Title: **Opportunities and obstacles to developing teachers' learning, networking and active presence through an online Pg Cert HE**

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Session Learning Outcomes

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

1. Share some of the benefits and challenges of engaging teachers in professional development online.
2. Identify Pg Cert HE participants' approaches to online professional development using the Visitors and Residents Mapping Framework (White and Le Cornu, 2011)
3. Discuss different participant support needs and teaching approaches in the context of an online Pg Cert in HE.

Session Outline

Key issues to be addressed are:
- What is the impact of an online Pg Cert on participants and their students?
- How can qualification-bearing online professional development become a tool for developing teachers' learning, networking and active presence online (Harris et al, 2013) ?
- What are the challenges and benefits of engaging with online professional development – for the practitioner and the developer?

The University of Westminster delivers its Postgraduate Certificate in HE online. It is an innovative approach to delivery that replaces a blended learning course and enables participants from the university to study alongside colleagues outside of the university and outside of the UK.

We will draw on evaluation data from a survey of graduates and from interviews conducted using the Visitors and Residents (White and Le Cornu, 2011) mapping tool for examining the nature of online engagement and web presence in order to explore the impact of the course on participants,'

- pedagogic thinking,
- teaching practice and
- use of technology with their own students

Differences emerged from the data in the ways in which the online tools are shaping participants' learning. For some it is a much more intense approach to thinking and talking about practice, and for others there is little visible engagement online (Cui et al, 2013). We are interested in how the different approaches to engagement with the course are related to differences in engagement with the web as illustrated through the Visitors and Residents framework.

The data analysis will draw on the TPACK (Mishra and Koehler, 2006) framework which sets out the expertise required of education developers working in this way. TPACK suggests 3 key elements that should be balanced for effective online teaching - technology, pedagogy and content knowledge. We will share the challenges that this model highlights for us as educational developers.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The session will start with an overview of the course and some videos of the delivery tools and course content to provide context. We present the findings of the study together with a discussion of the underpinning analytical frameworks set out above (20 mins).

The questions to frame the discussion (25 mins) will be around engagement and the role of the education developer. For example:

- What are the similarities and differences in the impact on participants' own teaching of online Pg Cert compared to one delivered face to face?
- What are the opportunities and challenges of designing and delivering an online course ?
- What nature of online interaction is desirable for a successful online course?
- What are the effects of this form of development on digital literacy and fluency for participants and their students?

References

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