

# CREATIVITY IN EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

FIRST DRAFT REPORT NOVEMBER 2013

**Nb the Questionnaire is still available for completion  
if you would like to add your views please visit  
<http://lifewide.vxcommunity.com/>**

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## A. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the results of an on-line questionnaire administered in October 2013 as part of an enquiry into the role of creativity in educational development. The questionnaire was developed by Professor Norman Jackson, based on the findings of an email survey of educational developers undertaken in September 2013. The questionnaire was uploaded to Lifewide Education's Values Exchange (Vx) website and developers were invited to contribute via email lists and specialist fora.

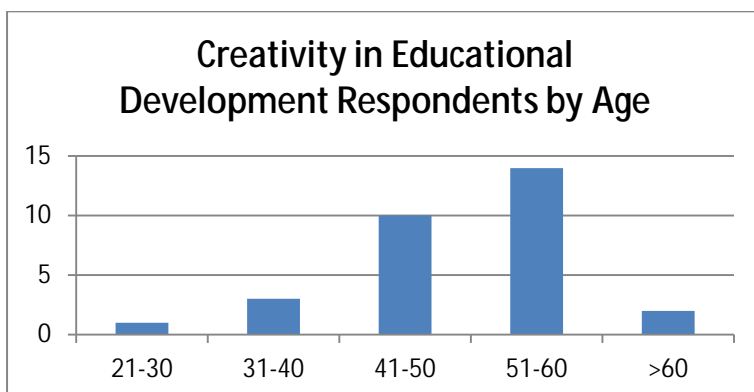
The questionnaire can be viewed and completed at <http://lifewide.vxcommunity.com/>. The Survey Report will be updated every 3 months as additional contributions are made.

## B. RESPONDENTS

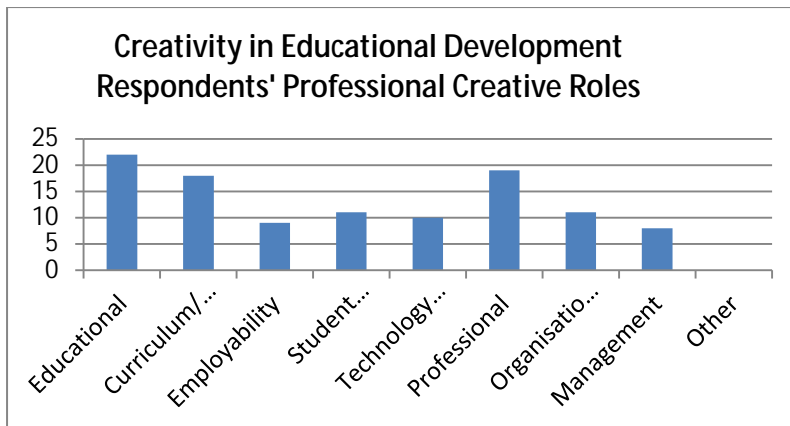
**Total:** 30 respondents.

**1 Gender:** Women outnumbered men at 21:9.

**2 Age:** Predominantly over age 40 (only 4 under 40 years old)



**3 Foci of creativity in professional roles** (Individuals may hold several). Most engaged in teaching and curriculum planning



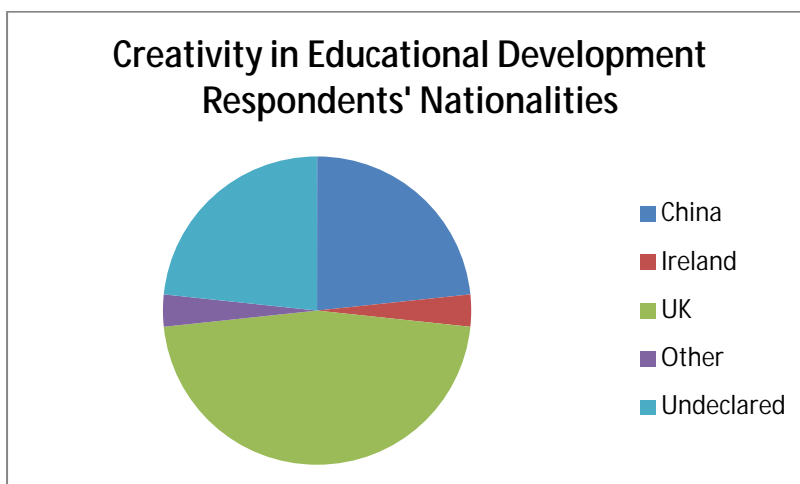
#### 4 Employment

Employed by a single institution: 24

Employed by more than one institution/department: 3

Freelance/consultant: 3

#### 5 Nationality

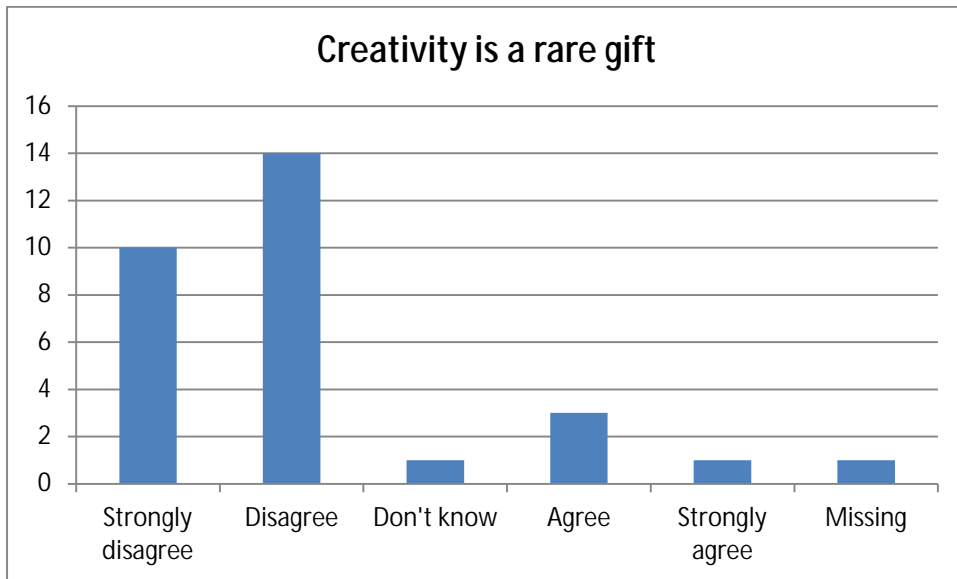


7 respondents did not reveal their nationalities.

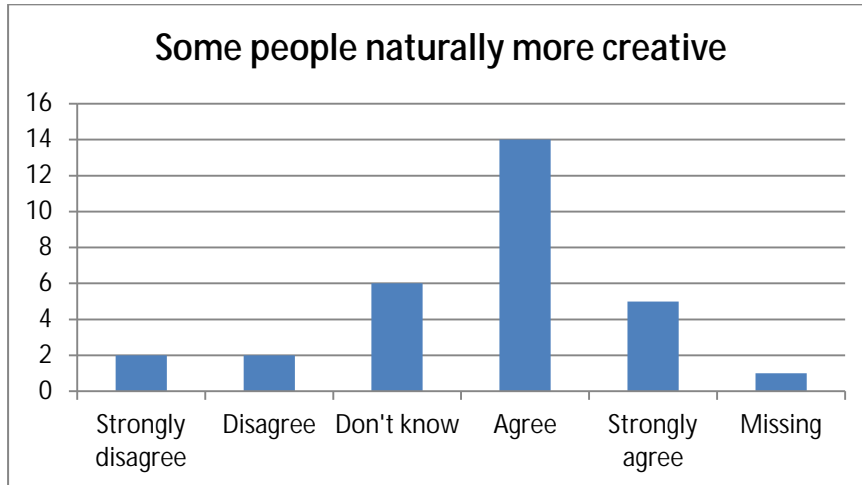
Other = Cyprus

### C. BELIEFS ABOUT CREATIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT

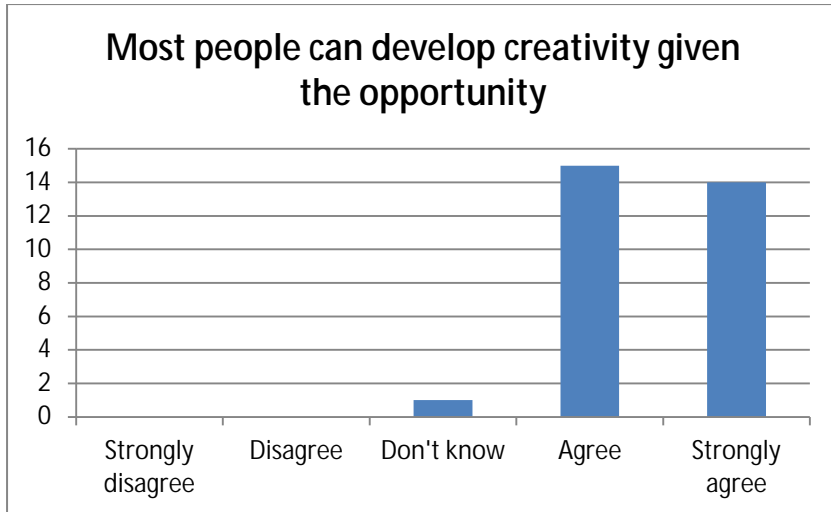
1 Creativity is a rare gift which only a few people have: most disagree with statement



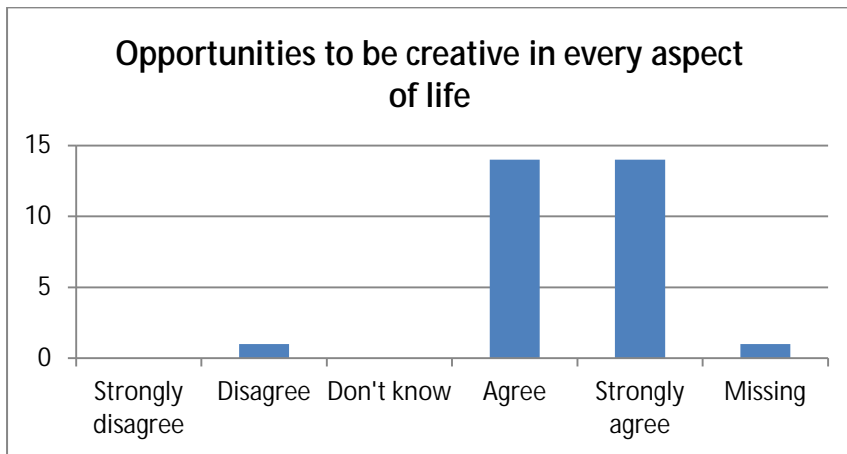
2 Some people are naturally more creative than others: a fair spread of views but bias towards agreement with statement



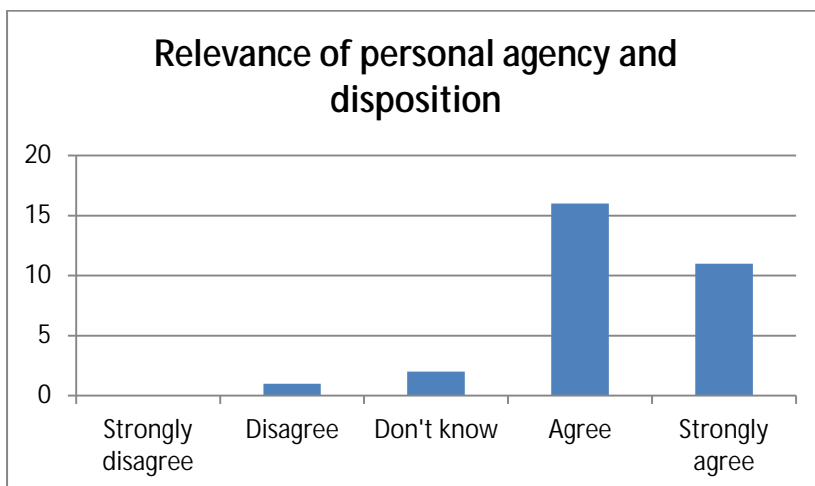
3 Most people can develop their creativity if they are given the opportunity to do so: only 1 person did not agree (they were neutral)



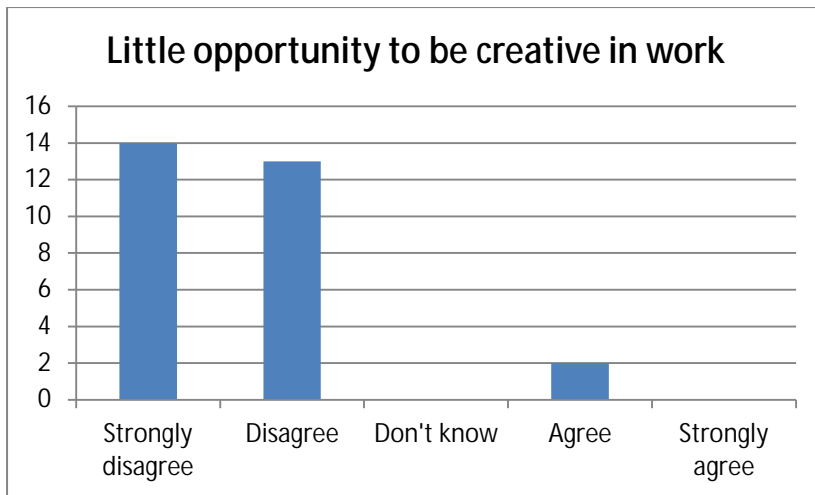
- 4 There are opportunities to be creative in every aspect of life:** only 1 person disagreed, and 1 did not respond



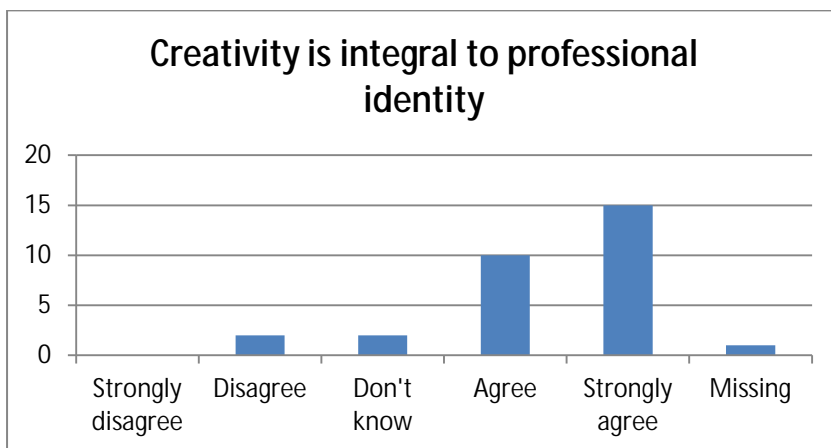
- 5 Effective use of creativity is dependent on other factors such as personal agency, disposition and having context relevant knowledge:** 27 agreed/strongly agreed



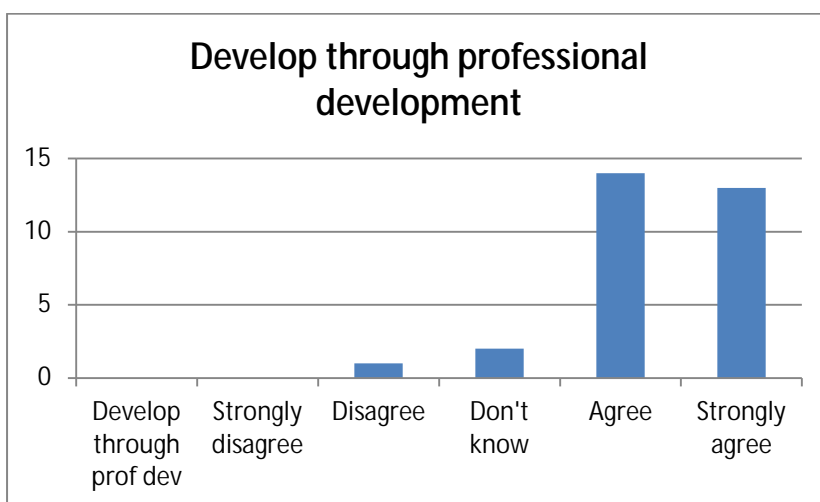
- 6 I don't have much opportunity to be creative in my work as an educational developer:** only 2 people felt they have little opportunity to be creative in their work



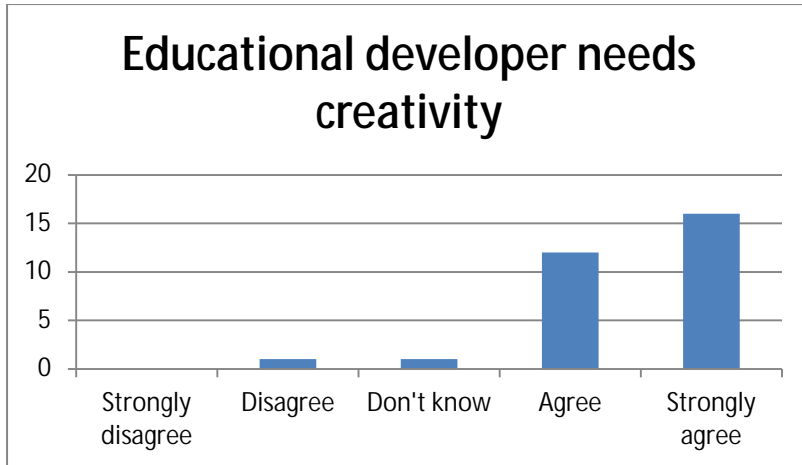
**7 My creativity is an integral part of my professional identity:** 4 people do not know or disagree



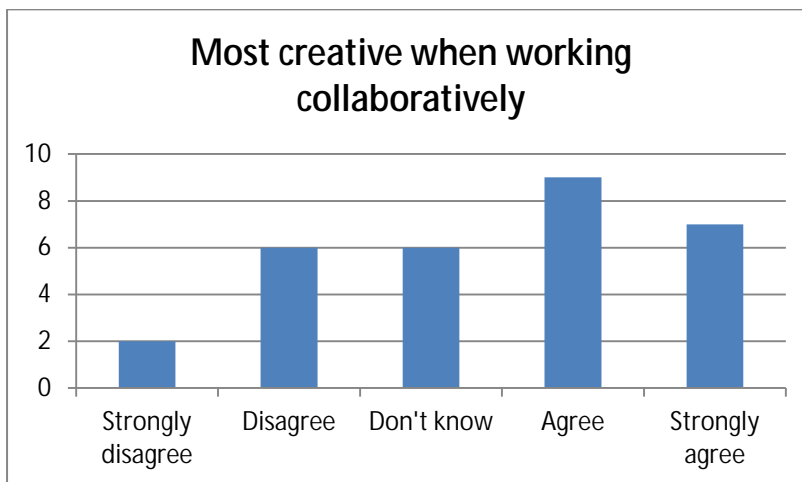
**8 I develop myself through the professional development work I do this includes my creative development:** only 3 people don't know or agree



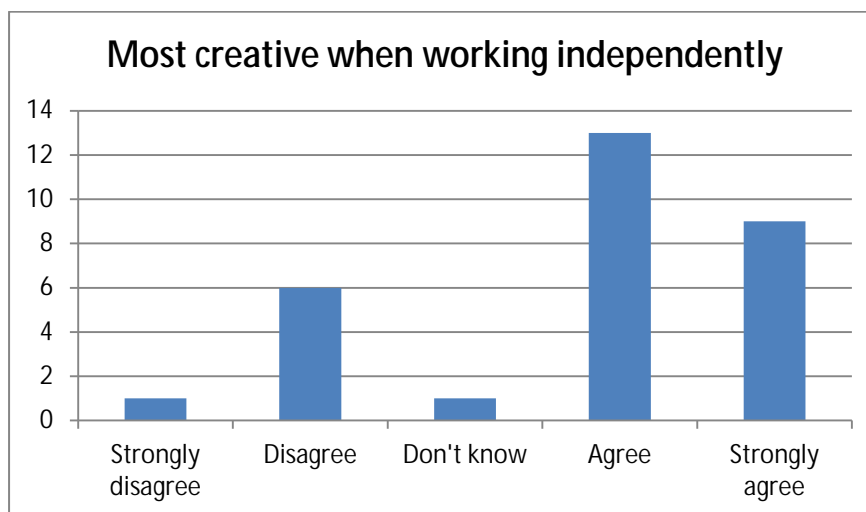
**9 The job of educational developer involves considerable creativity:** only 2 disagree/don't know



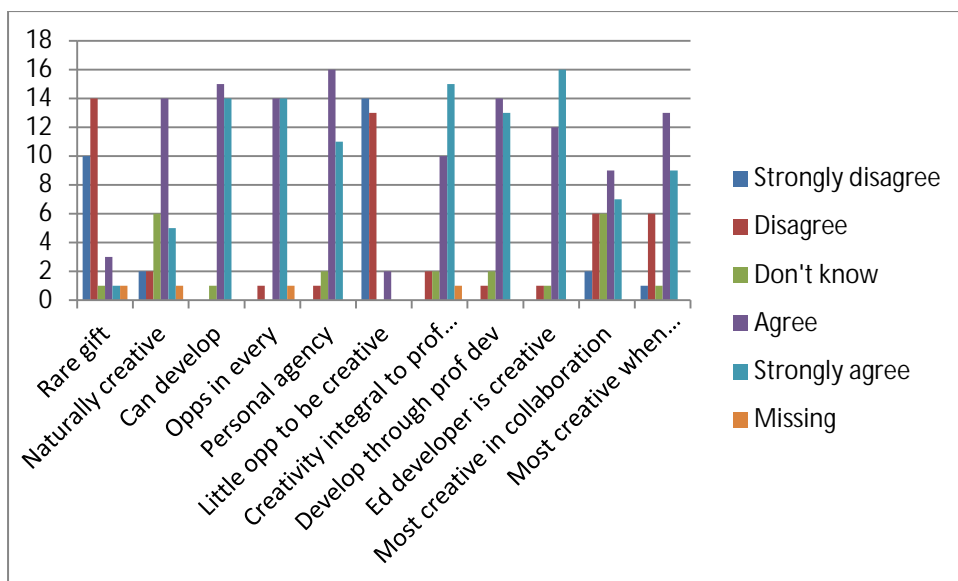
**10** I am at my most creative when I am working collaboratively and productively with others:  
a wide spread of views



**11** I am at my most creative when I am working by myself on something I care deeply about:  
also spread, but stronger preference for working independently



**Comparative significance of factors:** Most positive areas for the group as a whole - 9, 7, 3, 4,8. Least positive are 1 and 6

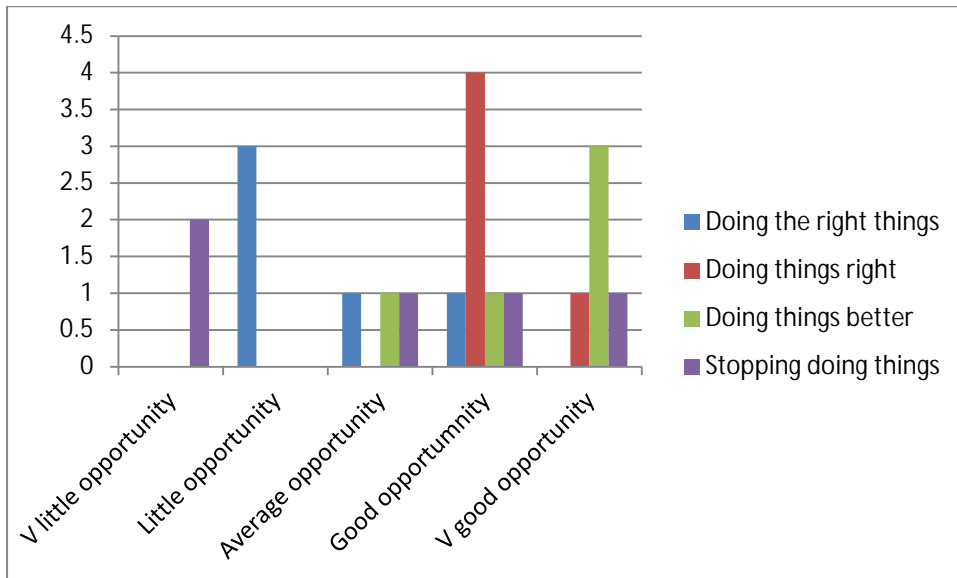


#### Other comments (verbatim, unedited)

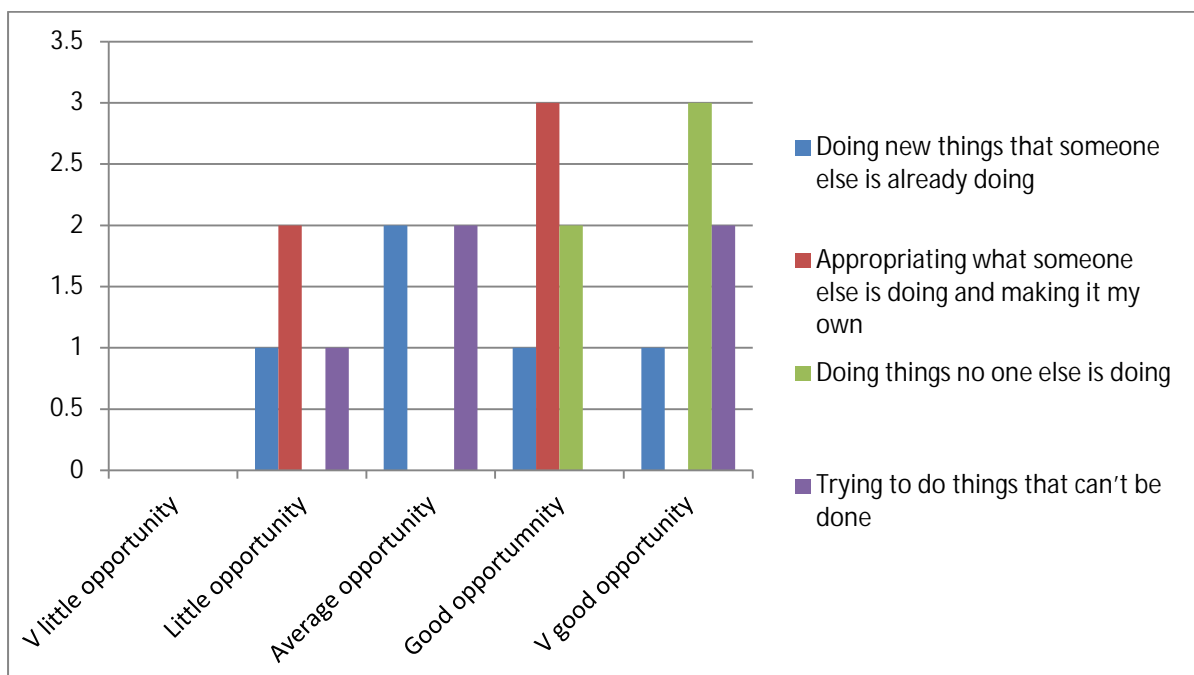
- enjoyment and pleasure of making new stuff/ideas/programmes/interventions etc. that are of value for others and myself? I think the pleasure of sharing creative ideas is fulfilling
- Whenever I face a problem of any kind I need to be creative.
- facing challenges with confidence and being prepared to experiment and occasionally to make mistakes
- I think it is about looking at the possible but also practical and how this can be made interesting
- Finding more appealing ways to present information or to help students to view information or their own capabilities in a new way.
- it is probably covered above but I tend to think of myself as a 'borrower' a la Mary Norton's kids books. I take something from one context (sometimes from one discipline) and reinvent it for another.
- I see creativity as more than just a response and reaction to a work context, to me it is a way of being and demonstrated through humour, attitude, skills and adaptability. I see catalysis and openness to change as being part of that creativity.
- creating energy (my own or collective) which can be used in different ways  
creating identity and buy-in - a shared potential to do something great together
- Trying to link my students' learning with their everyday lives and experiences - which is sometimes beyond my everyday life and experience and so requires me to throw caution to the wind/not be afraid to look foolish/self-disclose.
- Going with the flow and being willing to improvise and be spontaneous.
- Not sticking to a script.

- I see my own personal creativity as an opportunity for others (who may well think they are not creative!) to see what engaging in creative thinking looks like. I strongly believe that colleagues should see themselves (and others who they might interact with) as having intrinsically creative potential.

2. (a) INCREMENTAL DEVELOPMENT From your experience, which parts of the developmental spectrum encourage or require you to be creative? Scale 1= least to 5= greatest opportunity to be creative: doing things right is the most significant factor for the group, followed by doing things better, indicating need to achieve

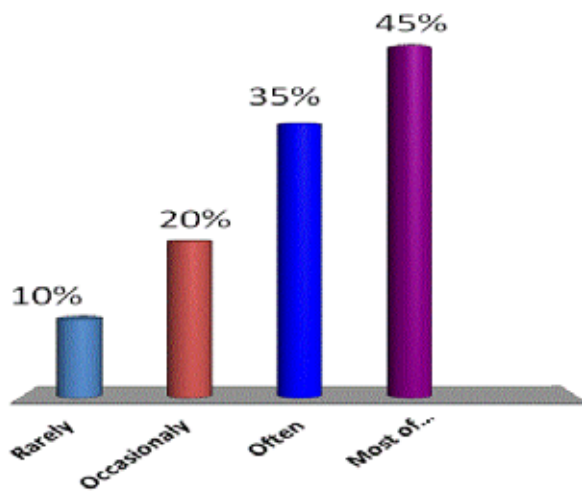


2. (b) INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENT From your experience, which parts of the developmental spectrum encourage or require you to be creative? Scale 1= least to 5= greatest opportunity to be creative: building on existing work or creating something new are the most important dimensions





3. How creative do you feel you are in your work as a developer in the field of education? Please tick the box that reflects you. 7 people feel they are not creative in their working role, 17 are creative often or most of the time

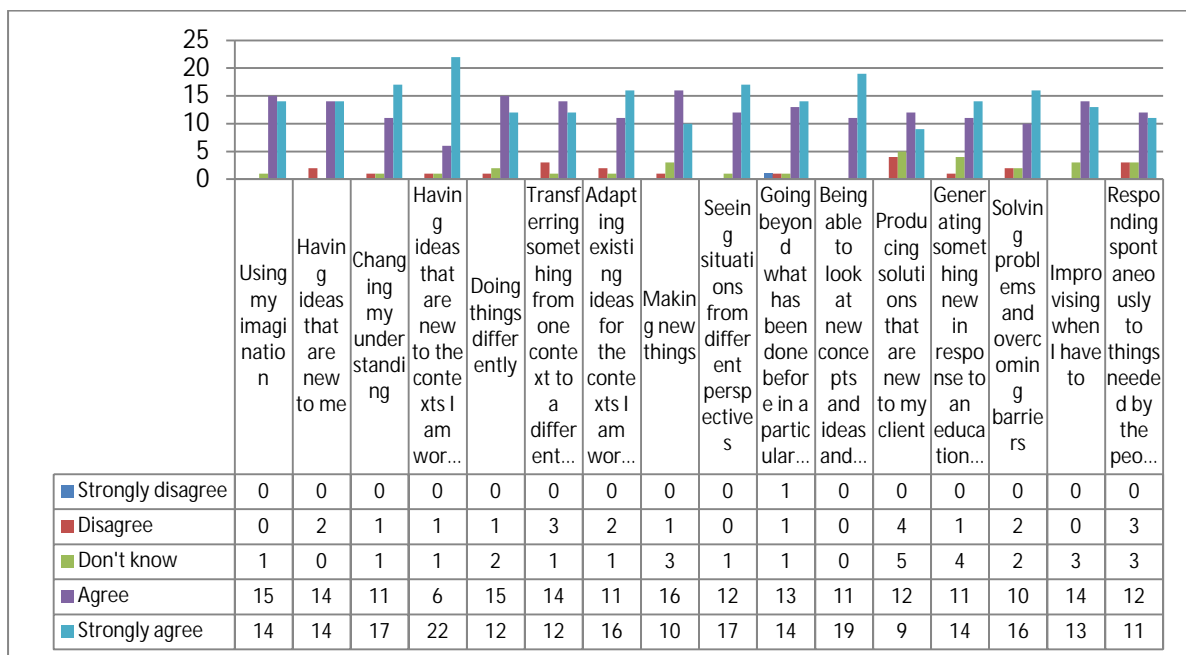


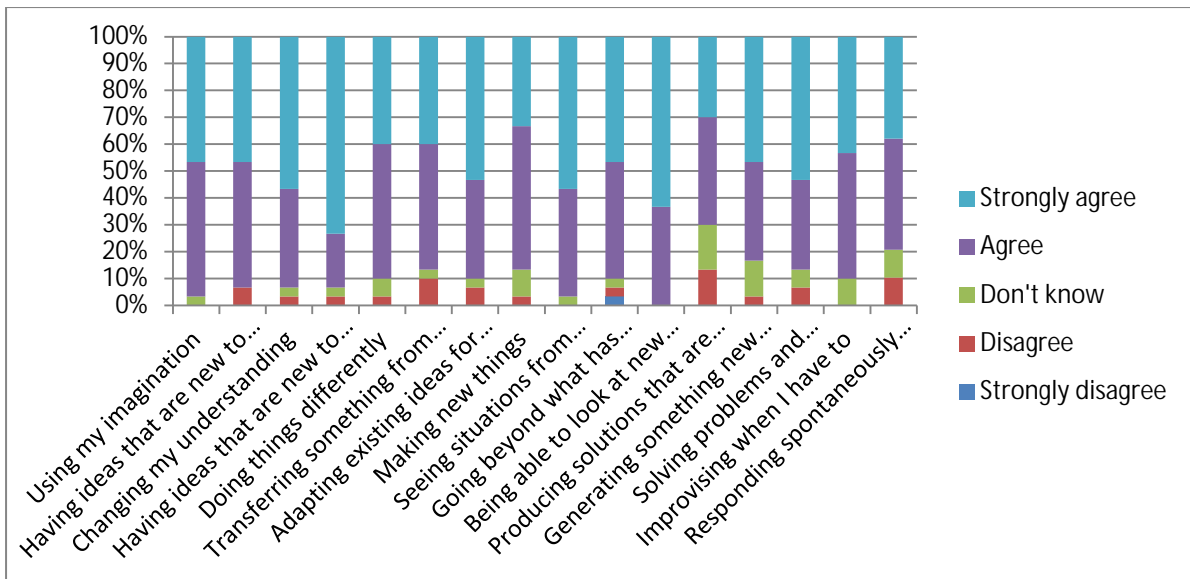
#### D. WHAT CREATIVITY MEANS TO YOU

4. In the context of being a developer in the field of higher education, please indicate your level of agreement with these statements about what creativity means to you

Most important factors are having ideas that are new to the context, being able to look at new concepts, and seeing situations from new perspectives.

Least important factors are producing solutions and responding spontaneously.





## E. CONTEXTUALISING CREATIVITY

5. Think of a significant educational development you have been involved in and try to match it to one of four types of development listed. Please provide a short description (50 words max) of the nature of the development.

5 (a) Original - your own ideas, inventing new practices. Doing things that no one has done before to the best of your knowledge (unedited responses)

Surrey Lifewide Award - trying to establish a new award scheme to encourage, value and recognise learners development through all their experiences.

Developing and playing a mixed reality game as part of the core module of the PGCAP. Theme is creative learning and teaching. The game is a mix of Problem-Based Learning and game-based learning and is played in a City Centre. Students, who are teachers are asked to focus on a session they are going to offer in a week or two and identify something that will be difficult to explain. They capture this as a scenario in their social media portfolio and bring it to town when we meet. Students are paired, different gender and different disciplines and have one hour to find a solution together. They can spend up to £3 to get an item that might help them. Through dialogue and exchange they come up with some excellent ideas. When we meet, each double act, presents they ideas. Feedback is provided by the whole group and points are awarded to each team. The team with the most points is the winner of the game and gets two books. When the wheel was still in Manchester, I also managed to get free tickets. During the day, photographs are taken to capture the learning journey and videos too. All are shared online and students then have a task to reflect in their portfolios on the game, their intervention and when they have trialled it they add their evaluation too.

The idea was born about 5 years ago, when I was a teacher trainer for FE. I have found that this type of learning is much harder to do in HE as academics are much more skeptic and not ready to go for something that is very different and playful. Play seems to have a bad name? I have sat through really boring creativity sessions and wanted to offer something that is engaging, has suspense and immerses participants into the learning process. It has worked and more critical voices, there were

not that many, have started seeing value in my more playful approach. This was helped through the fact that I started also carrying out research into my own practice. I was actually encouraged by one academic. He said to me, if you want to gain credibility, you need to do research, to get the evidence that it works and recognised by peers.

The Values Exchange. An enormous project to encourage and support people in deep thinking. The MOST creativity I have had to show however is not the original ideas - eg the Ethical Grid - but being flexible enough to meet people's needs when they are not what I originally intended. The stretches I have had to make are extraordinary but have been very creative and have helped me grow.

encouraging staff and students to think metaphorically around their growing and changing identities as learners and in becoming within professional communities/communities of practice  
Turning around negative perceptions of change to positively embracing a new situation and approach to academic development. Shifting mind sets from disappointment to creative and critical thinking. Encouraging a creative response to a significant change.

Developing a new model of disseminating good practice (i.e. how new ideas are generated, discussed/examined, rejected or accepted, then shared with others), and trying it out in the workplace

Developing a new leaflet to help students with the writing process using an acronym QUOTE - Question, Understand, Outline, Timeframes and Evaluation to make it easier to remember.

Design new activities to enable learning to happen  
Developing a framework for digital and information literacy, and mapping it to employability skills.  
Writing activities to develop people's digital literacy skills, using my own ideas and research.

seeking new methods or strategies that are effective to deal with the educational problems.

An idea to inform practice, modeling student development for skills/attributes etc as three stages - evidence, confidence and articulation and developing a way of measuring this so that students can determine their next developmental steps.

Capturing the ephemeral - exploiting the potential of ubiquitous digital recording devices to capture important but ephemeral 'learning conversations' e.g. many models of formal and informal audio feedback, audio PDP, personalising alienating VLEs, etc, etc

I often think about what my own idea is as I face problem in my work, and solve the problem as my own idea indicates.

developing/delivering an online countdown to christmas calendar of CPD activities to challenge practitioners' perceptions about the availability of CPD resources while supporting a shift in behaviour/attitude towards CPD, & increasing uptake of existing tools/resources available online.

We radically redeveloped our first year curriculum to deconstruct the modular approach to teaching and to emphasise that context is key to our students' understanding of their learning. All our assessments were made to cut across the different topics to force the students to understand context.

I agree combining the ideology of lifelong learning with transdisciplinary practice (work based and work-related learning)

**5 (b) Adaptive - being inventive with someone else's ideas or practices Recreation - adapting things that have been done before in another context. Doing things that have been done before but differently.**

I have had to adapt conventional databases and code to fit with the VX. I have also had to copy contemporary trends in networking and adapt them to the VX - this has been creative but I think less creative than a).

Using artwork in professional development activities for lecturers

exploring the use of drawings and model building to explore as above at 5a

Taking the process of peer and self assessment from a small but highly influential study and applying the research within a large class of students. Presenting the research in the different context was itself significantly influential nationally and internationally.

Finding a model that someone else has produced - e.g. a visual model - and then presenting it to others in a workshop and using the workshop to explore how well the model helps us interpret our own local context/issues/ ambitions/challenges etc.

assisting students in seeing essay planning in more holistic manner - drawing a whole view plan rather than writing a plan & discussing this with them

Adapting the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy -CBT to help students to identify and take action in relation to their academic issues.

Work on the PgC in LTHE

Developing a tutorial on avoiding plagiarism, using the interactive capabilities of Xerte Online Toolkits

explore the effective components of the strategies so as to get an integrative one.

Taking a one-off self-assessment induction activity presented by someone at a conference and using the underlying idea to develop one of the lynch pins for the first semester of a learner development/independent learning course I developed.

In 2004 I came across screencasting for the first time at an Education conference in Canada. I realised how this could visually and aurally capture the academic's thinking as they work through marking in the form of a 'Director's Cut.'

I don't exclude other people's experience as I do things, but I will be very careful as I adapt other people's experience.

developed & produced an online resource aimed at supporting students' transition into University/physiotherapy degree programme. Idea generated from module feedback/conversations with existing students about expectations of University/physiotherapy profession... & drew on experience of visiting other transitional websites outside healthcare/University setting

Unravelling the UK Professional Standards Framework to make it accessible to all levels of staff. Using my knowledge and understanding to make UK PSF applicable.

taking ideas from visual studies into workplace practice

**5 (c) Combination - mainly adapted from ideas and practices elsewhere but containing some original features developed in your own context**

I rarely do that preferring to forge my own path.

the above 5a and 5b applies - trying in new contexts eg different discipline areas and professional contexts

The above example included new developments because of the size of the class, the preparatory work in terms of informing learners of their responsibilities and supporting students in difficulties in a very different way, communication instead of conflict, developmental rather than punitive. It was a major shift because of the barriers to change within the particular context.

Changing the emphasis on teaching excellence and developing criteria for the award scheme that could be used across the institution as well as the evidence that could be used to assess nominations

My model of values-based education: starting with some existing 'values sets' (e.g. the values of the UK PSF) and working through these to come up with my own 'purpose-process-people' model of values-based education

Developing E-learning resources - Using images and video in presentations to help make ideas more meaningful and tangible

Adapting ideas gleaned from a conference on digital literacies and a second conference on e-learning to establish new practice and e-learning resources which are now being developed by a colleague.

Developed a student support scheme across an institution. it was adapted from a support model in one faculty, which we evaluated. However, in creating something for all faculties, new ways of working were developed which made the scheme incrementally better and more effective. Over time it has been adapted further and combined with some other processes to make it highly effective and quite adaptable.

Re-design of a module

borrow good ideas from different programs so as to bring about a new one.

I observed students having informal reflective conversations as they transitioned from formal situations (e.g. lectures) into other (sometimes informal) spaces. This was rich learning construction personified. This initiated a Student Audio Notes project in which we encouraged students to capture their thinking together at the end of events using cheap audio devices. It is combination because it brought the informal conversation into the formal domain of learning.

I wouldn't just learn from one person as I am trying to do a new thing, I will draw ideas and practices of many people and develop my own way.

Development of online virtual identity to share experiences/offer support to physiotherapists going through CPD audit process. Idea/character evolved from thinking critically about identity/virtual identities/story-telling/shared learning theories & practices

Recognising ethical concerns about online delivery (Web 2.0 is free but at a cost) and developing sustainable online provision using social media that learners think positively about and share even when the learning experience has ended

#### **5 (d) Incremental - building on what already exists in your own context perhaps drawing on ideas and practices from elsewhere**

I am doing this sometimes but if there is an external idea rather than copy it I will look to see what it achieves and then see if I can think of a better way.

i enjoy trying to work from authentic examples from practice and linking them to theoretical constructs and conceptions to help us better understand our practices and ways to enhance them

Encouraging academic developers to see themselves as part of the big picture, seeing themselves and identifying themselves as leaders in their field. Leadership is not promoted enough, I saw a significant opportunity to make leadership explicit and recognised as leadership, not business as usual, so it was capacity and capability building made explicit .

Just about everything!

Trying to become more informed about particular research and practices (e.g. self-regulated learning models) to improve my own professional practice and knowledge.

Skills audit.

Digital literacy skills development resources at OU - ongoing - looking at others' work outside the institution, as well as what has already gone before in the institution

to some extent, this is a job to add some new function or feature to the existant program.

I ran a conference in 2009 on Audio Feedback because I realised every case study I came across was different in the way the recordings were made and used. Later I ran other events (MELSIG) that steadily built upon the ideas of educational podcasting and audio feedback, spreading into a wider interest of user-generate digital media content involving academics and students.

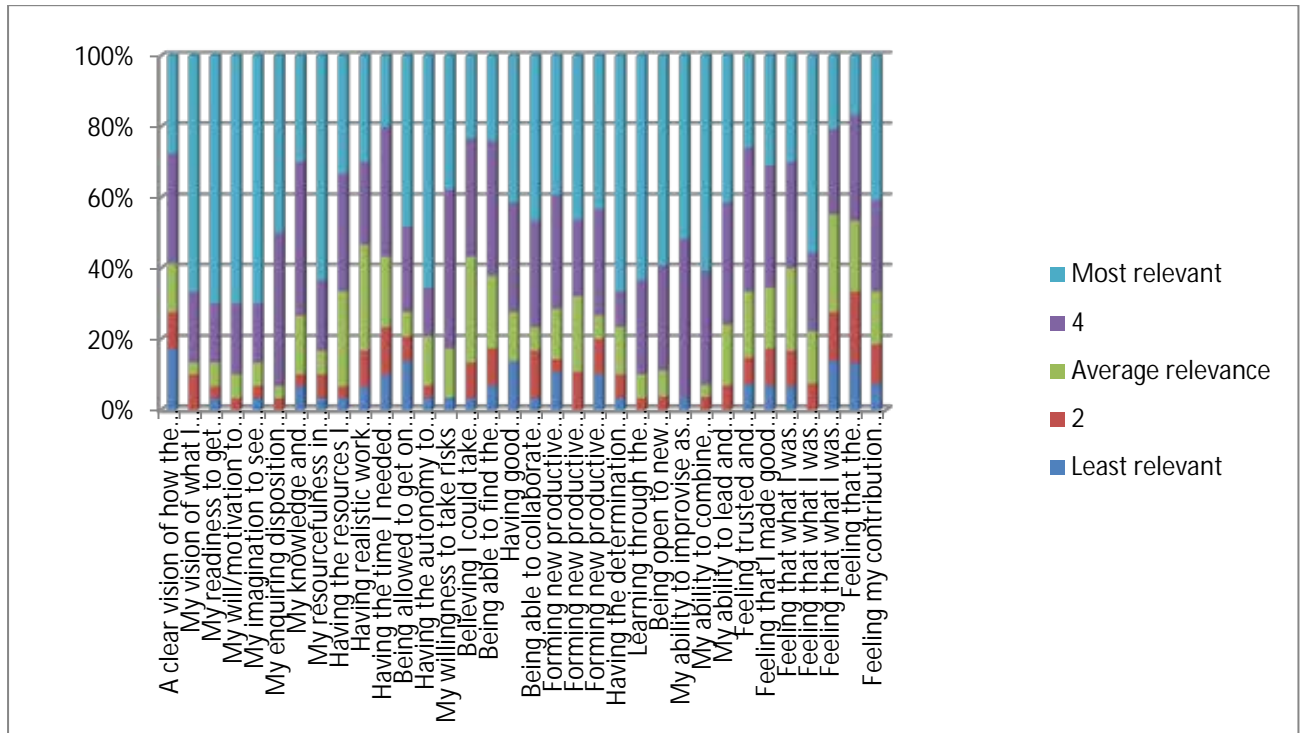
I will have a try to use ways of other people to do things as I have better ideas and ways of my own.

using learner's work to frame newer course materials

Research into wellbeing. Worked with colleague on devising then uploading questionnaire to VX. Repeated survey in 3 different countries to gather comparative perspectives. Analysed them according to certain paradigms and derived my own model. Written up into 2 chapters for e-book, and data used in several presentations around the world.

## F. CREATIVITY IN CONTEXT

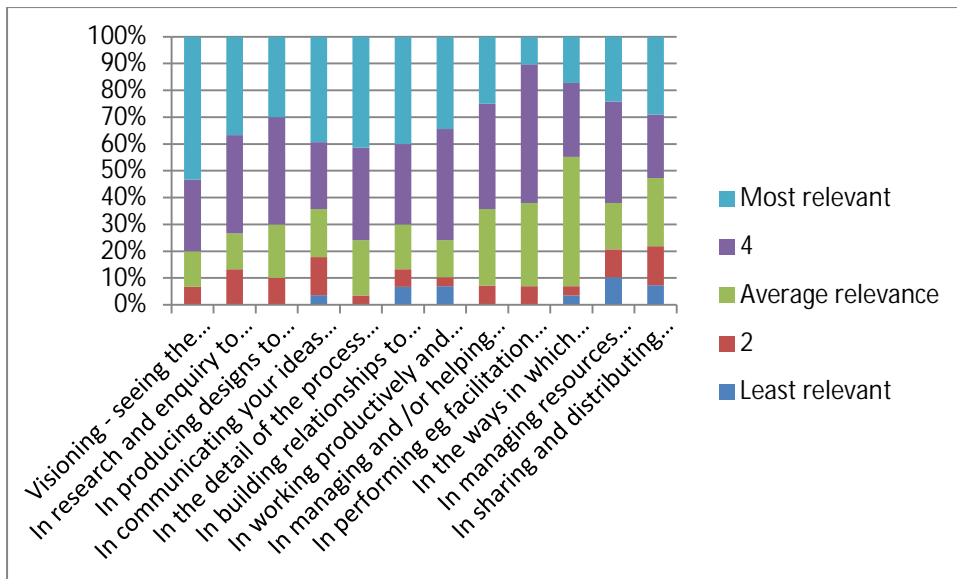
6. With reference to this project, please rate the extent to which each of the components on the left was relevant to your creativity and ability to be creative. Scale 1 = least to 5 = greatest relevance; N/A = not applicable



Please add any other factors that you feel were important to your creativity and ability to be creative, and rate them using the same scale

## G. DISTRIBUTION OF CREATIVE EFFORT

7. With reference to the development you have described, please indicate how your creative effort was distributed through the different elements of the project. Scale as for previous question.



## 8. What is the relationship between your creativity, your professional development work and your own development as a professional? (comments unedited)

My creativity enables me to come up with interesting ideas and to persuade others that the ideas have value. But it's in the implementation of these ideas that I have to exercise my will, use my expertise and develop new knowledge and capability in the process. So it might be argued that imagination leads to creative ideas which drive motivation to implement them regardless of the cost but it's learning through and after the experience of trying to implement an idea that leads to my continued development as the type of professional I want to be. So they are connected in a way that enables me to me.

Creativity is part of me, not an add-on and as such it is a building block of my identity, personal and professional. Does this make sense?

Difficult since the professional environment did not value my vision. Interlinked

Totally interconnected

Very much interlinked. Educational development requires learning and facilitating new learning. If I don't reflect on what I have achieved or what my group has achieved, I can't move forward, and I can't help learning all the time, it is part of what makes me tick.

Engaging in good professional development is critical to my own career development and my learning. I am not the oracle so it is important to access and share with the thinking of others. I am always being faced with new and challenging opportunities so it is important to be broad in my spectrum of learning. I like (albeit sometimes it is terrifying) to be challenged in new ways, to take myself out of my comfort zone. Being a developer is quite a privilege.

I think as time has moved on I have become more creative but that is linked to my experience and my need to do things differently



Very close. My own professional development is intimately connected with my professional development work. Every interaction that I experience has an influence on my understanding of my identity as a professional educational developer.

I do not believe I have a great deal of natural creativity. However, there is perhaps some connection at different times dependent on level of autonomy, time allowance, funds available, etc. I try to self-learn some new aspects of LD but this is very time consuming and often not supported by managers. Creativity, professional and personal development have a close relationship. Without creativity, professional development has the tendency to become imposed practices that can be meaningless for the individual. Creativity can enhance development, but only if the institutional context allows agency, autonomy and shared responsibility.

Greater than

I always set goals to improve my personal and professional development and a key part of these goals are to find more creative and innovative ways to carry out my work effectively. the relationship is a learning one. i am learning from those I work with, I am learning with those I work with, and my own professional development provides sparks to enable me to continue to be creative and work effectively with others, and to continue to learn from them.

Symbiotic

They nurture each other - my professional development enables me to see new possibilities or apply what others have done to my own situation, and then communicate to those I work with.

The relationship is based on the knowledgement and information.

My academic performance is essentially associated with my creativity.

It fluctuates with context, circumstance and how well things are going.

I see creativity as more of an underpinning value rather than something that is part of my professional development. I have never considered before now that I would develop my creativity, until I read the question 'I develop myself through the professional development work I do this includes my creative development' - this is not because I think I'm very creative and don't have room to improve, I just see it as something deeper than a skill.

'Academic innovation' is the fulcrum that allows me to think and work creatively. It's in my job title (because I made sure it was valued) and this means I 'have permission' and I'm even expected to take risks to ensure the institution is fit for the future. My responsibility for the University's professional development means that I am able to influence creative thinking amongst across the institution. I am told this is quite empowering.

Creativity is the main factor for me to work on professional projects, and achieve success.

They are all closely inter-twined - of equal value - movement in one element generating a shift in the other 2.

Autonomy is key and having self belief in what I am doing. I cannot separate the three. Especially I think because my field is so rapidly changing (technology/computing) I constantly try to find new examples, new practices, new ways fo sharing and creating knowledge.

critical thinking

time is a factor, lack of admin means that research is done on own time and thus not well organised or produced.

n/a

Creativity is important for my professional development work and my own development as a professional. To make great contribute to the development of teachers' ability in educational reform, especially in the field of teaching materials and methods, I must work creatively to get more resources and develop different ways to support teachers. In doing these, I becomes more and more creative

I am not sure I can see any real differences about my creativity and these aspects. I think that my creativity is manifest in more or less the same way for proof development work I undertake and my own development

Although retired from paid employment, creativity of an intellectual nature is vital to my sense of wellbeing and feeling I still have a contribution to make to academic and social contexts. This derives from my self-motivation and need for self-esteem above material rewards.

**9. What is distinctive about the way creativity features in the work of an educational developer compared to an academic teacher? (unedited comments)**

There is considerable overlap between teaching and educational development but the forms of educational development I engage in, with outside mainstream thinking about what constitutes learning and development, and outside the infrastructure and requirements of a course require much more creative effort in persuading people of the worth and value of the ideas.

We all need to be creative. Creative to connect with people, ideas and make learning stimulating, identify problems and solve them.

Teachers perhaps focus still too much on the what they are going to teach. Developers spend more time thinking about the how and the why and how learning happens? This might be a generalisation but it is a conclusion from working with academic teachers for a few years now stories they have shared.

My responses are all linked to the institution I worked until Sep 13, including 10.

All forms of creativity are essentially the same - it does not matter what you do.

More space

i feel it is important to inspire and engage people through my role at all times

The two are without doubt related but as a developer you are under the critical eye of your peers, this is very challenging. Developers need to engage with a host of different paradigms of curriculum design, development and delivery for example and manage ones way through academic tribes and territories.

I am not sure there is always as some really good academic teachers are often creative I think (aspirationally perhaps) that there is not much distinction - or that there shouldn't be. Teachers, like educational developers, are there to support, guide, challenge and share, and creativity plays a role in all of these.

As a skills adviser we are faced with teaching topics that many students have low levels of interest in. Hence it is helpful to try and make it as engaging as possible but I find this quite difficult apart from creating more colourful/smart art type presentations with images, etc. We do use extracts from subject materials but this too is not exactly enticing!!

I think both cohorts need to use creativity in their practice and collaborate among themselves to enhance positive change and progress. This way it will not be a top down approach where teachers feel that they are forced to change their individual styles.  
encouragement

Lecturers help students to develop specific academic skills and behaviours which are defined via expressed learning outcomes and assessed via exams, assignments and continuous assessment. Educational developers have more flexible remit in that the student sets the goal, which may be academic, behavioural, emotional, social or personal. This allows for more flexibility and creativity in the interaction between the student and the Educational Developer than the student and the academic teacher.

I don't know that this works for everyone, but for me it means being creative outside of my discipline. my discipline is important to me, but I have to step out of that frame and move into more unfamiliar territory and in that new territory learn about differences as well as similarities, and to trust the perspective of others who are coming from a different epistemological stance! Scary at times, but key to success!

Can be valuable for both

Not sure, as I'm not an academic teacher. But I think it's to do with finding new innovative ways to deliver learning, as opposed to being a subject expert focusing on knowledge of a discipline. the way creativity in the work of an educational developer features is more based on the advanced and uncertainty of knowledge.

the most important thing for the educational developer is to consider the appropriateness of his/her new ideas.

I see education developers as having more space and license to be creative than an academic teacher. My perception of a teacher is that although they may use their creativity within their role, they are quite restricted by the constraints of what they need to deliver because of the way teaching has become in this country. An education developer can impact the curriculum and also the wider education that is available to students.

In my role I am often several steps ahead or perhaps to the side of others. This is actually quite double-edged because it often means that I can be quite disconnected from the real pressures and needs of academic colleagues so I have to be vigilant about this and ask colleagues to tell me when to get real.

For an educational developer, new plan and its implementation is the direct result of creativity, but new idea is more important for an academic teacher.

I'm not sure that there is a difference based on role - think it's more about the space/environment/organisational structures & contexts in which the different roles operate. So structures that stifle agency/contain the autonomy associated with creativity shapes how creativity is enacted. So if I work in an academic environment that gives me freedom to move then my creativity will thrive - through my contact with students/other teaching staff etc. Will it be credible with a sceptic academic? How will this impact on an academics practice and workload?

I'm not sure there should be any difference although for an academic you are usually present at the point of information exchange/creation of new knowledge so there is the ability to be spontaneous which I find central to my way of working. For an educational developer perhaps there is more need to anticipate what is going to happen during the students' creation of new knowledge. (This is actually something that I and my colleagues went through when our physical teaching environment changed so radically that we had to anticipate what would happen in a tutorial while we were delivering a lecture - it does lessen the spontaneity. critical thinking

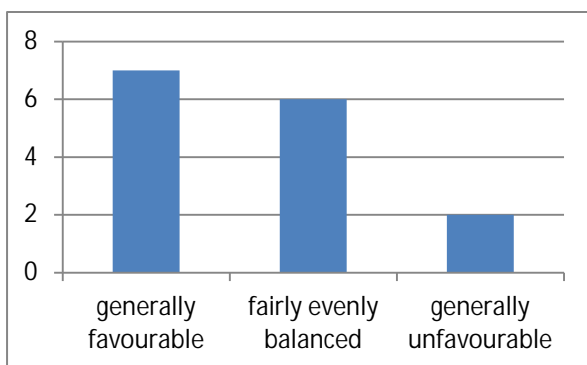
vision of goals of transformation versus delivery

Being a academic teacher, you need to know the discipline knowledge and understand students' learning process, and master necessary techniques of teaching. As an educational developer, you need to know the ways to get more resources, to know more and use different knowledge more creatively, to work with people of different field and be capable of excellent cooperation.

I am not sure that they may always be that different but it is actually highly dependant on the discipline context. One way in which they may differ is in the emphasis given to creativity as a set of concepts / topic. As an educational developer I am more interested in seeing evidence of the creative thinking of others (through engagement in e.g. developmental work undertaken in thinking about curriculum design) rather than explicit referencing (by me as an academic teacher) of the benefits of being creative.

A good academic teacher can still be (and still should be!) creative in how they teach, adapting their resources and methods to each unique situation. They should not be constrained by the need to achieve certain learning outcomes. An educational developer may not have the freedom they would wish, depending upon the context in which they are working.

**10. Is the environment in which you work generally favourable to you being able to utilise your creativity in the ways you would like to? Which descriptor best fits your context?**



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