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IS INTERNATIONALISATION HAVING AN IDENTITY CRISIS?

There is no doubt that internationalisation has come of age. No longer is it an *ad hoc* or marginalised part of the higher education landscape. University strategic plans, national policy statements, international declarations, and academic articles all indicate the centrality of internationalisation in the world of higher education.

But, has internationalisation become a catch all phrase used to describe anything and everything remotely linked to the global, inter-cultural, or international dimensions of higher education? Is the recognition and status now linked to internationalisation putting it at risk? Is internationalisation losing its way? After several decades of intense development, is internationalisation having a mid-life crisis?

Not only has internationalisation transformed higher education, it has dramatically changed itself. Recent national and worldwide surveys of university internationalisation priorities and rationales show that establishing an international profile or global standing is becoming more important than reaching international standards of excellence. Capacity building through international cooperation projects is being replaced by status building initiatives to gain world class recognition and higher rankings. International student mobility is now big business and more closely aligned to recruitment of brains for national innovation agendas.

Other unintended consequences show that some private and public education providers are lowering academic standards and transforming into visa factories due to revenue generation imperatives and immigration pressures. More international academic projects and partnerships are becoming commercialised and profit driven as are international accreditation services. Diploma mills and rogue providers are selling bogus qualifications and causing havoc for international qualification recognition. Awarding two degrees from institutions located in different countries based on the workload for one diploma is being promoted through some rather dubious double degree programs. And all of this is in the name of internationalisation???

At the same time, there are countless examples of positive initiatives which illustrate how collaborative scholarship,

crossborder education exchange, and campus learning based internationalisation strategies contribute to the development of individuals, institutions, nations, and the world at large.

Who could have forecasted that internationalisation would evolve from what has been traditionally considered a process based on values of cooperation, partnership, exchange, mutual benefits, and capacity building to one that is increasingly characterised by competition, commercialisation, self-interest, and status building. Do these dramatic changes indicate that the once valued and perceived difference between internationalisation and globalisation of higher education is being eroded? Or is internationalisation having an identity crisis as to its fundamental values and what drives the process and outcomes?

Recent debates on the meaning and role of internationalisation have stimulated an interest in redefining internationalisation. But is a new definition of internationalisation the right response or enough? How can we avoid a scenario where words might change but actions and, more importantly fundamental values, do not?

Internationalisation has always meant different things to different people, institutions and countries. It always will. Internationalisation has been guided by the principles that it must be linked to local context and purpose, that there isn't 'one way or a right way' to internationalise, and that it is a means to an end not an end unto itself. The challenge of strengthening and reinforcing the values of cooperation, exchange, partnership over the current emphasis on competitiveness and commercialisation is front and centre. Are we up to the challenge- can we focus on values and not only on definitions?



Jane Knight, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF POLAND'S HIGHER EDUCATION REFORMS

Mr Andrzej Stolarczyk – Counsellor to the Minister,
Department of Strategy, Ministry of Science
and Higher Education, Poland

In October 2011, Poland's reforms of higher education will enter into force, allowing universities more autonomy. These reforms will enable universities to create their own degree programmes. By introducing the National Qualifications Framework, degree programmes will only have to conform to a description of learning outcomes for a given subject area.

These proposed changes place greater emphasis on promoting high quality. The new law allows university departments and research centres to apply for Leading National Research Centre status, which is granted for five years. This status provides entities with an increase in funding that will be used to raise employees' remuneration, as well as for special scholarships for PhD and undergraduate students. These entities will also have priority when applying for funds to upgrade their infrastructure. Opening up academic careers to outstanding scholars is a vital

strand of the reform. Therefore, doctors without habilitation, but with postdoctoral qualifications, may be granted the title of professor. This provision applies to doctors who, for at least five years, have managed research projects and carried out significant scientific work in foreign countries. Moreover, the Central Commission for Degrees and Titles may request granting the title of professor to a person without habilitation or postdoctoral qualifications if the candidate has outstanding achievements.

The reform introduces restrictions intended to motivate assistant professors and assistants. Assistant professors with a PhD degree will be allowed to hold their post for a maximum of eight years. They will have this time to successfully conclude their habilitation procedure. A similar provision will apply to MAs employed as assistants who will be obliged to obtain a doctoral degree within eight years or lose their post.

The new rules also restrict multi-employment, or the work of one lecturer at several universities. To take a second post, a public university lecturer will have to obtain the consent of the rector.

QUALITY TEACHING...

...AT LAVAL UNIVERSITY, QUÉBEC, CANADA



Serge Talbot

IMHE conducted a study on quality teaching at Laval University analysing, in particular, a training programme on education pedagogy called *Pleased to Teach*.

The programme's creator, Serge Talbot, stresses that this intensive training "introduces and consolidates personalised teaching methods and enables pedagogical knowledge to be acquired". He asserts that

"teaching requires changing the paradigm, going from a teaching model geared towards discussion and knowledge transfer to teaching focused on the student's learning and development". According to IMHE, this training is a powerful change agent promoting pedagogical innovation, teaching effectiveness, and cross-disciplinary instruction. The continued commitment of the Vice-Rector of academic and international affairs and the expertise of the training team contributes greatly to its success.

...PROJECT FINDINGS TO BE PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED IN MEXICALI, MEXICO

The Quality Teaching in Higher Education Project, launched in 2007, explores institution-wide policies in support of and rewarding quality teaching. The findings of the project will be presented as part of IMHE's "What Works" series of events with the *Conference on Managing Quality Teaching in Higher Education*, to be held in Mexicali, Mexico on 5-6 December 2011 at CETYS University.

Link to presentation:

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/52/48346614.pdf>

Agenda: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/58/48349784.pdf>

At the conference in Mexicali, the following issues will be examined:

- Pedagogical innovations and implementing change in teaching and learning;
- Support for quality teaching and indicators of effective performance; and

– Improving quality teaching with fewer resources and within a competitive environment.

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...EXPERTS' RECOMMENDATIONS

The Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) in Barcelona, Spain hosted a meeting of quality teaching experts at which they recommended that institutions provide greater support to help teachers accomplish their educational mission. The quality of teaching relies on teachers having certain attributes, including extensive experience with student guidance and clear understanding of the multiple and complex characteristics of learners coupled with being proficient in the technical and subject matter.





IMHE welcomes the following new members:

- > Ministry of Higher Education – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- > University of Glasgow – United Kingdom

HE IN REGIONAL AND CITY DEVELOPMENT: REVIEW OF ANTIOQUIA, COLOMBIA UNDERWAY

IMHE work on Higher Education in Regional and City Development is making steady progress and more regions can now sign up for the third round of reviews. These reviews provide HEIs, regional and national authorities, and policy makers with information and analysis to assist them in formulating and implementing policies and practices to mobilise higher education for social, economic and cultural development. Antioquia in Colombia is the latest recruit for an IMHE review. Thanks to support from local organisers and the World Bank,

AHELO

The AHELO Group of National Experts (GNE) met on 1 July to review progress on the various strands of work, discuss insight emerging from Phase 1 of the work and decide on the next steps for Phase 2.

The work for Phase 1 (instrumentation and small-scale validation of assessment instruments) is now coming to an end in all three strands (Generic Skills, Economics and Engineering). This intermediate milestone provided an opportunity for discussion on initial feasibility insights from Phase 1.

Overall, the GNE commended the project's progress and was pleased to see the work move ahead at such a steady pace. The emerging insights from the cognitive labs in the Generic Skills strand and from the focus groups in the disciplinary strands are providing encouraging signals of feasibility in terms of the development of frameworks and instruments, as well as their validity within an international context. However, these initial

the review has progressed especially rapidly. A one week review visit took place in July 2011 and the report will be submitted to the region before the end of the year. The review of Antioquia has also paved the way for the participation of Colombian HEIs in IMHE. One of the universities in the review, Universidad de Medellín, submitted its application for IMHE membership immediately after the review visit.

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qualitative insights will need to be explored in more depth in the next phase of work. This will consist of real-life administration of the AHELO assessments with larger groups of students within participating countries and institutions, so as to permit psychometric analyses of data and more scientific proof of feasibility.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss the next steps. A number of countries have already confirmed their participation in Phase 2, and this critical mass will allow completing the feasibility study by late 2012 in all three strands, according to plans. More countries are planning to join the implementation phase provided more funding is secured.

With the feasibility study now on track towards its completion, initial discussions will start in the autumn on the format and content of the AHELO feasibility study final conference – tentatively scheduled for December 2012.


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MANAGING INTERNATIONALISATION – GAINING MOMENTUM

Within the context of the Managing Internationalisation initiative, IMHE is holding on-line focus groups with its members to examine issues of concern that were identified at the 1 April 2011 workshop. An overwhelming response was received for two topics, in particular: i) international networks as an aid to internationalisation; and ii) government policy and internationalisation strategies. In order to accommodate time zones and interest, it was decided to hold two sessions on each of these topics. John Hearn, Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Sydney, moderated the first focus group that was held on 5 July 2011 in which members examined the role of international networks in internationalisation. After exploring priority recommendations and the advantages and disadvantages of international networks, the group also looked at what IMHE could do to assist in the development of international networks that could not be done organically and how this could feed into the December conference (see below). Marijke Wahlers, Head of the International Department at the

German Rectors' Conference, moderated the focus group on government policy and internationalisation strategies held on 20 July 2011. A lively discussion revealed the various government and institutional approaches to internationalisation, obstacles to overcome and the sometimes diverging views on the effects of internationalisation. The outcomes of this work will be discussed at the *Conference on Strategic Management of Internationalisation* to be held in Lund, Sweden, on 15 and 16 December 2011, in conjunction with the Nordic Universities Association (NUS) and the Nordic Association of University Administrators (NUAS). Further work will feed into the 2012 IMHE General Conference, *Attaining and Sustaining Mass Higher Education*, scheduled to take place in Paris on 17 to 19 September 2012. Other topics will be examined in on-line focus groups.

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WIKIGENDER UNIVERSITY PROGRAMME

Wikigender, the open-source platform to share knowledge on gender equality, has started a university programme that engages gender equality and development studies in the classroom to contribute to the world of information sharing. The programme currently includes the [Institut d'Études Politiques](#) in Paris and the [American University of Paris](#).

Given the success of the programme, Wikigender is working to expand the current programme to selected universities, in both developed and developing countries, to enhance the range of perspectives and information that is available on the website. Wikigender University aims to actively engage students in the

development of this gender equality platform, bring together a range of universities to foster networking possibilities among students and academics, thereby extending the network of Wikigender users and enhance opportunities for building capacity in gender research, information sharing, social networking, IT and editorial skills.

[Wikigender University: Sciences-Po Paris](#)

[Wikigender University: American University of Paris](#)

If you are interested in becoming part of the Wikigender University programme, or if you would like to know more, please email: contact@wikigender.org.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST



Designing for Education: Compendium of Exemplary Educational Facilities 2011

OECD Publishing, ISBN: 9789264112308

D*esigning for Education: Compendium of Exemplary Educational Facilities 2011* showcases over 60 recently built or refurbished educational facilities from 28 countries. Collectively, these projects demonstrate state-of-the-art design in this field.



PISA Against the Odds: Disadvantaged Students Who Succeed in School

OECD Publishing, ISBN: 9789264089952

A*gainst the Odds* takes a close look at the resilient students who excel in PISA surveys despite a disadvantaged background. It provides insights into what enables socio-economically disadvantaged students to fulfil their potential.



Reviews of National Policies for Education: Reviews of National Policies for Education: Improving Lower Secondary Schools in Norway 2011

OECD Publishing, ISBN: 9789264114579

This report develops comparative knowledge on lower secondary education across OECD countries and tailors it to the context of an OECD country: Norway.



Education and Training Policy Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in Tertiary Education and Employment

OECD Publishing, ISBN: 9789264097414

This book examines the transition of young adults with disabilities from school to tertiary education and work.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Find all our meetings on
www.oecd.org/edu/imhemetings

- 29 September 2011** *Celebrating 50 years of Educational Facilities: Designing for Education*, Paris, France
- 5-6 December 2011** Within the context of the "What Works" series, *Managing Quality Teaching in Higher Education*, Mexicali, Mexico
- 15-16 Dec. 2011** *Conference on the Strategic Management of Internationalisation in Higher Education*, Lund, Sweden

SAVE THE DATE!

The next IMHE General Conference, *Attaining and Sustaining Mass Higher Education*, will be held in Paris from 17-19 September 2012.

16 August 2011 – the call for contributions opens

1 November 2011 – registration opens

www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/generalconference

OTHER MEETINGS OF INTEREST

- 13-16 Sept. 2011** *23rd Annual EAIE Conference*, Copenhagen, Denmark
<http://www.eaie.org/copenhagen/>
- 11-14 October 2011** *Australian International Education Conference*, Adelaide, Australia
- 12-14 October 2011** CONAHEC's 14th North America Higher Education Conference, *International Higher Education Collaboration: Empowering Societies in an Era of Transformation*, Puebla, Mexico
- 14-18 Nov.** *EAIE Academy*, a week long training event for international education professionals, Valencia, Spain
<http://www.eaie.org/academy/>

- 16-18 Nov. 2011** International Association of Universities (IAU) International Conference 2011, *Strategies for Securing Equity in Access and Success in Higher Education*, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya
www.iau-aiu.net/

- 7-9 December 2011** SRHE – Annual Research Conference 2011, *Positive Futures for Higher Education: Connections, Communities and Criticality*, Wales, United Kingdom

- 14-15 February 2012** *EFMD Higher Education Research Conference - Call for Papers*
To register and submit a paper please follow the link on www.efmd.org or contact research@efmd.org
Zurich, Switzerland



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