

Digital Education – Higher Education: Franco-British perspectives and overseas

Oct. 22, 2015, Résidence de l’Ambassadeur de Grande-Bretagne, 39 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, Paris

General information on the Franco-British Comparative Project

Franco-British Connections is a non-profit and non-political association that supports cross Channel student initiatives. Alumni and students from over 15 British universities, including : Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial, LSE and French “grandes écoles” such as Ecole Polytechnique, HEC, Sciences Po and ENA collaborate on the development of collective projects, conferences and debates.

The philosophy of the FB-Connections is to help British and French students develop their own professional projects. Every year, the association organises a major international conference on a specific topic. So far, they have been hosted by students at the Ecole Polytechnique (2005), Oxford (2006), LSE (2008), Cambridge (2009), UCL (2010), Imperial (2011) and ESSEC (2013). Last year, the members of the association held a Defence and Politics conference at the British Embassy to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the start of WWI, celebrate the 110th year of Entente Cordiale and the 70 years of the Debarquement.

Students are given responsibility for organising their events, with the help of alumni who can offer their professional experience and contacts. Franco-British Connections acts as a catalyst by offering every year, a broad network of institutional contacts to a new generation of students from various academic backgrounds. More than an organisation, we view ourselves as an informal network of people who wish to contribute to the development of Franco-British relations at university level.

Annual events have been hosted by students at the Ecole Polytechnique (2005), Oxford (2006), LSE (2008), Cambridge (2009), UCL (2010), Imperial (2011), ESSEC (2013) and Sorbonne (2014).

The Franco-British Conference aims to:

- Raise students' interest in Franco-British affairs and their European environment
- Develop Students and alumni understanding about the learning environment of the future
- Promote innovation by allowing students to analyse issues together with practioners.
- Act as a catalyst by facilitating access to a network of recent graduates who have worked with institutional contacts in both France and Britain
- Foster mutual understanding and gain from the differences between France and Britain and the rest of Europe

We want to raise awareness among the youth to have tomorrow's leaders interested in Franco-British affairs and their relationships to Europe and the global world.

Aim and composition of this conference:

In the context of the globalisation of education and the life-long learning principle fostered by the EU, Franco-British Connections sought to underline the importance of Franco-British experiences as a key component of digital education.

Composed of CEOs and Academia experts in digital learning, the Round-Table was composed of:

Andrew Hogg (Education Director at Total), Mathieu Nebra (CEO of Openclassroom) , Simon Nelson (CEO of Future Learn) and Aurélien Krejbich (Director Centre for Europe - Sciences Po)
Moderator : Tim Gore (CEO of the University of London Institute in Paris)

The conference was attended by **80 participants**, students, professionals and academia from both France and the United Kingdom, who had a unique opportunity to analyse and engage in debate on Franco-British dynamics. This round-table was followed by a short Q/A session.

Target Group: Students and academia from leading universities and with diverse academic profiles as well as professionals specialised in digital education. The aim of this conference was to **discuss the French and British experiences on these topics.**

Biographies of the speakers and moderator:

Andrew Hogg (speaker):

As Education Director, Andrew Hogg is responsible for setting strategy and delivery of Total's global Education policy. He manages relationships with higher level educational institutions worldwide and supports targeted 2nd level education projects whilst building the Group's reputation as an employer of choice.

Dr. Hogg holds a PhD in Geology and Petroleum Geology – sponsored by Total – at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. He has an MSc from the University of Toronto, Canada where he was a Junior Fellow of Massey College. He took his bachelor's degree in Geology at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland. He started his career as a geologist with BP plc and has since worked in a variety of roles in the oil & gas sector including business development, public affairs, communications and HR located in Canada, France, Kuwait and the UK. He took up his role as Director of Education for Total SA in April 2015.

Convinced of the potential of the digital education, in 2015, Total has supported the MOOC on Oil & Gas of the IFP School. It was very successful gathering over 21 800 participants coming from 140 different countries and had a completion rate of 28% –about 4 times more than the average MOOC.

Mathieu Nebra (speaker)

Computer enthusiast at an early age, Mathieu created the first version of OpenClassrooms in 1999 when he was only 13 years old. At that time, he was trying to create his first website and realized that resources designed for beginners and available online were quite limited. He finally succeeded in executing his project but decided that he wanted to share what he'd learn in an easy and accessible way. 15 years later,

OpenClassrooms is now the first community platform of online courses in Europe with 3 millions users each month. He is one of the ten winners in 2015 of the Innovators Under 35 selected by the MIT Technology Review . OpenClassrooms has been chosen in July 2015 by Wired UK magazine in the top 10 start-ups the most prominent in France.

OpenClassrooms developed into a huge community of people interested in learning new computer developer and programming skills, but also about digital marketing, communications and innovation.

Simon Nelson (speaker)

FutureLearn CEO Simon Nelson has a background in digital disruption as a pioneer in taking media brands and content online. He currently leads the first UK-based social learning platform offering massive open online courses (MOOCs) from leading international institutions to learners in over 190 countries.

Simon founded the Open University-backed initiative in December 2012 and has quickly established it as a high quality entrant to the emerging online learning market.

The FutureLearn site went live in September 2013; since then over two million people have registered, generating more than four million sign-ups to almost 200 courses.

He spent 14 years at the BBC, where he was instrumental in putting radio online, and overseeing its podcasting service and the innovative Radio Player around the turn of the millennium. He then moved to head up all digital content activities for its television divisions where he led the development of the BBC iPlayer and other ground-breaking online products and services.

Aurélien Krejbich (speaker)

Aurélien Krejbich is Head of the Centre for Europe at the international affairs division of Sciences Po Paris. The Center for Europe is in charge of promoting and implementing Sciences Po partnership policy at the European level. It aims to coordinate a large network of European universities that implies no less than 130 partnerships , a dozen dual-masters, -bachelor and –doctorate degrees programs, several multilateral and special programs, and a significant international exchange program for students and professors. Sciences Po also has built strategic bilateral relationships in Europe notably with the London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE), the Freie Universität Berlin and also Università Bocconi. Sciences Po delivers degrees fully taught in English.

With ten years of work experience in the Higher Education sector, Aurélien Krejbich has been closely involved to the development of Sciences Po. He holds a master of business and finance (Sciences Po) and a Msc in Comparative Politics (London School of Economics).

Tim Gore (moderator)

Tim Gore is CEO of the University of London Institute in Paris. He was previously based in London as Director, Global Networks and Communities for the University of London International Programmes where he was responsible planning and implementation of worldwide communications and marketing campaigns; the development of a global network of over 130 independent institutions spanning 46 countries; relationships with in-country stakeholders such as regulators and employers; and the alumni network. Prior to this, Tim was the Director of the Centre for Indian Business, the University of Greenwich where his role was to engage the University of Greenwich's intellectual capital with India. Tim previously held a number of senior leadership roles with the British Council working closely with educationalists, institutions, companies and governments to improve bilateral and multilateral educational links in Hong Kong, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Jordan and India over his career. He was awarded the OBE in 2008.

Schedules:

18h30 : Arrival

19h - 19h05 : Interventions: Welcome Speeches Sir Peter Ricketts (British Ambassador) and Jean-Pascal Sibiet (President of the Franco British Connections)

19h05-19h10 : Users experience

19h10 -20h10 : Round table & Question Time

20h10-20h12 : Presentation of Franco British Emerging Leaders by David Wahl 20h15 : Cocktail / Reception (and workshop by 360Learning)

22h : End

The team :

- The Team was composed of:
 - 4 Allianz Academy Alumni :
 - 2 of them were part of the organising committee
 - Marie Combescure-Pélissier Sciences Po Aix & Geneva Graduate Institute
 - Jean-Pascal Sibiet ULB & Karlova Univerzite, Sciences Po alumnus
 - 2 of them supported the project
 - Elona Xhaferri
 - Katarzyna Kubin
 - The rest of the team :
 - Dr. David Wahl member of the Franc-British Comparative Project
 - Nicolas Khadivi Imperial College London
 - Florian Bercault HEC and Sciences Po Alumni
 - Sara Gill Science, Innovation & Higher Education Attachée at the British Embassy in Paris
 - Laura Owen Project Manager for Higher Education at the British Council France.
 - Astrid de Roquemaurel e-learning and digital manager at Dunod (Hachette Livre Group).

Summary of the conference:

In the context of the globalisation of education and the life-long learning principle fostered by the EU, Franco-British Connections seek to underline the importance of Franco-British experiences as a key component of digital education.

They discussed the relevant issues and challenges regarding digital education from a franco-british perspectives and overseas.

Questions:

- Have MOOCs really made any difference in approaches to teaching?
- Do MOOCs give a pathway to employment?
- Do MOOCs allow companies to compete with universities?
- What does all this mean in France – has anything changed?

Time Gore, moderator, provided some context: It was an opportunity to share experiences with key players of Higher Education about the existing digital means, evolutions in the methods and their possible complementarities.

Indeed, the use of digital technologies is not novel in the world of Higher Education. From the university application procedure via Minitel to the Online Cambridge Exams to take from home, not to mention the Open University model, the challenge have been mainly to ensure that digital tools are used to create an interactive and effective learning experience.

Today MOOC are multiplying and its audience is peaking worldwide. Consequently, the French Ministry of Education (FUN France Université Numérique) as well as its British equivalent (Future Learn) have opened their own platform in order to provide better visibility on MOOC and also to facilitate their access by hosting them on the same platform. Besides that, other major players are developing new digital tools while students change their way of learning.

At the start of the conference, three MOOC users testified of their experience in order to provide a general background of the topic discussed.

The starting point was that digital media and E-learning provide huge opportunities to train and educate young people with unprecedented reach and scale. As examples, Total's and Science Po's recent MOOC experience were told.

Andrew Hogg, Education Director at Total told the success stories of his company which supported an IFP School MOOC on the Oil & Gas sector entitled "Oil & Gas: from exploration to distribution" which had 22,000 subscribers from 140 countries and among them, 6000 finally completed the full certificate. It was far beyond the completion rate which is 4 times the average.

This first MOOC experience has already triggered demands for more – on topics like photovoltaic, innovate & enterprise...and Global Energy Issues.

To conclude, Mr. Hogg said that this experience was an opportunity to :

- reach dispersed audiences who may not have easy access to higher level education
- reinforce a wider understanding of our industry and key issues facing society with an educated public globally - reputation for thought leadership and educational innovation
- raise Total's international profile
- build the global status of our Institutional partner
- enlarge recruitment pool

After that, Aurélien Krejbich mentioned Sciences Po's example. Indeed, this « Grande Ecole » has successfully launched several Moocs available on FUN and Coursera. Although Moocs invite faculties to reinvent themselves and the way they teach, the model remains unclear about the direct outcomes that Moocs may bring to Universities. Many Moocs available are of great quality and very innovative and manage to engage the students positively. Certification is still an issue to be discussed but it soon will be solved.

According to him, it seems clear that for a university that wishes to have a international exposure or to increase its attractiveness, producing Moocs is mandatory. It brings new users to higher education, helps to build its reputation and also question the meaning of what a "student" is. However, costs of production are quite high and the economic model still uncertain. It is pretty sure that with Moocs comes pedagogical innovation but an efficient blended pedagogical model mixing digital and direct contact hour has not been yet defined at least at Sciences Po.

Mathieu Nebra, CEO of OpenClassrooms told us how he created OpenClassrooms as well as his current and future projects. He also said that, in his opinion, the success of a MOOC doesn't depend on the content but on the teacher & teacher's passion for the subject. He highlighted that the social aspect of a MOOC is crucial as, according to him, social interaction is where a lot of learning happens. He also mentioned that even if you can find information everywhere, the big difference is that in a MOOC you stop looking for things, you take the time to THINK.

Simon Nelson, CEO of FutureLearn told us the aim of this digital platform : developing a global, social network for learning - one that is as valuable for the university partners to be part of as it is for learners and increasingly companies and other organizations. FutureLearn's approach to developing a very high quality platform and high quality courses appears to be paying off as its growth accelerates rapidly and some courses (including our first from French university partner - Paris Diderot) go viral and start to hit truly massive numbers (FutureLearn believes they now hold the world record for enrolments to a single mooc - 440,000 to a British Council mooc).

He also explained that MOOC is a catalyst of digital transition of Higher Education and agreed with Aurélien Krejbich's comment on the fact that a university that wishes to have an international exposure or to increase its attractiveness, producing Moocs is mandatory.

Finally, he talked about the pathway to employment and commercial businesses, and then talked through the development of their commercial plans including tie ins with corporates.

As a conclusion, the moderator Tim Gore said that MOOC are used to teach black holes globally and gained deeper understanding of science and thinking. Although the economic model remains uncertain, it provides huge opportunities to train and educate people with unprecedented reach and scale.

Outcomes and results of the conference:

Many informal discussions between academia, students and corporate people during the cocktail. Indeed, those people are not use to meet altogether.

Many people, students and professionals who attended the conference subscribed to MOOC.

Another conference were organised in London on November 12th, 2015 on a similar topic; The Franco-British Digital Conference small meets.

A better understanding of the digital education Franco-British landscapes.