



Special Interest Group (SIG) Entrepreneurial Learning Network

Frequently Asked Questions

Why was the SIG formed?

The Higher Education Academy identified Entrepreneurship Education as one of the key priority areas for supporting and enhancing the teaching performance of lecturers across all disciplines. A 2007 survey by the National Council of Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) indicated that 60 % of all teaching in the UK is delivered by Business Schools. However, international research outputs suggest that current or 'traditional' Business School pedagogical approaches are inappropriate and need re-evaluation and development. The group was formed in response to these observations.

What is the main purpose of the SIG?

To focus on and enhance the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment relating to entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship and enterprise related pedagogies. This is a forum for sharing not only good practice, but also observations as to what has and hasn't worked. All entrepreneurial educators acknowledge that we must learn from experience and that when mistakes go unnoticed they effectively lose their value. Purely 'best practice' events can therefore miss important aspects; we wish to hear about both sides of the coin.

Who are the SIG's activities aimed toward?

There are already a range of Conferences and similar activities that serve academic discussions and debate at managerial level. The SIG aim to give voice to those at the chalk face whose role it is to deliver entrepreneurial learning outcomes in their students. In 2005 Prof. Allan Gibb stated that there was no 'bottom up' forum for discussion. The statement triggered the idea of a SIG.

Who informs the SIG's activities?

Our steering group (See below) is active in national and international debate. We attend a range of conferences and workshops. In consequence, at most events we have been fortunate enough to secure leading voices to trigger our discussions. Our own SIG activities and related discussions are a vital form of input. It is this balance of activities that we hope will keep us better informed.

Who funds the SIG and its events?

Central funding comes from BMAF Subject Centre, but much of the work is voluntary and or unpaid. Host institutions are required to provide a venue and BMAF funds the hospitality and organizational set-up costs. You cannot buy enthusiasm, but BMAF certainly supports it.

Why is the SIG sponsoring an award for Enterprise Educators UK?

One of the aims of the SIG is to recognise the remarkable enthusiasm and commitment that many educators have to exhibit in order to develop and enhance entrepreneurial learning in their own and or other institutions. We wish to support such initiative-taking and innovative individuals, this is why the SIG is not only sponsoring the award, but are active participants in the decision making process.

Who is the SIG's lead institution and why?

Swansea Metropolitan University are the lead UK Institution. The institution offers extensive experience in the field and two of its staff, the husband and wife team of Andy and Kathryn Penaluna, not only led debates at BMAF's Conference in 2007, but also initiated discussion at other Subject Centre's forums. It was their proposal that was accepted by BMAF.

Who are the people in the steering group?

The group members inform the selection of topics for workshops. Members have a range of contacts and experience, both within and beyond academia. This group may expand as the SIG develops. Its current membership is:

- Andy Penaluna – Swansea Metropolitan University
- Kathryn Penaluna – Swansea Metropolitan University
- Spinder Dhaliwal – University of Surrey
- Janine Swail – Newcastle University Business School
- Richard Atfield, BMAF Representative

Why are the SIG's events spread all over the UK? Can't we have one locally?

We have commented on BMAF's support for enthusiasm; the locations of the SIG events simply reflect this passion. If you wish to host an event have an idea that might contribute to the EL-SIG then why not get in touch with us?

How might a SIG event be of benefit to me and my institution?

Through hosting a SIG event a number of benefits can be realised. Firstly, such events help to bring together like-minded educators who have a focused desire to improve the standard of enterprise teaching in their own institutions and beyond. Such events serve as a forum not only for idea exchange, but also idea generation. By listening to how others are delivering enterprise teaching on the ground, in their own institutions, educators can learn from each other and indeed build links for the

future. Furthermore, through workshop discussions it is often revealed that we are all facing similar challenges (e.g. buy-in from above!) and SIG-EL represents a stronger vehicle through which these challenges can be addressed.

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