

Learning for a Complex World: Appreciating the Power of Immersive Experience

<http://complexworld.pbwiki.com/Immersive+experience>

Wednesday 9th January 13.00 - Thursday 10th January 16.00

Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education (SCEPTrE)

University of Surrey, Guildford



We are making an assumption that people who want to participate in this collaborative enquiry have experienced for themselves the power of immersive experiences – situations where we are engulfed in challenging contexts for working and learning requiring intensive, prolonged and holistic engagement (physical, intellectual and emotional). Such situations encourage *learning to be and become*, rather than just *learning about*. They have the potential to stimulate creativity and transform people. The event provides a starting point for an appreciative enquiry aimed at discovering how we currently provide opportunities for immersive experiences in higher education and whether there are more and better ways of doing it. The event will appeal to anyone who is interested in encouraging higher education to move towards a more experiential, 'real world' curriculum and who is interested in their own professional learning.

Examples of immersive contexts in higher education might include: work placement, term-time employment, volunteering or social enterprise, entrepreneurial activity, certain types of intensive collaborative enquiries perhaps involving role play, field work/study situations or projects, study tours, participation in 'assessment centres' and virtual worlds like 'second life', extra-curricular processes...and many more!

Programme

January 9th Theme: What do we mean by Immersive Experience?

13.00 **Stimulator: Locating immersion in experiential learning: some triggers for thinking**
Professor David Boud, University of Technology Sydney

Immersive Experience Appreciative Inquiry

Following a short introduction to the process, participants will share their personal stories of immersive experiences. Personally significant insights derived through the conversations will be recorded on a jointly prepared poster and displayed on a giant Poster Wall.

16.00 Tea/coffee

16.30 **Plenary discussion** conducted in café format aimed at sharing insights into the nature of immersive experiences and the learning that is derived from such experiences. The whole process will be filmed and supported with a conference artist who will help us visualize our conversations.

18.30 **Networking dinner and experience**

January 10th Theme: Immersive Experiences in Higher Education

08.00 **Breakfast conversation** with representatives from the ACEN Australian Collaborative Education Network (similar to the UK's Work Integrated Learning Network) at Queensland University of Technology and Swinburne University Melbourne.

09.0 **Parallel conversations.** Conversations will focus on different forms of higher educational experience that seek to create or anticipate conditions for immersive experience. There will be a mix of pre-planned and emergent topics.

12.15 Lunch

13.30 **Synthesising plenary** conducted in café and open space formats. *The session will begin by sharing the results of conversations and then through an open space approach we will develop a plan for taking the Appreciative Inquiry forward. Reflective commentaries will be provided by Professor David Boud and Dr Glynis Cousin (Higher Education Academy).*

15.30 **Finish**

Entry to the Immersive Experience Appreciative Inquiry

To join the Appreciative Inquiry you must 1) prepare a story of a significant immersive experience that you have experienced (any context) and 2) identify an example of immersive learning experience from within your own undergraduate programmes.

Please use the prompts below to structure your story and submit it electronically to Di Whitelock at sceptre@surrey.ac.uk by Thursday November 15th

Appreciative Inquiry Questions

Please include:

- Your name
- Institution
- Email address
- Imaginative title for your example of an Immersive Experience

PART A : Your own immersive experience

We are looking for inspiring and significant examples of immersive learning experiences in order to gain insights into what immersive experience might mean and feel like, and the effects such experiences have on people.

Please structure your story using the following prompts to help us see patterns across the stories. An illustrative example story of an immersive experience can be found at:

<http://complexworld.pbwiki.com/story+of+an+immersive+experience>

- Q1 What was the context/situation/challenge for your immersive experience?
- Q2 What were the particular characteristics of the situation that engaged you in an immersive way.
- Q3 How did the experience change you? *What forms of learning / personal development / change came out of the experience?*
- Q4 What words/concepts/feelings would you use to describe the immersive experience?
- Q5 What principles or lessons can be drawn from your story? *How could your story inform designs and enrich opportunities for learning through immersive experience in higher education?*

PART B : Immersive experience in the HE Curriculum

If you are able: please provide a short description of an example of an immersive experience in the higher education curriculum and say why it is an immersive experience.

All stories and curriculum examples will be compiled into a 'Collection of Immersive Experiences' for the event and will ultimately be used to provide content for a story-based wiki, which participants can continue to develop.