



## Getting Sustainability into Higher Education Curricula

### International Workshop

**Dublin, 19-20 May 2019**

This international workshop on 'Getting sustainability into higher education curricula' has two interlinked aims. It seeks to create dialogue around what it means to pursue sustainability in higher education curricula; and to stimulate debate about the legitimacy and authority of the university in a changing world. It will offer participants the opportunity to debate these issues, to showcase examples of programmes/courses and research that are engaging actively with them, and explore possibilities for future WUN-led research projects arising from discussion.

To pursue these aims, the workshop explores two key and interlinked themes: the politics of global and local mobilities within higher education; and the contested nature of the higher education curriculum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our discussions will be held in the wider context of our joint commitment to engage critically with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals agenda; and, specifically, to consider the role of higher education in relation to Goal 4, to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all', and Goal 10, to 'reduce inequalities within and among countries'.

#### Theme 1      Globalisation of higher education and north-south mobilities

This theme engages participants in discussion of the complex space of global mobilities. Couched within the traditional cooperation paradigm, academic mobility is often equated with openness, connection and relationships. It is also seen as a vector of learning and integration. In recent years, however, the cooperation paradigm has come into question and is currently under strain.

Questions have been raised about the kinds of implications that academic mobility has had within a multi-speed global higher education consisting of big and peripheral players. Has the movement of students, teachers and researchers created the intended 'open' collaborative networks or has it rather participated in the advent of a market of minds whereby market-like principles and forces propel inequality and established advantage? Do we observe a growing concentration of minds and resources in highly ranked-institutions within countries acting as magnets for talent, instead of flat and pattern-less flows that benefit all? Do these higher-order global movements translate into any kind of national and local impacts as forms of public goods? The uneven state of play

which the political economy has brought to the surface, and the forces it is exerting on patterns of mobility, call for a fresh appraisal of the ways in which academic mobility impacts on individuals, institutions, and societies.

The workshop will reflect on these issues in relation to the following SDG 4 pledge:

*By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.*

## Theme 2      The higher education curriculum for the 21st century

Recent years have seen heated discussions about whose knowledge is valued in higher education curricula – and why/why not. Such questions are being pursued via ‘decolonising the curriculum’ and ‘transforming higher education’ debates in several WUN network countries and raise challenges around the permeability of traditional university curricula to knowledges seen to be important by other cultures/peoples. Contentious and controversial issues about epistemological / knowledge access play out differently in different national sites.

The workshop will offer opportunity to compare how WUN member universities have engaged with these challenges of globalisation. Have they seen improved access to traditional university curricula as the key challenge, and taken this as a catalyst to improve pedagogies that enable this? Or have they sought to include new kinds of knowledges in ways that challenge previous assumptions – often rooted in a Western scientific paradigm - of what is worth teaching? Or both?

The session will showcase examples of practices of unpacking the HE curriculum to respond to these concerns. It will investigate how partners have engaged with the tensions of universalising access to ‘western’ sciences while attending to opening up what counts as knowledge, and including other cosmologies and epistemologies in ways that challenge the status quo. It will discuss the implications of interrupting – or failing to interrupt – dominant epistemological orthodoxies for the legitimacy and viability of public research-based HE institutions, such as WUN partners.

It will reflect on these issues in relation to the following SDG 4 pledge:

*By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.*

# Workshop Programme

## Day One

- 9.00-9.30 **Welcome and Introduction**  
Professor Andrew Deeks, President, (University College Dublin) and GHEAR Chair, Professor Caroline Dyer (University of Leeds)
- 9.30-11.00 **Keynote lecture 1: 'Global higher education into the 2020s: openness, mobility and barriers'**  
Professor Simon Marginson, University of Oxford  
Chair: Prof Caroline Dyer (University of Leeds)
- 11.00-11.30 **Coffee**
- 11.30-1.00 **Workshop 1: Mobilities: cooperation and competition in a globalised Higher Education**  
Chair: Dr Vassiliki Papatsiba (Sheffield University)
- 1.00-2.00 **Lunch** (leaving for Book of Kells 1.30-1.45)
- 2.30-5.00 **Fieldtrip**  
Visit to Book of Kells

## Day Two

- 9.00-10.30 **Keynote lecture 2: 'Inclusivity, equity, and quality: discursive tensions and structural constraints'**  
Professor Emerita Sue Clegg, Leeds Beckett University  
Chair: Assoc Prof Barbara Grant (University of Auckland)
- 10.30-11.00 **Coffee**
- 11.00-1.00 **Workshop 2: Curriculum turns, shifts and connections: Are we there yet?**  
Presentations and discussion of curriculum change initiatives and research practices from partner universities  
Chair: Dr Kasturi Behari-Leak (University of Cape Town)
- 1.00-2.00 **Lunch**
- 2.00-3.30 **Presentation: Research in progress (2018 GHEAR RDF award)**  
Researching diversity, inclusion and student success: Towards a global campus climate framework  
Chair: Ass Prof Chrystal George Mwangi (University of Massachusetts Amherst)
- 3.30-4.00 **Afternoon tea**
- 4.00-5.00 **Forum Looking ahead to a research agenda**  
Chair: Prof. Caroline Dyer (University of Leeds)

Keynote speakers

**Professor Simon Marginson**

Title - **Global higher education into the 2020s: openness, mobility and barriers**

Simon Marginson is Professor of Higher Education at the University of Oxford, Director of the ESRC/OFSRE Centre for Global Higher Education (CGHE), and Editor-in-Chief of *Higher Education*. Simon's research is focused primarily on global and international higher education, higher education as a public good, and higher education and social inequality. He is currently preparing an integrated theorisation of higher education. His most recent books are *Higher Education in Federal Countries*, edited with Martin Carnoy, Isak Froumin and Oleg Leshukov (Sage, 2018) and *High Participation Systems of Higher Education*, edited with Brendan Cantwell and Anna Smolentseva (Oxford University Press, 2018).

**Professor Sue Clegg**

Title - **Inclusivity, equity, and quality: discursive tensions and structural constraints**

Sue Clegg is Emeritus Professor of Higher Education Research at Leeds Beckett University and Conjoint Professor in the Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education at the University of Newcastle, Australia. She was a Mellon Visiting Scholar at the University of Cape Town in 2014 and had previously been a recipient of the Rector's Award at the University of the Western Cape. She has been a visiting Professor at the University of Technology Sydney and a visiting Scholar at the University of Auckland. Her research draws on critical realism and feminist theory. In her empirical research she has elaborated on importance of theorising temporality and reflexivity. She has been involved in theorising the nature of curriculum and researching extracurricular activity and its importance in the formation and recognition of social and cultural capital. She is currently working on the significance of theorising powerful knowledge in higher education and the implications for theorising diversity and in exploring how these ideas play out in the debates about decolonising the curriculum. She was Editor of *Teaching in Higher Education* from 2006 to 2014 and was a member of the Editorial Board of *Studies in Higher Education* and of *Higher Education Quarterly*.