

Enhancing communication between staff and students, and among students

What did/do you do?

A coffee session to enhance communication between staff and students, and among students from different backgrounds.

Who is involved?

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How do you do it?

Last year we organised a late afternoon coffee session once a month to share practice of teaching English as a second or foreign language (EFL) in different cultural backgrounds. The session normally lasted about one and half hours, including a presentation and a discussion. We contacted the first presenter, and at the end of the first session we asked attendants for volunteers for the subsequent sessions. As students saw what was involved in the presentation and inspired by the discussion, they were more likely to put themselves forwards for the following sessions. We had five sessions in total, covering EFL teaching in Korea, Saudi Arabian, China, and Japan.

Why do you do it?

To meet more people from different backgrounds has been identified as a need by international students themselves. However, they tend to stick to their ethnic groups outside lectures and tutorials. On the other hand, students would like to see more communications between staff and students, as suggested in the programme evaluation. So we hope the coffee sessions could kill two birds with one stone.

Does it work?

Students liked the opportunities to share their experience with others and at the same time learn something new. Due to the workload in Semester 2, we couldn't organise another round of coffee sessions, students kept asking when the next one would be.

Teaching and Learning Case Study

HaSS 'communicating with students' project, 2010/11

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Coherent Curriculum theme:

- Student engagement
- Student induction
- Employability