

Project Title:

Measuring value and impact for educational developers

Project Participants:

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Outline of Project:

In Spring 2017 a lively discussion thread on the HEDG JISC mailing list identified 'Measuring Impact and showing value for money' as a hot topic for members who were concerned about institutions foisting inappropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) on their departments. This led to four members of the group meeting at City University of London with 8 other members joining by Skype to engage in a full and frank exchange of views and to share good practice. That meeting provided the impetus for this project bid.

This project is a response to emerging trends and patterns that seek to measure aspects of academic work and the student experience. Educational Development work has not been exempted from this level of scrutiny with units increasingly required to demonstrate value for money and evidence of impact. Such approaches are frequently metric based and rarely meaningfully capture the richness and transformational nature of Educational Development work.

This research is essentially a scoping exercise which addresses the following questions:

- What activities are we doing?
- What do we need to know about these activities?
- How might we gather appropriate evidence of our impact and added value?
- How do we review and evaluate?

Our aims are to:

- Build on existing scholarship and literature in the field of educational development which seeks to measure the impact of our work
- Through a grounded theory approach explore the current ways in which educational developers are evaluating their practices and what evidence they use to demonstrate impact?

- Contribute to advancing the field of Educational Development
- Gain community engagement by inviting large numbers of educational developers to contribute to 'theory building' via the creation of a framework.

Funding from HEDG for £ 2000 will pay for research support in the form of a research assistant and the costs for one group member to attend two HEDG grant meetings in London over the duration of the project.

Our methodological approach involves asking the educational development community in the UK and Australia to complete an in-depth survey which explores how the impact of their work is currently defined and measured. The decision to include Australia is motivated by previous relevant scholarly activity carried out within that country.

The intention is to use the survey findings to evaluate existing practices and then based on the findings develop a conceptual framework informed by scholarly approaches. The framework will include both quantitative and qualitative approaches to evidence gathering, demonstrating value and the evaluation of impact.

Dissemination will involve presenting the findings to both the HEDG Summer Residential in June 2018 and to the ICED Conference in June 2018. The outcomes of these sessions will be used to refine the framework for piloting from September 2018. A commitment to capacity building and a sustainable approach to the research is reflected by the four Higher Education Institutions involved providing matched funding in year two so the framework can be piloted and evaluated. We intend to involve other Institutions in the pilot.

Carole L. Davis 26/11/2017