**ELON workshop 16th April 2013**

**Entrepreneurial Learning: Growth, Internationalisation and policy issues**

**Notes from the business panel and summary session**

**Business Panel**

**Q1 To what extent have you followed a structured strategy or “emergent” Which is most effective?**

* Smaller firms do less planning, are more opportunist, bigger firms are more proactive and do more planning, but emergent is not a bad way to form strategy
* Strategy is on-going and develops as it is implemented
* The cycle of decision making in smaller firms needs to be quick

**Q2 When it comes to learning and developing opportunities which source is useful?**

* You need to know your objectives – e.g. exporting versus other market entry
* If you start with a home based business then planning to go into another country is a step into the unknown. You need to go and do it (get experience)
* Every business is unique but there are some common features/challenges. Customised support is needed. We don’t know well enough how firms become successful
* The domestic market can be a testing ground, but it can be difficult for new firms to get access to or penetrate some domestic (public sector markets) in the UK - can policy help?
* The quality of the thought process is crucial, the mindset is needed to make decisions quickly so that opportunities are not missed
* For policy, can overall checklists be provided of common knowledge about different foreign markets?

**Q3. How can policy makers and academics help businesses?**

* There had to be more 'engaged scholarship' so as for all three stakeholders to work together closely to produce better results for the businesses
* Student projects were a good resource: e.g. they did rigorous analysis for one company

**Summary session**

**Practice - key points:**

* How might practitioners leverage value from HEI research?
* There needs to be a dynamic approach to planning
* Flexibility is important
* Commitment to change is also important
* Leadership style issue
* Mechanism for engagement
* Systemised but individualised

**Actions:**

* Develop communities of practice
* Appropriate networks could be:
  + KTP
  + Staff expertise
  + Practitioner inputs

**Research: key points:**

* A context of scale
* Knowing the entrepreneur
* How do we educate people to keep up with a changing environment?
* Be drivers for change
* Issue on plans and planning
* Finding and exploiting opportunities
* How entrepreneurs learn
* Issues of scale

**Actions:**

* Develop communities of practice / appropriate networks

**Policy: key point:**

* How might policy makers facilitate greater exchange between academic practitioners and between SMEs and big business?