

Embracing change in development and delivery of teaching and learning in business education

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The ABS Policy Network is part of a series of events that are being held by the ABS across the UK. These events provide a platform for key stakeholders in higher education (HE) policy and business school practice to engage in debate and discussion around pressing issues. The Policy Network aims to directly engage with stakeholders, to influence policy, and to increase media profile.

This second annual series of events focus on one central question:

“Is it Possible to Balance Student Demands with Business Needs”

That question has been broken down into focused sessions with specific topics. This event centred around the topic:

“Embracing change in development and delivery of teaching and learning in business education”

To help us negotiate these discussions, the ABS invited key players from stakeholders in the HE sector.

Profiles



Richard Atfield is currently Higher Education Academy (HEA) Discipline Lead for Business and Management. With colleagues for Accounting, Economics, Finance, Hospitality and Marketing he works with business and management schools in the UK to seek and share good practice especially related to the HEA's current priorities. This includes supporting workshops on a range of topics, supporting those with HEA grants and scholarships, encouraging the development of communities of practice, and sponsoring conferences and the Enterprise Educator award.



Dr. Denise Baden - following several years in industry, both employed and self-employed, Denise returned to academia to do a doctorate in psychology, which was awarded in 2002. Dr Baden worked in the area of social psychology for 3 years, and then joined the Southampton Management School in 2005, where she has been engaged in research and teaching in the areas of ethics, entrepreneurship and corporate social responsibility.



Robin Stopford has worked with a large number of B2B companies to help them grow and create long-term and sustainable shareholder value. This is driven by translating a corporate vision into a coherent strategy and series of corporate commitments. He currently works with MACAT and the Alexandria Trust, a London-based charity dedicated to helping to restore world class standards of education in the Arab world.

Key Themes

Students as active partners

Graham Gibb's work, published through the Higher Education Academy, talks about strategic behaviours by universities in response to the National Student Survey (NSS) and an overconcentration on the individual academic rather than programme teams. Gibb calls for team recognition, more formative assessment and developing the role of the student as an active partner.

Innovative examples of learning and teaching are disseminated by conference and publication, for example involving enterprise students getting involved directly in projects with social entrepreneurs. This experience suggests that exposing students directly to a business culture predicated on social responsibility is an effective means of embedding sustainable values.

Quality and accreditation systems

The UK business school experience is very attractive to students from outside the UK. Some of the main reasons for this are thought to be the permanency of our institutions, international recognition of our qualifications and quality kite marks, particularly that of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). While some bemoan these institutions as designed to protect management rather than enhance the student experience, they are designed by the sector and can be changed by the sector and are more flexible than is often reported.

Technology enabler is real

The expectations of students and staff with regards to technology can be different and support is required. Cloud-based libraries are now available that can transform access to knowledge.

Celebrate diversity

As made clear in the recommendations of the ABS Innovation Task Force, business schools should celebrate their differences, rather than all trying to compete for the shrinking pot of research funding.

Conclusions

Sharing good examples and positive role models are very important, as is linking central mission statements that claim innovation in the student experience with the academics who are trying to deliver this. The technology enabler is real, but there are fundamentals of teaching and learning that should not be overlooked.