Your International Student Experience: Reflection & Publication

IEEL005 5 credit module (equivalent to 2.5 ECTS)

1. Module Leader

Rachel Peacock

Biography. Rachel has worked in private language schools and HE institutions since 1999. She has extensive experience with international and domestic students working as teacher, academic advisor, teacher trainer, director of studies and module convenor for various courses in Russia, Libya, the UK and China. Her Master's dissertation investigated the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching by Chinese teachers of English following a teacher training course, comparing teachers’ intentions outlined in their reflective journals with actual changes in teaching practices thus evaluating the effectiveness of reflection and reflective writing. She enjoys working in cross-cultural contexts and helping students and teachers maximise their study and work potential. She also enjoys communicating in other languages speaking Mandarin, Russian, and French.

2. Module Description

This module allows students to explore their own international student journey from the perspective of culture, language, educational background and psychological and affective factors, and consider different models of reflection. The module requires students to produce a reflective account of their own International Summer School experience at the University of Liverpool, or a comparative account of their experience by investigating their peers’ experiences using questionnaires and/or interviews. Students will be introduced to The International Student Experience Journal (ISEJ), with the option of submitting their reflective account for publication. This peer-reviewed journal was launched in 2013 as a forum for discussing international students’ experience of academic life in the UK and other English-speaking countries. It welcomes contributions from university staff as well as students themselves.
3. Module Aims

This module aims to:
- broaden students' knowledge of internationalisation in the HE context and the research literature.
- introduce students to different models of reflection in order for them to make sense of their international experience, considering issues of culture, stereotyping and expectations of and about international study opportunities.
- develop basic skills in qualitative and quantitative research methods (questionnaires & interviews) and collaborative learning.
- develop students’ confidence in understanding and communicating complex ideas.

4. Content

The following topics will be considered on the module:
- Cultural stereotyping of international students
- UK students’ perspectives on international students
- HEIs and Internationalisation
- Culture Shock
- The value of study abroad; Bourdieu’s (1986) notions of ‘capital'
- Student contributions from The International Student Experience Journal
- Kolb’s (1984) Learning Cycle
- Gibb’s (1988) Reflective Cycle
- Rolfe et al. (2001) Framework for Reflective Practice
- Schön’s (1983, 1987) Reflective practitioner
- Basic quantitative and qualitative research methods and approaches to presenting findings
- Ways of measuring and recording reflection

5. Module structure

The module will be delivered over a three-week period in six two-hour sessions (four hours per week, total 12 hours contact time).

Each session will comprise a seminar, which may include a short presentation of information and ideas from the lecturer accompanied by a combination of informal student presentations, group tasks, discussion of reading material and exchange of ideas in both small groups and plenary. Students will be actively encouraged to contribute through personalised and engaging activities. In order to facilitate the exchange of experiences, students will receive input on basic research skills and have the opportunity to conduct brief interviews and/or questionnaires with their peers and/or students from other ISS modules.

In addition, it is expected that students will spend 38 study hours outside of the classroom contact hours on guided independent study. This includes pre-session preparation (i.e. assigned reading, optional reading of areas of personal interest, homework tasks such as compiling interview/survey items, group/online research, and a reflective log) preparation and the production of the final written reflective assignment. The ‘flipped classroom’ approach will be used, requiring students to prepare in advance for the sessions. Therefore, students should be aware that in
order to fully benefit from the face-to-face classroom sessions, they will need to have completed the preparation work assigned beforehand.

6. Teaching methods

The teaching approach will include a combination of the following:
- Taught input sessions
- Flipped classroom – preparation work
- Small group work tasks
- Group discussions
- Presentations
- Online learning
- Loop input
- Workshops

7. Assessment:

Assessment will be by:
- Written essay/reflection of no more than 1,000 words.

Standard University policies apply with regard to late submission of assessments. There is no re-assessment opportunity.

8. Course structure:

The course will be current, practical and personalised with the input sessions providing opportunities for students to consider and reflect on the nature and value of their present/previous international student experience(s). Theoretical frameworks on models of reflection will be included in the course (see previous information on course content) but they will be introduced in the context of UK HEIs and internationalisation, encouraging students to combine theory with their practical experiences. The course will also allow students to consolidate and reinforce course content by informally presenting one/several idea(s) from their research findings and/or assessed reflective piece of writing.

The indicative schedule is as follows:

**Session One:** *Introduction to the Module*

The course will begin with an overview of the module, its sessions and its aims. Students will consider their own motivations for studying abroad and the general value associated with study abroad experiences. The concept of reflection will be briefly introduced within the context of the assessment (reflective piece of writing) which will be outlined and set in this session.

**Session Two:** Cultural stereotyping & its impact on students’ experience of HE

**Session Three:** Introduction to Models of Reflection (Kolb/Schön/Gibbs/Rolfe et al) & characteristics of effective reflective writing (analysis of *ISEJ* student publications)

**Session Four:** Introduction to basic research methods (writing surveys and interview items) to investigate student perspectives in the context of pre-arrival expectations, culture shock and cultural stereotyping
Session Five: Exploration of student perspectives (practical implementation of peer questionnaires/interviews)

Session Six: Informal presentation of findings/assessed reflective writing to the group/small groups through discussion and/or PowerPoint presentations

9. Learning outcomes

On completion of this module, students will be able to:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcome</th>
<th>Assessment component which assesses this learning outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate knowledge of internationalisation in the HE context and the research literature.</td>
<td>Written essay/reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate reflection on their international experience, utilising an appropriate framework.</td>
<td>Written essay/reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research a topic within the subject area, and be better able to work collaboratively to produce an independent piece of work based on that research.</td>
<td>Written essay/reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better understand and communicate complex ideas.</td>
<td>Written essay/reflection</td>
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10. Skills

Key skills that will be developed:

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<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>How this skill is developed</th>
<th>Mode of assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Collaboration is to be encouraged through the inclusion of group discussions, pair work, whole class activities and collaborative writing of surveys/interviews</td>
<td>N/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Students' oral communication skills are to be developed through group discussions, individual interviews/surveys, class activities and tasks. Written communication is to be developed through the analysis of ISEJ articles, a classroom focus on the style of reflective writing and the production of the assessed assignment</td>
<td>Written essay/reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Reflection</td>
<td>Classroom speaking activities promoting reflection via different theoretical frameworks and comparison with peers’ experience. In writing, this is encouraged through the production of a reflective piece</td>
<td>Written essay/reflection</td>
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11. Books, ebooks and websites:

The University Website at [www.liv.ac.uk/library](http://www.liv.ac.uk/library) provides access to many relevant books and electronic books, as well as academic journals and databases.

**Recommended Pre-Course Reading**


These articles provide a concise and clear introduction to the concepts to be explored on the course, as well as examples of student publications from the *International Student Experience Journal*. These sample publications act as a guide to the reflective writing to be completed for assessment. Extracts from these texts may also be assigned as preparatory work during the course.

**Core Texts**


Students are not expected to read these core texts in full. All the sources are available through the University of Liverpool Library or are freely accessible online.

**Useful Websites**


News & articles on the Student Experience available at the following:

[http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Pages/home.aspx](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Pages/home.aspx)

[https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/student-experience](https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/student-experience)

[https://globalgraduates.com/articles](https://globalgraduates.com/articles)

[https://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-create](https://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-create)

[https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/](https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/)

You Tube introduction to Bourdieu, P (1986) notion of cultural capital accessed on 09/11/17 at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DBEyiBkcp8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DBEyiBkcp8)