

The English UK Student Experience Conference 2007

In association with English UK North

University of Manchester, Manchester

Saturday 10th November 2007

Programme



Student Experience Conference 2007

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The Conference

We are pleased to introduce a new addition to this year's professional development calendar, the first staging of the Student Experience Conference in association with English UK North. This national event focuses on improving the student experience for international students, an issue that has been identified as a key target by education policy makers and forms an integral part of the recent Prime Minister's Initiative to which English UK is a party. The full day of interactive plenary and elective sessions is aimed at exploring ways that we in the ELT profession can improve the student journey through the education system here in the UK. The conference is an ideal event for those who have direct responsibility for student accommodation, welfare and the organisation and supervision of social programmes.

The Programme

This brand new event boasts an excellent programme featuring an opening plenary by Colin Lago, elective sessions by Nigel Heritage, Beatrice Merrick, Suzanne Spicer, Liz McLaren and Ulla Holmer, and interactive debates with panelists including Samuel Harris, Nigel Paramor and Richard Day. Sessions focus on issues directly affecting student experiences such as creating optimal learning conditions for all students, effectively managing a social programme, developing the accommodation register and taking a look at how to be excellent in pastoral care, accommodation and care of under-16s. Furthermore one of the sessions takes the form of an interactive discussion with a panel of students, providing delegates with a unique opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of issues that students face and how the students themselves would suggest EFL professionals could enhance the international student experience.

The Package

In addition to the excellent programme on offer, delegates will benefit from refreshments and lunch along with an exhibition from ELT-related businesses and service providers.

The Venue

The conference will be held in the Oddfellows Hall, a listed building which is part of the University of Manchester. This is an ideal location with good transport connections - just a 10 minute walk from the nearest train station (please see the website link below for a detailed map of the campus and location of the train stations).

Address

Oddfellows Hall
97 Grosvenor St.
Manchester M1 7HF

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/visitors/travel/maps/numerical/>

Pricing:

Prices include VAT:

English UK Member:

➤ Delegate Rate: **£70**

ACS Candidate Centre:

➤ Delegate Rate: **£80**

Non-Member:

➤ Delegate Rate: **£90**

Programme Overview

10.30 – 11.00	Registration and Coffee/Tea	
11.00 – 11.05	Welcome/Introduction	
11.05 – 12.00	Opening Plenary	Creating the Conditions for Learning: Culture, Communication and Change <i>by Colin Lago</i>
12.00 – 12.10	Transition	
12.10 – 13.00	Electives Session A	A1. Accreditation UK – What Contributes towards ‘Outstanding’ in Accommodation and Welfare <i>by Ulla Holmer and Elizabeth McLaren</i> A2. New Horizons – Researching the Student Experience <i>by Beatrice Merrick</i>
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch Break	
14.00 – 14.50	Electives Session B	B1. The International Student Experience – Student Panel <i>by Samuel Harris</i> B2. Risk Assessments Explained <i>by Nigel Heritage</i>
14.50 – 15.00	Transition	
15.00 – 15.50	Elective Session C	C1. Making Museums Fun <i>by Suzanne Spicer</i> C2. Building Up the Accommodation Register: How to get more families <i>Panel Discussion</i>
15.50 – 16.20	Coffee/Tea Break	
16.20 – 17.10	Elective Session D	D1. Managing a Social Programme: Making it Viable and Events that Work <i>Panel Discussion</i> D2. Making the Most of the Prime Minister’s Initiative for International Education <i>by Beatrice Merrick</i>

Sessions and Speakers

The Opening Plenary

Creating the Conditions for Learning: Culture, Communication and Change

Colin Lago

I have long been attracted to the concept of creating optimal learning conditions for all students. This lecture will focus on many facets of the student experience, taking note of the cross-cultural challenges facing international students embarking upon a British educational experience. Culture shock, finding friends, settling down, social life and the inevitable academic demands are all part of the challenging experience they face upon arrival in the new college. The demands of studying in another country, in a different cultural milieu and in another language are immense. You only have to consider going to somewhere like Beijing to learn Chinese to get a sense of the journey students undertake in studying abroad. How might institutions enhance their provision, welfare support and tutorial interventions to optimise the student experience? How might staff be supported in developing their sensitivities and cultural literacy to the diverse student cohort? How might we facilitate the creation of optimal conditions for learning? These and other considerations will be addressed within this lecture.

Colin Lago was Director of the Counselling Service at the University of Sheffield from 1987 – 2003. He now works as an independent counsellor, trainer, supervisor and consultant. Trained initially as an engineer, Colin went on to become a full time youth worker in London and then a teacher in Jamaica. He is a Fellow of BACP, an accredited counsellor and trainer and UKRC registered practitioner. Deeply committed to transcultural concerns he has had articles, videos and many books published. For leisure, Colin is a keen (but not very good) fell runner, enthusiastic (but incompetent) dancer and a lover of mountains, music, films and books. He is married with two grown up “youngsters.”

Elective sessions 1

A1. Accreditation UK – What Contributes towards ‘Outstanding’ in Accommodation and Welfare?

Ulla Holmer and Elizabeth McLaren (British Council)

Those who are involved in any aspect of the welfare of language students play a critical role in the quality of the student experience; a role Accreditation UK recognises and supports through the inspection process. In this session we’ll address the following questions:

- What does the accreditation scheme look for in Welfare and Student Services?
- How is this inspected?
- Where is the sector doing well?
- Where is there room for improvement?
- How can you be excellent in pastoral care, accommodation and care of under-16s?

Liz McLaren is the Assistant Manager of the British Council Accreditation Services. Liz has a BA in English and Drama, an MA in English Literature and a Part-time Certificate in Youth Work. She taught English in Spain and has worked in the Accreditation Unit for 15 years, seeing through many of the developments in the Scheme over the years. She is currently responsible for product development and is Secretary to the Accreditation Scheme Advisory Committee (ASAC).

Ulla Holmer joined the Accreditation Scheme as an inspector in 1982. She was director and principal of language schools/junior vacation courses for 10 years with responsibility for staff employment, quality control, all welfare matters and marketing. She served on the Felco executive and was chair of the publicity sub committee for seven years. She has been the course tutor on the English UK (formerly ARELS) Welfare Course since its inception in 1992.

A2. New Horizons – Researching the Student Experience

Beatrice Merrick (UKCISA)

In 2006 the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) undertook a survey of international students in the further education sector, including many EFL students, to explore what they thought of their experiences of studying in the UK. This session will report on the outcomes of the survey in general, and of the EFL students in particular, and will give participants an opportunity to discuss whether the findings mirror experience in the private sector, and their implications for all those who work with these students.

Beatrice Merrick has been Director of Services and Research at the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) since 1998, where she is involved, amongst other things, in international education research and policy development and the promotion of good practice in supporting international students. Recently, this has included, in particular, work on the Student Experience strand of the Prime Minister's Initiative for International Education. She is the author of UKCISA's survey reports on international students' experiences in HE and FE (Broadening our Horizons and New Horizons).

Elective sessions 2

B1. The International Student Experience – Student Panel

Samuel Harris (International Society Manchester)

A panel of students from Greater Manchester universities will talk about their experiences of studying and living in the UK as international students. They will talk about the problems they faced in adjusting to a new culture, reflect on the pros and cons of studying in the UK and share ideas on how they think the international student experience might be enhanced. The panel will include members from the Manchester International Society's International 16 project. This project brings 16 students from 16 different countries together for a unique educational and cultural experience which aims to enrich the student experience and build links with the local community. The session will provide the opportunity to ask questions and engage in discussion with students

Samuel Harris is the Project and Training Officer for The International Society in Greater Manchester. The International Society is an independent non-profit organisation that promotes international friendship, celebrates cultural diversity and aims to enrich the experience of students studying in the city. Sam has over 10 years experience working with international students and is a governor of HOST UK.

B2. Risk Assessments Explained

Nigel Heritage (Consultant)

Is your organisation fulfilling its legal obligations with Risk Assessments? This session looks at why they are required and more importantly the practicalities of providing them: which format to use, what needs to be assessed, how to get them all done, who should do them, when they need updating and how you record that staff and students know about them. The principles are the same for all sizes of organisation, so the session will be useful for everyone. The trainer guides you through an interactive session which includes group discussion and feedback, some handouts with practical information, and guidelines to 'best practice'.

Nigel Heritage qualified as an EFL teacher in 1983. He worked overseas as a teacher and as Children's Coordinator at International House in Singapore. He has extensive experience in UK Summer Schools, having been Head of Junior Summer Programmes for 3 quality organisations. Nigel is also a qualified teacher of children with learning difficulties and continues to work part-time in Special Schools, adding up to date state sector information to his EFL experience. As a freelance EFL trainer and consultant, Nigel promotes a positive, professional and 'Best Practice' approach to all areas of EFL work. He has been involved with all aspects of Risk Assessments for a number of different organisations in recent years.

Elective sessions 3

C1. Making Museums Fun

Suzanne Spicer (Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester)

Have you taken your students on a visit to a museum? Can you be bothered? This workshop will use examples from the Museum of Science and Industry here in Manchester to explore what museums have to offer students learning English. Have a go at some of the practical activities that students can experience and find out what they think of this different learning environment.

Suzanne Spicer began her career as a geography and history teacher in a secondary school in Surrey. During this time she moved into vocational education and set up and ran a pre-vocational course for sixth form students. Nineteen years ago, Suzanne moved into museum education. Her first job was as Education Officer at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum in Shropshire. Here she set up an education service for the six museums before moving to English Heritage as Education Officer for the West Midlands, East Midlands and East Anglia regions. In 2003, Suzanne moved to the Museum of Science and Industry as Learning Manager.

C2. Building Up the Accommodation Register – how to get more families

Panel Discussion

The panel discussion will share ideas on the extension and maintenance of the homestay register tackling such issues as shortage of hosts, difficulty in retention of hosts and finding homestays for particular age groups/student types.

The Panel:

Ulla Holmer, English UK Welfare Specialist

Nigel Paramor, English in Chester (Chair)

A representative from English UK North

Elective sessions 4

D1. Managing a Social Programme – Making it Viable and Events that Work

Panel Discussion

It is always difficult to produce an exciting social programme at a price that students can afford. This panel discussion will look at successful and cost-effective events and ways in which we may be able to cut a few corners without sacrificing the quality of the student experience!

The Panel:

Nigel Heritage, Freelance Consultant

Richard Day, English in Chester (Chair)

A representative from English UK North

D2. Making the Most of the Prime Minister's Initiative for International Education

Beatrice Merrick (UKCISA)

In 1999 Tony Blair launched an initiative to increase the number of international students in the UK. A second five-year initiative was announced in 2006. This session will give a brief overview of that second phase of the Prime Minister's Initiative (PMI), looking in particular at the work being done to improve the experience of international students in the UK. It will report on projects undertaken in the current and previous year, and will be an opportunity to suggest ideas for the remaining three years of the initiative, and how it can help contribute to improving student experiences in the EFL sector in particular.

Beatrice Merrick has been Director of Services and Research at the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) since 1998, where she is involved, amongst other things, in international education research and policy development and the promotion of good practice in supporting international students. Recently, this has included, in particular, work on the Student Experience strand of the Prime Minister's Initiative for International Education. She is the author of UKCISA's survey reports on international students' experiences in HE and FE (Broadening our Horizons and New Horizons).

English UK Training

For more information about English UK's full range of training programmes including ELT qualifications, conferences, training days and the accreditation consultancy service please go to: www.englishuk.com/training or contact: training@englishuk.com to request a copy of the English UK Professional Services Handbook.