Session title: Cultivating Range in Educational Developer Role

Session type: Lightening Talk

Main presenter(s): Aga M. Buckley, Kingston University London

Session summary:
The session introduces key insights and reflections drawn from an experience of faculty academic seconded to educational development. Starting with the surprises of staff-facing teaching and inspiration from cross-disciplinary learning, through the dynamics of pedagogical thinking, the talk argues that key messages from Epstein's (2020) Range might be just what is needed in the current HE climate.

Session outline:
"Knowledge is a double-edged sword. It allows you to do some things, but it also makes you blind to other things that you could do." Epstein, D. (2020)

This lightning talk introduces the perspective of a faculty academic seconded to the educational developer role. This brief reflection on cultivating a range of perspectives and understandings for a progressive pedagogical stance argues mutual benefit for an occasional 'sidetrack' to seemingly defined academic career paths. While changing career trajectory might be an unsettling and demanding process, a temporary change, such as a secondment opportunity, serves as an active continuing professional development, offering surprisingly fulfilling results. Creating opportunities for faculty academics to explore educational development introduces collaborative learning opportunity that strengthens the educator's core. Benefiting both sides, such range intentionally 'disrupts' well-rehearsed content and stagnant processes fostering creativity away from the comfort of one subject specialism. Moving between the educator and learner while also consciously agreeing to 'pause' the subject expertise, at least temporarily, frees us to see new connections and meanings, unexpectedly broadening our spectrum to shape skills and abilities we never thought we had.

References:
Epstein, D. (2020) 'Range. How Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World', London: Pan Books