

Title: **Should or could? Finding the focus for academic induction**

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Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, you will have:

- Designed a selection of academic induction activities and articulated the rationale behind your choices
- Collaborated with others to address challenging issues in supporting new academic staff via induction events
- Explored a range of approaches to designing a relevant and effective academic induction programme

Session Outline

Anyone who designs a short, intensive academic induction programme for new lecturers is faced with the dilemma of what to put in and what to leave out. This requires us to be clear about our aims in supporting new staff in their roles as university teachers through this kind of event – is it to tell them all about what they *should* be doing, or is it about firing them up regarding what they *could* be doing? Do we focus on covering the essentials or on allowing participants to uncover their own areas of importance and interest – when the time is right for them? And in a short programme, what blends of activities and media formats make the best use of the limited but intensive time together?

This session will provide an opportunity to share experiences of designing academic induction events and to examine and articulate the reasons for our own design choices. We will pool support to address troublesome issues within each other's programmes and generate and share ideas to help progress our induction provision in the future. There will also be the chance to hear about the evolving design of the induction programme at the facilitators' institution and to join the discussion about how we are moving from 'should' to 'could'.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

1. Design your own induction – buffet game (20 mins) *Small group activity and whole group feedback*
2. Case studies – from should to could (5 mins) *Informal presentation and discussion*
3. Develop your own induction – problem solving activity (15 mins) *Small group activity*
4. Wrapping up and evaluation (5 mins) *Whole group discussion*

Evaluation – Participants will be asked to comment on the question ‘What was the most useful aspect of this session?’

References

Trowler, P. & Knight, P. (1999) ‘Organizational socialization and induction in universities: Reconceptualizing theory and practice,’ *Higher Education*, 37, 177–195.

Ferman, T. (2002) ‘Academic professional development practice: What lecturers find valuable’, *International Journal for Academic Development*, 7:2, 146-158.