



FHEA Case Study Exemplar

<p>Written Case Study Title:</p>	<p>Occupational burnout and instructional rigour and student engagement</p>
<p>For a little while now, I keep longing for a weekend. After the weekend, regardless of what my experiences have been, I start longing for another weekend, only to realize it is Monday again. During my teaching sessions, I put in a lot of effort to make the sessions come 'alive'. It was not easy to understand what was going on. I thought I was alone in this situation. Soon I kept on hearing other colleagues while in the staffroom, dreading Mondays and expectantly waiting and longing for a weekend. I became thoughtful. There must be something creating this anxiety. On reflection, I realized that I have never been away from work longer than 12 days. I had accumulated annual leave days beyond one year. When I consulted with colleagues, I realized they also have accumulated annual leave days amounting to over two leave years.</p> <p>Accumulation of annual leave days, within the School of XXXX has arisen because of a very short semester interlude period for lecturers to take complete 30 days annual leave. When teaching activity is concluded at the end of a semester, other administrative aspects of the semester begin. These administrative aspects include; marking of coursework and examinations, recording of the grades into the system, moderation of examinations etc. A series of prior tasks must also be completed before the teaching of the successive semester starts; preparation of the module handbook, preparation of a teaching strategy and lecture plans, setting of course works and examination for external moderation etc. I realized that the situation is causing occupational burnout (Freudenberger and Géraldine, 1980); a psychological stress characterized by general lethargy, exhaustion, lack of enthusiasm, feeling of ineffectiveness that result in reduced classroom efficacy. Occupational burnout reduces a lecturer's instructional rigour concurrently reducing student engagement making the classroom not come 'alive' (Stronge, 2002). Among other lifestyle causes of occupational burnout is working too much without enough time for relaxing and socializing. Time for relaxing and socializing is only availed to lecturers through annual leave.</p> <p>The three annual semesters arise from the third bridging semester undertaken by students admitted into potential study programmes. This semester, administered at the beginning of an academic calendar year serves as a diagnostic meeting (Jones, Duckett and Hardman, 2005) to ascertain the learners' values, beliefs, feelings, personal background and experiences. The bridging semester has five modules. The bridging semester assists the school to further confirm the various potential students into the programmes they have chosen and consequently, the method of effectively delivering the study material.</p> <p>I have made a proposal for 'block' teaching (Cawelti, 1994) of the five modules. Each module is taught and students assessed within two weeks. The entire five modules and the corresponding student assessments will be delivered within twelve weeks. This proposal is a policy initiative to release enough time to allow all lecturers to take their annual leaves as scheduled. I believe that a healthy mind and body is necessary for improved brain function</p>	

(Carter, 2010). When the lecturers get enough time to relax and socialize during the annual leave, occupational burnout is rendered evitable with its unfavourable consequences and brings instructional rigour and student engagement in class. Adopted as a policy, it will form part of the quality assurance support initiative within the School of XXXX and in other higher educational institutions (HEIs).

Word Count: 554 words

Comment [PT1]: Overall, an unusual case study but one which is well evidenced, contains valuable reflective practice on matters that directly affect teaching quality and offers a thought-through solution. It is a shame that the we do not yet know the outcome and no discussion/reflection has been given over to the possible risks attendant on the solution chosen. Additionally, the opportunity to map the experiences described to the UKPSF to demonstrate an understanding of how s/he is meeting it, has been missed.