

Title: Immigrant academics in the pedagogic 'foreign-land':
Factors influencing their pedagogic acculturation

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to identify some of the pedagogic issues experienced by immigrant academics and consider ways in which the pedagogic acculturation of these academics could be best supported by teams and groups.

Session Outline

With globalisation, there has been an increase in cross-border travel of skilled workforces (Kim and Locke, 2010; Poole and Ewan, 2010) including academics within Higher Education (HE). Nearly 28% of academics working in the UK HE sector come from other countries (HEFCE, 2015). The presence of immigrant academics may offer pedagogic opportunities and challenges not only for themselves but also for their students, colleagues, the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the HE sector in general. Despite the increased academic mobility, the challenges that may be faced by immigrant academics and adaptations that they may make in their new work environments have been relatively under-researched (Pherali, 2012; Johansson and Sliwa, 2014). These immigrant academics may encounter 'pedagogic dissonance' (Jansen, 2009) due to the cultural distance between the two pedagogic *habiti* – i.e. the pedagogical culture they are accustomed to and the one they are exposed to in their British HEI. This pedagogic dissonance may inhibit their acculturation and professional/academic development within the British HEIs and hence may have an impact on how they work across their departments and within teams.

This session reports on an online survey of 240 responses from academics in 33 countries to illustrate the pedagogical dissonance and acculturation that both immigrant and native academics face in HE. Initial analysis indicates that there were no differences in the pedagogical dissonance between native and immigrant academics. Further, the immigrant academics felt they were less able to integrate into the pedagogical practices of their HEI than the native academics. This has implications on how we support both home and immigrant academics when they join HEIs in supporting them in working with teams effectively who may have come from

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The session will comprise:

- **Introduction (5 minutes)**

Overview of the work we have done in this field including the edited book on the narratives of nine academics, the SEDA funded study on the perspectives of the migrant academics and the SRHE study on the native academics.

- **Presentation (20 minutes)**

Detailed overview of the SEDA-funded study and presentation of the findings of the study

- **Reflections and Discussion (20 minutes)**

Participants will be encouraged to share their reflections on their experiences and thoughts on the possible teaching and learning opportunities and challenges faced by them if they are migrant academics and in the case of native academics what might be their experiences of working alongside immigrant academics.

The specific questions we would be seeking reflection on from the attendees are as under:

- What might be the opportunities offered by academics' migration for the immigrant academics?
- What might be the teaching and learning challenges posed for immigrant academics?
- How might the academic migration have an impact on the native academics (both positively and negatively)?
- What can institutions do to ensure the immigrant academics are best supported and that symbiotic professional environment develops for both the immigrant and native academics to thrive in their changed professional contexts and contribute to a good teaching and learning experience for students?

References

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