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of Commonwealth
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Bulletin

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The responsible university

Defending academic freedom

Combating sexual harassment

Scholarships in the development context

Bulletin

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Editorial



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What is 'development'? Who is it for, and who does it? The answers to those questions might have been different before September 2015.

The launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN two months ago marked the start of a step change in how the global community deals with the big challenges of our time. The SDG agenda moves away from the MDGs' targeted focus on poverty reduction to a broad approach that prioritises sustainability.

This agenda is also a truly global one: the 17 goals and 169 targets apply to all countries, rich and poor. It recognises that all nations have progress to make – on issues such as climate change, good governance, and food security, to name just three.

The SDGs have been a long time in the making (with more work yet to be done – the myriad of indicators that underpin the goals will be finalised in March next year). Ahead of their launch, the ACU saw an opportunity to bring together the worlds of higher education

and development – both of which are core to our work – in a global conversation about the role of universities in addressing development challenges. Through 'The world beyond 2015 – Is higher education ready?' campaign, we canvassed the views of leaders, experts, and students on how universities contribute to development, and what they require in order to maximise their impact in the new SDG landscape.

Now that the SDGs are agreed, our thoughts turn to what happens next. With many sectors lobbying for inclusion, a goal that specifically mentions higher education – Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all – may seem like an achievement in and of itself.

But with recognition comes increased scrutiny, as well as even higher expectations. John Kirkland explains on page 12 of this issue why the specific target for scholarships may be problematic. Universities are already under pressure from a wide range of factors, and it remains to be seen how this additional

responsibility will translate into resources for the sector.

Which brings us to one of the key findings of the Beyond 2015 campaign: higher education underpins all development targets, not just Goal 4. We have seen examples from across the world of how universities are already addressing local, national, and international issues, through the knowledge and skilled graduates they produce, as well their unique potential to support evidence-based policy through research.

Such activity is at the heart of the mission of higher education, which goes beyond the narrow definition of a specific goal or target. A robust higher education sector is indispensable for achieving the SDGs – and the onus is on universities themselves to be clear and determined in their articulation of their role and potential. ■

Natasha Lokhun is Communications Manager at the ACU.

What makes a responsible university?

In July 2016, the ACU Conference of Executive Heads will explore the range and remit of a 'responsible' university. Here, **John Wood** looks ahead to the debate.

It is clear that universities have multiple responsibilities to a vast range of stakeholders. But to what extent should they try and satisfy these stakeholders, and when, instead, do universities need to challenge stakeholder perceptions? In July 2016, executive heads from universities across the Commonwealth will meet in Accra, Ghana, to explore how we define a responsible university and its role in society – and there is much to discuss!

Just listing some of the stakeholders shows what a difficult task it is to balance their often conflicting needs. First, there are the funders of the university. If these are public bodies, then the politicians and taxpayers have an interest. If private funds, then the donors. If a university relies on student fees, it is often the parents. Next, there are the students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, who will have very different perceptions of why they are studying – ranging from a desire to interrogate their subject to training for a job at the end. Then, there are the staff, both academic and support. They have aspirations which may not necessarily be those that are best for the university as a totality. Depending on the governance structure of the university, there will be requirements from councils or governing boards. Finally, there is the public sphere, in which the university has influence and can set examples, whether local, regional, or international. A responsible university must look at all these aspects and achieve a balance between idealism and reality.

In *Universities for a New World*, a book exploring the rise and relevance of the ACU, published for our Centenary in 2013, I quoted from the

work of Professor David Ford, who has outlined various key elements of a responsible university. These, expanded by me, are as follows:

- Uniting teaching and research across a wide range of disciplines to create a learning culture that is rich and nurturing.
- All-round education formation to encourage wisdom that seeks the common good. Although this can be interpreted in many ways, the aim is to 'unite knowledge and understanding with imagination, good judgement and decision-making in life and work', and to instil a sense of social and corporate responsibility in students, staff, and institutions alike.
- Sustaining and reinventing collegiality to allow constructive debate and discussion between all members. This allows for dissension and challenge within an accepting community. Ideas need to be defended in the light of reason and evidence.
- Polity and control realising that the university is accountable to many stakeholders. I would also add that it should not be controlled by those stakeholders otherwise it ceases to challenge and have a conscience.
- Contributing to society. This can be in the form of responsible graduates, innovations, outputs that influence public policy, and many other ways of giving back to society. 'There are few other great challenges in our world towards which universities do not have some responsibility.'
- Interdisciplinarity across all areas of a university, including the support and administrative staff. It is important not to become myopic in teaching and research but rather to develop a holistic approach to

education; one which asks 'how is this all connected?'

There are, of course, many other aspects of a responsible university, but one I feel is very important is the need to encourage students, once they have completed their courses, to continue in their education as part of a lifelong learning plan. In many professions, this is a requirement of professional institutions, but should it be encouraged further?

The conference will explore the role of a responsible university from a number of angles, including democratic governance and the development of civil society; the importance of integrating entrepreneurial capacities and mindsets into university curricula; how to ensure that all students are able to access higher education, despite the ever increasing costs; how universities can maximise external investment in their research and development, and increase the benefits of this research to society; and how universities can build the skilled leaders of tomorrow.

To close this article, perhaps I can quote from Colin Lucas, also in *Universities for a New World*, on the responsible purpose of a university: 'Generation by generation,' he wrote 'universities serve to make students think'. And this, very possibly, remains the most important task of any responsible university. ■

Professor John Wood is Secretary General of the ACU.

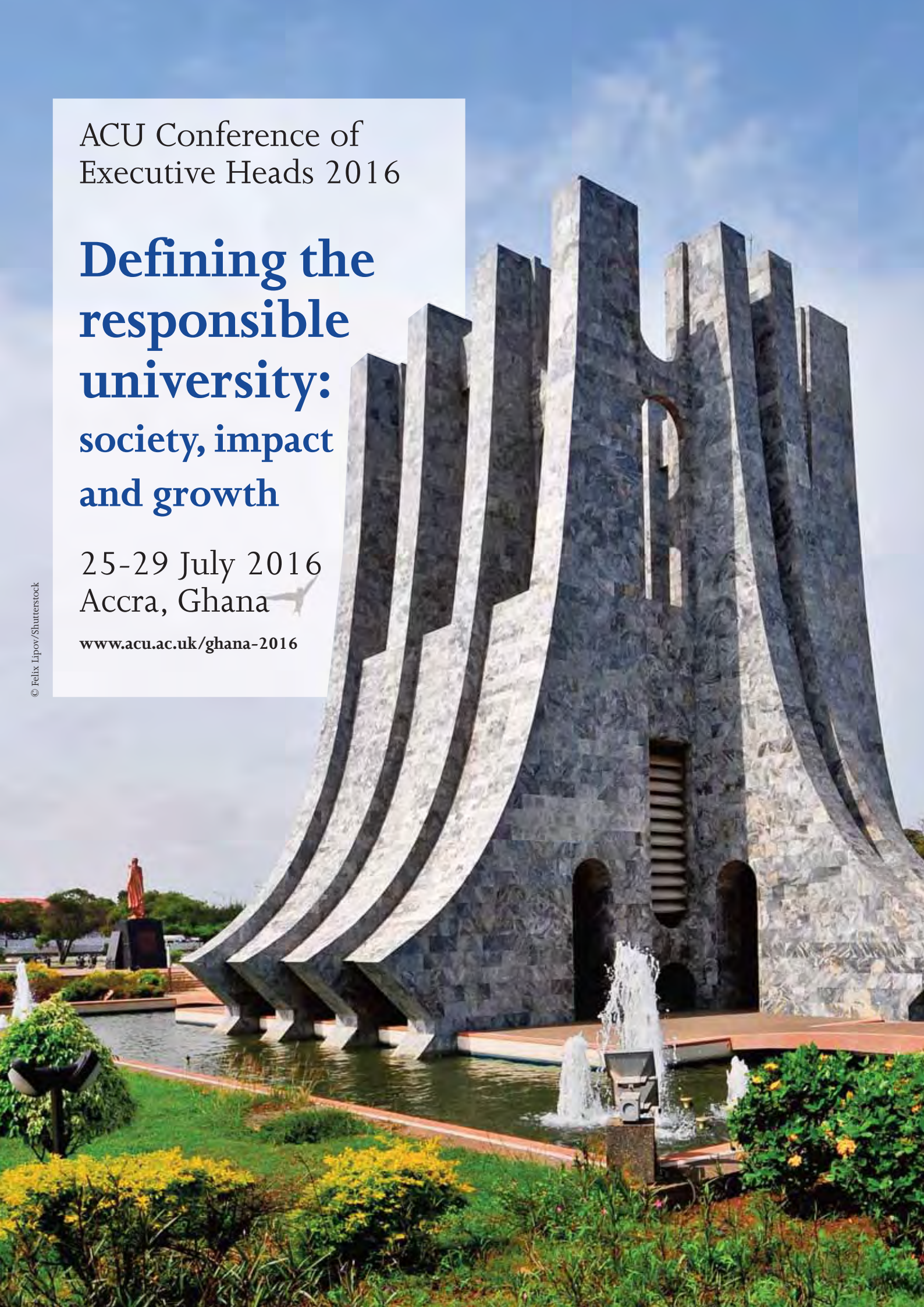
The event will explore the role of a responsible university from a number of angles, including the need to integrate entrepreneurial mindsets into university curricula; how to ensure that students are able to access higher education, despite increasing costs; and how universities can maximise external investment in their research and development, for the benefit of society.

ACU Conference of
Executive Heads 2016

Defining the responsible university: society, impact and growth

25-29 July 2016
Accra, Ghana

www.acu.ac.uk/ghana-2016



Big data and big opportunities

Terri Jacques reports on the 2015 ACU Commonwealth Summer School.

In August 2015, the Universities of Waterloo, Western, and Wilfrid Laurier in Canada hosted the annual ACU Commonwealth Summer School, attended by students from ACU member institutions on four continents.

Crucially, the event is an interdisciplinary one, and is targeted both at postgraduate students and final year undergraduates. Participants were chosen after a competitive application process and brought a fascinating range of life experiences, research, and expertise to the event. Bursaries were offered to students who otherwise would not be able to attend.

The theme for this year was 'Big data and the digital divide', with a packed programme exploring the opportunities and perils that surround the use and distribution of large datasets. The setting of Canada's 'technology triangle' was a fitting one as the host universities each brought their particular areas

of expertise to bear, with speakers drawn from both business and academia.

At the end of the week-long course, students presented posters on the big data theme, which they had developed in groups throughout the week. Well-researched work was presented on the use of big data for national security purposes, for agriculture, and for lifelong learning.

The winning poster presentation looked at how big data might be used to improve access to treatment for HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. 'With all four of our group members residing in developing nations,' said the group, 'we shared a common understanding about how access to sufficient healthcare, particularly for those affected by HIV/AIDS, is an escalating challenge. In our quest to analyse and understand the root cause of the problem, particularly in the sub-Saharan region, we found that a fundamental challenge was that patients could not get sufficient access to proper medical treatment in the form of

antiretroviral drugs. The second barrier to treatment for many patients was insufficient infrastructure'.

To tackle these challenges, the group came up with an innovative solution: a pharmaceutical vending machine system to bring targeted antiretroviral drugs to rural communities, using medical data (with consent of the patients) to identify suitable communities and to anticipate demand. The proposed system would generate unique individual codes that would be sent to patients by mobile phone, and subsequently used when collecting their treatment from the vending machines. The group analysed the viability of this system, given the high rate of access to mobile phones, as well considering limitations such as cyber-hacking, physical security, and user authentication.

Terri Jacques is Senior Scholarships and Fellowships Officer at the ACU.



Minea Kim, Tshepo Godfrey Moloi, Muneera Nizam, and Ruth Muturi (l-r) gave a winning presentation on the use of big data to improve access to antiretroviral drugs



As a fledgling researcher, I heard the term 'big data' several years ago when it appeared on the cover of *New Scientist*. It was billed as an exciting new field that was evolving at the peripheries of lots of disciplines and one that could potentially revolutionise them all. Having scanned the article briefly, I didn't make much of it at the time and resigned it to the realm of techies; something which would have little impact on me and the way I lived my life.

As the years go by, however, and the proliferation of digital data seeps into every facet of life – from monitoring what I eat and the exercise I do via mobile apps, to sharing my personal data on family, friends and life events through social media – I realise I may have missed the central point of the article. The technology to continuously monitor human life – both biological and behavioural – and the environment that surrounds us is here.

When the opportunity arose to attend the ACU Commonwealth Summer School and learn more about big data, I jumped at the chance as I could see its potential for postdoctoral research.

On our first morning, we got a tour around Toronto from our student ambassadors, before travelling to the University of Waterloo to hear interesting perspectives on big data from two industry speakers. Kevin Keane, co-founder of Brainsights, spoke about a range of wearable technologies, such as Fitbit and Hexoskin, which measure physiological signs to enable us to quantify and understand different aspects of human behaviour. The following day, Mark Damm, CEO of Fuseforward, outlined how cloud-based analytics platforms can be used to process large, diverse datasets that can help us better predict a range of outcomes and impacts. That afternoon, Dr John Hirdes from Waterloo's School of Public Health and Health

Systems discussed how big data could impact the healthcare system if we used standardised clinical assessments to collect digital data and create more robust predictive clinical decision support systems for doctors, nurses, and other health professionals.

On Tuesday morning, Professor Christian Boudreau from the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science spoke to us about how statistical techniques such as survival analysis are being used to query large amounts of bone marrow data. This is helping researchers to understand how long patients will survive if given a particular treatment or drug. A trip to nearby Wilfrid Laurier University to meet Dr Colin Robertson and his team from the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies resulted in us appreciating how geographical information systems can contribute to big data and help us understand the spread of diseases such as Japanese encephalitis in Nepal.

We were then treated to a real Canadian experience by going camping and canoeing at the nearby Laurel Creek nature reserve. Of course, important data can also be gleaned from the natural environment, which heavily impacts our health. We were given a demonstration of a miniature drone or UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) that remotely collects environmental data such as wind speed and direction, air temperature, agricultural practices, and other geospatial data. After a campfire, sing-along, and too many roasted marshmallows, we spent Wednesday morning canoeing around the reservoir with Dr Robert McLeman to learn how citizen science initiatives can help us monitor environmental changes in the weather, as well as animal and plant species, through mobile technology.

For the last leg of our journey, we travelled to Western University where Dr Mark Daley and Dr Dan Lizotte spoke about the difficulties

of statistically interpreting big datasets. They highlighted the importance of robust algorithms for drawing correlations and causation, as mistakes can lead to glaringly strange results – as shown by Google's initial flu trends data which has since been corrected. They were joined by Dennis Buttera from IBM, who reiterated this point from the industry perspective. He outlined the challenges IBM faces supporting different businesses from multiple industries with analytics capabilities. This in part is due to a lack of computer and data scientists and he highlighted the urgent need for many more skilled graduates in these areas. He recommended a book called *Thinking About Data* to educate everyone from children to adults on big data, which is now at the top of my reading list. In relation to healthcare, he noted that precision medicine is taking off as people are using large DNA and genomic datasets to personalise drugs and treatments for individual patients.

As the week drew to a close, we said our goodbyes after a trip to Niagara Falls. As it turns out, I couldn't have been more wrong about big data – it is here and it is going to affect us all as the wealth of digital information at our fingertips will only continue to grow and grow. For health researchers, that means more multidisciplinary collaboration with industry and other research disciplines, both from the technical and social sciences, to broaden and enhance our understanding of how big data can improve health and wellbeing. ■

Siobhán O'Connor is studying a PhD in health informatics (eHealth) at the University of Glasgow, UK. This article was first published on the University of Glasgow's *ihawkes* blog at <http://ihawkes.academicblogs.co.uk>

Combating sexual harassment in higher education

Earlier this year, the ACU Gender Programme, in collaboration with Eastern University, Sri Lanka, held a conference on addressing sexual and gender-based violence in south Asian universities. Here, one of the event's keynote speakers, **Ayesha Kidwai**, reports on her experiences of creating and working with university initiatives to combat sexual harassment, and offers guidelines for university committees working in this area.

The last 15 years have witnessed the beginnings of a change in the way that gender-based violence in universities across south Asia is perceived. Where once these crimes and violations of human rights were 'incidents' with no name – incidents which, if admitted to at all, were considered a woman's 'personal problem' – today they are perceived as complaints that demand both a public outcry and an institutional response.

This change, in major part, has come about through greater recognition of sexual harassment in the workplace – in the form of court guidelines, targeted acts of parliament, and amendments to criminal and civil laws – in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

When considered across sectors, however, the implementation of these guidelines in most countries has been far from satisfactory. At the same time, all across the region, it is in university spaces that the loudest demands for the implementation of these laws have been heard.

This is because universities embody a specific type of workplace that integrates within it all manner of hierarchical relationships. However, despite the various relationships based on institutional power – differential power between staff, students, officers, hostel/dormitory workers, contractors, and so on – the university also represents a space pregnant with the potential of solidarity – where progressive politics often serve to mitigate and confront the patriarchal power being

expressed along the seams crafted by institutional hierarchies. As a result of this, women aggrieved by sexual harassment may feel empowered not only to complain but also to confront the community backlash, both from within the university community and from the world at large.

While public outcry has the advantage of creating discussion around women's experiences of discriminatory practices, it also has the potential to create conditions inimical to those in which every woman feels empowered to complain. Outcry is often met not only with demands for justice but also a whole gamut of other reactions, ranging from moral panic, slander, and defamation, to very real physical and mental risks to complainants and those who support them.

Public outcry is also not conducive to a reformative approach towards the perpetrators of sexual harassment. Constituents of universities enter the space socialised into patriarchal customs and conventions, and a sensitive institutional response would be one that enables rejection of these mores. Furthermore, ad hoc administrative responses to outcry never yield just and accountable systems, even in the medium term.

Instead, what is needed is an institutional mechanism dedicated to the just redressal of complaints of sexual harassment, as well as managing gender sensitisation more widely. At Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in India, the Gender Sensitisation Committee Against Sexual Harassment represents such an experiment.

The student and teacher movement that ultimately won the committee itself arose from a specific case of sexual violence in 1997. Formally instituted in April 1999, after a long struggle by JNU students and faculty, the initiative has been almost unexpectedly successful. Its success has primarily derived from its representative and popularly constituted character (through direct election) and its translation of the anatomy of sexual harassment into a set of rules and procedures (constantly under revision) that govern its functioning. Based on its experiences over the last 16 years, this article presents a set of guidelines that should be kept in mind when formulating university or college-level bodies to combat sexual harassment. In India, many of the points made here have found their way into recommendations made by the country's University Grants Commission in the form of the Saksham Committee Report.¹

Guidelines for committees against sexual harassment

A core guiding principle in the constitution of a committee against sexual harassment is a commitment to a composition that is truly **representational of the workplace**. This necessitates widespread consultation within the university as to what composition will inspire the greatest amount of confidence.

While it could well be the case that the JNU mode of direct election is not feasible across all universities, it is nevertheless important that the composition of the committee does not replicate the power inherent in workplace hierarchies. In other words, a committee against sexual harassment must contain representation from all sections, particularly junior levels.

Another non-negotiable guarantee that must be provided is that of **complete confidentiality**. A major impediment for those seeking to lodge complaints of sexual harassment is the apprehension that the very act of complaining will lead to adverse

Missing and marginalized: ending the erasure of women's lives and experiences

The next major conference of the ACU Gender Programme will take place from 14-17 June 2016, hosted by the University of Waterloo, Canada. Titled 'Missing and marginalized: ending the erasure of women's lives and experiences', this interdisciplinary event focuses on the role that the post-secondary education sector can play in ending the vulnerability and expendability of women's lives and experiences. For more information, including on bursaries available to attend the event, visit www.acu.ac.uk/canada-2016

publicity for the complainant. In the interests of fairness, confidentiality must be guaranteed to both parties with respect to the details of the complaint, as well as to the proceedings of the inquiry. The maintenance of confidentiality with regards to proceedings should be the responsibility of all those involved; however, this commitment should not be interpreted as barring any party from approaching higher institutional authorities, as well as criminal or civil justice systems, for redress of specific grievances.

The third governing principle is a commitment to **non-coercion and interim relief**, which, in turn, is built on an institutional recognition that, in any workplace, the exercise of patriarchal power may exploit the seams of institutional hierarchies. It is incumbent upon any committee against sexual harassment that once a complaint has been lodged, it should take steps to minimise such abuse. For example, the rules of the committee at JNU require an order of restraint to be issued to the defendant as soon as the complaint is filed, prohibiting all direct or indirect contact with the complainant, her family, or witnesses. Violations of the order of restraint are viewed as aggravating the original offence. In addition, the rules accord both parties, and their witnesses, explicit protection from victimisation, and also prohibit the defendant from supervising or evaluating any academic or work-related activity of the complainant or their witnesses. Face-to-face confrontation between complainant and defendant is to be avoided at all times, and the identities of the witnesses, particularly student witnesses, should not be revealed to the person charged or any person acting on his behalf.

A further aspect is a commitment to immediate relief for the complainant. At JNU, the rules empower the committee to recommend to the vice-chancellor interim measures – such as the transfer of the complainant or defendant to another department or the granting of leave to the complainant for a period of up to three months, in addition to her regular leave entitlement. In addition, special attention with regard to interim relief for students, particularly research students, is outlined.

A very important fourth guideline is that of **fair inquiry**, in accordance with a specified procedure – starting from the filing of the complaint, throughout the examination and cross-examination of witnesses, right up to the submission of the report. The governing principle should be complete transparency and



Dr Ayesha Kidwai speaking at the ACU Gender Programme conference in Sri Lanka

impartiality, and the guarantee of principles of natural justice to both the complainant and the defendant (tempered, of course, with due consideration of confidentiality and non-coercion).

At the very minimum, the procedures must give information about who may file a complaint, the channels through which it may be made, and the procedures employed to record a complaint. They should also specify the composition of the inquiry committee – good practice would be to ensure that the inquiry committee includes representatives of the constituency of the complainant and the defendant (i.e. if the complaint is led by a student against a teacher, then the inquiry committee must include one student and one teacher). In addition, fair inquiry also demands clear rules about the order and manner of inquiry, such as timely information about hearings, the supply of all documents and authenticated depositions to both parties, and the provision of support services such as counselling or translation services.

A university-level committee against sexual harassment must, as a fifth guideline, be oriented towards **education and redressal**. Given the complexity of the university as a workplace, the committee must be seen as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism – particularly where cases of peer harassment between students would benefit from being considered as an opportunity for education and sensitisation, rather than stringent punitive action. This guiding principle should be reflected through the provision of a range of penalties – all the way from warnings and apologies through to dismissal.

Furthermore, committee activities should

be based on the understanding that, for many young people, the university years are the first time that they can begin to address questions of sexual orientation and sexuality. Such self-discovery is often traumatic and, in the face of internalised taboos and ridicule, may lead to behaviour that violates the rights of another. Such cases must not be dealt with only at the punitive level; while steps must be taken to ensure that the sexual harassment comes to an end, concern must be shown to the individual who is dealing with his or her own sexuality. In fact, discussing questions of sexuality and addressing the rights of sexual minorities should be an activity undertaken by the committee.

Finally, for the successful implementation of these guidelines, it is absolutely necessary that heads of educational institutions mandatorily extend full support to the committee against sexual harassment. The best practice should be to treat committee recommendations as binding. Furthermore, the institution must afford all possible resources to the functioning of such a committee, including funding, office and building infrastructure, staff, and counselling and legal services. ■

¹ University Grants Commission, India, *Measures for Ensuring the Safety of Women and Programmes for Gender Sensitization on Campus* (2013)

Dr Ayesha Kidwai is a Professor in the Centre for Linguistics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, India.

ACU Gender Programme

missina & MARGINALIZED



Ending the erasure of women's lives and experiences

14-17 June 2016

Hosted by the University of Waterloo, Canada

www.acu.ac.uk/canada-2016





ACU Measures

What and When: The ACU's annual online benchmarking exercise – ACU Measures – will open for data collection on **1 February 2016**.

ACU Measures offers members the opportunity to benchmark their performance in key areas of university management in a confidential and non-competitive way. In order to benchmark, you first need to participate – the more institutions taking part, the better the benchmarking will be. With more than 500 universities in ACU membership, spanning 39 countries, the potential for international comparison is substantial!

Who: Each year, ACU member institutions are invited to contribute data in four areas: **institutional profile**, **academic salaries**, **research management**, and **gender**. If you have not already done so, please nominate individuals to complete the respective sections of the survey on behalf of your institution by contacting measures@acu.ac.uk

Why: Rather than seeking to rank institutions, ACU Measures helps institutions to compare and contrast their current practices and policies with those of their peers, thereby supporting senior university management in decision-making and strategic planning.

Benefits to participants

- Benchmark your institution's performance over time and demonstrate the impact of managerial changes
- Learn about performance in a given area
- Take control over your institutional data and define your own comparison groups
- Produce your own individualised reports, tables, and charts
- Use the results to make a case for the reallocation of resources, additional staff, or training
- Share experiences and good practice with international colleagues
- Identify which issues are specific to your institution, as opposed to national or regional

How: Data will be collected online using the ACU Measures platform. We require only one response per area, per institution (i.e. one individual in each of the four areas completes the survey on behalf of their institution). Benchmarking will open in July 2016 to all registered users. To take part, visit www.acu.ac.uk/measures or email measures@acu.ac.uk

Taking scholarships seriously

The inclusion of scholarship numbers as a target for the new Sustainable Development Goals is proving controversial. Here, **John Kirkland** argues that instead of adopting simplistic views about their merit, key players need to develop a holistic view about what scholarships do and don't achieve, how this can be measured, and how they relate to the wider challenges facing developing countries.

The greater prominence given to tertiary education in the new Sustainable Development Goals is a good thing – indeed the ACU has been actively campaigning for such recognition. The references are not as strong as we would like, but strong enough to remind the international community that the educational needs of the world's poorest countries extend beyond basic literacy – however important that may be.

Scholarships, too, are a good thing – at least in principle. The challenges now faced by universities (and other sectors) in low and middle income countries are important enough to mean that access is needed to global expertise and to the best teaching and research institutions globally. To assume that rapidly expanding domestic systems can completely produce their own next generation of

academics is both naïve and condescending – developing country universities should aspire to the same goals as developed country ones, and that includes access to global expertise. Yet the cost of higher education in most developed countries is such that this will not be achieved without some form of scholarship intervention.

So why is the new target – 'to substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing states and African countries, for enrolment in higher education' – proving so controversial? And why, for that matter, does even the ACU – for which the support of scholarships has been a core activity for generations – have some reservations about the implementation of the new target?

The criticisms...

The inclusion of a scholarships target has been subject to a number of criticisms – some valid, some less so. It is argued that 'most people who study abroad tend to stay there' and that 'learning outside your own culture leads to skills that are not applicable when you return home'. Black and white approaches such as these damage the debate hugely. The assumption that scholarship holders see their awards as a ticket away from their own countries is particularly simplistic – and has certainly not been the experience of the Commonwealth Scholarships Scheme.

Even more simplistic is the notion that the few who do not return make no contribution to the development of their own country – our studies show a much more complex picture. And as for the notion that international experience detracts from the ability to apply



Commonwealth Scholars (above and opposite) studying for PhDs in the UK, at a recent training workshop on enhancing their development impact

knowledge in the home country – at a time when most developed countries are extolling the virtues of international exposure to their students, we have to ask whether this is another example of double standards.

Other criticisms deserve greater attention. Scholarships should be seen as just one tool – albeit a necessary one – in the much wider advancement of higher education in developing countries. They should not be seen in isolation from the ambitious wider targets which many countries have – for example, the ambitions of countries such as Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, and South Africa to increase the quality of domestic provision by increasing the proportion of academics with doctorates. Some donor countries seem to get this balance wrong – the examples of France and Germany quoted in the previous *Bulletin* (No 185; July 2015) are indications of this.

No one seriously believes that the policy of such countries to subsidise all overseas students has been devised for development reasons – or that a situation where the bulk of ‘scholarship assistance’ in Africa goes to the relatively richer north African countries, such as Algeria or Morocco, represents a good outcome for development. Nor is it clear that if the policy of subsidising international tuition fees were reversed, the funds saved would be applied to other development purposes.

A proper analysis needs to take all this into account. A crude measure – based simply on numbers – will be manipulated to include scholarships that have no development impact. At worst, the desire to meet the target might actually divert resources away from development.

Designed for development?

Not all scholarships are about development. Nor should they be. It is quite legitimate for a government, university, or private donor to offer learning opportunities based on other criteria – such as academic development or maintaining the wider reputation of the hosts. Sometimes, the reasons for scholarships are designed to be anti-developmental. Some countries or universities use them specifically

The SDGs have shone a light on the role that scholarships can and do play in international development. Now we need to define exactly what constitutes a ‘development’ scholarship.

to promote brain drain, by attracting talent from developing countries to settle in developed ones. These, though, are the minority. Most scholarships for low and middle income countries that are designed for non-development reasons still have some development impact – just as most development scholarships have some impact on wider international relations.

There is a fundamental need to devise systems that identify the key characteristics of development scholarships, and measure the number and impact of these – together, perhaps, with the incidental developmental benefits of scholarships designed for other purposes. A complex task, but not impossible. Measures such as selection criteria, recruitment methods, subject range, recipient expectations, and the subsequent record of alumni can all contribute to such a typology.

A classification of this type will not completely solve the problem of scholarships and development. Even where scholarships are development-based, they need to distinguish between the development of individuals and that of societies. Should scholarships go to the most able candidates? Should they go to poor ones, or those who could not otherwise afford them? (The two categories are quite different.) In principle, the answer to all of these questions is yes – especially when looked at from the perspective of personal development.



From the perspective of societal development, different questions emerge. A scholarship recipient needs to be well placed to utilise her or his knowledge to the benefit of others, whether through teaching, policy, or wider innovation. Providing doctorates in the global north at a cost of USD 150,000 a throw is an expensive form of development, if the only beneficiary is the individual.

Finally, there is the question of what a scholarship is in the first place. Some donors use the terms scholarship and fellowship interchangeably. Some of the awards counted in the new SDG figures will be as little as three months in duration, others three years or more. The cost to donors will vary accordingly.

The SDGs have shone a light on the role that scholarships can and do play. They have challenged donors to define more closely what they are seeking to achieve from their awards, and whether their schemes are successful. We need to define exactly what constitutes a development scholarship, and where this sits in a (much needed) holistic view of scholarships overall. When these things are in place, we will be able to isolate the impact of development scholarships on global development goals. I predict that it will be a positive one. ■

The *ACU Voice*, a blog exploring issues in international higher education, has launched a new series of posts exploring the evaluation of scholarship outcomes and impact, and evidence-informed policymaking in this area. The series – titled *Measuring Success?* – aims to draw together knowledge from a global community of experts working in this key area, with contributions so far including Dr Tamson Pietsch from the University of Sydney on geographical mobility and the Rhodes Scholarships through the 20th century. Read more at www.acu.ac.uk/blog

Dr John Kirkland is Deputy Secretary General of the ACU.

Giving a lifeline to academics at risk

Violence and conflict in the Middle East are forcing hundreds of academics to leave their places of work and seek refuge abroad. But there's a lot that Commonwealth universities could do to help. Here, **Stephen Wordsworth** from the Council for At-Risk Academics (Cara) explains how.

'Dear Cara,
When I arrived in England in 1966, after months of solitary confinement in apartheid jails, I was a psychological wreck. You gave me wonderfully sensitive support. When I arrived in England in 1988, having been blown up by a bomb placed by apartheid operatives, I was a physical wreck. Once again Cara was there to help me...

... My story has been repeated a thousand times and more, with different details, but the same theme. An intellectual driven from his or her homeland by repression and intolerance, enabled by Cara to share ideas and values with welcoming hosts, improving skills...

... Through living the principles of free enquiry we become natural apostles of peace and understanding and of internationalism at its best. Cara does more than provide succour for people in need. It helps keep alive the spirit of free enquiry.'

Those words come from a letter sent to Cara recently by Justice Albie Sachs. He is, so far, the only person to have needed Cara's help on two separate occasions. When the situation in South Africa changed, and apartheid was swept away, he was able to return and served as a Judge of the Constitutional Court for 15 years, helping to build a more peaceful and much fairer society.

Times change, but needs don't. Cara was founded in 1933 to help academics and scientists fleeing from the Nazis' campaign of hate in Germany. More than 80 years on, scholars and academics are still having to flee, from repressive regimes, from extremist groups, from violence and conflict. But our aim is not just to help them get to a safe place. Our founders defined their mission in two parts – not just 'the relief of suffering' but also 'the defence of learning and science' – rescuing the people, certainly, but also defending academic freedom, ensuring that the knowledge which these academics carried in their heads could be preserved and used for the benefit of all. That is still very much what we do now.

This also fits very well with the goals of the people we are working to help. Over recent

months, our newspapers and TV bulletins have been full of pictures of desperate people fleeing conflict in the Middle East, often taking appalling risks to get to a place where they and their families can be safe. Much of the popular narrative accompanying the pictures has, quite naturally, been of refugees, and of people being forced to seek asylum. Actually, we find that the reality is much more complex than that.

Overwhelmingly, the people who are turning now to Cara for support do not want to seek asylum. They don't want to leave their home countries forever. They clearly understand that they, and their skills, will be needed there again, once the situation allows them to return. What they are looking for is not a new permanent home, but a place where they, and in many cases their families, will be safe for maybe a few years, where they can maintain and develop the skills and networks which they will need when they go back.

So that is what we try to provide, with the active support of a growing number of universities in France, Germany, and the UK – and more recently in Australia and Canada. Currently, we support some 140 academics, with about 200 dependants.

A (Syria): 'The killing and kidnapping of Syrian intellectuals was a daily occurrence in our lives. My little daughter told me many times, 'do not go to work, please do not, they will kidnap you'. My older daughter understood a new and terrifying fact. Her father, who was supposed to protect her, could not even protect himself.'

We define an academic as someone who has held a teaching or research position at a university or equivalent institution. Depending on what stage they are at in their careers, and on whether their existing qualifications are fully recognised abroad, some will want to do postgraduate courses, such as a Master's or PhD, while others will need to find a placement for postdoctoral research.

In most cases, our applicants' first approaches to us come by email or mobile phone.

The situations in which they find themselves are always difficult, sometimes traumatic. In Iraq, for example, over 450 academics have been deliberately murdered since 2003. In recent months, the advance of ISIS into cities such as Mosul, with its large university community, has added a further level of horror, with reports of academics there being publicly executed. In the face of so much violence, many Iraqi academics have seen no choice but to get away, before they, too, are abducted or killed.

In Syria, some universities are now in a war zone, with barrel bombs and mortar shells falling nearby. Academics see their colleagues being abducted off the streets for ransom. Their daily journey to work becomes ever more fraught, with aggressive controls at checkpoints and the ever-present risk, for young academics, of forced conscription into the regime's forces.

Extremism across the region brings particular dangers for female academics, as some of their students fall under the influence of fanatical groups and start to object, loudly and threateningly, to the way their female teachers dress, to what they are teaching, or even to the fact that, as women, they are in universities at all. We know of several who have received a very direct 'last warning' in the form of a bullet in an envelope, and felt they had to leave.

But even away from the world's conflict zones, academics can find themselves in serious danger – because of things they have said or written, or because of their religion, ethnic group or sexual orientation. The result is the same – an urgent need for help, to get away.

S (Iraq): 'When Isis entered Al-Ramadi in June 2014, they targeted Anbar University. Those of us who spoke out were beaten or killed. Our colleges became our prisons and torture chambers ... we lost some of our best lecturers, killed by ISIS.'

Once we have established contact, we quickly check the applicants' academic references, and start the process of trying to match



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In Syria, academics see their colleagues being abducted off the streets for ransom. Their daily journey to work becomes ever more fraught, with aggressive controls at checkpoints and the ever-present risk of forced conscription into the regime's forces.

them up with a host institution. We have got to know many of the universities we work with very well, and between us we can usually agree a match. Sometimes, the university will direct us to a colleague at another university who can help. Wherever possible, we encourage the applicant and the university to contact each other directly, by Skype, to ensure that the academic 'fit' is right.

Then we have to agree about money! There are always more people needing help than we can support from our own resources, so we ask the hosting university to waive fees. We raise money for our Fellowship awards from various trusts and foundations, but it is never enough, and the present crisis in the Middle East means that we have many more people needing help than we can fund. So, increasingly, we have looked to universities also to cover as much of the living costs as they can. Some have responded generously, offering to

take on the full costs; others cover some, and we cover the rest. Then, when all the details of the placement have been agreed, we work with the universities to make sure the applicants, and their families, get all the necessary visas. It sounds complicated, and it is, but it's vitally important that everything is done correctly, so there are no last-minute problems.

University vice-chancellor

(Afghanistan): 'Now I have your Cara card, when the Taliban come I will call you. Until then I will stay here and get on with my work.'

As mentioned above, we have secured some placements at Commonwealth universities, and we are keen to involve any others who feel able to help. Cara Fellows come from many

different backgrounds and have highly developed skills and, just as importantly, different perspectives and experiences to share with those universities that take them in. A successful hosting is a win-win for both parties. It is also a very real contribution to keeping alive 'the spirit of free enquiry' about which Albie Sachs wrote to us so eloquently. ■

Stephen Wordsworth is Executive Director of the Council for At-Risk Academics (Cara).

If you would like to get involved and support an academic at risk, please write to wordsworth.cara@lsbu.ac.uk or visit www.cara1933.org

Noticeboard



A recent bursary recipient worked with child cancer patients in Kampala, Uganda

Applications are invited for the **2016 Edward Boyle Medical Elective Bursaries**. These awards help medical scholars in the UK obtain valuable practical experience in a developing country of the Commonwealth during their elective study period. In 2015, the bursaries helped students to complete electives in Bangladesh, Jamaica, Malawi, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Uganda.

Interested students should contact their medical dean or elective coordinator to check their institution's internal deadline for applications. However, deans must submit nominations to the ACU by 31 January 2016. For more information, visit www.acu.ac.uk/edward-boyle

The theme for **Commonwealth Day 2016** has been announced as 'An inclusive Commonwealth', referring to 'the values of tolerance, respect and understanding, as well as equity and fairness, set out in the Commonwealth Charter, and the richness of the Commonwealth as a family of nations in which each member state is valued equally and has an equal voice'. In announcing the theme, Commonwealth Secretary-General, Kamallesh Sharma, spoke of 'the need for the Commonwealth to act as an inclusive network for mutual support, development and growth of opportunity and rights for all'.

Commonwealth Day is celebrated by young people, schools, communities, and civil society organisations every year on the second Monday in March, and is an opportunity to promote understanding on global issues, international cooperation, and Commonwealth values, as well as the work of Commonwealth organisations.

The next conference of the **ACU Human Resource Management Network**, co-hosted by the University of Mauritius, will take place from 16-19 October 2016 at Le Meridien Ile Maurice Hotel, Mauritius. To register interest, email hrm@acu.ac.uk



The **Commonwealth iLibrary** is offering ACU members a 15% discount on subscriptions to its online repository, which contains all titles published annually by the Commonwealth Secretariat. Orders must be marked 'ACU Promotion 2016' in order to qualify for the discount, and can be made via the online form on the Commonwealth iLibrary website or via subscription agents. For more information on the resources available, or to subscribe, visit www.thecommonwealth-ilibrary.org



Delegates from 18 Malaysian universities attended the ACU's research management seminar at the University of Malaya

In October 2015, senior representatives from 18 Malaysian universities, plus officials from the Ministry of Higher Education, attended an ACU seminar on **university research management in the Malaysian context**, hosted by the University of Malaya.

According to Dr John Kirkland, Deputy Secretary General of the ACU, the seminar reflected a significant growth in interest in research management in Malaysia. 'However, there was a feeling that universities were developing their provision in very different ways, and not fully adopting international best practice,' he said. The seminar aimed to help universities identify their own needs, through discussion with other institutions, and to advance the idea of research management as a profession.

We are pleased to announce the **2015-2016 Commonwealth Scholars supported by the CSFP endowment fund**. The fund supports scholarships for postgraduate study hosted by low and middle income countries. Two PhD scholarships hosted in South Africa are funded with support from the David and Elaine Potter Foundation. To find out more, visit www.acu.ac.uk/csfp-scholarships

- **Oluwaseun Matthew Ajayi**, Nigeria: MSc in Occupational and Environmental Safety at the **University of the West Indies**, Jamaica
- **Khama Zephaniah Banda**, Malawi: MA in Communication Studies at **Papua New Guinea University of Technology**
- **Hasanul Banna**, Bangladesh: MSc in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at **COMSATS Institute of Information Technology**, Pakistan
- **Isaiah Debrah**, Ghana: MSc in Medical Biotechnology at **Maseno University**, Kenya
- **Anthonia Dickson**, Nigeria: LLM Law (Human Rights) at the **University of Pretoria**, South Africa
- **Wendy Dlamini**, Swaziland: Master of Public Health (Epidemiology) at the **University of Cape Town**, South Africa
- **Mduduzi Hlophe**, Swaziland: PhD in Engineering at the **University of Pretoria**, South Africa
- **Shahin Md Shafiqul Islam**, Bangladesh: MSc in Business Administration at the **University of Colombo**, Sri Lanka
- **Hellen Nduku Kasila**, Kenya: MA in Women and Gender Studies at the **University of Buea**, Cameroon
- **Immaculate Kyarisiima**, Rwanda: Master of Public Health at the **University of Nairobi**, Kenya
- **Abdullahi Mohammed Labbo**, Nigeria: MSc in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at **COMSATS Institute of Information Technology**, Pakistan.
- **Misheck Nyirenda**, Malawi: MTech in Information Technology at **Durban University of Technology**, South Africa
- **Resego Mothibi**, Botswana: MSc in Infection Control and Prevention at the **University of Stellenbosch**, South Africa
- **Wonder Motsa**, Swaziland: MSc in Agricultural Economics at the **University of KwaZulu-Natal**, South Africa
- **Mfundo Msibi**, Swaziland: MSc in Finance at the **University of Nairobi**, Kenya
- **Winnie Nyakundi**, Kenya: MA in Human Resources Management at the **University of Johannesburg**, South Africa
- **Oluwasogo Olorunfemi**, Nigeria: PhD in Agriculture at **North-West University**, South Africa
- **Royronald Ongong'a**, Kenya: MSc in Medical Laboratory Science at the **University of Ghana**
- **Ahnivar Peralta**, Belize: MSc in Climate Change at the **University of the South Pacific**
- **Motena Rangoanana**, Lesotho: MSc in Financial Economics at the **University of the Free State**, South Africa
- **Tolulope Peter Saliu**, Nigeria: MSc in Molecular Life Sciences at the **University of Colombo**, Sri Lanka
- **Mathias Vondee Teye**, Ghana: MSc in Applied Microbiology at the **University of Botswana**

Internationalising higher education in India: finding an equitable approach

A new government-sponsored initiative in India will see international academics, scientists, and entrepreneurs invited to teach in Indian universities. While international exchange is welcomed, concerns have been voiced over whether the programme will encourage a reciprocal, meaningful, and equitable exchange of knowledge, as **Mitra Mukherjee-Parikh** explains.

The Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) is a new programme launched by the Government of India's Ministry of Human Resource Development which aims to enhance the quality of learning and research in India by inviting international academics for short-term teaching programmes at Indian institutions of higher education. As well as teaching, the initiative proposes that visiting academics will help in developing high quality course material and new pedagogical methods in emerging topics of national and international importance. The programme is also expected to provide opportunities for technical employees from Indian industries to improve their understanding and update their knowledge in relevant areas.

The initiative, scheduled to begin in November 2015, will see participating institutions offer short-term, credit-based courses ranging from a week to six months in length. Recommendations for the invited faculty may be made by the host university but are screened and approved by a centralised body – usually one of the elite universities of the country – which will also have recommendatory powers. Financed by the government, along with the host institution and fees taken from students, the programme will operate initially at some of the elite science and technology institutes, management schools, and central universities of the country, with the ultimate plan to extend it to state universities and smaller institutions as well. Interestingly, the word 'gian' in most Indian languages means 'knowledge' or 'teachings'.

Broadening the horizons of knowledge

The internationalisation of education should involve interaction, exchange, circulation, the free play of ideas, and the rethinking of givens and set conventions. It should lead to new configurations, which are not blind imitations

of the new or habitual reiterations of the old. It should foster multiple viewpoints to approach and redeem problems, both of the individual and of the collective. Influence and reciprocal exchange should shape the relationship between transacting cultures, with both sides benefitting from equitable interaction.

Throughout the history of mankind, broadening the horizons of knowledge through exchange and commerce has been crucial for economic growth and social revitalisation. India, through centuries of Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim rule, has a long tradition of debate and discussion with scholars of all persuasions in the marketplace of ideas. In a rapidly globalising world, coexistence – as well as the interchange of epistemologies, pedagogical tools, innovations, technologies, and materials – is vital to the development and survival of governments and nations, especially developing nations such as India. Global linkages and collaboration not only hold the key to the growth of nations but also foster healthy competition and help counter violence, natural disasters, environmental degradation, and threats to health.

The GIAN is therefore a promising idea – one which commendably aspires to make available global experiences of learning to Indian students to further their learning, develop their skills and abilities, and increase their employment opportunities.

Surprisingly, very little is available in the public domain about the purpose, scope, and expected outcomes of such an ambitious national programme. Whatever is known, however – such as the time span of the courses, the centralised focus of its implementation, the disproportionate salaries to be paid to visiting academics, and the enormous potential cost involved – has raised several doubts about the intentions and the efficacy of the endeavour. This article explores some of these preliminary observations.

Reciprocity and dialogue

To begin with, there is a conspicuous absence in the initiative's design of notions suggesting exchange, dialogue, reciprocity, and the like – indicators of give and take between two relating cultures. One hopes this does not mean that Indian universities will be at the receiving end of the education transaction, playing a passive role and not equal partners in the learning.

If one looks closely at the short time span given to visiting faculty for teaching and research, it appears incommensurate with the projected intention and desired outcome of the programme. Importing global experts for a few weeks to augment theoretical and technical learning allows very little time for study, let alone dialogue or consultation. To revitalise thinking, new ideas and values have to be continually integrated into the world of the recipient. Assimilation and maturation processes require time and reflection. The perspicacity and practical relevance of such an initiative lies in its potential to add to existing traditions, allowing students to absorb the new in a convivial atmosphere. It cannot be forced from the above. There appears to be little thought given to this aspect by the planners.

Another related issue concerns the background of the scholars invited to teach Indian students. Currently, the preferred academics invited for the project largely come from north American, Australian, and European universities. Though all interactions with contemporaries invariably open fresh avenues of thinking, those ideas, values, and methods which are close to the lived realities of the learners have far better chance of being adopted than those which are more distant. One would like to believe that regional Asian universities or those of the global south – which are culturally, and for historical reasons, closer to India – have more to offer and may be of far more relevance than those geopolitically distant and with a different set of concerns.



Replicating a centralised model of control

Several educationists have repeatedly pointed out the need to decentralise higher education in India and give autonomy to regional universities across the country. In a diverse country, local situations demand multipronged approaches towards problem solving, whereas homogenising tendencies stultify growth and innovation. Surprisingly, a new programme such as the GIAN, which is attempting to bring about change in the system, continues to duplicate the centralised model of control. The power to recommend, select, administer, and finance the project rests in the hands of the Ministry of Human Resource Development and its selected representatives. To have no say or very little say in the matter of deciding experts or be dependent on the choices made by a central body for local needs does not augur well for either the dependent institutions or the governing powers in an educational context. There is always the possibility of asymmetry by the governing body, whether in the selection of disciplines or experts, based on subjective or political leanings.

Though the initiative apparently plans to reach out to all Indian universities across the country, in its first phase it is targeted towards the elite technology and management institutions, along with central universities. Whatever other issues these institutions may have, and there are quite a few, lack of international exposure is arguably the least of them. Most departments in these schools already have global linkages and collaborations for teaching and research, and strong ties with industry. Plenty of internship opportunities and placement facilities are available to most

students. Their academics are often eminent scholars in their own disciplines, holding visiting posts and/or conducting research in prestigious universities across the world. The GIAN project will not bring anything new into their world. It will be one more programme added to a host of others sponsored by the government or private agencies.

It is the state universities, especially in the provinces and small towns in India, which often have little or no interaction with either the national or international academies or industry. Beset with wide ranging problems – such as inadequate infrastructure, strained finances and resources, a lack of administrative and financial autonomy, a shortage of

In considering the background of the scholars invited to teach Indian students, regional Asian universities or those of the global south may have more to offer and may be of far more relevance than those geopolitically distant and with a different set of concerns.

permanent staff, large numbers of students, and insufficient knowledge of English as a medium of instruction, to mention just a few – the state universities need a different kind of reinvention than that which the GIAN can provide. Financial expenditure to pay foreign ‘pundits’ or to create necessary infrastructure to host the experts will only aggravate, rather than ease or erase, their chronic problems. Actually, the huge amount of money to be expended by the Government of India for the GIAN programme would go a long way to tackle some of the shortages faced by state-level universities in India.

Finally, although the project is aimed at covering all disciplines, initial choices indicate a certain tilt towards technology, management, and other skills which hold potential for financial gain. However practical and profitable that may be, an education policy which aims to widen the horizons of knowledge for a multicultural nation should have in the ambit of its design a far more open approach to the human and natural sciences. Not just because the humanities and natural sciences, as the bedrock of civilisation, need critical attention but also because there is more at stake in enhancing their potential for an enlightened future of a nation. ■

Dr Mitra Mukherjee-Parikh is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of English at SNDT Women's University, India.

Heart health promotion and collaboration at the University of Oxford

The ACU Titular Fellowships promote mobility among Commonwealth university staff and enable international collaboration on research projects. Here, **Sunitha Srinivas** reports on her research into community participatory approaches to promoting heart health.

My journey began as a pharmacist, and continues now as a healthcare professional. Although trained as a pharmacist to follow only the biomedical model, I received further training from the World Health Organization when asked to initiate an essential medicines programme in Karnataka, India. In the process, I began to incorporate social determinants of health into my research and teaching.

The timing of my entry into public health synchronised with the Millennium Development Goals being implemented at a global level. My compass needle was pointed towards Goal 8: access to essential medicines. I led an essential medicines programme for my province until 2003, after which I returned to academia to teach the subject at Rhodes University in South Africa.

Since 2003, a complex line of opportunities has led to a transition towards integrated health promotion and disease prevention as my primary areas of research – specifically community participatory approaches towards ‘heart wellbeing’. This has a personal interest since losing my father to a heart attack.

The ACU Titular Fellowship provided an opportunity to visit the British Heart Foundation Centre on Population Approaches for Non-Communicable Disease Prevention at the University of Oxford, UK. The centre carries out research into population approaches for the prevention of non-communicable diseases – i.e. cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer.

The visit was an opportunity to gain better understanding of the Preventable Risk Integrated Model (PRIME): a macro-simulation model designed to estimate chronic disease mortality in a population as a result of behavioural risk factors (poor diet, physical inactivity, smoking, and alcohol consumption). These operate through three intermediate risk factors: obesity, blood pressure, and cholesterol. Scenario models such as PRIME are a key tool in public health because they allow researchers to estimate the impact of



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population-level health interventions that cannot be assessed by standard epidemiological studies.

During my fellowship, I was able to conduct an extensive literature review of South African data with a view to applying the model. However, it became apparent that PRIME could not be used in South Africa at present due to the lack of comprehensive population data in areas such as salt and fat intake, physical activity, and alcohol and tobacco consumption.

It is true that when one opportunity seems to fade, the next begins to take shape. Based on consultations with team leaders at the British Heart Foundation, I used the quality time and space provided by the fellowship to write a proposal for a project on workplace health promotion to submit to my home institution. Globally, workplace health promotion is gaining recognition and momentum because

healthy and motivated employees contribute more effectively towards their organisation's progress. Workplace health promotion initiatives are particularly crucial in the context of non-communicable diseases, which are rapidly advancing as the leading causes of morbidity and mortality across all social classes in developing countries.

At the heart of my proposed research project was the impact of the epidemic increase of non-communicable diseases, such as hypertension and diabetes, in South Africa. This burden results in a complex interplay of personal, social, and financial complications, affecting the patients' families and communities. As well as being a middle income country with a high burden of non-communicable diseases, South Africa also carries the highest per capita health burden of any middle income country in the world – borne, disproportionately, by the poorest families. The negative

effects of these diseases, especially on lower socio-economic populations, results in increased poverty and hinders efforts toward the newly mandated Sustainable Development Goals. It is therefore essential to plan and implement health promoting workplaces and health education in this area.

The proposal written during my fellowship was awarded a research development grant from my home institution – Rhodes University – to fund postgraduate student bursaries for two projects envisioned in the proposal. This has resulted in collaborative research with one of the team leaders from the British Heart Foundation, Dr Nick Townsend, who is now a co-supervisor on the two projects. Both projects are progressing extremely well, and are titled ‘Workplace health promotion: policies and practices at Rhodes University’ and ‘Health promotion: approaches to dietary salt’. Two further health promotion projects aimed at support staff will be initiated in 2016.

These comprehensive, collaborative, and culturally-sensitive research projects add value to Rhodes University’s focus on research capacity-building, and to the career paths of the emerging pharmacists taking part. By collaborating with the Health Care Center at Rhodes University, it is hoped the projects will have a direct, positive, and sustainable impact on the wellbeing and health of support staff at the institution, and will further promote health promotion policy interventions at the university.

While in the UK, I was able to arrange a visit to the University of Bath, where I established links with the Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology. We intend to work on collaborative projects in the area of pregnant women and complications occurring with type 1 and 2 diabetes.

Another important link was forged through a visit to the University of Cambridge, where I established relevant contacts with the Cambridge-Africa Programme. Meanwhile, discussions with colleagues in the Department of Public Health and Primary Care resulted in a plan to collaborate on research into prescribing practices in primary healthcare in order to identify pharmaco-epidemiological trends. A first step towards this has been achieved with a baseline project in 2015. On a personal level, it was also important for us to visit Cambridge as a way of goal-setting for my 18 year-old daughter, who had just completed her A-level exams in India.

Despite all of the personal financial challenges (the sliding Rand and the decision to travel with my family, made possible by investing our savings into the trip), this fellowship will remain one of the most memorable professional experiences. The generous support and openness of Dr Mike Rayner, Dr Nick Townsend, Dr Peter Scarborough, and other colleagues created an excellent learning and collaborative space.

This timely experience opened doors for yet more opportunities that will ultimately benefit the postgraduate students involved in the projects described above, the support staff at Rhodes University, and the wider community. ■

Dr Sunitha Srinivas is Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice at Rhodes University, South Africa.

ACU Titular Fellowships 2015

We are pleased to announce the winners of the 2015 ACU Titular Fellowships, to be held between October 2015 and September 2016. The fellowships are offered on an annual basis to staff at ACU member institutions and aim to support Commonwealth universities in developing their human resources through the interchange of people, knowledge, skills, and technologies. To find out more, visit www.acu.ac.uk/titular-fellowships

The George Weston Limited, Canada, Fellowship is awarded in the areas of agriculture, forestry, and food science or technology, and has this year been awarded to two recipients: **Dr Anne Galloway** at **Victoria University of Wellington**, New Zealand, and **Dr Niranjalie Perera** at **Wayamba University of Sri Lanka**.

Dr Galloway will work collaboratively with experts at the **University of Exeter**, UK, focusing on livestock welfare and humane slaughter methods. Dr Perera will visit the **University of Reading**, UK, to investigate novel fat-free frying methods, with a view to reducing the consumption of unhealthy deep-fried foods in Sri Lankan diets.

The Gordon and Jean Southam Fellowship has been awarded to **Dr David Phipps** at **York University**, Canada. As knowledge mobilisation (or research uptake) becomes an increasingly important element in university research management, Dr Phipps will visit **Coventry University**, UK, to collaborate on the development of ‘knowledge broker competencies’, assessment tools, and capacity-building in this area.

The Jacky McAleer Memorial Fellowship is awarded to those specialising in the field of information technology. This year’s award will enable **Md Anwarul Islam** at the **University of Dhaka**, Bangladesh, to undertake research with the InterPARES Trust Project at the **University of British Columbia**, Canada. The InterPARES Trust is a multinational, interdisciplinary research project exploring issues concerning digital records and data entrusted to the internet. Mr Islam’s research will focus on cloud-based technologies, specifically looking at these in a commercial context.

The Swansea University Fulton Fellowship has been awarded to **Dr Helen Rawson** at **Deakin University** in Australia. Dr Rawson’s research at **Swansea University**, UK, will focus on developing best practice in the care of ethnic elderly patients.

The University of Manitoba Fellowship has been awarded to **Professor Derek Chadee** at the **University of the West Indies**, Trinidad. Professor Chadee’s research at the **University of Manitoba**, Canada, will explore crime victimisation and the fear of crime, including the disconnect between official crime statistics and rates of unreported crime.

The University of Oxford Fellowship has been awarded to **Dr Murray Cox** at **Massey University**, New Zealand. Dr Cox will work with colleagues at **St John’s College, Oxford**, UK, to explore links between human genetics and susceptibility to infectious disease, informed by expertise in computational modelling and big data.

The Wighton Titular Fellowship in Engineering is intended especially for the enhancement of laboratory teaching capacity, and has this year been awarded to **Dr Manisha Yasanthi Gunasekera** at the **University of Moratuwa** in Sri Lanka. Dr Gunasekera will visit the **Memorial University of Newfoundland** in Canada to develop her laboratory teaching capacity, with an emphasis on chemical process plant safety and the use of inherently safer design methodologies.

Blogging for impact

The ACU-led CIRCLE programme seeks to develop the skills of emerging African researchers working in the field of climate change, including supporting them as they look to disseminate their work. Here, **Caroline Cage** explores the value of academic blogging and online forums – as both a means of promoting research and as a channel for support and discussion.

Access to the internet in Africa has risen dramatically in recent years, with mobile phone usage set to increase a further twenty-fold by 2019 and many innovations emerging from growing engagement with social media. Open access is also gaining increasing support as a more accessible form of publishing. The use of blogs and other forms of social media within academia, however, is less well documented. Yet these channels could be used as further valuable tools through which to disseminate research more widely and increase its impact.

In 2011, the Edublogs platform reported that the majority of blogs on its site were published from institutions in the global north, while the fastest rise in page views was from the African continent, with a 70% increase over a 12-month period. As online access increases in African countries, it seems that access and engagement with externally produced academic blogs is increasing, but as an avenue for internal knowledge dissemination, there is much less engagement.

In recognition of this, the Climate Impact Research Capacity and Leadership Enhancement in Sub-Saharan Africa (CIRCLE) programme – an initiative managed by the ACU which supports fellowships for African early career researchers in the field of climate change – set up a blog and a private forum for fellows to share their experiences of participating in the programme. Both the online

platform and the blog have been successful in providing a virtual space for the fellows to discuss their progress and opportunities as early career researchers.

The private forum has given participants a safe space to discuss their experiences. Often, posts on conference presentations or research progress are responded to with supportive comments and encouragement. The forum also provides email updates, helping to minimise difficulties for those who may have limited internet bandwidth. The forum is lively and active, with almost 80 topics discussed in just over three months. What became quickly apparent was the genuine and healthy appetite for sharing experiences, achievements, and research progress.

The CIRCLE blog was established to provide a more substantial platform for the fellows and their institutions to showcase in greater depth the achievements, experiences, insights, and reflections that are emerging from participating in the programme. In the two months since the blog was set up, ten posts have been uploaded and the blog has received over 800 page views.

Why blog?

Globally, blogging is becoming an increasingly popular medium through which academics are choosing to disseminate their research. Writing a blog post has many advantages over traditional academic publishing:

- It's quick to set up, it's free (no article processing charges), and it's open access
- It enhances your online presence
- It can get your research read by more people (research from the World Bank suggests that one post on a well-known blog can bring in up to three years' worth the views of an abstract)
- It exposes your academic writing to a wider audience – broadening your potential readership, networks, and future collaborations to other disciplines, and even far beyond academia
- It provides immediate dissemination – you can set up your own blog in less than half an hour, compared to waiting months or years for article publication
- It is an effective means of communicating your research to non-experts
- It provides a means of testing your ideas with others in your field or in other relevant fields
- Blogging is increasingly recognised within academia as a valid form of publication

Following the success of the CIRCLE blog, the programme will be incorporating guidance on blogging to encourage the fellows to continue to make effective use of this important tool. The CIRCLE programme will be providing training on research uptake, giving guidance on the potential array of tools, platforms, and stakeholders that can be engaged to increase research impact.

How to blog

Be brief

- Short sentences, paragraphs, and overall text (aim for 600-1000 words total)
- Use subheadings to break up the text
- Stick to one topic – you can always write more than one post
- Don't go too in-depth, but keep it interesting
- An introductory paragraph summarising the post can help readers quickly decide if they want to read more

Be clear

- Try to avoid acronyms
- Try to use plain language to explain things – it is good to practice explaining your research in a simplified way
- Write as if the reader is in the room with you
- What is your blog about? Make this clear in the title and blog introduction, and don't go too much off topic with your posts

Be visual

- Use images – but remember copyright! Source free stock images online (e.g. www.freeimages.com)
- Present statistics clearly

Connect

- Link as much as possible to other blogs, pieces of work, presentations, etc
- Use a descriptive title so the post is easily found in search engines – make sure your title tells a story



Building an online presence

In many developing countries, resources are limited, both in terms of time and finances, to support research publication. Yet there is a need to increase the reach and impact of academic research, as well as a huge potential audience in the growing population online, engaging with social media. Researchers are also often limited in the avenues through which to test their ideas, form networks, and practice their writing. Blogging and online forums provide excellent opportunities for academics to develop their research profile. For academics who already confront many obstacles in disseminating their research, this is a vital resource to reach a wider audience and access new cross-disciplinary networks in

areas that straddle many fields, such as climate change research.

Most guidance on blogging for academics is positive about its potential impact, with the caveat that – as with other social media tools – while blogging is quick and easy, it is still part of our online profile that we present to the world. Private online forums may be a useful tool, therefore, to test ideas first in a safe environment, before publishing them online. Collaborative blogs can also provide the opportunity to review posts collectively before they are published.

Blogs are unlikely to replace the gold standard of peer review in terms of academic promotion and tenure in the near future. However, the impact of a presence online may

far outweigh that of a journal article and pressure is mounting to include broader measures of research impact in measuring academic performance. The experience of the CIRCLE blog and the growing use of blogs in many universities suggest that they could present a useful tool for forming valuable networks, increasing research uptake, and engaging society more widely in the African continent and beyond. ■

Caroline Cage is Programme Officer at the ACU.

Visit the CIRCLE blog at
www.acucircle.blogspot.co.uk

- Who do you want to read your blog (e.g. students, academics, policymakers) and what style of writing would suit that audience?
- Think about what parts of your expertise you want to share and to whom
- Share your posts on other social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc)
- Read other blogs and contribute – reading other blogs can help you keep on topic and create links to your blog. Contributing to other blogs can also increase the followers of your own posts
- Encourage others to comment on your posts

Potential topics for posts

- Updates on research progress
- Commentary on current events
- Reports from conferences, seminars and other events
- Reflections on your teaching/research
- Thematic posts with other bloggers
- Reposts from other blogs (with permission!)

Collaboration

Blogs work best where there are regular, interesting updates. Publishing a blog on a weekly basis might be too much of a demand on your time, so are there options for you to collaborate with other researchers on a similar topic? This will also help you build your network and get your blog disseminated to a wider audience. Blogging now comes in many forms, including solo blogs, collaborative and group blogs, and multi-author blogs with an editorial team.

Managing in the political context of your university

The ACU Strategic Management Programme is an opportunity for universities to compare their key management and administrative processes with those of their international colleagues. Away from the world of rankings and league tables, senior university staff can benchmark and analyse their processes, leading to a valuable exchange of good practice. Here, participant **Phyllis Clark** and consultant **Cliff Wragg** look at some of the recommendations arising from this year's exercise.

In the current tumultuous world, universities will merely survive with traditional management of their political contexts. A selected few will advance in these same circumstances by managing the internal and external political environment astutely and purposefully.

'Managing in a political context' was one of three themes explored at the 2015 ACU Strategic Management Programme, which took place at the University of Alberta, Canada. This annual evaluative benchmarking exercise aims to provide senior strategic managers of universities with tools to help them enhance the effectiveness of their institution. Guided by expert assessors – each appointed for their international experience in the areas covered by the programme – participants met at an intensive three-day conference to discuss the numerous facets of each topic. Key aspects of the programme are that it is qualitative, rather than quantitative; it examines processes and outcomes, rather than structures; and it seeks to generate statements of good practice to guide strategic managers.

This year, discussions acknowledged the centrality of managing the political context for public universities not as an end in itself, but as a technique for advancing the institutional mission or simply maintaining its current reputation and resources. There were intense exchanges that covered the spectrum of political relationships and the methodology of handling them in a world of social media and fractured interest groups – both within the organisations and looking outwards. In the summary of lessons learned, all participants agreed that relationship management would increase in intensity as universities cope with emerging and enduring issues.

In the end, the topic divided into three categories: managing the internal context, framing and working in the external political environment, and the impact of new media on working within these environments. This article draws on the statements of best practice

arising from the three-day conference that concluded the 2015 programme. While the statements themselves are designed to help managers bring about change, what follows is more broadly couched and is intended to give a sense of the issues addressed.

Managing in the internal environment

Within institutions, there is no escaping the need for a sound structure – especially in respect of governance and management – together with adroit handling of stakeholder relationships and interactions. (In the words of the late Sir David Watson, a keen supporter of this programme for many years, a stakeholder is 'someone who can do you harm'!) The aim must be to unite disparate groups in an effort to work towards attaining the institutional mission.

Unquestionably, the formal structure can aid the internal management of the political context where all voices want to be recorded. Clear flows of authority – responsibility and accountability – help groups within the institution to relate fruitfully. They also permit open documentation of decisions, as a record for future reference, preventing the constant churn that occasionally occurs in complex environments.

Key to the overarching governance of the institution is having a strong committee structure to manage the business side of the institution. Participants concluded that governing boards need committees populated with experts who bring outside perspectives, while also understanding the ebb and flow of issues within the organisation. The recommended committee structure covers the issues that will arise in normal business, while also looking to ensure that the administration is advancing the

institution toward its objectives.

Although the details and nomenclature may vary, each institution should have committees to manage financial issues, human resources, and estates and infrastructure.

The audit, finance and risk management committee should advise the governing body on internal and external audit procedures, exposure of the university to the full suite of risks and their mitigation, and on compliance with the breadth of legislative and regulatory standards. Increasingly, these committees will discuss emerging topics of concern such as cybersecurity, campus safety, and international student demographics.

Human resource committees provide strategic direction on people and workplace culture in the context of external trends. Meanwhile, estates and infrastructure committees oversee the development and maintenance of the physical infrastructure, as it enhances the teaching and research agenda.

Parallel to the business side of a university, it is important to recognise the suzerainty of the academic board on matters of academic policy. Best practice dictates that the academic board includes broad representation from all constituents of the institution.

The academic board regulates all teaching, learning, and research functions in the university and determines policy on academic matters. It should advise the governing body on the structure and configuration of university faculties to ensure administrative and academic coherence, efficiency, and sustainable quality.

Both boards – academic and governing or business – must collaborate in the strategic planning process or the institutional mission will be unattainable.

Governing boards need committees populated with experts who bring outside perspectives, while also understanding the ebb and flow of issues within the organisation.

The **ACU Strategic Management Programme** is an evaluative benchmarking exercise which allows participating universities to identify their comparative strengths and weaknesses, and identify possible routes to improvement. It is a way of finding and adopting good practices with a view to improving management processes.

Each year, the programme benchmarks administrative processes for three topics to create statements of good practice. At the start of the process, international expert assessors are enlisted to create a framework of questions to seek out good practice in each topic area. From the responses, the assessors formulate discussion topics to enable participants to discuss their practices, the accepted wisdom, and their expectations of excellent performance. Following discussions at an intensive three-day conference, statements of good practice are agreed and circulated to all participants. Institutions rank their performance against those measures, and participating institutions can contact fellow institutions to seek further insights into administrative excellence.

The programme has been running for 20 years, helping universities across the Commonwealth to improve their administrative effectiveness. To find out more or to take part, visit www.acu.ac.uk/strategic-management or email strategic@acu.ac.uk

Alumni management straddles internal and external political worlds. Here, universities should be working to build strong alumni associations and to foster networks within those associations with a view to supporting the strategic direction of the institution.

Managing internal political relationships with students deserves particular attention, too. The students themselves should be operating in an organised way to ensure that their voices are heard in the relevant forums in the institution. Universities will benefit from providing training and orientation sessions, and by hosting regular meetings between university management and student union representatives.

Managing in the external environment

The good practice statement which links external and internal political management notes: 'Whilst the university recognises that it provides higher education within a national context, there [should be] no direct government involvement or representation in the university's structure'. Nevertheless, good practice involves encouraging the development of good relationships with government at all levels, and with other communities as well. Within all of these relationships, the role of the vice-chancellor and the organisation of the senior executive team were seen to be central.

Discussions at the conference underlined the importance of the vice-chancellor – he or she has the primary role in managing external political relationships. The vice-chancellor's team will probably include a political adviser to help manage external stakeholder relationships, and a senior executive responsible for driving the development and implementation of strategies, projects, and policies for effective university relationships with business, alumni, donors and the wider community, as well as

local, state, and national governments. The strategies to manage stakeholder relations should be embedded in the strategic plan.

In examples of acknowledged good practice, close collaboration between the vice-chancellor and the communications and marketing team ensures that both formal and informal approaches to politicians and senior civil service figures help to achieve policy outcomes favourable to the institution. The media team manage all official university press releases and any media liaison, including the writing of official speeches for senior officers. The same team provides media training for senior staff and researchers to help ensure that public presentations are balanced and mission oriented, and survey regularly to gauge the effectiveness of relationships between the university – its staff and students – and the outside world.

All must share the joint responsibility to maintain situational awareness of the political environment. Additionally, the vice-chancellor and senior executives should participate actively in sector-wide groupings that can influence government and other fundamental stakeholders on behalf of the higher education sector. The managing board monitors and assesses the senior team in annual appraisals of their success in the political context area.

In the realm of research and commercialisation, universities need to be particularly aggressive to support their unique role. Effective institutions organise regular events to keep industry, business, government, and the broader community apprised of its most recent research and impact. They usually also maintain a website dedicated to the institution's research and, to the extent possible, professors are encouraged to explore research areas relevant to their broader community.

Social media in managing political contexts

Good practice in this realm centred around social media monitoring by the communications and marketing department. Such departments should track social media not only to alert executives to developing trends or potential political issues, but also to help assess the effectiveness of the university's relationship activities. A university will maintain its own social media accounts, and there should be clear branding guidelines for creating official social networking accounts for university units. A daily media report for senior management is recommended, reflecting regular and social media 'hits' locally and nationally.

The topic of political context management at universities lent itself to fruitful analysis and fascinating exchanges about good practice. The discussions themselves, all of which took place under the Chatham House Rule to encourage openness and the sharing of information, were enriched by anecdotes about successes and failures in universities throughout the Commonwealth. Participants returned to their home institutions with renewed fervour to use this powerful tool to advance their missions. ■

Phyllis Clark is Vice-President (Finance and Administration) and Chief Financial Officer at the University of Alberta, Canada.

Cliff Wragg is the Programme Manager for the ACU Strategic Management Programme.

The background of the page features four large, stylized hands in different colors: orange, green, blue, and red. The orange hand is at the top, reaching down. The green hand is on the right, reaching left. The blue hand is on the left, reaching right. The red hand is at the bottom, reaching up. All four hands are oriented towards the center of the page, symbolizing collaboration and community.

The ACU has launched a series of new special interest groups – the ACU Member Communities – to connect colleagues and other stakeholders working in three key areas of university activity. The new Communities bring university staff from across the Commonwealth together to share their experiences, explore ideas, and discover potential avenues for collaboration.

The Member Communities are free to join for all staff and students of ACU member institutions.

ACU Research, Knowledge and Information Community

For all university staff who support and encourage, but don't directly engage in, the research process, including those working in libraries and information, as well as research management and administration. To find out more, visit **www.acu.ac.uk/rki** or email **rki@acu.ac.uk**

ACU Engage Community

For all university staff and stakeholders working or involved in university community engagement and outreach, including university public engagement staff, industrial liaison officers, research managers and communication officers, and those specialising in distance or open learning. To find out more, visit **www.acu.ac.uk/engage** or email **engage@acu.ac.uk**

ACU Internationalisation Community

For university staff involved in international education, including such areas as student and staff mobility, international campuses, and the internationalisation of curricula and research. To find out more, visit **www.acu.ac.uk/internationalisation** or email **internationalisation@acu.ac.uk**

ACU Member Communities

Prefer to register by post?

Write to us at the address below with your full contact details, stating which community you'd like to join:

ACU Member Communities

The Association of Commonwealth Universities

Woburn House

20-24 Tavistock Square

London WC1H 9HF

UK

Recent publications

Nick Mulhern, ACU Librarian, summarises the latest titles in the field of international higher education.

Australian Postgraduate Research Student International Mobility Research Report 2015

[Australian Council for Educational Research; 2015]

<http://research.acer.edu.au>

A study based on focus group research which confirms the value of international mobility – to students, supervisors, institutions, and Australia – as ‘immense’. In addition to the motivations for, experiences of, and benefits from mobility, it considers how such exchange schemes are organised. Summarised recommendations, suggested by students, include ‘the central role played by supervisors in stimulating mobility’.

Cross-Border Content: Investigation into Sharing Curricula across Borders and its Opportunities for Open Education Resources

[Pepler, G.; et al; European Commission; 2015]
<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc>

A brief report concluding a European study on the sharing of curricula and syllabi across borders, including at HE level. The US experience of the Common Core State Standards is referenced as a precedent, though some issues addressed in the study ‘are generic for any cross-border use of educational initiatives’. Among areas for further analysis are possible links between commercial and non-profits, and the validation of informal learning.

Differences in the Location of Study of University-Educated Immigrants

[Hango, D.; et al; Statistics Canada; 2015]
www.statcan.gc.ca/pub

Comparative analyses – by country, period of immigration, and subject of study – of working-age immigrants in Canada. Using National Household Survey data, it gives a useful perspective on immigration, education, and employment. In 2011, 75% of university-educated immigrants to Canada received their highest degree outside the country. Overall, the study suggests that ‘not all countries are necessarily equal when it comes to having the education credentials that are often deemed necessary for integration into the Canadian labour market’.



E-Learning in Higher Education in Latin America

[Zamora, J.V.; OECD; 2015]
www.oecd-ilibrary.org

A survey-based study on the incorporation of ICT in higher education in Latin America, with country profiles and interviews on distance education/e-learning. The region is one where ‘e-learning is expected to expand in the coming years, and where it can have a positive impact’, yet the report also acknowledges that ‘new teaching and learning methods have barely penetrated the region and many HEIs are still reluctant to adopt them’.



Enhancing Cross-Border Higher Education Institution Mobility in the APEC Region

[Richardson, S.; Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Secretariat; 2015]

<http://publications.apec.org>

An Australian analysis of the policy contexts for institutional and cross-border mobility, the impact these policies have had, and recommendations for removing barriers to such collaboration and exchange. Eight APEC countries are covered in the interview-based study (China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, and Vietnam), each being represented in part by a brief institutional profile. Collaboration on quality assurance and credit recognition is a priority, but other recommendations include developing online opportunities, and greater study of the ‘extent of HEI mobility at the international level’.

Generation Study Abroad: Year One Impact

[Institute of International Education; 2015]
www.generationstudyabroad.org

An update on an IIE initiative to ‘mobilize resources and commitments with the goal of doubling the number of US students studying abroad by the end of the decade’. A supplementary report (on ‘partner actions’) details profiles and pledges from those involved in the initiative, from US institutions and education associations to international organisations.

Higher Education: a Worldwide Inventory of Research Centers, Academic Programs, and Journals and Publications

[Rumbley, L.; et al; Center for International Higher Education (CIHE); Lemmens; 2014]
www.bc.edu/cihe

A useful directory of HE-focused academic centres, programmes, and publications internationally, now freely available in full on the CIHE website. Framed by trend analyses, it shows how ‘higher education as a field of study, research, and practice is organised and undertaken around the world’.



Higher Education Cooperation between the European Union, Latin America, and the Caribbean

[European Commission; 2015]

www.ec.europa.eu/europeaid

A detailed study of EU academic cooperation programmes (student, researcher, staff institutions), and their impact since 2007, involving over 6,650 students and academics. One of the benefits of such schemes has been the impetus towards internationalisation in other areas: ‘participating in a mobility programme has been an entry point for further institutional, regional and interregional cooperation’.

How Internationalised is Your University: From Structural Indicators to an Agenda for Integration

[Spencer-Oatey, H; Dauber, D.; University of Warwick GlobalPAD; 2015]

www.warwick.ac.uk/globalpadintercultural

A working paper arguing that internationalisation in higher education should be assessed not simply by student numbers or mobility levels but by factors such as student satisfaction, ‘integrated communities’, and global skills. Internationalisation is a process, not ‘a state of an organisation’, and its social/skills aspects should therefore be better acknowledged.

How to Engage International Undergraduate and Graduate Students in the Admissions Process

[Ruffalo Noel Levitz; CollegeWeekLive; 2015]
www.ruffalonl.com/international

A survey of the expectations and perceptions

of international students aiming to study in the US. Parental influence in enrolment choices, both undergraduate and graduate, remains strong.



International Student Survey 2015: Value and the Modern International Student

[Hobsons EMEA; 2015]

www.hobsonssolutions.com

A report reflecting the perspectives of some 45,000 prospective international students, specifically looking at what is seen as 'useful, worthwhile, and valuable about studying internationally' and how, in this context, the UK compares with other countries. Employability, understood as including soft skills, is prioritised, and work rights/opportunities valued. The survey also gives evidence for communication in the HE sector, from rankings and effective digital engagement to targeted marketing and the influence of 'the whole network' – teachers, family, and friends – in influencing student choices.

International Trends in Higher Education

[University of Oxford; 2015]

www.ox.ac.uk/about/international-oxford

Summarises 'key trends in higher education to illustrate the global context of Oxford's international engagement', from the impact of policy on student mobility to internationalisation achieving other goals and professional education. Some examples from the HE sector internationally are referenced.

Internationalisation of Higher Education: Study

[De Wit, H.; et al.; European Parliament; 2015]

www.europarl.europa.eu/studies

A 300+ page report contextualising internationalisation trends and strategies in Europe, based on surveys and national profiles – some of which are countries outside the region (e.g. Australia, Canada, Malaysia, and South Africa). Cited developments include the increase in institutional internationalisation strategies and a 'shift from (only) cooperation to (more) competition'. Its policy-level recommendations include the importance of 'internationalisation at home' – i.e. integrating international elements into the curriculum. It concludes that some factors which potentially challenge internationalisation (such as the financial crisis, demographic decline, and immigration), could nevertheless help 'raise awareness of its importance in developing a meaningful response'.



Investing in European Success: EU-Africa Cooperation in Science, Technology, and Innovation

[European Commission; 2015]

www.ec.europa.eu/horizon2020

Summarised examples of EU-funded projects and research initiatives involving Europe and Africa. Each profile lists the relevant countries, budgets, and websites. Some programmes are included which relate to the infrastructures, policies, and support for research, as well as research itself – one example being the ACU-based CAAST-Net Plus programme, with its focus 'not on short-term results but on long-term change'.

Regional Integration through Educational Innovation, Exchange, and Cooperation: Institutionalization beyond the ASEAN Community

[Palacio, F.; Isoda, M.; Southeast Asian

Ministers of Education Organization

(SEAMEO) Secretariat; 2015]

www.seameo.org

A publication collating contributions to two SEAMEO-led symposia – one related to a student mobility initiative in the ASEAN region, another relating more to academic cooperation and regional/institutional links. The 'regionalisation' of higher education in east Asia, good practice in internationalisation, and strategies and links with Japan are covered.

Trends and Insights

[NAFSA Association of International

Educators; 2015]

www.nafsa.org

The series of briefings highlighting social, economic, political, and higher education system trends affecting international higher education. Recent articles include:

In Service to the Globe? Universities' Changing Sense of Community

A perspective on service mandates in the (US) higher education sector ('Universities are shifting their model of service to a global one – while simultaneously maintaining their service obligations to prior communities').

Scales of Global Learning: Prisms, Knots, and a Cup of Coffee

A paper on the value of inclusive ways of learning ('global educators should aim to foster global understanding by helping their students see the entire world – through a plurality of perspectives – as a place to which they are firmly connected').

Student and Staff Mobility in Times of Crisis, 2008–2013

[Haaristo, H.-S.; Orr, D.; German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD); 2015]

www.daad.de/en

An analysis of the Erasmus exchange programme in recent years and, specifically, given the context of the economic and financial crisis, the impact of macroeconomics and education policy changes. It gives evidence of the continued growth in mobility within the Erasmus scheme, though more immediate needs are now prioritised ('[a] utilitarian perception of mobility ... has deepened during the recent financial crisis').

Student Perspectives on Going International

[British Council; UK HE International Unit; 2015]

www.go.international.ac.uk

Surveys perceptions from UK students on studying abroad – the motivations, disincentives, and perceived impact of such study – and the implications for UK higher education. The rewards of relatively short and longer periods of international study can be comparable, implying that 'it is the experience of being abroad rather than the activity undertaken that is critical'. When considering international study, the most useful support or source of information was the experience of former students and advice on funding opportunities.

The Internationalization of Chinese Higher Education

[Neubauer, N.; Zhang, J.; Council for Higher Education Accreditation; 2015]

www.cheainternational.org

A brief paper focusing on student mobility to and from China, particularly in relation to the US.

WES-AASCU Joint Research Project on International Enrollment

[American Association of State Colleges and Universities; World Education Services; 2015]

www.aascu.org/programs

A US study on trends and priorities in international student recruitment. Strategies vary, reflecting the contexts of different universities. A common emphasis, in addition to increasing international student numbers, was 'improving the experiences (satisfaction) of international students'.

ACU membership update

The current membership total (as at 1 November 2015) is 527.

New members

We are delighted to welcome the following institutions into membership:

Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences, Pakistan

Horizon Campus, Sri Lanka

Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab, India

Sindh Madressatul Islam University, Pakistan

University of Rwanda

University of Winchester, UK

Executive Heads

Shirley Atkinson has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the **University of Sunderland**, UK, as of 3 July 2015.

Professor Ndowa Lale has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the **University of Port Harcourt**, Nigeria, as of 14 July 2015.

Professor Lakshman Dissanayake has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the **University of Colombo**, Sri Lanka, as of 6 August 2015.

Professor Anjila Gupta has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of **Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya**, India, as of 7 August 2015.

Professor Upul B Dissanayake has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the **University of Peradeniya**, Sri Lanka, as of 7 August 2015.

Professor Trevor McMillan has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of **Keele University**, UK, as of 10 August 2015.



Professor Trevor McMillan

Professor Muhammad Bello has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of **Bayero University**, Nigeria, as of 18 August 2015.

Professor Stuart Corbridge has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of **Durham University**, UK, as of 1 September 2015.

Professor Richard Williams has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of **Heriot-Watt University**, UK, as of 1 September 2015.

Professor Hugh Brady has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the **University of Bristol**, UK, as of 1 September 2015.



Professor Karen Stanton

Professor Karen Stanton has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of **York St John University**, UK, as of 1 September 2015.

Baroness Valerie Amos has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of **SOAS, University of London**, UK, as of 15 September 2015.



Professor Appa Rao Podile

Professor Appa Rao Podile has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the **University of Hyderabad**, India, as of 23 September 2015.



Professor Mawutor Avoke

Professor Mawutor Avoke has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the **University of Education, Winneba**, Ghana, as of 1 October 2015.

Professor Gabriel Ayum Teye has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the **University for Development Studies**, Ghana, as of 1 October 2015.



Professor Sir Christopher Snowden

Professor Sir Christopher Snowden has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the **University of Southampton**, UK, as of 1 October 2015.

Calendar

2015

December

1-3

Southern African Nordic Centre, with the Polytechnic of Namibia

What is the role of higher education institutions and north-south collaboration in shaping the UN development agenda post-2015?

Windhoek, Namibia

<http://sanord.polytechnic.edu.na>

2-3

Observatory on Borderless Higher Education

The new landscape of higher education: pathways, partnerships, and performance

London, UK

www.obhe.ac.uk

3

ACU

Annual General Meeting

London, UK

www.acu.ac.uk

9-11

Society for Research into Higher Education

Converging concepts in global higher education research: local, national, and international perspectives

Newport, UK

www.srhe.ac.uk/conference2015

2016

February

29 February - 3 March

Asia-Pacific Association for International Education

Asia Pacific – a global education and research powerhouse

Melbourne, Australia

www.apaie.org/conference

March

9-11

Universities Australia

Higher Education Conference 2016

Canberra, Australia

www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au

12-15

American Council on Education: Annual Meeting

San Francisco, USA

www.aceannualmeeting.org

14

Commonwealth Day

An inclusive Commonwealth

www.thecommonwealth.org

April

7-8

European University Association

Bricks and clicks for Europe: building a successful digital campus

Galway, Ireland

www.eua.be

May

3-5

British Council: Going Global

Building nations and connecting cultures: education policy, economic development, and engagement

Cape Town, South Africa

www.britishcouncil.org/going-global

17-20

Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association

Leveraging unique resources

Umhlanga, South Africa

www.sarimaconference.co.za

29 May-3 June

NAFSA Association of International Educators

Building capacity for global learning

Denver, USA

www.nafsa.org/annual_conference

June

14-17

ACU; University of Waterloo

Missing and marginalized: ending the erasure of women's lives and experiences

Waterloo, Canada

www.acu.ac.uk/canada-2016

July

4-7

Higher Education Research and Development

Society of Australasia

The shape of higher education

Freemantle, Australia

www.herdsa2016.org

25-29

ACU Conference of Executive Heads

Defining the responsible university: society, impact, growth

Accra, Ghana

www.acu.ac.uk/ghana-2016

August

24-26

Graduate Women International

At the crossroads of education, gender, and human rights

Cape Town, South Africa

www.gwiconference.org

31 August-3 September

European Higher Education Society

Only connect: collaboration, cooperation and capacity building through HE partnerships

Birmingham, UK

www.eairweb.org/forum2016

September

11-15

International Network of Research Management Societies

Research management in a connected world

Melbourne, Australia

www.inorms2016.org

13-16

European Association for International Education: Annual Conference

Liverpool, UK

www.eaie.org/liverpool

October

16-19

ACU; University of Mauritius

ACU Human Resource Management Network Conference

Mauritius

www.acu.ac.uk

November

14-16

International Association of Universities

Higher education: a catalyst for innovative and sustainable societies

Bangkok, Thailand

www.iau-aiu.net

The Association of Commonwealth Universities

Who are we?

The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) is the world's first and oldest international university network, established in 1913.

A UK-registered charity, the ACU has over 500 member institutions in developed and developing countries across the Commonwealth. Drawing on the collective experience and expertise of our membership, the ACU seeks to address issues in international higher education through a range of projects and services.

The ACU administers scholarships, provides academic research and leadership on issues in the sector, and promotes inter-university cooperation and the sharing of good practice – helping universities serve their communities, now and into the future.

Our mission

To promote and support excellence in higher education for the benefit of individuals and societies throughout the Commonwealth and beyond.

Our vision

Strengthening the quality of education and research that enables our member institutions to realise their potential, through building long-term international collaborations within the higher education sector.

Our values

The ACU shares the values of the Commonwealth and believes in the transformational nature of higher education: its power and potential to contribute to the cultural, economic, and social development of a nation.

Join us

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