



What conditions and environment could support teachers in finding space for 'creativity' in their work with curriculum?

By teachers I mean tutors, learning support professionals and designers for learning

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Context

This personal account was commissioned by the LTSN Generic Centre through a negotiated brief. Its purpose is to provide primary evidence of the way academics think about creativity in their work with the curriculum. Appendix I summarises a range of ways to create space for creativity in the curriculum, building on the ideas that emerged from the inquiry.

My current role, as leader of the Open University's Postgraduate Certificate programme for higher education teachers across the United Kingdom and Continental Western Europe, offers innumerable insights into the work of teachers and practitioners at HE level. Chairing a cross-disciplinary and multi-institutional M-level programme engages me with the work of professionals teaching at HE level in a wide range of contexts – from lecturers in traditional universities, to lawyer-tutors, agricultural veterinary trainers and nurse-educators. As course and curriculum design is part of the assessed curriculum for participants, **a series of online conferences provided conversational data that allowed for the emergence of creative issues and solutions from a range of practice and discipline areas.**

Inquiry processes

The processes of this collective inquiry are, on the whole, embedded in the curriculum and content of the certificate programme. The programme's content is based on theoretical writings and expert practitioner advice, initially collected and written by the course designers – Graham Gibbs, David and Carole Baume and other OU colleagues. Increasingly, this valuable resource is extended and enriched by up-to-date web-based links and the shared experience of participants – currently around 60 teachers and tutors. In a series of online conferences, focused and moderated by programme team members and part-time tutors associated with the programme, self-selected participants discuss a range of issues, more or less related to the portfolio-based assessment. At the point where participants were wrestling with 'course design' as a topic, there was a move to start a sub-conference entitled *Power Issues* to explore the constraints and freedoms of curriculum design and, serendipitously, I was approached as a potential contributor to the Innovative Curriculum project. So, in informal ways, the participants and I have together developed the data (if such virtual conversations can be graced with such a term) that underpin this report.

In carrying out this small piece of research and drafting the report, I have also drawn on my own experiences as I have been re-creating the content and assessment approaches of the certificate programme in response to changing agendas in higher education. (Re-versioning is the current term for this process in the OU.) Face-to-face conversations with my colleagues in the Open University (lecturers, project teams, tutors and members of the course team) have informed my understanding of some of the challenges of designing for diversity and creativity with particular reference to open / distance / flexible or distributed learning and the management of online learning, in particular. These conversations inform the report, which has also been strengthened by comments and suggestions from Norman Jackson.

The inquiry does not claim to provide a definitive cross-disciplinary perspective. It does, however, draw on contributions from a range of disciplines and professional expertise. In appreciating the various briefing papers that have been produced for the project conference, I have begun to internalise a definition of creativity that incorporates many of the ideas that LTSN network colleagues have proposed. I have not managed to resist *all* temptation to indicate where the insights from my participants may connect with and inform these ideas. However, my intention is to begin to present some of the features of the inquiry and to encourage network colleagues to draw their own lines of connection between notions of creativity emerging from the Imaginative Curriculum project and the voices in this report.

Participants

I have mentioned, above, that my participants are drawn from a range of disciplines. For reasons of anonymity and to maintain the privacy to which course participants are entitled, I am not providing any information that will identify contributors as individuals or as members of any institution. The following list, therefore, is simply indicative of the range of professional and disciplinary contexts, in no particular order, that informed the inquiry:

- Law
- Performing arts
- Psychology and counselling
- Nurse education and training
- Teaching and learning online (at undergraduate and postgraduate levels)
- Medicine-related sciences
- Information technologies
- Agricultural and veterinary training
- Undergraduate English and media education
- Philosophy
- Skills and guidance (in support of academic development)

Quotations (inset and in italics) are taken from the online conference. Any edited amendments aim to clarify meaning or to ensure anonymity.

Overview Framing an environment for creativity

In presenting some preliminary outcomes of the inquiry, I distinguish between three overlapping areas:

- the immediate social and political context such as a department or faculty, working within institutional and organisational constraints and influenced by political and quality drivers;
- individual teacher / practitioner understandings and frames for experience;
- creativity for the learner – how participants perceived their role in creating creative environments

These distinctions are essentially troublesome, because structure and agency (like learning and teaching?) are co-related in complex ways. For our purposes, the device may help to organise participants' frames of reference.

SECTION 1 Structural norms and boundaries

What limits a creative curriculum?

In our discussions and in their written assignments, the challenge to participants' creativity or power to innovate was often expressed in terms of limited professional freedom, usually attributed to the normalising constraints of a particular context. One respondent caricatured this as the voice of 'the System / Norm':

It is important that we become efficient, standardise our education and make it to very high standards. We need to increase the availability of education to a wider population. We need to ensure quality and thus impose effective quality assurance procedures....

¹The limitations that are imposed by structure may be experienced in terms of:

- ❑ 'How we do things' in this department / discipline / institution / sector
- ❑ Programme specifications and pre-ordered or inter-connected course / module content and outlines
- ❑ Rules and regulations, particularly those bound in with assessment practice and quality standards
- ❑ Time and pressure to produce and present a course / module, etc.

The notion of standards – particularly the need for courses, modules and units to be seen to be of an appropriate standard – seemed to be uppermost in people's minds.

I am told that we should meet certain kinds of educational and organisational requirements for which I should provide much paperwork ... accurately filled-out lesson plans, assessment schedules and schemes of work, and examples of assignments out and in ... I never feel that the real depth of the course can be appreciated from these processes, and the feedback from them is rather poor.

Quality Assurance procedures ... a lot of paperwork to determine that you are doing the right things, with resulting less time in actually developing the learning experience.

One interesting dichotomy was drawn between a golden age – identifying creativity as a personal freedom to design courses for academic purposes – and what might be termed the new vocationalism that requires us to design courses to meet the needs of professional bodies (at postgraduate level, in this instance):

I loved the freedom I had to create my own course when I was an academic. I hoped students would share my enthusiasm for that subject and was open to their own wishes to pursue avenues within a wide remit. Now I have a short time to turn academically taught students into new professionals.

Potential space within these limits

Although standards and structures are recognised as supportive of learning, identifying and allocating unstructured space for reflection and learning has equal, though perhaps conflicting, value in a curriculum. I would argue that it is as necessary to have thinking space for the curriculum designers as it is for the students who work with those designs. And, of course, the certificate programme needs to address both these dimensions because it is engaging teachers as learners. As part of a conversation about the need for explicit standards *and* the need for space, a participant suggested:²

¹ It was peripherally acknowledged that, for participants, some of the normalising pressures to express teaching and design in particular ways and within strict time frames were also driven by the assessment framework of the certificate programme, designed as it was to meet SEDA and ILT standards.

² I am struck by a parallel, here, between this and Jenny Moon's (2002) suggestion that a student's baseline or competent pass could be upgraded by reflection and creativity.

Surely the best situation would be the facility to do either, or both. If the structure is there you could go beyond it or achieve the same in a different way. Flexibility could be the key.

The list that follows anticipated how participants might create 'spaces' for creativity in their work as curriculum designers. In constructing this list, I drew on informal evidence of many creatively adaptive approaches that I had read in participants' assignments, tutor feedback and informal online 'chat'. As an outside observer, I could see how participants' experiences of limited power to innovate (as indicated above) could be and had sometimes been turned around, in practice:

- ❑ A small module *within* a programme may provide affordances as a special case
- ❑ May be non-assessed (or formative / experiential hurdle) area of curriculum
- ❑ Learning outcomes – offer the freedom to demonstrate in a range of ways
- ❑ Professional development / reflection and the emerging student PDP framework – opportunities for holistic approaches to student learning
- ❑ Different sorts of students (widening participation) – a positive driver for thinking differently
- ❑ New media – new environments.

All these opportunities need to be supported by personal and interpersonal contexts for change:

- ❑ A personal willingness to risk changing or adapting
- ❑ Organisational and sector-wide encouragement for innovation
- ❑ So much pressure that creative responses become the only option?

In conference discussion, it was not easy to find examples of participants responding to boundaries in ways that match this prepared list – but we might speculate that this is an outcome of 'hidden' creativity – that people don't recognise their own *situated* creativity. One participant had creatively re-framed the challenge of a curriculum committee into an opportunity for collegiality:

I asked for the collaboration of the other [...] faculty so we could determine a very specific skills list for the required courses in the [...] major. I wanted to know which skills I would be responsible for in the first-year courses and which skills were meant to be introduced in the second- and third-year courses. We completed this skills list just before the Christmas break and it was an invaluable tool for me - and will continue to be - as I plan my courses. ... I was thrilled to hear all the [...] profs ... saying that they had benefited from the insight and support that came out at our curriculum committee meetings. The meetings also helped to 'bond' the [...] profs, thanks to sandwiches and drinks, with the result that we have gotten to know each other better. It's always easier to drop in and bounce ideas off someone with whom you have a current, friendly relationship.

By voicing her uncertainties in what might have been experienced as a risky situation, this participant has effectively turned the constraints of normalisation (collegial pressures and quality agendas) into a positive support for her own practice. The example also highlights appreciation from her colleagues for the outcomes of her questioning approach.³

For those participants whose work involved professional development and incorporated elements of reflective practice (whatever this meant for their particular discipline), it became particularly essential to design a flexible and negotiated curriculum. Jenny Moon (2002) suggests that this creative tension is likely to be experienced more at M-level than in undergraduate study. Working in a medical field, a participant argued that

³ The participant claims that the initial question was triggered by a reflective assignment task undertaken as part of the certificate programme.

The need to design a post graduate [medicine-related science] course should aim to ultimately improve the quality of services, however this could be the result of transferable skills taught. Reflection is a challenging concept for many [practitioners] but important at post graduate level. It also links into clinical Governance. If the skill of reflection is introduced and developed looking at rainbows, it could be transferred to [practice] at a later date...

I only deliver post grad. degrees and the need to foster deep learning [in] mature students indicates that they should perceive that they are gaining the knowledge that is important to them, so we build this into course design.

Several participants needed to think creatively about curriculum design because, in their normal practice, their role required them to design for diagnostic purposes or for skills, rather than towards benchmarked or summative assessment at HE level. In these cases, some of the structures and boundaries identified above were hardly relevant and yet, to meet the certificate's assessment procedures, participants needed to indicate where their course 'fitted' in the HE scheme of things. This sort of creative endeavour exemplifies, for me, one of the benefits of structured frameworks that encourage those who might normally see themselves as marginal or 'outside the box' to position their work within some formal structures: this can enhance self-efficacy beliefs and confidence in the value of their contribution. Such personal re-framing also broadens our collective appreciation of the range of roles and activities that support learning in higher education.

It is important to remember that we can not, need not and, arguably, should not formally assess everything and that assessment strategies benefit from diversity (e.g., Knight, 2002). The participant group in this inquiry did not provide an example of a formatively assessed module that fits within a qualifying programme but I firmly believe that this becomes a possibility, as the HE community begins to respond creatively to the over-arching structures of benchmarked qualifications. The term 'bricolage' (Huberman, 1993), and its association with tinkering and adapting, describes such a positive process of adapting creatively within acknowledged constraints. One of the particular features of this sort of creativity is that it tends to be invisible and unacknowledged – but not usually subversive. The results of such tinkering are often satisfying to the *artisan* and effective in a very grounded way for the learner. Perhaps the certificate programme itself provides an example of this creative 'edge': as I re-think the assessment for the certificate programme, I find that I want to distinguish more clearly the *process* value of the professional reflection and personal development that emerge in the portfolio assignments, and to offer M-level credit only for the more theory-driven, summative assessment. *But this is a tricky edge and one that I'm not totally sure the OU's assessment systems will be able to handle.* As one of the participants says,

... there is so much potential and abundance in diversity and diverse styles in education, that we may need to consider what is trying to come in at our margins!

The following section explores how teachers can be supported (and can support themselves) in taking creative or innovative risks. Section 3 focuses on what participants understood about the student experience of creativity and moves towards a concluding section in which I suggest that political and institutional systems (as well as we ourselves) may need to develop new approaches in response to a move towards more creative learning relationships.

SECTION 2 Fostering personal creativity – as professional development and for the enhancement of teaching

For colleagues working within and around the boundaries and limits described above, curriculum design (or design for learning) risks becoming a compliance task – the 'graft' part of our role. For some academics, this compliance is rewarded and balanced by creative opportunities in research. For practitioner-teachers, the satisfaction of nurturing enthusiastic or inspired fellow practitioners can be rewarding. If we are to find the tasks associated with design for teaching and learning intrinsically

satisfying as opportunities for creative endeavour, we may need to shift our perceptions or re-frame the context of our work. Of course, it is helpful if institutional and political values provide some enhanced status and other extrinsic rewards for teaching and learning. But how does an individual practitioner build space for his or her own creativity?

One participant identified a risk in providing personal space for reflection. From the context, it wasn't clear whether this referred to students or to professionals in higher education – the Pandora's box metaphor springs to mind:

... once you encourage reflection you can neither prescribe nor proscribe what those reflections will be. And once you achieve reflection for action it is likely that that is going to lead to some kind of change.

In a creative attempt to give voice to thinking *outside* normalising pressures, the participant who gave voice to the 'Norm', generated three other 'voices' that could respond in different ways to what may seem like restrictive structure – his own creative way to articulate professional drives and tensions (that, interestingly echo some of the findings in Trowler, (1998). The *revolutionary* would say, for example:

We don't want your norms and bureaucracy, they stifle creativity and freedoms. We feel oppressed and controlled by the unconscious power you hold over us, and so we directly or indirectly oppose you and want to overthrow you!

The *marginalized* or the *oppressed* would respond to such pressure by saying:

We are suffering from so much being imposed on us, and from our voices being unheard. No-one seems to care about our views and our feelings. We either have to go along and do our job as told, or we are seen as bad or obstructive. Our bodies are giving way from the stresses we hold. We feel bullied and bludgeoned to deliver and behave in particular ways.

Such polarised belief systems position the person as victim, even where resistance is the preferred approach. They limit the potential for creativity, since the underlying assumption is that an external power – 'they' – hold the power for change.

The fourth voice suggested by this participant was *facilitator of a discussion*. In ensuing dialogue, I think that these facilitative roles were attributed to the way the certificate programme operates, as a context for professional and personal development.

These roles are maybe present in us all from time to time, and are bigger than any individual or organisation, while the individuals/organisations are usually more also than just the roles themselves. ... One view of [all] these roles is that they are constantly seeking facilitation and conscious interaction.

At the level of the individual academic and learning support professional, creativity is most likely to be found and fostered with those already interested in their own learning – perhaps, but not exclusively, exemplified by participants on certificate programmes such as ours. It is often useful to be reminded that courses and workshops are not the only spaces for learning.

The following examples of structuring creativity illustrate a range of support frameworks for developing personal creativity, from an informal network to a formal course:

- Institutionally-based informal 'creativity networks' of individual colleagues, probably outside a discipline community (may be face to face and/or online facilitated by web-resources) – time and space for thinking 'out of the box', free from pressure to produce or comply (as exemplified by this LTSN project)

- ❑ Frameworks within educational / professional development programmes (e.g., a postgraduate certificate programme) that stimulate innovation for personal learning – potentially, but not necessarily, for accreditation or CPD
- ❑ Structured courses (such as OU Creativity and Innovation; managing complexity) to learn and practice theoretical understandings.

There may be resistance from an institution, or from colleagues:

As I/we teach and facilitate around sustainability, then we are inevitably a bit of a challenge to the system. But I also don't think it would be sustainable just to slam the system or revolt against it without engaging with it, and having it's wellbeing at heart. Our course addresses; community; relationships; exploring our deepest beliefs and world views. These things can be very threatening to institutions. But in the favour of the institutions, we have also been encouraged and enabled to teach and explore these areas. The risk of teaching some of the things we do is that we will be and have been called 'weird' or 'cranks', and that there are some quite deep seated antagonisms very close to the surface in our colleagues and the public. The benefits of – what I would term – exploring the edges (rather than maybe 'pushing at the edges'), is that there is a huge amount of life and creativity at those edges to be lived.

But this range of illustrative opportunities, and the risks and benefits of articulated and explicit creativity as described by the participant, above, do not take account of *bricolage* – invisible creativity. As we respond creatively in our everyday practice, professionally tuning and tinkering our learning relationships with colleagues and students, we may be supported by joining and contributing to those explicit frameworks described above. But our situated and responsive small acts of creativity could equally remain hidden – from our selves and others.

So, in the following section, we consider the relationship between developing teachers' creativity and the student learning experience.

SECTION 3 Approaches to creativity for student learning

In our online conference, considering creativity and flexibility in the *student* experience seems to have provided a safe context for surfacing some deeper factors that may inhibit creativity in *teachers*. Perhaps (and this is my own speculation), some of our worries about our students' futures may be a projected anxiety about our own creative 'edges' and change in general. It was in this discussion that I felt we most closely identified the range of possible assumptions that underpinned our different responses to creativity and flexibility in the curriculum. It is noticeable that participants readily conflated negotiation or flexibility with creativity and innovation.

As teachers, changing the learning environment is likely to challenge our assumptions about:

- ❑ Contexts for learning
- ❑ Outcomes of learning

And, most importantly, perhaps, for this report

- ❑ Our role – controlling / managing relationships with students.

The network discussions have highlighted several contextual factors in student learning that connect with what participants added to the inquiry – themes such as *distance learning environments* and issues of *professional development* and *employability*. Because, increasingly, learning happens in a variety of ways and situations, Alan Jenkins (2002) suggests that:

We may now need to give greater attention to those methods that support learning outside class and at a distance.

This, of course, is the context within which our certificate participants are learning – using networked conferences, with written and online materials to support their development. One teacher had reservations about the use of email in distance learning, based on her tutoring experiences. Her pragmatic dilemma concerns how much support to offer students who, for whatever reason, fail to *participate* in the online opportunities she creates:

... do I use email and thereby exclude some students? Or do I laboriously print out every email 8-10 times and snail-mail it to those who do not have email (which costs me a lot in postage and printing) or do I eschew email completely because some students in the group do not have it?

These may be familiar questions to those experienced in online teaching. They probably belong alongside the challenge that independent and collaborative learning presents to distance learning modes. When our PGCert conference works well, as in the lively discussion from which this paper is drawn, one can see the potential for creativity, developing an independent voice and valuable collaboration in this mode of working. But the skills and the time involved in designing and moderating such activities responsively are a major commitment of resource that I don't *always* manage effectively.

Employability / professional development as a context for learning featured in several participants' reservations about supporting creativity for students. Some felt that the context for a curriculum is (or should be) explicitly designed to meet the requirements of professional practice and that, for this reason, curriculum needs to be designed, met and measured to a known standard:

*Are there circumstances in which we would **not** wish our students to be empowered to drive the learning agenda? I'm thinking of, for example, courses such as medicine, perhaps, where society wants people who qualify through those courses to have covered the necessary topics to a suitable depth and level such that they can practise competently as members of those professions.*

And, as another example:

... I now have to protect the Bar and the public from poorly prepared barristers.

In attempting to provide the protective control that the professional body requires, the same participant drew our attention to a paradox:

The irony is that we have a tightly controlled course for people many of whom are about to become independent, self employed lawyers, self-starters and pro-active etc! A clash of student type and course requirements.

The tension between controlled structures and creative or negotiated curricula was linked, in this discussion, with moves to enhance student 'employability' and, in undergraduate courses, the increased expectation that all graduates should have some core abilities:

... I've read about courses where tutors are very open to modifying the course content or allowing specialisation in certain directions in the light of students' own preferences. Is this really OK? In all courses? In some - and, if so, which ones? Widening it a little, is there a core of study that we should require of any HE student? Does this take us back to the notion of "graduateness" - generic qualities that should be displayed by any HE student?

Peter Knight's (2002) conviction that students should have 'constrained choice' to guide them towards complex achievements, mastery of a subject, discipline or practice suggests that structure is, indeed, useful in achieving such outcomes. He does, however, build on this foundation to suggest that 'mastery' can be a firm basis for the sort of flexibility that contributes to graduate employability.

Behind our unwillingness to consider the move from content-focus to student-focus, from more to less structure perhaps there is an anxiety about our own status and role as teachers:

If there is a lack of structure in course design ... How then do we justify ourselves as teachers? Would the position still hold value, or could students go it alone?

Some of us, however, were more than willing to relinquish our teacherly control in the interest of supporting our students' independent (or subversive!) thinking:

*I am probably not a 'revolutionary' but I certainly try to be subversive and courage it in my students. Above all I want them to question things and question me. I like the line from Walt Whitman's 'Song of Myself' Canto XLVII when he says: "He most honours my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher". 'Destroy' is a bit too strong but I know what he means.*⁴

John Biggs (2001:5) is quite clear that a more 'aligned' curriculum would involve a change of power base that would involve trusting students to control their own and their peers' learning. However, the question behind some of the anxieties raised by participants seems to be about whether we *can* trust students to use this space or choice. If we were to provide creative spaces, such as Alheit describes ...

Spaces for reflection and communication, as well as interactions with 'spaces of opportunity' are at least as important as developing 'instruments for individual self-management'

(Alheit, 2002:19 cited in Knight, 2002)

... do we really believe that students would manage themselves effectively? And, alongside this question, we may even need to consider whether we ourselves feel we can be trusted with unmonitored 'spaces for reflection and communication'.

We could hypothesise a creative, independent, free-thinking student whose context for

... 'surviving' (learning anything at all), must fundamentally be about effectively applying the skills of coping with uncertainty and with a lack of any explicit consensus.

(Jackson, 2002: 3)

But what would this mean for the 'teachers' of such a learner? Tosey (2002: 2) suggests that the change would involve valuing 'emergent' learning. I think it might also involve teachers in dropping some of what Boud (1995) described as the 'final' language of assessment and control that has, at some cost, protected us from our worst insecurities.

A participant described the tensions in her teaching role (arguably crossing the adult-ed / HE boundary) in some detail. I think it illustrates many of the values that we might be considering here:

The context was mainly working with women (many from ethnic minority groups) and developing their employment potential. It seemed to me that in a one-to-one situation the power was retained by the worker, telling the "client" what she needed to do to get a job, showing her how to do a "CV", even sometimes writing the CV for her so that she never gained any sense of autonomy over the direction in which she was going or any responsibility for how she moved forward. In comes yours truly with the alternative idea of covering the same ground in a group with a view to handing over the power to the group, so

⁴ I think we have two different sorts of scientist at either end of this continuum.

that they took responsibility for their own and each other's development and job searching. ... I still think it is very difficult to transform a one-to-one where the client comes in with a pupil-teacher (child-adult) approach into an adult-to-adult exchange. ... I seem to expend quite a lot of energy redirecting exchanges, both one-to-one and group, into something which more closely resembles an exchange of equals.

As we have seen in the network discussions and on our certificate conference, easing power and control structures in favour of some unbounded creativity is certain to raise anxieties about curriculum standards, our roles as teachers and, ultimately, the purposes of higher education.

Some conclusions and implications

In considering creativity and curriculum, there are several 'drivers' for the changes identified as desirable and / or threatening by participants in the inquiry:

- ❑ Accreditation / enhanced value of a professional teaching role: the development of communities of practice and action inquiry around HE teaching in the disciplines
- ❑ HE's changing purposes and 'employability' outcomes
- ❑ An expanding and more diverse student body, with new expectations.

These changes contribute to a sense that curriculum design may be moving towards valuing more highly students' creative engagement in learning and performing in more holistic ways.

To enable such change to happen, teachers need to consider and re-evaluate our roles and our practices, participating in supportive inquiries and communities that allow safe and honest exploration and resistance, as well as encouraging growth. In this context, we may be encouraged to notice the adaptive / creative work we undertake in small ways when working with students and colleagues: this sort of activity can influence the curriculum very effectively, without revolution.

In addition, political and institutional arrangements can continue to support these processes by:

- ❑ Acknowledging that not everything in the curriculum can be controlled, measured or assessed – some 'slack' for learning
- ❑ Cycles of open-ended 'encouragement' for innovation, driven by small allocations of 'skunk-tank' funding for inquiry without measurable outcomes
- ❑ A climate of enhancement and professional trust, rather than assurance and compliance. For example, encourage 'learning from failure' (or things that do not quite go as intended) and sharing those experiences of what didn't work – a major change of culture from that which currently requires reports to highlight (spin) successes to justify funding.

Such cultural change needs to be developed and recognised across all levels of activity – in designing for students' learning, through professional development programmes for academics and teaching staff, permeating quality enhancement processes and procedures, and even in the ways that funding agencies write bidding criteria for large-scale educational research.

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Appendix I Creating space for creativity in the curriculum – questions and suggestions

1. Creative edges of curriculum	
<p>If we consider the institutional regulations and procedures, QAA subject benchmarks and perhaps Professional Body requirements, where are there affordances and opportunities that encourage open-ended approaches to learning?</p> <p>Where is there support for innovation in my own institution?</p> <p>Large-scale curriculum reform may be underway but this takes time and commitment. Where are the gaps for tinkering with curriculum and experimenting with creativity in small ways?</p>	<p>E.g., to meet the key skill requirement: "Improving own learning and performance" students may be encouraged to develop reflective and connected thinking - a process-focus can encourage creative approaches</p> <p>Join a project e.g., to develop the use of new media or in support of widening participation agendas</p> <p>Looking across a whole programme, there will probably be duplication of assessed outcomes and procedures: in one module or unit, we might substitute <u>one</u> pilot assessment that encourages uncertain or unspecified outcomes.</p>
2. Creative spaces for our own development	
<p>Beyond the immediate time pressures and compliance requirements, how can we create time and space in our workloads to allow us to think creatively?</p> <p>Where do we reflect on and learn from experiments that work / don't work?</p> <p>Where are there colleagues we can trust with our 'unfinished' ideas and share our 'mistakes'?</p> <p>How do we <i>already</i> work creatively around or with problems?</p>	<p>Participate in a recognised course, programme or workshop about learning and teaching</p> <p>Talk and think with colleagues informally - across disciplines and institutions (e.g., ILT and LTS networks) and use other CPD opportunities</p> <p>Practice re-framing and work-around strategies – dare to think differently</p> <p>Appreciate where we are already being creative in adapting and responding to situations (bricolage)</p>
3. Space for learners	
<p>How can we transfer ideas about what supports our own creativity to the curriculum environment we create for students?</p> <p>Students are driven by assessment – how can we use this to encourage creativity?</p> <p>How can we manage our relationships with students so that we know they learn what we teach?</p>	<p>Creativity is a social process – develop trust through low-stakes collaborative work</p> <p>We learn from 'mistakes' (our own and other peoples) – assess process and participation, not always 'success' (e.g., learning logs, online conferences)</p> <p>Encourage students to negotiate how they demonstrate their achievements as outcomes, to serve <i>their</i> purposes, as well as ours.</p> <p>Trust our students to learn in and from the curriculum we have designed – keep reflecting with them.</p>