**Title:**          **Digital identity in online learning communities**

**Presenter:**      **Shirley Williams**
University of Reading

## Abstract:

**Session Learning Outcomes**
By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

Describe: digital identity, online reputation and trust, in terms of online learning communities. Demonstrate awareness of activities that they can use to help themselves and others be aware of digital identity issues.

**Session Outline**
Key issues to be addressed are: related digital identity in relation to online learning communities.

*Within an online learning community how would you view someone:*
- *who had an avatar that was a cuddly toy and always ended their posts with the word "kisses"?*
- *who bookmarked all the material they found relating to the community, and others asked for recommended reading?*

We use the term 'Digital Identity' to describe the persona an individual presents across all the digital communities in which he or she is represented (Parslow, et al, 2009), in the example above we are limiting ourselves to a single community although in reality there may be overlapping multi-membership of communities. Digital Identity is not only about the explicit information (e.g. data provided by the individual) but also the implicit which lead to concepts like online reputation (as presented by the FIDIS project, Rannenberg, et al, 2009). Your Digital Identity as perceived by other people is made up of material that you put online yourself (for example a post to a forum) but it also is made up of material other people put there related to you (for example a comment on your post or a mention of you by name).

In the session we will give more details of what Digital Identity is and discuss participants experiences of their perception of their own and others digital identities. We will link this with work on (social) identity (Wenger, 1999 and Jenkins, 2003), and discuss trust and reputation and how this relates to online earning communities.
Following discussion we will provide a series of activities that participants can use (individually or in small groups) to help them and their students explore their own Digital Identity.
The session will suggest ways learners can be guided to be aware of their Digital Identities, and what they and others are projecting as they participate in learning communities.

**Session Activities and Approximate Timings**

Introduction (10 minutes)
Group discussion of delegate experiences (10 minutes)
Feedback from group discussion and introduction to activities (15 minutes)
Activity 1 Facets of identity - pen and pencil exercise. Capturing 3 aspects of individual identity – in small groups. (15 minutes)
Activity 2 The Attention Game - adapted from Parslow et al, 2009. Concentrating on leaning communities and the interactions between members. (30 minutes)
Closing remarks (10 minutes)

**References**

Parslow, P. Williams, S. Fleming, S. & Hussey, R., 2009. This Is Me. Lulu.
Rannenberg, K. Royer, D. & Deuker, A. eds., 2009. The Future of Identity in the Information Society. Springer
Wenger, E., 1999. Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity. Cambridge University Press.
Jenkins, R., 2004. Social Identity. Routledge.