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Workshop outline

- Context – complexity and change in doctoral education;
- Generic components - institutional, departmental, programme, and supervisory team;
- Individual/group components - responding effectively to diversity.
Programme

2.00    Introduction
2.05    Complexity and change in research education
2.25    Group task
2.45    Generic content of induction programmes
3.00    Group task
3.15    Generic content
3.30    Group task
3.45    Responding effectively to diversity
4.15    Conclusions
4.20    Plenary
4.30    Close
The context: complexity and change in doctoral education
Historically…

…the achievement of a doctoral degree was a somewhat rarified and mysterious endeavour. Doctoral education was conducted behind closed doors in spaces remote from either undergraduate teaching or the world of commerce and industry. Its pedagogy has been characterised by some – perhaps unfairly – as one in which the precocious few were called to emulate the master as scholar.

McWilliam and James (2002: 117)
Changes

- massification;
- internationalisation;
- diversification;
- commodification;
- McDonaldisation;
- regulation;
- capitalisation;
- multiplication.
Massification
Key changes – massification

- Historically, ‘very few people, mostly of high attainment and motivation, undertook research degrees…’ (Joyner 2003: 124)
- Recent rapid expansion of numbers virtually all over globe;
- Now many more research students to supervise; in UK numbers up from 44,000 in 1997 to 119,000 in 2007.
Internationalisation

• ‘Push’ factors;
  – Knowledge economy
  – Expansion of undergraduate education
• Capacity constraints
• Reputation

• Unprecedented growth
  – UK 41%
  – France 25%
  – S Africa 23%
  – Canada 21%
  – Australia 20%
  – USA 14%

Powell and Green (2007)
In 1975, 34,000 doctorates awarded across the globe. In 2002, 82,000 awarded. (Reichert, 2006)
Key changes – diversification

‘...Many supervisees barely socialised into the demands and rigours of an academic scholarly and research culture. [Such a culture] is especially inadequate to the needs of many PhD aspirants who, by historic cultural positioning, have not been invited to imagine themselves as subjects of genius.'
Key changes – diversification (cont.)

These include all of who have been marginalised by the academic scholarly culture; women and men and women from the non-dominant class, ethnic or race positions.’
Key changes – diversification (cont.)

• Historically, most students went on to do research straight after an undergraduate degree.

• Still pattern in the sciences, but in other disciplines, a combination of debt and lack of research grants has led to delaying entry to research degree programmes
Key changes – diversification (cont.)

The traditional view of graduate students is of newly-minted Bachelor’s degree recipients engaged in full-time study. However, the decided majority of students...are quite different. They are older...and have family and career responsibilities.

Syverson (1996:1)
Key changes – commodification

• Traditionally deferential and often subservient.

• Now more likely to regard themselves as consumers with rights and expectations
## Key changes – McDonaldisation

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Regulation

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
Key changes – regulation

Higher Education Funding Council
Research Councils
Quality Assurance Agency
  – external Code of Practice;
  – institutions develop internal codes;
  – adherence reviewed at institutional audit.
Capitalisation
Key changes – capitalisation

- Traditional purpose was to train academic researchers
- But from 1970s onwards fewer academic posts and declining interest of doctoral graduates in staying in university employment
- In 21st century, purpose of PhD re-defined in terms of providing key workers for the ‘knowledge economy’
The traditional PhD was...aimed at producing researchers in the so-called Mode 1 of knowledge production, i.e. academic subject specialists who would conduct the search for knowledge for its own sake in line with the traditional academic values of truth, objectivity, and universality. But what was needed in the knowledge economies of the future was researchers trained in the so-called Mode 2 of knowledge production, i.e. researchers inside or
Key changes – capitalisation (cont.)

outside academia who were able to spot commercial opportunities for the application and exploitation of research, bring expertise to bear upon research problems, effectively manage research projects, and place and market the final product. In a nutshell, the traditional PhD was about producing academics, but the new knowledge economy required research entrepreneurs.

Taylor and Beasley (2005: 11-12)
Key changes – capitalisation (cont.)

In response, research sponsors have effectively extended the purpose of doctoral studies to encompass generic employment and knowledge-economy specific skills, and insisted that these form part of the research training of all research students.
Multiplication

- Professional doctorates;
- Practice-based doctorates;
- Project-based doctorates.
Task

What are the implications of these developments for inducting postgraduate research students?
Traditionally induction…

…. has been conceived of primarily in terms of informing students about the nature of the institution they have recently joined, including its history, structures, policies, procedures, and regulations;
In increasingly complex research education system...

...has wider role to play in supporting students

• to make the transition from undergraduates/taught postgraduates/professionals to researchers

• to integrate within the research environment
Induction is the process of supporting new postgraduate students in transitioning into their roles and identities as researchers and in integrating within the institutional and research environments where they will be studying for the next three or four years.
We define the purposes of induction as:

• supporting institutional/departmental transition;
• supporting academic transition;
• supporting administrative transition;
• supporting social transition;
• meeting the needs of diverse groups of students
What generic content should be covered by an induction programme?
Induction at levels of:

• Institution;
• Department;
• Programme;
• Supervisory team.
Institutional induction

- general information about the institution and postgraduate community
- the institution’s policies and procedures
  - Registration and enrolment
  - Assessment and review requirements
  - Research degree regulations
Institutional induction (cont.)

- the institution's expectations
  - Pre-entry
  - Student charters
  - Presentations
  - Current postgraduates
Institutional induction (cont.)

• the research degree process
  • Demystify research degree process
  • Form accurate and realistic expectations
Task

In groups design a training course to explain the research degree process to new doctoral students.

Course should

• *demystify the research degree process*
• *help students to form accurate and realistic expectations of the programme*
• *last up to 2 days*

Consider optimum class size
Institutional induction (cont.)

- the challenges that will typically face research students;
- student support and welfare services;
- student representation;
- social networks and activities;
- opportunities and requirements for skills development.
Institutional induction (cont.)

- roles in teaching and supporting learning
- ethics
- intellectual property rights
- health and safety
Institutional induction – a note of caution

• Massive amount of material

• Institutions can put too much into induction leading to student fatigue and/or boredom
Institutional induction – a note of caution

- **What:** What do students need to know?
- **Rationale:** Why do they need to know it?
- **Importance:** How important is the information?
- **Timeliness:** Do students need to know it now?
- **End result:** What will be achieved by telling students now?
Departmental induction

• Many institutional issues have their local counterparts at departmental level;
• Recent research on retention and completion suggests that departmental induction has a crucial role to play in promoting social and academic integration
Departmental induction (cont.)

Suggest should include:
• an initial reception with academic staff;
• a presentation from the Head of Department;
• a question and answer session with the departmental Director of Postgraduate Studies;
Departmental induction (cont.)

• a presentation from the departmental Director of Postgraduate Training;
• an informal postgraduate coffee morning;
• presentations from current doctoral students and postgraduate student representatives;
• departmental outings and social events for researchers and their families.
Departmental induction (cont.)

- Need to consider the induction needs of students engaged in inter- or trans-disciplinary research;
- Requires co-ordination between departments;
- May include inter- or trans-disciplinary research centres, networks, seminars and reading groups.
Programme induction

- Often assumed that students know what they are letting themselves in for when they do a doctorate, but by no means universally the case;
- Programme induction needs to provide details of:
  - Aims and intended learning outcomes;
  - Programme structure;
  - Programme regulations;
  - Progress and monitoring arrangements;
  - Procedures for addressing unsatisfactory performance
Programme induction (cont.)

- Appropriate information for candidates for doctorates other than the PhD, including:
  - *Professional doctorates, example of website for Salford’s professional doctorate in the built environment*;
  - *Practice-based doctorates, particularly on the balance of ‘writing’ and ‘making’.*
Induction to supervision arrangements

• Traditionally single supervisory model, now supervisory teams so need to define respective roles at the start of the programme;

• Need to calibrate expectations of supervisors and supervisees
  • Exploring researchers' expectations in supervision questionnaire;
  • Superqual tool (Hair 2006);
  • Student perceptions of research supervision questionnaire of University of Western Australia
Induction to supervision arrangements (cont.)

- ‘nuts and bolts’ of supervisory relationship:
  - frequency;
  - location;
  - timing;
  - duration;
  - procedures for cancellation;
  - responsibility for keeping records;
  - ‘crisis management’ arrangements.
Induction to supervision arrangements (cont.)

Timeline
0    Start
6    Internal departmental review of progress;
9    Annual Progress Report by supervisory team and student;
12   Full progress review with panel including independent reviewers; candidacy confirmed or terminated
18   Internal departmental review of progress;
27   Annual Progress Report by supervisory team and student;
30   Internal departmental review of progress;
36   Annual Progress Report by supervisory team and student;
48   Annual Progress Report by supervisory team and student.
Induction to supervision arrangements (cont.)

- Support for researcher and research project
  - Study facilities;
  - Access to copiers, computers, data storage, e-mail, internet, inter-library loans;

- Use of support services:
  - Technical support;
  - Library support.
Responding to diversity
Task

Look at the three case studies and think about how you would design an induction programme to meet each student’s needs.
Case Study 1

John completed his undergraduate degree fifteen years ago, took a PGCE, and for the past fifteen years has worked full-time as a teacher. He is married with two children. He has recently decided that he would like to return to study for a doctorate, which he is prepared to fund himself. He plans to work on his doctorate part-time alongside his full-time job.

• How would you cater for this student’s needs during induction at the levels of the institution, the department, the programme, the supervisory team?
Case Study 2

Maria did very well in her first degree at another institution, and she applied to your department for a place on the doctoral programme. In her application, she explained that she has a severe visual impairment and is registered as disabled. She was accepted as a doctoral candidate, and starts in October.

• How would you cater for this student’s needs during induction at the levels of the institution, the department, the programme, the supervisory team?
Case Study 3

Nashida has recently moved to the UK with her husband and two young children to begin her doctorate in October. She and her family are Muslim. Her husband and children speak very little English.

- How would you cater for this student’s needs during induction at the levels of the institution, the department, the programme, the supervisory team?
Diversity: International students

Just under half of all research students are from outside the UK.

• Confer considerable benefits:
  • very bright and highly-motivated students;
  • cultural enrichment of the research environment;
  • prestige to institutions;
  • opportunities for future collaboration;
  • economic and political benefits;
  • income.
Diversity: International students (cont.)

Challenges:

• traditional view: cultural transition and ‘culture shock’;
• more recent focus: learning transition and ‘study shock’.

Key areas for support through induction:

• calibrating of academic roles;
• academic writing.
Diversity: Part-time students

- About a quarter of students start part-time, proportion much higher if those on continuation are included;
- Can be isolated from academic and peer support networks;
- Find it difficult to access training and development sessions.
Diversity: Part-time students (cont.)

Responsive and flexible provision including a combination of:

• face-to-face academic induction;

• peer networking;

• electronic induction.
Diversity: Distance-learning students

Induction needs to focus on issues of particular relevance to their mode of study including:

• the expected method and frequency of interaction;

• how monitoring procedures will be implemented;

• facilities and resources (e.g. computers and internet access);

• access to sources of support.
Diversity: Distance-learning students (cont.)

- On-line resources;
- Induction packs;
- Face-to-face;
- Residential schools and programmes.
Diversity: Disabled students

4% of research student population have a declared disability.

• Mobility;
• Physical layout;
• Appropriate format for materials.

SRHE Guide and http://www.premia.ac.uk
Diversity: Mature students

Upward shift in age profile of research students.

Issues can include:

• fears skills were rusty and behind those of younger students;
• devaluation of life experiences by research;
• social isolation;
• awkwardness with supervisors, especially if younger.

Induction: Mature student presenter to share issues and solutions.
Diversity: Gender

- Current imbalance between gender composition of supervisors and of research students;

- Can lead to female research students finding themselves isolated and marginalised by macho male research culture;

- Associated in some subjects with females leaving early or being put off academic careers.
Diversity: Gender (cont.)

• Presentations at induction from males and females from all levels;

• Informal peer support groups:
  
  e.g. Café des Femmes in the Department of Theology and Religion at Durham.
Diversity: Religion

Higher Education Academy: Faith Guides

Christianity
Hinduism
Islam
Judaism
Sikhism
Diversity: Religion (cont.)

With any event:

• make sure that food is clearly labelled, and that there is a range of different foods to meet students’ dietary requirements;

• avoid organising events that focus on the consumption of alcohol;

• take care to ensure that you are sensitive to religious and cultural issues if you are organising residential events or field trips.
Evaluating induction
Evaluating induction

- Immediate questionnaires;
- Later questionnaires;
- Student focus groups
- Feedback from supervisors;
- Annual review processes.
Conclusions

• Induction historically been seen in terms of institutional transition;
• Massive changes in doctoral education;
• Induction now also about academic, administrative, and social transition;
• One size does not fit all, but also has to respond to needs of diverse student population.
Thank you