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# The opportunities afforded by offshore teaching to faculty members: Strengthening confidence in core qualities

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## ABSTRACT

Offshore teaching is a common practice in Australian higher education. While challenges in offshore teaching have been well studied, the opportunities that it may provide have been seldom discussed. Considering this, the aim of this study is to address this gap by investigating the opportunities that offshore teaching provided faculty members in the development of their professional values. This study employs the memory-work method self-study based on the reflective notes of Author1 about his teaching experiences in the offshore programme between December 2019 and August 2021, with reference to Korthagen's core reflection model. The reflections revealed that he not only identified but strengthened his confidence in his core qualities through offshore teaching. This strengthened confidence in his core qualities also helped him to negotiate with the new problematic situations created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## KEYWORDS

Offshore teaching; core reflection model; international higher education; Singapore; Australia

## Introduction

In Australian universities, offshore teaching is frequently offered as part of university courses. Offshore teaching refers to the programmes that are based internationally in locations other than the country of the main home institution (Leask, 2018; Richards & Lee Ross, 2004). Transnational education (Bilsland et al., 2019; Croucher et al., 2020; Dai, 2018; Tran et al., 2021; Wilkins & Juusola, 2018) may also be interchangeably used to represent the similar type of programs but, in this study, 'offshore teaching' is employed. According to the latest data released by Department of Education, Skills, and Employment (2019), while there are 401,930 onshore international students, there are 116,678 offshore international students. This number may change due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic as the shift to offshore teaching meant enrolling more international students (Ross, 2020). The impact of COVID-19 would be immense – on-campus teaching modes have to be shifted to online ones. There was also a significant concern on the quality of education by, and student satisfactions that stemmed from purely online modes of teaching for the students in the host countries (Croucher et al., 2020).

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## **Literature review**

As mentioned, one of the frequently researched issues is an array of challenges in the limited time accorded to offshore teaching. This is because offshore teaching tends to be often taught in the 'intensive mode' with fewer hours of face-to-face teaching as compared on campus teaching (Furlonger et al., 2018; Smith, 2013; Tran et al., 2021). In some cases, faculty members may also have to engage in marketing efforts for their universities (Lewis, 2015). Furthermore, teaching offshore has also been seen as a serious challenge on staffs' work and life balance (Debowski, 2006; Jais et al., 2015).

Second, contextual adjustment is often another challenge for faculty members. If they are confident about responding to and engaging with cross-contextual issues (Tangney, 2017; Tran et al., 2021), the faculty members can be more confident about teaching in offshore settings (Chen, 2016). Nevertheless, for offshore teaching, the negotiation between cultural and religious belief systems is instrumental to quality learning (Bilsland et al., 2020; Kadiwal & Rind, 2013; Nhan & Nguyen, 2018). Also, it has been pointed out that while the students are satisfied with the curriculum equivalent to the home countries, they also recognise gaps with local practices in the host countries, which the local public and employers are not satisfied with (Bilsland et al., 2020).

The third issue is in student support. Because host countries' labour markets can be different, it becomes increasingly critical to help students become more employable as part of their educational outcome (Bilsland et al., 2019, 2020; Tran et al., 2021). Due to this, offshore programmes have been diversified as students are given opportunities to experience studying outside their own countries as a part of the programme although their cultural adjustment could sometimes be an issue such cases (Dai, 2018). Therefore, it could be said that faculty members and student welfare officers have critical roles to play in supporting them for the entire programme (Cicchetti & Park, 2018).

In the offshore teaching research, the abovementioned studies mainly focused on the issues and challenges in teaching offshore programmes. While the insights yielded by these are valuable, there should more studies on opportunities that the faculty members can gain by joining offshore teaching programmes. Offshore teaching can provide opportunities too, such as identifying or developing their professional core qualities, which is an aspect that teachers value or care for (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2006).

## **The purpose of this study**

The aim of this study is, therefore, to discuss the opportunities that offshore teaching provide faculty members in terms of the development of their core qualities, based on the self-study of the first author (hereafter referred to Author1). Author1 obtained a large confidence through teaching in the offshore programmes about his teaching to the degree to influence his professional values. To address this aim, this paper is divided as follows; after this introduction, a literature review will be given. Then, a theoretical framework is explained. The fourth section is about the methodology that this study employs. Findings will be explained in the fifth section. Finally, discussion and conclusion will be drawn.

## Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework used in this study is the core reflection model (Korthagen, 2009; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2006; Geursen et al., 2010). Core reflection provides the levels and process of reflection by the teacher, and it is underlined by the ‘self’ at the centre of the reflective process. In comparison to other reflective models (Brookfield, 2017; Kolb, 2015; Schön, 1983), which emphasise more cognitive processes, the strength of the Korthagen model is that it directly incorporates both moral and ethical dimensions. Thus, it probes into the deeper layers of a teacher’s own beliefs or values (Geursen et al., 2010). Due to these strengths, the model is an apt one for this study, which investigates the influence of offshore teaching on Author1’s professional values through his critical reflections.

The core reflection model comprises six layers of (Korthagen, 2009) and five steps (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2006) in reflection. In terms of layers, Korthagen (2009) suggests that the first one relates to the environment, addressing a personal concern in dealing with the outer world. The second layer is that of behaviour, where the teacher reflects on the effectiveness of behaviours in interacting with the environment. The third layer is about competencies that relate to what the teacher can manage and is adept at. The fourth layer is the level of beliefs about situations that the teacher encounters. The fifth is the layer known as professional identity, referring to the question of how the teacher sees himself or herself as a teacher. This area also addresses his or her roles and future goals too. The last layer is called mission and this layer connects to the reasons why a teacher chooses the profession. Furthermore, according to Korthagen and Vasalos (2006), the implementation of the six core layers of reflection occurs in the following five phases: (1) experience of problematic situations; (2) awareness of ideal situations/limitations; (3) awareness of core qualities; (4) actualisation of the core qualities, and (5) experimenting with new behaviours.

Between the awareness and actualisation of the core qualities, a new phase can be proposed, that is, ‘strengthened confidence in core qualities’ (Figure 1). It is argued here that even if the teacher becomes more aware of his core qualities, it would still be necessary to have the self-confidence to demonstrate the core qualities through experimenting new behaviours.

**Table 1.** The backgrounds of Authors.

	Gender	Nationality	Expertise	Experiences in Singapore
Author1	M	Japanese	Educational studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked for a Singaporean university from 2008 to 2015</li> <li>• Teaching offshore units in Singapore from 2017 to present (an undergraduate unit in 2017 and a postgraduate unit from 2018 onwards)</li> </ul>
Author2	M	Singaporean	Educational studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Originally from Singapore</li> <li>• Teaching offshore units from 2015 to 2019</li> </ul>
Author3	F	Australian	Clinical psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching offshore units in Singapore from 2015 onwards</li> <li>• Coordinating the entire offshore courses from 2018 onwards</li> </ul>

## Methodology

### *Research design*

This study employs a qualitative method known as self-study and in particular, the memory-work method (Mitchell, 2005; Samaras, 2011). This approach was developed to investigate professional experiences through self-reflection of practitioners from professional perspectives by working with critical friends. As the study examines the professional reflections of Author1 on the opportunities that offshore teaching would provide faculty members in terms of the development of their professional values, the self-study method was chosen. Authors2 and 3 assumed the essential role of critical friends, providing critical comments to Author1's reflection and assisting in the process of his tacit knowledge more explicit (Samaras, 2011), and increasing the study's trustworthiness (Kitchen, 2019; Samaras, 2011). To this end, the reflective notes of Author1 were used as the data for analysis as a variety of Author1's emotions, beliefs, and identities are inherent in such reflections (Cole, 2011; Samaras, 2011).

### *Contexts*

All Authors worked in the Faculty of Education of an Australian university and have experienced offshore teaching in the units across programmes offered in Singapore. In this offshore programme, there are eight courses running, namely: one bachelor course (Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood) and seven postgraduate courses (Graduate Certificate of Education Studies and Master's degrees in the following expertise: Counselling, Education, Early Childhood Education, Education Leadership and Policy, and Inclusive and Special Education), deploying 60 teaching staff from Australia each year. All units are run online throughout each term over three months with the same unit contents used in Singapore and Australia. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, an intensive teaching block comprising of face-to-face sessions was provided for four days as part of the unit taught offshore in Singapore.

The total number of teaching intensive hours stipulated in the Authors' university offshore teaching programme used to be 22 hours over four consecutive days. The first day usually began on a Thursday evening and followed by a Friday evening in which both sessions began at 6:30 pm and ended at 10:30pm. On Saturday, however, the session began from 2 pm and ended at 9 pm while on Sunday it began at 9 am and ended at 4 pm. After switching into the complete online mode due to the pandemic, the dates of sessions were spread over the three-month period, decided by the lecturers in charge of the units, based on the approval by the coordinator of the offshore programme.

Most of the students in the offshore units were working professionals, which usually meant that they attended classes at the end of a full working day in which many arrive tired. Many of the students are from Singapore, within which ethnic and cultural diversities exist. These include students from Chinese, Malay, and Indian backgrounds, while others comprise international students from Asia and beyond. Some students fly in from other neighbouring countries to attend the class in Singapore. Within the intensive four days, the faculty members engage with all the unit content and address the stipulated unit outcomes. Given that equivalent units offered on campus are often completed over

a 12-week semester, the pressure of time is often a factor and this is a challenge that has been raised in the existing literature (Debowski, 2006; Furlonger et al., 2018; Lewis, 2015; Smith, 2013).

From February 2020, due to the pandemic, the intensive face-to-face teaching blocks were changed to fully online as directed by university policy. The dates and time of teaching were decided by the faculty members and the classes were conducted throughout the term over three months.

### ***The backgrounds of authors and data***

In this study, Author1 conducted a self-reflection about his experiences in the offshore programmes, while the other Authors took up the roles of critical friends. Authors have different backgrounds in their disciplines and the units that they have taught, as shown in Table 1.

Since this study is based on the self-reflection of Authors on their experiences, the ethical clearance by the committee in the university was not required. However, Authors paid attention to ensure anonymity and privacy any persons referred to in the study. Authors worked to maintain objectivity based on mutual critical friendships through comments on the notes and analysis.

### ***Methods of analysis***

This study employed a mix of deductive and inductive thematic analysis (Terry et al., 2017). Deductive analysis was done through the coding that is informed by the existing five phase advocated by Korthagen and Vasalos (2006), while inductive analysis was done through the identification of the original theme, 'strengthened confidence in core qualities', as a result of the study. The study data were the reflective notes of Author1 regarding his experiences in teaching the offshore program, which were written in December 2019 and August 2021, following the framework of Korthagen and Vasalos (2006). The first reflective notes covered his various experiences regarding the offshore teaching experiences from 2017 to 2019. Following the COVID-19 outbreak of, Author1 penned more reflections. Following this, he shared his reflective notes for critical comments with Authors2 and 3 for further elaborations. Author1 provided his reflective notes using the core reflection model in cycle. Then, due to the problems during the COVID-19 pandemic, he added further reflections about his experiences during the pandemic. Author1 directly quoted the narratives which seem to suit most with the descriptions and the rest of Authors provided checks as critical friends for trustworthiness (Kitchen, 2019; Samaras, 2011) of the quotes by going through both the reflections and the manuscript. Importantly, the critical comments by Authors2 and 3 also functioned to address any biases held by Author1. For example, Author 3 highlighted the risk of bias held by Author1 arising from his prior experiences in teaching in Singapore and the associated emotions at that time before joining the current university.

## Findings

### *Experiencing problematic situations*

As explained previously, offshore teaching often places huge time constraints during the face-to-face teaching. First, the curriculum of the offshore units needed to be consistent with the same unit offered on campus. Second, despite the intensive schedule of face-to-face teaching in offshore units, assignments requirements remained the same to those offered in the host country. Furthermore, like some of the on-campus courses, the offshore students in the programmes that Authors work are often immensely diverse in one classroom in terms of their age, professional experiences, occupations, ethnicities, and nationalities. This diversity requires staff to cater and adapt to students' needs and backgrounds.

Author1 had previously worked for 7 years at a Singaporean university and knew about the high teaching expectations as many of his students were working professionals, who were more discerning about the quality of their educational experiences. This explains why Author1 was filled with anxieties when assigned with offshore teaching in the second year of service at his current university. He writes:

Many of the students can be highly demanding about teaching qualities. They are even highly aware of my foreign accent, which I tried so hard to suppress . . . I remember some of the teachers with whom I worked with during the workshops in their schools showed obvious disappointment about having me as their consultant. (Reflective notes by Author1)

Therefore, Author1 was concerned if his students would welcome and not be discouraged and disappointed because he was not an Australian, who they may have expected from an Australian university.

### *Awareness of ideal situations/limitations*

Authors considered the contextual differences inherent in offshore teaching while working physically from the on-campus context. For example, Author1 ran an introductory unit on research projects in both Singapore and Australia. While the emphasis was on developing students' understanding on the whole research process in the case of teaching in Australia, Author1 encouraged offshore students in Singapore to identify key educational issues in their own contexts as the seeds of research.

Contextual knowledge and awareness become critical in teaching offshore units because students tend to be fulltime professionals. Thus, their exposure to the practices in the country tends to be highly professional and the remarks based on superficial knowledge would easily decrease the trust between the faculty members and students. For example, as students were more likely to be working professionals, it would be productive to have discussions in connection with practices that are relevant to the students' professional context. To this end, Authors developed an internationalised perspective of their content expertise to benefit offshore students. For example, Author1 utilised videos of his visit to the local schools, or the newspaper articles or clips of TV programmes that caused public debates in Singapore.

Furthermore, in running the unit about introductory research project for postgraduate students in Singapore, Author1 identified the most important point as the focus to run the

unit in Singapore. That is, it is critical for the students to be interested in research. Author1 identified it through reflections on what would be most critical in the unit, despite amending and reviewing the unit. This was because most students in the programme would be more interested in upgrading their credentials for professional reasons – and it would be highly understandable even if they lack interest in publishing their works in comparison to on campus students. Simultaneously, while the motivations of offshore students were understandable, Author1 wished some of the students would be more interested in research itself.

My teaching interest especially after joining the current university became how to assist students to be more inclined to doing their own research ... The most attractive part of this unit was that I could get to know the students and their interest by helping them verbalise their ideas. In other words, I am like a midwife that assists students to transform their premature or preliminary ideas into more mature and substantial arguments (Reflective notes by Author1)

Thus, Author1 aimed to encourage the students not to fear research – drawing on his own experiences of being depressed and overwhelmed about research when he was a doctoral student and how he overcame it. Author1 was also reminded about his prior experiences in a Singaporean university in which many of the students in their master's courses were overwhelmed in their capstone research projects and became unsure about what to write about. He remembered the importance of guiding the students to write about what interests them, not something that seems to be quicker or easier to complete.

### ***Awareness of core qualities***

Author1 shared some cases of on campus students who published their papers in journals based on their assignment essays with the offshore teaching students in Singapore. Immediately two students in the offshore unit showed their interest in doing so. This fact truly surprised Author1. It meant that the offshore students not only did the research for their unit credits of the unit but were also eager about informing the rest of the world about what they did. It made him acutely aware about his identity as 'a lecturer doing research *with* the students'. The collaboration with the two students have not resulted yet in actual submission due to their busyness, but the fact of them showing interest made Author1 clearly aware of this core quality that he had. He wrote:

I was a 'researcher-consultant' before joining academia. I was a consultant in international educational development in the first 10 years of my career. Then I joined a university in Singapore and developed my new identity ... as a 'lecturer'. I have found myself doing research with master's course students in the current workplace. I have been collaborating with the students in both master's and PhD courses for joint publications (Reflective notes by Author1)

This transition of identity has been taking place throughout his whole career and now the merger between lecturer identity and researcher identity seems to have begun through his work with students in the current university. This keen identity awareness seems to have been shaped by his work on research project units whilst employed in the Singapore university.



### ***Strengthened confidence in core qualities***

The offshore teaching experience gave Author1 stronger confidence on the value and meaning in encouraging postgraduate students to turn to their essays to publishable quality levels – more importantly, because of this, Author1 obtained stronger confidence that his core qualities would work with any students, regardless of their professional backgrounds and prior educational experiences. Such experiences of Author 1 seem to call for an added step in Korthagen’s model (Korthagen, 2009; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2006; Geursen et al., 2010): that is, strengthened confidence in core qualities, in which he was implicitly aware of his core qualities. The offshore teaching experience is an opportunity to reframe the emphasis in his teaching, as discussed by Chen (2016). Author1 writes:

I am like a midwife who assists students to transform their preliminary ideas into more substantial arguments. I tend to ask them, ‘How did you come up with the idea?’ or ‘Can you elaborate on it?’ which helps them to further deepen their ideas and return with more refined ideas and satisfaction on their face. They do struggle but their struggles are indeed valuable, I believe. I am excited to return to Singapore to teach this unit to offshore students – I can be myself. The student number was smaller, so the interaction can also be more intimate ... I can focus on how to share the joy of the process of doing research. My job is to invite the students into the community of researchers (Reflective notes by Author1)

During his offshore teaching experiences, Author1 was challenged on whether the value that he attaches to it would come to fruition or not. Author1 was uncertain because of the busyness of his students in Singapore, who were mostly working professionals (Chapman & Pyvis, 2006). Author1 had the strengthened confidence in this value because some of his students supported his value. It strengthened his confidence in the core qualities and that was a new opportunity in the offshore teaching for Author1. This is characterised especially by the fact despite the previous challenges that he experienced in his former work settings, he could still demonstrate his value and quality that would work in settings different from the main campus (Chen, 2016).

On the account of the above, Authors propose, another phase in Korthagen and Vasalos (2006)’s model, as shown in Figure 1. That is, faculty members would examine their own core qualities and reflect on the extent to which those qualities are well appreciated in offshore teaching under the enormous time pressures (Furlonger et al., 2018; Smith, 2013; Tran et al., 2021). It is argued that this is not a linear or mechanical step but a process of iterative and ongoing inner dialogue that teachers engage with when teaching each session. Consequently, faculty members could attain greater confidence in their own offshore teaching, as how Author1 experienced.

### ***Actualisation of core qualities***

Author1 has a passion to be a dedicated lecturer that does research. The offshore teaching experiences in Singapore for confirmed one thing to him – that is, he is a lecturer who does research *with* his master’s course students.

... to share the joy of doing research, someone needs to accompany them [students] – not only helping them complete the unit but to engage them with opportunities to share their research with the rest of the world through publication (Reflective notes by Author1)

Author 1 has been working more eagerly with the students at his current university in their research development and this eagerness and passion because of his strengthened confidence, now extends to his offshore students too. Author1 is also now more willing to be the one to support the students who are interested in working with him up to publication. The experiences in offshore teaching in Singapore consolidated this belief resulting in the reframing of his own professional identity as ‘a lecturer doing research with master’s course students’.

### ***Experimenting with new behaviour***

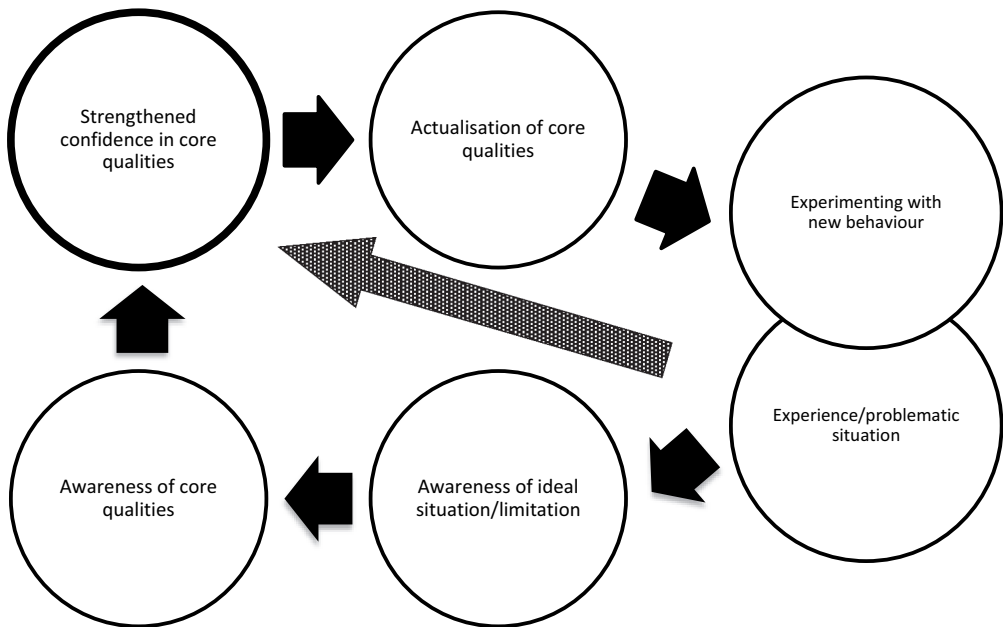
Following his offshore teaching in 2018, Author1 strengthened his reframed professional identity by working with more students in both Australia and Singapore. Author1 currently organises a fortnightly informal meeting with master’s course students who were keen to embark on a PhD subsequently. As this meeting is held during work hours in Australia, few Singapore students could attend it because many of them would be busy. Four of them have published in highly recognised journals published by leading publishers (Fatemi & Saito, 2020, Huang & Saito, 2022, ; Lin & Chan, 2020, Xu & Saito, 2020) in which those with Author1 were based on the assignment task of the unit that he taught in Singapore. The commitment to such earnest support for master’s course students was developed through having strengthened confidence in the new identity of Author1. Moreover, he shares the achievements of his students, naming this as an outcome of the unit that he teaches, which helps exemplifies the potentialities of learning to offshore students. While Author1 may teach undergraduate courses with fewer students who would be keen on publishing their works, he would still try to inspire their research minds by emphasising that the student works, like literature reviews or essays, could be published with refinements and improvement.

### ***Experiencing another problematic situation: COVID-19 pandemic***

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, and this unprecedented event posed a new problem to Author1 –flying to Singapore to do his offshore teaching as he used to became impossible. However, this did not deter Author1 from continuing with what he valued given the strengthened confidence in his teaching. Author1 once again leveraged on the professional identity that was shaped by his previous offshore teaching experiences, that is, ‘a lecturer doing research with master’s course students’.

As a result, an interesting development occurred despite the difficult period of offshore teaching caused by the pandemic. That is, a submission of a manuscript developed from the assignment task of one of the offshore students to a journal. Author1 was highly impressed with the work by one of professional students for the same unit in Singapore and recommended the student to consider a possible submission of the revised work to a refereed journal. The student took it positively and both the student and Author1 decided to be co-authors. Currently, it is under review by a high-quality journal and this accomplishment was a first for Author1 in terms of realising the submission of a manuscript as an outcome of his offshore teaching.

Thus, despite the obstacles caused by restriction of devices and platforms in teaching purely online, Author1 could concentrate more on motivating his students to run their



**Figure 1.** Revised phase model of core reflection, developed from Korthagen and Vasalos (2006).

research. In doing so, Author1 manifested the strengthened confidence in core qualities that has come to be the source of his resilience to the problematic situations (Figure 1) as those caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Discussion and conclusion

The aim of this study was to discuss the opportunities offshore teaching would provide faculty members in terms of the development of their professional values. Through the self-study of Author1 based on the core reflection by model Korthagen (Korthagen, 2009; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2006; Geursen et al., 2010), this research identified core qualities and the strengthened confidence in them. This is a critical contribution of this study in an area of offshore teaching which has been given little attention. It is the strengthened confidence in core qualities that was shown to be the source of resilience in new uncertain and problematic situations created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In terms of theoretical contributions, the strengthened confidence of faculty members in core qualities can function as opportunity to develop their professional identities. In the previous studies, the pressures and challenges in offshore teaching are emphasised, but this study shows that it can provide opportunities for lecturers too. The important elements of professional identities and qualities can be identified, consolidated, developed, and strengthened through participating in offshore teaching programmes in which such identities can improve teaching practices in the home campuses.

Second, the strengthened confidence about core qualities was shown to be a source of resilience against problematic situation like the COVID-19 pandemic. In Korthagen and Vasalos (2006), there was an expectation to make a direct transition from becoming aware

of core qualities to experimenting with new behaviours. This study proposes a bridge between awareness and practising the behaviours based on core qualities by referring to this sense of strengthened confidence as an intermediary. The strengthened confidence helps faculty members manage uncertainty by clarifying what to value and emphasise in their practices, despite the difficulties faced. With strengthened confidence, faculty members know what to turn to in uncertain or difficult circumstances.

Third, this study shed the light on how faculty members can gain and strengthen confidence in teaching through working in offshore programmes. Offshore programmes are important commitments of the universities. Concomitantly though teaching these programmes should be considered unique opportunities for professional learning for faculty members. Through Author1's reflections on his own qualities, this study distinguishes itself from previous studies because they focused on programmatic issues such as, packed schedule (Debowski, 2006; Furlonger et al., 2018; Jais et al., 2015; Smith, 2013; Tran et al., 2021), cross-cultural adjustment (Bilsland et al., 2020; Chen, 2016; Kadiwal & Rind, 2013; Nhan & Nguyen, 2018; Tangney, 2017; Tran et al., 2021), and student support (Bilsland et al., 2019, 2020; Tran et al., 2021). Thus, this study contributes to existing knowledge on offshore teaching by adding a new aspect of the discussions – one that is importantly related to professional development and learning of the faculty members.

Given the professional development benefits, it is, therefore, critical to encourage and support faculty members who participate in offshore teaching and to view them as growth opportunities. Such initiatives could be accompanied by staff reflective programmes to provide faculty members with opportunities to reflect on professional growth opportunities through offshore teaching. It is also important to provide avenues for ongoing critical core reflections that foster contemplation on the meanings and value of offshore teaching experiences. To this end, mentoring programmes can be established that allow the discussion of their experiences, findings, and insights arising from offshore teaching.

This paper has primarily been based on Author1's reflections on his offshore teaching which have been mediated by the critical friendship of Authors2 and 3 and Authors acknowledge that the study's narrow scope is a limitation. However, it could be the basis that informs further larger scale research into the area of professional core reflections of offshore teaching experiences. Especially, it would be important what strengthened confidence they have had about their core qualities through their offshore teaching experiences and how the strengthened confidence would work in taking up new behaviour and in managing new problematic situations.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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