Session title: In, out, shake it all about: doing the hokey cokey as an educational developer

Session type: Paper

Main presenter(s): Joanna Hall, University of Brighton

Session summary:
This session is a paper presentation designed to provoke thought and discussion regarding the complex positioning of educational development work in UK HEIs, specifically in relation to role, position and relationships with staff and other centralised departments.

Session outline:
In this paper, I examine different perspectives on the role, position of and attitudes towards educational development within UK Higher Education institutions. The work of educational developers has been described as 'complex business' (Ling, 2009), with some disjunction identified between the priorities of academic development professionals and institutional practices (Ling, 2009). This occurs through differences between approaches to development work as informed by ideas of collegiality, reciprocal peer learning (Boud, 1999) and more recently compassionate pedagogies (Hao, 2011), and success measures being increasingly determined by institutional priorities and externally scrutinised key performance indicators.

To discuss these different perspectives in more detail, I examine staff responses to the implementation of two projects led and managed by educational developers. The first is a four-year scheme to co-create an inclusive curriculum in partnership with students. Responding to ethnicity differential outcomes, the scheme employs students to work with academic staff to review the representation of racial, ethnic and cultural identities within module content and delivery. The student / staff teams support module leaders from across the University to implement changes that will begin the work of diversifying and decolonising the curriculum. The second project is related to the first, and as a recognition award is designed to recognise and celebrate enhancement of module curricula that makes both content and delivery methods more inclusive to students. The award is achieved by application with supporting evidence against specific criteria that demonstrates engagement in diversifying or decolonising the curriculum. This initiative has been embedded in centralised quality assurance and enhancement processes. These two different but related strands of work are used in this paper to reflect on the complex positioning of educational development within institutions, especially in relation to curriculum enhancement that itself focuses on the deconstruction of hegemonic power relationships and colonial structures.

References:
Boud, D. (1999) Situating academic development in professional work: using peer learning International Journal for Academic Development 4 (1), 3-10.

Hao, R.N. (2011). Critical compassionate pedagogy and the teacher's role in first-generation student success. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 2011(127), pp.91–98.

Ling, P. (2009) Strategic Approaches to Academic Development: Relationship to Learning and Teaching Collected Essays in Learning and Teaching (2) DOI: 10.22329/celt.v2i0.3202