

Institution: University of South Wales
Unit of Assessment: C19
Title of case study: The Enterprising University / Enterprise Education
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>This case outlines the research into Enterprise Education and the concept of the Enterprising University and impacts related to the E-college, female entrepreneurship education programmes, UHOVI and A4B project on Business Angels.</p> <p>The E-College Wales was an e-learning project pioneered and led by Pickernell and Miller at the Centre for Enterprise at USW in collaboration with six partner colleges across Wales, supported by the European Social Fund (ESF). Its aim was to provide an accessible, innovative, online learning environment and to enhance learning opportunities for individuals in Wales to improve their career prospects either through creating their own businesses or improving their competences and skills.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The underpinning research explains the background to the initial genesis of the E-college, which came after analysis into the Welsh economy at the end of the 1990s. The 4 papers listed highlighted some of the problems with the economic development focus on Foreign Direct investment (FDI), and illuminated the need for differential activities in Wales.</p> <p>Paper 1 (<i>Reviving the Valleys of South Wales : Case Study Evidence of a link with low pay</i>), provided a commentary and presented case-study evidence on the effects of low pay in Wales. It focused on firms relocating to Wales from elsewhere in the UK that appeared at that time to pay lower wages for the same work. This research had important implications for the perpetuation of low pay in sub-regions of Wales; it highlighted the potential for a mismatch in the employment-creation objectives of the current Welsh Development Agency (WDA), and the crucial need for the Welsh Assembly to play a vital role in ensuring that necessary higher-level employment formed part of future economic development.</p> <p>Paper 2 (<i>Regional Competitiveness Indicators : A reassessment of method</i>) outlined that Wales, ranked 11th out of 12 regions for its manufacturing output, was much less able to generate sustainable competitive advantage than the top ranking regions. Whilst at first glance this result was surprising, given the previously good record of manufacturing in Wales to attract FDI, the data showed that the factors required to generate sustainable advantage in Wales was lacking with low wages and high grant aid being the drivers that attracted FDI rather than high levels of manufacturing efficiency and performance.</p> <p>Paper 3 (<i>The End of the Beginning?: Welsh Regional Policy and Objective One</i>) highlighted that whilst 'West Wales and the Valleys' qualified for EU Objective One status, and were entitled to draw down up to 1.3 billion in EU funds, matched from public and private sources between 2000 and 2006, there were many issues raised by the process of organizing the subsequent programme. These included questions over policy focus in the economically diverse Objective One areas.</p> <p>Paper 4 (<i>Changing the Name of the Game ? : RSA, Indigenous and Inward Investors, and the National Assembly for Wales</i>) highlighted how the rejection of British Aerospace's (BAe) application for £25M in Regional Selective Assistance (RSA) for its Broughton facility in North Wales, and subsequent granting of £19.5M in other aid packages, identified an important policy issue now facing development areas across the UK. In particular, how do governments balance the ability of foreign investors to lever increasingly scarce economic development resources from central coffers on a continuing (almost automatic) basis against the new policy agenda which is</p>

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focusing to a much higher degree on the needs of indigenous firms and entrepreneurship in particular.

Overall, this work identified the clear need for a project which would build the necessary entrepreneurial skills base, given the previous context which had focused on FDI attraction. The resulting project created a number of high value enterprise based learning programmes.

3. References to the research

1. Brooksbank, D.J., Pickernell, D., and Morse, L.L. (1998) Reviving the Valleys of South Wales : Case Study Evidence of a link with low pay, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Volume 5 No 3, pp. 277-281. **ABS 3***
2. Brooksbank, D., and Pickernell, D. (1999) Regional Competitiveness Indicators : A reassessment of method, *Local Economy*, Volume 13 No 4 pp.310-326. **ABS 2***
3. Brooksbank, D., Clifton, N., Jones-Evans and Pickernell, D. (2001) The End of the Beginning?: Welsh Regional Policy and Objective One, *European Planning Studies*, Vol 9 No 2 pp. 255-274, **ABS 2***
4. Brooksbank, D. and Pickernell, D. (2001) Changing the Name of the Game ? : RSA, Indigenous and Inward Investors, and the National Assembly for Wales, *Regional Studies*, Vol 35 No 3 pp.271-277. **ABS 3***

Note: Authors Morse and Brooksbank were at the University of Glamorgan at the time of publication but subsequently left (Brooksbank in 2008, Morse retired). Clifton was at Cardiff Metropolitan University and Jones-Evans at the University of Wales.

4. Details of the impact

The E-College Wales was an e-learning project pioneered and managed by the University of Glamorgan in collaboration with six partner colleges across Wales, supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) Objective One programme. Its aim was to provide an accessible, innovative, online learning environment to individuals living in Objective One areas, and to enhance learning opportunities for individuals in Objective one area in Wales who wanted to improve their career prospects either through creating their own businesses or improving their own competences and skills.

The E-College Wales can evidence significant impact from the project. While there were internal impact benefits for the University in terms of publications and pedagogical procedures and teaching and learning practices, in terms of social and economic impact the most significant impact was upon participating students within the E-College Wales projects in terms of enhancement and development of their careers post programme.

In terms of dissemination a seminar series was undertaken plus a conference. Further presentations were made to UK, Welsh Government, British Council, Business Eye and employers within the project area (ECW, 2005).

In terms of student beneficiaries the project achieved its pre set objectives with over 1000 online learners achieving credits. More specifically 11% of beneficiaries started new businesses, 5% of those already in business experienced growth, 9% received promotion within their existing organisation and 25% planned to start a business. Moreover, 65% of project beneficiaries believed that they had enhanced their work skills. The E-college had provided them with training in entrepreneurial, ICT and managerial skills, practical entrepreneurial skills and an increase in managerial and associated skills. Students upon the project achieved excellent results particularly on the BA Enterprise programme. The project offered a first experience of Higher Education to a significant proportion of participating students and enabled students to progress from HND to Masters level qualifications. The E-College Wales project can be seen to have achieved an immediate and lasting impact on the majority of its beneficiaries. A recent review of former

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students via linkedin reveals that many have taken employment as small business advisors within enterprise support agencies (Mark Adams, Tina Sommer), others are successful entrepreneurs (Ben Brierley, Anthony Burgess, Daphne Field, Adele Harries, Denise Harries) and consultants (Victoria Cooper) and some have experienced significant career progression (Stephen Boyd, Steve Curry) since undertaking the course.

The E-College project also witnessed the introduction of a number of entrepreneurial short courses. The aim of these courses was to enhance entrepreneurial awareness and career intention. These courses (SANE, DANE and GANE) were embedded within the University of Glamorgan Business School curriculum for several years as additional courses of study. Moreover they have been adopted by several European Business Schools in Poland, Germany and France.

After the E-college was established, a large number of research outputs resulted, focused both on enterprise education specifically and on the role of Higher Education more broadly in promoting entrepreneurship through education and knowledge dissemination / creation. In addition to this, the University also went on to establish a number of key academic programmes for industry which include SANE, DANE, GANE, and the female entrepreneurship project.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/buildmlehefe/ecw.aspx>
- www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/rec%20readings.rtf
- pami.uwaterloo.ca/~nwanas/ftp/nabila/v3-i1-art5-monk.pdf
- <http://www.ecw.ac.uk/newssustainablemanagementseminar.html>
- funding-model.pbworks.com/f/WAG+Project+plan.doc