The Role of Research in Designing and Organising Learning Environments

Workshop Session

Key Transversal Issues arising for Innovative Learning Environments

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Is the set of research-based principles by which to design and organise learning environments an unattainable ideal or an unavoidable requirement of 21st century education?

- How can these principles and similar other approaches be made most accessible to those who need them? What steps might be taken to operationalise these principles and approaches?

- What experiences do we already have and what more can be done to embed research-based innovation in practice?

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QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- How can we encourage bi-directional learning and knowledge transfer (so that research informs innovation in practice and vice versa)?

- Is it possible for learners themselves be full players in these processes?

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LEARNER CENTERDNESS

The learning environment recognizes the learners as its core participants, encourages their active engagement, and develops in them an understanding of their own activity as learners.

SOCIAL NATURE OF LEARNING

The learning environment is founded on the social nature of learning and actively encourages well-organised co-operative learning.

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RESPONSIVENESS TO MOTIVATIONS AND EMOTIONS

The learning professionals within the learning environment are highly attuned to the learners' motivations and the key role of emotions in achievement.

SENSITIVITY TO INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

The learning environment is acutely sensitive to the individual differences among the learners in it, including their prior knowledge.

The learning environment devises programmes that demand hard work and challenge from all without excessive overload.

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USE OF ASSESSMENT

The learning environment operates with clarity of expectations and deploys assessment strategies consistent with these expectations; there is strong emphasis on formative feedback to support learning.

HORIZONTAL CONNECTEDNESS

The learning environment strongly promotes "horizontal connectedness" across areas of knowledge and subjects as well as to the community and the wider world.