



**ODL and Cross Border Higher Education in  
the Commonwealth:  
Who is offering it, and why? Who is studying  
in this way, and why?  
What are the key challenges and solutions?**

**The Experience of the Commonwealth  
Scholarship Commission**

**Dr Hilary Perraton  
Deputy-Chair**

## What is the CSC?

- The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom administers Commonwealth scholarships and fellowships.
- It is set up by act of parliament and consists of 15 commissioners. The Association of Commonwealth Universities runs its secretariat.
- Most of its awards are for conventional masters and doctorates.
- Since 2002 the Commission has also provided distance-learning scholarships, generally through partnerships between British and overseas universities.

## CSC DL strategy

- Strand 1: 'Partnership' scholarships, 2002
- Strand 2: Scholarships on DL programmes with no overseas partner, 2006
- New development: additional tranche of funding for DL scholarships in the health and education sectors, 2007

## Strand 1: 'Partnership' scholarships

- 2001 launch, 2002 start
- Key criteria: quality, developmental impact, partner capacity- building
- 16 courses have taken 43 cohorts
- 800<sup>th</sup> Master's level award in 2008
- Internal review by Commission in 2007

## Partnership schemes

- Wye and Pretoria, Agricultural Science (5 cohorts)
- Sunderland and JKUAT, Kenya, Information Systems (5)
- Loughborough (no partner) Water, environment (1)
- Loughborough and Bangladesh UET, Renewable Energy (1)
- Institute of Education and Aga Khan Pakistan, Education & International Development (4)
- Leeds Met and Chainama College, Zambia, Health (4)
- Leeds Met and Dar es Salaam I of T, Facilities Management (2)
- Staffordshire and Jadavpur/Madras, Sustainable Development (4)

## Partnership schemes (continued)

- Bath and CIOB South Africa, Construction Management (2)
- Dundee and Kenya Med Training College, Nursing (2)
- London EP and Univ Ghana, Agriculture and Sustainable Development (1)
- Stirling and Bangladesh Agric Univ, Aquatic Resource Dev. (5)
- UCL and Walter Sisulu Univ, Internat'l Primary Health Care (2)
- Edinburgh and Makerere, International Animal Health (3)
- Royal Veterinary College, Univ Peradeniya, Livestock Health and Production (1)
- Cardiff University, Karunashraya Hospice, Palliative Med. (1)



## How do the costs work out?

They vary:

If we have a student fee of £9,000 and a 70% graduation rate,  
cost per graduate = £12,857 (max)

- Include a term in Britain at an extra £4,000, cost per graduate at same graduation rate = £18,571; a graduation rate of 75% would give £17,333
- Add the scholar's own costs
- Conventional costs for 1-year Masters are often about £24,000: cost per graduate at 95% graduation rate = £25,263

## Who is going to pay them?

- **Scholarship funds won't meet all the demand**
- **They are rich-country fees**
- **Can partnerships help?**





## Conditions for success

1. High-sounding rhetoric is a waste of time, as is a vague desire to collaborate
2. The smaller the initial group of participants, the greater the chance of success
3. Objectives of collaboration have to be clearly defined and probably not too ambitious, at least at the outset
4. There has to be something in it for every participant
5. There must be people in every institution who want and are in a position to make it work.

Ian Mugridge

# Models for Face-to-Face support

- **Local, frequent (eg JKUAT Kenya)**
- **Local, intermittent (various)**
- **Mutual support within an institution (eg Chainama Zambia)**
- **Residential element in Britain**



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