Transnational education toolkit

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Acknowledgements

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

An increased demand for higher education globally has led to the marketing of higher education as a tradeable commodity (OECD 2004). The UK has been well placed to benefit from this demand for higher education, and international students have wanted to benefit from the UK's offer of instruction in English, its reputation for quality education, and a recognised qualifications' framework (Healey 2013, p. 7). The UK, along with countries such as the Australia, and New Zealand, is a major exporter of higher education.

The General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) identifies four modes through which a provider can offer services to foreign citizens (Knight 2002, p. 5); these have been recast by Healey (2013, pp. 8–9) in the context of higher education (see Table 1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mode 1</td>
<td>Programme mobility</td>
<td>Universities supply education across borders to students in their own homes via distance learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode 2</td>
<td>Student mobility</td>
<td>Students leave their home country to consume education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode 3</td>
<td>Institutional mobility</td>
<td>Universities supply education to students in their own countries via an in-country service provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode 4</td>
<td>Staff mobility</td>
<td>Universities send staff abroad to deliver educational services to students in their own countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Until relatively recently, the dominant service mode in higher education was Mode 2, the movement of international students to the UK to participate in UK programmes. The demand for higher education has increased at the same time as the visa regime in the UK has become more restrictive for international students making it harder and less attractive for them to come to the UK to study (UUK 2014). UK universities, then, have sought other ways of providing
education to the millions of international students who cannot or will not travel (Healey 2013, p. 7). This has been channelled primarily through Modes 1, 3, and 4, which can be classed as transnational education (TNE).

TNE is an established part of the UK’s higher education provision and is seen “as integral to the future development of UK education and its global reputation” (HEGlobal 2016, p. 7). As the TNE sector grows, an increasing number of people will become engaged in TNE in at least one of its many guises. Working transnationally brings its own challenges and there is often limited support for those new to TNE. This toolkit aims to offer some support to those involved in TNE.

Focusing specifically on quality assurance and enhancement; the logistics of TNE; learning, teaching, and assessment; and relationship building, this toolkit provides guidance, checklists, questions, and authentic experience to both inform and stimulate reflection about TNE.

1.2 Definition of transnational education

Transnational education (TNE) is defined as:

All types of higher education study programmes or sets of courses of study, or educational services, (including those of distance education) in which the learners are located in a different country from the one where the awarding institution is based (UNESCO/Council of Europe 2000, p. 2).

This is a broad definition that encompasses a range of ways that suppliers provide their educational services. The types of TNE (see HEGlobal 2016, p. 45) can be categorised as (see Table 2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of TNE</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance/online learning</td>
<td>Either with TNE partner support or without TNE partner support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local delivery partnerships</td>
<td>Including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; franchise – the TNE partner delivers the degree-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>awarding institution’s degree on its behalf; the degree is closely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aligned to the degree at the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
degree-awarding institution (Healey 2013, p. 9);

- validation – the TNE partner develops and delivers its own programme, which is validated by the degree-awarding institution (Healey 2013, p. 9);

- joint and dual degrees – mutual recognition of systems and academic input, leading to a collaborative award (Doorbar and Bateman 2008, p. 18);

- Twinning arrangements – two or more institutions jointly develop a programme. The students ordinarily begin their study in their home country and then complete in the degree-awarding institution (Stella and Woodhouse 2011, p. 9).

In some examples of local delivery partnerships, the degree-awarding institution might gradually hand over control of the programme to the TNE partner through a managed process of supported delivery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical presence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- international branch campus – an international campus, wholly or partly owned, by the degree-awarding institution, which delivers its own degrees (Healey 2013, p. 9).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- international study centre – presence in the overseas location, but not a full branch campus;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- flying faculty – degree-awarding institution staff members fly in and teach for short periods and then fly out again – there is not permanent physical presence in the other country (Healey 2013, p. 9).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While globally TNE has “grown exponentially” (Naidoo 2009, p. 326), in the UK TNE “represents a modest but growing part of the UK international education portfolio” (HEGlobal 2016, p. 7).
1.3 Scope of this toolkit

This toolkit focuses specifically on UK transnational education. The quality assurance procedures and the enhancement activities described are based on and geared toward the UK context. Elements of the guidance will certainly be of use to people operating in different jurisdictions, but in essence this is a toolkit aimed at those delivering UK degree awards transnationally.

Flying faculty teachers provide a microcosm for TNE teaching more generally; their experience is generally more extreme, intense, and disorientating. Smith (2014) writes that flying faculty teachers, as short-term sojourners (Pitts 2009), experience ‘culture shock’ and that when faced with the ‘disorientating dilemma’ (Mezirow 1991) of teaching in a different culture, transformational learning can occur as teachers critically reflect in an attempt to understand what has happened to them (Smith 2014). Given that these experiences can be so challenging (yet ultimately so rewarding), the need for a toolkit that supports flying faculty (particularly those new to this form of educational provision) is all the more important. Though TNE provision has increased dramatically over the last decade, support and development for TNE teachers remains patchy (Smith 2013). It is hoped that this toolkit, which draws together existing resources and guidance in one place, will contribute to filling this gap.

While the principal focus of the toolkit is on flying faculty teachers (most apparent in the section on the logistics of TNE), the toolkit nevertheless contains material that will be of use to those who have other roles in TNE; for example:

- staff at international branch campuses [IBC] have longer to acculturate to their new environment, but they are likely to experience the same initial reactions as flying faculty teachers;
- ‘link tutors’ fulfil a different role, often not directly teaching TNE students, yet they still have to develop productive professional relationships with TNE partners;
- all staff, TNE partners, IBC, flying faculty, need to develop relationships with their students and ensure that they are able to engage with the learning, teaching and assessment opportunities that sit within the TNE programme;
- TNE partners might well find aspects of this toolkit useful in understanding how UK higher education is quality assured the challenges that staff from degree-awarding institutions face.
1.4 How the toolkit was developed
The TNE toolkit draws together existing resources – especially those developed by the Higher Education Academy (HEA), and particularly the guidance from the Teaching international students (TIS) project – published research, and links to other institutional resources, where appropriate. Summaries and extracts from the existing resources and research are supplemented by reflective questions, prompts, checklists, templates and tips from experienced TNE teachers, which all aim to foster critical reflection on professional practice.

1.5 The structure of the toolkit

1. Quality assurance and enhancement of UK TNE
2. The logistics of TNE teaching
3. Teaching, learning and assessment in TNE
4. Relationship building in TNE provision

The toolkit ends with a comprehensive reference list.

2. Quality assurance and enhancement of UK TNE

Higher education is well regulated in the UK; ensuring high quality delivery is critical (Doorbar and Bateman 2008, p. 19). This focus on quality extends to programmes that are delivered transnationally.

This section will be relevant to all involved in TNE, as it provides an overview of the UK’s approach to assuring the quality of higher education provision through the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), gives you more detail on how the QAA works internationally, and outlines the additional reviews carried out specifically for TNE work. The section then goes on to discuss how TNE can be included in existing internal quality mechanisms (including student questionnaires; student representation; programme design, approval and review; and peer observation of teaching and learning schemes). The section then focuses more directly on approaches to quality enhancement by outlining different approaches to professional development for all staff involved in TNE, with particular emphasis on opportunities for joint (TNE partner and degree-awarding institution staff) professional development, which better reflects the collaborative nature of much TNE work.
2.1 Quality assurance and enhancement in the UK

The body that oversees quality assurance in the UK is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), through their UK Quality Code. The Quality Code sets the expectations that all UK higher education providers are required to meet in terms of quality assurance. The stated aims of the Quality Code are:

➢ to safeguard the academic standards of UK higher education;
➢ to assure the quality of the learning opportunities that UK higher education offers to students;
➢ to promote continuous and systematic improvement in UK higher education;
➢ to ensure that information about UK higher education is publicly available.

The Quality Code is grouped into three parts:

1. Part A on academic standards
2. Part B on academic quality
3. Part C on information about higher education provision

(You can find more information on the Quality Code here: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code.)

All transnational education is covered by the remit of the Quality Code which “protects the interests of all UK higher education students regardless of where they are studying or whether they are fulltime, part-time, undergraduate or postgraduate students’ (QAA 2014, p.1). The Quality Code has a specific chapter, in Part B, which focuses ‘Managing higher education provision with others’ (Ch. B10). The stated sector expectation for the management of higher education provision with others is that:

Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively (QAA n.d., Ch. B10, p. 9)

Chapter B10 sets out 19 indicators of good practice, covering things such as: due diligence, student admission, assessment, the appointment of external examiners, record keeping, and legally binding agreements. The chapter also points to additional resources and sources of information related to managing higher education provision with others (see: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b).
The chapter is clear that if you are involved in the provision of higher education with others it is not enough to just read Chapter B10. You should also read other parts of the Quality Code as well:

Part A, Part C and other Chapters of Part B of the Quality Code set out how academic standards are established and maintained, and how the quality of learning opportunities is assured and enhanced; they apply to all UK higher education provision, regardless of where it is delivered or who delivers it. The expectations make clear the role of all higher education providers in securing high quality learning opportunities for students, regardless of whether or not they are the degree-awarding body. All higher education providers that work with others to deliver learning opportunities should read these elements of the Quality Code first (QAA n.d., Ch. B10, p. 3).

Chapters, from Part B, that might be of particular interest to those involved in TNE include:

- chapter B3: ‘Learning and teaching’;
- chapter B5: ‘Student engagement’;
- chapter B6: ‘Assessment and recognition of prior learning’;
- chapter B11: ‘Research degrees’

To read these chapters (and others), follow this link: [http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b)

**QAA international engagement**

The QAA also takes a leading role in international developments in quality assurance. As part of their international strategy, they have three goals:

- to secure academic standards in internationally delivered UK higher education or transnational education (TNE);
- to be an authority on international quality assurance and enhancement matters, increasing recognition of QAA as a provider of authoritative advice by sharing expertise, intelligence and information;
- to maximise the influence of QAA in international quality assurance developments.

The QAA also works very closely with other international quality assurance agencies through memoranda of understanding (e.g. with countries including China, Hong Kong, Japan, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, and Albania). The QAA is also involved in project work, including the SHARE project: building capacity for quality assurance in South East Asia; Quality Assurance of Cross-Border Education (QACHE), which looks at quality assurance across
Europe; and a forthcoming project with the British Council looking at transnational education in China.

For more information on the QAA’s international work, see: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/international

Review of transnational education

In addition to the expectations in the Quality Code, that higher education institutions are expected to meet (and are reviewed against as part of the Higher Education Review), and the work that the QAA does internationally, the QAA also carries out TNE-focused reviews. The QAA applies the same review methods transnationally as it does within the UK, but the reviews are carried out on a country-by-country basis and are adapted according to which countries and programmes are under review. The QAA produces reports about individual institutions’ arrangements, as well as an overview of UK higher education in specific countries; for example, recent country reviews include:

- review of transnational education in Greece and Cyprus – 2015;
- review of transnational education in the Caribbean – 2014;
- review of transnational education in the United Arab Emirates – 2013;
- review of transnational education in Mainland China – 2012;

You might find these reports useful to gain an overview of TNE in these different contexts. All of these reports (and others) are available on the QAA website, with further information on how the QAA review TNE: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/how-we-review-higher-education/review-of-overseas-provision.

Aside from the regulatory aspect of the QAA through the Higher Education Review (HER) and the Review of Transnational Education, as indicated above, the QAA, through its Quality Code, provides a wealth of information you could use to support the quality assurance and quality enhancement of TNE. The remainder of this section will look specifically at TNE staff and student engagement in existing quality assurance mechanisms; professional development for host teachers; professional development for awarding institution teachers; and opportunities for joint professional development.

2.2 Staff and student engagement in existing quality assurance mechanisms

Chapter B5 of the Quality Code, ‘Student engagement’, recognises that students can provide insights into a range of aspects of the student journey, including applications and admissions, teaching delivery, curriculum content, support and
guidance, and assessment. TNE students are just as able to provide those insights as those based at the degree-awarding institution, and when coupled with evaluative feedback from local tutors, these insights can support robust quality procedures and ultimately enhance the student learning experience.

**Student questionnaires**

Most institutions use end-of-module evaluation questionnaires to enable students to provide feedback on their modules. These questionnaires are sometimes standardised, which means the questionnaire is the same for all students, on all modules; they can be individually designed for different modules; or they can be a mixture of the two – with standard questions, supplemented by more context-specific questions.

TNE students should be able to respond to these end-of-module evaluation questionnaires too; indeed O'Mahony's (2014, p. 27) research showed that 84% of institutions invited their TNE students to complete feedback surveys. Feedback from TNE students can be compared with feedback from those students based at the degree-awarding institution, to see if there are clear differences between the cohorts.

Results from the surveys can be fed back to the TNE students, and should be discussed with teaching teams (including local staff). Things for you to consider:

- Do your TNE students complete end of module evaluation questionnaires?
- Are the questions asked appropriate in the context? Do you have opportunities to adapt the questions?
- Do the results compare favourably to students on similar courses in the UK?
- How do you share the findings with your TNE students?
- Do degree-awarding institution staff and local tutors discuss the results and draw up joint action plans to respond to the feedback?

**Student representation**

The UK has a long history of student representation through its students' unions, associations, and guilds; student representation and engagement of TNE students, however, is rather under-developed (NUS 2014). While there are examples of good practice across the world, there are areas where much more work needs to be done to ensure that TNE students have an equitable experience to their peers based at the degree-awarding institution.

TNE students can play an important role in enhancing quality through the student representative system and many TNE programmes have established forms of course representation (NUS 2014, p. 13). Representatives gather
feedback from their colleagues on aspects of their courses and feed them back to module leaders through formal meetings. Challenges associated with TNE student representation include: a lack of training and support for the role; cultural differences around giving and receiving critique; and the legality, power and influence of students’ union in different contexts (NUS 2014).

It is possible to overcome some of these challenges through, for example, online training sessions, and video-conference attendance at meetings. But the National Union of Students (NUS) recommends that arrangements for TNE student representation be established carefully and in partnership with UK students’ unions (NUS 2014).

“We offer so much training, and this term we are going to be offering an online class rep training system, so we could offer that to them [TNE students]” (NUS 2014, p. 13)

“It is worth noting that decisions taken at Teaching and Learning Board and Quality and Standards Committee apply to the overseas campuses as well. In previous years only UK Officers have provided representation on these, but now the Education Officers in China and Malaysia are invited to attend via video link too” (NUS 2014, p. 14)

Programme design, approval and periodic review

Joint engagement between degree-awarding institution staff and local tutors on collaborative curriculum design and development can be an effective way of developing relationships. Equally joint engagement can enhance quality, and the engagement of TNE students can enhance quality further through the incorporation of their experiences and ideas in the design and approval process. Students contribute to the design and review process through their ongoing feedback; through targeted engagement on a course design team; and through giving advice through pedagogic consultancy.
This kind of student engagement is still relatively rare within most institutions (Healey, Harrington and Flint 2014, p. 48) and there is clearly scope to better engage TNE students in this way.

> **What opportunities currently exist for students to engage in curriculum design? Are these opportunities available to TNE students?**

**Peer observation of teaching and learning**

Many institutions now have peer observation as an integral feature of their quality enhancement and assurance procedures. The peer observation of teaching and learning can be an extremely powerful way of developing learning and teaching practice, and can be beneficial to both the observer and the observed.

There are many benefits to peer observation, including the opportunity to reflect on teaching experiences, with the help of a colleague; identifying good practice; learning from others; opportunities to watch more closely how students’ learn; and identifying generic development needs (from Race *et al.* 2009, p. 1).

One model of peer observation includes the following stages (see Figure 1):

![Figure 1: Stages of peer observation](image)
There are many pro formas available to structure your peer observation (and it likely that your institution already has a standardised one); below (see Table 3) is a template based on one used at the University of Hertfordshire as part of their lecturer development programme. It provides a series of prompts and space for the observer to add their comments:

**Table 3: Peer observation template**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompts</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introducing the session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods and approaches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of learning space and learning technologies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending the session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments on specific aspects as requested by the observee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarification of strengths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified suggestions for development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the difficulties of conducting peer observation with TNE partners is the distances involved. For link tutors and flying faculty staff, this may mean scheduling observations during planned visits. This can be very beneficial (but frequently difficult to organise remotely). Equally it might be possible for the TNE partners to observe visiting teachers from the UK.
While lacking the obvious benefits of face-to-face engagement, observations can be undertaken virtually. You can record teaching sessions and then share them, carrying pre-observation and post-observation meetings via Skype. Alternatively, lecture capture can be a useful way of sharing teaching practice across locations.

Collaborative approaches to peer observation can be mutually rewarding allowing all participants to better understand the different contexts in which they work and to identify development needs.

➢ Does your institution have formalised peer observation procedures?
➢ Do TNE partners participate?
  ▪ If they do, does the procedure work? Is the process developmental?
  ▪ If not, what is the most effective way of carrying out peer observation in TNE settings?

2.3 Professional development for TNE partners

Despite the expectations noted above by the QAA that all staff, irrespective of location, receive adequate support and development in learning and teaching, it is fair to say that professional development TNE partners is still somewhat patchy (Smith 2015). There are very good reasons for this:

➢ insufficient capacity to support development, especially when there are a growing number of international partners geographically spread;
➢ lack of understanding of UK quality assurance procedures;
➢ not enough time to work collaboratively in the areas of quality assurance and enhancement.

Irrespective of the challenges to cross-border professional development, there is clearly a need to do this well, and there are examples of where UK institutions have been developing their professional development work with collaborative partners.

Models of TNE partner professional development

There are a variety of models that UK institutions have used to support the development of TNE partners learning, teaching and assessment practice. Some of these are reflected in Table 4 below.
## Table 4: Models of TNE partner professional development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online professional development modules</td>
<td>TNE partners participate in online courses offered by the awarding institution (e.g. University of Bradford’s online PGCert in Higher Education for international partner staff, Stewart 2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner visits to the UK</td>
<td>TNE partners visits the degree-awarding institution, where they can visit the partner department and see how the programmes are taught, meet with teaching teams and establish relationships, and participate in (bespoke or general) educational development activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNE-partner-based development by awarding institution staff</td>
<td>Staff from the degree-awarding institution travel to the host institution to lead professional development sessions. Staff may be from central educational development units, or the design and delivery of staff development sessions around learning, teaching and assessment might be part of the link tutor role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blended online provision and face-to-face visits</td>
<td>Professional development could also be a mix of online provision and face-to-face visits. The University of Glasgow collaborated with the Hawler Medical University in Iraq to the design an educational development programme to support student-centred learning. The development comprised seven days of face-to-face teaching in Iraq (delivered in two blocks, five months apart) and ongoing support at a distance via the virtual learning environment (Jordan et al. 2014).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the following case study, Dr Megan Lawton, from the University of Wolverhampton, describes workshops that she offers to TNE partners, who come to the UK for professional development.

At the University of Wolverhampton I run a series of workshops for TNE partners who come for staff development to the UK under the title “why do we do what we do?” I start off with an activity “What makes a good teacher?”

➤ In groups of four or five discuss and brainstorm on paper what you think are the qualities that make a good teacher. When you have your ideas rank the top five qualities. Why have you chosen these? Present your ideas to the group – this is really interesting to start sharing what we do as tutors.

Then the session(s) cover

➤ What are some of the influences on our learning and teaching? (e.g. QAA Frameworks, Benchmark statements) Here I use the The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland looking at section 4 Qualification descriptors for what students should be able to demonstrate, typically what they will be able to do and what qualities and skills they should have. This helps with discussions of why we might have different types of assessment. The subject benchmark statement http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements add a level of subject relevance and I look at particular at the sections on Teaching, Learning and Assessment;

➤ What do we mean by terms such as ‘modules’, ‘credits’...? This has some institutional context, however, it helps to explain how courses are structured and what a student has to achieve;

➤ What does ‘20 credits’ really mean? This is always interesting as in the sector for example 20 credits would generate 200 hours of learning or 10 credits 100 of learning. The question is how this is achieved. How much time is spent in class-contact? Self-study? Doing assessment?;

➤ What are our approaches to learning design? How do they affect what we do? For us we use ‘Constructive alignment’ as the many underpinning theory. There are lots of resources on this, for example: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/resources/id477_aligning_teaching_for_constructing_learning.pdf, and an excellent five minute video from Delft University of Technology Constructive alignment Delft University of Technology http://repository.tudelft.nl/view/MMP/uuid%3A68c19d09-b35c-49c0-9919-5e43981939c5/.

Many of our TNE partners have said that these sessions fill in gaps in their understanding of why our courses are structured and our materials and activities are designed in such a way and what our view of the role of the teacher is. Dr Megan Lawton, University of Wolverhampton
Accredited professional development

It is now possible for international colleagues to engage with the UK Professional Standards’ Framework (UKPSF); managed and recognised by the HEA. This is a framework for benchmarking success within higher education teaching and learning support and it provides a comprehensive set of professional standards and guidelines for everyone involved in teaching and/or supporting learning in higher education. International staff are welcome to access the guidance, materials and online support available and apply directly to the HEA for recognition. In some cases, the kinds of lecturer development programmes outlined above are accredited by the HEA and successful completion results in a Fellowship status or degree-awarding institutions might have accredited continuing professional development (CPD) provision that TNE partners can access. It is worth checking with the degree-awarding institution what accredited provision is available for TNE partners (and whether it incurs an additional charge) and contacting the HEA if accreditation needs to be sought individually.

More information on the HEA UKSPF can be found here: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/recognition-accreditation/uk-professional-standards-framework-ukpsf

2.4 Professional development for degree-awarding institution teachers

Transnational teaching offers an amazing opportunity for professional development. The fact that you are working in a very different working environment and culture with a different study body means that there is potential to develop new skills, approaches and even aptitudes towards teaching, learning and assessment (see Smith 2009).

You may be in the fortunate position where your institution offers bespoke development opportunities for transnational teacher (see below), but these kinds of opportunities are rare. While it has been widely recognized in the TNE literature that specific development for TNE teachers is lacking (Gribble and Ziguras 2003; Dunn and Wallace 2006; Smith 2013), there are many opportunities that you can access to enhance TNE teaching.

Developing the skills and attributes that you have and those that you need

A good starting point when thinking about professional development is to assess the skills and attributes that you have, and those that you will need, to teach transnationally and to support TNE. This can be as simple as reflecting on the following questions:
What skills and attributes do you already possess that will help you in your TNE role?
What gaps do you see in your current skill set?
What development opportunities are available to you to develop those skills, attitudes and ways of working?

When you have identified where you need to develop skills, seek out the appropriate opportunities. Your own institution’s inhouse training may not focus specifically on teaching transnationally, but they might well equip you with new skills that will help you in your work.

Example workshops themes that you might find useful include:

- working with international students;
- developing inter-cultural competence;
- facilitating group discussions;
- getting started with blended learning.

If you feel that there are specific areas of development not currently covered by your institution, you could talk to the head of professional development to see if further workshops could be developed. If your institution has large TNE provision, there might well be sufficient demand for bespoke TNE development opportunities around foreign language skills (Arabic and Mandarin) or non-Western approaches to learning, for example. The HEA website has a wealth of resources that could support your overseas work and offers workshops and training.

The Framework for Internationalising Higher Education offers a useful tool to support internationalisation of higher education in the areas of: research (to shape research bids and projects); review (to evaluate, benchmark and evidence internationalisation activity); curriculum design or review (to evaluate internationalisation in the curriculum); communication (to convey internationalisation activity); engagement (to promote stakeholder commitment and inform partnership development); planning (to inform policy, strategy and practice); and finally, professional development specifically (through the continual development and review of individuals): https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/frameworks-toolkits/frameworks.

The International Student Lifecycle, developed as part of the Teaching International Students (TIS) project, would be a good place to start (https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/international-student-lifecycle). UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) also offers an online study package to help staff understand learn about key aspects of international work in education. UKCISA offer a free
taster package, and the full ten-module package is free to staff whose institutions are members of UKCISA. You can find more information here: http://institutions.ukcisa.org.uk/info-for-universities-colleges-schools/Training-conference/Understanding-International/.

It is also worth keeping an eye out for external conferences, events and seminars that relate to teaching transnationally.

As a new transnational teacher, it can be difficult to identify what skills you need to support your role before you have experienced it. This is why post-visit opportunities for reflection are so important.

*Reflecting on TNE experiences*

Reflection has long been seen as fundamental to the development of higher education teachers (see e.g. Light and Cox 2001). Adopting a critically reflective approach to your teaching (whether at your home institution or not) can contribute to your ongoing professional development.

*Individual reflection*

One approach to support individual reflection is to keep a reflective learning log. In your learning log, you can keep track of your experiences of teaching overseas. Simple prompts can structure your reflections (see Table 5):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompts</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give an overview of the teaching and/or learning event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe what happened, what was most significant or important to you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you feel in the situation? How were others feeling?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you learn from the experience?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What will you do the next time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such reflections do not need to be lengthy; they act as a reminder of your experiences, a chance to think more deeply about what happened and give you the opportunity to adapt your practices where necessary. Alternatively, you may
choose to evaluate the sessions that you run. This can be as simple as adding an evaluation section to any lesson plans.

Reflection, however, does not need to be seen as a “solitary armchair activity” (Kreber 2004, p. 43); most people benefit from the input of others when they are reflecting on experiences, and TNE experiences are no exception.

**Collective reflection**

It can be extremely beneficial to talk through how your transnational teaching has gone. In my own early TNE experiences, my debrief usually took place with co-teachers in the hotel bar, after long and intense working days. These post-event discussions are very useful, but there is merit in developing more structured opportunities for ongoing, collective reflection. Below are some examples (Table 6):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to reflection</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>Pairing new and more experienced TNE teachers together can be helpful both pre-visit and post-visit. The more experienced teaching can help with hints and tips to make the trip easier and to provide a sounding board for reflection when the teaching is done. Terry Tudor, in his HEA post on TNE teaching, urges us to: “Speak with others who’ve been there before, done it and got the t-shirt.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group reflection</td>
<td>Getting together as a teaching team or a programme team and talking through how the teaching has gone can help to work out what is working and what is not in current approaches to delivery. Recording these on post-visit reports means there is a record that can help support the development of future delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support networks</td>
<td>Where there is institution-wide presence in particular cities or regions, support networks can be put in place. These enable people who are travelling to the same parts of the world to be put in contact with each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See more at: [https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/transnational-education-now-agreements-have-been-signed-what-next#sthash.i04JMtAE.dpuf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/transnational-education-now-agreements-have-been-signed-what-next#sthash.i04JMtAE.dpuf).
other. They can share orientation information (e.g. good places to eat, transport arrangements); equally, they can share approaches to teaching and reflection on practice.

| Structured conversations | Debrief conversations that are facilitated by educational developers. Conversational approaches to support professional development have long been recognised by educational developers (see Haigh 2005), and these work well for transnational teachers as well (see Dunn and Wallace 2006, 2008). Having conversations with someone who is independent of the teaching team and the overseas setting, but who is skilled in the facilitation of reflection, can lead to a different kind of reflection. |

In relation to supporting collective reflection on transnational teaching, you might want to ask the following questions of your institution:

- Will I be allocated a mentor to support me? Will I be able to shadow my mentor on my first TNE trip?
- As an experienced TNE teacher, are there opportunities for me to mentor others?
- Are there scheduled meetings for our teaching team to meet and discuss how the transnational teaching has gone (either while overseas or back home)?
- Is there a post-visit report template where we could record our collective reflections?
- Does the institution have support networks for people teaching transnationally? Would it be possible to develop one?
- Are there independent individuals, from the educational development unit, for example, with whom I could meet and discuss my TNE experiences?

So far this section we have focused on the development of either the TNE partner or degree-awarding institution staff. Given that most TNE provision is collaborative, there should also be opportunities to support joint professional development across borders.
2.5 Opportunities for joint professional development

There are clearly challenges associated with providing opportunities for joint professional development to all those involved in teaching and supporting student learning, irrespective of location. It can be difficult to find the time or additional resources (human and financial), working across time zones can be problematic, and the technological infrastructure and staff technical expertise might not be sufficiently developed.

Yet, there are enormous benefits to be gained for enabling transnational staff to access the same professional development: degree-awarding institutions can be more confident that all their staff have received adequate training, and working with staff from different contexts will allow both sides to develop greater understanding of ways of working and cultural norms. Joint development opportunities can lead to sustained and long-term professional relationships and networks.

Below are some examples of the kinds of joint professional development that could be offered to TNE teachers.

**Joint workshops**

Developments in video-conferencing technologies mean that it has become much easier to support communication across multiple locations. This means that provision of joint workshops for degree-awarding institution and TNE partners is increasingly possible. Heriot-Watt University is a multi-campus university, with campuses in Edinburgh, Galashiels, Orkney, Dubai, and Putrajaya in Malaysia. It uses joint workshops for staff at the different campuses. These sometimes comprise face-to-face sessions, which are then streamed to the other campuses.
A recently introduced element of the academic development activity at Heriot-Watt University is the running of sessions with participants at more than one campus. In particular, running activities with participants at both our Edinburgh and Dubai campuses. This has been facilitated by having an academic developer based at the Dubai campus, and the University investing in Skype for Business across all campuses.

**Benefits:**

- **community building** – through this approach we encourage the development of communities of practice across the campuses. We also support a better understanding of the various cultures that staff work in and the opportunities and challenges that these present;
- **efficiencies** – this approach removes the need to repeat activities on different campuses. It also provides opportunities at the Dubai campus that we otherwise would not be able to offer;
- **promotes an holistic approach** – shared development activities should lead to a shared understanding and encourage a more joined-up approach among staff.

**Challenges:**

- **time-zones** – running synchronous activities across different time-zones is a challenge. For activities across the Edinburgh and Dubai campuses we can only run activities in the morning at Edinburgh (afternoon in Dubai);
- **technological infrastructure** – an important aspect of these activities is visual communication between the participants and the facilitator as well as between the participants themselves. Ideally, this can be achieved by having a number of video feeds between the different sites, and multiple screens at each site, to allow those in any one site to see any visual presentations (PowerPoint, etc.), the facilitator or presenter(s) as well as participants at the in other site. At the very least, the facilitator needs to be able to see the participants at the other site as well as present their visual materials. High quality microphone pick-up is important to ensure that all participants can hear questions asked, points made, etc. irrespective of the location at which these are voiced;
- **facilitator skills** – the facilitator(s) need to understand how this equipment works and have the skills to use it appropriately. Technological assistance can be provided by others, but this increases the resource costs. One useful approach is to ensure that there is a facilitator in each location who is prepared to deal with any technological breakdowns or hiccups;
- **contexts and cultures** – when there are significant differences in the learning context or culture, this needs to be addressed within the development activities. This can range from signposting of different support services for staff in different locations to consideration of student groups with different educational backgrounds and cultures.

Finally, it is easy to underestimate the demand for development at sites that do not have easy access to it and the patience they will have. When access to development activities is not the norm, staff will accept significant technological disruption to have the opportunity to engage. Dr Rob Daley, Heriot-Watt University
Engagement in accredited lecturer-development programmes

Most UK universities provide lecturer development programmes via their postgraduate certificates in learning and teaching (or equivalent) provision. In some cases, degree-awarding institution staff and TNE partners participate in the same (blended or online) programme. This has been the approach at the University of Greenwich. Their Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education is a blended learning programme, which includes both face-to-face sessions and an enhanced online learning experience. Following successful pilots with Sri Lankan (2013-14) and Trinidadian (2014-15) students, the programme currently has 11 Trinidadian participants and nine based in Egypt, who join the 50 UK-based participants. In addition to their face-to-face study days (delivered in flying faculty mode in Egypt and Trinidad), all participants work together in the online environment: completing weekly tasks via discussion forums, participating in virtual group work, attending webinars and online personal tutor group meetings. Teaching observations are conducted via video and Skype. Feedback on the programme has been positive, with few significant differences between international and UK participants. Some of the benefits of the cross-border nature of the programme can be seen below and you can read more in Smith (2015).

**BENEFITS OF JOINT ENGAGEMENT IN ACCREDITED PROVISION**

Benefits of this provision are seen both in reported enhancement of learning, teaching and assessment, and in institutional development and capacity building.

From the University of Greenwich perspective, this provision helps us to support our international partners and build our relationship to ensure high quality in the delivery of our collaborative programmes. It also has potential to build teaching and learning communities internationally:

“First we took part as learners in the PGCert ... Then we communicated some of this experience to our peers ... then to our [Teaching Assistants] TAs.”

International participants have reported benefits including: “changing practice which 'opens the door for change’’; institutional movement towards peer observation of teaching; and building capacity for academic research. Some of our participants have said: “we became much more aware of UK standards as a result and benefitted from this module such as QAA quality code, Greenwich Graduate attributes and SEEC.”

Dr Sally Alsford, University of Greenwich
Another positive approach to joint professional development is through the establishment of communities of practice (CoP). Dunn and Wallace (2008) argue that inter-cultural and transnational CoPs will enable members to work together on “authentic teaching, learning and student support tasks” (p. 249). More collaborative working within CoPs would allow for the integration of academic, support and administration in the different locations that the transnational education occurs. The value of transnational CoPs is also recognised in the work of Keay, May and O’Mahony (2014), who suggest that they promote a focus on relationships between partners that lead to academic enhancement and a better quality student learning experience. The benefits of transnational CoPs are enhanced communication, a better understanding of the work of other community members, shared enterprise and ownership of specific tasks, and the development of relationships that cross borders.

Dunn and Wallace (2008, p. 250) are clear that given the pressures of workload, geography, borders and institutional practices, transnational CoPs are unlikely to develop naturally, and that a commitment to the development of CoPs should be written into partner agreements and become embedded in the ways of working across borders.

Setting up a community of practice

There is a lot of guidance available online on establishing a CoP. The following headings (Table 7), adapted and expanded here to reflect the transnational aspect, come from Griffith University’s Guidelines for establishing a community of practice briefing paper:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of CoP development</th>
<th>Things to think about</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Who would benefit from the opportunity, what skills would they bring? Can people volunteer? What will be the breakdown of degree-awarding institution and TNE partner staff, and academic and professional staff?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals, terms of reference and operating principles</td>
<td>What does the CoP hope to achieve? How will it work in practice? How will the group meet (using</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordination and support</td>
<td>Skype, video conferencing technologies, during face-to-face visits? And how often?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Who will keep the CoP going? How will interest be maintained (email updates, blogs or webpages)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation and measurement</td>
<td>How will you measure how well the CoP is functioning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing a community of practice</td>
<td>A CoP has come to the end of its life when the task it was set up to do has been done; when it is no longer active; or when it is no longer doing what it set out to do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communities of practice have a lot of offer transnational teachers. While they can initially be time-consuming to establish and develop, the potential benefits based on: joint enterprise, mutual engagement, and shared repertoire (Keay, May and O’Mahony 2014) make them worthy of exploration.

**Collaborative action research**

One of the key recommendations from the HEA report Enhancing student learning and teacher development in transnational education (O’Mahony 2014) states:

Promote cross-national collaborative TNE research. TNE research is predominantly undertaken by TNE-provider countries. More transnational research should be undertaken transnationally: research relationships should be fostered between host and providers with both on an equal footing in terms of their involvement in the research. (O’Mahony 2014, p. 37)

Collaborative action research provides one model that would enable host and providers to have equal engagement in research. Action research can result in positive changes in practice, enhanced learning, greater personal awareness and confidence, and it is also a model that has long been seen as an effective approach to professional development (Zuber-Skerrit 1992; Kember and Gow 1992).

Action research is a research methodology that is used in many academic and vocational disciplines. The most famous model of action research, originally
devised by Kurt Lewin in the 1940s, is one that involves a cyclical approach to planning, acting, observing and reflecting (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Basic action research cycle**

**PLAN:** collaborators discuss the issue they want to explore, read about how others have dealt with it, and plan a course of action to improve the situation.

**ACT:** The plan of action, with agreed interventions, is carried out.

**OBSERVE:** Different methods of data collection are used to evaluate the success of the action.

**REFLECT:** The findings from the observations are reflected on and used to plan a subsequent cycle of action research.

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**Planning your collaborative action research project**

The following template (Table 8) has a series of questions that could help you frame a transnational collaborative action research project.

**Table 8: Questions to frame an action research project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the key issue that I want to work on and why do I want to work on it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who can work with me on this project? What skills, knowledge and perspectives will they bring? How can we play to everyone’s strengths?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some possible solutions to the issue we have identified?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which of these solutions do we want to investigate further?

How can we make the solutions work? What do we need to do?

What data do we need to collect to see whether our solution has worked? Who will be our research participants?

How will we make sense of our findings and reflect on what we have learnt? How will we use what we have learnt to develop our practice?

How will we share what we have learnt with other people?

There are lots of online guides that can help you if you choose to develop an action research project. Here is a link to one from the Open University: http://www.open.ac.uk/cobe/docs/AR-Guide-final.pdf.

2.6 Points for consideration

This section on quality assurance and enhancement of TNE has shown that:

- UK higher education is well regulated through the QAA's Quality Code and its expectations for the sector; those expectations also cover TNE. In addition, the QAA does international work and carries out comprehensive country or regional-focused reviews;
- TNE can and should be integrated into existing quality assurance mechanisms;
- TNE partners are entitled to professional development opportunities; these could be offered through online modules, visits to the degree-awarding institution, degree-awarding institution staff visits to TNE partners, or via accredited provision overseen by an external body (e.g. the HEA and the UKPSF);
- degree-awarding institution staff also benefit from professional development workshops and individual and/or collective reflection to develop their skills as TNE teachers.
3. The logistics of TNE teaching

This section moves into the logistics of preparing for TNE teaching, and has been written particularly with flying faculty teachers in mind. First TNE visits can be daunting if you are not familiar with the country you will be working in and this part of the toolkit aims to give practical advice to help you better prepare.

This section provides guidance on navigating new contexts; arranging travel, accommodation and dealing with expenses; looking after your own health and safety; and finally managing your workload so you do not suffer from TNE burnout.

3.1 Navigating new contexts

TNE work can provide you with opportunities to work in countries and contexts that you might not have had the chance to before. While this can be exciting, it can also be challenging if you do not really know what to expect of the place that you are going.

It is worth doing a little bit of background work about the location before you go, finding out something about the culture, the religion that is practiced there, the food, the climate, the ethnic groups, current affairs, and even some basic words and phrases in the local language. You might well find that some of these cultural differences have an impact on how you teach within the overseas setting, as shown below where Professor Veronica Bamber reflects on her experience of teaching in Dubai during Ramadan. While many staff across the UK teach students who observe Ramadan or are observing Ramadan themselves will relate to her reflection, this case-study is intended to draw attention to the fact that for some staff deployed to teach overseas, this may be their first experience of teaching a cohort of students, the majority of whom are observing Ramadan.
Ramadan is a key month in the Muslim year, when religious observation influences everything that goes on during that month, including studying and teaching. Teaching in a Muslim country during Ramadan presents a number of challenges. As flying faculty, I had to be aware of those challenges.

The challenge everyone is aware of is the need to fast during daylight hours, from dawn till sunset. As a non-Muslim, I was aware that it would be culturally insensitive to eat or drink in front of colleagues or students who were fasting, so having a drink of water happened in private – never in class. Another issue related to fasting was the timing of teaching sessions: could I really expect students to be on time for a 9am class if they have been awake half the night (to break their fast with social gatherings after sunset, and then to get up early to eat again before dawn, for the ‘suhur’ meal)? Once they were in class, pace had to be carefully monitored; if everyone is a bit out of sync, low in energy, then the pace might need to be slowed down. And a constant question in my mind was how to raise the dynamic in the classroom, when students might be tired.

At the end of the day, students might be getting twitchy, looking forward to the ‘iftar’ (post-sunset) meal. If a class went on till iftar, then food would probably be provided, in the social, celebratory atmosphere that is a part of Ramadan. The biggest party is reserved for Eid, at the end of Ramadan, and students would want to go home for Eid. So class numbers would drop significantly as they disappeared to celebrate with their families.

I found teaching during Ramadan quite taxing on the personal level. Not wanting to eat or drink in public, including in shared offices, meant it could feel a bit stressful just looking after my own physical needs. On balance, though, I enjoyed feeling part of another religious group’s customs.

Professor Veronica Bamber, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

You can gather a lot of information about the place you will be visiting by talking to people who come from there (e.g. international staff at your own university), people who have been involved in TNE teaching in the area before, and through reading any records of visits. It is also worth, if one does not exist already, compiling a log or diary of practical experience of TNE trips including good places to eat, what to wear, where to go shopping, what the weather will be like at certain times of the year (e.g. hurricane, tornado, monsoon seasons), and whether mosquitoes (or other biting insects) will be an issue, for example. These may seem like minor things, but the fulfilment of basic needs is really important.
for successful TNE teaching; in accounts of the challenges of teaching in transnational settings, food and climate do feature.

“the food that they serve is obviously quite different to what I’m used to and what I can tolerate” (Smith 2014, p. 125)

You can access a lot of country specific information before you go. The Foreign Office provides detailed country guides, covering:

- safety and security;
- terrorism;
- local laws and customs;
- entry requirements;
- health;
- money.

This site is comprehensive and regularly updated: [https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).

Commissio Global provide cross-cultural training, but also a series of freely available country guides, which provide information on language, culture, customs, and etiquette: [http://www.commissio-global.com/country-guides](http://www.commissio-global.com/country-guides).

Travel guides (and their websites) are also useful places to find overviews of the country that you are visiting. Here are three examples:

- **Bradt Travel Guides:** [http://www.bradtguides.com/](http://www.bradtguides.com/).

The Internet means that it is much easier to get access to local news – through online news sites. The BBC also does regional news roundups, which highlight some of the key news stories: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world).

You can also gain something of the cultural flavour by reading novels set in the place you are visiting. Before traveling to Trinidad for work, for example, I read
V. S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr Biswas*. You could ask your TNE students to recommend books to you that feature their country.

With regards to learning a bit of the local language, there are now many online resources and apps that you can turn to. Here are a few that you might want to explore:

- Duolingo: [https://www.duolingo.com/](https://www.duolingo.com/)
- Memrise: [https://www.memrise.com/](https://www.memrise.com/)
- Busuu: [https://www.busuu.com/](https://www.busuu.com/)

Background reading and a better sense of what to expect in the TNE location is all important planning. The next logistical activity is working out how you are going to get there and where you are going to stay.

### 3.2 Travel, accommodation and expenses

Practice differs within institutions as to who arranges the travel tickets. In some institutions there is a recognised travel agent, in others departmental administrators might be responsible for finding the best tickets and the best accommodation for you. It is worth looking carefully at the plans that have been made to ensure that there are not overly long lay overs on the way there or back and making sure that travel from your hotel into the workplace is easy to organise. In some places, you may be able to use public transport (as I did in Hong Kong), while in others your own institution, or the partner organisation you are working with, might arrange a driver to collect you (which was my experience in both Dubai and Trinidad).

The university is likely to have a policy on the travel class and the standard of accommodation that you can book. Some institutions will support ‘business class’ or ‘premium economy’, but most will require staff to travel ‘economy’. This can be frustrating for TNE teachers who travel frequently and find ‘cattle-class’ exhausting (Smith 2014, p. 123). It might be possible, as a frequent flyer, to accumulate airline points, and to upgrade your seat – again, your institution should be able to advise on this. Hotels often provide deals on repeat business, so you might find that you are able to get better rooms. If you do have a bad experience in a hotel on a TNE trip, it is worth letting the travel organiser know so that they can allocate different places for future visits. Confirm and check your flight details before you leave to make sure there have been no changes to the schedule and work out the most effective means of getting from the airport to the hotel.
You will need to check whether you require a visa (either in advance or at the border) to visit the country you are due to teach in and to ascertain whether you need to submit any documentation or letters of invitation. Much international travel requires you to have at least six months remaining on your passport. If this is not the case, you may well have to apply for a new passport. Some institutions will cover the costs of renewing passports, if it supports travel for business purposes. Your institution should arrange your insurance, but you might well have to trigger the process to ensure that you are adequately covered.

If you want to either extend your stay in the country as part of your annual leave or take family members with you, you might well have to seek permission to do that. It is worth investigating what your institution's policy is on this.

Finally, you need to be clear about how your expenses will be covered while you are away. Will you be given a daily allowance, will you be issued with a university credit card, or are you expected to keep receipts, which you claim back on return? You should find out what counts as reasonable expenses. Is there a maximum you can spend on subsistence? Are you allowed to claim back for alcoholic drinks? Will the university cover telephone calls home or costs for Internet access (either through the hotel or in internet cafes)?

Some institutions have specific policies and guidance on overseas travel (e.g. the University of South Australia has an *Offshore teaching remuneration guide*, and the University of Hertfordshire has a policy on *Working in the UK or overseas on university business*). You should seek out these kinds of policies and guides as they help you to better understand what you can expect in terms of travel, accommodation, and reimbursement.

Here is a list of things that you might want to check:

- Who will arrange your travel and accommodation?
- Is your passport up to date, have you made the necessary arrangements for a visa?
- Are you clear how you will get from the airport to the hotel, and from the hotel to your workplace?
- Do you understand the procedure for claiming expenses? Have you got local currency to take with you?
- Have you located your institution's policies relating to overseas work and travel?
3.3 Health and safety

It is important when you are travelling to feel healthy and safe, and there are precautions to make sure that you do.

Prior to travelling check whether you are up to date with any vaccinations that you need. Both the Travel Health Pro website: http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country-information/ and the Fit for Travel website: http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk/home.aspx provide guidance on what is needed in different parts of the world. It might also be worth making an appointment to see the Practice Nurse at your local GP surgery – there might well be a charge for some travel vaccinations.

Travel health websites will also provide information on any specific outbreaks of particular diseases and what precautions travellers should take. For example, the Zika virus can be particularly problematic for pregnant women and those planning to become pregnant, and the recommendation is that women planning to go to the parts of South America where Zika is prevalent should seek medical advice. In some cases, the Foreign Office may well recommend that people do not travel to certain locations at all (as was the case during the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa). Clearly these types of crises can have a significant impact on transnational education – as is shown by Feast and Bretag’s (2005) analysis of the impact of SARS on the delivery of a transnational programmes in Asia – and institutions need to have clear contingency plans to deal with such events.

Another area to consider is your own personal safety. You should investigate whether it is safe to move around on your own, whether there are areas in the city that you are visiting that should avoided, if there are recommendations about hailing taxis on the street, or about how you carry your personal belongings (wallet, camera, passport, jewellery). It is likely that you need only take normal precautions, but in new places we can sometimes be vulnerable to opportunistic crime. There might also be other threats to safety: terrorist attacks against foreigners or hijackings of foreign nationals. In these extreme cases, you should follow the guidance provided by the Foreign Office.

In any circumstance, you should make yourself familiar with what to do if you become unwell or if you are a victim of crime; the universal emergency telephone number is 112.

One health issue that you may encounter with working transnationally is that of fatigue. Many TNE teachers report extreme tiredness fuelled by the travel, jet lag and intensive teaching patterns: “you’re literally flying in, your eyes are shutting
and then you’re having to teach” (Smith 2014, p. 123). This means that managing workloads both at home and overseas is extremely important.

3.4 Managing workloads

TNE teachers often report that one of the most difficult things about working transnationally is managing workloads in two locations (Debowski 2005; Evans and Tregenza 2002; Smith 2014). While colleagues back home might see TNE visits as a ‘jolly’ to a sunny location, most TNE teachers will admit that this kind of work can often be quite a juggling act.

It is important that any overseas work is adequately recognised in workload allocation models and that there is sufficient cover for the students at the degree-awarding institution when you are not there. All too often, TNE teachers report that they continue to offer support to their students in the UK virtually when they are away, often responding to emails very early in the morning or very late at night. The University of Leeds has recognised the impact of overseas delivery on staff and have made it easier for them to participate in it; they have built “processes to manage workload and backfill academic time” (GlobalHE 2016, p. 65). TNE teaching and travelling to overseas teaching sites can often eat into weekends, and time off in lieu (TOIL) days should be claimed back. Trying to schedule a day’s break before returning to teaching is sensible because you are likely to be very tired. Teacher burnout is a serious risk to transnational education.

Here are some tips for managing your workload:

> make sure that your TNE teaching is reflected in your workload model;
> ensure that you have adequate cover when you are not in the country;
> set your out-of-office to show that you are away on business and be realistic about response time to questions and queries when you are away;
> when overseas, make sure that you have some down time – do not completely fill your non-teaching time with networking, meeting students, and keeping up with work at home;
> try and schedule a day to recover from a long haul flight, if possible.

3.5 Points for consideration

This section on the logistics of TNE has shown that (for flying faculty teachers particularly):

> it is worth trying to find out about the country you are visiting before you get there through talking to people, looking at country specific guides, accessing local news, and learning some of the local language;
> institutions will have different policies regarding travel, accommodation, and expenses and you should make yourself familiar with them;
> you need to look after your own health and safety when working transnationally and seek guidance where necessary;
> it is important to manage your workload both at home and overseas so you do not suffer burnout.

4. Teaching, learning and assessment

For many engaged in TNE, the most important aspect of the role is the interaction with TNE students and particularly with regards to learning, teaching and assessment. This section will be of use to anyone involved in teaching or supporting TNE students.

The section begins with an overview of curriculum design, and the external influences on the design process. It then outlines some of the different modes of delivery that are used in TNE and how approaches to learning theory have been applied to TNE students. The section then continues with a discussion about content and contextualisation. There are inputs around some of the skill sets that have been recognised as problematic for TNE students and then a call for you to audit your TNE students’ skills to ensure that what is being taught is what the students need. The final parts in this section look at approaches to assessment and feedback, and access to learning resources.

4.1 Curriculum design

Constructive alignment (Biggs and Tang 2011) has played an influential role in how UK higher education programmes are designed. The premise behind constructive alignment is that the teaching and learning activities relate directly what it is intended learning outcomes and the assessment tasks. This means that there is coherence within a programme of study: what is taught and learnt is done to achieve the learning outcomes and that is what is assessed in the assessment tasks. There are a number of external influencers on curriculum design. These are summarised below (see Table 9):
### Table 9: Influences on curriculum design

| Subject benchmark statements | There is guidance to help teachers decide what should form the learning outcomes for their courses. In the UK, subject benchmark statements set out expectations of standards of degree for a range of subjects, describing what gives a discipline its coherence and identity. Subject benchmark statements provide information about the extent and nature of the subject; what a programme should aim to achieve; and what knowledge and understanding a student is expected to develop during a programme of study. The subject benchmarks are not prescriptive, rather they act as a guide, providing a conceptual framework for the content to be covered in a curriculum. You can find more information about subject benchmark statements here: [http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements). |
| Frameworks for higher education qualifications | The frameworks for higher education qualifications of UK degree-awarding bodies describe the expected achievement of holders of qualifications at different levels. These frameworks can help staff ensure that they are pitching their work (i.e. what is expected outcome, the learning and teaching activities, and the assessment tasks) at an appropriate level. You can find more information on qualification frameworks here: [http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf). |
| Professional statutory regulatory body (PSRB) | PSRB is “an umbrella term for a very diverse group of bodies, including a large number of professional bodies, regulators and those with statutory authority over a profession or group of professionals” (HEBRG 2011, p. 8). One of the key roles of a PSRB is in the accreditation, monitoring, and review of academic provision. Accreditation may allow a graduate to practice as a professional in particular field, enable exception from professional exams, grant access to professional association, or enable an institution to benchmark against other institutions (HEBRG 2011, p. 12). A list of accrediting PSRBs can be found here: [https://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_studrec&task=show_file&mnl=12061&href=accreditation_list.html](https://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_studrec&task=show_file&mnl=12061&href=accreditation_list.html). |
Institutional drivers

In addition there might well be institutional drivers that impact on the learning, teaching and assessment approaches that are used in programmes. These drivers might be articulated in, for example, institutional graduate attribute statements. Equally, institutions may seek to prioritise particular approaches, such as assessment for learning; work-based learning; enquiry-based learning, for example.

Any discussion of programme or module design and of learning, teaching and assessment in transnational contexts will raise the rather knotty issue of equivalence. Most TNE arrangements are based on the premise of comparability and equivalency between the TNE offering and the one at the degree-awarding institution. Equivalence does not always mean that programmes in the two contexts have to be exactly the same; in some instances it might be appropriate to focus instead on equivalent effect (Smith 2010). What teaching teams (ideally involving degree-awarding institution and TNE partner staff) should decide is what equivalence looks like in their module and what can or cannot be adapted. Dr Megan Lawton’s checklist on module design (in Appendix 1) is a useful tool for supporting collaborative learning, teaching and assessment design.

The rest of this section is focused on different aspects of learning, teaching and assessment including: modes of delivery, approaches to learning, content, skill development, assessment and feedback, and access to resources.

Working transnationally in this area is likely to raise challenges that stem from differences in culture, educational background, and expectations. It is worth remembering, however, that often students respond very positively when provided with a clear rationale for the approaches adopted and permission to explore different ways of working.

4.2 Modes of delivery

Since the definition of transnational education is broad, TNE can encompass a wide range of modes of delivery. This section will focus on online, face-to-face, and mixed-mode delivery.

Online delivery

The definition of TNE includes fully online or distance programmes. There is much existing guidance on how to design and work with students in an online environment. This guidance will also be applicable for TNE students. For example, it is important that: the online activities are engaging and active;
sufficient information and support is provided; there are online orientation activities; teaching is front-loaded; there is strong teaching team online presence early; and there are opportunities for real-time virtual sessions and tutorials (Smith 2015, p. 14).

In addition to the practical and logistic benefits of supporting TNE students at a distance, online delivery also offers students flexibility in how, when, where, and what they learn. The HEA’s *Flexible learning framework* provides a useful tool for supporting flexible learning, which recognises the importance of learner choice, balanced pragmatism, personal flexibility and institutional agility. Focusing not only on technology-enhanced, the *Flexible learning framework* also recognises the importance of employment, pedagogical approaches and institutional systems and structures. The contributing characteristics of focus areas in the Framework could frame conversations between those involved in TNE teaching to ensure enhanced flexible learning opportunities. The *Flexible learning framework* can be accessed via: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/enhancement/frameworks/framework-flexible-learning-higher-education.

The TIS project has developed specific guidance for those supporting international students via online teaching: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/internationalisation/ISL_Online_Teaching.

This guidance recognises that there might well be cultural and experiential differences associated with international students and online learning and recommends:

- monitoring participation;
- modelling online dialogue;
- internationalising the curriculum;
- allowing international students to share their own materials;
- providing information on support for online learning;
- posting regular summaries of the course content and activities.

In terms of TNE specifically, we realised that we needed to be aware of the UK-centric view of some of our online activities, to be respectful of working across different time zones, for example, not scheduling all real-time activities at the same time (Smith 2015, p. 14), and that students might not have access to the full range of technologies required for the programme.

TNE students might also choose to work towards a doctorate online. Here there may be fewer opportunities for group activities and face-to-face contact. Online supervision requires a different skill set, as online supervision relies mainly on written communication around electronic drafts (Augustsson and Jaldermark
In order to overcome some of the challenges of online supervision, Sussex (2008) calls for a mixture of written communication (through comments on drafts and email exchanges) with verbal communication through synchronous computer-aided communication (e.g. conversations via Skype) or asynchronous audio/video files sharing feedback on drafts. The use of such technologies can enhance the inter-personal aspect that helps to support the development of the relationships that characterise effective research supervision.

Here are some questions to consider if you are working with TNE students in an online environment:

- **What experience do the students have of online education?**
- **Do the students have access to the necessary technologies and infrastructure to enable them to engage in the programme?**
- **Do you have clear guidance about what is expected of the TNE students in the online environment?**
- **Is it possible to work across time-zone differences in your TNE cohort?**
- **Is support available for your TNE students to develop their online learning?**

**Face-to-face delivery**

For some TNE students studying at a branch campus, their TNE experience may be little different to those studying at the home campus. These students will be taught by awarding institution staff, but based at the branch campus. The extent to which these transnational academic staff feel connected to the home campus might well vary. Smith (2009, p. 471) noted in her study of academics working at a branch campus that few locally based staff had visited the home campus or had prior knowledge of degree-awarding institution’s higher education system. Relationships can be strained, at least initially at the founding of a branch campus, when much quality assurance is managed by the awarding institution. The same challenges are apparent in locally delivered or supported-delivery partnerships, where the programmes are delivered in partnership with a TNE partner. These locally delivered models account for 40% of TNE provision (HEGlobal 2016, p. 45); there are different set-ups of this kind of model (Ziguras 2008), but the TNE partner might well be responsible for all the teaching on a TNE programme, and even the assessment and moderation.

Here the challenges that students and staff may face will be akin to those international students and staff coming to the UK to study and work. The guidance across the TIS project will be a useful support for helping the students acculturate to UK higher education: [https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/international-student-lifecycle](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/international-student-lifecycle).
Equally, aspects of the International Staff website (University of Leeds) may be useful for staff at branch campuses: www.internationalstaff.ac.uk. Branch campus modes of delivery, then, could well mirror what is happening in the home campus. With time, however, branch campuses might develop “their own branch of academic life, which can be very different to their more traditional Western partners” (Smith 2009, p. 478).

**Mixed modes of delivery**

TNE students can also experience mixed modes of TNE. This might be a combination of flying-faculty visits and ongoing online support; flying-faculty visits with ongoing support from local tutors; or a mixture of both.

One of the most challenging aspects of delivery of flying-faculty teachers is that contact is often based on very short and intensive teaching blocks (Leask 2008, p. 126). This involves teachers having to work through new models of teaching that enable the material to be covered in a much shorter period of time and designing sessions that keep students engaged for longer than the regular lecture and seminar models. For one TNE teacher, his overseas teaching became much more interactive that the sessions he ran at home:

“So it’s very interactive and some of it will be download stuff, then it’ll be discussion interaction, then it might be a couple of games that we’re playing, but it’s run like a workshop rather than a lecture/seminar/tutorial” (Smith 2013, p. 132)

My own very first experience of flying-faculty teaching was very similar and involved me teaching research methods on a top-up degree programme in Hong Kong. In advance of the teaching visit, I was given PowerPoints from an earlier cohort to frame my sessions. There were quite literally hundreds of slides to cover the material in the intensive week that I would be there. It became apparent to me very quickly that this kind of ‘sage on the stage’ approach was not feasible on five consecutive days; I was likely to get overly fatigued and the students would suffer from information overload. I redesigned the whole weeks’ teaching so that it combined a mix of tutor input, student activities (group and individual, with feedback), and time for reflection. While this was time-consuming (especially as I had understood that the session planning was done), it was worth the effort both for my sanity and my students’ learning.
Such adaptations are important when preparing for flying faculty visits; intensive block teaching is criticised for having little to do with pedagogy and more to do with convenience (Davies 2006). Block modes are seen to include little time for reflection; cover content more superficially; and emphasise cramming over deep learning (Davies 2006). If teaching sessions are restructured to focus on student learning, rather than content coverage, block teaching can be more satisfying and arguably more effective.

A further challenge of block teaching is maintaining the sense of a learning community when the flying faculty visits are over (Chapman 2008). While students may feel inspired and engaged following a visit, this enthusiasm can quickly wane if they are left to their own devices (and the pressures of family life and work eat into valuable study time). Here mixed-mode approaches to TNE delivery come into play. In order to maintain engagement in the programme and a sense of continuity, well designed, online, and/or TNE partner-support needs to be put in place. If you are engaged in mixed-mode delivery, you might want to reflect on these questions:

- How much contact time will you have with the students?
- How will the teaching be scheduled when you are overseas (full days, half days, consecutive days)?
- How much content can you realistically cover during your visit? How will you cover the rest of the content?
- How much work (reading and activities) can you expect the students to do before you arrive?
- How will you keep the students engaged during the longer sessions? Will the students be familiar and comfortable with the teaching and learning approaches you use?
- What is in-place for post-visit TNE student support?
  - Is it you, through the VLE? Is that support organised?
  - Will local tutors continue to meet the students post-visit? Is it possible for you to meet with the tutors and discuss what will be covered?

4.3 Approaches to learning

Student learning is one of the more theorised areas of research into higher education (Tight 2003, p. 60) and much has been written about students’ approaches to learning. Based initially on Marton and Säljö (1976) empirical work on conceptualising learning, the work has been extended and developed by many others. The basic premise is that learners adopt ‘deep’ or ‘surface’ approaches to their learning. Deep learning is associated with understanding,
connecting concepts and critical analysis, while surface learning is associated with acceptance, memorisation and surface retention of information. The learners' choice of approach (deep or surface) is based on their intentions for learning and also their understanding of the task they have been asked to do (Mathieson 2015). These approaches are not fixed characteristics of individuals, but are a response to the context in which the students are learning (Mathieson 2015). Such approaches to learning have been applied to different cultures and have resulted in descriptions of, for example, Confucian-heritage students as passive rote learners, who adopt a surface approach to learning, and who do not participate in classes (as outlined in Zhou and Pedersen 2011, p. 126; Tran 2012). Equally, literature on learning styles (e.g. Kolb 1984; Honey and Mumford 1986), which postulates that learners have preferences for different styles of learning (e.g. reflector, theorist, pragmatist or activist) has been applied to TNE students to try and better understand how students from different cultures learn (e.g. Heffernan, Morrison, Basu and Sweeney 2010).

While some of this research has provided compelling results, there is growing critique of these kinds of approach (e.g. Haggis 2003; Coffield et al. 2004). With regard to TNE students specifically, Eaves (2011) argues these styles do not belong to one culture and that they are “adaptable between educational contexts” (p. 688). To use them may result in typecasting, stereotyping, and bias.

Adopting an academic-literacies approach, rather than a learning-approaches one (Haggis 2003), might be more fruitful for TNE students. Instead of categorising TNE learners, TNE teachers should provide opportunities for students “to model and explore the expected learning behaviours over an extended period of time in the context of specific disciplinary learning” (Mathieson 2015, p. 67).

It is likely that some of the learning behaviours (and indeed the teaching methods) TNE students encounter in their UK-accredited degrees will initially be unfamiliar. TNE students might well have limited experience of, for example, group work, critical thinking or independent research; with a clear rationale as to why these approaches are important within UK higher education, guidance on how to learn in these new ways, and opportunities to try things out will enable TNE students to “experience the international transformative experience they desire” (Egege and Kutieleh 2008, p. 76).
4.4 Content

Many TNE programmes are developed around particular disciplinary expertise; the main subject areas in demand from UK TNE providers (i.e. those delivered in most countries) are business and management; medicine and related; and arts and humanities (HEGlobal 2016, p. 34).

As noted above, the subject benchmark statements can provide useful guidance on the content that should be covered in programmes, while the Framework for higher education qualifications can help indicate the level. This guidance is equally relevant for programmes that are delivered transnationally. Additionally, some UK programmes are shaped by their engagement with their public sector regulatory bodies (PSRBs). The PSRB might well set out strict guidelines on the curriculum content, standards, testing, and fitness for practice (HEBRG 2011, p. 13).

There is, then, guidance on the content that is taught in TNE programmes. There are still questions, however, about the extent to which this content (often developed for a UK-delivered programme) should be contextualised for delivery in TNE settings. There are arguments that TNE students have signed up for a UK programme, so the programme that is delivered should reflect UK content, as one of my interviewees said: “if we are saying that UK education is good, then why am I changing it?” (Smith 2013, p. 231).

Some writers on TNE suggest that there should be attempts to contextualise programmes to enable TNE students to grasp key concepts quickly. Here are just a few examples of how:

- local case studies (Dunn and Wallace 2004; Gift, Leo-Rhynie and Monquette 2006);
- local readings (Evans and Tregenza 2002);
- company visits (Prowse and Goddard 2010);
- guest speakers (Prowse and Goddard 2010).

Hoare (2012) warns against simply injecting local “flavour” into courses, suggesting that contextualisation should occur through “in-class intercultural and transnational comparisons” (pp. 282–3), whereby the TNE students' knowledge is harnessed, and their own contextualisations shared within the class. Dr Megan Lawton shares below an example of where precisely this happened.
I was asked to teach in Sri Lanka using materials from a UK course. One of the topics was on entrepreneurialism and this included a case study on the Innocent Smoothie company. Some of the issues to be pulled out from the case study were creativity, initiative, vision, new ideas and new ways of working.

However, the first question a student asked was “what's a smoothie?” After explaining this and also mentioning the government drive to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, the discussion veered off into the eating habits of people in the UK and childhood obesity. Though the case study was appropriate, it needed to be contextualised. The next time I ran the session I explained the issues and asked for a local and global example of entrepreneurialism and then offered the UK example. The students co-created their learning and we mutually learnt something about each other’s country. I could have just asked for a local case study but I thought it was important for students on a UK course and in a global setting to broaden their experience.

Dr Megan Lawton, University of Wolverhampton

Skill development

As the subject benchmark statements and the Framework for higher education qualifications testify, UK higher education is not just about the acquisition of subject knowledge, it is also about the development of skills, which include subject-specific skills (e.g. using particular pieces of machinery, software programmes, or techniques) as well as more generic (and employability) skills (e.g. independent learning, critical thinking, group work).

What follows focuses specifically on employability, and the development skills related to: critical thinking, independent learning, group work, language, and academic integrity. These are all areas that the TNE literature suggest TNE students struggle with.

Employability

Research for the HEA (Mellors-Bourne, Jones and Woodfield 2015) has shown that there is little development of employability skills for TNE students studying for UK accredited-degrees. This is particularly marked for students engaged in locally supported TNE programmes; students at branch campuses appear to have a more comparable experience to students studying in the UK (p. 6). In UK higher education, the development of employability is strongly supported by Government policy (Cole and Tibby 2013). Since employability is now embedded in UK degree programmes, it is, as Mellors-Bourne, Jones and Woodfield (2015,
p. 36) note “disconcerting” that this is not reflected in the TNE programmes offered.

Mellors-Bourne, Jones and Woodfield (2015) do outline some reasons why TNE programmes might well not emphasise the development of employability skills; these include:

- a lack of understanding about what employability is among both TNE students and TNE partners;
- many TNE students are already working, so do not understand the importance of continuing to develop for future career opportunities;
- lack of access to employability focused services such as careers services;
- limited engagement of TNE students in extra-curricular activities such as volunteering, work placements, or societies;
- limited employer engagement in the design and delivery of TNE programmes.

TNE students, like any others, will benefit from developing employability as part of their programme. Even if they are already in employment, opportunities to develop self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy (Dacre Pool and Sewell 2007) supports an ethos of lifelong learning that extends beyond the period of university study.

In order the better help TNE students understand what employability is and the skills it encompasses, programme teams (including both degree-awarding institution staff and TNE partners) should explore what employability provision is currently available, identify gaps, and develop plans to fill them. The HEA (Cole and Tibby 2013) offers a framework to support these kinds of discussion, and this could be used to not only review and develop provision, but to explore the extent to which there are differences between opportunities for TNE students and those students studying on campus at the awarding institution. The framework begins with a shared goal of a more cohesive approach to employability, and sets out four stages of how to get there (see Figure 3):
More information on the framework can be found in Developing and defining your approach to employability.

The HEA has further developed this work in their Embedding employability in higher education framework, which provides a useful planning and evaluation tool: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/frameworks-toolkits/frameworks.

Additionally, Pedagogy for employability includes a series of case studies that offer examples of how employability can be embedded within a curriculum: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/pedagogy_for_employability_update_2012.pdf.

Based on Mellors-Bourne, Jones and Woodfield (2015) findings, you might want to consider the following questions with TNE students in mind specifically:

> Do TNE students and local staff understand what employability is and how employability should be developed in the programme?
> Are students able to articulate the skills, qualities and characteristics that they have developed during their programme?
> Are there links with local employers? Could these links be strengthened?
> Can TNE alumni contribute to the development of the programme and/or mentor current students?
Critical thinking

Bodycott and Walker (2000), Evans and Tregenza (2002), and Debowski (2005) all note that some students struggle with notions of criticality. As noted above, this might well be due to their previous educational experiences and lack of emphasis on these skills. In the guidance directed at supporting international students specifically, the TIS project suggests that teachers should first consider what they consider to be a ‘critical thinking’. The guidance goes on to note that in order to develop their students' critical thinking, teachers should:

- show examples of critical thinking and writing (in other students’ work);
- share their own examples of where they have written critically;
- model the process of critical thinking;
- highlight the words and phrases that show that critical thinking is happening;
- show how to make notes that are avoid copying (e.g. starting to engage with the ideas);
- encourage higher order thinking skills.

You can read more about how to develop critical thinking in the TIS guide to Critical thinking: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/internationalisation/ISL_Critical_Thinking.

Independent learning

TNE students might well also lack independent learning skills (e.g. Baker and Nesbitt 2006). Developing independent learning skills is not something that only TNE students struggle with, it is an issue for many students when they first access higher education. The nature of TNE might well mean, however, that TNE students do have extended periods where they are working independently (between flying faculty visits) or that they working at their own pace within online courses.

Across cultures, the concept of ‘independent learning’ can mean very different things. One way to work with TNE students is to talk about what independent learning looks like in your programme and in your discipline. The TIS project again provides useful guidance for developing independent learning skills with international students. These include:

- recommending resources that students can access as part of their independent learning;
- encouraging students to come to contact you with questions that arise from their independent learning;
- offer opportunities for students to share what they have learnt from their independent learning;
provide opportunities for students to lead aspects of their learning (by suggesting readings, for example).

The TIS guide to *Independent learning* can be found here: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/internationalisation/ISL_independent_learning.

Additionally, *Effective practice in the design of directed independent learning opportunities* and its associated *Compendium of effective practice in directed independent learning* offers a rich resource of case study material on how directed independent learning can be designed and supported in higher education. You can find links to both these resources here: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resource/effective-practice-design-directed-independent-learning-opportunities.

**Group work**

The TIS guide to Transnational and multimodal teaching recommends that TNE teachers are careful when it comes to group work. TNE students, they suggest, might not have encountered group work activities before. Equally, we may expect certain behaviours in group-work situations, which simply do not sit well within particular cultures, as Leo Chivers’ example below shows.

The TIS guide to group work emphasises that effective group work does not just happen, it needs to be planned, clearly explained, and supported. In designing a collaborative task, the guide recommends:

- using a collaborative verb to describe the task (e.g. compiling a portfolio);
- setting a problem that needs a joint effort to solve;
- allocating different roles;
- requiring students to draw on different skills to fulfil the task;
- making all students feel equally unsure.

See TIS guide to Group work: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/group_work.pdf.

The Transnational Teaching Teams Guide to effective inter-cultural group work in transnational education provides guidance on allocating students to groups, planning group work, guiding students, and monitoring how group work is progressing. This guide highlights the benefits of designing group work task where TNE students in different locations can work together on group work projects. There are great benefits to be had from students in different cultures working together; online communication tools (such as Skype, Google Hangouts, Adobe Connect, etc.) can help facilitate cross-border collaborative working.
Language can be another challenge for TNE students. For some TNE students this might manifest itself in students struggling to keep up with the reading that is required, or having difficulties expressing themselves orally (e.g. Bodycott and Walker 2000; Evans and Tregenza 2002). Other students might have been brought up using a different variety of English and find it hard to translate into standard English, for example, Dunn and Wallace (2005) describe how the their students in Singapore found it hard to translate out of Singlish.

In some cases, it is easy to imagine that key terms and concepts will translate seamlessly into another language and culture. This, however, is not always the case. This does not have to be negative, however, it can be seen as way of developing understanding and exploring what underpins key terms within a discipline, as Leo Chivers describes below.

It is easy to assume direct transference of word meanings through translation. However, through alphabetic English to symbolic Mandarin, the meanings of traditionally paired terms in English such as ‘leadership and management’ become more complicated, as though they are perceived through different lenses, culturally, organisationally and philosophically. Therefore, through our learning together (UK staff and students on an MA in Education in China), we began to see different ways of looking at the world, different hierarchies and contrasting meanings. One size, (one word) does definitely not fit all……

Leo Chivers, University of Hertfordshire
Language learning is difficult. It can be even more difficult for TNE students who do not have the same immersive exposure to English that international students coming to the UK would experience. There are things that TNE teachers can do that can limit the issues that students face. The TIS guide to Language suggests that teachers need to be aware of their own language: speaking clearly and not too quickly, explaining key concepts, using simple and more complex words (to develop vocabulary), and leaving time at the end of sessions for students to ask questions.

With regards to helping students navigate reading: annotated bibliographies, key readings, guided questions, reading lists, and guidance on how to skim read can all help. In terms of encouraging students to talk in sessions, the TIS guide recommends stating guidelines for participation, give students time to answer (don’t be afraid of silence), respond with interest to what has been said, re-state answers when necessary (e.g. modelling the use of the correct term) and encourage students to expand on their responses.

“Although it’s not particularly strong, I do have an accent, so I had to be aware that I had to slow down my delivery because, although in the UK after a few weeks and exposure to it and the rest of the city, people get used to it, seeing them just for a few days then it could easily be that … they wouldn’t know or follow anything that I was saying” (Smith 2013, p.133)

You can read more of this TIS guidance in the guide to Language: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/internationalisation/ISL_Language.

Finally, in some cases, a decision may be made to deliver and assess the programme in the local language. The QAA (Ch. B10: ‘Managing higher education provision with others’) warns that awarding bodies that chose to offer programmes in languages other than those in which they usually operate need to be sure that they have the capacity to satisfy themselves that they are
maintaining academic standards (e.g. those with quality assurance oversight have the linguistic competence in the local language to ensure that assessment, grading, and feedback have been done effectively). If the decision is made, TNE teachers should be aware that the impact might well go beyond the monitoring of assessment, but will also influence any interactions between awarding institution staff and TNE students. Debowski’s (2005) study shows how the delivery of a programme to Chinese students in Chinese (with the aid of translators and interpreters) impacted on preparation (making sure all materials were translated); delivery (the impact on flow, while waiting for the interpreter to finish); rapport (difficulties in engaging in question and answer sessions or in discussion); and assessment.

**Academic integrity**

A final area where all students, including TNE students, need additional skills is in relation to academic integrity. Academic integrity is about respecting the work of others, adopting a responsible and honest approach to scholarship, giving credit to other people’s work and not passing it off as your own. To act without academic integrity is to plagiarise. Plagiarism is taking someone else’s ideas and using them as though they were your own. UK universities take plagiarism very seriously. However, for most students, plagiarism is unintentional.

TNE students face particular challenges when it comes to developing the skills of academic integrity and therefore ‘avoid’ plagiarism. Some of these challenges include:

- different cultural understandings of what constitutes respect for other people’s ideas. In some cultures, for example, changing an expert’s words (which would demonstrate understanding in the UK) is not seen as appropriate;
- lack of appreciation of when collaboration with other students turns into collusion;
- inadequate English-language skills, meaning it is difficult for students to express themselves in their own words;
- insufficient time within the programme to develop skills to manage plagiarism;
- degree-awarding institution staff working at a distance, with less opportunity to reinforce expectations of academic writing.

TNE teachers can take measures to mitigate plagiarism, here are some ideas (adapted from Carroll 2008, pp. 95–6):

- make opportunities to discuss what plagiarism is with TNE students;
find out about students’ previous educational experiences and their expectations of UK study;
provide clear guidance on how to find, report and reference other people’s work;
> design out plagiarism from assessment tasks;
> require students to share their ongoing work towards assessment (e.g. drafts, plans, notes);
> monitor and detect plagiarism, using software such as Turnitin.

When TNE students have a better understanding of conventions and expectations, they are less likely to unintentionally plagiarise. While time is needed to develop the skills of academic integrity, it is time well invested.

The TIS guide to Addressing plagiarism provides more guidance for individual teachers, programmes, and institutions on how to manage plagiarism and develop academic integrity: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resource/addressing-plagiarism.

Skills audit

As with all areas of TNE provision, there is a danger of resorting to stereotypes. In the section above, some of the key areas that TNE students have been reported to struggle with have been highlighted. This does not mean that all TNE students will have difficulties with group work, English or the concept of skill development for employability. It might well be that your TNE students struggle in other areas. The most effective way of checking where your cohort’s weaknesses lie is in devising a skills audit tool. Using the subject benchmark statements as guidance, you could list all the skills that the students need to develop during the module and then ask them to assess their current ability. Wherever there are gaps, guidance and resources can be provided. If the students have not completed a skills audit before, they will need to be introduced sensitively, reassuring the student that this is not a test, but a tool to help them develop. You should return to the skills audit regularly to note progress and identify further areas for development.

Below is an example of part of a skills audit for a student on an undergraduate degree in Business and Management (see Table 10).
Table 10: Example skills audit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Specific skill</th>
<th>Confidence rating: 1 = I am confident I can do this 2 = I am not sure 3 = I need to develop this</th>
<th>Example of when you have done this</th>
<th>Ideas for development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time management</strong></td>
<td>I am able to manage my time and meet deadlines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Team work</strong></td>
<td>I can work effectively with people from different cultures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>I can present information accurately and persuasively</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information literacy</strong></td>
<td>I am confident at finding information from a range of sources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 Assessment and feedback

Subject benchmark statements, as well as providing guidance on the subject knowledge that a programme should cover, the teaching and learning methods, and the transferrable skills to be developed (see above), also provide some information on the forms of assessment and feedback that are most suited to a particular area of study. In UK higher education, assessment is expected to be designed to enable students to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of the programme, to ensure that every student has “an equal opportunity to show their achievement”, and that all students should receive timely feedback on their assessments (QAA n.d., Ch. B6).

These expectations could be conceived as ensuring parity of assessment for students at the degree-awarding institution and those students located in the TNE partner institutions; the Transnational Teaching Teams Initiative has provided a useful guide outlining the questions TNE teachers need to ask in order to achieve parity in assessment for students:

Some of the challenges involved in managing a module that is delivered by many different TNE partners in different locations is discussed below, where Dr Scott Fernie reflects on his experiences in a previous role.

Being a module leader for a module that is delivered in many locations around the world by multiple lecturers each shaped by different social, cultural and political institutions as well as being specifically located in disparate social, cultural and political spaces brings with it a number of challenges for assessment. Firstly, while the content of a module may be specific to a technical body of knowledge, the delivery of the module is arguably aligned with not only facilitating the learning of this technical content but also with the ongoing development of research and writing skills. Arguably then, the style of delivery, the sources referred to in the delivery and the form of engagement with students during delivery matter to both technical content and research and writing skills.

Lecturers’ styles differ and some privilege research and writing skills more than others. Indeed, delivery is, I found, significantly connected to a lecturer’s experience of education and their values related to education per se – these differ considerably based on cultural context. While, of itself, this is not necessarily a problem, it does present problems if the same assessment instrument is used regardless of delivery or place within which delivery occurs.

Pedagogic solutions are not that easy and only in part address the wider systemic problem of achieving consistency across cohorts taking a module in disparate places with different lecturers [TNE partners], different styles and the same assessment instrument. One solution is to have the assessment designed at the local level. A second might be to have the assessments marked by the lecturer [TNE partner] delivering the module or for the module leader to attempt to engage all those delivering the module in agreeing a format for delivering the module – an attempt to harmonise delivery regardless of context.

Dr Scott Fernie, Loughborough University

It can be difficult to design assessment that both establishes parity and ensures equal opportunity to demonstrate achievement for all students. TNE students, like international students, may not be familiar with UK assessment practices. Indeed, Pyvis and Chapman (2005) have suggested that TNE students also experience ‘culture shock’ when faced with imported educational systems. The TIS Project’s guide to Assessment and feedback provides an overview of what to look at specifically when working with international students:
Like other international students, TNE students may, for example, be less familiar than degree-awarding institution students with some forms of assessment such as: presentations, posters, or reflective writing. Overviews of assessment methods, such as James Atherton’s Learning and Teaching website: http://www.learningandteaching.info/teaching/assess_form.htm, can be useful when talking to students about assessment and what different forms of assessment involve.

TNE teachers should be cautious, however, in assuming that just because students are familiar with a form of assessment, that the assessments will be practiced in the same way in the two contexts. My own research has shown (Pilcher, Smith and Riley 2013) that an assessment item as universally accepted as the examination was experienced very differently by international students in their home countries when compared to their first experiences in the UK. While the examination format was not so different, there were vast differences in the requirements of exam answers and the environment in which the exam took place, as one Dutch student said:

The way they want an answer to the question is really different here in the UK than in the Netherlands. Here they want you to write a complete essay as an answer to every question while in Holland they just want the answer and that's it (Pilcher, Smith and Riley 2013, p. 10).

It is impossible for TNE teachers to be aware of every form of assessment that TNE students have experienced; there is, then, a need to recognise that students will come with different expectations of assessment.

Equally, TNE students may not have the same experiences of feedback as students at the awarding institution. Formative feedback is seen in the UK as an integral part of the learning experience and in the development of self-regulated learners (Nichol and Macfarlane-Dick 2006); yet for international students, feedback can be seen as negative, unhelpful, unspecific and frustrating (Sovic 2008).

Invitations to engage in peer and self-assessment (i.e. giving feedback to yourself and others) can raise further issues. It is important that the purpose of any feedback activity is shared and that the following questions are discussed with TNE students (adapted from the Transnational Teaching Team's Guide to peer and self-assessment: http://transnationalteachingteams.org/documents/Guide%20to%20Peer%20and%20Self%20Assessment.pdf)

> In terms of giving and receiving feedback in your culture:
Discussions around assessment tasks and what students are expected to demonstrate through them and the feedback that students will receive on them should become part of taught sessions, helping TNE students to develop both assessment and feedback literacy (Price et al. 2011; Sutton 2012). In helping to articulate assessment and feedback decisions and designs to students, it can be useful to ask questions of your own assessment practices. This Assessment audit tool, from the Biosciences Centre HEA, can prompt you through a series of questions (which might also identify areas for review):

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/auditool.pdf. Equally, the HEA’s Framework for transforming assessment in higher education offers a framing device to ensure clarity and consistency in the assessment process:


Assessment and feedback-focused discussions with students can be particularly challenging in some forms of TNE provision. In locally delivered models of TNE, staff at the awarding institution may have little or no contact with the students, but may well be involved in the marking or moderation of their assessments. It is clearly important that there is good communication between the degree-awarding institution and its TNE partners to ensure that all understand what is expected of assessment, the approaches to marking, and the moderation procedures. The University of South Australia has developed a very comprehensive toolkit to support assessment moderation of TNE, which has links to resources, experiences, and research literature:


4.6 Access to learning resources

In order to have equivalent opportunity to succeed in their programmes, TNE students should have equivalent access to the learning resources that can support their study. This is not, unfortunately, always the case. In O’Mahony’s study of UK TNE in 2014, 48% of survey respondents stated that when compared with the learning resources that were provided to their students at the HEI in the UK, the resources provided to the TNE students were worse (2014, p. 44). Learning resources here refer to the classrooms, IT facilities, and library resources that are available for TNE students (McBurnie and Ziguras 2007). McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) caution against benchmarking facilities for TNE
students against those in the degree-awarding institutions (who is to say whether the degree-awarding-institution-based students are adequately provided for), and suggest instead outlining minimum requirements for TNE students.

In assessing the availability of learning resources, it is worth asking the following questions:

**CLASSROOMS**

- What audio/visual material is available?
- What kind of furniture is there in the room – is it moveable for workshop-style activities?
- Is there access to the Internet in the classrooms?
- Are the computers available in the classroom adequately protected against viruses?
- Is climate control available?

**IT FACILITIES**

- Do students have access to computers?
- What are the technical specifications of the computers?
- Do students have access to hardware, such as printers (and, perhaps, the printing of poster-sized outputs)?
- Do students have access to necessary and required software packages?
- Can students access the institutional VLE?
- Is internet access reliable? Do students have unrestricted access to the Internet?
- How much bandwidth can TNE partner institution and/or national systems support?

**LIBRARY RESOURCES**

- Is there a physical library that the students can visit?
- Does the library hold all the key texts and reference materials required?
- Do students have access to the awarding institution’s online catalogue?
- Can all databases be searched? Are all resources accessible?
- Are there any country-specific restrictions to accessing resources?
4.7 Points for consideration

This section on learning, teaching and assessment has shown that:

- curriculum design is influenced by external drivers including subject benchmark statements, qualifications’ frameworks, PSRBs, and institutional priorities;
- equivalence is not always straightforward in TNE; collaborative curriculum design can help identify what equivalence might look like in a specific programme or module;
- TNE can be delivered via different modes – online, face-to-face, and mixed mode; these modes are often supported by TNE partners to varying degrees;
- there might be issues in using approaches to learning and learning styles to categorise TNE students; modelling and exploring different learning behaviours might be a better option for developing academic literacy;
- programme context is influenced by subject benchmark and PSRB guidelines. For TNE students, content might need to be contextualised; an effective way to do this is through transnational comparisons in class;
- TNE students might struggle with certain skill sets and attributes (e.g. employability, critical thinking, independent learning, group work, language, academic integrity) – the most effective way of identifying which skills and attributes need developing is through a skills’ (or equivalent) audit;
- TNE students may not be familiar with the range of assessment and feedback approaches used in UK programmes, or may find expectations of assessments different – support should be designed into programmes to develop assessment and feedback literacy;
- TNE students may not have access to the same learning resources as the students at the degree-awarding institutions; those working with TNE students should not assume that they do.

5. Relationship building

Much TNE work is about the establishment and management of relationships. TNE enables people from different countries and cultures to come into contact and learn from each other.
This section provides some practical examples of how to develop and sustain relationships with both TNE students and TNE partner staff. The section then moves on consider the importance of respecting difference within TNE relationships, through developing inter-cultural competence and recognising unconscious bias. Finally, the section ends by highlighting the importance of managing the expectations of all parties in TNE.

5.1 Developing positive working relationships with TNE students

For any teacher, one of the most important aspects of their work is to develop positive working relationships with their students. In TNE models, this can be particularly challenging when working at a distance, when face-to-face time is limited, and/or when there are cultural and linguistic differences are taken into account. It is often useful to find out as much as possible about the students before you start working with them. There is a range of data about your TNE students that you should be able to access through the degree-awarding institution. This might well include:

- their names (and possibly their photographs);
- the other modules they are taking (and any results they already have);
- demographic information (e.g. their age, their mode of study, previous qualifications).

It can also be beneficial to talk to other degree-awarding institution staff who have already been out to teach and to the TNE partners who often have more contact with the students.

First impressions

In any relationship, first impressions matter. Whether your first interaction with the students is via email or face-to-face, it is important to make the right impression. The Sacramento Centre for Teaching and Learning (http://www.csus.edu/hhs/faculty/faculty%20resources%20docs/25-whaton1stday.pdf) provides a list of tips to make your first day of class go well, which are shared below, augmented with some ideas for TNE engagement (see Table 11).

Table 11: First interaction activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Getting students involved quickly</th>
<th>If you want the students to be active in the class, you need to get them involved early. This might include getting them to introduce themselves, participating in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highlighting the value and importance of the subject</td>
<td>It can be useful to share with the students your view of the importance of the subject that you are teaching and why you and the global community value it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting clear expectations</td>
<td>Have a discussion about expectations – what you expect from the students in terms of preparation for class, what will happen in the class, and how the students should behave. You can also find out from the students what they expect of you. Having open discussions about expectations can help reduce cultural misunderstandings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing rapport</td>
<td>Relationships develop when you trust each other – you can facilitate the development of trust by establishing rapport – taking time to get to know something about the students, their culture, and language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing something about yourself</td>
<td>You can reveal something about yourself. This might include sharing something of the place you live, what you enjoy doing in your spare time, or your impression of the place you are visiting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing credibility</td>
<td>Students might well be interested in your background, experience, research and publications. For some cultures, academic position is important and the sharing of this kind of information will establish your credibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting the tone for the class</td>
<td>We can have very different views of how we expect our classrooms to operate. Your students might expect formal and serious classes, but you might well prefer to adopt a more informal and relaxed approach. It is worth discussing this early on with the students to avoid misunderstandings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving administrative information</td>
<td>The first class is an opportunity to make sure the students are clear about how the programme will run. This could include providing a schedule of your (and others') visits, providing information on how to contact you (and expected response time), sharing information about any ongoing contact with local tutors or through quizzes, or engaging them in whole-class or small group discussions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the virtual learning environment, and guiding them through assessment procedures.

| Introducing the subject matter | Finally, you can use some of the time to discuss the subject matter that will be covered and show how this content links with what has been learnt before and what is to be covered in future modules. |

**Ice-breakers**

Ice-breaking activities can be another excellent way to get to know your class, establish rapport, and to set the tone of your class. Here are some examples of ice-breaking activities, but you can find many more on the University of Honolulu’s site: [http://www.honolulu.hawaii.edu/facdev/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm#firstday](http://www.honolulu.hawaii.edu/facdev/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm#firstday).

* ‘find someone who’ – every student has a checklist and needs to find classmates who can meet the criteria (e.g. ‘find someone who drank coffee for breakfast’; ‘find someone who knows when the first assessment is due’). The first person to check off their list is the winner;

* word association games – ask the students to note what they associate with key words from the syllabus;

* ‘where on earth would you rather be?’ Ask the students to share the place they would rather be (e.g. country, city) and why;

* ‘expectations’ – ask the students to share their expectations of the module you are teaching.

While many of these ice-breaking activities are designed for face-to-face sessions, some can be adapted for online introductions, either via email lists or through the virtual learning environment.

* What ice-breaking activities do you currently use with your students? Would these translate to TNE settings?

**Learning students’ names**

It sounds like a very simple thing – but making sure you know and can pronounce your students’ names is important in establishing relationships. Dr Megan Lawton, below, offers a word of warning on learning the names on the student record system.

Many teachers have their own techniques to help them to remember their students’ names. These include having pictures on the register; asking the students to wear badges, or to write their names on folded paper ‘tents’. placed
on their desk; drawing up a seating plan; or using students names in class as much as possible.

There are also games that you can play with your students so you can all learn each other's names. Here are two (Cowley 2013):

> **Adjective name:** ask the students to provide an adjective that describes them and starts with the same letter as their name, for example, 'charming Chido'.

> **Pass the name:** ask the student to repeat the names that have already been given, then say their own name and finally give the name of the person they are passing on to. If a person pauses or makes a mistake, they are out of the game.

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Do not assume that students wish to be called by the name that appears as their given name in any student records system. When teaching in Sri Lanka students could have up to five different names and had one they preferred to be called by. Some of my Chinese students chose western names. If in doubt, ask but also get a student number to make sure you have the correct person when it comes to assessments.

Dr Megan Lawton, University of Wolverhampton

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When working in international settings, the process of learning names can be that much harder if you are faced with names that you are not familiar with. California State Polytechnic University, Pomona provides a really useful resource for helping with the pronunciation of Asian names, including Cambodian, Cantonese, Mandarin, Filipino, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Thai and Vietnamese. For each language, there are hints about pronunciation, along with some common names and a more phonetic spelling and sometimes at audio file. At the time of writing, the inbuilt search engine was not working. The site also provides links to other websites providing information on naming conventions.

The resource can be found here: [https://www.cpp.edu/~pronunciation/index.html](https://www.cpp.edu/~pronunciation/index.html).

Remember, though, that if you are struggling to remember a name or how to pronounce it, just ask. Students are usually sympathetic if they see that you are trying.
**Sustaining relationships**

It is equally important to keep the relationship going following these first encounters. For flying faculty teachers, the TNE visits often represent the bulk of contact with students. It is possible to continue the relationship through regular email updates, discussions in the VLE, or through virtual classrooms. Sharing clear information about how and when your TNE students can contact you is important.

**Developing a sense of belonging to the degree-awarding institution**

‘Belonging’ can be defined as:

A student’s perceptions of intimate association with the university: to feel a central and important part of the university and a sense of ownership of their university, each of which fulfils their human need for inclusion, acceptance and efficacy. These in turn strengthen students’ sense of responsibility to the university; evoke university citizenship and even expectation of having a voice and being involved. (Klemenčič 2016)

Nurturing a sense of belonging and an institutional identity can be difficult with TNE students, mainly due to the distance between the degree-awarding institution and the TNE students. Unless the student is studying at a branch campus or has the opportunity to do part of their study at the degree-awarding institution, they are less likely to come across the institutional branding that visually reinforces their belonging to their institution or to feel the same associations that the students at the awarding institution feel. The challenge is even greater, as O’Mahony (2014, p. 21) notes, when “outward facing staff do not know they [TNE students] exist”, as her TNE research has shown sometimes happens.

There are some practical things that staff can do to raise awareness of the values and the vision of the university and to help TNE students to become more engaged with the institution that they have enrolled with. Things you might want to try:

- early on in the programme, give the students an overview of the history of the university and also the history of the partnership with their context (location, institution or programme);
- discuss your institution’s vision and values statement (or equivalent), or graduate attributes framework and explore what it means to the students and what it means to be a student at that institution;
Use the university branding on the material that is sent to the students (e.g. the VLE, letters, PowerPoints);
> incorporate your TNE students, as much as possible, into the emails that go out to students based at the awarding institution (but be aware of dates and opportunities that they may not have access to);
> make TNE students have the chance to act as student representatives or to be involved in quality assurance activities;
> enable TNE students to work on group projects with students at the awarding institution or other branch campuses;
> provide opportunities for TNE students to do some of their study in the UK if that is appropriate;
> invite TNE students to attend their graduations in the UK;
> encourage TNE students to become members and engage with the students' union (if this is available to them);
> see if it is possible for TNE students to access the branded items (clothing, pens, cups, bags) that other students have access to, or develop something bespoke for them as a TNE group from the degree-awarding institution.

If students feel a strong sense of belonging to their university when they are studying there, it is more likely that they will want to keep in touch post-graduation.

Sustaining relationships through alumni networks

In a HEA report, *Strategic affinity: engaging international alumni to support internationalisation*, Miller (2013) recognises the importance of alumni transnational students to support internationalisation:

> The growth of Transnational Education also presents significant opportunities for institutions wishing to extend their internationalisation efforts, and will further diversify what it means to be an alumnus from a UK university, and how institutions engage with their graduates. (Miller 2013, p. 45)

Most universities now have strong alumni networks. Many alumni networks are targeted at UK alumni (Miller 2013, p. 6), but for those who do prioritise international alumni engagement, TNE students should not be forgotten when developing those networks.

Social media is a very useful tool for sustaining relationships and many universities use the professional networking site *LinkedIn* to bring people together and other social media, *Facebook*, *YouTube* and *Twitter* to communicate and connect alumni.
Institutions can also support international events in specific locations where there are many alumni – which could work well for TNE students, who often come from the same overseas locations. Face-to-face events in international hubs can offer career development sessions, opportunities to network and engage in discussion, and also opportunities to update the alumni on what the university has been doing since they graduated.

TNE alumni can also be engaged as mentors for those who are currently studying on TNE programmes, or act as inspiration to those who are considering enrolling.

Aside from the financial benefits that might be gained from maintaining contact with alumni through their potential donations to their alma mater, Miller (2013) identifies further benefits of engaging with alumni:

- supporting academic development (e.g. helping to ensure that the curriculum is informed by a global view);
- promoting global employability (e.g. helping to develop global graduate employability);
- promoting international recruitment (e.g. through involvement in the university's recruitment activities).

While universities might have systems in place to support and develop alumni networks, those involved in TNE programmes might want to support a smaller scale programme-specific group. There is a lot of guidance available on the Internet on how to develop an alumni network, but here are some key questions to ask yourself:

- What is the purpose of the group and what will you offer?
- Does a similar group already exist?
- Who will be able to join and how will you recruit them?
- Will you have an organising committee?
- How will meetings be organised (online or face-to-face)?
- Is there any institutional support (money, human resource) to help you set up the network?
Below, Professor Paul Senior shares his experience of sustaining relationships with TNE students through alumni networks:

I recently took part in a ten-year celebratory event of a top-up degree programme in applied social sciences in Hong Kong. This is a joint programme run by Sheffield Hallam University and SCOPE, City University, HK. It was a joyous occasion and saw around 150 students mixing with local and UK staff, catching up, sharing experiences, remembering significant events in the life of the programme and renewing friendships. We had created an alumni network over the years but it is not always easy to sustain interest and commitment at such a distance. We had an annual meeting which attracted a consistent group of alumni but mixed motivations for this event I think scuppered greater engagement. Alumni can be sources of financial investment for a university but for me it is about maintaining links with students, building on relationships made on the course and supporting their next career moves. Alumni are very proud of their connections across to the UK and some have made the trip to UK to enjoy a second graduation event.

Through social media I have kept in touch with many alumni who maintain an interest in your progress too. As this event coincided with my retirement, all the alumni got on stage and sang me a song, a warmly spontaneous gesture, which was emotionally charged. I have always enjoyed continuity in relationships forged while studying and to meet so many again, have your photo taken hundreds of times, and simply share experiences, was so valuable and energising. Our deputy vice chancellor was there and abandoned her speech to give a spontaneous input about the sheer joy and electricity of this event. These are occasions that make TNE teaching so rewarding and I felt privileged to be there, linking alumni to each other, to us and to their futures.

Emeritus Professor Paul Senior, Sheffield Hallam University and Chair Probation Institute.
5.2 Developing positive working relationships between degree-awarding institution and TNE partner staff

Another crucial relationship in TNE is the relationship between degree-awarding institution and TNE partner staff. The development of positive relationships is important in all forms of TNE, but particularly in local delivery partnerships (e.g. franchised deliver, joint and dual degrees, twinning, validation and quality arrangements, HE Global 2016, p. 10), where contact is limited and relationships have to be formed quickly. This form of TNE is often supported by a ‘link tutor’ (or equivalent role). The link tutor is the main link between the university and a programme delivered by a partner. Their key role is in facilitating a productive working relationship between the university and the TNE partner.

Specifics of the link tutor role might include:

- monitoring quality assurance and advising on university regulation;
- supporting quality enhancement through, for example, staff development and peer observation;
- attending meetings;
- being a link for TNE students.

For many link tutors, relationships are maintained via email communication, Skype conversations, and a limited number of face-to-face visits. If you are appointed as a link tutor for a TNE programme, here are some questions you should ask:

- What institutional support and networks are there for this role?
- What is expected of you?
- How often should you visit the TNE partner?
- What is already in place for you to communicate with the programme team at the partner institution?
- Who was in the role before you, and what can you learn from them?

Relationship building is also important for those staff working transnationally, but not in a link tutor role. Degree-awarding institution staff engaged in TNE might not have the regulatory quality assurance remit, but there is still the requirement that programmes run to appropriate standards, that the student experience is good (and of an equivalent standard to the home programme), and that TNE partner staff are clear about what is expected of them in terms of the development and delivery of teaching materials, ongoing student support, and, where appropriate, approaches to assessment.
Relationship building with TNE partner staff shares the same challenges as establishing relationships with TNE students: distance, time, and face-to-face contact. My own research (Smith 2014, p. 128) has shown that sometimes TNE partners are ‘not motivated’ to engage in TNE; that teaching on a TNE programme can be an ‘additionality’; and that they often teach out of their area of expertise and are told they have to do it. In addition, TNE partners are often doing their TNE work on top of “high contact hours” (frequently under the remit of different overseas institutions) and there is just not sufficient time for them to meet with and engage in the development opportunities offered by the degree-awarding institution.

These challenges aside, there are practical steps that can be put in place to help foster positive working relationships between degree-awarding institution and TNE partners.

Managing overseas collaborations to enhance staff relationships

Claudia Bordogna (2016) carried out empirical work to investigate how staff relationships effect the development of Sino-British “joint programme” partnerships. She interviewed staff members responsible for the delivery of these overseas partnerships in both China and the UK. Operational tasks, such as the updating of teaching materials, assessment design and feedback, methods of communication including virtual (emailing) and physical (fly-in-fly-out) interactions, course evaluations, and academic integrity cases were identified by academics as being critical in the delivery of TNE programmes. However, to ensure these activities occur as productively as possible, meeting and exceeding partner and student expectations, staff members on both sides of the partnership need to feel empowered. In the box below, Dr Claudia Bordogna sets out three key areas that managers need to consider in their design of TNE partnerships.
1. Time: time is required in order for faculty members to communicate, discuss ideas, implement innovative change, and evaluate outcomes. Since international partnerships run in different geographical locations, operational teams must be afforded the opportunity to modify their working practices to accommodate these differences. High workloads, time delays and multiple agendas create challenges for TNE faculty members who need time to process and implement changes for the good of the students and programmes. A lack of time creates stress, anxiety and can mean that operational activities are either rushed or poorly executed, delivering questionable outcomes.

2. Legacy: previous interactions between faculty members within the partnership system, affect current and future interactions. Faculty member interplay therefore needs analysing in relation to the historical context on which it was built. TNE partnerships that have a history grounded in negotiation and collaborative envisioning are more likely to accomplish transformation by providing a strong base for deliberate collective change. It seems that a legacy of productive engagements between faculty members is critical in developing behaviours that inspire trust and commitment over time.

3. Cultural difference: though it is possible to standardise motives, cultural terms and values across one team who operate in one county, it is not as easy when two or more different cultural teams work together. It then becomes harder to create a standard sequence of steps that make sense to both teams. In TNE, the cultural differences and educational traditions of the awarding and host countries may create different opinions about how educational programmes should operate. This may create tensions between those operating TNE programmes. Different understandings and approaches to higher education may mean faculty members are unable to find workable solutions to daily problems. In order to deal with problems and challenges effectively and efficiently, partnerships require good cross-cultural leadership, transparency and honesty. Faculty members need to know that when problems arise, they can ask probing questions about operational practices, supported by both their institution and their colleagues. Moreover, if partners create mutually beneficial objectives, such as the creation of meaningful learning experiences for both the educational institutions and students, probing questions should not create animosity or distress, but provide platforms for relevant, complementary transactions.

Dr Claudia Bordogna, University of Huddersfield
Collaborative curriculum design and development

Another approach to establishing positive working relationships between degree-awarding institution and local staff is by providing opportunities for them to work more closely together on curriculum tasks. Betty Leask (2004) has written convincingly about the need to reconstruct the TNE teaching team to enhance internationalisation. She argues that it is imperative that TNE partner staff become equal members of the teaching team and to recognise “the true value they bring to the content of the curriculum as well as to its delivery, and who, as cultural insiders, can assist the cultural outsiders to understand the teaching and learning environment and to learn from it” (Leask 2004, p.3). In a similar vein, Dunn and Wallace (2008) suggest that the use of inter-cultural communities of practice can be an effective way of engaging TNE partners and degree-awarding institution staff in collaborative approaches to curriculum design in a “united, egalitarian teaching team” (p. 254). They recommend that curriculum meetings should involve regular input from TNE partners, and recognise that much of the joint planning will have to take place virtually (e.g. through video-conferencing), and enriched through face-to-face meetings when degree-awarding institution staff visit for teaching, administrative, or quality assurance reasons.

“These guys [TNE partners] are your colleagues, we’ll treat them as if they were just part of the module team ... it’s basically just a case of treating them with respect.” (Smith 2014, p. 123)

> What role do local tutors currently play in the design, delivery and evaluation of your programme?
> Do you feel you benefit from their expertise?
> Is there an opportunity to foster more equitable working relations?
Visits, exchanges and secondments

A further area whereby degree-awarding institution and TNE partner staff can learn more about each other and how they work is by spending time in the other’s normal work location. This can be through short visits, exchanges, or longer secondments. Staff in many different roles (academic, professional, administrative, and support) can gain from these kinds of relationships.

The benefits of such two-way exchanges is that staff get to experience the other context and begin to develop empathy and understanding of the challenges associated with the different ways of workings.

The Bangor College China rates staff exchange as one of its success factors (HEGlobal 2016, p. 15). From its very inception, there has been reciprocal exchange visits between staff from Wales and China. They note that the visits:

> allowed potential operational challenges to be addressed early on, e.g. securing funding to boost broadband capacity when IT staff recognised the service initially employed was insufficient to operate the University’s virtual learning environment. (HEGlobal 2016, p. 15)

While at the University of Greenwich, UK tutors on dual degree programmes with the University of Sciences and Arts in Cairo, Egypt, spend 85-90% of their time in Cairo supporting students. This enables them to gain “a good understanding of local conditions and culture and can facilitate clear communications between academic staff at the two universities” (HEGlobal 2016, p. 17). The University of Greenwich has also relatively recently developed an overseas appointment in Kuala Lumpur to oversee TNE in South East Asia, see Raj Dass’s reflections on the importance of that role below.

> Do opportunities exist for you to participate in exchanges or
The decision to relocate and move to South-East Asia was to ensure that the University of Greenwich’s overseas partnerships and programmes of study were providing a comparable student experience to the UK and meeting QAA requirements in terms of teaching, learning and assessment. The overseas partnerships have grown considerably during the past three to five years and some programmes of study have greater student numbers overseas when compared to the local UK campus. It was therefore apparent that twice-yearly visits from link tutors were insufficient in meeting the complex requirements of overseas delivery with limited direct contact between the partners and UK teaching faculty. An overseas posting was therefore created to provide a direct link between the UK and international partners in the Asia region. My role requires me to be based in Kuala Lumpur and travel to partners in Vietnam, Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

The key advantage of having an overseas posting enables a closer awareness of the key cultural differences in how TNE education is delivered and how localisation and adaptation of teaching resources can benefit the learning experience for students and staff. In addition, the role enables extensive training of local staff in UK based marking, moderation and teaching philosophies that support student engagement and progression in their studies. There has also been a requirement to streamline and introduce UK systems and processes such as Grademark and Moodle to provide students with online marking and feedback for assignments. The overseas partnerships have valued the overall contribution of this role as it helps to build future relationships to develop new programmes and enhance developmental opportunities for staff to engage in mutual research through increased engagement. There are regular communications throughout the year via Skype and face-to-face visits.

In summary, the decision to provide an overseas posting to work more closely with TNE partnerships has created benefits to the overall student and staff experience. There is a commitment to ensuring a comparable learning experience is provided to overseas staff and students while meeting QAA requirements of quality and enhancement.

Raj Dass, University of Greenwich
Research collaboration

A final area where working relationships can be developed and enhanced is in the area of collaborative research projects. There is much scope in building research into collaborative partnerships as there can be opportunities to develop new knowledge through the broadening of research into new contexts and cultures. For one of the interviewees in my own research (Smith 2014), the focus on research collaboration was his main motivation and where he gained most professional satisfaction. His experience as a TNE teacher and his visits overseas had enabled him to gain the experienced and the networks to develop his research, and also “led to opportunities to review journal articles, and supervise and examine PhDs from the region” (Smith 2014, p. 126).

Are there areas of research that you could collaborate on with your TNE partners? These might be areas of disciplinary research, or equally areas of pedagogic research, as in the collaboration between the University of Glasgow, Scotland and partners at the Hawler Medical University, Iraq (see Jordan et al. 2014)?

5.3 Recognising and respecting difference

One of the clear benefits of being involved in TNE work is that it can bring you in contact with staff and students from different backgrounds. Such exposure enables you to develop not only your students, but also your own inter-cultural competence.

Developing inter-cultural competences

The following strategies are summarised from the TIS project guide to Intercultural competencies. They are designed to help develop inter-cultural competence:

- try and find out about your students and colleagues cultural background;
- if you cannot learn about all the cultures of your students, develop awareness of the different kinds of expectations and experiences they might have;
- think about your own culture and how it approaches education;
- see you colleagues and students as a learning resource that can provide you with an understanding of your discipline is taught and practised in other places;
- reflect on your feelings about mixing with international students and colleagues. Do you carry any prejudices and preconceptions about different
cultures? If so, how can you change these feelings so that you are open to and respectful of these differences?

For more information on inter-cultural competence, provided by the TIS project, see: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/resources/intercultural_competencies.pdf.

**Unconscious bias**

The last bullet point in the previous section alludes to what is termed ‘unconscious bias’. The Equality Challenge Unit (2013) defines unconscious bias as:

A term used to describe the associations that we hold which, despite being outside our conscious awareness, can have a significant influence on our attitudes and behaviour. Regardless of how fair minded we believe ourselves to be, most people have some degree of unconscious bias. The means that we automatically respond to others (e.g. people from different racial or ethnic groups) in positive or negative ways. These associations are difficult to override, regardless of whether we recognise them to be wrong, because they are deeply ingrained into our thinking and emotions. (Equality Challenge Unit 2013, p. 1)

While it is difficult to remove these biases from our thinking, it is important for us to recognise and reflect on the fact that these biases might exist, identify what our own specific biases may be, and see whether we can limit the potentially negative impact that they can have on the ways in which we interact with staff and students in our transnational work.

The Implicit Association Test is one means by which you can more about your own biases. The site offers a series of different tests around areas including: weight, age, sexuality, race, gender, countries and skin tone.

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/uk/selectatest.jsp.

Plymouth University has produced guidance on mitigating unconscious bias in teaching and learning (Muneer *et al.* 2015), which provides seven very useful steps:

1. Recognise that everyone has unconscious bias
2. Identify your biases
3. Avoid snap decisions and consider assessment criteria carefully
4. Incorporate examples which question stereotypes and value diversity
5. Encourage participation of under-represented groups in class
6. Adopt an affirming approach
7. Create an atmosphere of openness in discussing biases and best practices to minimise them

You can read more around these steps here:

Finally, the Equality Challenge Unit (2013) have produced a report to help higher education institutions understand what unconscious bias is and to explore ways to reduce it (particularly in the areas of recruitment and staff selection):

> Do some of the implicit association tests and reflect on what the results mean for how you interact with colleagues and students, and how you approach your learning, teaching and assessment practices.

5.4 Managing expectations

The key to most successful relationships is managing expectations. In the context of TNE, these expectations might include some of the following:

> your own – what you expect to be in place when you visit the TNE partner institution; how you expect the students to respond to you and how they will behave in class; what you assume the students know and have already done; what you think the country you are visiting will be like and how much time you will have to explore it; the recognition that you will receive from your own institution;

> your TNE students – the relationship they have with you, how they interact and address you, and how they work with you; whether they expect a UK programme or one that is more internationally focused; how much work they expect to do and whether they can combine it with other aspects of their lives; the ways in which they are expected to work and who they are expected to work with;

> your TNE partner colleagues – how they expect to work with you; what kind of relationship they will have with you (formal/informal; authoritative/collaborative); what you will expect of them (will you provide lesson plans or ask them to design their own); how you will stay in contact and how often;

> your colleagues at home – what they think you do when you are teaching transnationally; whether they will have to cover your classes at home; if they can expect to have the same opportunities.
Communication has a major role to play in the management of relationships. If you can keep communication channels open and you are clear about what is expected, there is less chance of misunderstandings occurring. This is arguably more difficult to achieve when you are working at a distance.

One practical thing that you can do to help manage expectations is to make explicit the psychological contract between yourself and the other party/parties. A psychological contract is defined as “a perception of mutual obligation” (Schalk and Roe 2007, p. 168) between two parties. The concept of psychological contracts was originally developed within the field of organisational development to define the relationship between employee and employer, and what each expected from the other. Psychological contracts are often implicit: they are based on an unwritten set of expectations. If the expectations are aligned, then there is usually a healthy working relationship, when they are not, dissatisfaction ensues, which might lead to a breakdown in communication. Making the psychological contract more explicit (though still not contractual, in the sense of a formal written contract), through a process of agreeing on a set of commitments between the two parties (e.g. which could be you and your institution; you and your TNE students; you and your TNE partners), helps to develop clear and shared understandings of the how, why and for what gain you are working together. Making expectations explicit early should mean that misunderstandings can be avoided (Whiteley, Hornby-Atkinson and Sumner 2008).

These questions could help frame discussions about expectations:

- **What do we commit to do as part of this relationship?**
- **What will help us to meet these commitments?**
- **How are we going to manage our working relationship?**
- **What are our best hopes and worst fears about this relationship?**
- **How will we deal with misunderstandings?**

In this final case study, Dr Nick Pilcher reflects on how he deals with some of the different expectations that those involved in TNE encounter.
When I went to teach overseas it was to a country I had worked in 20 years previously, and so my expectations of the students were based on this. In addition, I based my expectations on what students here could do on similar modules. I allow students to call me pretty much whatever they feel comfortable with using. I learn their names by writing these down on paper on a diagram I make of their seating arrangements. My approach to helping students understand what is expected of them is very much related to how I approach work here, and this is to get the students to physically write a piece of work in an hour of class time at the end of the first day and to have this marked by me while I am there. I also give feedback and graded the work using similar criteria to what the students would need to understand on their own coursework assessments.

Generally, this has the effect of aligning a number of disparate psychological contracts. It aligns my own perceptions with what the students can produce, it aligns the students own perceptions of the level and quality of their work and in what is expected with what is required from them in a UK context. This is very time intensive and may not be possible with all groups, but my experience has been that it actually saves a lot of time in the medium-to-long term as it deals with a lot of questions early on that would come up throughout such as the way to use references and so on. I actually love doing it. In addition, I keep generic feedback and use this with other groups I have taught subsequently, and find that the whole process helps students understand more what is expected of them in the coursework assignments.

In terms of working with partner colleagues, my experience has been that it works best if everything is communicated well in advance. For example, if you want the students to have paper copies of materials, ensure you ask early. Also, if you want to use your own computer, check the equipment can do this. My experience is to expect nothing when you arrive and to arrive well in time and extremely early. Often, people who you have arranged to meet may be unable to meet you and unexpected issues may arise, such as not knowing which exit to take on the underground, or getting off at the wrong stop.

At home, so far, my classes need to be rearranged so they can be taught at another time, but this may change for future trips. Further, when I am away for a period of a week or so and come back no-one actually knows I have been away at all. To quote someone I taught with many years ago, who returned to the UK after at least a year away in Japan, “It was almost like I'd just nipped out to Boots.” Other colleagues have also taught the module I teach abroad and we do share out the teaching. We have found it very useful to share notes and to share the marking. I have passed on any material I have used and we keep a file specifically for the module that both of us can take. We greatly benefit from learning from the others experiences, ranging from matters such as taking a cardigan to one site as the air-conditioning is so fierce, to using particular references and approaches. The key frame to approach any trip, even if we are going out there for a repeat visit, is to be prepared that many unexpected issues will arise, and to just accept them. In that way, we are better prepared to react to them when they do.

Dr Nick Pilcher, Edinburgh Napier University
5.5 Points for consideration

This section on relationship building has shown that:

➢ when working with TNE students, first impressions matter and there are lots of activities you can do to break the ice and to learn your students’ names;
➢ to sustain relationships, it helps if the TNE students feel a sense belonging to the degree-awarding institution;
➢ alumni networks can extend the relationship beyond graduation;
➢ link tutors play an important role in facilitating a productive working relationship between TNE partners and the degree-awarding institution;
➢ time, legacy and cultural difference can all impact on the relationship between TNE partners and the degree-awarding institution;
➢ collaborative curriculum design and development; visits, exchanges and secondments; and research collaborations can strengthen relationships between partners;
➢ relationship building in TNE means recognising and respecting difference;
➢ managing expectations can lead to more fruitful relationships for all involved in TNE.
6. Conclusions

TNE is an established part of the UK’s higher education provision and is seen “as integral to the future development of UK education and its global reputation” (HEGlobal 2016, p. 7). As the TNE sector grows, an increasing number of people will become engaged in TNE in at least one of its many guises. Working transnationally brings its own challenges and there is often limited support for those new to TNE. This toolkit aims to offer some support to those involved in TNE.

Focusing specifically on quality assurance and enhancement; the logistics of TNE; learning, teaching, and assessment; and relationship building, this toolkit provides guidance, checklists, questions, and authentic experience to both inform and stimulate reflection about TNE.

Though challenging, TNE work can also be immensely rewarding. It can take you to different places, into contact with different people, it can challenge your assumptions and broaden your worldview; it can transform you as a teacher and as a person.

“It has greatly expanded my perspectives on life, teaching and working in other cultures. I know I am a better teacher because of the challenges I have encountered ... Actually, I know I am a much better person too” (Debowski 2005, p. 278)

It is hoped that this toolkit will inspire and support people to get involved in transnational education, and for those who already are involved to develop and further enhance their practice.
7. References


**Appendix 1**

**Collaborative/partnerships design checklist**

Contributed by Dr Megan Lawton

Points one to four are based on issues that are more likely to be at course level but will have an impact on module delivery.

Points five to nine are based more on the delivery of modules with the assumption that students will access materials via a virtual learning environment (VLE).

1. **What cannot be changed unless agreed by a quality system**
   - module title;
   - learning outcomes;
   - assessment type(s);
   - assessment weighting.

2. **What is indicative and could be contextualised?**
   - module content;
   - module materials;
   - assessment topics;
   - resources lists;
   - assessment deadlines.
3. **What needs updating annually in the module guide?**
- module content;
- assessment topics;
- resources lists;
- assessment deadlines.

4. **Who does what? UK and or partner responsibilities**
- module content – materials, assessment briefs, learning activities;
- contextualisation;
- annual updates;
- marking and feedback – formative and summative;
- grade entry;
- student support and the student experience – study skills, personal tutoring (etc.);
- course and module monitoring – mid-module evaluation, course journals, student reps (etc.);
- course and module administration – enrolment, extenuating circumstances, debtors (etc.);
- access for staff and students to ‘systems’ (enrolment, student records, VLE);
- comments, complements and complaints;
- staff development, partnership support.

5. **Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs)**
Are there any PSRB influences on the curriculum?
Are PSRB requirements based on UK standards?
Are they relevant to the TNE setting?
Are there ‘local’ branches/organisations that could be referred to?

6. **Materials**
- Are VLE materials restructured and made relevant for TNE delivery?
- Do examples/case studies/reports rely on students understanding of UK settings?
- Can examples/case studies/reports be contextualised?
- Can a local or global context be added?
- Are the examples/case studies/reports culturally sensitive? Do they exclude any student group?
- Can the materials be accessed anywhere? (e.g. YouTube? FaceBook?)
7. **Assessments**
   - Are the assessment tasks familiar to TNE students?
   - Do TNE students need any additional support to complete the assessment tasks?
   - Are the assessment briefs clear?
   - Do the learning activities help students prepare for the assessments?
   - Are there assessment criteria?
   - Are the assessment topics culturally sensitive? Do they exclude any student group?

8. **Language**
   - Is the English used clear and easy to understand?
   - Are there discipline specific uses of words/terms that staff and students must understand and use?
   - Are there colloquial words/terms/phrases, metaphors, or ideograms used that could exclude staff or students?
   - Is the language used in assessment clear?
   - Do staff and students understand different expectation by the use of different verbs?
   - Is the language used in feedback clear, useful and unambiguous?

9. **Supporting students**
   - Do students have a designated University and/or local personal tutor?
   - Do students know who to contact in the University and locally?
   - Do students know how to use the learning tools and system? (e.g. student records systems, VLE, blogs, forums, e-submission?)
   - Do students know how to find all appropriate forms (e.g. mitigating circumstances)?
   - Do students know what learning support resources are available and how to use them?
   - Do students know who to contact for IT issues?
   - Do students know how to submit assessments?
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