

**LINCOLN HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH AWARDS (LHERA)**

**FINAL REPORT 2017-18**

*Please complete all sections of the proforma below and return to* *lheri@lincoln.ac.uk* *by 29th June 2018*

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| **Project title** | Interprofessional Education (IPE) and Professional Identity: Can Students' Reflective Writings Measure Professional Development? |
| **Project lead** | Keivan Ahmadi (KA) |
| **Other collaborators** | Marianne L Keeler (MLK)Mark L Brennan (MLB)Penny Mosley (PM)Nicole Murdock (NM) |
| **Project duration**  | *10 months* |
| **Project dates** | *From: 01/11/2017**To: 31/08/2018* |
| **LHERI funding received** | *£750.00* |
| **Please provide an overall account of the project describing the research questions, ethics approval process, brief overview of the methodology and main activities, including how students and collaborators contributed to the research** *(max 500 words)*  |
| In recent years, healthcare educators have increasingly embraced the use of reflective writing to assess interpersonal and professional development among healthcare students (Charon et al., 2016). Interprofessional education (IPE) is a key catalyst for professional development. Moreover, there is a significant association between professional development and reflective ability (Hoffman et al., 2016). Thus, the main aim of our research was to investigate if MPharm students’ reflective essays following IPE activities could provide information on students’ professional development?**Method:**IPE-related reflective essays had been graded for a different assessment. We chose the essays from all range of grades to ensure they were representative of each cohort. Manual qualitative analysis of an anonymised sample of 35 MPharm students’ IPE-related reflective essays (7 year 1, 14 year 2, 14 year 3) was undertaken for evidence of:1. Understanding of the purpose and professional application of the IPE activities
2. Reflecting on own practice
3. Setting targets to develop own professionalism
4. Critiquing mainly focussed on the activities, rather than their own practice

Each category carried one point. We referred to the 2017 Standards for Pharmacy Professionals, General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), as the reference criteria to extract themes from students’ reflective essays. Themes were coded according to the nine GPhC Professional Standards. Each essay was then scored by the researchers from 0 –3 for each theme.**Primary Results:**Year 1 and Year 2 scored equally (33%) for Theme 3 ‘communicate effectively’, whilst Year 3 essays scored 80%. Thirty six percent of Year 3 essays referred to demonstrating ‘leadership skills’, compared to 21% of Year 2 and 0% of Year 1. Not only did reflective essays provide us with important information on students’ professional development, they also helped in making comparisons between student cohorts. Themes such as communication and teamwork featured across all 3 year cohorts, suggesting IPE activities have inherent benefits from the outset. However, leadership did not appear in any Year 1 essays, but featured significantly by Year 3, which suggests some professional skills develop more gradually than others.**Conclusion:**Reflective essays seem to be valuable and instrumental tools in assessing the longitudinal process of professional development in healthcare courses such as the MPharm course. We highly recommend our colleagues in pharmacy education (health education) to apply this method of assessment.**Student and collaborators contribution to this project:**KA came up with the idea. MLB contributed to the idea. PM & NM added to the idea. KA discussed the idea with Dr Karin Crawford and re-shaped it for a more holistic approach.KA & PM randomly chose sample of 35 IPE reflective essays of three cohort of MPharm students. Essays were anonymized and coded.MLK manually analysed the essays for themes on traits of professionalism referenced to “Professional Standards” for Pharmacists, Midwives & Nurses and medical doctors.MLK & KA discussed the early findings and KA guided MLK to proceed with further data analysis.KA & MLK drafted a 300-word abstract for Manchester Pharmacy Education Conference.MLB, PM & NM contributed to the draft abstract.MLK & KA finalized the abstract and submitted it to the conference organizerKA & MLK produced a 10-minute PowerPoint slideshow to present in the Manchester Pharmacy Education Conference. MLB, PM & NM read and commented on the slides.KA & MLK contributed to the LHERA dissemination event (Audio aided conference at UoL)MLK & KA presented the findings at 2018 Manchester Pharmacy Education ConferenceKA & MLK discussed the idea of drafting a qualitative manuscript to publish the findings.KA provided MLK with help and guidance regarding the manuscript writing and targeted journal for a possible publicationMLK to draft a manuscript.KA to comment on /edit the draft manuscript for a potential publication. |
| **What challenges, if any, occurred during your project and how did you overcome these?***(Max 250 words)* |
| Overall, we were able to achieve our milestones in a timely and smooth manner. The only bit of challenge was understanding the modus operandi of “Campus Jobs” and to ensure we were strictly following their set of rules and regulations. As I was not given the rights to approve the student submitted timesheet, it was really difficult to find out about the remaining balance. If I may suggest, it would be easier if LHERI takes care of the accounts and expenditures, directly. |
| **Please outline the major tasks and milestones delivered in this project. How far do these follow the outline in your original application? Please detail any variations and additional deliverables that occurred** *(Max 250 words)* |
| To recruit the research assistant – a UoL student – we:1. Created Job description and role evaluation document.
2. Advertised it through “Campus Jobs” portal.
3. Asked the interested candidates to submit their resume and a 100-word expression of interest.
4. Evaluated the candidates through the panel of research team members.
5. Chose a candidate i.e., Ms Marianne (Lou)
6. Informed her of the panel decision
7. Had an introductory/briefing meeting with her
8. Discussed and agreed on the following Gantt chart
9. Kept meeting with her (total 4 formal meetings) throughout the duration of the research.
10. Maintained a continuous channel of communication via emails.

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| **Proposed Activities** | **Nov** | **Dec** | **Jan** | **Feb** | **Mar** | **Apr** | **May** | **Jun** |
| Lit. Review |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ethics Approval |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Advertising and hiring research assistant |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| On-job training for the research assistant – if needed |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Identifying the theoretical framework |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Text-analysis |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Description of themes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coding and grouping the themes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| In-depth analysis of the themes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reporting the early findings |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dissemination of the final findings\* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Fortunately, we were able to achieve all of our proposed milestones, in a timely manner. The extra bit that we are working on is to write a qualitative manuscript for the purpose of publication. We have planned to have the first draft ready by the end of October 2018.  |
| **Please provide details of all outcomes and outputs from the Higher Education Award funded project, including any activity you plan to take forward beyond the funding –** *this will include specific details of dissemination / scholarly outputs, evidence of impact or potential impact from the research processes and findings, plans for ‘next steps’ with the research etc.* |
| 1. I was able to recruit a research assistant – UoL student at the college of social sciences – who I believe has worked tirelessly and has engaged so well with the project and its deliverables. Marianne – Lou – has proven that the notion of “Student as Producer” is pragmatic and actionable.
2. We submitted our findings – in the form of abstract – to the 2018 Manchester Pharmacy Education conference and our abstract was accepted.
3. Our abstract shall be published in the “Journal of Pharmacy Education”.
4. We are planning to publish our full results in the form of a qualitative manuscript.
5. We can cautiously claim – based on our findings – that reflective writing can be used as a proxy measure for professional development – professionalism – amongst healthcare students.
6. The next step, is to encourage colleagues in other schools/colleges to use reflective writing as an assessment tool in their professional courses and to see if our findings are replicable.
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| **Please provide outline details of expenditure against the budget** *(this should be available from TechOne)***. If your project costs varied from the original application please provide details.**  |
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| Project budget code: **0003635-2226**  |  |  |  |  |
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| Income | Budget | Actual | Remaining |  |  |
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| Pay | £750.00 | £750 | £0 |  |  |
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| **Is there any feedback you would like to give to the HE Research Institute to assist us in the development of these awards in future?** |
| I would like to commend LHERI for the following:1. Drop-in session with Karin to discuss the idea and bid as her expertise and knowledge regarding the higher education landscape was paramount to the design of this study.
2. ToR document was really helpful and informative
3. Reviewers’ feedback on the proposal and project was invaluable as not only it provided me with information on how to improve this project; but also, has helped me with subsequent similar submissions in future
4. Networking events were well-placed, timely and informative
5. Shared decision making in creating this template was a true representation of values-based approach to research and collegiality.
6. LHERI dissemination event was innovative and I did learn from this dynamic type of audio aided abstract presentation.
7. Most importantly Ali’s continuous support throughout the project, which without a shadow of a doubt has been exemplary.
8. LHERA is a great opportunity for those colleagues who wish to have an extra pair of hands to prime pump their innovative educational ideas and need some money to get started. £750.00 is more than it sounds!
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Completed by …Keivan Ahmadi

Date …26/06/2018………………………………………………

Please submit this report to lheri@lincoln.ac.uk no later than …………….