

How to create effective collaborations between academics and educational development professionals

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The project aimed to assist academics and educational development professionals (EDPs) to establish successful long-term collaborations. Improving the success of such collaborations is important in contemporary higher education because the ubiquitous presence of technology-enabled learning and teaching materials requires academics and EDPs to collaborate successfully over extended periods. Despite the critical importance of successful collaborations between academics and EDPs, even well intentioned collaborations are subject to high rates of failure. In addition, existing guidance in the literature has thus far been unable to improve this situation successfully. This project used an autoethnographic research approach to analyse the development of a successful and sustained collaboration between one accounting academic and one EDP over time. The project used the qualitative memory data of the collaborators to create concept maps that summarise the development of the analysed relationship from the perspective of academic, the EDP, as well as the joint perspective of both collaborators. The project provides a systematic analysis of the created concept maps to identify factors that were deemed critical by each collaborator, as well as an assessment of their integration within the joint perspective of both collaborators.

The project's findings highlight that although the academic and the EDP approached their collaboration from different perspectives, a small set of key success factors, as well as the change in the relative importance of these factors over time, was critically important for the establishment of a successful collaboration. In addition, the project places the identified factors within the context of the prior literature, and develops evidence-based recommendations aimed at improving the success of collaborations between academics and EDPs in general. The findings of the project are valuable for academics, EDPs, and higher education managers because they provide practical evidence-based guidance that supports the creation of successful and sustainable collaborative working relationships between academics and EDPs.