Kingston University London

Scanning the Horizons

Institutional Research in a Borderless World

Fourth Annual UK and Ireland Higher Education Institutional Research Conference

16–17 June 2011 Kingston University London, UK

Keynote speakers

Angel Calderon

Dr Lis Lange

Sir Peter Scott

HEIR

HEPP network
www.heir2011.org.uk

■ **Academic Development Centre**

CONTENTS

Dear delegates,

Welcome to Kingston University and the 4th HEIR Institutional Research conference. I am delighted that many of you have returned following the successful event at Dublin last year and particularly pleased at the large number of international delegates from every continent (except Antarctica!). This year our eminent keynote speakers: Lis Lange from South Africa, Angel Calderon from Australia, and Peter Scott (my predecessor as Vice Chancellor here at Kingston) from the UK will add to the international flavour and set the scene for "Scanning the Horizons in a Borderless World".

The new funding climate in the UK and financial pressures across the globe increase the need for innovative use of data to plan, monitor and evaluate the efficient use of resources. League table positions, external profile and increased value for money demands all raise the importance of effective research to plan and evaluate the outcomes of university strategies. Those institutions which embrace this will be the winners as we move forward. The presentations and network experience at HEIR2011 give many examples of innovative methods and ways forward from which I hope you are able to take solutions and new ideas to fit your own situations.

Since starting at Kingston in April this year I have spent much time scanning for evidence-based practice here. In addition to our Higher Education Policy and Practice research group I have found IR embedded within our Academic Development, Planning, Marketing and Student Services departments and spread across faculties. This may sound familiar to some of you and alien to others; it is my belief that through looking closely at the practice and experience of others, and at models of IR wherever it is carried out in Higher Education, we will all benefit.

I wish you all a stimulating, insightful and enjoyable conference.

Julius Weinberg
Vice-Chancellor
Kingston University

Dear delegates,

In higher education as in other economic sectors we live in interesting yet uncertain and often challenging times. Our institutions need to respond to an ever wider range of societal needs and social, economic and political interests. Leaders and all categories of staff are called upon to work across boundaries - whether national, cross-sector or inter-professional - in order to position our institutions, our countries and most importantly, our students, for living and working in an inter-connected world. Given this context, environmental scanning, understanding our profile and position and using data for quality enhancement, information to the public and comparative benchmarking become increasingly important and central to all our institutional operations at management, governance and accountability levels.

Our UK and Ireland HEIR conference takes place in this context and with a purpose to explore good and innovative practice internationally through the tracks of: accountability and engagement; supporting decision makers; planning, policy and management; institutional research in action; enhancing student experiences; and looking forward through institutional research.

Kingston University is proud to welcome you. Kingston's geographical position and history will allow you to enjoy London as a global city and Kingston itself as a historic market town. Kingston is a popular modern university whose 25000 students study a comprehensive range of undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes representing the diversity and vibrancy of London and Britain more widely. It has a strong focus on civic engagement and a commitment to encouraging students from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds to further their studies. In addition developments in teaching, learning, research and facilities have all contributed to making Kingston University a diverse and adaptable institution at the heart of education and economic development in the region.

We look forward to your engagement with the themes of our conference, bringing your knowledge and expertise in to stimulating dialogue and debate with others from the UK and other countries.

Robin Middlehurst
Professor of Higher Education
Kingston University

Dear delegates,

I would like to welcome you to Kingston University and to the 4th Annual HEIR Institutional Research Conference. The Academic Development Centre and the Higher Education Policy and Practice Network at Kingston are very proud of the opportunity to host this conference and we are grateful for the support of keynote speakers and a very strong and stimulating series of presenters from around the world.

The profile and role of institutional research within the UK is becoming more prominent as universities begin to grapple with the difficult issues emanating both from the economic climate and the strategy employed by the Coalition Government. Which measures to employ to improve Student Engagement? How to bridge gaps in attainment within a heterogeneous student body? How to improve the Student Experience within the classroom? Which strategies will improve the rates of degree completion? These questions require institutions to understand both the nature and extent of the issues to be resolved and the impact of solutions as they are developed and implemented. One of the most exciting features of institutional research is that it encourages the bringing together of people from a variety of disciplines, from both academic and professional backgrounds and from different types of institution. I do hope the conference affords you an opportunity to engage in stimulating debate, to hear about and contribute to new ways of thinking about issues and to come away with a renewed interest in reflecting on your own practice.

Have a great conference

Michael Hill
Director of Academic Development
Kingston University

Dear delegates,

A warm welcome to the 4th UK and Ireland Higher Education Institutional Research conference!

The growing prominence of institutional research (IR) in the UK and Ireland in the last few years has taken place against a landscape of rapidly changing national higher education policy contexts. Simply 'keeping the show on the road' is no longer an option. As the pressure on institutions to 'know themselves' in order to be more effective increases, IR takes on an increasingly vital role in institutional strategic management. Key components in the quest for institutional effectiveness are the skills, competence and knowledge of the staff undertaking these IR functions.

Set up after the 1st IR conference in 2008, the HEIR Network aims to build IR capacity and grow a community of IR practitioners in the UK and Ireland, although we are increasingly welcoming IR colleagues from all round the world. To date, the main activities of the HEIR Network have included the annual conference each summer and focussed one-day thematic events. The last 4 years has seen the gradual blossoming of a small but authentic community around the concept and practice of IR. Your open and active participation in the conference programme over the next two days will add to this shared sense of community.

I hope you have an interesting and fruitful conference and that you will take every opportunity to dialogue and establish (or re-establish) connections with IR colleagues from the UK, Ireland, and from around the world. Together, we make up the rich and varied mosaic of IR approaches and traditions from which we can all learn.

As we are an informal network almost entirely reliant on goodwill and support, do feel free to contact me with suggestions for future events and activities and indeed, any offers to host future events.

Helena Lim
HEIR Network Co-ordinator

About the HEIR Network

Who we are
A community of individuals with an interest or involvement in research into higher education at the institutional or system level.

What we are trying to do
Develop a network that enables higher education researchers to communicate with each other.

What we mean by IR
Research undertaken within an institution or higher education system to provide information to support an evidence-informed approach to policy and practice.

The purposes of the HEIR Network include:
• developing knowledge about the practice in the UK and Ireland brokering expertise and identifying people willing to share their knowledge and skills with others.
• advocating and championing IR
• and in the future, establishing a professional association for IR practitioners in the UK and Ireland.

Conference Working group

Rene Bach Website design and development
Ash Ghafoor Website design and development
Holly Sorce Finance and invoices
Rob Pearce Registration and fees
Anette Hjerde Administrator
Hazel McNeil Administrator
Kate Dracup-Jones Administrator
Helena Lim HEIR network
HEPP Steering Group General support
The KUCEL Team Conference logistics
Student Ambassadors Conference support

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John Taylor University of Liverpool
Randy Swing Association for Institutional Research
Robin Middlehurst Kingston University
Russell Rimmer Queen Margaret University Edinburgh
Sheryl Randall University of Northampton
Steve May Kingston University
Steve Woodfield Kingston University
Tim Linsey Kingston University

Conference Chairs

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Stefan Buettner Eberhard Karls University Tuebingen
Aoife Flanagan NUI Galway
Heather Forland Kingston University
Peter Hoekstra University of Amsterdam
Graham Holden Sheffield Hallam University
Ann Irving Southampton Solent University
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Ruth Matheson University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
Sarah Parrott Maguire Associates, Inc.
Helen Ralph University of Southampton
Russell Rimmer Queen Margaret University Edinburgh
Anna Round University of Sunderland
Duna Sabri University of the Arts, London
Shan Wareing University of the Arts, London
James Williams Birmingham City University
Caroline Williamson University of Birmingham
Harvey Woolf University of Wolverhampton

Conference Planning Group

Steve May Kingston University
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Conference themes and tracks

The theme of the conference is **'Scanning the horizons: Institutional Research in a borderless world'**.

The conference aims to explore the role of Institutional Research in a globalised education context where tertiary level institutions increasingly operate across conventional boundaries: geographical (e.g. transnational education); temporal and spatial (e.g. e-learning, virtual universities and blended learning); cross-sectoral (as in consortia of business and universities); and cross-functional (as in convergence between academic and vocational education). At the same time, institutions are being required to operate more efficiently and effectively in a context of reduced financial and physical resources, requiring us to find new ways to approach our tasks. How can we, as Higher Education practitioners and specifically Institutional Researchers, harness the available knowledge and resources to support institutional decision making, engage with stakeholders, improve the student experience and student outcomes, and prepare our institutions for the future?

Authors were asked to use the tracks below to guide their choice of topic:

Track 1
Accountability and Engagement: Moving beyond Performance Indicators and Quality Assurance
What is the role of Institutional Research in a context of ever-increasing internal and external demands for accountability?

Track 2
Supporting decision makers: Planning, Policy and Management
The role of Institutional Research in internal and external planning and policy making.

Track 3
Institutional Research in action: Tools, methods and capacity building
Developing the profession of Institutional Research

Track 4
Enhancing student experiences and measuring outcomes
Using Institutional Research throughout the student life cycle, from recruitment to employment.

Track 5
Looking forward through Institutional Research
Against a background of rapid change in its social, economic, scientific, environmental and technological contexts, how can Institutional Research help the future higher education institution to engage with its range of possible futures?

This year the five concurrent break-out sessions are only loosely based on the conference tracks in order to accommodate the differing numbers of accepted presentations in each track.

Venues
The break-out sessions are distributed between floor 1 and floor 3 of the John Galsworthy building, while registration, meals and refreshments will be available on floor 2 of the same building. The Plenary sessions (keynotes, welcome, etc) will take place in the Clattern Lecture Theatre in the main campus building.

We hope that you find the programme interesting and educational. This booklet contains details of all sessions. The programme timetable is included within your conference pack.

The colour-coding for rooms is consistent across this booklet and the programme timetable.

Angel Calderon

Challenges and Paradigms for Institutional Research in a Globalised Higher Education System

Abstract

The world of higher education (HE) is very different today to the one that prevailed ten, twenty or even forty years ago. Since the 1970s, but even more so since the 2000s, HE has undergone a rapid transformation parallel to other industries operating in a rapidly changing world.

In the past, universities responded to fewer longer-term policy priorities, but today such priorities arrive fast and change quickly as governments sense it is time for another policy review. The nature of work in HE, and IR in particular, has changed accordingly over the years. Within the context of the work undertaken by academic-related and support staff in universities, we now need to view IR as a function and professional practice in tertiary education. IR has become an essential function in the way institutions seek to fulfil their mission and accomplish their vision.

Whilst the roots of IR reside unquestionably in the United States, the practice of IR has taken different but complementary forms in the UK, Ireland, Australia, Netherlands and South Africa. However, a common thread across IR practitioners worldwide is that we provide information about the wider national and international context in which higher education institutions operate. IR is no longer a backroom data crunching operation, although this is still very important. It is now situated at the forefront of policy setting, guiding institutions as they navigate through reform, strategically reposition, and deal with growing uncertainty. In order to meet changing institutional demands, IR practitioners need to blend a range of skills and utilise their experience effectively and efficiently in activities that include: data analysis; policy analysis; research methods; environmental scanning; and strategy development.

In this keynote, we will examine the history of IR, the challenges of today and address the uncertainties of the future. We will seek to explore the following critical questions:

- Where is IR coming from and where is it heading – within the national, trans-regional and global contexts?
- What are the functions of IR in an inter-connected, competitive and globalised higher education environment?
- How are we fulfilling our role as institutional researchers and institutional visionaries in building the big policy picture for decision makers?
- How can we, institutional researchers, be innovative in our functions and professionalism at times of scarcity, uncertainty and ever changing work priorities?

Biography

Angel Calderon is Principal Advisor Planning and Research at RMIT. Previously he was the Head of Institutional Research at RMIT. Between 1997 and 2001 he was Manager of Statistical Services at Monash University. He has been working in the higher education sector since 1989 when he joined Footscray Institute of Technology (now Victoria University) as Planning Assistant Officer.

He has undertaken research and published papers in trends and developments in higher education and vocational, education and training; free trade agreements and higher education; student equity; use of student feedback to support decision making; skills for the future and implications for tertiary education; globalisation; emerging markets and implications for human capital and development (flows of trade and implications for education, training and research). He is co-author of a book examining trends in science education in Australia.

He has undertaken consultancy in the tertiary education sector and in industry in the fields of environmental scanning, scenario planning, market research and strategic planning. He has been recipient of various research grants. He is a regular speaker in conferences in Australia, in the United States and in Europe.

He was co-editor of the Journal of Institutional Research (1998-2001) and co-editor of the Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management (2001-2007). He is the founding editor of "The Electronic AAIR", a newsletter dedicated to environmental scanning on higher education management issues, and acted as the editor from 1996 to 2002. He remains active in academic publishing through consultancy and as a member of several editorial advisory boards.

Dr Lis Lange
Institutional Research and Quality Assurance: reflections on the nature and use of knowledge on higher education

Abstract
Quality assurance and institutional research are both acknowledged tools in the global march of higher education reform. The critique levelled at them is usually constructed in terms of the relative loss of institutional autonomy, particularly in the case of quality assurance, and the bureaucratisation and instrumentalisation of the core functions of the university, in the case of institutional research. Both quality assurance and institutional research are singled out as examples of, and tools for, managerialism. What is less common in the literature is to look at both activities from the point of view of the generation of knowledge about higher education and the possibility of this knowledge contributing to both improving higher education provision and supporting a progressive politics for national HE systems and the societies in which they are located. Questions such as: 'What kind of knowledge is generated through quality assurance and institutional research?' 'How is it used?' 'Who uses it?' and 'Does this knowledge amount to a better understanding of individual institutions and of higher education systems?' are focused on issues that are not frequently tackled in the literature. This keynote address will try to explore different answers to these questions, and the assumptions on which they are based.

Biography
Dr Lis Lange is a senior director heading the Directorate of Institutional Research and Academic Planning at the University of the Free State in South Africa. Before this, she was the Executive Director of the Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council of Higher Education, which has responsibility of quality assurance for private and public higher education institutions in South Africa. For 15 years she has been involved in the development and implementation of science and technology and higher education policy in South Africa working in different capacities in the Human Sciences Research Council and the National Research Foundation and the Council on Higher Education.

Her research on higher education and her contribution to the development of a framework for the monitoring of higher education as part of the Council on Higher Education has informed policy development and advice to the Ministry of Education in South Africa. She has published on quality assurance and science and technology in local and international journals. She is the author of a book on the history of South Africa.

Dr Lange was a member of the board of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (INQAAHE) and has served in different international initiatives on quality assurance.

Dr Lange has taught at higher education level at the University of Buenos Aires, and in the joint Masters on Higher Education of the universities of Cape Town and the Western Cape in South Africa.

Sir Peter Scott
A Double Paradigm Shift? Transforming higher education systems – and research practices

Abstract
Two paradigm shifts are under way, which are both complex and intimately linked.

The first is in the character of higher education (HE) systems. In the 20th century this transformation was typically described in terms of student growth - from elite to mass and then universal systems. In the 21st century it is more commonly described in terms of HE's funding base and its organisational (and managerial) culture – as a shift from the 'public' university to a more open 'market' system. Both reflected the dominant ideology of their age – the culmination of the post-war welfare state in the case of the former, and the triumph of neo-liberalism for the latter. Both accounts claimed to describe paradigm shifts, but neither captures the complexity of this transformation which has many, often contradictory and even antagonistic strands – the evolution of the welfare state into the so-called market state, the impact of new social movements, the growth of a 'graduate culture', the emergence of 'clever cities', and the advance of globalisation (in its market-oriented form but also in the shape of global resistances). The HE system is suffused by the knowledge society – and the knowledge society is suffused by higher education.

The second shift is in research practice. Once the dominant paradigm was of 'objective', empirical and/or experimental research conducted by suitably qualified (i.e. university trained) 'experts' in specialised sites (typically universities). Other forms of 'research' (including institutional research and action research), although acknowledged, were regarded as inferior. Even traditional scholarship in the humanities and critical social science struggled to compete with this dominant paradigm (rooted in the research practices of the natural sciences). Recently its dominance has been challenged – theoretically by new accounts of knowledge production which emphasise trans-disciplinarity, contextualisation (and contingency), the problematisation of expertise and social reflexivity; and practically by changes in research policy (for example, in the UK the replacement of the Research Assessment Exercise by the Research Excellence Framework with its greater emphasis on 'impact') and also the 'fight-back' by alternative forms of research inquiry grounded in practice and (occasionally) more politically engaged.

In this keynote I will argue that these two paradigm shifts are, first, complex – and, therefore, not easy to reduce to a simple ideological discourse whether 'social purpose' in the case of mass HE, or the 'market' in the case of more recent changes in higher education's funding base and organisational culture – and, secondly, that both reflect larger changes in intellectual culture and social structures. I will also emphasise the opportunities and challenges facing institutional research – in particular, its choice between acting as the R&D arm of the new more market-oriented organisational culture in HE, or whether it assumes a wider and more critical role.

Biography
Peter Scott is Professor of Higher Education Studies at the Institute of Education University of London. From 1998 until 2010 he was Vice-Chancellor of Kingston University and formerly Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Education at the University of Leeds and Editor of 'The Times Higher Education Supplement' from 1976 until 1992.

His main research interests are in the origins, structures and wider societal significance of mass higher education systems and the development of new patterns of knowledge production (in particular, the concept of 'Mode 2' knowledge). He is currently co-leading a BIS-funded project on higher education in further education (a joint project with colleagues at the University of Sheffield).

He chairs the Leadership Foundation's Research Advisory Panel and was a member of the board of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (2000-2006), chair of the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (2000-2008), and President of the Academic Cooperation Association in Brussels.

Anna Round

University of Sunderland, England

Modelling the university: information and ownership in current institutional research for HE

Individual paper

Scholars undertaking institutional research must select, collate and interpret information. Yet information about universities is contested in numerous ways.

Universities 'own' a number of information sets. These are populated by different actors within the institution, and driven by various institutional, sectoral or policy processes. In turn, these information sets acquire meanings beyond their content and possibly also beyond their stated purpose. For example, the inclusion of any particular variable can heighten its salience within policy or media discourses, while implicitly downgrading other factors. Signals about the validity and legitimacy of different types of information accrue from a variety of sources. Fears about 'survey fatigue' among students may effectively silence some topics altogether.

A further issue in contemporary British HE is the relationship between institutional information and information as a factor in the operation of the increasingly 'marketised' system.

This paper examines the construction of meanings around some important information sets in relation to HE, and at the implications of these for IR practitioners. The ways in which researchers' decisions build a particular 'model' of a university and its purpose will be discussed. Refinements to improve the fit between research, policy and institutional mission will be explored.

Penny Jones & Deborah Smith

University of Brighton, England

Streamlining the annual Academic Health monitoring process

Work in progress

The institution conducted a pilot study inviting schools to trial a revised approach to their annual monitoring (known as Academic Health) of undergraduate provision.

The aim was to reduce the demands on staff for quantitative data analysis, by using a centralised, analytical framework and set of indicators and benchmarks. This was developed to enable greater comparability across schools and faculties as well as across partner colleges, reducing staff resource by means of exception reporting. Used alongside qualitative input and local knowledge the new process aims to better support institutional quality assurance and corporate aims, and to enhance the student experience.

The presentation will highlight the challenge of choosing the appropriate indicators, and finding comparable data across institutions and their partner colleges. Discussion is invited on the use of KPIs and exception reporting.

The paper also covers how the indicators support QA and drive enhancement at the institution, and the role of qualitative analysis in addressing the gaps exception reporting introduces.

Post trial recommendations for roll out, from the steering group and the academic board will be shared along with further developmental work in the postgraduate area and partner colleges.

Yuraisha Chetty

University of South Africa (Unisa), South Africa

A practical support tool to tackle the language barrier at an open and distance learning university thereby supporting student learning and the student experience

Individual paper

**Thursday 16 June 11.30–13.00
JG Room 1005**

Track 2

Given South Africa's colonial history, English and Afrikaans have dominated the teaching and learning environment of higher education institutions. Various literature questions the dominance of English as the language of instruction and assessment, and strongly supports multilingualism. The effective implementation of Unisa's Language Policy was the key impetus for this research. The multilingual glossary initiative forms part of a broader initiative to effectively implement the Language Policy at Unisa. A multilingual glossary is included in particular courses at the University of South Africa. It comprises a description of key terms and concepts in some African languages and in the two languages of instruction, namely English and Afrikaans. Glossaries are aimed at supporting students, whose home language is not the language of instruction, thereby increasing their chances of success. The research aim was to determine whether students regarded glossaries as a useful tool which supported their learning. A quantitative approach framed the research in the form of an online survey. Purposive sampling targeted students enrolled for courses which had multilingual glossaries. The findings were positive and made a strong case to university management for the continued and wider provision of multilingual glossaries. This is currently being implemented across colleges at Unisa.

Louise Comerford Boyes & Becka Colley

University of Bradford, England

Researching the Personal Academic Tutor Framework: what can institutions learn from stakeholder-centric research practices?

Work in progress

**Thursday 16 June 11.30–13.00
JG Room 1005**

Track 2

This paper explores a current research project that examines the implementation and development of a new Personal Academic Tutoring Framework. The Framework, strategically launched from the Learner Development Unit is borne of ongoing, systemic examination and evaluation of the student experience. A mainly qualitative questionnaire to academic departments has been developed by institutional researchers, the methodology adopted being an initial baseline snapshot of policy implementation followed by ongoing formative evaluation of what factors support/constrain academic departments in this area. Importantly, it allows departments to showcase their best practice. A strong theme throughout the questions explores whether staff collect their own data and whether this is informed by student feedback. Additionally, questions are designed to encourage staff to understand the framework as fully as is possible as well as look for evidence that the practices it supports do indeed enhance the student experience by yielding a wide range of positive impacts. One of the expected outcomes, therefore, is that staff will learn through the experience of engaging with the data capture. The session will very briefly introduce the context and the content of the research in order to generate discussion that focuses on peoples' experiences of investigating and evaluating institutional practices.

Martyn Stewart, Elena Zaitseva & Clare Milsom

Liverpool John Moores University, England

The forgotten year: exploiting institutional datasets to illuminate the second-year slump

Individual paper

Thursday 16 June 11.30–13.00
JG Room 1007

Track 3

Research into the student experience in higher education has overwhelmingly focused on the first year and emphasised the importance of front-loaded support. Empirical research in the USA has identified the phenomenon of a performance dip in year two, termed the 'Sophomore Slump', and this is supported by analysis of institutional datasets at Liverpool John Moores University. This study examines how institution-wide student record data sets have been tailored/adapted for better usability and how the existence and scale of the performance dip has been established for different subject areas, based on analysis of means and the distribution of the proportion of equivalent 'good degree' classifications awarded (i.e. Upper Second and First Class). Analysis of wider student engagement indicators suggests the second year slump phenomenon extends beyond simple measures of academic performance. These include data from student experience surveys, Student Union and academic support services and attendance monitoring. Potential causes are in part indicated by these data, but illuminated further through analysis of interviews with students and staff. As well as highlighting both the value and challenges of accessing and integrating institutional-scale data sets, the study recognises a need to consider a broad range of evaluation techniques to assist with interpretation of quantitative findings.

Fiona Smyth Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
Peter Cullen Higher Education and Training Awards Council, Ireland

Assessing the impact of higher education on learners' skills: What have we learned?

Work in progress

Thursday 16 June 11.30–13.00
JG Room 1007

Track 4

A group of first year and final year bachelor degree students took standardised tests of critical thinking, problem solving and analytical reasoning skills in 2009. The group consisted of approximately 670 students from business and commerce programmes across 8 HEIs. Half were in their first year and the remainder in their final year. Performance and its improvement was analysed against a range of other variables such as age, degree result, school results, programme level. The set of tests was developed by the CAE and ACER. One of the tests (the CLA) allowed international comparison with test scores from the US.

The use of standardised tests with suitable control data offers the possibility of comparative studies of the change in learning (between first and final year) across different institutions. The paper will discuss findings as well as methodological and policy conclusions. Specifically it will provide some insights into the results, opportunities and challenges of this approach applied to generic skills.

The technical report on the research underpinning this presentation is available on HETAC's website.

http://www.hetac.ie/docs/Assessing_the_impact_of_HE_on_Learners_Generic_Skills_04042011.pdf

Janet Cole & Nicholas Fernando

Kingston University, England

A socio-cognitive diagnostic framework to determine student's academic stress

Individual paper

Thursday 16 June 11.30–13.00
JG Room 3003

Track 4

Students in Higher Education (HE) are under academic and non-academic pressure. Those experiencing pressure may be unable to recognise it, or to describe how they are academically coping and are therefore unable to seek help. Our research shows that pressure does not happen in isolation and that there is a tension between the balance of a student's family, social, and employment life, with their academic life. The disruption of the balance is recognised by the student being unavailable to participate in academic activities such as lectures, workshops, and group work; and in missing deadlines, and may cause them to disengage, even to dropout of HE. The motivational behavioural diagnostic framework gives an indication of academic coping ability in positive or negative terms. From this an evaluator can determine whether support would assist the student. Other institutional faculty processes can then also be integrated with the diagnostic framework to provide an innovative and cost-effective support mechanism. 150 students from three universities participated in the research.

Kate Thomas

UWE Bristol, England

Working on transition: Foundation degree to Honours year

Work in progress

Thursday 16 June 11.30–13.00
JG Room 3003

Track 4

This paper presents work in progress on a longitudinal project entitled: *Working on Transition*. The project tracks student narratives of transition from Foundation degree (Fd) at a Further Education College (FEC) to an Honours year at the validating university (HEI) and the paper explores the role of institutional mechanisms and interventions in supporting that transition. Ecclestone suggests, 'transitions become problematic only if a viable identity in one context does not transfer to another' (Ecclestone, 2009) and this project places the work-connected nature of Foundation degrees and Foundation degree learners at the heart of its investigation. Research methods include online questionnaires, group and individual interviews and journal entries to capture student narratives pre-and post-transition and across a range of disciplines and occupational fields.

The conference session will consist of a 10 minute presentation outlining key research findings and emerging themes followed by a 20 minute discussion during which participants will be invited to consider both the impact and implications of institutional interventions on the Fd graduate experience of transition and ways in which these might value, reinforce or disrupt 'work-connectedness'.

Stefan Buettner

Eberhard Karls University Tuebingen, Germany

Institutional Research vs. "Third Space"

Individual paper

Thursday 16 June 11.30–13.00
JG Room 3004

Track 5

Victoria Perselli

Kingston University, England

Is there a principled way forward for educational research that can speak to the paradigm of institutional research in times of immense challenge and complexity?

Individual paper

Thursday 16 June 11.30–13.00
JG Room 3004

Track 1

In a series of papers, Celia Whitchurch (2006, 2008) explores the 'Third Space', which she defines "as an emergent territory between academic and professional domains, which is colonised primarily by less bounded forms of professionals" (2008, p.2). Jobs in that spectrum can now be called 'higher education professions' (or HoPro's in German). Today, 'Institutional Research' is used more often across Europe, sometimes without a proper investigation of what IR stands for originally or what else it could include in their specific context.

Common definitions of IR rather describe the tasks than the territory it actually covers. IR has been developing and extending its field of operation continuously and the form it takes differs from institution to institution, but yet it spans over many areas and could unite the patchwork of small bureaus on campuses doing third space activities under one performance increasing roof – like an umbrella.

In this session, we will discuss whether institutional research actually is filling the 'Third Space' or more, whether there are white spaces that are not yet being dealt with by IR but part of that territory and how the fields covered by IR or related disciplines differ across the world.

In professional practice research in education, participants often begin their projects by posing practical questions centred on an aspect of their real world experience that they wish to change through intervention. In the process of conducting their research they usually discover that these practical questions or dilemmas can be viewed and interrogated using a far greater range of discourses and analytical lenses than they ever imagined. In the process this helps practitioners to extend their understandings of their research, themselves and the phenomenon they are investigating, often ending with a more refined and subtle set of research questions. There is a distinct pedagogy associated with this research paradigm, drawn from emancipatory philosophical frameworks and informed by specific cultural and social demographics, that enables practitioners to extend the 'lexicons' of their professional practice and feel more

'ontologically secure'. In this presentation I will explain what I mean by this through illustrations from my own research and teaching of masters and doctoral students. I will then ask the question, to what extent is this framework and methodology useful towards understanding and responding to the questions we are faced with presently in higher education such as, what is higher education, who is it for?

Shan Wareing & Duna Sabri

University of the Arts London, England

The research is only half the project: developing dissemination and change strategies for institutional research

Workshop

Thursday 16 June 14.30–15.30
JG Room 1004

Track 3

The purposes of institutional research are often intertwined with universities' responses to changes in their relationship to government and society. The primary agents in this endeavour are institutional managers and this assumption seems to underlie institutional research in the UK (Watson and Maddison 2005) in Europe in general (Begg 2003) and the US (Leimer 2009). Leimer (2009), sees institutional researchers as 'change agents' and advocates the involvement of other staff groups through 'building awareness' (Swing: 35). Nevertheless even here, staff are conceived as essentially outsiders to the research who need to be brought on board.

Drawing on our experience of three IR projects, this workshop considers approaches to communicating institutional research with the goal of avoiding two threats:

(i) that a written report is circulated but not read;

(ii) that where the report identified existing practices or policies as having a negative effect, that the perceived public criticism and sense of exposure creates a barrier to action.

Participants will be asked to consider (i) their own experience of projects that have had no discernible impact, (ii) analyse the communication and dissemination needs at each stage of IR, and

(iii) identify strategies for communicating IR research that is considered sensitive or particularly controversial.

Helena Lim

Higher Education Academy, England

Geeks bearing gifts: unwrapping institutional research

Workshop

Thursday 16 June 14.30–15.30
JG Room 1005

Track 3

The last few years has seen the growing prominence of institutional research (IR) in the UK. This introductory workshop is aimed at colleagues new to the concept and practice of IR. It will offer an overview presentation of the development of IR in UK higher education and elsewhere - demonstrating the different facets, skills and functions to the IR process and output - and cover topics such as what is IR; who does it; for what purposes; what they do; skills needed; the sort of information generated; how the information is used; and also consider some challenges faced by IR practitioners. In an increasingly challenging and ever-changing HE landscape, simply 'keeping the show on the road' is no longer a viable option. IR has a key role to play in institutional strategic management as the pressure on institutions to 'know themselves' in order to be more effective increases. This session supports practitioners who are at the start of that journey.

Maura McGinn & Aine Galvin

University College Dublin, Ireland

The pros and cons of Introducing a university-wide student feedback on modules system

Workshop

Thursday 16 June 14.30–15.30
JG Room 1007

Track 4

University College Dublin introduced a university wide standardised online student feedback on modules system in 2010-11, following a pilot project the previous year. In 2010-11 a total of 3,500 modules, involving 24,000 students and 1,000 academics participated in this online student feedback system. A cross-functional approach was adapted to the coordination and delivery of this project, drawing on the expertise and the experiences of Institutional Research and the Teaching and Learning unit.

The workshop will begin with a brief presentation of the survey process; how academics and students engage with the system; operational requirements; some initial results; successes and challenges.

Workshop participants will then be invited to problem-solve and offer best practice examples to some key challenges:

• Student engagement -increasing completion rates- managing survey fatigue

• Staff engagement – migrating from local (voluntary) systems to centralised (mandated) system – dealing with the dilemmas associated with 'who gets access' to results

• Ensuring that student feedback is systematically used and that actions taken are communicated back to students.

Adela Garcia-Aracil & Davinia Palomares-Montero

INGENIO (CSIC-UPV), Spain

A proposed methodology for comparing Higher Education Institutions

Work in progress

Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 1004

Track 1

The perspective adopted to evaluate Higher Education Institutions (HEI) depends on the aims of the assessment. The literature proposes several approaches for the HEI evaluation and there are intense debates over which are the most appropriate. In this context, ranking schemes are becoming very popular. However, rankings are mainly slanted towards research and overlook important aspects of universities such as structural differences. Furthermore, depending on the indicator applied, university rankings change, which has been used to delegitimize them.

In this framework, we try to gain an insight into the evaluation of HEI applying multivariate methods, to find out whether HEI can be classified into different clusters related to, at least, their three main missions (teaching, research and knowledge transfer), and fuzzy cluster analysis to find out whether HEI can be in different clusters at the same time depending on their degree of belonging to each cluster. Our analysis focuses on the Spanish HES. This study demonstrates that the evaluation of HEI is complex than just rank universities in one-dimensional ranking, given the multiple objectives of HEI. Not all universities plan their strategies in the same way and evaluations should take account of these differences.

Sarah Parrott & Linda Cox Maguire

Maguire Associates, United States

Best practices in assessing institutional value and price

Workshop

Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 1004

Track 2

What is your university's "value" in the minds of students and families? The answer to this question is critically important given the new variable pricing structure in the UK. Universities that figure out how to authentically *drive up perceptions of value* can charge more without jeopardizing enrollment and revenue.

In our work with hundreds of universities in the U.S. over the past 27 years, we have found that students and their parents are increasingly price sensitive and value-oriented. To be considered a "good value," a university must meet the needs and expectations of students and their families at a net cost (after scholarships and/or bursaries) that is perceived to be reasonable and justifiable.

Research can uncover which attitudinal factors will have the most influence upon perceptions of value, driving up willingness to pay. These factors vary from institution to institution. Identification of your own market's decision drivers will inform the development of more highly effective messaging strategies. In addition, assessing relative value requires careful study of your competition set.

This session will use real case examples to show researchers and marketing professionals how to assess a university's value and then use that information to inform decisions about sticker price, net cost, and strategic communications.

Tracey Taylor

University of Brighton

The Trouble with First Years: Achievement, Attendance and Attitudes of 1st Year Business Students – Their effects on success

Work in progress

Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 1005

Track 4

With widening participation and a rise in non-continuation rates, it is increasingly evident there is a need to work harder to ensure those enrolled do not drop out. Funding issues are extremely important but so is the student experience of higher education. An improved picture of the student population could well lead to improved practices, better retention rates and result in a 'best practice policy'.

This session will report on a current study which seeks to unravel some of the threads that contribute toward the student experience and looks to corroborate, or otherwise, the work of Colby (2004) Bevitt, Baldwin & Calvert, (2010) and Smith & Begg, (2003). Firstly it looks at achievement on entry against the HEFCE risk tables. Secondly, from a dataset of 253 students at the University of Brighton Business School, it examines the impact that attendance at seminars and workshops has on first year Business students' overall first year

marks and considers some of the implications. Finally, the results of an attitudinal questionnaire completed by 275 students will be presented and commented upon.

These findings give an interesting insight into the experiences of first year undergraduate students. From this research it may be possible to make clear recommendations regarding monitoring and evaluation, early intervention and how these could improve continuation rates at the University of Brighton and at other HE institutions.

Steve May & Michael Hill

Kingston University, England

Engaging with colleges to improve transition to university

Work in progress

Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 1005

Track 2

The transition from college to university study can involve many academic and personal challenges for students. In a climate of increased student fees, university funding more closely linked to module completion, and caps on student numbers, an understanding of how staff can collaborate to research and address the issues affecting students is of increasing importance. Participants will be invited to discuss their own experiences of IR collaboration and transferability of the methodology.

This presentation of a case study across two institutions will show an example of how the development of initiatives to enhance the student experience and improve completion rates is being developed through institutional research. Information from staff on issues from college and university perspectives has been gathered and analysed alongside university and course level quantitative data. Initial findings indicated a number of key factors including

student attendance, accommodation and type of entry qualifications; an action plan agreed between the college and university is now being implemented and the final phase of the project will be its evaluation.

The outcomes have fed into the recently submitted university Access Agreement and widening participation strategic assessments and the methodology applied to other level three courses at the institution.

Andrea Canales

University of Oxford, England

Degree completion at British universities

Individual Paper

Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 1007

Track 4

Although the expansion of higher education in the UK has provided new educational opportunities to students from different backgrounds, yet large gaps persist. The patterns of access show stark social class and ethnic gradients, with students from the lower social class and ethnic minorities overrepresented in New Universities.

Recent evidence has revealed that these differences in access are transferring to different chances of degree completion. This paper attempts to make a contribution to the understanding of this problem, focusing its analysis on the role that institutional (universities and context) and individual factors play in predicting student's chances of degree completion.

This paper uses national-longitudinal data provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency, which follows the cohort of students enrolled in British universities in the academic year 2004/2005, until they complete their degrees. The results reveal that students' chances of degree completion are strongly shaped by ability, social class, gender and, to a lesser degree, ethnicity. Additionally, the analyses show that contextual variables have an effect on degree completion, but their impact is rather modest. There is a positive effect of institutional selectivity, institutional average SES (peers) as well as of the teacher-student ratio at universities.

Hanlie Liebenberg, George Subotzky & Dion van Zyl

University of South Africa, South Africa

Student success: Challenges of meaningfully profiling a highly heterogeneous student body to inform effective interventions – the case of the University of South Africa

Work in progress

Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 1007

Track 3

The University of South Africa (Unisa) is an open distance learning mega-university with a diverse profile of over 300,000 students, ranging from high-achieving, mature employees to underprepared school-leavers facing challenging socio-economic circumstances. It recently approved a comprehensive framework to enhance student success, comprising four elements:

a) following an extensive literature review, conceptually modelling all factors effecting student success in the Unisa context;

b) through comprehensive profiling, tracking and intelligence gathering, building a predictive model of student and institutional risks to success;

c) informed by this, incrementally implementing an institution-wide student support framework;

and d) evaluating impact over time.

The underlying premise is that relevant, actionable intelligence about students' academic and non-academic circumstances as well as institutional processes impacting on success will more effectively inform student support interventions. This presentation of work in progress focuses on the critical challenges faced to date in meaningfully segmenting Unisa's highly heterogeneous student profile in order to predict risk. Utilising multivariate statistical segmentation analysis techniques, the aim was to distil meaningful identities within the heterogeneous student population. Each of these faces different permutations of risks and therefore constitutes primary reference points in understanding the underlying relationships between the key student-related constructs of the predictive model: socio-economic status/circumstances, academic readiness/ability, meta-cognitive/psychological skills and attributes, and engagement.

Linda Leach

Massey University, New Zealand

Enhancing student engagement: Institutional strategies from 'down under'

Individual Paper

**Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 3003**

Track 4

Student engagement is a focus of governments and higher education. It is seen as a proxy for good teaching and a means to encourage students' active involvement in their learning. Consequently, engagement is understood to improve retention, progression and completion. Surveys of student engagement, begun in the USA, are now being used in Australasia, South Africa and the UK. Data produced suggest a variety of institutional strategies.

This paper draws on data from studies of student engagement conducted in Australasia to identify strategies institutions can use to understand and enhance the student experience, their engagement and consequently their retention and completion. It outlines some ways one institution is using available data to develop such strategies. However, it

suggests that better use could be made of the data from annual student engagement surveys and that more could be done by individual institutions, even during times of increasing financial pressure. It identifies some strategies institutions could adopt/adapt to enhance student engagement and the student experience and proposes some changes to the current engagement surveys.

Participants at the presentation will be invited to discuss, reflect on, critique and add to the suggested strategies and to comment on the proposed changes to the survey.

Nicholas Fernando & Janet Cole Kingston University, England
Po Li Tan King's College London, England
Joao C Freitas Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal

Live streaming of lectures for distributed learning

Work in progress

**Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 3003**

Track 4

Live Lecture Streaming (LLS) is becoming commonplace in Higher Education Institutions (HEI) across the globe. Research findings indicate that LLS is an approach to delivering distributed learning driven by cost, demand and cohort size. Our study, comprising of data collection and one-to-one interviews captured the perceptions of students that directly experienced LLS in two large undergraduate (UG) modules. There is an overwhelming student demand for LLS on all UG modules. It is, however, still not the predominant mode through which students want to engage. LLS is valued as a revision tool for assessment as the student can 're-experience' the lecture to some degree. It provides flexibility for those who have to support their income which will be an ongoing theme as a result of the tuition fees cap lifting. Unexpected issues arose like demotivation

created by the fragmenting of the cohort. There was dissatisfaction with the Lecturer's interaction with LLS participants during the lecture. The dual-nature of LLS requires a modification of lecture style to leverage the strengths of both face to face and online channels. With such a culturally diverse audience, now more global, affordances are required to ensure that lecturers become more effective communicators and that meaning is not distorted through the medium of delivery.

Julie Arthur & Don Johnston

Southern Cross University, Australia

Australian university staff data: A comparison of data collection and reporting

Work in progress

Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 3004

Track 3

The Australian Higher Education Sector is reliant on national government funding with the funding relationship between the government and institutions based on a "compact" with agreed targets against student load, research and teaching quality indicators. Both research and teaching quality indicators rely on staff data e.g. staff student ratio and publications per academic staff member. Therefore the reporting of staff data in ways which reflect the actual staff establishment over the academic year is critical. University decision makers in planning, policy and management often struggle to identify the staffing complement at an institutional level. Reporting of permanent and contract Australian University staff is based on a single census date (31 March) and has remained unchanged for over a decade resulting in a simplistic work pattern framework. Conversely, casual staff are reported on full year (hours worked) data, and reported as full time equivalent (FTE). The disparate collection methods notwithstanding, data are reported together resulting in inconsistent and possibly erroneous interpretations, particularly for casual comparison across the sector. This paper reports findings from investigative work in a regional Australian university to improve reporting of staff data both at an institutional level and when benchmarking across the sector.

Karen Webber

The University of Georgia, United States

Faculty research productivity at US Institutions: The contribution of immigrant status and other select characteristics

Individual Paper

Thursday 16 June 16.00–17.30
JG Room 3004

Track 4

US institutions are experiencing a growing number of international faculty members, yet there is limited literature examining foreign-born faculty who work in US institutions and how research productivity from foreign-born faculty compare to US-born natives. Using data from the most recent US national data, the 2004 *National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty* (NSOPF:04), this study examines the difference in faculty members' research productivity at doctoral-granting institutions by US- and non-US-born status, and controlling for select individual and institutional characteristics. Implications for institutional policy are discussed, including how to ensure diverse faculty communities that lead to strong research and knowledge production.

Bill Williams & Pedro Neto Setubal

Setubal Polytechnic Institute and CEGIST research centre Lisbon, Portugal

Macro and micro lenses – linking Institutional and departmental research in a Portuguese engineering education context

Work in progress

Friday 17 June 10.50 – 11.20
JG Room 1004

Track 4

The Polytechnic Institute of Setubal (IPS) showed its commitment to Quality Assurance in requesting an European University Association evaluation of its quality procedures in 2008 and a follow-up evaluation in 2011. This process has helped the institution in developing its processes for collecting and analyzing data at institutional level and has identified areas that need attention such as high retention and attrition on engineering courses.

In one engineering department of the IPS, a nationally funded research project began in 2007 to encourage active learning in lecture classes and to develop an instrument to measure learner activity. Although this 3-year project has been successful at the level of the 8 participating engineering lecturers and has generated additional research on technology stewardship and the use of online self and peer student assessment tools, having an impact at school or institutional level has been challenging.

The session will briefly outline our experiences in carrying out and implementing pedagogical research in the school of engineering and then we will move to on a discussion of the issue of linking up research carried out at departmental and institutional level.

Uta Landrock & René Krempkow

iFQ Bonn, Germany

Does size matter? An analysis of performance based funding in German medical universities

Work in progress

Friday 17 June 10.50 – 11.20
JG Room 1005

Track 2

In recent years, performance based funding (PBF) has taken a central role among competitive elements in German universities. The main ideas of the New Public Management framework, as well as New Governance literature, to some extent, are based on the assumption that output orientated governance is the most efficient form of governance. As of yet, however, little is known about the impact of PBF as a means of governance. We will present selected results of a multivariate analysis of both intended and unintended effects of PBF in relation to the intensity of publications of medical faculties. Contrary to the expectations, and also to the statements from PBF actors in ministries, the results of our multivariate analysis established that the researched characteristics of PBF models and the actual publication output per professor are not related. However, a comprehensive evaluation process, the size of financial resources, and the volume of third party funding are related to the intensity of faculty publications. We found intended and unintended effects of governance. Our aim is to find out which possibilities ensure that PBF models manifest the least possible unintended consequences in the future.

Russell Rimmer Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Muir Houston University of Glasgow, Scotland

Simultaneity in student decision making and institutional data

Work in progress

Friday 17 June 10.50–11.20
JG Room 1007

Track 3

The authors have used simultaneous-estimation techniques from statistics with university data to analyse a range of pressing questions in institutional research. Yet, there is little understanding of the implied simultaneity of student decision making and the interactions students take on in reconciling university demands and rest-of-life considerations. The authors will discuss the statistical method and how it reflects the reality of student lives in modern institutions.

Vangelis Tsiligiris

MBS College, Greece

EDUQUAL – Measuring cultural influence on students' expectations and perceptions in cross-border Higher Education

Work in progress

Friday 17 June 10.50–11.20
JG Room 3003

Track 3

This presentation will introduce EDUQUAL, an instrument incorporating the SERVQUAL and Hofstede models. The purpose of this instrument is to evaluate the relationship/effect of student individual cultural dimensions on the formation of expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education.

The increased importance of cross-border higher education and the consideration of cultural dimensions in service quality make this session of great importance for HE decision makers. Additionally, what makes this study worth attending is its differentiation from the existing similar instruments (i.e i-Graduate) as it is focusing on individual student level cultural values rather than on country wide culture/factors.

The presentation will start by discussing the increasing role of Cross-Border Higher Education (CBHE) and the growing need to better understand student expectations in the context of quality management and assurance. The session will continue with the presentation of EDUQUAL and the findings from its implementation in a CBHE setting which includes Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in UK (source institution) and Greece (receiving institution) who operate under a franchise collaborative arrangement.

The presentation will be followed by a discussion with the participants that will contribute to the identification of the usefulness and limitations of EDUQUAL. This discussion will provide valuable insights in the effort to shape and simplify EDUQUAL for its wider adoption by HEIs worldwide.

Richard Watermeyer

Cardiff University, Wales

Impact and the new production of knowledge

Work in progress

Friday 17 June 10.50–11.20
JG Room 3004

Track 1

This paper considers academics' narratives of socio-economic impact as a means of identifying the myriad of knowledge streams, users, collaborators and brokers that constitute a 'knowledge society' (Stehr 1994) or 'network society' (Castells 2000; van Dijk 2006) within an age best expressed by Bauman (2007) as 'liquid times'. Impact is accordingly treated as shibboleth of a larger political agenda and zeitgeist of the contemporary academic milieu where a commitment to visibility, transparency and accountability is a core priority.

Determining how impact occurs, plotting its network or 'pathways' is essential in generating more fluent, dialogical and collaborative models for knowledge production in a global knowledge economy. A commitment to

demonstrating and self-evaluating impact therefore represents a new heuristic, propagating new knowledge synergies, hybrid knowledge paradigms and an epistemically enriched global community. Expressions of impact are therefore intimately linked to notions of 'upstream' public engagement, 'Big Society', the 'public intellectual' and 'citizen scientist'. This paper accordingly explores how a demand to demonstrate impact is redefining and problematising academics' professional subjectivities and the practice of expertise.

Jonathan Adams & Jon Stroll

Discovery Logic, United States

Practical tools to define and Implement effective Higher Education performance metrics

Workshop

Friday 17 June 11.40–12.40
JG Room 1004

Track 3

This presentation will seek to work within the conference themes of "Encouraging the responsible use of performance indicators and league tables and "Developing better methodologies for comparing higher education institutions". Diverse indicators have been used to evaluate the impact of institutional research activity, including publication output and follow-on citations. While these are robust, and can be normalized by field, other data and analyses are evidently needed to address more diverse and equally important aspects of academic endeavour, such as teaching, service, and instances of research or scholarship not captured in journals. The recent attempts to define economic and social impact for the REF have explored this contested territory. We will discuss the concept of 'metrics of performance', revisit the issues of how we might 'want' faculty

or programs to perform and explore a series of initiatives taken to develop approaches to this in consultancy work for public bodies and in commercial work to create products that walk the tightrope of utility for academic management and acceptability for academic staff. We will seek to provoke consideration not of whether the quantification of academic endeavour is feasible but of how the academy can develop its own view of how this should be reified.

Student Classification and Assessment Group

University of Worcester, England

Regulating student assessment: issues and dilemmas

Workshop

Friday 17 June 11.40–12.40
JG Room 1005

Track 2

The Student Assessment and Classification Working Group (SACWG) has contributed to the literature on student assessment through several comparative research studies on institutional variations in academic regulations, and their impact on classifications. SACWG has been able to demonstrate, and raise questions about, the variation in the regulatory practices governing passing and failing modules, including rules relating to compensation and condonement, eligibility for, and penalties attached to, re-assessment, as well as the methodologies for determining degree class. It has also drawn on comparisons with practice in the US and Australia.

This workshop will start with a brief presentation to set the scene, followed by small group discussion and exploration of the rationales – pedagogic, ethical and pragmatic – for different regulatory practices, and concluding with a short plenary. Participants will extend their critical appreciation of issues which should inform decisions concerning the review and re-design of regulatory practice. HE practitioners concerned with measuring and improving outcomes – pass, progression and completion rates, will also find the workshop relevant. In the new political and economic context for HEIs, student success, institutional performance indicators, as well as the management of academic standards, are likely to have even greater individual and institutional significance.

Duna Sabri & Shân Wareing

University of the Arts, London, England

The UK National Student Survey: Uses and abuses

Workshop

Friday 17 June 11.40–12.40
JG Room 1007

Track 1

The NSS is positioned as central to informing prospective students' choice between institutions and helping institutions to quality assure and enhance their practice. Questions have been raised about the validity of NSS league tables (e.g. Holmwood, THES 10 Feb 2011) and HEFCE's own review of the NSS cautions against the indiscriminate comparative use of NSS data. Yet the political momentum behind students' public information needs is set to increase the significance and use of NSS results for comparative purposes through 'Key Information Sets'.

A study at the University of the Arts London analysed students' comments in the 2009 NSS and focus group interviews with students who had just completed the NSS in 2010. The findings question the focus of the NSS on the course as the unit of analysis, and its omission of significant issues such as links with industry, curriculum, relationships with peers, intellectual development and institutional factors. The NSS structures internal institutional agendas and external marketing, and reconfigures work and relationships among staff and between staff and students.

Participants who attend the workshop will be invited to debate the evidence to support this view, consider the extent to which it applies to their institution, and the implications for the sector.

William Lawton The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, England
Will Archer i-graduate, England
Ruth Matheson University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, Wales
Christina Yan Zhang NUS Executive, England
Stephen Williams University of Warwick, England

A responsive university: Using student feedback to improve the student experience

Workshop

Friday 17 June 11.40–12.40
JG Room 3003

Track 4

In this data-driven world, the need for departments and arms within higher education institutions to collaborate to enhance the student experience is critical. Higher education institutions are being called upon to become more responsive to the needs and perceptions of their students, who now have more study options than ever before. To remain competitive in the changing landscape of higher education, institutions must find ways to capture and harness student data to support institutional decision making and improve the student experience and student outcomes.

Helena Lim HEIR Network and Higher Education Academy, England
Peter Hoekstra University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
Maura McGinn University College Dublin, Ireland

Institutional Research in action: three cases and one round table conversation

Workshop

Friday 17 June 11.40–12.40
JG Room 3004

Track 3

The rapidly changing and challenging HE landscapes that we increasingly find ourselves in provide a strong impetus for institutional research (IR) as a tool for informing and supporting institutional decision-making. Different institutions in different national HE contexts have responded in different ways. For IR practitioners, it is vital that there are opportunities to strengthen the community of practice so that we do not operate in 'silos' but continue to learn from each other.

This interactive session will focus on the development, management and practice of IR in different national HE contexts. Case studies from the UK, Ireland and Holland will be offered with particular emphasis given to tasks; skills and competencies; and products and outputs.

The collective experiences of participants will be drawn on through active participation and contribution to the discussion. It is anticipated that there are valuable lessons to be learnt from the different approaches and contexts of IR functions and that issues and challenges identified are not necessarily exclusive to any one context and will resonate with IR practitioners across institutional/national/pan-national boundaries.

Mark Glynn & Richard Thorn

Institutes of Technology Ireland

Using technology to reach the student and meet government targets

Individual Paper

Friday 17 June 13.30–14.30
JG Room 1004

Track 2

This paper describes the results of a on-line marketing exercise conducted as part of the major project on flexible and part time learning being undertaken by the Institutes of Technology in Ireland. The EU have established a target of 15% of adults participating in lifelong learning by 2020. Whilst some countries, notably the northern European countries, comfortably exceed that target, many do not, including Ireland. This project is aimed at increasing the amount of flexible learning being provided and taken up by learners. One of the main outputs of this project was the creation of a website, www.bluebrick.ie, promoting all flexible learning opportunities across the sector.

This quantitative research follows initial work conducted to identify what triggers may be used to encourage adult learners back into education in Ireland (Glynn, 2010). The goal for this element of the project was to increase the visibility of our site in internet search engines. This paper specifically describes the efforts followed to increase our relative rankings on search engine result pages (SERPs). The presentation will include details on how to improve your own website rankings and how you can measure the success of your efforts.

James Williams

Birmingham City University, England

Taking the long view: what institutional student feedback surveys have shown us

Paper

Friday 17 June 13.30–14.30
JG Room 1005

Track 4

Long-term institutional student feedback processes are largely used to provide a snapshot of student experience and pick out current concerns of students. Managers seldom use it to effect quality improvement; commentators seldom explore the trends in student satisfaction.

This paper explores student satisfaction over a twenty year period and also explores institutional action taken as a result of listening to the 'student voice'. For comparison, the paper analyses qualitative and quantitative data from surveys that use the Student Satisfaction Approach.

The research has identified interesting trends. Issues such as computing and finance are regarded as less important than they were even ten years ago. Issues such as teaching and learning and library facilities are consistently regarded positively, despite anecdotal evidence to the contrary. Issues such as assessment and feedback, catering and social life, have proved difficult to improve.

The research highlights the value of taking the long view when exploring student satisfaction. In the NSS context, they also show that some issues are particularly difficult and cannot be solved by quick-fixes. The implications from this research are that regular, in-depth institutional student surveys, carried out separately from national processes, are valuable for improving the quality of the student experience.

Nick Zepke

Massey University, New Zealand

Institutional research and improving the student experience

Individual Paper

Friday 17 June 13.30–14.30
JG Room 1007

Track 4

Ann Irving Southampton Solent University, England
Martin Read University of Portsmouth, England

Facing the dilemmas in providing effective student feedback

Workshop

Friday 17 June 13.30–14.30
JG Room 3003

Track 4

In this paper I ask whether *Institutional Research could help improve student outcomes and success by researching student engagement at sub-institutional levels such as in courses*. The paper uses two foci. One focus is on student engagement, an accepted proxy for student learning and success. Student engagement is complex sheltering psychological and sociological orientations. I focus on the sociological in which teaching and institutional performance can be key indicators of engagement and student success. The second focus is on institutional research. Also complex, it offers an institutional intelligence service: technical and analytical intelligence, contextual and political intelligence and institutional intelligence about what works and what does not within an institution. I use data from a funded research project on student engagement that revealed that the perception of first time students in post school education in four different courses displayed significant differences in the way they perceived the efforts of teachers and institutions to support their engagement. Not only do individual course results differ significantly from institutional means, courses also differ from each other significantly. The answer to the question then is that Institutional Research could help improve student outcomes and success by researching student engagement at sub-institutional levels such as in courses.

Internal and external surveys consistently inform us that students are not satisfied with the feedback they receive on their assessed work, which suggests institutional research and policy initiatives are failing to address this core issue. However the number of good degrees continues to increase and this raises possible questions regarding perceived slipping standards.

Universities have developed policies on feedback to students and have provided staff development, run awareness campaigns and undertaken research to better understand why students report low levels of satisfaction.   At the same time Universities face the dilemma that if feedback practice is effective and raises the level of student achievements, it is possible that the improvements will be interpreted as slipping standards rather than good teaching practice.

The workshop will provide an introduction to the issues from a University perspective followed by the experiences of Head of School who has to balance the demands of implementing feedback initiatives whilst maintaining standards and balancing staff workloads. The workshop provides the delegates with the opportunities to learn from each other, discuss and debate effective feedback policies and identify what institutional research can do address the inherent dilemma that improved performance is often perceived as slipping standards.

Nicholas Freestone & Cynthia Sam

Kingston University, England

Unpalatable truths about Institutional Research: When doing the right thing costs

Individual Paper

Friday 17 June 13.30 – 14.30
JG Room 3004

Track 2

Reflecting upon academic practice, especially through an institutional research lens, may lead to changes in that practice. For instance, Freestone (2009) has reported that measurable improvements in student outcomes can be achieved by a process of iterative feedback on essay drafts. However, these improvements in student learning were dependent on much additional work being undertaken by academic staff. Such evidence then, whilst leading to beneficial changes in student learning, may be unpalatable to some academics due to the significant increase in workload. Academics are rational beings so incentives may be needed for them to be willing to make the sacrifices necessary to improve student experience and outcomes. Can academics be tempted from the "high ground" to the swampy lowlands" though (Schoen, 1987)? This paper suggests that institutions may need to develop promotion and reward pathways to facilitate academic staff engagement with pedagogical improvements. It is undoubtedly easier to reward achievement in research endeavours than in pedagogy. However, in the changed funding environment and consequent increased student expectations concerning their academic experience and provision, institutions will have to find some way of measuring teaching quality and rewarding staff who engage in the previously "cloistered virtue" (Yorke, 2000) of pedagogy.

Ana Paula Cabral & Isabel Huet

University of Aveiro/ ISPGaya, Portugal

Using Institutional Research to build a framework for assessing research quality

Poster

JG Room 2002

Track 1

This study aims to promote the quality of research at an institutional level. The international experiences, reference frameworks and the contacts with experts, research and funding institutions involved in the UK's experience are the tools for the development of the guidelines for building a framework for assessing research quality.

The data emphasize the role of a valid, robust, legitimate and reliable system based moderation, comparability, consistency, recognition/ reward and the need for an active support at departmental level, the development of a collegial and inclusive research culture, the encouragement of new researchers and the promotion of an appropriate research environment.

The session will consist on a brief explanation of the content of the project and its context followed by a discussion about its expected outcomes.

Richard Ennals & Melissa de Oliveira

Kingston University, England

Students' Quality Circles in a Borderless World

Poster

JG Room 2002

Track 4

Students' Quality Circles offer a partnership approach to learning, when Higher Education is under pressure. Empowered students can cross boundaries of module, discipline, faculty, institution and country, taking advantage of new technology. Their engagement in self-managed project activity enhances their employability. There are radical implications for learning and teaching.

Quality Circles were first developed with Japanese automobile workers, and the approach was adapted for schools in India in 1992. Since 2005 there have been pilot activities in Higher Education, starting at Kingston Business School, benefiting from contacts with international partners. Students' Quality Circles, from International Human Resource Management and Global Information Technology modules, have addressed practical problems affecting learning and teaching, and stimulated academic debate.

As a result of work in 2010-11, two Circles have entered a competition in Istanbul, collaboration is developing with students at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa, and the students are leading longer term projects. The International Convention on Students' Quality Circles will be hosted by Kingston University in 2014, maximising virtual engagement by students from 25 national chapters of the World Council for Total Quality and Excellence in Education.

Holly Rook

Kingston University, England

Student re-engagement with an innovative use of the Learning Management System (LMS)

Poster

JG Room 2002

Track 1

Diane Rushton & Chris Duggan

Sheffield Hallam University, England

Cultural Equivalence in the assessment of reflective writing

Poster

JG Room 2002

Track 4

The identification of disengaged students and their re-engagement within Higher Education has traditionally been a resource intensive process, further compounded by the unreliability of student registers. The Student Liaison Team within Kingston University's Faculty of Computing Information Systems and Mathematics devised an approach to measuring engagement based around student interaction with the Learning Management System (LMS). Data is extracted from the LMS for analysis and students are ranked on a disengagement severity scale. Those who are identified as disengaged or at risk are placed into the Student Review Process. This involves contacting, interviewing and monitoring (via LMS) the student with a view to successful re-engagement. Since the recent deployment of the service there has been an improved rate in student re-engagement. At the end of 2010/11 semester one, nearly 60% of disengaged or at risk students had begun re-engagement. The process acted as a catalyst for semester 2 re-engagement. Support and involvement of senior staff such as the Associate Dean and Director of Undergraduate Studies has been a key factor in the success of the process.

The objective of the postgraduate module, 'International Management Competencies', is to create graduates with impact. Students are given the opportunity to understand and develop for themselves the particular employability skills and competencies required in international management. Reflective practice as advocated by Bolton (2010), Hedberg (2009) and Francis and Cowan (2008) is the main tool of self development offered to students. They are required, as a formative element of assessment, to keep a Learning Log, to write a self evaluation of the development of their international management skills and competencies and to engage in SMART development planning. Tutors raised concerns that for many international students, who compose the great majority of the student cohort, this form of reflective assessment is outside their educational and cultural norms, putting them at a disadvantage. We reviewed the literature in this area and finding it to be sparse, decided to carry out research to test the hypothesis that culture has an impact on ability to engage with and succeed in reflective writing. We also sought to identify and implement practices that would support such engagement. Our preliminary findings suggest that cultural is not the only variable. Language skills and support from tutors are also influential.

Wednesday 15 June
Rose Theatre

Those delegates who are in Kingston on 15 June are warmly invited to an informal welcome reception in the Gallery of the Rose theatre, only a stone's throw from the Thames. This theatre, which was modelled on the original Elizabethan Rose theatre situated on London's Bankside, has a unique design which incorporates a pit area where the audience can bring their own cushion to sit on.

Here you can enjoy a drink and some locally-produced canapés before sampling one of the many restaurants in the vicinity, some with a riverside location.

Thursday 16 June
Pembroke Lodge

We are delighted to welcome delegates to Pembroke Lodge, a magnificent Georgian Mansion set in some 2500 acres of Richmond Park, with spectacular views across the Thames Valley to Windsor and Surrey. Previous occupants include the Countess of Pembroke, "a close friend" of King George III, a Prime Minister and the philosopher, Bertrand Russell.

On arrival at Pembroke Lodge, drinks will be served and you will have some time to take in the amazing view before the three course dinner in the Belvedere Room. Throughout the evening, jazz entertainment will be provided by the Meredith White Trio. Led on piano by Meredith White alongside Dave Jones (bass) and Paul Cavaciutti (drums), the trio specialises in personal interpretations of jazz standards and arrangements of modern contemporary repertoire. All highly respected educators and performers in their own right, this trio allows for a more intimate rapport which has been developed over many years.

Transport will be provided from the Penrhyn Road campus and the Holiday Inn and will return to all three conference hotels.

Computer and WIFI access at the conference venue

Delegates will be able to use the computers in the Skills Centre (on the ground floor of the John Galsworthy building) during the conference. If you are a visitor from another academic institution, you might be able to use WIFI through the EDUROAM facility of the JANET Roaming service (JRS), if your device was set up for it before your visit.

Conference catering

Refreshments and lunch will be served in Room 2002 in the John Galsworthy building (the same room as Registration). Lunch on both days will be buffet-style, and vegetarian options will be available. Fruit juice and water will be available with meals.

Universities week

Please note that the conference coincides with Universities Week, and various activities will be taking place around the campus, some of which are by invitation only.
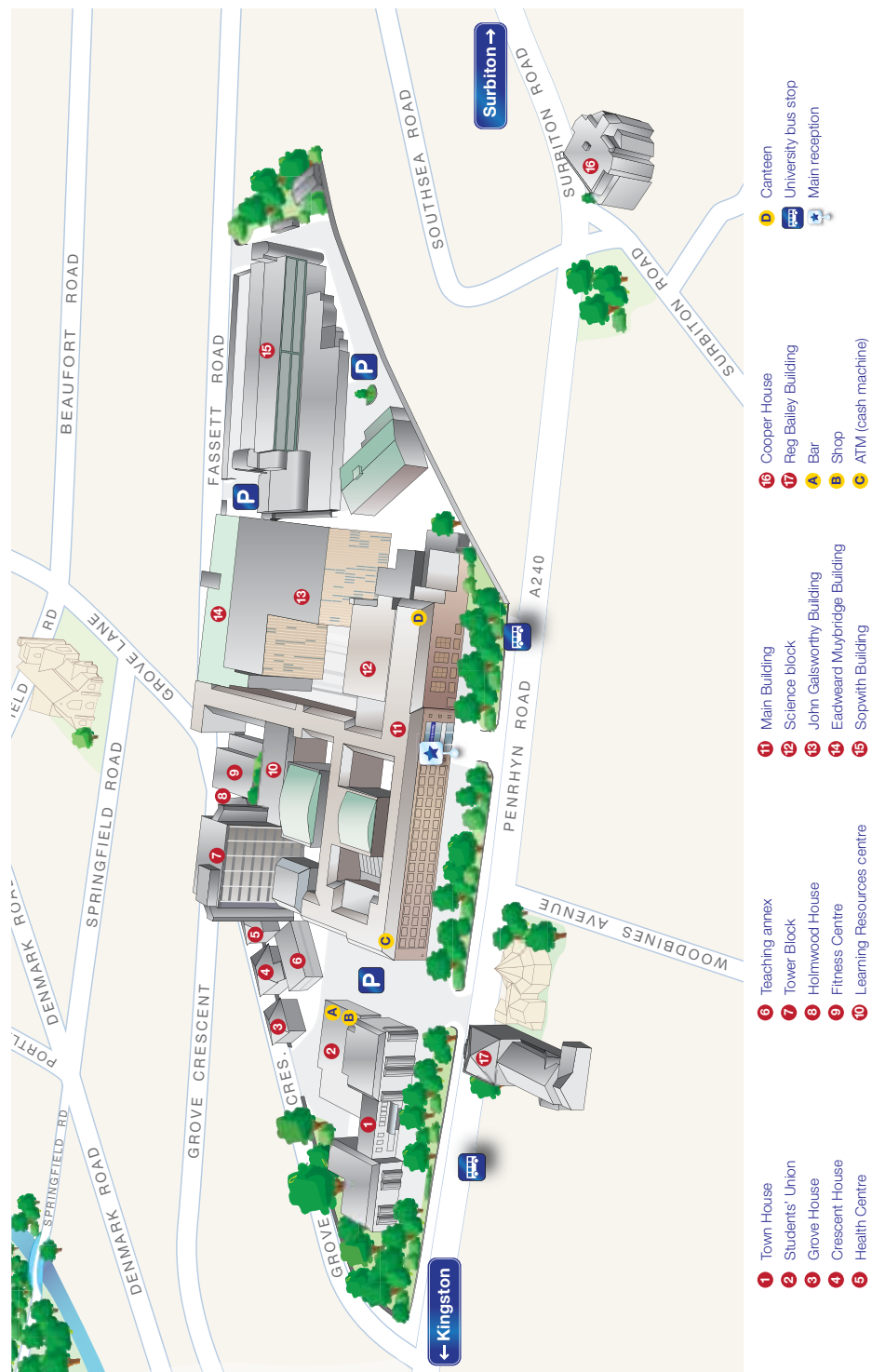
ATMs

ATMs are located at the front of the Main Building on the Penrhyn Road campus (letter c on the campus map). There is also an ATM on the ground floor of the Rose Theatre, where the welcome reception will be held.

Health and safety

The University 24 hour emergency number is 66666 or 020 8417 6666. Alternatively the mobile security office can be contacted on 07831 136082.

Conference feedback

Conference feedback forms are included in your delegate pack. Please complete these and return to the Electric Paper desk by 13h00 on Friday 17th June.

Surbiton →
← Kingston

D Canteen
University bus stop
Main reception

16 Cooper House
17 Reg Bailey Building
A Bar
B Shop
C ATM (cash machine)

11 Main Building
12 Science block
13 John Galsworthy Building
14 Eadweard Muybridge Building
15 Sopwith Building

6 Teaching annex
7 Tower Block
8 Holmwood House
9 Fitness Centre
10 Learning Resources centre

1 Town House
2 Students' Union
3 Grove House
4 Crescent House
5 Health Centre

University Sites

- **IQ** iQ Wave
- **MH** Millennium House
- **IC** The International Centre
- **SH** Swan House
- **RH** River House
- **KP** Knights Park campus
- **RB** Reg Bailey building
- **PR** Penrhyn Road campus
- **CH** Cooper House
- **H** Halls of residence
- University bus stops

Kingston Landmarks

1. Kingston train station
2. Cromwell Road bus station
3. Fairfield Road bus station
4. Kingston Bridge
5. The Rose Theatre
6. Police station
7. Royal Borough of Kingston Guildhall
8. Kingston Museum
9. Kingston Public Library
10. Kingfisher Leisure Centre
11. Surrey County Council

Shops, banks, post office etc.

12. John Lewis, Waitrose
13. The Bentall Centre
14. M&S
15. Main banks
16. Wilkinson's
17. Sainsbury's
18. Boots
19. The Market Place
20. The Post Office

Entertainment

21. The Rotunda (cinema, bowling & restaurants)
22. Oceana
23. McClusky's
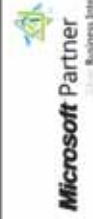24. Charter Quay
25. Hippodrome

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University of Liverpool
for HEIR July 2012

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