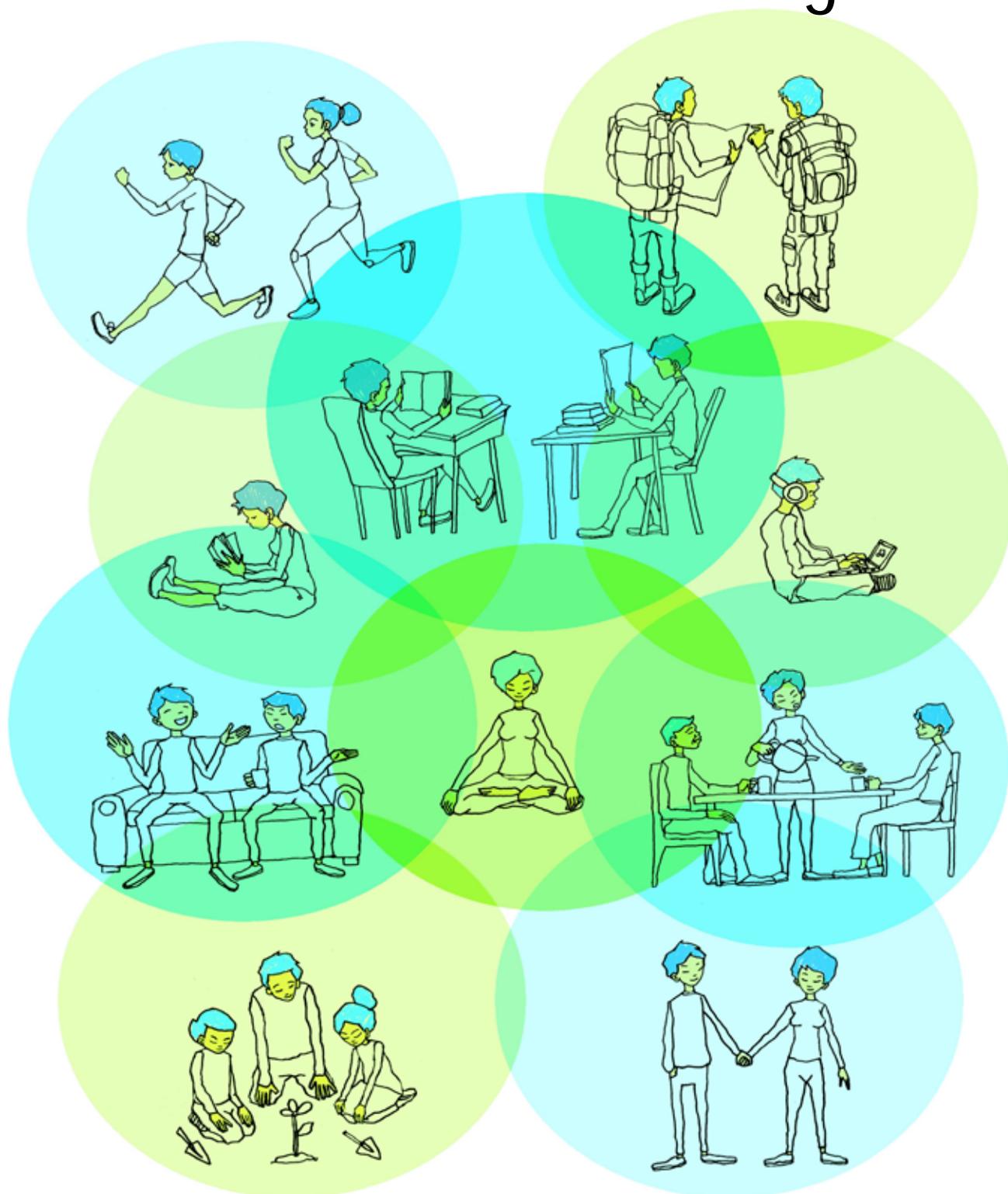


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CHAPTER B7

UCLan Graduate Development: Exploring Leadership Potential

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SUMMARY

This chapter describes the approach taken by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) to include 'Leadership' development as a key strand in the university's career and employability development portfolio in recognition of the importance of supporting students to recognise the capacity for learning from life experiences as well as formalised education. This programme combines leadership with global study through delivery at our Cyprus campus, alongside our Cypriot students. Groups of up to 30 students are travelling to Cyprus each week between October 2013 and June 2014. In recognition of the importance of graduate employability and the challenges around financing opportunities that are additional to the study programme, this programme is funded centrally. The three day programme is delivered through an experiential learning approach and is designed to engage students in a critical self-reflective process exploring leadership, leaders and their own leadership potential within the context of life long career and personal development. UCLan staff, both from Cyprus and the UK, work as a team to deliver the programme, facilitate the students' learning and provide supportive individual feedback to the students on the final day. In addition to the learning that takes place in the classroom and through individual reflection, the programme is designed to support and help students develop self-confidence, team-working and leadership skills outside of the classroom, through the challenges posed by being overseas, living in communal accommodation and preparing communal meals, arranging leisure activities and organising their lives in an unfamiliar setting. The approach is consistent with the idea and practice of lifewide education. The approach taken advocates the centrality of individuals and supports the notion of lifewide learning by considering the learner in the context of his/her whole life. Early evaluations of the programme are very positive. Further evaluation of the programme is planned.

BIOGRAPHIES



Dr. Alison Chambers is currently Dean of Academic Development and Employability at UCLan, and a fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She holds a Master's Degree and Doctorate in Education. Alison graduated as a Chartered Physiotherapist in 1985 and worked as clinical physiotherapist, specialising in older person and neurological rehabilitation until in 1995 when she moved into higher education. Alison started her teaching career at the University of Salford where she taught



physiotherapy. She left Salford in 2002 to take up a post at UCLan with the responsibility of developing a Department of Allied Health Professions to augment the Faculty of Health's academic portfolio. She has held a number of senior academic leadership roles and led a number of academic schools and is currently in a cross institutional role focused upon the student experience, academic development and employability.



Dr. Lorraine Dacre Pool is a Chartered Psychologist, Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a Senior Lecturer in Employability at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan). Lorraine is widely known for the development of the CareerEDGE model of graduate employability which is used in many Higher Education institutions nationally and internationally. It is designed to explain in a clear and practical way that employability encompasses personal, educational, career and professional development and is not solely concerned with the 'job getting' elements (important as these are). She has a particular interest in Emotional Intelligence and the role this plays in graduate employability, which was the subject of her PhD research and the focus for a taught module of Emotional Intelligence (the first of its kind in the UK).



Carol Cox is a Principal Lecturer within Forensic and Investigative Science, having previously worked as a Police Officer within Merseyside Police. Having qualified at the rank of Inspector she had been involved in many diverse leadership roles, with diversity and culture in the police service being the current focus of her PhD. Presently as well as being a Principal lecturer in Policing she is the school Quality Lead, involved in validation of all programmes.



Jackie Day is a Principal Lecturer within the School of Sport, Tourism and The Outdoors at UCLan and has coached within elite sports teams for 15 years in the UK and USA. She is currently working with elite female football players in Europe on their transitions through their football careers.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the approach taken by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) to include 'leadership' as a key strand in the university's career and employability development portfolio. UCLan is committed to ensuring that students achieve their full potential in relation to their academic, personal and career development and fully recognises that learning outside of the formal curriculum has an important part to play. This chapter describes a programme introduced during the 2013/14 academic year which augments the employability curriculum and provides students with the opportunity to consider leadership in the context of their own career aspirations, through an experiential learning approach. The specifically designed, centrally funded, three day intensive programme combines leadership development with global study through delivery at the university's Cyprus campus, alongside

its Cypriot students. The chapter discusses the rationale for the programme and provides details of its design and content. It describes the pilot programme and the early lessons learnt. It concludes by discussing some of the key themes emerging from early evaluation of the programme by the students who have participated, the Cypriot tutors who deliver the programme and the UK based tutors who have accompanied their students on this learning journey.

While the main focus of this chapter is to provide a detailed description of 'The UCLan Graduate Development Programme - Exploring Leadership Potential', for completeness the UCLan Future Leaders Programme (UFLP) will also be described in order to provide an overview of the university's overall approach to augmenting the existing and well established employability and career development portfolio through an institutional student leadership initiative.

Background

UCLan has a strong and successful history of providing excellent employability and career development learning opportunities for students. The UCLan approach, developed over a number of years and originally led by the Centre for Employability and later through 'Futures'; the university's centre for student employability and enterprise, has always placed an emphasis upon student centred learning and in particular the importance of individuals' responsibility for personal and professional development through reflection.

Embedding employability as a core element in students' higher education learning experience remains a key priority for the government, universities and employers (HEFCE 2011). In essence UCLan's approach to student employability and career development is one underpinned by lifelong learning, experiential learning and reflection (Kember, 2001; Brockbank, McGill & Beech 2002; Smith & Trede 2013).

UCLan takes its responsibilities for supporting students in their personal and professional development very seriously. The university is committed to ensuring that students are able to access and engage with a wide range of extra-curricular activities specifically designed to support their wider career aspirations and employability. At the same time there is recognition that student engagement with these extra curricular offerings is sometimes challenging. Recognising the importance of engaging students (with different views and attitudes) with employability and career development learning early in their university life, the university undertook a review of its employability portfolio and identified the opportunity to augment the portfolio by introducing, across the institution leadership development opportunities for all students.

It was acknowledged that some academic areas in the university were already successfully engaging students in leadership learning, for example the Lancashire Business School had introduced its flagship LaunchPad programme in 2011 and a number of other Schools had a range of leadership/ management modules built into the students' academic programme.

The university recognised that to enable a large number of students to participate in the programme it would be beneficial to do so outside of the formal curriculum thus allowing for greater flexibility in respect of programme design, delivery and accessibility. It was important to recognise the considerable progress we had made at UCLan in embedding employability

in the curriculum. The addition of leadership was seen as natural progression and intended to complement not replace UCLan's Employability Essentials Framework (UCLan 2012). The Employability Essentials Framework identifies the desired learning outcomes for employability and enterprise development that all UCLan students can expect support to achieve through their academic studies. These are described in three broad categories,

1. Personal and Professional Development
2. Career Development Learning
3. Professional Self-Presentation

In acknowledgement of the importance of learning outside the formal academic programme, UCLan developed and delivered an additional employability award known as the Future's Award (Higher Education Academy 2012). The Future's Award was the mechanism through which students could gain extra credits for engaging with employability and enterprise, and career development learning. During 2012, a review of the employability and career development portfolio was undertaken.

As a consequence of this review the opportunity to augment the existing portfolio to facilitate greater student engagement with employability and career development. In consultation with colleagues and students from across the institution and in consideration of employer expectations of graduates and the challenging external context, it became evident that there were opportunities for UCLan to introduce an institutional leadership development programme for undergraduate students. Developing graduates through leadership learning makes a positive impact upon students' overall employability (Niehaus, O'Rourke, & Ostick, 2012) and the programme described in this chapter was intended to provide the opportunity for all students irrespective of their academic discipline, to consider their personal and professional development through leadership. The concept of life-wide learning as described by Jackson (2011 and this volume) supported the academic team to take a creative approach to programme development. When developing the leadership programmes, an important consideration was how students could be encouraged to make connections between learning in one context to learning in another context. The ability to make connections between distinct and often isolated learning experiences is seen as essential to life-wide and life-long learning success. Encouraging students to explore personal lived learning experiences across boundaries instead of in isolation is an important step in the reflective process. Biographical narratives of lived experiences are not only important for individuals, they can also become important cultural tools for future students (Reissman 2008).

Leadership is a valuable graduate attribute which transcends academic and labour market sector boundaries, as such it was seen as important to develop a programme which would allow all students who wished to do so the opportunity to explore their leadership potential. UCLan's approach has been to develop two distinct but interconnected programmes:

- The UCLan Graduate Development Programme- Exploring your Leadership Potential
- The UCLan Future Leaders programme (UFLP)

The graduate development programme has been designed to provide an introduction to leadership and assumes no prior experience or knowledge of leadership. It is open to all students irrespective of their academic programme or level of study. The UCLan Future

Leaders Programme is designed for and targets high achieving second year students. It is 14 months in length and accredited by the Institute of Leadership and Management is being sought. Both programmes were launched in 2013 and it is intended that students undertaking the introductory programme will be encouraged to apply for the UCLan Future Leaders Programme. For completeness the following information provides a brief overview of the UFLP.

UCLan FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAMME

Overview

Launched in November 2013, the UFLP has been designed to provide participants with the opportunity to explore the social, political, economic and personal dimensions of leadership through theoretical, experiential and applied learning opportunities. As an integral part of the university's graduate employability offer it will stretch and challenge students to test out their leadership potential and develop a personal and professional development plan over a sustained 14 month period. It is aimed at the highest achieving undergraduate students and designed to raise aspiration. An integral part of the programme is to provide students with the opportunity to engage with leaders from different sectors and to hear at first-hand how leaders identify and respond to real leadership challenges. The programme participants are drawn from across the university. It is intended that the interdisciplinary nature of the student cohort will provide a rich, challenging and rewarding learning context. An exciting element of this programme is the residential leadership challenge. This will comprise a real life leadership challenge where students will work in teams to identify solutions whilst based at UCLan's campus in Cyprus.

The rationale for the programme lies in the University's recognition of the importance of encouraging and supporting effective student engagement with employability and career development learning very early in their academic life. Successes in embedding employability as described above have gone a long way to addressing the challenges of engaging students across a large institution. However in the spirit of continuous improvement, finding new ways of engaging students with employability were sought and leadership development was an obvious choice. By introducing leadership as a key strand the university has been successful in supporting greater student participation and our employability portfolio is developing in response to a very competitive graduate labour market and sector wide expectations of the knowledge, skills and attributes graduates need to possess.

Design and content

The aims of the programme are to provide students with an introduction to the subject of leadership, to encourage them to explore their own leadership potential and to promote their personal, professional and career development through critical self-reflection. As the students participating in the programme are from a diverse range of subject disciplines, for example; English Literature, Geography, Policing, Psychology, Social Work, Law and Sport Development, the design of the programme needed to be such that it was accessible to students who had either no prior or limited knowledge of leadership theory and practice. In line with an experiential learning approach the programme was designed to maximise

practical learning opportunities to facilitate student engagement and enjoyment, with a minimal amount of didactic teaching.

A pilot for the programme, delivered in Cyprus by two UK based academic staff (Carol Cox and Jackie Day) resulted in some minor changes prior to the final programme detailed below. Further information is provided in the section 'Piloting the Programme'.

Following the initial pilot, the programme has subsequently been taught by experienced International Business and Management academics at UCLan Cyprus. As the Cypriot based academic staff are unknown to the UK based students, it has been necessary to include a number of short relationship building activities into day one of the programme to help build rapport between staff and students alike. Each student cohort is accompanied by two UK based academics who are known to the students. The UK academic tutor's role is to facilitate the students' learning; contributing to class discussions where appropriate, and liaising with the Cypriot tutors to provide individual student feedback at the end of the three days. In preparation for commencing the programme and prior to leaving the UK, students are asked to find a picture of a 'leader' of interest to them and bring it with them to the first taught session. This encourages them to start to think about what they understand by the term 'leader', what kind of person they consider to be a leader and why.

Figure 1 Programme overview

Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory activity What is leadership? Leadership competencies Introduction to the Leadership Programme Learning through reflection Details of group project task for the Programme 'Our leadership journey so far ...' Personality test
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personality and leadership Values Career Drivers Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Culture in organisations Group Coaching Project Task Time
Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership competencies - Auction activity The 'Great Eight Competencies' Group Project Presentations Action Planning Conclusions

Day one begins by providing each student with their own copy of the Programme Guide & Workbook. This includes information about the different activities and space for their own notes and reflections. The workbook is for the students to complete, keep for future reference and help them in further personal, career or professional development activities. There then follows a self-assessment activity that encourages the students to start to consider their own leadership style, in particular if they have a preference for a 'people' or 'task' orientated approach. After the introductory session, which includes discussion around expectations and boundaries, the students are assigned to small groups of no more than six people (which they remain with for the duration of the programme). The first task they are

given uses the pictures of the leaders the students were asked to bring along with them from the UK. These, together with a set of pictures of leaders provided by the tutors, are used to stimulate group discussion on the meaning of leadership and to draw out some leadership competencies which are displayed and referred to throughout the programme. As this is a group activity, the students are also asked to reflect on the part they played and consider if a 'leader' emerged in their group and what competencies they might have demonstrated during the activity.

In order to gain the most benefit from the programme, the students require an understanding of learning through reflection, which is introduced through Gibbs' reflective cycle (Gibbs, 1988). This enables them to complete reflective learning logs at the end of each day's activities. Later in the day a group project is introduced, whereby the students are asked to work together to present on the subject of 'our leadership journey so far'. This is delivered on the final day with no PowerPoint slides or flipchart paper allowed, encouraging the students to be creative and innovative in their approach.

A helpful place to start in relation to self-awareness activities is to have insight into your personality. For the final activity on the first day the students are provided with a professionally developed, online Personality Test called the Type Dynamics Indicator (Team Focus). After completing the test they receive a detailed report, which they are encouraged to read, reflect on and bring with them to class the following day.

Day two begins with discussion around personality and leadership. Working in their groups the students share what they have learnt from the personality test and are encouraged to discuss what kind of traits might be desirable in leaders and why. They then take part in a 'leadership competencies auction' where, using the competencies they identified on the first day, each group are given an imaginary amount of cash to spend and have to bid for the competencies they believe are the most important. This stimulates discussion around which competencies are the most valued and whether there is consensus amongst the groups. The next activity builds on earlier work looking at personality and introduces the subject of emotional intelligence and leadership. There is an activity for the students to complete individually which encourages them to become more aware of their emotions and the impact these can have on their behaviours. The students also consider organisational culture in relation to leadership, for example how a leader may need to challenge or change this in order to lead effectively.

In the afternoon a fun practical activity is included, which requires teamwork and again provides opportunities for reflecting on how the task was approached, what went well and maybe not so well. There is also time allocated for discussion about leading and working in successful teams. The students are introduced to the idea of action learning sets and work on problem solving activities in their groups. They are also given time for working on their group presentations and a further self-awareness activity, which requires them to consider their own personal values, is provided for completion and reflection on at the end of the day. On the final day each group delivers their presentation and receives tutor and peer feedback. They are then given individual time with their UK based tutors, which can be used to discuss their experiences over the week and receive some individual feedback. Whilst these discussions are taking place the class complete individual activities which require them to consider what motivates them in relation to a future career, what competencies they

demonstrate that are sought by graduate employers and what evidence they might have to support this.

The final activities include using SMART criteria for goal setting and action planning in relation to what they have learnt over the three days and what they plan to do next. The day is brought to a close with some final conclusions drawn in relation to leadership development, followed by evaluation of the programme.

In addition to the learning in the classroom, throughout their time in Cyprus the students stay in shared accommodation on campus with some communal facilities. This allows for group meals to be prepared and shared and further discussion on the events of the day. The students also plan and organise their leisure activities.

The leadership development programme has been introduced to augment UCLan's employability provision and covers many aspects of the CareerEDGE employability framework developed at UCLan (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007). For example, the self-awareness activities are an important aspect of career development learning. The programme also includes many activities which promote the development of a number of the generic skills many employers require evidence for in applications and interviews, including team working, problem solving, communication skills, adaptability to new situations and creative thinking. The programme explicitly covers emotional intelligence, essential for employability development (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; Dacre Pool & Qualter, 2013) and has learning through reflection as a thread running through the entire three day programme. It is hoped that through participating in this programme, students will also increase their self-efficacy (particularly in relation to leadership potential), self-confidence and self-esteem - vital attributes for graduates who will shortly have the difficult task of negotiating their way into the workplace.

Piloting the programme

As the programme was intended for delivery to a wide range of students with differing levels of understanding and experience of leadership learning, it was agreed that an initial cohort of eighteen students would undertake the programme, delivered by two members of the academic team who designed it. This pilot cohort, were students who were studying programmes from the same academic discipline as the two staff and so were known to and familiar with the staff themselves. Within this initial cohort some students had already undertaken some leadership development as part of their academic programmes.

The programme was deliberately designed to facilitate a learning experience emphasising the individual's 'leadership journey'. An important aspect of the delivery was the decision to deliver this from UCLan Cyprus, thus supporting two of UCLan's curriculum themes. This added a global dimension and provided a unique learning environment for UK based students. This was a deliberate attempt to take students out of their comfort zone away from their familiar learning and social environment, thus creating a multidimensional learning context which supported cross cultural learning in a new and unfamiliar learning space. In this way the student's leadership journey started as they made their way to the airport and ended as they arrived back in the UK after 4 days.

One of the first tasks students had to undertake was to work out how to get themselves to the campus the next day. They were provided with very basic local information and left to organise themselves. They were then expected at the university the following morning.

Beyond consideration of the academic experience, the academic staff designing the programme had to consider the broader cultural and geographical/climate dimensions and their impact upon the learning and living experience of students. Maslow's self-actualisation model was helpful in thinking about the broader student learning experience in context (Maslow, 1970).

The content of the programme was written before departure to Cyprus, however this was kept flexible during the pilot to ensure it could be adapted to the needs and emotions displayed by the students. All of the material was produced and circulated for the students and lecturers, with extra reading material being given, so it was consistent and could be used by anyone. Another reason for piloting was so the lecturers at the Cyprus campus who would be delivering the programme after this pilot could examine the course materials, observe the delivery of the course and feedback on the strengths and possible areas to change.

Pilot delivery

The pilot group comprised eighteen students, each of whom were initially placed in four groups. On reflection and following observation during day one it was concluded that the students would benefit from remaining in one larger group for longer. Fourteen students formed a strong bond from the outset. Four of the group who had benefited from previous leadership development did not integrate with the wider group.

In recognition that the students did not know each other very well, a number of team building exercises were incorporated into day one. These were an important starting point to enhance team dynamics, (a requirement for later activities) and helped the delivery team create an environment where students could get to know each other without the pressure of being assessed. These team building exercises were predicated upon Tuckman's (1965) team development model.

It was pleasing to observe that during the team building exercises, individual students' leadership strengths began to emerge. An example of one of these exercises is detailed below:

Task 1: Each group of students was given an envelope (no instructions, this was deliberate to see how long it would take before one of the group took control). Inside the envelope were a set of photographs of individuals who the academic staff identified as 'leaders'. The students then had to discuss their understanding of the possible strengths and weaknesses of the leaders concerned. They also had to explain to their peers the reasons for their ideas and opinions.

In the pilot some of the leaders identified by staff were unknown to the students, which meant it was less easy to discuss the individuals in context. This could have been avoided had students brought photographs of a leader they could identify with. This was the approach taken for future cohorts.

The sequence of delivery was positive, students enjoyed the fast pace and the interactive delivery mode. This was helpful in keeping students focused and attentive during the sessions. It was also beneficial in that it allowed students to build on their personal experiences and personalities, creating an environment where they grew in confidence and became more comfortable with reflective aspects of the programme. The reflection and emotional intelligence areas were new concepts to the students and some initially struggled to relate this to their past experiences.

The final task of the course which was given to the students on day one was to present back to the whole group on the final day "our journey so far....." This was presented by the four groups in an innovative way without using PowerPoint etc. This allowed the individual groups to work together to highlight how each individual had experienced their journey throughout the course, and was portrayed in various ways such as a rap, and a fairy tale. This was found to be an important focus for the course and enabled students to demonstrate their development and learning over the course of the programme.

The course culminated in a 1-2-1 session with each student and a member of staff. This allowed both the student and the member of staff to share their observations, which in turn led to the students producing a personalised developmental action plan based on this feedback, to further develop their leadership potential.

Key Learning Points

- Identify students with previous leadership development and utilise their leadership potential as peer leaders
- Allow students to bring photographs of individuals they identified as leaders rather than present them with photographs identified by academic staff
- Final 1-2-1 session to make an explicit link to the student's personality test results
- Maintain high levels of student interaction

In conclusion, the benefits of this pilot programme were twofold; it allowed time to enhance the curriculum content and to make changes to the delivery methods. It also allowed academic colleagues from the UK and Cyprus to work together, share ideas and best practice.

Evaluation of pilot

At the time of writing, a total of 157 students, from eight cohorts and disciplines including Social Work, English Literature, Geography, Sports Development and Modern Languages have participated in the programme. The feedback has been extremely positive, with some key themes emerging. The students are asked how the course has helped them with their personal and professional development. So far, the most common responses have related to increased self-awareness, particularly in relation to identifying own strengths and weaknesses.

I have learnt a lot about myself and I have realised that I have leadership traits and I hope to keep working on them. (Student A)

Many of the students have also commented that the programme has really helped them to build their confidence generally but also in relation to their potential for future leadership roles.

[I] identified that my confidence has improved but that it still needs to be developed. Shown I am not yet a leader but that I have the potential to develop as one in the future. (Student B)

When asked for the best features of the programme many have commented that they have enjoyed the group work, the relaxed environment, the range of interactive teaching materials and the self-awareness activities - in particular the personality test. A number have also appreciated the teaching styles of the Cypriot tutors.

Good mix of listening to teaching staff and group activities to allow us to work together and get to know each other. (Student C)

There has also been some very positive feedback received from the UK tutors who have accompanied the students to Cyprus. They attend and contribute to the classes, delivered by teaching colleagues from the Cyprus campus and help to facilitate the students' learning.

The Cyprus trip has to be up there as one of my most rewarding and enjoyable experiences at UCLan. As a lecturer, it has helped me to build even more of a rapport with the students, which again will help to increase student engagement and enjoyment. Additionally, observing our students being taught by other tutors, and observing the different teaching methods employed, has been useful for our own personal development. Each student has clearly come away with something from the trip which will enhance their employability: whether that be a greater insight into their strengths and weaknesses, improved confidence, or better social and interpersonal skills. (Angela Kilpatrick, Lecturer, School of Language, Literature & International Studies)

Finally, this is also proving to be a positive experience for the Cypriot tutors delivering the programme.

I have found it to be an extremely useful developmental exercise. Interacting with a wide variety of students from different disciplines and cultures is an invaluable experience, which informs my own teaching. (Panayiotis Constanti, MBA Course Leader, UCLan Cyprus)

There have been some useful suggestions for improvements to the programme which have been incorporated where possible and a full evaluation is planned for early 2014.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has described the approach taken by UCLan to introduce leadership development as a key strand of the university's employability and career development learning portfolio. The early sections of this chapter have described the rationale for introducing leadership development opportunities for all UCLan students, provided details of the programme itself and the approach taken to delivery as well as details of some early

evaluation activity. Early indications suggest that the inclusion of leadership development has been positively received by students from across the university's diverse student base. By the end of the academic year, a total of 675 students will have completed the programme. Following a full evaluation the development team and academic colleagues from across the university will look to increase the numbers of students undertaking the programme in 2014/15. To support increased student engagement and accessibility to the programme, it is envisaged that the programme will be available to students within a UK context as well as through UCLanCyprus. A very positive unintended consequence of the programme has been the positive impact on staff and student relationships which appear to be maintained once back on campus in Preston. Staff evaluations have highlighted the positive impact team teaching with Cypriot colleagues has had upon their own and peer professional development. It is hoped that these early signs will create the impetus to develop new opportunities for academic staff and students from the UK and Cyprus to support the sharing of cross cultural teaching and learning approaches and best practice.

In summary, student leadership development programmes such as those described in this chapter can be invaluable in facilitating life-wide and life-long learning capacity in students. This promotes individuals to develop resilience through learning and thus become more adept at adapting to change and different contexts as well as developing the ability to successfully translate learning in one context to another.

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