

Institution: Bishop Grosseteste University
Unit of Assessment: UoA 25 Education
Title of case study: The Lecturer Self-efficacy Project. Professor John Sharp.
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The Lecturer Self-efficacy Project is a national and international collaboration led by Professor John Sharp at Bishop Grosseteste University (UK) and Dr Brian Hemmings at Charles Sturt University (Australia). The project was initiated to develop a diagnostic instrument or resource to measure confidence in core academic function (research, teaching, other) with a view to enhancing professional practice across the UK Higher Education sector. The Project claims reach and significance in impact on practitioners and the development of professional services at organisational and departmental levels. This was achieved by stimulating debate and challenging conventional wisdom, thereby influencing the management of professional standards and guidelines on recruitment and training and by using research findings to define best practice and formulate policy towards research capacity building and strategic decision-making.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Witnessed most readily in its diversification, with accompanying evolutionary and revolutionary changes observed over time, the recent and accelerated growth in UK Higher Education Institutions and student numbers has, according to many, reignited the debate between research and teaching, and the extent to which these are viewed as competing or complementary. That said, and taken together with its now seemingly entrenched division between 'research-intensive' and 'teaching-led' institutions, the prioritisation and intensification of research over teaching is now a well-documented and commonplace reality for many academics. The impact case study presented here reflects research undertaken in response to a perceived need for those institutions regarding themselves as 'teaching-led', but seeking to become more 'research-informed' to independently benchmark themselves against others across the sector. Benchmarking taken in the context of this report required the development and validation of a reliable but relatively easy to administer and interpret questionnaire as a research instrument of choice for research leaders, managers and administrators.</p> <p>Research towards achieving this initial aim resulted in the Lecturer Self-efficacy Project which began in the UK at BGU in 2010. The Lecturer Self-efficacy Project followed hard on the heels of the publication of a 70-item lecturer self-efficacy questionnaire used in Australia by Dr Hemmings at Charles Sturt. Recognising the potential educational and culturally contextualised significance of this work as indicated, Sharp and Hemmings entered into what has now become a most productive professional relationship, contributing to and pushing back the boundaries of research in a field located in Bandura's social cognitive theory. The development and statistical validation of what became subsequently known through publication as the 'Revised Lecturer Self-efficacy Questionnaire' was made possible with the involvement of 200 respondents drawn from four institutions through the GuildHE's Consortium of Research Excellence, Support and Training initiative (CREST) as a major stakeholder group, itself supported with funding from HEFCE. All institutions could readily identify the potential of such an instrument to provide an evidence-base to inform research capacity building, strategic decision-making and policy implementation, largely through identifying institutional strengths and weaknesses in confidence and resource allocation and particularly with respect to research activity. This initial quantitative phase of study involved a robust evaluation and statistical analysis of the questionnaire's associated scales and subscales across all three core academic functions (research, teaching and other academic activities) and use of the questionnaire had an immediate impact on those institutions participating. A subsequent publication focused on comparing UK and Australian data on a trans-national basis.</p> <p>On completion of the initial phase of study, the limitations of the questionnaire and quantitative</p>

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approach became all too obvious in terms of explaining why outcomes generated appeared as they did and in relation to respondent qualifications, career stage, gender and research output. What also became obvious was the application and relevance of this work to a particular subset of lecturers who might best be described as 'second-career' and 'non-traditional' rather than 'early career' and recruited into Higher Education from within the 'professions' (e.g. teaching in schools and Further Education colleges) and frequently without doctoral level qualifications. At that point, the Project moved into a more qualitative phase of study designed to explore academic identity, institutional research culture and the lived experiences of research in the same 'teaching-led' environments. This particular phase of study has recently extended, with Dr. Pauline Couper at the University of St. Mark and St. John (UK) and funding from the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, into exploring the part-time doctoral experiences of that subset studying as 'staff-candidates' while working on a full-time basis. Outcomes to date, supported by HEFCE as well as GuildHE and LFHE, published and accepted for publication as well as disseminated by other means (see below), are being used to understand and determine how best to support those colleagues integrate within the Higher Education community more effectively.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Publications in peer reviewed journals of international standing:

- **Sharp, J.G.**, Hemmings, B., Kay, R. and Callinan, C. (accepted) When worlds collide: Identity, culture and the lived experiences of research when teaching matters more. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*.
- Hemmings, B., Hill, D. and **Sharp, J.G.** (forthcoming) Factors that shape early academic research career trajectories in two higher education institutions. *Issues in Educational Research*. [Accepted for publication.]
- **Sharp, J.G.**, Hemmings, B., Kay, R. and Callinan, C. (2013) An application of the revised 'Lecturer Self-Efficacy Questionnaire'. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 37(5), 643-674.
- Hemmings, B., Hill, D. and **Sharp, J.G.** (2013) Research experiences of staff within a specialist UK higher education institution: Challenges, opportunities, and priorities. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 19(1), 52-67. [DOI: 10.1080/13583883.2012.742924.]
- Hemmings, B., Kay, R., **Sharp, J.G.** and Taylor, C. (2012) A trans-national comparison of lecturer self-efficacy. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 36(3), 291-307. [DOI: 10.1080/0309877X.2011.614932.]

Other outputs:

- Callinan, C., **Sharp, J.G.** and Hemmings, B. (2012) Research-led teaching and teaching-led research: the impact of qualifications, career stage and other factors. In: Miller, A., Sharp, J.G. and Strong, J. (eds.) *What is research-led teaching?* London: GuildHE. [Also available at: http://collections.crest.ac.uk/5215/1/CREST_What_is_research-led_teaching_web.pdf.]

Outputs are also available from Bishop Grosseteste University on request.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

In terms of reach and significance, the impact of the Lecturer Self-efficacy Project was virtually immediate for the four participating institutions drawn from the GuildHE/CREST group. These included the host institution, Bishop Grosseteste University, as well as the University of St. Mark and St. John, Newman University and St. Mary's University College. Both Bishop Grosseteste and St. Mark and St. John incorporated findings and recommendations arising from the

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quantitative phase of work directly into discussion and debate surrounding research strategy, resource deployment, recruitment policy and the provision of professional development for staff in the areas of research capacity building and strategic decision making. Other beneficiaries of the research included all other members of the GuildHE/CREST initiative as a collective body where the research was disseminated at regular research seminar events. Such has been the strength of the collaboration between BGU and CSU in Australia that Sharp and Hemmings have each been awarded internally competitive research support funding for short study visits to each other's institutions and to work with the GuildHE/CREST initiative. This mutually beneficial relationship and work to date has resulted in several research outputs in peer reviewed international journals and dissemination by other means as indicated including a web page devoted to the Project at the GuildHE:

- Sharp, J.G. and Hemmings, B. (2012) Researcher self-efficacy. Available at: <http://www.crest.ac.uk/en/about/researcher-self-efficacy/researcher-selfefficacy.cfm>.

Within the UK, the GuildHE/CREST initiative has confirmed that the website has received 195 hits since its construction. The Lecturer Self-efficacy Project has also attracted international interest from universities in the United States, Malaysia and the Middle East.

Through the GuildHE/CREST initiative, interest in the whole field of lecturer self-efficacy and 'research-led' teaching stimulated further discussion and debate leading to the publication of an important and influential book of source materials for those institutions who might consider themselves 'teaching-led' but looking to become more 'research-informed'. The book was co-edited by Prof. John Sharp and contained an article outlining findings and recommendations from the Project:

- Miller, A., Sharp, J.G. and Strong, J. (2012)(eds.) *What is research-led teaching?* London: GuildHE. [Also available at: http://collections.crest.ac.uk/5215/1/CREST_What_is_research-led_teaching_web.pdf.]

The publication was part-funded by HEFCE with distribution to HEFCE itself, RCUK, the Higher Education Academy, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Wellcome Trust, the Leverhulme Foundation and other charitable organisations, and Vice-Chancellors at all major UK universities.

The progression of work from quantitative to qualitative and its application to 'second-career' academics has taken the Project from a measured understanding of the relationship between qualifications, gender and career stage into a growing understanding of the experiences of research for colleagues working in similar environments. Findings beyond national boundaries appear broadly similar in nature resulting in broadly similar considerations and recommendations cutting across cultural boundaries. Considerations and recommendations have included a focus on the induction, training and support available to all staff, but particularly 'second' and 'early career academics' and research mentoring. This progression, which included recognition of the unique doctoral journeys experienced by 'second-career' academics, was rewarded with a small grant from the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education to the University of St. Mark and St. John with Sharp and Hemmings as academic consultants:

- Couper, P., Evans, J., Sharp, J., Miller, A. and Lea, S. (2012) *Leadership, management and the part-time doctoral experience for 'second career researchers'*. (£10,000, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education).

As this particular project has evolved, dissemination and impact has also been made possible with further support from the GuildHE/CREST initiative in the form of an important and influential doctoral supervision and support seminar:

- GuildHE (2013) Managing part-time doctoral study: a one-day event for part-time PhD students. 24 June, 2013, Woburn House, London. With Bishop Grosseteste University,

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University of St. Mark and St. John and Winchester University. Funded by GuildHE and LFHE.

All Project work to date, reflecting the on-going collaboration between UK and Australian institutions and the GuildHE/CREST initiative, culminated in a competitive travel award to Sharp, now Adjunct Professor at Charles Sturt, to disseminate details of the Project with Dr Brian Hemmings to 70 faculty members and doctoral candidates, including one keynote presentation:

- Doctoral Research (2013) Travel grant awarded by Charles Sturt University to support research visit (\$5000AUS, RIPPLE).

The Lecturer Self-efficacy Project is a continuing work in progress with future dissemination planned for the UK's first lecturer self-efficacy conference at the University of Chichester in August 2014.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

In addition to the articles, web sites and other forms of dissemination listed above, independent corroboration may be obtained from the following sources:

- enquiries concerning reference to impact associated with the BGU/CSU collaborative project may be directed to Dr Tom Lowrie, Professor and Director of the Research Institute for Professional Practice Learning and Education (RIPPLE), Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, Australia.
Tel: (02) 6933 4328; Email: tlowrie@csu.edu.au.
- enquiries concerning reference to impact and its association with the GuildHE/CREST initiative may be directed to Dr. Alisa Miller, Senior Policy Advisor (Research and Innovation) / CREST Network Co-ordinator, GuildHE, Woburn House, 20 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HB.
Tel: (020) 7387 7711; Email: alisa.miller@guildhe.ac.uk.
- enquiries concerning reference to impact associated with funding from the LFHE may be directed to Dr. Pauline Couper, University Research Officer, Faculty of Sport, Media and Creative Arts, University of St. Mark and St. John, Derriford Road, Plymouth, Devon PL6 8BH.
Tel: (01752) 636700; Email: pcouper@marjon.ac.uk.