Conceptualising Curriculum Change: Structuring The Final Year Learning Experience On A Professionally-Orientated Degree Programme In Education Studies.

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CONCEPTUALISING CURRICULUM CHANGE:
Structuring the Final Year Learning Experience on a Professionally-orientated Degree Programme in Education Studies

Overview of the study

What is the impact on student experience, engagement and progression of the curriculum design of the final year of a non-professional degree programme in education studies?

Subjective evaluation of 4th year of the BSc in Education Studies Degree

Qualitative Study: Research Question

Student online survey and focus group interviews; Programme team focus group interviews

Indicative Literature

LITERATURE METHODOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Key Elements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Online databases</td>
<td>- Professional pathways - Professionally Oriented - Curriculum design - Connected Curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reference lists</td>
<td>- Critical thinking - Academic writing - Regular learning journal entries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final selection</td>
<td>- Appreciative - Findable - Organised</td>
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Timeline to date

Research Design Stages | Date
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Acquire Graduate contact details | November 2015
Review of literature | April 2016
Develop student survey in SurveyMonkey | November 2015
Ethics: Review information letter & participant consent form | Early January 2016
Develop focus group questions for students and staff | January 2016
Student survey to be sent out | By 15/1/16
Conduct two focus group interviews (Students & Staff) | Mid March 2016
Transcribe interviews | End March 2016
Data analysis & interpretation | Mid April 2016
Poster & Presentation for ICED Conference Dublin | April 25-28, 2016

Initial Findings: Students

- Isolate focus on teaching goals
- Experience working with different age groups/culture
- Develop professional relationships
- Help with job applications

CHALLENGES
- Stressful; scary; daunting; overwhelming; intense; conducting interviews; more time on thesis; more tutor meetings; academic writing; regular learning journal entries; apprehensive; finding organisation to conduct interviews; securing placements

BENEFITS
- Enjoyable; interesting; link to further study/world of work; career focused/shaping; support; rewarding; practical research; RM lectures alongside dissertation; self belief; exchanged ideas; competence

SKILLS
- Communication; problem-solving; teamwork; leadership; organisation; time management; motivate others; multitask; courage; interpersonal skills; research skills; academic writing; presentation skills; theory to practice

Initial Findings: Staff

- Collaboration was central in design and delivery of modules
- Curriculum design supported students to become more independent learners
- Students developed their workplace skills and could talk the language of recruitment
- Students require a significant piece of work experience as part of the degree programme
- There was a lesser focus on innovation first time round but this year the eportfolio has greatly improved the level of innovative thinking
- Research, Internship and Skills modules worked but a module to connect the learning from other years is required

Mid-point reflections

- How well did the final year prepare students for the path chosen by each on completion of the degree?
- What were they key variables in the programme design and implementation process for the final year from the staff perspective?
- How did the student experience of the final year compare with the intentions of the programme design team?
- After synthesising different perspectives from students and staff on the curriculum design of the final year of the BSc in Education Studies, how is the programme going to be improved?

Next steps

- Consolidate findings
- Implement recommendations
- Continue to innovate