Application of the threshold concept approach to curriculum development in enterprise education
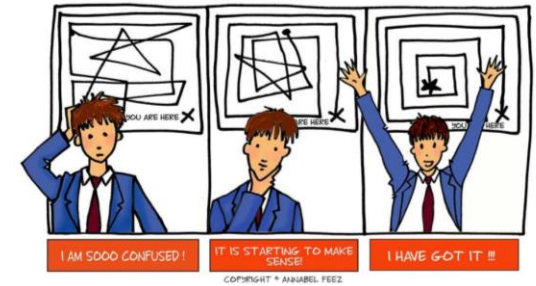
Lucy Hatt and Dave Jarman

IEEC2021

Threshold Concept Framework (TCF)

- Threshold concepts form a basis for differentiating core learning outcomes that represent "seeing things in a new way" and those that do not (Meyer & Land, 2003)
- A threshold concept is likely to be
  - Transformative (epistemologically and ontologically)
  - Troublesome
  - Irreversible (unlikely to be forgotten)
  - Bounded (with terminal frontiers, possibly defining academic territories)
  - Integrative (exposes the previously hidden interrelatedness of something)

Smith, Young, Raeside & Elliot (2015)

- Threshold concepts can constitute "ways of thinking and practising", a way to understand what it means to think "like an entrepreneur", defining what is distinctive about entrepreneurship
- Conceptual approach could offer a counter to threats of the skills agenda
- Bounded and integrative characteristics of threshold concepts could enable the development of distinctive curricula

EEUK EERPF Funded Project

- This project applied and developed Dr Lucy Hatt's PhD research using the threshold concept framework to enhance entrepreneurship curricula in higher education.

- Using an adapted form of transactional curriculum inquiry (TCI) local threshold concepts in entrepreneurial thinking were developed with staff and stakeholders (external panel and students) of the University of Bristol's Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CfIE) as part of a programme review and an evaluation of student understanding.

- A toolkit was developed for EEUK members to develop and evaluate their own enterprise education curricula informed by the threshold concept framework, concept mapping and a TCI approach.

- The toolkits consists of

  Threshold Concepts in Entrepreneurial Thinking (Overview of CfIE process and Outline of Three Approaches)

  Appendixes including: briefing documents, survey templates, guidance on language use, examples of threshold concepts, ethics approval forms, adoption guidance, and concept mapping processes.

  A physical paper-based activity and a Mural online template for the same activity.

CfIE Threshold Concepts in Entrepreneurial Thinking

1

Entrepreneurship is a Practice:
Practitioners understand that entrepreneurship is a practice that anyone can adopt in any context to create new value. It is a way of doing things, a way of thinking and practicing or a way of seeing the world, that manifests as creation of value in response to opportunities and challenges.

2

Your Context is Your Opportunity to Create Value:
Practitioners habitually and constantly create and recognise opportunities within their own context to create value. Practitioners are habitually resourceful and make use of what they find to realise and exploit opportunities to create value.

3

Value is Defined by Others:
Practitioners understand only other people can define the value of what they have created, and others demonstrate the value they place on what is being offered by being prepared to give something tangible or intangible in exchange for it (money, time, goodwill etc).

4

Iterative Experimentation:
Embracing small failures as a means of maximising opportunities to learn from mistakes as well as success. Just as the process of scientific experimentation generates data whatever the outcome of the experiment, iterative experimentation in this context is less emotive and outcomes are not deemed necessarily to be "successes" or "failures".

5

Recognises Their Agency:
Practitioners recognise that they always have some agency to create value, or that it is at least beneficial to assume that they do and should take ownership of their actions.

6

Taking Action:
Practitioners know that intention must be translated into action for value to be created. Intention PLUS will is all-important to create or exploit an opportunity for value.

7

Knowledge is Always Partial and Often Ambiguous:
Practitioners understand that you can still act even if the situation is not perfect, ideal, or even favourable – but that the process of taking action is likely to lead to new situations, learnings, and ultimately opportunities.

Workshop Sessions

- We have created a breakout room and Mural board for each of the seven threshold concepts in entrepreneurial thinking
- Choose the room for the threshold concept you are most interested in
- Join the relevant room and brainstorm ideas to develop an understanding of that threshold concept in students
- Put your ideas on the Mural board
- Please stay in the first room you choose!
- All Mural boards will be shared to all participants following the session, together with the ideas that are in the EEUK toolkit

Application

Using the threshold concept to inform module curriculum development
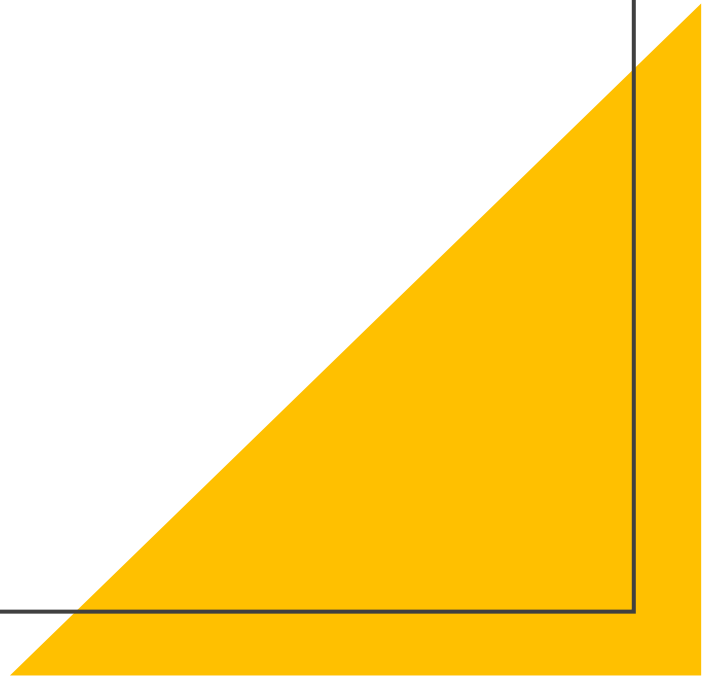
Module Details

Module NBS8970, 21/11 Innovation and Change, MSc Strategic Leadership, 2 years part time, 2nd year, 1st semester

Cohort includes majority of Senior Leader Degree Apprentices – needs to comply with Level 7 Degree Apprenticeship standards

Programme accredited by Chartered Management Institute – needs to comply with their standards too

Road Map

	WEEK 1 Sept 27, 2021	WEEK 2 Oct 4, 2021	WEEK 2 Oct 11, 2021	WEEK 4 Oct 18, 2021	Oct 25, 2021	WEEK 5 Nov 1, 2021	WEEK 6 Nov 8, 2021	WEEK 7 Nov 15, 2021	WEEK 8 Nov 22, 2021	WEEK 9 Nov 29, 2021	WEEK 10 Dec 6, 2021	WEEK 11 Dec 13, 2021
Topic	Module Orientation	The evolution of innovation	YOU – the person, the player, the actor	Opportunity Generation	Breather Week	Opportunity Recognition	Leading &, managing change and innovation	Attitude to failure	Mobilizing and empowering resources	VUCA Futures	Assessed pitches	Assignment Surgery
Present in Person Session		08/10/21 13:30 – 16:30		22/10/21 09:30 – 12:30				19/11/21 13:30 – 16:30			10/12/21 09:30 – 12:30	

Guided Online Learning

Each week you will engage in structured guided online learning activities, for example watching lectures and videos, case-studies, structured and directed research, reading and reflection which on average equates to 5.75 hours of learning each week. You will also find guided independent online learning activities to help you to develop and apply mastery in practice – personal, professional and workplace which you can work through in your own time, for example additional online discussions, suggested further reading, research and reflection.

Scheduled Online Learning

01/10/21 09:30 – 12:30   17/12/21 10:00 – 11:00

Work-based Learning

Each week you will engage in skills practice activities to relate your learning back into the workplace which equates to 1.5 hours of learning each week. You will also find reflective signposting each week which you can work through in your own time. Engaging in reflective practice and maintaining a reflective portfolio is fundamental to support your sense making of your learning and leadership development on the programme.

Action Learning Set

04/11/21 10:00 – 12:00

ASSESSMENTS

You will be given formative feedback throughout this module in your scheduled learning sessions as well as guided online learning. There will also be an opportunity in this module to receive written formative feedback by submitting a written piece of work by 08/11/21. This will support the development of your academic skills to prepare you for the summative assessment.

Summative Assessment
Report due 12:00 noon Monday 10th January 2022

SLMDA Apprenticeship Standard

Four PiP sessions

THE SITUATED, INNOVATIVE LEADER AND CHANGE AGENT

OPPORTUNITY FOR INNOVATION AND CHANGE

IMPLEMENTING INNOVATION AND CHANGE
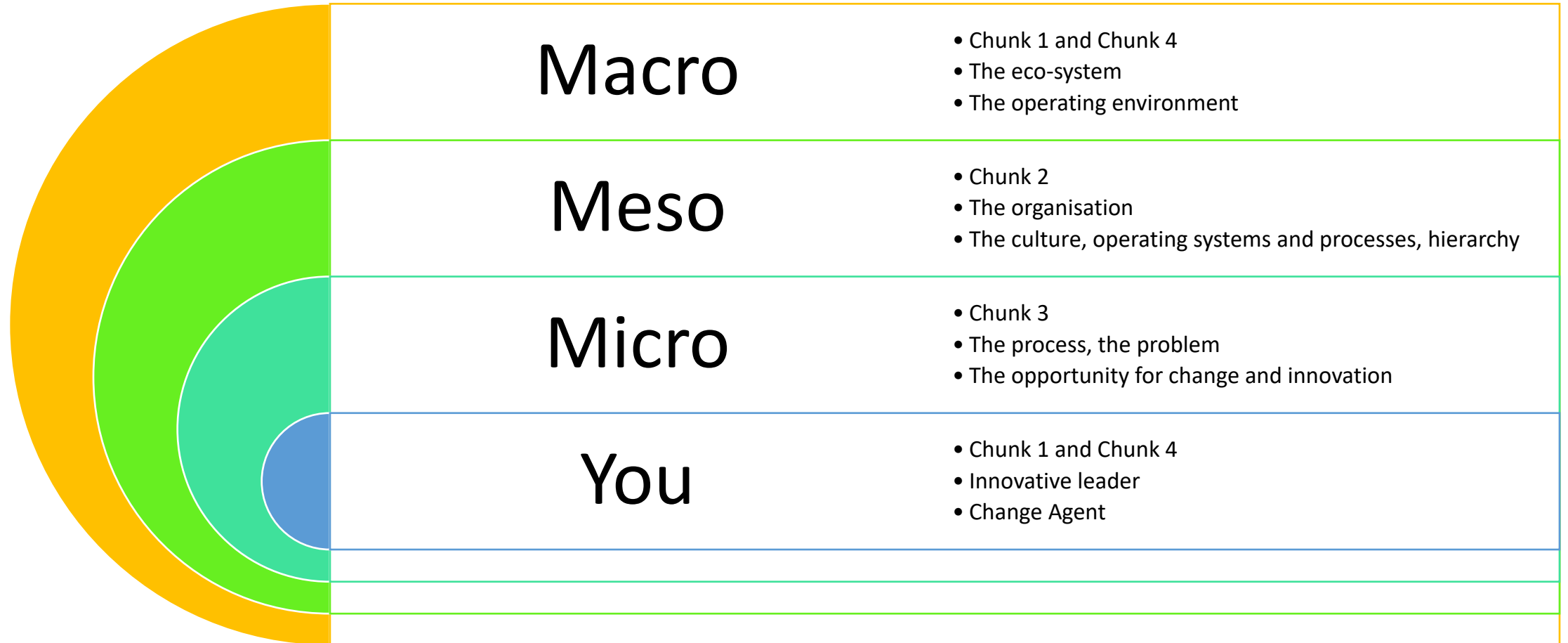
CREATING VALUE

Levels of Magnification

Macro
- Chunk 1 and Chunk 4
- The eco-system
- The operating environment

Meso
- Chunk 2
- The organisation
- The culture, operating systems and processes, hierarchy

Micro
- Chunk 3
- The process, the problem
- The opportunity for change and innovation

You
- Chunk 1 and Chunk 4
- Innovative leader
- Change Agent

1) The situated, innovative leader and change agent

- The macro context - the evolution of innovation (timeline)
  - Overview of innovation and change in organizations - historical context, background, key theories, and models

Threshold Concept of entrepreneurial thinking

- Entrepreneurship is a practice

- YOU – the innovative leader and change agent
  - Being an innovator and an intrapreneur, working out your role and strategic contributions

Threshold Concept of entrepreneurial thinking

- Recognizes their agency

2) Opportunity for innovation and change

- The meso-context – **opportunity recognition**
  - Understanding the nature of problems, what makes a problem problematic, how to explain a problem, different types of problems, informal and formal problem structuring techniques and solutions

Threshold Concept of Entrepreneurial Thinking

- Your context is your opportunity to create value

- The meso-context - **opportunity generation**
  - Opportunities and forms and types of innovation, creative approaches, design thinking and evaluating ideas.

Threshold Concept of Entrepreneurial Thinking

- Knowledge is always partial and often ambiguous

3) Implementing innovation and change

- The micro-context - Leading, Managing and Communicating innovation and enterprise
    - Communicating a vision of change and pitching ideas to others, persuasive communication, pitch decks, 140 character pitches
    - Models of leading and managing innovation and change

Threshold Concept of Entrepreneurial Thinking
- Value is defined by others

- The micro-context - Attitude to failure
    - Resistance to change

Threshold Concept of Entrepreneurial Thinking
- Iterative experimentation

4) Creating value

- YOU- Mobilizing and empowering key resources
  - Organising for innovation in different contexts; matching practices to challenges and creating the environment for innovation and creativity

Threshold Concept in Entrepreneurial Thinking

- Taking Action

- The macro-context - VUCA futures - innovation, change and the future of work
  - Analyse the impact of disruptive exponential change upon wider global context

Thank you for attending

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