

Internationalising the Curriculum through joined-up thinking
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The 'internationalisation' phenomenon is currently sweeping the UK HE sector, posing challenges for both policy makers and those engaged in supporting student learning. The drive to 'concretize' internationalisation raises a host of conceptual and practical issues. In order to engage meaningfully with the internationalisation agenda and to grasp the fundamental principles which underpin the notion of an internationalised curriculum, we need to understand the origin and evolution of the movement.

If curriculum design is not to be a mammoth task devouring resources at an ever-increasing rate, it is necessary to adopt a holistic approach to the internationalised curriculum - an exercise in 'joined-up thinking' that exposes the connections between internationalisation and related policy agenda that seek to influence the HE curriculum.

Internationalisation has traditionally been viewed as the response to changes brought about by globalisation, the most significant being the breaking down of domestic barriers between societies and cultures and the subordination of all to the market. Globalisation has also been cited as the origin of a 'marketisation discourse' that has come to pervade higher education as international competition intensifies. Taken together with institutional 'shortfalls', globalisation creates pressure to develop a favourable 'brand' in the international marketplace geared towards maximising foreign earnings from the recruitment of international students.

However, whilst international competition remains a significant driver for internationalisation, universities' efforts are now being re-focused on the need to enable graduates to compete in an increasingly global world of work, to function effectively in international and multicultural workplaces and to negotiate the uncertainties of a 'super-complex' world. This trend in thinking has engendered a marginal shift away from ethos, student mobility and content towards the 'graduate attributes' or 'competency' approach to internationalisation.

Within the internationalised curriculum, we are thinking about how we can develop cross-cultural capability in students who, for one reason or another, cannot study abroad. In this context, 'Internationalisation at Home' (IaH) is increasingly assuming significance. IaH is defined as 'any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility'. Thus, it focuses on activities 'beyond mobility', critiquing traditional actions in the process of internationalisation and countering the 'lighthouse' perspective that internationalisation is something you do abroad.

In effect, Internationalisation at Home links the international and the intercultural dimensions of HE teaching and learning in such a way as to raise awareness of and promote values of cultural diversity and equity in the classroom. It is clear that the

goals of internationalisation and Equality and Diversity are similar, each intending to facilitate mutual understanding, tolerance and respect and these goals can be realised through curriculum design based on the principle of IaH.

While Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has traditionally been regarded as the territory of geographers, scientists, engineers, it is clear that the internationalised curriculum and the sustainability curriculum share common ground since internationalisation is the response to globalisation and sustainable development is an attempt to 'humanise' it. Today's vision of sustainable development embraces an interconnection of issues such as poverty alleviation, social justice, democracy, human rights, peace and environmental protection – issues common to the notion of the 'Global Citizen'. This concept encompasses sustainability literacy, skills and knowledge, including problem solving in a holistic, non-reductionist manner; holistic thinking to support critical judgements; and a high level of reflection to identify, understand, evaluate and adopt values conducive to sustainability.

Whilst institutions have a responsibility to consider the economic imperatives of globalisation, university teachers and others supporting learning have a responsibility to interpret mission statements, policy documents and strategic plans to determine the most appropriate ways of introducing an international/intercultural dimension to the student learning experience. It is crucial to consider not simply 'what we do' but 'why we do it'. A holistic approach to internationalisation makes the vital connections that bridge the gap between rhetoric and reality.

Photo caption: Maria Lee, Head of CED (l), with Viv Caruana (r)