

## Deans' Qualifying Programme (DQP)

### An evaluation

Tony Nelson  
April 2011



Special thanks	4
Executive Summary	5
1 Introduction	6
2 Evaluation methodology	7
3 Background	8
4 Aims of the programme	9
4.1 Learning Outcomes	9
4.2 Programme Structure	10
5 Key learning in delivery	11–12
6 Reflections and Evaluation feedback	13–20
7 Written assignments analysis	21–22
Annex A	23–25
Annex B	26
Annex C	27–29

# Special thanks

## Special thanks are due to

- DBIS and UNESCO - as main funders of the programme
  - Dr Mahmood – whose vision for DQP provided the ‘igniting spark’ for the programme and whose ongoing sponsorship has affirmed its high priority within FTE. You are a ‘father ‘ to DQP.
  - The Rawabit Steering Group, chaired by Geoff Pine – for enabling DQP to launch and nurturing it as a priority Rawabit programme
  - Dr Moneer – who as group leader for DQP provided guidance and wisdom to facilitators and delegates; who hosted us in Iraq and ensured our personal safety and welfare
  - Dave Peel – who as DQP tutor threw himself into the project, travelling to unusual places, always willing to share his experience and insights and who endured some illness in Iraq
  - Jo Clough – who through endless coordination and influencing ensured that Rawabit always had a ‘home’ and sponsorship. You have been a bridge between many complex worlds and a source of encouragement in times of difficulty.
  - Ali Hadawi – who shared his PQP experience with Iraqi colleagues through Rawabit which sowed the seeds for DQP
  - Martin Doel & John Mountford – who ‘adopted’ Rawabit and DQP into the AoC family and made this a seamless transition
  - UK Principals Ian Peake, Paul Hafren, Maureen Mellor, Matt Atkinson and Sue Rimmer - who provided a week of leadership shadowing in their own Colleges
  - CMgr assessors Gaynor Thomas and John Sephton – who coped with uncertainty, date/venue changes and assessing in unfamiliar circumstances. Your empathy and warmth was exceptional.
  - DQP assessors Reg Chapman and Howard Petch – your insights, challenges and developmental feedback have been a gift to the programme and the Deans in particular. I have deeply valued your wisdom.
- And of course to the Deans themselves who were willing to move from simply ‘being taught’ to taking responsibility for their own leadership learning and development. You are shining examples for your colleagues.



Row 1: Drs Mohsin, Rifat, M. Fakhri, Fekri, Kareem, Aziz, Fadhil, Moneer and Nasser

Row 2: John Sephton, Tony Nelson, Gaynor Thomas and Dave Peel

- The Rawabit Deans' Qualifying Programme has been trialled and customised for Iraq's FTE between November 2009 and March 2011. Delivery took place in UK, Istanbul and Iraq.
- This report evaluates the programme. Programme aims have been fully achieved or exceeded.
- Nine Deans have passed robust, external assessments to achieve triple accreditation in a first for Iraq. This includes Chartered Manager status.
- Leadership Standards have been developed for FTE. As Chartered Managers the Deans now adhere to Professional Standards. The programme has been customised and contextualised to ensure that wider roll out is as relevant and valuable as possible.
- DQP Deans have been equipped to own their personal leadership development and build a community of reflective leadership practice within FTE.
- They have also been trained to support the wider roll out of DQP by acting as leadership coaches and providing assessment of future written assignments.
- Significant evidence of personal leadership learning and organisational impact has been accumulated and a separate report will share specific and detailed examples and case studies of both learner journeys and business benefits.
- Delivery has depended on building complex partnerships and strong and enduring relationships, underpinned by high trust.

*“On a journey, the lord  
of a people is their servant”*

(Muhammad)

# 1 Introduction

Prof. Dr. Mahmood Sh. Abdulhussain, president of the Iraqi Foundation of Technical Education (FTE), having been introduced to the English Principal's Qualifying Programme, championed the idea of developing an Iraqi equivalent for FTE through the Rawabit Iraq/UK further education partnership. This became known as the Dean's Qualifying Programme (DQP). Dr Mahmood also had the vision for the pilot group to be trained to support the future roll out of DQP across all the Technical Colleges and Institutes.

Nine Deans selected by FTE started the DQP pilot in November 2009. A tenth started the programme but left early on appointment to a University position. Their programme has included leadership theory and models including high performance, change leadership, motivation; competition/collaboration and innovation; leadership shadowing of English Principals for a week; coaching skills; managing a change project in Iraq; personal leadership ('360 degree') feedback; personal leadership development plan; teambuilding theory and experiential learning in small groups. Deans wrote a 5000 word assignment on their applied leadership learning on the programme and this was externally examined by assessors experienced in the Principals' Qualifying Programme. Modules took place in England, Istanbul (twice) and Iraq (twice) between Nov 2009 and March 2011.

In a unique partnership with the UK's Chartered Management Institute (CMI), Deans successfully applied to become Fellows of the Institute, which recognises their managerial scope and responsibilities over 10 years and strategic experience over 3 years. The Deans were subsequently assessed in Istanbul by the CMI to become Chartered Managers – this requires evidence of personal impact in their Colleges over the last 18 months, focusing on the key areas of Leading People and Managing Change.

All Nine Deans on the pilot have been awarded the triple personal accreditation of

- Graduate of the DQP
- Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute (FCMI)
- Chartered Manager (CMgr)

This triple award is a world first for a leadership programme for Iraq which, under the umbrella of 'Rawabit', has been a joint venture between the UK's Association of Colleges (AoC), the FTE and CMI. The project has been made possible by funding for 'Rawabit' from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, UNESCO and FTE.



## 2 Evaluation methodology

Tony Nelson, Rawabit Programme Director for DQP, supported by Dave Peel Programme Tutor undertook a series of group qualitative interviews with the Deans towards the end of the programme covering the learning experiences and identifying process strengths and areas for improvement. Additional qualitative and quantitative desk analysis was undertaken of the 5000 word written assignments as well as Chartered Manager business impact submissions to ascertain areas of benefit, impact and applied use of models introduced on DQP. Case studies are being developed (with the permission of Deans) to demonstrate the impact of the programme on Colleges and personal leadership learning. Feedback was obtained from the CMgr and DQP assessors.



## 3 Background

In Iraq the period since 2003 has been characterised by significant change following a long period of centralised and oppressive control of the society and its people. Political stability is still being sought and there remain factions opposed to change and prepared to act violently; so, the Deans are operating in a unique situation. Therefore, the assessments were conducted mindful of the environment in which the Deans lead and manage their people.

In preparation for the DQP Tony undertook extensive research into the likely cultural sensitivities when working with an Iraqi group, along with the cultural history of this ancient people and the modern country setting. He researched effective leadership development in an Arab context. There is a scarcity of published research in leadership development in an Arab setting and it became clear that this programme was going to be ground-breaking in its ambition, scope and partnerships.

The earliest known writing in the world was found on a Sumerian clay tablet in Babylon (5000 years old). It included a leadership parable ('Soldiers without a leader are like sheep without a shepherd'). We were always aware that we were therefore working with people from a country with the oldest leadership wisdom. We took the approach that we would be learning as much from the Deans as we sought to share. We wanted to reconnect them with their own leadership heritage as well as introduce some new thinking.

### Philosophy underpinning delivery approach

We valued the prior experience of Deans, viewing them always as senior practitioners who did not need to be 'fixed' but rather had valuable wisdom to share with us and one another. We believed their practice could be strengthened through reflection. DQP was therefore not a programme which was 'done' to Deans but an opportunity for Deans to take full ownership of their own leadership development, with skilled facilitation.

We wanted to equip Deans to become curious about what worked in their leadership and why. We used many anecdotes in recognition of the story-telling culture in the Middle East. We recognised that it was likely that some of our teaching would be relevant but some would not apply in a different culture. We were ourselves curious as to what content from PQP would 'travel', how learning may differ and how delivery would need to be adapted.

*"Your position never gives you the right to command. It only imposes on you the duty of so living your life that others can receive your orders without being humiliated"*



Dag Hammarskjöld  
Markings 1964

1. Programme participants will develop continuous and sustainable improvement in their personal leadership skills, knowledge and impact. This is in the context of change and complexity within the Technical Education sector in the Republic of Iraq.
2. This pilot programme will be an opportunity to customise DQP for use by the Iraqi Foundation for Technical Education, with supporting Leadership Standards. Pilot participants will provide feedback to inform this tailoring.
3. Pilot participants will also be trained to provide coaching support within Iraq for future participants. Capacity will be developed for assessment. This will help ensure the sustainability of the programme by using FTE staff as much as possible to support the wider roll out.

### 4.1 Learning Outcomes

The programme is designed to support participants in achieving the following personal learning outcomes:

- Understand and apply strategic leadership to improve the effectiveness of your institution and its position in the market and community
- Understand the impact you make as a leader on your team and organisation
- Apply selected theories, models and concepts from the programme in an action learning project to strengthen your adaptive leadership of change
- Develop reflective leadership practice through feedback, coaching, action learning and self-awareness
- Help create a community of leadership practice amongst peers to support continuous leadership improvement





## 4 Aims of the programme

### 4.2 Programme Structure

<b>MODULE 1</b> <b>Residential</b> Induction High performance Change leadership Action learning project preparation and selection Personal coaching Draft leadership development plan	Nov 2009 (5 days)	UK
<b>MODULE 2</b> <b>Leadership shadowing</b> in pairs	Nov – Dec 2009 (5 days)	
<b>MODULE 3</b> <b>Action learning project</b> in country	Dec 2009 - April 2010	
2. LDP submit next draft	Jan 2010	
3. Leadership Audit complete 360 feedback	Jan – Feb 2010	
<b>MODULE 4</b> <b>Residential</b> Coaching skills training 2 day experiential workshop on team building Personal coaching including 360 feedback Leadership development plan	March 2010 (5 days)	
<b>MODULE 5</b> <b>Residential</b> Consolidate coaching skills Review of action learning Tutoring for assignment submission Briefing for CMgr assessment Personal coaching	Oct 2010 (4 days)	
<b>MODULE 6</b> <b>Assessment</b> of 5000 word assignments x 9 (translation if needed). Extended for illness and rework.	Nov – March	E mail
<b>MODULE 7</b> <b>Residential</b> Coaching skills – advanced Tutoring for assignment re-work Intensive coaching for CMgr assessment & practice interviews Finalise LDPs for 2011/12	Jan 2011 (5 days)	
<b>MODULE 8</b> <b>Residential</b> Professional Dialogue assessments x9 Evaluation interviews Coaching consolidation Preparation for wider roll out Identifying assessors	March 2011 (5 days)	Istanbul

There are several areas of learning from the perspective of the UK facilitators.

### Relationships

- These are the key to learning in an Iraqi group.
- We built on the strong relationships established by Rawabit, feeling that we had been invited in to an 'extended family' with strong and trusting bonds
- Tutors need to establish credibility with an Iraqi group – but this is more than professional background, qualifications and relevant experience. It covers working with trust, dignity and respect at all times.
- Building relationships takes time and is a layered process – for example we experienced a deepening bond each time we visited Iraq. This was a function of entrusting our personal welfare to the Deans as well as them being able to showcase their country to us in the enchanting and charming way Arab hosts excel in. We think it empowered the Iraqi Deans to take responsibility for us.

### Planning

- Planning is good but we learned to increase our personal flexibility – working 'in the moment' rather than to a fixed idea of what had to happen next. This is how Iraqi culture works.
- Delivery took twice the time it would with a group of English Principals because of the need to work with in-group translation and also to allow time for the group members to discuss new concepts and theories. This meant a need to adjust the pace, adapt content and avoid colloquialisms which only served to confuse.
- We learnt to assume nothing – we repeatedly discovered aspects of Western leadership development which are not present in Iraqi culture. 360 feedback is new territory; corroboration of evidence of impact is unknown; CVs are set out differently; management theories we would regard as foundational are unfamiliar. We will prepare a management and leadership introduction for future cohorts.

### Groups work differently

- The role of a group leader in Iraqi culture is quite different to the Western model. The group leader has a spiritual authority emanating from the Qur'an and their authority over a group's behaviour and direction is palpable. It is therefore essential to understand and acknowledge this, consulting the group leader for all important decisions and briefing them ahead of modules and key activities. Sometimes the dialogue in class is solely with the group leader – with others listening in or occasionally contributing.
- There is much more collaboration and less competition in an Iraqi Deans' group compared to an English Principals' group
- Deans search for 'the wisdom' in tasks, lectures and even ice-breaker exercises. And this is seen as a function of the group rather than the individual take-away it would be in the UK
- Deans make lateral connections across leadership models and theories (whereas English Principals tend to drill down into one particular model to examine it in depth). Deans could then create a new model out of the inter-connectedness. This was outstanding conceptualisation.



## 5 Key learning in delivery

- Feedback flows differently in an Iraqi group. It firstly depends on the level of trust present (as in the UK) but even in high trust groups it defaults to discussion of the positives and avoids anything which might be seen as negative. This protects the 'face' of the hearers or facilitators. Reframing developmental feedback to 'it would be even better if.....' could sometimes help. The quality of feedback was also in inverse proportions to group size – small groups worked better than large ones; pairs better still and one to one feedback from the tutor gave the greatest scope for discussion of 'negatively perceived' issues, subject always to obtaining the permission of the hearer and watching closely for non-verbal reactions which might indicate psychological distress from feedback.

*'The importance of good leadership today hardly needs to be stressed. For it is widely recognised that a democratic society cannot work effectively without it. Leaders are needed in all fields and at all levels to give direction, create teamwork and inspire people to give of their best'*

Prof. John Adair *Great Leaders* 1989

### MODULE 1 (Induction in UK )

Dean's feedback suggests we introduce basic management development concepts and theories in Induction including the concepts of action planning, change planning, learning styles diagnostic and other elements. This will provide a shared platform and vocabulary for the rest of the programme. We should provide a list of DQP terms and their meanings. We should also provide a study guide on leading and developing people.

Setting the right atmosphere is important – an environment safe for learning with plenty of ice-breakers and practical, fun activities to allow the group to bond. Now that we have greater clarity on all the programme elements, we can also provide more direction and explanation as to what to expect in terms of learning and assessment. FTE will be organising an additional pre-briefing in Baghdad for group 2.

In-group translation is essential from the group leader and others. This worked well in group 1 but placed a heavy demand on Dr Moneer. The handbook should be translated into Arabic as should handouts and questionnaires. Graduate Deans can now be used as visiting speakers on the new programme from Induction onwards.

### MODULE 2 (leadership shadowing in UK)

Deans found these paired week-long visits formative and challenging. Deans explored departments throughout each College and identified many technical areas for improvement in their own institutions. They valued the hospitality and warmth shown.

However they recommend that for the next group a tighter programme is drawn up by DQP with a sharper set of learning outcomes/goals related more closely to leadership issues and practice (strategic and operational); culture and values. There should be a core set of activities and freedom for extra activities from the host College.

Possibly, some shadowing outside the FE sector to draw wider leadership lessons. Distribution of Deans to Colleges could possibly reflect their areas of professional interest. De-briefing across the groups needs to be better to share learning. Some Deans wanted longer than one week.

## 6 Reflections and Evaluation feedback

### MODULE 3 (in country)

#### Action learning project

This had variable success. The initial briefing in Module 1 proved to be inadequate and we did not realise that many Deans left the UK with an incomplete understanding of action learning methodology. In response, we later altered the requirement to write about an action learning project to writing about their leadership of a 'change project'. This worked better and provided the opportunity for integration of leadership models into an actual change intervention within their Colleges.

We will design for group 2 learning experiences which are linked to evidence collection for both the 5000 word assignment and CMgr. These will be centred on the change project.

#### Leadership Development Plan (LDP)

The production of personalised LDP's with early dated versions being replaced by more comprehensive later versions (evidencing progression of thinking) proved difficult for some Deans.

Feedback has indicated the need for greater prescription in format and common submission dates. We will use the group 1 coaches to support this process.

#### Leadership Audit (360 feedback)

No Dean had ever participated in a 360 exercise and completion is a counter-cultural expectation. This made it a high risk experiment. Dean's colleagues and peers were unfamiliar with the process so it had to be approached with sensitivity. One to one tutor feedback of the results was for some Deans a cause of high anxiety. We worked to support them through this. The Leadership Audit product itself worked – although we later learned the term 'manager' had a different meaning to its UK intention of 'boss'. In Iraq this is two levels below a Dean. Consequently the choice of some vertical feedback givers was skewed.

The questions and instructions should be translated. We will need to support group 1 coaches as they give LA feedback in group 2.

Feedback indicated that the Leadership Audit was valued and contributed to gradually increasing comfort with giving and receiving feedback. Arab culture seeks to preserve 'face' so feedback needs to take this into account and work with 'even better if' approaches, only moving to overtly developmental discussions when permission has been given.

We were able to challenge behaviour and leadership practice as trust increased but it took time – and sometimes several attempts - to reach that point.

## MODULE 4 (Istanbul)

The experiential 2 day team workshop included in this module helped the group to further bond as it was only the second time they had been together as a group. We brought in a second specialist tutor (John Ashford) for this work and whilst introduction of a new face was unsettling they quickly accepted him. Team building was accelerated by this workshop and it reinforced the feedback mechanisms. Tutor relationships deepened. For group 2 we can use the experiential to reinforce understanding of learning styles.

Coaching skills training commenced in this module and group 1 coaches will be supporting future cohorts. The ongoing task will be to equip group 2 delegates with a basic coaching toolkit to use as line managers to improve results and performance.

We gave out various texts including two Essential Managers series on Coaching Successfully and Managing People along with the Leadership of Muhammad and a range of coaching and leadership books. These were well received and read. It is hoped it will stimulate the creation of a management library in FTE. This can of course be immediately supplemented by the rich on-line resources of CMI.

### Personal coaching

The cost pressures in the funding of the programme limited the amount of personal leadership coaching available to each Dean. Some coaching was given in most residential modules but the priority for this became to support 360 feedback, written assignments and preparation for Chartered Manager assessment. The wider coaching experienced by English Principals in their programme was not possible in the pilot. However the training of pilot Deans to take up the role of DQP coaches for the next cohorts is an exciting development. This will allow in-country coaching to take place, face to face and by phone, in delegate's first language. FTE are planning to allocate coaches geographically to facilitate ease of access and have discussed ways to support and supervise coaches to ensure high quality practice.

## 6 Reflections and Evaluation feedback

### MODULE 5 (Erbil)

It was during this module we realised that understanding of the action learning methodology was insecure. There had been a long and unplanned gap in face to face work due to funding and sponsor organisation issues. This area had suffered as a result of interrupted communication. We adapted the assessment criteria as described above. The need to better test understanding had been highlighted.

We had taken out of the written assignment assessment process the provision of written formative feedback by assessors on an emerging draft. This was for cost reasons. However we found that Deans desperately needed formative feedback and so we gave this in one to one sessions in Erbil, with follow up notes. This worked well.

Dr Moneer was the first to submit a written assignment and passed it at the highest possible level. He became a mentor to other Deans. Dr Moneer was enlisted to assist colleagues who were struggling with the feedback or criteria.

Preparation then started for CMgr assessment with a session in which Dave questioned Tony (who had recently undertaken CMgr to prepare for this Module). Additional coaching skills were shared.

A full day was spent on the FCMI application process – this membership document needs to be provided in Word next time. Tony brought the hard copies back to the UK and all nine Deans were subsequently successful in their application to become Fellows of the CMI.

### MODULE 6 (e mail – assessment of DQP written assignments)

Each Dean submitted a 5000 word assignment which evidenced their personal and applied leadership learning on the programme against defined criteria. These assignments were marked by assessors from the UK's Principal's Qualifying Programme. The assessment criteria are at Annex A.

Four required translation from Arabic into English. A fifth required translation support subsequently, due to poor quality of written English.

The two UK based assessors were briefed by Tony on the programme aims and context as well as Iraqi culture. Both assessors worked very hard to provide each Dean with detailed and meaningful feedback against the criteria, sensitively expressed. The standards used were very similar to the UK PQP assessment criteria. Allowance was made for culture and the difficulties of writing in English or through a translator, however some terms and idioms were not always clear to assessors. Re-work was called for to provide clarity, or additional evidence requested as needed.

The outcomes were two Deans passed with a Merit and six Deans achieved a Pass mark. One Dean was marked Pass with Development. Some were asked for rework as their initial submissions did not provide sufficiently robust evidence. Four needed additional face to face tutor support which Tony gave in Erbil in module 7. This meant that the window for the written assignment became very extended – indeed the final result for the ninth Dean was not declared until March 2011 due to the illness of one Dean.

## MODULE 7 (Erbil)

Originally intended to be in the UK (with CMgr assessments taking place) the venue was switched at short notice to Iraq due to visa delays. Tony and Dave worked with the Deans in their own country and noticed a further deepening of the relationships with the Deans. Tutoring for several written assignments continued. Motivational theory and leading edge thinking on this subject was introduced.

Practice interviews were also undertaken for CMgr but it quickly became clear that Deans were not yet ready. It had proved to be providential that the live interviews were not taking place that week.

Applied learning is the hardest level of learning to evidence – we sought ways to help Deans present their learning as both personal and applied. A three level model for this was developed by Dave Peel when it became evident that most Deans needed to move out of description of theory (Level 1) to evidencing the impact they made at work. The aim was to ensure that for the CMgr interviews only Level 2 and 3 evidence was offered.

Deans were intensively coached by Tony and Dave in January 2011 for their assessment challenges, to ensure they were not disadvantaged due to cultural imperatives such as a reluctance to use “I” when describing impact. Deans had never undertaken a competency based assessment before. This face to face support proved to be essential.

We also gave Deans a three stage model for how to talk to assessors, and write about, individual examples of evidence.

These are attached at Annex B.

## Feedback from DQP assessors on the written assessment process

### What went well

Assessors felt that assignments met the criteria despite the many obstacles Deans encountered in evidencing their learning. This was a credit to their dedication and to the formative feedback and support they received, which helped ensure a thorough understanding of assessment requirements. The criteria are clear and explicit which helped assessors to differentiate amongst the Deans based on their achievements and ‘distance travelled’ in their leadership journey. The criteria have largely stood the test of the pilot, with the main alteration being to the change project.

The assessment feedback was detailed and specific, with the framework helping to identify any areas which were less convincing or where further evidence was required. Feedback given was developmental and profoundly sensitive culturally, reminding Deans that they were on a continuing journey of personal development. Assessors pursued evidence of challenge and application. Where substantial re-work was needed assessors strove to leave no margin for misunderstanding whilst remaining supportive. Assessors realised that leadership is perceived and practiced differently across cultures – they looked for evidence of horizons being stretched (experimentation). Assessors have built up a better understanding of Iraqi cultural leadership norms and looked for evidence in each criteria of understanding, critical analysis, challenge and application.

Assessors encouraged Deans to look forward as well as to reflect on past experience. They asked Deans to describe and appreciate the relationship between their personal leadership development and the potential impact on others of exercising their leadership role.



## 6 Reflections and Evaluation feedback

Assessors understood that some aspect of the programme were completely unfamiliar to Deans such as the 360 feedback approaches. They recognised the discomfort this caused and applauded the determination of Deans to experiment with this method of feedback. Emotional intelligence was another area of 'stretch' for most participants.

The briefing for assessors from the DQP Director had proved to be essential. During assessment a dialogue developed with assessors and DQP Director in which assessors tested hypotheses and emerging judgements about Deans' learning and leadership, receiving further background as to their situations. This helped assessors overcome the limitation of not being able to meet individual Deans (English PQP has a face to face panel after the written assignment – in DQP face to face assessment is part of the CMgr Professional Discussion).

Assessors would encourage graduate Deans to build and maintain peer support mechanisms.

### What could be improved

The assessors sometimes struggled to fully understand the intended meaning of some of the work written or translated into English. Some of the translated pieces were subject to a long delay whilst a translator was sourced. It proved essential to use clearly marked footers and document titles on each item submitted for translation to ensure the correct assignment. (For group 2 assignments will be written and assessed in Arabic).

Assessors advise that group 2 Deans be encouraged to write more personally about their experiences and aspirations – more about their personal journey and less about their Colleges. The levels of learning model described above will greatly assist this. Assessors had to try and 'get underneath' the deep humility of the Deans, who were reticent to write in the first person. Discovering the fuller narrative through additional work, assessors were often struck by their awesome stories of courage.

Assessors wanted Deans to write more about their personalised leadership style (this will be introduced earlier and in more depth for Group 2) and the influences which have shaped it or provoked adaptation. Assessors were hungry for more examples of Level 2/3 learning and for further writing on continued leadership development planned for the next 12 months. Dated leadership development plans tracked through the programme with a future one would be most helpful. Access to CMI material on-line is to be encouraged as is use of the internet as a leadership learning and research resource.

'Pass with Development' was added as an additional category. The 'Refer' mechanism needed to be more nuanced. Refer was used twice but we found to be more productive the use of stronger formative assessment from the DQP Director and tutoring in support of specific, written questions from the assessor. We also found that it was more efficient to ask for additional evidence to fill gaps against the criteria, rather than a whole resubmission.

## MODULE 8 Chartered Manager assessment by Professional Discussion (Istanbul)

We were joined in Istanbul by two assessors from the CMI. Each Dean underwent a Professional Discussion (one to one interview) for up to 4 hours, in support of their application for Chartered Manager (CMgr) status. Assessors carried out additional corroboration to triangulate the evidence of personal impact, interviewing Dr Mahmood and other FTE colleagues.

The integration of the CMgr award into DQP is in preparation for the wider roll out of DQP in 2011. It fully supports a competency-based, accredited approach. One of the assessors is lead moderator for the Institute, which is very excited at this ground-breaking initiative in the Middle East. The Institute's UK standards are used in the assessment process. Chartered Managers have to demonstrate personal impact on organisational results over the last 18 months at strategic level in Leading People and Managing Change. CMgr's have to abide by a professional Code of Conduct and have to demonstrate continuing professional development.

Pre-work was by e mail exchange with the CMI assessors rather than by phone call, which reflected the logistical and translation problems. We will look at ways to simplify evidence gathering processes for group 2.

CMI Assessors found that contemporary leadership and management skills are still in their infancy in Iraq and in their Professional Discussion the Deans all showed an advanced understanding of theory. Over the latter period of the DQP they have been able to apply these leadership and management theories within their Institutions and Colleges to:

- Develop visions, leading to defined objectives supported by a framework of ethos and values;
- Establish High Performing Teams;
- Engage, motivate and lead their people with understanding and compassion; and
- Identify, plan and manage change.

Assessors Gaynor Thomas CMgr MCMI and John Sephton CMgr FCMI carried out the Professional Discussion, contextualising the evidence to reflect the unique setting and challenges of Iraq. Gaynor said "We learned so much about what is happening in Iraq and the leadership and management Deans have had to exhibit in such very complex and difficult circumstances. What they have achieved is most impressive and it was very clear how they had successfully applied the models and concepts learned on the DQP in their Institutes, which have successfully blossomed under their leadership".

Deans shared their stories of creating business impact including de-politicising their learning institutions; stabilising local communities through vocational education amongst former insurgents and prisoners; introducing new vocational and academic qualifications to Masters level; rebuilding Colleges destroyed in terrorist activity. They have experienced personal attacks yet demonstrated resilience, patience and faith. Gaynor commented "The most impressive stories were those of rebuilding the human soul".

It was with huge pride that we saw the Iraqi Ambassador present Deans with their DQP graduation certificates. Gaynor Thomas presented FCMI certificates. In parallel to the assessments, we undertook programme evaluation interviews and consolidated coaching skills ready for the wider roll out. Assessors were identified for working on group 2's written assignments in 2012. More training of these four people will be needed in 2011 (priority was given to supporting Deans through the CMgr process).

## 6 Reflections and Evaluation feedback

All nine Deans were advised after Istanbul that they had been successful in their assessment and now enjoy CMgr status. They are the first managers in Iraq to achieve this award and amongst only a handful of CMgrs in the Middle East region.

The CMgr assessors were not aware in advance of the outcomes achieved by the Deans in their DQP assignments; interestingly the two Deans who were deemed to be particularly strong CMgrs were those who had achieved merits in their DQP assignments.

One of the problems that the Deans encountered in the CMgr process was the requirement for evidence of Impact and the application of skills. This is simply indicative of a cultural difference and the assessors accepted some “level one” evidence, e.g. photographic. To surmount this gap the assessors strengthened the corroboration process, which was more than adequate.

For future cohorts we are planning to integrate evidence collection as an integral part of the DQP.

On reflection CMgr assessors felt an important enabler was quickly establishing a relationship based upon trust and respect; understanding the history and culture of Iraq. Assessors had to be flexible and culturally aware, so that any Anglo-Saxon idiosyncrasies could be surmounted without any dilution of the quality of the CMgr award.

*‘truly the best of men for thee to employ  
is the (man) who is strong (competent)  
and trusty’*

(Quran, 88:26)

An analysis was carried out of both the written assignments and the CMgr business impact submissions to ascertain the frequency and level at which DQP introduced theories and models were described (Level1) , applied (Level 2) or experimented with (Level 3). This can be used to inform detailed programme design for group 2.

Most frequently mentioned at Level 2 were Change House; High Performance working; 360 feedback, leadership styles and coaching. This was followed by generic team building theory. Evidenced at Level 1 were Compete/Collaborate models (with one additional example at L2) and Innovation.

This analysis excludes some models and theories introduced to Deans in the latter part of the programme, as Deans had little opportunity demonstrate their application in their assignments. These will be introduced earlier to future cohorts. Some new models may be introduced to future cohorts to address feedback from the pilot group.

### **8. Leadership Standards**

A set of FTE leadership standards was drafted and refined on several occasions, incorporating feedback from Deans as well as later integration with the CMgr sub skills. The final set is attached at Annex C.

### **9. Community of Practice**

Deans identified some actions they will take to support the development of a community of practice amongst group 1. This takes account of the great distances between many of them. They wish to use email to exchange information and ideas; translate interesting articles on leadership and exchange them; meet at the end of each term to discuss DQP topics; to publish leadership articles in journals of FTE; continue to study leadership; establish a DQP group in the FTE training centre and a resource centre for group 2; exchange relevant published papers from CMI website.

CMgr status requires Deans to continue their professional development and reassesses this every 3 years. These actions will ensure that they have plenty of evidence to maintain their status.

### **10. Dean's overview**

Deans used a range of words to describe the overall programme experience

- Development
- Progress
- Openness
- Skills
- Sustainable
- Fun
- Change
- Respect and trust
- Love
- Sharing

In the short term the benefits of the programme are developing leadership capabilities but in the longer term they are about culture change.

## 7 Written assignments analysis

### 11. FTE perspective

Prof. Dr. Mahmood Shaker Abdulhussain, President of FTE, visited the UK in early 2009 with a group of policy makers to commission an Iraqi DQP.

Dr Mahmood recently said " We strongly supported DQP from the start. This is an accredited programme which is helping Deans achieve our vision to strengthen the Iraqi economy through local communities. DQP is helping professionalise our senior management".

### 12. Next cohorts

Dr Moneer will be leading the next cohorts due to start in 2011/12, which is being funded by the EU through the British Council in partnership with AoC (Rawabit). He will be supported by the eight other graduate Deans - some will perform coaching and others assessment of the 5000 word submissions. Additional training for the assessment task will be supplied nearer the time. UK facilitators will provide expertise for the delivery of residential modules and support of programme design. DQP will move to self-standing status within FTE by the end of the EU-funded intervention.

CMI are very keen to continue their collaboration with Rawabit and discussions continue to further streamline evidence collection and assessment processes. Chartered Manager status has huge value within Iraq – the Deans have placed their achievement as sitting 'alongside the PhD'. FTE will be encouraging a community of practice amongst CMgr Deans.

Deans have advised that we work to overcome the visa delay problems. There must also be a strong English-speaking leader for each group. Deans need a pre –course briefing in Iraq which FTE will organise and an abstract about DQP covering goals, process and what will be achieved. If possible delegates should receive papers and slides before the modules.

### 13. Conclusion

The DQP has achieved its aims of equipping participants with continuous and sustainable improvement in their personal leadership skills, knowledge and impact. The pilot programme has now been customised for use by the Iraqi FTE, with supporting Leadership Standards. Pilot participants have been trained to provide coaching support within Iraq for future participants. Some capacity has been developed for future assessment (with additional training planned nearer the time). All these steps will help ensure the sustainability of the programme by using FTE staff as much as possible to support the roll out.

All participants have achieved the triple award of DQP, FCMI and CMgr. Each has demonstrated through robust, external assessment their personal learning, strategic experience and organisational impact. The standards for assessment and leadership have been customised and contextualised but never diluted.

FTE now have a world class programme, tailored for the Iraqi context, with a group of graduate Deans able to support the wider roll out with continuing and appropriate UK facilitation (on the residential modules and programme design elements).

The success of DQP has come by working through complex and abiding partnerships whilst building strong and trusting relationships - which is the very nature of Rawabit.

This applied leadership wisdom can help FTE shape a generation of senior leaders; impact the whole system over time; and strengthen the economic and social gains which are such a 'perfect pearl' (al-Jiwan) in FTE's vision.

*Tony Nelson*  
*Director, Deans' Qualifying Programme*

*'As you are like, so will your rulers be'*  
(Arab Proverb)

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA for 5000 word assignment (March2011)

You have to write a minimum of 5000 words in the submitted written assignment. This should reflect upon and critically review your leadership learning.

The submission must be submitted electronically to Tony Nelson the Programme Director, who will acknowledge receipt. It will be forwarded to an assessor who will mark it, provide written feedback and return it to you via the Programme Director within 6 weeks.

Should you prefer to write in Arabic the programme administrator will arrange for translation of your submission into English but you should allow for a further 3 weeks to receive assessment feedback ( i.e. 9 weeks from receipt).

All assessment feedback will be in English.

The assessor will mark the submission against the criteria and make a judgement as to whether the submission demonstrates sufficient evidence.

The assessor may judge the submission as

- 1 Merit (demonstrates high level of evidence across all criteria)
- 2 Pass (meets the assessment criteria overall)
- 3 Pass with Development
- 4 Resubmit (does not yet sufficiently meet overall assessment criteria)

The assessor will give written feedback for merit and pass (and with development). More detailed feedback will be provided in the case of a resubmit mark.

## Structure

Your stage 1 submission should cover

### 1. Introduction (500 words)

A statement explaining for the assessor your personal leadership context and performance before you started DQP. This will help the assessor understand a little about your institute and your approach to leadership as a Dean. Write about your history as a Dean and your experience within education before becoming a Dean.

### 2. Your leadership learning on DQP (2000 words)

You should describe your key learning as a leader referring to specific modules.

#### 2.1 Module 1

The Induction residential. Which leadership models and theories introduced on Module 1 have you applied in your leadership? What has been the impact? What has worked well and what less so? What are your reflections on this? You may not have liked or used some of the theories – please say why they were not appropriate for your situation.

The writing here should be more about application and learning and less just a description of what you were taught.

## 2.2 Module 2

The leadership shadowing week. You should focus on what you learned about leadership during this week rather than simply describing what you did during the week. Write about how you have applied your leadership learning in your context.

## 2.3 The **Leadership Audit** (360) feedback.

You should write about your reaction to the feedback you received. Were there any surprises for you? Write about your areas of strength and how you will nurture these. Which area did you decide to add into your Leadership Development plan as a personal development and why?

## 2.4 **Module 4** (residential)

Write about the models and theories of leadership introduced to you in the week. Make particular reference to the 2 day experiential workshop and the personal developmental feedback you received from other Deans in your small group. How have you added that into your leadership development plan?

## 2.5 Your **Leadership Development Plan**

Write about how and why your draft plan has changed and improved during DQP. Enclose dated versions of the plan.

## 3. **Leading a Change Project (2000 words)**

The change project is another opportunity for you to demonstrate how you have engaged with the programme. It is also a means for you to evidence to the assessor the 'personal power' of your leadership in a group setting, calling for a facilitative and coaching style.

You will describe for one change project

- 1 The aims of your project and why you chose these
- 2 The members you invited to help you
- 3 The action undertaken as a group
- 4 Which theories, concepts and models introduced in the DQP you applied to the project - how these impacted on you and the group members and why
- 5 The learning which emerged
- 6 Any changes to approach you made as a result of feedback or review in the group
- 7 The impact of your personal leadership on the group and how you know
- 8 What you would do differently next time *as a leader* and why
- 9 How your leadership development plan has changed as a result

## 4. **Summary (500 words)**

Provide a reflection on your personal leadership learning on DQP and its impact on your Institute.

## 5. **Appendixes**

Include in appendixes any evidence which the assessors will find helpful - this should be in electronic format only (for example, a small number of digital photographs, scanned documents, the dated draft versions of your leadership development plan)

The assessment criteria for the 5000 word assessment are:

	<b>Leadership learning, knowledge and practice</b> In the writing you demonstrate your ability to:
1	Critically analyse and apply key theories, models and approaches to leadership learning
2	Apply learning through the programme and project to develop your leadership practice
3	Write clearly expressing ideas, linking theory and practice
4	Plan and manage your own leadership development
5	Critically analyse and reflect on your leadership experience and adopt new ways of working as a leader where appropriate
6	Seek, evaluate and learn from feedback from others
7	Critically assess your own leadership impact on others
8	Describe your personal 'distance travelled' as a leader through the change project and programme



## Hierarchy of learning on DQP

### Level 1

Exposure to and basic understanding of DQP materials/models/theory  
This is a descriptive piece of writing/explanation

### Level 2

Thorough understanding and application of DQP materials/models/theory.  
This is a piece of writing/explanation which reflects on applied practice in context.

### Level 3

Adaptation and modification of understanding of DQP materials/models/theory  
This discusses the underpinning rationale for the experimentation and is an advanced piece of writing/explanation. It is the deepest level of learning.

## How to present evidence

What did you do (focus on your College)

How did you do it?

How do you know? (focus on impact/results)

**DQP Leadership Standards**

*Drawn from LLUK Benchmark Role Specifications for Principals and Chartered Manager competences*

There are six key elements to the leadership role of a Dean within FTE. These cover leadership of what is to be achieved; the experience of studying or working in the College; the resources required; the outcomes; the key external relationships.

**1. Strategic Leadership**

Based on a clear understanding of the skills needs of employers and individuals, the Dean must work with FTE and other key stakeholders to set direction, create a shared vision and produce a strategic plan for the college. This plan must seek to continually improve and develop excellence in the college to meet economic and social needs.

Leadership standards for the role
Makes sense of the external environment
Works effectively with local, regional and national needs
Develops strategic plan, working with key stakeholders
Communicates the plan effectively

**2. Leading Excellence in Teaching and Learning**

The Dean has responsibility for raising the quality of learning and teaching in the college. This means setting challenging standards and expectations for both staff and students. The Dean must create the culture in which all staff strive for excellence in courses and services.

Leadership standards for the role
Raises retention, achievement and success rates
Co-ordinates curriculum design
Improves teaching and learning through self assessment
Uses equality and diversity standards to improve teaching and learning
Creates a learner-centred college



### 3. Leading People and Managing Change

The Dean must be a role model, treating people with respect and fairness. Achieves high standards and improves the college.

Leadership standards for the role
Provides clear purpose and direction
Inspires trust, respect and shared values
Communicates clearly and succinctly
Develops and supports individuals and team members
Resolves problems and conflicts with positive outcomes
Adapts leadership style to take account of diverse situations
Scopes, plans and drives change
Manages others through the change process
Consistently applies strategic thinking
Takes account of stakeholder issues
Encourages others to be creative and innovative
Identifies opportunities for change and development

### 4. Leading Resources

The Dean is responsible to FTE for the overall safety and management of all college staff and resources with delivery to agreed plans. The Dean ensures the college is financially sound with adequate control systems to ensure value for money.

Leadership standards for the role
Ensures accountability for income and expenditure
Ensures high quality financial and management information
Manages value for money through performance indicators
Leads performance review process
Produces clear and accurate reports for FTE

### 5. Leading Accountability

The Dean must clearly understand the duties, responsibilities and risks associated with the activities of the college and ensure that FTE is fully informed and advised.

Leadership standards for the role
Follows Professional Code of Conduct of Chartered Management Institute
Ensures compliance with legal and regulatory requirements
Ensures contracts and agreements are fulfilled
Works to protect students and vulnerable adults
Uses effective risk management processes

### 6. Leading Stakeholders

The Dean should champion the college contribution to the economic and social well-being of the local community and, where appropriate, play a part in the wider economy. The Dean must ensure that the college responds to the identified needs of local employers. The Dean must ensure that the college operates in an inclusive and collaborative manner, working in partnership in the community and in the workplace

Leadership standards for the role
Contributes to professional networks
Works collaboratively with other colleges and organisations
Engages with employers to ensure the college is meeting their needs
Promotes the reputation of the college

