

# Chapter 2

## Staff Development Needs in TNHE and the Importance of Targeted Tailored Training and CPD

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### ABSTRACT

*Transnational higher education is an increasingly prominent service format that numerous universities have engaged with in recent years as it provides an opportunity to realise development goals, generate income, and promote internationalization initiatives. In China, transnational, Sino-foreign cooperative initiatives are an established niche area. In 2023, the number of collaborative initiatives within the country was believed to be as high as 1400. Unsurprisingly, working within these novel environments can prove challenging necessitating systematic onboarding and*

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*measured training and professional development. This chapter considers the case of a Sino-British university in China and examines the training and professional development needs of a selection of the staff.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Transnational, cross-border, or inter-regional, higher education is an increasingly prominent service format that numerous universities have engaged with in recent years as it provides an opportunity to realise development goals, generate income and promote internationalization initiatives, amongst other designs (Dai, Mok and Li, 2023). In China, transnational, Sino-foreign cooperative initiatives are an established niche area as Xue and Li (2023) and Yang (2023) highlight. In 2023, the number of collaborative initiatives within the country was believed to be as high as 1400 (Shi and Ramos, 2023). Staffing these institutions usually relies on a combination of expatriate employees alongside more numerous home nationals. Unsurprisingly, adapting to working within these novel environments can prove challenging, not only because each institution is unique, but also due to the nuances involved in working within a transnational setting which may involve the blending and balancing of service provider policy with host country regulations and culture. This increases the importance of integrating both initial onboarding and training with longer term professional development needs as situations evolve and times change as Li and Morris (2021) draw attention to. This chapter will thus consider the case of a Sino-British university in China and examine the training and professional development needs that a selection of staff within two divisional units have by analysing their experiences through an interpretative qualitative design.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Transnational Higher Education**

Transnational higher education is regarded as encompassing study programmes in which groups of learners are in a country other than the one in which the awarding institution is located (Wilkins, 2016). Ansell (2023), the Global Director of Education at the British Council, states that the demand for higher education continues to grow around the world as students and their families hope that potential can be realised, while providers seek to enhance provision quality and internationalise. For governments, economics and meeting the sustainable development goals are appealing factors in promoting this educational form (Ansell, 2023). Li, Song and Zhang (2023)

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