

Creativity in research education: Is it a threshold concept or just a good thing?

Panel

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Chair: Prof Gina Wisker, Centre for Learning and Teaching, University of Brighton, UK

This presentation reports on research work arising as a result of two challenges. The first was at the 2007 European Association for Research in Learning and Instruction (EARLI) conference in Budapest where the suggestion was made by a participant that creativity might be considered a threshold concept in research education. Subsequently a paper was presented at the 2009 EARLI conference in Amsterdam (Kiley, 2009) where it was argued 'that the use of the term creativity in research education refers more to disposition and personality e.g. adventurous, intuitive and seeing complexity, rather than a concept that can be defined as a 'Threshold Concept', that is a concept, across whose threshold one could cross. At that presentation and subsequently, vigorous debate has ensued between those who argue creativity is a threshold concept and those who argue otherwise.

This presentation will be in four parts. The first briefly discusses creativity as a function of, and in research, and then presents the results of a modest study which had as its aim gaining some insight into what experienced supervisors and thesis examiners considered to be 'creativity' in research education.

Secondly, the Threshold Concepts framework will be applied to the findings to determine whether creativity might be defined as a Threshold Concept at the research level (or is it just a good thing)!

The third part of the presentation, but not included in the preparatory paper, is the debate engaged in by participants. This debate will be chaired by Wisker and will actively encourage vigorous debate on the question: *Creativity in research education: Is it a threshold concept or just a good thing?*

The final five minutes will be devoted to summarizing the debate and coming to a conclusion, if possible. (Note: Creativity in this paper does not specifically relate to the creative or performing arts.)

Reference:

Kiley, M. (2009). Kiley, M. (2009). Creativity as a Threshold Concept in research education. Paper presented at the 13th biennial conference of the European Association of Research in Learning and Instruction.