Internationalisation of the curriculum and quality improvement – what’s the connection

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Outline

1. What, exactly, are we talking about?
2. The process of internationalizing the curriculum
3. Some key learnings from international research and scholarship
4. Applying these learnings to the ‘International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016–2020’
5. Implications for institutions, governments and quality agencies
What, exactly, are we talking about?
Internationalization of the curriculum is the incorporation of international, intercultural and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a program of study. (Leask 2015)

Across the three domains of curriculum – ‘knowing, doing and being’ (Barnett and Coate 2005)
Internationalising campus culture – the informal curriculum

• ‘creating an internationalised campus environment through the provision of a curriculum and services that support student engagement with diversity’

• This is ‘the way we do things around here …’

(Leask 2009, p. 206)
Formal Curriculum

Informal Curriculum

Hidden Curriculum

The diagram illustrates the relationship between formal, informal, and hidden curricula.
Formal

Informal

Hidden
Internationalisation at Home

The purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments.

Beelen and Jones (2015)
A conceptual framework of internationalisation of the curriculum

Curriculum design

Knowledge in and across disciplines

- Institutional context
- Local context
- National and regional context
- Global context
- Requirements of professional practice and citizenship
- Assessment of student learning
- Systematic development across the program in all students

Contextual influences

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The process of internationalising the curriculum
The role of the facilitator in the process of IoC is critical to ensuring the success of the process. One of the most important skills is that of negotiation.
Academic rationales for IoC

As members of a caring profession nurses have an ethical responsibility towards all members of the global community.
(Bachelor of Nursing)

We have a responsibility to prepare students to be global citizens and practitioners. This means they must be:
- Sensitive to the varied cultural responses to communications in international, regional and local markets,
- Respectful, ethical, responsible, adaptive and flexible...
(Bachelor of Media and Communications)

Scientists in a globalised world need to be able to:
- critically analyse the connections between culture, knowledge and professional practice in science,
- employ problem-based methodologies,
- be flexible, adaptive and reflexive problem solvers who can conduct community-based as well as industry-based investigations.
(Bachelor of Science)
Engaging with non-dominant knowledge paradigms

• ‘Content (that) does not arise out of a single cultural base but engages with global plurality in terms of sources of knowledge ... encourages students to explore how knowledge is produced, distributed and utilized globally ... helps students to develop an understanding of the global nature of scientific, economic, political and cultural exchange’ (Webb 2005, p. 111)

• Curricula that acknowledge that knowledge is not absolute
Pedagogies to internationalise the curriculum

1. Engage students with cultural diversity as social, human, academic and economic beings.

2. Structure purposeful engagement with culturally diverse people and ideas – multiple and authentic intercultural ‘engagements’ across a program of study.

3. Create social and intellectual learning environments which support intercultural learning.
Epistemology - knowledge is not absolute

Ontology - fluid identities and multiple ways of being

Pedagogy – authentic, cumulative intercultural ‘engagements’
Five challenges in IoC/IaH

1. Engaging teams of academic staff and facilitating the process.
2. Changing the curriculum – decisions about curriculum innovation are not neutral.
3. Integrating development of global perspectives into learning outcomes, learning activities and assessment in formal curriculum.
4. Moving beyond electives and specialist niche programmes.
5. Leveraging cultural diversity in the classroom to develop all students’ global perspectives.
Five key enablers of IoC/IaH

1. A clear rationale for IoC/IaH that resonates with academic staff (at institutional and program level)

2. A critical approach to dominant knowledge paradigms – a willingness to consider moving beyond the Western cannon.

3. Mapping how all students international & intercultural learning outcomes will be developed and assessed in across a program.

4. Balance between centrally mandated and disciplinary led approaches.

5. Leadership and facilitation of the process of IoC.
Some key learnings from international research and scholarship
1. The potential of IoC/IaH as a driver of curriculum innovation and quality improvement is under-realized.

2. Need to focus on learning outcomes related to programs rather than on inputs.

3. Discourses that portray the primary rationale for IoC/IaH as economic, drive perverse behavior in academic staff.

4. IoC is an essential component of a holistic, comprehensive institutional approach to internationalisation of the curriculum
Applying these learnings to the ‘International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016–2020’

Irish higher education institutions will:

• ensure that ‘all students, including those domestic students who do not undertake a study or work-placement abroad, benefit from a high-quality international student-experience’

Internationalisation of curricula will be:

• delivered through HEIs’ internationalisation strategies
• monitored in the [Higher Education System] Performance Framework and Strategic Dialogue process’ ...

Source: Department of Education and Skills, Irish Educated, Globally Connected, 33.
Through the implementation of the International Education Strategy we will:

- **Increase the number of international students studying in Ireland**
- **Attract outstanding researchers** to our institutions and to build research capacity and commercialisation of research
- **Build world class networks of learning and innovation** that can attract funding from outside the Irish education system
- **Equip Irish learners with skills and experience** to compete internationally
- **Have more Irish students integrate overseas experience** into their study through maximising mobility opportunities for all
- **Connect the benefits gained from internationalisation in education with enterprises** to support the achievement of national economic ambitions
- **Enhance our international alumni networks to build global connections** for greater social and economic outcomes for Ireland at home and abroad
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“I’m not interested in teaching my students to be agile players in the global marketplace...”
“The managerial top down process has been disempowering...the University’s big challenge is how to allow subject coordinators to be creative”
“[I don’t like] the term citizenship. . . it tends to be associated with nationalism. . . But yes, Universities have a big responsibility to get students thinking about their moral and ethical responsibilities as people”
“[The curriculum should] mess with the way students see the world and their place in it.”
Implications for institutions, governments and quality agencies
Institutions

1. Foreground academic and social aspects and benefits of internationalisation for all students in policy, strategy & management documents.

2. Investigate approaches to professional development of ‘academic leaders’ who work with facilitators and ‘learn as they do’ through practice-based, continuing professional learning in IoC curriculum design.

3. Recognise and reward academic and curricula achievements in internationalisation, including those related to curriculum design, community engagement and student learning.

4. Involve both international and domestic students as partners in reviewing and designing internationalised curricula.
IoC as part of holistic, comprehensive internationalisation

1. Rationale & strategy for internationalisation
2. Governance, leadership & management
3. Internationalisation of informal curriculum & campus culture
4. Internationalisation of formal curriculum – all students
5. Student diversity
6. Guidance and support for students outside the classroom
7. Staff development, recognition & reward – all staff
8. Broad and deep international partnerships
9. Resources follow strategy
10. Monitoring, reflection, evaluation & review

Globally competent graduates


10 key elements of integrated internationalisation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional level</th>
<th>Program level</th>
<th>Course/subject level</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All graduates will be:</td>
<td>Graduates will be able to:</td>
<td>Students will be able to:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Global Citizenship Essential</strong>&lt;br&gt;(La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia)</td>
<td>Explain the possible consequences of research agendas being dominated by those in the world who have greatest social and economic power</td>
<td>Analyse data related to the international sources and distribution of funding for research in discipline and/or professional area</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Analyse the impacts of local action on global issues</td>
<td>Capstone project involving one or more local immigrant or refugee communities</td>
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Some universities in Europe doing some interesting work in IoC

• Gottingen University - Internationalisation of the Curriculum – multiple disciplines
• Groningen University - International Classroom Project – multiple disciplines
• The Hague University of Applied Sciences - Internationalisation of the Curriculum – multiple disciplines
• Coventry University – Online International Learning – multiple disciplines
• Karolinska Institute – Internationalisation of Health Professionals
Governments and Quality Agencies

1. Are the themes and priorities communicated in documents and communications appropriately balanced across all aspects of internationalisation?

2. Are performance measures and audit processes driving quality improvement and innovation in curriculum design, teaching and learning?

3. How can you exploit the tension between compliance and contestation to drive innovation?

4. How will you engage with domestic and international students in the QA process?
Some useful references and websites


Websites

• [www.ioc.global](http://www.ioc.global) - Practical IoC resources and case studies

• [www.ieaa.org.au](http://www.ieaa.org.au) - Principles and Good Practice Guides: Learning and Teaching Across Cultures