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**The University of West London**

**Teaching and Learning Conference 2015**

***Changing landscape, re-thinking practice***

**Call for Proposals**

# Introduction

The University of West London annual Teaching and Learning Conference 2015 will be held at Paragon on Monday 29th June.

This year’s conference is focused on how we might adapt our approaches to learning, teaching & assessment in the midst of a rapidly changing environment. These changes include: the growth and potential of new digital technologies; the emergence of students as consumers and their associated expectations; a demand for flexible learning in its many guises; the need to develop accomplished learners with strong employability skills.

The conference programme will reflect the theme of rethinking our approaches with a particular focus on the following sub-themes:

* Innovating in the classroom
* Curriculum redesign
* Bridging the gap between theory & practice
* Assessment for Learning
* Strengthening student support
* Embedding literacies in the curriculum

Proposals in the form of abstracts are invited for presentations, workshops and posters. Proposals should be around 300 words and need to show clearly how your session relates to the conference theme. Proposals that consider the learner perspective or actively involve students are strongly encouraged.

Proposals will be peer reviewed and feedback will be provided.

# Key dates

* Call for proposals opens: Tuesday 14th April
* Deadline for submissions: Monday 11th May
* Notification: Friday 29th May
* Conference: Monday 29th June

# Submitting Proposals

*Session Types*

Proposals, as abstracts, are invited for 3 types of sessions:

1. **Presentations** should allow time for discussion. Presentations will either be allocated 10 or 20 minutes, with a further 5-10 minutes for discussion.
2. **Workshops** are interactive sessions (not presentations) that explore topics in greater detail. They should run from between 30-45 minutes. The abstract should indicate the format of the workshop.
3. **Posters** will be displayed in the Exhibition space. Final posters should be A1 size (841x594mm).

*Submission Process*

Proposals should be submitted as a word document using the form below to [instil@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:instil@uwl.ac.uk) no later than Monday 11th May, 5pm.

Submissions will be peer reviewed (by colleagues from across the University) and feedback will be provided. Proposals will be judged based on:

1. Relevance to the conference themes
2. Clarity and coherence
3. Scholarship (i.e. reference to related research/literature)
4. Adherence to the submission requirements

Proposals that consider the learner perspective or actively involve students are strongly encouraged.

*Format for the Abstracts*

Abstracts should be a maximum 300 words and need to show clearly how your session relates to the conference theme. References are not included in the word count.

Keep in mind that the proposal you submit for review now will, if accepted, also be used for inclusion in the conference programme and is the primary way for participants to choose which session to attend.

# Proposal Submission Form

Completed forms (i.e. this page) should be sent to [instil@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:instil@uwl.ac.uk) with a subject line ‘TL Conference 2015 Proposal (Author Name)’ to arriveno later than **11th May, 5pm.** Late submissions will not be considered.

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| --- | --- |
| **Title:** | A workshop exploring how cultural norms and values impact the multicultural groupwork assessment process |
| **Type** Workshop for the Theme: Assessment for Learning | |
| **Abstract** (max. 300-words, not including references)  In today’s multicultural society students can expect to work in multicultural groups as part of their professional practice (Sweeney *et al*. 2008; Krishnamurthi 2003). Therefore the ability to work in multicultural groups is seen as an integral part of a student’s competency within higher education (Papov *et al.* 2012).    Multicultural group work provides for many benefits. The greater diversity in communication styles helps development of intercultural competence (De Vita 2000; Popav *et al*. 2012) and increases performance in team project tasks (De Vita 2000). Equally it provides challenges due to different cultural behaviour patterns. As Bourdieu (1990) and the Hofstede (1980) model identified, each culture inherits its own societal behavioural norms. A lack of knowledge of the differences in members’ social norms and values may provide for conflicts. Particularly within the multicultural groupwork assessment process as student socio-cultural expectations of verbal communication norms may be challenged (Popov *et al.* 2012). International students from more passive teacher led approach to learning (Kim and Davis 2014), unfamiliar to verbally challenging and debating with other students ideas face-to-face. (Vryonides 2007); Cox and Blake 1991) may find small groupwork daunting as the nature of the assessment requires them to adapt to a set of cultural norms different to theirs (De Vita 2002; Kimmel and Volet 2010).  **Workshop Format**  The aim of this workshop is to bring awareness of how cultural norms may impact the group assessment process.  The workshop provides an opportunity for lecturers to explore their own understanding and experiences of the cultural behaviour and societal norms international students bring to the groupwork assessment process. Clearly cultural diversity cannot be stereotyped as factors such as age and gender can affect groupwork dynamics. However in order to capitalise on the benefits cultural diversity brings and help lecturers become better aware of the different socio-cultural norms and behaviours international students bring to the groupwork assessment, the workshop will present the Hofstede model’s set of indices that quantitatively describe national cultures. The workshop will then attempt to unravel whether having this informed understanding of different cultures, derived from literature, can better help lecturers maximise the benefits multicultural group work assessment brings.  **References** (optional but encouraged)  Bourdieu, P. (1990). In other Words. Cambridge, Polity Press.  Cox, T. and Blake, S. (1991). Managing cultural diversity: implications for organisational effectiveness. Academy of Management Executive, 5(3), 45-56.  De Vita, G. (2002) Does Assessed Multicultural Group Work really pull UK Students' Average down? *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education,* 27(2), p.153-161.  Hofstede, G(1980), culture’s consequences: international differences in work-related values. Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.  Kimmel, K. and Volet, S. (2010) Significance of context in university students' (meta)cognitions related to group work: A multi-layered, multi-dimensional and cultural approach. *Learning and Instruction,* 20(6), p.449-464.  Krishnamurthi, M. (2003). Assessing multicultural initiatives in higher education institutions. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 28 no. 3: 263-77  Sweeney, A., Weaven, S. & Herington, C. (2008) Multicultural influences on group learning: a qualitative higher education study. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education,* 33(2), p.119-132.  Vryonides, M. (2007) Social and cultural capital in educational research: issues of operationalisation and measurement. *British Educational Research Journal*, Volume 33, issue 6, December 2007, pp 867-885. | |
| **Author Name(s)** |  |
| **School / Department** | Hospitality and Tourism |

Paper accepted, subject to the following amendments.

* **Make the focus of the workshop clear**. The title claims the workshop will explore how cultural norms and values impact the multicultural group-work assessment process, which would feed into the conference theme of assessment for learning. The workshop format, however, seems to be structured in a way which may elicit the difficulties international students may bring to group-work, and result in these being stereotyped and shamed.
* **Include the models / theories which underpin the session**. These need to be explicit in the abstract. Models / theories which are claimed to be explored have not been explained, nor is it clear how these can be based on a discussion which has not taken place yet.

The focus and structure of this workshop should be made clearer for it to be accepted.