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Table of Contents

Streams and Papers- Ghent 2016

Stream: Collaborations between Higher Education & SMEs and other collaborations
005 Collaborations between Higher Education & SME's and other collaborations
Nina Martens, Justine Van Zande, Elien van Zandweghe, Ayoub Ogbani, Stijn Goedhuys, Stijn Joris and Michiel Vansynghel
004 Languages for business? Applicability of European language measures – Flemish case
Marjan Marchand and Sarah Auman

Stream: Higher Education Pedagogy (and European and International Implications)
002 Can tutors improve student outcomes through reflection on learner variance?
Matthew Wilson
007 Intercultural Experiences of Being Valued in Higher Education
Dr Julia Claxton
008 Non-participation in formative assessment: a study of post-graduate professional students.
Christine Daley
009 'What's in it for me?' – internationalisation and the domestic student
Helen Thompson
010 How does physical space affect the higher education learner and academic?
Dr Sudi Sharifi
011 Fostering of business and management students learning in accounting courses
Dr Aleksandra Peciuriene
012 The Role and Skill Set of External Examiners
Dave Chesley
014 The Importance of & Challenges to Business Ethics provision in HRM
Michael Taylor
015 "the swim or drown strategy"- thinking and dialoguing classes
Arminda Sá Sequeira

Stream: Entrepreneurship and Innovation
006 The influencing factors of intraentrepreneurship in professional secretarial
Carissa Barbosa
001 Building a joint training programme for immigrants and native population -
Mikhail Nemilentsev and Marja-Liisa Kakkonen
003 Facilitating entrepreneurship learning in the project "Innovative entrepreneurship in Nordic-Russian context"
Marja-Liisa Kakkonen and Mikhail Nemilentsev
(there is no nº 13)

Abstract 01

Building a joint training programme for immigrants and native population

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KEYWORDS
EntreEtelä-Savo project; entrepreneurship; Finland; immigrants; native population; training programme;

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The purpose of this paper is to describe a project "EntreEtelä-Savo" as a case study. The project has started on September 1, 2015 and will last until August 31, 2016.
The project's objective is to familiarise educated immigrants and Finnish citizens who live in the South-Savo region with entrepreneurship and establishment of their own enterprises (Etelä-Savo–Ohjelma. Maakuntaohjelma vuosille 2014-2017, 2014). In other words, the objective of "Entrepreneurial path to working life-EntreEtelä-Savo" -project is to promote and strengthen opportunities of the above-mentioned target groups to find employment through establishment of their own companies. These requirements are fulfilled through a specific training model. The model itself has been applied from a previously developed entrepreneurship training organised in Odense, Denmark. The goal of the applied model is to give basic competences and skills to participants of how to become an entrepreneur and create individualised paths for self-employment (i.e. entrepreneurship) by the means of training.
The participants' level of entrepreneurial competences will be developed during the training, and their competences are also directed towards entrepreneurship. In addition, another objective of the project is to help immigrants to assimilate in the South-Savo region as well to become integrated in the Finnish culture. Aspects of the participating immigrants' assimilation and integration in the Finnish culture will also be articulated during the training. The project also contributes in the development of networking and intensification of cooperation between different actors (Joronen, 2012). Furthermore, the project aims at intensification of multi-sectoral cooperation with the higher educational institutions (HEIs) of the region and especially among the organisations that promote entrepreneurship.

During the training course, the participants will receive an extensive and practical picture of entrepreneurship as well as opportunities to learn competences about entrepreneurship through coaching (Koellinger & Thurik, 2012; Suddaby et al., 2010). Participants are assisted in the process of conceptualisation about an enterprise's whole range of activities, acquisition of an entrepreneurial way of action, and finding of one's own entrepreneurial path.

METHODOLOGY

This paper is based on the content analysis of publications of entrepreneurship education, educational programmes in EU, inclusive employability of immigrants and minor groups of the population (Roberts, 1997). Benchmarking is another method that will be used in order to evaluate effectiveness of the planned programme (Myers & Avison, 2002). The project will be introduced as a case study.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Implications for practice of this research can be based on the novelty and value added of the project. In the present project, entrepreneurship is offered as a potential option for educated immigrants and native Finns who are currently living in the South Savo region. The new-type model of entrepreneurship coaching will be piloted in the project. An idea behind the training is to grow the participants' entrepreneurial mindset, competences and skills of being entrepreneurs through a phased training process (Mayson and Harvey, 2013). Participants will learn how to act in the role of entrepreneurs. At the same time, immigrant participants will get help in their integration in the South Savo region. The aim is to increase the integration of participants during the programme by having the two groups together and gradually also developing the intercultural skills and attitudes of the participants. At its best, such an interaction could bring new ideas and economic opportunities, which in turn could contribute to the growth of other already existing skills of the participants (e.g. in relation to reaching customers and mapping markets) (Alvarez & Barney, 2013; Congregado et al., 2012). The participants have an excellent opportunity to get familiar with one another and widen their networks, which are highly important for both groups, but especially for the immigrants.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

As for the results of the present project, the participants (about 50 people from the two Finnish cities – Mikkeli and Savonlinna) will increase readiness to act as entrepreneurs as well as their up-to-date knowledge about activities of an enterprise and its development will be anticipated. In addition, it is expected that participants will successfully network with the regional entrepreneurs and organisations that support entrepreneurship development during the project's period.

During the training programme or within a year after termination of the project, it is expected that at least 8 persons of all the participants will start their businesses.
In addition, one of the results is an analysis of the intensified collaboration of the higher education institutions and other parties involved in development of entrepreneurship in the South-Savo region.
The long-term opportunities of the highly educated citizens of the South-Savo region to become entrepreneurs will be discussed. In addition, the South-Savo region will be considered as an attractive place for educated immigrants who could be fully integrated in the region based on their self-employment. Therefore, developmental needs of the region will be considered. Finally, issues of sustainability, competitiveness and possibilities for employment of the region by means of development of entrepreneurship will be assessed.

CONTRIBUTION

There are the following contributions of the present paper. The facilitation of better training for the skilled workforce will be analysed. One of the measures of the regional programme of South Savo 2014-2017 is "skilled workforce and good innovation environment", which aims at ensuring the availability of skilled workforce (Etelä-Savo-Ohjelma. Maakuntaohjelma vuosille 2014-2017, 2014). Secondly, aspects of the regional and national sustainability will be considered in detail. The sustainability of the region is influenced by working life and education. Therefore, it can be stated that the role of continuing education will be more significant in the future. In addition, by the means of retraining, the workforce and work confront each other better. Thirdly, cooperation between educational institutions and enterprises will be broadly analysed. The intensification of collaboration between the higher education institutions and enterprises is emphasised in the regional programme. The productivity of the region is considered as the increased opportunities for the employment for both domestic and incoming workforce. All the earlier mentioned challenges are considered in this particular project, the utmost goal being the development of the entrepreneurial competences of the participants and the long-term sustainability and increased competitiveness of the region. This will be discussed in the conference paper.

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Abstract 02

Can tutors improve student outcomes through reflection on learner variance?

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PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

This research project will investigate how the use of processes of reflection by tutors might positively affect teaching practice and improve the learning experiences of students. In doing so, it will attempt to draw tutors' attention to learner difference and of the need to consider and address learners' differing needs. That is not to assume that tutors are unaware of these differences, nor is it to suggest that they are not currently taking these into account, at least to some extent, when they plan and deliver their teaching. The premise is that all tutors, this writer included, could improve teaching practices, and therefore the learner experience, through processes of critical reflection on experiences inside and outside the classroom.

METHODOLOGY

This will be an action research project which aims to bring about 'social change through action, developing and improving practice and, at the same time, generating and testing theory' (Titchen and Binnie, 1994:2 in Titchen, 2015:2).

The research group will comprise:

-a group of five tutors delivering classes at the same university to groups of students who are at the same stage in their academic career

-their students

The intention is to take the research group through a three-step-cycle. In the first stage, tutors will teach their classes, which I will observe, and then qualitative data will be collected through interviews with these individual tutors and their students. This will establish a 'benchmark' position that can be compared to later data. In light of the emergent data from this stage, a reflective process that is appropriate to these contexts and that addresses these tutors' classroom experiences will be designed.

This instrument will, in a second stage, assist teachers to consider learner performance in the light of Biggs' (2003:25) call for them to ask themselves, "What else could I be doing?" and his recommendation that they take an approach which focuses "on what the student does, on what learning is or is not going on". They will be guided towards a process of reflexivity of the type recommended by Bolton (2014) in which she recommends deep level questioning, critical challenges to assumptions and searches for alternative perspectives.

The third stage will involve these tutors' delivering classes again and then reflecting on their experience in interviews and in focus groups. Data will also be collected from their learners who will also be asked to reflect on their experiences. Tutors and students alike will be asked to reflect, to reconsider the questions and ideas discussed at the first stage and to note how this reflective process has changed their approaches, their procedures, their perception of the efficacy of particular teaching and learning strategies and how they might make changes in the future

Analysis will, it is hoped, lead to some conclusions about the nature and efficacy of this reflective process and also, it is hoped bring about useful change.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The model of research outlined here fits the requirement for Action Research indicated by Cohen et al. (2011:344) in Bell and Waters (2014:10) because " a problem involving people, tasks and procedures cries out for solution, or where some change of feature results in a more desirable outcome" In this case the desirable outcome should be a more effective learner experience

The premise of this research is to underline the point made by Gould (1996: 1) in Thompson and Pascal (2012:313), which is that "practice wisdom depends upon highly developed intuition which may be difficult to articulate, but can be demonstrated through practice, ... reflective learning offers an approach to education which operates through an understanding of professional knowledge as primarily developed through practice and the systemic analysis of experience".

It is hoped that by equipping a group of teachers with this ability to create and develop systems for reflecting on and improving classroom practice; their own and that of others, there should be an improvement in outcomes for learners. Both tutors and learners can benefit from this process in that they will now be able to engage in this systemic analysis and in a continuing reflective process

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Abstract 003

Facilitating entrepreneurship learning in the project "Innovative entrepreneurship in Nordic-Russian context"

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KEYWORDS
facilitating learning; innovative entrepreneurship; international project; Nordic-Russian context;

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The purpose of this paper is to describe the achieved results and to disseminate knowledge generated during the two-year international project "Innovative entrepreneurship in Nordic-Russian context" (project number: NCM-RU/10088). The project aimed at increasing a long-term value of the project by focusing on the future cooperation between the four higher educational institutions (HEIs) from Finland, Denmark and Russian Federation. Another objective of the project was to ensure the sharing of new knowledge at an international level and to analyse ways of increasing the innovative competences of teachers and students through innovative training and exchange during and beyond the project period. In particular, future cooperation of the project partners is discussed.

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is based on the qualitative method (Mason, 2002; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) and in particular on observation (Robson, 2002) of the multiple documents related to the project application stage, interim reporting, final reporting, and the new project applications. Additionally, project publications relating to the project structure, achievement of the main and specific goals and objectives, as well as topic related to teaching and studying entrepreneurship in the intercultural context will be qualitatively analysed (Walford, 1998; Woods, 1996).

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Practical implications can be evaluated through the attainment of the project's main goal and three specific objectives. The main goal of the project was to strengthen the network among the partners as well as to strengthen the cooperation between HEIs involved and with the industry partners in Nordic countries and Russia. As such, this research gives practical information to practitioners in the educational field of how to develop a long-lasting partnership in the cross-cultural setting when educational systems in the partner countries may differ to a large extent.

The project involved four higher education institutions from the Nordic countries and Russia, which have strong international orientation. Therefore, assessment of the efficiency of the arrangement of such an internationally-oriented collaboration could be considered as the first implication for practice. The second practical implication is the enlarged involvement of teachers and students in the project activities. The third practical implication of the paper is students' developed understanding of value creation for customers/markets. The fourth practical implication is the analysed path for increasing entrepreneurial teaching competences of teachers.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

The attainment of the project objectives will be analysed from the teachers' and students' perspectives. In particular, aspects of the inter-university collaboration, strengthening of the international networking inside each partner university, development of entrepreneurial teaching competences at the levels of knowledge, skills (i.e. methods and approaches), and entrepreneurial mindset will be considered. Another base for results will consist of the observations of how project objectives were attained from the students' perspective. In particular, development of students' innovative skills and entrepreneurial mindset at three level of students' knowledge, skills and mindset (i.e. belief) will be assessed. In addition, development of students' understanding of value creation for customers and markets at the three above-stated levels.

Furthermore, sustainability and plans for future cooperation will form another informative base of results. Sustainability of the present project will be assessed from the perspective of the recently made application for future partnership within the same consortium of partner universities in Finland, Denmark and Russian Federation.

In conclusion, the paper analyses the key project indicators achieved over the project period. In particular, a number of courses developed (3), a number of participants of the project activities (178 - including the participants of the hosting institutions), a number of the student mobility in the partner universities (39), a number of the teacher mobility in the partner universities (75), and a number of publications (3 books including 30 refereed research articles or papers of good practices) are described and assessed.

CONTRIBUTION

Contribution of the present article can be presented through mutual benefits for partners institutions and added value that was created during and maintained after the project period. The added value of the project was that the network of partners, Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences (Mamk), St. Petersburg State Forest Technical University (FTU), St. Petersburg State Technological University of Plant Polymers (PPU) and Tietgen Business College (EAL), has a diversity of approaches in the entrepreneurship education, and they were willing to share their practices with each other, and learn and create more together. Denmark and Finland represent a long history in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. Russia, in turn, contributes a new and fresh drive in entrepreneurship which has increased rapidly especially during the last two decades.
By combining these different approaches and development phases in entrepreneurship education and innovation training, the project created added value and provided new learning opportunities for all the partners in the network. In addition, the Finnish partner was used to working with the Danish partner as well as with the Russian partners. The new dimension of the collaboration was a joint Danish-Finnish- Russian team.
Mutual benefit from the achieved results by the four project partners could be measured through attainment of the project's main and specific goals. The main goal was achieved and the inter-university collaboration developed between the partners as follows: The Inter-university collaboration in the project emerged or developed at different levels: a) between MAMK, EAL, PPU, and FTU (the whole network); b) between EAL, PPU and FTU (Danish and Russian partners), between MAMK and EAL, and between MAMK and the Russian partners; and c) between PPU and FTU (Russian partners). The project lasted two years. Now it is fully completed. It will be presented as a case study. All of those project-related information and findings will be described in detail in the conference paper.

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Abstract 004

Languages for business? Applicability of European language measures – Flemish case

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KEYWORDS Language strategy – SMEs – Flanders – ELAN – PIMLICO -

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

A significant number of commercial transactions by SMEs is lost due to a lack of language skills – this was proven in the 2006 ELAN project (Effects on the European Economy of Shortages of Foreign Language Skills in Enterprise), launched by the European Commission. In a sample of 1,964 companies, 11% of respondents declared to have missed a contract as a result of lacking language skills. The real figure is probably even higher, as the research identified only those situations in which companies were aware of (potentially) lost opportunities due to language barriers. It is estimated that 945,000 European SMEs fail to engage in commercial transactions because of a lack of language skills. As a result, the average loss over a three-year period is €325,000 per company. The ELAN report concludes:

Given that SMEs account for more than fifty per cent of employment within the European Union, it would thus appear that, if a greater number of SMEs were to become successful exporters, and if those currently exporting were to expand their markets, there would be a significant impact on the European economy and also that there could be considerable additional benefits in terms of greater innovation and market-awareness, which in turn could impact on productivity within national economies.

In 2011, the ELAN report was succeeded by the PIMLICO report (Promoting, Implementing and Mapping Language and Intercultural Communication strategies), which was published as a result of the European Commission's effort to promote greater use of foreign languages by SMEs. The report describes best practices of 40 European SMEs, all selected on the basis of the strong growth of their sales thanks to an aptly formulated and well-used language strategy consisting of several language measures. In this context, a language strategy is defined as the planned implementation of a series of techniques in order to foster effective communication with both foreign customers and suppliers. These techniques, referred to as language measures, include carrying out a linguistic audit, recruiting native speakers, designing a specific recruiting policy and following language trainings. These language measures focus on the organisational level on the one hand and on the level of the employees on the other hand. Nearly half of the 40 companies indicated that their turnover had increased by more than 25% by adopting a language strategy. Another third of these companies estimated this ascent to be 16 to 25%. Once again, this research proved the positive effect of a sound language strategy on the turnover of small and medium-sized enterprises.

After the PIMLICO report, various European initiatives were launched, such as the CELAN project and the Languages mean Business website. They endeavoured to be a guide for companies when adopting the language measures formulated in the PIMLICO report. Although highly valuable, these European initiatives have never completely filtered through national, regional and operational levels – where they are of great importance. As a result, these initiatives seem to have missed their aim. In addition, one could ask the question whether these measures can be extrapolated to specific national or regional contexts – such as that of Flanders, Belgium's Dutch-speaking area. Recruiting a native speaker for every business language, for example, does not seem feasible for the average Flemish small or medium-sized enterprise. Nevertheless, it is desirable to enable Flemish SMEs to devise a well-defined language strategy, which would allow them to obtain more foreign assignments, and thus to increase their market share. The language measures formulated on a European level should be concretised and adapted to the specific context of Flemish SMEs.

CONTRIBUTION

Further research into the applicability of the European language measures thus seems required. In this research, the needs of the actual target group should always be the point of departure, since the parties concerned, busily engaged entrepreneurs, would otherwise not be inclined to put the proposed measures into practice.

METHODOLOGY

To establish a good understanding of the needs and the expectations of Flemish SMEs with regard to language strategy, a survey was administered to a group of approximately fifty Flemish SMEs. To further refine the results of this survey, a series of in-depth interviews was conducted with ten Flemish enterprises. The cooperation of UNIZO (Organisation for the Self-Employed and SMEs), the largest Flemish organisation for self-employed entrepreneurs, has proven to be important in these processes.

FINDINGS

One important finding of both the survey and the interviews was that the language needs of SMEs in different sectors are quite diverse. As a result, it would be beneficial to focus on one specific sector for the continuation of our research, which would allow us to cater to the needs of our target group in a more efficient and effective way. We are currently considering the idea of focussing on the IT sector, as the IT enterprises among our respondents were especially enthusiastic about the idea of improving their language strategy. Furthermore, the IT sector is the third largest tertiary sector represented in the Exportbarometer 2015, which is based on a survey carried out by Flanders Investment and Trade and completed by 506 exporting Flemish SMEs.

In the next phase of our research, we will further explore this idea by inquiring IT SMEs. Again, we will first launch a survey to gain a general insight into the needs of this specific sector. The results of this survey will then be further researched by means of in-depth interviews with a focus group of enterprises. In addition, we will interview HR specialists, educational specialists and representatives of sector federations in the field of IT. In doing so, we could establish the language measures that matter most in the IT sector.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

In our presentation, we will introduce the provisional results of this ongoing research project, and explore its possible implications for future research. SMEs should be enabled to perform a language audit of their organisation, thus detecting the strengths and weaknesses in their language strategy. They should then be able to remedy these observations in an easy, direct way. To reach these aims, a toolbox should be designed, consisting of a language audit tool on the one hand, and a remedy tool on the other. This toolbox should be employable on the level of the organisation as well as on the level of the individual employee. The language measures identified in the present research project could form the basis for the development of both these tools. As a result, the ultimate objective of our research is to develop a practical, efficient toolbox which will enable Flemish small and medium-sized enterprises to implement a sound language strategy and – in this way – to increase their competitiveness. Because languages mean business, that much is clear.

Abstract 05

Collaborations between Higher Education & SME's and other collaborations

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KEYWORDS
Professional Development – Students – Internships – office management – Faculty of Business and Information Management

To bring work and higher education together the faculty of Business and Information Management of HoGent in Belgium has implemented working in a SME or international company in one of their courses, called Professional Development. Thanks to this course the students get the chance to be part of the workforce within a company. And while the students offer their knowledge and skills for a period of time, they acquire experience in return. Both parties benefit of this collaboration and when the student finally begins his carreer in a company, he will already know a few tricks of the trade.
Professional Development is one of the courses of the specializations Management Assistant, Medical Management Assistant and Business Translator-Interpreter. These specializations are part of the office management training, which is taught at the Faculty of Business and Information Management. This course aims to provide the student with experience by means of internships, which is more and more demanded by companies and recruitment agencies. Professional Development gives the student the opportunity to work in a small or medium-sized enterprise or even an international company. Considering the fact that we are future Management Assistants, we will further focus on the internship of this specialization.

During the first year, the internship is essential to get to know the ins and outs of the course Professional Development. It is also a way of giving students a first impression of business life. The first internship, considered as a nine-to-five job, takes place once a week over a period of six consecutive weeks. Given the fact that students did not have any experience with this course before, the apprenticeship covers mostly simple administrative tasks such as welcoming clients, handling the external and internal correspondence, classifying documents...

The second year's internship is aimed at developing the student's competences, for example learning to be more assertive and at putting their knowledge, gathered during courses, into practice. Because of these more extensive tasks, the internship is two days longer than in the first year. To be more precise, it is organized once a week, spread over a period of eight consecutive weeks. The student is given a list of companies willing to take on an intern for these educational purposes. It is then expected of the student to arrange an interview with one of the companies from the given list or to find a company outside of the list willing to offer an internship. A company that wasn't on the list has to be reviewed and approved by the school, although students are encouraged to find new and interesting internships. This period contains several new tasks on top of the assignments executed in the first year, for instance making preparations for a meeting, handling the correspondence in foreign languages (English and French), working with Microsoft Office-programmes (Word and Excel), arranging business trips... In comparison with the first year, the student receives more responsibility and works more independently. Furthermore the second year's internship is also more international-oriented, because the tasks sometimes require professional knowledge of foreign languages and cultures. For example, the student should be capable of having a fluent telephone conversation to help a client. HoGent teaches students how to conduct various types of conversations in Dutch, French, English and even during electives in German and Spanish.
Nevertheless, the ultimate test takes place in the third and last year of the training. The expectations are higher, the responsibility is bigger, the period is longer and – again – there are a few additional tasks. In fact, the range of tasks varies from student to student because they are expected to individually discuss them with the companies where the internship takes place. This in turn functions as a first professional negotiation for terms and conditions. It is obligatory that some of the tasks are in the range of administrative and IT skills acquired during the previous years and require the knowledge or the practice of multiple languages. The student now functions in a small or medium-sized enterprise or international company during a total of three months (fifty-eight days, to be more precise).

As explained in the previous paragraphs, the course Professional Development evolves and becomes more elaborate throughout the academic years. In the first year, the students acquire the basics, with which they can start their work placement in any company: linguistics (English, French and Dutch), a basis of Microsoft Office Word and the fundamental ideas of business economics and laws. In the next two years, these basics will be extended so that students are fully equipped with all the skills that are demanded by most employers. The subjects are working with databases in Microsoft Office Excel and Access, further linguistic enhancement and creating publication pages and websites. After the internship, students have to develop a personal SWOT-analysis together with a Personal Development Plan.

This SWOT-analysis obliges the students to reflect on their Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Knowing their weaknesses, they can work on improving them and convert them into strengths or opportunities. This tool for self-improvement has multiple benefits: it allows the students to strengthen their position, take on new opportunities in life and it helps the students to introduce themselves during a job interview later on.

A Professional Development Plan is the process of creating an action plan based on reflection, goal setting and planning for personal development within the context of career, education and self-improvement. This is also an assignment that is handed in after every internship. The purpose is to ask yourself "where do I see myself in five or ten years?". By asking this question, students determine their personal goals and learn to use both strengths and weaknesses to their advantage in achieving these goals. This is a good preparation for job interviews in the future.

Students, however, reflect on more than just themselves. Their opinion about the course is equally important. Therefore, to conclude, you will find the opinion of several Management Assistant students on this matter below:

"Professional Development I gives us just a small glimpse of what we are actually going to do as future careerists. We experienced our first steps in the business world and saw how a company works from the inside. University College Ghent has really thought very thoroughly about how to prepare us, young curious people, for the business world!"

"Professional Development II emphasizes the performance of students, which we appreciate a lot. In comparison with the first year, the number of days that we do a work placement has increased and the fact that we get the opportunity to gain more work experience is a great asset."

"At the end of our studies, Professional Development III plays the most important role in our study career since we get the opportunity to perform an internship during approximately three entire months! We have the possibility to take up new challenges and we can do an internship at companies abroad too if we want to."

"For all three subjects, we have to make an analysis and an assessment and we have to be able to give our opinion to our mentors of our internship company as well as to our mentors in school. A very special bond is created between us and the lecturers. It is very amusing and pleasant at the same time because we can learn from our teacher in a different way than at our desks or in a traditional classroom."

"Professional Development allows us to put our knowledge into practice, which offers us a lot of benefits. The purpose is to learn and should we need help or encounter difficulties, we can always count on our supervisors."

Abstract 06

The influencing factors of intraentrepreneurship in professional secretarial

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KEYWORDS
intrapreneurship, secretaries, influencing factors

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Over time authors have contributed to the definition of intrapreneurship. This concept is a process within an existing company, regardless of size, that besides adding new business investment, also refers to other activities and guidelines innovative, for example: the development of new management techniques, strategies and competitive postures (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Intrapreneurship can be manifested in any role or function in organization, since no one has a monopoly on the intrapreneurial behavior. It is possible have intrapreneurs in technical or non-technical and in higher, middle or junior levels of management. An intrapreneurial behavior can be verified by removing "unproductive layers" because of the bureaucratic hierarchy and looking for other ways to improve efficiency and organizational effectiveness (Seshadri & Tripathy, 2006). This study will address on specific professional: the secretariat. According to Marques dos Santos (2011), the secretariat's work was expanded and began to include tasks with more responsibility. These developments in the profession is justified by technological revolution, globalization, new forms of management, competitive market and the constant need to have more knowledge and be in constant update. Marques dos Santos (2011, p.5) states that the secretary needs to "be an innovative professional, creative and enterprising and able to perform their duties in the face of numerous socio-economic vicissitudes." According to the above, it is possible that any element within the organization evidences entrepreneurial behavior, regardless of the task being performed. So, this situation also applies to the secretariat professional. For these reasons, the purpose of this work is to identify which factors influence the intrapreneurship in the specific professional. Will be factors related to organizational context or the individual's characteristics? Or both? This is the issue of research into the development of this work.

METHODOLOGY

This work starts with the study of entrepreneurship and then focus in intrapreneurship, based on the exploration of this concept by identifying and gathering information. This research was done with the use of keywords in scientific databases - theoretical background. Then, the research design includes a qualitative approach, through 8 semi-structured interviews with secretarial professionals of various companies - empirical research. Through these steps, it was possible to study the intrapreneurship factors, namely: a) the personal traits (proactive personality, need for achievement, control and self-efficacy); b) demographics (age); c) cognitive abilities (education level and field experience); d) job design (type, autonomy, variety and contact with exterior) and e) work context (awards, resources, leadership and work environment) in this specific situation.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

According to the intraentrepreurship impact, it was possible make some recommendations to the business world. How could the employee and the organization promoting change towards greater inclusion of intrapreneurs behaviors? By the developer, he can develop more personal traits of intrapreneurial ability, how to work the proactive personality (take more initiative, be persistent and dynamic), increase the realization of need levels (look for own motivation) and self-efficacy.

By the organization, this could provide a working environment more open to change, compensate employees with resources (rewards) for acting proactively and participate with suggestions for improvement, adopting a participatory leadership style, establish a working team with a enabling environment and provide a company culture in which mistakes are acceptable, where people are not afraid of making mistakes and that employees' work is recognized. The organization also takes influence on the job design, should pay attention if employees are motivated to the type and variety of work they do and if they are given sufficient autonomy.

FINDINGS

In this professional group it was concluded that certain factors seems to have more weight than others, depending on each situation. The personal traits, work design and context indicated more influence in the development of intrapreneurial behaviour in secretaries. This research has contributed to the study of this job, showing that this professional can perform in entrepreneurial mode.

CONTRIBUTION

This work aims to contribute to the study of the factors (personal traits, demographics, cognitive skills, job design and work context) which may influence the intrapreneurship, in organizations, the secretariat professional. The factors suggested in the literature was explored in this group of professionals, in order to understand the business environment of these employees. The results of this study may give clues and strategies that can serve as an example and good practices to be applied and are therefore relevant in the business domain.

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Abstract 07

Intercultural Experiences of Being Valued in Higher Education

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KEY WORDS
Intercultural, being valued, engagement, grounded theory

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

There is a lot of work about how we can satisfy students but valuing them is a more important concept which is often ignored.

The aim of this research was to find out what students on an intercultural leadership programme identified as making them feel valued as students in their own country and in the country in which they studied.

So why is being valued so important? Being valued is a very common way of describing a key experience and is used in multiple questionnaires when organisations are trying to find out how their employees feel about their jobs and their employers. There is no known research involving the 'feeling valued' construct in HE for students but there the term is used in the business world.

The construct of 'being valued' is particularly key as a driver for 'engagement'. Robinson et al (2004) in their research on the NHS found that "The strongest driver of all (drivers) for engagement is a sense of feeling valued and involved" (Robinson, et al., 2004, IES Report 408).

In America, the Harris Interactive online survey organised by the American Psychological Association's (APA) 2012 showed that in answer to the question "my company makes me feel valued" only 52% in 2011 and 54% in 2012 of workers agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. (Employment Experience section of the APA Workplace Survey 2012).

There is a specific feeling valued section of the report which shows that "employees who report feeling valued are significantly more likely than those who do not feel valued to report that they are satisfied with their job overall and are also more satisfied other key aspects like employee involvement, growth and development and recognition." (Feeling Valued Section of the APA Workplace Survey 2012).
For example; the question "I am motivated to do my very best for my employer" gained responses of agree or strongly agree by 93% of workers who felt valued and only 33% of those who did not feel valued.
For the question "I am satisfied with my job" it was 70% of those who felt valued compared to 40% of those who felt undervalued and for the question "I am satisfied with the employee recognition practices of my employer" it was 76% compared to 6%.
Lack of participation in decision making was a significant factor for only 16% of those who felt valued but 57% of those who felt undervalued.
So 'feeling valued' is a moderator to a person's experience of other factors in work so it is logical that this may well relate to students as well as it is a psychological phenomena. This research uses the work done in the business world to inform the work with students.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology is essentially inductive using Classical Grounded Theory (Glaser 1967) which involves collecting, coding and categorising data using an iterative process and from this developing theory. It is a means of giving voice to the participants without confining them to a pre-established theoretical framework devised from literature. It was particularly relevant as there is very little literature on the amorphous construct of being valued.

Forty students from 15 countries: England, Nigeria, Poland, Cyprus, Slovakia, Greece, Crete, Lithuania, Mauritius, China, Thailand, India, Finland, USA, Spain.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The implications for practice are two-fold. Firstly any factors that are commonly held by students across different nationalities and culture will provide higher education organisations with things they can address. Secondly, for factors that may be particularly individual that higher education organisations can consider how they would get to know what these are in their study body.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

Findings are in themes of experience from the students.

Primary Themes

I feel most valued when:

-my effort/contribution/thinking is noticed/rewarded/appreciated by fellow students and tutors

-tutors know me/make time for me/support me/care about me and my development as an individual with individual needs

-I am given opportunities for exciting and challenging tasks - experiential learning – international opportunities

-When tutors and fellow students believe in me to perform

-When I can help others by - friendship, contributing, teaching, supporting and sharing my expertise

Secondary Themes

I feel most valued when:

-being part of a group/working with others/sharing experiences/hopes and dreams

-Specific advice and feedback from tutors on my achievements/learning

-good relationships with other students and with tutors (as equals)

-respecting/treating equally different cultures/nationalities/educational background

CONTRIBUTION

The contribution is towards literature which is scarce for this topic and also theoretical in developing a model for improving the way students are valued.

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Abstract 08

Non-participation in formative assessment: a study of post-graduate professional students.

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KEY WORDS
Adult Learners, Higher Education, Formative Assessment, Professional Students

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The structure for higher education in Europe is provided by the Bologna Declaration. There are two distinct and consecutive cycles of studies; first cycle (undergraduate) and second cycle (postgraduate), where 'access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years.' (European Higher Education Area, 1999 p.6). This paper concerns the experiences of a group of students within a cohort admitted directly to a post-graduate professional programme (second cycle) in a business school, without having completed an undergraduate degree (first cycle). Instead significant work experience in the field is accepted as a proxy or substitute measure of attainment and thus suitability through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

The author is module leader for the first module on the programme and thus her classes are such students' first experience of higher education. To ease the transition into the classroom, a student centred approach to learning (SCL) was employed as defined as a "broad teaching approach that encompasses replacing lectures with active learning, integrating self-paced learning programs and/or cooperative group situations", (Turner 2006, p.6). Activities such as guided group work, case study analysis and discussion were used. Voluntary formative assessments (based on previous exam questions) were offered weekly with formative, constructive feedback provided by email, and a voluntary mock exam was offered. An additional intention of the approach was to make explicit the contribution such students could make in the classroom; thus validating their right to be there in their own eyes and those of others. Module feedback suggested that all of the non-graduate students who engaged with these measures, especially the weekly questions and mock exam, considered them beneficial and instrumental in enhancing their performance at summative module assessment. Why then do some of the non-graduates not participate in the process?

METHODOLOGY

Analysis of attainment records will provide some quantitative data and allow the identification of suitable subjects but the study will rely mainly on qualitative data in order to study 'to uncover prevalent trends in thought and opinion' (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p.212). An online survey will be utilised and students participating will be asked to participate in one to one interviews.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Attainment statistics suggested that participation in formative activities enhances summative performance by up to 10% for non-graduates. However participation was voluntary. This paper examines the experiences of a small number of non-graduates on the programme who did not participate in the voluntary activities. The number is small, but the matter is significant because it is a recurring, year on year phenomenon. Module tutors speak in class of the value of participation and participating students support them in this view, publicly stated how helpful the process has been. However every year there are students who fail to participate and subsequently and/or consequently fail the module.

Three main inhibitors to adult participation in formal learning were reported by Cross (1981) as situational (individual circumstances such as work pressures and family commitments), institutional (such as timetabling and access to resources and facilities) and dispositional barriers. Dispositional barriers related to relative attitudes, self-perceptions about oneself as a learner and expectations about what would be required to succeed. The author will seek to identify and explore the barriers that are possibly preventing participation among this group with a view to developing strategies formal and/or informal that will empower both tutors and students to help overcome them. Results will be reported in the full paper.

CONTRIBUTION

There is research on the situation of students admitted onto undergraduate programmes occupational experience being accepted as a proxy measure of suitability, but the author has been unable to identify very little about the experiences of non-graduates admitted onto post-graduate programmes. An exception was the work of Cooper (2011), who examined the experiences of non-graduates admitted onto a professional Disability Studies Masters programme on the basis of RPL exploring the question "can adult learners prior experiential knowledge act as a resource for the successful acquisition of postgraduate academic literacy practices?" (p.40). It was questioned whether adult learners' previous professional and life experience would act as a resource for writing and research or as a barrier to acquisition of the academic literacies needed to complete a Master's level programme. Cooper's findings indicated adult learners' prior experience acted as affordance or constraint dependent on three factors. First, the nature of the disciplinary subfield; the operational knowledge of students on the Disability Studies programme was seen by lecturers as complementing and enriching formal academic knowledge. Second, the nature of the programme's curriculum and pedagogy; the interventions of lecturers in curriculum design and pedagogy were found to be instrumental in either facilitating or inhibiting learning. Third, the students' social and learning histories were instrumental in their perceptions and experience of the programme.

Noting Cooper's findings, the author of this paper will examine the experiences of the students on the programme in the business school of her institution as a different occupational group to that of Cooper, seeking to add something of significance to the literature on the matter.

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Abstract 09

'What's in it for me?' – internationalisation and the domestic student

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KEYWORDS
Internationalisation, domestic students, intercultural skills, phenomenography

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Both governments and scholars agree that one of the fundamental aims of the internationalisation of higher education is to increase the intercultural understanding and skills of students (de Vita, 1995; de Wit, 1995; Kimmel and Volet, 2012; Knight, 2004). This improvement in intercultural skills and understanding is viewed as a desired result of the increased diversity of both campuses and classrooms that the internationalisation of higher education brings.

An extensive literature exists on internationalisation of higher education and its impact on students but much of this has examined the integration issues and learning challenges experienced by international students and their perceptions of and interactions with domestic students. A review of ten years of publications on internationalisation from 1996 -2006 conducted by Kehm and Teichler (2007) supports this view in that it identifies seven recurring themes within the literature - tellingly none of these was the effect of internationalisation on home students. Much has already been written about the international student experience (Carroll, 2002; Hills and Thom, 2005; Guo and Chase, 2010) but very little literature exists re the perceived impact of the presence of international students on those students receiving them in ever increasing numbers (Peacock and Harrison, 2009). This is surprising as the very notion of intercultural interaction demands participation from home students. Peacock and Harrison's (2009) view is echoed by Jon (2013) who writing from a Korean perspective, four years on, notes that the literature still focuses 'on mobile students, while little focus has been paid to non-mobile students, those who remain at home campuses and receive international students.'

The study will explore, from the domestic student perspective, the perceived effect of the presence of international students on campus and in the classroom in terms of levels of intercultural interaction, the nature of those interactions and any subsequent development of intercultural skills.

METHODOLOGY

A phenomenographic research approach has been chosen because this best fits with the aim of the study i.e. phenomenography aims to explore the qualitatively different ways in which individuals experience the world in which they live and to understand the broad spectrum of experience as opposed to the 'typical' or 'norm' (Yates et al 2012).This approach is seen by the researcher as starting from the point of view of a blank canvas, that is, where student views of the phenomenon in question have not been determined in advance. Therefore the starting point is not a hypothesis to be tested but an attempt to build an understanding of the range of student perspectives.

Thus data collection has been carried out via one-to-one, semi-structured interviews. In his seminal paper Marton (1981) outlines the key features of phenomenographic research. These include taking a second order perspective; focusing on experiences which have been reflected upon and exploring the range of ways in which a phenomenon has been experienced. Therefore the semi-structured interview is deemed the most appropriate data collection method as it enables the interview to be deep and open (Booth, 1997), meaningful (Entwistle 1984) and allows for reflection (Ashworth and Lucas, 2000). It also allows for unexpected lines of discussion which is in line with the phenomenographic approach which focuses on exploring the range of experiences rather than identifying the 'typical' or 'norm' (Yates et al, 2012). Therefore this method of data collection is the most appropriate forum for individual students to reflect on their experiences and for the interviewer to explore these experiences fully in a confidential environment. Seventeen interviews have been conducted. The literature indicates that this should be sufficient to achieve variation in conceptions (Stenfors-Hays et al, 2013) and also to a fairly novice researcher it is important that the data remains manageable (Mason, 2010).

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The results of the study will enable appropriate interventions to be developed and implemented in order to improve the existing frequency and quality of intercultural interactions between students which would be beneficial for all students.

CONTRIBUTION

This study will contribute to the limited current literature on the impact of internationalisation on domestic students who receive international students on campuses and in classrooms.

The lack of literature in this area has been noted by a number of scholars including Peacock and Harrison (2009) and Jon (2013) with Trahar and Hyland (2011) referring to 'the paucity of literature that engages with the critical reflections of the local higher education community' as surprising - p623

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Abstract 10

How does physical space affect the higher education learner and academic?

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KEYWORDS
workspace, learner space, knowledge workers, transitional control

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH
Currently, it seems 'normal' for organisations to restructure the physical workplace and for knowledge workers to experience being 'moved' in some way or another. In this paper we consider how this kind of change 'moves' people in ways other than just physically.
When we change work spaces – eg from offices to open plan - what manifests in the way we communicate, the way we reciprocate and the way we hold confidences? How do we share success, share guilt, how do we become 'partners in crime' and ultimately how do we perform? In this paper we wonder how people placed at different hierarchical levels assume their power in relation to the space they occupy and what their working space signifies to others in terms of power. What is 'own space' as compared to 'blurred boundaries' and how does this affect identity, work, trust, openness? Is open plan 'equal misery' or 'collective joy'? Is there a sense of 'being in it together', of comradery? Will the change outcome be different depending on which meaning we adopt?
Is this 'economies of space' not Fordism in a different guise - when people are separated by building or walls or when 'corridors of power' 'separate the wheat from the chaff'; the titled from the ones without? When people work from home does it empower and liberate them from the bonds of office? How does hot-desking and 'being moved about' shape the feeling of belonging, of being valued?

METHODOLOGY
This paper is conceptual and will use models from literature and critical reasoning to develop themes and questions.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

As educators, learners and as students we can rethink some of our assumptions and challenge the status quo of our organisations to bring about an awareness of the impact of space on learning.

CONTRIBUTION

There is a need to bring together ideas in order to see the importance of them and how they affect our daily lives as learners and academics. This conceptual piece fills a gap in the conceptual and theoretical work in this area.

Abstract 11

Fostering of business and management students learning in accounting courses

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KEYWORDS
accounting, assessment, competence, learning, skills, students

Students capable of continuous learning for development of skills necessary for professional competence in length of time become professionals able to flexibly adapt to the society and business progress. The study focuses on fostering professional bachelor's Business and Management study programmes students' learning and assessment in basic Accounting courses. Thus the paper examines educational theoretic implications in the students learning process. Besides the coherent analysis implemented on the population of the students who have recently taken scheduled Accounting courses at Business Management Faculty of Vilniaus Kolegija/ University of Applied Sciences is presented. The paper as well provides insights for further research in the study area.
Following the strategies of education in European Union creation of a "second" higher education sector, composed by higher education institutions (hereafter HEIs) oriented towards professional education, was mainly motivated by educational concerns to improve the quality of professional tertiary education (Lepori, 2008). In line with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research (2014) provisions in Lithuania same as in other European Union countries non-university HEIs have been granted the right of primary educating future business professionals within the pale of professional bachelor's business and management study programmes. Certain basic accounting (hereafter accounting) courses mostly hold a relevant place in the former.
Accounting courses commonly have been marked as a dry" study subject, stuffed with structured definitions of technical terms, complex rules and standards, uninteresting "number crunching", and the "knowing" of concepts (Springer&Borthick, 2004). Variety of surveys conducted in accounting learning/teaching in HEIs had shown that quite a few students from all majors begin their accounting courses with great trepidation, having heard about its difficulty along with high demand in possession of mathematical skills.

Students' evaluations of these courses happen to be lower than for those more related to their chosen study majors (Rahman, 2006). Accordingly, accounting courses are often considered a challenge to teach to any major students, especially in pursuance of ensuring an effective environment for their learning (Springer et al., 2004; Struyven et al., 2010; Watty et al., 2010; Stivers et al., 2011; Turner, 2011).

The study focuses on fostering professional bachelor's business and management study programmes students' learning and assessment in basic accounting courses. Thus the paper examines educational theoretic implications in the students learning process, especially within the accounting study are. Besides the coherent analysis implemented on the population of the students who have recently taken scheduled accounting courses at Business Management
Present-day accounting educators need to adapt their teaching styles and instructional methods to facilitate the process of Business and Management students' learning of Accounting by offering a variety of appropriate experiential learning opportunities to the students with diverse dominant learning styles (frequently learners with non-dominating mathematical skills as it is shown in the implemented coherent analysis).
For the teaching/learning to be effective the instructors need to be aware of recognising students learning styles and to be qualified in the design and delivery of the experiential curricula. It will from one side warrant sensitivity to differences in students learning styles on instructional level and from the other side foster students' adaptive flexibility to alter their learning styles in response to the learning demand of accounting specificity. Benefitting learning environment in turn will maintain students' concernment in the subject and the perception that solid performance in accounting learning is achievable.

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Abstract 12

The Role and Skill Set of External Examiners

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KEY WORDS
External examining, higher education quality, quality control, QAA

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH
To better understand the skill set required for an external examiner within a complex arrangement of external examining work from validated colleges in Asia whilst based at a UK Higher Education Institute.

METHODOLOGY
Documentation analysis, focus groups and interviews possibly using a phenomenographic, grounded theory approach or auto-ethnography approach. This paper is a working paper which will consider different approaches possible for this research study so a variety of methods will be presented with their pros and cons.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE
This research will help those in quality control of higher education to consider the support that external examiners may need, to consider the skill set that they may look for in external examiners and systems and processes that may support best practice.

FINDINGS/RESULTS
This is a working paper and at exploratory stage. However, quality arrangements around benchmarking of will be brought to the fore with an emphasis around the skill set an External Examiner can bring to help develop Higher Education quality provision for business areas.

Abstract 14

The Importance of & Challenges to Business Ethics provision in HRM

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PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The purpose of this paper is to raise awareness of the importance of Business Ethics provision, in order that students may become 'good' ethical decision makers in a future human resource management (HRM) context. A second aim is to provide an extensive literature review as to the current state of affairs in Business Ethics provision; highlighting any issues affecting potential 'adequacy'. A further objective was to emphasise the results from an initial scoping exercise. And finally, this paper wishes to elaborate on the intentions of our future research, to help improve ethical decision making in HRM students.

METHODOLOGY

As a working paper, finalising a methodological approach has yet to be decided. Realistically speaking, due to the formation of embryonic hypothesis, it is more likely that research and data collection will be more quantitative or perhaps mixed in method. At this stage, the paper is more of an academic narrative that firstly, raises the importance of providing adequate business ethics provision and secondly, collates the challenges UK HEI's face in providing this provision in a HRM context.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Human Resource Management (HRM) is not simply about buffering corporate strategy, nor is it merely an administrative tool that enforces legislation through policy and practice. Given credence by its very name, HRM should aim to rise above the notion of personnel management and the allocation of human asset and ascribe to purer form of duty, based on values. If we were to group all of the different secular functions of HRM together, there is something fundamental that remains throughout: And that is, a responsibility to others. Responsibility should be the embodiment of all HR practice, infiltrating all levels of the organisation, its management, employees and external stakeholders by means of ethical decision making. Ethical decisions are made when responsibility, integrity, values and judgement are exercised harmoniously by way of good practice.

Understanding the meaning of good values such as benevolence, diligence, humility and temperance in order that we may practice those values through exercising morally sound judgement, is at the heart of ethical decision making. To Aristotle, understanding the meaning of good values was expressed through cardinal virtues (Steadman, 2011); an innate skill achieved by overcoming the 'vice' standing either side of the 'virtue'.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

Consequently, it appears there is a need for HRPs to have the skills associated with ethical decision making, which has a requirement to be taught, or at the very least, nurtured and developed in the same way that other HR skills are tutored, such as employment law or resourcing. These skills may be achieved through the provision of Business Ethics in HEIs, this process however, is not without issue........

Challenge 1: Firstly, until very recently there simply has not been enough Business Ethics provision and the current upsurge can be directly ascribed as the fall-out from poor business practice (Wang & Calvano, 2015).

Challenge 2: Secondly, there are those who see Business Schools as culpable due to strategic administrative failings, making them ethically challenged (Warnell, 2011). According to this notion, in being ethically challenged, Business Schools have seen little of the required transformation or evolvement in their approach to teaching Business Ethics necessary, in order to mirror economic and societal changes (Evans & Weiss, 2008).

Challenge 3: Thirdly and perhaps more damagingly, are those who see Business Schools as having a besmirched reputation (Floyd et al, 2013) because of implicit role they have played in focusing graduate psyche on their own objectives and not to the responsibility of societal goals (Swanson, 2004). This concept suggests that Business Schools have 'brutalised' business education by creating winners that focus on share price, short-term profit and survival at all costs (Cavanagh, 2009).

Challenge 4: Fourthly and perhaps most importantly, once a school Dean and their profilers have decided where Business Ethics best fits (challenge 2), there is the more profoundly complex and significant decision of how do you actually teach it? Some academics have questioned whether or not ethical decision making and behaviour can be improved through teaching (Ryan & Bisson, 2011), stating intrinsic values are unlikely to alter through tutoring (Caldwell, 2009).

CONTRIBUTION

Those who practice their trade in Human Resource Management (HRM), are required to have a number of skills that allow them to successfully navigate and shape policy, procedure, resourcing and the alignment of corporate objectives. HEIs working in partnership with external bodies such as the CIPD and with employers who initiate structured HR training, can largely provide these more traditional, 'business like' skills to graduates. However, as we know, Human Resource Practitioners (HRP) find themselves in a unique position of responsibility and service in that, HR practice is not simply about corporate strategy. By the very nature of its label, HRM has a more fundamental 'human' element. The 'human' component of HRM goes beyond the notion of personnel and human capital, to one of responsibility, integrity, judgement and values. These concepts are strongly associated to ethical philosophy and although intrinsic in nature, are bound to the practicality of HRM 'action', 'behaviour' and 'decision making'. As such, the emergence of ethics and HRM is a growing field and in receipt of a greater amount of attention from academic practitioners (Shacklock et al, 2011). Although scarce in nature (because of the relative infancy of the discipline), ideas around ethical practice and ethical responsibility in HRM are generally negative (Dale, 2012). This negativity is generated from a number of different perspectives in relation to the functionality of HRM (Wiley, 1998), the span of control in HRM (Guest & Woodrow, 2012), the will of HRM (Wilcox, 2012 & Lovell, 2002) and the dehumanising of HRM (De Gama et al, 2012). Despite the apparent pessimism in the current relationship between ethics and HRM, there are many who state that HRM has an implicit role to play in ethical decision making (Gond et al, 2011). While many note that it is inappropriate for the HRM function to be the moral conscious of an organisation, HRP's are seen to have a key role in providing management with advice on ethical practice (Foote, 2001). Literature would suggest that ethics in HRM is unproductive and ineffective, yet at the same time, has an important part to play in shaping ethical decision making and the ethical climate of organisations. From this then we may appropriately deduce HRM is a 'SHEEP in SHEPARDS clothing' (Bennington, 2006).

Abstract 15

"The swim or drown strategy"- thinking and dialoguing classes

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KEYWORDS
Methodology design; skills; knowledge society requirements;

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of the research is the design of a teaching-learning methodology most appropriate to the demands of the knowledge society; the expectations of students for the practice of their future profession (corporate communication professionals) and the study cycle stage.

Education, particularly higher education should be at the forefront in preparing future professionals, which, hopefully, will become the drivers of social development.

New social challenges require new ways to think about education and new frameworks and methodologies.

Challenges to education:

- The transition between economies requires new skills;
- The education system "moves" more slowly than the economy;
- Any work changes quickly, even if someone doesn't change jobs.
- Employment is not guaranteed

The demands made to higher education, require if not the reconceptualization of the entire higher education system, at least the reconfiguration of the approach to teaching and learning.

The design of a methodology must consider answering 3 questions: In what kind of context will the future professionals work? What skills will be required? Which methodology is more adequate to prepare them?

With regard to the future context, we can only guess... most certainly will be... uncertain and most of the future professionals will be self-employed. For that reason the development of soft skills as the "ability to make decisions", the capacity to solve problems", "self-management" and "self-development", as defined by Bloom should be strengthened within the classes.

With regard to the skills required, a study concluded that there are 4 skills that are indispensable in the knowledge society work context: analytic reasoning; critical thinking; problem solving; effective writing.
The methodology design must therefore take into consideration those requirements and encourage the development of those skills. We concluded that the structure should be as follows: creating a business as group work; flipped classroom and case studies.

METHODOLOGY

The design of the methodology is the result of years of improvements that have been introduced gradually. For us it is very important not only to assess the degree of development that the students show at the end of each semester, but also the perception that each of them experience about the self-evolution in the acquisition of the set of skills defined at the beginning of the semester.
To do so, the semester begins with an inquiry to know the student profile: expectations regarding the future profession (which path would they like to go? Which tasks would they rather perform?); age; type of student (regular or working student?); desired type of job? (for others/in a company? or self-employed?); how do they prefer to learn? Listening to a class? Studying alone? Studying in group? Solving exercises/problems? Analysing cases?
This first step aims to determine the general characteristics of the class.
The second step is to determine the self-perception about the degree they think to have regarding the 4 skills: analytic reasoning; critical thinking; problem solving; effective writing. This self-assessment should be confirmed (or not) as they receive the grades of the various assignments they are required to do over the semester.
The third step, an inquiry made at the end of the semester, aims to determine the self-perception of the self-development over the semester and confronting it with the degree of success in the curricular unit.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

As we said the structure has been developed over the years. Based on the results obtained, the methodology is designed to encompass the specific objectives of the curricular unit; the student's expectations and the development of the knowledge society skills requirements.
The structure we came across is based on 3 pillars: flipped classroom; group work: simulation of creating a business in which all syllabus content is applied; case study analysis.

(1) Flipped classroom is based on 2 concepts: availability through moodle platform of every content taught in class; as far as the 'business decisions' concerns the teacher help the students to think in the context of the business they created and to make choices rather them giving them answers;

(2) Every single subject of the syllabus has to be applied to the 'virtual business' they create, which implies to analyse their business context, specially to see what the 'competition' is doing and how they can do better; think critically about the business situation their potential strengths and weakness'; solving problems as they emerge – the main concern here is to help them to cope with different ways of 'doing things', different personalities and working patterns, because the group are intentionally numerous (6 to 8 persons); effective writing (and communicating) students must follow the rules as the extension of each section is concerned; they must communicate effectively among them otherwise the work isn't done properly.

(3) Case study analysis is a fundamental tool because they must think about different contexts and situations and express their thoughts/opinions orally and in writing.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

Over the time we acknowledge that the creation of the 'business' is important to develop both sets of skills because it presupposes analytic reasoning; critical thinking; problem solving effective writing/communicating, as they must make decisions and justify them, but specially because they have to learn how to do so interacting in a group context, where in principle, all members are equal and have the same 'power', which is an important constraint and condition to develop soft skills; the case study analysis has an impact specially in the conceptual set of skills development.

CONTRIBUTION

We think that trough this framework we gave a contribution to more interesting, dialogued classes where students are always present, participating and interested in developing 'their businesses'.
This framework also served to draw methodologies to other disciplines, helping to change the paradigm of the classes, making them closer to the model of the polytechnic education.
It has been important also as it was the foundation for the basic training of new teachers over the years, since the working structure had been designed and tested and can always be improved as these new teachers gave their testimony.

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Abstract 16

Professional Paths and Professional Activities of Hospitality Management Graduates

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PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Entering the job-work system by higher education graduates has become a relevant issue today in the present social and economic environment in which we live, but that is still poorly explored in scientific research, in Portugal, on the specific case of activities related to hospitality management.

The study that is now being presented aims to explain and discuss the features of professional situations from graduates of hospitality management degrees, in Portuguese public higher education institutions.

Specifically, this study aims to analyse the characteristics of professional situations in a group of hospitality management graduates, who currently work in the hospitality area. In this perspective the following aspects on i) features of their professional paths and ii) the characteristics of professional activities carried out by them in this professional area will be examined.

METHODOLOGY

With a quantitative methodology, the study relied on completion of a survey, applied to 442 hospitality management graduates, between the years 2006/2007 and 2013/2014, from six Portuguese Polytechnic higher education institutions, whose data were statistically processed using the SPSS software.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

The results allow to highlight the existence of differences in the graduates' professional paths, depending on their gender and less pronounced differences in relation to their age. In addition, the seniority of the graduation is a characterising variable of the professional activity developed by these professionals.

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