UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Coventry University

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TILBURG UNIVERSITY

BAM British Academy of Management

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Impact of Capstone in enhancing Masters Students experience in UK/EU HEIs: using Bloom's taxonomy

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Overview

- Introduction
- Background
- Research approach
- Findings and Discussion (so far!)
- Conclusion
- Implications

1) Introduction

⌘ This project is funded by BAM – Management Knowledge & Education (MKE) Grants Scheme 2017 – 2018.

⌘ The project aims to assess the impact of Capstone enhancing Masters Students' experience through the development of critical thinking skills using Bloom's taxonomy.

⌘ To achieve this aim, the study focuses on the following objectives: (a) to examine different Capstone options (traditional dissertation or experiential capstones) and how they help learners to develop and use critical thinking skills, and (b) in the light of the above, the study explores impact on Masters Students' experience

2) Background

Perspectives	Outcomes
Global	Capstone has gained prominence in institutions around the globe. Aside from the United States of America where the idea emanates from, it has now gained currency in the Higher Education system in Australia and some European Educational Institutions.
UK	In UK Business schools, the quality of teaching and learning are now under intense scrutiny due largely to the decline in student recruitment in the recent past. Business schools are facing increasing pressure to deliver programmes that will enhance graduate employability. There's the growing demand to rank business schools based on their postgraduate delivery by PTES.
Institutionally	MSc programmes insist on outcome-based assessment that demonstrates graduating students ability to apply critical analysis and thinking skills to solve a real-world business problem. As with most business schools offering MSc programmes in the UK, efforts are made to integrate PSRB requirements in their curriculum, particularly those that focus on critical-analytic and thinking skills.

3) Research Approach

- The data employed in this study are from some European Union and UK business schools.

- Survey questionnaires was administered mainly to Masters level students within these business schools. The response rate was very high; this was due to the technique employed for the administration of the instrument.

- A total of 119 questionnaires were completed across four business schools in Europe and the UK. Our use of multiple business schools allows us to investigate our study from multiple perspectives, rather than from a single viewpoint (Yin, 2003).

- The planning and administration of the empirical data took place between April 2018 and August 2019.

4) Outcome so far!

- ⌘ Update on various capstone approaches adopted by universities
- ⌘ Students profile
- ⌘ Capstone awareness
- ⌘ Developing critical thinking skills
- ⌘ Facilitators comment

4.1) Universities capstone approaches
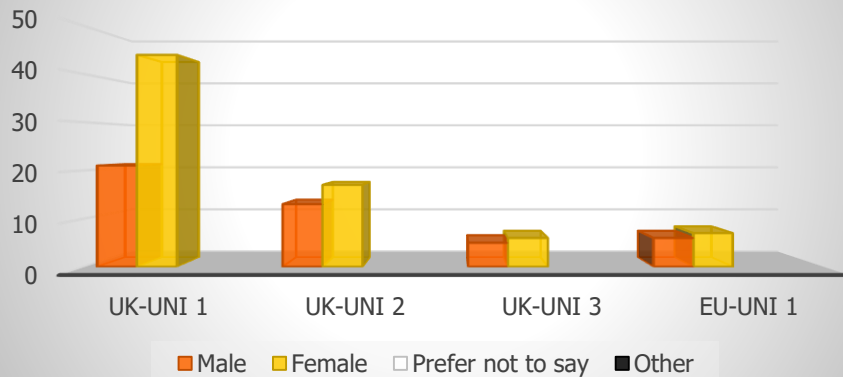
UK Universities (Sampled)

- Began Capstone extensively within the last three years (in most cases)
- Adopt different approaches i.e.
  - 2-options (Dissertation & Practice tracks (consulting))
  - 3-options (Dissertation, Live projects (LP) (consulting) & Professional Practice (PP) (placement))
  - 4-options (Dissertation, New Business, Capstone project (consulting) & Work placement)
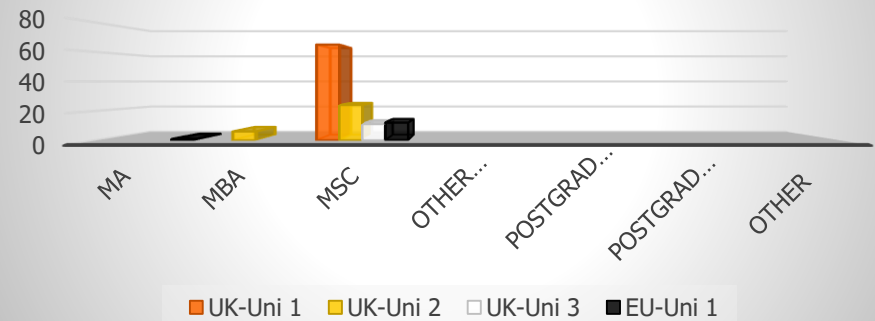
EU university sampled

- Capstone approach has been embedded over the years (extension of internships, placements, Erasmus etc)
- 3- options:
  - Integration project - In a small team you will apply your new knowledge and skills
  - Thesis project – consulting, i.e. explore and solve a real company issues, project must meet academic and practical objectives. For example, real customs issues like safety, security, trade facilitation, sustainability with compliance, e-commerce, customs supervision or corruption
  - IM Thesis - Master thesis project. Aim is to apply your knowledge learned from the master courses to solve a real business related problem
- Strong Student union with +188 companies in their networks, 500+ vacancies advert, over 10+ careers workshop/seminars (https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/students/career) – help facilitate capstone.

4.2) Students profile

2) What is your gender?

Male | Female | Prefer not to say | Other

3) I am registered for the qualification of:

UK-Uni 1 | UK-Uni 2 | UK-Uni 3 | EU-Uni 1

MA | MBA | MSC | OTHER… | POSTGRAD… | POSTGRAD… | OTHER

4) Please indicate which of the following most closely matches your discipline.

LAW | ECONOMICS | BUSINESS… | MANAGEME… | FINANCE…

UK-Uni 1 | UK-Uni 2 | UK-Uni 3 | EU-Uni 1

5) Type of study

UK-UNI 1 | UK-UNI 2 | UK-UNI 3 | EU-UNI 1

Primarily a face-to-face learner | Primarily a distance learner
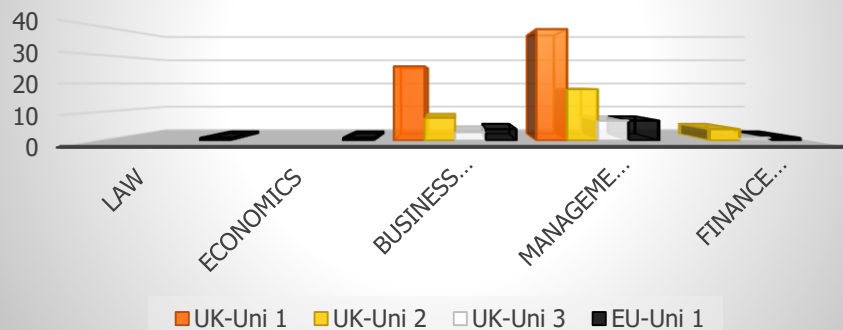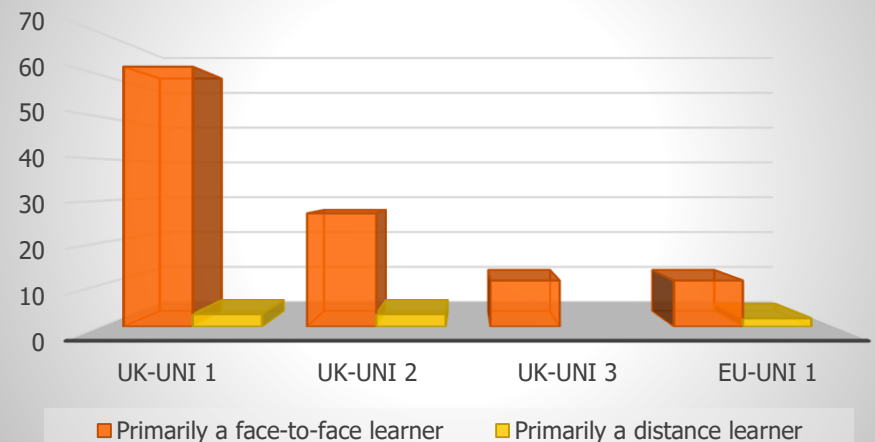
4.3a) Capstone awareness

6) Which Capstone option will you/are you undertaking?

Legend:
- Dissertation
- Live project (aka Practice track, New Business, Capstone project)
- Professional practice (otherwise known as Placement

Values shown:
- UK-UNI 1: 35, 29, 1
- UK-UNI 2: 16, 13, 1
- UK-UNI 3: 7, 3, 1
- EU-UNI 1: 1, 7, 5
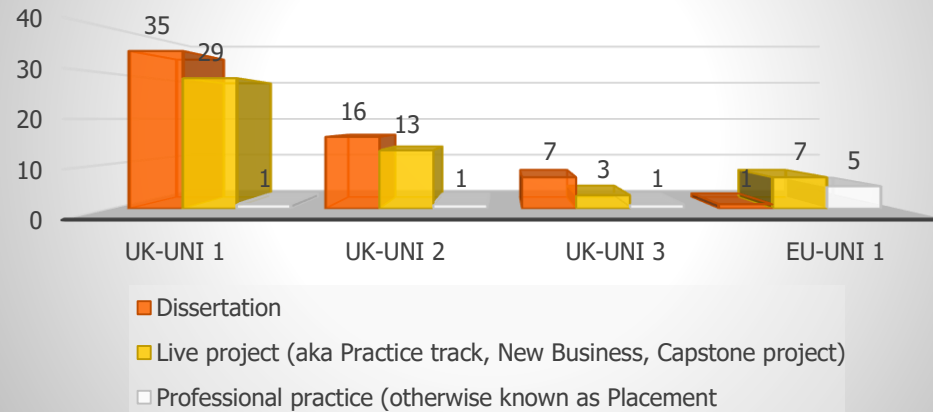
7a) I understand the required standards for the Capstone - DISSERTATION

Legend: UK-Uni 1, UK-Uni 2, UK-Uni 3, EU-Uni 1

Categories: DEFINITELY AGREE, MOSTLY AGREE, NEITHER AGREE…, MOSTLY DISAGREE, DEFINITELY…, NOT APPLICABLE…
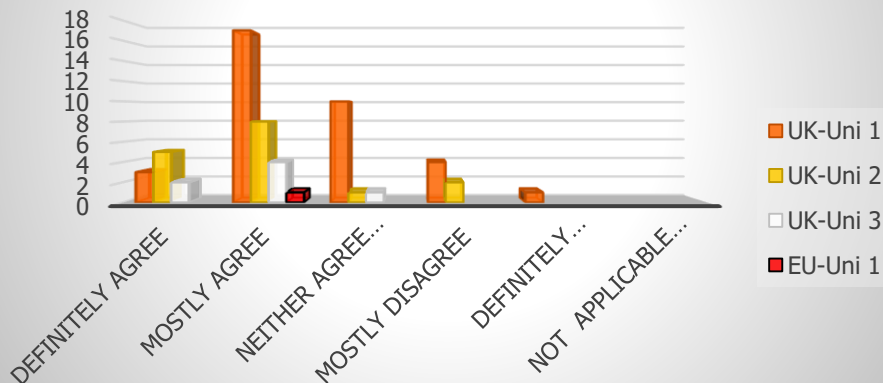
7b) I understand the required standards for the Capstone - EXPERIENTIAL (LP/PP)

Legend: UK-Uni 1, UK-Uni 2, UK-Uni 3, EU-Uni 1

Categories: DEFINITELY AGREE, MOSTLY AGREE, NEITHER AGREE…, MOSTLY DISAGREE, DEFINITELY…, NOT APPLICABLE…
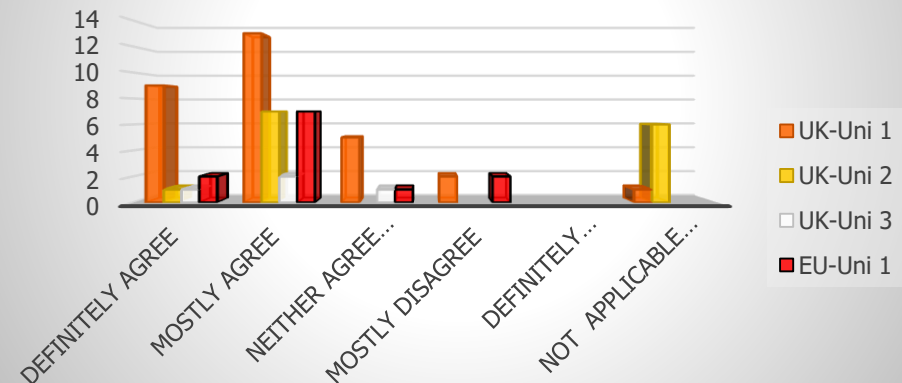
4.3b)

8a) I am happy with the support I receive for planning my Capstone - DISSERTATION

Legend: UK-Uni 1, UK-Uni 2, UK-Uni 3, EU-Uni 1

Categories: DEFINITELY AGREE, MOSTLY AGREE, NEITHER AGREE NOR…, MOSTLY DISAGREE, DEFINITELY DISAGREE, NOT APPLICABLE OR…
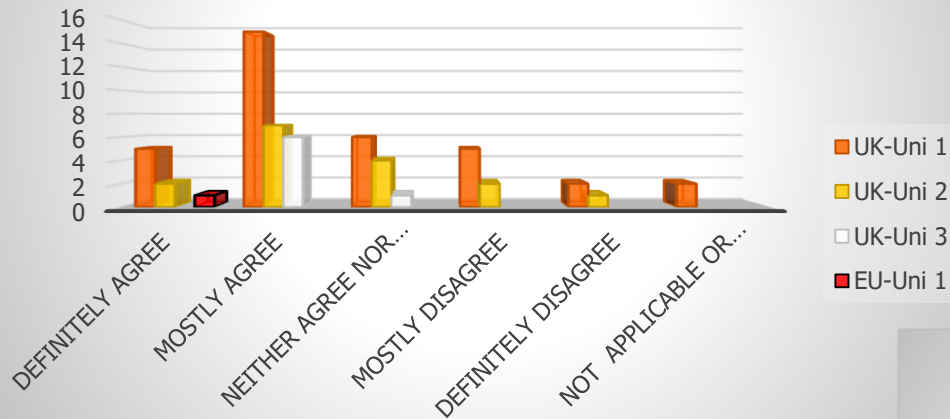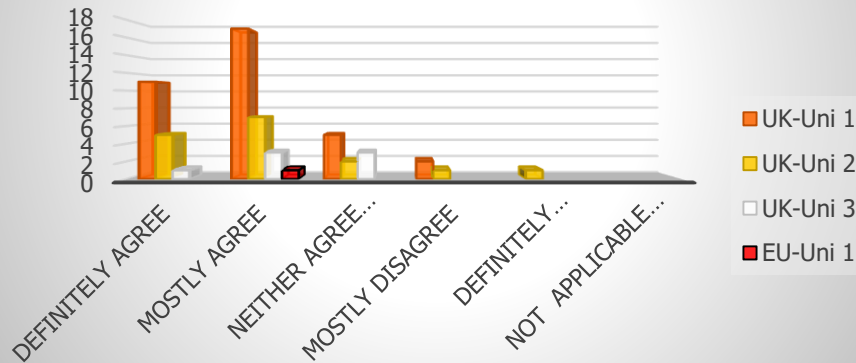
- Further help on the capstone is critical for me. I would appreciate if the school provide more on it
- I have not seen my supervisor yet. But what I want from my supervisor is the specific suggestions
- Expectations from students should be 100% clear
- Need examples of previous work of different grades
- Excellent

8b) I am happy with the support I receive for planning my Capstone - EXPERIENTIAL (LP/PP)

Legend: UK-Uni 1, UK-Uni 2, UK-Uni 3, EU-Uni 1

Categories: DEFINITELY AGREE, MOSTLY AGREE, NEITHER AGREE…, MOSTLY DISAGREE, DEFINITELY…, NOT APPLICABLE…
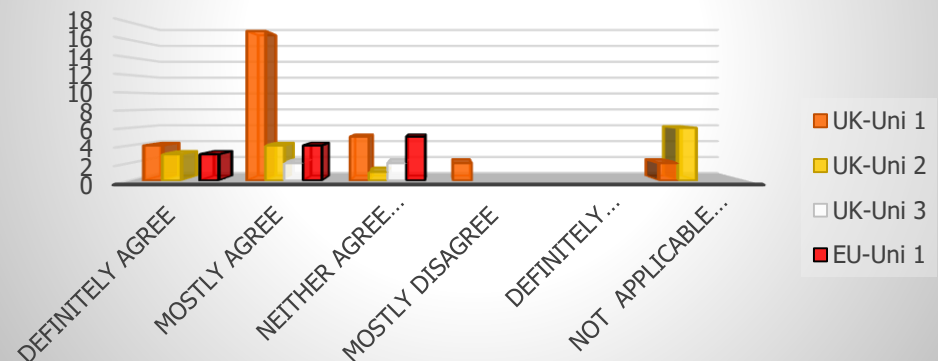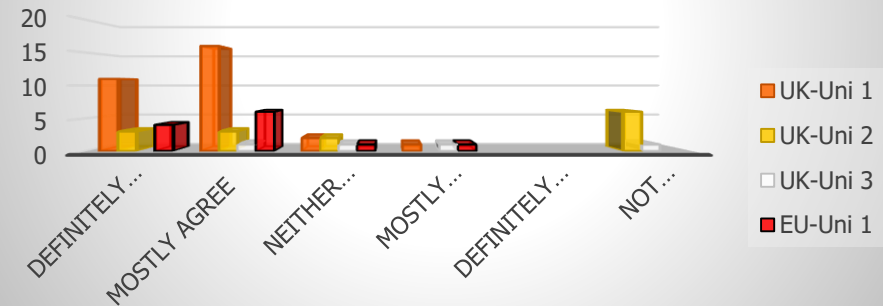
4.4a) Developing CTS

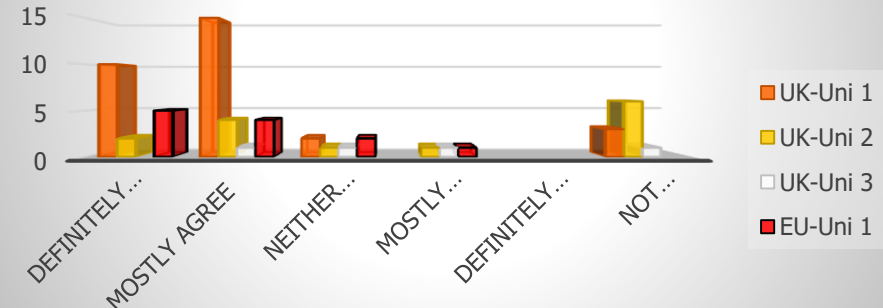9a) I am able to REMEMBER what I learn during my Capstone - DISSERTATION

9b) I am able to REMEMBER what I learn during my Capstone - EXPERIENTIAL (LP/PP)

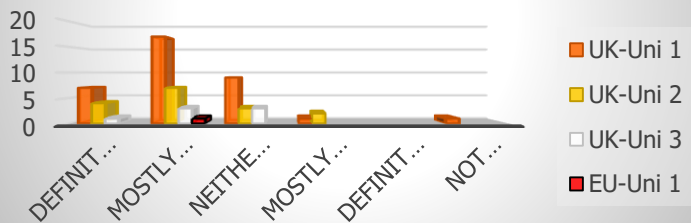10a) I UNDERSTAND what I learn during my Capstone - DISSERTATION

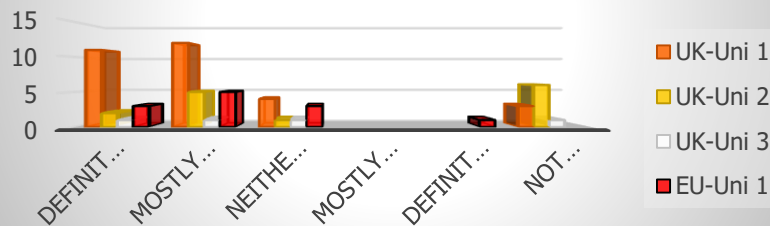10b) I UNDERSTAND what I learn during my Capstone - EXPERIENTIAL (LP/PP)
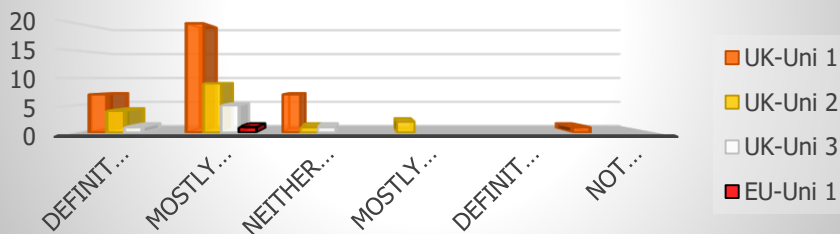
4.4b)

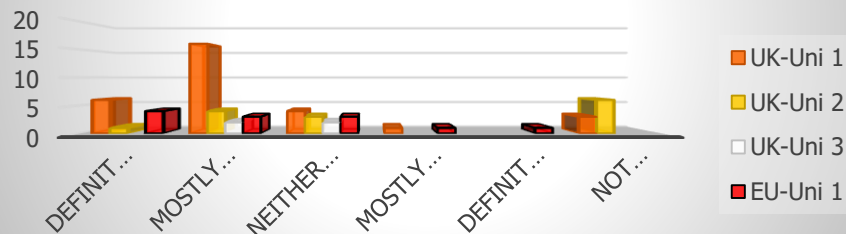11a) I can APPLY or use the knowledge gained from my…

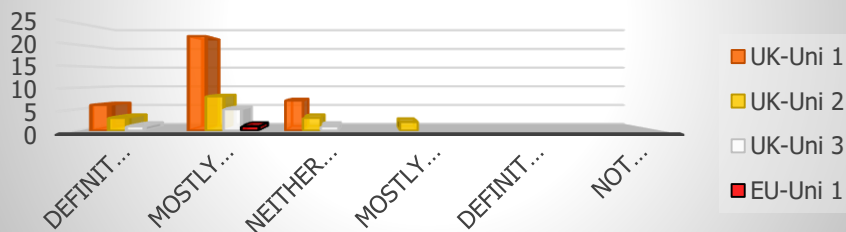11b) I can APPLY or use the knowledge gained from my capstone -…

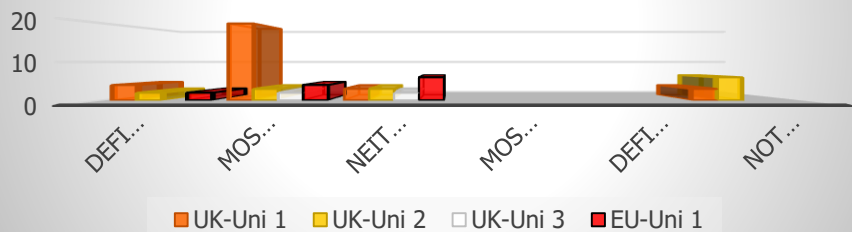12a) I have the ability to ANALYSE issues properly through my Capstone…

12b) I have the ability to ANALYSE issues properly through my Capstone…

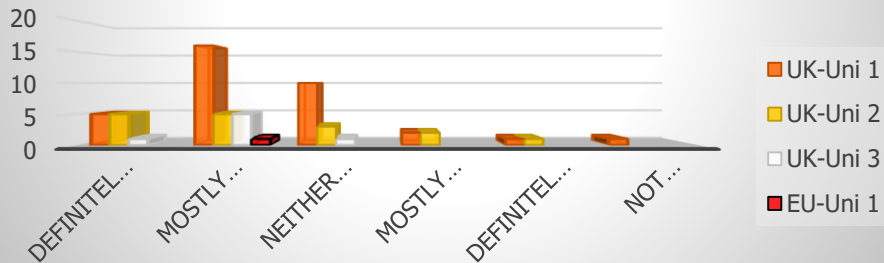13a) I have the ability to EVALUATE and draw valuable conclusions…

13b) I have the ability to EVALUATE and draw valuable conclusions based…

4.4c)

14a) I am now able to CREATE new knowledge and skills from my Capstone experience (which demonstrates mastery of...

- I am able to gather different views of different authors before concluding on an issue.
- It made me understand more people's research and opinions, changed my previous views, and thought
- I don't remember what I have learnt from capstone unit. the classes were boring.

14b) I am now able to CREATE new knowledge and skills from my Capstone experience (which...
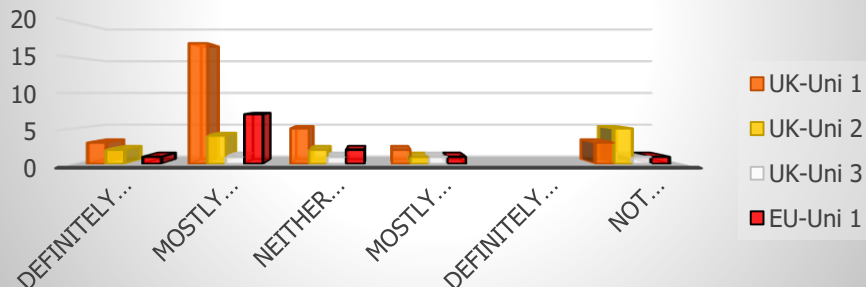
- Capstone expands my thinking
- I think it is a great learning experience that we get the opportunity to work with a company because you can also learn from practice
- It gave me a better understanding of a big firm whilst also exploring new terrains. I learned that it is okay to ask critical questions about certain processes to improve them in the future.
- Not applicable

14

5) Conclusion

⌘ Stand-alone presentations are not sufficient conditions for developing CTS in students, which conflict with the works of Cullen (2016) which states that the overarching objectives of Capstone unit are focused on enhancing graduate employability and assuring graduate outcomes.

⌘ Students on LP/PP demonstrate CTS quite well, which confirms the works of Lovelance, Eggers and Dyck (2016) that critical thinking in an experiential environment helps to enhance performance, encourage participation, allows creativity and novelty.

6) Implications

- Our study can be considered as one of the first systematic analysis of how Capstone can enhance CTS amongst masters' students. In so doing, we respond to an increasing body of recent literature clamouring for improved delivery in postgraduate studies in UK HEIs such as better management education (Kolb and Kolb, 2005; Rousseau and McCarthy, 2007), simulation education (Lovelace, Eggers and Dyck, 2016), knowledge and expertise (McPeck, 2016) and students experience (PTES, 2017).

- Our contribution to policy and practice within business schools is done extensively and provides insights into how delivery can be measured through Capstone, going beyond the recognised PTES benchmark for measuring postgraduate delivery.

- For UK HEIs to encourage CTS in masters' programme, there's the need to move from the monologue approach of Dissertation and focus more on the Experiential approaches.

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