



RESEARCH

Designing and Engaging Support for Comprehensive Internationalisation: Case Studies from the University of Kent to Share Good Practice with Institutions in Uzbekistan

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Internationalisation of Higher Education is of key significance to universities across the globe. However, given the many ways in which comprehensive internationalisation can be manifested, challenges and opportunities can be found in encouraging and engaging staff and students, with a range of ventures which could potentially support and advance internationally-focused and meaningful activity and impact. Given global engagement with international Higher Education, it is also notable that alternative challenges and solutions emerge in different regions of the world, often through collaborative transnational education, and this can offer institutions and globally-minded academics opportunities, in line with accepted principles of knowledge diplomacy.

Since internationalisation is a term which has different connotations for the various individuals and departments within any given institution, it is important to approach internationalisation activity with a clear strategy in mind. This paper presents a series of case studies which focus on the strategy, activities and projects devised by a University in the UK in order to support academic internationalisation in Higher Education. These examples are then considered in the context of transnational education with a particular focus on Uzbekistan. Examples are presented not in an attempt to suggest they offer perfect solutions from the West but rather in the 'Silk Road' spirit of internationalisation, to share good practice and to add to that knowledge through the experiences of others. This was very much the context at the 'Internationalization and Innovation in Higher Education' conference, jointly run by Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT) and the University of Westminster in the UK (WIUT, 2018), where the author delivered a paper on this same topic.

Keywords: global; university education; Uzbekistan; case studies; global engagement; internationalisation

Introduction

Internationalisation of Higher Education remains an important priority for universities across the world, including in Central Asia (European Commission, 2017) which is the key region associated with this journal. As noted by Hudzik (2014) comprehensive internationalisation focuses on desirable practices in institutions and their actual approaches to implement a more integrated, strategic, or comprehensive global engagement across their core missions: teaching, research, and service. However, given the different areas of focus and priority for internationalisation activity in particular regions and institutions, there are also different approaches available for engaging staff and students; there is a broad range of ventures that could potentially support and advance educational activity, student experience and institutional impact. Dilemmas follow from identifying the best options across a broad range of possibilities and this becomes increasingly important during times of budgetary constraint and increased competition in the sector (Marginson, 2006). This paper is based on aspects of an internationalisation strategy developed and deployed at the University of Kent, in the UK as well as considerations for how particular activities, linked to that strategy, might be applied to, or be informed by, transnational contexts. There is a particular focus on Uzbekistan, arising from the context of the conference at WIUT (2018), where this paper was first delivered.

A supporting rationale to encourage stakeholder engagement across complex Higher Education institutions is presented, so that involvement with strategic internationalisation can be supported for cross-institutional and transnational benefit. Elements of aims and outcomes from internationalisation projects will also be considered along with how they may be transferable or adaptable for use in transnational education contexts, in Uzbekistan and beyond.

The Importance of Internationalisation in Higher Education

Knight (2008) highlighted the importance of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education. The significance of this is also emphasised by Van der Vyver and Crisp (2019) who explain, that when diverse groups of individuals mix, their brains are forced to process complex and unexpected considerations and viewpoints. The more people do this, the better, it is argued that they get at forming complex ideas themselves. This encourages students and staff to look beyond the obvious and to engage in critical and creative thinking. An important linkage between curriculum internationalisation, critical thinking and knowledge construction is similarly also emphasised by Hudzik (2011), who notes that there is a requirement for commitment – confirmed through action – to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of Higher Education. This point is key, in terms of demonstrating the relevance and value of curriculum internationalisation within mainstream academia Hudzik (2011). One further point is supported by Bourn (2010) in Jones (2010), who states that internationalisation in Higher Education should support critical and independent thought that has foundations in social justice. Such a dimension to internationalisation confirms the need for an approach that promotes knowledge diplomacy between institutions and nations (Knight, 2018).

Knowledge Diplomacy as Exemplified by the WIUT (2018) Conference

It should be noted that the context of this paper is very much rooted in the principles of knowledge diplomacy, recognising, in line with Knight's (2018) commentary that:

History has shown us that addressing both global and national issues requires collaboration and a commitment in order to find solutions that respect the individual needs and perspectives of different countries, while at the same time finding a common path to ensure different but relevant benefits for all.

As described by Knight (2018), knowledge diplomacy focuses on ‘the role of international higher education and research in building and strengthening relations between and among countries’. Importantly, it is not a unidirectional process. Rather, as Knight notes, it should be interpreted as a two-way and reciprocal avenue through which ‘relations between and among countries can enhance international higher education and research’. This view is supported by Altbach and De Wit (2015) who recognise that although international cooperation and exchange are not guarantees for peace and mutual understanding, they continue to be essential mechanisms for keeping communication open, and dialogue active. It is particularly important to note this, within a context where concerns still arise (in association with internationalisation in Higher Education) that its agendas represent another vehicle to promote Euro-American logics in the guise of the ‘global’ according to some. (Jowi 2012; Leite 2010 cited in Majee and Ress (2018). Such concern is not illogical given that, in the past, western Higher Education hegemony was one of the outcomes of many Higher Education international ‘relationships’ in earlier periods (Altbach and de Wit, 2015: 7).

However the aim of this paper is not to present a solution from a situation where there is a perceived need for transfer of expertise from the UK to Central Asia, given a preoccupation with the need for development, but it is rather to share good practices through a multi-directional forum where all parties have the opportunity to learn from alternative approaches to internationalisation in a range of geographical and transnational contexts. This was certainly the ethos of the conference in (WIUT, 2018) which showcased a broad range of transferable good practice from Central Asia and other international regions including, transnational education models, pedagogical approaches for learning and teaching and responses to governmental policy initiatives.

The Context in Uzbekistan

The original Silk Road, which connected Asia, Central Asia and parts of Africa to Europe, was an important trade route which enriched the countries that it connected through trading of goods and also via the exchange of new ideas, the spread of knowledge and understanding. This objective was later emulated through the modern-day ‘Silk Project’ (2009), which aimed to facilitate access to contemporary exchanges of information between major research and educational facilities.

Internationalisation of Higher Education and international cooperation remains a priority in Uzbekistan (European Commission, 2017, Silk Road Project, 2009). This includes broad engagement with opportunities provided through inter-governmental agreements, offering knowledge exchange and development between staff and students. Some of the following areas of Higher Education development in the country include:

- establishment of joint Higher Education institutions
- involvement of foreign teachers and scientists in the teaching process at HEIs
- fostering academic mobility
- facilitating the organisation of joint academic research work
- organisation of international conferences on current problems in Higher Education, innovative technologies, resources and energy saving
- attracting foreign investments
- curriculum development projects
- bilateral agreements
- partnerships and networks

It is clear that each country experiences its own challenges in realising educational internationalisation objectives, due to geographical, cultural and socio-political considerations.

However, it is also evident that the objectives specific to Uzbekistan overlap with many of the goals of other national university representatives such as the UK's UK International (UUKi, 2019a). As a result, a transnational conference and collaboration with academic specialists from different institutions and geographical regions, offers much potential in terms of finding alternative solutions to problems shared by different nations as well as for approaches to local adaptation in Higher Education contexts across the globe.

Western Developments in Internationalisation of Higher Education

There is an ever-increasing supply of resources and academic writing from Europe and the US in the field of internationalisation of Higher Education including, for example, the eponymous Routledge series which recognises that:

internationalization has become of vital concern in Higher Education and all indications are that this will be increasingly the case. Globalization, privatization and mobility of students seeking internationally accredited qualifications relevant to a globally-mobile workforce are increasing the pressure on institutions around the world to take action in internationalizing curricula and professional practice. (Routledge, 2009)

This series of publications addresses key themes in internationalisation, with books written and/or edited by leading thinkers and writers in the field of globally-focused Higher Education.

In addition, the Internationalising Higher Education Framework (HEA, 2014) sets as its mission the internationalisation of the curriculum in order to prepare graduates for a globally interconnected society. Importantly, the framework focuses on a process which involves: 'People', 'Organisations' and 'Curriculum', recognising the significance of each element, in order to design and implement sustainable and meaningful change. There are a wide range of useful benchmarks and existing toolkits available within universities in the UK and beyond, which provide worthwhile reference points for curriculum internationalisation. These include toolkits, frameworks, handbooks, courses and centres of activity, some of which are summarised on the University of Kent's Curriculum Internationalisation webpages (UoK, 2019r).

The importance of understanding how the concept of internationalisation has developed in historical phases in Higher Education is described by de Wit (2014). In the current phases of internationalisation in Higher Education, de Wit (2014) advocates a reorientation towards outcomes and impacts and away from an input and output approach (de Wit, 2014). Rather than focusing on the number of people in certain groupings, categories or incidences of involvement in internationalised activities, de Wit argues that the emphasis should be on the skills acquired or the benefits and impacts derived. In addition, Brandenburg and de Wit (2011, 2012) explain this by noting that, in order for internationalisation to be truly successful within an institution, it needs to move beyond the realms of the International Office and become a core element of curriculum development, quality assurance and faculty development.

Kent's Internationalisation Strategy

Internationalisation is a concept which has varied emphases for different individuals and departments within any given Higher Education institution or regional context. As a result, it is important to approach the achievement of goals of higher education internationalisation, with a clear strategy in mind, appreciating that it is not a unidimensional concept.

Kent's Institutional Strategy, (UoK, 2018) is based on the three dimensions of Research, Education and Civic Engagement, with an embedded approach to internationalisation across each of the three pillars; this is described in more detail in the associated Internationalisation

Strategy (UoK, 2015). The Internationalisation Strategy (UoK, 2015) seeks to provide further detail related to internationally-focused aspects of the Institutional Strategy and to identify more specific targets linked to key areas of required comprehensive internationalisation activity. With this in mind, five central objectives are noted in Kent's Internationalisation Strategy, in order to seek to motivate colleagues to engage in different ways with the broad range of challenges that the institution's comprehensive internationalisation objectives present. These goals are outlined below in **Figure 1**:

1. Raise the profile and increase international esteem of the University of Kent and its research
2. Embrace, learn from and respond to cultural diversity and embed cross-institutional internationalisation
3. Champion and extend the University's unique position as the UK's European University
4. Further develop and enhance partnerships and networks in the wider international world
5. Continue to increase and support international student recruitment

Figure 1: Objectives within the University of Kent's Internationalisation Strategy 2015–20 (UoK, 2015).

In addition to the connection between Kent's internationalisation strategy and the overarching institutional plan, the internationalisation strategy also articulates some other leading strategies for education and research and in turn has generated other strategies linked to the five sub-dimensions listed above. Although there are many areas of strategic engagement which can continue to be improved upon, in terms of action and impact along different avenues of internationalisation, the level of success and relatively widespread adoption of the overall strategy across the institution has been strongly supported by this 'nested' strategic approach. This aligns with the advice provided by Jones and Brown (2007) who noted that, in order to achieve a genuine culture shift within an HEI, there needs to be a mainstreamed whole-institution approach to internationalisation, involving the production of institutional policies and specific strategies which make explicit the relevance and importance of internationalisation. This also connects with the concept of layers of depth in internationalisation engagement, or an international education stratigraphy as referenced by Beelen (2018). The manner in which this approach to internationalisation is based on a range of interconnected elements is summarised below (in **Figure 2**) by Beelen (2018):

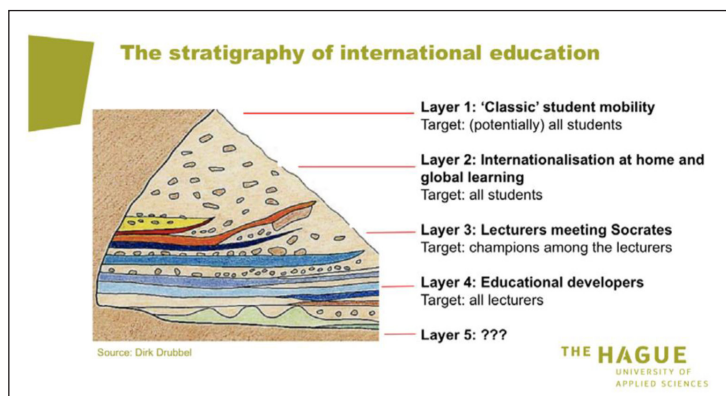


Figure 2: The Stratigraphy of International Education (Beelen, 2018).

Internationalisation Case Studies (1–4)

The case studies provided below offer insights into some of the ways in which Kent has responded to different comprehensive internationalisation challenges as part of its internationalisation strategy. It is hoped that these may offer readers, in a range of locations, including Central Asia, an opportunity to consider how such approaches compare with possible solutions to their own local challenges and constraints. A section has been included within each case study which considers the application of the highlighted internationalisation activities, in the context of transnational education in a manner which is intended to be relevant in Uzbekistan and beyond. This has been undertaken in close consultation with a senior colleague working in the field of transnational education that links the UK and Uzbekistan.

Case Study 1: Realising the UK’s European University

Example Actions and Activities

- European degree programmes UoK 2019e
- European centres UoK 2019d
- European exchange activities UoK 2019a
- European research UoK 2019b
- Our European pledge UoK 2019c

Kent Objectives and Outcomes

In order to ensure that the UK’s European University commitment continues to have impact and credibility, the University has committed to delivering a broad range of modules and programmes which have key relevance to European-focused subject areas (UoK, 2019e), both at our UK campuses and at our centres in Europe (UoK, 2019d).

The University has continued to engage proactively with European research (UoK, 2019a), representative organisations – especially with the prospect of Brexit (UUKi 2019b) – and with good practice sharing networks (SGroup 2019) with collaborators from European institutions. The University’s traditions of mobility (within Europe) of staff and students remains strongly supported and its pledge (UoK, 2019b) to support all the University of Kent’s European features involving staffing and students continues to strengthen (UoK, 2019c).

Challenges

Ongoing challenges include how individual institutions and the wider UK sector can continue to maintain diversity on their campuses by attracting European and international students and academics (Yudkevic et al., 2016). Consideration also needs to be given to how this might impact on the realisation of these ambitious aims within the UK’s recently published International Education strategy (gov.uk, 2019), given the potential reputational damage and negative impact on collaborative academic activity which Brexit may lead to (Hubble, 2016).

Considerations from the Transnational Context

In many respects, there are parallels between Kent’s focus on distinctive European education and research features and the approach of transnational Universities. Transnational campuses are often able to distinguish themselves from other local universities in a particular region, through a characteristically international approach, which represents features of the country which they are supported by. Both models seek to make a virtue of approaches to education and collaborative research which are associated with good practice and connections with specific regions in the world. Given the rise in recognition of civic responsibilities within

UK institutions (Goddard et al. 2016), those institutions which engage with transnational education also need to continue to consider how this relates to the wider region where their activities are based. As a result, there are vital ways in which UK universities can learn from the activities of transnational institutions, such as WIUT in Uzbekistan, in terms of overseas civic engagement and the benefits and challenges of developing large scale TNE provision.

Alternatively, transnational institutions which seek to use their regional individuality to continue to extend their international student diversity and recruitment practices, can draw on opportunities to inform their marketing and outreach activities from the experiences of UK institutions, where the need for international recruitment initiatives has developed rapidly in recent years (Constantinides & Stagno, 2013).

Case Study 2: Sharing and Promoting the University of Kent's Institutional Commitment to Internationalisation

Example Actions and Activities

- Kent International Partnerships UoK 2019v
- Think Kent Videos UoK 2019f
- Think Kent Global Showcase UoK 2019g
- FutureLearn MOOCs at Kent UoK 2019h
- Kent Global Newsletter UoK 2019i
- Innovation in Academia UoK 2019j

University of Kent Objectives and Outcomes

A central dimension of global engagement includes the building of partnerships with international institutions for the benefit of research and transnational education initiatives. With this aim in mind, Kent has developed a specific strategy to enhance institutional academic activity through the signing of collaborative agreements with key partners and regions around the world. Kent is also committed to communicating the University's internationally-relevant expertise in innovative ways to the institution's different range of stakeholders. In order to provide easy-to-access tasters of our academic expertise and research-led teaching this has led to the creation of a suite of online videos, called Think Kent which are accessible, free of charge, via YouTube and a dedicated website (UoK, 2019f). The videos, which now have reached a total of 150 episodes, have been viewed more than 400,000 times and have been shortlisted for two awards (BUFVC, 2017 and HEIST, 2016). Also, in order to introduce a broader group of international students to Kent's educational offer, the University has started to offer a series of MOOCs (UoK, 2019g) which have been engaged with by more than 86,000 students to date. In large institutions, internal engagement activity is also of increasing importance in order to share good practice and maintain strong communications. One vehicle for achieving this is through the Kent Global Newsletter (UoK, 2019i), which shares comprehensive internationalisation stories with staff, on a monthly basis.

As a mechanism to engage with academics, collaborators, alumni and future students around the world the University has created the 'Think Kent Global Showcase' which draws together and presents Kent's regional activities in set regions of the world. This includes reception events, panel discussions, training activities and representative engagement activities, in different locations around the world. Similar recent events have also included the Innovation in Academia awards scheme which has sought to draw attention to overseas academics whose work demonstrates research impact and who are connected to Kent (UoK, 2019j). As noted by UUKi (2019c), participation in multi-stakeholder delegation visits (which may also sometimes

include members of regionally co-located organisations or UK representative groups) offers a collaborative approach which brings a greater quantity and quality of opportunities for UK universities to participate in outward-bound development missions.

Challenges

International partnership development is a complex and time-consuming activity, given the need for due diligence and the often bureaucratic, institutional approval processes within two or more institutions. Once a partnership has been approved it is also not a given that intended strategic benefit will be derived, for a range of cross-institutional and inter-personal reasons. As Brandenburg (2016) notes, when comparing forms of human partnership and university collaborations, each type of relationship between humans needs communication, recognition of different degrees of experience, trust and comparability as well as compatibility.

The creation of promotional educationally-focused media which showcase and share a university's academic expertise either internally or externally can be impactful (Constantinides & Stagno, 2013) but requires time, expertise and resource both for media creation and for identifying appropriate channels that work for sharing and digital promotion. There is also a need to identify meaningful mechanisms to track influence of stakeholder interaction with such media, as direct impact on student or staff recruitment and profile raising is not always easily discernible. Whilst outbound delegation visits have the opportunity to raise institutional esteem and lead to broader institutional impact, organisation of such events is often time-consuming and costly, sometimes also requiring the pooling of resources across departments and units within a University. It is also true that institutional-level internationalisation ambitions do not always align with the individual and diverse priorities of individual departments of the university, so effective action in this area, requires, planning, trust and the availability of supporting resources.

Considerations from the Transnational Context

Whilst it is acknowledged that partnerships with universities and businesses are critical to the success of contemporary international universities and common priority shared by universities in the UK and transnational institutions, collaboratively realised campuses, such as WIUT's activity in Tashkent and a number of Kent's European centres, can be seen to represent an excellent example of bilateral engagement between institutions in two nations which have led to very successful and meaningful transnational education ventures. This is arguably an indication that focus and investment can bring dividends and that more partnerships does not necessarily mean more impact.

Again, with reference to Brandenburg (2016):

... if we look at our university partnerships the same way we look at relationships in our private lives, it may be easier to identify what we want and what we need. ... degrees of experience, trust, and comparability as well as compatibility ... The more stable the partnership is considered to be, the more similar future goals become important.

The promotion of UK Higher Education overseas and the attraction of students and other stakeholders to English language media, promoting the expertise of UK institutions is supported by the power and influence of English as both a global language (Crystal, 2012) and as an academic lingua franca (Jenkins, 2014). These are arguably the same forces which contribute to the ongoing popularity of UK-associated Higher Education and standards. However, it

should also be acknowledged that it is accepted that English as a lingua franca in the context of international universities is an operational assumption which has attracted considerable criticism. This is especially the case, given that the pressure on students, whose first language is not English, is often under-estimated, when they are required to conform to inner circle varieties of the language (Bowles & Cogo, 2015).

Transnationally-skilled institutions in Uzbekistan could therefore feasibly continue to extend their student recruitment reach through the use of electronic educationally-focused media. This could offer both learning and promotional opportunity in order to highlight the institution's high-quality and international approach to education. Ideally, this should be approached in a manner which draws on international expertise and the best resources from both transnational contexts. Whilst an internationalised education may mean the educational lingua franca remains English, activities and their promotion should also emphasise and support the retention of local cultural attributes to reduce any danger of colonisation. Some particularly good practice in this field can be found through the British Universities Film and Video Council (BUFVC) (2019) and their 'Learning on Screen' activity. Where funding allows, further opportunities could also be sought to promote activity within the institution through academic delegation visits and opportunities for staff interaction in regions of potential strategic benefit. Examples of good practice, many of which were evident from the presentations from participants in central Asia in the WIUT conference (2018), include: joint research projects with overseas universities, innovative joint conferences and transnational staff involvement from university partners in academic development and quality assurance.

Case Study 3: Internationalising Welcome/Induction and Cross-Community Exchange

Example Actions and Activities

- Student Global Hangouts UoK 2019k
- World Fest UoK 2019l
- International Experience Week UoK 2019m
- Intercultural Graduate Attribute UoK 2019n
- International Visiting Academic Network UoK 2019o
- Internationalisation Module UoK 2019p

University of Kent Objectives and Outcomes

In order to support the integration of home and international students, the University of Kent operates an initial welcome and induction programme for international students at the start of each academic and has also added University-wide activities (Holmes, 2012) at several other points during the academic year, through the Global Hangout (UoK, 2019k) series of events for both home and international students. These events are co-created with students, along with ventures such as WorldFest (UoK, 2019l), an international student festival and International Experience Week, with a view to mixing the home and international communities so that they may engage within and outside the classroom. The objective of this is for students to be able to emerge from their university life better equipped to interact more effectively, ethically, and comfortably within the vicissitudes of a globalising world (Killick, 2014). This also aligns with the University of Kent's Intercultural Graduate Attribute, which is a form of overarching learning outcome set out for all students via the study of any degree at the University.

With regard to staff, the International Visiting Academics Network (UoK, 2019o) has been designed in order to support and develop close connections with visiting academics. This event cycle has been created with a view to recognising the impact that international faculty have on the local university, as well as the challenges faced by these internationally mobile academics on arrival in the UK (Yudkevic et al., 2016). Longitudinal staff induction and training for the global classroom, now also includes support for internationalisation of the curriculum, through a dedicated internationalisation module (UoK, 2019p) for new lecturers on Kent's Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education.

Challenges

Despite well-intentioned and specifically-designed events and activities, challenges persist for the task of encouraging home and international students to engage with activities which promote truly international networking and understanding. This is evidenced by the research of Carroll and Ryan (2005) who noted from interviews with international students that there is a perceived need for opportunities to be created for mixing with 'home' students. Evidence of more organic interaction can often be found in extra-curricular sporting activity or in music societies, where an interest in a hobby provides intrinsic motivation and creates an opportunity or environment that transcends intercultural reticence or perceptions of boundaries. This harnessing of extra-curricular experiences arguably aligns more closely to the motivations of home and international students when they seek an international education (Fakunle, 2019).

As noted by (Yudkevic, 2016: 2), it is unquestionably the case that international academics are central to the global Higher Education environment in the 21st century. The recruitment of international faculty is undertaken by universities around the world for a broad range of reasons, including the provision of specific expertise in teaching and research and to help foster institutional reforms or innovation. Indeed, in some cases certain countries may have a shortage of academics and there is a need to recruit overseas staff. Given this phenomenon, there is a clear need to provide the right kind of support for international academics, who may have sought to work overseas as a result of a range of push or pull factors.

Considerations from the Transnational Context

In some transnational campuses, a highly diverse international student community may not be as realisable compared to large city campus locations, as the UK or USA, if there is not a tradition within the region or country of attracting large volumes of students from overseas. However, such circumstances can often still lead to creative solutions for internationalisation such as online exchange activity, impact through planned transnational staff exchange and the use of home festivals or regional traditional activities, as mechanisms to bring student communities from the same nation together to celebrate diversity and different approaches to understanding and learning. Universities in the UK which are interested in developing their own civic mission with regard to local and national communities (Goddard, et al. 2016) could learn from such transnational contexts, including those in Uzbekistan.

The active participation of international university staff in the UK in the recent 1 Day Without Us Campaign (2018), further highlights the important role played by international staff in contemporary internationalised University life. This campaign involved trade unions, NGOs, charities, universities and cultural institutions taking part in a day of action in order to highlight the important role played by migrant workers in all sectors. With regard to international academic staff in the transnational context, the important impact and high expectations of international faculty should not be underestimated, given the role such colleagues play in creating both a globally-focused but English-speaking academic environment (Yudkevic, 2016: 2). In addition, there is also potentially a role for national universities and transnational campuses to share good practice with one another so that students and staff

can learn from the relative merits of different approaches to education within the same country and to avoid the development of parallel systems. This view is supported by Ubaydullaeva (2019) in the context of Uzbekistan.

Case Study 4: Curriculum Internationalisation

Example Actions and Activities

- Curriculum Internationalisation Handbook UoK 2019q
- Curriculum Internationalisation Website UoK 2019r
- Kent Global Projects UoK 2019s
- Global Engagement modules UoK 2019t
- Internationalisation at Home Conference UoK 2019u

Kent Objectives and Outcomes

Forty per cent of Kent's academic staff stem from international backgrounds and so this presence necessarily helps promote internationally focused curriculum across its academic community. However, a number of other ventures and mechanisms have been harnessed in recent years in order to support the incorporation of international, and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a program of study (Leask 2009: 209 and 2015). These mechanisms include the requirement of a clause describing aspects of curriculum internationalisation within all new and revised modules (UoK 2019q); support and training for Kent staff (UoK); focus groups with Kent students; and the curation and promotion of specific internationally-focused learning opportunities in the form of Global Engagement Modules (UoK, 2019t) and Projects (UoK, 2019s). In 2019, the University also launched its first conference on Innovations in Internationalisation at Home (UoK, 2019u).

Challenges

It remains the case, notwithstanding, that University academic staff have competing demands on their limited time and that there are known barriers to curriculum internationalisation which need to be overcome for any comparable initiative to succeed. Bennett, (2008) refers to 'mindset', 'skillset' and 'heartset' to describe the willingness, capacity and commitment of academic staff in intercultural and educational internationalisation contexts. Clifford (2009) identified that some representatives of particular discipline areas are less persuaded of the need to engage in the discourse of curriculum internationalisation. Furthermore, Leask (2015) also refers to institutional blockers in terms of university organisational structures and the level of institutional engagement or support with the process.

Considerations from the Transnational Context

The University of Kent's curriculum internationalisation activities, described above, represent mechanisms to encourage the infusion of diverse and interculturally-attuned approaches into its education. However, it is evident from the WIUT conference (2018) that institutions that are engaged with curriculum internationalisation can also learn from transnational institutions such as WIUT in Uzbekistan. As an example, the collaboration, between Westminster University in the UK and WIUT in Tashkent, typically results in the provision of what is referred to as a validated UK degree being delivered overseas, in this case in Tashkent. Through this form of collaborative education, the degree is not a franchised replica of a degree in the UK institution, but rather a localised version which has been designed to achieve learning outcomes which are deemed to meet the required outcomes and standards of the validating

UK institution. Importantly, this pedagogical approach allows for local contextualisation. Although globalization often promotes homogenization, it should also encourage localized differentiation (Hall et al. 1992). While much can be learned from alternative education systems, HEIs should avoid duplication without appropriate modification. Pyvis (2011) goes as far as to argue, that in transnational education, even the act of using one university's standards as a benchmark needs to be replaced by collaboratively developed measures of quality that are context-sensitive.

This process and the multi-disciplinary engagement of staff in the UK with staff in Uzbekistan, for the purpose of educational design and validation, involves a large number of individuals in the process of co-creating curriculum to support learning in diverse contexts. It is therefore also to be expected that, in addition to the benefits for educational design and delivery in Uzbekistan, a collaborative process will result in a positive 'return flow' effect on the levels of staff engagement and expertise concerned with institutionalised curriculum internationalisation practices, at the UK-based institution.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As demonstrated by the transnational exchange of good practice, which took place at the conference in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (WIUT, 2018), different considerations and approaches are required when seeking to meet the varied challenges of internationalisation. It is clear that knowledge can be made more robust through reference to multiple and varied sources, which consider issues from different perspectives (Van der Vyver and Crisp, 2019). Consequently, it follows that good practice in the pursuit of comprehensive internationalisation in Higher Education can be strengthened through sharing of approaches and solutions across departmental boundaries, within institutions of Higher Education, and beyond regional and national boundaries.

The principles, practices and case studies that were shared through this particular paper, were discussed and disseminated with the 'Silk Road' spirit of internationalisation in mind with the aim of promoting knowledge diplomacy (Knight, 2018). It is also hoped that these ideas and activities are of use to assist other institutions in different regions, when considering how they may motivate students and colleagues to respond to their own comprehensive internationalisation challenges in context. The concept of internationalisation in Higher Education necessarily incorporates a central goal of international collaboration and exchange. This offers opportunities for nations to learn from each other or, in certain cases, for less-developed countries to build capacity through guidance from others (Ninnes and Hellsten 2005); this does not infer that nations need to duplicate the models from the Western world (Ng, 2012). Emulating the West without essential modification, localisation and evaluation (Mok 2008) should be avoided in order to prevent academic colonisation or in some situations a form of 'recolonisation'.

The following series of observations from this paper, is intended to inform the advancement of Higher Education internationalisation in a manner which takes into account, but is not limited to, the transnational education context in Uzbekistan:

- Institutions in different nations which seek to collaborate for transnational education provision have important opportunities to learn from each other in their approach to internationalisation and the benefits which can be derived.
- Universities which place a key focus on distinctive aspects of internationalisation, as part of their institutional strategies, have much in common with transnational institutions which often distinguish themselves in their regions as beacons of global engagement and internationally informed education. Therefore more interaction and sharing of good practice should be encouraged between such institutions.

- For optimal and more equal benefit to be derived from shared international education activity, developed between institutions in different nations, it should be recognised that collaborative delivery needs to draw on good practice from both national contexts and that this should involve localisation, in order to support knowledge diplomacy and to avoid any sense of colonisation.
- Ventures designed to support and enhance international student and staff experience and impact at internationally-focused universities, can inform student experience initiatives designed for less diverse nationality groups at transnational campuses. Conversely, student experience activities on transnational campuses can also inform approaches to local and national civic engagement for universities in countries such as the UK.
- Where colleagues in more than one country engage in transnational education activity, there are potential benefits for those participating institutions, in terms of the enhancements for their shared transnational campus. There are also benefits in the development of expertise in curriculum internationalisation at the 'origin' campuses and opportunities to share good practice with the wider education culture in the countries involved.
- International staff on transnational campuses and in internationalised universities, in countries such as the UK, play key roles in creating and supporting an internationalised environment. Like hygiene factors in the workplace, the benefit of international faculty may sometimes be overlooked or unrecognised, but becomes critically apparent if at risk of decline or withdrawal, as the 1 Day Without Us (2008) campaign warns us. This highlights the need to support international staff and to understand critical push and pull factors which draw international faculty to internationally-focused universities and transnational campuses, as well as significant factors which encourage staff to remain in those locations.

Competing Interests

Anthony Manning is Dean for Internationalisation, Office of the Vice Chancellor, University of Kent.

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Dr Manning is responsible for the development, review and implementation of international activity across the University of Kent. This involves key aspects of education, research and student experience. Dr Manning's particular area of academic research expertise is in the teaching and assessment of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), modern foreign languages and transferable skills. He is also one of the principal authors of the *Transferable Academic Skills Kit (TASK)*, published by Garnet and has also taught in France, Germany, China and Japan.

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