

An aerial photograph of a vast sand dune landscape. The dunes are characterized by numerous parallel ridges and valleys, creating a rhythmic pattern across the terrain. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the sand. In the bottom right corner, a single starfish is visible, partially buried in the sand. The overall scene is serene and expansive.

The STAR Project

(Student Transition and Retention)

Support For International Students in Higher Education In The UK

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SUMMARY

International students are now an important feature of the Higher Education institutions in the UK and their specific needs should be given attention. This does, of course, pose significant problems for front-line academics, course directors and administrators as they have to come to grips with cultural and academic differences between home and international students and the complexities of having classes with both groups.

The experiences recounted in this case study describe three activities (language provision, a bridging course and an orientation programme) involving international students at the University of Ulster. These activities attempt to support international students to ensure that they are well integrated into both college and academic life.

Keywords - International students, student retention, student transition.

INTRODUCTION

The media spotlight has recently been focussed on the future of science and, particularly, though not exclusively, on physics and chemistry in our UK universities (Anon, 2005). Some of the difficulties experienced by institutions are thought to result from a general decline in students' interest for 'hard science'. The U.K. application figures seem to support this view – from 1997 to 2003, chemistry applications fell from 3,900 to 2,700 whilst physics applications declined from 3,500 to 3,200 (Cookson, 2004).

Increasingly, universities are turning to the recruitment of overseas students to 'fill the gap'. As Jaggi (2004) points out: "If science and research in UK universities has a problem, then overseas students are very much part of the solution – both financially and academically." The total higher education course fees in 2002-2003 were £3.4 billion – 31.8% of this came from overseas (non-EU) students even though they represented only 8.5% of the student population (Jaggi, 2004). Whilst the number of EU (non-UK) *science* students has remained more or less unchanged at about 40,000 between 1999/2000 and 2002/2003 the number of science students from outside the EU has increased from about 45,000 to over 70,000. Indeed, in some universities, international

students now make up a significant part of the undergraduate population, for example, within the Russell Group of universities about 33% of the undergraduate population is international (Jaggi, 2004). Inevitably, with the increased pressure on science departments, the size of this cohort will continue to grow.

Therefore, with the increasing importance of the overseas student population, it is even more imperative that policy and practices are developed to meet their specific needs.

The experiences recounted in this case study describe three activities involving international students at the University of Ulster. These attempt to support international students to ensure that they are well integrated into both college and academic life.

RELEVANCE TO THE STAR GUIDELINES

At its outset the STAR project researched, produced and published a set of guidelines based on the causes of student attrition and which pointed the way towards possible good practice. The STAR guidelines (Cook *et al.*, 2005) relevant to this case study are:

- 2.1** Induction activities should familiarise students with the local area, the campus and its support services.
- 2.2** Induction activities should highlight students' academic obligations and the obligations of the staff to the students.
- 2.3** Induction activities should support the development of those independent study habits suitable for higher education.
- 2.5** Induction activities should promote the development of good communication between staff and students.
- 3.2** The course and its delivery should assist students' transition from their previous educational experience to studying at tertiary level as well as addressing the different needs arising from the subject backgrounds of the student cohort.
- 4.2** Staff should recognise that expertise in ensuring appropriate support and guidance of students is as important as expertise in their subject.

Cook, *et al.* (2005)

THE PROBLEM

The University of Ulster has an administrative department, the International Office, which contains a teaching team (CELT – Centre for English Language Teaching) devoted to supporting the language development of International students. The International Office/CELT has recognised that international students accepted into all the university's programmes of study face challenges in terms of adapting to new

academic and social experiences. While some of these arise inevitably from language barriers many stem from cultural differences between the United Kingdom and students' home countries. The cultural diversity encompasses students from English-speaking countries such as the US to those students from continental Europe (e.g. Germany, France, Italy, Greece, etc.) to those students from the East and Far East. At the University of Ulster there are sizeable groups from Taiwan, mainland China, Japan and Hong Kong and these, in themselves, form a very heterogeneous group.

Many cultural differences result from the values that underpin the teaching and learning styles in the country of origin. Different interpretations of these values may result in higher education institutions in the UK not fully appreciating the significance of this diversity and thus creating difficulties for efficient teaching and improved learning. For example, in some cultures it is inappropriate to question the authority and knowledge of the lecturer and so critical thinking, which is so valued in the UK, is not encouraged. Some cultures value silence in class and so active participation is inhibited; thus some students find it difficult to contribute in seminars and tutorials (and this is not unknown in home students) and hence teaching approaches need to be sensitive to both cultural and/or individual circumstances. Teaching methods at pre-university level may not encourage independent learning; again, this may be true of home students also. There also exists a problem of academic integrity as some cultures regard the virtual reproduction of existing published work as a compliment to the original author and an acceptable practice whilst this is heavily frowned upon in the UK.

While their determination and work ethic is mitigation for some of their difficulties, some international students can bring with them culturally based study strategies that permit neither independent learning nor confident speaking.

The problems faced by home-based students, i.e. a new academic environment, a lack of experience of independent learning, a new living environment, having to make new friends, etc. are exacerbated for international students. Many have to cope with the additional burdens of the perceived speed of spoken English, the variation in regional accents and the apparent directness of face-to-face communication. These problems together with differences in climate, living costs, health care and social activities all combine to prevent efficient and effective learning.

THE PRACTICES

In order to support and integrate such students into the academic community, a number of mechanisms have evolved. Three of these are detailed below.

International Office/CELT English Language Provision

The International Office/CELT are jointly responsible for the initial care and support of international students. Their policies acknowledge the importance of social as well as academic integration of these students and the difficulties encountered by international students entering Northern Ireland, most for the first time.

To help international students overcome the language barrier the International Office/CELT offers a six-week Pre-sessional English Language for Academic Study Programme (ELAS). The programme is obligatory for students who have achieved IELTS 5.5 (International English Language Testing System, <http://www.ielts.org/>) or equivalent. The University of Ulster asks for an IELTS score of 6.0 for entry to most degree programmes but, for example, entry into the BSc Hons Speech and Language Therapy requires an IELTS score of 7.5. Students offering an IELTS score below 6.0 are only conditionally admitted to the University and must attain a level equivalent to 6.0 before being allowed to proceed to a degree programme. The outcomes of the programme equate to an IELTS score of 6.0; a student who does not achieve this cannot continue on their chosen course until they do so.

Students who have already reached the requisite IELTS 6.0 score or equivalent can attend the programme and will benefit from attendance because it also aims to teach skills that are necessary for independent learning. Other added benefits to the pre-sessional ELAS course include introducing students to different teaching styles, particularly group work. Students become familiar with a small number of staff who they get to know them on a first name basis and learn about their roles in the University. This helps them to begin to feel part of the University.

Student Assistants are employed specifically for the Pre-sessional ELAS Programme. They are recruited through the University website, University notice boards and the Training and Employment Agency. They are normally university students but not necessarily from the University of Ulster and can be either home or international students.

The ELAS programme starts on a Wednesday but the students are asked to arrive in Northern Ireland on the Monday of that week. The Student Assistants meet and greet new arrivals at Belfast International Airport and Belfast City Airport. Courtesy buses operate to transport incoming students to the various campuses. Students on the ELAS programme generally stay on campus and so the first couple of days are spent orientating them to their new accommodation and environment.

The first day of the ELAS programme is the Induction session whereby students are given an overview of the next six weeks, they are given information on visas, meet representatives from Student Support and are given a campus tour. Additionally they attend a session on how to fill out forms, something of critical importance over the first few weeks at university.

Within the pre-session teaching, students are taught in multi-cultural groups and these groups (maximum of 20) are formed depending on the students' level of English. All groups follow the same curriculum (which has the same assessment criteria) but the lecturers teach the material at a speed and intensity in keeping with the group's level of English. See an excerpt from the pre-session timetable in Appendix 1.

During the pre-session ELAS course the students complete a written report and they also make a presentation using those skills acquired in the previous weeks. Additionally those with a conditional offer have to complete an examination in the four skills of Listening, Reading/Use of English, Writing and Speaking to ensure their English is up to the standard required before proceeding on to a degree programme. Students also attend lectures by visiting invited speakers, in order to improve their exposure to a variation in styles and types of delivery.

The Student Assistants help plan cultural and social events during the six-week period, such as trips to local tourist attractions and shopping expeditions. Because of the nature and length of time spent with the new students, the fact that they are of a similar age and have also recent experience of being new members of the university community, Student Assistants become the link between the new students, university staff and the staff in the International Office/CELT. Over this time the Student Assistants get to know the new students extremely well, can identify problems and, if appropriate, pass this information on to the relevant staff.

At the end of the six-week ELAS programme there is a party. The University provides the room and the refreshments but the students themselves provide the entertainment. This has proven to be a highly successful end to the programme and as other international groups attend the party there is added integration.

The studies undertaken in the pre-session programme may be continued during the teaching semester through In-session English Language Workshops that are available to all international registered students of the university. These workshops have replaced in-session English Language modules that were taught previously. Whilst attendance is optional, it is highly recommended. The workshops are additional to the formal teaching within the degree programmes on which the students are enrolled. Students may apply for a maximum of three workshops per semester from the six on offer, as shown in Table 1. Workshops run at various times during the week in order to

accommodate course timetables. Currently, these workshops are not credit-bearing (though this is under review) but certificates of attendance are awarded to students who qualify.

Table 1. **In-session English Language Workshops available at the University of Ulster.**

In-session Workshops	No. of Weeks
Accuracy in English (available twice per week)	11
Listening and reading skills (available twice per week)	11
Academic writing (available twice per week)	11
Spoken English and cultural awareness (available twice per week)	11
Giving presentations (available twice per week)	5
Pronunciation (available twice per week)	1

Details of the workshops, including learning outcomes, are included in the In-session English Language Booklet; an excerpt is attached in Appendix 2.

Both the pre-session ELAS programme and the in-session workshops are free to full time students. In addition, students can attend up to 3 individual, one-to-one sessions per semester with Teaching Fellows within the International Office/CELT where they can receive support with assignment/report writing or any other problematic area of English-related study. Attendance at the workshops qualifies students to access these individual academic consultations and this acts as an incentive to attend.

The Teaching Fellows are permanent appointments. They do not have a research role and their primary function is the delivery of the core English language teaching to University of Ulster students on three of the main campuses (Magee (Derry), Jordanstown (just north of Belfast) and Coleraine) – the ELAS pre-session programme, the in-session workshops and the academic consultations. All have some administrative/managerial responsibilities and one of them acts as an Academic Coordinator. Some also have responsibilities for English language programmes in collaborative institutions in China and one Teaching Fellow is employed on a one-year collaborative English language programme in China.

Faculty of Life and Health Sciences Summer Bridging Course

The University runs a summer bridging course for students entering the final year of some courses within the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences, having completed a higher diploma at another institution. For international students the main aim of this course is to help them integrate into life in Northern Ireland and to help them begin to develop transferable skills such as research and report writing skills. A bridging course timetable is included in Appendix 3.

The international students take a Use of English test, administered by the International Office/CELT, at the beginning of the three-week course in order to gauge their ability to use the English language. If the student's score is below 40, which is equivalent to an Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE; <http://www.alte.org>) Level 3, then the student is strongly advised to attend the in-session workshops described above. The students are then re-tested at the end of semester one to assess their progress in English. During the bridging course students attend workshops/seminars/lectures on presentation skills by the International Office/CELT and are assessed on these skills towards the end of the summer programme.

A student's previous educational experiences leaves ingrained cultural values and is therefore, an issue for all international students and not just those for whom English is a second language. Again, some of these students may have come from an educational background and a culture where communication is very much one-way from the lecturer or the person in authority and where class participation and critical reasoning are not encouraged. The bridging course explicitly addresses these cultural differences. The students are encouraged to participate; discussion sessions are built in, presentation skills are taught and the students are made aware that they are ultimately responsible for what they learn and how they learn it. Students attend lectures and practical demonstrations on how to use the library and IT resources to access information and then how to use this information appropriately in report writing sessions.

Staff Opinions of the ELAS and Summer Bridging Courses

Many of the lecturing staff value the pre-session and in-session English Language support given to international students. A member of staff commented:

“Right from the start the important aspect is their level of English. If their English is weak it is going to be a difficult year for them. So in terms of settling in it is an important aspect to support them from day one.”

Another acknowledged:

“For some students when you ask them a question it is hard for them to communicate with lecturers and their colleagues.”

However, it is important to note that international students normally have a relatively competent grasp of English prior to studying at the University of Ulster. The pre-session ELAS programme lasts six weeks and as one lecturer stated:

“Yes they do attend pre-sessional English classes but I think we can’t achieve a big improvement in the time frame we have.”

A Teaching Fellow from the International Office/CELT agrees that there is no huge improvement in their English but there are other benefits to the programme:

“In the time available we have to incorporate and develop reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. This is difficult; we do make a 0.5 IELTS band progress but they also gain confidence and get nestled into society and life in NI. They get bank accounts opened, make friends, get to know their way around the university and people and places to go for help. They can then act as an unofficial buddy for other incoming students at a later date.”

In terms of trying to change behaviours ingrained in students from their previous educational background, the bridging course co-ordinator comments:

“By-and-large they haven’t had to take that responsibility before and so clearly if they are in difficulties they have to ask.

We have to get across the message that we need interactivity and discussion and I think the English classes help get this across. We also build in discussion sessions throughout the bridging course; we need to try to get them to participate. There can be limitations in terms of the lecturer – some are better than others at encouraging discussion.”

Another lecturer agreed with these limitations:

“Some people are gifted in their delivery, their style of delivery and how to make it interesting and they get that response. It is just an extension of ‘how do you encourage participation?’”

Both agreed that lecturers would benefit from some help when lecturing to international students:

“A programme to help lecturers know the right approach to encourage the students to participate. That could help.”

“It is really just building on the principles of small group teaching where you can deliver the content in an interesting way. I suppose in our case we break the session down as they can only truly listen for 15 minutes

and do something different if it is only one-way. It comes down to how you get them to make a comment if something isn't clear."

A conference in November 2004 held at the University of Ulster introduced participants to some of the problems associated with teaching students from a different cultural background, particularly those from the China; the associated PowerPoint presentation is given in Appendix 4.

The International Office/CELT advises:

"Speakers to speak slowly, clearly and not to use colloquialisms, as even the most fluent speakers will not understand them. Also to check at intervals for understanding."

The Bridging Course Director described an improvement in English over the semester one period in some of these students. However, it was not possible to attribute this improvement completely to the workshops but it certainly did help some students.

"Last year we found that there was a difference between two cohorts [doing the bridging course]; there was a Biotechnology cohort and we looked through their results and would say they improved their English and the other cohort of Food Technology Management certainly hadn't. I think one aspect of it was attitudinal but there were other factors, for example, in terms of the timetable where they argued they couldn't get to the English classes."

(Course Director, Bridging Course)

In addition, it is possible to look at how the bridging course students performed overall.

"In Food Technology there were two [students who obtained] 2.2s and six [who obtained] 2.1s. In Biotechnology there were actually three Firsts, but this probably reflects that the Biotechnology group were a stronger group coming in with a higher average mark in their Higher Diploma. But certainly in terms of the English, our external examiner for Food technology Management interviewed all the students and wanted to be confident that they could all communicate their knowledge in English and was unhappy with [the abilities of] two students. In general the external examiner was happy with the effort being made to ensure English was of a certain standard."

(Course Director, Bridging Course)

The Main Orientation Programme

New international students, including those who have completed the Pre-sessional ELAS Programme and the Summer Bridging course, are invited to attend an Orientation Week at the beginning of semester one in the week preceding the start of teaching. This programme provides them with the opportunity to become familiar with the University, the campus and studying in a UK university whilst experiencing a different culture. It is a much more intensive programme of events than the programme available to home students. The Main Orientation Programme's timetable is given in Appendix 5. The following week is the beginning of the semester and deemed Freshers' Week where there are orientation events for all students – home and international. International students attend departmental orientation activities in class cohorts and are welcome to attend any of the centrally organised events with their peers.

Notification of the international students' main orientation programme is sent out from the International Office well in advance to enable suitable travel plans to be finalised. Organisation and support for the programme resides with the International Office/CELT.

Student Assistants, employed to help with Orientation Week and the immediate run up to it, meet and greet new arrivals at the two main airports. Again, free charter buses operate to transport incoming students to the various campuses. The Student Assistants are also responsible for putting together a welcome pack for the new arrivals.

On the day of arrival they are directed to the International Office/CELT where they pick up their information pack. This provides the following information:

- A timetable for the Orientation Week
- Sample time-tables (and direction to the University's on-line timetable system)
- Invitations to the Provost's Reception and Coleraine Mayor's Reception
- The transport time-table for the week (buses and trains)
- Local tourist information leaflets.
- An Information Booklet which is updated annually and prepared by Student Assistants

The orientation aims to introduce students to Northern Ireland in general and the University, including its facilities, the local environment and shopping areas in particular. Students are introduced to administrative and academic staff, members of the Students' Union and other international students. This orientation week gives students the opportunity to familiarise themselves with University procedures and working practices, as well as giving assistance with all registration formalities. Students are strongly advised to attend all sessions of the orientation programme in order to help them to settle into life at the

University of Ulster more easily. However, experience shows that Asian students prefer a more formalised, structured orientation whereas SOCRATES (European) and North American students, etc. prefer to 'do their own thing'.

There are opportunities for students to meet and stay with local families. 'International Friends' is a group of local people who help to link international students on the Coleraine campus with local families. International Friends provides an ideal opportunity for international students to meet local people outside the University, to learn about Northern Irish family life and culture, and to make new friends. International Friends also organises local walks and local ceilidhs (Irish set dancing evenings).

For those living in university owned accommodation, the Accommodation Office is involved in the international students' orientation in terms of facilitating their access to information related to health and safety regulations, e.g. fire alarm protocol, etc. and general 'ground rules'. Thereafter, many of the students are in almost daily contact with accommodation staff and so problems can be easily identified and dealt with.

In the week following Orientation Week the international students along with home students, meet the Residents Assistants who live in university accommodation and provide peer support and leadership to both home and international students living alongside them. Residents Assistants are students often in their final year so they bring to the role recent experience of adapting to life at university. Several of the Residents Assistants are international students and thus can empathise with and effectively help their (usually) younger peers. Residents Assistants organise events to help students mix socially. Each student pays a booking fee for their accommodation a portion of which is allocated to a social fund called 'Resident Life'; students can apply to this fund for money to hold events and excursions to promote integration.

The Students' Union are also involved in the orientation and induction of international students. Members of the Students' Union accompany the students on a tour of Ireland's North Coast and the world-renowned Giant's Causeway. That evening they host a night of entertainment with food and ice-breaker games. The Christian Union also hosts evenings such as Irish ceilidhs and it actively encourages all students to drop in to have a chat and meet each other and this forms another source of support.

A senior officer of the Union also meets with the students to let them know the role of the Students' Union, what it can do for them and where they can get help.

Students' Union Site Vice President at Coleraine commented:

“International students play a vital role as part of the cultural diversity and vibrancy at the University of Ulster. The Students’ Union is here to support international students during their stay and to ensure that their time at the University of Ulster is enjoyable and memorable”.

This year, 2005/06, the Students’ Union aims to have an international student in place as the International Officer – it has not necessarily been the case previously. An international student has the added advantage of having an insight into adapting to life and study in a new country and so would be more effective in answering queries and helping solve problems.

The Students’ Union also has an International Students’ Society that organises cultural events, weekend breaks, sporting activities for both international students and home students. As a lecturer commented, there are many advantages to these extra-curricular activities:

“As far as integrating we encourage them to take up sports, it is a great common ground and their English does improve with the interaction.”

Staff and Student opinions

Helping students orientate to life in Northern Ireland and inducting them into the University is important. As a lecturer commented:

“Social integration is key to them for success and settling quickly. If they can’t get their money from home or can’t get settled in accommodation it’s going to have a big knock on effect ... even in terms of the campus, getting to know where things are, where the sources of help are, that the first port of call is the Course Director but sometimes it is more effective to go straight to the module co-ordinator or to the Faculty Office so sign-posting this is valuable.”

The International Office/CELT do not consider the students’ orientation to be complete after the initial Orientation Week:

“We take the view that orientation does not stop at the end of that week, it continues throughout their time here. Initiation and familiarisation is very gradual for them.”

A lecturer acknowledges that orientation and induction encompass longer-term objectives:

“We can help somewhat but their value and behaviour systems are different from the ones here and it is hard to change. We can encourage them to ask questions openly and express opinions but I don’t think we can change that

a lot. In my experience cultural differences need more than one year.”

An international student welcomes the orientation activities:

“This is my first time studying at the University of Ulster so a welcome event for international students provides a great introduction to the University and to the cultural attractions of Northern Ireland”.

CONCLUSION

Good practice in relation to induction suggests that opportunities should be available to facilitate both academic and social integration (Carter *et al.* 2003). This is of particular importance to international students who not only face the task of settling into a new academic environment but also a new country and a new culture. These problems can be exacerbated by the need to communicate in a different language.

University staff need to understand the cultural diversity within the international student body and help them integrate into the university community in order for them to become successful, independent learners and to benefit fully from their time in the UK.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

University of Ulster	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 campuses• 24,389 students• Undergraduate: 19,796• Postgraduate 5593• Full time: 16,821• Part time: 7,568 <p>• >3500 staff</p> <p>>1000 International students from >60 countries</p>
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FURTHER INFORMATION

See STAR Case Study: Support for International Students in Higher Education

APPENDIX 1

Pre-sessional English for Academic Purposes 2005 Coleraine Student timetable

Week 3, 22 – 26 August 2005					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9.15 – 12.15	Writing Unit 4 Internet Unit 6	Writing Unit 5 Grammar Unit 5	Project workshop Reading Unit 5	Writing Unit 8 Grammar Tense review	Project Writing
					12.30 student/staff consultative meeting
1.30 – 3.00	Presentation Skills	Listening Unit 3 & 4	Listening Skills Tutorial participation skills	Guest lecture 'Culture kick'	Supervised guided study Reading Unit 5
Tutorials	1 hr	1 hr			

APPENDIX 2

Examples of In-session Workshops

ACCURACY IN ENGLISH

Aims and objectives

- * To improve sentence structure accuracy in the context of assignment writing.
- * To help you recognise and correct grammatical inaccuracies.
- * To help you choose appropriate sentence structure and vocabulary.
- * To improve accuracy in punctuation use.
- * To examine use of appropriate register.
- * Areas of grammatical difficulty according to the group's needs.
- * Areas of vocabulary difficulty according to the group's needs.

Workshop Description

This is an eleven-week workshop of two hours per week. The workshop aims to clarify and extend your understanding of key grammar and vocabulary areas in spoken as well as written contexts. There is tutor input activities and pair work, as well as opportunities to discuss how to overcome commonly occurring or individual problems in accuracy in writing, grammar and vocabulary.

Who Should Attend

- * International students who find that their written or spoken communication is often unclear to the reader or listener because of inaccuracies.
- * Students who wish to clarify or improve sentence structure, tenses and other areas of grammar and vocabulary.

SPOKEN ENGLISH AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

Aims and objectives

- * Practice in communication in various social and academic situations.
- * Focus on correctness in conversation.
- * Strategies and language for effective discussion.
- * To exchange information on your culture with other students and explore the differences.
- * To recognise that a knowledge of culture is essential to the study of the language.

Workshop Description

This is an eleven-week workshop of two hours per week. There is tutor input and monitoring, a small amount of listening to examples, awareness of natural spoken English and a great deal of practice in pairs or groups. There is also a focus on acquiring language and strategies to gain control over your contribution to

discussion. Workshop methods include small group and pair work, so that you will take a highly interactive role while the tutor acts as a facilitator.

Who Should Attend

- * International students who would like guidance and practice in spoken English and would like to improve their cross cultural awareness.

GIVING PRESENTATIONS

Aims and objectives

- * To focus on language of presentations
- * To analyse video extracts of academic presentations
- * To practice giving sections/whole presentations using PowerPoint and to receive feedback.

Workshop Description

This is a five-week workshop of two hours per week. There is considerable tutor input on approaching and preparing effectively for a presentation in English and on use of language. There is also emphasis on practice in giving presentations, with tutor and peer feedback.

Who Should Attend

International students who wish to learn and practice how to give seminar presentations in English.

APPENDIX 3

Summer Bridging Course for BSc Hons Biotechnology, BSc Hons Human Nutrition and BSc Hons Food Tech Mgt

Week Starting	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
29 Aug	Holiday	<p><i>Induction</i> in LT14 10.10-12.20 Welcome, campus tour & introduction to library 12.30-13.15 Briefing</p> <p><i>BMS333C3</i> in LT16 14.15-17.05 Use of English test (CELT) 17.15 Reception</p>	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> in LT14 9.15-10.05 Graduate Skills 10.15-12.05 Scientific report writing and Plagiarism 12.15-13.05 Statistics</p> <p><i>BMS333C3</i> in A111 14.15-17.05 IT Services 15.15-17.05 Data analysis using Excel</p>	<p><i>Induction</i> in LT6 10.15-12.20 Library seminar and assignments 12.30-13.30 Student support</p> <p><i>BMS333C3</i> in LT10 14.15-17.05 Skills for presentations (CELT)</p>	<p>Induction 10.15 Meet at Waterstones Bookshop for sight seeing of Antrim Coast</p>
5 Sept	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> in TL2 10.15-11.05 Health and Safety 11.15-14.05 Micro lab Practicals</p> <p>Continuation of practicals as required</p>	<p>BMS333C3 9.15 Meet at Waterstones Bookshop for visit to Dairy Product Packers (DPP) and sight seeing in Belfast</p>	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> in TL2 Continuation of practical as required</p> <p><i>BMS333C3</i> in A111 14.15-17.05 Data analysis using SPSS</p>	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> in TL2 Continuation of practical as required</p> <p><i>BMS333C3</i> in LT10 14.15-17.05 Skills for presentations (CELT)</p>	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> in TL2 Continuation of practical as required</p> <p>Free to work on the practical report and supporting literature for the DPP visit essay</p>
12 Sept	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> in LT6 10.15-11.05 DPP visit workshop</p> <p>Free to work on practical report</p>	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> Submit draft practical report to your tutor for feedback</p> <p>Free to work on the practical report & revise for essay exam question</p>	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> in H254 10.15-11.15 Write an essay under exam conditions about the DPP visit</p> <p>Free to work in assessed presentation</p>	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> Free to meet tutor and to work on the practical report</p> <p><i>BMS333C3</i> in LT10 14.15-17.05 Assessed presentations (CELT)</p>	<p><i>BMS333C3</i> in LT14 10.15-11.05 Submit final practical report Module evaluation Final year briefing 11.15-11.45 Briefing on use of additional “use of English” classes (CELT)</p>

APPENDIX 4

The academic backgrounds of students in China

Some perspectives
Anne Hagan
Centre for English Language Teaching

Contents

- Confucian values related to education
- Selection for university
- University teaching and learning methods
- Problems students encounter here
- Culturally-based study strategies
- Conclusion

Confucian values related to education

(Adapted from Flowerdew and Miller, 1995)

- Respect for authority of lecturer
- Lecturer should not be questioned
- Student motivated by family and pressure to excel
- Positive value on self-effacement and silence
- Emphasis on group orientation to learning
- Paradoxically, close relationship between lecturer and student (communality)

Selection for university

- Students selected on basis of nationwide examination on June 7, 8, 9 each year
- All study from primary school onwards directed towards this examination
- Competition extremely fierce
- Failure means 'blue collar' work
- Students allocated to university on basis of marks obtained

University teaching and learning methods

- Rote learning, memorisation and repetition
- Lecturer may simply read from textbook
- Little emphasis on creative thinking
- Little emphasis on critical thinking
- Very little communicative interaction

Problems students encounter here

- New academic environment and expectations
- No prior experience of independent learning
- Perceived speed of spoken language
- 'Directness' of western approach
- Climate, prices, isolation, caring for self

Culturally-based study strategies

- Reading: word-for-word translation - message not received
- Writing: inductive/deductive approach; 'plagiarism'
- Listening: try to understand every word: syllable-timed/stress timed languages
- Speaking: afraid of making mistakes; inhibited by own cultural mores

Conclusion

- Workshop is focused on understanding pre-entry qualifications
- No attempt to provide strategies to overcome problems
- Colleagues and I willing to discuss these with you if required.

APPENDIX 5**UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER AT COLERAINE**
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION TIMETABLE**Monday 19 September – Friday 23 September 2005**

Date	Time	Session	Venue
Monday 19 September	1800 - 1930	Arrival <i>Informal Welcome</i> – to meet other international students	Senior Common Room
Tuesday 20 September	1030	Welcome and Information Session International Office	
	11.00	Getting to know the University	Lecture Theatre 9 Central Buildings
	12.00	English Language Teaching, CELT	
	12.00	Campus Tour	
	12.30	Campus Tour	
	13.00	Provost's Induction for New Students	Lecture Theatre 8
	15.15	Shopping Tour (Optional)	Meet in Entrance Hall
	18.00	Provost's Reception	Bannview Dining Room
Wednesday 21 September	10.30	Library and Information Services	Lecture Theatre 9 Central Buildings
	10.50	Health Care Guidance and Counselling	
	11.10	Accommodation	
	11.20	Tourist Information Northern Ireland Tourist Board	
	11.40	Riverside Theatre	
	12.30	Library tour for inexperienced speakers of English	Central Library
	13.30	(maximum of 10 students on each tour)	
	14.30	Faculty of Life and Health Sciences	Coastal Building Seminar Room - G1117

Thursday 22 September	10.30	Students Union and Sports Centre	Lecture Theatre 9 Central Buildings
	11.00	PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland)	
	11.10	HOST UK	
	11.20	International Friends	
	11.30	Chaplaincy	
	11.40	Campus Tour	Meet in Entrance Hall
	13.00	Faculty of Business and Management	Lecture Theatre 12
	15.15	Mayor's Reception	Meet in Entrance Hall at 14.30 (2.30pm)
Friday 23 September	09.30	Registration for all exchange students	See details in <i>Useful Information</i>
Saturday 24 September	11.00	<i>Day trip to Giant's Causeway and evening entertainment at Students Union (£10, by ticket only)</i>	<i>See details in separate information sheet</i>

If you cannot register at the times specified on this timetable, or if you would like further information about registration, please contact your Faculty office:

Faculty of Arts	Room C100
Faculty of Business & Management	Room L039
Faculty of Engineering (including Computing)	Room D067
Faculty of Life and Health Sciences	Room H142