

Pedagogically Speaking

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Place: the City, the County, and the Region

Not before time, UK political parties of all hues, have recently taken up the cause of those who are *just about managing* or those *left-behind* in areas of the country that suffer relative deprivation compared to more affluent communities. A recent report by Local Trust and Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion, into what they call 'left-behind' neighbourhoods, got only passing mentions in the British news media¹. Like many other important news items, it has been buried by Brexit news. The report highlighted the plight of neighbourhoods that are deprived economically, socially and culturally. According to the report, these *left-behind* communities are places that have been hard-hit by ten years of austerity, they have seen cuts to their local services, they have a lack of cultural resources and have suffered decades of post-industrial decline. Until June 2016, these areas had been forgotten by politicians and policy makers. Even now, three and a half years on from that vote, they continue to miss out on the benefits of new technologies and economic growth. In these neighbourhoods many have become disillusioned with the ability of traditional party politics to offer solutions.

Why is this important to Durham University? The answer is because of the proximity of many of the *left-behind* communities to where we are; 9 of them are in County Durham, with a further 20 in the neighbouring unitary authorities of South Tyneside, Sunderland, Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees (the pre-1974 County Durham), and 15 more in the rest of the North-East of England. For those of you whose geography is not great, 25 out of the 206 *left-behind* neighbourhoods (12%) are within 20 miles of Durham city centre, and several, like Stanley and Shotton, are less than 10 miles from Durham. These *left-behind* communities are our neighbours. Durham University has been very good at becoming a global institution of late, proud to be in the World Top 100, but in so doing has the University forgotten the place that it comes from, Durham city in County Durham, part of the North-East of England?

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More importantly does it overlook those people who happen to be its next-door neighbours? Place - the city, the county and the region - is the theme of the 10th edition of *Pedagogically Speaking*.

Durham University claims to be the best university in the North-East of England and yet we have relatively few students from the North-East studying at Durham. From a 2018 Sutton Trust report on commuter students we know that many students in the North-East choose to stay at home and commute to their university; this is the highest proportion in England and Wales. Other local universities, Sunderland and Teesside, enrol over half of their students from this commuter category, placing them both in the top 20 for attracting commuter students. Durham, by contrast, is in the bottom 10, with 1.3 per cent commuter students, while at the same time being at the very top of the table for attracting long distance movers - over 60 per cent of our UK students are long distance movers from outside the region. With so few students from nearby and so many from other parts of the country and other parts of the world, it is perhaps not that surprising that the student population remains largely detached from the local population and its culture. By economic and arguably cultural measures too, the town and gown divide is wider now than it has ever been.

Durham University's recent record on social inclusion is weak (albeit slowly improving). Each year it appears towards the bottom of the *Sunday Times* social inclusions rankings.

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The Digital Luddite – a world without maps

In a world without maps, the relative position of buildings, towns, cities and countries to each other does not seem to be understood by younger people. To illustrate the point, I need to tell you about an exercise I do with my students. Each year as an introductory 'get to know your group' exercise, I ask students to plot where their home town is on a world map. I am amazed how difficult some people find this. Each year performance seems to deteriorate.

Continues on page 8.



The UK Government wants Durham and other Russell Group universities to do much more for disadvantaged communities and the Labour Party wants to limit the University's ability to recruit pupils from private schools to the same proportion as in the community as a whole, i.e. 7% (according to figures the University supplied to the *Sunday Times*, Durham currently recruits 39% from independent schools). The latest Access and Participation Plan by the University is featured on page 4. This document acknowledges some of the current issues faced by Durham in trying to attract students from under-represented groups. It bodes well for the future but it also is realistic in identifying the scale of the task that lies ahead. The article by Julie Rattray and Rillie Raaper (School of Education) makes a powerful argument suggesting that pedagogy should be based around the expectations that students make a socially responsible contribution to society. Hopefully some of that contribution will be made to society in the North-East of England.

Some colleges and departments already do a lot of good work in the local community. We have done our best in this edition of *Pedagogically Speaking* to highlight some of these activities. We refer to the work of the Archaeology Department with their applied social sciences research module; also a Business School initiative to place MBA students and budding entrepreneurs with local charities, to help the charities and enable the students to develop practical experience of social entrepreneurship. The Sports Science Department and Team Durham have a history of coaching and sports developments in the local community, and we refer to some of their work. Whilst we don't feature it in this edition, we also note that the Vice-Chancellor's column in the local paper recently announced a Maths School project, which will develop a specialist 16-18 years Maths School in partnership with Durham Sixth Form Centre, and we know that students from the School of Education do work hosting activities for children from local schools and organising learning outside the classroom events at local museums such as Beamish. These are all positive contributions and developments.

However, Durham University, its staff and its students could be a much stronger and more important resource for the Durham travel to work area, County Durham and the North-East of England. Through our outreach activities, scholarships, teaching, support and facilitation of social enterprise Durham should be seeking to put something back into the communities who provide many of the university's employees; the communities who put up with the congestion, the noisy habits of some of our students and the pressure that is put on the local property market.

Sporting scholarships could be redirected from already affluent and successful Lacrosse players from Connecticut to promising footballers from West Auckland or the next England captain from Horden. The University already has some partnerships with local schools but could this go further?

Could the University do more for the school children of Seaham, South Moor, Shildon, Shotton, and Stanley, by paying for them to come and do experiments in laboratories, do case studies in collaborative work spaces and play on sports fields from time to time? The University should be aiming to inspire kids from these communities. At present too many are put off by Durham's reputation. As a result many of the best local scholars pass Durham on their way to study at Teesside, Sunderland or Northumbria.

Staff and students involved in outreach initiatives would undoubtedly feel more of an emotional attachment to the region and feel connected to Durham as a place. At present the only time some of our students think about the region (beyond the Cathedral and castle) is at their degree ceremony, when our Chancellor (born in Seaham) tells them what a great and inspiring place they have been studying in.

¹Local Trust, 2019, Left behind? Understanding communities on the edge, available on line at <https://localtrust.org.uk/insights/research/left-behind-understanding-communities-on-the-edge/>

New year – new ideas

We hope you are enjoying this issue of *Pedagogically Speaking*. As we start to wrap up 2019 and approach the start of a new decade – and a new run of this magazine – the editorial team is taking the opportunity to make some exciting changes. We have a third editor on board who is relishing the prospect of a digital revolution – though the Digital Luddite might not know what has hit him/her! This includes plans for a website that will allow access to back issues and, we hope, more opportunities for you, our readers, to engage with us and each other. We also wanted to reiterate that we are always open to contributors, guest editors, and suggestions for themes. Our next issue, on 'learning' – in the broadest sense – is planned for Spring 2020, so please get in touch with a member of the editorial team if you would like to contribute.

The Appliance of Science

For the last two years, Simone Abram, Sandra Bell and Maria Salaru have been leading a project in Durham's Anthropology department which links Durham Masters students to the North-East community. The project is part of a 3-year Erasmus+ Knowledge Alliance project which links university-company partnerships in the Czech Republic, Netherlands, Slovenia and Durham respectively. The project has developed a people-centred research and design process that enables students to involve industry partners, communities, academics and masters-level social science students in practical, applied, social sciences research projects. In particular, they have been looking at developing people-centred ways to apply technology to help sustainable living and energy consumption in the four countries.

In a module titled 'field study', masters-level students at Durham have been working with local communities and potential consumers on a variety of projects. The academic team have helped develop the students to work in teams on real world issues. This has been particularly challenging as the students have to work their way around problems and identify third party groups who need to be involved in the discussion. One example is a development of domestic sensor technology which can alert carers to any change in energy use patterns by vulnerable people. This could be particularly useful to monitor if an elderly person living on their own has failed to make themselves a hot drink or piece of toast in the morning, or failed to switch on lights in the evening. In order to find a way of introducing the technology, Durham students have spoken to housing associations, carers and focus groups of elderly people to find out whether this sort of technology can be used to help people live independently.

A team of Durham students recently worked with Durham County Council to develop a greater understanding about how the County Council can encourage greater uptake of electric and alternative fuel vehicles in the County. As well as advising the County Council on the factors inhibiting the use of electric vehicles, they have been able to point to practical ways of using electric vehicles. The most successful current use is predictable point-to-point journeys, where there is charging infrastructure available. A good proportion of the County Council's own fleet of vehicles are involved in this type of journey, giving the council an opportunity to convert a part of their fleet to alternative fuels when and if resources are available. Additionally, the students were able to identify potentially significant improvements that could be made to the current charging infrastructure, helping the council to prioritise its investments in EV charging points.

Clearly there are significant employability benefits for the students from working on these applied research projects. But what is interesting in relation to this edition of *Pedagogically Speaking*, is that Durham students and academics are out in the community making a difference. As a result of a research link with several European universities, Erasmus funding enabled students to contribute to the NE, learn from their European peers, and gain lifelong skills.

Responsibility for the future: Is it our responsibility to develop socially competent graduates?

Dr Julie Rattray & Dr Rille Raaper
School of Education

At a time when we are being bombarded with league tables, student satisfaction and an increasingly measurement-driven culture in higher education it is important to take time to reflect on what higher education is really for. The traditional liberal discourses of higher education advocate it as a place for developing socially minded and socially skillful individuals who would shape society and have a positive impact on those around them. More recently however, the focus has been on the production of labour market-ready graduates who can fulfil the needs of corporate society and market economies. In such models of higher education, students are frequently constructed as consumers and university education as a commodity to be bought and paid for. Such a system fosters competition, individualism and instrumental learning taking us further away from a holistic discourse of higher education.

As part of our ongoing Erasmus+ project that explores the development, assessment and validation of social competences in European higher education we have been exploring these issues as we consider the social function of higher education. One of the first challenges in this project has been to unpack what we mean by the term 'social competence' and ask questions about whether we all understand it in the same way, and whether that is important. For us social competence is underpinned by critical pedagogy that characterises education as a social practice with a mission to develop socially competent citizens. Taking our inspiration from feminist theorist bell hooks, and advocates of critical pedagogy Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux, we envisage a model of social competence and associated pedagogy that is co-constructed and relational with an emphasis on active student engagement in examining issues of justice and injustice in their life and society more broadly. However, we acknowledge that there are a wide variety of ways to conceptualise or think about social competence that are drawn from many different disciplines and discourses, e.g. developmental psychology, global citizenship, moral philosophy and other areas of educational and social theory.

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In order to further add to the complexity of this important, yet overlooked, issue we have started to consider the relationship between social competence and university transitions. As far as we can tell at the moment much of the emphasis on social competence development in higher education is centered around transitions into the academic world of the institution, as students are supported to develop the necessary academic and social skills i.e. communication and teamwork that they need to cope with university life. Whilst this is undoubtedly important, students are required not simply to enter the academy but to progress through it and finally move on. In moving on, we expect them to contribute to a sustainable and inclusive future society, having arguably furnished them with an overly individualised way of looking at the world. Despite mission statements that emphasise the contribution our students will make to society, many of our systems and practices foster and promote this individual culture and short-term reactive practice that seems to be at odds with the idea of socially minded graduates who understand and are ready to challenge some of the fundamental inequalities in society. By taking a more holistic approach to social competence and the idea of transition as something that does not end after induction week, we can perhaps reverse this trend. By embedding the idea of social competence and responsibility not only into extra-curricular activities but seeing them as a core part of all curricula in the form of content, the learning environment and social interactions, we can foster in learners a growing sense of social responsibility and empowerment. By extending the transition period throughout the life span of a degree programme, students would develop a much stronger sense that learning is an ongoing process and that they need to continually re-visit who they are and where they fit in the world. Such an approach would also help students to gain a stronger sense that learning is not only a cognitive process, but rather, that it has a fundamentally social nature relating to taking an active role in society and not being a passive bystander.

Through our project a number of areas of good practice have emerged where individual teachers and departments seem already to be drawing on these principles in their approach to curriculum design and student learning. Whilst we applaud these individuals, we would argue that institutional, and even national policies and structures are needed to live up to our responsibilities and support the development of socially competent graduates¹.

¹For more information about the DASCHE project see: <http://dasche.eu/>



Image from *This Is Durham* website, <https://www.thisisdurham.com/>

Where is Barnard Castle?

Philip Warwick, Business School

Ignorance of place is the new normal. There has been an erosion of geographical knowledge (SatNavs and Google have taken over from maps as the primary source of information about place and location) and many of the students I teach in Durham seem to have little notion of place. Instead their world is virtual; they remain connected to their own virtual community throughout their studies and arguably fail to make a connection to the place in which they are based. So when I ask them about the impact on the North-East of England of: globalisation, the growth of emerging economies, the growth of the service sector, the financial crisis and post-financial crisis austerity, few have anything to offer. In 2018-19, I decided to tackle the issue of place, referring to the City, the County and the North-East more explicitly in my teaching.

UK wealth inequalities are more noticeable now than ever they were in the late 20th century. Some localities appear to thrive, whilst others struggle to keep their head above water. While visiting placement students around the country in April 2019, I found myself visiting Lidl in struggling Bridgend one day (Bridgend is the South Wales town that has just lost its Ford engine plant) and mobile phone company Three in thriving Maidenhead (more of a Waitrose rather than Lidl sort of town) the next. I visited Watford Junction, which although not an attractive town, is doing well as a commuter town for London. For my final visit I walked through beautifully manicured parks and gardens in central London at lunchtime to reach IBM's headquarters on London's South Bank. I could discern no hints of austerity Britain in the parks and gardens of central London. I then travelled on a brand-new train from the recently upgraded Blackfriars station, to the newly renovated and extended Kings Cross station. The train had all manner of technology on-board.

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Not much more than a couple of hours later, back 'up-north' in Darlington, I observed the trains heading to Saltburn and Bishop Auckland.

They were of the type converted from busses, built nearer the middle of the 20th century than the start of the 21st century. The once magnificent curved roof of the station was looking shabby. From Bank Top station I cycled through South Park noting the neglect in stark contrast to the central London parks. The local council has virtually abandoned any attempt to maintain the park to its old standard. Darlington is a town that used to be a serial winner of Britain in Bloom contests as recently as the 1990s and in 2000, had an award winning garden at the Chelsea Flower show.

What about Universities? What is their place in this? Many of the UK's top universities see themselves as global first, then national second (they pronounce themselves World top 100/200, UK top 10/20 etc). Their local identity seems to come a distant third. This helps recruit the best students and international students and staff. It also makes an important statement about where the university sees itself, but it doesn't do anything to locate the university in a local/regional context. Few top institutions declare themselves proud to be located in the North-East of England, the North or the Midlands.

Well over 60% of Durham's home students as well as all our international students come from outside the North-East of England. Perhaps as a result, the significant majority of undergraduate and postgraduate students remain detached from the city and the region. There is also a very low proportion of local and mature students. With this in mind it is perhaps not surprising that many Durham students feel allegiance to their social media virtual network first, their college second, their university third and perhaps their department somewhere down the line. Many of them do not even consider that they are attached to the place, in the form of city, county or region. They just happen to be here while at university. The idea of being in a place, with an identity and regional characteristics has little or no bearing on them.

Durham's town and gown chasm was thrown into the media spotlight in November 2017, when a student society arranged a fancy dress party themed on the 1984-5 miners' strike, with participants encouraged to attend dressed as miners with pick axes, or policemen with truncheons. The students seemed oblivious to their setting and not surprisingly the whole incident caused great offence to the local residents and institutions. Whilst the Students' Union and University made an appropriate response to this incident, there has been a reluctance to discuss it subsequently. I talked about what happened with some of my second year seminar classes at the time. I was shocked about how little they knew (and cared) about Durham as a place.

Their experience of the locality had not exposed them to any insights into inequality or austerity and few had considered the issue of place. They had little sense of belonging to the region. I decided I need to do something about this.

I am not in a position to change university strategy. I was not altogether sure that I would get a favourable response from the University if I made a noise about my plans, so I just got on with it. I knew I could do more through my modules to develop a greater sense of regional identity. I wanted students in my class to know more about the locality in which they are based. So, without abandoning the idea of an international curriculum, I developed more of a regionally rooted feel to what I taught, building into my modules opportunities to look at some local issues. Last year, my Public Sector Management module students did a case study on the challenges facing Durham County Council. It focuses on the County Councils interconnected plans for a strategic business park and a new County Hall. The same students also look at the managed market in higher education by studying the impact of competition on the four universities in the North-East of England and I refer to local issues with public services throughout the module. With my first year undergraduates I talk about the reasons why they apply to study at Durham, as a way to introduce them to writing a simple report. This year, they will be doing a case study about Recyke y'Bike (the charity bike shop on North Road) as an example of a not-for-profit organisation and at every opportunity I will be including examples of international, national and – crucially – local business issues. I don't want students from other parts of the UK and the rest of the world to spend a year or more in the North-East of England without engaging with issues facing the North-East beyond the Durham bubble that they inhabit.

I am not sure if I can influence my colleagues who don't think about the issue of place. I know several who have worked in Durham for many years who have not been to visit the North-East coastline, the Durham Dales and have barely gone anywhere in the North-East beyond Durham, Newcastle and possibly the Metro Centre. A couple of years ago, a colleague in the Business School asked me what connections the Business School had to the pharmaceutical industry. He had been working in Durham longer than I had (perhaps around 4 years) at the time, so when I told him that Glaxo (now GlaxoSmithKline) have a large plant at Barnard Castle, I was surprised by his response. "Where is Barnard Castle?"¹ As I said, ignorance of place is the new normal.

¹If you don't know, Barnard Castle is a small attractive market town 25 miles South-west of Durham, in rural Teesdale. It is home to a spectacular riverside castle and the Bowes Museum, with its famous silver swan (see picture on page 4).

The Access and Participation Plan

The University's Access and Participation Plan articulates the actions that need to be taken to improve opportunities for groups underrepresented in the student population. The plan concentrates on improving access for mature students, students from poorer neighbourhoods, students with disabilities, or from Black, Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups. Whilst there is no explicit link with students from the North-East of England, the North-East catchment area is particularly relevant to mature student applications and is offered as context for the relatively low number of BAME applications.

The University now supports and promotes the idea of making slightly lower offers to students from schools in parts of the country where fewer young people go into higher education. This might help encourage students from some of the *left-behind* neighbourhoods (including those in the North-East) mentioned elsewhere in this edition of *Pedagogically Speaking*. This is done in the knowledge that students who achieve a grade B (or equivalent) at A level from a school in a low participation in HE area, may well have attained an A grade in a school in different environment. In addition, students from lower income families are offered a partial bursary on a sliding scale, and consideration is being given to support engagement in extra-curricular activities for these groups. There are also plans for the University to expand the existing Supported Progression scheme for regionally based 16-18 year olds.

Perhaps even harder to overcome is the issue of attracting more mature students to study at Durham. The plan states that various strategies are under consideration to improve the record of recruitment and retention for this group. The Foundation Programme could be expanded and further enhanced to encourage more applicants, and once admitted mature students could be supported in a smaller number of colleges to create stronger mature student communities. They could also be given more support to help them obtain graduate level jobs at the end of their studies, without expecting them to leave the region, as many of the younger graduates do at the end of their studies.

In the new regulatory environment for higher education in the UK, The Office for Students will be monitoring the delivery of Access and Participation Plans, and can impose penalties on organisations that fail to achieve targets set in the plan.



Sense of place in a placement module

Sue Bock & AJ Rankin-Wright, Department of Sport & Exercise Sciences

Jackie Lowes & Katie Binks, Experience Durham (Team Durham)

The Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences hosts a final year placement module (SPRT3201 Sport in the Community Placement), which requires our undergraduate students to engage with external partners in professional contexts from within our local community (Durham city and the wider county). The module aims to provide our students with a vocational insight through practical experience, into professional settings within the sport, exercise and physical activity for health sector. Importantly, the placement module also enables us as an academic Department to forge positive partnerships between the University and external professional organisations in our immediate and local area. The module offers a positive and important learning experience for our student cohorts, while also greatly benefitting both our Department and importantly, members of the local community.

Our Placement Partners reflect a range of professional settings for our subject area, and include: County based School Sports Partnership schemes (e.g. Sedgefield, Chester-Le-Street and Durham City), Durham Trinity School and Sport College, a range of Team Durham-led Community Outreach programmes (e.g. multi-sport and dance, athlete strength and conditioning training, health and well-being initiatives, and inclusion group projects such as 'Active Steps'), Durham City Junior Sport Programmes, County Durham Sport Development Team, Durham Institute of Sport, and media, marketing, and event management within Experience Durham provision. All of our placements are located within the county, enabling our students to engage with a very real experience of local 'place'. Our colleagues in Experience Durham (Team Durham) – without whom we would not be able to offer such carefully considered and often times bespoke student placement experiences - have carefully nurtured and supported these community partnerships. They work closely with local and regional community providers, to ensure that the University compliments and supports their work, rather than seeking to replicate or compete against their provision. This work is successful and vital; of course, we seek to benefit directly for our placement provision, but the University's successful programme of Student Volunteering within Team Durham also depends upon this momentum and carefully considered hard work. There is much to celebrate here in terms of excellent links between the University and the local community.

The 'Sport in the Community Placement' module is pivotal to the personal development of our students, and in preparing them for graduate employment. In return, our placement partners positively gain from the contribution that our students make to their delivery and provision in a community setting. Our students offer a range of professional competencies that positively influence the work of our partnership organisations, whether that is through the planning and delivery of initiatives, the evaluation of current provision, or through the development of future sports development ideas, projects or initiatives. Our Placement Partners are a highly valued component of our degree programme team, and provide an essential element of our student experience.

For many of our final year students, the experience of working within the local community while on placement provides a vital insight into the region, its people, and its geographical space. Our students who originate from the region value the role of the placement in terms of creating valuable networking opportunities, and real-world experience of working within local professional contexts. (Indeed, a small number of them manage to secure future employment, or school-centred teacher training through the links they have forged and created within the placement module). For our students who originate from wider locations, the experience can offer far-reaching insights and learning about their sense of 'place' while here studying with us. When exploring student experiences from within the module, we begin to appreciate the valuable insights that our students gain from working in their immediate location. An enhanced awareness of professional organisations, local providers, varied and diverse user groups (young and old), political and government influence, social and economic landscape, urban and rural geography, and importantly how these all impact upon the local provision of sport, exercise and health, can bring their academic learning to life. The placements offer our students a new-found appreciation of both successful examples of sport development or exercise promotion, running alongside the challenges of applying theoretical concepts and frameworks of practice in sometimes-challenging situations or locations. This offers an element of learning that a lecture theatre or seminar room cannot provide.

Learning gain aside, what continues to impress us the most from our involvement with this module, is the genuine appreciation and respect that our students have for the people of our region. Our students appear to thrive when they work directly with members of our local community. In turn, we are confident that they provide access and opportunity through engaging with the important work of their placement providers. They are ambassadors of our undergraduate programmes, our Department, and of Durham University – and we are confident that they offer a small piece in an important multi-faceted approach to positive and strong links between the campus and the town.

MBA Social Entrepreneurs

Every year, a group of full-time MBA students are encouraged to develop their entrepreneurial skills by working with charities and social enterprises in the local area. The specific focus of the project is to work with disadvantaged people, people who have fallen on hard times, and the organisations that work with people who fall into these categories. This is quite a stretch for some of the Business School's MBA students and not necessarily what they expected to do when they enrolled on an MBA programme. However, the work they have done on these projects has been tremendously successful and has helped many of them develop their entrepreneurial skills in the context of a social enterprise or charity organisation.

In 2018-19 MBA students worked with:

Auckland Youth and Community Centre, a charity that works with school age and young people in the Woodhouse Close neighbourhood in Bishop Auckland. Their aim is to work with young people to build a sense of community, to develop skills for education and employment and build self-esteem.

Daisy Chain, a Stockton-on-Tees-based charity which provides a range of support services for children and adults affected by autism in the Tees Valley and County Durham area.

If U Care Share Foundation, a Chester-le-Street-based charity that encourages young people to share problems, providing emotional and practical support at a crucial time in their lives. The charity works with young people and families to intervene to prevent suicide and support those bereaved by suicide.

RT Projects, a Durham-based arts charity which encourages people living in County Durham to get involved in arts, crafts and creative activities to improve emotional wellbeing and positive mental health.

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Next issue, Spring 2020: 'Learning'

Would you like to contribute to the next issue of *Pedagogically Speaking*? If so please email a member of the editorial team (page 1).

Stray Aid, a charity based in Coxhoe, which rescues, reunites and rehouses abandoned, lost, and abused cats and dogs, found on the streets of North-East England.

MBA students are allocated to the charities with instructions to meet and maintain contact with the organisation, then to work with the key contact to develop a project brief, delivering a project within the agreed timescale. Projects typically relate to financial management, improving the efficiency of service delivery and/or marketing and promotion activities.

Auckland Youth and Community Centre website carries a news item on the work that the MBA students did in spring 2019. The piece includes the following quote from the Chairperson of the charity:

Bill Niblo, Chairperson of Auckland Youth and Community Centre, said: *"This valuable piece of work, carried out on the Centre's behalf, is the latest step in our internal programme to support both our business operations and staff development. It will result in the updating of our plans to ensure the Centre's longer-term sustainability. The students presented themselves very well throughout the project and they engaged positively and professionally with our staff and volunteers. Our leadership team was very impressed with the final presentation. We thank the students for their hard work, dedication and support and we wish them every success in their future careers."*¹

Once the contacts have been made, projects tend to follow fairly easily and word of mouth recommendations enable the work to continue in future years.

¹Available online at: <https://www.aucklandyouthcommunitycentre.co.uk/mba-consultancy-project-success/>

Downloaded, 14/10/19.

The Student Pledge

The annual Matriculation ceremonies in Durham Cathedral on Wednesday 2nd October introduced the Student Pledge to a new intake of Durham students. Developed in consultation with students and the Students Union over the course of academic year 2018/19, the Student Pledge articulates a set of values for students to follow while studying at Durham University. Further efforts were made to reach students during Freshers' Fair with the handing out of 'Pledge Packs'. Whilst the pledge does largely refer to study-related activities, it does introduce the idea of the wider Durham community (i.e. the place), and being respectful to and considerate of that community¹. The full pledge is reproduced in the following:

My pledge to myself - I undertake to:

Hold myself to the highest possible standards

Conduct myself with integrity and dignity in all matters

Demonstrate high standards of personal conduct in my interactions with the University and the wider Durham community.

My pledge to others – I undertake to:

Respect diversity and the promotion of equal opportunity for all

Treat other students, staff and members of the wider community with respect and tolerance, irrespective of their race, colour, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, nationality or disability

Promote a culture in which incidents of sexual violence and misconduct are not tolerated

Be a good and considerate neighbour while living in College or within the wider Durham community.

My pledge to my educational experience – I undertake to:

Engage with my academic studies to the very best of my abilities both as an independent learner and as part of the community of practice within my academic department(s)

Conduct myself with honesty and integrity in pursuit of my education, respecting the University's rules on plagiarism, research misconduct, and the use of the IT and Library facilities

Respect freedom of expression.

¹Available online at: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/experience/colleges/pledge/>

Continued from page 1.

This year, a UK student plotted London in Albania on my world map.

Another student told me she would be a little late for the seminar because she had a language class prior to the seminar. Fair enough, I thought, she may be a few minutes late. At half past the hour, she came in to the seminar in the new Teaching and Learning Centre, blaming the bus for her lateness. When I asked her where her language class had been taking place, she said at Elvet Riverside. She appeared to have little idea where these two locations were in relation to each other.

I blame all of this on Smart Phone dependence syndrome. Bring back maps!