**Intercultural Ambassadors Programme**  
*Katy Manns, University of Leeds*

**Summary**  
Responding to national and institutional research highlighting the need to facilitate greater UK and international student integration, this project set out to make it easier and more attractive for students to take part in intercultural activity on campus and to gain the benefits of interacting beyond their compatriot groups. The programme developed through the project is a framework for university and students’ union staff and students to work in partnership on intercultural learning and enrichment activity. The project aimed to increase:

- the amount and quality of interaction between UK and International students from different cultural backgrounds  
- the quantity, range and uptake of intercultural activities on campus  
- students’ cultural awareness, cross-cultural skills and employability

The project was led by International Student Office staff with support from academic and co-curricular colleagues in the University and Students’ Union. The programme trains 40 UK and international student volunteers per year to work together to lead intercultural student activities on campus. It also strengthens participants’ capacity as individuals to increase their intercultural interaction and encourage others to be more open to intercultural experiences.

The programme attracts a diverse group of student volunteers, in terms of cultural background, discipline and study level. This enables the programme to offer rich opportunities for participants to learn from each other and to extend the reach of the programme to an equally diverse peer group.

Ambassadors receive 25 hours of training over 10 sessions plus social interaction homework tasks and project work, with most sessions taking place in term 1. The training helps ambassadors to develop confidence in cross-cultural interactions and to build relationships with peers from different cultural backgrounds; to gain skills in multi-cultural team working, project development and intercultural events management; and to turn their ideas into successful activities/outputs. Ambassadors have the support of staff mentors as they develop their projects and the final session helps participants plan how they will use their Ambassador experience in their career development.

**Aims and objectives**

- To increase the amount and quality of interaction between UK and International students from different cultural backgrounds  
- To increase the quantity, range and uptake of intercultural activities on campus  
- To increase students’ cultural awareness, cross-cultural skills and employability

An additional aim arising out of the programme has been to challenge the divide between international and UK students and to promote the ethos that all students, wherever they are from, are part of the University’s Global Community.
**Approach**
Support was secured from staff in the University and Leeds University Union for the development and delivery of training, administration, supervision and mentoring. All methodology, materials and online resources to enable the running of the programme have been developed and refined through three cycles. This report includes evidence related to 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 cycles of the programme including the improvements introduced in response to feedback from participants, training facilitators and mentors.

**Recruitment**
The process and resources for recruiting and selecting ambassadors were developed by International Student Office with support from HR, Careers, Volunteering and the Students’ Union. The publicity was designed to be accessible and attractive to students from all backgrounds and study levels with a range of motivations (for example to make a positive difference, make friends, run a project, gain international/multicultural experience/employability skills). We aim to shortlist around 60 candidates to invite to a selection event. Without using quotas, each year we have ended up with a diverse group of participants. The 2012-13 participants came from 20 countries, all 9 faculties, undergraduates from 1st to 4th year and postgraduates. Both UK and international participants included students with mixed cultural heritage and some with dual/triple nationality. Each year so far we have attracted just over 100 applications.

In 2011 we used 10-minute interviews to select the final 40 ambassadors, but in 2012 to find out more about how participants would work in a group, we used a 45-minute group simulation task instead. We observed candidates interacting with each other as a project team planning an intercultural event and presenting their proposal. The information we gained was useful both for selection and for assigning successful candidates to project teams. In 2013, we used both the group simulation task and a 5-minute individual interview which we felt were both necessary to gauge not only the applicants' aptitude but also their level of commitment and their ability to engage and support others in meaningful intercultural interaction.

**Training**
The training was developed by the International Student Office supported by University and Students’ Union colleagues with expertise in skills development, intercultural studies, EFL, creative writing, careers, student activities, project management, events management, volunteering, health and safety, and quality assurance.

The training is designed to be a mix of learning, socialising and action and to recognise that participants expect the programme to be a break from their studies. Topics like intercultural studies theory, events management and risk assessment, use a dynamic delivery and are balanced with lighter activities such as icebreakers and socialising tasks which are designed to give students confidence in interacting outside their comfort zone and to give them ideas to use in their own project events. In 2011 we found that the different study levels in the group resulted in difficulties with some of the skills development sessions, for example presentation skills. For some participants the session was ideal, whilst others had heard it all before. In 2012 where this could be an issue, we opted to recommend courses and resources external to the programme instead. The link to employability is made explicit with specialist facilitators from the Careers Service and from staff or alumni with relevant professional experience who can demonstrate how the ambassadors’ experience of project work and team working for example, is applicable to work situations. This is important to help them to value the extra effort involved in using the programme tools like meeting agendas, project proposal templates, project management plans and event briefs.

Key principles of the training are an equal responsibility of UK and international students to work towards more meaningful intercultural interaction and also to look beyond essentialist views of culture. Training activities encourage participants to interact as individuals with different experiences and perspectives rather than as representatives of specific countries or cultures, and to frame their projects in this way too. Even with ambassadors who are ostensibly open to embracing difference and aware of
the impact of language barriers, we have found it essential to include activities which draw attention to the need for native speakers of English and more assertive communicators to be aware of their potentially excluding behaviour. For example when some ambassadors’ enthusiasm for putting forward their own ideas prevented non-native speakers or quieter individuals from having their suggestions considered, or when a team starting to bond would be oblivious that one of them was struggling to follow the banter. This had to be sensitively done to avoid an unhelpful non-native/native speaker divide and to highlight that this is an issue related to communication style and personality differences more generally, as well as to language or cultural difference. In the 2013-14 programme we focused attention on the merits of everyone in the group developing skills in international/global English. Active listening activities like “Big Ears for Big Ideas” and dividing groups into pairs for social activity homework were also helpful for this. One international participant said her best memories of the programme were the pair homework “I talked a lot with my partners for nearly one hour every time. I enjoyed it a lot”.

In our initial pilot of the project we identified that to achieve the optimum level of interaction between ambassadors from different backgrounds it was essential to use table numbers and grouping mechanisms such as cards/name labels with numbers, colours, animals, sports etc. and pre-selected lists of pairs and groups. Even though this group had signed up for an intercultural experience, the natural drift towards similar people was very strong, so, when they were not working in their project groups, we mixed participants in different combinations, changing with each activity. “I liked the way we were split in groups throughout the session-- just as I was beginning to get comfortable with fellow 'yellows' or 'hedgehogs', we would be moved again! Scary... but really nice” international participant. “It has made it easier for me to approach people and not feel anxious and that has allowed me to enjoy it more” UK participant.

In addition to the teams getting together outside the training session to work on their projects, socialising homework tasks to promote bonding and learning were allocated to pre-determined groups/pairs of participants from different backgrounds, facilitating interaction beyond the teams. In 2011 we put participants together in groups of 4 for the socialising homework, but many found it hard to find a time that all could meet together, so in 2012 we allocated homework to a different pair each week, which worked better. In 2013-14, a number of participants had difficulty fitting in meeting their pair each week as well as working with their project team, so we reduced the pair homework to every other week, but where students have the time, weekly is better as they get to know and learn from more people and develop their confidence more. The socialising homework tasks and the initiatives in place to increase team bonding have increased the success of the programme in supporting the development of friendships across the group. “I really value the opportunity I’ve had to meet and make friends with the people I have, who are from such culturally diverse backgrounds. It’s opened my eyes so much” UK participant.

**Evaluation**

We used a number of different types of evaluation during the training:

- Postcard feedback asked three questions each week which enabled us to see how the participants were responding to the training and to pick up issues related to group dynamics that would require us to adapt the following week’s training.
- A quick ratings form for each session assessed reactions to each activity within the session.
- At the end of the training we asked ambassadors to rate how much they agreed with a series of statements about the training and to give comments and suggestions.
- A cross-cultural skills and cultural awareness questionnaire completed before and after the training allowed us to compare the impact of the training on their perceptions of their confidence and skills in these areas.

Both this questionnaire and quotes from the end of training evaluation form and the final postcard indicated that most participants had increased in confidence and skills across all areas. The feedback on the enjoyment and usefulness of the programme was very positive. A number of participants suggested shortening the length of the three hour sessions (which has now been cut to 2.5 hours including the 15 minute break) and there was variation in the rating of some activities commensurate with the diversity of the group, with just a few activities needing to be replaced because they were generally unpopular.
Ambassador Projects

In the initial pilot in 2010 participants were allowed to find their own team mates and think of their project ideas after starting training. However this took a long time and some never got into teams or developed their ideas and therefore did not deliver their projects. So in 2011 project ideas were requested on the application form and in Session 2 ambassadors were allocated into teams of 4 or 5 people and given project themes according to their experience and project interests, whilst ensuring the team had a good mix of cultural backgrounds and native/non-native speakers. Some teams worked out well, but others were less happy. In 2012 we found it very valuable to use, in addition, insights from the selection event simulation task to get the right balance of dominant and less dominant personalities and range of English language fluency in each team and to match participants who could get on and work well together. This produced more successful teams with all 2012 teams completing their projects.

In 2011 some project teams cited timetable clashes as the reason why they had not been able to progress their projects. Also those teams that happened to gel quickly during the training were significantly more successful in their project work, so we identified that putting in support for good team structures and early bonding was important for the success of the programme. In 2012, ambassadors were asked to bring their timetable and diary to the first training session to enable meetings to be set up immediately. One of the early homework tasks was to organise a team building activity and post a photo on the Ambassadors' Facebook page. Teams also had to work on team ground rules and a team tree activity (which highlights what team members bring to and want to gain from the teamwork). This resulted in teams bonding better, projects being more established before the regular training meetings had finished, and all ambassadors continuing to work with their teams up to project completion (unlike the previous year when some projects lost team members on the way).

In 2011, the University and Students’ Union staff mentors who were allocated to support each project team, were recruited after teams had been put together, once we knew what their projects would be and could match teams to mentors with relevant expertise. This delay caused problems and we identified the importance of teams connecting with their mentors right from the start. So in 2012 we had mentors ready to be introduced on the same day as ambassadors were put into their teams. This meant that although mentors did not necessarily have expertise in the specific project area, they were able to build a relationship with the team straight away and support other aspects of the team building and project development. In many cases the mentors and ambassadors worked very well together and this was reflected in the quality of the final projects. There was variation in 2012-13 however, which we wanted to address. Some mentors were very proactive and others were more hands off. Some teams consulted and involved their mentor throughout. Others were not interested in using their mentor’s support, which was disappointing for the mentor. Some teams expected their mentors to lead them and did not use enough initiative or manage themselves and their time independently enough. Others produced weaker projects and gained fewer skills because they failed to seek or act on mentor guidance. Also because both mentors and ambassadors were fitting the projects in around all their other commitments, it was sometimes hard for them to have timely contact and some teams lost focus as a result. In 2013 a Mentor Guide was introduced including an Ambassadors and Mentor Agreement; a compulsory mentor meetings schedule and some mentor meeting guidance, which have helped to clarify expectations and enable ambassadors and mentors to work together more effectively.

In 2011-12, ten ambassador-led intercultural student activity projects were completed including a World 5-a-side football tournament, a global citizens discussion forum, an intercultural postcard factory, a creative writing workshop, an international food and quiz night, a story telling event, an intercultural training session for societies, a team involved in running the annual International Cultural Festival, and teams working on marketing and impact.

In 2012-13, eleven projects took place as part of the festival – rebranded by that year’s ambassadors as “the World Unite Festival” - and a number of the previous year’s ambassadors also organised activity within the festival. Ambassador activities over the two years attracted between 7 and 300 participants at each event with the smaller events often having just as much intercultural impact as the larger ones, if not more. Details of their projects are available on www.globalcommunity.leeds.ac.uk/ambassadors/2012-13-ambassadors/ [Accessed February 2014]
**Case Study:** In 2012-13 one ambassador team had the idea of communicating the aims of the World Unite Festival through an exhibition of photos of students from different cultural backgrounds wearing clothes from other backgrounds. They recruited models and outfits through the Ambassadors’ Facebook page and supported by their Students’ Union mentor were able to enlist the services of a staff photographer and book a room. The team organised a photo-shoot session - a good opportunity for intercultural interaction in itself - and then arranged for some of the photos of UK and international students to appear on the Student Portal login page (giving them massive exposure) along with a link to the festival programme. More photos were brought together in an exhibition during the festival and are now on long-term display in one of the Students’ Union cafés.

**Communications**

From the experience of 2011-12 it was recognised that communication structures needed to be strengthened if we wanted to improve the outcomes of project teams who needed more support to stay on track. For 2012-13 an intern was employed to be available daily throughout the programme both to administer the programme and to maintain contact with ambassadors and liaise with mentors, reminding about dates, checking on ambassadors’ progress, monitoring submissions of project documents, checking health and safety aspects, assisting with promotion and answering questions. The intern plays an important role in supporting ambassadors and mentors and can intervene whenever there is a risk to the success of a project.

In the initial pilot of the programme in 2010 the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) was used as a method of communication between ambassadors and with the programme administrators both for social contact and for submitting project proposals and project management plans for feedback. However this was not popular and participants have preferred to use Facebook and e-mail instead which is what we now use.

In 2011-12 most training materials were made available on the VLE with only activity handouts given in hard copy. But many ambassadors rarely accessed the resources on the VLE, so for 2012-13 branded ring binders were provided with key documents, to help ambassadors make best use of resources and have an easy reminder of dates, contact details and expectations. This worked well and was expanded into a full handbook for 2013-14 including some content previously delivered through the training sessions, which enabled us to improve the balance of content delivery, project work and social interaction during the training session times. The VLE is still used to store all training resources and the VLE blog facility was used in 2013-14 to capture and share feedback from pairs who met for the socialising homework tasks.

In 2011-12 email submission of project proposals, project management plans and reports followed by written feedback provided by the Programme Leader was the method used, but this was administratively cumbersome, delayed project teams’ progress and made the project planning process too much of an academic exercise. In 2012-13, teams submitted project proposals and project management plans in the form of a presentation to their mentor and one other project team. The mentor and other team all gave verbal feedback, which they then wrote up and gave to the team immediately after the discussion. This approach was extremely well received, with ambassadors finding the experience instructive, enjoyable and motivating. Project reports were given as a presentation to the whole group and were also used to select the best presentations for the Intercultural Ambassadors Showcase, where staff including the Pro-Vice Chancellor join ambassadors to celebrate their achievements.

Communication about the programme and the ambassadors’ activities to the rest of the University and beyond has been done through the Ambassadors’ section developed on the Global Community website as part of the project; via the Global Community Facebook page; on the Student Union’s website and in the World Unite Festival brochure. Much of the most effective promotion of the activities ambassadors organise for other students comes from individual ambassadors using social media and word of mouth.
Outputs

- Poster presentation, training outline and mentor guide on: www.globalcommunity.leeds.ac.uk/ambassadors/resources  [Accessed February 2014]
- Case studies on: https://www.globalcommunity.leeds.ac.uk/ambassadors/  [Accessed February 2014]
- Katy Manns 0113 343 3930  c.j.manns@adm.leeds.ac.uk available for informal consultation

Impacts

Ambassadors say that they have really valued the opportunity to get to know people that they would not otherwise have interacted with, and the evidence of their feedback forms confirms that they are influencing their friends too. The extent and enthusiasm of the interaction between students from different backgrounds who had never met before they were brought together to become Intercultural Ambassadors, has been considerable. The changes introduced to the programme in 2012-13 resulted in a real camaraderie in the group and intercultural friendships developed which are lasting beyond the training and projects. There was noticeably more support from ambassadors for each others’ projects; keenness to volunteer for extra activity together such as being stage hands during the World Unite festival, significantly more activity on the Ambassadors’ Facebook page and most recently one of the UK participants organising a farewell party for international participants after their graduation.

The impact of ambassadors’ projects can be very significant both for ambassadors and for the participants in their activities. The best projects have brought together students and mentors with a shared enthusiasm for their project area and a determination to derive and provide the most benefit.

Case study: In 2012-13 an ambassador team running an intercultural film festival team taught themselves Prezi to create their proposal presentation; learnt how to use survey monkey to do their market research; used the expertise of their mentor appropriately and kept her involved with all developments; worked together effectively to plan and deliver an ambitious series of seven events involving films, guest speakers - including some of the film makers and some students who wanted the chance to present - and themed international food; created impressive promotional materials and attracted 40 participants to their first film and discussion, which their mentor was there to share with them. Their project provided positive intercultural experiences for them and for their participants and enabled the team to develop skills and gain valuable experience that will be relevant to discuss with employers.

The programme has been highlighted as good practice in a QAA audit and in our institutional strategic review of progress on internationalisation. The programme was also selected to be in the list of significant achievements that can be included on students’ Higher Education Achievement Record. The Intercultural Ambassadors Programme is now a long-term part of our offering to students. Although a small programme with only 40 direct participants annually, the success of the programme has helped us to support a strengthening of the institution’s focus on internationalisation at home as a means of delivering an international experience and employability benefits and to promote the benefits of engagement in intercultural activity to students more widely. This demonstrates the value that small projects can have in influencing more wide-ranging change.

Setting up this programme has changed the strategic direction of the International Student Office. Before developing the programme the Office did not have a remit or mechanism for engaging UK students, and international students’ concerns about difficulties in making friends with UK students were not being addressed at a strategic level. At that point the University and Students’ Union concentrated support for integration on helping international students to adapt better to the UK context, providing services tailored to international students’ needs, and encouraging more international students to take up mainstream offerings. This project has now established the International Student Office as a source of expertise and a valued partner for co-curricular activity which internationalises the experience of both UK and international students on campus and has enabled the building of a range of “Global Community” intercultural activity starting from the premise that both UK and international students need support with, and stand to benefit from, more meaningful intercultural interactions and experiences.
We have been able to reorganise the International Student Office team structure to allow us to continue to deliver the programme and to work in partnership with other Student Opportunity colleagues to develop further intercultural initiatives on campus. We have support from Santander Universities for programme training costs and we have core funding to be able to continue to offer a student internship to provide programme support for the Intercultural Ambassadors Programme and other Global Community initiatives. This is important for ensuring that the student voice is influential in developments, as well as enabling front-line support for ambassadors and involvement of students more widely, to be facilitated on a peer-to-peer level, which is effective for promoting engagement.

The programme has also helped the Students’ Union to develop more activity to support integration between UK and international students, including, with the involvement of Intercultural Ambassadors, a broadening of the focus of their annual international cultural week. This used to be a showcase of different international societies with a mostly international audience, but is now also targeting and involving more UK students, with a broader range of intercultural activity, its new name “World Unite Festival” and featuring the strap line “bringing people together”.

The programme has been an important tool to draw attention to intercultural opportunities on campus and to bring together international and UK students. In the words of one ambassador, the programme is “making intercultural cool”. Stories of positive intercultural interaction in ambassador activities are spreading through Facebook and the Global Community website. Ambassadors now feature as role models/case studies on University video and photo profiles. Ambassadors continue to have an impact beyond their projects, for example in societies: a number of society presidents and committee members are former ambassadors. One of the 2012-13 Ambassadors was elected the representative for cultural societies on the Students Union’s Activities Executive and was very influential in motivating societies to engage in intercultural activity. Ambassadors have had impact in their academic departments, for example an ambassador went to China to help facilitate pre-arrival activity for new students on her course. They have also participated in focus groups: for example ambassadors have contributed to research and testing for our Student Education Service website and they have also helped shape the plans for a new initiative we are working on with the Accommodation Service: Ellerslie Global Residence. Using experience of the Intercultural Ambassadors programme we helped set up the University’s first 50% UK student, 50% international student hall which students can apply to if they want an intercultural residential experience with an intercultural activity programme. Activity here has resulted in positive feedback from residents and a very high level of interaction between UK and international students compared to other halls. “Incredible living with people from all different backgrounds and also really useful having friends who are older on exchange programmes and who have already had a few years' experience at uni” UK student resident.

We are continuing to build on the strengthened partnership between the University, the Students’ Union and our students, and on the increased profile of intercultural activity on campus, which have been developed through this programme. The latest initiative is a new working group including both academic and co-curricular representatives and students which will be developing the World Unite Festival to link into the internationalisation of the curriculum and to create more opportunities to connect students and the local community.

**Implications for the student learning experience**

An important element of the programme has been supporting an equal relationship between UK and international students and a strong sense of being part of the same community. Some initiatives to support integration, for example some buddy schemes, can emphasise the separation between UK and international students, with international students being seen as needing extra support to integrate, whilst UK students, who can be just as much, if not more, un-integrated in their international learning environment, are not seen as needing support. The success of the Intercultural Ambassadors Programme has highlighted the benefits of promoting an ethos of reciprocal benefits in terms of broadening horizons, global employability etc. and a shared need to develop cultural awareness and intercultural competence. In the absence of this ethos, international students can sometimes be perceived by UK students and staff as the poor relation, and UK and international students alike miss out on many of the valuable learning and personal development opportunities available in their international learning environment.
We have included insights from the work with Intercultural Ambassadors in our training for staff in faculties and student services: “Cultural Awareness for supporting students in an International learning environment”. We have also used approaches from the Intercultural Ambassadors Programme in the marketing and delivery of Freshers’ week activities and residence welcome events.

Working with students in this project has convinced us of the importance of putting in specific support/interventions to facilitate meaningful and mutually beneficial interaction between students from different backgrounds. Just having a mixture of nationalities together in one place does not create an intercultural experience. Even where students are likely to be pre-disposed to want to interact (e.g. on an international-related course, interested in study abroad) it is far from straightforward for them to move out of their comfort zones in the first place and then to move on from the acquaintance stage to make friendships, particularly when concerns about language barriers, and differences in socialising preferences and attitudes to study, exacerbate the distance between them. Whether in residences, in classes, in school inductions or in social groups, using the right kind of icebreakers, teambuilding activities and grouping mechanisms at the start of students’ time together in the different environments in which they meet, is invaluable, to build the necessary confidence and flexibility for meaningful intercultural interaction.

Increasing students’ cross-cultural skills and confidence in interacting outside their comfort zone in this co-curricular context can help students to be more adventurous, more versatile in their academic life and better equipped for work. A UK participant describes her experience “The programme has had a massive impact on my first year experience of uni. I doubt it would have been as worthwhile, busy and enjoyable without it. I’ve organised a union event, something I never would have thought I could do, and I’ve met some fantastic people… It has given my first year meaning and I now have something to build upon, both in regard to my self-confidence and skills and, hopefully, experience of working with a range of different people.”

Supporting UK students to develop their interest, confidence and skills in interacting successfully with students from different cultural backgrounds is a powerful way of enhancing the experience of international students. In a speech she gave at the Intercultural Ambassadors Showcase, which enthralled her audience, one ambassador, a talented Masters student, described how discouraged she had been by the lack of connection with her British course-mates who didn’t seem interested in her and how intimidated she had felt by being surrounded by often inaccessible English. “Although I passed IELTS exam with 6.5 at once, I still feel stressful to understand people. Especially, in my main course, there are around 20 students and only me one Asian, my tutor just talks in normal speed, which means super fast speed to me. After classes, I always feel lost and depressed.” She told of how her experience of making friends with the British students and the other international students on the Intercultural Ambassadors Programme and working together to create a successful project, had helped her to develop herself and enjoy her time at University. “Intercultural Ambassadors Programme builds up a shelter for me, here I feel safe, here I got my strength and confidence, here is like my home in Leeds. Now, I know I can speak English, Yeah ~ and I have no difficulties to work with a group of foreigners for my communication skill grow up within all these process with you.” “I think the biggest gift from Intercultural Ambassadors Programme is my increasing confidence. For example, I can’t believe that I’m using English to do a presentation in front of a bunch of native English users now! and I got your attention!”

Our experience with the ambassadors has also confirmed the merits of using international food to bring UK and international students together. This is not a new idea in relation to international students, but food was also by far the highest on the list of UK ambassadors’ preferences of project area, and food-related activities pulled in the highest numbers during the World Unite Festival. International food was also an effective facilitator of good quality intercultural interaction within other activities such as the international film events and global discussion forum. Organising refreshments on a “bring a dish” basis can be problematic because this tends not to meet institutions’ food hygiene health and safety criteria. We have addressed this by providing funding to enable interested students from different backgrounds to gain the necessary food hygiene certificates (which can be done online) and also receive a briefing from University catering; by producing guidance on permitted foods which can be provided without a certificate and still allow scope for international diversity; and by working with local restaurants who are often keen to supply food at a discount (or even free) in exchange for publicity. Where funding allows, university catering teams may well be enthusiastic about
conjuring up more unusual food from different parts of the world. (One of our chefs recently rose superbly to the challenge of providing an assortment of Cambodian dishes). It is still very effective for students to present/interpret food related to their cultural background even if they have not cooked/brought it themselves.

Intercultural Ambassadors is a mixture of development programme, social group/network and making a difference. Participants take away different things from the experience. Ambassadors have talked about it helping them in interviews; being a springboard to other experiences; giving them a new and interesting circle of friends; boosting their confidence; enabling them to create valuable experiences for others... It is important that it provides many benefits, because administering the programme requires a significant investment of time. Although it is already benefitting the students who are touched by it, in diverse ways, we recognise that with more input from specialists in different areas, the programme could be developed and adapted to provide greater impact. So more involvement from academic staff, technical specialists and alumni is something we are keen to attract. We are considering whether other models of delivery such as intensive weekends could be useful to extend some of the benefits of the programme to a greater number of participants and to serve different purposes (for example as preparation for study/work abroad). We will be working with our Blended Learning Team to enhance the training. We are also continuing to explore how the spirit of the programme can be introduced into more areas of the student experience. We would be very happy to hear from others who would like to run similar activity or who have found other ways of achieving the same goals.