

Title: Tutor: Participant (student) e-journaling as an effective tool for academic identity work: but whose academic identity work?

Presenter: Clare Kell, Cath Camps
Cardiff University

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Explore how an Academic Development team use technology as the medium for beginning teachers' academic identity work as UKHE teachers;
- Experience the opportunities and challenges of e-journaling as noncontact time learning opportunities;
- Begin to reflect on their own personal philosophies of academic development practice, their role in others' academic identity development, and the boundedness or mutuality of this learning relationship.

Session Outline

The Academic Team for an in-house PgCHE programme were keen to develop opportunities for participants to develop self-knowledge (Kreber 2010; McLean 2006). Recognising the value of private, but supported reflection space in academic identity work (Billot 2010) and assured that technology would provide a safe and secure environment for this endeavour, the Team embedded 1:1 tutor: participant e-journals within their first Module.

At first the Team's attention focussed on the smooth running of the technological practicalities which were by no means unproblematic and included challenges with the software systems, participant access to the tool, and at times private e-conversations made visible. Whilst initially disconcerting and troublesome, the Team's growing appreciation of the limitations of the technology enabled technological concerns to recede and, with confidence restored, a refocusing of attention onto the pedagogic value of the e-journaling activity, and the commencement of a Grounded Theory-based evaluation study.

Preliminary study findings have raised a number of issues: the ways that participants choose to engage with the task (Kell and Camps 2014); the means by which the identity work might be achieved and, for the focus of today's discussion, the relationship that develops between tutors and participants in the e-conversation interactions. Specifically, the study findings are challenging the tutors to reconsider if and how the ways that they comment and question

participants' posts 'guides' participants' learning journeys in certain ways. Reflections suggest that the e-conversations could be read as examples of the Academic Team's identity work as well as that of their participants. Using examples of e-journals transformed into verbal conversations enacted by the presenters, the Team will share their thoughts on what these initial findings mean for their continuing use of e-journaling and encourage colleagues to reflect on the possible unintentional consequences of their own practices on other's academic development.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

| Session segments | Contributor Input | Delegate activities | Timing |
|--|--|---|---------|
| Introduction | ❖ Outline of the session outcomes | | 2 mins |
| Contextualisation | ❖ Rationale for the use of Technology within the Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiral nature of technology • Use of 1:1 e-Journal writing | Listening and contributing as desired | 5 mins |
| Examples of e-journals and their contribution to identity building | Two examples enacted with presentation of the following emerging study findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Whose agenda? The power relationships between the conversation participants; ❖ Ethical issues of disclosure both of the tutor and participant (hooks 1994); ❖ Managing the scope of participant identity work – reeling out and reining in; ❖ The impact on the identity of the Tutor. | Annotation of handout that offers a framework for review/ reflection discussion | 15 mins |
| Contributions/ Discussion | Possible questions for discussion: What are your thoughts/responses? How does this resonate with your experiences? What is the place of Academic Developers' own identity within this activity? What might such work mean for your own identity? | Discussion Followed by personal writing | 15 mins |
| Conclusion | Construction of a bullet board of ideas. | Contributions | 5 |

References

Billot, J (2010) The imagined and the real: identifying the tensions for academic identity, Higher Education Research and Development, 29(6): 709-721.
 Hooks, b. (1994) Teaching to Transgress. London: Routledge.

Kell, C and Camps, C. (2014) Supporting the development of an 'educator' identity within a research-intensive university Academic Identities Conference, Durham University.

Kreber, C (2010) Academics' teacher identities, authenticity and pedagogy, *Studies in Higher Education*, 35(2): 171-194.

McLean, M. (2006) *Pedagogy and the University*. London: Continuum.