Title: **The precariat makes its voice heard: a module blog as a tool of academic development**

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Session Learning Outcomes

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

- Explore the need to create spaces for non-mainstream inquiry, discussion and analysis of academic development against the backdrop of a rapidly changing he landscape
- Envision critical, non-mainstream/diverse approaches to learning and teaching, especially on academic development courses
- Reflect on and analyse their own practice (teaching, research, consultation) in terms of how it integrates these values (diversity, social justice, rigour, etc.)

Session Outline

The session will showcase how a critical and diverse approach can be adopted to interrogate and study important contemporary issues in higher education by drawing on a PGCert module for early-career academics and guest teachers.

The first part of the session will be a thought experiment that was used in the module. This will be used to draw out the pedagogic and ideological underpinnings of the course - how one uses the intellectual and emotional, the common-sensical and critical to discuss and analyse contentious and controversial issues. We will then discuss in groups, scenarios based on issues that came up during the course (eg. whether the participant blog posts should be public or private given the sensitive nature of the posts and precariousness of some participants' positions/roles in the institution/academia, how to increase peer interaction in an online setting, rules of civil disagreement). In this way, attendees will be presented with a range of techniques – cognitive, discursive and operational - to embed a critical and heterodox approach to academic development and learning that empowers and provides a forum for marginalised voices in academia.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

Time	Topic	Description	Activities
5 minutes	Introduction	PGCert module description, learning outcomes and plan, create a safe and constructive space for sharing and learning - manage expectations and emotions	
15 minutes	Setting the scene	Conform, contest, critique	Thought experiment, discussion
20 minutes	Scenarios x 3	Private v public blog, blogs as assessment, etc.	Problem-solving in groups and discussion
5 minutes	Conclusion	Bringing the different elements together to show they made up the module – structure, content and theory, pedagogic and practical implications	Discussion

References

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