

Title: Accidental experts: ways of supporting the professional development needs of teacher educators

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Session Learning Outcomes

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

1. Explore global perspectives on teacher educator development;
2. Discuss the feasibility of collaborating on new professional standards for teacher educators in HE in FE and HE;
3. Debate the feasibility of institutional, policy and contextual support for the research and scholarship needs of teacher educators

Session Outline

Despite increasing public and government focus on the quality of teacher education around the world, there is little emphasis on the professional development needs of those who teach teachers in English Higher Education (HE) and within HE in FE Colleges (Boyd and Harris, 2010; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Koster et al., 2008; Lunenberg, Korthagen and Swennen, 2007; Murray, 2008; Swennen et al., 2008; Noel 2006). Yet teacher educators are crucial players (Caena 2013). From Australia and the United States of America to Holland and Belgium, efforts are intensifying to promote the professional development of teacher educators.

HE lecturers have their own professional standards, such as the SEDA-PDF and UKPSF, and there is considerable literature concerning staff and educational developers in HE (Manathunga 2006, Gibbs 2013, Baume & Popovic 2016). However, in England, there is decreasing support for new University or HE in FE teacher educators and no specific professional standards regarding this role, which has an impact on the professional practice and career trajectories of teacher educators themselves (Eliahoo 2014). This workshop will explore global perspectives on teacher educator development (Tack and Vanderlinde 2016), discuss the feasibility of collaborating on new professional standards specifically for University and HE in FE teacher educators and ask participants to comment on institutional, policy and contextual support for their research and scholarship.

The workshop draws on a research project based on a series of interviews, online survey and focus groups, which captured the voices of English HE and HE in FE teacher educators (Eliahoo 2014). The research participants identified mentoring, induction and continuous professional development sessions as important strategies to improve the effectiveness of

their role over time. However, a majority felt that acquiring a PhD would make teacher educators 'too academic' and divorced from the needs of their trainees.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

Participants will be asked to take part in round-table discussions focussing on ways of working collaboratively on different aspects of the professional development needs of teacher educators with a plenary discussion at the end.

15-20 minutes mini-lecture followed by 15-20 minutes of round-table discussions focussed on three groups of different questions, followed by 10 minutes of plenary discussion.

References

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