‘Reconnecting the fragments ’: addressing the unintended consequences of modularisation in curriculum design
**Inspiring Teachers: learning and leading in academic practice: 5th Annual One Day Conference in Learning Teaching and Assessment 2012.**

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**The Greenwich Graduate – our vision for the institution and its students:**

*A flourishing scholarly community, with an ethos of sustainability and a global outlook, full of confident, distinctive students, always learning, always developing*

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**Scholarship and Autonomy**

_The University of Greenwich is committed to developing graduates who:

1. Have an informed understanding of their discipline or professional practice, and the ability to question its principles, practices and boundaries
2. Think independently, analytically and creatively, and engage imaginatively with new areas of investigation
3. Appreciate disciplines and forms of professional practice beyond their own, and draw connections between them
4. Are intellectually curious, responsive to challenges, and demonstrate initiative and resilience_  

**Creativity and Enterprise**

_The University of Greenwich is committed to giving its graduates the confidence to:

1. Recognise and create opportunities, and respond effectively to unfamiliar or unprecedented situations or problems
2. Generate new ideas and develop creative solutions or syntheses
3. Communicate clearly and effectively, in a range of forms, taking account of different audiences
4. Make use of familiar and emerging information & communication technologies
5. Seize and shape the opportunities open to them on leaving university_  

**Cross-cultural and International Awareness**

_The University of Greenwich is committed to producing graduates who:

1. Engage effectively in groups whose members are from diverse backgrounds
2. Appreciate the importance of behaving sustainably
3. Move fluently between different cultural, social and political contexts
4. Value the ability to communicate in more than one language_
Core Proposition:

The modular approach to curriculum design creates a number of interrelated problems arising from curricular knowledge codes which may subvert the aspirations contained in the *Greenwich Graduate Attributes*. 
Research Methodology

• Case study (Yin 2009)

• 24 interviews + documentary review

• Two undergraduate degree programmes

• Explanatory and evaluative orientation

• Critical realist paradigm (Bhaskar 1979)
What are curriculum and pedagogy?

‘currere’

The curriculum is the totality of the experiences that the [student] has as a result of the provision made. (Kelley 2009: 13)
What are the problems the modular design of undergraduate curricula?

6 propositions

1. shaped by market forces
2. de-contextualised at the meta level
3. de-contextualisation at the organisational level
4. a ‘narrowing’ of pedagogy and assessment
5. constructing learning as the management of ‘knowledge objects’
6. key transferable skills are not a panacea
Typical undergraduate programme structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Sandwich year</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPD1</td>
<td>PPD2</td>
<td></td>
<td>PPD3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to business processes</td>
<td>IT for business</td>
<td>Leadership and Management</td>
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<td>Business Planning</td>
<td>The value chain</td>
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<td>Business contexts</td>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Option 1 Small businesses</td>
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<td>Organisational behaviour 1</td>
<td>Creativity in business</td>
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<td>Option 4 International business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality management</td>
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<td>Option 5 E Business</td>
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What alternatives to CDPP are suggested by these propositions?

• Taking a strategic approach which puts learning and teaching at the centre in an educational way. (Scott 2008)

• Problem-based learning where the disconnected knowledge can be drawn together around broader business issues. (Barrett & Moore 2011)

• Imaginative pedagogy which challenges students to take a more agentic approach to learning. (Jackson et. al 2006)
‘Are we educating our young people at universities to be happy thoughtful citizens living in a society to which they can relate and contribute in a variety of ways, including work, or are we just training them to be human resources or consumers for the global economy?’
References


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Thank you for listening!