

Title: **Career Profiles of Educational Developers: looking back while looking forward**

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Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

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

- Reflect on ways in which educational developers are supported and developed
- Appraise the local and national agendas informing the role of educational developers and their impact on the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment
- Unpack key issues for establishing Educational Developers as a recognized professional group within Higher Education

Session Outline

This session will look at the career development of educational developers in a time when educational development units are increasingly important in informing and supporting quality enhancement in Higher Education (Gosling, 2009; Grant et al 2009 and Land 2004). In the session, we will explore themes and findings from a series of reflective accounts that chart the career paths taken by a number of educational developers, at various stages in their careers (from new entrants to those moving toward retirement) from the UK, Australia and North America. This narrative approach has been used previously as a means to provide rich insights into the work and challenges faced by educational developers (Land, 2004 and Grant et al 2009). From these reflective accounts, we investigate a number of relevant questions, such as: how do people become educational developers, what influences people to choose to become educational developers, how do people progress as educational developers, and, perhaps more importantly for SEDA, how and where are educational developers, individually and as a professional group, developed and supported within Higher Education?

The session will be highly informative to anyone interested in becoming an educational developer, currently working as one, or those interested what informs educational development and how it has changed and continues to change. As part of the session, participants will be encouraged to reflect on their own career development and future development needs, and to consider possible answers to key questions such as: how can we support and facilitate educational developers and attract new developers to the field?

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

Presentation (15 minutes)

Small Group Activity (25 minutes)

Participants will be asked to read/act out quotes from the reflective accounts provided by educational developers at various stages in their careers (as referred to above).

Indicative Questions:

1. What attracted you to a career in development?
2. What level of support do you currently receive? And from whom?
3. What developmental opportunities should be provided to new/continuing developers?

Evaluation Questionnaire (5 minutes)

References

Grant B., Lee A., Clegg S., Manathunga C., Barrow M., Kandlbinder P., Brailsford I., Gosling D. and Hicks M. (2009) Why history? Why now? Multiple accounts of the emergence of academic development. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 14 (1) 83–86.

Gosling D. (2009) Educational development in the UK: a complex and contradictory reality. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 14 (1) 5-18.

Land R. (2004) *Educational development: discourse, identity and practice*. McGraw-Hill International