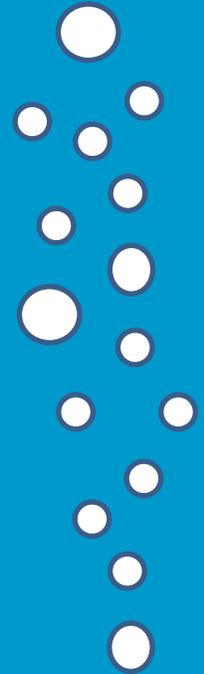


LIFT LAB

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENTS IN SUSTAINABILITY

**“I need a Chinese
costume”**: developing the
cultural lens for globally-literate
Early Years professionals





This project aimed to facilitate critically reflective thinking through the co-construction of knowledge.

The intention was to scrutinise the cultural lens of the Early Childhood Studies (ECS) BA Hons degree and how it equips graduates to work within an international context.

The project drew upon principles of EfS to challenge our existing practices and help to 'decolonise' the learning experience for current and future students.

This was to enable staff and students to acknowledge good practice and identify opportunities for curriculum and professional development.



STUDENT CO-CREATION

Early Childhood Studies Graduates

Current ECS Students

ECS Lecturers



Themes from graduate interviews

- Understanding what your own pedagogy is and where this personal pedagogy has come from
- Expressing your own pedagogy and understanding the pedagogy of others
- Considering different international perspectives about working with children
- Working with children from different cultures and possibly speaking different languages
- Debating and compromising to come to a shared vision of effective practice for working with children and families

ECS graduates' reflections on course enhancement

- Wider inclusion of diverse cultures to develop a deeper understanding of how they impact on notions surrounding the child, childhood, raising children and ECEC
- Greater focus on EAL and effective provision for children and their families with language and/or cultural barriers
- Greater focus on how to articulate developing pedagogies but with strengthened awareness of the cultural basis to EYFS
- Greater focus on how to share these pedagogical viewpoints with other practitioners, especially when from differing cultural backgrounds

Current students' reflections on course enhancement

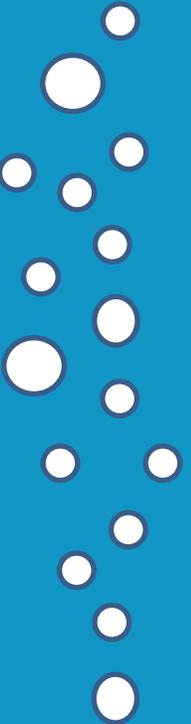
- Earlier inclusion/focus on international contexts/perspectives within ECEC
- Use of case studies that come from a wider contextual background (international)
- Further focus upon effective practice to support working with children and families with English as an additional language
- Greater inclusion of student debate and role play
- Wider inclusion of existing reading group activities (wider use of international texts)
- Empathy building; encouraging thinking beyond professional roles to include greater focus on parents from diverse social and cultural contexts

KEY OUTCOMES

- *Futures thinking* - the course team are more able to respond proactively, from an informed position, to the needs of the next generation of EYs practitioners within the international context. They are able to identify how the course can provide greater opportunity for students to engage in developing their skills of problem solving, debate and compromise.
- *Decolonising learning* - the course team are better equipped to support decolonisation of student learning experiences, focussing attention upon challenging western dominance and promoting the transferability and global relevancy of their knowledge and understanding.
- *Systems thinking* - findings suggest that ECS students need to have more explicit learning experiences to further develop their knowledge and understanding of the interconnectedness of the various aspects which contribute to any given situation. This is to ensure that they are better skilled and equipped to grapple with the intricacies of complex situations.

FINAL THOUGHTS

- We have enhanced our appreciation of how and where EfS can be integrated across all areas of our programme. It has been transformational to our own understanding, enabling us to facilitate ECS course improvements.



Thank you!

