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Breakout Session 1:

10:30 – 11:00

Presentations

Session 1

‘Are You Thinking What We’re Thinking? Probably Not!’ How far do the self-expressed needs of Chinese students match what UK tutors believe?

Presenter: Angela Smith

Institution: Edge Hill University

Theme: Teaching and supporting international students

The British Council predicts that the number of overseas students attending Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) courses in the UK could increase from 150,000 in 2001-2002 to over 600,000 in 2014-15. UK FE colleges attract international students by offering three types of courses: A Levels, foundation routes to universities and vocational diploma courses. Learners from the People’s Republic of China arrive on education courses in the UK with perceptions of the academic abilities they possess and the methods they find most conducive to academic achievement. Tutors who teach these learners also have expectations of what learners should be able to do, with a focus on independent learning and critical thinking. The differences between the expectations of the two can create tensions on both sides.

This presentation investigates the extent to which prior learning of PRC learners may impact on their perceptions of UK academic conventions as enjoyable, helpful or difficult. Their responses, compared with those of their UK lecturers, indicate some agreement but considerable disparity of tutor and learner perceptions. The study aimed at investigating what tutors across a range of A2 and pre MBA courses regard as particular needs of Chinese learners, investigating what Chinese learners themselves see as their learning needs, and establishing which teaching and learning strategies best meet Chinese learner needs on A2/Foundation courses. It also questions the reasons behind any differing perceptions and their impact before suggesting how students, tutors and the institution might best respond.

Session 2

How the ALPS CETL is Embedding the Concept of Competency Maps and Interprofessional Assessments Processes to Enhance Student Learning and Employability Skills

Presenters: Catherine Coates, Sue Smith, Julie Laxton & Gerry Armitage

Institution: Leeds Metropolitan University, University of Leeds & Bradford Hospitals NHS Trust

Theme: Enhancing employability

The ALPS CETL and the Institute for Enterprise at Leeds Metropolitan University are working collaboratively to develop the use of the ALPS competency maps. The process initially established within ALPS to expose the key skills and attributes inherent in communication, teamwork and ethical practice (<http://www.alps-cetl.ac.uk/maps.html>) has now been extrapolated to develop a new enterprise skills map and a patient safety map to be used by students and staff to enhance learning and employability. The ALPS competency mapping process was equally relevant to make explicit enterprise skills in the curriculum at Leeds Metropolitan University. The Institute for Enterprise CETL supports and promotes enterprise education within the University and with key external national partners. Its small team has strengthened and developed enterprise education in the last 5 years through development of new courses and modules, collaborative projects and student led events. We anticipate that representing the enterprise dimensions in a competency map will allow students to grasp the diversity of the competency and help them to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Additionally as part of the NHS Yorkshire and the Humber funded ALPS CETL extension project, Leeds Metropolitan University have secured financial support to set up a Competency Mapping Network whose primary objective is to produce a Patient Safety Competency Map. The network which is led by Catherine Coates and Julie Laxton has attracted many local experts in the field of patient safety and aims to complete this new ALPS map for a consultation event in May 2011.

This presentation will discuss how the processes championed by ALPS have been successfully transferred and shared across professions and describes how the challenges, benefits and future potential of this approach has been evaluated by practice partners and technology enhanced learning colleagues during the extension period of the ALPS CETL.

Session 3**Changing Assessment to Improve Student Retention Success****Presenter:** Andrea Cerevkova**Institution:** Edge Hill University**Theme:** Retention focused practices

Student retention is a cause of concern for many higher education institutions. Early interventions aimed at improving student retention focused on student support mechanisms (see for example, Thomas et al., 2002). However, a shift has gradually been made towards learning, teaching and assessment practices which focus on student engagement with their studies. Crosling et al. (2009) identify engaging students in their studies as the major need for retaining students and stemming attrition. Over the years, the Department of Law and Criminology at Edge Hill University has adopted various learning and teaching approaches to encourage students to engage with their studies. These included: early diagnostic exercises, comprehensive induction programme, formative assignments, amongst others.