

Notes from Meeting

Information

1. Both Indian and UK institutions require more information on potential partner institutions in the respective countries.
2. More information is required as to the current and possible changes to the Indian regulatory environment and quality assurance requirements.
3. Strong endorsement of this type of joint event to bring together UK and Indian providers with mutual interests in cooperating
4. Broader based web support to facilitate communications between institutions is very desirable.

Indian Regulatory Framework

5. A number of questions were raised and for which clarification was sought:
 - i. Can a clearer navigation be made available to explain the Indian regulatory framework to institutions.
 - ii. The roles and breadth of remit of AICTE was unclear (eg does a 'Deemed University' need to have its collaborative course with a foreign provider cleared by AICTE?).
 - iii. What is the current position on the clearance of programmes pending within AICTE? Can a likely time scale be estimated?
 - iv. Are joint or dual degrees recognised in the Indian regulatory framework?
 - v. Which regulations limited the total numbers of students on a particular programme and what might this total be?
 - vi. What level of distance learning support (including through e-delivery) is likely to be allowable for a degree to be recognised?
 - vii. If a programme involves teaching components both in India and UK will this have any effect on the accreditation and recognition of degrees?
6. There was much interest in the forthcoming UKIERI seminar on QA arrangements.

UKIERI Collaborative Delivery Proposals

7. UKIERI team should provide clear feedback from the previous rounds of proposals as to what might constitute success. Provide some examples of successes.
8. A set of FAQs would also be welcome for the next round of bids.

UKIERI 2 Needs and Possible Directions

9. There were many strong statements in support of UKIERI and in particular the need to ensure a follow up project.

10. More focus on employability and entrepreneurship development within any future UKIERI activities.
11. Whilst all welcomed the commitment to widening participation and social inclusivity, the concern was to explore what might be practically realisable in the context of such collaborative delivery projects?
12. Future support might also include projects involving consortia of institutions collaborating.

Business Plans

13. Building the expenditure/revenue plan for post UKIERI is essential to assess the long term sustainability of each project.
14. The difficulties of pricing programmes in India was recognised ie the need to balance affordability in the market with meeting all the costs of development and delivery for both partners. This was made more difficult as little information on competitor fees was available.
15. It was recognised that the repeat needs of validation visits and the associated full costs must be built into proposals from the beginning.
16. A risk contingency needs to be included in any plans after identifying all potential risks. This should allow for foreign exchange fluctuations.

Approaches to Delivery of Projects

17. Trust is the most vital ingredient for a successful delivery of projects. Investment in regular meetings and a good communications system can facilitate.
18. Institutions must appreciate that there is a long term commitment implied in any project, given the time scale of course development, student recruitment and duration of degree programmes – a minimum of 7 to 10 years is typical. Early investment to ensure compatibility and mutuality of interests of staff and institutions is thus essential.
19. It is vital to have full commitment of the respective institutions and their senior management in the project – not just the individual managers.

Academic/Teaching Staff Development

20. The very large and growing gaps in the staffing of Indian HE institutions was commented on by many delegates. Recruitment and retention was a real problem generally but particularly acute in those subject areas where there was a buoyant labour market outside HE (eg IT, electronics, business related).
21. The needs would seem to be embrace 3 requirements:
 - a. Subject related: Specialist training in the actual subject area, particularly for doctoral research.
 - b. Pedagogical: Improving teaching and related activities through specialist programmes for university staff eg possible provision of specialist Masters programmes.
 - c. Professional Doctorates: the current range of professional doctorates in the UK would seem to offer an opportunity particularly for mid-career academics, to gain greater insight into their subject as well as to explore aspects of pedagogy.

22. Staff Exchanges: the usefulness of these was commented on by several delegates. It was recommended that these be built into CD projects by the partners from the outset.
23. Cascading of Skills: It was suggested that those trained through the specific projects in which they were involved might run programmes within their institutions to cascade the skills learnt.

Student Exchanges

24. There was a clear statement from delegates of the need to incorporate more student exchanges in the planning of projects. This had to be 2-way.
25. Whilst it is recognised that there are cost constraints, some form of 'equal exchange' in each direction might be an approach to fund 2-way flows.
26. Comparison was made with US exchange programmes where there are very significant payments made to the Indian institutions receiving US students and these revenues can then be employed to support Indian students when they visit US.