

**Title:** Navigating perspectives on staff development – or ‘Who are we (as educational developers) and what are we doing?’

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### **Session Learning Outcomes**

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

- Evaluate the role of an educational developer within the delegate’s own institution and the lenses through which their role and responsibilities are viewed.
- Explore the ways in which their practice has impact on others.
- Develop ideas for navigating the different perspectives on educational / staff development.

### **Session Outline**

The role of those involved in educational development is gaining more prominence in a rapidly changing sector. The responsibilities of those supporting the professional development of staff are becoming more varied with a potential shift in how we perceive our own academic identities. We are increasingly reflecting on the impact of what we do and questioning how we measure that impact (Pickford, 2018). With the challenges of what Jonathan Grant (2017) called a “positive moment of uncertainty” come opportunities. We consider then how opportunities may be exploited.

This session will share the experiences of two educational developers working with a wide and varied range of staff across two partner Universities: one a teaching and learning institution, the other a research-focussed University. They will share their personal experiences of navigating the different lenses through which staff development is perceived, including the sector lens (TEF, NSS), the institutional lens (policies, strategies and profile), the staff lens (backgrounds, career stage, roles and responsibilities), and finally our own lens (the “who are we and what do we do” lens).

The discussion paper will encourage delegates to consider think the lenses through which their own practice is viewed and the ways in which we might measure and demonstrate our impact (Forstenzer, 2016). Delegates will work in small groups to consider the key stakeholders that we work with as educational developers (and conflicting perspectives) and how we might gain insight into the most effective ways to engage staff in their own professional development.

## Session Activities and Approximate Timings

Please provide an indication of how the session will be structured and how activities and discussion will be facilitated. For discussion papers please include a few indicative questions which will focus the discussion element.

Facilitators will use a mix of short presentation (powerpoint) and an online 'Padlet' discussion wall [https://en-gb.padlet.com/s\\_edwards1/SEDA](https://en-gb.padlet.com/s_edwards1/SEDA) to engage delegates (note there is an underscore in this address s\_edwards). Guided questions are included within the padlet for direction. 'Magic' flip chart paper will be provided for those who prefer to write their responses and/or don't have access to the internet on the day.

### Introduction (20 minutes)

Facilitators will introduce their own institutions and the different perspectives through which staff development is viewed. A picture will be developed that highlights (and tries to navigate) the complexity of both 'top down' approaches informed by policy and the need to evidence quality, and 'bottom-up' approaches (are we the enforcer or the enabler)?

Delegate engagement (10 minutes) 'What conflicting perspectives do you experience in your institution?' (Padlet). Delegates will be invited to contribute their thoughts via the Padlet wall (delegates can log in to the Padlet address given and contribute using their 'phones/laptops/tablets. We suggest that if delegates are attending this session, they upload this address in advance). Contributions for all delegates will be visible and facilitators will refer to answers given to establish any emerging themes.

### Sharing of recent initiatives (20 minutes)

Facilitators will share the narratives of two recent initiatives that have impacted on their own roles and the roles of their teams: an institutional audit leading to a tailored approach to professional development and support, and the emergence of a Higher Education Futures institute and a move towards career-long professional support for staff.

### Delegate discussion and reporting through padlet; (30 minutes)

In this part of the workshop delegates will be expected to work in small groups to identify the following;

How do you 'navigate' this landscape and engage staff in their own professional development?

What specific initiatives can you share?

How do you show evidence/impact of your initiatives?

Within the groups, a nominated 'scribe' should add findings to the Padlet wall to evidence their discussion.

## References

Forstenzer, J.I. (2016) *The Teaching Excellence Framework: What's the Purpose?* Report. The Crick Center - Center for Engaged Philosophy and the University of Sheffield Available at <http://www.crickcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TEF-Whats-the-Purpose-booklet-Josh-Forstenzer.pdf>

Grant, J. (2017) A positive moment of uncertainty for Universities? *Wonkhe blog*. Available at <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/a-positive-moment-of-uncertainty-for-universities/>

Pickford, R. (2018) A blueprint for teaching excellence. *Journal of perspectives of applied academic practice*. Vol 6, Issue 1 pp98-102. Available at <https://jpaap.napier.ac.uk/index.php/JPAAP/article/view/299/435>