

Globalisation

Higher Education and Research Office website

1. The aspects of 'globalisation' with which we're all familiar - the growth of Far East manufacture, the emergence of an international culture etc. - are trends which go back many decades. What is distinctive about globalisation in the early twenty-first century?

In a word 'connectivity' – the internet means communication with other parts of the world is instant and the knowledge that anyone may potentially access across the globe is now vast. We can literally bring knowledge and images of most places in the world to our desk top in a few clicks. Technology combined with cheaper travel serves to make the world seem a much smaller place and to reinforce that we are all more connected in terms of our global responsibility.

What is also distinctive, for me, is that the global and the local are more intricately entwined than they have ever been: what we do 'here' has repercussions for others in other parts of the world, similarly actions 'there' impact upon our local lives. It is impossible to escape the global in the local. Our food and most things we purchase come from other countries and may well have travelled through several countries on the way. In a lecture theatre recently, amongst 140 students, no-one was wearing any item of clothing that was 'made in the UK'. The students also tracked the journey of a pair of jeans from the Beninese farmer who makes £15 a year for an entire crop of cotton, to the seamstress in Turkey who is paid 58p per hour and eventually they calculated that the jeans, bought in Bournemouth, had inputs from eleven countries in the process. Things are less clear cut than they used to be in terms of what is local and what is 'foreign' – services which we may assume are delivered by UK providers (for example provision of school dinners, refuse collection etc) are more likely to be provided by corporations which are owned and managed in other countries.

Finally, (and perhaps reflecting optimism on my part) we are now more aware of the shortcomings of globalisation in terms of inequality, injustice and the consequences of unsustainable development. Recent events have highlighted the failings of the economic system and our global financial institutions.

2. What prompted the launch of CGP, and what role will the Centre play in Bournemouth's wider activities?

The Centre was first conceptualised in 2000 when a group of staff developed a 'Global Vision' for Bournemouth University (BU) on the basis of a desire to better prepare students for a future which is global and uncertain.

A formal proposal for a centre was an outcome of strategy development as part of a Higher Education Leadership Foundation Fellowship project. The strategic report 'A Global Perspective at Bournemouth University: Education for Global Citizens and Sustainable Development' (2005) proposed three themes for development:

- Corporate responsibility and behaviour- the University as a global citizen
- Curricula and pedagogy – embedding global perspectives
- Extra-curricula activities to support citizenship and international awareness

The report was endorsed by senior management but it took a further three years to achieve buy-in across the institution, to set up CGP to drive change.

Part of the rationale behind CGP is to lead the internationalisation agenda and to support BU in responding to the challenge of preparing graduates for life in a global society and work in a global economy. Through various activities we aim to embed global perspectives within the curriculum with an objective of developing learners as 'global citizens'.

The graduate who is a 'global citizen':

- will be familiar with global issues and processes (particularly the interconnectedness between the local and the global)
- will appreciate the need for sustainable development
- will be effective at working across cultures and in contexts of diversity.

CGP cannot achieve this agenda by working in isolation: the challenge is to work with Schools to help them develop resources and initiatives to take this agenda forward across disciplines

3. CGP promotes the values of 'social entrepreneurship' and 'corporate social responsibility'. How will this stance be reflected in CGP's work, and how will CGP seek to influence global business culture?

Social entrepreneurship will be reflected through our support of students and their extra-curricular activities. The first example of a student-led initiative (set up by an ex BU student Espen Berg) that we have supported (and an exciting example of student empowerment) is United Youth Development Organisation www.uydo.org, which is based on the notion that young people from all over the world stand united against poverty, inequality, and injustice.

UYDO aims to facilitate for increased employment opportunities for young people in a poverty situation primarily through microfinance. The organization is entirely youth-led and now includes students from all over the world, including universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, Yale, Université catholique de Louvain, Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar, and so forth. Many current and previous BU students are heavily involved in the organisation.

Corporate social responsibility is something that CGP engages with in two ways: firstly through working with colleagues in business and management disciplines to ensure that this is a feature of their programmes and secondly, through working at an institutional level to ensure BU acts as a good corporate citizen. The latter has involved such things as gaining FAIRTRADE status and recently includes Corporate Responsibility benchmarking.

We aim to influence global business culture through the type of graduates we produce but also by developing projects with business partners, for example Bournemouth Council, is the only local authority to have signed up to the Earth Charter – we are working with them to support implementation.

4. CGP seeks to educate Bournemouth's students on the importance of global

perspectives. On a personal level, what do today's students need to learn, and what practical steps should they be taking?

It's always impossible to advocate what any particular student needs to learn – they are all so unique. The approach we try to adopt at Bournemouth is 'to start from where the learner is' (something that we have learned from development education) and to avoid seeing 'where they are' through a deficit lens. In developing the global perspective we aim to heighten the learners' awareness of self in relation to other, to increase their understanding of global issues and global processes and to empower them to bring about change (in their own spheres of influence) which might contribute towards a more just and sustainable society.

Graduates have world-wide career opportunities at their feet, but to be successful in that global environment they will need to possess the skills, knowledge and self-awareness to adapt to a dynamic, international business environment, including a wide range of cultural circumstances. Regarding the latter, it seems critically important that students are able to learn from others' perspectives and to develop cross-cultural sensitivity. We have so many nationalities on campus which creates a rich learning environment - students need to capitalise on this opportunity. In relation to sustainable development students need to understand their own carbon footprint but more importantly they need to understand the importance of futures thinking and being able to evaluate the risks (to others and the environment) of any decisions that they make.

The curriculum is not the only site of learning – the most practical thing students can do is to engage with those extra-curricular activities which also develop their understanding and skills. www.uydo.org (see question 3) is a brilliant example of students engaging with social responsibility, making a contribution towards global issues and developing employability skills.

5. In broad terms, how do you see globalisation shaping UK HE in the coming decades?

If I could predict that I'd be rich! It's difficult to see beyond the current economic crisis, the implications of which are difficult to predict for HE. A weak pound might make the UK a more attractive place for international students and reverse a trend which seems to suggest declining numbers. However, that might be to ignore that this is a global crisis and as such many countries will be feeling the impact. In the UK, the impact on graduate employability is already starting to bite – this may make HE seem less attractive – universities will need to work harder to address employability.

Our recent publication (produced in partnership with the DEA), *The Global University: the role of senior management*

<http://www.dea.org.uk/publicationf24fa405f2e0259092644833737c64ac>

highlights issues that will be critical for HE: internationalisation at home and sustainable development. Universities will need to ensure that the learning experience equips students for a global environment and educates for sustainable development. The Higher Education Funding Council for England is taking a strategic approach which will ensure that all institutions have to reduce their carbon footprint; it will be harder to ignore the need for sustainability.