

# Surfacing 'Southern' Perspectives on Student Engagement with Internationalisation: Doctoral Theses as Alternative Forms of Knowledge

## Speaker: Professor Catherine Montgomery

Professor of International Higher Education  
Department of Education, The University of Bath



## Chair: Dr. Anatoly Oleksiyenko

Associate Professor, HKU

**Date: 26 June, 2018 (Tuesday)**

**Time: 12:45-14:00**

**Venue: Room 204, Runme Shaw Building**

*'Contemporary universities are powerful institutions, interlinked on a global scale; but they embed a narrow knowledge system that reflects and reproduces social inequalities on a global scale' (Connell, 2017).*

### Abstract

This presentation explores how knowledge represented in doctoral theses exploring internationalisation may be constructed as a source of 'Southern' knowledge on international education. The presentation aims to surface some of the ways in which the knowledge generated by doctoral students could illustrate new perspectives on internationalisation, particularly in terms of knowledge building for the students' own country contexts. The research conducted a search of all UK doctoral theses in the EThOS repository of the British Library, focusing on theses where students had engaged with internationalisation. The search generated a data set of theses written in the decade 2008 to 2018 which were then thematically analysed. In addition to questioning whether thesis knowledge constitutes powerful or empowering knowledge for the student and the Southern cultures they come from, the research indicates that the doctoral theses both reproduced Western knowledge but also generated some new perspectives on methodological and thematic constructions of internationalisation. The presentation highlights hierarchies of knowledge, and questions whether postcolonial encounters through the PhD can generate knowledge that builds Southern perspectives on internationalisation.

### About the Speaker

Catherine Montgomery is Professor of International Higher Education in the Department of Education at the University of Bath. Catherine's research focuses on internationalisation of higher education and she has a particular interest in transnational higher education in China and East Asia. Catherine's recent work focuses on international higher education mobilities, mainly with reference to flows of international students and considers what this can tell us about the changing landscapes of global higher education.

Catherine has also worked on international and comparative research projects in Denmark, Mexico and Vietnam including a British Council project focusing on Internationalisation strategy in Vietnam, an ESRC funded project looking at autonomy and democracy in education entitled Freedom to Learn and a British Council project researching the role of dialogic STEM education in addressing social and cultural disadvantage in Mexico and the UK.

Catherine has recently been appointed to the role of Academic Director of International Partnerships at the University of Bath. In this new role, she is leading the strategic development, coordination and delivery of worldwide partnerships and supporting faculties and departments in identifying, developing and maintaining research, teaching and knowledge-exchange links and partnerships with institutions overseas.

Other indicators of esteem include a visiting professorship at the Centre for Higher Education Internationalisation at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, Italy, a UK National Teaching Fellowship (2010) and frequent invitations to give keynotes, plenary and papers on international education at national and international educational conferences and for government policy groups. Catherine has strong and active collaborative research links with high ranking universities in China, Hong Kong, Vietnam and Mexico.

**All are welcome!**