

Australian Universities' Preparation and Support for Fly-in Fly-out Academics

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, I am the sole author of this thesis; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program and any editorial work carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Kath Lynch

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Dedication

Jack and Eileen Lynch

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents. Your love for each other, for learning and your passion for life are truly inspiring.

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Abstract

There is consensus in the transnational higher education literature that the selection, preparation and support of academics are essential for ensuring the delivery of quality education in transnational programs. This is particularly important in Australia—one of the largest exporters of higher education services in the world—where fly-in fly-out transnational teaching makes a significant contribution.

This thesis explores the range of personal, professional, cultural and teaching challenges that fly-in fly-out academics experience. It analyses how academics are recruited, remunerated and prepared for managing these challenges while living and teaching in foreign cultures. It examines how the types of challenges, preparation and support have changed from those documented in previous research.

Most previous studies have focused on discrete aspects of transnational teaching, such as teaching challenges prior to departure or development and support opportunities for partner staff. There are few comprehensive studies seeking to identify the challenges academics face from the stage of recruitment through teaching offshore to returning to Australia.

There are also few studies capturing academics' perceptions of the value of the different types of professional support provided by universities. Perhaps more significant is the paucity of research, mapping how Australian universities prepare academics prior to departure, support them when they are teaching offshore and facilitate ongoing professional development upon return.

This study examines the types of preparation and support provided to staff through observing 25 academic development sessions; reviewing recruitment, policy, preparation and support documents from 20 Australian universities; and interviews conducted with 30

academics and 10 academic developers (40 in total) from 15 of these universities. The collection and analysis of the data used a qualitative methodology informed by the constructivist-interpretive tradition.

This investigation found few differences in the types of challenges identified by academics over the past decade. In most universities there are no formal recruitment protocols for fly-in fly-out academics and little formal preparation for offshore teaching assignments. There is a marked absence of support for academics during overseas sojourns and on return to Australia. This study also documents a diverse, complex and interconnected set of personal, professional, cultural and teaching challenges facing most academics at all phases of transnational teaching. The study indicates that preparation and support provided as part of a discipline team-based approach was perceived as far more effective than other approaches.

The findings generate a series of recommendations for Australian universities to consider in the recruitment and remuneration, preparation and support for fly-in fly-out academics teaching offshore. Future research related to designing and implementing innovative professional development practice is also proposed.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AEI	Australian Education International
ALTC	Australian Learning and Teaching Council
AUQA	Australian Universities Quality Agency
AVCC	Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
ESOS	Education Services for Overseas Students
GATE	Global Alliance of Transnational Education
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
IAU	International Association of Universities
IDP	International Development Program
IEAA	International Education Association of Australia
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
NTEU	National Tertiary Education Union
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OLT	Office of Learning and Teaching
QA	Quality Assurance
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency
TNE	Transnational Education
TQS	Transnational Quality Strategy
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Glossary

Offshore and partner:

These terms are used to refer to educational institutions overseas.

Onshore, home and local:

These terms are used to refer to Australian-based universities.

Transnational and offshore:

These terms are used interchangeably in the thesis. Leask *et al.* (2005, pp. 7-8) documents how the intricacies of transnational programs are reflected in the terminology. The terms 'abroad' and 'overseas' are also used.

In-load and above-load:

In-load describes when academics teach offshore as a part of their overall workload.

Above-load describes when academics teach offshore in addition to their onshore work commitments and when they are financially compensated for this extra work.

Professional and academic development:

These terms are used interchangeably in the thesis. More broadly, 'professional' development refers to development for all university staff and 'academic' development is specifically intended for academics. The terms 'educational', 'staff' and 'faculty' development are also used.

Program, course, subject:

Participants and institutional documents use nomenclature relevant to each particular university when referring to units of study. The thesis interchanges these terms. For example, it does not distinguish between a 'program' or 'course' or 'subject' coordinator, but uses the generic term 'coordinator'.

Guanxi:

Describes the basic dynamic in personalised networks of influence, and is a central idea in Chinese society.

Chapter One: Introduction

On any given week Australian academics gather in airports around the country to board flights to Singapore, Hong Kong, China or another country to teach students enrolled in courses offered by their Australian university. This is a form of 'transnational' education, 'in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based' (Council of Europe 2001, p. 450).

Transnational education is complex and dynamic and includes 'an array of partnerships, consortia, articulating agreements, modes of delivery, public, private, offshore, for-profit and corporate elements' (Miliszewska 2006, p. 35). The main modes of delivery in transnational education are offshore campuses, international distance education, and partnerships with public and private universities and private colleges (Harmon 2006). This thesis focuses on one specific mode of transnational delivery: academics from Australian universities who travel to other countries to teach with partner institutions for short and intense periods of time, and which will be generally referred to as fly-in fly-out teaching.

Australia's international education and training sector is the 'fourth largest export industry, earning \$15.7 billion during 2011. This is largely driven by the higher education sector, representing 65.6 per cent of total revenue during this period' (IEA Council 2013, p. 8). In 2012 there were 323,612 international students studying in Australian higher education institutions, with 82,458 enrolled offshore—a rise of 2.5 per cent from 2011 (DIISRTE 2012). Perhaps not surprisingly, given these figures, Australian universities have become increasingly dependent on income generated from international education (Naidoo 2009).

Market analysis forecasts that transnational education will remain viable into the next decade (Skidmore & Longbottom 2011). However, there are significant risks associated with operating in the transnational market. McBurnie and Ziguras (2007, p. 31) documented the 'financial, legal, sovereign, reputational and physical/personal' risks for institutions entering

into transnational ventures. Hoare (2012, p. 272) notes how 'some organisations have reaped significant economic return ... [while] ... others have experienced equally noteworthy financial and reputational loss'.

McBurnie and Ziguras (2007, p. 31) and Marcus (2011) not only write about the 'risky business' of transnational education but also question how well equipped academics are to deal with these risks and challenges. This question is currently difficult to answer given the paucity of research focused on fly-in fly-out academics' experiences across each phase of transnational teaching. It is not even known how many academics are involved in teaching offshore as there is no data on the numbers of fly-in fly-out academics (Jais 2012). There is only minimal research exploring recruitment and employment conditions, and to what extent universities prepare and support academics to do this type of work.

There are major challenges involved for academics teaching offshore with implications for family, health and wellbeing, and careers. There are also significant stresses associated with managing the cultural and social complexities resulting from multiple trips into unfamiliar cultural settings. Then there are the problems involved in designing and teaching short, intensive courses, and delivering curriculum designed for Australian traditions of intellectual and professional practice in foreign contexts and quite different cultural milieux. When all of these challenges are combined, it is clear there is a need to better understand the preparation and support provided by universities for academics. Hence the following primary research question and four subsequent research questions for this thesis.

How do Australian universities' prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?

1. How are academics recruited and remunerated for fly-in fly-out teaching?
2. What personal and professional challenges do fly-in fly-out academics face?
3. How do universities formally and informally prepare and support academics teaching offshore?
4. What type of preparation and support for transnational teaching do academics engage in and find valuable?

1.1 Purpose

There are numerous benefits to learning about academics' preparation and support for teaching offshore. The opportunities for international academic mobility have never been greater (Kim 2009; Onsmann 2010). There appear to be fewer equivalent opportunities for research investigating the preparation and support needed by these globally transient academics (Jais 2012). The only other education exporting country engaged in partner-supported transnational teaching on a large scale is the United Kingdom. Kim and Locke (2010) have described a similar lack of research in the UK on 'conditions favouring and inhibiting mobility' and 'academics' experiences in their host institutions and countries' (p. 27).

If we accept that it will be useful to investigate experiences of support and development, we also need to understand academics' preferred approaches. There is much research that suggests academics do not readily participate in traditional modes of one-off type workshops (Angelo 1999; Boud 1999; Gelade & Quinn 2004; McWilliam 2002). And yet there seem few alternatives, such as professional learning, as an integrated part of academic's daily practice (Boud & Brew 2013). Associated with this issue is the opportunity to learn from academic developers about their role in preparing staff for teaching offshore, especially considering university academic development units are being 'redefined' (Debowski 2007), and experiencing instability and insufficient resources from these organisational restructures (Gosling 2009), along with it often not being clear whose role it is to support TNE teachers.

Many academics report that teaching abroad has positively transformed their worldview and enhanced their cultural understanding. Also, they perceive it as improving how they teach and engage with staff and students onshore (Bodycott & Walker 2000; Crabtree & Sapp 2004; Garson 2005; Leask 2004b; Smith, K 2012). This study aims to increase our understanding of how institutions can help academics integrate these shifts in attitudes and

behaviours and to further develop their intercultural engagement, and communication and teaching skills.

1.2 Prior research

There is almost no recent published research investigating universities' processes for selecting fly-in fly-out academics to work offshore, aside from the recent study by Jais (2012) which focused on the impact of short-term offshore assignments on academics' career success and work-life balance. Due to the limited literature, this thesis draws more broadly on research in other fields, such as the short-term expatriate workers literature, and which is further discussed in Chapter Two (Dowling, Festing & Engle 2008; Katz & Seifer 1996; Lau et al. 2001; Mehegan 2006).

Smith (2014) has grouped the available literature on transnational education into four themes: quality assurance (AEI 2006b; McBurnie 2008; Stella 2006); teaching and learning practices (Bodycott & Walker 2000; Dunn & Wallace 2006; Evans & Tregenza 2002); preparation of academics (Dunn & Wallace 2008a; Gribble & Ziguras 2003; Leask 2006a) and challenges (Debowski 2003; Feast & Bretag 2005; Leask 2004b; NTEU 2004a). Many of these studies are small scale, collecting data from participants in one university, program, and discipline or focusing on a single event. Government projects such as the *Good Practice in Offshore Delivery* (AEI 2008) and the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) (2004a) project, *Australian Staff Involvement in the Delivery of Offshore Courses*, are larger national scale projects using a range of data collection methods.

There are few studies explicitly examining how and when Australian universities formally and informally go about preparing and supporting academics for teaching offshore. Major contributions include those by Dunn and Wallace (2005), who conducted an online survey of 61 academics from nine Australian universities, noting the important role of collegiality, and advocating a cross-border community of practice approach to preparation. Similarly, Leask,

Hicks, Kohler and King's (2005) mixed-methods study identified the need for professional development to be incremental, in line with academics' roles and experience and include intercultural development. Also, professional development and support was recommended for partner staff. As a result of their research a mix of face-to-face and online resources were developed for both sets of teachers.

More recently the Australian Learning and Teaching Council [now the Office of Learning and Teaching] has funded a number of transnational studies including promoting good practice in moderation of assessment; recognition of leadership roles; and the enhancement of learning and teaching quality offshore—all of which recommend professional development for academics (Mazzolini et al. 2011; Pyvis et al. 2011; Sanderson et al. 2011).

Finally, there is literature from Australia, the United Kingdom and some European countries, not all empirically based, which does not so much investigate how to prepare and support academics but rather discusses what constitutes the 'ideal' international/global teacher (Badley 2006; Leask 2006a; Sanderson 2006; Teekens 2001b) and which is further explored and discussed in Chapter Three.

1.3 Approach

To address my key research questions I chose a qualitative research method drawing on a broadly defined constructivist-interpretive tradition, with a mix of methods to collect data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011; Denzin & Lincoln 2011; Schwandt 1994). This was a national study involving a review of documents from 20 universities, observations of 25 professional development sessions, and interviews with 40 participants from 15 universities. It was beyond the scope of this project to engage with academics while they were living and teaching offshore, just as it was not possible to collect data from partner coordinators, teachers and students in offshore institutions.

Among the documents reviewed were a selection of online and hard copy university resources including policies and procedures, recruitment and promotion documents, travel guides, teaching resources, and professional development and workshop materials. Of the 25 formal professional development sessions observed, 19 were run by universities, with only one dedicated to preparing academics for teaching offshore, the remaining 18 being sessions with teaching and international themes. The six remaining programs were day-long seminars delivered by the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA).

The interviews involved purposive sampling of key informants, comprising 30 academics and 10 academic developers, using a flexible schedule of questions and prompts. All fly-in fly-out academics had taught at least once offshore, although some had taught many more times. The academic developers had delivered and/or were responsible for providing professional support for academics teaching in transnational programs.

This qualitative project was informed by adult learning theories, programming principles and professional development models for academics (Cranton 1992; Dunn & Wallace 2005; Knowles, Holton & Swanson 2005; Lawler & King 2000a, 2000b; Leask et al. 2005; Osborn 2004). In line with previous research, aspects of needs assessment and phenomenography were adopted to guide the inquiry (Akerlind 2005a, 2008; Dunn & Wallace 2003b), and a range of interpretative perspectives to analyse and make sense of the data gathered from the three primary methods were drawn on.

1.4 Structure

The thesis consists of 10 chapters, with this introductory chapter providing an overview of Australian universities' engagement in transnational education and professional development background information about the investigation.

Two chapters review prior literature informing this thesis. Chapter Two reviews the literature pertaining to transnational teaching and the experiences and challenges identified by academics. Chapter Three reviews the literature relevant to professional development for academics in Australian universities, critiquing the limited literature about current university preparation and support programs specifically for academics working transnationally.

Chapter Four relates to the choice and implementation of methodologies engaged to conduct this research. I describe and justify the use of an interpretive-constructivist paradigm, the tools and methods for collecting data, and outline the process for data analysis.

Chapters Five to Nine present the findings from the analysis of the empirical data. Chapter Five identifies how academics came to be selected and remunerated, and the tasks associated with working abroad, along with personal challenges experienced outside the classroom. Chapter Six considers curriculum and pedagogical challenges faced inside the transnational classroom. Chapters Seven and Eight report on 'formal' and 'informal' preparation provided by Australian universities for academics to best manage these challenges. Chapter Nine presents a particular approach that is distinct from formal and informal methods, and outlines how a small number of academics prepared and supported each other as part of a team.

Chapter Ten reflects on the major research outcomes, and discusses implications and areas for future research.

Chapter Two: Challenges of Transnational Teaching

This is the first chapter of a two-part literature review. This chapter reviews the research on Australian academics teaching offshore, with a focus on the challenges they experience. The literature in the field addressing 'challenges' is diffuse, thus I have organised the review around key features of the fly-in fly-out teaching experience. The chapter is divided into four sections: recruitment, remuneration and responsibilities of staff; personal and professional challenges; cultural challenges; and teaching challenges.

2.1 Recruitment, remuneration and responsibilities

There is limited research on the recruitment and selection of academics working in short-term transnational positions, particularly when compared with the extensive expatriation literature on the relocation of staff working in government and non-government organisations (Dowling, Festing & Engle 2008; Katz & Seifer 1996; Lau et al. 2001; Mehegan 2003). Fly-in fly-out academics are in fact not usually 'recruited', but mostly put themselves forward for offshore positions, because they have the necessary discipline expertise (Debowski 2003; NTEU 2004a; Poole & Ewan 2010). These findings show a similarity with the selection of 'flexpatriate' staff in the business world—those who are qualified, willing and available to work offshore (Mayerhofer et al. 2004). This approach often results in an ad hoc and haphazard process whereby intercultural skills and cultural empathy are not factored into selection (Harris & Brewster 1999; Tung 1981, 1987).

Debowski (2003) and the NTEU (2004a) found that in the early years of transnational teaching, the typical profile of an academic sent abroad was of an older, experienced, Anglo-Saxon male at professorial level. It was assumed their seniority and discipline expertise would enable them to adapt the curriculum, and manage living and teaching in different cultural settings. This profile matched the market preference for senior male staff, often to the exclusion of women, younger staff and academics from other cultural backgrounds

(Debowski 2002; Hebbani 2007; NTEU 2004a; Poole & Ewan 2010). Other studies have drawn attention to the impact on staffing of the growth of transnational education and the ageing of the academic workforce (Hugo & Morris 2010). As a result of the need to broaden the pool of teaching staff, more female and middle level academics have been engaged. Even with such initiatives, some institutions still had insufficient numbers of permanent staff, resulting in sessional staff being employed to undertake this work, or it fell to a set handful of staff. Initially the majority of academics report enjoying the work but for some over time it became 'an onerous and unrewarding experience' (NTEU 2004a, p. 28).

Positions are commonly filled by academics who teach a course onshore volunteering to deliver the same course abroad. Others are chosen following a casual conversation, a selection process detailed as the 'coffee-machine system' (Harris & Brewster 1999). Some staff 'felt obliged and that gentle arm twisting was required' (NTEU 2004a, p. 28). Teekens (2001a) also cites cases where international teaching positions are filled by academics on the basis of 'goodwill' and that not all academics 'have deliberately chosen their positions' (p. 35). Debowski (2003) specifically cautions against this approach, seeing the potential for the abuse of staff goodwill.

There has been little detailed research on the way in which offshore academics are remunerated, with the notable exceptions being the National Tertiary Education Union's [NTEU] (2004a) and Jais (2012) investigations. In-load and above-load are the two main types of remuneration for continuing academic staff, and short-term contracts for sessional staff. Due to the expansion of transnational programs and the need for greater staff participation, above-load payments were introduced and teaching abroad became a non-standard part of an academic's workload (NTEU 2004a).

There are no standard above-load payment rates, with noticeable disparities across universities and within the one university, faculty or school, with some institutions providing partial payment based on the overall profitability of the programs (NTEU 2004a). Poole and

Ewan (2010, p. 156) found that the use of above-load payments 'effectively dissuaded staff from doing much beyond their contractual obligations'. Academics are usually reimbursed for travel expenses but Jais's (2012) study showed over half of the participants 'perceived that the reimbursement and per diem were inadequate', and argued that this perception of low levels of remuneration 'is likely to affect morale adversely and hamper the willingness to travel offshore' (p. 82).

A recurring theme in previous research is the lack of specificity around teaching and non-teaching duties for fly-in fly-out academics. Pyvis (2009, pp. 310-1) calls for 'written instructions on roles and responsibilities' and warns that the 'quality of TNE teaching and learning was jeopardised by the failure to provide new staff entering programs with advice on their roles, responsibilities and obligations'. Jais (2012) highlights the lack of clarity around the diverse range of non-teaching duties. Academics were unaware of the responsibility of 'forging overseas relationships' when accepting social invitations from partner management, with dinner conversation focusing on 'university planning, strategic direction and administration issues' (p. 70). Social engagements often extend beyond just promoting a particular discipline, program or institution (Poole & Ewan 2010) to being an 'ambassador' for Australia (Hoare 2006, p. 142).

There is widespread agreement in the literature that the role and responsibilities of offshore academics, particularly coordinators, are complex, and that they provide a 'conduit' between Australian and partner institutions and staff (Debowski 2003; Mazzolini et al. 2011; McLean, V 2006; NTEU 2004a). They are expected to be good coordinators and teachers, ensure contractual requirements around the curriculum are fulfilled, oversee the employment of partner staff, as well as manage partner meetings and reply to large volumes of email in a timely and culturally appropriate manner (NTEU 2004a). Additional offshore duties compete with onshore commitments and coordinators explained they are often prioritised second,

'largely because offshore coordination was perceived as additional workload' (Pyvis 2009, p. 311).

Debowski (2003) goes further and describes coordinators as the 'public face of a programme' not only responsible for curriculum quality, but also corporate governance issues. She details that they need to 'demonstrate good customer service orientation and be proficient in networking, marketing and maintaining effective relationships with external partners and students' (p. 4). McLean (2006) argues that to successfully fulfil this range of duties it is essential coordinators are 'very well informed and ... skilled in communication, both in developing good communication strategies across the teaching team and in terms of ... personal intercultural communication' (p. 62).

The first of two Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) funded projects, *Learning Without Borders*, found that coordinators often have these roles 'thrust upon them' (Mazzolini et al. 2011, p. 4). A second ALTC report, *Clarifying, Developing and Valuing the Role of Unit Coordinators as Informal Leaders of Learning in Higher Education*, which touched on transnational responsibilities, recommended that coordinators receive professional development, support in managing the complex challenges connected to the role, and greater acknowledgement by universities for excellence leadership (Roberts, Butcher & Brooker 2011, p. 6).

The literature search has revealed that processes for recruiting and selecting staff to teach offshore are usually unplanned and informal, and the rates and processes around payment for transnational work are highly variable. As well, along with the core responsibilities of teacher, supervisor and coordinator, academics teaching offshore are required to fulfil additional roles, all the while working in unfamiliar cultures (Debowski 2003; Hoare 2006). This forms the foundation from which the professional and personal, cultural and teaching challenges identified by academics in prior research can be explored.

2.2 Personal and professional challenges

All academics currently working in Australian universities are faced with the competing demands of teaching, research and administration, often generating high levels of pressure and stress (Bexley, James & Arkoudis 2011; Coates & Goedegebuure 2010; Roche 2001; Winefield et al. 2008). In addition to these demands, academics teaching in transnational programs need to find extra time and energy to prepare for offshore travel and adapt to living and working in new and unfamiliar cultures, while maintaining their workplace commitments. Research has shown that this dual role can create major personal and professional challenges (Clark & Clark 2000; Debowski 2002; Feast & Bretag 2005; Horgan & Roberts 2004; Smith, K 2012).

2.2.1 Personal challenges

Several studies have documented the ways in which transnational teaching impacts on academics' work-life balance, health and wellbeing. Jais's (2012) mixed-methods study into how short-term international teaching assignments affect academics' career success and work-life balance is one such recent study. Jais established that long working hours adds strain both to academics as well as their partners who often assume extra responsibilities when their spouse is abroad. It can also be a high-cost activity, particularly for single parents and academics that do not have extended family to assist them. They may have to pay carers' fees when working offshore (Debowski 2003; Evans & Tregenza 2002; NTEU 2004a, 2004b).

Dowling and Welch (2005, p. 68) found that short-term or 'commuter' workers become stressed from travel and intensive work over extended periods of time, which gradually impacted on their health and personal relationships. Stress can also be experienced by family members when academics are offshore during critical events, such as the SARS epidemic in Singapore. These stresses are intensified if there are ineffectual university

procedures and poor communication strategies (Feast & Bretag 2005; Horgan & Roberts 2004; James & Mok 2003).

Some academics, prior to departure, report being concerned about vaccinations, quality of water, food and accommodation (Davis, Olsen & Bohm 2000). Others are concerned about safety, health insurance and workers' compensation (NTEU 2004a). The demands of frequent, economy class travel is not conducive for arriving rested or ready for productive work. Some academic staff struggle post arrival with 'jet lag, difference in climate, diet and health issues and the logistical concerns of transport and accommodation are present from the moment of arrival' (Gribble & Ziguras 2003, p. 212).

Leask (2004b) acknowledges the demands of regular fly-in fly-out teaching, as do Pool and Owen (2010, p. 156), who write of the 'mental and emotional energies that above-load teaching demands'. Both highlight how working in different cultural contexts exacerbates the emotional demands on staff which can 'lead to feelings of frustration, confusion and disorientation' (Leask 2004b, p. 146). On return to Australia, some staff have been found to be 'suffering from physical and emotional exhaustion', particularly those working above their normal load or making multiple trips (NTEU 2004a, p. 30).

In addition to the high cognitive and emotional demands that are a part of working offshore, there is a lack of immediate local support networks. Debowski's (2005) study analysing the experiences of academics teaching with translators in China revealed that none had received pre-departure preparation, they did not have local language skills, and no immediate source of support was available offshore. The participants reported numerous 'unsettling' experiences prompting safety, security and travel management policies to be reviewed. The significance of these challenges is captured by academics strong shared belief, expressed to Chapman (2009, p. 317), that 'staff welfare is critical to quality teaching and learning in transnational education'.

2.2.2 Professional challenges

There are additional administrative and management tasks associated with teaching offshore. Booking flights and accommodation and completing health and insurance checks can be time-consuming and frustrating (Seah & Edwards 2006). Management processes operating across multiple research and teaching and learning partners can also be complicated. Dunworth (2008) notes the importance of administrative systems and process being well planned, but also highlights how mundane tasks can be wearing, citing the following examples: assembling class lists from different student databases; coordinating teaching and assessment with timetables designed around different academic calendars; and negotiating teaching around different religious and public holidays.

It has been acknowledged that often being away for short periods of time can disrupt family connections, the same is true of relationships with onshore students and colleagues (Mazzarol & Hosie 1997). For example, research students have to accommodate their supervisors' offshore schedules, academics have to be prepared in advance, and substitute lecturers have to be arranged, either swapping with colleagues, employing sessional staff or re-scheduling classes. Onshore students have reported feeling 'they were being given "second best" treatment when their lecturers were required to travel offshore' (Rosenfeld & Kniest 2003, p. 11).

Academics engaged in transnational teaching are also generally less able to fully commit to school projects. They also miss out on the informal, face-to-face corridor chats, where school news, teaching, and research ideas are exchanged (Debowski 2003). There is the potential for tension to arise between colleagues, especially if they are expected to pick up extra teaching and administrative tasks for their colleagues who are overseas. Jais (2012) points out that these tensions are intensified if the school and wider university community views transnational academics as being 'off on vacations in exotic locations' (p. 70) or 'roting the system' by "pulling in the money" for very little extra effort' (Debowski 2003, p. 6).

Hechanova, Beehr and Christiansen (2003) caution that if such tensions go unchecked, the cumulative effect can lead to a sense of alienation and disconnection from colleagues with far reaching consequences.

Managing the additional work generated from transnational teaching means academics have less time and energy to dedicate to other professional commitments, such as research, which is likely to impact on their career progression and reputation (Debowski 2003; Jais 2012; Mazzarol & Hosie 1997; NTEU 2004a). Fifteen years ago Welch (1997) highlighted the overall need for international experiences to be better valued in terms of academic career opportunities and for institutions to give extra weight to foreign teaching experience for promotional purposes. Jais (2012, p. 154) identifies 'working with people from other cultures, managing uncommon problems, and coping with demanding situations' as some of the skills academics can acquire working offshore; but her findings also show that universities still 'tend not to recognise the value of these acquired skills'. The next sets of challenges identified by academics in prior research are cultural challenges followed by teaching challenges.

2.3 Cultural challenges

Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) describe culture as when members of particular groups or categories of people have different ideas, customs and social behaviours. Two components of cultural challenges were reviewed. First, the direct influences on academics entering and living in new cultures and second, the indirect challenges that come from working in culturally unfamiliar teaching and learning contexts.

2.3.1 Culture and academics

There is scant research that explicitly investigates the impact of culture on academics transitioning into and out of new cultures for short, multiple stays each year. Much higher education cross-cultural and cultural adjustment research has focused either on international

onshore students (Brown, L & Holloway 2007; Burns 1991; Cameron & Kirkman 2010), offshore students (Chapman & Pyvis 2006a, 2006b; Pyvis 2007; Pyvis & Chapman 2004, 2005) or staff relocating for longer-term exchanges such as working on offshore campuses or permanent relocation (Dobos 2011; Exley 2005; Garson 2005; Roskell 2013). There is a similar lack of focus on the cultural impact on short-term assignment workers in the human resource and expatriation and repatriation literature. This is despite short-term offshore commercial assignments growing as a result of the high costs associated with traditional expatriation, improved telecommunications, and the new demands and dynamics of globalisation on commercial enterprise (Collings, Scullion & Morley 2007; GMAC 2004; Price Waterhouse Coopers 2005).

There are cases from the limited transnational literature where academics have reported concerns, prior to departure, about working in different cultures. Seah and Edwards (2006) in-depth case studies of two fly-in fly-out academics perceptions of cultural differences prior to departure found high levels of anxiety. This apprehension was based on an anticipated sense of isolation, separation from their families, and having to manage different approaches to teaching and learning. Bodycott and Walker (2000) also note separation from family and teaching in unfamiliar environments was experienced as stressful, and Hoare's (2013, p. 564) participants reported feeling scared and afraid about not being 'good enough'. The anxiety and stress experienced prior to departure can continue after arriving offshore, which Hoare (2006) explains is a part of the process of learning to cope and adjust in new social situations. Roskell (2013, p. 168) discusses how 'anticipatory adjustment' to a new culture is 'an important factor which impacts on successful "work adjustment"', and Stirzaker (2004) has noted the positive influence induction and preparation can have on adjustment.

These emotions experienced in the adjustment process could be interpreted as 'culture shock' (Mumford 2000; Winkelman 1994). Culture shock was an expression coined by Oberg (1960) to explain the responses experienced when interacting in unfamiliar cultures. Adler

(1975, p. 13) later described this phenomena as ‘a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one’s own culture to new stimuli, which have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences’. Progressive research expanded the understanding to include ‘language shock’ (Smalley 1963), ‘role shock’ (Byrnes 1966) and ‘culture fatigue’ (Guthrie 1975). In the 1980s there was a shift away from the clinical idea of ‘shock’ as a diagnosis linked to illness and a move towards ‘learning’ from cross-cultural experiences (Adler 1972).

Although fly-in fly-out academics have reported feelings of anxiety and stress, it is unlikely this group of transitory workers would develop deep symptoms of confusion, home-sickness or depression, more commonly associated with longer-term stays in foreign environments. Smith (2013, p. 136) though does suggest that ‘confrontations with new and different cultures trigger transformational learning through ‘culture shock’, and that multiple ‘culture shocks’ over time can act as a stimulus for reflection and eventually transformation of long-held beliefs and judgements.

Whilst there are few empirical studies examining transformative change for short-term academic sojourns, there is evidence of academics self-reporting change. Hebbani (2007), for example, reflects on the experience of living and teaching in several countries, including Malaysia and Hong Kong, when teaching for Australian transnational programs. In an earlier study, Stier (2003, p. 80) observed how international students, learning in new cultures, might for the first time have their ‘own taken-for-granted culture become visible to them or they realise that other people hold stereotypes and prejudices about them’. This was also true for Hebbani (2007). She emphasised the need to remain ‘adaptive’ and concluded by saying, ‘teaching internationally has made me what I call a “vagabond academic”, a female academic of colour with a shifting identity of “international professor”’ (p. 51).

Similar reflections of change were also self-reported by various faculty staff in the North American (longer-term) teaching abroad literature. Garson (2005, p. 326) introduces herself

as 'a single Jewish female management professor' from the US teaching in an Arab country for nine months. She documents her preparation, culture shock, teaching, adjustment and repatriation experiences. She concludes by outlining how she was 'divested' of past ways of thinking and opened up to new 'discoveries'. Fast (2000), a Canadian mathematician, reported that many of his long-held and taken-for-granted views were challenged whilst teaching in Zimbabwe. Upon reflection he argued that 'one is forced to re-examine one's beliefs and come to a new and better understanding of what is really important' (p. 92).

Intercultural encounters without prior preparation, or even information about customs and practices can lead to 'errors and cultural gaffes' (Debowski 2005, p. 276). This may result from what at first simply appear to be small and incidental occurrences when interacting with local citizens, colleagues and students. Fast (2000, p. 90), for example, initially frustrated by the 'tedious' custom in Zimbabwe of formal greetings, planned to dispense with them. That was until he was warned by the local teacher that the lack of formal greeting was considered very rude and 'reserved only for one's worst enemies'. Galvin (2004), working with a group of academics teaching professional doctorates in Hong Kong and Thailand concurs, saying '... it is often not the obvious issues, but often minor points such as appropriate dress codes ... or business card etiquette, that may be problematic' (p. 434).

Such incidents of learning by indiscretions are scattered throughout the literature, with awareness of cultural differences often realised retrospectively, frequently after the transgression of a rule. Hoare (2006), in her ethnographic study set in Singapore, shares from her own 'partial insider' perspective and her observations of academics' 'naivety', 'cultural faux pas' and 'social blunders' about 'local social and religious issues' and her own experience of initially being excluded from 'taboo' topics (pp. 236-8). Being offshore and learning experientially on the job about appropriate cultural behaviour is challenging, both for the academics and others around them. Although Hoare (2006, p. 238) noted how the students were 'tolerant of lecturers' cultural naivety and appreciative of their efforts to adapt'

as did Chapman and Pyvis (2005, p. 47), with the caveat, 'as long as there was no religious offence intended or given'.

Rather than retrospective learning, it is suggested that such cultural challenges could be minimised with pre-departure customs and cross-cultural briefings, where academics get to learn 'some of the rules of the game before playing it' (Hoare 2006, pp. 167-8). The provision of local information about transport, weather, food and currency, as well as understanding social rules, etiquette, gender protocols, socio-political, economic and legal factors would support academics in their transition to new cultures (Dunn & Wallace 2003a; Gribble & Ziguras 2003; Leask 2006a).

In the expatriate literature Shin, Morgeson and Campion (2007) argue that two-stages of training are necessary to 'minimise failures': the first being selection and pre-departure training, followed by 'post-arrival training' (p. 65). Selmer (2001) goes further, arguing that post-arrival training is more effective than pre-departure. This is because staff motivation is higher when having to interact with locals and adjust behaviour to the cultural norms and values of the new location. Smith (2013, p. 136) adds to this by calling for post-visit or returning home support, 'fostering critical reflection and triggering transformation learning'.

There is much literature written about programs and training for cultural awareness, the phases of cultural adjustment and developing skills of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett 1998; Hall & Hall 1990; Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2000). There is far less known, however, about how applicable these programs are as a means of preparation for short-term fly-in fly-out academic sojourners who may repeat this pattern multiple times a year over time. Hoare (2006, p. i) established that 'cultural phenomena have a profound impact on participants' experiences of transnational education programs ... [but] ... that this is substantially unrecognised by key actors in the process'. She calls for changes to 'ameliorate negative impacts of cultural difference'. And like Dunn and

Wallace (2004; 2008a) and Leask *et al.* (2005), Hoare supports the inclusion of cultural preparation, not to eliminate but reduce and best manage cultural transitions.

2.3.2 Culture and education

The educational environment is a microcosm of the larger society and reflects its values, traditions and practices. Just as sojourners must learn the general rules, regulations and skills for adapting to life in a new culture, they must also develop the ability to apply these to their specific operational domains. (Ward, Bochner & Furnham 2001, p. 156)

There is a vast amount of research—much of it in linguistics—on the role culture plays in informing cognitive styles, conceptions of learning, different attitudes to knowledge, and authority, relationships and communication conventions (Ginsberg 1992; Kaplan 1986; Littlewood 2000). At a macro level there is agreement that cultural values inform behaviour and ways of thinking (Ginsberg 1992; Hofstede 1980; Ramachandran 2011; Triandis 1988), that ‘no education is neutral because of the effects of culture’ (Hallak 2000, p. 16), and that there are differences in how Eastern and Western systems go about educating students (Cheng & Wong 1996; Evans & Tregenza 2002).

Nie (2012) argues against taking a binary East-West cultural outlook in education, for although it is ‘neat’ and ‘appears to respect differences’ in fact ‘rather than enlightening us about the differences between cultural practices and norms the dichotomizing approach often merely reinforces a variety of stereotypes – explicit or implicit, good or bad’ (p. 338). Jones (1999) also cautions against taking such a dual and polarising approach, suggesting it overlooks the rich dynamics of culture at play at the micro level and is also likely to result in creating a deficit model of the Asian learner.

Rather, Jones (1999, p. 5) supports seeing cultural characteristics and approaches to learning ‘on a continuum’. Nie (2012, p. 341) puts forward a “transcultural” or “interpretative”

approach': a cross-cultural paradigm that resists stereotypes and invites the complexities and intricacies of cultural differences. Another position proposed by Briguglio (2000) and Lo Bianco, Liddicoate and Crozet (1999) is to find the intermediary place between two extremes—adopting a third place, from which to understand and offer insights about complex language and learning systems informed by multiple and shifting variables that operate at any one time in any learning environment.

All cultural challenges—experienced as culture shock when first entering a new country or when working in foreign education systems—merge and need to be managed holistically, woven into personal, professional and teaching challenges. The ever-present influence of culture is demonstrated in the following section that reviews previous research on teaching challenges in transnational contexts.

2.4 Teaching challenges

Culture, to varying degrees, is intertwined in eight significant elements of offshore teaching, namely: facilities and resources; partner colleagues; intensive teaching; the role of teachers; learning styles; English language; equivalence; and assessment.

2.4.1 Facilities and resources

When teaching offshore, access to quality ICT equipment and compatible software and resources is critical, including modern computers, well maintained laboratories, reliable internet connections for downloading online lectures and hosting blogs and discussion forums (Dunn & Wallace 2004; Pavey & Garland 2004; Van Damme 2001). Galvin (2004), for example, outlined the challenges that arose for supervisors and their transnational doctoral students when bibliographic and analytic software was not easily accessible.

Debowski (2003) discusses the impact on academics of a partner's capacity, or lack thereof, to provide office space, photocopiers and printers and clerical and technological support,

especially considering classes are mostly conducted over weekends. Similarly, ready access to current student textbooks, translated teaching materials, student support services and library facilities are just as important. However, several studies have found that the quality of offshore partner facilities varies considerably (Pannan, Gribble & Barnes 2005; Thompson, Baron & Newton-2003). Debowski (2003, p. 3) highlights a case from China where 'many courses are taught in long, narrow hotel function rooms, which reduces the capacity to shift furniture', requiring academics to alter how they teach to fit the space. The International Education Association of Australia's (IEAA 2008) *Good Practice in Offshore Delivery Guide for Australian Providers* calls for equivalence in, 'teaching spaces, facilities, online resources, student support and the educational environment' (p. 14).

2.4.2 Partner colleagues

Prior research has consistently found that professional relationships between Australian-based staff and partner colleagues can be difficult to establish and maintain. The reasons given for this are heavy workloads, time pressures, geographic distances, different time zones and a heavy reliance on electronic communication (Dowling & Welch 2005; Dunn & Wallace 2004; Leask 2004b; Leask et al. 2005; McLean, V 2006; NTEU 2004a).

Leask (2004b) likens some partner staff employment conditions to those of sessional teachers in Australia. Some partner staff employed on short-term contracts received low rates of pay and often concurrent employment at a number of institutions. This can lead to high rates of staff turnover resulting in a lack of continuity in the curriculum and lost opportunities for building collegiate relationships. The power imbalance and the disparity in work conditions between institutions have also been found to affect academic relationships, curriculum continuity and teaching.

Dunworth (2008) points out, 'the term "partnership" implies an equality of status but most times the quality assurance or legal demands of the programme embedded a status differential' (p. 100). Leask (2004b) argues that this mimics a colonial structure where partner

staff are 'subsidiary to that of the Australian staff' so the teaching and learning team are not equal (p. 146). Some studies have found that students contribute to this power imbalance by preferring and seeking out the 'credible and authoritative' Australian academics, particularly around assessment (Dunn & Wallace 2004, p. 298). Despite this power imbalance, Australian academics often turn to their 'local teaching counterparts to contextualise the material' (Evans & Tregenza 2002, p. 5). Leask (2004b, p. 144) notes how partner staff play the critically important role of 'cultural mediator and translator'. Leask *et al.* (2005) suggest if time and circumstances allowed for greater collaboration, then, rather than being a challenge, partner staff as the 'cultural insiders' could make significant contributions to the curriculum and language and learning styles because of their local knowledge and expertise.

2.4.3 Intensive teaching

The challenges for fly-in fly-out academics teaching offshore in intensive formats, such as spending several long days in the classroom with often very tired students, is well documented in the literature (Clark & Clark 2000; Debowski 2003; Leask *et al.* 2005; Pyvis & Chapman 2004; Seah & Edwards 2006). The fast pace and intensity may not allow time to explore new material or revise former content, with few opportunities to assist students who might be struggling to grasp certain concepts (Galvin 2004). There is also little time for academics to get to know their students or establish supportive relationships with their partner colleagues. Thus they can be left feeling overwhelmed, weary and unsatisfied with their teaching (Gribble & Ziguras 2003; Wilkes & Lee 1991).

2.4.4 Teachers' roles

A common theme in the literature is that Australian staff, partner staff and offshore students have different expectations as to what constitutes the role of a teacher. Studies examining the expectations of students from Confucian backgrounds often characterise lecturers as 'the authority, the repository of knowledge ... a respected elder transmitting to a subordinate junior' (Ginsberg 1992, p. 6). Watkins (2000, p. 167) observed that Chinese students are

culturally more likely to view teachers in a parent role. Jin and Cortazzi's (1998, p. 752) study however shows how teachers are expected to 'have deep knowledge, an answer to learner's questions and to be moral examples', whilst being 'friendly and warm-hearted', even beyond the classroom.

Cheng and Wong (1996, pp. 34-6) also document that traditionally, teachers from Confucian cultures carry high community and social expectations; they are seen to have the 'ideal' personality and their role extends into the realm of pastoral care with visits to students' homes and providing remedial tutorials. Although such expectations may have lessened over time, Bodycott and Walker (2000) were still wary of their offshore students' reticence to participate in in-depth critical discussions or challenge teachers views, explaining how teaching abroad required them to reassess and 'reconstruct their view of the role of the teacher and teaching in higher education' (p. 87).

2.4.5 Learning styles and approaches to learning

Keefe (1979, p. 4) define learning styles as '... characteristic cognitive, affective, and physiological behaviours that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment'. Some studies have found that academics describe their offshore students as having a propensity to rote learn and memorise, lacking critical thinking skills, and needing to fully understand an idea before communicating it with others (Dunn & Wallace 2004; Evans & Tregenza 2002; Jin & Cortazzi 1998). Academics also commonly reported that transnational students were reticent to ask, respond to, and learn from questions (Eldridge & Cranston 2009).

From an intercultural communication perspective, Ji (2008) and Qian (2002) argue that students' reticence to openly contribute orally in class and with academics may be due to the value placed on vocal restraint in Confucian-heritage cultures, and social conventions governing speaking and interpersonal relationships based on a range of factors such as power, distance and hierarchy. To question, challenge, or express a different viewpoint to

their teacher or other students could be seen as attacking the teacher's competence or speaking out of turn (Ginsberg 1992). MacKinnon and Manathunga (2003) urges teachers not to view silence as necessarily negative but to recognise that it may be students showing respect and that they are thinking.

In contrast, studies examining learning from the perspective of transnational students as opposed to academics show although initially difficult the students adapted to new ways of learning. Wang's (2005) study conducted in China with 20 students enrolled in an Australian graduate program found most students over time responded to learning with 'Western' participatory pedagogies such as class dialogue, group work and peer assessment. Heffernan *et al.* (2010) investigated the 'differences in learning styles between business students in China and Australia' and asked 'how' and 'to what degree' teaching strategies should be modified in light of the clear differences they found. In essence the challenge for academics is first being aware of any differences in learning styles and then knowing how best to respond, being mindful that 'it is important to not simply cater to students' preferred learning styles – students need to be developed in areas of weakness' (Morrison, Sweeney & Heffernan 2003, pp. 214-6)

2.4.6 English language

Dunworth (2008), when investigating transnational English language programs for higher education, learned 'cultural misunderstandings and communication failures were cited frequently as causes of problems while positive experiences were also often explained as the result of good communication and shared cultural values' (p. 98).

The literature includes many accounts of academics struggling with their students' perceived poor reading, comprehension and analysis, essay writing and listening and oral presentation skills (Bodycott & Walker 2000; Dunn & Wallace 2006; Galvin 2004; Hicks, M & Leask 2001). Even though English language entry requirements may be equivalent offshore and onshore, transnational students have less exposure to English outside the classroom. Thus their

language skills may not develop through their studies as rapidly as onshore international students (MacKinnon & Manathunga 2003).

Golby (1999) found that academics teaching in Singapore, who initially assumed their students would have high levels of English and socio-linguistic skills, found this not to be the case, with 'Singlish' not matching expected levels of Standard English. Some academics reported to Bodycott and Walker (2000, p. 84) that an institutional assumption was 'as native English speakers, we were also competent teachers of English ... and an expectation that we could address issues of language proficiency in our classrooms'. Despite this issue, several studies have found that language and learning skills supporting services at partner institutions are not equivalent to those provided onshore (Clark & Clark 2000; Leask et al. 2005; McLean, V 2006).

Finally, a unique language and communication challenge for academics teaching offshore is working with translators and interpreters. One academic in a study by Poole and Ewan (2010) was adamant that teaching with translators in transnational programs should be 'abolished by every Australian university' (p. 154). And in fact the percentage of offshore programs using translators is low, while the many challenges for academics teaching in bilingual programs remain. Translating is expensive and time-consuming with long lead times for course notes and exams to be converted into different languages—an essential factor for success being the personal connection between the academic and partner translator. There is a loss of pace, rhythm and spontaneity when using an interpreter in classroom teaching. Evaluating learning outcomes is difficult, and bilingual assessment is complicated by concerns of accuracy, authenticity and security related to the translated assignment and examination papers (Campbell-Evans & Leggett 2007; Debowski 2005).

2.4.7 Managing difference and equivalence

There is a consensus in official guidelines and good practice guides that programs delivered within Australia and transnationally should be 'equivalent' in both the standard of delivery and

learning outcomes (AEI 2005, 2008; UNESCO 2005). Programs accredited by professional bodies, for example, the Institute of Engineers Australia or the Australian Computer Society, must also teach the curriculum and criteria stipulated in the granting of accreditation. Carroll and Woodhouse (2006) explored the meaning of equivalence in a transnational context by asking whether this means that programs should be identical, somewhat altered, significantly tailored, or completely different to the domestic version. There are those who argue that one of the key reasons why offshore students choose to enrol in an Australian program is to experience an Australian designed curriculum, delivered intact without being altered, and wanting both a quality degree and one where they will be challenged to learn new things (Egege & Kutieleh 2008; Pyvis & Chapman 2004). On the other hand, V McLean (2006) describes offshore students who 'were critical of an educational experience that was perceived to be Australia-centric in content', and another group who did not seek either a specifically Australian or local qualification but rather 'a degree experience that is tailored to help them become citizens of the world' (p. 61).

Ziguras (2008, p. 49) warns that removing 'culturally bound ways of thinking, communicating and working', to create a universal style curriculum, could mean 'lecturers run the risk of abstracting the curriculum from real-world contexts' (Ziguras & Rizvi 2001, p. 4). Volet (1999) and Egege and Kutieleh (2008) similarly do not advocate a single model of teaching based on the assumption all students are the same. However, they believe teaching models based on sound principles of learning will benefit all students regardless of cultural orientation. Biggs (2003) suggests that attempts at standardisation and parity could reduce quality, whilst others argue the need to adapt the curriculum on the basis of creating contextual relevance (Dunn & Wallace 2006; Gribble & Ziguras 2003; Hudson & Morris 2003; Leask 2004b; Smith, P & Smith 1999; Ziguras 2008).

Ziguras (1999, p. 3) also stresses that academics 'must be familiar with their students' backgrounds, assumptions and expectations' as well as their home country and its

educational practices. Stella (2006), then auditor-general of AUQA, supports programs being locally relevant and explains that ‘the “same” or “equivalent” or “comparable” aspect of a programme has to be understood with reference to two different aspects, namely cultural or contextual and standards or outcomes’ (p. 269). McLean (2006) confirms that equivalence in transnational degrees may not have to be identical but there must be ‘meticulous strategies for continuing to compare the quality of the degree across locations’ (p. 61). The requirement to teach differently, but to equivalent standards, poses ongoing challenges for fly-in fly-out teaching staff. Stella (2006, p. 270) reminds us that ultimately ‘the judgement on whether “same as” is being achieved is a qualitative academic task to be carried out by the academics’.

Many researchers, including Evans and Tregenza (2001), Leask *et al.* (2005), Miliszewska and Horwood (2004), and Dunn and Wallace (2004), describe academics’ concerns about tailoring course content to be culturally and socially responsive. Most academics alter or add to the course content by including local case studies and references, often from current media sources. Others decide to leave out parts of the course content so as to spend more time on foundational concepts that students may be struggling to fully grasp. Debowski (2003, 2005) emphasises how important flexibility and versatility in both teaching and curriculum design are in the transnational context. Debowski (2003) also argues this is why it is preferable to send senior and experienced academics abroad who ‘can be flexible in adapting the programme to suit the students’ needs rather than slavishly adhering to a structure and stipulated program of study set by the course managers’ (p. 3). Dunn and Wallace (2006) and Leask (2004a) propose and alternate optimum ways to minimise concerns of relying on individual academics by working with local partners, taking a collaborative and team-based approach to adapting the curriculum.

2.4.8 Assessment

A range of studies, including those by MacKinnon and Manathunga (2003), Teekens (2001b), and Dunn and Wallace (2004), have described the difficulties involved in designing assessment for use across national and cultural boundaries. It can be challenging for academics—more so in a transnational context—ensuring assessment is inclusive and addresses the needs of students from different cultural, learning and language backgrounds (Pyvis & Chapman 2004; Scarino, Crichton & Papademetre 2006). An additional complication, as Dobos (2011, p. 26) observes, is that ‘assessment and moderation are two tasks strictly controlled by the parent university’, and that ‘moderation is almost always one way’. As a result, local partner staff are ‘very rarely “allowed” any input into the content and style of assessment’ (p. 26). Australian academics reported to Pyvis (2011, p. 739) that they saw moderation of partner staff’s written assessment of student work as ‘a means of creating likeness between programmes ...’. An additional dilemma due to security reasons is that different versions of exam papers have to be written when operating across multiple locations and time zones. This is even more challenging and time consuming for the few offshore bilingual modes of program delivery (Campbell-Evans & Leggett 2007; Carroll, M & Woodhouse 2006).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed research into how fly-in fly-out academics are recruited and remunerated and the range of responsibilities, in addition to teaching, associated with this role. The quite dispersed literature around the personal, professional, cultural and teaching challenges academics have reported experiencing teaching offshore was also reviewed.

It is significant that much of the research has been conducted on a small scale and was undertaken more than a decade ago, while in this same period the transnational education sector in Australian universities has grown significantly. An essential task of this investigation, therefore, is to identify if there have been any changes that have occurred

since the earlier research was conducted. Have universities re-examined their recruitment processes and the way academics are remunerated? Are the responsibilities of teaching, and the additional tasks associated with working offshore made explicit? And have the types of personal, professional and teaching challenges and support changed? Findings relating to these questions are presented in Chapters Five and Six.

The next chapter examines previous research on the type of professional development and support universities have provided for academics teaching offshore.

Chapter Three: Australian Universities and Academic Development

This chapter reviews the literature that informs how Australian universities approach the preparation and support of academics teaching offshore. It begins with a brief historical review of academic development in Australian universities including external forces influencing current practices. This is followed by an introduction to academic development theories and the models informing this study, along with three important aspects of academic development programs: namely, the promotion of programs, their evaluation, and academics' engagement in university professional development. The chapter then critiques the research advocating the need for and importance of dedicated preparation and support specific to offshore teachers, as distinct from general university professional development programs. Finally, the content and methods of delivery considered 'ideal' for such preparation programs are reviewed.

3.1 Academic development in universities

This overview of the historical and regulatory factors influencing the context in which preparation and support for fly-in fly-out academics operates, draws from literature in the field of academic development (Brew 2002; Lee, A, Manathunga & Kandlbinder 2008; Lee, A et al. 2007). From the 1960s through to the early 1970s the practice of academic development emerged, with lecturers voluntarily and informally working on projects together and/or attending conferences. In the 1970s academic development started to be seen as an identifiable field of practice which could be linked to changes in policy and practice in higher education. The dramatic rise in the number and mix of students at universities created a need for different approaches to teaching and learning. The 'student-centred' model was

introduced and lecturers were encouraged to view their students as active, independent, motivated, and willing participants in their learning (Sparrow, Sparrow & Swan 2000).

By the end of the 1970s the introduction of new learning technologies created a need (not always met) for academic development support to be formalised. Academics required support in how best to utilise new technologies designed to teach larger and more diverse cohorts of students (Pocknee, Mulvany, Schier 2011). Academic development was still rather piecemeal, not strategically planned, and showing little evidence of being informed by adult learning theory. 'Development' was aligned with the academic norms of the time which valued 'autonomy, integrity and personal responsibility' (Boud 1999, p. 2). Interestingly, the training programs did not adopt the student-centred approaches being advocated for use in classrooms. Instead, en masse 'how-to' sessions were the de rigueur, or as Scott, Dixon, Dixon and Kerr (2006, p. 3) recall, the 'one-shot workshop' was born.

Funding cutbacks of the 1980s and the Dawkins Reforms (Dawkins 1988) saw Australian universities moving away from 'traditional modes of collegial decision-making' (Thornton 2005, p. 5) to more entrepreneurial corporate models of governance. More strategic approaches to staff development were called for (AVCC 1981) and as a result, centralised academic development units were established. At this time Marginson (1993) described university staff roles as being shaped by human capital theory and Boud (1999, p. 2) suggested that staff were seen as 'a resource (especially for teaching) which need to be trained and deployed for the strategic objectives of the employing institutions'. Twenty years on, McWilliams (2002) writes: 'Australian universities are now understood to be workplaces where client-driven activity is the norm' and 'professional development curriculum must be constantly informed by, and responsive to, market forces' (p. 5).

As part of this trend, academic development units started to be co-opted to facilitate institutions' corporate agendas and initiatives such as the introduction of 'quality assurance and performance management' (Boud 1999, p. 2). Also with the shift to 'new managerialism',

senior managers worked with academic developers to implement university policy changes. For some, academic development was now being 'viewed as a somewhat evil, top-down method of control' (Gelade 2007, p. 216).

In the late 1990s only one-third of academics had any formal teacher training (McInnis 1999); but by the early 2000s most higher education institutions had made participation in tertiary teaching graduate certificates compulsory for all newly appointed academics. This was a step closer to formalising academic development and replacing voluntary with mandatory participation. This period also saw the introduction of nation-wide quality audits, the catalyst being an attempt to maintain Australia's competitive edge in the international education market (Coaldrake 1999; Dearn, Fraser & Ryan 2002; Marginson 2000; Marginson & Considine 2000).

With these changes came a re-think of the roles and responsibilities of academics, generating debates around what constituted academic work (Gelade 2007) and the academic promotion process (Dearn, Fraser & Ryan 2002; DEST 2002). The notion of university teaching as a profession began to crystallise (Andresen 1995; HERDSA 1997) and fuelled the teacher versus researcher divide. Some deemed real academic work as being about research and publications, while teaching and administrative tasks were perceived as less valuable roles that should be shouldered elsewhere (Dearn, Fraser & Ryan 2002).

These changes were also the catalyst to re-think the purpose of academic development units and the role of academic developers (Brew 2002; Hicks, M 2005; Holt, Palmer & Challis 2011; Roche 2001; Rowlands 2002, 2007). There is extensive research, not only on academic developers' roles, but also their relevance, qualifications, expertise and the theoretical foundations underpinning and informing their work (Carew et al. 2008; Land 2001; Lee, A & McWilliam 2008; McWilliam 2002; Taylor 2005). Professional 'identity' is a key theme within the literature with researchers documenting the challenges about academic

developers' credibility, creativity and ability to be catalysts of change (Andresen 1996; Bath & Smith 2004; Hicks, M 2005; Peseta & Manathunga 2007).

Contributing to this 'identity crisis' were the multiple changes and restructures academic development units experienced, resulting in working with fixed budgets, finite resources and reduced staff (Holt, Palmer & Challis 2011). It has been suggested that academic developers were caught between the opposing demands of supporting academics in their development, while meeting institutional policy and accountability requirements (Brew 2002; Hicks, M 2005; Lee, A & McWilliam 2008; Rowlands 2002). Peseta and Manathunga (2007) directly pose the question about who academic developers work for: '... is it the institution, our academic colleagues, students or some awkward combination of all three?' (p. 165). In 2000 Webb (2000, p. 18) warned that 'there are tough times ahead' for academic development, with an increasing external 'quality assurance and standards approach dissociated from quality improvement'.

These 'tough times' for academic developers were not too far into the future, for in 2000, as competition for students in domestic and global markets increased, so too did the drive for accountability, and with that the increase in processes to monitor quality (Anderson, D, Johnson & Milligan 2000). Australian literature around quality principles and international education was initially piecemeal (Castle & Kelly 2004), but changed significantly from 2000, when the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) was established. One of the key objectives of AUQA was the enhancement of offshore quality, with the first round of audits in 2005 focusing on international and transnational education (AUQA 2006). Rather than using absolute criteria for the five-year university site visits, AUQA examined each institution's own self-assessment of their policy, standards and systems around research, teaching and learning and management. In addition there was 'a growing energy across the world around promoting quality learning' (Debowski 2010, p. 6), with education authorities in host countries and professional registration bodies becoming more actively engaged in the quality process.

'Quality' in transnational education focused on government regulations of quality assurance processes, trade in education services and institutional processes in managing programs (Marginson 2004; Paige & Mestenhauser 1999). The *Transnational Quality Strategy* (AEI 2006b) was underpinned and driven by the principles that Australia's quality assurance arrangements were easily understood, well regarded internationally, and that transnational programs were equivalent in standard and delivery to those offered onshore in Australia. Stella and Woodhouse (2011, p. 15) exhorted that 'legal and quality systems' in offshore education must continue to be enhanced and developed if the opportunities of transnational education are to be embraced and pitfalls avoided. In 2011 the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act* (TEQSA) was established to follow-on from AUQA and commenced operating in 2012, undertaking both compliance and quality assessments (TEQSA 2013).

While the government agencies focused on regulations, standards and quality assurance, Leask *et al.* (2005) and others called for discussions on 'quality' in transnational education to be broadened to include ethical, educational and teaching and learning assurances (Baird 2006; Gallagher 2011; McBurnie & Ziguras 2011; Stella & Sudhanshu 2011). Miliszewska and Horwood (2004, p. 1) support this more expanded concept of quality and assert that universities' 'survival in a global educational environment is dependent on the quality of their "educational product", that is, the quality of the design and delivery of the transnational programs'. The degree to which Leask *et al.* (2005) have been heard is in part being assessed in this thesis, and hence the inclusion of the role and contribution of academic developers has been included in the design of the study.

Stefani (2013, p. 294) argues that now, facing intense 'political, fiscal and organisational pressures', university management are conscious that academic development is a 'cost' as opposed to a 'revenue-generating activity'. They also note that these pressures and restraints account for academic units continuously being 'restructured, redistributed or

disestablished' (p. 294). Although Stefani writes from a New Zealand perspective, she refers extensively to the report *Benchmarking Performance of Academic Development Units in Australian Universities* (CADAD 2011). And given the similarity in the two countries' higher education institutions, her observations are equally relevant to Australian tertiary education.

In spite of the plethora of literature questioning and reconceptualising academic developers' identity and contributions (Boud & Brew 2013; Gibbs 2013; Kinash & Wood 2013), it is clear that the nature of academic developers' work is determined by where academic development units are located in the broader university structure, and the power, position and politics attached to the division. Challis, Holt and Palmer (2009, p. 372) identify four factors critical for academic development units to be successful in contributing to the academy of the future: clarity around its direction and role; a shared understanding of purpose; the capacity and capability to achieve its purpose; and the ability to demonstrate value. This research considers each of these factors as it examines academic development units and academic developers' roles through the lens of preparing and supporting staff for transnational teaching, all the while being mindful of the current driver of academic developers' work 'will be the institutional strategy rather than the needs identified by academics' (Ling, Fraser & Gosling 2013, p. 11).

3.2 Theories and models

Professional development by its very nature is both complex and multifaceted, particularly in the higher education sector, which is currently experiencing many changes in staffing structures, student diversity and external economic and technological demands (Nicholls 2001, p. 10).

While all universities respond to external challenges, such as government regulations and quality audits (Ramsden 1998; Reid 2002), each adopts their own unique approach to preparing staff depending upon individual internal circumstances (Ferman 2002; Nicholls 2001). Other influences shaping how universities go about preparation and support are how

they choose to theoretically underpin their academic programs and what type of models are used to deliver them. These two essential components of academic development are next reviewed.

3.2.1 Theories of academic development

The thesis is located in the field of higher education academic development, situated within a cultural and global dimension of education, namely fly-in fly-out transnational teaching, and is investigating the types of preparation and support Australian universities provide for academics. Higher education academic development draws from multiple disciplines and theories such as learning organisations, organisational learning and human resource development (Argyris & Schon 1996; Martin 1999; Senge 2006; Warner & Crosthwaite 1995). But fundamental and core to academic development is adult learning theory (Brookfield 1986; Cranton 1992; Cross 1981; Knowles, Holton & Swanson 2005; Kolb 1984; Merriam 2001). The term andragogy, the study of adult learning, was coined by Kapp, a high school teacher, in Germany in 1833 (Henschke 2009, p 2). Knowles (1978) developed andragogy into a theory and model of adult learning in the 1970's and identified six principles fundamental to adult learners, namely that adults are: internally motivated and self-directed; practical, goal and relevancy oriented; value respect, and bring their own life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences. The concepts encapsulated in the theory and models of adult learning are key to informing the design of this investigation and analysing the data collected about how Australian universities prepare and support academics teaching offshore.

Adult learning is multifaceted and as Cranton (1992) makes clear is a complex discipline without 'one unifying framework or theoretical model' (p. 1). Proof of this complexity and richness are the differing approaches and models to adult learning documented in the literature such as: andragogy (Knowles 1978); experiential learning (Kolb 1984; Rogers & Freiberg 1993); reflective practice (Argyris & Schon 1974); action research (Carr & Kemmis

1986; Huang 2010), self-directed learning (Merriam 2001); transformative learning (Mezirow & Taylor 2009); and most recently scholasticism (Gibbs 2013; Grant 2013). Successful academic development is where the needs and context of the learning is matched with the appropriate approach and activities framed in a well-planned model of delivery.

3.2.2 Models of academic development

There are extensive international studies describing different models and frameworks for providing professional development for academics (Beaty 1998; Crawford 2008, 2010; Feixas & Euler 2012; Land 2001, 2003). Significant Australian frameworks and delivery models include: Hicks' (1999) integrated two-dimensional framework; Dixon and Scott's (2003a) adaption of Guskey and Sparks' (1991) three-phase model for professional development for offshore lecturers; and Moore's (2005) *Model of Teacher Change* working with Guskey's (2002) framework. However, as often only one aspect of these models matched the concepts of this study they were therefore considered not useful. Hicks' (1999) model, for example, considers the integration of delivering central and departmental academic development. Dixon and Scott's (2003a) model was created to evaluate the effectiveness of academic development to improve student learning outcomes by working with partner teachers at offshore locations. And the focus of Moore's (2005) adapted four stage model was on academic development as a transformative experience for literacy teachers. Three models of academic development, two Australian and one American, that more closely aligned with discrete components of the research design and data analysis were identified as suitable and are discussed next.

The *Adult Learning Model of Faculty Development* (Lawler & King 2000b) is a US model which incorporates both the principles and processes of adult learning and adult program planning. The model, created through the lens of adult education, is built on core adult learning principles such as: the creation of a climate of respect; active participation; building on experience; using collaborative modes of inquiry; learning for action; and creating a

participative environment. The four adult education program planning stages are: pre-planning, planning, delivery and follow-up (Lawler & King 2000a). This model was chosen to inform the design and analysis of this study as: it incorporates both adult learning and program planning principles interwoven in the one model; it considers the role of the academic (faculty) developer, needs assessment and the promotion of programs; and it includes a 'follow-up' phase which aligns with the 'returning home phase' of the TNE academics and the opportunities for continuing their learning post return. A diagram illustrating the key features of Lawler and King's model is provided in Appendix 1.

The second model is Osborn's (2001) *Work Embedded Professional Development Model*, the outcome of an Australian qualitative doctoral study, examining approaches to professional development for primary, secondary and tertiary teachers over time. Osborne found in the tertiary sector data that approaches toward university academic development were out-dated and did not meet the needs of staff, particularly those with no formal teaching qualifications. This model supports this investigation in that it was created for an Australian university context. The focus is on supporting staff with no formal educational qualifications, which is often the case for academics teaching offshore. An additional strength of this model is its categorisation of Australian tertiary profession development approaches, which are applied to the data gathered around the delivery methods used to prepare and support staff teaching offshore.

Osborn (2001) examined academic development characteristics such as the purpose, process, delivery approach, concept of learning and the learner and concept of improvement and renewal. These were analysed in relation to how closely they aligned with teachers' work and from this analysis three categories were created. Each category was labelled with the term 'generation' to denote the length of time involved in the evolution of the paradigm shifts between different methods of professional development. The first category was named 'work-

ignored', the second 'work-perceived' and the third 'work-embedded'. A table illustrating the key features of each of these categories is provided in Appendix 2.

The first generation work-ignored category is that of professional development, which operates separately from the academic's work context, with prescribed and generic content more or less 'dumped' onto the participants in a linear manner. The second generation work-perceived category partially recognises academics' differing tasks and contexts, but professional development is still ancillary to their main work and mostly externally driven, although a reflective and cyclical process is followed. The third generation work-embedded category is based on principles of collaboration, ongoing development and constructivist learning and operates in an intrinsic and spiral process of learning (Osborn 2004).

Osborn (2001) found most tertiary sector sessions stagnating in first generation approaches. The majority were linear, one-off formal sessions, delivered by presenters who were external to academics' work contexts. The academic attendees were from diverse disciplines with varying interests and different levels of experience, for example, new sessional staff and long-term senior staff. There is much evidence to suggest that these first generation characteristics still reflect many universities current formal approaches to academic development (Kandlbinder 2000, 2003; O'Reilly, Ellis & Newton 2000; Timberlake 2008). Ho (1998, p. 24) argues that such a 'teaching recipe' model with an 'additive' approach to development is not flexible and does not foster independence or facilitate the development of personal meaning, especially if academics participating in these workshops do not have formal teaching qualifications (Biggs 1989; Ramsden 2003; Trigwell 1995).

Second generation approaches most often operate at the local discipline level, with a mix of both formal academic development, created in consultation with staff, and informal collegial learning. There is also evidence (on a small scale) of semi-structured types of academic development such as peer-assisted learning (Bell 2005; Boud 1999; Cooper, P & Bell 2009), mentoring (Blackwell & McLean 1996; Reid 2002; Robbie & Weaver 2009), workplace

facilitation (Hughes 2002), solution-focused work (Devlin 2006) and action research (Zuber-Skerritt 1992, 1993).

Across both the Australian and international literature, many studies have pointed to the need to shift away from first and second generation approaches to third generation work-embedded and integrated programs (Ferman 2002; Hicks, O 1999; Osborn 2001; Reid 2002; Senge 1995). Elements of this phase of the model include approaches such as professional practice and practice development (Daley 2000; Mott 2000; Hager, Lee & Reich 2012), communities of practice (McDonald & Star 2008; Wenger, E 2000; Wenger, E & Snyder 2000) and transformative learning (Cranton & King 2003; Mezirow & Taylor 2009; Smith, K 2009). What these approaches have in common is that academics can take responsibility for creating their own curriculum, based on the needs arising from their daily work. These approaches are collegial, flexible, self-determined and self-directed.

Time, effort, resources and leadership are required to shift away from well ingrained traditional, first and second generation institutional approaches to a more interconnected, collaborative and work-embedded model of academic professional development (Baird 1991; Clarke & Hollingsworth 2002; Osborn 2004; Weaver et al. 2013).

The third model is the *Professional Development Framework for Academic Staff Teaching Australian Programs Offshore* developed by Leask *et al.* (2005). The framework was the outcome of a government funded project specifically focused on the professional development needs of Australian-based and partner staff involved in transnational teaching. As well as the framework, the study developed support materials and resources for teachers and proposed guidelines to inform the selection of staff teaching transnationally. The participants included administrators, students and teachers from Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore, with the aim of identifying the skills, knowledge and attitudes required by staff teaching in international and intercultural settings. The research design had four overlapping and related stages including scoping, the formulation of the framework, development of

materials and resources and communication of the outcomes. Three surveys and interviews were administered to evaluate 15 'essential and desirable characteristics' (Leask et al. 2005, p. vi), gathered by reviewing previous literature in the field about offshore teaching. Electronic surveys were sent to Australian and partner staff, offshore students and administrators and managers in partner institutions. Four themes emerged from the interviews and these themes informed the characteristics required of academics teaching offshore and they are discussed in detail in the next section. The key features of this model are set out in Appendix 3.

Leask *et al.* (2005, pp. 36-45) proposed three key principles that provide clear guidelines for effective support for transnational teaching staff. First, teaching offshore is different from other forms of teaching, with differences being shaped by each unique intercultural space. Second, both Australian based staff and partner staff require access to professional development and resources. Third, professional support needs to be flexible and able to respond to the varying roles, knowledge and experience of individual teachers. Not only do these three principles provide a sound foundation for this investigation, but the framework also focusses attention on the skills, knowledge and attitudes that need to be included in preparation programs, along with the materials and resources to support staff.

This survey of literature of relevant adult learning theories, program planning principles and models of academic development has demonstrated the multiple factors that need to be considered for designing and delivering academic development in general and offshore teaching in particular. There is overlap between the models. For example, the cyclical design of Lawler and King's (2000) model, is similar to Osborne's (2004) spiral approach, and each is constructed on the principles of adult and constructivist learning. These three models were chosen to form the conceptual basis for understanding, designing and analysing the data gathered around learning about how Australian universities prepare and support fly-in fly-out academics, prior to departure, abroad and returning.

3.3 Program promotion, evaluation and engagement

3.3.1 Program promotion

Biggs and Tan (2007) contend that there is a correlation between the effectiveness of promotion of workshops and programs and academics' decisions to attend. How professional development is promoted, the timing, location and presenter/s, is seen as integral to program success. Academics rarely proactively seek out professional development, more usually responding to the active promotion of upcoming events (Gelade & Quinn 2004; Johnston 1996, 1997; King 2003). They base their decision about attending a program on the perceived relevance, practical worth and applicability to their needs. Hence it is important that the promotion of programs clearly indicates the purpose, objectives and intended audience. Parson and Jozeps (2005), in particular, emphasise the need to tailor promotions specifically to the targeted end-user, especially since the promotion of professional development programs competes with a mass of information from websites, newsletters, blogs and emails.

3.3.2 Program evaluation

Evaluation plays a critically important role in the design and implementation of all adult learning, training and professional development (Basarab 2011; Baume 2003; Cranton 2006; Guskey 2000; Knowles, Holton & Swanson 2005; Owen 2006; Spaulding 2008). Yet the Australian and international literature reports that evaluation of university staff development programs is systematically overlooked (Bamber 2008; Gibbs & Coffey 2004; Ho 1998; Rust 1998; Stefani 2013; Stes, Clement & Van Petegem 2007). Gaff and Morstain's (1978) study in Canada found an abundance of descriptive and analytic literature 'about' faculty development programs but limited evidence on 'the impact these programmes have on participants or on their institutions' (p. 73). Australian researchers Moses (1985) and Cannon (1983) similarly revealed a 'paucity of evidence to support the notion that professional

development improved university teaching', suggesting programs are 'acting on faith rather than evidence' (Cannon 1983, p. 21).

Even where programs are evaluated, the literature identified three areas of concern. First, much evaluation is not systematic and often targets only one aspect of programs. Given the complex and multidimensional context of higher education, not to mention transnational education, evaluating only one component of a program in isolation is not effective (Konrad 1983; Kreber & Brook 2001).

Second, where data is collected to evaluate programs, it generally relies solely on information derived from participants' self-reporting or informal conversations, and only seeks feedback on participants' reactions to the program. Such data represents the first of Kirkpatrick's (1998) four levels of program evaluation: overlooking assessment of any knowledge and skills acquisition, behavioural changes, organisational changes and student learning outcomes. McLean and Moss (2003) highlight the fact that participants may report being happy and satisfied with a program but there is little evidence that there has been any behaviour change, or positive impact on an organisation. Alternative program evaluation approaches usually include intervening variables in learning such as the participants' motivation to learn, personal characteristics, attitudes to work, trainability as well as the transfer of training conditions (Holton 1996, p. 5). Despite the critics of the utility of Kirkpatrick's model as a program evaluation tool, based on assumptions that the four levels are causally linked and inter-correlated (Alliger & Janak 1989; Owen 2006), this model continues to be widely used as a means of evaluating university professional development.

The third area of concern identified in the literature, and an extension of concern of only evaluating participants initial reactions, is the lack of short- and/or long-term follow-up to learn of the degree of transfer of learning to participants' teaching practice at the local discipline and/or wider university level (Gibbs & Coffey 2004; Rust 1998; Wilson & Berne 1999). For example, Levinson-Rose (1981) in their US study found that workshops and

seminars were the most common approaches used for faculty development but the least evaluated for improvement. This finding is supported by Weimer and Lenze (1991) who found that 'the actual research on workshop effectiveness is so meagre that it makes assessment across any dimension a moot point' (p. 301). In contrast, Rust (1998) evaluated 33 workshops designed to improve university teaching, but did not just rely on using questionnaires to gather immediate reactions from the participants. Rust re-evaluated all participants four months later using the same questionnaire, as well as conducting telephone interviews with some of the academics. With the temporal questionnaire and phone interview data the results showed that workshops can be an effective means to change academics' practice.

The literature confirms that evaluating individual and organisational learning outcomes is a multi-variable, complex, and resource intensive endeavour that requires time, money and staff expertise (Kreber & Brook 2001). The literature also shows that overall there is a lack of systematic and comprehensive evaluation of university professional development. This is in spite of Cannon's (1983, p. 21) warning 30 years ago that continuing to implement professional development as an 'act of faith', without using methods that are more 'evidence based', is likely to see universities recouping little from their investment.

3.3.3 Academics' engagement

Along with effective promotion strategies and renewal of programs based on quality systematic evaluations, a third significant factor discussed in the academic development literature is the rates of academic attendance and engagement in programs. The research evidence clearly supports generally low rates of attendance and few accounts of positive experiences by academics in regard to professional development. Many feel 'ambivalent to negative' (Gelade & Quinn 2004, p. 9). Common reasons given by academics include a lack of time, heavy workloads, teaching complex and diverse student cohorts, demands of working with new and changing technology and multiple modes of delivery opening up online

and offshore teaching. In the case of some new staff, 'simply surviving' moves engaging in academic development down their long to-do list (Akerlind 2005a; Clegg 2001, 2003; McWilliam 2002; Peseta & Manathunga 2007).

Another explanation is that academic development at its core acts as an agent of change (Cannon & Lonsdale 1987; Cordiner 2013; Hicks, M 2005), and that varying degrees of resistance can be expected with any and all types of change. Research examining learning organisations, change management, and managerial psychology has established a relationship between 'change' and staff 'resistance' (Bovey & Hede 2001; Burke 2011; Marsick, V & Watkins 1999). Self (2007, p. 11) however notes that 'people do not necessarily resist change out of hand, for example, individuals rarely reject change that has obvious personal benefits'. Periods of rapid, prolonged and ongoing change, as evidenced in the Australian higher education sector in recent times (Adams, M, Marshall & Cameron 1999) and in which professional development has played a significant role, can cause greater resistance. The findings of staff resistance in the academic development literature is mirrored by professionals in management, business and organisational research (Raelin 1985; Self 2007).

Resistance can take varied forms. Gelade and Quinn's (2004) extensive two-part qualitative university study defined resistance as opposing or withstanding participation. They identified different types of overt, covert and inadvertent behaviour. Overt resistance is demonstrated with low to negligible registration rates in voluntary programs. And inadvertent and passive resistance is displayed by academics registering but not attending. Overt and active forms of resistant behaviour can also be observed when academics attend programs, but rather than participating and focusing on the objectives of the session, the time is used to vent frustrations either around related topics or broader institutional matters (Atherton 1999). Covert resistance occurs when academics attend workshops with the expectation that they will get a 'quick fix' to a teaching challenge, becoming frustrated when this is not forthcoming.

Gelade and Quinn (2004, p. 3) observed an 'anticipation that the presenter will wave a magic wand and provide instantly whatever solution is needed for any given problem'.

Besides the multiple demands vying for academics' time, there were other explanations offered by academics for their lack of positive response to university academic development. There may be doubts around the theoretical rigour of educational research underpinning academic development programs (Clegg 2003; Peseta & Manathunga 2007). In particular, the scholarly appropriateness of non-discipline based pedagogies is commonly reported (Lindsay 2004) These concerns were not just about the theory informing recommended pedagogical practices but extended to questioning the qualifications, expertise and credibility of academic developers. Webb (1996, pp. 104-5) suggested the more academic developers actively teach, research, publish and attend conferences, the more likely their role will be better understood and the more credible they will appear. Thus resistance may diminish.

Another recurring theme in the literature was the lack of recognition, reward or incentives for engaging in academic development in general and teacher development in particular. Peseta and Manathunga (2007) established that improved and good teaching were not necessarily linked with promotion. In some cases demonstrating proficiency in teaching was taken as evidence for being 'a failed researcher' (p. 170). However, studies have shown a school or institutional culture that valued and rewarded academic development or supported the transfer of learning, with additional resources of time and funding, reduced workloads or class sizes (Ginns, Kitay & Prosser 2010, p. 242) could positively influence staff participation rates (Gelade 2007; Scott, S et al. 2006; Webb 1994).

The shift from voluntary to mandatory participation was another issue raised in the literature examining academics' engagement in professional development. The prime objective of the now mandatory graduate certificates of higher education, first seen in the late 1970s, was to introduce new academics to methods of tertiary teaching (Kandlbinder & Peseta 2009, p. 19). Gelade and Quinn's (2004) study followed participants enrolled in one such certificate and

found that even though resistance decreased as the program progressed, 75 per cent of the respondents reported that, if they had a choice, they would not have enrolled in the program. The three top reasons given were the demands on their time, the extra workload it generated, and encountering difficulties trying to implement the new ideas and practices back in their workplace. Other studies have reported similar findings. Gibbs and Coffey (2004), with regard to some schools' lack of support for innovation noted, 'change was sometimes frowned upon and taken to imply criticism of more experienced colleagues' (p. 98). New academics reported instances of strong resistance, active discouragement and antagonism from other colleagues (Adams, M & Rytmeister 2000; Ginns, Kitay & Prosser 2010; Isaacs & Parker 1997; Peseta & Manathunga 2007) which impacted negatively on their overall impression of the professional development.

With regard to resistance and seniority and age, experienced academics 55 years of age or above have been found to be far more likely to be resistant to academic development than younger and early career staff. The explanations are that older academics are more secure in their role and identity and because their career development is shaped by 'publish or perish' expectations (Gelade 2007, p. 214). Conversely, sessional staff, with the least formed professional identities and job security (Becher & Trowler 2001, Trowler Saunders, Bamber 2012), are far less resistant to academic development than all other groups, in spite of rarely being paid to attend.

Academics' resistance to professional development has also been depicted as a symptom of a sense of loss of academic autonomy and independence. Intellectual freedom is perceived as being whittled away, and greater centralisation and regulation is attacking 'the traditional work of academics and values of academe' (Lynch 2003, p. 9) This is particularly since the late 1990s, and in the face of highly structured, top-down styles of management exacerbated by academic development units merging with central university management divisions, as noted at the start of this chapter (Gelade & Quinn 2004; Thornton 2005).

Up to this point, this chapter has established the historical circumstance in which universities generally go about providing professional development to support academics and their teaching. It has demonstrated that academic development needs to be informed by theories of adult learning, and that models of delivery incorporate both adult learning and program planning principles. Effective promotion of programs and systematic evaluation of professional development is essential, along with monitoring and following-up on the rates of academic attendance, engagement and/or resistance. The general university professional development context has now been set for the final review of literature that focuses critically on university programs specifically designed for academics teaching offshore.

3.4 Dedicated preparation and support for academics teaching offshore

Transnational partnership education is demanding of staff. It is not as simple as a lecturer boarding a plane with a memory stick of presentations to be delivered in yet another lecture theatre. Transnational auditors need to be asking many questions about staffing – about the orientation Australian staff undergo before teaching offshore ... (McLean, V 2006, p. 61).

Examinations of the way universities go about preparing and supporting academics who teach offshore is a rather under-represented aspect of the wider transnational education research. Lead researchers contributing to the current knowledge include Leask (2004b, 2006a, 2008), Dunn and Wallace (2004, 2006, 2008b) and Debowski (2002, 2003, 2005, 2008). Other researchers in the field include: Gribble and Ziguras's (2003) inquiry into formal and informal means of academic development; Hoare's (2006, 2008) ethnographic studies of Australian academics in Singapore; Bell's (2004, 2008) investigations into internationalised curriculums in the global context; and the NTEU (2002, 2004a) which addressed professional and personal preparation needs. Further afield and beyond Australian research, which is primarily focused on teaching in Asia, there are studies documenting experiences in Canada, Qatar and North and South America (Crabtree & Sapp 2004; Haeger 2007; Prowse &

Goddard 2010), and the United Kingdom, Zambia, and the Middle and Far East (Smith, K 2009, 2012, 2013; Whittaker 2008).

3.4.1 Is dedicated preparation and support needed?

Much of the available literature argues for the need for, and importance of, specialised preparation programs including Australian government reports and regulatory frameworks (AEI 2006a; AVCC 2002a), studies from professional associations (IEAA 2005, 2008), the academic union (NTEU 2002, 2004a), as well as university researchers of transnational education (Debowski 2003; Dunn & Wallace 2008b; Leask et al. 2005). All conclude that academics need dedicated preparation and support if they are to deliver quality education offshore. However, there are fewer studies critiquing how, when and what type of academic development universities are providing, and to what degree academics are engaging with such programs and whether they are finding them beneficial; this is a gap in the literature this investigation aims to address.

The *AVCC Provision of Education to International Students Code and Guidelines for Australian Universities* (AVCC 2002a, p. 8) documents seven guidelines which universities are responsible for putting into action to support staff involved in international education, which include transnational teaching. These guidelines:

- ensure that all staff involved with international students and other clients are competent to deal with the students' special circumstances;
- develop training programs, including cross-cultural programs, appropriate to the different levels of involvement and responsibility among staff;
- ensure, through the relevant academic department, that for higher degree research students, adequate supervision and facilities will be available for the duration of candidature;

- ensure that all academic staff delivering courses to international students are appropriately qualified and competent to deliver those courses;
- ensure that staff are well prepared for overseas assignments and visits;
- provide appropriate grievance procedures for staff and students on international matters; and
- ensure that all staff involved with international students are aware of their responsibility under the relevant Australian laws and relevant laws of countries where the university is providing education services.

The importance to government bodies and university management of preparation for academics teaching offshore is also evidenced by DEST and the AVCC funding two submissions specifically focused on staff preparation, in the national *Practice Models for Offshore Delivery Projects*. Both the University of South Australia (Leask et al. 2005) and Flinders University (Cooper, J et al. 2005) researched and produced resources for professional development of staff involved in transnational teaching. The strengths of these approaches were that academics were consulted about their needs, and from this data a mix of university-wide programs with school and discipline support and input were developed. A combination of online resources, face-to-face workshops, manuals and guides for both fly-in fly-out academics and offshore partner staff were also developed (Cooper, J et al. 2005; Hicks, M & Jarrett 2008; Leask et al. 2005).

More recently the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) and Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) have funded projects addressing the preparation and support needs of staff teaching offshore (Keevers, Lefoe & Harper 2012; Mazzolini et al. 2011; Pyvis et al. 2011; Sanderson et al. 2011). Again the outcomes of these projects included professional development frameworks, induction programs, manuals and guides, and a dedicated web portal to support both onshore academics and offshore partner staff.

AUQA's *Quality Audit and Assurance for Transnational Higher Education* (Baird 2006) similarly recognised the demands on academics teaching transnationally and advised auditors to ask questions 'about the orientation Australian staff undergo before teaching offshore' (p. 61). As well, the Australian government, in conjunction with the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA), prioritised the need for staff preparation by commissioning the *Good Practice in Offshore Delivery: A Guide for Australian Providers* (IEAA 2008), which built on the work from the earlier national good practice projects. A section of this guide is dedicated to the selection, induction and training needs of all staff involved in offshore programs, and emphasise factors critical for success when working with and managing teams in a multilingual, cross-cultural workforce (pp. 73-84).

The NTEU (1996, 2004a, 2004b) also mounted a strong case on the need for universities to provide preparation for academics to manage the professional, administrative and teaching demands that arise from working with multiple partners in multiple locations across mixed teaching schedules. They called for preparation to build personal resilience and coping strategies for dealing with the constant dislocation from family, friends, colleagues and interruptions to career aspirations.

In addition to the large scale research by the NTEU, government and professional associations, smaller scale studies such as Bradley (2005), Hudson and Morris (2003) and Knight (2005) similarly argue the need for dedicated preparation based on the key differences between 'at home' international education and 'cross-border (transnational)' teaching. Leask (2004b, p. 145) calls attention to the fact that offshore academics are working in a foreign context where their role as teacher is different and they are the 'other'—the 'cultural outsiders'. Clark and Clark (2000) support this by detailing the unique skill sets required by academics to be able to contextualise the curriculum, teach in intensive mode, manage language challenges and understand the cultural background of the learners. Similarly, Seah and Edwards (2006) state that if the needs of academics living and teaching

in new and unfamiliar cultural contexts are to be met, then additional and specifically designed academic programs are needed, calling for 'more proactive professional development programs to facilitate this development' (p. 309).

3.4.2 Curriculum for offshore preparation and support programs

Transnational teachers need particular skills, knowledge and personal attributes in order to be successful in what is a complex and demanding intercultural environmental ... Transnational teaching is both similar to and different from any other form of teaching activity. The fundamental difference is the intercultural space in which it occurs. The professional development for academic staff needs to address the intercultural nature of offshore teaching (Leask 2006a, p. 7).

Over the past decade a range of authors have sought to describe what they see as the characteristics of an ideal 'globally competent' academic (Badley 2006; Bikson et al. 2003; Haeger 2007; Hunter 2004; Leask et al. 2005; Sanderson 2006; Teekens 2001b). This literature identifies particular types of knowledge, skills, attitudes and attributes needed for teaching higher education programs in international, transnational and global contexts. Although three of the lead researchers in this field, Leask *et al.* (2005), Teekens (2001b) and Badley (2006), were based in different countries, their findings and recommendations regards what skills and knowledge need to be included in preparation and support programs overlap.

Leask *et al.* (2005, pp. vi-vii) identifies four essential themes in professional development for academic staff teaching Australian programs offshore. The first theme is the need for academics to be subject experts in their field, to be informed of the latest research in Australia and internationally and the local context where the offshore program is being delivered. Second, they need to be skilled teachers and managers of the learning environment of the same offshore context. Third, due to the complexities that can arise from each unique transnational setting, it is paramount academics are efficient intercultural learners with particular personal attributes and attitudes. Cultural awareness forms the

foundation from which appropriate materials and methods are chosen to facilitate teaching in a flexible manner, with the ability to adjust to various language and learning differences. Finally, academics need to demonstrate particular personal attitudes and attributes, such as being enthusiastic about what they are teaching, and to be patient and approachable during the teaching process. These four themes or qualities are reinforced in recommendations by Teekens (2001b) and Badley (2006).

Teekens (2001b), based in the Netherlands, worked within the European 'Internationalisation at Home' framework (Crowther et al. 2000; Jones, E & de Wit 2012; Wachter 2003), which is often termed 'internationalisation of the curriculum' in Australia (Leask 2004b, p. 147). Teekens' (2003, p. 111) propositions were based on reflections from practice, rather than resulting from empirical studies, and were intended to promote discussion rather than be an 'empirically validated instrument'. Where Leask *et al.* (2005) identified four key themes, Teekens (2000) created nine clusters of qualifications that form a profile of an ideal international lecturer. These are intended to inform managers as well as teachers and staff developers, with the 'general' and 'personal qualities' cluster intended to help in the selection of academics for teaching in international classrooms. The personal qualities include the need for staff to tolerate cultural differences and provide 'vision and leadership to promote intercultural learning' (Teekens 2003, p. 118). Teekens also emphasised the need for teachers to understand the specific requirements of academic disciplines, foreign education systems and labour markets, as well as awareness of cultural differences and how these differences relate to teaching and learning styles, language, and media and technology. Teekens (2001b, 2003) emphasises how the sets of qualifications are applicable for all academics, including those teaching in local, diverse multicultural classrooms, as well as lecturers teaching abroad.

Badley (2006) also wrote a discussion paper as opposed to conducting empirical research, but from a UK perspective. He outlined four major features required for university teachers to

be globally competent. And, similar to Leask *et al.* and Teekens, the first two features acknowledge the need for academics to be experts in the subjects they teach, and to have pedagogic and andragogic skills to match both the discipline and sociocultural learning context in which they teach (pp. 150-1). The remaining two sets of competencies relate more directly to teaching practice when working in foreign cultures. Badley argues that teachers should adopt a 'transformatory and democratic approach to education' (pp. 153-4), and 'an ethnographic approach to people and cultures' (pp. 156-7).

Badley (2006) proposes methods for academics to go about acquiring these competencies. He suggests academics should maintain their subject expertise by attending conferences to stay abreast of current research. For building their teaching expertise—besides maintaining a commitment to the scholarship of teaching—he encourages enrolling in professional programs such as graduate certificates of higher education. As for developing democratic and transformative approaches to teaching, Badley suggests academics attend staff development workshops and seminars where these concepts could be debated. He also encourages academics to adopt more 'democratic and collegial practices' in their own university as a way to become more confident in creating 'transformatory and democratic teachers abroad' (p. 162). For the fourth competency—taking an ethnographic approach to teaching—Badley draws on the work of the anthropologist Geertz (1988, 1993) in encouraging skills of participant observer and teacher as social critic. The recommended means by which academics could build these rich competencies seem underdeveloped, especially with regards to the latter two capabilities, with rather simple approaches to what are complex competencies. More work would be required to develop these suggestions into university-wide academic development programs that staff could actively engage in.

Comparing the desired characteristics of internationally competent teachers proposed by these three researchers, Leask *et al.*, Teekens and Badley there is agreement that particular attributes should be considered in the selection, preparation and ongoing academic

development. First, it is important when selecting academics they that they are experts in their disciplines and skilled teachers. They need to understand the sociocultural factors of the local setting and be culturally aware, which includes knowledge around different education systems, and teaching and learning styles. In addition, Teekens (2001b; 2003) suggests an understanding and openness to the important roles language, technology and support services play when teaching in a global context.

3.4.3 Delivery methods for offshore preparation and support programs

In spite of the resounding agreement that academics need and would benefit from professional support for offshore teaching, there is a clear and significant gap between universities' intentions when signing-up to the *AVCC Provision of Education to International Students Code and Guidelines for Australian Universities* (AVCC 2002a, p. 32), and what is found in practice in 'addressing the issues of staff development and training'. Based on current literature, where institutional preparation is provided, it is essentially restricted to the point of pre-departure, with no evidence of systematic support available for staff when they are offshore, returning home, or in any ongoing capacity. No studies reported on any formal programs or support mechanisms provided for staff when working offshore, nor when they returned to Australia. The findings from Australian studies are consistent with the literature from other transnational education providers such as the UK (Smith, K 2009, 2013; Smith, L 2009) and the US (Garson 2005; Haeger 2007). Overall, there is little evidence of strategically planned university professional development and support programs in place, with mostly central preparation workshops focused on teaching matters, and negligible preparation for non-teaching and cultural matters.

Previous studies have found that few academics were aware of, or had participated in, any type of formal institutional academic development specifically addressing offshore teaching needs (Dunn & Wallace 2006; Gribble & Ziguras 2003; Seah & Edwards 2006). Hoare (2006) again highlights in her study that 'the university did not provide pre-departure or cross-

cultural briefings' (p. 144). On the few occasions when academics in previous studies had participated in pre-departure preparation, the method of delivery was either brief one-off workshops or accessing online 'teaching tips' resources. Academics who participated in these types of preparation found them unsatisfactory, piecemeal and 'very average and inappropriate' (Seah & Edwards 2006, p. 305).

The most common means of preparation recorded in the literature were academics' own self-preparation and informal support provided by coordinators, experienced colleagues and, to a lesser extent, partner institution staff (Debowski 2003; Gribble & Ziguras 2003; Leask 2004b; Paige & Goode 2009; Prawat 1996; Smith, K 2009; Wilkes & Lee 1991). Again, much of the focus of such preparation was around teaching matters (particularly subject content, assessment and moderation) or logistical issues (including seeking guidance about food, accommodation and transport). Seeking out other colleagues prior to departure or while overseas for a chat over breakfast, coffee or drinks after work appears to be the main means of support available to most Australian fly-in fly-out academics.

Gribble and Ziguras (2003) suggest that informal approaches are preferable to formal academic sessions for three key reasons. First, they propose that informal preparation is unlikely to change across evolving economic, political and social situations. Second, very specific local contextual information can be shared, as opposed to generalised, abstract information and advice. Third, experienced colleagues are in the best position to provide the most appropriate type of information at the right level to newcomers. Several other studies similarly found that more experienced academics share strategies, based on their own individual experiences, for managing teaching, personal and cultural challenges, both inside and outside the classroom (Debowski 2003; Hoare 2013; Smith, K 2009).

Whilst Dunn and Wallace (2006), Hoare (2006) and Smith (2009, 2013) acknowledge the benefits of collegiate informal learning, they also caution against an over-reliance upon this type of informal preparation, particularly in relation to cultural matters. Experienced

academics may feel knowledgeable and confident about a country's culture and eager to pass on their insights. However, 'without mediation of expert facilitation' (Dunn & Wallace 2006, p. 366), facilitated reflection and intercultural development, there is potential for stereotypes and 'organisationally entrenched ethnocentrism' to be reinforced (Hoare 2013, p. 565). Hoare argues that this risk extends beyond cultural matters, observing well-meaning, experienced teachers passing on teaching tips that are 'incorrect ... and wrong' (p. 565). She explains that in some situations advice from experienced colleagues, 'reinforces student-deficiency stereotypes and provides inaccurate and unhelpful (mis-) information' (Hoare 2006, p. 144).

Another preparation approach considered is for academics to participate in more general university development programs and workshops with titles such as 'internationalising the curriculum', 'managing diversity' or 'plagiarism'. Aside from the fact that attendance might be difficult due to a clash with offshore teaching schedules, Gribble and Ziguras (2003) contend these programs and workshops are often rudimentary, generalised and not readily transferable to the challenges experienced offshore.

Most academics in Gribble and Ziguras' (2003, p. 210) study felt there were few differences between onshore and offshore teaching and their prior experience teaching international students in Australia prepared them for teaching offshore. Some saw little need to adapt their teaching for students in Singapore, Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur, believing these students were familiar with 'Western ideas, culture and business practices' (p. 211), although others in the same study felt this not to be the case when teaching in Vietnam and China, perceiving greater cultural differences in these countries. In spite of academics feeling this way, studies have concluded there are too many differences between onshore/offshore contexts to simply transpose the skills acquired teaching international students in onshore. Clearly, many of the challenges discussed in the previous chapter do not apply onshore, and significantly fly-in fly-

out academics are teaching in unfamiliar and foreign cultures where they are in the 'minority', the 'outsider' or the 'other' (Bodycott & Walker 2000; Leask 2004b; Seah & Edwards 2006).

In summary, earlier studies have consistently concluded that academics teaching in transnational programs require dedicated preparation and support to address the unique needs of teaching intensively for short periods of time in foreign locations. There is evidence of two institutions—both having received government funding—where there are well-developed support resources and pre-departure preparation (Cooper, J et al. 2005; Leask et al. 2005). These are the exception, with few other well-developed pre-departure preparation programs, and no documented formal programs and support for staff when they are offshore or when they return to Australia. Rather, the literature suggests that the vast majority of fly-in fly-out academics teaching in Australian transnational programs are acquiring skills in what Hoare (2006, p. 172) describes as 'a "thrown in the deep end" transgression-induced manner'.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined prior research on the design and delivery of mainstream university professional development, as well as research more central to the question in this thesis regarding preparation programs specific to academics' teaching offshore. A context was set by outlining the historical progression of academic development and the role of academic developers in Australian universities to the present. Next the range of theories underpinning this research was noted, emphasising the importance of academic development being built on principles of adult learning theory. Three delivery models (of the two Australian-based models, one was specifically designed for academics teaching offshore) were reviewed, before documenting the significant role promotion and evaluation of programs plays. Research documenting Australian-based academics' engagement with university

professional development was examined, in order to provide a context for the implementation of preparation programs for staff teaching offshore.

Next, literature documenting the need for, and importance of, specialised preparation programs for academics teaching offshore was examined. Studies recommending specific content to be included in dedicated preparation and support programs were examined. There were fewer detailed studies addressing delivery methods, particularly while academics were teaching offshore and upon their return to Australia. Finally, literature debating the 'ideal' characteristics of global and international teachers was reviewed.

No critique could be made as to the success, or otherwise, of the various recommendations made from previous studies of over a decade ago as there have been few investigations following-up on the implementation and outcomes of these recommendations. The literature detailing the theories of adult learning, and the models of academic development have provided a framework to explore the effectiveness, from the perspective of academics and academic developers, of 'how' ten years on, fly-in fly-out academics are being prepared and supported.

It is the aim of this thesis to go part way to closing these gaps in the literature by examining the research questions about how Australian universities prepare and support their staff to meet the challenges of delivering quality education offshore. For example, are the recommendations around the content of programs, the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed by an 'international and global' teacher, as documented by Teekens (2001b, 2003) Badley (2006), Leask (2006a) and Leask et al (2005) incorporated into programs? Are flexible, embedded and inter-collegial delivery methods, as outlined by Osborne and Leask et al (2005), evident in current preparation and support programs? And is it noticeable that fly-in fly-out academic development is built on principles of adult learning and program planning, and moves cyclically from a pre-planning phase with needs assessment through to evaluation and follow-up, as detailed in Lawler and King's (2000) *Adult Learning Model for*

Faculty Development?. Before presenting the findings, Chapter Four will outline the methodology chosen for this investigation.

Chapter Four: Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology used in this investigation. There are eight parts grouped into three sections. The first section frames the research context by summarising the methodologies of prior research, and then outlines the methodological framework and strategies of inquiry of this study. The tools and methods for collecting the data are documented in the second section. The third section addresses the analysis and interpretation of the data, along with ethical considerations and methodological reflections from conducting the research.

4.1 Research context

A limited number of studies uncover the strengths, limitations and outcomes of various approaches. From the available studies I learned some have collected data from: one onshore site and one offshore site (Hoare 2006, pp. vi-vii); a single offshore site (Bodycott & Walker 2000); several offshore sites (Leask 2006a); or several Australian universities (Gribble & Ziguras 2003). Other related studies have examined single topics, such as plagiarism, among transnational students (Carroll, J 2008; Partridge & West 2003) and risk management in transnational programs (Shanahan & McParlane 2005).

The methods used are predominantly qualitative, though several smaller studies employed mixed methods (Bretag & Scobie 2002; Debowski 2005; Dixon & Scott 2003a) while some larger studies were quantitative surveying Australian academic staff (AVCC 2003; Dunn & Wallace 2006; NTEU 2004a). Interviewing academics experienced in teaching offshore is the most common method adopted for collecting data, along with a mix of surveys, case studies and document analysis (Debowski 2003; Dixon & Scott 2003a; Dunn & Wallace 2006). It is important to note though that findings from a significant number of small-scale studies, are focused in one faculty or one discipline area or a few programs in one university. As well as Australian academics, other investigations have involved partner teachers, administrators, managers and students (Dixon & Scott 2003b; Haeger 2007; Hoare 2006; Leask 2004b,

2006a; Leask et al. 2005; Zamit 2008). In summary, there are significant gaps in the breadth and depth of most previous studies of transnational education. Many were conducted with a qualitative framework, many using a single approach and method for data collection, often interviews, that focused on a single university, program and/or teaching site, with preparation examined only at the point of pre-departure (Bretag & Scobie 2002; Crabtree & Sapp 2004; Debowski 2005; Dixon & Scott 2003a; Heyward 2002; Leask 2006a).

This thesis, by contrast, was designed to bring together data from different disciplines across a range of Australian universities that teach programs in many countries. Also, the opinions and experiences of academic developers and academics before, during and after their transnational teaching sojourns are examined. The two unique design features here are purposefully examining the provision of preparation and support across each of the key phases, and examining the perspectives of both academics and academic developers.

4.2 Methodological framework

As with much of the prior research in this field, this investigation was conducted within a qualitative framework, supporting an 'inductive as opposed to a testing' style of research, and encouraging an interactive relationship between data gathering and analysis (Silverman 2011, p. 8). The methodology was structured around a constructivist-interpretive paradigm with aspects of pragmatism. Such an approach sees knowledge emerge from individuals (academics and academic developers in this study) interacting in their social world (their Australian onshore and offshore work settings), where 'meaning is not discovered but constructed' (Crotty 1998, p. 42). An interpretivist approach was based on the researcher interpreting the data with an as open mind as possible, whilst following a systematic analytical approach (Denscombe 2002).

Different approaches and methods operate within an constructivist-interpretative paradigm including interviews, observations and text analysis (Creswell 2009; Denzin & Lincoln 2005;

Patton 2002), but all are fundamentally concerned with finding meaning by understanding social interpretations (Bogdan & Biklen 1992; Lincoln & Guba 1985; Tuli 2010). Other features supportive of this research design include recognition of the impact of the researchers background, the dialogue between the researcher and participants and as Creswell (2009, p.9) states the importance of the ‘participants’ views of the situation study’. Given the purpose of this study—to identify the challenges experienced by academics teaching in transnational programs and then to understand from their preparation experiences what they found helped meet these challenges and their needs—a constructivist-interpretative paradigm was an appropriate choice.

Although this research was not structured around a pragmatic paradigm—more commonly associated with mixed methods and action research—the project did draw on the practical and applied research philosophies of pragmatism (Denzin & Lincoln 2011, p. 246). The research question was problem-centred, real-world orientated and focused on the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of the research problem (Creswell 2009). Other attributes of pragmatism aligned to this investigation were the significant role context plays—that academics’ actions were understood as purposeful and that it was assumed ‘experience emerges in a continual interaction between people and their environment ...’ (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, p. 53). Finally, pragmatism emphasises application and ‘what works’ and this study aimed to learn what type/s of preparation ‘worked’ for academics. These findings thus contribute to the literature on transnational education, making recommendations for universities to consider in preparing and supporting their academic staff teaching offshore.

4.3 Strategy of inquiry

As research strategies most often ‘originate out of disciplines and flow throughout the process of research’ (Creswell 2009, p. 176), prior literature in the field was examined. Phenomenography and needs assessment were found to be used in a way that could be applied to this investigation. Akerlind (2005b, 2005c, 2008) and Prosser and Trigwell (1997),

Australian academic development practitioners and researchers, employed 'phenomenography in the design of programs for teachers of higher education'. Wang (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008) also employed phenomenography in an Australian study of an offshore graduate program exploring Chinese educational leaders and transnational pedagogies. Needs assessment was adopted by Dunn and Wallace (2003b) to investigate professional development for staff teaching offshore. When working with established strategic approaches Tesch (1990) called for flexibility, arguing they do not have to be used in exactly the same way, thus these strategies were employed within the constructivist-interpretative framework.

Phenomenography is a qualitative methodology, within the interpretivist paradigm, and an approach often used in educational research to explore how people experience and think about ideas Marton (1981, 1986). Phenomenography, although not used per se, informed the decision to use in-depth interviews as the chief method to gather data, and thematic analysis to interpret the data in this study. Marton (1981) noted how phenomenography was complementary to other types of 'experiential', 'content-orientated', and 'interpretative' approaches (p. 177). It is also aligned with this study from a methodological and discipline perspective as it 'emerged from a strongly empirical rather than theoretical or philosophical basis' (Akerlind 2005c, p. 321), and links with disciplines of 'learning, studying, communication, teaching and instruction ... [as well as] ... intercultural understanding' (Svensson 1997, p. 161).

One of the main aims of this study was to gather and analyse data around the phenomenon of academics' formal and informal preparation across a range of institutions, programs and disciplines. The aim was to learn what was perceived as worthwhile and meaningful preparation by the academics who participated in these programs and by the academic developers who oversaw them. Entwistle (1997, p. 127) discussed how phenomenography went 'beyond the description of categories to the detection of underlying meanings'. Similarly, Akerlind (2005c) noted how phenomenography was able to capture 'a range of

meanings within a sample group, as a group, not the range of meanings for each individual within the group' (p. 323).

Witkin's (1984) description of needs assessment makes clear its relevance for this study, noting that it could be utilised at an individual, group or organisation level, used for theoretical or applied studies, and with qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Queeney (1995), a researcher specialising in adult and continuing education, also explained that needs assessment was 'a process of identifying the gaps, or discrepancies, between what actually is and what ought to be' (p. 5), and this approach could be used in addition to working with adults' self-reported perceived needs. Employing such a research strategy to guide this study allowed for capturing academics' self-reported needs and also offered the opportunity to note any 'gaps' or 'discrepancies' in university preparation.

Needs assessment could also work in conjunction with an evaluative strategy of inquiry. Witkin and Altschuld (1995), for example, explained that it could provide a means to systematically evaluate 'a set of procedures undertaken for the purpose of setting priorities and making decisions about program or organizational improvements and allocation of resources' (p. 5). Similarly, this study aimed to examine participants' views about the efficacy of institutional preparatory and support experiences, with the intention that the findings may assist universities when reviewing or creating policies, procedures and programs related to the preparation of academics teaching transnationally.

4.4 Methods

Three different methods were chosen, each appropriate for the social context of the study, and each having been successfully used before by experienced researchers in the field (Debowski 2005; Dunn & Wallace 2004; Hoare 2006; Leask et al. 2005). Stake and Usinger (2010) argued that multiple methods should be used to explore similar themes from different perspectives in order to substantiate the data collected. This was, in essence, a type of

triangulation. Data in this study was gathered from the perspective of academic developers and observing preparation workshops; reviewing institutional documents and resources; and from the transnational academics. This aligned with Flick's (2002) viewpoint on triangulation—that it is not so much a strategy of validation but rather an alternative to validation.

Flick (2002, p. 229) also argued that using multiple-methods helped avoid bias or misconstruction of meaning and was 'a strategy that adds rigour, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth'. Despite this view, Silverman (2010) cautioned against assuming that multiple methods would necessarily capture 'the whole picture', asserting that methods needed to be applied from within a theoretical perspective and warned that 'we cannot simply aggregate data in order to arrive at an overall "truth"' (p. 134). I was mindful of this as I gathered and analysed the data collected from interviews, observations and university documents.

4.4.1 Interviews

It is in the use of the self, of relationship building, of acute awareness of the flow of conversations, of a sensitive awareness of the interviewer's theoretical and professional position, and of his or her research question that qualitative data of high quality are constructed in the interview (Nunukoosing 2005, p. 698).

Interviews provided a means whereby academics and academic developers could share their views of former and current preparation and offshore teaching experiences (Fontana & Frey 2005; Patton 2002). Interviews have also been a popular means of data collection in other transnational teaching studies, and were the main method of choice for collecting data phenomenographically. Akerlind (2005c) suggested that interviews ideally captured the full range of ways participants experienced the phenomena under investigation.

Thirty academics and 10 academic developers drawn from 15 Australian universities were each interviewed for approximately one hour. Participants were recruited in a variety of ways,

including: searching Australian university websites for programs taught offshore; contacting university coordinators and academic development units; placing a call-for-participants through university e-newsletters and blogs; and engaging with the International Education Association of Australia. (See Appendices 4, 5 and 6: Call for Participants.) Once initial contact had been made the snowball sampling procedure, that is, 'when the researcher accesses informants through contact information that is provided by other informants' (Noy 2008, p. 330) was also used.

The selection criterion for academics' participation was purposive—that they had taught at least once offshore. Although academics new to the academy and sessional staff were represented in the sample, most participants had taught many times, over many years in different countries. The 30 academics comprised 14 females and 16 males, with just over half (18) who were 50 years or older. The academic disciplines were business and economics (8), science, engineering and health (10) and humanities (12). Within the humanities, the majority were from education (5) and communication and creative arts (4), followed by law and legal studies (3). There were two sessional teachers who were formerly from industry, with the remaining staff being permanently employed, with 22 at lecturer or senior lecturer levels. Six staff relatively new to transnational teaching had taught offshore 10 or fewer times, and nine academics had taught offshore between 11 and 20 times. Fifteen had taught abroad more than 20 times, with three academics having worked in fly-in fly-out teaching for over 20 years. (See Appendix 7 for detailed demographic data for academic participants.)

The selection criterion for academic developers was also purposive in that participants needed to be currently engaged in, or to have in the recent past contributed to, the preparation of fly-in fly-out academics. Recruiting academic developers was more complicated than recruiting teaching staff. This was mostly due to difficulty in making initial contact, as academic development units were organised differently in different universities.

Academic development units were located in human resource divisions, education disciplines, as well as centralised and de-centralised, and in some instances situated within a specific discipline or program. Due to the different organisational structures at each university, more time and refined online searches were needed to make contact with possible participants.

Once contact was made with academic developers they were just as willing as academics to be interviewed, though they initially needed to confirm their participation with their managers. Of the 10 academic developers, nine were females and one male, and half were aged 50 years of age or above. Discipline backgrounds for these academic developers were mostly in education with other specialisations and disciplines including educational psychology, media, language and literary studies, and library studies. All participants were permanently employed on academic awards from lecturer to professorial levels. Six were based in central university academic development units (although one drew on prior experience working at school level), two participants were faculty based, and the other two were school-based with overlapping roles as coordinator, teacher and staff developer. Their position titles were as diverse as the professional skills and pathways that brought them to the role of university academic developer. These included director, coordinator, manager, lecturer, teacher, educational and staff developer. (See Appendix 8 for detailed demographic data for academic developers.)

Flexible interview schedules were designed for both sets of semi-structured interviews. (See Appendices 9 and 10 for interview schedules.) This flexible format suited the 'exploration of attitudes, values, beliefs and motives' (Barriball & While 1994, p. 329) while ensuring 'that the same basic lines of inquiry were pursued' (Patton 2002, p. 343). This was particularly useful, as there was a mix of face-to-face and telephone interviews, and gaps in time between interviews due to the timing of field work in different states. The questions were informed by findings from prior research and focused on learning about the content, delivery

mode, the times and frequency that formal university preparation programs were offered, and the ways in which they were promoted. Participants were also asked about informal means of preparation including self-preparation activities, working with individual academics and coordinators and/or collaborating with a number of colleagues.

The interview guide was pilot tested and one significant change resulted: the decision to frame the questions around the transnational teaching cycle which constitutes pre-departure, offshore and returning to Australia. This framework provided a natural flow for interviews and ensured that challenges and preparation experiences were captured for each part of the teaching cycle.

The most suitable time to meet with academics is generally during non-teaching periods in semester breaks; however, as has been documented, academics teaching in transnational programs with onshore and offshore teaching schedules do not necessarily have such clearly defined breaks. To overcome this problem, I made myself available for interviews at any time nominated by each academic; if a suitable time could not be found, I arranged to conduct a telephone interview at a mutually agreed time. Interviews were most often conducted in the academic's university office—the benefit being they are familiar and comfortable with the setting and it is convenient. The two sessional staff who did not have their own offices were interviewed in a library. Plain language statements and ethics and consent forms were sent in advance of each interview. (See Appendices 11, 12, 13 and 14 for explanatory statements and consent forms.)

As a way of building rapport, each interview with academics started by inviting them to share how they came to be in academia. LeCompte and Goetz (1984) suggest that in educational research learning about participants' career history can 'aid understanding of how participant[s] respond to settings, events and particular innovations' (p. 45). This also provided a context within which to later analyse the data. Rapport and trust were established

without difficulty and it was not obvious that participants felt inhibited, or reticent to contribute their stories or to ask for clarification about questions.

Once a brief discussion around participant interpretation of key terms had taken place, the topic of transnational teaching was introduced with questions around how they were recruited, how many times respondents had travelled offshore, to which countries, and about partner institutions. The questions around preparation were then addressed. Throughout the semi-structured interviews academics could focus on aspects of their preparation and experiences they found most significant. Rarely were probes or prompts required, as the academics seemed willing to participate and readily shared their views and experiences.

Although academic developers were more difficult to recruit, it was far easier to arrange a suitable time to meet. Most interviews were conducted on the home campus, but rarely in an office space, as most academic developers worked in open-plan offices. Two interviews were conducted in private offices, four on campus grounds, two were conducted off-campus at a local library and two interstate interviews were completed via telephone. Each interview would start by inviting the academic developers to share information about their professional background and how this led them to their current positions. Most answered questions precisely, rarely expanding on or moving off the topic. At times I needed to prompt or encourage greater explanation and more detail. There was less flow to these interviews compared with the academics, possibly because the responses around preparation were more factual than experiential. As a result of more direct answers, interviews generally ran between 40 and 45 minutes, although a few were 60 minutes and one was 90 minutes.

A small digital recorder was used in all interviews. Once the recordings were transcribed each participant was offered a copy of the transcript to read through, to verify and provide feedback, though no participants took up this offer.

The only practical limitations in the interview process were the initial difficulty of making contact with academic developers and finding suitable interview times with some participants. There were two telephone interviews, and although I could not observe non-verbal cues, both interviews flowed smoothly and produced valuable data.

4.4.2 Observation of preparation programs

This section outlines the reasons for including observations as the second main data collection tool, the ways I identified and gained access to sessions, the observation protocol and process, and the challenges involved. Patton (2002) and Denzin and Lincoln (2011) explained how observations sit along a continuum ranging from complete immersion to removed observer, similar to the continuum of structured to unstructured interviews. My approach was non-participatory, aiming to position myself as O'Leary (2004, p. 172) described 'physically present but attempting to be unobtrusive', all the while aware that 'there is no pure, objective detached observation; the effects of the observer's presence can never be erased' (Angrosino & Kimberly 2011, p. 416).

Observations have often been used as a method of data collection in transnational and international education research (Bell 2008; Dedoussis 2007; Hoare 2006; Stanley 2010). In this study 25 professional development sessions from different universities and states were observed. This informed me about the themes and content, as well as modes of professional delivery. These observations also augmented the academic developers' interview comments around the planning, promotion and running of preparation programs and the academics' reflections on their experiences as participants in similar programs. I was attempting 'to document what people actually do, rather than what they say they do' (O'Leary 2004, p. 172). This method of data collection contributed to the overall research, particularly identifying topics that were not discussed by the participants.

My intention was to observe sessions specifically designed for academics preparing to teach offshore but I only found one such dedicated session. After much searching of university

websites I found 18 general university professional development sessions focused around international themes. I also observed six formal, non-university seminar programs delivered by the IEAA and hosted on university campuses. (See Appendix 15 for observation summaries.)

Once I had identified the 19 university sessions and the six IEAA programs I forwarded an outline of my research to the presenters of the workshops and seminars. Some institutions required further details but every request to observe the programs was supported.

Drawing from previous transnational and adult learning literature I designed a checklist detailing the theme and content of the program, resources (pedagogy, assessment, culture and logistics) and delivery methods (workshop, small group work and lecture style). The presenters provided information on the number of participants who registered but did not attend. Extensive descriptive field notes documented the style and delivery model of presentations, interactions between the presenter and participants and amongst participants, as well as noting questions, responses, comments and reactions (Bogdan & Biklen 1992; Creswell 2009). As O’Leary (2004, p. 173) encourages researchers ‘to observe and record the unplanned and/or the unexpected’, I also took note of participants who appeared to be focused and actively engaged in the session or distracted, those leaving the room to take phone calls or leaving the session early, along with those who remained for the duration of the program.

At the start of each session the presenter briefly explained to participants the purpose of my attendance. At the end of each observation session the descriptive notes were written-up and an entry made in my researcher’s journal to be referred to during the analysis phase. The major challenge was sourcing programs most relevant to academics teaching offshore. The observations were valuable and enriched the data from interviews and documented reviews as well as giving me the opportunity to experience—in part—what academic developers and academics experienced in formal university workshops.

4.4.3 Review of documents, materials and resources

The third data collection method used was reviewing university policy and procedure documents, teaching resources and professional development materials, obtained both online and in hard copy. Hoare (2006, p. 88) adopted a similar approach in her ethnographic study and wrote of the 'efficacy of written material to gather information about the program before entering the field and, on return, to keep abreast of the latest developments'. This method was, as Fetterman (2010) and Creswell (2009) described, inexpensive, unobtrusive and convenient.

Documents were gathered from 20 universities by searching official university websites for policies, preparation programs, and teaching manuals. I also collected resources distributed during the general university workshops and IEAA seminars, for example, resources for teaching large classes, inclusive teaching and intensive teaching. The documents, materials and resources were in differing media including websites, DVDs and hard copy publications.

Creswell (2009) noted that potential limits of this method of data collection include difficulty in accessing documents, sourcing of partial documentation, and reviewing of documents out of context. To varying degrees I experienced each of these, particularly when searching some university websites and especially around policies and procedures. However, even with the restrictions of only being able to source part of some documents—the rest being password protected or only finding out-of-date documents—this method was valuable in that it confirmed much of the data acquired from the interviews and observations.

4.4.4 Researcher's journal

My researcher's journal was primarily a means to build reflexivity, as a progressive record of my research journey and development as a researcher. Entries into my journal were open-ended including long passages, drawings and bullet point notes. The purpose of an entry was to capture my immediate thoughts and feelings elicited in response to the data.

The intention was to use these entries, in the way Ortlipp (2008) suggested, to monitor myself and try to improve my interview skills, as well as make conscious any tacit knowledge or bias, particularly useful during analysis. The journal provided, and continues to provide, a chronological record of the development of my research techniques and skills and my growth as a researcher.

4.5 Analysis

This section outlines the approaches followed to elicit meaning from the vast amount of text-based data collected. A key reasoning for conducting qualitative analysis is that it works with data to understand rather than explain, contextualise rather than generalise and recognises the importance of participants' own meanings (Mouton 2001). Gathering, reflecting and writing about the data was a concurrent iterative process conducted throughout the duration of the thesis (Johnson & Christensen 2000). Ritchie and Spencer (1994) suggested qualitative analysis is primarily about detection and methods that support fulfilling this process of discovery and included, 'defining, categorizing, theorizing, explaining, exploring and mapping' (p. 176).

Thematic analysis requires creating codes leading to the formation of conceptual categories from which to focus on large amounts of data (Babbie & Mouton 2001; Scott, K 2005). The coding and analysis process occurred in iterative stages. The first stage involved listening, transcribing and entering all data into Nvivo 8 software. I worked through the data looking for patterns to create themes, and similar units of meaning (Creswell 2007). As these appeared and disappeared, shifted, blended and morphed, forming codes, clusters and categories, I created memos to note these changes, new directions and new ideas linked to the coded data. As more data was gathered I would re-read, code and re-form codes and delete sections of 'unessential' text, in the process described as 'winnowing' by Seidman (2006, pp. 117-8) and as 'data reduction' by Miles and Huberman (1994, pp. 10-2).

In order to manage and examine such large amounts of data, I initially created a pre-set list or priori codes derived from themes found and reported in previous research, along with the secondary and supplementary questions in the interview schedule, always grouping all data from all sources around the three phases of pre-departure, offshore and returning to Australia.

After this initial phase of filtering and sorting the original mass of data, I let the abovementioned structures loosen, opening up the data to see what new themes might emerge. Some that appeared were directly connected to the research questions. For example, there was a clear distinction between central university-wide formal approaches to preparation and informal approaches used to prepare to teach abroad. But there were other themes that did not seem to 'fit' or directly link to the research questions. And yet they were not so far removed they could be used for negative case analysis (Padgett 1998; Strauss & Corbin 1998). For these sets of data, I created separate categories, for despite appearing at the initial and middle stages of analysis, I realised these circumstances may change. This iterative process shifted from the identification of patterns to the creation of codes and formation of categories, to eventually being able to develop clusters of comparable responses.

4.6 Interpretation and presentation

Qualitative research is at its core about constructing meaning by interpreting subjective data, most often from multiple sources. And throughout the research continuum there are stages particularly vulnerable to researcher bias, which the researcher needs to strive to be aware of. While the criteria for evaluating the rigour of qualitative research have been described in many ways, methodologists agree that positivist standards of reliability, validity, generalisability, objectivity and reproducibility are not applicable (Creswell 2009; Guba 1981; Lincoln & Guba 1985; Miles & Huberman 1994; O'Leary 2004; Patton 2002; Silverman 2011). As a way to establish trustworthy research I followed Guba's (1981) four post-positivist

constructs against positivist indicators: aiming for credibility as opposed to internal validity; confirmability rather than objectivity; dependability rather than reliability; and transferability instead of generalisability.

A variety of strategies were used to meet these aims. To ensure the 'credibility' of my interpretations I employed methods of data collection and analysis successfully used in similar earlier research. I was also 'familiar with the culture of the participating organisations' (Shenton 2004, p. 65), having worked professionally in academia. I supplemented this by reviewing additional referential materials, such as institutional policies and teaching resources. As well, the research design allowed the option for participants to withdraw or have their data removed from the project, along with opportunities for member-checks, inviting participants to read, confirm or give feedback on their interview transcriptions (Guba 1981). Triangulation, in the form of suggestions of multiple methods and cross-referencing data, contributed significantly to ensuring credibility (Denzin & Lincoln 2005). Substantiating data and interpretations between academics and academic developers, observations and institutional documents was another measure incorporated into the study. Also, quotations from the raw data were reported verbatim, which as Fetterman (2010) argues provides direct insight.

Triangulation was also one of the two mechanisms put in place to ensure 'confirmability'. Collecting data from a variety of sources using a variety of test methods can reduce researcher biases (Shenton 2004). As other investigators cannot be involved to help balance out pre-dispositions, I kept an audit trail and practised reflexivity in maintaining my researcher's journal. The 'dependability' of my research was planned for by choosing methods used in previous research, providing a detailed research design, including different methods where data could be cross-checked, and taking heed of Lincoln and Guba's (1985) finding that demonstrating credibility in an investigation in part ensures dependable research.

Finally, in relation to 'transferability', the findings of qualitative research often result from working with small, concentrated populations, with the significance of the findings related to a specifically defined group, rather than being more generalised for wider groups and populations as is the expectation of positivist research. In this research the findings regarding academics' perceptions of preparedness and support for fly-in fly-out teaching in Australian universities' transnational programs may have relevance for academics offshore for longer periods of time, for example academics teaching transnational students at an offshore campus, as well as being useful to academics outside of Australia. Similarly, findings relating to academics' preferred mode of professional support and 'ideal' types of academic development might also be relevant to professional development programs beyond fly-in fly-out academics including methods and processes applicable to broader staff groups.

4.7 Ethical considerations

A prime ethical imperative is to ensure the safety of all those who participate and that their views are truly represented. The level of risk for participants involved in this doctoral research was classified as 'low to negligible' by the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee.

Anonymity and confidentiality of the academic developer and academic participants' identities was assured in all forms of publication, even using 'they' and 'them' to disguise gender. Real names were replaced with pseudonyms in interviews. The names and types of universities, departments, schools and titles of offshore programs, resources and materials were all removed.

Participants' were fully informed of the study's aims and objectives via an explanatory plain language statement, informing them of their right to withdraw from the study at any time, and giving them the option of checking transcribed copies of their interviews. The professional

transcription service was required to sign and adhere to a confidentiality agreement, so as to guarantee anonymity and confidentiality measures built into the ethics of this investigation.

4.8 Methodological reflections

On reflection across the entirety of the study, I was able to identify three broad challenges. First, the fact that transnational education is a relatively new field of research, and the preparation of academic staff even more fledgling, meant there was only a limited body of literature to draw from to learn of the types of methods, analysis and outcomes of previous studies. Second, there were difficulties associated with trying to identify universities engaged in fly-in fly-out teaching in partner-supported transnational education programs. And third, inherent in the nature of doctoral investigations are challenges related to time, finances and resources, which in part influenced the research design. With additional resources and time, this study might have included, for example, the participation of transnational students and local partner staff, whose voices are absent from this study. While this study interviewed fly-in fly-out academics once about the entirety of their experience, an expanded study might interview academics while they were abroad, or immediately prior to departure and again on their return.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has described the methodology of my research, the means by which I collected and analysed my data and the strategies used to ensure academic rigour. The methodological decisions to work within a qualitative framework and constructivist-interpretative paradigm, and the value of drawing from phenomenography and needs assessment as strategies of enquiry were justified as the best means to learn how universities prepare and support academics teaching offshore.

A unique research design was created, involving a mix of methods of interviews, observations and document review, rather than relying solely on interview based studies or questionnaires, and the scope of the research extends beyond a single institution, discipline or country. Along with the reasons for the way the study was designed and structured, the application of the chosen methods of interviews, observations and review of university materials and resources were discussed. The thematic means of analysis to interpret and present the data was outlined along with ethical considerations, and limits and challenges documented. Unique aspects built into the research design of this study was the decision to gather data from academic developers, as well as academics, and to learn about preparation and support from the pre-departure, when staff are teaching offshore and returning to Australia.

The following chapters present the findings from the analysis of research questions. Chapters Five and Six build on the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and present key personal, professional, cultural and teaching challenges of working transnationally.

Chapter Five: Challenges Outside the Transnational Classroom

We are forgetting that when we visit another culture we become the international person and as a result we are the outsiders. And I really don't think we have fully acknowledged what that means. We are trying to fill gaps.

Experienced coordinator and teacher

The purpose for initially investigating the challenges identified by academics inside and outside the transnational classroom is threefold. First, it is essential that the types of challenges—and when and how academics experience them—are understood so as to assess how well university preparation and support is meeting the needs of academics. Second, it is important to investigate whether the types of challenges have changed from those documented in studies conducted over a decade ago. Considering dynamic changes in transnational and global education; universities signing up to the *AVCC Provision of Education to International Students Code and Guidelines for Australian Universities* (AVCC 2002a); and as a result of recommendations from prior research outlined in Chapter Two change is anticipated. Third, this investigation set out to discover the types of challenges and preparation and support, not just at the point of pre-departure, but those particular to working offshore and after returning to Australia.

It is important to note, that although positive experiences were discussed by the participants, the aim of Chapters Five and Six is to report on the *challenges* experienced by academics, that is, what they identified as difficult and problematic, both outside and inside the transnational classroom.

Chapter Five begins by revealing more about the participants' backgrounds, followed by a discussion of challenges associated with recruitment, remuneration and responsibilities.

Personal and professional issues will then be identified, before outlining the difficulties associated with entering new cultures.

5.1 Prior to teaching offshore

Fly-in fly-out academics come from many different backgrounds and bring with them a diverse range of personal and professional experiences, along with different pathways to teaching and coordination offshore. Fourteen of the 30 academics identified particular life experiences as influencing their work offshore. And rather than attempting to report each individual's story, the most commonly reported experiences are documented.

All 30 academics reported having been in contact with different cultures inside and/or outside Australia prior to teaching offshore and all but two had travelled abroad, with 14 (i.e. just under half) having travelled extensively outside Australia. Of the 30 academics, six were born overseas; four were first generation Australians and seven participants' first languages were not English, with three others having learned a second language. Just under one-third (i.e. nine) had studied and/or worked for multinational corporations, government and non-government agencies, the tourism industry or as educational contractors in China, Indonesia, Singapore, Eastern Europe, the United Kingdom or North America. These nine participants spoke of how employment in these organisations connected them to multicultural and multilingual teams, which they felt had increased their awareness and understanding of the important role culture and communicative competency plays while working in global contexts. One academic captured these experiences saying:

It's because of the exposure over the years; I guess I've built up some of that knowledge. I guess I feel I'm a bit more sensitive to people and interaction and desire to understand people. Therefore, I think I'm more attuned to differences and absorb some of those things.

This group of nine participants felt that their prior work, study, travel and migration experiences had contributed to preparing them to teach offshore in two ways: 'valuing outside experiences' and becoming familiar and confident with life outside Australia. One academic explained:

I mean whether it's life experience, whether it's an age thing or whether it's experience having travelled and lived abroad before ... some of the younger guys the first time, they found it daunting, whereas I never found it daunting but I'd travelled an awful lot prior to coming to this university.

These nine academics also made a direct connection between their motivations for participating in former international work and their interest in teaching offshore. Their interviews were interspersed with comments such as, 'I like engaging with difference ... in fact that is what makes teaching stimulating', 'I enjoy variety' and 'I am very keen on doing different things, going to different places and having challenges'. As well as being drawn to difference this group of participants also spoke of being comfortable with the unfamiliar, saying, for example, 'maybe it's just a personality thing but I am happy working outside my comfort zone', and 'I don't expect everything will necessarily go to plan'. Three of the nine academics also described themselves as being 'naturally reflective'. One older, experienced academic said, 'I'm an observer. I watch. I check things. I look around. I try where possible not to assume things and I listen'.

Expatriation research has identified, along with other factors, personal characteristics such as resilience, managing change and cultural adaptability as being connected to staff being 'more likely to perform effectively in foreign environments' (Tung 1987, p. 117). Harris and Brewster (1999, p. 490) also emphasise the need for international managers to have 'additional skills to reconcile the cultural problems created by the international environment'. Along with such discussions in expatriate studies, research has also been conducted around what characteristics and competencies contribute to the 'ideal' international and global teacher. Similar personal attributes are documented along with patience, tolerance and

showing respect for other views (Badley 2006; Leask 2006a; Leask et al. 2005; Teekens 2001b).

Self-identified characteristics, such as prior life experiences and particular personal qualities, were seen by this group of academics as being advantageous when working in unfamiliar contexts, which is consistent with discussions in prior research. For example, they spoke of their openness to the unexpected and the unknown—in the context of teaching offshore—as providing an opportunity to learn as highlighted by one academic:

I have a fascination for culture ... so I guess I've learned from my own experience. Every time I go to a presentation, watch people on TV, life, I pick up things that I may use, even formally try. I'm always willing to try new things.

Prior transnational and expatriate research has acknowledged the value of selecting staff with such characteristics, and the degree to which these types of qualities and experiences were taken into account by universities in recruiting offshore educators is reported in the next section.

5.1.1 Recruitment of academics

As previously noted, historically senior male professors were the first choice to fill positions to work abroad; however, as Heffernan and Poole (2004) and Poole and Ewan (2010) report, because of the ageing workforce and the growth in transnational education, there is now a greater presence of female academics and middle level and sessional academics working abroad. The academics participating in this research reflect this change, being 14 females and 16 males, 40 per cent (12) aged younger than 50 and most (22) appointed at the level of lecturer or senior lecturer. (See Appendix 7 for details of academics' roles and backgrounds.)

Despite recommendations for planned and careful selection of staff for working transnationally, the interviews and document analysis undertaken for this research did not reveal any formal recruitment process for selecting academics to teach offshore. There were

no specific position descriptions, documented duties or selection criteria, except in the case of one coordinator and one sessional staff member who responded to school advertisements. In the absence of any systematic appointment most participants came to be working offshore based only on subject expertise and availability. This finding is consistent with research undertaken in the commercial and corporate sectors that shows there tends to be less rigorous appointments of short-term and 'flexpatriate' workers, and that decisions are primarily based on technical expertise and availability (Harris & Brewster 1999; Mayerhofer et al. 2004; Tahvanainen, Welch & Worm 2005).

Two participants noted that their initial contracts included a standard clause stating that all staff must be prepared to teach at any campus of the university including those overseas, but that accepting work abroad was, in principle, optional. This was supported with statements in university policy documents governing offshore work stating 'participation will be voluntary except where the requirement to work offshore is a genuine requirement of the position', with another university policy including the 'right of staff to refuse unreasonable requests to work outside Australia'. Four academics, during the interviews, did, however, directly refer to 'there being some underlying indirect pressure' for staff to teach offshore, thereby challenging this principle.

Indeed, two coordinators spoke openly about the pressures they experienced trying to find staff to fill offshore teaching roles. One coordinator from a particularly small school said, 'my view is a very simple one—if all my staff didn't commit to it [offshore teaching], it wouldn't work. I couldn't make it work'. The second coordinator explained that while academics are not obliged to teach offshore, twice they had to 'strongly encourage' staff to consider teaching abroad:

There could possibly be some sort of implicit pressure there because it's got to be done and somebody's got to do it. You know you don't have to do it but oh God, if you don't, it's going to make life really difficult, so that's a sort of indirect pressure ...

One coordinator described having to send a reluctant staff member offshore to teach, because the only other academic with the required discipline expertise was taking extended leave. The replacement academic begrudgingly taught offshore but this ended up being a negative experience for that staff member, other colleagues (and possibly students) with everybody just having to manage the difficult behaviour as best they could. A resolution was only found when the original staff member returned from leave and resumed the role, thereby fulfilling the school's offshore commitments. The lack of formal staff selection not only impacts negatively on individuals but questions the potential to deliver the highest quality education.

Except for these incidents, all participants agreed that teaching offshore, at least initially, was an exciting opportunity because of the chance to travel, visit family overseas and for under half, earning extra income. However, just as in some cases where it was difficult to find staff to teach offshore, the appeal of working abroad, in some schools, was the cause of disruption amongst staff. No specific transnational job advertisement documents were identified except for casual positions, and this lack of formal recruitment culminated in a number of participants commenting that the same staff did all the offshore work, particularly when transnational teaching was first introduced into their school. A younger academic said, 'people tended to capture a subject and keep it for themselves because of the good fringe benefits'. Two female participants asserted 'the guys were actually much more active in getting the work ... and then kept it as their power base', adding that it was many years before offshore teaching opportunities were opened up to women.

Another source of contention discussed by one of the coordinators was how each year a select group of staff were spending a large amount of time overseas, and that their absences and the consequent redistribution of onshore work caused tension among the other academics. As a way to redress this imbalance a rule was introduced 'that you can only do 50 per cent of your teaching offshore'. These incidents suggest there is still some way to go

before Debowski's (2008) earlier call for transparent and equitable selection processes are put in place.

5.1.2 Recruitment of coordinators

Just as no position descriptions could be found outlining the roles of offshore teachers, there were also none for coordinators, as also found by Mahmud *et al.* (2010, p. 5). All coordinators in this study, except for one, were appointed on the basis of being experienced at coordinating the equivalent program onshore. As with teaching, there seems to be an underlying and yet unexamined assumption: if a person has the requisite skills to manage an onshore program they are qualified to fulfil the role for an offshore program.

The motivation for taking on this crucial and complex role varied amongst respondents in this study. One participant explained that 'the incentive is straightforward; there's a financial payment for coordinating ... then there's an additional smaller payment for an incentive to go up to Hong Kong, and in addition all costs are covered up there', although not all coordinators received extra payment for coordination. Others saw the coordination role as an opportunity to travel overseas, or as part of a career development strategy, although this view often changed over time. Not all participants were so willing, especially those perceiving transnational teaching as detrimental for career progression (Jais 2012). In spite of the fact that accepting the role as offshore coordinator is in principle optional, most coordinator participants felt 'they had no choice'.

This research found only two cases where coordinator positions were advertised, neither in optimal circumstance. In one case this occurred in an environment of industrial unrest, with the aim of formalising reporting structures, and in the second case, a position was hastily created due to an unexpected staffing shortage. More common were experiences similar to those documented by Mazzolini (2011, p. 4) where roles were 'thrust upon them', with participants speaking about filling 'gaps' and having to 'stand in at the last moment' and the role being 'a delegated task with not much forewarning or preparation'. One participant, a

former consultant, learned in a very informal manner three weeks into their first academic appointment they would be coordinating and teaching a program offshore. The head of school casually mentioned that 'they needed somebody who can do the coordination for all the offshore stuff. There's very little work involved in it really. It's not a demanding thing ... there's nothing in it. It's pretty simple'. They accepted the role but subsequently discovered 'that that was a complete and utter lie'. The findings of this study clearly indicate that universities have still not acknowledged or acted on the recommendations of prior research for institutions to formalise procedures for the recruitment and selection of coordinators and lecturers to work offshore.

5.1.3 Remuneration

Financial remuneration for fly-in fly-out teaching fell into three categories: two sessional staff were paid casual rates (and made no comments about their payments); 12 academics received above load payments; and 16 academics had teaching offshore included within their normal workload. (Two academics in this last category also received one-off additional payments for guest lectures separate to their offshore teaching commitments.) Payment conditions were identified differently in each university's documentation, for example, one stated 'payment may be offered where presentation offshore above workload is unavoidable', others advised rates of pay for above load teaching were to be 'negotiated with the head of the local unit' and all had different clauses for casual staff.

Nine of the 12 participants receiving above-load payments expressed some type of dissatisfaction with this model for remuneration. For example, two single parents explained once they had factored in paying for extra childcare for the times they were offshore, the work was simply not worth it financially. A similar sentiment was expressed by one academic who felt they were also not receiving appropriate wages, asking 'why scrooge over staff payment? It is really trafficking in human labour'. Participants at three universities raised the issue of pay discrepancy between different schools or within the same school, but for

different disciplines. A review of the data reflects significant variations in the rates of above-load payments and conditions between and within Australian universities. Two academics argued that there should be one agreed pay rate across the university, but others suggested that payments should be commensurate with the overall profitability of an offshore program. This is in line with the findings of Keevers *et al.* (2012, p. 13), who also revealed that staff in two of the three faculties involved in their study felt that remuneration was a 'token amount' and they 'perceived lack of fairness in the payment'.

Debowski (2002) found that financial incentives can initially entice staff but, over time, this value diminishes as academics become aware of the significant professional and personal impacts of taking on additional teaching loads. A decade later, Pyvis (2011, p. 737) similarly reports financial as opposed to workload compensation were still being offered as a means to retain staff when the initial enthusiasm for teaching in China 'wore off after the first teaching visit', and the realisation of the challenges of travel, teaching, family and health and safety were too much. This aligns with the experience of a senior academic whose comments were less about financial remuneration than about broader types of compensation. They said they started offshore teaching with enthusiasm, goodwill and the expectation they could make a meaningful contribution but, after two years, withdrew saying, 'you just recognise that it is a business and it wasn't worthwhile from a teaching or research perspective ... it is a business but for somebody else's benefit. It's not there for any benefit I contribute or I could get'.

The academic developers and one coordinator expressed other concerns with the above-load model that were less to do with rates of pay and more to do with the impact it could have on academics' motivation for teaching offshore. They suggested the money could make 'a difference to attitude as to whether you actually consider it part of the work you do, or whether it's added onto that work for compensation'. A coordinator involved in setting up a new transnational program expressed similar concerns saying 'I never saw the program as a

money making thing. I saw it as being a part of our teaching and if it's a true partnership, it's part of the teaching that we do as a whole school'.

In contrast to the nine participants who were variously dissatisfied with elements of above-load payments, there was consensus across the 16 participants who had offshore teaching built into their workload of the benefits of this model. The key advantage being a balance between their onshore and offshore teaching schedules. This group perceived academics on the above-load payment model as, 'always being pushed for time because you've still got the rest of your other onshore teaching load to cover'. As noted above, the academic developers supported including teaching in academics' overall workload, reasoning it was less likely they would be given back-to-back teaching schedules, they would have more time for preparation and, overall, they felt it was less wearing on staff. Poole and Ewan (2010) also endorse this payment method to minimise staff fatigue as well as improve work-life balance and the quality of teaching, arguing that, 'the mental and emotional energies that above-load teaching demands, exacerbated when undertaken in cross-cultural contexts, make reductions in teaching quality more likely' (pp. 156-7).

Finally, one coordinator commented that from a school management perspective, the lack of extra payment 'works a lot better and causes less internal tension between staff, which has happened in other schools where the people have got extra money'. A former offshore teacher who now works as an academic developer perhaps best captured the above sentiments by saying, 'I think when it has been part of people's workload they've actually had more time to think about the teaching and the learning issues and think about the partner staff as well as the students'.

Three concerns regarding remuneration were raised by participants across all three payment types: the extra, hidden work involved in offshore teaching, per diems and university financial administrative processes. The first issue was described as a general 'misunderstanding of the complexity of transnational teaching' and 'the invisible work' associated with it.

Academics felt this work was unrecognised and not professionally acknowledged and for some, unfairly financially rewarded. Secondly, there is a lack of clarity around what additional costs the university per diems were intended to cover and what costs staff were responsible for, with out-of-cost expenses being an issue raised earlier by the NTEU (2004a). One lecturer reported the per diem system at their university had recently been withdrawn and now 'it's quite the opposite, I pay with my own money and then I have to wait to be reimbursed by the university'.

The third general concern was around increased 'administrivia'. There were numerous incidents recounted of slow and cumbersome paperwork trails for reimbursement and insurance claims and, at one university, of above-load payments not being processed until academic reports had been submitted. One of the sessional staff said they have to send multiple emails just to 'check out the pay and per diem money transfers, issues with paying the hotel bills and so it goes on'. This mirrors similar difficulties experienced by sessional staff working onshore (Percy & Beaumont 2008). Finally, two staff raised issues around not being granted days in lieu when working abroad over weekends, public and university scheduled holidays. One commented, 'I was refused leave and told this was a gig. You are not owed days off in lieu'.

Many of the issues associated with organisational support raised by the participants are the same as those reported in the NTEU (2004a) national study. This is consistent with Rea and MacDonald (2010, p. 3), who found that while the NTEU 'data is now somewhat dated, the issues are not'. These findings demonstrate that university employment practices for staff working offshore have changed very little since a decade ago, when Debowski (2003) called for universities to address such industrial matters including providing better 'support and recognition of the demands the roles entail' (p. 7).

5.2 Responsibilities of academics while offshore

When the coordinators and lecturers were asked about additional responsibilities other than their classroom teaching duties, common responses included attending partner advisory meetings, providing support to partner staff and a range of moderation activities. Less common tasks included conducting 'pastoral care visits to students' and 'attending student social functions', with one participant explaining, when working in China, they always feel they are 'operating in some diplomatic role'. By way of contrast, one academic's response to the question was that they 'tried to avoid as many extra duties as possible'. They were aware that, 'there are plenty of things to be done, like marketing and meetings with partners and such' but felt these tasks should fall more to coordinators.

The 10 coordinators, excluding one who did not teach abroad, felt their prime responsibility was to work with their Australian colleagues and oversee all aspects of successful delivery of the programs offshore. One coordinator added it was their job to chase up staff to make sure they met deadlines for study guides and booklists saying, 'it was a bit like [being] a glorified PA'. In addition to supporting Australian-based colleagues, coordinators are called on to work with partner staff around university policy and procedures, fulfil academic requirements, and conduct student and staff inductions. Coordinators also needed to manage a range of educational administration tasks across institutions, attend meetings, resolve problems with partners, participate in student progress hearings and appeals and manage moderation processes.

In light of the fact there are 'few guidelines as to what the role of the subject coordinator in the TNE context might be' (Mahmud et al. 2010, p. 4), a finding confirmed when conducting searches for university documents and position descriptions for the role of offshore coordinators, it is not surprising that coordinators also listed marketing, attending graduation ceremonies and alumni dinners as extra responsibilities. In essence, the offshore coordinators and, according to this study, some lecturers felt they were seen as the 'public

face of the programme', fulfilling the dual roles of 'customer service and quality control' aspects identified earlier by Debowski (2003, p. 4). Interestingly, discussions with coordinators focused less on the actual tasks than on the lack of preparation, time, institutional support and recognition of how complex these tasks become in a transnational context.

One particular issue raised was instability in the partner institution's workforce which led to increased time spent on getting to know new staff and orientating them. Scattered throughout coordinator interviews were comments such as 'the reality is we would probably have a turnover rate of about 30 per cent of our offshore tutors' and 'our partner institutions have rotating program coordinators; they change every three to six months'. These partner staff issues were interwoven into challenges that arose around the curriculum, communication and teaching quality, discussed in greater detail in the latter half of this chapter and also documented in prior research (Blickem & Shackelford 2008; Dobos 2011; Pyvis 2008).

To summarise, there is a clear lack of progress in how universities go about recruiting and selecting staff. They still fail to explicitly document the roles transnational staff can be expected to carry out. As discussed in the literature review in Chapter Two, the 'need' to formalise the recruitment and selection process and align with offshore responsibilities has been a common recurring theme. And yet the evidence in this study shows that few university human resource divisions have addressed this issue. The findings also show a lack of clarity and consistency around payment structures, and a lack of awareness of the impact different remuneration models can have on academics' wellbeing and quality of both onshore and offshore teaching.

Many of these workplace relations issues are raised in Rea and MacDonald's (2010) presentation, *Managing the Risks of Offshore Programs: Attracting, Retaining and Developing Quality Academic Staff*. Continuing to ignore concerns about workloads, safety and security issues, and the negative impact on career development could lead to increased

difficulties in attracting qualified staff to fill offshore positions. A staff shortfall is even more probable considering the likely gap created from the predicted increase in demand for academics to work offshore with few rewards, the attrition rate of current staff and the ageing workforce.

In 1997 Mazzarol and Hosie (1997) anticipated that as transnational education grew, so too would the need for position descriptions and job advertisements to explicitly include offshore teaching as part of employment requirements (pp. 21-2). However, over a decade later and despite significant growth in the sector, little seems to have changed in the ways in which universities recruit, remunerate and define the roles and responsibilities of staff—their processes continuing to be labelled ‘ad hoc and amateurish’ (NTEU 2004a, p. 18).

5.3 Participants personal and professional challenges

The most significant finding emerging from the data is that academics continue to identify the same types of personal challenges around family life and health, and professional challenges around administrative matters, workloads and negative impacts on their career progression as has been noted in prior research. One significant exception to this pattern, however, is the evidence presented around the lack of support provided to staff when working offshore if they are unwell, and/or during and after natural disasters and critical incidents.

5.3.1 Family life

Just over one-third of the participants found it challenging to balance offshore teaching with parenting, personal relationships and extended family commitments. They spoke about ‘lots of juggling’ and ‘extra childcare costs’ and many of their issues reinforce similar findings from previous research (Debowski 2008; Evans & Tregenza 2002; Jais 2012; NTEU 2004a). Participants reported the key to managing commitments outside work is to be given enough time to prepare, otherwise it is ‘all too chaotic’. One academic explained to the coordinator: ‘I’ve got kids. I need time. I’ve been. I’m not going again at short notice ... there are lots of

other things that come into play that I have to consider'. Other participants spoke about an expectation on them to be available for teaching, in spite of out-of-work responsibilities. This was the case for an academic with an unwell, dependent parent, who said: 'I was urged by my head of school' to fill in offshore for another colleague at the last moment. These incidents directly challenge the notion that offshore teaching is always 'optional'.

5.3.2 Health

All but four participants, to varying degrees, reported experiencing similar illnesses to those noted by Gribble and Ziguras (2003, p. 212), resulting from different climates, water and diet, such as food poisoning, heatstroke, dehydration, flu and viruses, along with jet lag, fatigue and disturbed sleep patterns. They spoke of feeling particularly anxious when unwell offshore, even more so when alone, adding to their levels of stress and feelings of isolation.

The lack of accurate, up-to-date and easily accessible pre-departure health information about vaccinations, medical guidelines in the event of sickness, and procedures to follow in the event of an emergency were also reported concerns. In the absence of institutional documentation participants sourced information about health matters from other colleagues, general practitioners and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website. Some institutions provide, as one academic explained, a 'tick-the-box health webpage, but nobody checks that you've ticked the box'. And another participant spent a great deal of time searching the university website for information about travel and medical insurance, saying: 'Eventually, I found very good university comprehensive insurance but it is not much use if you don't know about it or you can't find it'.

A further check in 2013 of websites show some universities now have all travel related documentation together on the one site, and others have outsourced travel advice and offshore assistance to commercial businesses. Only one participant commented on using the outsourced service after a pick-pocketing incident left them overseas with no money or identification. They told me, 'they look great on the website but in practice they are not very

useful'. They explained the private service didn't offer any advice beyond the logical steps of reporting the incident to the police and insurance company. After this experience they said: 'I wouldn't place my faith in them if I have to use them in the future'. This academic's unsatisfactory experience is echoed by the eight participants who were offshore during medical emergencies or natural disasters and these experiences are examined below.

5.3.3 Wellbeing and critical incidents

Leask (2004b, p. 146) describes teaching offshore as an 'intellectual and emotional journey', and one imagines never more so than being offshore during extreme circumstances, especially if alone. The experiences of eight participants in this study contribute to limited research concerning the impact on Australian academics teaching offshore during medical emergencies, natural disasters and critical incidents. A few prior investigations have prioritised the need for universities to abide by their duty of care by creating policies and establishing organisational procedures for staff health and safety at all times, but especially during critical events (Debowski 2003, 2008; Denman 2003; Feast & Bretag 2005; NTEU 2004a). Although all universities represented in this study have such documentation, again it was not always easy to locate. Few directly addressed offshore the specific protocols to follow during emergencies and, of those that did, none documented in detail any follow-up procedures and support for staff after returning to Australia. Of equal concern is that only two of the eight participants had been made aware of emergency procedures prior to departure. And none of the eight had fully complied such as always carrying a university mobile phone with all emergency contact details. These experiences challenge how effective university policy and procedures were when put into practice.

The challenge for participants who were teaching offshore during the SARS and Asian flu pandemics, the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, the hanging of an Australian citizen in Singapore and the bombing of the Australian embassy in Indonesia were twofold. Academics described in depth the distress they experienced living through, and in some cases

continuing to teach through, these events. An equal, if not greater cause of distress was the lack of coordinated university response and support during and after such events.

These experiences were shared in great detail. For some the research interview was the first time they had been able to tell their stories in full. One young academic, new to teaching offshore and with little prior travel experience, said they had 'reservations and were quite nervous and tense' about having to fly and teach, a few days after flights resumed after the events of September 11, 2001. They said they did not receive any communication or advice from any sector of the university—nor did an academic due to teach in Indonesia shortly after the Australian embassy bombing in Jakarta.

Another academic initiated a discussion prior to departure with the head of school when they were due to teach in Singapore 'during the worst week of the SARS outbreak'. This academic was also reticent to travel, but they said the head of school 'made me feel guilty for even thinking of not going', detailing the consequences of re-scheduling and loss of finances if the program did not run. Feast and Bretag (2005) echo this response by noting how the focus of SARS, as reported by the *Australian Higher Education Supplement* (Illing & Buckell 2003, p. 31), was not about the 'health risks to students or staff' but rather the emphasis was on the 'the loss of income for Australian universities'. Fortunately, for this academic, the three days' teaching in Singapore were uneventful, unlike returning to Australia, which was 'traumatic; people didn't want to come near me for fear I could infect them and I was very upset'. They concluded by saying, 'there wasn't support before I went or when I came back. There was absolutely no support at all, nothing from the university, and no offer of counselling'.

Finally, the coordinator of a team teaching in Singapore during both the 2005 hanging of an Australian citizen and the 2008 imprisonment and threatened caning of an Australian journalist, spoke about the experience offshore and on returning to Australia. They said they found it 'a very taxing time because the students wanted to know the lecturer's personal

viewpoint and challenged their societal attitudes'. They continued: 'I will be honest. It was very hard ... the cultural things we observed and witnessed during those times. It was very difficult'. No support was offered and when the coordinator sought out specialised counselling for the team, the only support available was access to the general university counselling service. They declined because they considered it was not suitable under the circumstances.

In summary, the participants described their attempts at contacting the university during these critical incidents as being 'bounced' between different central and school divisional managers. They were often stuck in a loop, with partners and family members the only source of regular and reliable contact for updates and support. After returning to Australia from such events, none of the eight participants had been offered any informal or formal professional debriefing. These experiences are not dissimilar to those of an academic working at a US university campus in China during SARS. Although all staff were eventually evacuated, causing the program to be cancelled indefinitely, the academic concluded by saying, 'the fact remains that when such a crisis as SARS occurs—wherever it may hit or even reoccur—it is generally the loss of money that most concerns people' (Denman 2003, p. 9).

The next set of findings addresses professional challenges. The first issue to do with 'administrivia' may appear mundane compared with the extreme experiences of the eight academics involved in critical incidents. However, all 30 academics commented on the negative impacts of inefficient systems and insufficient class data and wasted time was a significant challenge.

5.3.4 Administrative matters

In addition to some staff experiencing difficulties with university administration procedures with regard to accessing their pay and per diem allowances, the other areas commonly noted were around travel and educational processes. As to be expected, administration processes

differed widely across universities but all participants', to varying degrees, acknowledged these additional tasks took time away from teaching preparation.

Just over half the academics communicated negative experiences with the logistics processes involved with transnational teaching. Completing travel arrangements, for example, or having to get multiple quotes for flights, accommodation, insurance and other logistical matters was left to the academics to organise, which was frustrating and time consuming. This is best captured by two participants' comments: 'There's probably more preparation for travel than the actual lecture' and 'As time has gone on, making the travel arrangements has become such a horrendous experience and takes precedence in the preparation'. The other participants either made no comment, because they had a central university unit complete all travel arrangements on their behalf, or appreciated the flexibility and independence that comes with making their own arrangements. However, one academic explained that having to organise travel bookings was about the university 'saving money, not to make my life easier'.

The other major concern was around education administrative processes. Difficulties related to accessing student profiles and up-to-date enrolments, using different onshore/offshore databases, and there were issues uploading student results. Some of these issues have been documented in prior research (Clark & Clark 2000; Seah & Edwards 2006). The two sessional staff experienced the greatest difficulties. One said they relied on a lot of 'word of mouth' regarding what processes they needed to follow, while the other said, 'they couldn't even give me a list of student names, let alone their background to the subject and what they were like'. Dealing with a few departmental directives could be frustrating, but having to manage multiple bureaucratic university processes was challenging and added to an already heavy workload.

5.3.5 Workload

There is much written about the increasing workloads of all Australian academics (Bexley, James & Arkoudis 2011; Roderick et al. 2011). Add to this the well-documented additional demands associated with teaching offshore, particularly for those who work above their onshore responsibilities (Clark & Clark 2000; Debowski 2005; Jais 2012; Mazzarol & Hosie 1997; NTEU 2004a). Understandably all participants identified managing the workload of fly-in fly-out teaching a challenge. The academics described offshore work as being both physical and emotional. They felt there was an expectation that they could balance all their personal and professional onshore and offshore commitments and still perform in both locations 'without jet lag, just be up and running and ready to do a good job'.

The workloads varied. They could not be calculated solely on the number of trips offshore in any given year, with academics explaining it depended on a range of variables for each trip. Some of the heaviest workloads were described as 'teaching up to five courses a year, which was 10 trips a year all over weekends' and the greatest number: '14 times this year with the most I have ever been away is 16 times'. One senior academic, responsible for establishing, coordinating and teaching, calculated they had made '98 trips to Singapore since 1995—multiply that by four days and you can see I've spent almost 10 per cent of my time either in an airplane or in Singapore'. The emphasis was not just on time and the demands of teaching offshore, but also being responsible for ensuring onshore commitments are fulfilled, such as classes being covered, contact with staff and students being maintained, and returning to Australia and being ready to start teaching again. This pressure was more intense for the 12 staff teaching offshore over and above their normal workload.

Discussions about workloads were peppered with descriptions of being 'exhausted', 'jaded', 'over-worked' and 'burned out'. This tiredness was the result of not just travelling long distances or crossing time zones, but the 'intensive mode of teaching' and 'how classes are timetabled' with no planned time for rest and recovery when offshore, or between onshore

and offshore teaching. Along with physical tiredness, some participants spoke of emotional exhaustion, finding it taxing moving between different foreign locations and cultures. One academic said, 'you are on your best behaviour, in a strange environment, coping with taxi drivers, trying to find a new place; you're trying to meet new staff, new students and it takes a lot of physical and emotional effort'.

Some participants described the energy expended working with students struggling with English, unfamiliar learning styles, and having to communicate in different ways because of cultural variations. This is all a part of the 'invisible work' academics refer to. One participant was of the opinion that either university management simply does not understand the unique demands associated with transnational teaching and therefore cannot acknowledge them, or they are aware of the many additional responsibilities, but 'just see them as a routine part of the job' and so they are not factored into the workload. This became too much for some. One academic said, 'you know you've worked hard over weekends, and you'd not get any time off in lieu and you don't get any additional benefits. So in retrospect it was a very traumatic and unpleasant experience'.

Most participants spoke about workload issues and none reported they did not feel overworked. The emphasis of workload discussions, however, was not solely focused on the quantity or complexity of offshore work but couched in terms of how they went about managing the demands and stress. The participants spoke about support strategies being in place, or not, such as collegiate support, and this is further discussed in detail in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine.

5.3.6 Career development

Twenty-seven academics expressed that offshore teaching did not advance their careers and a few went so far as to say it was detrimental, primarily because of the restrictions to research and publishing. All 27 felt that the invisibility of their offshore work and lack of recognition was evident with individual colleagues, within school communities and extended

to the wider organisation. Academics unanimously reported an overwhelming lack of understanding from their employers and many of their discipline colleagues of the complexity of transnational teaching. Equally, as found by Jais (2012), they expressed a lack of formal recognition of their contributions to teaching offshore, evidenced most in transnational teaching being overlooked as a measure for promotion.

The academics gave two explanations for their perceptions as to why universities did not value transnational teaching, and hence it not being included as criteria for promotion. One built on the foundations of the much wider and long-term tussle in academe, that 'teaching is undervalued in status and financial terms as compared to research' (Lemass & Stace 2010, p. 21). The second reason is attributed to the tension between universities' dual purposes for being involved in transnational education: to deliver quality education offshore and to generate revenue. The value of teaching offshore appeared to be in opposition to the dual forces of revenue and research.

Academics spoke about the teaching-versus-research issue: 'It's just an extension of the fact that good teaching is rarely rewarded ... it's all part of the same issue, it's just complicated, more complicated when you're looking at offshore teaching stuff'. Built on the back of the teaching-is-not-valued premise was the fact that the scholarship of learning and teaching domestically, internationally or transnationally was, as one young academic said, 'the poor cousin of research'.

Not all participants were research active. For those who were, teaching offshore was a disruption to their research productivity and therefore their career progression, a view confirmed in prior research (Debowski 2003; Jais 2012; Mazzarol & Hosie 1997). Two participants said they stopped teaching abroad because of the direct detrimental impact it was having on their research outcomes and thus on their chances for promotion. Another academic shared they had been thinking of withdrawing from offshore teaching, and

withdrew after a conversation with the head of school who said: 'Offshore teaching is neutral and does not contribute any benefits to your promotion prospects unless you are getting some research papers out of it ...'

The other message academics perceived was that the value of their offshore teaching is only measurable by profit and not teaching quality, despite most university international branding stating the contrary. The contradictions and tensions regarding the motives for Australian universities involvement in offshore education are well documented (Dunworth 2008; McBurnie 2008; Saffu & Mamman 2000). Feast and Bretag (2005, p. 64) capture the essence of this debate when they state: 'Distasteful as it may be to the many educators working in transnational settings who are committed to genuine cross-cultural exchange, transnational education is a multimillion dollar "business", motivated as much by profits as by teaching and learning objectives'. For some participants, any seed of doubt about the worth of their offshore teaching contributions were reinforced by dismissive statements about the limited value of offshore programs: 'Even my head of school has admitted that if our offshore programs died tomorrow it wouldn't make much difference really. It brings in a bit of cash that's all'. In a similar vein a long-term coordinator suggested: 'The offshore thing isn't valued or recognised because it's not bringing in masses of money, not as much as some other projects, so probably at the university level nobody cares'.

Participants readily acknowledged that programs needed to be financially viable and ideally profitable, but felt that educational objectives should match and be equal. One academic demonstrates this belief: 'We're educators and understand you've got to keep finances going but none of us get our kicks just out of seeing a big bottom line. We get kicks out of teaching and research, so that's where we're coming from'. Smith (2010, p. 804) too calls for maintaining a balance between 'financial gain and realising the full potential of international collaborations ...'.

The perception of the apparent loss of balance between teaching and profit is captured in the stark views of one participant, an experienced and well-respected international onshore and offshore academic who, on reflection, after many years of teaching remarked:

It's part of money making, a revenue thing for the university, and staff need to be aware of how the teaching programs fit into the context of the university, and that it's treated with about as much respect as the staff teaching onshore. The university's plan is to make money. That's the sole purpose, it's not to supply an education service per se—it's a revenue earner for the university.

In summary, feelings that 'nobody much cared' about offshore teaching or teachers was evidenced through: the lack of understanding and acknowledgement of workloads; the absence of immediate response and long-term follow-up support for staff involved in critical incidents; the lack of efficient and streamlined administrative systems; the tensions around profit and teaching; and subsequent lack of recognition or reward through promotion.

These findings highlight the cumulative impact on individuals and universities. A considerable number of participants are therefore either withdrawing from offshore teaching altogether or continuing only for personal reasons, most often with the incentive of additional income. One coordinator working at a research intensive university highlighted the worrying attrition rate of staff teaching abroad, particularly of senior staff, noting in the beginning 'everyone was chafing at the bit to go to Hong Kong to teach, once, perhaps twice and after that you couldn't get them there for love or money'.

These findings consistently show there has been little change in the types of personal and professional challenges academics experience teaching offshore. Particularly noteworthy are the academics' perceptions of not feeling supported during critical incidents, and more broadly not feeling validated or rewarded for their involvement in fly-in fly-out teaching. Lack of acknowledgment and recognition of academics' contributions to transnational education by

universities is all too often resulting in experienced, senior staff withdrawing from these programs.

5.4 Social and cultural challenges

Participants were not directly asked about social and cultural challenges they faced outside the classroom, but most spoke about particular incidents and consequences of their lack of familiarity with the host society. Many commented on how their observations and experiences of the wider foreign society influenced how and what they taught inside the classroom. As noted in Chapter Two, there is minimal research about the effects of cultural transitions of academics as short-term sojourners. The experiences outlined below reinforce, and build on, the few studies which capture how academics to varying degrees are anxious both prior to departure and on arrival offshore (Bodycott & Walker 2000; Hoare 2012; Seah & Edwards 2006). They also highlight the need for academics to understand and be well prepared for engaging in local conditions (Gribble & Ziguras 2003).

Immediate post-arrival challenges included: managing local transport systems; coping with getting 'lost in the underground system'; 'struggling late at night to read the signs to locate my hotel'; adjusting to a different climate and new foods. The most concerning incident was relayed by an inexperienced traveller who, not wanting to appear a 'rude Westerner', agreed to carry duty free goods through customs for a fellow passenger whom they had just met on the plane. They later realised the potential risks of their actions and admitted they were '...quite innocent, I was naïve, I hadn't travelled internationally for many, many years and it [the potential risk] never dawned on me'. In such incidents a lack of preparation potentially poses significant risk to the individual staff member and the institution.

There were few challenges around daily needs, as all had access to taxis or public transport and most academics resided in Western style hotels. A few participants, particularly when first offshore, said they rarely ventured further afield, having little desire, or lacking

confidence or often because they had little time or energy to do so. Such behaviour protects them from being exposed to potentially difficult cross-cultural encounters; however, it also reduces the opportunity to have direct contact with people who are culturally different—to observe or interact within the local community.

There were exceptions. One academic described going out with their partner colleague to eat from the street stalls at the night markets, 'because he knew the food, so it was perfectly safe to do that but I wouldn't do that on my own'. Another academic resided in quite cramped foreign staff quarters at a Chinese university campus, where food options consisted of cooking in a shared kitchen or dining at the university cafeteria. Both choices were fine, for a 'flexible, adaptable and experienced traveller'. The only other participant not staying in a Western style hotel found their accommodation quite challenging, describing the location as being in an 'economically depressed part of town ... it was quite a slum area around. ... We lived in a little converted building that had like a bedsitter, and a little kitchenette, and there were two rooms; if there was more than one staff member staying it could be hard to sleep'.

Participants working in China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan noted their lack of foreign language skills as an impediment to being able to freely and confidently move around. One academic teaching in Taiwan felt restricted and isolated and created a series of cards with instructions written in Mandarin to show taxi drivers how to get to destinations they regularly needed to travel to, adding a new destination each trip. If they wanted to eat away from their hotel they chose restaurants within walking distance of their accommodation that used picture graphs.

Gribble and Ziguras (2003, p. 209) recommend lecturers 'develop an understanding of the cultural, political, legal and economic contexts of each country in which they are teaching' so as to contextualise student learning. It is evident that even if the academics may not have made sense of, or understood all their sociocultural experiences, that these experiences still informed the participant's ways of communicating and forming relationships with students and partner colleagues, but also influenced their decisions around the choice of content and

approaches to teaching. The following remarks reveal how academics' perceptions were informed, accurately or otherwise, beyond the classroom by the wider social and cultural context in which they work.

Attitudes to discipline, time, dress codes, gender, class, work, religion and the media were compared to Australia. These attitudes particularly stood out in discussions around extreme events, such as the threatened caning and lashing of the Australian journalist. One academic remarked, 'Singapore was a very disciplined society' and related this to the classroom setting, having learned that checking a student ID card, number and photo 'would get them worried for a long time'. Differences were noted around time, with some academics observing some countries being precise and punctual and others more relaxed. In Hoare's (2006) study some participants, expecting punctuality, were surprised that students were more casual with time. Dress codes and the need to dress appropriately were raised, with one academic noting that 'in a Muslim country, for your students' sake, you are not supposed to wear low necklines or sleeveless shirts and you have to dress formally—things like that might not cross your mind before you leave'. One academic noted female partner staff had less authority compared with the male teachers, and among different ethnic groups there are definite 'tiers and hierarchies and even different occupations are assigned'.

The 'Asian work culture' was perceived as being made up of high expectations and long hours. This was frequently given as the reason why students arrived to class late and tired. One academic remarked, 'I mean Australians can be workaholics but nothing like the Singaporeans'. One academic reflected how transnational students' further studies were not necessarily seen as positive or supported by organisations, with managers suspicious of their motives. They 'can't leave until their boss leaves. ... They don't like you studying outside. That means you're not doing enough work, you have extra time for study, or you're not a committed employee because you will leave us'.

Social and religious issues were often conflated, such as when the academic teaching in a predominantly Islamic country suggested the 'compliant nature [of students]... is probably symptomatic of the role of religion in their society'. The same participant then described students from another country as 'caught between a Muslim and Western culture', explaining they were still respectful but less compliant, more socially active and much more willing to talk about certain issues. Another academic shared their surprise at discovering a series of billboards in Malaysia promoting a Christian church, explaining how 'this really struck me as interesting, given the fact that their culture is Islamic and yet this church has obviously gone to great extremes, slapping up these posters with this message'. Those teaching in a Catholic university, co-funded by the church and the government, felt challenged when they had to start each lesson by calling on a student to lead the class in prayer. The common thread regarding these observations was the feeling of 'needing to be more careful about how you refer to things ... about being polite and not offending, inadvertently or deliberately, religiously or culturally or other sensitivities'.

Academics frequently spoke about accessing the media to source local and current content to include in the curriculum. As a part of this process they mentioned how they were cautious in what they selected noting the different 'way people think and report about social institutions', how there is a 'lack of openness' and that the press 'is full of cultural imperatives, even if they are not appearing to be [biased]'. One participant described how in Australia they would use controversial articles in class to stimulate debate: 'I was very careful not to do that over there. It was none of my business as a foreigner to make any comment about anything'.

Discussions about the media invariably extended to remarks about politics and the economy. For certain disciplines it was seen as essential to include in lessons local economic trends. One academic demonstrates why they took care in what they chose to include, sensing the country was '... rife with politics, I like the country but I've got to say the politics was an

absolute shocker'. Another academic was similarly selective about what content was used in class, not wanting to be seen 'as some political activist or being perceived as one'. Having to 'walk a tightrope' describes the tension between choosing relevant content, while not causing offence, but also 'not to forsake what you think is the economic principle' when you are having to deal with 'antiquated, fixed and less than open economies'. An academic who had worked with the Singapore government was 'conscious of the government in terms of its own rules ... and there are things you don't get students to talk about. You don't want them to be embarrassed about not being able to have that dialogue'.

Some participants who had taught offshore for many years sensed subtle political changes in their partners' 'views about Western universities ... and how we are treated, how our education is seen'. Cognisant that market analysis in the region indicates that transnational programs will remain viable for at least the next decade (Skidmore & Longbottom 2011), four participants questioned how much longer Western universities might continue to operate offshore with their current 'cultural' mode. One academic suspected there was 'a mistrust of our culture' and another long-term coordinator thought that certain South-East Asian countries were now 'more closely aligned with China'. Another participant was of the view that the constant battles to gain high speed internet access in China were less to do with infrastructure problems and more to do with being 'foreigners, as we're seen as a security risk'. A coordinator shared that their partner colleagues had recently 'changed to their Chinese names, which wouldn't have happened in the past' and was therefore unsure whether the increased interest in the 'nitty gritty' of the program details was 'more about absolute accountability or cultural change'.

Capturing academics' initial reactions and their evolving adjustment to living and teaching in foreign cultures is particularly valuable because of the limited literature documenting multiple short-term cultural transitions. A strong theme emerged from this data of lecturers being cautious in relation to what might be seen as culturally appropriate content for the curriculum,

and developing effective ways of teaching, engaging and communicating in the foreign classroom. A number of participants felt strongly that coming up against societal differences 'affect academics' teaching because it impacts on what our expectations are and what our commitment is up there [offshore]'. Finally, one academic reflected that these differences needed to be understood beyond individual programs, by the wider transnational sector.

Overall, there is richness in the academics' experiences and diverse interpretations, but they are accompanied by feelings of insecurity and, for some, confusion. The findings agree with Hoare (2006) that academics do not depart 'as "empty vessels" but as individuals with all the preconception, values, belief and cultural baggage we all carry' (p. 172). Yet there remains a sense that these academics are on their own in having to navigate through these foreign settings, both outside and inside the classroom, and flag the need for pre-departure preparation, in situ support for informal learning about new cultures and teaching in foreign contexts, and ongoing development on returning to Australia.

5.5 Conclusion

The beginning of this chapter revealed more about the 30 academic participants' backgrounds and life experiences and what they brought with them to teaching offshore. Their stories began with the informal manner in which they were appointed to teach overseas, the different ways staff can be paid, their employment conditions, and the diverse and often unclear roles and responsibilities they were required to fulfil. From this point, we learned about personal and professional challenges associated with teaching offshore as well transitioning into and out of foreign cultures for short periods, and the cultural challenges experienced both inside and outside of the classroom.

This study is one of only a few that has reported on academics' experiences of being involved in natural disasters and critical incidents. These findings document a range of reactions and different dimensions to such experiences—for some, having long-term effects.

The dominant finding that academics felt unprepared and unsupported by their universities during these events is vital from an individual and organisational perspective.

Even though the cultural transition experiences reported were rich, diverse and had much potential for intercultural development, they were accompanied by much discussion of cultural confusion and limiting assumptions. As this thesis is focused primarily on how universities are ensuring their fly-in fly-out staff are prepared and supported to live and teach in foreign cultures, then a key finding is academics' need for integrated cultural preparation and support in all phases of transnational teaching.

Again, something telling from this large and diverse study is that challenges documented in previous research—some from smaller or single university studies—have not changed. It is significant that there are no temporal dimension changes in the types of challenges, despite the growth in importance and value of transnational education over the same time period. Also significant was the uniformity in the challenges reported with few differences identified by gender, age, institution type, discipline or country, except for certain challenges were reported as being more complex to manage in China.

Academic developers' views have not been gathered before and yet they clearly identified the workloads of offshore academics as challenging, as well as the additional demands associated with working for above load remuneration. Most importantly, this chapter revealed the types of challenges experienced prior to departure, while abroad and upon returning to Australia. By implication, preparation, professional development and support should be cyclical to match these needs.

This concludes the first of two empirical chapters detailing the challenges academics experience leading up to teaching offshore. The following chapter discusses the challenges experienced by academics inside the transnational classroom. These include the foreign environment, language, learning styles and curriculum.

Chapter Six: Challenges Inside the Transnational Classroom

This chapter discusses the professional challenges experienced by fly-in fly-out academics *inside* the transnational classroom. As in Chapter Five, many of the challenges reported here are similar to those reviewed in Chapter Two. However, as the research methodology was intentionally designed to focus academics' reflections on each stage of the transnational cycle, the data collected around the teaching challenges offshore is plentiful and rich in detail. The analysis of this detail revealed—despite dealing with the 'same or similar' challenges—great variation in academics' response. How they set about managing these challenges will be alluded to here and in subsequent chapters.

The first section explores the transnational education setting, particularly connections with partner institutions, their staff and different infrastructure and resources. The second section deals with the curriculum, reflecting firstly on the experience of teaching offshore with English as the language of instruction. The challenges of providing equivalent curriculum and assessment, and noting difficulties with plagiarism and moderation will then be discussed. The final section focuses on the dynamics of teaching, pedagogy and mode of delivery and examining challenges arising from different approaches to class composition. Student expectations and learning styles as well as the demands of intensive teaching in unfamiliar classroom settings will then be explored.

6.1 The setting

The academics' data revealed that offshore challenges were influenced by their work environments. Factors were the type of institution they were partnered with and partner colleagues, along with the infrastructure, facilities and resources provided. The study has

found that significant challenges can arise as a result of these factors and these are discussed in the following sections.

6.1.2 Partner institutions

Academics spoke of the importance of working with the 'right partner' and how that could lessen or eliminate particular teaching challenges. What constituted the 'right partner' varied from institutions having a good reputation, to being well resourced, and longevity in the relationship. Two participants responded by remarking that when the partner arrangement is less formal and more flexible they felt more relaxed and this made it a 'lot easier to translate our delivery model'. The most common response (22 out of 30 participants) however argued for the need for a match between onshore and offshore educational objectives. One long-term coordinator suggested that this match often resulted from close collaboration early on in the planning and implementation phase. These findings are mirrored in Chapman's (2009, p. 317) study, where senior faculty members reported the 'university is "extremely selective" and has a limited number of what are considered to be "solid good partners"'. Ten participants also spoke of the importance of early site visits, detailed discussions around the curriculum, and maintaining regular and ongoing communication with partner staff.

A distinction was made between partner institutions being a 'proper university or a privately owned company'. Those who had taught in both types felt it was more challenging teaching with partner organisations that were commercial enterprises. One lecturer likened private institutions to '... simply a business. They're buying a product which they really don't have any say over really. Once the deal is signed, it's signed. They don't offer any support; I don't think they feel the need to I guess'. Participants in Dunworth's (2008) investigation of the management of three offshore tertiary English teaching programs expressed similar views, and were explicitly concerned about the separation 'between prioritising educational outcomes and running programmes primarily for the profits it generated' (p. 102). The tension between economic and education needs is in fact a recurring theme running

throughout the academics' feedback and prior literature, and reinforces Leask's (2004b) call for the need to reconcile the relationship between economic and academic rationales for teaching offshore.

6.1.3 Partner staff

Distance, time pressure and lack of regular contact with offshore colleagues were noted by 26 of 30 academic respondents as impediments to engaging and building professional relationships with offshore colleagues. Academics working with local staff and employed by commercial businesses on part-time and/or short-term contracts observed a lack of staff availability and/or high staff turnover rates. This lack of stability made it even more difficult to build strong working relationships. The staff who worked at partner universities and colleges were perceived as better qualified and experienced. They enjoyed more stable employment conditions, which made it easier to build rapport and improved communication, resulting in greater program consistency.

Another challenge academics raised—particularly in the initial stages of teaching offshore—was to do with forming relationships with partner staff. One lecturer became aware of the lack of ease in the exchange of ideas and sharing resources, suspecting their partner 'feared I might take advantage in some way'. Only after much time, effort and talking did this shift. Another academic spoke of feeling uncomfortable with how they felt the relationship with partners was established and operated, explaining 'they are the support act, and we're top bill ... it's a Western view being imposed; in the main they see they're giving a Western experience to their students and we're the ones that know what that means'. In contrast, another academic observed cultural tension from a different perspective, sensing a lack of being accepted, and feeling particularly excluded when their colleagues spoke only in Mandarin. Slowly, with each subsequent visit, 'they started to translate more and more ... and then they were including me in their conversations, and they were being less formal and proper'.

Leask (2004b) writes of how partner colleagues are generally seen as subsidiary rather than equal contributors to transnational programs. The consequence of this lack of equality is a lack of genuine collegiate collaboration and a loss of cultural 'insider' expertise around curriculum and delivery. For offshore programs to be truly internationalised and deliver good quality teaching, benefitting the students and providing high levels of satisfaction to all staff, the roles and power relationships between the two teaching teams needs to be reconceptualised and re-configured (p. 146).

Academics' challenges in dealing with different partner institutions, staff and unfamiliar organisational cultures have been investigated by numerous researchers (Dunn & Wallace 2004; Dunworth 2008; Leask 2004b; McLean, V 2006). If recommendations from these studies, such as having greater awareness, prior to departure, of the environment and work culture they would be teaching in had been adopted, some of these challenges may have been better managed or possibly prevented. This is highlighted in an incident where a coordinator spoke of organisational differences in communicating and networking being a barrier to working with their partner colleague. They explained that when their endeavours to schedule work meetings with their partner colleague when offshore were not making any progress, they decided to give up and spontaneously suggested they simply leave the office and have a meal together. From that point on 'we got along famously'. This academic stumbled upon the importance of China's 'eating culture' (Luxon & Peelo 2009), which plays a significant role in cementing relationships (Anderson, E 1988). This is one way in which informal settings provide the opportunity 'where learning is viewed as a process of social participation' (Hsieh 2012, p. 377). It also fulfilled one of the recommendations of Leask *et al.* (2005) that time and circumstances need to be such that both sets of staff can connect and collaborate.

6.1.4 Infrastructure and resources

Linked to the choice of partner institution are concerns around the levels of organisation and administrative services, student support, teaching spaces, facilities and online resources. The IEAA (2008, p. 14) reports that for effective transnational delivery there needs to be equivalent minimal standards around such infrastructure. And prior research has demonstrated the potential negative impact on academics and teaching quality when there is an absence of equivalent resources (Chapman 2009; Clark & Clark 2000; Dunworth 2008; McBurnie 2008; Pannan, Gribble & Barnes 2005). Of the 10 academics who spoke specifically about infrastructure matters, only one, teaching in Singapore, had a positive experience, impressed with the 'roving team of radio frequency IT guys, with walkie talkies doing the corridors, you only have to press a button' in the event of a problem. The remainder focused on identifying shortcomings around teaching facilities, print and photocopy services, quality of staff offices (or no office at all) and the variability of resources, from the lack of basic stationery to information technology problems.

One of the sessional staff said 'I had 24 students and literally the room held just 24 with no space to spare and no other break-out rooms for group work'. Another academic checked ahead with the partners about the technology and software, but did not think to check on the classroom, assuming they would be suitable for teaching, and was surprised and disturbed to discover they were expected to teach in a room with '... concrete floors, concrete walls, fixed tables and a computer I wasn't even sure would turn on'. One academic summed up the sentiments of many: 'Before I just assumed those things would be taken care of ... now I've learned to check and be very clear before I leave'. Consequently checking of teaching facilities became an essential addition to preparation lists.

In particular, prior research has established that when teaching offshore, quality, reliable information technology is essential for success (Pannan & Gribble 2005; Ziguras 2000, 2001). And yet for 24 academics this was the most commonly reported resource of concern.

The first issue had to do with discipline specific software not being installed or not operating if it had been installed, one teacher describing how they lost half of their first three days' teaching waiting for IT support. Academics said they learned to always have contingency plans. The second most common issue related to unreliable and/or slow internet connections. This was mentioned particularly by staff teaching in China, where one academic expressed frustration that 'high speed internet has been there for many years, it is just that we haven't had access to it'. These and other similar concerns may just as likely be experienced at any Australian university. However, the difference was, as one lecturer explained: 'If you have no teaching software over there for three days, your options to cover the entire curriculum in the one visit per semester are far more restricted'. One-off incidents may cause frustration, however the cumulative effect of persistent systematic problems is wearing and, as Dunworth (2008, p. 105) notes, can lead to 'negative attitudes toward the programme on the part of the participants'.

To summarise, it is apparent that well-planned financial and human resources, compatible educational and administrative systems, and quality infrastructure and physical environments are necessary elements for successful transnational programs. The prominent theme that emerges from the challenges for academics working in different settings is one of a good 'fit' between the two partners. When establishing new strategic alliances Bannerman *et al.* (2005) emphasise the need for Australian universities to understand future partners' needs and intent, their objectives and goals, and their organisational culture and mode of operation, warning that 'failing to select the right partner can be fatal' (p. 30).

Most of the 30 academic respondents in this research felt that one or more of these essential elements were missing, for example, the lack of equivalent resources and inability for partner staff to truly collaborate on the delivery of programs. If these concerns are only noted in isolation they may seem inconsequential. However, when academics are forced to manage a number of these issues on each consecutive trip, on top of all the other demands they have,

it becomes a challenge and their teaching will be significantly impacted. The solutions seem to lie in prevention, with strong preparation and planning, consulting with 'representatives of all stakeholder groups' (Dunworth 2008, p. 106), which ideally includes academics experienced in offshore teaching.

Different partner institutions with different infrastructure, staff, resources and cultural practices not only influence the teaching environment but also impact the curriculum content, pedagogy and assessment (Dunworth 2008). The second part of this chapter turns to the challenges experienced when teaching in English in a foreign language context, while ensuring content and assessment are contextually relevant, and importantly learning outcomes are equivalent to those in Australian university classrooms.

6.2 Equivalency and comparability

The principles of equivalence and comparability are the central means by which Australian universities demonstrate that the same quality standards provided in Australia are delivered in programs offshore (AEI 2005, 2008). Equivalence applies to the purpose of the programs, facilities and resources, teacher qualifications, evaluation tools and the processes around assessment (Woodley 2008, p. 3). There is a robust debate in the literature about what constitutes equivalent and comparable curriculum (McBurnie & Ziguras 2007; Sanderson et al. 2010; Woodley 2008); and in the quality assurance literature there is 'tension between the demands for equivalence and comparability and the need to contextualise curricula to fit the local context' (Keevers et al. 2012, p. 13). Pyvis (2011) acknowledges that international educators who are culturally sensitive to the foreign context make allowances for local understandings. Still, quality is measured by how similar the curriculum is to the home program: 'In cross-border program provision, education traditions meet, but quality is imported with practice' (p. 734).

In practice there are multiple interpretations of the concept of equivalence and the participants' contributions in this study demonstrate these variations. The range of understandings is reflected even in the different terms participants used to discuss these concepts including 'equal', 'exact', 'the same', 'similar', 'mirroring' and 'comparable'. All participants were aware of the requirement to deliver equivalent curriculum offshore, as outlined in their institutions' policies and informed by the principles in the *Transnational Quality Strategy* (AEI 2005). However, what equivalence might look like and how best to go about creating comparable curricula were mostly left to the interpretations of individuals and small teams of academics.

Only three out of 30 academics had participated in any formal university workshops about equivalence and comparability offshore. The message two of the three took away from the workshops was along the lines of the need to take care not to use examples such as 'Australian football games and animals ... otherwise they [the students] wouldn't have a clue' and 'they urged us to adopt local aspects into the courses ... and not to use Australian context and lingo'. At the very least, as Mahmud *et al.* (2010, p. 5) point out, Australian-based tacit knowledge in the curriculum and assessment needs to be avoided. In practice, equivalent curriculum is far more complex and multi-variable than just attending to 'jargon and lingo'.

The third academic, who had attended a university workshop, was critical of the focus being solely on the content, saying 'there was no talk about changes to study guides or ways of teaching or even thinking about education more broadly, and it was more like you just need to put in examples'. The coordinator of the only program in this study that was delivered onshore, offshore and online expressed a similar view: that equivalence was far more than just content. The coordinator aimed for 'consistency' in teaching but it was not always the 'same' because of the pragmatics of modes of delivery, saying 'you may need to use different pedagogies, you may need some different assessment criteria'. Woodley (2008, p.

7) concurs and suggests that 'if Australian educational programs, both on- and offshore were internationalised, less customisation would be required and comparability or even equivalence between on- and offshore would be more apparent'.

A missing voice in much of this debate, one which this study foregrounds, is that of the practitioners—the academics in the field—who are responsible for interpreting these divergent views around equivalence when teaching in English, delivering Australian content and assessment to diverse groups of transnational students. The academics' challenges are presented and analysed in the following section.

6.3 English as the language of instruction

Prior to departure most academic respondents expected their transnational students' English levels to be similar to onshore international students. This was based on an assumption that they had met the same Australian university entrance level requirements. Few anticipated the significant impact of English being the dominant discourse inside the classroom, but used little outside, unlike when teaching international students onshore in Australia. Mistaken assumptions suggest that no prior inductions or conversations with experienced colleagues had occurred. Given these circumstances, four challenges were identified by participants: namely, the suitability of English language standards and the reliability of entrance admission processes; the wide-ranging levels of English competence within any given class; the influence of culture on communication; and teaching with translators.

6.3.1 English language standards

English language entry standards vary, depending upon each program. The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) are widely used; however, there are growing alternate means for being accepted into Australian programs (Adams, T, Burgess & Phillips 2009). For example, students can apply through advanced standing pathways from partner programs delivered in English, or

complete an English program delivered by a language school connected to the Australian university. The outcomes of an extensive Australian university study into non-test entry pathways, for both onshore and offshore students, called for more consistent and rigorous approaches to English language assessment (Leask, Ciccarelli & Benzie 2013). The academic respondents were unified in calling for universities and partners to set appropriate English language entry levels, and that partners and schools be vigilant at checking students have fulfilled these requirements.

Academic respondents shared the opinion that English language test scores in isolation were not a realistic assessment of transnational students' readiness to study in short bursts of intensive teaching in English. One of the sessional academics recounted two contrasting scenarios to highlight how the students' lack of ability in English was an additional challenge to teaching in China. The first scenario involved teaching large classes. They commented that the majority of students appeared to struggle, but in particular, 'the students at the back were all chatting non-stop with each other in Chinese and they just didn't seem to have a clue [about] what was going on in the lesson'.

The second frustrating experience occurred in smaller, seminar style classes with postgraduate students. They noted 'in the discussions around the table there were variable rates of comprehension and participation and it was harder for the quiet and weaker students to hide'. They summed up by saying that teaching for many hours in English was difficult for them and the students, but 'small groups are much harder work than a larger group because of the intense and intimate nature' of the lessons.

The sessional academic who recounted the above scenarios had no formal teaching qualifications and had not received any pre-departure professional development. This response highlights the lack of adequate preparation with the necessary skills to manage these different encounters, which combine a lack of understanding of students' English readiness with a lack of recognition of different cultural and learning approaches. It is

possible that the low levels of student participation in discussions might not only be due to poor comprehension, but could also be explained by a lack of familiarity with group learning and what was expected of them. Or the quiet students may just be shy and in need of some encouragement and inclusive teaching strategies to help ease them into group work.

Regarding the larger group issue, two other experienced offshore academics described similar situations of ‘pockets of noisy students who interrupted their teaching’. Initially they assumed, like the sessional participant, that because of the students’ poor English they were disconnected from their lesson. However, over time, teaching more classes offshore and talking with these groups of students, they discovered that students were struggling to follow their fast paced lectures in English, and the noisy chatter was translating for one another and attempting to help clarify points. One imagines the sessional staff member may have managed their classes differently, especially if they had had the opportunity to hear and discuss these insights from the more experienced academics.

A second concern raised by two academics was not about the English entry requirements per se but that these standards had not been met by students they were teaching. One coordinator recounted how the partner institution had enrolled 10 students in a subject without any evidence of meeting English language entrance requirements. Unsure about the explanation given—that the students’ test results ‘had gone missing’, which was true—the coordinator removed the students until the ‘results had been found’, which did not occur in that teaching period. This decision caused a great deal of distress all round and the coordinator felt their ongoing relationship with their partner was ‘strained, if not damaged’, because of the doubt they expressed and real or perceived lack of trust. Dunworth (2008) recounts a similar incident around entry standards and emphasises how important it is for academics to feel they can trust the integrity of the partner institution and have confidence in their processes. This language incident again emphasises how important it is to invest time

and effort in choosing new partners. Dunworth (2008, p. 102) reminds us that ‘trust between partners was most likely to be established when alignment of values occurred’ .

6.3.2 English language competence

Another challenge was the variation in proficiency across specific language skills. A number of academics reported that students often managed their writing and reading tasks but struggled with listening and speaking. One lecturer was convinced that ‘even the good ones probably only comprehend about 70 per cent of what you are saying’. The academics felt that students’ low levels of aural competence were exacerbated by having to listen to teachers with different types of English accents explain complex concepts, but there was little they could do to rectify this situation.

Some participants felt that the students’ ‘actual oral language skills are very poor and they struggle with speaking’. This was particularly concerning for teachers in disciplines that required specialised language skills, for example, journalism and public relations. As one academic commented, ‘specialist discourse presupposes familiarity with English usage’. Another academic discovered, with their first offshore cohort of students, that their fluency was too low to participate in a discipline requiring very high levels of oral language skills. While these findings around strengths and weaknesses in specific language skills might be similar to those of onshore international students (Bretag 2007; Sawir 2005), onshore students are free of the pressure of intense modes of learning. Also, their aural and oral skills are more likely to develop, with English being the dominant language, both inside and outside the classroom. Their language development is also assisted by language support services being more readily available onshore than most offshore partner institutions.

6.3.3 Culture and communication

The next language issue groups together a myriad of communication components such as different accents, academic literacy skills, varying communication styles and varying cultural

expectations. Participants teaching in multiple locations often made comparisons about students' English proficiency. Perhaps unsurprisingly, former British colonial countries and the Philippines, with its history with the USA, were generally ranked the least challenging to teach in and China the most challenging. Taiwanese students with their 'Americanisms' were perceived as easier to understand than mainland Chinese students and Japanese students, who were easier to understand than Korean students. Academics reported that even when teaching in Singapore, where students demonstrated high levels of English proficiency across all language skills, this was still not akin to first language level proficiency. Singapore has a mix of Chinese dialects present, such as Mandarin, Cantonese, Hokkien, as well as Malaya, Bahasa and Hindi, with a significant presence of creole (Singlish). Hoare's (2006) six-month ethnographic study in Singapore identified similar issues around language, noting in particular that "Singlish", strong accents, fast speech and quiet voices combined to challenge lecturers' (p. 233).

Each of these items is compounded by cultural factors sanctioning certain patterns of communication, with the differences impacting dialogue between academics, students and partner staff, as well as between the various student ethnic groups. One teacher recalled how, on their first trip to China, their attempts to engage with students was 'like talking to a soft wall and there was nothing coming back', adding 'before you go offshore you really need to find out how you can talk to students who are giving you the soft-wall treatment'. Such intercultural communication issues are faced by all educators in multicultural classrooms as documented by Ko (2008) and Ippolito (2007). However, when offshore with very limited time to teach large amounts of material, along with little or no student language and literacy support services, academics are left to manage these encounters on their own as best they can.

6.3.4 Teaching with translators

The experience of teaching with a translator was mentioned by only two academics, but this is significant, being a unique challenge to transnational education. Most of the difficulties identified by these two participants were similar to those found in prior research (Campbell-Evans & Leggett 2007; Debowski 2005; Poole & Ewan 2010), especially the long lead time to ensure teaching materials have been translated, and re-designing teaching resources to include extra or new visual materials with slides, graphs and charts. The academics expressed concern about the accuracy of what was being translated and of their message 'getting through to the students'. Levels of doubt increased when they observed a number of students 'using their mobiles during class', but as noted earlier, students could be working with electronic dictionaries and translator applications. The two teachers working with translators agreed on two points: teaching this way took 'double the time' to deliver the content, and 'it was critical to initially build rapport' with the translator. This in itself proved to be a challenge as they often met for the first time after the academic's arrival in the country, and they might share only one or a few hours together prior to starting work. Along with the unique difficulties associated with working with translators, these academics also had to contend with the other intercultural communication challenges that form part of teaching in foreign settings.

6.4 Curriculum content

Academics teaching offshore often must decide to what extent curriculum content should be altered, and what needs to be added and/or deleted to make the content meaningful and relevant, while ensuring the learning outcomes are equivalent and comparable. One academic developer empathised with other academics and felt 'there are a whole lot of assumptions about equivalence ... and little support for understanding that these students are culturally different; there are different ways of socialisation and all sorts of differences in terms of education'. In light of the lack of formal preparation academics felt their decisions

were partly informed by feedback from students' evaluations, but mostly from discussions with colleagues.

Student feedback included comments such as: 'I thought I was signing up for an international degree' and 'I expected there to be more examples, and more readings and content from other places than just Australia'. One academic said their 'students felt disappointed at our Australian-centric or Euro-centric, Western-centric view of academe and research and the world'. Similar comments have been made by students in studies examining cross-border pedagogies and internationalisation of the curriculum, along with alternate views, such as some wanting generalised content, and others suggesting their discipline knowledge, for example, chemistry and physics, were already 'international' (Clifford 2005, 2009; Ryan 2003). Leask and Bridge (2013, p. 84) acknowledge disciplinary variations to internationalisation and argue 'the disciplines, and therefore disciplinary teams constructing the curriculum' need to be situated at the centre of the internationalisation process.

It is one thing for academics to be aware of students' expectations and another to know how best to meet them, whilst ensuring equivalence. Bates (2001, p. 130), a Canadian academic delivering online programs to Mexican students with a different language, culture and pedagogical heritage, wrestled with this dilemma. Bates wondered to what extent 'Western' approaches to learning and assessment should be imposed on these students, all the while being conscious that it may be exactly these 'new' approaches which attracted students to this course. As noted previously, the participants' interpretation of equivalence and comparability varied considerably. The continuum of views regarding the need for content changes ranged from minimal to significant, although the majority of academics positioned themselves somewhere in-between, striving to ensure comparability, whilst remaining culturally and context sensitive. It is these positions that are next examined.

Five academics believed in only making minimal curriculum changes and one participant said changes are close to 'non-negotiable', reasoning that offshore students enrolled to graduate

with an Australian degree. One academic explained they had been told that equivalence meant that offshore partners were keen to receive an Australian education and so 'you are going to look at this product and just export it the way it is overseas. If they like it or not that is up to them'. Another argued that some offshore programs had articulation options built in for students to complete their degree onshore in Australia. There was concern that if the curriculum was altered too much the articulating students 'would flounder', and the purpose of keeping the Australian content intact was 'to build a bridge' for such students. A third participant simply explained that their course 'is international anyway, so I have all that [content] covered'. Another reason put forward for supporting minimal change came from two of the five participants, both coordinators, who explained how their offshore programs were created in close consultation with their partners, an approach recommended by Mahmud and Sanderson (2011) and Pyvis *et al.* (2011). They felt sure the specific needs and outcomes of students enrolled in these degrees were being met in the current curriculum and therefore changes were not needed.

At the other end of the spectrum five academics felt they needed to go beyond merely localising content over time to being sensitive to broader cultural factors and discipline practices in different countries. One lecturer described the early years of transitional teaching: 'Our delivery models, well we had a bit naively assumed that our discipline was quite transferable'. They discovered that over time 'you can't deliver what you deliver in Australia and you shouldn't be expected to ... even though we have a policy that says something very different ... you're filling gaps in a different education system'. They were clear that trying to adjust and 'engage in a different model of society and teaching' was not the easy option. This required a great deal of extra effort and time—something they felt the university did not recognise or acknowledge.

The largest group, the remaining 20 academics and 10 academic developers, held a moderate position on equivalence between countries. The common factor was the need to

ensure relevancy for students in their local context. One academic's measure for change was simply put: 'If it is not relevant then it is not good teaching, if it doesn't connect to the students you might as well sing *Danny Boy* all day'. There was much evidence of the lengths academics went to in sourcing relevant content, from accessing local media (in particular newspapers), including English language journal articles by local scholars in student reading lists, using video clips of domestic advertising campaigns in marketing classes, and seeking input from local partners.

Some academics in this group also added how it was important to localise the curriculum because of their disciplines, particularly in the fields of design, law, economics and finance. One academic highlighted how, in the finance sector, different nations have their different currency setting mechanisms (pegging versus floating), and the subject content has to reflect both local and global contexts. This was also true for programs seeking certification and/or accreditation with local professional bodies, as is common in engineering, construction and health.

As well as the extra effort and time required to alter the curriculum, another challenge identified was the degree of change and 'trying to find the balance ... there's a kind of a tension between providing a course which is relevant to their [students'] setting and having to change our content'. One academic said: 'I was trying as best I could to make them [courses] relevant ... trying to bend and work around the stuff I was given' and another understood the need 'to make some allowance for cultural differences and this soft ground stuff; but how much allowance should you make, and what kind of allowance should it be?' In essence, these academics struggled to decide on an appropriate 'level of contextualisation', a point also noted by the participants in the study by Sanderson *et al.* (2010, p. 5).

Along with knowing what might be suitable, or culturally appropriate to add to the curriculum, was the worry of changes being read and interpreted differently to how they were intended. There were many examples of expressions of concern: 'I always feel I need to be sensitive to

differences' and 'I need to be aware and make sure you're not offending people'. One academic emphasised that when 'taking [curriculum] materials into a Muslim country you've got to be a lot more careful ... with some things, I have realised afterwards, maybe I should have tempered them'. There was a sense of apprehension and some participants spoke of potential consequences if they did not remove some material from the curriculum, or did not make an appropriate choice for replacement. One academic was worried the partner institution or students' parents might object, saying 'someone's bound to tell one or other of these people if you do anything improper, it could compromise you'.

From the participants' responses it is clear they are aware of the importance of delivering equivalent and comparable curriculum offshore. It is equally clear that they do not feel well supported or confident in the decisions they need to make to ensure it is culturally and context relevant. It was both telling and concerning when an older and very experienced academic reflected on this dilemma and said, 'we all know the subjects are meant to be equivalent and it has been a bit of an issue within our university for years but of course everyone knows they never are'.

6.5 Assessment

What type of assessment will be used to compare the skills of a person educated and trained in different corners of the globe? (Little 1996, p. 434)

The demonstration of student learning is key to ensuring equivalent outcomes (Woodley 2008). All academic participants understood the need for offshore students to demonstrate the development of new skills, attitudes and knowledge akin to the Australian degree, along with the requirements of any accrediting professional bodies. Translating these conceptual understandings to practice, however, was not always easily achieved. Clearly the fundamental challenge for academics around assessment was the struggle to ensure equivalent standards when teaching with different partners, in different locations, time zones, cultural settings, learning traditions and sometimes different languages. Similarly, equivalent

learning outcomes were expected, even though the offshore students were taught in intensive mode, with limited time in class to discuss and provide feedback to students and lack of student academic support services.

Just as there was significant variation in understanding and practice regarding adapting content, there was also evidence of a continuum of how academics interpreted and delivered equivalence around assessment. The following three quotes demonstrate the range of responses. When it came to assessment two academics noted they were 'more flexible with the offshore students' and admitted to not always implementing 'the quite rigid onshore rules, penalties for late submissions and the very extreme penalties for plagiarism, and so we do make some changes'. Others explained, 'there's a temptation over there [offshore] for you to just think, well look, these students, they're going to be working in their local context here, and I'll just push them through. You tend to develop that sort of attitude, even though you can't really do that'. And finally, there were a small group of mostly experienced academics who said that with increasing offshore exposure their expectations and understanding around equivalent standards were changing. They believed the students had good standards but they were accustomed to being assessed differently to those in Australia. One academic captured this when they said, 'It's a dilemma when there is pressure on you to pass the students. There's pressure here in Australia too to pass students from other countries ... but you've just got to maintain the quality. It's a difficult one to balance'.

Interwoven through these challenges of delivering equivalent and equitable assessment is students' lack of familiarity with certain types of assessment tasks and issues to do with exams, plagiarism and the moderation process. The findings detailed here reinforce and further build on similar difficulties identified in previous studies and discussed in Chapter Two (Dunn et al. 2004; Mahmud et al. 2010; Pyvis & Chapman 2004; Scarino, Crichton & Papademetre 2006).

6.5.1 Types of assessment

Academics noted that it was challenging to maintain equivalence of assessment when they may have taught their subject with localised content, which might not be reflected in the design of assignments or exams. The requirement to provide equivalent assessment frequently led to discussions about having to find ways to manage offshore students' lack of familiarity with certain types of evaluation tasks, their different academic literacy skills, and their need for assistance with academic writing. The participants also found students required explicit details about assignment requirements; they frequently asked for criteria for assessment, breakdowns around marks and sought surety about the grading process.

Mahmud *et al.* (2010) capture the essence of such dilemmas when they wrote, 'assessment weighted to these types of tasks', such as critical analysis of case studies, problem-solving and argumentative essays, were disadvantageous as they 'were not a part of the academic repertoire of many students when they enter TNE programs' (p. 4). Similarly, Pyvis (2011) notes Chinese local tutors' feedback around assessment requirements such as referencing, formal written reports and critical reviews of articles as being unfamiliar and foreign tasks to Chinese students. Some strategies academics spoke about by way of responding to the students' needs included: providing guides to certain types of assessment; examples of prior successful and less successful graded assignments; detailed marking schemas for assignments along with reinforcing the importance of observing word length, submission dates and referencing style. However, they often found that these extra resources remained insufficient. One academic proclaimed their assignment guidelines were 'so clear you couldn't miss it, concrete and not airy-fairy'. And yet they still found that students would seek further explanations either during the limited lecture time or by queuing after class.

Academics felt they were faced with ignoring student requests or taking the extra time to teach students, for example, how peer assessment worked and the purpose behind evaluating individual team member's contributions to a group project. Some academics

believed there was an assumption they would address these student gaps while others expressed a lack of expertise to teach the intricacies of academic skills, not to mention a lack of time. Those who invested the extra time to make the assessment process more accessible for the students said they responded positively and were appreciative. They did not, however, believe the extra effort to improve the quality of the overall assessment process was noticed or appreciated by their school and university.

Another common frustration, echoed by Carroll (2005, p. 29), was a view among some students that 'bulk matters—the more there is the better'. Two academics said they automatically failed assignments they described as over the word limit, irrelevant, unfounded or lacking evidence. Seven academics introduced iterative assignments where students could upload sections of their assignment to be marked and receive detailed feedback before final submission. However, not all academics always employed this strategy, for although they noted improvements in the students' work with each submission, again it added considerably to their workload.

6.5.2 Examinations

It is reasonable for all students to want to learn as much as possible about the nature of their assessment, but two-thirds of the academics expressed frustration with offshore students' 'preoccupation and fixation with the exam'. One relatively new academic to teaching offshore said that from the beginning students 'just want to know what's in the exam, they were not interested in anything else, they were just concerned with the wretched exam that is coming up'. Another commented: 'It is difficult to engage students' learning with anything beyond the exam'. One academic became so exasperated, they considered removing the exam component altogether, but felt sure in the particular cultural context that 'if the subject didn't have an exam in it, it just wouldn't be seen as a serious subject'. One might assume that these academics were unaware that competitive examination systems have been and often still are the dominant means of assessment in Asian countries (Biggs & Watkins 2001). If

they had been prepared and understood this requirement, it may have eased their levels of frustration and their preparedness to assist students.

A difference in contrast to the perception of students' exam fixation was noted by two academics who commented how their students offshore seemed to have a less formal attitude around the examination process than their Australian students. One described how their offshore students would often speak with them informally, but directly, about an exam after they had completed it. This academic felt there was 'the expectation that they could talk to you about ... how maybe they went and how they should get a better score'. The other more experienced academic concluded this part of the interview by saying that after teaching for a number of years, 'I never got a sense that they were doing this because they thought they could get on my good side ... but on the other hand, as I said, there was certainly a different way of approaching examinations'.

As well as commenting on how offshore students related to the exam process differently, participants also noted how some students struggled with the exam design, the types of questions asked, having a choice of questions to answer, and the time they had to complete them—similar issues noted in prior research (De Vita 2002; Hoare 2006; Pyvis 2011). For example, one academic shared with me the data they had collected over a number of years, showing how different types of questions within the exams resulted in different grades between their mostly domestic onshore and international offshore students. The exam paper was designed with two distinct parts, one section on theory and the other an applied section. Within these two parts there were 'straightforward questions' and more 'explanatory' questions respectively. The same exam was delivered in Australia and Singapore over a number of years and when the results were compared they found two recurring patterns. The Singaporean students consistently did better in the theory section and the opposite was true for Australian students, who scored far better in the application to real-world scenarios. The academic added that these direct response questions required reading of the textbook and

other prescribed texts, which they felt confident all the Singaporean students read, but were not so sure the Australian students had.

Although these rich and interesting findings could be used to inform some of the contentious debates around rote learning, surface versus deep learning, or constructivist versus transmissive styles of teaching, this academic had done little beyond collecting the data. I asked about motivation for investing time and effort in this project, and the academic's reply was twofold. First, it was out of curiosity, noticing these differences early on, and second, there was pressure from the school to publish. I then asked if they had formally or informally shared these findings with other colleagues or considered further investigations and publishing their work. Their response to all the questions was negative, but they hastened to add this was not due to any lack of willingness or reticence to explore further and circulate the outcomes. It was more a case of not having the time or support to do so.

These comments fit into a broader discussion about more than just assessment. A number of participants spoke about offshore students having a different way of relating and communicating with them. An incident often used to highlight this was their struggle at having received 'gifts' from students, not being sure if this behaviour was merely because they were a foreign teacher, or if it was how the students also engaged with local staff. Such dilemmas have been discussed in former research, such as Hoare's (2006), where the academic respondents similarly questioned the ethics and motivations behind the gift giving and wondered if 'there would be an expected "quid pro quo" in terms of assessment' (p. 142). Comments from the academics in this investigation again suggest they were ill-prepared about various cultural practices and different expectations of student-teaching relationships, leading to confusion and, for some, placing a strain on their relationships with their students and teaching practice.

Each of the above comments challenges highlights how culture influences all aspects of the curriculum. Another major challenge is plagiarism, which Leask (2006b, p. 183) describes as

'a complex, culturally loaded concept' which 'causes much anxiety for both academics and students'. This challenge will now be explored.

6.5.3 Plagiarism

Much has been written about international onshore students and plagiarism (East 2006; Ha 2006; Nagy 2006; Walker 1998) and there is a growing body of literature specifically focused on the transnational context (Campbell-Evans & Leggett 2007; Carroll, J 2008; Partridge & West 2003). Carroll's (2008, p. 96) study examining student plagiarism in transnational teaching captures the sentiment of many academics in this study, when she says 'managing plagiarism [offshore] can be even more challenging' than onshore.

In this study academics were not surprised when they came across transnational student work which was copied, lacked references, was incorrectly cited, included failed attempts at paraphrasing or encountered parts of the textbook memorised and written verbatim in an exam. They had seen all of this before in classrooms in Australia. Much of this is similar to participants' responses in other studies; one academic teaching in China remarked to Pyvis (2011, p. 738) 'their learning is our plagiarism'. What was unique and more challenging to deal with offshore was the lack of support from student academic learning services, and that they often had to manage cases of plagiarism remotely and without assistance from other colleagues of the university.

The common dilemma for academics was how to respond to plagiarism, which they did in a number of ways. One coordinator recounted that their program team had failed a high number of students for plagiarising in different subjects in the first intake. They followed the university procedures closely, interviewing each student, and explaining the result. This coordinator reported that because they had made the consequences very obvious, plagiarism and other forms of cheating were far less prevalent in subsequent cohorts. Another coordinator also observed a rapid change after they failed students, saying 'if people plagiarised and cut and paste they got zero and people became very wary of it'. Other

academics, however, were more lenient and some were particularly adamant that plagiarism had to be dealt with in a sensitive manner: 'You cannot put them [the students] into a corner from where they have no way out'.

There was another group of participants who hoped that along with reducing the incidents of plagiarism, students would acquire some understanding of academic integrity. This group spoke of preventative strategies; one academic said they wrote a series of 'self-paced learning exercises for the students ... and some self-assessment and peer review guides'. Others agitated for more and better online guides and tools to help students with referencing, although interestingly no participant mentioned Turnitin software, a tool that can be used to support both academics and students in managing plagiarism. The two academics who introduced iterative assignments had the added benefit of 'not failing them outright ... we kind of help them, train them and make them resubmit'. Offering students the opportunity to learn about plagiarism in the context of their assessment overall appeared to improve the students' work. However, often because of time restrictions to turn around student feedback, and the extra work involved for individual lecturers, this approach was not always sustainable.

No matter the different types of responses, all academics agreed that having to deal with plagiarism was frustrating, and most commented that their views around plagiarism had altered since teaching offshore. Attitudes to international onshore and offshore students and plagiarism had shifted for one academic, who now appreciated 'the concept of plagiarism may be understood in an intellectual way, but not in a pragmatic or experiential way'. Others felt some international students, new to their programs, had 'no sense of what the consequences were, or whether we take it that seriously, or how it's a part of our learning'. Some teachers considered their students had completed their entire secondary and/or undergraduate degree in a tradition of learning and teaching, within which the Western concept of plagiarism was not a part, and were now having to respond to a foreign set of

expectations around attribution. Although another academic understood there were different cultural practices around attribution, they were still frustrated with having to deal with such complex issues without assistance or support from their university.

It is clear from these findings that plagiarism is a multifaceted and complex concept. And singular, isolated attempts to resolve plagiarism are unlikely to succeed due to it being interwoven throughout the teaching and assessment process. In fact plagiarism was raised, mostly by coordinators, as a part of the difficulties with moderation.

6.5.4 Moderation

The most common challenges connected to moderation were: types of assessment and associated language and literacy issues; difficulties working with partners; and the lack of clarity around processes. The comments from academics reinforce and build on similar issues reported in prior research (Dobos 2011; Goldacre & Briguglio 2008; Mahmud et al. 2010).

Moderation of assessment is a quality assurance process. Monitoring and evaluating student learning outcomes offshore to ensure they are equivalent and comparable to those of students onshore is an essential component of ensuring quality education is delivered abroad (Carroll, M & Woodhouse 2006; IEAA 2006). Harlen (1994, p. 1) notes that 'moderation procedures fall broadly into those concerned with adjustment of the outcome of the assessment to improve fairness (quality control) and those concerned with arriving at fair assessments (quality assurance)'. Universities have policies and procedures governing the process and in spite of such documents not always being easy to locate, coordinators mostly responsible for moderation were all aware of what was expected, although in practice their interpretation and application may have varied.

The first set of difficulties relating to evaluating students in English with unfamiliar assessment tasks has already been addressed in detail above. The second set of

moderation issues had to do with working with partner colleagues. The coordinators explained the bulk of assessment and moderation was managed by the host Australian university. In spite of previous studies clearly articulating the advantages to having partner staff working collaboratively, in designing both the curriculum content and assessment, only a few had worked this way—time and distance were given as the key restraints. Other partner concerns were to do with ‘too lenient or too hard’ marking, penalties not being applied for missed deadlines and overlooking incidents of plagiarism. One academic said they had a ‘strong suspicion the tutor taught to the exam’ and therefore released the exams ‘at the very last minute’. Underlying these concerns are complex issues of power and trust around ownership of the award (Keevers et al. 2012; Mahmud & Sanderson 2011; Pyvis et al. 2011). Wallace *et al.* (2009, p. 8) succinctly articulate the tension ‘between the need for the Australian university to maintain **control** of the assessment for the sake of quality and standards and the need for **trust** by the transnational partners’.

The final issue related to different interpretations and confusion around implementing university moderation policies and procedures, and this is demonstrated in the following two cases. In both incidents, the academics were new to coordinating offshore programs and neither had received any moderation training nor discussed the assessment with partner staff.

The first case is the experience of the sessional staff member appointed to coordinate and teach a subject onshore and offshore. This staff member had not received any pre-departure preparation, was poorly supported by the program coordinator, and had no correspondence with partner staff prior to departure. They had no input into the design of the assessment and were not made aware of the moderation procedures, other than what they accessed from the university website. This inexperienced and first-time coordinator/teacher found it ironic they were moderating their experienced partner colleague, especially when, ‘I have never marked a university assignment. I would first like someone to check what I am doing’. They outlined

the university requirements as needing to mark 50 per cent of the total papers. They then explained their moderation process as, 'if I thought marks needed to come up or go down, then I said to the local lecturer, "I need you to do a review. I've marked them all and given you my comments. This will give you a guide as to what and how I've marked these papers"'. The sessional staff member then waited for their partner colleague to return the papers. The sessional participant understood the importance of moderation but said they felt 'very much out of my depth' and that among the many challenges this was most stressful.

The second participant spoke of an episode which left them questioning their university's offshore assessment and moderation practices, and raised doubts about how diligent they were expected to be in managing such matters. They recounted how the first time they moderated offshore exam papers they were 'appalled at the local marker's inconsistency ... it was totally bad practice. It was not just the grades but the inconsistency'. They wrote an urgent report to their university documenting their concerns and suggesting a recall of all papers for re-marking and/or re-examination. Even though they anticipated 'no one wanted to hear this and I was going to be unpopular at either end ... I just felt I couldn't let it ride, something had to be said'. The response received was very much as anticipated and they were advised 'not to raise this issue or take the matter further just now'. Although this was only one case, the impact on the academic was significant. The lack of any professional support offered about how to handle the situation again raised concerns about quality and trust, this time not so much in relation to their partner colleague but more doubts about their own university.

With all the curriculum challenges academics varied in how they interpreted and responded. Much of the academics' feedback around issues of equivalence and comparability, contextualisation of content, suitability of evaluation tasks, inclusive assessment practice in multicultural classrooms and managing plagiarism and moderation processes reinforces similar findings from prior research (De Vita 2002; Evans & Tregenza 2002; Mahmud et al.

2010; Ryan 2000). The recommendations made in these former studies, regarding better ways to design and deliver the curriculum across borders, particularly working from the start of a new program in a collaborative manner with partner colleagues, seem mostly to be going unheeded.

6.6 Dynamics of teaching

The final section of this chapter reports on the challenges posed by the diverse cohorts of students that teachers encounter during fly-in fly-out teaching.

6.6.1 Class composition

Most participants found teaching culturally and ethnically diverse groups of students in intensive mode over a number of days challenging. Two long-term coordinators noted the size of classes and types of students could fluctuate depending upon the popularity and interest in the discipline, the state of offshore economies, and what the Australian university deemed a minimum number of students to ensure the programs are financially viable.

Academics reported their class sizes were either less than 20 or between 50 to 80 students with one coordinator giving guest lectures for up to 250 students. Some participants spoke of 'no shows' to suggest not all students enrolled attended all sessions. Academics agreed that teaching in intensive mode to any size class was taxing, but as noted previously in the discussion of English language challenges, most found the small groups all-consuming and presenting more difficulties. Few had any experience of teaching a small group of non-English speaking students for many hours over three days. Put simply, one academic said 'teaching small classes, around a table, all day, is demanding and exhausting'. A few academics preferred to teach postgraduate as opposed to undergraduate students saying they were more mature and they felt they had more in common with them. No comments were made about gender differences. The only time gender was discussed was in the

context of an inappropriate cultural comment the teacher had made that caused embarrassment and discomfort for the academic and one particular ethnic group of students.

Except for some classes in Korea, Japan and China, the majority of participants who commented on the makeup of classes reported being surprised to find such student diversity. Some academics did not expect to find the heterogeneous cultural groups, with different 'ethnic sub-groups', and 'mixes of nationalities' the first time they taught in Singapore and Malaysia. An academic was surprised to learn their Hong Kong class consisted of 'Chinese Hong Kong, Singapore, British and Nepalese students but the majority were Chinese'.

Participants observed students forming clusters on the basis of language or homogenous cultural groups; one academic commented their students were reticent to work in 'mixed and diverse groups'. One teacher working in the Philippines said they found there were the 'Spanish immigrant type groups, and then the second largest indigenous group who all speak Tagalog'. Another academic discovered 'three different cultural groups in Malaysia plus lots of Indonesians who seemed very laissez-faire in comparison'. This finding is noted by Chapman and Pyvis (2006b, p. 239) who explain the need for students to belong and 'fit in'. This is particularly important inside ethnically and culturally diverse classrooms and often why they seek out students from similar cultural and language backgrounds. One of the coordinators explained how teaching various ethnic groups offshore was different and challenging compared to the diversity found in Australian classrooms:

But we also struggled from the point of view that, going to Singapore ... when we viewed it with our eyes, in comparison with Australia, it was still quite a segregated multicultural society. The fact that our Chinese students wouldn't go and eat or go on an excursion into Little India and so forth was quite confronting for us. We didn't expect that to occur.

Much of the feedback suggests the participants were not prepared for teaching students from such diverse social, cultural and educational backgrounds. This is particularly notable when examining the academics' views on how their students learned, which is next discussed.

6.6.2 Learning styles

Many of the participants remarked on their students' approaches to learning, saying they were 'quiet and don't ask questions', that they 'memorise and learn by rote', they 'want to be babysat' and that they 'lack critical and analytic thinking skills'. Other participants commonly reported their students' need to have 'the right answers' which was particularly challenging for one academic working in a discipline where 'there are no right answers, just hypotheticals, arguments and debates'.

As well as these observations, there was a range of interpretations, rightly or wrongly made, of student behaviour and body language, for example, 'shifting in their seat' meant boredom, 'blank looks' meant disinterest and 'talking in small groups in Chinese' was considered rude. Still others took 'nodding heads and smiling' to mean students understood them and were following the material, although one academic said if they then asked questions to revise the work, they mostly remained silent.

In contrast, a number of academics said their students did ask questions and they did have interesting 'one-on-one conversations but it was mostly at the end of class' when they wanted to finish up. They found this frustrating because the questions and ideas were not being shared with the class and it was stressful, coming at the end of many hours of teaching, and when they were tired. Only one participant argued that what they observed in their offshore classroom was similar to that in Australia, explaining, 'the differences are only student preferences and not really a style of learning ... honestly, you can find similar attitudes and actions with domestic students too'.

Noticeable throughout this section of the interviews was the term 'Asian' preceding a number of participants' responses to how they observed transnational students' approaches to learning. For example, 'the Asians tend to be quiet' and 'the Asian students just want the answers' and 'maybe the attitude is an Asian thing, they've paid this huge amount of money and so they are empty vessels and you have to fill them up'. An academic with a great deal of transnational experience explained the reason for making such distinctions was the fact that students 'share a common difference to me. I am the outsider and that makes a generalised pattern of different learning styles very noticeable to me'. Two other participants' similarly suggested identifying students' learning and interaction as different and 'Asian'. This possibly only exists because they are in a foreign context which contrasts or confirms views formed from their onshore teaching experiences.

Differences between international onshore and offshore students' approaches to learning have been well documented in the previous literature (Biggs 1991, 1997, 2003; Dunn & Wallace 2004; Evans 2002; Jin & Cortazzi 1998; Wong 2003). Similarly, there is much scholarly debate around the concept of the 'Asian' learner, accompanied by arguments, for example, of surface/deep and passive/active approaches to learning (Kember 1996; Kember & Gow 1991; Kennedy 2002; Littlewood 2000; Watkins, Reghi & Astilla 1991). However, it is not the purpose of this study to delve into the debate about if or how 'Asian' students learn differently to 'non-Asian' students. Rather, the most relevant point to note in light of this thesis is to identify what the participants found challenging about their students' varied learning approaches, and what type of preparation and support they received for teaching students in settings culturally different from the one most were familiar with. The principle difference to offshore teaching has been made clear by Leask *et al.* (2005, p. 34) because of '... the intercultural space in which it occurs'. Thus professional development for academic staff needs to address the intercultural nature of offshore teaching' and thereby be prepared for responding to students' varied approaches to learning.

6.6.3 Students' expectations of academics

As noted earlier, academics often discussed how they felt there were different expectations placed on them, as a teacher, when working abroad. This was the result of engaging with students from multiple cultures and ethnic groups with their own discrete sets of assumptions about this role. Generally, academics felt the relationship with their students was more formal than in Australia and some, particularly in the beginning, struggled to adjust to the different ways of interacting. For example, one academic, relatively new to offshore teaching, felt overwhelmed by the way students related to them, telling me, 'you've just got to break that formal barrier down ... and all that cultural stuff'.

Academics most commonly used the term 'respect' to describe how they perceived students viewed them. This manifested in different ways. One teacher struggled with students refusing to leave class before they did, even when they gave them permission to do so. Their partner colleague explained it was a sign of respect to wait and let them leave first. Another way of showing respect was by being addressed as 'Sir', which was extremely uncomfortable for a young academic, not that much older—possibly even younger—than some of their students.

There was a general sense that it was out of respect for the authority of a teacher that students took their words so seriously and explained why they 'wouldn't dare interrupt a lecturer' or challenge or question them in class. It is worthwhile observing that although these views were expressed by many of the participants, they were not shared by all respondents. The one sessional staff member, mentioned earlier, interpreted the loud chatter at the back of the room when they were lecturing as anything but respectful.

Other academics believed their students' reticence to engage with them in class were because 'the sort of education model is you're a teacher, you have knowledge and are a knowledge giver and they're the knowledge absorber. ... It is their responsibility to absorb knowledge and you will see them being very attentive and feverishly taking down notes because that is what their role is'. One participant simply responded by saying 'You're next to

God really. There are the parents, God and the teacher'. This is a view echoed in research about students' perceptions of teachers, particularly from Confucian backgrounds (Cheng & Wong 1996; Ginsberg 1992; McCargar 1993; Watkins 2000).

It was clear that academics only became aware of the various challenges discussed in this chapter *after* having taught offshore. There was no sense of being aware before working transnationally of the likelihood of such incidents: a consequence of none of the participants having received any pre-departure preparation. They soon discovered that teaching international students onshore was not adequate preparation for teaching transnational students in English with different teacher and learner expectations offshore. This was also the case for academics who had taught intensive 'weekend blocks' onshore, discovering very soon there were different and many more demands associated with intensive teaching offshore. These challenges are next explored.

6.6.4 Intensive teaching

Across all the interviews there was unanimous agreement that intensive teaching was 'challenging, tiring and exhausting'. 'Coping, managing and surviving' were terms commonly used to describe the experience. In fact, the participants who taught postgraduate classes particularly commented on the greater levels of student fatigue offshore, due to their exceptionally long work hours, as well as the demands of family commitments. Similarly, the academics mentioned their own increased levels of fatigue when teaching offshore. There was often little or no time scheduled for rest between flying-in and teaching, along with the increased demands of working in unfamiliar contexts. As one participant explained, 'the lecturer has to be the focus for 18 hours for the entire weekend'.

After each academic detailed the number of days, hours per day and times they travelled abroad, it was clear no two schedules were exactly the same, although most fell into one of two types. Academics either worked for three days teaching over weekends with eight to ten

hours of teaching per day, or worked offshore for one week teaching up to six hours each day, two blocks of three hours, one in the morning and afternoon.

Some academics had prior experience teaching in intensive mode in Australia and felt they had learned to manage some of the inherent challenges associated with this approach. They had developed strategies such as clustering common parts of the curriculum, minimising information overload and dealing with tired students. They acknowledged however that the offshore environment meant the skills they had acquired onshore were not always readily transferable.

Academics spoke of having to be far less flexible with the curriculum, having fewer opportunities to use innovative teaching activities or work in groups; one participant said that often on the last day they 'simply had to resort to straight lecturing'. Others concurred explaining the short amount of time allowed to cover a great amount of content in an unfamiliar language meant they were often teaching from a transmission rather than constructivist-student participatory model. One exasperated academic said, 'there is always a race just to get through the curriculum', and an experienced coordinator agreed:

... you can see you are going to get derailed and you have to go home at night and edit what you are able to cover and try and negotiate with the students the next day and just rejig the rest of the time. Clearly we run out of time.

Teaching in a compressed time frame exacerbates language difficulties, and this seemed particularly challenging for academics teaching in China. One academic explained how they were expected to teach an entire semester curriculum in two back-to-back weekends. They were aware how unrealistic this was stating, 'pedagogically it just does not make any sense because the students have no time to participate or absorb from one topic to the next'. After returning to Australia they made attempts to re-design the program to be delivered across the semester with two separate trips, reasoning that a more educationally sound and less stressful approach would improve learning outcomes. More experienced colleagues advised

that their alternate approach, although educationally better, would not be implemented because the current model is 'financially cheaper ... so it was more of a financial decision you know'. Academic respondents experience significant dissonance in relation to this issue, with one, who was quite typical, suggesting to me: 'imagine if you are going to do that here in Australia. They would crucify you. It would be like national news ... they would be jumping up and down'.

6.6.5 Teaching styles

Academics readily acknowledged the fast paced, intensive delivery, students' learning preferences, English as an additional language, different and varying quality of facilities and resources and foreign cultural contexts all impacted on how they taught. One coordinator said 'Before I taught offshore I was so unaware of different cultures, different education systems and the gaps in different learning environments [i.e. compared with the Australian learning environment]'.

In essence, it was valuable to learn, from the 30 academics, how they were 'filling these gaps' and managing their teaching challenges. Unsurprisingly, there was a wide range of varied responses. At one end of the spectrum were participants who were self-critical, expressing concern that the students 'didn't get my teaching', and who were worried when they saw students with 'bored' or 'quizzical looks' on their faces, or appearing to be 'asleep with their eyes open'. At the other end were those more sanguine with what they saw as their 'failed teaching attempts', coming to the conclusion the students were happy with large lectures and 'chalk and talk', as opposed to small group activities, and the university and partners seemed happy too. This is captured by a senior and experienced academic who said:

I mean, in the beginning we all made lots of attempts to get them to contribute. Sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't ... But I think that they have an expectation

of their own culture and their own experience. And I think they would just like to have that maintained. That's my view now.

Two other academics initially assumed the lack of student responsiveness to their teaching was to do with low levels of English language ability. They acknowledged that at first they fell into the trap of speaking 'slower and slower' and another, 'started getting louder and louder and was soon shouting' but very quickly became aware of the folly of this and stopped. A junior academic, teaching offshore for the first time, thought the lack of student response to their teaching was because they were coming across as 'too serious and stern'. They decided on the second day they would tell their 'tried and true opening joke' as a way to be more light-hearted, but which did not result in laughter, but rather greater student distance. Their partner colleague later explained the offensive nature of their humour, particularly to one ethnic group in the class. This was an abrupt and confronting on-the-job learning experience for this relatively young and inexperienced academic.

A coordinator explained how in the beginning they were exasperated because even though they had made it explicit in the contract and in promotional materials to students and parents that 'We expect you to participate. We don't want to do lectures for three hours on the go. We will do small group work. We will expect you to interrupt, to ask questions' they continued to fail to put into practice such approaches. They said that with experience they learned a lot about cultural differences to teaching and learning, and that stipulating a particular approach in a contract will not close the gap, but rather time, effort, collaboration, encouragement and support from other academics, partner teachers and transnational students are needed to build a bridge between the two.

Although no question was directly asked about online teaching, six participants extended the discussion to include their views around this type of teaching in transnational education programs. Most only supported online teaching as a way to supplement face-to-face classes. One coordinator was adamant his team, 'studiously avoid online teaching' both onshore and

offshore. Another saw value from a supplementary perspective but could not rationalise the cost to develop online tools for a small group of students. Some academics held the view that online teaching runs counter to their efforts to introduce active learning by having small, face-to-face groups work through activities together. Others argued that online technologies designed and used smartly can similarly fulfil such outcomes (de Salas & Ellis 2006; Oliver 1999) but that 'transnational educators are inevitably caught up in tensions between global modernising trends and local traditional practices' (Ziguras 2001, p. 8). Duke (2002) points out that while information communication technologies (ICT) can contribute to support and enhance internationalisation, these benefits requires much planning and many resources.

6.7 Conclusion

As the purpose of Chapter Five was to identify the challenges leading up to and arriving offshore, the purpose of this chapter was to specifically focus on the 'teaching' challenges experienced working in a foreign teaching and learning context. They are many and diverse.

This broad, multi-campus investigation has identified that many of the same teaching challenges previously reported still exist. This is a valuable finding in and of itself. So too is understanding, in greater depth, the effects of some of these known challenges, for example, the negative impact on academics' professional self-confidence and self-esteem of learning intercultural knowledge and skills by way of transgression or faux pas. Or, revealing the considerable degree of uncertainty academics experience with regard to the requirement to deliver equivalent curriculum and assessment. The findings from this study have also reinforced the manifest cognitive dissonance, frustration and anxiety that respondents felt when left alone, without clear direction or support from their university in managing this critically important quality component central to Australia's transnational programs.

As each discrete teaching challenge was analysed three themes emerged. Firstly, it is apparent there are many diverse but interconnected challenges associated with teaching

offshore. Secondly, individual academics were left primarily on their own to respond, as they saw fit, as best they could, to each challenge. Thirdly, in part a consequence of many individuals operating independently of others, the interpretation and implementation of equivalent and culturally relevant curriculum and teaching in Australian transnational programs is wide-ranging, diverse and necessarily pragmatic.

The purpose of the two chapters on the challenges of transnational teaching was to clearly identify what type, when and how university preparation and support is most needed. The next three chapters set out to examine how universities go about responding to all the personal, professional, cultural and teaching challenges present when working abroad. Chapter Seven begins by reporting on the types of formal university preparation and support provided to fly-in fly-out academics teaching offshore.

Chapter Seven: Formal Preparation and Support for Academics Teaching Offshore

The preceding chapters established few differences in the types of challenges previously documented by academics teaching offshore. Considering this trend, I anticipated I might also find few differences in the types of university preparation and support documented in the literature review and three models outlined in Chapter Three. Many of the findings around formal university preparation presented in Chapter Seven supports this, with only minimal evidence of pre-departure preparation programs operating in some universities, and no evidence of ongoing formal support for staff while offshore or when they return home.

However, progressive analysis of the data revealed methods other than formal preparation were in place. Chapter Eight presents these informal methods of preparation and support: some building on those documented in prior research and other new approaches. Chapter Nine goes further and presents how a small group of academics working as a team, and drawing on a mix of formal and informal methods, prepared and supported one another across all three phases of offshore teaching. No one formal, informal or team preparation approach is necessarily ideal, rather further analysis revealed potential for a mixed or hybrid approach to preparation and supported based around academics needs and work context.

This chapter investigates the formal university preparation and support available to fly-in fly-out academics, how they engage with this support and how it contributes to their preparedness for teaching offshore. The term 'formal' preparation and support refers to all institutionally created materials and programs, including those delivered at the central, faculty, school or departmental level and by the IEAA. The chapter first examines online and hard copy resource materials and the ways in which development opportunities are promoted. The findings from the observations of 25 formal face-to-face professional development sessions and 40 interviews with fly-in fly-out academics and academic

developers are then presented. Data analysis aims to show whether the content, means of delivery, and timing of university preparation and support aligns with the personal, professional, cultural and teaching challenges discussed in Chapters Five and Six.

7.1 Online resources

At the commencement of this research in 2008, searches for online resources, created specifically for transnational teaching, revealed that only four of the 20 universities had dedicated web pages designed specifically for staff teaching offshore. Two universities offered online resources at central level and two at discipline level, both in business schools. A second round of searches conducted in 2013 showed six other universities had developed some online resources.

Despite evidence of growth in the number of available online resources during the research period, there was no growth in quality or ease of access to resources. They were still difficult to find, being variously located on the websites of central academic development units, teaching and learning sites and human resource divisions. Once located, many still only amounted to 'checklists' and 'tip sheets'. One resource for 'cultural preparation' consisted of a set of bullet points advising academics they need to be 'culturally competent' and 'observe cultural etiquette', but no explanations of what this might mean were provided and no further links to resources or support about how they might achieve this.

Along with the poor accessibility and effectiveness of the online resources describe above, the content of the resources appeared skewed towards administrative and logistic matters, according to my reviews and the few participants who accessed them. One academic reflected, 'there was just you do this, that and the other. The next things are the deadlines, this is how you get the grades and this is how you put them in'. Another described their use as 'just trying to come to grips with all the different forms and that was about it'. There were minimal or no resources to prepare academics for personal, critical incidents or cultural

challenges. For example, some universities had links to guides about culture shock but on closer examination, although intended for academics, the content focused on the experiences of international students. There were no resources designed for academics departing to teach overseas who may possibly experience their own culture shock.

While in most cases, the online resources for supporting teaching transnationally were minimal and often were just text and documents uploaded to a website, two universities offered richer aid. In one university, media such as audio recordings of academics sharing their experiences of teaching offshore were included, while the other had developed self-paced online preparation modules. A faculty based academic developer at the latter university, who was not involved in the development of these central resources, acknowledged the modules were useful but commented, 'they were a bit too general for their staff' and 'I didn't actually go through all the modules because I just haven't got that amount of time'. One might assume if an academic developer finds the resources too generic and time consuming, this might also be the case for academics in specific disciplines.

Excluding the two cases above, there was little evidence of innovative Web 2.0 technologies, video demonstrations or interactive multimedia such as wikis, blogs or shared databases. Academic developers spoke at length about reasons for the scarcity and poor quality of resources, web design and navigation tools. One developer explained there was little incentive to create interactive media saying, 'We've already got masses of blogs and wikis and staff just don't use them'. Another developer spoke of having established a shared database for teachers to record dates, when offshore, so they could connect and meet up with each other, which was never used. No formal evaluation had been conducted to understand why there were such low levels of academic engagement with these resources, although four of the 10 academic developers shared their views more broadly about online learning and the online learning environment.

Several academic developers expressed doubts about the value of using an online mode to build offshore teaching skills and foster collegiate networks with partners. This was based on concerns around the poor pedagogy and accessibility of the resources, poor promotion of the resources and an overall lack of regular communication. Some others challenged the thinking that it is always a cost-effective means of providing quality professional development, especially considering initial start-up costs. They argued that producing quality online resources appropriate for well-educated adult learners is often as expensive, or more expensive, than face-to-face workshops. Counter views, such as those provided by Anderson (1996), are that online resources remove the barriers of time and place and in the long term they are more cost effective. There is literature supporting either side of the online learning debate. The ideal outcome is most likely to be not solely relying on one means of delivery, but rather incorporating multiple modes when developing professional development programs. This, however, was not evident in the material and resources sampled.

Other reasons put forward for the poor quality of online materials were the lack of financial and personnel resources allocated to tasks, some academic developers suggesting this reflected, more broadly, the institutions' low priority given to preparation of staff teaching transnationally. To demonstrate this point, one academic developer described a university-wide 'international' teaching and learning website that was constructed in a rush to be completed for an upcoming AUQA audit: 'Sam pulled a whole pile of stuff together and stuck it on the web ... it is a bit all over the shop ... at best I would have to say it is piecemeal'. Another described short cuts in designing a set of online transnational resources. The original project plan required draft versions of the materials to be 'pre-tested and feedback collected from academics for revisions', but this part of the project was not followed through before the materials were uploaded. This example reinforces previous discussions in Chapter Three about the possible impact of the audit culture.

Half the academic developers also said it was difficult to maintain and update resources when their units regularly experience organisational restructures resulting in new objectives, reporting lines and budgets—a phenomenon well documented in the literature (Hicks, M 2005; Holt, Palmer & Challis 2011; Rowlands 2002, 2007). One academic developer explained that, ‘as they have shifted us around’; resources can get ‘lost and forgotten and if not used, are essentially not resourced anymore’.

Ultimately, it was clear there were few comprehensive, well-designed and maintained university online resources available for academics to access. Academic developers, although aware of the limited scope of the materials, did not feel they were in a position to rectify and improve the quality of these resources due to the knock-on effect of limitations on their roles and resources. The quality and availability of hard copy resources are next examined.

7.2 Hard copy resources

Print materials collected during observations and interviews, were a mix of teaching booklets, manuals and tip sheets covering a range of topics associated with international and transnational teaching, along with some samples of curriculum outlines and resources from graduate certificates in higher education programs.

University teaching and learning handbooks were discussed by two academic developers as a possible resource for academics preparing to teach offshore, so 11 different university handbooks were downloaded and reviewed. None were found to specifically address the needs of transnational teachers, as identified in chapters five and six. Most contained summaries of university policies and procedures, administrative rules and regulations, outlines of student graduate attributes and guidelines for assessment and academic misconduct. While this is essential information, it does not specifically address the challenges

of teaching in foreign classrooms. Overall, there was minimal reference made either to international or transnational teaching.

Four transnational manuals specifically designed for partner staff were reviewed. Again, they included information about university policy and procedures, guides to university learning and teaching approaches, moderation and academic integrity. These were mostly hard copy manuals, although some were also distributed as DVDs and online. Interestingly, no equivalent manuals for Australian-based staff were found. One developer commented that there were more dedicated resources for partner staff than for local academics, although they believed that 'some university staff need as much up-skilling as the offshore people'.

Five academic developers spoke about subject materials and resources in their universities' graduate certificates in higher education teaching programs as being inadequate for preparing academics to teach offshore. Two of the five developers taught in certificate courses; one observed, 'they're [course material] not specifically for going offshore', and the other remarked, 'I wouldn't say there's a heavy emphasis on culture; they'd need to do something a bit different for offshore teachers'. I reviewed 10 different universities' graduate certificates in higher education and found the core curriculum covered topics such as the scholarship of teaching, assessment design and online teaching, with some universities offering electives in learning and teaching in a global world. Of the 10 only those with offshore campuses included specific teaching materials to support transnational teaching. However, these materials neither catered for nor addressed the unique needs of academics working in intensive fly-in fly-out mode.

Nine academic participants had no formal teaching qualifications. Three had completed graduate certificates, and of the three only one commented about the graduate program saying, '80 per cent of it was garbage ... and the 20 per cent that was useful was about career development and IT sites'. When I probed further about what was missing in relation to preparation for offshore teaching, they replied 'there was absolutely nothing on

international [preparation]'. They also struggled to find the time—one of the top four problems identified in Kandlbinder and Peseta's (2009) study. They observed: 'It's just one of those classic situations: that a whole lot of people who don't teach are telling people how to teach'. This comment on presenter credibility reinforces one of the key reasons given by academics for their resistance to engaging in formal university professional programs (Gelade & Quinn 2004; Gibbs & Coffey 2004; Knight, P 2006). As discussed in Chapter Three, along with presenter credibility, academics are also resistant where attendance is mandatory, which is most often the case with the postgraduate certificate for academics newly appointed to the academy. Amongst the negative evaluations gathered from participants in Knight's (2006, p. 10) study of postgraduate certificates, were comments such as, 'attendance at these compulsory programs is an exercise in time-serving and demonstrating an ability to jump through hoops'.

Australian and UK literature has not only questioned mandatory attendance and overall low participation rates, but most importantly, the extent of learning transference from graduate certificates to the classroom (Butcher & Stoncel 2012; Knight, P 2006; Knight, P, Tait & Yorke 2006). The number of staff teaching offshore with formal teaching qualifications would be expected to increase as more junior academics complete graduate certificates. Aside from more academics completing these programs, there remain the important questions about the value of this approach for preparing discipline experts for teaching in today's complex, globalised, multidimensional, higher education systems, which clearly includes teaching abroad.

Finally, both academics and academic developers mentioned that commercial travel guides and books were useful for preparing for the practical aspects of travelling offshore, with information about the climate, currency, transport, local customs and food. Frequently they referred to the information being up-to-date and the guides being readily accessible. Other texts mentioned was a book by Lee Kuan Yew, former Prime Minister of Singapore (Lee, K

2000), a book written for expatriates by a Singaporean businessman, and some introductory language learning texts. One academic said, as a part of their preparation, they 'read books in our library about Singapore and the culture', but after teaching offshore, they realised that the books were 'outdated and not useful'.

Interestingly, participants' in Keevers *et al.* (2012, pp. 9-10) study reported the most common type of professional development they experienced for teaching offshore was 'printed guides and information and online material/courses ...', the latter perceived as the least useful. These poor quality online and hard copy materials might explain the findings from the above study. Academic developers again suggest the reason for the dearth of adequate resources was a lack of organisational prioritisation for transnational development. And consequently a lack of time, money and personnel assigned to designing, evaluating and maintaining up-to-date relevant and high quality resources.

Connected to the availability of quality resources and programs is how well they were promoted. It has already been established that online materials were difficult to locate. And the findings reported in the following section highlight this issue as another unsatisfactory aspect of supporting academics who teach offshore.

7.3 Promotion of university resources

As discussed in Chapter Three, effective promotion of development opportunities is a significant factor in ensuring that institutional professional development reaches its intended audience (Gelade & Quinn 2004; King 2003; Parsons & Jozeps 2005). I gathered data about the ways in which universities advertise resources, programs and policy for fly-in fly-out teachers by conducting extensive web searches, and asking academic developers how programs are promoted and accessed.

With the exception of two universities, I found a distinct lack of any targeted approach to promoting transnational preparation programs and resources. Searches across key institutional professional development sites, online calendars of events, and electronic newsletters and bulletins revealed that some items and sessions were advertised multiple times, while others could only be stumbled upon, buried deep under layers of hyperlinks. The rather ad hoc nature of promotion was in part explained by an academic developer describing the process thus: 'If something comes across my desk I send it on to the web team and it might make it to the website, or it could go out in an email list, but then it only gets sent to people who have signed up'. Another academic developer explained, 'our website is *again* under review' explaining with each review there is a new structure and hierarchy of menus and content pages 'which never seem to be tested by the end user'. This ignores Parsons and Jozeps' (2005, p. 2) recommendation that for successful promotion of professional development resources, it is essential that 'intensive consultation with intended end users – academic staff teaching in transnational programs' is conducted.

Just over half of the searches for universities' offshore policies, procedures and professional development were limited by password protection. Where policies were located it was common to discover out-of-date or draft only copies published on websites. As mentioned previously, the most user-friendly access to these documents was found in the four hard copy manuals designed to support partner staff. Most of my searches for professional development programs proved similar to those described by academic developers—time consuming and often unproductive. There seemed to be no well-developed strategy for locating and promoting transnational institutional programs.

Two academic developers from separate institutions who were frustrated with this long-term modus operandi created an alternative means of promotion. They regularly attended faculty/school teaching and learning committee meetings, where they 'do a little commercial of upcoming events or policy updates' with follow-up emails and/or relying on word of mouth. A

school-based academic developer was adamant it was unrealistic and inefficient to expect time poor academics to have to trawl through a vast array of general university learning and teaching resources in the hope of finding support relevant for offshore teaching. They suggested it would be far better to package and promote a 'suite or repertoire of relevant support and resources' to academics in their school.

Overall there was consensus from the academic developers that promotion of university programs and resources for transnational teachers was poor, with no clear systematic institutional promotion strategy in place. Academics generally had little to say on this topic, other than sharing failed attempts at finding any transnational resources, or attending workshops to discover discrepancies between what was promoted and what was presented. All this goes against Attwood's (2009) recommendation that clear, accurate information around the program title, aims, intended audience, location and dates were fundamental components for successful promotion of professional development.

In summary few dedicated institutional resources for transnational teachers were found and the attempts to promote policies, procedures and professional development programs appeared ad hoc. One experienced academic developer summed up the importance of promotion saying 'advertising has to be spot on when and where teachers need it to be, and if it is not, they just won't come'.

The next section of this chapter reports on what happens if academics do come to university preparation programs designed for transnational academics. It will examine the types of programs and support available for staff prior to departure, offshore and returning to Australia, investigating whether the topics and types of delivery match the needs of the 30 academics who participated in this study.

7.4 Formal preparation programs

It is impossible for this study to evaluate how well formal university pre-departure preparation specifically designed for teaching offshore met the needs of the participants, and/or how valued it was, because none of the 30 academics in this study received any! An experienced academic but who was new to transnational teaching said, 'There was nothing formal. I mean the stuff on the piece of paper was, this is your task that you have to do, and then you go, this is what you must do, there wasn't any preparation'. The same academic did not receive any institutional support while offshore, summing up his total preparation as, 'you were thrown in the deep end and you learned by making every mistake in the book'. An academic with over 15 years' experience commented, 'there was no orientation or resources provided then or now'.

Eight out of the 10 academic developers confirmed the lack of dedicated formal pre-departure preparation and ongoing support for fly-in fly-out teachers at their universities, echoing the academics' comments, for example: 'they went without any formal training, so they just went there and learned on-the-job'. Three developers suggested that in place of planned dedicated programs there were occasional one-off workshops, and six said they recommended to academics the option of attending general university professional development workshops with 'international' teaching and learning and cultural themes. This is despite former research explicitly stating the need for universities to provide dedicated preparation for academics teaching offshore due to the differences between onshore and offshore teaching.

The scarcity of dedicated programs confirmed by academics and academic developers was thus reinforced a third time. My extensive web searches failed to find any university preparation programs specifically designed for academics teaching offshore, however, I was made aware of eight preparation sessions during the interviews with academic developers. The reason I was not able to locate these workshops was either because they were 'only

planned at the last moment' or they were password protected on an intranet. For example, two ongoing programs were operating within faculties and two discipline-specific one-off sessions were responding to an immediate need arising from an oversight in the initial planning of the transnational programs. The remaining four were also all one-off ad hoc preparation sessions, coordinated by central university units, and held in advance of upcoming AUQA audits. I was able to observe one of these four sessions and analysed the remaining three from the interview data from the developers, allowing me to examine four different university preparation sessions planned just before audits. These findings are presented later in this section.

In light of over half of the developers' suggestions that academics attend 'internationally' themed general university professional development programs as a means of preparation, I felt it essential I also observed such workshops. As previously outlined in Chapter Four these 18 formal sessions covered a wide range of topics and were all coordinated by central university units. In addition I observed six seminars hosted and promoted by universities but delivered by the IEAA, a professional association providing workshops on issues relating to internationalisation and transnational teaching. (See Appendix 15 for a summary of observations of all professional development sessions.)

Despite confirmation of the need for all academics to be professionally prepared and supported (AEI 2006a; AUQA 2006; AVCC 2002b; NTEU 2004a) and the valuable research contributing to how this might be best achieved (Debowski 2003; Dixon & Scott 2003a; Dunn & Wallace 2005; Gribble & Ziguras 2003; Hicks, M & Jarrett 2008; Leask 2004b) it was overwhelmingly clear that just as there were few well-designed and dedicated online/hard copy resources, there was also a lack of dedicated, systematic university preparation and support programs for staff. There was, however, evidence of non-planned and ad hoc formal university workshops and support. These findings will be discussed in the next section.

7.5 Common attributes of formal ad hoc and general PD programs

The university based sessions observed included a mix of workshops, forums and seminars. The sessions were generally two to three hours' duration, attracting between four to 16 participants. They focused on one theme, with the content delivered at a broad and surface level by a university subject specialist, academic developer, or consultant. All sessions were coordinated either by central or faculty based academic development units, and most were promoted on professional development websites, electronic newsletters and by email. The promotional materials mostly consisted of a brief outline of the topic, venue, time and booking details. In half of the cases, information about the presenter was left as 'to be advised', which is an oversight, considering that presenter credibility is significant in academics deciding whether to attend or not (Andresen 1996; Peseta & Manathunga 2007).

The method of delivery was similar in all sessions I observed, with participants either seated around tables, or in rows facing a lectern ready for a presenter-driven session. After introductions and program outlines, the presenters generally worked through a set of power-point slides, interspersed with occasional breaks for brief discussion and feedback to the group. There were few interactive activities and few opportunities for participants to discuss issues at any length with each other or the presenter, except during the coffee break or designated question time. Mostly participants were given hard copy handouts of the power-point slides along with recommendations for further reading and links to websites.

To an observer, the method of delivery appeared formulaic, content-driven and teacher-centred rather than utilising an array of effective and engaging techniques, as recommended for adult learners (Knowles, Holton & Swanson 2005; Mujtaba & Preziosi 2006). Also the content appeared pre-designed and generic with little evidence of being tailored to the diverse experiences, expertise and knowledge of the participants, as emphasised in the *Professional Development Framework for Academic Staff Teaching Australian Programs Offshore* (Leask et al. 2005). The participants' backgrounds, needs and expectations of the

workshop were gathered with the 'around the room ritual' of brief self-introductions at the start of the workshop. This is in contrast to building the content from the results of needs assessment conducted with participants' prior to the workshop, as is recommended in adult learning and academic development literature (Altschuld & Witkin 2000; Lawler 2003; Osborn 2004; Queeney 1995). In summary, if measured against Osborn's (2004) *Work Embedded Professional Development Model*, the rather rigid and external approach to delivering professional development was largely stuck in the 'first generation phase', ignoring the work needs, context and experience of participants.

In the 'international' themed, general university professional development sessions, the content was predominantly directed to onshore teaching, rarely incorporating scenarios or contextualising skills and materials relevant to transnational settings. In summary, the choice of content and skill development in these sessions was unsuitable and inadequate when measured against the recommendations of prior research, which make explicit the different needs of staff teaching offshore compared to onshore (Clark & Clark 2000; Hudson & Morris 2003; Leask 2004b, 2006a).

Evaluation, another key aspect in program design (Brinkerhoff et al. 1984; Owen 2006; Spaulding 2008), involved either a paper or online form designed to measure Kirkpatrick's (1998) first 'reaction' level or 'happiness quotient' (Kutner et al. 1997, p. 1), focusing solely on how participants 'felt and liked' the session, the presenter, venue and/or food. Kirkpatrick's (1998) remaining three levels, evaluating the degree of learning, and changes made in teaching and organisational outcomes, such as the contribution to improving overall institutional teaching quality, were overlooked. As previously discussed in Chapter Three, such a limited and superficial approach to evaluation provides little information for measuring levels of success, or for adapting the academic development to better accommodate the needs of individual participants, students, the university and their offshore partners.

7.6 Workshops specifically for pre-departure transnational preparation

As noted, while none of the 30 transnational academics in this study attended formal training, eight formal university pre-departure preparation sessions specifically designed for academics were discussed in interviews with academic developers. I observed one. Six of the eight were one-off, ad hoc, institution-wide sessions. All were hurriedly organised and delivered in a rather urgent manner with mandatory attendance implied in the promotion. As previously stated, four of these programs were organised by central university units, and developed and delivered in anticipation of upcoming AUQA audits. Two other formal programs were different in that they were faculty based, strategically planned and ongoing. One was run by a faculty based academic development unit, and the other delivered at faculty level in conjunction with the central academic development unit. The remaining two were last minute discipline-specific workshops responding to unforeseen issues in the planning of each transnational program. These eight 'dedicated' preparation programs offered at university level, faculty level and then discipline-based are discussed in detail below.

7.6.1 Four university pre-AUQA sessions

Six developers spoke about hurriedly developing resources and organising pre-departure preparation sessions, with no attempt to disguise the connection with upcoming AUQA audits: 'we were going to be AUQA'd and we had to get moving'; 'AUQA's the big driver' and 'our International support was hammered in the first audit round and I'm expected to find the holes in our resources and fix them before they come again'. The one central 'AUQA inspired' workshop I observed will first be outlined, then two AUQA related faculty incidents described by academic developers, followed by a discussion around the common themes that emerged from these pre-AUQA audit sessions.

The academic developer who invited me to observe the one-off workshop explained there had been a vigorous university-wide campaign 'strongly encouraging' all offshore teachers to

attend the half-day workshop. This resulted in 67 academics from different disciplines, and of different levels of seniority and teaching experience, gathering in one room for a three-and-a-half-hour workshop. It was organised by the university central quality unit but two experienced offshore academics facilitated the session which gave some credibility to the workshop. In the short time only a few topics at a general level were covered, such as the 'offshore learning and teaching contexts' and 'colours across cultures'. The session was also promoted as an opportunity for 'networking with other offshore colleagues' but no time was given to this activity. The only means of evaluation was again a Kirkpatrick level one 'reaction' tick-the-box assessment. The workshop concluded with an announcement that follow-up resources and further workshops were being developed and would build on this first 'introductory' session. When checking with the academic developer one year later, much to their dismay and despite their best efforts, I learned that after the AUQA audit no further resources or professional development were offered. They told me that they really tried, 'to keep the ball rolling but were met by a brick wall'.

Four distinct features emerging from this observation were found in the other three programs, namely: the impetus for action being an upcoming AUQA audit; the hurried and unplanned nature of the workshops resulting in generic content presented in a transmissive manner to disparate groups of academics; mandated attendance; and the un-kept promise of ongoing professional development. Although on paper these four universities had provided preparation and resources for teaching offshore, the question left unanswered was how much true preparation and development had occurred?

A faculty based academic developer told me how they ended up presenting a similar type of generic and transmissive session for the university. They had previously designed and run a half-day induction program for small groups of discipline-based staff teaching offshore with one partner, at one location. Prior to an AUQA audit, a request from the central academic group was made to them to 'adapt and deliver' this discipline-specific program for a

university-wide audience. The pro-vice chancellor learning and teaching sent a communiqué expecting all academics' teaching offshore, who had not previously taken part in any professional development, to register and attend one of the three repeat sessions. The developer disagreed with this approach and described 'apologising to the academics for being told to come' at the start of each workshop and then struggled to elicit participant engagement in the workshop.

Issues around the quality and appropriateness of professional support continued to emerge from the data, as the following incident to do with developing resources for partner staff illustrates. Again, prior to an audit, a central academic developer was given a short amount of time to create a set of online resources for offshore partner staff. They expressed their concern about the standard of what they could produce in such a brief amount of time, but were assured by senior management that they could, 'revisit and update this later and make it more contemporary'. However, the opportunity to revisit and update never eventuated. The academic developer concluded this discussion by explaining, 'my personal suspicions were, and continue to be, it's really a tick-the-box exercise for the AUQA audit ... it's been like, well you know, we've got to do something because we don't really have anything'.

These incidents support Jefferies and Conway's (2007) observation that in the lead-up to an AUQA audit at their university, 'some staff perceive that, prior to an audit, some activities were driven more quickly than was good for the university' (p. 64). A clear-cut example of such an incident was recounted by a senior academic developer, required to help develop a university transnational policy just prior to an upcoming AUQA audit, explaining 'the university was exposed because it didn't have anything'. They said they ended up with a rushed policy and no time for meaningful consultation in the development or implementation phases. The developer demonstrated the shortcomings of the policy saying:

A lot of it is motherhood statements and it's not overly useful ... The policy pretty well sits by itself. There hasn't been any attempt to integrate it into HR practice or

professional development practice. No one has really taken it on board as a major initiative.

Clearly these rapidly developed knee-jerk responses are flawed, not least by the lack of consultation with academics, who as Newton (2000, p. 162) reminds us 'are not passive recipients of management objectives. Academic staff are the 'makers' and 'shapers' of policy. They respond, adapt to or even resist ...' This contrasts with Schreuder (2007) who speaks of AUQA's philosophy as one of 'collaborative engagement and development' and 'institutional enhancement' (p. 17) rather than a 'Rottweiler style of watchdog – with funding and accreditation consequences of a savage audit "bite"' (p. 14). The above accounts suggest, however, that the anticipation of an upcoming AUQA visit was in fact 'used as a big stick, rather than as an opportunity for reflection and quality improvement' (Jeffries & Conway 2007, p. 64).

Quality assurance literature has referred to this phenomenon as 'wet paint syndrome' (Scott, G 2009), with some commentators warning of the potential for the cycles of AUQA audits to lead to 'permanent wet paint' (Carroll, M 2011, slide 32). This 'wet paint' syndrome alludes to the institutional process of addressing problems before audits in order to minimise critical comments and maximise positive recommendations (Carroll, M, Razvi & Goodlife 2008, p. 81). Despite the fact that any institution of higher learning should be well aware that quality adult learning cannot be measured simply by 'being seen to be done' (McWilliam 2002, p. 8), it seems none of the four institutions providing these one-off workshops heeded Dean's (2011) warning that 'for the sake of your credibility, avoid trying to make wet paint look dry ... the auditors will certainly touch it' (p. 3). Although in an interview with an experienced academic developer, who had been involved in two AUQA audits at two different universities they wondered 'if the shiny wet paint had finger prints on it or if it had never been touched?'

Another concern about these ad hoc pre-AUQA sessions, was the mandatory attendance directive, which again is not recommended for adult learners and is particularly antithetical to academics' learning (Moses 1985; Rockhill 1983). Although 'compliance' training exists in almost all large organisations the challenge and skill is to deliver this in a manner that still results in learning. As noted earlier in Chapter Three, Gelade and Quinn's (2004) study demonstrated that mandated workshops may reduce levels of non-attendance and resistance but will not increase academics' willingness to learn.

Osborn (2004) observed how compulsory, top-down short courses may address an institution's needs (in this case aiming to comply to AUQA's reporting requirements) but not necessarily meet the needs of the participants. The degree to which attendance was actually enforced and the consequences of non-attendance were not clear in any of the four cases in this investigation. Even though levels of resistance to professional development might be predictable, the challenge for academic developers is to find ways around this. The mandated nature of these one-off workshops meant they had to 'work very hard to win them over'. When I questioned academic developers as to why they thought attendance was mandatory, there were varying responses. One central academic developer suggested that heads of school made it compulsory, so they could 'tick the box and shift the responsibility for preparation and quality from the school to the central academic development unit, particularly if any problems arose in the future'.

Other developers were more positive. One thought, 'maybe this way we are going to minimise big problems in the future', while another believed they were 'catching people who wouldn't normally sign up themselves, and this might help'. Still the reality that attendance can be mandated, but that 'change in attitude, motivation and ability to learn ...' (Donen 1998, p. 1044) cannot be overlooked and in fact could contribute to increases in cynicism and future non-attendance.

In conclusion, these attempts to demonstrate to AUQA (since 2013 TEQSA) that these universities had strategically planned, implemented and evaluated quality preparation and put support in place for academics teaching offshore seemed precarious. At best, all four universities that delivered these one-off workshops might feel they have ticked off and fulfilled their obligation to staff development recommendations in the AVCC (2002a) *Provision of Education to International Students: Code and Guidelines for Australian Universities*, to which all universities are signatories. However, if the one-off formal preparation programs outlined above reflect the only way in which universities develop and support their staff, it is to be expected that under-prepared academics would be routinely teaching offshore in Australian transnational education programs. Fortunately, this is not the case, with the following faculty and discipline-based approaches demonstrating alternate formal approaches.

7.6.2 Two faculty based preparation sessions

Two academic developers from separate institutions who were faculty based, both with large, long-term and financially successful transnational programs, described programs designed to prepare academics across various disciplines in the faculty. Although these academics were from different universities and disciplines and were teaching with different partners in different countries, the design of the programs was similar.

Both faculty programs provided a series of ongoing and graded formal workshops that included: an introduction to offshore teaching for new staff; a consolidation and extension of skills for more experienced lecturers; and another stream focused on managing administrative and quality issues that was intended for coordinators and more senior staff. Face-to-face workshops were delivered for two to three hours' duration and the content was primarily focused on teaching issues. The workshops were learner-centred and interactive with the academic developers taking the role of facilitator, rather than presenter. Experts from different parts of the university were called upon to deliver specialised topics, as well

as co-presenting with academics experienced in transnational teaching. Evaluation included a mix of formal online questionnaires and informal discussions, with feedback being used where possible to modify the programs.

The two academic developers were able to draw from their practical experience of having previously taught and worked offshore, adding to their credibility as presenters. One developer managed the program on their own, calling on topic experts and experienced academics as needed. The other faculty based academic developer liaised closely with two university central services: the international office provided information and support to the academics around logistical queries, such as travel, insurance and finance, as well as background information and assistance with partner institutions; the central academic development unit invited staff to co-present on teaching and learning topics, as well as assisting in developing online educational resources.

These programs used an array of methods to deliver content. There was a mix of factual information delivery and encouragement for individuals and small groups of academics to build on their own experiences and further develop their skills using strategies such as reflective practice. One of the two faculty based developers explained their approach as:

I'm trying to get them to feel like they are the experts, which they are, and they may not have taught offshore before, they haven't, but they've taught international students before and they've thought about presumably what they're doing in the classroom and why they're doing it, even if just at the level of what makes them learn best.

Of all the formal university preparation programs these two emerged with evidence of the programs being designed for academic adult learners and included most of the principles and recommendations in Leask, *et al's* (2005) *Professional Development Framework for Academic Staff Teaching Australian Programs Offshore*. Based on Osborn's (2004) *Work Embedded Professional Development Model* these programs reflected second generation

characteristics such as staff consultation, contributions from a mix of internal and external experts, and a constructivist approach to development. Yet, despite sound planning and design, better resources and both presenters experienced in teaching offshore, they still shared two attributes with the university one-off sessions: low attendance rates, and minimal preparation time around intercultural and cross-cultural communication.

Neither of the programs was mandatory, although there was an expectation that the academics would participate in these sessions. The reasons given by the developers for low attendance were diverse and when the two sets of explanations were combined they included: practical issues such as the location of workshops (some academics having to travel across campuses); pre-scheduled times not matching all academics other commitments; and the large size of the faculties meaning the diverse disciplines teaching with different partners led to the content still being too broad. The most common reason was that those workshops have to compete with academics' heavy workloads. The explanations given for the minimal intercultural content was the same for both, it being a wider institutional issue beyond the scope of the faculties. Academic developers in general were definite that, despite having some cultural expertise of their own, they required additional support, and there was simply a lack of university leaders to turn to and resources to access. This becomes a common recurring theme.

7.6.3 Two discipline-specific preparation programs

The first of these programs was a half-day workshop organised for academics who would be teaching with a new Islamic offshore partner institution. It was held off-campus in an Islamic community centre and was run by members of the community organisation. The workshop only involved a small number of colleagues from one discipline. All academics attended, which the academic developer attributing both to genuine interest and some peer pressure to attend as a result of working within a small group.

The academics' feedback was that they found the workshop informative, and there were no credibility issues regarding the presenters' expertise around customs and culture. However, in evaluation, the academics emphasised the workshop did not address or answer any of their curriculum, classroom or teaching questions. The academic developer who organised the event understood this but said, 'it was the best I could do in the time and with the resources I had'. Considering the overall lack of evidence of any culture-specific training in this investigation, this session, even with its limitations, was positive at least from an introductory perspective, even if the potential to build ongoing support was not realised.

The second one-off discipline-based preparation workshop was also restricted by lack of time and planning. Again, there was full attendance but for a unique reason. The coordinator and academics of the offshore program had requested the workshop, after they discovered they were expected to provide face-to-face training to partner staff on their next offshore trip. The central university transnational business unit had planned this. The project team had not consulted with the academics to check how comfortable and confident they felt about providing this training, or even how they would fit it in into the busy and intense schedules of both academics and partner staff.

The limited time frame and the fact that no resources had being allocated in the initial project budget to prepare the academics meant the only professional support the academic developer could provide was 'a half-hour session ... and then if there was some more time there's a bit on student-focused learning put in as well'. The sessions were conducted in a 'how to' manner, with no evaluation conducted, and with plans to develop more in-depth workshops in the future. On checking one year later with the academic developer about the follow-up preparation, they said, 'it has been in the planning stage but is not happening'.

The irony of this case is that not only had the academics not been consulted or included in the original project plan for training and supporting partner staff, but there were also no equivalent resources or induction programs available for the Australian-based academics.

However, a significant and positive outcome reported by the developer was that although the academics had come together under stressful circumstances, due to the lack of planning and consultation, this was the beginning of the group working more closely together, and they continued to work informally on a needs basis with the academic developer.

To conclude, in terms of 'specific' formal institutional pre-departure preparation, it is evident that there is a significant gap between universities' intent and their action in offering preparation, support and ongoing development for academics teaching offshore. Some universities provide a better standard of preparation than others, but when considering content, skill development and means of delivery, overall there is a lack of comprehensive and strategic professional development. In light of this vacuum, it was suggested by six of the academic developers that fly-in fly-out academics could prepare for offshore teaching by participating in some of the general university staff development programs. Expectations that general professional development programs would have low rates of participation and the content not be suitable for offshore teacher preparation were fulfilled in the analysis of the observation data and participants' responses.

7.7 General professional development

This section outlines the range of generic university professional development opportunities most likely to prepare academics to manage the challenges involved in fly-in fly-out teaching. General university professional development is organised by central human resource and/or academic development units, and as outlined above, the method of delivery was generally a few hours or half-day in length and presenter-driven. I will, therefore, focus on the *content* of these programs, assessing how relevant, if at all, they are for academics preparing to teach offshore.

The 18 sessions I observed were selected from different universities' general professional development websites. The selections were based on the titles and outlines that seemed to

most closely connect to the circumstances of academics teaching offshore. This search and find (or not) method of selection is analogous to what academics might follow, considering no university has a database of academics teaching transnationally whom they could alert to relevant workshops. The findings below are presented around three content themes, focusing on administrative matters, teaching and learning sessions and intercultural themes.

I did not identify any workshops that might have included administrative or logistic matters for an offshore context, such as travel or occupational, health and safety topics. A few universities offered general workshops around, for example, 'writing contracts' and the descriptions of these sessions included transnational business matters. However, these were not selected for observation as they did not fall within the domain of academic teaching staff.

The university-wide professional development programs addressing teaching matters, unsurprisingly, were predominantly focused around onshore issues; no transnational cases were included in any of the sessions I observed. For example, I chose to observe a two-hour academic integrity workshop at a university with a significant offshore presence. I entered the workshop mindful of previous research having established that managing student plagiarism in transnational settings was different to onshore settings (Carroll, J 2008; Hoare 2006; Partridge & West 2003); however, no specific reference was even made to offshore issues and no transnational case studies were included.

The final part of the workshop discussed plagiarism prevention strategies, such as academics needing to: design their assessment in a way to minimise the opportunities for plagiarism; encourage students to attend library referencing classes; and referring students to the university language and learning centre for academic literacy support. All of these are useful strategies. However, it was not recognised that these strategies were not always transferable to an offshore context. As discussed in more depth in Chapter Six, it is rare that assessment is designed in conjunction with the offshore partner, or that colleagues employed by the partner institution are even consulted in how assessment will be delivered or

assignments graded. Similarly, as previous research has documented, there is a distinct lack of equivalent library and student academic support services offshore (Shah, Roth & Nair 2010; Stella & Liston 2008). Some academic respondents in this study struggled with this lack, commenting they felt it was incumbent upon them to provide, as best they could, the dedicated student services not provided by their university.

This tendency for generic university academic development to be focused on onshore teaching scenarios is understandable. It does, however, demonstrate the fundamental unsuitability of such programs for academics preparing to teach offshore. If universities plan to use these programs to prepare staff to work abroad, then clearly they need to be adapted to incorporate content associated with the challenges of teaching with foreign partnerships for short and intense periods of time in new and unfamiliar cultures.

Amongst the general array of university professional development programs I only found one workshop to observe with a culture theme. This three-hour workshop was organised by a central academic unit, but delivered by an academic developer from the business school. It was promoted as being suitable for all academic and non-academic university staff with no prerequisites required. The diverse audience, the brief amount of time and the one-off nature of the workshop severely restricted the presenter's ability to address the intricacies and complexities of culture in any depth. The superficial content fell far short of providing participants with the opportunity to understand and develop intercultural awareness and cross-cultural communication skills in general, let alone for a transnational context.

Data gathered from interviews, observations and review of university programs and resources all showed an absence of any type of strategically planned professional development for enhancing intercultural understanding and abilities. This finding is core to an investigation examining how universities prepare and support fly-in fly-out academics, as central to their preparation is readiness to teach in foreign cultural contexts. The remainder of

this section therefore focuses on documenting how participants in the study experienced the impact of this critical oversight.

The majority of academic developers reported feeling 'professionally unsupported' by the lack of quality resources or cultural 'experts' to guide them in supporting onshore and offshore staff. The lack of internal university resources and expertise more than once led academic developers to seek support outside the institution. The following incident captures elements expressed by other developers who sourced expertise from beyond the university.

One developer organised an external cross-cultural consultant to deliver a day-long seminar for a wide cross-section of university staff including professionals, academics and managers. The external consultant was experienced at working in corporate cultures, and during our interview, the academic developer reflected back over this session and acknowledged the content was not in itself directly relevant for higher education, or suitable for academics teaching, be it an onshore context or a transnational teaching setting. From a cultural learning perspective these sessions were neither a quick fix nor a long-term solution, least of all because of the high cost of the commercial consultant being financially unsustainable.

Models of cultural learning, especially within an educational context teaching in multiple locations, require commitment to a well-planned, long-term and scaffolded approach of intercultural development (Bhawuk & Triandis 1996; Bochner 1986; Brislin et al. 1986; Landis, Bennett & Bennett 2004). I was not able to find evidence of any such approaches amongst the universities participating in this study. It was therefore not surprising, when I asked academics about the types of formal cultural preparation they received for living and teaching in a foreign context, that there was unanimous agreement they had not received any. As one academic simply put it, 'there was no support for learning about culture or teaching'.

Stella and Liston (2008) made twice the number of recommendations than commendations in their report *Internationalisation of Australian Universities: Learning from Cycle 1 Audits* including the need for 'professional development for internationalisation'. It is concerning that three years on I only found one out of 20 universities had anything resembling a strategic program of international and transnational professional development. Stella and Sudhanshu (2011), reiterated the need for 'a more coherent approach to cultural awareness and implementation', calling for institutions to strengthen the induction programs for all offshore teachers ... and ensure professional development opportunities exist' (p. 70). My findings suggest that to date Australian universities have not responded.

7.7.1 Academics' engagement with general professional development

With all that has taken place, it is perhaps not surprising that I found only two of the 30 academic respondents had attended general university professional development workshops to prepare for teaching offshore. The first, a lecturer new to offshore teaching, had a mixed response to attending these workshops, saying, 'I went to one [workshop] on teaching large groups which I found useful for my classes in Australia but not for Singapore. I've been to others but I can't even remember what it is about now, so can only assume they must have been totally useless'.

The second academic was a more senior experienced teacher, both onshore and offshore, and a former international student. Although familiar with learning and teaching in different cultures, they chose to attend a workshop for teaching international students, with the hope of finding new ideas to manage some problems they were experiencing offshore. They were very disappointed, saying, 'There was nothing new that I am learning. I am not walking out saying yes that was new'. When I asked what they expected or what would have been helpful, their first response was 'to have included something about international students who are offshore'. This desire for sessions to address the unique needs of teaching offshore, for cultural issues to be framed within an offshore teaching and learning context, and separate

sessions for experienced as opposed to new staff, echoes the recommendations made by Leask *et al.* (2005). This academic again raised the importance of a credible and suitable presenter with their suggestion for future sessions.

I mean workshops from people who have worked or studied in another country, or, taught in another country I think they would be useful. Tips, you know that you can take with you when preparing your course material, and, while you are over there delivering your lectures, and how to be more sensitive to the needs and demands of the students offshore to help work through those kinds of problems.

With the other 28 participants, initially there was a sense of confusion to do with 'why' I would ask if they had attended a general university academic development workshop as a part of their preparation for teaching offshore. They were perplexed, and didn't particularly see any connection between general professional development and preparation for offshore teaching. And as it turned out, their thinking was correct. One lecturer replied, 'I mean I can't recall. Look, if I have attended any over the years, and I may well have, it made such a deep mark on me, I can't even remember'. When I asked how they went about their preparation, they replied 'mostly shoe leather'.

When I explained the purpose behind the question – that some universities saw this as a form of preparation for offshore teaching – there was general scepticism, followed with responses more to do with sharing their experiences and views about university professional development in general. For example, one academic explained that over time they had cultivated a mindset, 'that in any given session only about 1 per cent was useful and the remainder was fluff'. Another said, 'a lot is just going to be rubbish, but there might be a little gem there'.

A lecturer new to academia captured the sentiments of the more junior and sessional participants, focusing less on the content or quality of workshops than the practical task of

first finding relevant sessions, which in part supports the earlier findings to do with poor promotion strategies. They said:

Like many things here in the university it is probably unfair to say they deliberately obfuscate, but there are so many things where there are opaque barriers put in place of things, and really, unless you know how to ask or you accidentally lift a lid, you just don't find out.

In short, few of the academic respondents participated in university formal professional development. Their reasons are similar to those found in prior research including heavy workloads, the pressure to publish, and the need to improve teaching scores' and expectations to adopt new technologies vying for their time (Gelade & Quinn 2004; McWilliam 2002). Added to this list were the additional demands of teaching offshore.

Thus, as expected, these findings reinforce it is unlikely that academics will be prepared for teaching offshore by attending selected general university professional development sessions. Along with the less than engaging methods of delivery, the content was generic in nature and rarely included offshore cases. No sessions were observed or discussed which were likely to develop skills to manage the unique personal or logistic and administrative tasks associated with working with foreign partnerships. None of the generic teaching programs, even those with international themes, incorporated aspects of working in a transnational context, or provided support for academics teaching away from Australia in unfamiliar contexts with partners who could hold different outlooks and values about education.

7.8 IEAA professional development programs

Three academic developers suggested that attending IEAA workshops and seminars was another option for academics preparing for offshore teaching. I extended my observations to include these formal, but non-university professional development sessions, to provide a

point of contrast with those delivered by universities themselves. The following six sessions were analysed in the same way as the universities' academic development sessions.

The IEAA, a peak body of professionals working in international education, has developed resources and provides professional development for all Australian education sectors involved in international education (Stella & Sudhanshu 2011). Six fee-for-service seminars were chosen from the streams specifically focusing on transnational education and internationalisation. The purpose and objectives of each program were explicit and detailed, and pre-seminar readings and resources were available prior to each session. When registering, participants were required to provide background information about their role, experience and anticipated learning outcomes from attending the session, enabling the presenter to tailor sessions to each group's particular needs.

The presenters were either national and/or international experts in the field, their credibility established with a mix of their practical teaching skills and research profiles. The sessions were half- to day-long seminars hosted by universities with up to 20 participants attending from different universities with a range of roles represented. Hard copy evaluation forms were used at each of the six sessions. These were distributed and collected at the end of the day, with mostly only Kirkpatrick's (1998) reaction level one data sought, similar to that gathered in the university sessions.

However, there were noticeable differences between university sessions and the IEAA professional development seminars. Most obvious was that rather than the transmission and presenter-driven model of delivery used in most university sessions, the IEAA presenters worked more as facilitators, guiding participants through an array of pair and group work activities, problem solving around specific teaching scenarios and case studies, and encouraging collegiate exchanges and discussions. Each participant received a hard copy folder containing materials from the day's activities as well as further resources and readings. Two of the six presenters also offered to establish and facilitate an electronic network for

participants interested in staying in touch, for ongoing support and development. In short, the IEAA seminars have a singular purpose and focus, provide greater access to resources, allocate more time to each seminar and engage experienced research active presenters, allowing for a greater depth and breadth of content being covered. The sessions were also tailored to each particular group's needs and levels of experience.

Despite its quality, this professional development was not reaching many academics that teach offshore. At all six IEAA sessions I observed, the attendees were predominantly academic developers, administrators and researchers with only a few teaching practitioners. The possible reasons for such low rates of academics' participation could be due to poor promotion, high costs or, as with university sessions, a lack of time and generally poor perceptions of formal professional development. Regarding costs, one academic explained they were required to self-fund non-university professional development either out of their research grants, or apply to the department for financial support. They added that even seeking financial support to attend and present a research paper at a conference had become more difficult. One of the sessional participants' replied, 'support for any type of professional development is not an option for me in my school'.

7.9 University support offshore

As previously noted in Chapter Three there is minimal research documenting the types of university programs and support organised for staff beyond the pre-departure phase. This study aims to contribute to this gap in the literature. However, searching university websites, I did not find any formal support programs, services or resources for academics post arrival to work offshore. None of the 30 academics had accessed or knew about any institutional services to assist them when offshore. A common response, reflected in one academic's comment was that 'any support was happenstance'. A sessional academic reported that the only means of support was 'the offshore admin person – that was it'. In fact, the support

provided by some partner-institution administrators and technicians was noted by many academics as being invaluable and 'the job would be so much harder' without them.

Academic developers agreed there was no structured support for academics abroad and that they rarely had any contact with them when they were offshore, saying, 'they are totally on their own over there'. One developer suggested, 'if they are struggling with their classroom teaching all they can do is sweat and perspire heavily and then maybe get on the web or email'. It has already been established though that 'getting on the web' is generally not a viable solution, as there are few dedicated online resources for transnational academics, and where they do exist, they can be difficult to locate, poorly designed and maintained.

A faculty based developer spoke of having their own 'mini international office in the faculty to assist staff with problems' when they were offshore. However, I learned that the staff in question primarily assisted with accommodation, travel or transferring academic papers for marking or entering grades et cetera. Whilst this is a valuable resource to help with logistic problems, administrators are not qualified to offer support for 'just-in-time' teaching and learning difficulties and/or addressing cultural challenges. There is also the disparity of business operating hours, preventing any type of immediate support over weekends, when academics offshore are most often working.

The time difference was also a limitation for support being provided via phone and emails. One developer made it clear that 'there is nobody who would be available at the central teaching and learning unit after hours'. An academic agreed saying, 'you don't have the time, the energy or the inclination to make contact at 1.00 a.m. Melbourne time, after you get back from a long day intensive teaching'. One out of 10 academic developers did mention being part of a roster required to respond to 'urgent' phone calls and emails over weekends. And another said they did once provide their mobile number to a fly-in fly-out academic because they were so concerned about this particular lecturer going offshore, but it was clear this was an exception saying, 'I wouldn't give it out to all of them'. The following academic developer

summarised the sentiments of most: 'I'm not available on weekends. I'm not on call. I'm very strong on my work-life balance.... So there is a sense of the academics being on their own for the weekend ... and they pretty much sink or swim'.

7.9.1 Why the lack of support offshore?

I was curious to learn from the academic developers their views on why their institutions did not provide formal support for academics when offshore. There were two types of responses. As to be expected, the first response was to do with the financial and practical difficulties of setting up support, either from the home campus, or to operate at the partner campus. The second response, which I followed up in more detail, emphasised that academics teaching offshore were professionals, experienced teachers, and had taught international students onshore. I feel there is evidence from prior research and from this study that challenges such arguments and each will be individually examined.

One of the fundamental elements of being a professional is 'some form of ongoing professional development or Lifelong Learning' (Davey & Tatnall 2009, p. 27). It is considered essential and vitally important for professional workers, such as expatriates and NGOs, to receive on arrival in-country support (Anderson, B 1999), so it is difficult to comprehend why this would not also be the case for professional academics as well. Leask *et al.* (2005, p. 34) not only recognise the professional nature of academics, but that their development needs are ongoing, no matter what role or how 'professional' they are. They call for resources and staff development that accommodates different types of academics' 'experience, knowledge and situations ...'

Given it is the offshore phase where academics are most exposed to rich and diverse situation specific experiences, both inside and outside the classroom, it seems an optimum time to provide support for academics when they are abroad. 'Experiences' are fundamental to adult learning, acting as catalysts for new discoveries and transformation (Boud, Keogh & Walker 1985; Kolb 1984; Mezirow 1991; Mezirow & Taylor 2009) and yet the lack of

institutional mechanisms offshore, to facilitate and support academics to recognise, engage and reflect on these learning encounters, seems a lost opportunity, failing to fully capitalise on these experiences.

Next, the notion that an 'experienced' academic is not in need of preparation and support is similar to the case of academics being professional, in that no matter how experienced academics are, they are likely to benefit from suitable ongoing development. The claim made by one academic developer that, 'we wouldn't be sending very inexperienced and green lecturers offshore' is also challenged by evidence from this study. For example, there is the extreme case of the totally inexperienced academic, that is, the sessional staff member straight from industry, who had never taught in tertiary education. They were sent offshore to coordinate and teach, both inexperienced and without any preparation. Or, less extreme, if one accepts an academic's level of seniority as an indication of experience, then approximately 37 per cent of participants teaching offshore in this study were at lecturer level, which represents the usual entry level to the profession.

As noted earlier, in Chapter Two, the profile of fly-in fly-out academics is changing. A staffing gap is being created from a combination of the ageing workforce, more 'experienced' academics not interested in teaching offshore and the growth in offshore provision. This gap is being filled by greater numbers of less experienced and/or sessional staff (NTEU 2004a). It is likely that this growing cohort of 'inexperienced' academics will most definitely be in need, not only of pre-departure preparation, but also some type of structured support once offshore. One coordinator summed this up by saying, 'If you are sending a greenhorn offshore into a place like that, it could be really very difficult and confronting'.

The final suggestion to be challenged by the academic developers' feedback is that support offshore is not needed, because most have taught international students onshore in Australia. The findings from this research again provide another view. First, as noted in Chapter Six, not all participants were experienced at teaching international students onshore,

and of those who were many spoke of the lack of transferability of skills to unfamiliar and foreign settings.

One senior academic, who had studied, worked and conducted research in different countries, and received teaching awards at an Australian university with a high proportion of international students, still spoke of the difficulties and challenges of teaching offshore, particularly in the early days. They recalled how they were surprised at the differences, noting, 'it was a big wake-up call for me. You know, you think you know everything, you're experienced in this and that, well I had to think again'. I asked if there was any support available when offshore and they replied, 'there was nothing offshore ... no mechanisms existed and no such helping hand was offered'.

Another senior academic, spoke of struggling to implement, in an offshore context, a curriculum they had co-written and 'had taught onshore for years, for more than a decade'. There was no formal support prior to leaving Australia to adapt the curriculum, and abroad, the only help available from a university sense, was if a colleague was offshore, 'to sit around at breakfast or dinner time. I mean, that's how we did it'. Finally, another 'experienced' academic and onshore and offshore coordinator, again without any formal pre-departure or offshore support, said it was a case of 'learning to teach by trial and error', adding this was the same way they learned to live in a foreign culture:

I mean when we all go up there, I guess we are foreigners in someone else's land, so we've got to get our head around what's going on and keep an eye on things in teaching but also on all sorts of other things as well.

In summary, there is evidence from this study that professional academics, with fly-in fly-out experience, who have taught international students onshore, suggest they would benefit from post-arrival support while living and working offshore. Yet, universities seem stuck, thinking that professional learning can only occur or be facilitated onshore prior to departure.

One final point to be addressed before concluding this section is the seemingly unexamined premise that preparation at the point of pre-departure is optimal and satisfactory. As stated in the introduction, there are not only few studies documenting support beyond the pre-departure phase, but also there are no comprehensive long-term studies evaluating the effectiveness of the university one-off pre-departure sessions. Due to the lack of studies in the transnational field, I looked to the expatriate literature. While I acknowledge the differences between fly-in fly-out academics and longer term expatriate workers, there are valuable insights to be learned from studies in this field.

Selmer, Torbjorn and de Leon (1998), for example, investigated the effectiveness of cultural preparation for expatriates, based on the assertion that training needs to match participants' peak motivation to learn, a key tenet of adult learning. At the end of the study the effectiveness of pre-departure training remained inconclusive. The recommendation was for sequential cross-cultural training. That is, 'that learning from one phase enhances the learning in later phases' (p. 838). Selmer (2001) built on this earlier study, exploring 'when' the optimum time for cross-cultural training and support might be for expatriates. He discovered 'a sizeable minority of expatriates preferred training post-arrival and post-culture shock' (p. 50).

Selmer (2001) suggests prior to departure participants lack a cultural reference framework of the foreign 'other' and therefore may not fully benefit from pre-departure preparation. He further speculated some participants may not see the point or bother with learning about the other culture, or worse 'could simply end up with a set of stereotyped ideas about the host culture' (p. 51). Just as Selmer does not advocate abolishing pre-departure preparation, I too support pre-departure preparation, but not as a one-off and stand-alone unit of preparation. Rather, I suggest it needs to be a part of a continuous cycle of professional development and learning, which recognises the need for support post-arrival and the benefits of learning offshore.

As this section concludes, it is clear that Australian academics need preparation and support beyond just the point of pre-departure and beyond just matters related to teaching. The evidence from this study, however, shows little formal institutional support being provided for staff when they are offshore. Universities need to consider not only providing quality pre-departure preparation, but also ongoing development and support throughout the transnational teaching cycle through to the returning home phase, which is next examined.

7.10 University programs and support on returning to Australia

As discussed in the literature review, there is no extensive prior research on support provided to fly-in fly-out teaching staff re-entering Australia. This study aims to fill this gap.

Desktop searches of university websites found no dedicated materials or workshops to support academics returning to Australia. The only online resource mentioned was a travel checklist that dealt with, 'was your hotel ok and did your flight arrive on time, that sort of thing, so it's very administrative'. None of the academics were aware of any university programs. 'No, nothing, zilch, zero, nothing', one replied. Another academic, when asked about re-entry support, explained 'nothing is structured at the university, school or discipline level'. A rather dispirited academic developer confirmed this finding, explaining that practice at their university was, 'there's no debriefing and no learning from what they did, none at all. They go back and do the same thing again'.

One faculty based academic developer conducted formal debriefs for new, first time teachers (discussed further in Chapter Nine) and the remaining nine academic developers were not involved in any formal re-entry programs. Although they all saw the value and importance of such a process, with the added caveat that 'you would have to find the right people'. When I asked, 'who would be the right person', they described someone familiar with teaching offshore and knowledgeable about working in different cultures. This part of the interviews

connected back to earlier discussions around the lack of institutional cultural expertise and resources to provide preparation and support at all phases of transnational teaching.

The importance of re-entry support is again supported by adult learning theory, where a fundamental element of adult learning, particularly for academics, is continuous reflection (Lawler 2003; Osborn 2004; Zuber-Skerritt 1992). In Kolb's (1984) experiential learning style model, the 'reflective' phase follows on from experience, then moves on to thinking about ways of conceptualising the experience, before acting or testing this new knowledge. In effect, one academic developer aptly captured this cycle of learning when describing this phase: 'It is the debrief that becomes the starting point before the next time going'.

It became clear early on in the analysis phase that while there is little formal re-entry support available *for* academics; there are a number of formal processes in place to gather information *from* academics, particularly around operational issues. Academics who had been teaching offshore for many years observed that institutions were now putting more processes in place to collect information about transnational teaching. Also that 'quality assurance has become more important as a mechanism for feeding back to the very top at the central partnership office'.

The most commonly identified means for gathering feedback was written reports, although the frequency and content of these reports varied enormously across the different Australian universities. One teacher was required to 'write a one-page report at the end of each semester, just saying how it worked, how it didn't work and suggestions for improvement'. At another university academics' payments for offshore teaching would not be processed until a report was submitted to the coordinator and signed-off after each and every teaching trip. A number of academics were required to include comments on partner staff in these reports and others had to 'account for our time when we were there. So, like an itinerary of the things we did'. The academics' reports were usually provided to the program coordinator, head of school or the faculty dean, and some were tabled at transnational committees. One

frustrated lecturer pointed out, 'unless you are high-up enough to be on the transnational committee you get no debriefing or feedback from your report'.

Some of the more experienced academics initially were supportive of these new processes; however, over time there was a shared perception that the reports were simply bureaucratic and compliance hurdles to be jumped rather than a means to effect change. As one academic said, 'no conclusions are drawn and no steps are taken to address any problems.' This sentiment is summed up by one participant saying, 'I think there's tiredness or apathy from staff around continuing to do things if they're not acted on.' The strongest expression on this theme was by an academic with a long history of teaching international students onshore and offshore.

Can I tell you, no one really wants to know. I mean you mention things casually to your colleagues but not at the university level. There is no problem, it's bringing in lots of money and there is no mechanism to report a problem and so we don't. Not that this has been said, but you just know.

This sense of university lack of interest was also evident when I asked academics why they thought there was no formal re-entry support provided. The impression of a young academic who had only taught offshore a few times was, 'as long as it hasn't been a complete muck-up, or as long as something really bad hasn't happened, you just continue on'. A similar sentiment was expressed, although even more directly, by an experienced coordinator who explained, 'there is no such thing as debriefing unless you screw up ... unless you do something silly over there like say you're going to sell your mother or something, then that will come back to [bite] you'.

When I asked academic developers why they thought there was an absence of formal re-entry support, their responses were similar to those expressed for the lack of support offshore, and included practical and resource issues along with academics' resistance to such sessions. From the perspective of value for organisational development and learning, it

should be a matter for concern that highly educated staff consider opportunities for professional growth to be a task, and one that must be attended to or engaged only when they are considered to have performed poorly and/or 'mucked up'. Possibly, if re-entry support was imagined as something less traditional than formal workshops I might have garnered different responses. I wanted to discover if this was the case and the next section outlines the responses to the question about what type of re-entry support academics would find beneficial.

7.10.1 Academics and re-entry support

A handful of academic respondents, mostly older and more experienced, said they did not feel the need 'for any further workshops' when they returned. In contrast, an academic new to the academy and new to offshore teaching similarly pondered, 'I'm not sure what a formal debrief would do unless ... maybe you've lost your way, maybe you've lost your drive, then maybe someone needs to come on board and say, 'now look, let's just sit down, let's just try and get back to basics.'

Another academic viewed having to attend professional development after returning to Australia as being yet another demand on top of the double duties they already juggled, teaching onshore and offshore explaining, 'it's like you get back and you are onto the next thing. Like I mean everybody's busy.' One of the academic developers agreed, explaining that staff return from a weekend of many hours of intensive teaching to a pile of unattended onshore academic and administrative duties as well as family commitments, and in that context, 'I don't think you could even ask staff ... I don't think they'd take kindly to attending a returning home workshop.'

I continued by asking what type of support, other than central workshops, might they find valuable. There were a range of responses, but most described a semi-formal approach, where academics came together primarily 'to hear how other people are getting on' with similar challenges, and another participant saying, 'it would help enormously to hear you are

not the only one struggling. I think a lot of problems could be solved.’ Along with identifying what worked and what didn’t, others suggested that more experienced colleagues and experts could also be invited, to listen and learn about ‘how to do things differently next time, that would be helpful’.

Academics as adult learners and professionals tend to individually deliberate and assess how effective their teaching has been and how it might be improved. Facilitated and informal group support could positively enhance their self-reflection, especially considering the mostly isolated, complex and foreign nature of offshore contexts. Finally, one academic’s answer to the preferred type of re-entry support was simply put, saying ‘it doesn’t matter so much about the type of support on offer’ but just knowing ‘someone is actually interested’ would help.

Again this issue of recognition, or lack of, was raised; the absence of acknowledgement was a noticeable theme permeating through the academics’ interviews. Many academics felt their offshore contributions to the university’s broader internationalisation strategy went unnoticed by the head of school and senior executive staff, and went unrecognised during promotions. Similar sentiments were expressed by Australian-based staff to Keevers *et al.* (2012, p. 7), feeling their transnational contributions were not recognised, valued or respected. Also noticeable in this and other studies (Debowski 2003; Jais 2012), were the multiple expressions of their offshore work being misunderstood by their colleagues, explaining how some assumed offshore teaching was purely a personal money-making endeavour with ‘bonus travel’ opportunities. The cumulative impact of returning from overseas, over many years and feeling misunderstood by their colleagues, and their contributions invisible and unacknowledged by the wider university was wearing.

One long-term fly-in fly-out senior academic in this investigation, who had recently stopped teaching offshore, looked back and shared their thoughts on this matter.

Transnational teaching, there was no interest. No interest. And the experience of coming back after being away, on a 'working holiday' was always traumatic because every time I returned I then had to deal with ... something that had happened in my absence that was accorded to me, this hadn't happened or this class wasn't held or so on and so forth and you just went into a defence mode... So that was, in retrospect, a very traumatic, unpleasant experience.

To conclude this section on re-entry support, it is clear that just as when staff are offshore, there is no strategically planned support or ongoing professional development for academics returning from teaching offshore. Some academics expressed the need for such support while others perceive the offer of post sojourn development and/or debriefing possibilities as burdensome. This lack of formal encouragement, recognition and institutional structures to support fly-in fly-out academics to reflect and learn, is a loss not just for individual's own professional growth and development, but more broadly for the whole of the university.

7.11 Conclusion

This chapter examined the types of formal university preparation provided for academics teaching offshore. The clear and definite finding is that few universities are providing strategically planned and comprehensive preparation and support at any of the three key phases of transnational teaching. There is little evidence of any of the four-staged planning outlined in Lawler and King's (2000) model of adult learning for faculty (academics), and only one of the four themes proposed by Leask et al (2005) in the *Principles, Themes and Stages of Professional Development Framework for Academics Staff Teaching Australian Programs Offshore* was observed, that being the choosing of academics expert in their particular field. The other three key themes of being skilled teachers and managers of the learning environment, being efficient intercultural learners and demonstrating particular personal attitudes and attributes were overlooked. Most formal preparation and support for academics reflects Osborn's (2004) first category of a 'work-ignored' phase, where preparation is top-down, linear, transmissive in delivery style and the content generic.

There was evidence of some online administrative, logistic and teaching resources mostly presented as checklists and tip sheets but there was a paucity of intercultural resources specifically directed to the needs of academics teaching offshore. Most university online resources are poorly designed and difficult to locate, with few universities having a dedicated website for transnational teaching support.

The few dedicated, formal institution pre-departure preparation sessions are rarely planned, and new and experienced academics are brought together for mostly one-off workshops, where superficial content is transmitted. The gaps created by the lack of forward planning are filled in a reactive manner. The catalyst for hurriedly creating rudimentary preparation workshops were in response to unforeseen problems, or upcoming external auditor checks such as AUQA. General university professional development workshops also do not meet the needs of this cohort of staff. Excluding the two faculty based programs described in this chapter, academics' and academic developers' comments point to the need for a review of current formal pre-departure professional development programs.

Offshore, no support programs were evident, although this phase offers much potential to build on the many personal and professional just-in-time learning experiences. Currently, however, the universities participating in this study seem oblivious to this 'powerful professional development opportunity' (Smith, K 2009, p. 11), and rather than nurture and support this potential, it is overlooked and ignored.

As with each of the two previous transnational education phases, there is little formal institutional professional support provided for staff returning to Australia. While academics have observed an increase in the amount of quality assurance mechanisms and gathering of feedback *about* offshore operations, the quality professional support *for* academics does not seem to have been monitored for pre-departure, offshore or re-entry phases. An effective and engaging re-entry program could not only improve offshore teaching but equally enrich, enhance and benefit academics' onshore teaching.

The findings clearly indicate that if such benefits are to be realised, change is needed in how universities provide long-term sustainable professional development specifically designed for academics teaching offshore. Before contemplating such changes it is worthwhile following leads and further investigating what academics tell us they are doing and would find valuable. In the discussion in the re-entry phase of this chapter many academics expressed their preference for semi-structured, collegiate and informal types of learning. The purpose of the following chapter is to investigate how Australian universities foster and facilitate informal ways of academic preparation and support.

Chapter Eight: Informal Preparation for Academics

Teaching Offshore

Much of the limited literature concerning the preparation of academics teaching in transnational programs reported on formal university programs and most programs were provided prior to departure. This chapter describes the informal strategies academics adopt to prepare for working offshore at each of the three key phases of transnational teaching.

Other than formal university sponsored preparation, the participants drew on the following when preparing to teach offshore; self-initiated activities, learning from students, colleagues and, in particular, coordinators. While in practice none of these operate as discrete activities, this chapter will examine and address each separately to highlight their unique features, benefits and limitations. This analysis of informal learning strategies undertaken by academics, particularly during offshore work (an area currently devoid of university support), contributes significantly to current knowledge of how universities prepare and support (or otherwise) academics teaching offshore. The findings in this chapter are most closely aligned to Osborn's (2004) second 'work-perceived' stage of professional development and the emergence of aspects of Lawler and King's (2000) cyclical approach to preparation. Characteristics such as a mix of personal and external needs informing the types of preparation and support required, along with moving away from transmissive models of delivery to more constructivist approaches are evident.

The chapter is divided into four sections, focusing first on academics' self-initiated preparation activities, followed by engagement with international and transnational students, collegiate collaboration at both the Australian university and partner institution and finally working with coordinators. Team-based initiatives for academic preparation and support emerged as a major area of interest in this study and these initiatives warrant more in-depth discussion, so these findings are presented in Chapter Nine.

8.1 Academics' self-preparation

Academics are generally self-directed learners adding to their own professional development, and in this study they initiated their own preparation for teaching offshore. The extent of self-preparation though varied, with some simply responding to practical and administrative matters, and others more actively engaged with the students, partner staff and challenges that presented in the transnational classroom. Self-preparation encompasses a wide range of activities. Prior to initial trips abroad academics are often preoccupied with operational matters such as planning flights, accommodation, vaccinations, et cetera. It is only with subsequent trips, when these elements of travel have become routine, that there is more time and a greater realisation of the breadth of preparation needed. At this stage, the focus broadens to include the curriculum and, in some cases, cultural matters are given due consideration both prior to departure and while offshore.

8.1.1 Self-preparation and teaching

New and experienced academics alike spoke of the importance of practical preparation around teaching materials including making 'multiple backup copies of lectures on discs, memory sticks, overhead projection transparencies, and hard copies and always taking 'copies of everything for the first lecture as carry-on luggage'. The consensus around these common sense concerns is one could never start too soon, or be over prepared. Moreover, as Coryell, Alston and Ngyuen (2012, p. 98) found with US faculty teaching abroad, academics needed to be adaptable and always have a 'contingency plan'.

It is noteworthy that academics typically felt familiar and confident with curriculum content prior to their first trip overseas. All but three had experience teaching their subject onshore, and assumed little additional preparation was necessary over and above what they would normally do. Most curriculum preparation involved re-reading and re-familiarising themselves with the subject guides and assessment and, for most, meeting with the coordinator. However, after teaching offshore and experiencing firsthand the challenges of intensive

mode delivery in unfamiliar settings plus the need to provide contextually relevant content, there was a definite shift. They realised that further preparation was required prior to departure and responded by sourcing current and local offshore information from the internet and from books. One academic, for example, read 'education research papers coming from Hong Kong ... so I could augment my content to suit the offshore learning climate'.

For some academics a similar process occurred regarding pedagogy. Initial expectations were that methods used onshore could be used offshore. However, after teaching offshore some of the participants came to fully appreciate the differences between learning environments. Even lecturers with prior experience teaching in intensive mode in Australia, realised strategies, such as looking out for signs of student distraction, changing the pace of delivery and including interactive activities, could be 'lost in translation'. One academic shared how they struggled to distinguish whether their students were 'tired, confused or just bored with my teaching'. Effective teaching requires the ability to interpret various forms of complex verbal and non-verbal communication (Georgakopoulos & Guerrero 2010). Misreading cues, students' reactions and/or using inappropriate non-verbal behaviour could cause or exacerbate breakdowns in communication (Shi & Si 2010).

All participants were clear that self-initiated actions around adapting content and pedagogy were ongoing tasks needing attention both offshore and prior to leaving. Often after arriving overseas, various local media outlets were searched as a way 'to get a feel for the different current local issues going on'. Other examples of effort to localise the content include an academic from a building discipline taking photographs of local construction sites, and a legal studies lecturer gathering recent court cases to use in class. One academic in advertising compiled examples of local and regional marketing campaigns to supplement Australian and other international cases that were already a part of the curriculum. Participants frequently spoke about universities not understanding or recognising the additional demands

associated with these self-initiated activities, which they considered essential for effective transnational teaching.

While most participants were able to plan ahead to supplement subject content, adjusting pedagogy was frequently more spontaneous and less considered, often occurring in the midst of a lesson. Where most took steps to adapt curriculum content, only 10 out of 30 participants spoke of deliberately trying new teaching strategies, and all 10 were definite that implementing changes were not always easy. These participants mostly spoke about being confronted by challenges in class and their just-in-time responses, explaining it was 'simply a matter of adapting each time' until eventually 'you learn from your mistakes'. One participant compared teaching their onshore and offshore postgraduate classes saying, 'if you had a few silent foreign students in your class in Australia you could just continue on, but if all your students are silent offshore you really have to think about new ways to get your class happening'. An experienced lecturer summed up the process by saying, 'realistically we ended up teaching ourselves how to teach over there [offshore]'.

Some of the self-initiated strategies included finding different ways to present the same information multiple times over, providing written as well as verbal instructions, or sometimes just breaking teaching up into smaller segments and slowing the pace. One academic pointed out these strategies created the new problem of 'not getting through all the content in the three days'. Some changes were more successful, others brought a sense of satisfaction and reward for investment in time and effort, while others brought frustration. For example, two academics spoke about their efforts in trying a variety of strategies, but they were still confronted by a sea of silence with students 'not asking or answering questions'.

When asked what informed these pedagogical changes, most academics simply reported they were 'making on-the-spot decisions', responding to 'split second thoughts', 'calling on past experience' and mostly relying on 'intuition'. One lecturer explained '... it's all hindsight. The initial experience is when you'll probably make the most mistakes but then you start to

identify an area that you need to change for the next time and that's sort of a developing process'. Others spoke of the work after class, reflecting, adjusting and adapting the next day's lessons based on what had worked or not worked during teaching. The major difference and challenge offshore was that this usually had to be done on one's own and overnight, due to the back-to-back and intense nature of their offshore teaching schedules.

One relatively new teacher explained, 'When I stood up in front of a class in Hong Kong it suddenly became obvious to me that I could think on my feet and make adjustments as I go and it was really empowering'. In contrast, a senior academic explained it took years of teaching offshore before being able to 'see when the students aren't getting it'. Through perseverance and much 'trial and error' this academic now felt more confident in detecting when they are starting to 'lose' their students in their transnational class. They stop lecturing, break the content up into segments, organise the class into small groups, and move around and discuss what they 'don't get', re-grouping, clarifying and continuing with their lecture.

These differing aspects of just-in-time, incidental, experiential, self-directed and reflective learning practices are well documented in the literature (Bell & Gillett 1996; Candy 1991; Kolb 1984; Marsick, K & Watkins 2001; Merriam 2001; Mezirow 1991; Schon 1987). What is less well reported is how valuable these experiences in a transnational context are in relations to academics' professional learning. Smith (2009, 2012, 2013), building on the work of Mezirow (1991), argues that teaching in settings culturally different from one's own 'forces reflection which can lead to "perspective transformation"'. She suggests this could be 'a powerful professional development opportunity which should be nurtured and supported', with benefits evident 'not just in the transnational context but also back home' (2009, p. 111).

The early findings from this research show there is much potential and many opportunities to develop academics' teaching and intercultural skills when offshore. Few of these opportunities to maximise and consolidate academics' teaching practice—be it through self-initiated or other types of informal learning—are being actualised. The findings in the

previous chapter clearly show there is little evidence of Australian universities providing formal professional support to staff when offshore and/or returning home. They thereby miss the chance to foster, facilitate and build upon the potential that rich learning outcomes provide in the transnational context.

Additional university support is essential, not just for the small group of 10 more experienced academics who altered how they taught in the transnational context, but for the two-thirds of participants who did not speak of exploring alternate teaching methods. Informed and facilitated support for all staff is likely to encourage and empower academics to be more confident in responding to classroom challenges.

Not all academics are necessarily aware, confident, motivated or experienced enough to independently adapt their teaching practice when their students 'don't get' their teaching. Ideally, self-initiated activities need to be one of a suite of approaches used for teaching preparation.

8.1.2 Self-preparation and culture

Aside from reading books (particularly the cultural and customs sections of travel guides) there were few examples of self-preparation for living and working in a foreign culture. Some participants mentioned having conversations with family or friends who were familiar with the particular country and/or culture; one academic enrolled in language classes but few went to such lengths. Unfortunately learning appeared to occur after the fact, with interviews centred more around recounting cultural mishaps, mostly when teaching, rather than focusing on self-initiated preparation activities.

One such cultural blunder, addressed in part in Chapter Six, was relayed by a young and enthusiastic academic on their first trip. Their attempt to engage the students with humour, 'which had always worked in Australia', failed in the offshore context. They realised more by the 'stunned silence', rather than anything students said, that they had inadvertently offended

a small ethnic group of students in the class. The academic said, 'my sense of humour did not go down well' and even when they tried to undo any negativity they later realised their sarcasm was again culturally misinterpreted and it became an even more awkward situation. Hoare (2006) had found that mostly there was tolerance from the students and partner colleagues of academics' cultural faux pas. She also suggests that providing academics with cultural awareness training might avoid or at the very least minimise the impact of such cultural clashes.

As I listened to similar incidents being recounted from other participants, I detected a sense of loss of confidence and self-esteem, even from encounters that had occurred some years prior to the research interviews. The re-telling of these awkward events were peppered with comments: 'I felt the students weren't very impressed with me and my ignorance', 'you've just lost a bit of credibility', 'it wasn't one of my better experiences' and students 'just think you're a moron'. Communicating and interacting with people from unfamiliar cultures can generate intense emotions, psychological stress, embarrassment and the risk of failure; but these can be alleviated, and intercultural learning fostered through facilitation and support (Paige & Goode 2009, p. 34). There are few studies examining the long-term consequences of such cultural mishaps on short-term sojourners, such as fly-in fly-out academics, who have not had the benefit of intercultural preparation and facilitation. I sensed from the feedback from this group of participants that a significant and enduring mark has been left. On many levels, the current accidental transgressive manner of learning about culture, customs and taboo topics is less than ideal.

To summarise, most academics demonstrated some type of self-initiated informal preparation, although the depth and breadth of preparation activities varied greatly. The small group who were highly motivated and self-driven, engaging in the transnational process, acknowledged the value of their investment of time and energy in the different self-initiated activities. However, they equally noted this approach to preparation could be slow,

taxing and a bit 'hit and miss'. K Smith (2009) calls on universities for greater support to nurture potential transformative change, Leask (2004b) also endorses this view, alerting us to the 'opportunity for deep, transformational engagement with cultural others' by setting out to learn more about others rather than setting out to teach them about how to be more like us.

8.2 Students and academics' preparation

All academics agreed to varying degrees that engagement with international onshore students contributed to their preparation for teaching abroad, and that the lessons learned with transnational students benefited their students in Australia. This section will start by outlining academics' reflections in relation to those points: the ways in which teaching international onshore students contributed to their preparation for offshore teaching, and how, for a few academics, transnational students positively challenged their role as teachers and increased their repertoire of teaching skills.

8.2.1 Onshore international students

Most participants had taught international students onshore prior to their first trips abroad and consequently felt this prepared them for teaching students offshore. One coordinator said 'we were already au fait, most of us, with teaching students from the countries concerned, and we felt we all knew a fair bit'. Most expressed their familiarity with international students' learning strategies with observations such as 'they use English and language differently' and 'they're quiet, they don't really participate'. The majority of participants recalled, prior to teaching offshore, either not thinking about any difference or expecting transnational students would behave in similar ways. In contrast, three participants from universities with few international students spoke about feeling unsure as what to expect, 'not having taught many students from other cultures'.

What is most striking is the fact that respondents based their estimates of their own level of preparedness on their degree of experience teaching international students onshore. There is a problem with assuming any student cohort is the same, including assuming that 'international' students are the 'same', no matter their individual motivations and surrounding circumstances. Staff heading overseas can be in a vulnerable position if they are unaware of the intricacies of teaching ethnically diverse groups of students and working in unfamiliar foreign learning contexts with no preparation.

Interestingly, after returning from teaching offshore, seven of the 30 participants self-initiated meetings with international onshore students from the particular countries they were teaching in: one teacher saying it was 'not so much looking for gems of wisdom' but more simply to discuss life and culture at a broad level. An academic assigned to teach in a small and remote country, for example, organised to meet with the exchange students at the university, asking them about customs, greetings and phrases they could use during their next teaching sojourn in the same country. In addition, two participants felt they gained valuable insights from their international doctoral research students having a far greater understanding of the teaching and learning context they would be stepping into.

8.2.2 Offshore international students

Academics reported the two most common means of learning from their transnational students was through formal student evaluations, and for a few participants, proactively engaging with students both inside and outside the classroom.

Formal student feedback processes varied. Shah, Nair and de la Harpe's (2012, p. 74) extensive AUQA audit analysis confirm 'limited attempts made by universities to embed transnational student feedback systematically into institutional stakeholder feedback frameworks'. Some universities used the same teaching evaluation forms used in Australia, others used those of partner institutions, some institutions used both, and some academics did not mention any type of student evaluation or feedback. One case that stood out involved

an academic who had always received average to good feedback from students in Australia, but received poor feedback the first time they taught offshore. They initially considered the problem was due to communication difficulties and the students' English ability. After receiving similar poor feedback over the subsequent two teaching periods they realised they were missing something and 'there might be something I'm doing that is sort of causing this'. They added, 'the evaluation forms helped me, although it is a bitter pill to read them ... but they helped me change my approach to teaching and my attitude'. The assumption underlying this academic's initial response to their students' feedback is concerning, as is the fact that it took three different sets of students providing similar feedback before this academic re-evaluated their teaching approach. It is also concerning that there were no earlier institutional interventions and/or offers of support to assist this academic in reflecting on their offshore practice.

In relation to informal student feedback during class, a participant explained, 'one way you learn from students is when they keep asking the same questions over and over again'. A lecturer discovered early on that the assignment questions and subject guidelines lacked clarity for their students offshore and needed to be re-written, because the students kept asking "What does it mean?" and "How do we start?" and "What is it you want us to do?" While their students in Australia asked similar types of questions, the difference was evident, even after the academic offered what they thought were detailed explanations and provided further examples to show there were issues other than just language comprehension.

Many academics noted that offshore students positively contributed to their learning around culture, although this was not always a straightforward or smooth process. One academic found among the students 'a willingness to share if you took an interest in their language or special events. They were so generous and wanted to help you out and to explore these things. It was great give and take'. This academic had casually mentioned their interest in Korean drumming and the next day two students gave them a video of Poongmul, traditional

Korean folk music rituals, drumming, dances and acrobatics. The academic watched it that evening and returned it expressing their appreciation, which then 'generated an invitation to a live drumming demonstration in two days' time'. They were unable to take-up the offer but they spoke about how this encounter was a 'turning point' for them, signalling the start of a new way of looking at their students and the culture more broadly.

Not all cultural exchanges with students were so well received, at least not at first. One academic said they were initially suspicious when students offered gifts. And another who said during class breaks students would 'buy a drink for me at the local store and come back and plonk it on the podium beside me'. Another participant was similarly guarded about such behaviour initially, but said they came to understand that 'there was this continual generosity I needed to get used to'. This 'getting used to' and learning to adapt to different student behaviour was, for some lecturers, a challenging and uncomfortable process.

Leask (2005, p. 37) notes that one way to manage these different learning environments is to engage and 'establish effective relationships with students'. This is mirrored in the actions of five of the seven academics who proactively initiated meetings with onshore international students, and who also tried reaching out to their transnational students during and after class. Initially it seemed both parties were equally apprehensive about talking with each other, but eventually it became less awkward, one teacher explaining: 'I made an effort to talk one-on-one, maybe crack a joke and just ask a bit about Malaysia in terms of very simple things ... and by the end of the four days we were getting a degree of interaction, which was good'. Others found it 'much easier with mature-age students because you've got something in common to talk about' and a teacher working in China learned 'there are so many subtle clues and cues and it takes a while to interpret them'. Once they had built rapport with the students they felt they could read and understand the 'unspoken moments' better, which they said also made a positive difference to their overall teaching.

This small group of staff also spoke about being open to accepting social invitations, often around food. One teacher who had worked at the same university for many years said by accepting such invitations they had developed a reputation for being social, and 'now every lunchtime I am invited out by somebody. They just want to catch up and chat'. Even though the five academics mostly found these occasions enjoyable, they did not always feel relaxed in certain social situations. They acknowledged engaging with their students required an investment of time and energy, both of which are in short supply when working offshore, but that they definitely felt they gained insights into the culture and student learning.

8.2.3 Impact of students' contributions over time

Just under half of the academics were confident that the experience of teaching offshore and, in particular, engaging and receiving indirect feedback with their transnational students had made them 'a much better performer in the classroom offshore and back in Australia'. These 14 participants also commented they were, 'much more aware of cross-cultural issues', and had 'developed a better understanding and become more empathetic towards the students' perspective'. This also aligns with similar changes that Garson (2005), a US professor teaching in Cairo for just under a year, found in her reflections of teaching abroad. One of the academics who supervised onshore international research students said after teaching abroad 'I was able to share certain kinds of local understandings of the challenges ahead of them [research student] which I could not have done before teaching offshore'. Except for Dunn and Wallace (2006), who only noted minimal changes made to teaching back in Australia, other findings support the positive influence teaching offshore can have on teaching onshore (Leask 2004b; Smith, K 2009).

The majority of these academics were not explicit about how this change came about; rather their narratives revealed a mix of 'aha' moments and recognition of changes only on reflection. Three participants were the exception, and said the greatest catalysts for change were teaching culturally and ethnically diverse cohorts of international students in their

transnational classroom, differentiating the experience from teaching multicultural classrooms in Australia. One explained they needed to recognise and understand 'the differences, you know there are differences between Chinese students from China, Hong Kong and Malaysian students ... there's no sort of broad brush strokes about them'. Similarly another teacher explained that in the transnational classroom they got to experience international students less as 'one amorphous Asian group'. They continued by saying 'I know that they're all very different. I am much more sensitive to various ethnic groups in all my classes and try and include as many of their experiences into my lectures'.

The third academic spoke of similar experiences and they can now appreciate 'there are differences between international students who have travelled from overseas and international students who are in their own country'. Clearly these are valuable insights; however at a broader level these insights are problematic because they were expressed by only three out of 30 participants.

In summarising, the academics clearly identified that engaging with transnational students and to a lesser degree onshore international students' contributed to their preparation for teaching offshore and also to their ongoing development as teachers. Though these perceived changes are positive, the methods of achieving change may not always be so. The following quote from a returning coordinator who, prior to departure, felt they were 'au fait' with the needs of transnational students emphasises the need for pre-departure ongoing preparation and support:

It's a really different thing to teach someone out of their context to teaching them here in Australia. But you actually don't realise that until you go up there and you see the different cultures and what arises in those learning environments.

8.3 Colleagues and preparation

To varying degrees, all participants sought advice from their Australian university colleagues to prepare for teaching offshore, most often prior to their first few trips. As part of their ongoing support, seven academics also identified relationships with partner colleagues as providing valuable support, but in different ways to Australian-based colleagues. The following sections discuss the types of support offered, ways of working together, and the strengths and weaknesses of working with Australian and partner-based colleagues.

8.3.1 Australian-based colleagues

Prior to departure and in some cases after returning to Australia most participants prepared for and reflected on their transnational teaching by communicating with colleagues—in many cases this was the only source of preparation. The exceptions were the two sessional academics who felt they were on their own, which concurs with McNeil *et al.* (2010, p. 102), who found that Australian sessional staff frequently report feeling isolated from the broader academic community, and disconnected from formal and informal learning opportunities. The significant role colleagues play in preparation is outlined prior to departure, offshore and returning to Australia before three shortcomings as a sole means of preparation are discussed.

Given the lack of university induction and preparation programs, it is not surprising that participants ranked collegiate support as the prime means of preparation prior to their *first* time teaching aboard, most acknowledging that they were ‘really reliant on having colleagues passing on information’. Advice sought for these initial trips (from most to least common) was about what to expect regarding accommodation, transport and food, logistics of the program, partners and local technology, and finally curriculum matters. First time academics that prepared and travelled with a colleague were grateful for hands-on guidance. One participant said they ‘would have been lost had I just gone there by myself’ and another commented, ‘I

was just so spoilt. I wasn't thrown in the deep end because my colleague, well it was more a friendship, supported me all the way'.

Two of the academics who did travel alone the first time said they were 'sharing the subject with a more experienced colleague who walked me through it in advance before I left', and another first-timer's colleague wrote out a detailed step-by-step list from the point of arrival offshore through to instructions on how to travel to the partner institution. There were also cases of academics travelling alone who did not receive any formal university or collegiate pre-departure preparation. They said they found 'going by myself was a bit scary' but 'once you've gone once or twice, it gets easier'.

As first-time fly-in fly-out academics became more experienced and confident at managing the practical aspects of life offshore; they sought out different kinds of information from their colleagues including teaching challenges and personal issues. However there was little evidence from interviews that they sought information about the cultures of the countries in which teaching was taking place. Collegiate discussions about the curriculum included ways to manage the pressure that comes from the lack of time to get through the content, exchanging class activities and sharing ideas of ways to better engage students.

The way colleagues worked together before departure was with 'lots of discussions' and 'sharing materials', either face-to-face in their office, via email or casually conversing in the corridor. If travelling with a colleague, preparation continued at the airport, on the plane, sharing taxis or at the hotel. One academic observed, 'there's about a third of our time we're actually travelling together.... We talk a lot, particularly in the plane, about what's gone on and what we've learned and the various processes'.

Once offshore, if possible, contact with colleagues was reported as the most important means for 'seeking-out information and collecting information about a wide range of things'. One participant was definite that 'the conversation isn't necessarily always around teaching

... it might be about issues that we have over there or even about family back home' and another said 'you pass on tips...not so much teaching it's sort of survival tips'. If staying at the same hotel, academics met up at meal times and those in separate accommodation saw colleagues 'at the partner institution when you get to the session and you get to at least have a chat with them'.

A participant teaching in China described how all the foreign lecturers were in one separate, 'open-planned staffroom and it is a very good place for exchanging information – on the spot and practical stuff because it is a meeting place. It's a hub. And it's a debrief space for us after class'. Another lecturer commented that at certain times of the year in Singapore, 'there were heaps of people over there with me, basically half of the school ... [and] ... our head of school spent three weeks there because they probably could see more of us over there than they would back here'.

Connecting and communicating with other Australian-based colleagues, even with academics from other disciplines or universities, was mostly noted as positive, not so much for teaching tips, but for companionship. Coordinators seemed aware of this and tried to support it, saying whenever possible it is their preference to always send at least two staff away at the same time. One coordinator explained how this was important, even 'if staff are spread across two different sites ... or ... have two different lots of accommodation they will still tend to try and spend some time together'.

The decision though to send academics offshore in pairs or small groups, or not, has less to do with it being an informal means of support than being a commercial decision, informed by the size of the transnational program, location, discipline and business arrangements with partners. Most small-scale transnational programs are only able to send one teacher offshore because of staffing limitations and financial implications. Even in larger transnational programs, where it had been the norm for staff to travel in pairs, a number of participants revealed this was changing; now they are expected to manage on their own. This shift of

practice reflects the changes to academic life more broadly, as discussed in Chapter Three, and could be seen to support Boud (1999, p. 5), who writes how collegiality 'characterises the workplace of academia' but warns it is under threat from 'management intervention'.

The times academics found the most challenging, being offshore alone and without any pre-departure preparation or institutional support, were less to do with work matters and more around personal challenges involving life outside of work. Unsurprisingly, there were the challenges of illness and critical incidents, as discussed in Chapter Five; however, the following experience recounted by a senior staff member, but with limited experience abroad, mirrors some of these concerns. After teaching for three days, this academic was required to complete additional duties with the partner for the university. They travelled alone, had not received any formal preparation, and only received minimal briefing about the additional partner work. They described their time offshore: '... it was for two and half weeks, in a Muslim country, a female alone in Jakarta. Work was hard and out of hours was harder'. They felt isolated and after calling home a family member organised for them to meet up with 'a long-term Australian expat, because they knew what you were up against and they had some kind of support system'. They said connecting with the expatriate community, 'provided companionship and they helped me negotiate local customs and practices'. This positive experience helped in resolving the academic's feelings of loneliness, but was not necessarily a solution for learning how to manage the educational or business tasks with the partner. The cultural advice might also need to be treated cautiously if it arises from what the literature describes as an 'expatriate ghetto', meaning isolated communities with little or no contact with host country nationals (Sims & Schraeder 2005, p. 103).

Finally, there was little evidence of colleagues working together after returning to Australia. Some academics reported having casual chats and informal discussions but the majority suggested they were tired; they had personal commitments to follow-up as well as their regular onshore duties. It was different for the few lecturers teaching back-to-back with

colleagues, who said it was essential to have detailed handovers so as 'to be brought up-to-speed on the state of play in terms of the teaching and the partner colleagues'. Another teacher said a handover was necessary because 'some academics have their own slight spin ... they have their own pet areas which get promoted at the expense of more minor topics sometimes'.

8.3.2 Limits to Australian-based collegiate support

Although working offshore with a colleague is preferred by most academics, a number were adamant that successful collegiate collaboration required more than just simply being paired up with any other academic. Three key factors were identified as needing consideration when assigning staff to work together: the potential for a lack of compatibility between colleagues; the potential for inaccurate and unreliable information being exchanged; and the extra burden imposed on the more experienced staff member involved in communicating and sharing their knowledge.

The academics were clear that you could not simply assume that they and their colleague would 'get on'; that they would plan, prepare, travel or teach well together. One academic pointed out, 'so much depends on the individuals involved'. Other comments include the need for at least a 'modicum of professional compatibility', 'some initial connection' and 'building rapport takes time'. Another lecturer recalled working 'with colleagues who were wonderful to bounce ideas off ... and others, one in particular I'm thinking of who was a pain in the arse'. This feedback challenges the assumption that any pair work is good or better than no pair work and supports the extensive research into the complexities of the many models and types of mentoring (Blackwell & McLean 1996; Knight, P & Trowler 1999; Kunselman, Hensley & Tewksbury 2003). One participant, who found themselves offshore with a difficult colleague, explained:

It is not to do with their knowledge and expertise, it's just to do with the fact I didn't like them and they probably didn't like me. So, yes, informal structure is good, but

only if you like the person, because that's the key, isn't it, the informality part of it. You can't force it.

The second concern raised about collegiate preparation is around the consistency and quality of advice being exchanged between academics. Participants agreed there were no checks on the advice shared, one teacher saying, 'we don't really formally talk, we just make some observations, we don't deeply discuss together, it's just casual'. One experienced academic suggested that 'what works for one person doesn't necessarily work for another, so what one person gives as good advice ... may actually work for them, but it wouldn't work for you or me and vice versa'. While participants assured me that colleagues were always well intentioned, one lecturer claimed they had been given 'some lousy unchecked advice', which had major consequences for them once when they were teaching in a transnational setting—by then it was too late.

Based on the participants' accounts, the potential for misinformation seemed most evident around intercultural matters, a concern previously discussed by Hoare (2006, 2012). A senior academic in this study approached a more experienced colleague who had formerly taught in the institution offshore. The senior academic reported initially being taken aback and then anxious after being given what they felt was quite strident advice about how to engage and communicate with students and partner staff. They were told, 'you know the fact is they are very reserved, and if you want to get anywhere you have to be fairly forthright and even aggressive in making contact, otherwise they'll just leave you alone and not say or do anything'. They explained that such advice did not sit comfortably with how they engage with students and colleagues in Australia, let alone in somebody else's country and classroom.

Such advice might in fact be true or worked for this academic. However, besides highlighting the need to moderate informal information being exchanged between colleagues, one can only imagine better outcomes from dedicated pre-departure preparation, particularly around intercultural communication matters. Academics filter their offshore experiences through their

own unique lens, and it is easy to see the potential for misinformation and miscommunication between colleagues. For new staff, relying solely on personal and professional encounters of a more experienced colleague is not a substitute for well-planned and comprehensive preparation. Learning from other academics' experiences is an invaluable method of development but more so when it is in conjunction with other means of professional learning and support.

The third limitation to preparing and supporting colleagues was raised by the three most experienced offshore academics. They spoke about the weight of expectation to always be available to step in and fill the void created by the lack of any institutional preparation or support mechanisms, particularly in relation to new staff. Some expressed fatigue at being continuously paired up with new academics working offshore for the first time. This added an extra responsibility, which is demanding and burdensome on top of an already heavy workload. They recalled how at the end of a long day of intensive teaching, it was not unusual to arrive back to the hotel and be met at the bar, in the restaurant, or even have their bedroom door knocked on by a perplexed and sometimes distressed colleague needing to debrief about the day's teaching. One academic shared how, 'sometimes after teaching I go to a different hotel to where I am staying. I have dinner and then head back to my accommodation later. I feel guilty about 'hiding' but I need to have time to myself and to unwind.' These particular academics felt there was an unofficial expectation added to their offshore duties, for which they did not receive preparation, recognition or financial acknowledgment from their institutions.

In conclusion, despite these concerns, it is clear that working with Australia-based colleagues is a favoured and valuable way to prepare and be supported when teaching offshore. A smaller number of academics had equally valuable experiences with partner-based colleagues and these relationships are explored in the following section.

8.3.3 Partner-based colleagues

Seven of the 30 academics discussed how they learned from and were supported by their academic and non-academic partner colleagues. In the following paragraphs these relationships will be explored, then the remaining 23 participants' explanations as to why they only had minimal contact with offshore colleagues are analysed. Significant elements in either promoting or preventing collegiate connections with partner colleagues are identified.

Less than one-third of the academic respondents spoke about ongoing professional relationships with partner-based colleagues. Those who did were older and experienced academics who had taught for a number of years, often with the same partner institution and same staff. Evidently the long-term nature of the partnership was conducive to forming strong collaborative relationships between the academics and partner colleagues. However, they also observed that—just as with Australia-based colleagues—there needs to be an initial rapport between colleagues. These academics also suggested there needs to be a desire and a motivation to establish, develop and sustain a mostly initially formal, long-distance partnership. They suggested that, as well as being committed, both lots of staff need to be well organised and flexible to enable regular online or face-to-face communication when Australia-based academics are visiting the partner colleague's country. Scheduling times to work together requires forward planning, making allowances for time differences and negotiating around each other's work responsibilities, particularly if teaching with a translator or peer reviewing each other's classes.

Along with the dedication to make the partnership work, an understanding and respect for the other's work world was essential. A lecturer from Australia, keen to set-up a co-teaching arrangement with a partner colleague, said they were conscious from the beginning that they were arriving 'from Australia with a packaged curriculum' to deliver in their partner colleague's classroom. They appreciated they needed to be 'respectful to the other academic and that they were a guest lecturing in their classroom ... and that it's an honour to be there

and you start with the understanding of “thank you for the welcome”. According to most of the participants a third vital variable along with commitment and planning is time, both in the sense of schedules matching when offshore, and the benefits of enduring relationships forming over many years. This latter point was highlighted when a lecturer said they initially got to know their partner online by ‘trading ideas about teaching and sharing ideas from various conferences or workshops we’d each attended’. Three years later they had incrementally built a relationship which was ‘very much a team-teaching situation’, and they were writing a paper to co-publish about their teaching.

Throughout the discussions it was reinforced that while these collegiate connections were valuable they were also logistically and professionally demanding. Just as with additional engagement with students, the process of informally learning from culturally diverse colleagues was often challenging and sometimes confronting. Some of the challenges and the motivation required to continue to reflect and be resilient enough to make changes are mirrored in the case of a lecturer observing their partner colleague’s teaching for the first time, all the while knowing the next day they would be observed. They recounted:

As far as affecting my teaching practice and I think my learning, it was really useful. However, it’s one of those memories that I have so clearly as I was sitting at the back of the classroom thinking, ‘Shit, I can’t do it the way I was going to do it’. I realised I had to find a different way before tomorrow.

In fact, participants felt that the two most valuable outcomes from working with partner colleagues were the opportunity to learn about different approaches to teaching and being exposed to different cultural practices. One teacher said that working with their partner colleague ‘led to improvements in the way the subject materials are created and they make you a lot better at actually making them clearer and trying new ways’. Another felt they began to understand why their transnational students were not engaging with some of the teaching activities they were using.

It was interesting to hear this group of academics report learning as much from the process of collaboration as the actual knowledge and skills exchanged. The following two experiences demonstrate the learning that occurred from the act of working together. The first comes from the experience of the Australia-based academic and their partner writing the journal article about teaching together in a transnational program. It was in the process of reading each other's drafts they realised how very differently they were interpreting the same students, materials and teaching circumstances. Similarly, another academic involved in peer observation with their offshore colleague first spoke about how beneficial it was to observe their colleague. After they were observed, however, they expressed disappointment and frustration with what they perceived as a lack of depth and critique about their own teaching. It was only over a number of observations that they started to see a pattern in *how* feedback was given, which led them to reflect on the process of providing feedback outside their own cultural framework:

Now whether because he was a bit younger, whether because he felt a power situation, which I certainly didn't try to promote, or whether he was just being polite and didn't want to harm our relationship for either of us to lose face, his feedback in the beginning I didn't find as meaningful. I mean, now I see there is meaning in what I suppose are all those things he didn't say.

As well as support directly related to teaching, many participants were able to readily recount support with non-teaching and even personal matters, with an overall sense 'they do more for us than probably we do for anybody who comes here. They are just brilliant'. One academic spoke about their partner colleague as 'a chaperone, a mentor and a rock' and another described being 'taken under her wing' by their offshore coordinator. Particularly noted were incidences of generous hospitality. Even though the days were long and tiring for both sets of staff, an academic said their colleague still made time to eat out with them, 'and if he could, on the few hours that we'd have free on a day or on a weekend or something, he would take us to a gallery, a museum or something. He was extremely helpful'. Overwhelmingly, there was a collective sense of indebtedness as expressed by one long-

term lecturer: 'It wasn't an even or equal reciprocation. I don't think they got out of the experience what I got. I got the rewards out of the relationship far more than they ever got from me, that's for sure'.

Some of the academics with strong collegiate relationships with partner colleagues felt they had developed skills that made them more informed and confident teachers in transnational settings. The benefits were not just confined to teaching, as noted by one academic; their partner colleague was also the catalyst for them wanting to learn more about their culture. They said they were motivated to continue in the language classes they had enrolled in previously and became eager to continue to return to teach offshore and learn more. Another experienced academic described how much they valued working with their partner colleague, and said the relationship challenged them to reconsider and review some of their long-held beliefs about teaching, saying 'I used to think I knew everything. Now I know I know nothing'.

Relationships with non-teaching staff, such as administrators and technicians, were also significant for some fly-in fly-out academics, many spending more time with them than their teaching colleagues. As well as introducing them to their new teaching and learning environment, some also assisted the academics to adjust to life outside the confines of the partner institution. Just as some Australia-based colleagues listened and provided support around family and personal matters, so too did partner staff demonstrate similar care, most particularly evident to those staff caught up in a natural disaster/critical incident as described in Chapter Five.

8.3.4 Limits to partner-based collegiate support

As noted earlier, two-thirds (the majority of participants) did not experience the benefits of support from partner colleagues. Those who did not have collegiate relationships with partner staff tended to discuss the impediments to forming such connections and questioned how authentic universities' intentions are for forming collaborative partnerships. The two most

common impediments identified were the manner in which transnational programs are structured and the employment conditions experienced by many partner colleagues.

In relation to the structure being an obstacle for collaboration, the majority of fly-in fly-out programs were organised in one of two ways: either an academic from Australia teaches for a number of hours over a few days with partner staff responsible for teaching the remainder of the semester, or an Australia-based academic is offshore for a few days of intensive teaching, alternating teaching days with their partner colleague.

When Australia-based academics are offshore no time is scheduled in the programs for the two groups of staff to work together formally or informally. The teaching days are packed so tightly and with so much content to be covered that there is little energy left for staff to continue working after a long day of teaching. One academic mentioned 'the only time I've physically met any offshore colleague ... was when I stood at a bus stop with a guy, and we had a natter about our respective tasks. So it's just the way it's timetabled'. Some participants argued that the lack of any structured time to facilitate coming together or institutional encouragement to extend time abroad for professional development reflected the fact that universities are not genuinely interested in true collaborative, transnational partnerships. One experienced academic felt their university actively discouraged having additional time abroad, explaining their request for professional development leave was not supported, and if you used annual leave to extend your time offshore then 'the university expects you to pay a percentage, up to half of your airfare'. It seems that most universities find it difficult to justify the resourcing required to have staff extend their time in foreign countries when not teaching, in spite of educational, cultural and personal benefits.

Outside these intense teaching periods, when academics are back in Australia, both groups of staff have their own ongoing personal and professional commitments vying for their time and attention—more so for academics teaching above their normal workload. Whatever method is in place, fly-in fly-out programs are intense, inflexible and demanding for students

and both sets of teachers. The motivation, time and effort required to forge successful collaborative relationships, with all the benefits that can ensue, seems very much left to each individual academic. This is powerfully captured by one experienced academic's summation:

The amount of time I lost having dinner with my offshore compatriots in my own time was more than compensated for in the benefits gained from having a relationship, down the track, when problems need to be solved. If you have a relationship they will work with you, if not they will possibly work against you.

A second impediment to working collaboratively is the employment conditions of some partner colleagues, particularly those working for private and commercial institutions. It is common for partner staff on short-term contracts and others in countries with low wages, to teach concurrently at multiple institutions. Such staff often need to leave immediately after one class to travel to the next workplace. Conditions in some ways can be compared to those of casual university teaching staff in Australia being paid for the time they teach but often not for staff exchanges or professional development. Their short-term contracts can also lead to high staff turnover rates, and one academic explained that they have a 'revolving door' type of relationship with partner colleagues. Pyvis (2011) though also points out the negative impact on partner staff when some Australian-based subject coordinators change every semester or yearly, each time they receive 'a change in instructions regarding teaching and learning' (p. 737).

Two long-term academics also suggested that the lack of time, money and permanency could send a message to their partner colleagues that they are not valued as part of the overall transnational program. These situations led five academics into wondering how truly 'collaborative' transnational programs are intended to be. They questioned how realistic it is for partner staff to contribute to the curriculum, and in fact for either group of staff to work collaboratively in creating and making the curriculum contextually relevant. One academic new to teaching offshore recalled how they were advised to just fly-in and 'simply teach' with no mention or even suggestion to seek out or engage with their partner teacher.

To conclude, this section on collegiate connections, the immediacy, informality and empathy provided by colleagues in managing professional and personal challenges is found to be a popular method of preparation, confirming similar findings in smaller studies (Gribble & Ziguas 2003). There is a marked difference between the experiences of a small group of participants who found a way to engage and work with their offshore colleagues, and the majority of academics who did not. The latter group raised a number of systemic issues, which they felt needed to be addressed before opportunities to work collegially with their partner colleagues could eventuate.

Creating and sustaining relationships with partner staff depends on variables such as how programs are structured and scheduled, the amount of time available to develop professional relationships, and the employment conditions of partner colleagues. When one or more of these factors are absent, the result is either a lack of collegiate connection and support, or only minimal or perfunctory exchanges. This method of preparation relies heavily on the goodwill of academics and often the support of coordinators, as examined in the following section.

8.4 Coordinator's preparation and support for academics

All participants, excluding the two sessional staff, reported that coordinators, whether they were teaching offshore or not, were involved to some degree in their preparation, mostly around curriculum. This section first examines the range and type of preparation and support provided by coordinators to their colleagues. This is followed by an examination of the type of preparation coordinators received for their role, especially for preparing their academic colleagues.

Roberts, Butcher and Brooker (2011, p. 6) note that the role of higher education subject coordinators (both onshore and offshore) is 'complex and demanding'. They recommend improved approaches to help manage these challenges including targeted professional

development and transparent ways for universities to recognise excellence. A common theme in the findings from academic respondents in this study regarding coordinators' involvement with staff preparation is the variability of the type of support provided. Academic developers contribute and reinforce this finding, commenting that coordinators' involvement in staff preparation ranged from being 'patchy' to 'they can make a real difference'. One said 'it depends on the individual coordinator, it may well depend on where they're going, and how established the program is there'.

There are numerous possibilities that might explain this lack of consistent support, such as the fact that academics are not formally recruited for this complicated role and the lack of any induction or ongoing support for them. The types of preparation by coordinators are discussed in the next section, along with the issue of coordinator selection and preparation.

8.4.1 Range and type of coordinator preparation

Coordinator involvement in staff preparation is mostly provided prior to departure and primarily focuses on curriculum content, pedagogy, assessment and delivery, with some guidance around administrative matters. Also, coordinators prepare and support staff informally, with a mix of one-on-one discussions, corridor chats and emails, with some providing informal mentoring. These activities are discussed below, starting with the most common types of coordinator support offered, followed by two outlying cases – one comprehensive and successful and one less than ideal. These descriptions capture both the variability and the impact coordinators can have on academic preparedness and their transnational teaching experiences.

Although the range and type of support varied greatly, most academics mentioned coordinators contributed positively in their preparation, mostly around learning and teaching matters. One lecturer said their coordinator 'prepared a couple of kind of tip sheets or information sheets they passed on' while another academic received extensive and detailed support from their coordinator:

I'm given a checklist kind of like what sort of material will go into the teaching package in quite some detail so we can prepare ... the subject description, the schedule, detailed lecture notes ... the laboratory and tutorial exercises, and solutions and marking schemes for assignments and the final exam.

If coordinators are also teaching offshore, at the same or different times, as many of them are, then they have firsthand experience of the conditions and teaching context their colleagues are working in. This helps in that they are able to relate to difficulties their colleagues encounter and can respond based on how they personally managed similar challenges. One coordinator of a very large offshore program was in the situation where a considerable number of staff was scheduled offshore at the same time. They took this opportunity to call semi-formal meetings and have 'good half-an-hour sessions on how to tackle the teaching ... go over the course notes, go over the assessment, look at what you need to tidy up, what we agree on'.

Coordinators who remain in Australia offer support by being ready to respond to emails or phone calls, although, as noted in the previous chapter, it is rare for academics teaching offshore to make contact. Two coordinators had never been contacted, and one said it is more common to receive a call only if academics are offshore alone, saying they might ring if 'they're just a bit stuck and so they'll phone up just to talk'. Only one coordinator said they had been contacted by phone after hours, which is when most teaching takes place given the time differences and weekend teaching, and recalled having 'serious conversations, not always to do with teaching matters' with staff.

The only evidence of coordinators providing any structured debriefing, or preparation after a transnational assignment and before the academics' next iteration of offshore teaching, was found in the participants working as part of a team which is discussed in detail in Chapter Nine. Otherwise, permanent staff spoke of occasionally having informal chats and discussions with their coordinators or attending an end-of-semester meeting, while others said they only ever follow-up with their coordinator if there had been a major incident.

Similarly, another participant said they would only submit a written report if specific concerns regarding assignments, student grades, retention rates or appeals needed clarification. This again highlights that debriefing is rarely practiced, except in the event of an error or crisis, and despite, as discussed in Chapter Seven, regular evaluations and reflection are critical for fostering teaching improvement.

The above findings represent the experiences of most participants; but it is worth noting here, by way of contrast, examples of coordinator preparation at the extreme ends of the spectrum. Of the 30 participants, one academic recounted a case of exemplary coordinator support and two had less than ideal experiences. For two of these three respondents this was the first time they had taught offshore; none of the three had received any formal university pre-departure preparation, nor had they taught the subject before. As all three were standing in at the last moment for colleagues, who had suddenly stepped away from the transnational programs, this also meant none of them had much notice and therefore time to prepare prior to leaving to teach.

8.4.2 Exceptional preparation by a coordinator

The academic who recounted a positive experience of their coordinator, was teaching offshore for the first time and due to the former academic unexpectedly departing the university, found that along with minimal preparation time, there was no direct handover. The coordinator at this time had onshore teaching commitments along with preparing a keynote address for an international conference. This academic explained that despite their coordinator's heavy workload and commitments, they stepped in and set up times to meet one-on-one where they '... took me through the structure of how I was going to carry things out'. The coordinator also changed their travel itinerary to the conference, adding 'an extra three days to go to Singapore so he could introduce me to everyone'. As it happened, the coordinator's decision to accompany their colleague was beneficial not only for them, but also once offshore they discovered a partner staffing problem that had previously gone

unreported and required immediate attention.

Returning to Australia the support continued with the coordinator again setting up a series of one-on-one meetings for the academic to debrief and offering ideas for preparing for the next round of teaching. The academic spoke highly of the coordinator, not only for the support they received but because they felt the transnational students and the relationship with the partner had also benefited from the coordinator's involvement. In the end, all the proactive actions and effort of the coordinator resulted in a relatively seamless transition, and the academic felt it was obvious they did a much better job of teaching compared with being left on their own to stumble through the best they could.

8.4.3 Minimal preparation by a coordinator

Two out of 30 academic participants reported almost no support from their current or former coordinators. What is concerning is that these two participants were the sessional academics, who might be considered most in need of coordinator involvement and support. Neither had received any formal university preparation, and although both were familiar with the broader discipline area, neither had taught these subjects before—either onshore or offshore.

As noted earlier in Chapter Five, one of the sessional teachers was recruited from industry, and was responsible for coordinating and teaching the postgraduate subject onshore and offshore. They felt like they were working in a vacuum and soon realised 'it was up to me to find the help I needed'. As the former coordinator had departed the university, they were reporting directly to the head of school, who by way of introduction to the course content, had set up a meeting with a lecturer who had taught the subject onshore, but never offshore. Prior to leaving Australia this sessional teacher, new to academia, had no sense of the offshore context in which they were required to teach.

While the second sessional participant was more senior and experienced in working in higher education and offshore, they were teaching in China for the first time and said they had to initiate and 'actively seek out assistance' prior to leaving Australia. The one meeting they managed to arrange with the coordinator was about how to 'condense 40 hours of the curriculum material into 20 hours'. The meeting ended with the coordinator telling them 'It's a job. In fact I was told before I went, look go over there, have a good holiday, teach your 20 hours and you're done'.

Both sessional staff said these one-off meetings, which they had initiated, were the full extent of their pre-departure preparation. There was no communication from Australia when they were offshore and on returning to Australia, although each wanted to speak with someone about their experiences and some matters of concern, there were no formal university re-entry programs offered. There was also no contact from their school, other than involving administrative tasks, entering student grades and for coordinator moderation of results. The older and more experienced sessional concluded by saying 'I gathered pretty quickly they were just not that interested'.

It is important to remember that these three academics' experiences are the exception, with most finding coordinators' preparation and support, mainly around the curriculum, beneficial. The type and depth of guidance does vary and much depends upon each individual coordinator. Considering there are no position descriptions for this role, I was curious to learn from the coordinators what preparation they had received to fulfil the duties as an offshore coordinator, and for preparing and supporting academics teaching abroad.

8.4.4 Preparation for coordinators

Two of the 10 coordinators had been formally appointed to the role. None had received any training or formal preparation for teaching offshore. The list of coordinator duties that emerged from the data was diverse. Some had significant levels of responsibility attached to their roles and all, to varying levels, were directly responsible for ensuring high quality

delivery of transnational programs. All but one academic developer recognised the need for coordinators to be better supported: the most common reason being 'these people may have been teaching 20 years onshore but may not have any understanding of what it's like teaching over there'.

Aside from some templates for administrative tasks, the academic developers agreed there were minimal university resources specifically designed to support offshore coordinators. One online module and one faculty based workshop, focusing mainly on administrative tasks, were the only two resources mentioned. One academic developer did speak of a plan to build a website to house pre-departure resources to which coordinators could refer their colleagues but as yet no funds or resources had been allocated. Since data was collected for this investigation, two valuable sets of resources have been created for all onshore/offshore coordinators (Roberts, Butcher & Brooker 2011) and specifically for teaching offshore (Mazzolini et al. 2011), although how widely these have been promoted and are being used is not known.

The one academic developer who was unsure whether training was needed reasoned 'there was no real preparation for coordinators ... because they've been going offshore now for a while. They have built a body of knowledge that they draw on'. This seems to overlook the fact that all coordinators, even those currently with offshore experience, were once teaching offshore for the first time, with no formal induction or ongoing support and many lacking any formal teaching qualifications. The other nine academic developers challenged the premise that a coordinator's onshore expertise negates the need for additional support, suggesting it is the starting point from which ongoing professional development then builds further knowledge and skills. So without any formal training, the question still remains as to how and when coordinators become skilled in preparing their colleagues for teaching in culturally diverse environments, and for the additional non-teaching duties expected of them. This is next explored.

Given this lack of preparation, perhaps it was not surprising that when I did ask coordinators how they went about preparing their colleagues for teaching offshore, the overwhelming response was 'a lot is based on my own experience'. In the absence of any institutional training, coordinators said they mostly 'worked it out as they went along' although some met with the former coordinator for an informal handover. Even assuming that over time all coordinators do 'work it out,' universities relying on each coordinator's teaching abilities, experience, interest and willingness to fulfil the multiple tasks of a transnational coordinator leaves offshore programs vulnerable to the vagaries of individuals. This has been clearly demonstrated by the previous examples highlighting the range of participants' experiences—both extreme and otherwise. One academic developer captured this reliance on individual coordinators saying:

It will be very dependent on the interest and the knowledge-level of the coordinator, who would hopefully take responsibility to brief someone, at least brief someone who is new to teaching offshore. But again it would be whatever they happen to share and would not be targeted or systematic.

There is a dissonance between the high level of responsibility assigned to coordinators to oversee the successful delivery of quality transnational programs, and the lack of any type of institutional selection, preparation and support provided for offshore coordinators. The academic developers call attention to the need for suitable induction and ongoing professional support to fulfil what is a set of critically important and complex tasks in unfamiliar cultures. This gulf has recently been researched in the Office of Learning and Teaching project *Learning Without Borders: Linking Development of Transnational Leadership Roles to International and Cross-Cultural Teaching Excellence* (Mazzolini et al. 2011). Twenty-eight recommendations were made for the home and transnational campus around leadership in transnational education, under the headings of decision making, communications, recognition, reward and recompense, and support and professional development. This finding in this investigation concurs with Mazzolini *et al.* (2011) and

confirms the need for further work to be conducted in developing a consistent approach to defining the roles coordinators play in the offshore context, and providing support and recognition for these important positions.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter reported on the types of non-institutional activities and informal strategies academics adopt to prepare for working offshore across the three phases of the transnational education cycle. All participants reported engaging in some type of informal preparation—a sharp contrast to none having engaged in formal preparation. The main types of informal preparation included combinations of self-initiated activities and working with Australia-based colleagues and coordinators. A few engaged with their onshore and offshore international students and many cited logistics, time pressures and cultural differences as the reasons why they did not collaborate more with their partner colleagues.

There are four outstanding features discovered about academics' informal approaches for being ready to teach offshore. First, most academics engage in some informal type of preparation, as opposed to none of the participants preparing through the few formal, central, one-off institutional programs. Second, informal preparation was incidental, mostly in response to a particular need, and occurred mostly with colleagues in the academics' work context, be that onshore or offshore. Third, most participants' informal preparation was not continuous across all three phases of transnational teaching. Similar to institutional approaches, much preparation through informal means was concentrated at the point of pre-departure, with minimal to no preparation after returning to Australia. However, in contrast to formal university approaches offshore, there was evidence of collegiate and coordinator support. This was the main and often the only means of support for academics working abroad, and although there were some limitations, this support was valued by most. Finally, as was the case with formal university preparation options, there was little offered in relation

to intercultural and communication preparation, with the proposal that offshore academics be efficient intercultural learners (Leask et al 2005) once again missing.

Moreover, the intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes shared between colleagues was not checked for accuracy or appropriateness. Much of the learning with partner colleagues and students was retrospective, often reflecting on cultural mishaps, which as noted previously, for some left a lasting impact.

There is a need for facilitated institutional support to ameliorate misinformation and gaps in academics' preparedness and ongoing professional development. The following chapter explores the 'working in teams' approach to preparation with its mix of semi-structured and informal collegiate activities.

Chapter Nine: Team-Based Preparation and Support

This final findings chapter concerns nine participants from nine different universities who used the expression 'team' to describe how they prepared to teach offshore. In higher education literature 'team' generally refers to 'team teaching': a technique where two or more teachers share responsibility for a group of students (Benjamin 2000; Wenger, M & Hornyak 1999). The expression 'teaching teams' in transnational education literature is often used to describe onshore and offshore staff working together, involving program and/or subject coordinators and/or quality assessors as well as teaching staff (Dunn & Wallace 2005; Keevers et al. 2012; Leask 2004b; Mazzolini et al. 2011; Napier et al. 2002).

The teams referred to in this study are groups of Australian-based academics who taught into the same transnational program, sometimes teaching together offshore and always assisting one another with preparation and ongoing support. As one participant candidly put it, 'team preparation is just not a herd of academics that just happen to travel offshore at the same time and see each other at breakfast'. Rather participants frequently noted the collaborative framework within which as a team they prepared and worked, and spoke about the importance of the composition, cohesiveness and motivation of the group, factors identified as influencing the effectiveness of team work (Guzzo & Dickson 1996).

Brew (2010, p. 24) argues, 'academic development should be grounded in the daily demands of academic work and takes place in response to particular projects and responsibilities' and this exactly reflects how the nine disciplined-based teams prepared for their offshore teaching assignments. A mix of semi-formal and informal activities were employed as needed, along with employing strategies such as peer learning with Australian colleagues and peer observation with partner staff (Boud 1999), communities of practice (Boud & Middleton 2003; Dunn & Wallace 2005, 2008b), practice development (Hager, Lee & Reich 2012; Price, Johnsson, Scheeres, Boud & Solomon 2012), work-embedded professional development (Osborn 2001, 2004) and situated cognition (Brown, J, Collins & Dugid 1989).

Although this data comes from a small number of participants, their experiences are highly instructive. The findings presented here are a combination of the patterns and characteristics that emerged from analysis of the nine cases, with individual events and experiences included to highlight particular aspects and circumstances. This chapter first outlines common characteristics of the nine teams. This is followed by a discussion on how the teams plan, implement and review their needs, contrasting, where applicable, with formal and informal approaches. The final section examines the significant role that partners and partner staff play in this type of ongoing academic development.

9.1 Team characteristics

The nine participants who spoke about preparation as part of a team were all coordinators. Eight were academics who taught offshore, and one was an academic developer, who did not teach offshore, but co-coordinated with the international dean from the home campus. Most were senior level female academics aged 50+ years. The majority came from humanities disciplines and most possessed high level qualifications in education alongside their discipline qualifications. Two-thirds undertake offshore teaching as a part of their normal workload. All have continuing employment and most had travelled offshore many times. See Appendices 7 and 8 for demographic data of those involved in team-based preparation.

The composition of 'teams' varied for each group. One participant said, 'the "we" is a team of approximately four staff in the undergraduate program who make ... three or four visits a year to Singapore', while another said, 'our school has a large offshore presence and we have had up to 12 staff in our team. Despite the differences in scale, all teams were discipline based, most had significant connections with their partners, all participants spoke positively about their preparation, and each coordinator played a pivotal role in the formation and ongoing support of the teams.'

The nine teams and the transnational programs they taught varied in size, discipline, location, type of university and type of partner institution. On average their offshore programs had been operating for 10 years or more and were delivered in Asian countries including Indonesia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and China. Five academics who prepared as part of a team worked at a Group of Eight university and seven of the nine partnerships were with public higher education institutions (five traditional universities and two advanced colleges), with two of the offshore partners being private commercial providers.

Team-based preparation is an amalgam of semi-formal and informal activities, such as workshops and mentoring, but also includes elements of communities of practice and transformative learning (Coryell, Alston & Nguyen 2012; Coryell et al. 2012; Dunn & Wallace 2005, 2008a; Smith, K 2009, 2013). Fundamental principles of adult learning are used for the team-based approach described in this chapter, in that it creates a climate of respect, encourages active participation, builds on experience, employs collaborative inquiry and empowers participants (Lawler 2003).

Team-based preparation and support was not left to chance, but planned around the needs of team members unlike many of the ad hoc university approaches outlined in Chapter Seven. Depending upon the context, a team employed a flexible and eclectic range of methods. Distinctively, team-based preparation and support addressed issues beyond just teaching, continued beyond the point of departure and was the only approach where academics returning from teaching abroad had the chance to debrief, either as part of a group or, in one team, more structured one-on-one debriefs. In such debriefs the team members' feedback was actively sought and respondents were of the opinion that their views were appreciated, acknowledged and acted on. This feedback then informed the next iteration of professional support needed, and also incorporated into reviewing offshore programs more broadly.

9.2 Coordinators and team leaders

As with all the coordinators included in this study, none of those in teams were formally recruited or selected for their role, nor had they received any training or ongoing university professional development. This was also true for the academic developer, who was assigned the role of co-coordinator in addition to their existing responsibilities. Although there is increasing acknowledgment that academics in leadership roles—particularly in the offshore context—would benefit from training and ongoing support (Jones, E & Brown 2007), as recently as 2011, Mazzolini *et al.* (2011, p. 1) still noted the lack of ‘systematic, structure and sustainable support frameworks for this purpose’. The same study also points out the lack of recognition and career advancement opportunities for the extra skills and workload associated with transnational leadership. The non-academic coordinator felt well supported by the dean with who they co-coordinated. The eight academic coordinators were definite that there was no recognition from any part of the university regarding the extra work in leading the teams, nor were there any benefits, such as increased promotion opportunities. One coordinator summed up the sentiments of all when they said:

It's just what I do. What is required to teach on these programs is an unspoken kind of dedication to the task if you like, so it's not people who do it for financial reasons ... We'll go together, we'll work as a team rather than just a kind of employment situation.

The provision of preparation and support to academics teaching offshore was clearly driven by each individual coordinator, seemingly out of a sense of responsibility for and satisfaction from their colleagues, which in some teams included partner colleagues. The attitude that fostered this commitment is typified by the following quote from a coordinator respondent: ‘I would never send someone away absolutely cold [unprepared] ... that would be a disaster for them and the program’.

A number of coordinators recognised that because of their senior positions they were granted a significant degree of autonomy as to how they went about preparing and supporting their teams, and possibly had greater access to information and resources compared to other coordinators. For example, one coordinator was the school representative on the faculty international committee and, by attending these meetings, learned a lot about the university's transnational programs beyond teaching, with many of the discussions focused on budgets and managerial matters. From similar positions, some were able to leverage funds and time release to plan for professional development for their staff.

These team leaders however were equally aware that a reliance on one individual 'champion' potentially made the team-based approach vulnerable. One coordinator explained, '... it was really important to make sure the team members contribute and have ownership'. Contribution and ownership are essential for practical reasons, for example in the event that the coordinator is no longer able to continue in the role, but also to consolidate the importance of shared responsibility and sense of belonging. In consideration of succession planning, one coordinator described sharing the leadership role by involving other team members in non-teaching duties while offshore such as delegating and/or attending together meetings with partner managers, education trade fairs and graduation ceremonies.

Another attempt at encouraging team participation and increasing stability was to introduce succession mentoring for when staff were retiring or moving out of the team and new colleagues moving in (Brenner 2008; Rothwell 2010). The coordinator explained 'they had somebody else teach with an academic retiring because they're going to be the ones who take over, so it's been a mentoring and preparing to handover time'. The mentoring is both a means of professional development but also an opportunity for the teachers to invest in the team by building constancy and creating a sense of seamless transition.

Within each team there was a sense of staff continuity. One coordinator commented, 'The staff teaching on the program has been the same for four years ... all prepared together and

all are interested to go again after they come back'. Eight out of the nine teams also reported high rates of staff satisfaction, with one coordinator revealing, 'they all want to go back. It's been incredible ... I can't think of a single case where there's been a problem'.

Five of the coordinators suggested a possible explanation for their teams' continuity and satisfaction was because they carefully selected staff, one saying 'from the start we approached the right people, suitable members of staff'. Another said, 'staff don't self-select, we kind of handpick them, people that we think would be appropriate'. One coordinator was adamant that, 'we are very selective in who we would choose ... they would have to be very good in the subject and also have the kind of personal qualities to carry through'. When asked what informed their decisions, qualities such as being hard working and flexible were mentioned along with vague responses of 'you just know the right kind of person for the job'.

Only one coordinator described a member of a team who was not enthusiastic about teaching offshore, but was obliged to go, being the only academic with expertise in a core subject. The coordinator observed this academic struggling, as did their students and other colleagues and added, 'I was the unfortunate person who followed them offshore so I got it in spades from the students. ... They have since retired and left the program but it was actually very difficult working with them'. This case supports the earlier discussions in Chapter Five regarding the importance of selecting staff with particular personal characteristics, as well as competencies deemed necessary for 'ideal' international and global educators.

As previously noted, former research has argued the case for universities to put in place strategic recruitment procedures to select staff best able to manage the complex tasks and challenges of teaching offshore (Jais 2012; Leask et al. 2005; NTEU 2004a). Evidently, institutions continue to overlook this recommendation. The feedback that teams are selecting staff to work offshore, although subjectively and from a limited pool of discipline experts, shows that academics recognise that some staff are a 'better fit' for this work compared to others.

9.3 Preparation and support provided for teams

The next section focuses on the content, methods of delivery and level of academic engagement in a team-based approach to preparation and support across each of the three phases of transnational teaching.

9.3.1 Pre-departure preparation

Team preparation was both planned but flexible. There was preparation around fixed topics such as university policies, logistic and travel requirements and the curriculum. There was also preparation based on the assessment of academics' needs. As to be expected, the finer details of each team's plan and approach to professional development were different, honed to match the circumstances of each transnational program. However, across the nine teams there were similar shared patterns of preparation and support, which were not evidenced in most other types of university preparation. The following paragraphs illustrate two distinctive team-based pre-departure programs but that address many of the challenges identified by participants and described in Chapters Five and Six.

A team coordinator was determined to ensure their staff did not lack the preparation they had the first time they taught abroad. In their preliminary discussions with the head of school, they strongly argued for and received time and money to develop an induction program for the academics. They also requested the recruitment of a bilingual, part-time staff member who would ideally have expertise in the Chinese education system. 'Jenny', the school senior administrator fulfilled these requirements and was appointed to the role. Six months prior to the commencement of the program, the coordinator conducted two reconnaissance trips accompanied by Jenny. Besides meetings with the partners this trip provided the opportunity, 'to look at the facilities for teaching and accommodation and to get a sense of how to prepare the staff'. As a result, pre-departure checklists were developed for the academics along with a package of materials covering logistic and administrative matters, such as health and safety, visas, staff obligations, and 'what the university did and what the school did, and what

the university paid for and what it didn't. The coordinator also identified that language would be a major challenge for the team, and so a series of informal introductory language sessions were set up for staff prior to departure:

Jenny ran some Mandarin language classes for us before we all went. We would meet over lunch once a week for about 10 weeks. Staff would come and sit around the table and Jenny would introduce and prepare us for basic Chinese language expressions.

The second case involved a new fly-in fly-out offshore teaching venture requiring two teams to teach the same program in different locations. An academic developer co-coordinated the offshore program in conjunction with the international dean. The academic developer was responsible for managing all aspects of educational administration, liaising with the partners, and preparing and supporting the academics. The heads of school and the faculty international dean were accountable for all aspects of the curriculum being delivered.

As with the earlier case, detailed planning occurred six months prior to teaching. Although originally planned for, in this instance there was no travel to visit the partners ahead of time. Instead the academic developer worked with the discipline heads and the international dean, going through the final contract details, reviewing the facilities of the partner institution and familiarising themselves with university policy and regulations. Then an inventory of all relevant formal university professional development workshops and resources for staff preparation was conducted, noting where there were gaps that needed to be filled—often many.

Information sessions outlining the structure and delivery of the transnational program were advertised, followed by a call for expressions of interest from staff which was released electronically, on posters and through meetings. Team members were selected by the discipline heads, based on their subject expertise and availability, with preference given to senior academics that had prior experience teaching overseas. The teams were brought

together and each academic was canvassed to ascertain their particular concerns and needs. It emerged 'there was a lot of anxiety around using the new technology, around the type of student we'd be getting, the offshore facilities, and being alone in an unfamiliar country'. Preparation then targeted these specific concerns. For example, to alleviate anxiety about travelling and teaching alone for the first time in a foreign country, all staff travelled in pairs for their first two trips, and whenever possible, all subsequent trips.

Semi-formal induction sessions were organised where peers and/or senior colleagues from other disciplines who had previously taught offshore were invited 'to talk about their offshore experiences and their understandings ... but not in a formal way'. This activity was popular with staff. There were also a series of workshops addressing logistic and teaching issues 10 weeks prior to teaching offshore. Because IT was identified as a common concern, the team members participated in formal IT training sessions delivered by the university technology group. Finally, prior to departure, all team members had one-on-one meetings with the coordinator.

As well as these pre-departure approaches, all the other seven teams provided informal induction sessions, along with different versions of peer support, structured and informal, one-on-one and in groups. Structured and one-on-one peer support programs were most common for academics working offshore for the first time, with a new teacher being matched with an experienced academic. For more experienced staff, two teams provided mentor training. The others were less structured with buddy systems created, allowing flexibility in how the two academics worked together.

The aim of these various styles of informal pairing was to facilitate personal interaction with colleagues when preparing and returning from teaching abroad. One academic spoke about the importance of the informal mentorship they received when they first started teaching offshore five years prior, explaining that, 'I would certainly still look on John as being a

mentor for me ... we continue to chat about teaching experiences and commonalities and so on and that has certainly helped me to develop personally and professionally over the years’.

The one common thread all teams shared was a lack of preparation around cultural matters. A few of the coordinators expressed concerns about possible cultural and intercultural communication challenges prior to departure. However, just as all the academic developers had reported in Chapter Seven, all team coordinators said they struggled to find any university experts or resources to work with to prepare and provide ongoing support for such matters.

The team that was the exception, receiving some support around cultural matters, was the one where Jenny, the bilingual program administrator, was recruited. Although lacking any formal intercultural qualifications, Jenny was from China, had experience working in the Chinese education system, had worked in Australian universities for eight years, and was prepared to share her personal and professional experiences. The informal lunchtime sessions, initially conducted by Jenny to introduce teachers to some local Chinese language expressions, soon expanded to include talking about language and literacy issues that could potentially arise in the classroom. After a few weeks the issues addressed in these meetings evolved to include information about local customs and cultural challenges staff might encounter in daily life, both outside and inside the classroom. These team gatherings continued throughout the semester, providing opportunities for the academics to explore a range of issues across the curriculum, while exchanging teaching ideas amongst the team. The coordinator explained, ‘it wasn’t just dealing with one topic at a time, we dealt with the program as a whole’. Such an approach is strongly endorsed by Leask and Bridge (2013) who place discipline teaching teams at the centre of their conceptual framework for internationalising the curriculum, explaining they are the ‘primary architects of the curriculum’ (p. 80).

It could be argued that it was less than ideal to have Jenny facilitate such sessions, simply based on being a native speaker, and having previously worked as an administrator in the education sector in China and Australia. However, considering the obvious lack of university expertise and the alternatives (such as the university who engaged a cross-cultural consultant with business rather than higher education expertise to run a one-off session for all university staff), then this team could be applauded for such an initiative.

9.3.2 Offshore team support

Academics teaching as part of a team rarely worked offshore alone, most often travelling with one other colleague or less often a small group of staff. Staff would either be informally paired with another colleague or if new to offshore teaching, assigned a mentor. The most extensive support was in the team with Jenny, the bilingual administrator, who travelled to China with all first time lecturers, and whenever possible the more experienced academics, to assist with language and cultural transition issues.

There were no fixed stipulations for staff travelling in pairs, but rather the working arrangements were left up to the academics themselves. In mentoring arrangements, Blackwell and McLean (1996, p. 80) advocate for this more organic and less prescribed approach, suggesting it empowers partners to develop a working relationship corresponding to their interests and strengths. Travelling in pairs also meant the incidental 'corridor chat' type exchanges to do with personal and professional issues continued during the teaching sojourn.

Although it could not be guaranteed that the pairs were automatically compatible, or the fact that team members had mostly been carefully selected, and colleagues worked and prepared together prior to departure minimised the risk of conflicts offshore. The only negative pairing, already discussed, was the team member who was reticent but required to teach offshore; their lack of engagement and motivation causing tension for all staff, but particularly those paired to work with them abroad.

In addition to pair and small group work which was noted in all nine teams, three other types of offshore support strategies were identified. First, two coordinators, when not with the team offshore, successfully provided online and phone support for staff to discuss professional and/or personal matters. As previously noted in Chapter Seven, this was generally not a popular means of support, with academics rarely making contact from overseas. When I asked one coordinator why they thought this was an effective means of support for their team members, they said it was because they had established strong relationships 'built up over the years working together onshore and offshore'.

Another type of support organised by some teams was to arrange to have the partner-institution program coordinator or administrators meet each new group of staff on arrival from Australia and then 'induct them into the class and into the technology et cetera'. Other specific types of professional development and support with partners were also discussed and these are examined separately in the final section of this chapter.

Finally, two teams, actively supported staff who wanted to extend their time abroad on either side of their teaching commitments. These two teams budgeted and planned for brief periods of professional development leave for staff to be taken offshore. Three other teams took a less planned approach, attempting to accommodate academics' requests to extend time offshore as they were made—a coordinator explaining how they tried to be flexible when timetabling academics' onshore teaching commitments. This was easier to achieve for the 60 per cent of academics who had their offshore teaching built into their overall workload than for staff who taught above-load, restricted by their onshore work commitments. Although research encourages staff to have extra time offshore (Debowski 2003) and rest days before resuming onshore commitments (NTEU 2004a), the remaining four teams, as with most other academic participants, were unable to take advantage of such opportunities.

The participants reported using the extra time offshore to rest and to 'immerse themselves into the culture' mostly taking short trips, gathering local teaching materials and meeting up

with partner colleagues. A few used the extra time to observe different partner colleagues teach and in two cases were invited to team-teach. One coordinator of a small team explained how after teaching ended at the end of the semester, the team stayed offshore for one extra day, and 'we sit and have debriefing meetings with our team, as well as partner staff and with student reps and we get feedback and then together look at how we can improve based on the feedback'.

9.3.3 Re-entry support and ongoing development

Only one of the nine teams provided formal structured debriefs. This was the team coordinated by the academic developer who did not teach offshore. The other eight teams provided different types of semi-structured re-entry support, often during group meetings where team members were encouraged to raise questions and concerns. One coordinator explained, 'whatever the issues were, we would try and negotiate amongst us as a team, benefiting from people's experience on how to address any problems that anybody had, so we did that as a team'.

Two coordinators felt that the longer their team taught together the stronger the group dynamic became, and that the team members became more confident to speak about problems and struggles experienced offshore, while making suggestions and sharing possible solutions. One coordinator described how colleagues would be involved in many 'micro level meetings, particularly after teaching visits, reviewing the work the students were producing and assessing as a team what to do next and how they might go about doing things differently'. Another coordinator said in addition to incidental work meetings, they set-up semi-formal but social gatherings to encourage feedback:

At least twice a year I've had staff meetings where we get together. Sometimes I have people over to my place for lunch, just to talk about what some of the issues might be, and what we can do before the next program. We try to deal with most of the stuff together.

No matter the approach, the eight academic coordinators felt that living and teaching in the same offshore context as their colleagues, observing and experiencing similar challenges, were advantageous when facilitating informal debriefs. They felt in a good position to understand the feedback of individual team members upon re-entry, while experiencing firsthand any gaps where extra professional development might be needed in the next iteration of pre-departure preparation.

In contrast, the one team that took a more structured approach to supporting staff and gathering information, once they had returned, was that in which the academic developer did not travel and teach offshore. Members of this team who were new to transnational teaching attended a detailed one-on-one session for up to 1.5 hours. The academic developer explained, 'I did quite strong debriefing with them, "Come into my office. How did it go? What happened? Were the resources okay?" that kind of thing'. The meetings with more experienced academics were 'not as extensive. I'd just pop in and ask, "How'd it go?"'

As well as these meetings, all staff could make extra consultation times and were free to discuss personal, teaching and cultural concerns. This coordinator explained that the purpose for the re-entry debriefs was twofold. First, they provided an opportunity to assess what professional development might be needed before the next teaching cycle. Second, the coordinator was able to gather 'the staff perceptions from the first teaching cycle', which would be reported back to the head of school and international dean should any changes need to be made or if issues needed to be discussed with the partners.

No matter the type of debrief offered, gathering data firsthand from the returning academics was vitally important. First, this process ensured the cycle of professional development was ongoing. Second, the academics' feedback made a valuable contribution to improving the overall delivery offshore and immediately raised any teaching concerns. The third critically important feature is that this process demonstrated to the academics the important role they

play by valuing their contributions. It is significant that it was only in the team-based approach that returning home support was so comprehensively included.

9.4 Teams and partnerships

The nature of the relationship with partner staff and the role they play is the last significant finding regarding team-based preparation. All nine teams made particular reference to their relationships with partner staff and three coordinators in particular considered partner staff to be a part of their team. In examining the significance of these relationships five important factors were discussed: the types of partnerships and how they were established, the importance of time, creating the curriculum, partner staff and their employment conditions and collaborative professional development.

Partnerships in the early days of transnational education were primarily an outcome of professional relationships between individual academics. McLean (2006) describes how this 'cottage industry' approach saw single disciplines multiply over time such that one university could find themselves with many partners operating in the one location with different delivery models. McLean (2006) argued since transnational education has grown and is now a 'high stakes, high risk core business for most Australian universities' this 'cottage industry' approach needed to be replaced with a more 'entrepreneurial approach' (p. 57). This new business model resulted in fewer partners, more systematic processes managed by university international business units, in consultation with the schools delivering the discipline-specific programs.

It was interesting to discover therefore that seven of the nine universities where participants preparing in teams were created along 'cottage industry' lines and were partnered with public higher education institutions (the remaining two with private commercial providers). The seven partnerships were the result of relationships between two or more senior academics with shared research and teaching interests, professional networks and connections, or with

former international students. According to one coordinator, 'when we established our first contact in Singapore 10 years ago it wasn't through an exact official university link, it was a member of staff who had associates that they knew in Singapore and the connection was made'.

Another team coordinator explained how an Australian-based academic who had originally been an international student from China did all the negotiations for the program. The transnational program 'basically came about through their contacts, as a lot of things in China do, so once you've got your '*guanxi*' going ...' This academic, who was a leading discipline expert in their field, had a deep understanding of the Chinese and Australian education systems and had been exposed to both cultures; they were considered the 'driving force' of the program and 'they would speak and liaise with us, the partners and the students'.

All of the participants recognised that the entrepreneurial model fulfils the business demands of the complex and competitive global higher education market space. However, they also felt that new partnerships need to be established with equal input from the university managers and marketers, and academics and their partner colleagues. They feared that in practice this was not always the case. Hoare (2006, p. 246) concurs, noting the 'sometimes profound difference between the attitudes of those who establish a transnational contract and those who eventually deliver it'.

One long-term team coordinator, who has been involved in setting-up programs under both models, strongly advocated the need for adequate academic input when establishing programs from an entrepreneurial model. They emphasised the importance of building personal relationships with partners, the literature supporting this position (Davies et al. 1995; Lee, D, Pae & Wong 2001; Lovett, Simmons & Kali 1995). They also bemoaned how current negotiations and contract considerations can be driven more by business than educational imperatives, explaining:

I think that's a significant weakness in the way we approach contracts now and how we negotiate everything. With the new situation [entrepreneurial model], the contract, everything got signed before, and now everybody is agreeing that this program needs to be further academically developed ... we're kind of putting the time into it in a very rushed manner, because it wasn't fully considered before.

Along with equal input from academics, all nine coordinators highlighted the importance of allowing enough time for both sets of staff to contribute to the curriculum, and build collegiate relationships and trust with partners. The importance of trust and the consequences of doubt, particularly when establishing rapport with colleagues from different cultural traditions were previously discussed in Chapter Six. To highlight this point, one coordinator shared how they 'had three days of talks with the Chinese university and then several years of slow discussion before teaching started'. Another coordinator emphasised the importance of having 'a long lead-in time' both for planning the curriculum and developing relationships explaining '...I've been talking to colleagues, I went to an international conference, a visiting scholar came here, I've got research students in the field, I've been following up on the web ...' Another long-term coordinator of a team, speaking about a program that was established after meeting their current Hong Kong university colleagues at a conference in Europe, put it this way:

We met with them there and talked about partnership possibilities. The idea and the development of the idea of the program happened over probably four or five years where we worked directly with the partner organisation. We looked at what the Hong Kong needs were and developed a program specifically for them ... over a four year period we built a strong understanding of their needs and a strong relationship.

Having the locus of control of the curriculum at the team level allowed for greater flexibility and collaboration with partners, the outcome being a factor for the successful delivery of the program. The participant, who had taught in two separate programs, one established under the university business model and the other built from academic relationships, spoke about these differences in light of the content and methods of delivery. In the collegiate model they

said they felt they had ‘a lot of autonomy in terms of how we run our program. We’re not restricted by the central university unit in any way and we could adapt the material as we needed to’. They then explained teaching under the alternate model: ‘It felt like the content was fixed and only considered after the contract had been signed’. The benefits of the former approach were not just about working with a more contextually relevant curriculum but that in allowing for input from onshore and offshore colleagues (Leask 2004b; Miliszewska 2006) it demonstrated a real partnership and a genuine sense of mutual ownership.

The selection of partner staff and their employment conditions was another common issue discussed. Most Australian-based coordinators of transnational programs are required to be involved in the selection of partner teachers. However, this practice often may only ever amount to consulting with the partner coordinator and approving pre-selected applicants. This was generally not the case in the nine team-based programs, with evidence of much greater interaction and involvement in the process. One coordinator explained, ‘the recruiting is technically the partner’s responsibility, but we don’t believe you can sub-contract quality, so we want to go up there and get involved’. An experienced offshore coordinator commented that another benefit of long lead times when establishing new partnerships is ‘you get to know the academics and teachers along the way’. Another coordinator also emphasised the importance of being involved in the selection of partner staff.

We have a number of affiliated lecturers offshore who are not full-time academic staff members. They are usually people that we know and that we have worked with in other settings ... or have retired from other universities and are doing this with us, but they are all experienced academics. We know them before we employ them.

As well as contributing to selecting staff and getting to know academics in the process of setting up a new program, they also recognised the advantages of working with partner colleagues who had stable employment conditions. In the seven partnerships with universities and higher education colleges the partner academics were permanent members of staff or on long-term contracts. This stability afforded the Australian-based academics

working in teams the opportunity to get to know their colleagues, regularly review the curriculum together and plan improvements for future iterations in delivering the program. This contrasts with partner teachers employed at commercial institutions, many of whom do not experience similar employment conditions and therefore less able to commit to long-term planning.

Linked to partner colleagues' employment conditions was varying levels of support for professional development. For example, formal and informal staff exchanges for partner colleagues were mentioned by half of the participants who prepared in teams. In some cases, partner staff exchanges were formalised as a part of their professional development or sabbatical leave. One coordinator who started teaching in a team-based program 11 years ago spoke about the mix of formal and informal connections they had with their offshore counterpart, explaining: 'As a part of our memorandum of understanding we invite an Indonesian staff member to come here ... to engage with various staff members here in terms of research, in terms of teaching and learning, to kind of take in as much information as they can'.

Another academic mentioned a similar type of exchange, saying, 'we invite one of the partner teachers on the program to come here and just spend a few weeks with us, to take part in the classes that we run, and they come and live with me for a time'. As part of a larger and more formalised exchange, a lecturer from Singapore travels to Australia with all the offshore students for a two-week study period, which is a part of the transnational program. The coordinator explains how the lecturer 'actually spends a lot of time meeting with staff here to get a more fundamental understanding of program changes and how things are evolving'. No similar staff exchange arrangements were discussed for Australian-based staff to work offshore with their partners; the only opportunity was arranging to spend a few extra days at a time, as previously discussed.

The team-based participants' experiences reflect the valuable outcomes of collaborating with partner staff, not only as a means to avoid cultural hegemony (Ziguras 2008), but to benefit from the rich collegiate learning opportunities and as a way to build 'equal footing' into transnational education programs (Smith, K 2010, p. 804).

9.5 Teams and university approaches to preparation and support

A comparative cost analysis could help inform and provide some support for an institution to consider implementing alternatives to formal preparation such as a team-based approach. Based on the participants' experiences, especially in the initial stages, it seems it may not be so much a case of needing greater amounts of money and time, but rather distributing and utilising current resources differently. With this in mind, the strengths and limits of the team-based model for preparation are further explored by contrasting this model with current university formal and informal approaches.

9.5.1 Benefits of team-based preparation

In sharp contrast to many of the one-off, non-planned and reactive formal university preparation sessions, all nine team-based approaches were planned and designed around the four stages for effective program development: pre-planning, planning, delivery and follow-up (Brundage & MacKeracher 1980; Lawler & King 2000a). Team-based preparation was also discipline-based, operated within the parameters of the academics' work context, and more able to recognise and respond to individual academic's needs based on their particular roles and experience. This is in distinct contrast with typical central university programs where all staff, sessional and permanent, new and experienced are 'prepared and developed' together in the same two-hour workshop.

The different versions of team-based preparation were based on adult learning principles, whereas many of the formal institutional sessions followed a linear and transmissive style of delivery. For example, they responded to learners' needs, built on the team members various

experiences, and used collaborative modes of inquiry as outlined in the *Adult Learning Model of Faculty Development* (Lawler & King 2000a). Along with a collaborative and inter-collegial approach, other strategies recommended in Osborn's (2004) *Work-Embedded Professional Development Model*, such as taking a constructivist view of the learner and mutually negotiating the delivery methods, were evident. The presenters and methods used were diverse with a mix of face-to-face formal workshops, meetings, informal gatherings, and peer-led sessions and mentoring. Each method was chosen to best match the requirements of the learners, the context and available resource, and incorporated many of the strengths of informal preparation approaches such as being flexible, collegial and self-directed.

Another significant strength of the team-based approach is that it is the only method where support was provided across each of the three phases of the transnational teaching cycle. The flexibility and immediacy to respond to specific needs in a timely fashion was not evident in any of the 'non team-based' approaches primarily focused only at the point of pre-departure. Also the team-based approach addressed personal and professionally related issues, logistics and teaching challenges, while semi-formal and informal approaches were mainly focused on preparatory teaching issues at a superficial level.

The one critically important omission from all university approaches was the lack of preparation and development for the 'intercultural nature of offshore teaching' (Leask et al. 2005, p. vii). The one exception was in the team where Jenny, the Chinese administrator, provided some informal preparation based on her personal and professional experiences. Developing academics to be interculturally competent and confident at communicating and teaching in foreign contexts is vitally important, and as with all university approaches of preparation, this was missing from team-based preparation. This was not the result of an oversight, as the coordinators, similar to the academic developers, acknowledged the need for such intercultural development, but it could be explained by the lack of readily accessible institutional resources to turn to for support.

Where team-based preparation failed to adopt the second guiding principle of Leask *et al's Professional Development Framework for Academic Staff Teaching Australian Programs Offshore* (2005, p. vii), concerning intercultural preparation, most teams did address the other two guiding principles. That is, where possible, partner colleagues were encouraged or did receive professional development, and team preparation was sensitive and responded to the different individual needs of academics as well as the groups. Teams also followed through on other recommendations from the Leask *et al* study such as selecting the most suitable staff for offshore teaching. Although the choice of staff was limited to the available discipline experts, coordinators informally selected from this cohort, where possible, staff considered to possess particular personal attributes that would best match the challenges of working abroad. This was a significant, positive step in comparison to how most other academics in the university found they were teaching transnationally.

Other advantages of this type of preparation is that there was no need to 'promote' the sessions because the timing, location, objectives and purpose of the professional development activities were determined and agreed upon by the participants. Related to this is the readiness, as opposed to resistance, by team members to participate and contribute in the various development events. The academics were willing to attend and actively contribute in the training or meetings, as long as they were well organised, and had clear objectives and worthwhile outcomes. The regular collegiate interaction provided the opportunity to share their knowledge, learn from others and rather than feeling like a solo traveller, it was more like benefiting from some group *simpatico*. One coordinator captured this sentiment:

I mean as a group we're very closely knit. We get together and we talk about the situation and listen to what staff have got to say ... so certainly there is a great deal of communication and offers of support ongoing between the members of the team.

Further research would better discern if these respondents worked collaboratively before they started preparing as part of a team, or if being part of a collegiate supportive environment made them appreciate this type of preparation. In the meantime, their responses were decidedly different to the experiences of the other academic respondents in this study and previous studies, where academics were resistant to the more traditional and formal modes of university professional development (Adams, M, Marshall & Cameron 1999; Gelade & Quinn 2004).

9.5.2 Limits of team-based preparation

No matter how dynamic and well received this approach to preparation was by those who prepared as part of a team, there are always limitations to all professional development approaches. The major concerns with this approach were the lack of evaluation, cultural preparation, concerns around collegiate compatibility, the role of coordinators and finally collaboration with partners.

A general, as opposed to specific limitation is the lack of comprehensive program evaluation as to the long-term effectiveness of team-based preparation. To date, the measure of the benefits of this approach relies mostly on participants' self-reporting and the stability of teams over time. The participants' self-reports are strengthened by the fact that they represent nine different universities, but it is only from a small number of academics, with very particular circumstances in how the transnational programs were established. Along with academics' perceptions, feedback from students and partner staff would be valuable. As well, program evaluation research (Gibbs & Coffey 2004; Kirkpatrick 1998; Wilson & Berne 1999) recommends systematic short and long-term follow-up be implemented so as to assess the degree of academics' learning, changes in the performance of their teaching offshore and overall benefits of improved quality in program delivery.

The remaining limitations are more specific, starting with a point already raised, to do with the lack of intercultural and cross-cultural communication preparation and development.

There has been a consistent call from academic developers and coordinators of teams, that to redress this shortcoming; change on a much broader scale is needed, requiring attention and a response from institutional leaders to provide cultural support for all university staff at all locations.

A potential risk, present in all types of collegiate work, was the impact of incompatibility and conflicts between staff. The negative effects of such dissonance could be intensified, considering the nature of teams being a small number of staff working closely together over an extended period of time, particularly when offshore without ready access to other means of support. Its strength could be a weakness and that is why the strategies to minimise such scenarios, such as careful selection of team members, developing communication and team work skills and early supportive intervention when signs of adverse behaviour show are so important.

A third concern is to do with the heavy dependence on a 'champion' coordinator to create, lead and sustain the team-based preparation and support. Despite attempts at encouraging shared ownership, implementing succession strategies and planning and developing skills for their absence; there was still the sense that a great deal of the success of these teams was due to the dedication and hard work of the coordinator. This reliance on an individual's vision, commitment and drive makes the teams vulnerable, as well as adding extra pressure and strain on the coordinator's already demanding role. However, as with including intercultural preparation, minimising these risks may require additional actions from the wider university, such as supporting coordinators' facilitation of the teams, as well as recognising and rewarding them for fulfilling such an important role.

Finally, these teams predominantly operated with transnational programs created from collegiate connections, and mostly with partners that were traditional universities. Shanahan and McParlane (2005, p. 223) argue that in the current highly competitive marketplace, strategic direction and targeted planning needs to replace the former 'serendipitous' nature of

transnational partnerships being formed through academics' personal contacts. With these types of partnerships becoming less likely in the future, the challenge for teams is to find a way to successfully implement all, or part, of this model of preparation in programs with commercial partners resulting from entrepreneurial means.

The challenge therefore for universities is to find a way for the entrepreneurial model to work more closely with onshore and offshore academics, with enough flexibility to allow additional time for preparation and development to be built into the process along the way. Failing to find the right balance and having contracts signed without detailed input from academics and partner staff around the curriculum, can stymie the flow-on benefits from establishing true and trusted collaborative partnerships. It also reduces the opportunities to extend the team-based approach to preparation to include all partner staff to achieve what Dunn and Wallace (2005, p. 7) recommend, 'program-based inclusive communities of practice' made-up of staff members 'in all countries associated with a program'.

In essence, there are many benefits to be had for those universities who remain flexible and open, not only to alternative ways of establishing new partnerships, but how they go about preparing and supporting staff for teaching offshore. The question to be asked is not if this team-based approach should replace other formal and informal methods of preparation, but rather what can academic development practice learn from these nine teams and how then can those lessons be innovatively applied to current and new discipline-specific groups engaged in transnational teaching?

9.6 Conclusion

This chapter revealed how nine participants successfully prepared as part of a disciplined-based team for teaching offshore. A great deal of the richness and value of this team-based approach stems from how the teams were formed, how professional support was planned across the TNE cycle and how it responded to the discrete needs of team members. The

reported benefits of this approach stand out even more when contrasted with the lack of strategically planned and dedicated university preparation and support provided centrally. Unlike formal and some types of informal university preparation, teams determined the type of preparation and support provided by acknowledging academics' different backgrounds and levels of experience, and identifying and responding to their different needs at each phase of the transnational teaching cycle.

The relatively small sizes of the teams and shared discipline-based knowledge around the curriculum and pedagogy, allowed for shifts in the type of preparation required at any given point, guaranteeing enough flexibility to respond in different ways to new challenges. An eclectic mix of delivery methods was also used incorporating semi-formal, informal and social types of learning activities. This was also the only approach where there was evidence of preparation and support being provided across all three phases of the transnational teaching cycle: before, during and after teaching sojourns. However, in common with all other approaches to professional development, intercultural preparation and support was neglected.

A most distinctive and positive attribute of this method was that those working in teams had the strongest relationships with partner staff. They learned from each other through peer observation, collaborative development of curriculum and assessments, and engaging in joint publications and sabbatical exchange. Informally they learned as well, through sharing meals or attending social and cultural events together. Some staff were also encouraged and supported to foster such relationships by spending extra time offshore. The benefits from strong collegiate partner relationships flowed through to greater ease and collaboration in working on the design and renewal of the curriculum, assessment and research.

The team-based approach reported in this chapter has introduced a new and flexible model of professional development for preparing and supporting academics teaching offshore. This approach moved beyond the limits of binary formal and informal approaches reported in

Chapters Seven and Eight. It represents the value of taking an eclectic mix of adult learning strategies, and innovatively applying them to discipline specific groups of academics. Most significant and encouraging was that of all types of preparation and support, there was strong evidence to support that this group of academics willingly engaged with and found worthwhile their professional development, which is not the case for all professional development aimed at TNE teachers.

Chapter Ten: Conclusion

In this thesis I set out to examine how Australian universities prepare and support fly-in fly-out academic staff teaching in intensive mode for short periods of time offshore. I reviewed the small body of research that had previously explored this unique mode of offshore teaching activity in Australian universities. I planned to contribute to the current body of literature by collecting data from different universities and disciplines, from academic developers and from academics involved in transnational education. The aim of this thesis was to contribute a detailed account of how universities prepared and supported academics for living and working abroad.

Accordingly I addressed four central questions. First, I asked how academics were recruited, remunerated, their roles and responsibilities. Second, I asked what kinds of personal, professional, cultural and teaching challenges they faced. Third, I sought to establish what kinds of formal and informal preparation and support their universities were providing. Finally, with a view to making some worthwhile contribution to universities engaged in fly-in fly-out teaching, I set out to discover what types of preparation academics found most valuable in managing the challenges.

The data was gathered from a range of sources to investigate academic preparation and support at all three phases of the transnational teaching cycle: preparing for departure, while staff were abroad, and after their return to Australia. This study employed a combination of analysis and interpretation of a range of policy and educational support documents, observation of professional development sessions, interviews with academic developers involved in the preparation and support of staff, and interviews with academics who had taught offshore. The research design was innovative compared to former studies not only because of the mix of methods employed but also because the scope of the research extended across different types of universities, disciplines and multiple offshore sites.

The findings show that very little has changed over the past decade regarding the types of challenges academics experience teaching offshore or the low levels of institutional preparation and support they received to manage these challenges. This study revealed that most academic participants were still not formally recruited to teach offshore, experienced increasing tension around financial remuneration, and believed that teaching offshore impacted negatively on their career progression.

Few participants received any comprehensive and strategically planned institutional preparation or support to manage personal and professional challenges at any of the three critical phases of transnational teaching. The formal and informal preparation that was provided was ad hoc and generally perceived to be a poor quality. There was no evidence of any basic, let alone, well-developed dedicated, intercultural professional development provided in any of the approaches to preparation or at any phase of transnational teaching. Although most academics coped with most challenges, even those involved in critical incidents offshore, strong feelings of disaffection were expressed by most of the academics regarding their contribution to transnational teaching.

Early on I felt dejected by the initial findings. Although there is much value in confirming former findings, such as the poor quality of pre-departure preparation and absence of effective streamlined cultural preparation, new findings, such as staff disaffection and the impact of critical incidents on academics, were less than uplifting. This however was not the sum total of new discoveries from this investigation.

Listening and talking with academic developers and academics, I identified alternate informal means to institutional preparation and support. I also uncovered pockets of innovative individual self-preparation and exceptional examples of collegiate support. I also discovered a team-based method of continuous preparation and support that a small number of participants actively engaged in and found worthwhile. So, alongside findings that are cause for concern, there are discoveries of good practice, often occurring in isolated sectors of the

university, but which highlight potential for new ways for university preparation and support to be provided for fly-in fly-out academics.

This concluding chapter brings together significant findings of the academic participants' experiences of recruitment and remuneration, followed by preparation and support. I will then present three prominent themes that emerged from the synthesis of the data around academics' challenges, preparation and experiences of teaching offshore. My thoughts and implications for universities follow, along with suggested areas for future research before concluding with my reflections on this investigation.

10.1 Recruitment, responsibilities and remuneration

My studies revealed around 90 per cent of the participants were not formally recruited. Except for some informal attempts to select particular staff in some teams, most of the academic participants were chosen primarily because of their discipline expertise and availability. This suggests that recommendations from former research, as to the importance and value of selecting specific staff to work abroad, are being disregarded (Debowski 2003; Jais 2012; Leask et al. 2005; NTEU 2004a). The particular skills, attributes and personal characteristics recommended in the literature as 'ideal' for selecting staff teaching in foreign contexts are similarly being overlooked (Badley 2006; Leask 2006a; Teekens 2001b).

None of the academic participants were given position descriptions specifying key teaching accountabilities or detailing additional non-teaching duties. Participants noted that the additional tasks were challenging, requiring time and expertise they did not always have. As previous research suggests, the academic participants reported being either unaware of, or unprepared for activities such as marketing university programs at trade fairs, providing pastoral care to offshore students, and/or representing their university at offshore graduation ceremonies (Debowski 2003; Jais 2012; Poole & Ewan 2010). As a result of not being informed of such tasks academics were left to respond in a reactive as opposed to an

informed manner to such duties, losing the opportunity to make a quality contribution to fostering university international relations, beyond their central teaching role.

There were significant remuneration disparities within and between institutions, with differences in above-load payments, per diems and work conditions occurring between faculties, schools and departments. Participants noted these disparities as a cause of frustration and at times discontent between colleagues and not conducive to building strong supportive collegiate relationships.

Participants in this study also pointed to a growing imbalance between the demands of offshore work and the rewards and acknowledgement for transnational teaching. Debowski (2003) notes that the initial appeal of monetary incentives diminishes as the negative effects of intensive fly-in fly-out teaching become clear, and this was found to be true for a number of academics in this study. There was general dissatisfaction around per diems not staying abreast of increasing costs and becoming more administratively complex to manage. Some staff working above-load felt the payments did not adequately reflect the additional duties and demands of balancing onshore and offshore teaching commitments. These financial factors led some participants to withdraw from offshore teaching.

Decisions by academics not to commit to ongoing offshore teaching were also informed by the perceived lack of recognition of their contribution to the universities' internationalisation strategies, along with the detrimental impact on their career progression. Some participants—most notably middle and senior level academics—were clear that transnational teaching was not considered criteria for promotion and played no part in developing their careers. There was no formal (or informal) recognition of the additional knowledge and skills required for teaching intensively in foreign cultures. Overwhelming the perception was that teaching offshore negatively impacted their research productivity and therefore career progression.

These were the main reasons given by the academics opting out of offshore teaching, or those who were contemplating doing so, and may also deter others from choosing to teach offshore. Regarding the ageing academic workforce, fewer experienced permanent staff ready to commit to fly-in fly-out teaching, and high staff turnover will inevitably create long-term employment consequences for HR departments responsible for filling offshore positions. Based on the findings of this study, relying on junior and sessional academics to fill the potential void of more experienced and senior academics is not a sustainable or quality solution, particularly considering the lack of preparation or support for sessional and junior staff.

10.2 Preparation and support

This study clearly demonstrated the absence of any comprehensively planned, delivered or evaluated formal university programs or resources for staff to manage offshore teaching. Formal institutional preparation, mostly delivered from central academic development units, was ad hoc, the content generic, and the delivery methods were devoid of adult learning and program planning principles. The varying and complex needs of academics were not considered in any of the workshops observed, resulting in a disconnection between what was delivered and what was needed. The content mostly addressed teaching issues with little attention given to personal and cultural matters or the provision of information and strategies for managing critical incidents. The pedagogy was presenter-driven with information transmitted from a pre-departure perspective, even though most of the participants were experienced in offshore teaching. In addition, there was no evidence of ongoing evaluation or long-term follow-up or renewal of these programs.

Most of the sessions specifically intended for offshore teachers were organised prior to upcoming AUQA audits, and appeared to be motivated by a concern for compliance rather than quality. There was a clear message from academics and academic developers that frantically applying 'wet paint' to create a pristine façade of preparation before AUQA visits

was not useful from a professional learning and growth perspective. Academic developers, in particular, were aware of the shortcomings of not just the pre-AUQA sessions but of preparation and support for transnational academics more broadly. They expressed an eagerness to provide alternative preparation, but felt they were not encouraged or supported to do so. Along with the operational challenges they faced, such as continual restructures, there was also a struggle to validate their developing role to academics. Additional barriers and impediments noted by developers and directors of academic development units such as fixed budgets and finite resources for programs, stress related to their role and lack of career options were also reflected in the data and confirmed similar findings from prior research (Fraser & Ryan 2012).

Although the academics I interviewed commented on tangential preparation activities, none had participated in any formal university planned programs or received any ongoing institutional support. It is thus impossible to discuss their perceptions about the worth of formal preparation and support designed specifically for academics teaching offshore. The academic developers who participated in this study did not rate these professional development sessions highly, and their descriptions were consistent with my observations on the one-off pre-AQUA workshops. The few academic participants who had attended generic university workshops were generally disappointed, with more negative than positive accounts shared in this study.

Informal approaches, on the other hand, were engaged in more often and spoken about more favourably than one-off general university professional development workshops. This investigation confirmed that informal approaches filled the void created by the lack of formal preparation and support by universities. This is in spite of the knowledge and skills exchanged during informal learning not necessarily always being accurate, appropriate or ideal from either an individual, organisational or intercultural perspective.

The mix of informal strategies the academics chiefly depended on included drawing from onshore teaching experiences, self-initiated actions and working with colleagues. The vacuum created by the lack of university preparation saw academics relying on their former onshore teaching experiences, particularly of teaching international students. The contention that onshore skills are always readily transferable to a foreign and unfamiliar offshore context, or that teaching international students onshore prepares staff for working with international students offshore has been questioned in this and former studies and requires further investigation. Another common informal approach was academics self-initiated and self-directed preparation, mainly triggered by individuals' needs, for example, searching websites for information about vaccinations, reading travel guides for cultural preparation and accessing local newspapers to include contextually relevant content into the curriculum.

Along with these two approaches most other informal preparation was the result of connecting with colleagues. Although it is important to note collegiate support was not always an option, especially while offshore, and depended upon teaching schedules and/or colleagues' compatibility. Other limitations on informal collegiate preparation were the untested and subjective types of knowledge, skills, insights and attitudes honed by individual coordinators' and academics' experiences, particularly noted in intercultural exchanges.

Informal methods in isolation were just as patchy and risky as sole reliance on formal approaches, and operated outside of any institutional strategy and without resources or support. While academics engaged more readily with informal strategies, finding them more closely aligned to their 'values of autonomy, integrity and personal responsibility' (Boud 1999, p. 4), in isolation they were still no panacea for a total lack of institutional integrated and planned holistic program of preparation and support. The quality and availability of informal approaches varied greatly, often depending upon the individual experiences and motivation of a coordinator or colleague, and there was minimal evidence of any quality intercultural preparation.

Along with formal and informal means another approach to preparation and support was reflected in the experiences and feedback of approximately one-third of the academic participants. This was a mix of semi-structured and informal strategies, labelled by respondents as a 'team-based' approach. Individual academic experiences, expertise and needs were recognised in the planning of the programs, and a variety of methods that best matched the particular challenge and context were used. Many of the team-based participants worked closely with offshore partners and most programs were created from a collegiate as opposed to entrepreneurial model. The academics reported feeling engaged and supported in the preparation process and expressed a sense of professional growth and development. It was the only approach where most of the identified challenges were addressed and where support was provided across each of the three key phases of transnational teaching. The type of challenge this model was least effective in responding to, as with formal and informal approaches, was cultural and intercultural preparation, a reflection of the seeming lack of universities' wider investment in intercultural development.

The teams' reliance on one champion team coordinator, who was not supported or acknowledged by the university for their innovation, academic development leadership or mentoring, made this approach vulnerable and potentially unsustainable. As with formal and informal approaches it could be a more robust and reliable means of professional development, if integrated into a wider dedicated and strategic university plan of preparation and support. Academics in this study have demonstrated they are willing to engage in professional development if designed around their needs, delivered at a discipline-level, flexibly planned, well-coordinated and drawing on a combination of formal and informal methods relevant to the task at hand.

Each year a new set of academics go offshore—their lack of preparation no different from those who have gone before them. As professionals, academics diligently do their best to deliver equivalent and quality education. However, solely relying on ad hoc formal, informal

or institutionally unsupported team-based means of professional learning and development can prove unproductive, even detrimental. None of the participants had received any quality formal university preparation or support to manage the diverse personal, professional, cultural and teaching challenges they would experience, either prior to, during or on returning from their offshore work.

These findings would seem dire if they did not sit alongside evidence of valuable quality preparation practice operating in isolated pockets of universities, demonstrating the potential to shift to more productive and engaging preparation approaches. Evidence gathered in the thesis, particularly from the participants working in teams, suggests that with recognition for and support of skilled and dedicated leaders, current good practice could be harnessed to deliver planned, integrated and flexible ongoing professional development and support for all fly-in fly-out academics.

10.3 Challenges, responses and consequences

Three outstanding themes emerged from the synthesis of the data gathered around academics' challenges, preparation, experiences and perceptions of their contributions to transnational teaching. These themes reflect: how academics teaching offshore coped or did not cope; the impact of critical incidents; and the perception of disaffection regarding their contributions.

10.3.1 Coping or not

Most participants 'coped' most of the time with the personal, administrative and teaching challenges associated with working offshore, in spite of the fact none had received formal institutional preparation or ongoing support. Although coping is better than failing, the leap to excelling at managing the diverse and multiple challenges connected to transnational teaching is significant.

The findings show that academics managed personal challenges by relying on their own resources as well as the support they received from family and friends. Nearly all administrative and logistic matters associated with teaching abroad were also self-managed, even during emergencies, natural disasters and illness. However, the feelings that lingered after such encounters were not dealt with easily, as discussed in the following theme around critical incidents. When academics recounted their experiences of teaching challenges, such as working with new partners at different institutions, they said they managed most of the teaching challenges by drawing on a mix of self-initiated preparation, collegiate support and 'trial and error' learning.

There was a less definite or unanimous response around managing cultural and intercultural challenges. Some respondents spoke about entering new countries and feeling 'anxious', 'nervous' and 'frustrated' and, when teaching, 'hitting a wall' and 'questioning' their professional abilities. These are likely indicators of culture shock (Brown, L & Holloway 2007; Furnham & Bochner 1986; Roskell 2013; Ward, Bochner & Furnham 2001). Another group of academics made little overt mention of any cultural differences or how cultural differences might be woven into their challenges and experiences. Yet another type of response was identified by very few respondents, for whom cultural differences were unsubtly determined as the sole reason for all their difficulties and challenges, especially in the initial stages of living and teaching in a different country.

These divergent responses are not surprising and I do not argue that intercultural preparation would or should align individual responses; however, it could provide insight and understanding into what they were experiencing. The first group of academics may recognise they are in the midst of culture shock and the other two outlying responses might be ameliorated had they been prepared and received ongoing support for living and working in unfamiliar cultural contexts. The literature informs us that intercultural preparation is far more than just knowing about the weather and food and different customs and rituals. Ultimately it

is about developing an open, curious and respectful attitude to valuing differences in all teaching and non-teaching settings (Badley 2006; Leask 2004b; Leask et al. 2005; Smith, K 2013; Teekens 2001b). The experiences of some of the academics demonstrate this, and the findings show how cultural differences influenced how they lived, communicated and taught while working offshore. While other academics, after having taught offshore a number of times, reflected on the need for particular communication and cultural skills they could apply when living and working in different settings.

The fact that none of the participants had engaged in any type of general cultural preparation, let alone any quality preparation dedicated to specifically teaching in foreign settings, is a significant finding in itself. Equally significant is the fact that most academics gained their cultural knowledge from the internet, travel books and informally seeking out the opinions and views of other colleagues. Except for one team, the few one-off cultural sessions identified in this study lacked an educational focus, let alone one that dealt with the issues specifically related to offshore teaching. If academic development is to be learner-centred, then recognising that academics do not necessarily distinguish between a 'teaching' challenge and a 'cultural' challenge is important. Providing a two-hour stand-alone cultural familiarity workshop once a year, therefore, will not successfully prepare all academics teaching in foreign multicultural classrooms around the world.

At the time of the study, there was evidence of only two universities providing dedicated and well-developed online resources addressing cultural aspects of teaching offshore. Academic developers and some team coordinators actively sought assistance and resources to help them provide intercultural support for academics; however, they struggled to find expertise either within their universities or externally. The outcomes of this study support Leask and Carroll's (2011, p. 656) proposal that effective university professional development for intercultural engagement is essential if academics are to 'create learning spaces within their

own disciplinary spheres that encourage meaningful and purposeful interactions and cross-cultural engagement’.

The ‘internationally’ themed workshops, part of the wider university staff professional development programs, failed to address the needs or context of transnational teachers. In contrast, the IEAA professional development programs, hosted by universities but not developed by them for their own academics, were planned around participants’ needs, and had expert facilitators who encouraged active participation rather than delivering presenter-driven sessions. However, besides these strengths, they were still isolated one-off events, and few academics attended, possibly due to poor promotion, the expense, or because they were struggling to make this a priority against other competing demands.

Given the general absence of any pre-departure preparation or ongoing offshore support most academics reported slowly, becoming aware of cultural differences over time, most often retrospectively, and often by transgressing social and cultural norms. Participants reported they often learned how to be culturally sensitive from their offshore students and partner colleagues gently making them aware of their cultural ‘gaffes’ and ‘faux pas’. For some the consequences of such encounters resulted in feelings of embarrassment, confusion, self-doubt and failure. This impact on academics’ self-esteem and professional self-confidence is a significant finding and stands out as an area that would benefit from further investigation. The current ‘sink or swim’ university approach to preparing academics for managing cultural differences involves, at best, the loss of many rich intercultural learning and growth opportunities and at worst, potentially damaging offshore partner relationships and the delivery of quality education, and teachers’ self-esteem.

10.3.2 Critical incidents

While many of the challenges identified by the participants were similar to those documented in prior research, one notable exception was the challenge posed by working abroad, especially when alone, during natural disasters and critical incidents. Such incidents were

described in depth by eight academics. Although these eight cases represent just under one-third of the total number of academic respondents, their experiences highlighted broader concerns about institutional communication, coordination, and support for fly-in fly-out academics.

The eight academics reported, not always effortlessly, managing the practical aspects of their unexpected offshore encounters on their own or with the support of partner colleagues. At the forefront of their stories were feelings of isolation and being forgotten about by their universities. There was a strong sense of being disconnected from their home campus, the result of uncoordinated and poor communication systems. Their real-time feelings of distress were intensified, and for some lingered after returning to Australia, where their experiences went largely unacknowledged with no debriefing or specialised support provided. A few of the participants in this small group revealed they were still struggling to cope with the effects of these events some years later. None of the eight academics spoke about being briefed prior to leaving Australia regarding protocols in the event of a critical incident offshore. None received any streamlined support during the incidents, and none received follow-up support after returning to Australia, even when one coordinator specifically requested assistance for the team. More broadly, the universities' responses to these extreme events reflect a lack of any holistic institutional preparation or any support services extending beyond the point of departure and on return.

A review of institutional documents shows that critical incident policies and procedures are in place in universities, as are insurance and offshore assistance, mostly outsourced to commercial businesses. This study's findings suggest, however, frequent evaluation of the effectiveness of these policies and procedures would be an invaluable part of the policy improvement cycle. Regular monitoring of the quality and appropriateness of services provided by third-party insurance and offshore assistance providers' with regard to meeting the needs of academics in the field would also be beneficial. Finally, meeting with academics

when they return would not only be an effective way to collect information to help improve procedures for responding to critical incidents, but also be an opportunity to acknowledge firsthand what academics go through overseas while working for the university.

10.3.3 Disaffection

Two-thirds of the academics reported feeling marginalised rather than central players in offshore education. The lack of university acknowledgment discussed by staff involved in critical incidents exemplified the perception of academics, more broadly, of feeling disconnected and disaffected, with their transnational teaching going ‘unrecognised’ and ‘unrewarded’. Six of the 10 academic developers empathised, commenting that in their universities transnational preparation was peripheral to the central academic development focus, and in certain parts of the universities this was invisible.

Nineteen academics spoke of returning from teaching offshore to a workplace lacking either understanding or interest in their offshore work, apart from the interest shown by other colleagues involved in fly-in fly-out teaching. They described gradual erosion over time of their sense of worth or purpose about their offshore teaching. They reported reactions from colleagues ranging from a lack of awareness they had even been away teaching offshore to suggestions they had been away on some type of paid holiday or ‘junket’. Home campus colleagues who had never taught offshore, seemed particularly uninterested in discussing returning academics challenges, and even more so if the university was paying them in addition to their normal salary. Two participants made reference to senior school staff who believed that the only relevant form of assessment of their transnational work was the profit margin of the program.

This lack of understanding and recognition was evident across different levels of seniority, disciplines and universities. And although most academics became accustomed to this type of reception, they did not become accustomed to the feelings it provoked. Some academics decided to withdraw from teaching offshore altogether. Others continued to do a professional

job offshore but lacked the motivation to do an exceptional job. Another group made connections between the marginal position of transnational education across the wider university and the absence of any institutional recognition of their work offshore. The lack of opportunities to advance their career through promotion was often cited as evidence of universities not valuing transnational teaching. One participant captured the sentiments of many when they explained the value of their transnational work in relation to academic promotion saying, 'teaching is less valued than research, and offshore teaching is less valued than onshore teaching'.

This group of academics and academic developers commonly described tensions between 'profit', 'purpose' and 'preparation'. They are not alone. Pyvis (2011, p. 740) recognises this tension, explaining that the 'rationale of profit generation arguably risks the integrity of the educational enterprise'. McLean (2006, p. 58) too observes the tendency to justify transnational programs 'with the highest moral goals, but is often driven by the much lesser gods of ... commercial gain'. Aspland (2009) acknowledges that in each transnational program, even within the one university, the purpose of engaging in offshore teaching, the allocation of resources and the profit margins vary. More broadly she argues 'it is expensive for universities to engage in high quality program delivery in offshore contexts' and that 'generally speaking: the higher the quality of teaching – the lower the profit margins' (ppt.23). The majority of staff in this study felt an imbalance between the pursuit of economic returns and the opportunity for developing greater cultural awareness and global connections.

It appears that most academics and academic developers active in the field of transnational teaching interpret as indicators of indifference both the lack of dedicated programs and resources for preparation and support and the lack of recognition and reward for academics. There may be indifference shown to academics, but as Aspland (2009) alludes, there seems to be no indifference to profit margins. The implication here for the many university sectors involved in transnational education is for each in their own way to address genuine 'profit',

'purpose' and 'preparation' concerns. Failing to do so could leave the nagging question persistent in the minds of academics teaching offshore: 'Is transnational education designed purely for profit?' (Aspland 2009 ppt.22).

How best to respond? Different sectors of the university could make their own unique contribution to addressing these feelings of disaffection. Transnational business units, for example, when establishing new partnerships and writing new contracts, could invite academics to be involved earlier and thus have greater input into negotiating the type of facilities, resources, curriculum design, teaching materials, and time allocated for professional development. The disciplined 'team-based' approach exemplifies the potential benefits to be gained from early and often engagement with partners. University human resource services could further develop policy to support TNE teachers and review promotion criteria to ensure that excellence in offshore teaching is appropriately recognised. Quality assurance units tasked with reviewing transnational programs could commit to greater involvement and investment in staff preparation and support. University and school leaders could reaffirm the varied educational and global benefits of transnational programs along with the financial returns. It is vital that the current gap perceived between universities' rhetorical commitment to quality in transnational education and actual practice is addressed, so the broader benefits of offshore teaching are valued and enhanced for all participating in this endeavour.

10.4 Thoughts for the future

Many of the findings from this research provoke questions for future investigations. Most significant is to understand why universities have not acted on recommendations from prior research, such as deliberately selecting, preparing and supporting academics to teach offshore? How is it that human resource units seem not to have introduced recruitment procedures or altered promotion practices to recognise the unique contributions of transnational teachers? Or why do academic development and quality units continue to focus

preparation on occasional half-day pre-departure workshops rather than provide strategically planned, ongoing whole-of-university learner-centred preparation and support for academics? And most importantly, why is it that academics are 'discipline' and 'knowledge' experts, but not intercultural experts skilled in developing curriculum and pedagogy relevant to foreign learning contexts? Or indeed why academics are not culturally aware, competent and confident intercultural communicators able to respond and operate appropriately in the dominant offshore culture in which they are living and working?

This thesis confirms there has been little institutional change and few research recommendations incorporated into staff preparation and support over the past decade. I have not been able to explain from the findings why universities have not instigated change. This anomaly might be explained by a financial argument as earlier proposed by some participants and researchers, or it might be that the current modus operandi of preparation, with academics mostly coping but not excelling, is acceptable. Such questions around the status quo of institutional preparation are critically important areas for future research.

For now, however, I want to give the compelling argument of the potential benefits to universities of re-visioning how fly-in fly-out academics could be prepared and supported for teaching offshore. The findings of this thesis suggest change to current university approaches in the following five areas: a new discipline team-based model; inclusive cultural preparation; continuous cyclical method of preparation; recognition of the role of academic developers; and a cross-sectoral whole-of-university approach to preparation and support.

This research has found that a planned, flexible and well-coordinated whole-of-university approach to facilitating work-embedded discipline-based learning would be a significant and valuable contribution in providing long-term preparation and support. With organisational recognition of the importance of preparation for offshore teaching the alternative team-based model of professional development has potential to be deployed across universities. This

might be seen as a hybrid model. The central unit could oversee and facilitate the implementation of strategically planned preparation and support, delivered in a flexible manner at the discipline level. Academic development units could coordinate the provision of resources of time, money and expertise to team coordinators and support them in their preparation and development of team members. In essence the academic developers would act as a conduit, connecting the multiple local teams to university-wide infrastructure, programs and to relevant experts and professionals. Such an approach would not only align central resources to support the informal approaches that are currently being used most successfully by academic staff, but ensure all, rather than some academics, are prepared and supported in a meaningful and worthwhile manner.

It is essential that cultural preparation is at the core and *integrated* into every aspect of professional development and support provided across all phases of transnational teaching. The findings were definite: there is a general dearth of university resources and expertise around intercultural development and so initially additional time, money and research may be needed to develop transnational academics' cultural sensibilities and abilities. Introducing an embedded and ongoing developmental approach to cultural competency would replace academics' current mode of cultural learning by indiscretions. Cultural pre-departure preparation and continuous support whilst offshore would improve academics' transitions, adjustments and adaption into new cultures, and thus reduce or better manage anxiety and stress levels. Re-entry support would not only ease the cultural transition back into the home campus but also help to draw on and maximise what academics learned offshore and apply onshore.

Another major finding of this study is that learning does not 'end' when academics depart Australia, but this is ongoing and cyclical, the implication being that academics would benefit from support provided across all phases of transnational teaching. Currently, while there is limited evidence of preparation prior to departure and some support offshore, there is no

evidence of any attempt to provide ongoing development on return. University programs with strategies to support staff when they are working offshore would maximise the opportunities for transformative learning that prevail when teaching in foreign contexts. Regular debriefing, follow-up and evaluation of academics' experiences when they return to Australia would provide the opportunity to consolidate and check new knowledge and skills as well as identify continuing gaps. This would also inform the next phase of preparation and development in the cycle of continuous learning and development.

This investigation revealed a tension for academic developers' between their recognition and intent to provide relevant, holistic and engaging preparation and their sense of not being empowered or resourced by senior level managers to effect such change. The challenge for academic developers, as the university experts of adult learning, is to convince university management of the benefits of shifting away from the current one-off, unplanned and ad hoc approach to an alternative hybrid model of discipline-based team preparation (Healey & Jenkins 2004; Healey, Bradford, Roberts & Knight 2013). The return on investment in better-prepared and supported academics would likely be improved teaching quality offshore and added legitimacy to the role of academic developers. Responding to such a challenge is not best done alone. Alongside this sits the contribution human resource teams could make by examining and responding to the recruitment, work conditions and remuneration, motivation, disaffection and attrition of academics teaching offshore. University quality units could work collaboratively with academic development units, investing their time, expertise and resources to ensure quality preparation and support for all academics.

This thesis has made clear that fly-in fly-out teaching is a dynamic and complex form of transnational education that involves professional input from many different sectors of the university. Any contemplation of change requires a unified approach as opposed to discrete units responding in isolation to other sectors. A whole-of-university strategic plan, where the design of preparation and support is ongoing and continuous across all three phases of

offshore teaching, cultural development is core and professional development is provided at the local discipline level but supported university-wide would be ideal. Commitment and resources from the quality units, transnational business division, human resource sector and academic development units, together working on re-visioning and implementing alternative preparation practices provides promise for the future. A major outcome of such changes could be a shift from most academics reporting just 'coping' with teaching offshore to one of 'excelling'.

10.5 Future research

All the findings, the three key themes and the resulting implications in essence call for innovative practices from different sectors of the university involved in transnational education. This would re-imagine how academics could be best prepared and supported when teaching offshore. Alongside the aforementioned need to understand why universities have not acted on recommendations from prior research, there is a wide range of opportunities for research to inform and support future change.

Before initiating any change it is crucial for feasibility studies to be conducted to assess the benefits and obstacles to shifting to what for some universities would be a quite radical approach of coordinated, multiple discipline-based teams. Along with this there would be great value in detailed evaluation studies of the actual (as opposed to perceived) professional growth and development from formal, informal and team preparation approaches. These might then be further developed by building on the outcomes from prior research into transnational teams and communities of practice also involving partner staff (Dunn & Wallace 2005; Keevers et al. 2012) and professional learning and change through practice development strategies (Hager, Lee & Reich 2012).

Extending research to collecting data from Australian academics when they are in situ living and working offshore would also be valuable. For example, observing academics teaching in

transnational classrooms and investigating how they develop their teaching from 'just-in-time' and 'situated-learning' moments would inform new approaches to preparation and build on K Smith's (2009, 2013) approach to transformative professional development, which relies on academics' recommendations of their experiences. To ensure greater cultural preparation and ongoing development of staff, offshore field work would also provide the opportunity to examine academics' responses to culturally challenging situations inside and outside the classroom. There would also be the opportunity to examine real-time collegiate interactions and preparation and support with other Australian academics, partner staff and transnational students.

Finally, there is value in learning about the needs of discrete groups of academics, such as staff employed as sessionals, new and inexperienced academics, staff working above-load as opposed to in-load and coordinators of offshore programs. All such studies would make a valuable contribution to better understanding how to provide meaningful holistic preparation and support for all academics.

10.6 Researcher's reflection

To conclude on a personal note, at the beginning of this research I felt that only 'old' 'bad' and 'ugly' news was emerging from my data, especially around formal university preparation and support. As I progressed I discovered some smart informal approaches utilised by exceptional coordinators and colleagues, and the more inclusive team-based approach. These discoveries emerged from having designed my research to not only examining formal university preparation and support but all means of readiness, along with talking openly with academics about their challenges, experiences and responses. At this point I created a new working title for my thesis: 'the bad, the good, and the *potential*' of preparing staff for working abroad.

Collecting, analysing and synthesising the abundant and rich data, from a university-wide organisational level to reporting on the minutiae of academics' personal and professional challenges and experiences, enabled me to not only better identify the gaps but also reveal possible alternatives to current preparation practices. By the end, I understood that quality preparation, the content, methods of delivery and timing of support, has to acknowledge the multiple variables at play in offshore teaching, and reflect the dynamic and shifting nature that is transnational education.

Therefore, this thesis has revealed the *potential* for Australian universities to provide preparation that is valuable, of quality, and which engages and supports academic staff teaching offshore.

To actualise this potential there needs to be collaborative leadership that is committed to well-coordinated and resourced university-wide facilitated preparation and support; preparation and support that is strategic and flexible, and central and local, based around cultural preparation and delivered using best practice adult learning methods. Such an approach would address the myriad challenges academics face in transnational teaching. Such quality changes and preparation of academics could be the catalyst to bring Australian universities and their partners, and all students and staff, closer to becoming true global leaders.

We live in a borderless world. How beautiful that world is depends on our ability to dismantle our own cultural fences. Success at global teaching is certainly about our academic knowledge, but it is also about our willingness to let go of much that we think we know so that we can lay hold of new understanding (Garson 2005, p. 326).

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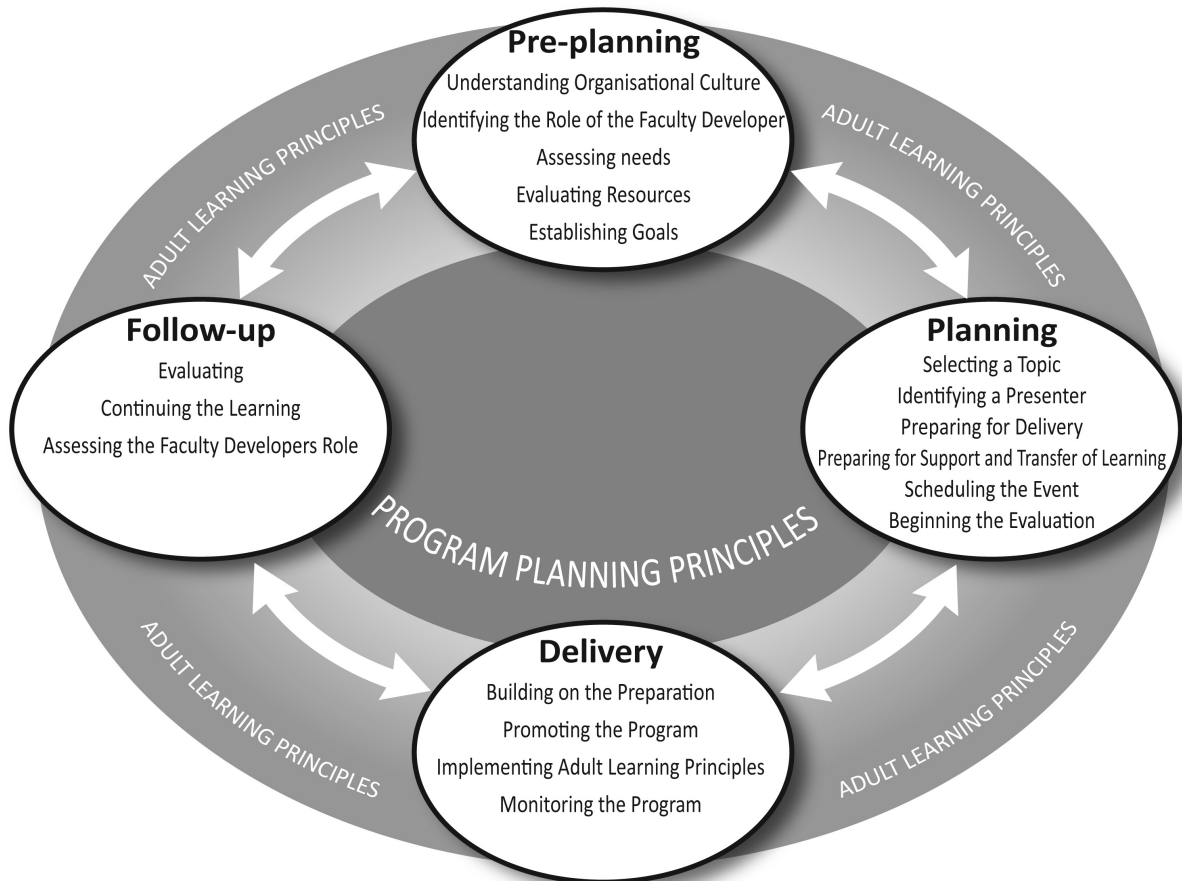
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Lawler and King's (2000) Adult Learning Model for Faculty Development



(Lawler and King 2000, p.33)

Appendix 2: Osborn's (2004) Models of Professional Development

Stereotypic Characteristics	First Generation: Work-ignored	Second Generation: Work-perceived	Third Generation: Work-embedded
Purpose	To formally 'dump' predetermined information onto the individual regardless of personal or organisational needs.	To instigate and direct professional growth with the intention of transforming or reforming the performance of individuals and their organisation.	To encourage and support the self-directed transformation or reforming of individual and organisational performance in relation to personal needs and the mission of the organisation
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linear • Isolated/one off • Instrumental • Uncontrolled • Generic • Authoritative • Rigid • No consultation • Top/down instigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyclical • Spasmodic • Organic • Confusing • Adjunct • Cooperative • Manipulative • Some consultation • Top/down, bottom/up outside/in investigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiral • Consistently ongoing • Intrinsic • Empowering • Embedded • Collaborative/inter-collegial • Flexible • Dialectic • Top/down, bottom/up, inside/out, outside instigation
Delivery approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External provision • Set time line • Formal approach adhering to a pre-set agenda • Passive participation towards the PD agenda • Set range of providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External & limited internal provision • Timeline set with some negotiation • Formal approach with a quasi-flexible agenda • Some emphasis on active participation • Limited range of providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated external and internal provision • Mutually negotiated timeline • Integration of a formal & informal approach • Focus on active participation • Increased range of providers
Concept of learning and the learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transmission • Generic learning practices • Acquisition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructivist view emerging • Experimentation • Personal • Reflective • Acquisition and participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructivist view • Experimentation • Personal • Reflective • Acquisition and participation
Concept of improvement and renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transmission view of learning underpinning change • Adoption of the 'new' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transmission view and introduction of a constructivist view of learning underpinning change • Sustain and build incorporating the 'new' change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructivist view underpinning learning • Mutual adaption

Appendix 3: Leask *et al's* (2005) Principles, Themes and Stages of Professional Development Framework for Academic Staff Teaching Australian Programs Offshore

(Summarised from Leask *et al.* 2005, vi-vii)

Leask *et al's* (2005) proposed guiding principles for the professional development of academic staff.

Principle 1	As both Australia-based and local tutors play a critical role in offshore teaching both groups need to be involved in professional development.
Principle 2	Offshore teaching is both similar to and different from any other form of teaching activity. The fundamental differences relate to the intercultural space in which it occurs. Thus professional development for academic staff needs to address the intercultural nature of offshore teaching.
Principle 3	The professional development needs of academic staff will vary according to their role and the stage of their involvement with this particular teaching activity. Professional development activities and resources need therefore to be flexible and sensitive to the experience, knowledge and situation of the individuals involved.

Leask *et al's* (2005) four themes informing the characteristics required of offshore teachers.

Theme 1	To be experts in their field , knowledgeable in the discipline within both an international and a local context (where local refers to the offshore context), and both informed about the latest research and able to incorporate it into their teaching
Theme 2	To be skilled teachers and managers of the learning environment : able to acquit the operational issues involved in teaching offshore effectively and efficiently
Theme 3	To be efficient intercultural learners culturally aware and able to teach using culturally appropriate materials and culturally appropriate methods which recognise the critical role played by language and culture in learning and flexible enough to make adjustments in response to student learning needs
Theme 4	To demonstrate particular personal attitudes and attributes , for example, approachable, patient, encouraging and passionate about what they are teaching.

Leask *et al's* (2005, pp.36-40) proposed three stages of the professional development framework for Australia-based staff. (Three equivalent stages for local tutors are not represented in this appendix.)

Stage of Career	
Induction	2-5 hours + self-access resources
Early Career Orientation	2-5 hours per year + self-access resources
Ongoing PD	2-5 hours per year + self-access resources

Appendix 4: Call for Participation – Academics



Good-morning [coordinator's name],

My name is Kath Lynch and I am an RMIT doctoral student investigating 'How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?'

As the program coordinator I am requesting your assistance to recruit academics to participate in this study.

I have had my RMIT Ethics approved (HRESC-B-054) and attach a Plain Language Statement outlining my research.

I would be most appreciative if you could:

1. Introduce me to colleagues who have taught offshore at least once.
2. Provide links to any university teaching materials and/or preparation workshops intended to prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore, as well as university policies and/or school procedures relevant to staff teaching transnationally.

Thank you for the time taken in reading this email and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest possible convenience.

Regards,

Kath Lynch

kath.lynch@rmit.edu.au

Appendix 5: Call for Participation – Academics (flyer)

Attention: Academics Who Have Taught Offshore At Least Once

Research: How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?

1. Have you taught offshore?
2. Have you experienced or observed any challenges associated with teaching offshore?
3. Did you participate in any preparation activities before, during or after returning to Australia?
4. Did you receive support prior to departure, offshore or returning to Australia?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you are invited to participate in an RMIT postgraduate research project investigating how Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore.

The project aims to discover how academics came to be teaching offshore and what type of challenges preparation might have addressed. Also, to what extent are academics engaging in preparation and finally how effective they perceive their preparation to have been in light of their offshore teaching experiences.

Your voluntary participation will require an interview (of approximately 60 minutes), in which you will be asked to reflect on your offshore teaching and learning experiences. The interviews will be conducted at a time and place that is convenient for you. Confidentiality will be maintained in all publications and materials will be securely stored.

If you are interested in participating, or would like more information, please contact:

Kath Lynch at kath.lynch@rmit.edu.au

Appendix 6: Call for Participation – Academic Developers



Good-morning [name],

My name is Kath Lynch and I am a PhD student investigating 'How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?'

I am hoping you can assist me by introducing me to academic developers who have developed university resources and/or conducted professional development sessions for academic staff who teach offshore. I would like to invite them to consider contributing to this research.

I have had my RMIT Ethics approved (HRESC-B-054) and attach a Plain Language Statement about my research.

I would be most appreciative if you could:

1. Introduce me to colleagues who have developed resources and/or worked with preparing and supporting academics teaching offshore.
2. Provide links to any university teaching materials and/or preparation workshops intended to prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore, as well as university policies and/or school procedures relevant to staff teaching transnationally.

Thank you for the time taken in reading this email and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest possible convenience.

Regards,

Kath Lynch

kath.lynch@rmit.edu.au

Appendix 7: Academics' Demographic Data

Academic Level	Discipline	Highest Qual (Discipline)	Highest Qual (Education)	Employment Type	TNE Payment	Prior Overseas Travel	TNE Experience	Languages other than English	M/F	Age Range	Team-based preparation
Lecturer	Info Systems	MIS	Grad Dip	P	A+	Y	H	N	F	60+	N
Assoc Prof	Eng Construction	PhD	Grad Cert	P	A+	Y	L	N	M	50-60	N
Lecturer	Business Logistics	MBA	-	S	SR	Y	M	Y	M	60+	N
Lecturer	Computer Science	MSC	-	P	A+	Y	M	N	F	50-60	N
Lecturer	Education	BEd	MEd	P	IL	Y	M	N	F	40-50	N
Snr Lect	Computer Science	MSC	PhD (Ed)	P	IL	Y	M	Y	F	40-50	N
Assoc Prof	Computer Science	PhD	-	P	IL	Y	H	Y	F	40-50	N
Snr Lect	Marketing	PhD	Grad Cert	P	A+	Y	M	Y	M	40-50	N
Lecturer	Engineering	MEd	MEd	P	IL	Y	H	N	M	50-60	N
Snr Lect	Information Technology	PhD	PhD (Ed)	P	A+	Y	H	N	M	50-60	N
Snr Lect	Health Sciences	MSC	-	P	IL	Y	H	Y	M	50-60	N
Lecturer	Health Sciences	BSc	-	P	IL	N	L	N	M	50-60	N
Assoc Prof *	Education	PhD	PhD	P	IL	Y	H	N	F	50-60	Y
Snr Lect *	Communication	B Comm	MEd	P	IL	Y	H	N	F	30-40	Y

Snr Lect	Economics	PhD	-	P	A+	Y	M	N	M	30-40	N
Lecturer	Marketing	MA	DipEd	P	IL	Y	L	N	M	40-50	N
Snr Lect	Law/Legal Studies	SJD	-	P	IL	Y	M	Y	F	40-50	N
Snr Lect	Marketing	B Mktg	-	P	IL	Y	H	N	M	50-60	N
Snr Lect	Law Legal Studies	LLB	PhD	P	A+	Y	H	N	F	40-50	N
Professor *	Communication	PhD	PhD	P	A+	Y	H	Y	M	50-60	Y
Lecturer	Education	PhD	PhD	P	A+	Y	L	Y	M	40-50	N
Lecturer	Law/Legal Studies	PhD	-	P	A+	Y	L	N	M	40-50	N
Snr Lect *	Health Sciences	PhD	BEd	P	IL/A+	Y	M	N	M	50-60	Y
Assoc Prof *	Communication	PhD	BEd	P	IL	Y	H	N	F	50-60	Y
Professor *	Organisation Mgmt	PhD	Grad Dip	P	A+	Y	H	Y	M	60+	Y
Lecturer	Organisation Mgmt	MBA	Grad Dip	S	SR	Y	L	N	M	40-50	N
Professor *	Education	PhD	MEd	P	A+	Y	H	N	F	60+	Y
Snr Lect	Education	PhD	Dip Teach	P	IL/A+	Y	H	N	F	50-60	N
Lecturer	Computer Science	PhD	Grad Cert	P	IL	N	M	N	F	50-60	N
Assoc Prof *	Communication	PhD	PhD	P	IL	Y	H	N	F	60+	Y

Employment Type: P (Permanent) and S (Sessional)

TNE Payment: A+ (Above workload), SR (Sessional rates), IL (In-load), IL/A+ (IL with some additional one-off above load payments, e.g. guest lecture, consulting fee)

TNE Level: H (high - taught offshore more than 20 times), M (medium – taught offshore between 11 and 20 times), L (low – taught offshore between one and 10 times)

Team Preparation: * denotes preparing as part of a team

Appendix 8: Academic Developers' Demographic Data

Academic Level	Position Title	Location	Highest Qualification (Discipline)	Highest Qualification (Education)	Employment Type	Languages other than English	M/F	Age Range	Preparing staff as part of a team
Professor	Director T&L	Central	PhD	Grad Dip	P	N	F	50-60	N
Assoc Prof	Manager T&L	Faculty	PhD	BEd	P	Y	F	50-60	N
Professor	Director T&L	Central	PhD	MEd	P	Y	F	40-50	N
Lecturer	Academic Developer	Central	PhD	PhD	P	Y	M	30-40	N
Senior Lecturer	Academic Developer	Central	MEd	MEd	P	N	F	50-60	N
Assoc Prof	Head Education	School	PhD	MEd	P	N	F	50-60	N
Lecturer *	Education Developer	Faculty	BA Hons	Grad Dip	P	Y	F	30-40	Y
Lecturer	Academic Developer	Central	PhD	MEd	P	N	F	50-60	N
Lecturer	Academic Developer	Central	PhD	MEd	P	Y	F	30-40	N
Assoc Prof	Academic Developer	School	PhD	PhD	P	N	F	60+	N

Team Preparation: * denotes preparing as part of a team

Appendix 9: Interview Schedule for Academics

Please tell me how it is that you came to be working in academe?

Recruitment, Remuneration, Roles

1. Can you tell me how you came to be teaching offshore?
2. When you were selected or volunteered to teach offshore were you aware of any extra duties, in addition to teaching, that you were required to fulfil?
3. If you had extra duties what were they and how did you learn about them?
4. How were you remunerated for teaching offshore? Was it above your normal workload?

Challenges

5. Can you identify any challenges you have experienced in preparing for working offshore, teaching overseas and/or after returning to Australia?

Pre-departure

6. Were you aware of any university online/hard copy resources for staff teaching offshore?
7. Were you aware of any university PD programs offered for staff teaching offshore?
8. How did you hear about these resources and PD programs?
9. Describe the type of pre-departure preparation you received?
10. Did you feel you were introduced to new knowledge or skills in the preparation that were relevant and useful for teaching offshore?
11. Did you find participating in the PD beneficial? What were the best and worst parts of it?
12. Did you voluntarily attend the PD? If not, why did you attend?
13. Were there PD sessions you chose not to attend and if so why?

Offshore Teaching

14. Did you receive any PD/support upon arrival and while offshore and if so what type, from whom and was it useful?
15. If you did not receive any PD/support upon arrival and while offshore do you think some would have been beneficial? If so, what type of support would be most worthwhile?
16. Were there any challenges or difficulties you encountered while teaching offshore that could have been resolved with in-country support and/or online support from Australia?
17. Did your pre-departure program prepare you for the 'transition' for living and working offshore?
18. What aspects of your pre-departure preparation were most useful when teaching offshore?
19. What aspects of your pre-departure preparation were not relevant when offshore?

Returning to Australia

20. Can you describe the formal and informal follow-up PD/support you received after returning to Australia? Was this useful? If not, what would make it worthwhile?
21. If you did not receive any formal or informal follow-up PD/support, what kind of PD/support do you think would have been valuable on returning to Australia?
22. Would you participate in any further PD programs before returning for another round of offshore teaching? If yes, describe what type of PD would be useful. If not, can you explain why you would not participate in any further PD?

Supplementary

23. Reflecting on your offshore experience/s, how adequately do you feel the university formal and informal pre-departure, offshore and on-return preparation and support prepared you for living and working offshore?
24. Describe what you have learned outside of your formal and informal preparation that has been useful for your offshore teaching?
25. Why was this useful and in what context did you experience this learning?
26. If you were to design and implement a preparation program for academics new to teaching offshore what would it look like and how would it be different to what you have participated in to date?

Appendix 10: Interview Schedule for Academic Developers

Please tell me how it is that you came to be working in your current role?

Recruitment, Remuneration, Roles

1. Are you involved formally or informally in the recruitment or selection of staff working offshore? If so in what capacity?
2. Do you prepare academics teaching offshore for duties other than teaching?
3. Are there any differences in preparing and supporting staff who work offshore as a part of their normal workload and those who work in addition to their normal onshore commitments?

Challenges

4. What are the greatest challenges for you in providing PD and support for academics?
5. What have you observed to be the greatest challenges facing academics who are teaching offshore?

Pre-departure

6. What type of resources and materials have you developed for academics teaching offshore? How would you rate their impact? What additional resources do you think are needed?
7. What type of formal PD sessions have you designed/delivered for staff working offshore and what would you say are the strengths and weakness of these programs and approaches?
8. Who resources the PD materials, programs and support you provide for academics?
9. If you were to re-design the PD materials and programs how would they be different?
10. Have you worked informally or in a facilitative role with individuals or small groups of academics?

Offshore Teaching

11. Do you provide PD and support for academics when they are offshore teaching? If so what type and how do you provide that support? Do you think this is an ideal means of support?
12. Are you aware of any incidents where academics have needed immediate support when they have been offshore?
13. Have you ever travelled offshore to provide training and offer support to academics? Could you tell me about this?

Returning to Australia

14. What type of formal and informal follow-up PD and support do you provide for academics after they return to Australia?
15. If there are no dedicated resources or programs for academics returning to Australia, why do you think this is and do you think it would be worthwhile?

Supplementary

16. What are the current strengths and weaknesses of how your university goes about preparing and supporting academic staff teaching offshore?
17. If you were to design and implement a preparation program for academics new to teaching offshore what would it look like and how would it be different to what you have delivered to date?
18. Is there anything extra you would like to tell me about your experiences of preparing and supporting academics teaching offshore?

Appendix 11: Plain Language Statement – Academics

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

‘How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?’

My name is Kath Lynch and I am undertaking a PhD at RMIT University. The title of my research is ‘How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?’ My principal supervisor is Associate Professor Christopher Ziguras.

The aim of this research project is to examine how academics prepare and are supported for offshore teaching. It sets out to discover how academics are recruited and what challenges they face teaching offshore. Also, what academics perceive as challenging, to what extent academics engage in preparation, what they learned from their preparation and teaching and how effective they perceive their preparation and support to have been in light of their offshore teaching experiences.

I would like to invite you to participate in an interview which will last approximately 60 minutes. The questions can be provided to you prior to the interview if you wish to consider them before meeting. The interviews will be conducted at a time and place that is convenient for you. You may cease the interview at any point, withdraw from participation in the research at any stage and extract any unprocessed data previously supplied.

The interview will ask questions about your views and ideas regarding preparation for working overseas, in light of your offshore teaching experiences and will seek your reflections on ‘formal’, informal’ as well as any other types of preparation.

Your name and contact details are required for me to email you to arrange an interview time. Personal information will not be used for any other purpose and will be held securely.

With your consent, interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Upon your request transcripts can be returned to you for review. The confidentiality of interview notes, recordings and transcriptions will be strictly maintained during and following the completion of this project. All hard copy data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in a secure location and all electronic recordings and documents will be securely stored on a password protected computer. All data will be held for five years from the completion date of the awarding of the degree at which time the material will be shredded or otherwise destroyed.

It is anticipated that this research will be completed by 2012. Findings from the project may be presented to conferences and published in academic and other journals. All publications from the interview data will be strictly confidential and individual details will be de-identified. Copies of conference or journal article publications can be provided to you if you are interested.

For further information or any questions you may have regarding this project please contact me or my supervisor at the contact details provided below.

Thank you for considering taking part in this project. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Kath Lynch
PhD Candidate

CONTACT DETAILS

Kath Lynch
PhD Candidate
kath.lynch@rmit.edu.au

CONTACT DETAILS

Christopher Ziguras
Principal Supervisor
Christopher.ziguras@rmit.edu.au

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Executive Officer, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Innovation, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. Details of the complaints procedure are available at: http://www.rmit.edu.au/rd/hrec_complaints

Appendix 12: Plain Language Statement – Academic Developers



INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

'How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?'

My name is Kath Lynch and I am undertaking a PhD at RMIT University. The title of my research is 'How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?' My principal supervisor is Associate Professor Christopher Ziguras.

The aim of this research project is to examine how academics prepare and are supported for offshore teaching. It sets out to discover how academics are recruited and what challenges they face teaching offshore. Also, what academics perceive as challenging, to what extent academics engage in preparation, what they learned from their preparation and teaching and how effective they perceive their preparation and support to have been in light of their offshore teaching experiences.

I would like to invite you to participate in an interview which will last approximately 60 minutes. The questions can be provided to you prior to the interview if you wish to consider them before meeting. The interviews will be conducted at a time and place that is convenient for you. You may cease the interview at any point, withdraw from participation in the research at any stage and extract any unprocessed data previously supplied.

The interview will ask questions about the university's resources and approaches to providing preparation and support to academic staff who teach offshore and seek your reflections on 'formal', 'informal' and any other types of preparation and support.

Your name and contact details are required for me to email you to arrange an interview time. Personal and university information will not be used for any other purpose and will be held securely.

With your consent, interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Upon your request transcripts can be returned to you for review. The confidentiality of interview notes, recordings and transcriptions will be strictly maintained during and following the completion of this project. All hard copy data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in a secure location and all electronic recordings and documents will be securely stored on a password protected computer. All data will be held for five years from the completion date of the awarding of the degree at which time the material will be shredded or otherwise destroyed.

It is anticipated that this research will be completed by 2012. Findings from the project may be presented to conferences and published in academic and other journals. All publications from the interview data will be strictly confidential and individual details will be de-identified. Copies of conference or journal article publications can be provided to you if you are interested.

For further information or any questions you may have regarding this project please contact me or my supervisor at the contact details provided below.

Yours sincerely

Kath Lynch
PhD Candidate

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kath.lynch@rmit.edu.au

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Principal Supervisor
Christopher.ziguras@rmit.edu.au

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Appendix 13: Plain Language Statement – Presenters



INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

‘How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?’

My name is Kath Lynch and I am undertaking a PhD at RMIT University. The title of my research is ‘How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?’ My principal supervisor is Associate Professor Christopher Ziguras.

The aim of this research project is to examine how academics prepare and are supported for offshore teaching. It sets out to discover how academics are recruited and what challenges they face teaching offshore. Also, what academics perceive as challenging, to what extent academics engage in preparation, what they learned from their preparation and teaching and how effective they perceive their preparation and support to have been in light of their offshore teaching experiences.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research by allowing me to be a non-participant observer during the professional development program you will be facilitating. The purpose of the observation is to collect data about the various ways professional development programs are delivered, for example lecture-style or group workshops and the content that is delivered, such as cultural issues, administrative issues, teaching issues or a combination of such issues.

Your name and contact details will be required for me to make contact with you to arrange a date and time for me to attend a professional development program that you are facilitating. This personal information will not be used for any other purpose and will be held in a locked filing cabinet in a secure location.

As the facilitator, you will not be identified nor will any attendees of the PD program. You may ask me to cease taking notes and/or to leave the professional development program at any time. You are able to review all notes taken and to have any unprocessed notes withdrawn from the research. The confidentiality of the notes made during the professional development program will be strictly maintained during and following the completion of this project.

All hard copy notes will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in a secure location and all electronic notes will be securely stored on a password protected computer. All data will be held for five years from the completion date of the awarding of the degree at which time the material will be shredded or otherwise destroyed.

It is anticipated that this research will be completed by 2012. Findings from the project may be presented to conferences and published in academic and other journals. All publications from the notes taken will be strictly confidential and they will be de-identified. Copies of conference or journal article publications can be provided to you if you are interested.

For further information or any questions you may have regarding this project please contact me or my supervisor at the contact details provided below.

Thank you for considering taking part in this project.

Kath Lynch
PhD Candidate

CONTACT DETAILS

Kath Lynch
PhD Candidate
kath.lynch@rmit.edu.au

CONTACT DETAILS

Christopher Ziguras
Principal Supervisor
Christopher.ziguras@rmit.edu.au

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Executive Officer, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Innovation, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. Details of the complaints procedure are available at: http://www.rmit.edu.au/rd/hrec_complaints

Appendix 14: Consent Form for Participants

RMIT HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE



PORTFOLIO OF Design and Social Context
 SCHOOL/CENTRE OF Global Studies Social Science and Planning

Name of participant:

Project title: **How do Australian universities prepare and support academic staff teaching offshore?**

Name of investigator Kath Lynch Phone:
 Email: kath.lynch@rmit.edu.au

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/observation involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which, including details of the interviews/observations, have been explained to me.
3. I authorise the investigator to interview/observe me.
4. I give my permission to be audio taped Yes No
5. I acknowledge that:
 - a) Having read the Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
 - b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
 - c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me. The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded. The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law. If I participate in a focus group I understand that whilst all participants will be asked to keep the conversation confidential, the researcher cannot guarantee that other participants will do this.
 - d) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to RMIT University in the form of a PhD Thesis, possible journal publications and conference presentations. Any information which may be used to identify me will not be used unless I have given my permission.

Participant's Consent

Signature: Date :
Participant to sign

Name : Signature : Date :
Witness name *Witness to sign*

Participants should be given a photocopy of this consent form after it has been signed.

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Executive Officer, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Innovation, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. Details of the complaints procedure are available at: http://www.rmit.edu.au/rd/hrec_complaints

Appendix 15: Summary of Observations of University and IEAA Professional Development Preparation Programs

TNE PD						
Focus	Type of PD	Audience	Presenter/s	Content	Method of Delivery	Observer's Comments
Pre-AQUA audit TNE Preparation Seminar	Half-day workshop Uni Quality Unit Central	67 TNE Academics	1 QA Manager 1 Dean T&L 1 TNE Academic	O/S L&T context O/S Teaching skills Networking opportunity	Lecture style Case study/group work Q&A session	Diverse staff needs Large amount of data Mix theory & practical Little time for questions 1 st wksp in a series but no further sessions offered
General PD						
Focus	Type of PD	Audience	Presenter/s	Content	Method of Delivery	Observer's Comments
Intl Curriculum (Onshore focus)	Half-day workshop AD Unit Faculty	20 Academics from different institutions	2 Academics 2 Intl. Pg. Students 1 TNE researcher	Culture & HEd teaching EAL and language levels Intl course materials Intl classroom delivery	Panel-style 1 theme per presenter AD as facilitator Q&A & discussion	Well chaired Presenters rushed Robust discussions Intl onshore issues *1 TNE case study*
Intl Curriculum (Onshore focus)	2.5 hour seminar Faculty L&T Unit	22 Attendees: 16 Academics 6 Faculty/Central T&L Advisors	External Consultant (& Academic)	Outline of Hofstede Culture into curricula Teaching strategies Engaging with students	Lecture style with questions welcomed during presentation	Robust Q&A discussion 2 academics challenged the theory presented *No TNE specific included

Intl Curriculum (Onshore focus)	Half-day workshop AD unit Central	9 Attendees: 8 Academics 1 PG research student	Academic Researcher Academic Developer	Ways to IoC Culture & T&L styles Embed English/literacy skills into assessment	Lecture style Group Activities Q&A & discussion	Academic 'theoretical' AD 'practical/applied' Disconnection btwn two 'Culture' domestic and onshore Intl. students *No TNE specific included
Teaching (Intl Elective)	1.5 hour workshop Intl Research Unit Central	18 Attendees: 12 Academics - Teach 6 Academics - Research	1 Academic (onshore) 1 Academic (on/off) 1 Pg research student	Curriculum for new 'Intl' student elective Intercultural theory PD for Elective teachers	Lecture/Roundtable Mix of theory & Lit R Case study from a grant Q&A & discussion	3 Presentations disjointed Little time for Q&A Few opportunities for participants to contribute *1 reference to TNE
Resources (Teaching materials)	2 hour workshop Uni Copyright Unit Central	7 participants: 2 Academics 5 Professional staff	University Legal Officer	Copyright & Intl content Role of technologies & public domain licenses	Lecture style Roundtable discussion Q&A	Expert presenter Participants engaged Topic made alive Few academics present *A few TNE references
Teaching Methods (Technology)	3 hour workshop Ed Tech Team Central	29 Attendees: 18 Academics 6 TAFE Teachers 5 T&L Advisors	2 Education Developers	Student engagement Delivery modes & methods w technology Assessment and technology	Lecture style Online demonstrations Hands-on learning with computer activities	1 of 2 presenters' skilled & engaged w participants Hands-on popular Promotion disparity, more technical than content *TNE (online) included
Assessment (Diversity - cultural, disability, mature age etc.)	1 day workshop Faculty AD Faculty	22 Academics (diverse disciplines)	2 Central AD 2 Faculty AD 2 Students (1 domestic & 1 Intl)	Formative/summative Face-to-face / online Assmt needs/strategies Timely feedback	Lecture style& activities Mixed presentations (1, pairs, groups, panel) Detailed work sheets Resource list provided	Well organised/presented Variety of presentations No attendee attrition Student session popular *No TNE (but focused on 'needs' of all Intl students

Plagiarism	2.5 hour workshop L&T Unit Central	8 Attendees: 5 Academics 2 TAFE teachers 1 School AD	University Language and Learning Advisor	Assessment design Plagiarism & group work Academic standards Resources e.g. Turnitin Student support services	Lecture style Contend facts & figures E.g. good/poor design E.g. student work	Presenter driven Well organised & clear Focus- 1 st year & Intl Onshore Intl & services *No TNE specific included
Internationalisation (University)	1.5 hour presentation L&T Unit Central	18 Academics (different institutions)	Visiting International Fellow	HEd Internationalisation Aust & other countries Student mobility	Seminar presentation Q&A	Promotion disparity Minimal focus on teaching Few questions at the end *No TNE specific included
Internationalisation (University)	1 day seminar Faculty L&T Unit Faculty	22 Attendees: 12 Academics 7 Professional staff 3 Marketers (different institutions)	2 Senior Uni Executives 4 Faculty L&T Advisors	Intl teaching contexts Intl Policy & Practice Cultural identity Teaching Intl students Assessment	Multiple mini-lectures No activities/groups 1 roundtable planned but cancelled	Promotion disparity Uncoordinated day 2 keynotes withdrew Diverse audience needs Attendee attrition high as day progressed *No TNE specific included
International (Teaching)	3 hour workshop School AD School	15 Attendees: 1 Academic 6 TAFE Teachers 5 Professional staff 3 AD's	School Academic Developer	Teaching culturally diverse students Intl. student 'difficulties' Intl students & problem-solving strategies	Lecture style Q&A	Disengaging presentation No active learning Concern re: content Half left at the break *No TNE specific included
Cultural Diversity (Teaching)	Half-day workshop L&T Unit Central	9 Attendees: 5 Academics 2 TAFE Teachers 2 community educators (guests)	1 Academic 1 Academic Developer	Strategies to enhance teaching in culturally diverse classrooms	Mix of methods Highly interactive Participant focused	Excellent presentation Mix of theory & practice Few attendees but high rates of participation *No TNE specific included

International/Global (Teaching)	1 day forum Faculty AD Unit Faculty	50 Attendees: 40 Academics 10 L&T & AD's (open university-wide)	Corporate Cross-Cultural Consultant 3 Snr. Faculty Staff	Intl / Global Trends Intercultural Theory 'Global' graduate attributes	Keynote address 3 Lecture style 1 Panel presentation Q&A	Skilled CC presenter Mismatch 'corporate' & academic 'curriculum' Venue small & cramped High attendee attrition *No TNE specific included
Culture (Teaching)	Half-day workshop AD Unit Central	36 Attendees: 12 Academics 16 TAFE Teachers 5 T&L Advisors 3 Professional staff	Academic (CC expertise)	Culture & T&L Student-teacher r/isp. Student engagement & learning styles Culture & group work	Interactive workshop Mix of lecture style & group activities	Active/engaged workshop High levels of interaction Popular session with request for follow-up No TNE specific included*
Culture (Students)	Half-day workshop AD unit Central	18 Professional staff	Cross-cultural Consultant (former academic)	Communication & EAL Cultural sensitivity Managing needs of diverse cultural groups	Mix mode presentation Introductory Lecture Variety of small group activities	Content relevant for academics Promotion disparity-why so few academics? *No specific TNE include
Inclusivity (Students)	Half-day workshops L&T Unit Central	20 Attendees: 8 Academics 12 TAFE Teachers	1 L&T Advisor 1 Intl Advisor 1 Equity and Disability Advisor	Inclusive course design Support material Teaching for diversity Strategies to engage diverse students Student support services	3 separate lecture style 3 small group activities Final general discussion	3 presentations disjointed, no theme Not enough time 1 presenter very engaging Intl services only onshore *No TNE specific included
EAL Learners (Students)	3 hour workshop T&L Unit Central	5 Academics	Teaching & Learning Educator	Challenges for EAL Modes of Literacy Assessment & language/ literacy	Theory lecture style Practical 'tips' Case study activities E.g. Student work Q&A /discussion	Too much for 3 hours Few participants = high engagement/interaction Domestic & Intl student *No TNE specific included

Offshore Partners	2 hour Uni International Unit Central	16 Attendees: 2 Prgm. Coordinators 14 Professional staff	2 Senior International Business Unit Staff	Historical review of TNE International articulation Programs and Partners Role of AQUA	Mixed methods Lecture style Case studies Group work Discussion	Skilled presenters Participatory activities & high levels of engagement Excellent session Promotion disparity- why so few academics? *All TNE specific
IEAA						
Focus	Type of PD	Audience	Presenter	Content	Mode of Delivery	Observer's Comments
Internationalisation of the Curriculum	1 day seminar	22 Attendees: Discipline Academics Academic Developers	Experienced Academic	Theory & practice of IoC Conceptual frameworks Materials and resources	Mixed-mode Lecture style Small group discussions Review of resources Develop IoC action plan	Experienced presenter Mix of theory and practice Participants 'left' with a 'practical' and 'individual' plan to continue working *No TNE specific included
TNE Teaching	1 day seminar	22 Attendees: 2 Academics 20 T&L and AD's Professional staff	Academic Researcher	TNE context TNE curriculum & Assessment Planning & teaching PD for teaching staff	Mix of lecture style Group work Case study	Experienced presenter Excellent presenter Informed theory/research Interactive & engaging *All TNE specific included
TNE Teaching	1 day seminar	20 Attendees: 5 Academics 15 T&L and AD's and Professional staff	1 Uni T&L Advisor 1 Academic Researcher	Key issues in HEd TNE Intercultural curriculum Assessment & feedback Challenges of TNE T&L PD Plan	Participants needs pre- identified & seminar tailored to group Mix of lecture style & Group work	Skilled presenters Well structured day Pre-post wksp activities Interaction-presenter & other participants *All TNE specific included

Culture (Communication)	1 day workshop	18 Attendees: 4 Academics 14 T&L and AD's and Professional staff	Cross-cultural Consultant (onshore experience)	Role of culture Culture, language and communication Strategies for managing cultural differences	Lecture style Pair work Group work Activity sheets	Experienced presenter Mix mode of delivery 'Onshore' scenarios Handouts provided for post-session follow-up *No TNE specific included
Multicultural (Teaching)	Half-day workshop	21 Attendees 6 Academics 15 T&L and AD's and Professional staff	Academic Teacher/Researcher	Theory of Culture in Org Culture & Learning bhv. Student learning needs Multicultural classroom	Mix of Lecture style Group work Individual/pair Group discussions	Experienced presenter Participants engaged Lot's of 'energy' in groups Robust Q&A *No TNE specific included
Quality	1 day workshop	Attendees Academics L&T & AD's HEd Policy Managers Student language & learning educators	Higher Education Consultant (language and learning)	Embedding AQUA GPP Students' language/ & literacy needs Integration strategies	Interactive Case studies Discussion Analysis of various models of integration	Mostly lectured Minimal group work Group activities unclear No attrition but participants disengaged *No TNE specific included