

**Title:** What's the value in a SEDA Professional Development Programme? How one university used a programme to develop change agents in 'third space' (Whitchurch 2008)

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### Abstract

This proposal offers lessons about educational development activity designed to respond to an increasingly common institutional 'problem' linked to the values which underpin policy to help a wider range of staff to work confidently with technology to enhance the student experience.

### SEDA Values

Indicate which SEDA Values may be relevant to your proposal:

An understanding of how people learn	x	Scholarship, professionalism and ethical practice	
Working and developing learning communities	x	Working effectively with diversity and promoting inclusivity	
Continuing reflection on professional practice	x	Developing people and processes	x

### Session Learning Outcomes

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

- identify the factors which will ensure that a similar educational development activity in their HEI is effective
- consider the professional development needs of a wide range of staff who enhance student learning using ICT
- articulate the benefits of professional development activity underpinned by SEDA values

### Session Outline

In 21<sup>st</sup> century universities new initiatives such as e-assessment have impact on a range of staff as well as students. Course administrators for example can find themselves helping academic colleagues and students navigate virtual learning environments or software such as Turnitin. When this happens e-learning support staff find their roles changing too. Traditional

notions of 'staff development' can focus on 'training' and 'skills' rather than professional transformation, the development of communities of practice and the human aspects of new ways of working. Educational development has often focused on academics or those very close to the student learning experience.

This session is based on a JISC Transformations Project at the University of Roehampton. The Transformations programme is aimed at supporting institutional staff to effect large-scale organisational change, underpinned by ICT, where there is an objective to enhance student experience.

This particular project made use of a SEDA PDF programme Embedding Learning Technologies to support academics, e-learning staff and administrators across the university. It recognised that all staff need to become enablers of ICT and that this can sometimes be uncomfortable for the staff involved and for the e-learning support people who can feel displaced. SEDA values were key to programme we designed,

Key issues to be addressed are:

- Effective ICT tools often remain with the champions, often in silos – how best can we help all staff to become enablers of ICT and not be threatened by new ways of working ?
- Whitchurch (2008) points to 'third space professionals' in higher education working in administrative and support roles now enabling and enhancing student learning. Many of the course participants fitted this description and hankered after professional development beyond skills training which recognised their hybrid position. We ask whether SEDA values can play a role in supporting the changing roles of these 'third space professionals.'
- How might we combine two usually distinct ways of working – the course, in this case of fixed duration (10 weeks) leading to the SEDA-PDF Embedding Learning Technologies award, and a technology project at the 'chalk face' for organisational change

### **Session Activities**

10 mins –Activity: using SEDA values for professional development

10 mins: - Presentation - outcomes from the JISC funded Transformations project to offer a SEDA Embedding Learning Technologies programme particularly focusing on the role of SEDA values

10 minutes – small group discussion activity based on one used on the programme to reflect on particular SEDA values in relation to roles and working with technology

15 mins – lessons learned from developing the SEDA ELT at our University – a check list for delegates considering a similar programme

## References

Smith, J. Oliver, M. (2000) [Academic development: A framework for embedding learning technology](#), International Journal for Academic Development, Vol. 5, 2,

Whitchurch, Celia (2008) *Shifting Identities and Blurring Boundaries: the Emergence of Third Space Professionals in UK Higher Education*. Higher Education Quarterly, 62 (4). 377-396.

Ellis, A and Phelps, R. (2000) Staff development for online delivery: A collaborative, team based action learning model, Australian Journal of Educational Technology, 16(1), 26-44.

JISC Work -with -IT Toolkit

<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/staffroles/workit.aspx> (accessed 5.11.12)