

Embedding Education for Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development (EGCSD) in Initial Teacher Education and Training Courses

World Education Centre and School of Education, University of Wales, Bangor

Third 6-monthly report: April 2002 – September 2002

Introduction

The last six months has seen several significant developments both within this project and in this field of education in Wales. In Wales, there have been moves towards highlighting EGCSD in school ethos and the curriculum. The Welsh Assembly's Working Group on Global Citizenship and the Panel on Sustainable Development have worked together to produce a booklet for teachers outlining the key concepts of EGCSD, with examples of good practice in Welsh Schools. The World Education Centre, with DFID and Assembly funding, has been working on production of an accompanying training video on EGC in Welsh Schools. Estyn, the Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales has included some penetrating questions on Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship in their latest briefing sheet. The outcome of the consultation on the status of Personal and Social Development is imminent and this will be crucial to how elements of EGCSD are viewed by teachers and ITE institutions. The review of standards for ITET in Wales is also imminent and will provide an opportunity for the role of EGCSD to be explored. The Enabling Effective Support Initiative for Global Citizenship Education in Schools is also expected to have an impact on both teachers and ITET institutions.

Within the School of Education staff of the Primary Education courses have been evaluating their work on EGCSD and there are some exciting plans for long term inclusion of this element in their courses. The Project has begun work with the Secondary ITET courses and a realistic plan has been formulated for embedding EGCSD.

Primary courses (BEd and PGCE, also BA (Education))

May and June saw the submission of some significant pieces of student work. These included assignments in Core English for BEd Year 3 and PGCE relating to Global Citizenship and Children's Literature, a main subject English assignment on Dual Language texts, several relevant Individual Studies from Art students and an exam question on GC in Geography. These studies were all based on practical application in the classroom and provided evidence that students

definitely begin to grasp the principles of EGCS D when asked to research and plan work on the issues. The standard of work produced was excellent and showed much insight.

“Students produced work which was relevant for the level of the class and which showed insight into some of the issues of global citizenship.”

Tutor, English in Education

Some of this English assignment work will be used with pupils in the coming year and issues raised will be covered in a visit by the English tutor to Jamaica in October this year.

It is significant that B.Ed English assignments for 2002-03 continue to look at these elements. In year 2 the Core English assignment asks for production of a non-fiction shared writing experience for use within a PSE /PSHE/Citizenship cross-curricular theme. References include many on global citizenship. The Year 3 Core English assignment is to design a pack for teachers on “Traditional Tales from different cultures – Promoting Storytelling and the Global Dimension”. In Geography the tutor commented,

“Global Citizenship brings every educational aspect in. Every student does Geography as a Foundation subject and therefore finds out about GC, including using stories.”

Two Geography students, one Art and One English student will be doing their Individual Assignments on aspects of Global Citizenship next year. New input on sustainable development is also planned for the Design and Technology course.

Of interest, from the point of view of future planning in ITET courses, was the assignment set for BA (Education) students. These students may or may not go on to be teachers, and they do not have the background in teaching of the ITET students. Their assignment, however, required them to think critically about the introduction of EGC to primary pupils, and required extensive background reading. This was coupled with three seminar sessions in which they looked at the background to global citizenship issues. The content of their assignments showed that they had indeed begun to think about, and question critically, these issues. It seems clear, that if we expect students to help pupils engage with these issues, then we must also provide sufficient opportunity for them to explore them themselves.

During the summer, information on new resources, articles from books on EGCS D and information on other ITET courses in the UK was exchanged with staff. Several exhibitions of students work were mounted in the library so that other students and staff could see what was happening in other subject areas.

An informal staff seminar in July looked at the issues described above and a stimulating discussion was held on how different subject areas can work together to ensure coverage, continuity and progression of umbrella areas such as EGCSO in courses. This is the real start to effective planning for the future. The Professional Studies team has been discussing how they can plan for long term inclusion of EGCSO issues in their courses and the School practice Team has outlined a 12-point plan to further involve mentors and students with EGCSO in school. These developments are seen as significant indicators of the impact of the project.

Secondary Courses (PGCE and Design and Technology with QTS)

The project commenced in-depth work with the PGCE Secondary course in April. The Project Officer is grateful to the Course Director for her support and guidance with planning. A clear plan was produced for introducing EGCSO into the course. Key elements in this were

- meetings with PGCE tutors to discuss what was already happening in their courses and to introduce EGCSO resources. Tutors have agreed to explore the provision of EGCSO in their courses.
- an introduction to the project was given to Senior Mentors in July and several interested schools were followed up. All schools were sent an outline of the plan and currently, seven secondary schools have agreed to support students by explaining about, or involving them in school activities on EGCSO. An interesting discussion was also held with Outdoor Education mentors, and other subject tutors discussed the field with their mentors. An exhibition of resources was also held in the library during Mentor training days.
- preparation of a Briefing sheet on EGCSO for the student Professional Development handbook. This asks students to think about issues and to look at how this field is approached in their teaching practice school;
- an introductory seminar for all students was held at the beginning of their course. This introduced the background to, and concepts of EGCSO and the situation in Wales schools. Students had an opportunity to discuss and explore their own ideas of EGCSO and how it could be introduced in their subject areas;

This plan is very significant as it ensures that all students will be aware of EGCSO and encouraged to look at how it is approached in practice. However, the means by which students wish, or have time to, increase their background knowledge of global citizenship issues is still a relevant question.

Exit questionnaires were completed by students at the end of their course in 2002 and these will be compared to questionnaires completed by students in the 2002-03 intake who will have had significant input on EGCSO in their course.

Within the BSC Design and Technology with QTS course, a very successful, and fun, seminar was held by staff from the Intermediate Technology Development Group and University of York. This explored issues of Sustainable Technology. Evaluation by the students showed that many had little understanding of Sustainable Development and Sustainable Technology before the seminar, but that their understanding had greatly increased during it. Some comments from

students included:

“Yes, very interesting, eye-opener. We don’t think enough about the products we buy.”

“Good fun with interesting subject content.”

It is hoped to make this an annual event. This seminar provided proof for the need for further work in this area in all courses. It is easy to assume that students are coming from school, or even from degree course with a basic grasp of issues in EGCSO, but it is becoming obvious that this is not the case, and that work must begin at a very basic level in order to stimulate discussion. The Team leader for Technology in the Primary courses was also present and he is very enthusiastic about including a similar seminar in the primary courses next year.

Networking within Bangor School of Education and with other Institutions

A newsletter outlining significant happenings in the project was sent to staff in June. The outcomes of the Primary course audits were also circulated. However, the staff seminar, described above, proved a much more effective medium for sharing and discussing work, a sign that staff, already inundated by paper work and e-mails, prefer more social face to face meetings.

A substantial amount of networking with other institutions has taken place over the last six months, both through this project and through members of the Assembly’s Global Citizenship Working Group. The Global Teacher Conference, to which several Bangor staff intended to go, was cancelled in May. However, the Project Officer then contacted several ITE tutors in institutions where Education for Citizenship or Global citizenship is well established. They provided an interesting insight into what is happening on their courses. The Bangor School of Education Primary Professional Development Team has since been perusing and discussing this information and this has led to further discussion about planning for future course developments, including staff training and resource provision. Several new handbooks on Global Citizenship and ITE have recently been published by members of other UK ITE Institutions and these have been reviewed in RE news and given to staff to review.

All named contacts in ITET Institutions in Wales were sent a copy of the March 2002 Project Report. This was also posted on the WEC website. An on-line discussion forum was set up for ITET practitioners in Wales. This aimed to allow tutors to share what they were doing in the field of EGCSO in their institution. This has not been a success, (five members registered and one posted a message) possibly due to its initiation during the exam period and also perhaps because tutors first need a face to face meeting. This contrasted with the Discussion Forum set up by the DEA for UK ITET institutions, in which the Project Officer participated. This had a very lively discussion of indicators for the global dimension in ITE. Many of these participants had already met in the past, making an on-line discussion easier.

At present members of the Global Citizenship Working group are organising visits to all ITE institutions in Wales to discuss plans for EGCSO. The Project Officer has also recently introduced the project to the UCET-Cymru meeting in

Bangor. It is hoped that the result of these last two activities will be a meeting of ITE practitioners in Wales next year.

In conclusion

It is clear that, after 18 months, the project has had considerable impact on the ITET courses in Bangor. Awareness of the issues of EGCSO is considerably higher, especially amongst staff and there is an increasing awareness that, in order to deal with these areas effectively in their teaching, students will have to be thoroughly prepared, especially in terms of background knowledge and opportunities to discuss key issues. Some members of staff have recognised that this may, in the long term, require substantial changes in the way courses are organised. The request by the staff for training and for further networking with other institutions is also reflected in other ITET institutions in Wales. It is hoped that ways can be found for staff to discuss these issues, both within the Bangor School of Education and within the whole ITET network in the UK. It is certainly a stimulating time to be working in this field.