

# EDUCATION FOCUSED ACADEMICS OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY AND BEYOND

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## BACKGROUND

Education focussed academic roles still remain a mystery in the tertiary system with few positions offered nationally; the definition, expectation and workload of these roles remains an evolving landscape. The role of education focused academics is both complex and challenging but critical for higher education (HE) to meet university initiatives such as increasing student numbers, providing authentic learning experiences, retaining students, and to meet employer expectations for STEM graduates.

## OUTCOMES

This presentation will look through the lens of two mid-career education focused academics from different institutions, comparing their roles, challenges and successes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century ecosystem. An insight into their innovative teaching practices to engage students in the classroom will be highlighted including education research that has been recognised both nationally and internationally. Beyond the classroom, both academics have a passion for education and have sought opportunities to obtain formal qualifications in HE. They are also leaders in education within their institutions; supporting academics in their scholarship of learning and teaching through workshops, facilitating communities of practice, and curriculum development of learning and teaching modules for continuing professional development in HE.

## CONCLUSIONS

Upon reflection, both academics credit their success to the importance of mentors and collaborations with peers. There is power in sharing ideas, receiving feedback and dividing workloads to collectively make an impact in the field of education research.

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