as cited in Knight, 2004) definition is the use of the term *intercultural*, replacing the oft used *multicultural* term. Intercultural is considered more appropriate as it suggests that, rather than simply having multiple cultures examined or used as examples, they are instead combined and work together. This experience would provide students with a truly internationalised education.

Leask Definition (2009)

Leask, B., 2009. Using Formal and Informal Curricula to Improve Interactions Between Home and International Students. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 13(2), pp.205-221.

A definition worth noting as it may gain preference in coming years is that offered by Leask (2009): "Internationalisation of the curriculum is the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the preparation, delivery and outcomes of a program of study" (p. 209).

Leask's definition is another tweak of Knight's (2003, as cited in Knight, 2004) definition though is specifically related to learning and teaching. As well as including Knight's addition

of interculturalism, Leask also provides *outcomes* in her version, an aspect neglected by both the OECD and Knight. Leask (2005) argues that it is important that the internationalisation of a curriculum is not an “end to a means”, developed simply to be able to claim that the curriculum is internationalised. Instead, internationalising should be “a strategy which will assist learners to become more aware of their own and others cultures”. For this reason, this definition states that internationalisation should not only be integrated into the curriculum but it should also be measured in the outcomes. Then the question can be asked “have students actually gained an internationalised outlook?”.

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Sanderson, G., 2009. Challenges in Internationalising the University Curriculum: Is it the Teaching, the Students and the Curriculum? Available at:
http://tlu.ecom.unimelb.edu.au/teaching_staff/pdfs/gavin_pres.pdf.

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http://tls.vu.edu.au/vucollege/courses_services/resources_downloads/Internationalisation%20of%20the%20Curriculum%20Toolkit%201%20April%202010.doc