

SEDA Spring Conference 2024



Session Title: Plus ça change?': reflecting on change across 20 years of Educational Developers in Ireland as part of planning for the future

Session Type: Research paper (20 mins plus questions)

Main presenter(s): Dr Claire McAvinia, TU Dublin, Ireland

Co presenter(s): Dr Alison Farrell, Maynooth University, Ireland

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Session Summary: Title: 'Plus ça change?': reflecting on change across 20 years of Educational Developers in Ireland as part of planning for the future

In this session, leaders from the Educational Developers in Ireland Network (EDIN) will present work based on their and EDIN members' reflections and experiences of change in the field of education development in Ireland over the past twenty years. The session will focus on shifts which have occurred in priorities and processes. It will include suggestions, based on the research, around possible future directions for this field and those working in it.

Session Outline: In this session, we will share with colleagues research reflecting on and reconsidering educational development in Ireland and beyond, to inform our future work.

We first describe the Educational Developers in Ireland Network (EDIN) briefly to provide context for our research. EDIN was established just over 20 years ago, and highlights of our work as a self-sustaining community include four Emerging Issues books, a journal Special Issue, and the open access Impact Analysis Tool (www.edin.ie). EDIN's mission is "to support, enhance and influence the field of academic development and practice", and we "value[s] creative, critical, collaborative and professional approaches in supporting teaching and learning".

Recently, leaders and members of EDIN have been reflecting together on the changing nature of the higher education (HE) landscape, and (re)imagining of the future of educational development in Ireland and beyond.

From initial discussion sparked by recent papers and 'provocations' (including Bass, 2020; Baume, 2023; McNaught, 2020), we framed further research using critical reflection as a methodology combined with relevant data analysis methods. We have drawn on three of Brookfield's (1995) four lenses for reflection: individually through concept mapping (Heron et al., 2018), with peers in a focus group of EDIN members, and through consulting the literature. We present our findings under two headings:

- key shifts in priorities over the past 20 years - individual and institutional;
- key shifts in processes over the past 20 years - individual and institutional.

We present consideration of these findings in terms of HE ecosystems (Barnett & Jackson, 2020). We make suggestions around possible future directions for this field using future thinking tools where appropriate (Government Office for Science, 2021). We invite and welcome responses to the research, and anticipate that colleagues will be prompted to reflect on their own practice, perhaps building on the methods we share to navigate current complex changes in HE.

References: Barnett, R. and Jackson, N. (eds). (2020). *Ecologies for Learning and Practice. Emerging Ideas, Sightings, and Possibilities.* Routledge.

Bass, R. (2020) 'What's the problem now?' To Improve the Academy; *A Journal of Educational Development*, 39 (1). DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/tia.17063888.0039.102>

Baume, D. (2023) 'My obituary for SEDA', *Educational Developments: The Magazine of SEDA*, 19 (4): 5-7, Ed-Devs-24.3.pdf (seda.ac.uk)

Brookfield, S. (1995). *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher.* Jossey-Bass.

Heron, M., Kinchin I., and Medland, E. (2018). 'Interview talk and the co-construction of concept maps', *Educational Research*, Vol.60(4), pp.373-389, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2018.1522963>

Government Office for Science (2021), *A brief guide to futures thinking and foresight*, Accessible at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/635931b18fa8f557d066c1b1/A_Brief_Guide_to_Futures_Thinking_and_Foresight_-_2022.pdf

McNaught, C. (2020) 'A narrative across 28 years in academic development', *International Journal for Academic Development*, 25:1, 83-87, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2019.1701476>