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28th ICDE World Conference on Online Learning

3-7 Nov 2019 – Dublin, Ireland

New Title:

Getting Recognised: Accrediting and Promoting Professional Learning in Distance Education at the OUUK

Abstract:

Academic professional development can be key to empowering online educators to be more innovative and make informed decisions about enhancing learning and teaching, as they work in fast changing and new times. However, significant pressures and changes in the work and careers of academics have impacted on their practice and the way they perceive professional development. Workloads have increased dramatically over recent decades leaving very little time for building their own capacity. In an attempt to create professional development opportunities for its educators, which also recognise individual professional learning, the Open University (OU), UK, has developed a pathway to the Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowship accredited since 2016 by the now Advance HE. The Applaud scheme – accrediting and promoting professional learning and academic development – offers the OU educators the opportunity to claim both an OU Applaud fellowship and external recognition as an Associate Fellow, Fellow or Senior Fellow of the HEA. Applaud has been designed for those who teach or directly support student learning at all levels across the university. This presentation will further explore Applaud and uncover some of the benefits and challenges of managing such a scheme. It will also discuss the opportunities of engaging in such scheme for individuals and their faculties, and possibly also their students. More broadly, we will also discuss how these activities can influence promotion and probation criteria and other institutional learning and teaching strategies, as well as how award and recognition could assist in promoting professional learning and building capacity of online educators.