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2010

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TYSTYSGRIF UWCHRADDDEDIG ADDYSGU MEWN ADDYSU UWCH

POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Cylch Dysgu 1 | Teaching Cycle 1

Integrating Research and Teaching

Mae’r Cylch Dysgu hwn o’r portffolio TUAAU wedi’i gyflwyno i CADAIR gyda chaniatâd yr awdur uchod. Adnodd i’w ddefnyddio gan ymgeiswyr y TUAAU yn y dyfodol a staff eraill ydyw, fel rhan o’u datblygu proffesiynol ym Mhrifysgol Aberystwyth. Erys yn eiddo i’r awdur a Phrifysgol Aberystwyth. Os hoffech dyfynnu’r gwaith hwn neu gyfeirio ato, cysylltwch â’r awdur. Ceir y manylion cyswllt yn http://www.aber.ac.uk/cy/directory/.

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Integrating Research and Teaching

Introducing elements of research-oriented and research-based teaching into MM12610

LITERATURE REVIEW

Integrating research and teaching has been identified as an increasingly important issue in Higher Education. "Universities need to set as a mission goal the improvement of the nexus between research and teaching.....The aim is to increase the circumstances in which teaching and research have occasion to meet." (Hattie and Marsh, 1996, p. 533; The Higher Education Academy, 2009). Jenkins and Healy (2009) emphasize that all undergraduate students in all higher education institutions should benefit from learning experiences which include research and inquiry, for becoming stakeholders in a research community rather than merely passively receiving individual academics’ research. The importance of effective teaching-research links in institutions was highlighted as they are core characteristics of a university education (Jenkins and Healey, 2005), or the "heart" of higher education (Jenkins et al., 2007, p. 76).

The research-teaching nexus is acknowledged to be complex and contested (Jenkins, 2004; Jenkins et al., 2007; Mariken et al., 2009) and with regard to the richness of academic research and the diversity of disciplines, it is obvious that links between research and teaching may take many different forms and vary by the nature of the discipline. Jenkins and Healey (2005, p. 7) have in accordance with other research underlined the potential value of staff research to student motivation and learning, and have emphasized that this linkage is not intrinsic but has to be "built systematically into the curriculum, department, institutional and national planning".

Given the complexity and contested nature of the research-teaching nexus and the need for creative and individual approaches, I have tried out one approach to this issue with my MM12610 undergraduate students in 2007 and 2008. In accordance with Jenkis et al. (2007) I believe that departments are responsible for students’ intellectual development and that efficient research links have to be implemented with some imagination and effort. Feeling committed to contribute for our department's research record, I aimed at connecting my teaching and research roles to gain possible synergies. My personal motivation, as for many
other staff, is influenced by valuing a teaching-research-nexus (Jenkins, 2004) and these thoughts can be linked to a humanist tradition concerned with a socially beneficial linkage of teaching and research, inspired by Humboldt which I referred to in my initial PGCTHE statement (see also Elton, 2008).

For this teaching cycle it was aimed to introduce an element of "research-oriented teaching" (Jenkins et al., 2007, p. 29, Healey, 2005) into the curriculum; research-oriented teaching means that "students learn about research processes, the curriculum emphasises as much the processes by which knowledge is produced as knowledge that has been achieved, and staff try to engender a research ethos through their teaching". This is a pre-stage to research-based teaching (Jenkins and Healey, 2005, p. 21) which is defined as an activity with a curriculum largely "designed around inquiry-based activities, rather than on the acquisition of subject content ... the division of roles between teacher and student is minimised; the scope for two-way interactions between research and teaching is deliberately exploited." In these perspectives students are seen as participants (e.g. Mariken et al., 2001). I tried to make students participate in my research, turning them into 'stakeholders' (Jenkins, 2004), "bringing the student into the world of research" (Jenkins and Healey, 2009, p. 9), and guiding them towards autonomous academic inquiry and the production of intellectual findings.

TEACHING PLAN AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

In 2008 MM12610 students were asked to search for literature on a specific topic, to set up a literature list, and to present their findings in an essay. Students were supposed to go through various stages of a research process. Evaluation was planned via course-work - their work was marked and compared to the results of a similar assessment in 2007.

I considered MM12610 (Marketing Skills Tutorial) offered to first year students, to be apt for this teaching cycle as the module aims at developing the necessary skills for an academic career and learning outcomes comprise issues such as: "search for information on particular topics in marketing; present information in various written styles (management report; academic essay)".

For developing the research-teaching link, in 2007 one piece of course-work (out of four) has been newly designed and students were asked to use their skill of 'proper referencing' to set up a Harvard style literature list. The change has been done in close co-
ordination with the former module-co-ordinator, the head of the centre for research marketing, and my mentor.

In 2007, the result was frustrating. Although I had distributed templates of Harvard style literature lists, students - except one student from Poland (sic) - failed to perform satisfactorily and there was not a single submission which contained at least one flawless reference.

This is an issue which needs improvement as it is a common understanding and university policy (Aberystwyth University, 2008, p. 4) that copying contents and presenting information without properly indicating the source is plagiarism, which needs to be avoided for ensuring a proper academic standard and social fairness. It needs to be emphasized that setting the focus of one of the four pieces of course-work on 'Referencing' has been the outcome of a wider reflection process. I had already in the first year double-checked with the former module co-ordinator and my mentor that the issue of proper referencing is of vital importance for our students. Sadly, even when marking Master's dissertations, it is rare to encounter a flawless reference list which complies with academic standards - although written output is central to academic education (Murray, 2001).

I've noted in the 2007 module report sheet, that students' ability to work with text and other material requires further development: "It is of fundamental importance for academic progress that students know how to find resources (we had an introduction by Hugh Owens library speaker) and to properly quote or refer to resources (e.g. Harvard Style referencing was introduced and tested in coursework). This section will be further developed to include short training sessions (e.g. how to put down a reference; more extensive discussion about the limited quality and robustness of sources, e.g. Wikipedia) as some students didn't succeed in properly managing this at home with respect to their coursework."

For the teaching cycle I decided to concentrate on this aspect and to embed it into a better research-teaching context. Therefore the topic on which students search for literature has been altered (see the following section).

Although there is clear evidence of students valuing learning in a research-based environment, student attitudes to staff research vary, depending on their individual academic orientation and motivation (Jenkins, 2004). Being aware that UG students are typically do not have the experience to particularly value academic research, I chose a subject which is an everyday, real-life phenomenon, hoping that this would help students to overcome their potential inhibitions.
More specifically, the exercise aimed to take MM12610 students through all four stages of research (Healey, 2005; Jenkins and Healey, 2009): Students were given a lecture about the research topic, it was explained how material can be found to investigate the research question (research-oriented) — for some years now module co-ordinators invite a speaker from Hugh Owen library to cover the "search for information"; students were supposed to undertake a search for journal articles (research-based), students were asked to explain which steps they took and they were asked to present their findings (research-tutored).

In the end, I was also attempting to generate some synergies between my research and teaching, making my research more interesting to students - this goes with making theories and concepts simple, understandable and applicable - and using student feedback to create new insights into the subject (Vroom, 2007).

PROGRESS NOTES ON TEACHING PRACTICE

Change of Assignment

In 2007 I had chosen the 'Architecture of Stock Exchanges' because I thought I might integrate students' effort into my ongoing research on the topic. I was hoping that students find relevant literature and pictures which I could use for conference presentations. The idea was to benefit from their individual perspective onto the topic.

The course-work contained further information about the topic and provided students with key-words for their searches. I asked them to email articles and pictures (which could be used for my research) but this was too confusing for a range of students. There were only few articles.

I realized that the complexity of the topic created confusion and students were not successful in finding related articles. Only some of the native speakers have understood the topic, the situation was worse among foreign students.

I should have made clearer that the literature list was expected to be flawless. Students' literature lists were of low academic standard and full of mistakes.

In 2008, I changed a number of elements. I decided on a topic which is still related to 'architectures' and situated in the field of marketing communications. I refrained from asking for electronic copies of articles and decided to retrieve them by myself as it is not the common policy to ask for electronic submission of course-work, and I did not want students to print out
dozens of pages. As regards the 'referencing', I clearly outlined that a very good mark will be
given for a flawless literature list. This has been emphasized and trained in a separate session.
The assignment in 2008 was as follows:

Coursework 1 worth 25% of total marks
Using the online searches (Voyager, LexisNexis, ABI, etc.) to set up a list of articles about the following subject:

It has been recognized that people in their purchase decision-making, respond to more than simply the product or
service. Buyers also respond to the place where it is bought or consumed. This place is one of the most
significant features influencing a client. In some cases, the place, more specifically the atmosphere of the place,
is more influential than the product itself in the purchase decision. In some cases, the atmosphere is the primary
product. Atmosphere [e.g. in Starbuck’s coffee shops with carefully selected furniture, pictures, colours;
glamorous Nike flagship stores; etc.] is an important marketing tool. (Partly cited from: Kotler P. (1973-74),

Your task is to find
2 newspaper articles
4 articles of academic (peer-reviewed) journals (make sure you active the "scholarly journals" field here when
using ABI!)
2 pictures of marketing atmospheres in good quality.

Use the Harvard Style Referencing Guide and set up a list containing all the references to the articles and the
sources of the pictures. Also put the pictures in (list the sources) and print everything out.
A very good mark will be given to a flawless literature list in Harvard Style which contains the requested items.
Make sure that you closely follow to the Style Guide! (e.g. "Gardner, H. (1973). The arts and human
development. New York: Wiley." - no bold letters, only put italics where they should be, etc…)

Submission of Coursework J to Cledwyn Office: 28 Feb, 3pm

Some students were also asked to write a short essay on the subject. Findings were also
discussed in the session.

**Giving a lecture on the topic**

I gave a lecture on this issue and referred to it in a previous lecture which I gave to these
students in an effort of team teaching in MM1251O. I have also briefly recapitulated the
findings in the second session of MM1261O when we discussed 'Impression Management'
and emphasized that 'atmospheres' are part of corporate impression management. The
frequent and repeated discussion of the subject should emphasize the relevance of the subject
for students and give them the feeling to work on a 'familiar' field. This was "research-led"
(Healey, 2005) teaching.

At the time I was doing research on marketing atmospheres and was hoping that I
could gain some insights from students' work.
Preparing students for the assignment with an exercise in the session

In 2008, I have printed out our Referencing Guide and distributed it to students at the beginning of the exercise session. The training element has been announced from the beginning on (first session, introduction) and took place before the joint visit to the library for an introduction of information systems. So students haven't been surprised by the action and were able to see its relevance.

Firstly, the importance of proper referencing has been explained. I outlined that it is essential for students to adopt one method - e.g. Harvard APA style - and consistently use it throughout their work. I gave a framework for the importance of the issue and outlined its relevance for students academic career (until the final dissertation). I also linked the issue of proper formatting to work life: Any presentation to colleagues and clients needs to accord with corporate standards and identity - be it the typography and size of letters or the allocation of images on a PowerPoint slide.

I quoted from the 5MB’s Reference Guide: "Referencing is important in all academic work as it indicates to the reader the sources of your quotations and borrowed ideas. Failure to indicate your sources is tantamount to plagiarism. The purpose of the referencing system is to describe your sources in an accurate and consistent manner and to indicate within the text of your paper, report or dissertation where particular sources were used. This is essential for three reasons: (a) it demonstrates a disciplined approach to your work (academic rigor); (b) it means you will not be accused of plagiarism because you have acknowledged your sources; (c) anyone who reads your work at a later date will be able to follow up on citations which interest them."

Students have been allocated into groups at the beginning of the lecture. (Students were later supposed to submit group work, so the referencing exercise provided an initial opportunity to working together informally before doing 'serious', assessed work.)

I then distributed additional material. Physical evidence typically adds a new dimension to the sensual learning experience and stimulates involvement and perception. I had chosen a number of books, newspaper articles and journal articles which I brought into the lecture. Each of the five groups started with a book. We opened p.5 of the referencing guide to take a look at the example for a book reference and then the groups had 7 minutes to write down a proper reference. Students were opening, turning and touching the books, trying to find the title, turning pages and scanning covers. This was a bodily experience for them and added a new dimension to the intellectual task.
The team experiences aimed at providing a forum for discussion and mutual help to students (Jenkins and Healey, 2009). This is better than letting the students write down the reference individually.

Students, when finished, came to the front and wrote down their proposed ‘solution’ on the white board.

The first round was quite disappointing. A proper book reference looks like this:

Students’ suggestion looked like:
"Gardner, Harold, 1973 THE ARTS AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. WHey"

We identified the mistakes in a group discussion. I refrained from personalizing and emphasized that the first step is always the hardest. It was thus not embarrassing for individuals.

We added another round with journal articles and had a go at newspaper articles. I figured out that in the second trial, there have been less mistakes although a journal reference is more difficult than the book reference. The newspaper references than had been flawless. Students needed less time and delivered better results. The feedback during the session was positive and showed that a tutoring approach (Jenkins and Healey, 2009) was received well.

**EVALUATION OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

As a means for evaluation of the exercise, submitted coursework was used. In a previous section it was described how I newly created this piece of coursework to account for the central and recently introduced aspects. The course-work results fulfilled my expectations. Most students were able to set up a proper literature list, around 30 percent even presented a flawless piece. This is a definite improvement to 2007, when over 90 percent were not able to submit acceptable work. There were some essays (re-sit coursework) on the topic which showed that students understood the subject and were able to deal with it on a certain intellectual level. In 2007 marks were 40 on average and around 60 in 2008. At this point I shall not compare the marks in detail as the marking in 2007, in accordance with my mentor and the previous module co-ordinator, positively valued correct listings and was less strict on the level of formatting as all submissions have been lower in quality. The marks hence cannot be compared one to one. The overall improvement however is more than clear.

This evaluation was complemented by informal chats which are used as a method for gathering student feedback (Brown and Race, 2002, p. 174). Around ten of the students are
may personal tutees, so I posed some brief questions on the exercise in the APPR meeting. I realized that they were aware of the importance of proper referencing, but still not yet 100 percent confident. In future years, even more time might be allocated for such exercises.

From my personal observations, I gained the impression that students were now familiar with the referencing guide and should not hesitate to use it at home for the coursework. The exercise should have helped to overcome their inhibitions towards the use of an 'academic framework'. The joint academic experience during the exercise and the success of putting together a correct set of references in the session should have motivated students and should have raised their confidence in the ability to use the academic framework on their own. These are more long-term expectations which can not directly be measured, but hopefully will be experienced by my colleagues.

**IMPLICATIONS**

The teaching practice which included the search for literature and the presentation of sources and research findings, and my experiences which were made with this form of integration of research and teaching and the introduction of research-oriented teaching (Jenkins et al., 2007; Jenkins and Healey, 2009), had some implications for professional development of the teaching practice. We have discussed this issue in the 5MB’s Centre for Research in Marketing and have enhanced the module MM1261O. In our new degree scheme Marketing Single Honours, which started in September 2008, the Marketing Skills module has been enhanced and upgraded into a core module, now worth 20 credits. This allows us to spend more time on developing students' research abilities and motivation.

I was hoping to benefit from student’s literature search, discussion and essays, but the "crop of" academic fruits was only limited. One student managed to find a special issue on retail atmospheres in a less popular journal which was new to me. There were some other, minor, gold nuggets, but not a big idea or change of perspective. I rather understood that turning students into participants for benefiting from their contribution to a larger extend needs to be done via a completely different set-up. Also I would not necessarily want to involve first-year students, such as those enrolled in MM1261O, in a more complex project. They find themselves on the initial stage of academic learning and might benefit from teaching efforts aimed at strengthening their academic confidence by providing a certain basis upon which they can build in the future. A more stakeholder/participant oriented setup
however can be fruitful, but would require the redesign of a module - which is not to be done in a teaching cycle.

It is acknowledged that "written output is a key topic in higher education for individuals and institutions", making genuine connections between research and teaching roles (Murray, 2001) and the teaching cycle shows that introducing seemingly 'boring' and 'bureaucratic' aspects of research, which are however the basis for successful research, is a long, difficult way to go and needs constant development.

REFERENCES


Jenkins, A (2004), A guide to the research evidence on teaching-research relations, York: The Higher Education Academy.


You should discuss your planned teaching cycle with your Mentor, and consider how you plan to gather feedback and evaluate what happened.

Class/Module
The module description (intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods may be attached).

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<th>Level</th>
<th>First year</th>
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<td>Semester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>C63 L1, HO Lib Sem room</td>
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The intended development:
- Encouraging students to draw on scholarly research, enabling students to academically deal with research (e.g. referencing)

Issue to be addressed
- How to encourage students to link research and teaching; using interactive methods to strengthen student confidence in their academic abilities

Sources of appropriate scholarship on issue


Intended outcome for students?
Students should be able to use proper referencing in the future. They should be able to access online information sources and be able to judge and select articles.

How will the teaching practice be implemented?

Lecturer will prepare respective coursework tasks. Issues to be introduced towards students in the lectures.

What feedback on student learning will be produced?

Informal student feedback
Coursework was altered and coursework marks will be used as a point of reference.

What opportunities will there be for modification along the way (if any)?

This cycle is about to take place in two different classes in two consecutive semesters

What criteria will be used to evaluate the success of the teaching cycle?
Using coursework marks as a point of reference. Results and progress will be clearly visible.