Working Group 6: Creativity in a technology enhanced curriculum - Policy Paper

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Introduction
This strand of the EduSummit 2015 focuses on developing a better understanding of the relationship between creativity, its role in teaching and learning, the role that technology can play in the process and how all of these fit into broader curricular frameworks and goals.

Governments and educational institutions around the world are calling for the development of creative thinking skills, and our group will work to address this. For instance the push for innovation and creative approaches to contemporary problems is often spoken about or referred to in curriculum materials or educational policy standards internationally. However, one core problem here is that “creativity” as a term is not always clearly defined, or even articulated. This is essential if we are to move forward with specific suggestions or practices in curriculum and policy that meet the overarching 21st century goal of creativity. We therefore aim to understand what creativity might look like at present and in the future, and to develop ways of nurturing these practices towards improved teaching, learning and curriculum.

Contemporary technologies provide new and powerful ways for individuals and groups of individuals to be creative – and our group will focus on these opportunities within a 21st century framework for education. In relation to creativity and policy we will investigate how creativity is integrated in curricula and policy, and how creative practices are integrated across different curricula. We will investigate this at the macro level (national level: core objectives, attainment levels and examination programmes), the meso level (school level: school programmes and curricula) and the micro level (classroom and teacher level: teaching plan, instructional materials, textbooks and digital resources).

Innovative practices
Several innovative practices can be found throughout the world when it comes to integrating creativity in a technology enhanced curriculum. Countries such as Scotland, Australia and Singapore are integrating creativity in the national curriculum. Other countries make an effort to make this happen in a less policy-
 driven way by stimulating schools to make their own plans. During EduSummIT 2015 we will collect innovative practices and make them available for a larger audience.

**Issues and challenges for practitioners and policy makers**

There are different issues and challenges that can be identified in relation to creativity, because the term creativity itself is not always clearly defined, or even articulated. The issues range from the place that creativity has in different national curricula, the assessment of creativity, the gap between policy and practice, and the need for professional development of teachers. This has been studied in several contexts and across countries. O’Donnell and Micklethwaite (1999) for instance reviewed the curriculum documents of 16 (developed) countries, (American, European and East Asian), identifying the place of arts and creativity in education. They found that creativity was included at various educational levels, at least from early years through primary education for most countries and beyond, up to higher education, for some. The extent to which creativity is integrated in education differs across the countries. Key barriers to the implementation of policies and initiatives that aim to better equip students with skills in thinking and creativity relate to the weaknesses of existing evidence, to traditional mindsets among the actors that ought to participate in the innovation process (most notably teachers), and to the absence of a shared terminology and understanding of creativity that would give greater visibility to these learning outcomes. Furthermore, as the Creativity in Education Advisory Group of Scotland reports: Creativity needs to be built in as a key feature of all areas of the curriculum, Creativity should be fostered at an early stage, There should be more definition of the meaning of creativity and examples of how to include it in all curricular areas, There should be less emphasis on what is being taught and more on how, and Current assessment procedures need to be more flexible if creativity is to be fostered. More opportunities are needed for peer and self-assessment.

**Policy recommendations**

Creativity should be considered as part of the curriculum at macro, meso, and micro level. In order to achieve this we need a discourse on creativity, not aiming at a common, world-wide definition of the term, but to be able to explicitly state what is meant by creativity in a certain context (country, region, school, classroom) and thereby making it possible to make comprehensive decisions on how to integrate creativity at each level of the curriculum.

**Recommended readings**


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2 http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/hmiepcie_tcm4-712760.pdf