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The revised SEDA Values and how we use them

Stephen Bostock, Independent Consultant, and **Pam Parker**, City University London (Co-Chairs of SEDA)

Following Sue Thompson and Jo Peat's article, 'SEDA Values – The jewels in the crown?', published in the June 2014 issue of *Educational Developments*, we are writing to share the final outcome of the review of the SEDA values across the SEDA community.

It is to be celebrated that as a community SEDA members have spent over a year reviewing and reflecting on our professional values. The outcome of this review is a number of small changes plus illustrations and guidance on what the values mean for our members. The revised wording is more systematic and more clearly action-oriented but the underlying values are unchanged from those the newly-founded SEDA adopted some twenty years ago.

Everyone involved in the review agreed that the values belonged to the whole organisation, and that SEDA is a values-driven organisation. The main audience for our activities and our values are our members and other educational developers. However, we also engage with a wider range of others across the Higher and Further Education sector whose roles are much more diverse, notably in the programmes accredited against SEDA's professional development framework awards. The wording of the values therefore needs to be inclusive of this wider audience we wish to influence, while at the same time, in parallel, we can be more specific about what these values look like in practice for educational developers.

Here is the revised wording of the values, while the table below provides illustrations of what these values mean in practice for educational developers.

SEDA is a values-driven organisation, committed to educational development, and underpinned by the following values:

- 1) Developing understanding of how people learn
- 2) Practising in ways that are scholarly, professional and ethical
- 3) Working with and developing learning communities
- 4) Valuing diversity and promoting inclusivity
- 5) Continually reflecting on practice to develop ourselves, others and processes.

The revised values have been launched at the November Conference 2014 and the website reflects the change. SEDA members should use the new wording immediately but for some processes such as fellowships assessments and PDF recognitions there will be a short period of transition, and those within SEDA responsible for these processes will be managing this. These values should continue

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NB SEDA members automatically receive copies of *Educational Developments*.

to underpin all our activities including our courses, events, conferences and publications, but we can take this opportunity to review our practices, inside and outside of SEDA, against the SEDA values.

We would like to thank Julie Hall for raising the issue of our values in her SEDA@20 symposium workshop in May 2013, and Sue Thompson and Jo Peat for leading on this review. The values belong to the SEDA community and the wide engagement in the review has been a great example of the strength of this educational development community.

SEDA is a values-driven organisation, committed to educational development, and underpinned by the following values:

<i>SEDA Value</i>	<i>Evidence/guidance/illustrations for staff and educational developers</i>
1. <i>Developing understanding of how people learn</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varying our teaching approaches, acknowledging that people learn in different ways • Recognising that learning takes place in different contexts and through different media • Sharing and engaging practices with others through conferences, events, the professional development framework, Fellowships and membership • Acknowledging the diversity of individual experience and disciplines • Seeking out practice on which to draw • Developing the individual for the benefit of the student learning experience
2. <i>Practising in ways that are scholarly, professional and ethical</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using evidence-informed approaches, the outcomes from research and reflection in and on practice to inform our work • Drawing on alternative perspectives, theories, models, research and scholarship • Questioning and challenging our practice • Acknowledging that the need to engage with theory underpins all our practice • Questioning our own practices and looking for ways to develop further • Evaluating practice elsewhere and comparing/contrasting our own practices • Developing and using practices that show respect and concern for others
3. <i>Working with and developing learning communities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with colleagues, peers, developers and supporters of learning to share ideas, practice, reflections and theory • Facilitating networking opportunities through conferences and other events • Developing thematic Special Interest Groups and other online communities • Working with our membership to inform and develop knowledge • Working, engaging and disseminating beyond the traditional establishment with global, diverse learning communities

Continued

4. <i>Valuing diversity and promoting inclusivity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and seeking to meet the many and varied learning needs of the learners with whom we work • Celebrating difference and working to redress disadvantage • Using technology to widen representation in SEDA • Increasing access to SEDA events and publications and recognising the needs of varied, under-represented groups • Strengthening the ways in which SEDA programmes illustrate the SEDA values
5. <i>Continually reflecting on practice to develop ourselves, others and processes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving our practice in the light of our reflections on it and in it • Reviewing our development and our practice, and the relations between them • Ensuring that processes and practices are developmental and supportive • Supporting and encouraging change-making processes which are contextually sensitive and owned • Developing valuable and appropriate courses and practices which reflect the needs of the participant group and the wider context • Enhancing the professional identity of ourselves and others, within and beyond our professional networks

Table 1 SEDA Values

Stephen Bostock is an independent consultant, and **Pam Parker** is the Associate Director of the Learning Development Centre at City University, London.

Using Brookfield's reflective lenses in educational development

Peter Reed, University of Liverpool

This article takes the view that we each see the world differently, and emphasises the role of critical reflection through various lenses (Brookfield) as an approach to problem-solving and decision-making.

Unique insights

True to social constructivist theories of learning, we each see the world differently. Uniquely. Our perspective, a cultivated output based upon prior experiences and interactions, leads to the construction of new understanding and meaning. Logically then, we approach problems with an equally unique insight.

My perspective and personal approach to work, for example, comes from a range of experiences working in Higher Education over the past ten years. Perhaps it even goes further, to my experiences as a student. Since that time I've worked across four Universities in the North West of England, starting out in IT support and learning technologist roles. I went on to coordinate funded projects, and more recently held academic positions. These have involved teaching on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes as well as coordinating Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) across large Faculties. My outlook and approach to work has been moulded and influenced by the unique experiences

throughout these positions. However, as diverse and widespread as they may be, they are equally limited to just those experiences I've encountered. This is a realisation that came to me a number of years ago working in the SOLSTICE Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Edge Hill University, where curriculum development projects involved the 'New Academic Team' approach. This placed value in the unique experiences of other colleagues – learning technologists, media developers, information specialists, administrators, students and academics. The list could go on because, like me, these groups of people have also had unique experiences and skills, and also see the world (or in many cases a particular issue, problem or project) with such an insight.

Discussion of the lenses

The New Academic Team worked well on many initiatives, including curriculum development projects, but it's not always possible to bring so many different stakeholders together. I found support for these thoughts when studying for the PG Cert in T&L in HE. Brookfield (1995) suggests the power of structured reflection can enhance and transform our own practice. John Cowan, within this very publication, emphasised the use of Kolb's cycle for transformative reflection as long ago as 2001 (Cowan, 2001). However,

Brookfield's notion of 'lenses' offers teachers an alternative framework to support the process of reflection, and suggests we consider four key perspectives or 'lenses' (Figure 1) to move beyond our own experiences:

- The lens of self-reflection or our 'autobiographical' lens – we often approach situations by using previous experience as an invaluable guide to inform future practice, enabling us to act upon prior lessons that have both failed and succeeded
- The lens of the student or through the 'learners' eyes' – considering the student perspective can provide a great sense of what is happening to students as they navigate the ongoing challenges in our field of work
- The lens of the literature – evidence can provide reassuring support when working on projects based on what has (or has not) worked at other institutions with other unique conditions, This can be priceless to inform own approaches and form a strategy with the best chance of success
- The lens of our peers and their experience – colleagues can act as a sounding board for much of our work. When we can't involve them directly, by considering wider stakeholders (e.g. administrators, exams teams, etc.) we can see problems from completely different perspectives and ensure solutions are fit-for-purpose for all.

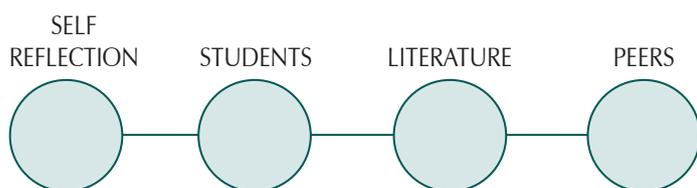


Figure 1 The four key reflective lenses

Engaging in reflection through the lenses 'helps surface the assumptions we hold about pedagogic methods, techniques, and approaches and the assumptions we make concerning the conditions that best foster student learning' (Brookfield, 2002, p. 58). However, whilst the lenses are commonly related to teachers and teaching they can also be considered in every aspect of our practice. Seeing different perspectives can support us in all aspects of our work. Furthermore we can also view the varying degrees of granularity based on those perspectives, from a holistic bigger picture through to more specific and localised challenges.

And so whilst I still value the role that other parties can bring to the table, and recognise it can be impossible to replicate their own unique outlook, I try to use Brookfield's lenses as best I can to consider the problem from other perspectives. How does situation X look from the student's perspective? Or importantly, from the administrator/exam team/computer services/learning technologist/academic perspectives? In short, we need to move on from a narrow view of a problem to consider the wider impact and viewpoints. Elizabeth Rider-Grant argued (Rider-Grant, 2013) that educational developers 'have made an enormous difference to higher education, to thousands of academic staff and countless students across the world'. Could they possibly have such an impact by working within silos? Indeed, Laura Bateman

(Bateman, 2013) reflects on the variety of demands required to develop a holistic picture to achieve particular outcomes (in this case the development of a tutor training programme) and emphasises the role of critical reflection.

Applying Brookfield's lenses

I recently discussed the use of Brookfield's lenses at the eAssessment Scotland Conference at the University of Dundee, and applied it to various scenarios involving the introduction of the 'e' within assessment processes. I began with inviting delegates, just as I invite you now, dear Reader, to consider summative assessment for a moment. What do you see when you look at Assessment? What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about the typical assessment period? How does that impact on your workload?

The answer to this is rarely the same, because we all approach it from a different angle. Even between two learning technologists or two academics, their views may be very different. Academic managers might be thinking about the National Student Survey due to the consistently poor performance of the 'Assessment and Feedback' category across UK Higher Education. For others, it might be how one academic can mark a bunch of 3000-word essays. For another, it might be how to actually manage the admin processes of 20, 30 or 40 modules all submitting in the same week. For a student, it might be about writing 4 essays to be submitted within a few days of each other.

Thinking through the lenses can help us consider these perspectives. Perhaps some colleagues might be interested in the efficiencies of the Grademark tools in the marking of student work. Perhaps it might start to encourage programme leaders to consider assessment at the programme level by visualising the range of assessments on a timeline, and using this to shape assessment schedules. Literature might tell us that the key to improving NSS scores might lie in best practice around the provision of feedback.

Implications for staff development and staff developers

From an educational development angle, we might consider using the lenses to construct a staff development programme focusing upon technology-enhanced learning. When we place ourselves in the lens of a manager, we might consider alignment to the UK Professional Standards Framework. Considering academics, we might consider specific pedagogic challenges they face; their limited time availability; or their motivation (or lack of) to engage. Considering the literature lens, we can be cognisant of the most significant barriers to engagement, *i.e.* lack of time and reward mechanisms to engage in this area. When we consider the student, we might think about flexibility in accessing content or reducing printing (financial) and travel (time and financial) requirements in the submission of assignments. Some of these issues may not be the first that spring to mind, but are unequivocally critical issues for the various people identified. A more considered approach can improve the things we do on a daily basis.

Conclusion

This article has emphasised the role of critical reflection in our day-to-day work in making informed decisions. 'It helps them distinguish the dimensions of students' actions and motivations they can affect from those that are beyond their influence. It also helps them develop a rationale for their practice that they can call on to guide them in making difficult decisions in unpredictable situations' (Brookfield, 2002, p. 36).

Of course the role of critical and transformative reflection is nothing new to readers of this publication – Dr Ray Land discussed this key trait amongst academic developers back in 2000 (Land, 2000) and this article takes the view that by reflecting critically upon our own experiences, in light of educational literature, and in consideration of the perspectives of colleagues and students, we can make better choices in our daily work.

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Constructing practice space to support professional learning

Ruth Pilkington, Liverpool Hope University

What it means to be a professional in any field is not straightforward. Professional identity and what counts as professionalism in education is highly contested with issues around marketisation, stratification and performativity in both the HE and FE sectors (Ball, 2003; Sachs, 2001). Whilst not all institutions respond in the same way to external drivers, staff are increasingly under pressure to perform in research, to administer, and to design and deliver excellent learning for students. This is in addition to increasingly being held accountable and measured in both performance and quality, informed by targets and decisions in which they may have no voice. The result is a sense of disempowerment and disenfranchisement. An outcome of this can be that when practitioners are confronted with requirements to professionalise and develop their identity as professionals, they feel frustrated and angry, as their values and priorities conflict with those of the decision-makers responding to organisational and wider drivers.

This stark picture of further and higher education is framing the work

of educational developers across the sector as they offer a range of options to support professional development of academic staff. This is through addressing initial training, for example, through a raft of Post Graduate Certificates and introductory short courses, as well as a growing number of progression routes through to Masters with emphases on either CPD or educational research and SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning). Alongside this, educational developers support a wider engagement in professional learning using communities of practice and networks to generate opportunities for less formal sharing and exchange. Additionally, mentoring and coaching are increasingly being encouraged to emphasise dialogue between professionals around practice at key stages of professional transition and are proving an attractive route for professional development. One of the elements that may be missing within these trends, however, is a unifying conception of how professional learning might be constructed and supported across a range of pressures and professional expectations.

Such was the aim of a group of educational development practitioners who sought to generate a model to explain in a coherent way how their practice could be conceptualised and explained for individuals and to organisational stakeholders. The resulting publication *Developing Critical Professional Practice in Education* (NIACE, 2014) draws together the research of two educational developers working across the northwest of England who worked with staff primarily from the lifelong learning and HE sectors. In it, as authors, we argue for an approach to support the development of critical professionalism through targeted use of learning spaces and enabling structures; both within organisations and more widely within educational contexts. Whilst the book itself incorporates several case studies from practice, the aim here is to discuss some of the key ideas informing the approaches across the case studies, which we propose offer educational developers a practical and unifying framework to inform and support their development work. Writing the book itself modelled a learning space

for the authors and contributors as it emerged and developed out of a series of debates and discussions about theory and practice. In the space constructed around writing the book, we were able to conceptualise and articulate our tacit understanding of how we approached professional learning and development for colleagues and students. The process has enabled us to share our work with peers within our networks, our communities of practice and within the field of education and professional learning.

Our approach rests on two core ideas: a model for supporting critical professional development using enabling structures and learning spaces; and a definition of critical professionalism. The two ideas emerged from an examination of our practice and its alignment against theories of how professionals learn and develop practice within educational settings. We explored our model and definitions with colleagues working in broader professional learning contexts of lifelong learning, primary and FE, to test whether their practice was encompassed within it and to examine its relevance to their own experience-led development work. The outcome was encouraging and very positive. The book has proved invaluable in helping us plan and design further professional learning programmes and development opportunities as well as critiquing what we are already doing.

Our model is founded on five assumptions about how professionals learn. These are:

- 1) *The belief that the professional learns best through social, discursive and reflective processes structured in and around practice.* This led us to emphasise opportunities for talk within the structures and spaces of our model. We recognise that professional practitioners have multiple communities of practice and learn in the deconstruction of practice with peers and dialogic, deliberative reflection (Eraut, 2004).
- 2) *Recognition from our practice is that there is a need for progressive structures to support identity creation in a way that reflects role, career stage, and personal and professional need.* We considered three approaches to conceptualising career development, which we term the knowledge model, the career path model and the doing and becoming model. The knowledge model is valuable because it considers the complexity of professional knowledge, for example Shulman's (1987) seven areas of educational knowledge, and how this varies in nature reflecting career stage, role and practice focus. The career path model allowed us to consider the way that academic roles are increasingly complex and dynamic, varying over time and in terms of professional role priorities. Anyone designing professional development opportunities, therefore, needs to consider the when and why behind learning needs in relation to the individual's position, role and function. In the light of this, we argue that it is important to help the professional think through her potential career path and to be aware of how needs may differ and to plan accordingly. This has to be considered within the way spaces may be structured and framed across practice and the academic life cycle. Similarly, organisations might consider how structures and processes support learning. We particularly liked Barnett's (2008) doing and becoming model because professional identity is discursive, dynamic, contextual and situated. It is constantly de-/re-constructed in and around practice. This led us to identify social discursive elements as crucial to the spaces we proposed.
- 3) *Questioning what educational knowledge is, who owns it and how it is acquired and developed.* For us it is important that as professionals we are aware of the complexity around our knowledge in terms of its content and also in terms of the purposes it serves; questioning who directs it and its application. One of the concepts we engaged with was 'professional capital'. This useful concept allowed us to begin to conceptualise the capital of the professional from the perspective of the practitioner as individual and in terms of their value to an organisation. It led us to highlight agency for the individual practitioner and also to consider how an organisation might be persuaded to appreciate the importance of recognising the way professionals learn in order to create accommodating and supporting structures and space within the workplace.
- 4) *An acknowledgement that professional learning is contingent and situated within organisations, contextualised practices and processes.* In order to be critical and professional, learning has to embrace wider political and professional contexts. This led us to consider how we might embed structures and learning spaces within organisational systems and processes, within practice and as opportunities for formal learning that complemented issues of practice and also to highlight that it cannot be enacted in isolation from wider influences.
- 5) Finally, we consider it necessary to *design purposeful and embedded approaches to professional learning that maximise critical learning opportunities.* Effective professional learning needs to recognise and acknowledge interrelationships between stakeholders, individuals and political and organisational interests. Hence we generated a model that is constructed from a series of circles – spheres of action in which learning might be enabled. The diagram of our model (Figure 1) illustrates this in the various learning spaces and structures we identify: formal and

informal courses; projects; communities, forums, networks and collectivities of practice. These in turn are positioned in two halves showing how the primary influence on the structures and spaces within each sphere might be the individual on the one hand, or policy and the organisation on the other.

The model of learning space and enabling structures might work in the following ways:

- *For the individual:* A novice practitioner may benefit from formal structures in the form of courses to learn about her educational practice, but may utilise networks as an experienced inquirer to develop her discipline specialism. A practitioner may draw value from the structured and defined space of projects with clear objectives and targeted activity to structure learning around a specific initiative. An experienced practitioner may access multiple networks and forums to develop learning and construct knowledge with preferred and relevant communities. Depending upon learning preferences a practitioner

developing scholarship of teaching and learning may choose a Masters programme or pursue the less formal learning approach of collaborative writing or participating in a forum.

- *From an organisational perspective:* Strategic interests to achieve standards of excellence and quality in teaching and learning may be supported by a conscious structuring of learning spaces and activities to support practitioner learning in a way that accommodates learning preferences. This can be achieved by short-structured initiatives, by building time into course design and curriculum processes, by encouraging the development of groups and collectivising practice around key aspects of Teaching and Learning. In this way the organisation can support and enable professional learning within a culture of professionalism and enhancement. Organisational spaces can be actual physical environments to encourage exchange and talk, or they can be virtual and built into procedures and timings so as to foster reflection and exploration of practice.

Case studies of practice enabled us to concretely illustrate and interrogate the way spaces had been constructed using examples of projects, programmes and courses, forums and networks. These allowed us to apply a definition of professionalism that we regarded as essential to direct the focus and intended outcome of professional learning activity. This we termed 'critical professionalism' (Figure 2).

Around the core objective of critical professionalism the diagram presents six segments. The segments comprise three behaviours which characterise the 'critical professional', and a further three precursor characteristics which underpin and enable critical professional behaviours to be developed and applied. In unpacking our definition of critical professionalism, using case studies and theory, we propose a link between the behaviours that are generally viewed as desirable for critical professionalism and which we argue can be developed through the use of learning spaces and structures. As with our model for structuring and enabling professional learning of practitioners, we explain how our definition of critical professionalism draws upon theories about professional learning. These theories suggest that professional learning involves critical and deliberative processes of reflection upon practice by the individual in the workplace through social interaction with peers, in order to acquire and develop a complex spectrum of knowledge and skills. Our precursors of critical professionalism therefore reflect these aspects of professional learning. We suggest critical professionals need to:

- 1) Be skilled in the multiple discourses that enable operation across diverse communities for the purpose of sustaining and creating professional identity
- 2) Appreciate and understand the complex state and interplay of knowledge and practice
- 3) Learn through critical reflection that is informed by values, wider understanding, scholarship, reflection on practice and

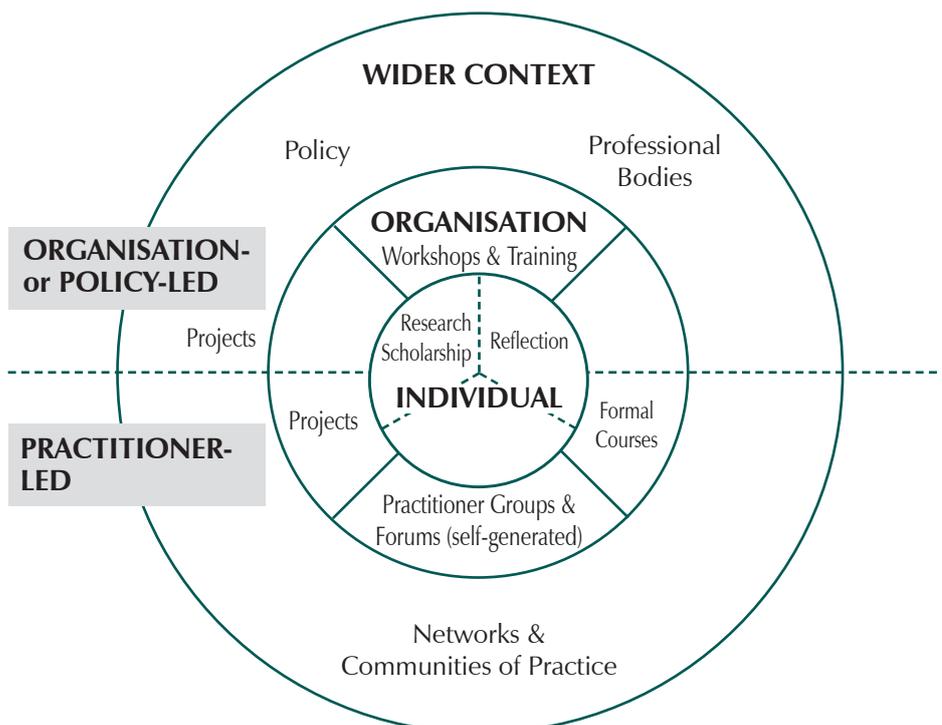


Figure 1 A model for supporting critical professional development using enabling structures and learning spaces (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014, p. 36)

interrogation of assumptions and prior learning.

When we consider the complexity of educational settings, it is clear that they are diverse and multifaceted. Academics not only function as members of a discipline community involving diverse strands of thought and discourses, they are also members of teams, departments and schools within larger institutions and sectors. Each of these communities requires awareness of a different level of discourse and operation. For example, one challenge for anyone new to HE is to become familiar with the academic systems and language that can generate barriers of considerable challenge. This requires learning skills in interpreting and operating within these differing communities and discourses; skills that may impact upon immediate and future career success. As Shulman (1987) suggests, educational knowledge encompasses several complex areas, each with its own language and processes which a teacher must be able to engage with. This makes mastery complex and it becomes necessary to engage discursively with each area of educational knowledge in a process of meaning-making. In creating learning spaces and structures to enable staff to achieve this, we propose there is considerable value for early career practitioners from participating in formally structured mechanisms such as courses as they support learning

around discursive practices and knowledge forms. Sharing across such generic learning communities in a formal supported space allows criticality and familiarity with the language of the various communities to develop, and also supports engagement with bodies of knowledge that can then be applied to practice and considered in a safe, reflective process. This allows the third precursor to be fostered and supported, namely scholarly and critical reflection on practice and the interrelationship between knowledges, discourse and practice. Formal learning spaces at an early stage may also support practitioners in considering the values and expectations of the profession. In such a way, we argue, Post Graduate Certificates in HE support practitioners to consider and to engage with UK Professional Standards Framework (PSF) descriptor statements as part of a process of entry to the professional community.

Educational practitioners can learn and develop through experience-based learning within the workplace (Eraut, 2004), a process that is widespread and often more comfortable to an individual whose knowledge is shaped and formed within and around workplace activity and in practice. Nevertheless, it is often necessary for practitioners to have structured opportunities to interrogate practice as part of acquiring a professional stance and status. This requires

purposeful framing by educational developers, achieved through dialogue, mentoring and facilitated environments such as groups and forums where the concepts and frameworks of educational practices and knowledge receive reflective and critical interrogation. The model for supporting critical professional development that we propose allows educational developers and organisations to incorporate reflective learning opportunities in a variety of structured and progressive ways. They can be purposefully incorporated into systems and processes providing an explicit scaffolded means of structuring learning. Linking the model with the definition of critical professionalism provides educational practitioners with a tool for directing the learning and making the process overt.

The behaviours of critical professionalism identified below depend upon targeted support. The outcome for practitioners is that they can begin to engage actively in critical professionalism through ownership of their own development and career as critical learning professionals. The three characteristics we promote within our definition are:

- 1) Critical professionals possess an appreciation of their individual professional capital through its development and application
- 2) Critical professionals identify and selectively use opportunities for learning which enhance self and practice towards becoming a learning professional
- 3) Critical professionals apply agency within the organisational context to make judgments and initiate actions on their own and others' behalf with respect to practice, position and career.

Behaviours of Critical Professionalism

Precursors for Critical Professionalism

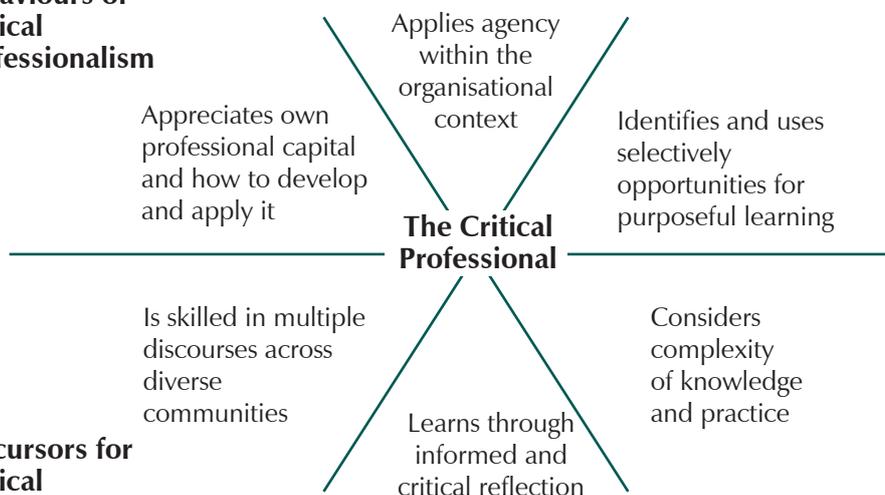


Figure 2 Diagram defining critical professionalism (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014, p. 32)

The simplest characteristic to target is to own one's development by managing the process of learning towards achieving goals. Alongside this, however, the educational developer supports the practitioner to make the concept of professional capital meaningful. This concept implies not only awareness of one's

worth as a professional actor, it also implies understanding of how power is constructed in and around the workplace. As a consequence, this knowledge can be more effectively applied in the purposeful direction of individual development or career. Without an awareness of the organisation, the wider influences on practice and how it is shaped, the practitioner can become demotivated, frustrated and disempowered – a passive object rather than a change agent. An understanding of professional capital and organisational consciousness goes hand in hand in enabling the practitioner to draw benefit from the less formal spaces and structures that characterise the individual-led learning of the experienced professional.

How can this model and the accompanying definition of critical professionalism be used by organisations, individuals and

educational developers? We suggest the two are interlinked:

- On the one hand they potentially allow educational developers and organisational stakeholders to construct learning that meets the particular needs of practitioners in a way that reflects the life cycle of a professional learner and also accommodates the professional tensions and contradictions emerging from sector changes
- On the other hand educational practitioners can use the model and accompanying definitions to begin to conceptualise how their own learning and development can be configured, facilitated and directed.

By considering these issues educational developers can talk meaningfully to stakeholders about the nature of professional learning and argue for the particularity of learning within educational work.

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Leading Transformation in Learning and Teaching: The story so far...

Doug Parkin, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, and **Steve Outram**, Higher Education Academy

'After falling on hard times two brothers went their separate ways. Ivan said to his brother "you can keep the big top, the caravans, the animals and the cages, and I wish you well with them."

Orlov took them and aimed to keep the great traditions alive. Visiting the towns his family had always visited, he had animals doing tricks, stupid clowns being cruel to each other, strong men lifting weights, and lots and lots of dancing girls...and fewer and fewer people came.

Ivan went to new cities and entertained in venues never visited by a circus before. Humans performed instead of animals, incredible acrobats, jugglers and gymnasts, and in his circus clever clowns created magic and told new stories...'

(The Travelling Circus – which university are you?)

'Leading Transformation in Learning and Teaching' is a new development programme offered by a partnership between

the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) and the Higher Education Academy (HEA). It has been running for a little over a year and has just started its fourth cohort. It has been very successful as the following feedback demonstrates:

- *'I used one of the tools within days of returning to work.'*
- *'I feel empowered to be a consultant/critical friend (in learning, teaching and assessment) within the workplace. This role is essential.'*
- *'I have found this programme to be extremely useful, extremely enjoyable, an excellent networking opportunity, a great way of sharing best practice, crammed full of useful information, and at all times run by experts who are incredibly helpful and supportive. I cannot recommend this programme highly enough.'*
- *'I learned a very great deal about investment by stakeholders, partnership with students, and the crucial importance of negotiation in relation to the curriculum and much else besides. This is the most exciting (and exacting) leadership course I have ever undertaken.'*

We think that this success is based on a number of important principles and key activities. Firstly, the programme is aimed at a constituency of academic colleagues whose needs have not been fully recognised by developers in the past – namely, course and programme leaders, senior course tutors and Associate Deans. A key acknowledgement (and celebration!) this programme makes both explicitly and, perhaps, symbolically is that programme directors and course leaders have become some of the most important people in our universities: if they don't succeed then neither do their institutions. The overall aim of the programme is:

To support participants to develop the skills, approaches and insights needed to lead course and programme teams through processes of transformation and innovation.

Delivered through three modules over a period of 6 months, the programme outcomes include:

- Sharing experiences of academic leadership in the specific context of learning and teaching (Module 1)
- Considering the nature and forms of pedagogical transformation and innovation, and what makes it work (Module 1)
- Identifying what makes for success in collaborative change processes (Module 1)
- Exploring ways of motivating and inspiring academic colleagues (Modules 1 and 2)
- Learning from current good practice in engaging students in curriculum development (Module 2)
- Carry out a Transformation Pilot initiative in their own institutional setting, with support from other participants on the programme (Module 3 and action learning).

Programme structure

The first module – 'Getting Started' – is a two-day residential. On the first day participants complete sessions focused on leading change; on the nature of quality enhancement and innovative pedagogies and, importantly, are introduced to a 'strategic toolkit' that comprises a number of organisational development tools such as doing a force-field analysis, a stakeholder analysis and other tools developed uniquely for the programme. The principles underlying the programme stress the importance of generative, collaborative working and, as with the other sessions, participants are introduced to the tools and then invited to try them out. All of this is to prepare them for the second day. The morning of the second day is taken up with what we have called the 'Live Case Study'. Prior to the module commencing, an institutional team who have successfully introduced transformative and innovative change in a programme will have been identified and briefed about the programme and this session. So far we have worked with teams from Hertfordshire University, Birmingham City University, Dundee University and, most recently, Imperial College.

There are two phases to the Live Case Study activity – looking back and looking forward. Using the tools they acquired on

the first day and their own experience, participants discuss with the case study team what worked, what was successful, what barriers they overcame and so on. The case study team also gets benefits from the programme. Prior to the module commencing the programme directors have a meeting with the case study team leader(s) to identify three issues or concerns that they might still have. Splitting into three groups the programme participants act as 'consultants' to aid the case study team's progress. This feature of the first module has been particularly commended. The afternoon of module 1 also includes a session on developing influencing skills including activities focused on storytelling and developing an elevator pitch as well as a dramaturgical session where a hopeless course tutor presents the case for a new programme to a hostile Senate. Participants are then invited to change the script and the tone to enable the course tutor to be more effective. Feedback from participants suggests that the scenario is actually quite uncannily realistic.

Module 2 – 'Getting Going' – is focused on Leading Engagement and Challenge. Supported by a guest consultant from the NUS, the nature and scope of different types of student engagement and student partnerships are explored with an exploration of how such student involvement might be included in their own transformative initiatives. A second element of module 2 that has also received commendation is a session on curriculum development (facilitated in the first three cohorts by Professor Mick Healey). This session includes an introduction to different approaches to curriculum design, including Alan Jenkins 'Ouija Board' model, and a consideration of the Healey and Jenkins research/teaching nexus ending with an exploration of the 'flipped' curriculum. Using the COCD Box creativity exercise developed by the Centre for Creative Development at the University of Antwerp, participants identify feasible and innovative ideas to take forward in their own curriculum designs (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/cocd>).

On completing Module 2, participants are asked to complete a Transformation Pilot template that describes their own transformation design, to consolidate their thinking so far.

Module 3 – 'Going Forward' – progresses these Transformation Pilots and there are a number of sessions to develop further the leadership skills of the participants. This includes the completion of the Bolton and Bolton inventory for revealing one's preferred working style. Unlike other approaches that explore personality types, such as Myers Briggs, and team roles (Belbin), the approach taken by Bolton and Bolton is simple and pragmatic, and with a focus on observable behaviours it emphasises interpersonal versatility as the key to deep influence. A number of participants in the programme have had epiphany moments completing this exercise (Bolton and Bolton, 1996).

Module 3 also includes an action learning session. In groups of 4-6, and informed, particularly, by Liz Beaty's monograph on action learning, participants are introduced to action learning sets and undertake an action learning session

(Beaty, 2003). These are followed up by two further online action learning sets using Blackboard Collaborate. Of course, these have met with the usual technical hitches experienced by a few participants but, for the most part, they have worked surprisingly well. Throughout the programme there is a theme of how to ensure that transformational initiatives are sustainable and in Module 3 participants are introduced to the skills necessary to become effective internal consultants to support their influencing role. The transformation pilots are a supported opportunity to embed the learning and turn ideas into action: the range of initiatives participants have pursued have been very impressive!

So what are the features that make this programme successful?

Firstly, the programme is designed for a particular group of colleagues who are under pressure to deliver transformational curricula that will give students highly satisfactory learning experiences to meet the raised and different expectations students now have. These are colleagues whose needs have been relatively ignored (notwithstanding the SEDA CPD programmes). In meeting their needs we have included the development of their leadership and influencing skills with a focus on being transformational, innovative and sustainable. These skills include preparation for the role of an internal consultant.

Secondly, the programme espouses a number of important values and principles including working to a non-deficit model of academic development, the importance of mutual learning through the Live Case Study and working with an appreciative spirit of inquiry. The strategic toolkit of organisational development tools provides a very tangible benefit, and throughout the programme strong cohort cultures are created that clearly value the transformation leadership role in teaching and learning. The programme also prioritises practical and applied learning outcomes with real-time opportunities for learning and enhancement through action learning.

Implications for the sector

What we have learned from the first four cohorts is the importance of making connections between leadership and learning as well as the importance of investing in the development of transformational leaders at the level of course leaders, programme directors and associate deans. The programme illustrates how leadership is generative and endorses the notion that collaborative change is iterative, emergent and intensely negotiated. The growing popularity of the programme (the last two cohorts have been oversubscribed) demonstrates the appetite for structured, well-supported and quality development in this area.

Throughout the programme participants are encouraged to keep a reflection and action planning journal and a format with question prompts is provided for them to use. For those who wish, this can be used to create a significant

piece of evidence towards professional recognition against either Level 3 or level 4 of the UKPSF.

There have also been lessons for the programme directors. Not all of the sessions have received universal positive feedback, for example. The influencing skills session in module 1, where participants are introduced to storytelling and how to make an elevator pitch, has met with critical comments from one or two participants and, perhaps inevitably, after the curriculum design session that introduces how to develop a 'flipped' curriculum one or two participants queried why the programme itself had not followed a 'flipped' curriculum design throughout. To some extent it has. One of the features of the programme has been to use Yammer as a social site to provide resources and allow for discussion. In practice, overall it has been most useful as a repository for sharing resources, although the most recent, and largest, cohort used it quite extensively for interacting both within the modules and also between themselves. The programme directors also now use Yammer to give participants the choice of seeing course materials in advance of sessions, if they wish. Interestingly, not all do.

So, the travelling circus must re-invent itself to survive. Why? Because the world is changing and audiences move on. To change the course of history we must change the course of leadership, and if universities are to play their role in answering the big questions of tomorrow, then transformational leadership needs our full support.

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Engagement for enhancement: The development of the UK Engagement Survey

Alex Buckley, Higher Education Academy

Introduction

The shift in focus from what teachers do, to how teaching impacts on students, is a familiar recent development of higher education. In the realm of student surveys, that shift is reflected in the development of surveys that focus on students' engagement with their course. For the past two years, the Higher Education Academy has been piloting the UK Engagement Survey (UKES), derived from a US survey that has now been adapted throughout the English-speaking world, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). In 2015 the first full administration of UKES will take place. This article will briefly describe the conceptual and theoretical background to UKES, the development of the survey, and the findings from 2014. It will also briefly explore some of the implications of the survey for the enhancement of learning and teaching.

The nature of student engagement

In the UK, 'student engagement' is a problematic term. It encompasses an incredibly broad range of activities and processes, from attendance at lectures to student membership of university committees; from participation in extra-curricular activities to the use of student feedback. At a basic level, there is a broad distinction between two 'kinds' of student engagement in the UK: students' engagement in their learning (the amount, quality and type of effort that they invest in studying), and students' engagement in the decisions that affect them (through governance, representation, feedback or other forms of participation). Both of these aspects of engagement are key to the improvement of learning and teaching, and the focus that the idea of student engagement has received is one of the most positive aspects of modern higher education.

In the UK, it is the element of engagement focusing on students' participation in decision-making that has received the most attention, as in the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code (QAA, 2012). Internationally, however, student engagement is far more commonly understood in terms of students' engagement with their course. Decades of research has reinforced the idea that what students put in to their studies is the determining factor in how well they learn and develop. The areas of research that contribute to this engagement construct include the importance of the quality of effort (Pace, 1982) and student 'involvement' (Astin, 1984), the value of deep versus surface learning (Marton and Saljo, 1976), and the ideas distilled by Chickering and Gamson's (1987) 'seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education'. This largely US engagement construct (which differs from the UK understanding in mostly ignoring student involvement in decision-making) is well developed and long-standing, but still complex and in the process of refinement. It can be useful to reflect on the most basic foundational idea behind engagement, which is the optional nature of higher education:

'College is basically a voluntary activity... This is why the quality of effort, which one might also think of as quality of initiative, is so important at the college level... college can't give you an education; but if you go to college, and fully use the facilities and opportunities it provides, you can get an education.' (Pace, 1982)

What students do in response to the educational environment has such an impact because, in a way not mirrored by secondary education, it is largely up to tertiary students

themselves how much effort they invest. This greater variation in such effort makes it the key determinant in how well students learn:

'The process variables that best predict gains are not to do with the facilities themselves, or to do with student satisfaction with these facilities, but concern a small range of fairly well-understood pedagogical practices that engender student engagement.' (Gibbs, 2010)

The National Survey of Student Engagement, first implemented in 2000, was designed on the basis of this vast body of empirical and theoretical research. It is still widely used in the US and Canada (over 700 institutions took part in 2014), and has been adapted throughout the world; in addition to the US and Canada, the survey has been used as a national survey in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Ireland.

The popularity of the survey, and the growth of an international student engagement 'movement' (Kuh, 2014), is due largely to three factors. Firstly, it is closely and explicitly based on research into student learning, as described above. Secondly, it is not designed to support simplistic and misleading league tables, but to provide information to institutions that will help them understand and improve their students' engagement. Finally, it is rooted in an attempt to direct attention towards student learning, and towards the factors that are known to influence student learning. The impetus to create the NSSE (with funding from US educational charities) was the absence of student learning in the public attention on the quality of higher education: 'to help change the national conversation about what matters to collegiate quality away from the resources institutions have

(which is, at root, the basis of most rankings) to what students did with these resources, which is the key to learning' (Kuh, 2014, p. vi).

The UK Engagement Survey

In the UK, we are in the luckier situation that a measure of effective teaching, in the form of students' views, takes pride of place in many of the public measures of institutional quality. However, there has always been concern that our National Student Survey – the vehicle for gathering those student views – is overly focused on what students' receive, rather than what they put in, and that it dangerously skews attention towards questions of customer satisfaction rather than challenging and effective learning. This can be overstated, but it is uncontroversial that the NSS is designed to collect students' views on the quality of key aspects of their experience: the performative aspects of teaching, the organisation of the course, the promptness and detail of the feedback, etc. Despite its roots in research into effective learning (Richardson *et al.*, 2007), unlike the NSSE it is not explicitly designed to investigate the factors that lead to effective learning but to collect students' views on the quality of the provision they have received. The interest in the NSSE in the UK can partly be traced to this element of the NSS. Parallel to concerns that the NSS doesn't currently evaluate the crucial elements in student learning has been the growing interest in student engagement, discussed above: a switch in attention from the educational provision that students receive, to the kinds of educational activities that they engage in. The recent review of the NSS has recommended that a number of questions on aspects of engagement should be added to the survey (Callendar *et al.*, 2014). A small number of these questions overlap with the NSSE and its derivatives, but the NSS will retain its distinctive focus on those aspects of their experience that are subjectively important to students, rather than those aspects highlighted by research into effective learning.

These two factors – an interest in the research background of the NSSE and a growing focus on student engagement in the UK – led a number of institutions in the UK to adapt the NSSE for their own use. Between 2008 and 2012 a range of institutions followed this route: the universities of Reading, Warwick, Worcester, Sheffield Hallam and York St John. These initiatives largely took place in isolation, with limited opportunities for coordinating how questions were modified for the UK, and in the sharing of data. There was a clear need for a coordinated initiative, and in late 2012 the Higher Education Academy convened a working group of institutions interested in using engagement surveys. Over the course of several meetings, the group selected 14 questions from NSSE, in the following areas:

- Higher-order learning (example question: 'How much has your coursework emphasised applying facts, theories or methods to practical problems or new situations?')
- Course challenge (example question: 'How often have you come to taught sessions unprepared?')
- Collaborative learning (example question: 'How often have you worked with other students on course projects or assignments?')
- Academic integration (example question: 'How often have you discussed ideas from your course with teaching staff outside taught sessions?').

These questions were then used by nine institutions in spring 2013. 8500 responses were collected, with an approximate response rate of 17%, and on 6 November at a launch event at King's College London, the HEA released a report of the data, the findings of cognitive testing of the questions, and a set of case studies of how the participating institutions had made use of the results. The 2013 report and related resources are available at https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/nss/engagement_for_enhancement.

This relatively small-scale project attracted a significant amount of interest from around the sector, and in conjunction with the positive findings about the validity and reliability of the survey, the project was repeated in 2014, this time with an official name: the UK Engagement Survey (UKES). 32 institutions took part, and an extended range of questions was used – three further groups of questions drawn from the NSSE were added to the questions used in 2013, and two groups of questions developed specifically for the UK context (the full list of questions used in 2014 is available at <http://tinyurl.com/oqwgb8h>).

- Reflective and integrative learning (from the NSSE, example question: 'How often have you connected your learning to societal problems or issues?')
- Time spent (from the NSSE, example question: 'About how many hours do you spend in a typical seven-day week preparing for taught sessions?')
- Skills development (from the NSSE, example question: 'How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in solving complex real-world problems?')
- Exploring knowledge (developed for UKES, example question: 'How much has your coursework emphasised learning about the results of current research?')
- Creating knowledge (developed for UKES, example question: 'How much has your coursework emphasised formulating your own open-ended lines of enquiry (including problems, questions or scenarios)?').

The survey was administered in spring 2014, and 25,500 responses were collected. The findings of the survey, and of a second round of cognitive testing, were published on 12 November. The full national results, including tests of reliability and validity and breakdowns by a range of student and institutional characteristics, are available at <http://tinyurl.com/oqwgb8h>. These are a few of the key findings:

- As in 2013, the most substantial differences were between different disciplines
- 2% of students in historical and philosophical studies felt that there was very little emphasis in their course on the evaluation of decisions or points of view, compared with 26% of maths and computer science students
- 50% of engineering students felt that they worked with other students very often, compared with 12% of those in historical and philosophical studies
- 6% of students in creative arts and design felt that there was very little emphasis in their course on their active participation in the creation of knowledge compared to 38% of students in maths and computer science
- There were substantial differences in the engagement of full-time and part-time students, with those studying part-time reporting a much lower frequency of working with other students
- Students in later years reported greater levels of skills development, particularly around the analysis of numerical information, and thinking critically and analytically.

Discussion

The increasing use of UKES (and the growing focus on student engagement more generally) creates a range of new tensions and challenges with the shift away from what institutions, departments and teachers do, to how students interact with the provision. One key challenge is to acclimatise to the phenomena under investigation being only indirectly under the control of institutions and departments. While there are considerable challenges to making changes to teaching provision, and to affecting students' perceptions of that provision, the nature of institutions' control over students' engagement is even more indirect:

'One challenge would involve reconciling the constructivist perspective underpinning the idea of student engagement with what is ultimately an institutional responsibility for managing ongoing improvement. There is a tension here which stems from the fact

that although students are seen as making a direct contribution to the educational process, it is one that is largely beyond institutional control. Accordingly, institutions would need to develop approaches to manage and enhance student engagement without having ultimate control over students.' (Coates, 2005, p. 35).

The challenge is clear: the importance of student engagement for effective learning is rooted in the voluntary nature of tertiary study. But that voluntary nature entails that institutions' ability to affect engagement is partial and highly indirect. But engagement data is still 'actionable' by institutions, as enshrined in the founding principles of the NSSE; there may be more work required in unpacking the survey results in order to figure out what issues they reflect on the front line of teaching, but they provide an understanding of what is happening 'under the bonnet' of learning and teaching that very few other sources of data can supply. Knowing how your students are engaging with your course, department or institution (or strictly speaking, knowing how they report their engagement) does not tell you the reasons why or why not. That is true of any student survey, which can only provide a starting point for investigation; it can only tell you where to look for areas of improvement, not what you'll find when you look there. But an engagement survey does allow you to start the exploration where the action is: what students themselves do.

Conclusion

UKES will run again in spring 2015, as a full non-pilot administration for the first time. The findings of the two pilot years have been used to create a robust instrument that institutions can use to explore their students' levels of participation in a range of important educational activities. More information is available on the HEA website at <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/consultancy-services/surveys/ukes>.

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Further reading

The full list of questions used in 2014 is available at https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/UK_Engagement_Survey_pilot_2014_items.pdf. The full national results, including tests of reliability and validity and breakdowns by a range of student and institutional characteristics, are available at <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/consultancy-services/surveys/ukes>.

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The Student Engagement Partnership conversation: Same old chatter or hearing new voices?

Ellie Russell, The Student Engagement Partnership

Sometimes it's hard to get a conversation going, because everyone is talking so much. When The Student Engagement Partnership was set up to support, develop and promote student engagement, we knew people were already talking. Depending on your definition, academics and providers have been 'doing' student engagement for many years, but as new concepts have been explored and practices developed the chatter has naturally increased. Rather than be an interruption, we want to provide tools to help kick-start or enhance conversations both locally and nationally.

When we look at the conversations taking place across the sector on student engagement, there is a lot to consider. There is no fixed, universal definition for a start. Indeed it is often concluded that there is an intrinsically subjective and moreover context-anchored element to 'what student engagement is'. So, already the discussions are varied and complex. There are some dominant voices, but they are often people and providers who have put a lot of thought, energy and resource into student engagement and have interesting stories to tell. However, in an increasingly diverse sector where one size does not fit all, it's important that different voices are heard and latent knowledge and practice is surfaced and explored.

When, where and with whom these conversations are taking place is another consideration. Are policymakers talking to practitioners? Are students' unions working with educational developers? Once space has been created for meaningful discussion between different stakeholders, how are conversations developed into actions? Our analysis is that there are existing groups and organisations that support stakeholders operating in the broader student engagement landscape, but that these are not effectively coordinated with each other or feeding their considerable expertise into national policy-making and activity.

It's clear that in order for TSEP to support, develop and promote student engagement, we need to be part of new and ongoing discussions. We need to find out more about where conversations are taking place, what good practice already exists, and the priorities, perspectives and barriers faced by individuals, institutions and networks. With those goals in mind, we have launched our Student Engagement Conversation.

To help frame our conversation, we have developed a set of 'Principles of Student Engagement'. These principles are not intended to define student engagement or partnership but rather to draw out the dimensions that constitute, and the principles which underpin, student engagement and

partnership. It is increasingly evident that 'partnership' should not be seen as a set of discrete exercises or engagement mechanisms, but rather a way of framing the culture of the community that exists within a higher education provider.

These principles have been created through a review of literature on student engagement since 2010, including documented examples of current practice and with the guidance of our Steering Group. Of particular interest to educational developers will be the principles relating to teaching and learning:

- 1) Students are active members of a learning community
- 2) Students engage in setting the direction of their learning
- 3) Students engage in curricula content, design, delivery and organisation
- 4) Students engage in the enhancement of teaching, feedback and assessment practices
- 5) Students engage in and with their learning.

The principles in their current form are intended to be iterative in nature, under constant review in the light of content created through our conversation exercise and our wider work with the sector. Understanding your perspectives on student engagement in teaching and learning is essential to our work. Take our first principle as an example. Integral to a culture of partnership is the space for students to learn from and support one another and indeed for educators and students to do the same. These reciprocal relationships build learning communities, with mutual benefit. As educational developers, you help provide the pedagogical strategies to support these interactions in formal and (potentially) informal learning spaces. We want to better understand how you go about doing this and share our learning with you. How do you work with students and students' unions? What are your drivers and barriers in relation to student engagement?

If you have something to say about these principles, please take part in our call for evidence. If you're having a conversation locally, invite us to listen. If you want to have a conversation locally, but don't know where to start, invite us to facilitate. We look forward to listening and asking questions and then talking some more!

For more information about TSEP and the Student Engagement Conversation visit www.tsep.org.uk/theconversation.

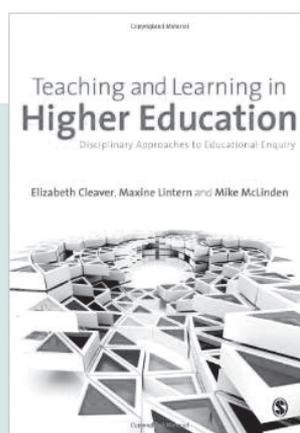
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Book Review

Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Disciplinary Approaches to Educational Enquiry

by Elizabeth Cleaver, Maxine Lintern and Mike McLinden

SAGE Publications Ltd
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Consider three albums: *Nashville Skyline* (Country), *Blood on the Tracks* (Christian) and *Oh Mercy* (Soundscape minimalism) – all produced by different people but all by the same artist.

After some discussion as to the relative merits of the term enquiry in relation to research, the authors suggest that educational enquiry within disciplines is related – it all is enquiry and as such shares some commonality. In this book I found a kind of regression towards a common-ground research process: question (and/or hypothesis), research design, data collection, data analysis, results, findings, conclusion, write up and publication – which I agreed with at some level but disagreed with also. Enquiry is enquiry, but ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies vary.

A problem frequently articulated within the book was that quantitative research was different from qualitative; the former could do the 'what' and the latter the 'how' and the 'why'.

However, I could argue that the 'why' can also be accessed quantitatively. For example – *why did you do the experiment in that way?* The replies might be a binary forced response:

- a) *because I was told to or*
- b) *because my friends did it that way).*

'Why' questions can equally be answered using a quantifiable Likert scale. For example – *The research was conducted using a questionnaire because it seemed like a good idea at the time. Do you:*

- a) *strongly agree*
- b) *agree...and so on.*

In addition, the explanation of qualitative research tended to be oversimplistic, perhaps to encourage researchers from more qualitative disciplines to consider it as a methodology.

This book emphasises that researchers from disciplines other than education should start their enquiry into education from the research strengths of their discipline. However, the problems of reading and working within the 'new' discipline of education are also emphasised. The authors maintain that HE enquiry should not only be the province of educationalists, it should also encourage lecturers to enquire into their own practice.

The book is written in two halves, the first six chapters provide a general introduction to undertaking enquiry in higher education written by the named authors, and the second seven chapters written by invited authors about educational enquiry within broad discipline areas, for example, Engineering and Maths and Arts and Creative subjects. A comparison of the language and style in which these latter two chapters is written reveals much about contrasting disciplinary approaches. For example, the Maths chapter mentions the construction of models with no mention of research ethics whilst the Arts one discusses the embracing of 'reflexive ignorance'. I also found myself wondering why, with all the discipline chapters sharing the same title, they did not all have the same outcomes.

The vignette illustrations of existing work within the disciplines are a highlight and the one about GPS tracking of novice and expert geoscientists was fascinating. It relates research into mapping accuracy and mapping strategies with reported differences in GPS track simplicity.

It is difficult to know who the target audience for the first half is and I found myself struggling with the frequent changes in style. At times I was the 'you' being addressed by the authors 'as a way of helping you with this', at other times the style was more 'academic' ('it is useful to explore'), and different again when the authors wrote about their own experience ('we are aware'). All of this within two pages. When addressing the reader as 'you' the authors also seemed to struggle with the audience, trying to find the right pitch without knowing who exactly they were addressing. A new HE enquirer from physical sciences (say) is at a very different place from one starting with a health background. As such it is quite difficult to figure out who to recommend this book to, although the material in the first chapter will be of especial use to novice HE enquirers.

For academic developers it is the chapters in the second half that are of most interest as they provide an insight into the enquiry processes of many HE disciplines. Country compared with Christian compared with minimalism – all Bob Dylan (Higher Education) but all different (disciplines). HE enquiry is always going to be eclectic and is the richer for it. What this demands is a broad-mindedness from the readers of that research (and Dylan listeners).

Having read the whole book I was hoping for a summary chapter that drew the various discipline strands and the two sections together, perhaps by recommending that the focus of enquiry into HE practice can be unified because it is conducted in order to improve the learning experience of students.

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#10DoT – Ten Days of Twitter

Dr Helen Webster, Newcastle University

Twitter has been taken up in increasing numbers by academics and other professionals working in Higher Education, including Educational Developers (Beckingham and Adams, 2013). It has demonstrated its worth in bringing academic professionals together to share practice and raise the profile of their work. Not everyone accepts its relevance or feels comfortable with it as a medium, but Twitter and other social media platforms are beginning to change the HE landscape, particularly in the context of Open Access publication, the Impact agenda and Technology Enhanced Learning. Whether individuals choose to use such tools in their work or not, they should make this decision with an informed understanding of their potential value and broader impact on the sector. In terms of its functionality, Twitter is in some ways one of the simpler social media platforms, and therefore a good place to start exploring and understand what social media can do. This article examines some of the issues raised by 'teaching' Twitter, and describes *Ten Days of Twitter*, a programme I developed to support academic professionals in learning to use the platform and develop their digital literacy.

(How) should Twitter be taught?

Social media tools don't really come with instructions or training as they are intended to be intuitive, but this relies on a familiarity with icons, tabs, menus and other graphic user interface conventions, and on prior expectations and assumptions about what a tool such as Twitter might do. Users who lack this cultural capital may also lack the confidence and ability to teach themselves a new digital tool. Teaching the basic functionality of Twitter should therefore also provide an accessible route into understanding social media generally, and provide a 'future-proofed' framework for users' approach to learning any new tool independently, or assimilating the inevitable updates to the ones they already use.

However, conventional IT training sessions in computer suites focus almost exclusively on functionality, struggling to place the tool in the context of the academic professional's work or, with rows of fixed computers, to address the personal, social or cultural aspects of social media through discussion. Even BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) workshops may get bogged down in basic IT support, sorting out individuals' wifi logins etc. Static online materials provided via webpages don't create the social context either, and can't assist if a learner has questions, concerns or simply wants to discuss their experiences with others. A lecture or seminar approach, often given by an early-adopting and enthusiastic peer offering a show-and-tell or a how-to demo, doesn't generally enable the audience themselves to have a go, and may be too advanced or intimidating.

What exactly are we teaching?

However, the functionality of Twitter is only one aspect of what users need to know. Perhaps more important is an

understanding of the social conventions of the medium, the characteristic behaviours and values (which may be in conflict with academic professional values – soundbites instead of depth, popularity instead of peer review). Moreover, the legal framework of intellectual property and copyright in the context of academic publishing is in some cases struggling to catch up with a social media landscape in which information can be freely and easily shared by anyone, and academics may feel uncertain or unprotected with so much at stake. Users also need to consider strategies for integrating the tool into their workflow rather than it becoming yet another time commitment or distraction.

Academic professionals also need to think creatively and critically about a tool's relevance and potential value in the context of their work, being aware of how social media can enhance their work as well as realistically assessing any pitfalls or risks. For this reason, my goal was not simply to encourage academic professionals to use Twitter. Rather my aim was to encourage them to explore both the platform and the community it hosts, and come to an informed and considered decision about whether to use it or not, in the context of a broader understanding of how social media might be impacting on the sector beyond their own individual use.

In developing a programme to teach Twitter for academic users, I devised a number of principles which I felt would constitute good practice for supporting HE professionals in exploring any social media platform or tool:

- *Online*: social media by definition enables both content-sharing and interaction, so where possible, the programme should be built using the tools which the participants are exploring
- *Situated*: participants should be able to explore the tool or platform using their own device, operating system and browser/app, so that they are learning in the familiar context of their own hardware and software preferences rather than unfamiliar computers or systems
- *Participative and discursive*: participants need to be able to raise and discuss more complex concerns about the personal, social, cultural and professional implications of using a tool like Twitter in the context of their work in Higher Education
- *Authentic*: examples and activities should be grounded in the Higher Education sector, and wherever possible, in the profession and/or discipline of the participants
- *Real time*: to keep momentum, build a community and to mimic the quasi-synchronous nature of social media, the programme should run over a defined time period
- *Bitesize and just in time*: recognising that academic professionals are busy people, the programme should offer small chunks at the point at which the need is created, rather than overwhelm participants with everything in one go, giving them time to absorb and apply it.

What is Ten Days of Twitter?

Ten Days of Twitter (or, to give it its Twitter hashtag name, #10DoT) is an initiative I designed to address some of these issues when supporting Higher Education professionals in exploring Twitter for professional purposes. It is an online course, built on and run via a blog and Twitter itself, to scaffold participants' exploration of Twitter and some of the general principles of social media in bitesize daily chunks over the course of ten days. Through completing daily tasks and interacting with the facilitator and other participants, new tweeters are encouraged to build an appropriate professional profile and network, and create and share content which will help them achieve professional goals such as raising awareness of their work, sharing practice and resources with peers or finding professional contacts in their field and beyond.

The *Ten Days of Twitter* format is essentially a modified version of the 23 Things programmes developed by librarians as informal CPD, in which they would collectively experiment with 23 new online tools and write reflective blog posts about their experience. Instead of 23 tools learned over 23 weeks (or two a week over twelve weeks – both approaches requiring participants to master a large number of tools quickly and sustain interest over a long time), *Ten Days of Twitter* focuses in depth on one tool, breaking down its functionality into manageable chunks with more targeted guidance over a compact time frame. Although online, the programme might also encompass face to face elements such as a 'launch' event for people to meet other participants in person, an initial workshop to cover the first few steps for those who need their confidence building in the context of a conventional training session, 'trouble-shooting' drop-ins or even a 'wrap-up' event to celebrate completion.

An important aspect of #10DoT is that it is tailored to enable participants to explore Twitter in the context of their own profession and work. The programme was originally developed at Cambridge University as part of a project to support the digital literacy of Early Career Researchers in the Physical Sciences (#STEM10DoT), but I have also tailored further versions of it for Learning Developers (#LD10DoT) via the UK professional body ALDinHE, Librarians and Academics at Anglia Ruskin University (both versions ran under #ARU10DoT but are subtly different). This ensures that the relevance of Twitter to the typical work and values of each profession and career stage are made clear, that the examples used are authentic and the network which participants build is genuinely useful to them after the programme. A similar approach might be taken when adapting the programme for students.

How #10DoT works

A blog is set up by facilitators either using the institution's VLE or a blogging platform such as Wordpress to host the content of the programme. Participants are invited to sign up via the institution's usual registration process, so that they can be contacted with information about how the programme works, and notified when the blog is live and the programme begins. Ten blogposts are scheduled to publish automatically

at 9am, one a day, over ten (working) days. The ten posts are carefully structured to scaffold participants through initial stages such as setting up a profile with some engaging, if static, content, through to building their confidence in interacting with others online in a more visible, dynamic and participatory way, and finally strategies for managing and curating the flow of information. The schedule is:

- *Day One*: Setting up a profile
- *Day Two*: What to tweet
- *Day Three*: Following people
- *Day Four*: @messages
- *Day Five*: Embedding and shortening URLs
- *Day Six*: Retweeting
- *Day Seven*: Hashtags
- *Day Eight*: Managing people (apps to create lists)
- *Day Nine*: Managing information (apps to curate links)
- *Day Ten*: Past and Future: Twitter archiving and scheduling tweets.

Each post contains:

- *Identification of a common need* which arises in the context of academic practice. Examples include:
 - *Instructions* for a small element of Twitter's functionality, which might help to address that need or enhance their practice in that respect
- *Examples* or suggestions for using that functionality in the context of Higher Education professional practice (these may be tailored for different professions such as Academics or Librarians). Examples include:
 - *A small task* to complete, using the functionality as suggested to interact with other participants or a wider academic professional network.

The programme also has its own Twitter feed, to publicise new blog posts, share tips and relevant material (perhaps news stories about social media in academia or helpful web pages about using Twitter), and interact with participants, answering questions and offering encouragement. Once the blog is set up and the posts scheduled, the facilitator's role is to keep an eye on participants' progress, through 'following' them and the programme hashtag which will be unique to that version (examples from previous programmes have included #ARU10DoT for Anglia Ruskin or #LD10DoT for the ALDinHE programme).

In the early stages, participants may interact with the facilitators by email or other familiar platform such as the VLE so that there are no initial barriers, but later on are encouraged to ask questions or share experiences and content via commenting on the blog or Twitter itself, to experience the benefits of many-to-many communication within and beyond the network of participants. It is crucial to interact with participants on an individual basis as well as tweeting generally to the programme, encouraging them to respond

and to begin posting content for others. This encourages them to ‘break the ice’ and become comfortable with this more participative, dynamic approach. If all the participants ‘lurk’, they will not experience many of the benefits of Twitter!

Participants’ responses

The programme was evaluated after each iteration I ran, using the feedback form which was standard for the department and university in which #10DoT ran in each case, which meant that the data gathered varied somewhat. However, certain themes stood out in the responses:

- *Confidence* – It is encouraging that those who had never explored Twitter before found that the initial stages supported them in taking the first step, ‘learning the basics – it’s not so scary after all!’ They commented that ‘just starting a Twitter account was a big breakthrough for me’ and that ‘the initial days helped to break down the barrier to the medium’. This suggests that the bitesize approach is supportive for those who are less confident in teaching themselves how to use new digital tools.
- *Level* – Although the programme was explicitly aimed at those who wished to learn to use Twitter from scratch, inevitably some more experienced participants also signed up, perhaps to consolidate their practice, learn more advanced functionality and build their network, or perhaps as they were simply enthusiastic about Twitter. It was thus rather tricky at times to pitch the content appropriately. More advanced users did note that the least useful parts were the early stages, ‘some of the basics of setting up an account because I had already done this’, but seemed to find the later Days of the programme more engaging (those same Days which beginners found daunting: ‘using external apps as I think I need to work on the basics first’). As the programme developed over successive iterations, the posts started to differentiate between the basics (functionality internal to Twitter) and optional more advanced features (external apps). More advanced users were also encouraged to reflect on and review their practice and tweet their experiences and tips to others.
- *Interaction* – Participants seemed to really appreciate the amount of interaction with the facilitator, and to enjoy my virtual ‘presence’: ‘Lovely to have a facilitator joining in! Think of any training YOU’VE done – did the facilitator join in?’ ‘Very friendly and helpful instructor.’ It should be noted that interaction was entirely online, and I had never met the participants in person! The ability to create a welcoming and approachable online presence seems crucial to successful facilitation. Indeed, some participants wanted even more interaction to be encouraged, particularly between each other, showing the importance of scaffolding users into unfamiliar online social behaviours.
- *Professional development* – Others enjoyed the fact that they too were able to create a virtual presence which showcased their achievement and demonstrated their commitment to professional development: ‘I was able to show my learning to the world – brilliant!’. However, the difference between professions is marked here – librarians and other ‘para-academic’ participants were much more willing to be seen to be learning publicly, while the academics (early career and more established staff) were more discreet about broadcasting their identities as ‘learners’ online in public, perhaps as it conflicted with their professional identity as ‘expert’. This is another area in which tailoring the programme is essential.
- *Authenticity* – The fact that the programme was embedded in their professional work, needs and values was appreciated. Some commented that they found most useful the practical and authentic nature of the tasks, ‘actually getting a chance to tweet’. Others found that the programme had changed their minds about the relevance of Twitter, and found most useful ‘establishing a good set of relevant tweeters that I now follow, so that I know when I look at Twitter I will get something useful’; ‘understanding the relevance of Twitter for professional purposes – I had rejected Twitter because it had no relevance to my social life’; ‘I no longer see Twitter as merely a sequence of status updates – I have found and followed a wide range of useful and interesting work-related people and institutions’. Some participants on the Anglia Ruskin academic programme wanted even more tailoring to their circumstances ‘e.g. for academics in the Business School’. This would not have attracted a large enough cohort to be viable in terms of my own resource or the resulting network created by participants, but the Learning Development programme showed that such tailoring is possible if run across institutions, within a single profession or discipline.
- *Barriers* – The greatest barrier was of course time. It was very difficult to anticipate how long participants would spend on the programme each day, and give an accurate indication to those considering signing up. Some simply read through the post and completed the task, others invested more time in checking Twitter through the day and interacting. Thus, some participants felt that early estimations of time commitment were misleading.

Running #10DoT

Ten Days of Twitter has been made available under a Creative Commons Licence, so if further iterations acknowledge the original source and make their own materials available under the same terms, the content of the ten posts may be freely taken and adapted from the original. Materials associated with the programme are available on a blog, together with a full ‘How-to’ guide and links to the previous iterations as well as updates on versions run by colleagues elsewhere which I am aware of. It has been wonderful to find that others have found the #10DoT format useful. Each time the programme runs, it has evolved, and others have experimented with the format for other social media platforms. If you would like to run a #10DoT programme, do keep in touch to share your experiences and innovations via the central #10DoT blog with others.

Ten Days of Twitter is available under a Creative Commons Licence (CC BY NC SA – Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported Licence), so it's free to take, use and adapt for non-commercial purposes, if you acknowledge the source and share your version under the same licence. You can find the blog which hosts the materials, How-To guide and other resources at <http://tinyurl.com/noonnar>

Tips for running #10DoT

- Set up the blog posts in advance and schedule them to publish automatically, linked also to the programme's twitter feed, so you can focus on facilitating interaction on Twitter.
- Participants' questions or problems can be edited into blog posts retrospectively, addressed in the blog's comment facility as additional 'notes' or added to a 'troubleshooting' page.
- Tailor as far as possible to a precisely defined audience: profession, career stage or discipline. A university-wide programme for all staff and students is likely to be too generic to help them see the relevance of Twitter.
- At the same time, it's important to ensure that there is enough of interest for more advanced users, while catering for the complete beginner. Reflective discussions on Twitter as well as more advanced functionality are helpful in this respect.
- Be proactive in encouraging participants to get tweeting early. If they don't break the ice in the first few days, they are likely to continue 'lurking' or drift away.
- To maintain a sufficient virtual 'presence', it might be best to have a team of facilitators, tweeting either from the programme account or also from their own professional accounts.

- Move from encouraging them to tweet generally to interacting individually with you to tweeting to each other and the people they follow (where appropriate). This helps them to move from a passive consumption of broadcast content to a more participatory networking which will sustain them after the programme has ended.
- While the blog posts form a major part of #10DoT, the activity on Twitter is equally important, as it should be a dynamic and participatory format. Instigate discussions each day about how the participants think they might use each aspect of Twitter, or how they might develop strategies to integrate it into their working lives.
- Enlist participants from previous iterations (perhaps even at other institutions) to support, interact, share tips and experience, and 'cheerlead'. Bring in people from your own networks to contribute too, demonstrating the reach and serendipitous networking which Twitter offers.
- Storify the participants' tweets each week and share this resource, to showcase their contributions.
- Maintain activity after the programme has ended. A Twitter chat might be scheduled for a week or so later, or you might ask participants to tweet their experiences of #10DoT and Twitter and collect these. The programme Twitter feed can continue to share news stories, blogs, resources and guidance about Twitter.

References

Beckingham, S. and Adams, J. (2013) 'Introduction to Twitter for educational developers', *Educational Developments*, 14.3, pp. 10-13.

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Ten Days of Twitter at Regent's University London

Chris Rowell, Regent's University London

Starting RUL10Dot

The content for the 'Ten Days of Twitter for Regent's University London' (RUL10DoT) course was originally developed by Helen Webster at Anglia Ruskin University and made available under a Creative Commons Licence. I started my version on 13 May 2014 and each day over the following 10 days a blog post gave an outline of the topic and a short task that participants were expected to complete. I followed the original course schedule starting

with the basics of setting up a Twitter profile, and moving on to more complex applications of Twitter such as Tweetdeck and Hootsuite.



The 'Regent's' experience

Overall, the experience of running the RUL10DoT course was a good one. I really enjoyed seeing the learning and collaboration taking place. Each day I could see the number of tweets increasing and over time interactions started to take place between the participants. My main task as the facilitator was to put up the daily post on the blog and then oversee the Twitter interactions that followed over the next 24 hours. I also had several

comments posted on the blog and questions emailed to me that I had to respond to over the 10 days. I had set up a separate Twitter account (@RUL10DoT) to support the course and I used this account to interact with the participants. By the end of the course I had made 401 tweets and had 78 people following the account. Monitoring the Twitter time-line was a rewarding but also time-consuming experience. Over the course of the ten days I averaged 40 tweets a day on the @RUL10Dot account whilst I also maintained my own personal Twitter account (@chr5rowell). At the same time I had to continue with my 'day job' which includes the numerous activities of a Learning Technologist.

Evaluating RUL10DoT

The RUL10DoT course was available to all academic and professional staff in the University. Judging by the informal feedback I received from the participants, a few had never used Twitter before and the majority had set up a Twitter account in the past but were unsure of what to do with it and often could not see how it could be relevant to their own professional development. They were attracted to the course because it offered them the prospect of developing Twitter in their own professional context.

Over the course of the 10 days, there were 53 participants at Regent's University who 'engaged' with the course. The variety of their engagement varied a lot, if we see engagement as a continuum, where at one end there were 'lurkers' watching and observing the blog/tweets and at the other end participants tweeting on a regular basis on the various daily tasks.

To be honest, when I started the course I had no idea how many staff members would engage with the course. We can get some idea of the participation by looking at some of the online analytical tools supplied by Wordpress and Twitter. The course blog stats started to 'take off' on Day Two of the course. On Day One I had over 30 visitors and 47 views to the

blog and on Day Two this leaped to over 50 visitors and 188 views of the site. Obviously not all of these would have been Regent's staff members but I was more than a little surprised to see so many people 'checking out' the blog posts.

In terms of the Twitter stats these were equally surprising (for me). By the end of the second day there were over 100 people using the #RUL10 hashtag. Also the @RUL10DoT account had 78 followers – most of them staff at Regent's University.

A couple of days after the course I set a course evaluation questionnaire (using Survey Monkey) and posted the link on the course blog. The results of the questionnaire were very positive although the responses were probably from participants who lasted the whole 10 days and not people who didn't make the end of the course. However, they gave me some great suggestions for other short online course they would like to do.

Challenges I experienced

One of the biggest challenges of running the course was keeping the momentum and maintaining the motivation of the learners. I could clearly see from the numbers viewing the course blog that there was a tailing off in participation from a peak of 188 views to 10 views by Day 5 of the course – admittedly this was a Sunday, but I had anticipated this and had already planned a 'Selfie Competition' to boost motivation once more.

The competition was simple. Participants on the course just had to tweet a 'Selfie' of themselves using the hashtag #RULselfie to enter. Again I had a great response and numbers on the blog were boosted again. I just think adding a fun element to the course is really important!

Lessons learnt and tips for others who want to run 10DoT

There are a few lessons learnt and tips I would recommend to others thinking about running the 10DoT course:

- 1) *Make time.* Running the Twitter course takes up a 'fair' amount of time which is difficult to quantify. Throughout the day I was always checking the Twitter time-line and responding appropriately. This allowed me to get on with my 'day job' but did add to my overall workload by the end of the day. Try and keep your other activity to a minimum over the 10 days – if possible. Also I ran the course over the weekend – this was a mistake – activity dropped off considerably over the weekend but also meant I had to administer what was going on. If I ran the course again I would just stick to working days (Mon-Fri).
- 2) *Motivation.* Think about the motivation factors for the learners. Even over a relatively short period of time learners dropped out of the course. I used the 'selfie' competition to re-engage participants which worked to some degree, but if I'd had more time I think I could have done more, especially using and embedding videos into the blog. Maybe interviewing some of the participants about their Twitter experiences would have made the blog posts more motivating and interesting.
- 3) *Value of face to face meetings.* Again if I redo the course I think I will organise more supporting workshops. Having the initial one on the first day really worked but next time I think I could organise two or three more face to face sessions. I'm sure most of the participants wouldn't have turned up but it would have been a useful addition for those who wanted it.
- 4) *Develop a team.* Don't just run the course on your own. I asked a variety of people in the University to be co-facilitators, which really just meant them helping to respond and encourage people to tweet over the 10 days. This worked really well.

Where next for RUL10DoT?

I will to run the RUL10DoT course again at the end of this academic year. The end of course survey gave me several new ideas for similar courses on different subjects.

Starting on 4 December 2014 I am delivering '12 Apps of Christmas', in April 2015 '5 Days of LinkedIn', and in May 2015 'Blogging for

Beginners'. All of these courses are aimed at Regent's University staff but are online and open to anyone who wants to join.

Further information

Ten Days of Twitter
(<http://10daysoftwitter.wordpress.com/>).

Ten Days of Twitter for Regent's

University London
(<http://regents10dot.wordpress.com/>).
12 Apps of Christmas (<http://tinyurl.com/pwocsjrb>).

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Using e-portfolios to evidence the UKPSF: Challenges and opportunities

Mandy Asghar, York St John University

Introduction

Using e-portfolios to support Continuing Professional Development (CPD) frameworks and help staff gain Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA) is still relatively novel. When we at York St John (YSJ) set out to design our framework, we wanted it to stimulate greater use of our e-portfolio system so that staff would see its potential as a reflective tool for their own professional development and, more particularly, for their students. This has not been without its challenges. This article describes what we did, suggests ways that educational developers can facilitate effective engagement with e-portfolios, and shares some responses of staff who subsequently engaged with it.

Context

Our CPD Framework 'Recognising Academic Practice' was accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in September 2012. It provides a choice of routes, either through paper application or by professional dialogue, to Fellowship recognition at all four descriptors of the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF). Both routes are designed for experienced staff, with the postgraduate certificate in academic practice (PCAP) continuing as the mandated option for those new to teaching in higher education. PCAP is integrated into the CPD framework in that it requires individuals to gain FHEA recognition through professional dialogue (and e-portfolio) as part of the certificate's overall assessment diet.

To participate in the professional dialogue route, participants have to collect and collate evidence in their institutional e-portfolio, which at YSJ uses the open source Mahara platform. Approximately 90% of staff who have achieved Fellowship, thus far, have opted for this route rather than the paper application. This has resulted in approximately 100 staff over the last two and a half years attending professional development workshops about the UKPSF and engaging with our e-portfolio system. The success rate of those using the professional dialogue and portfolio route is higher than those

opting to use the paper application process. Participants on both routes are provided with mentors but we believe there is greater engagement with mentors on the dialogic route, resulting in higher quality, and successful final dialogic assessments than via final paper submissions. Additionally, a face to face dialogic assessment allows exploration of aspects of the UKPSF in ways that are inconceivable with a paper application.

The institution has set targets for all teaching staff (approximately 250) to be recognised as FHEA by the end of this academic year. Our baseline two years ago was 36% and as of September 2014, 75% have successfully been recognised as FHEA or SFHEA. Another 15% of staff are currently midway through the process. We have also encouraged learning support staff to use the CPD framework for professional development and this has resulted in a number of experienced technicians successfully gaining Associate Fellow recognition through the professional dialogue route.

The role of the portfolio in the professional dialogue route

The professional dialogue route provides staff with an opportunity to engage in conversation with a mentor for a minimum of two one-hour sessions before they present for their final dialogic assessment. The e-portfolio is developed over time as part of that process and normally completed within a three-month period. Participants are invited to attend an initial three-hour workshop delivered by an educational developer and a technology-enhanced learning (TEL) advisor. This session provides the development necessary for those who are unfamiliar with the technical aspects of creating e-portfolio pages within the Mahara system and facilitates engagement with the requirements of the dimensions of practice within the UKPSF. Subsequent to this workshop, participants share their portfolio with their mentor and, one week before their assessment, with their assessors. During the professional dialogues with the mentor

and the assessor reference will be made to the portfolio and it can be used as an *aide-memoire*, particularly at the final dialogic assessment.

E-portfolios are used as a means to draw together a participant's evidence relevant to the UKPSF, alongside reflection on that evidence in a way that endeavours to make tacit learning explicit through developing an individual's metacognitive skills (Sjorgen *et al.*, 2012). However, as the portfolio is integrated with the professional dialogue, it has become evident that, for some, the reflective element becomes more explicit through the conversations that take place with mentors, as opposed to being overt within the portfolio. Mok (2012) suggests that portfolios enable individuals to connect thinking and doing. For some individuals, particularly those less familiar with the scholarship of learning and teaching, this became the key developmental aspect of the process. The portfolios demonstrated practical evidence of many years of teaching and facilitating learning, and the mentor in the subsequent dialogues prompted staff to explore relevant scholarship to provide the rationale for their pedagogic choices. This resulted in portfolios changing over time rather than presenting as a finished product with initial dialogues. When we designed the CPD framework the e-portfolio was intended as a formative element of the process, with the dialogue providing the means by which the final judgement is made as to whether or not a participant meets the appropriate descriptor level of the UKPSF. In this way the portfolio was conceived as a thinking space, providing an opportunity for staff to be creative and to celebrate their expertise rather than something to be assessed. Jones and Shelton (2012, p. 22) suggest that portfolios can be useful as a vehicle for students to show how thinking changes occur over time, that they represent a 'portrait of one's development as a learner'. It also helped to avoid the challenges that can occur when using e-portfolios for evaluation rather than development, whereby participants strive for conformity rather than individuality (Chau and Cheng, 2010).

Many of the YSJ staff who gained recognition through the professional dialogue route became passionate about their portfolios and it has been inspiring to see how they have creatively illuminated individual journeys through their pages. There are, however, a number of challenges that require consideration if e-portfolios are to be adopted and attention given to strategies to overcome potential problems.

Challenges for staff participants

Some participants found the technical aspects of creating e-portfolio pages daunting. They did, however, wish to participate in the professional dialogue aspect of the process, so making this choice forced some, less comfortable with technology, to engage with the e-portfolio. Many report that the Mahara platform is not particularly intuitive, but as the only option available, they were forced to get to grips with it. Like most new things, increasing familiarity with a system facilitates greater ease of use and our evaluations have demonstrated this as being true with regards to the e-portfolio.

Some participants found the idea of a blank page intimidating and would have preferred a template approach,

but for others this would have presented unnecessary constraints. Other participants treated their portfolio as a Word document and, despite advice, tended towards writing unnecessary quantities of text. Indeed, participants often wanted to know if there was a word limit or a prescribed length to the page required. Others were unsure of the criteria, appropriateness of evidence (despite lots of guidance), and were generally anxious about what to include and leave out. As you might imagine, not everyone engages with the technology in the same way, and this has resulted in a variety of individual approaches, with some just focused on saving 'stuff' and others engaging more thoughtfully with a process of 'collect, select, refine and connect', and using it as a means to engage in multimodal reflection (Parkes and Kajdar, 2010). Characteristic of the e-portfolio pages are the ways in which they all look different and we strongly advocate the individual nature when it comes to the aesthetics and layout of evidence.

Participants are advised to come prepared and bring examples of evidence with them to the workshop, so they could start to create their Fellowship page in the session. Those who did this successfully (not always the technologically savvy) went on to build pages without needing much additional technological support. Others who did not were more inclined to struggle, once left to their own devices, ultimately demanding more time from the TEL advisors.

I am sure the challenges that our staff faced are not unfamiliar, and evidence suggests similar findings, particularly relating to the challenge of being able to reflect on practice at the same time as learning the technology which can result in cognitive overload (Parker *et al.*, 2012; Tisani, 2008). This seemed to become evident through expressions of frustration, impatience and concerns about the time it was taking to create e-portfolio pages. In addition it is important to be aware of potential anxiety about the role the portfolio plays in the final assessment (Mok, 2012). This becomes compounded by the challenge of 'saving face' and the potential embarrassment staff might feel if they do not succeed in the recognition process, particularly when being mentored and assessed by peers.

Strategies to engage staff participants

I remember running the first CPD workshop two years ago and, in preparation, realised that if I was a participant I would want to know what an e-portfolio page looked like. This meant I needed to be competent in using Mahara and be able to produce an exemplary Fellowship e-portfolio page. I then had one of those realisation moments, when delivering a workshop, I realised how images could stimulate dialogic reflection (rather than just being there to break up the text and to make the page look attractive). It personally reinforced the need for educational developers to be able to model the practice we want others to engage in. Since then I have seen some e-portfolio pages containing word clouds, poster presentation images, book jackets, complex diagrams and hand-drawn cartoons, as well as audio and video files.

As time has gone on, participants have permitted their pages to be shared. This has been probably the most useful strategy to motivate staff and to allay their anxiety of what's required.

Care needs to be taken, however, that if you show pages from the particularly technologically able, it does not put others off and increase their anxiety. Using others' pages also helps to emphasise that the most successful portfolios do not adopt a reductionist approach to the UKPSF, but go about it in a holistic manner, portraying a 'portrait of the builder' (Jones and Shelton, 2012) rather than just a list of evidence. We do this by encouraging a thematic approach to evidence collections, whereby individuals then work backwards to map how those themes address the UKPSF. I know that many of those who have created visually striking pages, and really got the most out of the functionality of Mahara, have been very proud of what they have produced.

We have resisted the temptation to adopt a template approach to displaying evidence as we want participants to value the opportunities that Mahara provides in showcasing their expertise and experiences as teachers. We also felt that this would constrain those who were drawn to a more creative approach (not always just those from the Arts disciplines). However, we do expect a simple mapping document, which can also be used for self-assessment purposes, to be included on their pages to highlight that they have considered all elements of the UKPSF. This helps key in the mentors and assessor into how the participants have thought about their evidence without taking away from the flexibility of the portfolio. It is acceptable that sometimes evidence appears against more than one of the dimensions of practice. (An example is given in Table 1.)

The professional dialogue and e-portfolio process is run over a three-month period, with small cohorts of participants all working to the same deadline. We set goals during that period (e.g. you should have had your first mentor meeting by, you need to send the link for your portfolio to your assessors by) to attempt to keep people on track. This helps staff to have clearly established procedures and targets. This also prevents the CPD framework from becoming the only thing we do in the Academic Development Directorate. In addition we provide ongoing access to the TEL advisors should individual participants require it for additional support. Other things we have tried that have been less successful include providing a halfway session for the cohort to come together and to share their portfolios, to ask questions about the UKPSF, and to encourage participants to give the group access to their portfolio in progress.

One Faculty in particular had the lowest number of staff recognised as FHEA, and an important strategy that has helped move them forward is the engagement of both the Dean and Associate Dean in completing the professional dialogue/e-portfolio route. The Dean has subsequently become a strong advocate for this approach rather than the paper application route, helping to stimulate wider engagement with this as a preferred option.

In summary, evidence from research (see 'References', below) as to the factors that inhibit or enable staff engagement is borne out by our own experiences (see Table 2).

	<i>Areas of activity: demonstrate engagement with...</i>	<i>What's my evidence?</i>	<i>What do I need to do further to achieve this area of activity?</i>
1	Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study	The review of a level 3 module in line with Assessment for Learning principles. Good example of adopting a PBL approach	Discuss if it's necessary to talk about the range of curriculum development I have been involved in. Worried that this is going to make my evidence too big!
2	Teach and/or support learning	Developing pedagogic approaches in a level 1 physiotherapy skills module Distance learning M level module 'Applying the Evidence'	
3	Assess and give feedback to learners	My work around Reciprocal Peer Coaching as a formative assessment strategy	What about summative activities?
4	Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance	My use of the VLE for distance learning students Audio feedback project and level 1	
5	Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/ disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices	The Assessment for Learning M level module at Northumbria University My peer reviewed paper Peer Coaching that incorporates psychological literature and reviews the literature about formative assessment	Need to think about my future CPD so that I demonstrate how it is ongoing

Table 1 Example of mapping document

Inhibit	Enable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time pressure/work intensification • Lack of motivation • Lack of clear goals • Lack of understanding of the value • Technological problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior management support • Psychological as well as technological support • Role of the mentor • Personal determination • Flexibility • Feedback • Modelling • Deadlines

Table 2 Factors that inhibit/enable staff engagement in e-portfolios

Evaluation

Over the last two years, since starting out with our CPD framework we have captured the views of colleagues who have been through the recognition process about their experiences of the e-portfolio. In general, the majority felt that their confidence in using an e-portfolio had increased, with only a few disliking it and suggesting an alternative platform would be better:

'It's been good for me to use the e-Portfolio in a real-world scenario, rather than simply exploring and testing its features for the benefit of teaching others.'

'It was a good platform, as it allowed small areas of text plus downloads of larger files plus photos to break it up and stimulate discussion.'

'I think the e-Portfolio is a good tool at this stage. Using it for the SFHEA application provided me with an opportunity to use the tool in earnest, which I really enjoyed.'

When asked how easy or challenging participants found the e-portfolio, there was an even split across the 34 respondents. We know from the work of the Directorate that a number of staff who have engaged with the professional dialogue/e-portfolio route have gone on to use the e-portfolio with their own students. This has been as a result of their own experiences in seeing its potential as a tool. We think 'forcing' staff to engage with it has helped to promote its benefits.

We also sought views as to whether or not participants found that it did what we had wanted it do, i.e. to provide a 'thinking space', a place where you could reflect and build a picture of one's individual role and identity as a teacher. There were some mixed views about this linked to the challenges of the technology and highlighting the possibility of cognitive overload:

'It took so long to get the stuff on in the right order [had to take everything off and number it]. The thinking had to be done before anything could go on Mahara as a finished product. No value for me in the thinking/developmental process which was all done outside the presentation of the portfolio.'

'It did precisely that – I found that thinking what to include in the e-portfolio made me reflect on what I had been doing and why.'

'Mahara allowed for the "documentation" of and "drawing together" of evidence, to support the dialogic process. It gave me an opportunity to look back and reflect upon my achievement and plot my progression over time.'

When asked if they would carry on using their e-portfolio there was a mixed response, with some more enthusiastic than others. As we move towards re-accreditation of our CPD framework, we expect to embed the e-portfolio as a means for staff to demonstrate that they are maintaining good standing. We would also like to encourage the use of the e-portfolio for professional development review purposes.

Conclusion

I think we have been relatively successful in what we wanted to achieve with our CPD framework. Advantaged, possibly, by being a small institution, the professional dialogue and e-portfolio route has initiated much more 'talk' about teaching than went on before. It has provided a catalyst for the development of teaching and learning expertise, as well as a celebration of the many incredibly thoughtful and successful pedagogic interventions of experienced colleagues at York St John. I have learnt a huge amount from reviewing e-portfolios and listening to people's stories. Anecdotally, so many have said that the process allowed them a moment to really think about their practice, an oasis amidst the busyness of being a teacher in higher education:

'The process helped me to understand myself as a practitioner and provided ideas for future development work. A thoroughly enjoyable experience!'

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Mandy Asghar is Director of Academic Development at York St John University.

News from the Professional Development Framework Committee

Lynnette Matthews, University of Leicester

The SEDA-PDF Committee are pleased to report that SEDA-accredited programmes are now running in Canada and Europe. The Committee would like to thank Ruth Pilkington, Jessica Claridge and Alan Mortiboys for their sustained and supportive work that resulted in the recognition of the University of Basel; and Celia Popovic, Jessica Claridge, Vicky Davies, Rachael Carkett, Stephen Bostock and Lynnette Matthews for their work with the Universities of Guelph, Windsor, York and Ryserson in Canada. More international links are expected with enquiries from IIAD, a private company aiming to train staff in the Middle East and Asia.

We would also like to welcome three new members to the PDF Committee: Roisin Curran, Kathryn McFarlane and Ali Cooper, as well as express our gratitude to the out-going members: Carol Maynard, Sarah Floyd and Chris Wakeman.

For the past ten years, Carol Maynard has been a valued SEDA colleague, who was a substantial contributor in shaping and developing various PDF awards in the areas of e-learning, the enhancement of academic practice and supporting change. She was responsible for the successful adoption of the DPP award at Liverpool John Moores University; held a crucial role as evaluator and external for the national External Examining Award led by Stephen Bostock; and not least, undertook work in 2006 using SEDA PDF to inform the development of LJMU's CPD framework that was used as a case study by Ruth Pilkington for her SEDA Special 21 publication.

Sarah Floyd joined the PDF Committee in June 2006 and has

contributed to the work of SEDA as both a mentor and recogniser for institutions seeking recognition for a variety of awards. Institutions Sarah has supported include the universities of Staffordshire, Central Lancashire, Birmingham City, Christchurch Canterbury, Glyndwr, Keele, Lancaster, Liverpool John Moores and the Institute of Financial Services. She was also the coordinator for the Student Support and Guidance award, and a contributor to both SEDA conferences and Education Developments.

Chris Wakeman has demonstrated high levels of commitment to educational development in a variety of ways. He has promoted the scholarship of learning and teaching through leadership of Masters courses, setting up and taking a leading role in the *Innovative Practice in Higher Education* journal and influencing by example through publishing his own research. His key contributions to a number of national organisations, including SEDA, have

inspired and enhanced the educational development community.

In addition, the Committee would also like to celebrate the achievements of some of our members. Our warmest congratulations to Rachael Carkett for attaining Senior Fellowship of SEDA and Principal Fellowship of the HEA; Vicky Davies and Roisin Curran for also being awarded Principal Fellowships of the HEA; and not least, well done to Ruth Pilkington for being awarded a National Teaching Fellowship this year.

And finally, due to the growing interest of SEDA PDF awards with international institutions, the Committee would be very interested to hear from you if you have foreign language skills and would like to be an award accreditor.

Lynnette Matthews develops and manages programmes for academic professional development in the Academic Practice Unit at the University of Leicester.

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Book Review

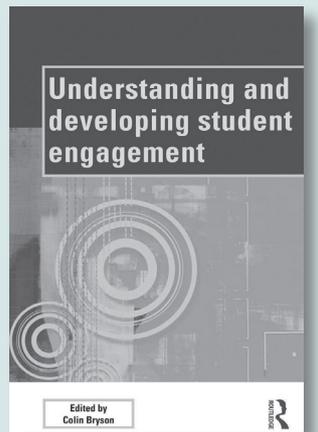
Understanding and Developing Student Engagement

Colin Bryson (ed.)

The Staff and Educational Development Series

London: Routledge 2014

ISBN: 978-0-415-84339-3



Why do some students do better at university than others? A perennial question, with perennial answers, including ability, background, culture, and so on. In the last few years the term 'engagement' has increasingly found itself on that list of answers. But, as with all the others, we quickly find ourselves asking the follow-up question: 'But it all depends what you mean by this term'. Colin Bryson, and his co-authors, have done a fantastic job here of pulling together, in one book, an analysis of the multiple meanings of the term 'student engagement' and how exactly it contributes to answering that original question.

This analysis includes paying attention to the need for students to feel they belong at university; that they understand and can enact forms of higher learning; that they can become self-motivated and self-reliant. Ron Barnett once summarised this as a 'will to learn', or, put more crudely, students able to see themselves as agents rather than victims. At the heart of this seems to be a desire to ensure that students are engaged in what George Kuh has referred to as purposeful learning activities. But this book works for me not because it analyses the multiple meanings of the term, but because it uses this analysis as a springboard into discussions of how to enact them, stretching from the individual level to institution-wide.

One of the distinctive features of the book is that it is written equally by staff and students, and sometimes collaboratively. This itself perfectly exemplifies a form of engagement – staff and students co-joined in the scholarly activity of producing the chapters. The book is big – 18 chapters – but you will soon navigate your own way through those chapters, because they are largely self-contained, and could easily be read two or three at a time. Indeed, the book is well structured, with part one focused on perspectives from researchers, part two focused on perspectives from students, and part three focused on engaging students. And the whole book is topped and tailed beautifully by Bryson who surveys the field in the opening chapter, and offers a concise summary in the

final chapter. That final chapter also includes considerations for the future, the most intriguing of which for me was the discussion which linked the notion of a learning community with the wider notion of a university as a co-operative enterprise.

On first reading of the whole book, I was particularly struck by the student author Emma Chadwick, who spoke of the kinds of support and resilience often required to successfully navigate university, and the academic author Sam Elkington, who spoke eloquently of the benefits of designing curricula starting from the student experience of learning. I choose these two specifically because although they are addressing different dimensions to engagement, both reminded me of the need to underpin engagement with an equally clear understanding of the word 'partnership'. Essentially, there is much more to developing a successful 'will to learn' than just listening to the 'student voice', important as that might be as a starting point.

I can see myself coming back to this book regularly, and recommending individual chapters to staff and students. The book is instructive; if you are still trying to get your head around the difference between student satisfaction, student experience and student engagement, it will be an invaluable source of information.

The book is practical: it reports on a number of completed projects, which could just be read in order to enhance understanding, but all of them could be repeated, adapted, and applied in new contexts. The book is also provocative, prodding its readers to think seriously not just about the epistemological dimensions to higher learning, but also, and crucially, the ontological dimensions.

It is also provoked me to reconsider the answers to three questions that have been on my mind for some time. First, how did the US, a country obsessed with 'customer satisfaction', manage to produce a really useful student engagement survey, while the UK only managed to produce a satisfaction survey which, as currently constituted, would not be able to measure the kinds of things that this book clearly demonstrates can enhance student learning? Second, I often hear academic staff talk about a lack of belongingness, but when talking about themselves, not their students, so how do we best develop that engagement partnership? And third, it provoked me to reflect on just how hard I found it when I first became a teacher – I thought I knew my stuff (after all, I had got high marks in all my student work), but there's nothing quite like trying to explain something to someone else, and having to answer their questions – now that requires engagement.

John Lea is Head of Academic Professional Development at Canterbury Christ Church University, UK.

SEDA News

SEDA Roll of Honour

Congratulations to **Professor Ranald Macdonald** who was recently placed on the SEDA Roll of Honour in recognition of his exceptional contribution to staff and educational development. Through his work in fostering research within the staff and educational development community he has been instrumental in raising the quality of the scholarly work we undertake. Ranald demonstrates all the values of SEDA and as a reflective practitioner.



Forthcoming conference: Internationalising the Curriculum: What does this mean? How can we achieve it?

SEDA Spring Teaching Learning and Assessment Conference 2015

14-15 May 2015, Marriott Victoria and Albert Hotel, Manchester

Call for proposals deadline extended to Monday 12 January 2015

Save the date:

SEDA Annual Conference 2015: 19-20 November 2015, St David's Hotel, Cardiff

New Publication

Look out for *Developing Pedagogic Research in Higher Education* edited by Lindsey McEwen and Kristine Mason O'Connor (SEDA Special 37). Available to purchase on the SEDA website at £12.00.

Join the Editorial Board of *Educational Developments*

This is advance notice that we will be looking for a new member of the editorial board in 2015. The detailed invitation will be sent to the SEDA list, and the deadline for applications will be 9 February 2015.

We will be looking for someone with a broad knowledge of educational development, who brings new elements to the existing board, and can develop the skill of commissioning articles from busy educational developers!

If you are interested, please log your details with Joseph Callanan in the SEDA Office and we will keep you informed.

Editorial Developments Committee

We welcome **Chrissie Nerantzi** and **John Lea** to the Editorial Developments Committee. Chrissie is a Principal Lecturer in Academic CPD at Manchester Metropolitan University, and John is Assistant Director for Learning and Teaching, leading the University's Academic Professional Development Framework, at Canterbury Christ Church College. With regret and our heartfelt thanks, we say goodbye to **Viv Caruana**, Reader in Internationalisation at Leeds Beckett University, who has stepped down due to pressure of work.

Professional Development Framework Recognitions

We are delighted that Kingston University and the Change Agents' Network have recently been recognised to provide SEDA-PDF accredited programmes. Congratulations to both.

Supporting Higher Education in College Settings

A new professional development award from SEDA.

This new award aims to support all practitioners – managers, teachers, and educational developers – working in college higher education, including further education colleges, university partnerships and private providers.

The course is run entirely online, with six formal sessions in twelve weeks, including support materials, and a core text, which is included as part of the course fee.

The first pilot starts on 16 February 2015. Enrolment details are on the website: http://www.seda.ac.uk/?p=3_3_7

Related new publication: *Supporting Higher Education in College Settings* edited by John Lea (SEDA Special 36).

This SEDA Special supports teachers, managers and staff developers who are working in colleges providing higher education either directly or through partnerships with universities. It will also be valuable for university staff engaged in these partnerships. It recognises the varied provision of this growing sector and will help college staff who are beginning to provide some higher education courses, as well as those who are seeking to enhance their more-established courses.

'An excellent publication from SEDA exploring some of the key issues facing College Higher Education in a period of considerable flux in the sector.'
(Nick Davy, HE Policy Manager, Association of Colleges)