

INTERNATIONALISING THE CURRICULUM (IOC)

AN INTRODUCTION

This guidance links to the principal pillar of Intercultural and International Engagement within the CU Education Strategy

“Internationalisation of the Curriculum is the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the preparation, delivery and outcomes of a program of study [course]” (Leask 2012)

INTRODUCTION

Not a New Concept . . .

Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IOC) is not a new concept, but has in more recent years, moved from the periphery to the core of the UK HE agenda. It is aimed at developing graduates who have the global competences to contribute responsibly as citizens and economic agents in a diverse and interconnected world.

Historically, Internationalisation (as a broader concept) focused on the *physical* mobility of students (i.e. kicking students out of the UK to gain so-called international or intercultural experience), however, this approach excluded those students who had neither the social, cultural or economic capability to benefit from such travel. The issue then became one of equity . . . shouldn't all students benefit from an international experience along with the skills, mindset and professional development that it reportedly affords?

Today . . .

IOC responds to two primary drivers.

ONE: a new perspective regarding the role of higher education in an increasingly interdependent, connected and globalised world. HE has a responsibility to prepare graduates for their future professional, private and citizenship roles in markets and societies that are culturally and linguistically diverse at local, national and global planes. In order to do this equitably, internationalisation should permeate every aspect of the curriculum at home, in order to develop the international perspectives, intercultural competences and ethical sensitivities of EVERY student.

TWO: the increasing diversity of students in the classroom. This requires teachers to adopt an inclusive approach to teaching, learning and assessment to capitalise on the plethora of perspectives, cultures, skills and experiences that students bring to the learning environment, but also to ensure each student is supported to adjust to new academic and discipline systems and cultures to maximize their individual potential.

IOC DEFINITIONS & CONCEPTS

- IOC is “the integration of an international and intercultural dimension into all of the activities of a university, including the **teaching, research** and **service** functions” (OECD 1999)
- “Internationalising curricula is not just about **content**, it also requires changes in **pedagogy** to encourage students to develop critical skills to understand forces shaping their **discipline** and challenge accepted viewpoints” (Zimitat 2008)
- “it is **transformative** and **holistic** in approach . . . not simply institutions with ever increasing numbers of international students” (Robson 2011)
- “Internationalisation of the curriculum may mean different things in different **disciplines** because the international perspectives required by different **professions** vary” (Leask 2011)
- “IOC is the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the **preparation, delivery** and **outcomes** of a program of study [course]” (Leask 2012)
- IOC is about “preparing 21st century graduates to live in and contribute responsibly to a globally interconnected society . . . whilst promoting a high **quality, equitable** and global learning experience for all students studying UK programmes, irrespective of their geographical **location** or **background**” (HEA 2014)
- “Internationalisation at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the **formal** and **informal** curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments” (Beelen and Jones 2015)

HOW DO WE PUT THIS INTO PRACTICE?

INTERNATIONALISE SUBJECT CONTENT

- **What is this?** Internationalising content refers to the meaningful and purposeful incorporation of international dimensions and perspectives into degree course content, material, tools and resources.
- “Course content can include diverse perspectives on social, economic, political and/or environmental issues and differences in professional practices across cultures” (GIHE 2011)
- Disciplines are the basis of knowledge but “The problems faced by the world and its communities, however, require ‘problem-defining and solving perspectives that cross disciplinary and cultural boundaries” (Hudzik 2004:1)

See resource on Internationalising Content

INTERNATIONALISE TEACHING PRACTICE

- **What is this?** Internationalising practice refers to the way teaching and assessment is delivered so that it positively encourages interactions between diverse students to develop intercultural competences, it invites and values viewpoints and contributions from students of all backgrounds, and it treats different ways of knowing as a valuable resource for learning (Leask and Carroll 2013) to foster respect for diverse knowledge, people and experiences.

- It adopts an inclusive approach to teaching, learning and assessment.

See resource on Internationalising Teaching Practice and Inclusive Assessment Principles

INTERNATIONALISE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- **What is this?** Internationalising the student experience refers to Internationalisation of the informal curriculum. “The formal curriculum does not operate in isolation (or in a vacuum)” (Leask 2011) but is instead supported by extracurricular activities and services available to students.
- In order to assist students develop global attributes without leaving the country, courses should adopt strategies and processes that encourage development of global, international and intercultural knowledge, awareness and skills through a variety of wider activities. Examples include academic field-trips, Erasmus, study-abroad, Global Leaders Programs, peer mentoring and more.

See resource on Internationalising the Student Experience

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