MB3 Jane Interview 04092017.m4a

[00:00:00] All right so we're off and recording. So thank you very much for taking part. Thank you for coming today. And I just need to double check that it's okay with you that we record using this device.

[00:00:13] Yes that's fine.

[00:00:14] And just to reassure you that the only place that this is going to go is straight from here on to my computer where it will be secured via the steps that I said in my ethics approval that I would take . So it will come off the phone. You can see I've actually had two recordings already today but they're not there so they come off straightaway. And also just to check that you're happy to maintain your informed consent that I have a copy of and there's nothing that you want to do to change that or.

[00:00:47] No that's that's fine.

[00:00:48] Thank you. So could we just have a pseudonym to, so when I'm writing.

[00:00:55] I'm Jane

[00:00:56] Jane thank you Jane. I'll just make a note that, you don't have to remember it, it's just as I say I said I can know who was who when I'm writing; but you can be confident that I'm not going to be using your real name. So on that note just to again just reassurance that this is me as a researcher now, it's nothing to do with me in my work.So you can feel quite safe to to express opinions or tell me about experiences that you've had knowing that that's got nothing to do with you or your paid work force or my position in the school, so you know please do feel free. I'm absolutely interested in understanding better what works and doesn't work for people so I would hate to think that anybody didn't say something because they thought they couldn't. So yeah please do. Okay so, you might remember even though it was some time ago, that you filled out a survey that was asking you about your motivation and engagement as a tutor working fully online. So it's that role that that we're interested in, and in how people operate and think and feel in terms of their motivation and engagement when they're working in the online program and they're working online themselves. Having said that it's also, what I'm trying to find out more about is what we as an organization do or don't do that can impact on that motivation and engagement. So while we know that students do and don't do things that can impact, that's not what the focus of the research is on; it's on what we as an organization do. So if you can just try and bear that in mind. Of course there could be things that we do or don't do that relate to student behaviour but it's it's about what we do what we could do what we could do better, what we could stop doing, that would actually help towards that. So to begin, just to sort of get you started, can you just give a brief summary of how long you've been working as an OUA tutor,   what kinds of roles you've had what units and year levels and those sorts of things.

[00:03:31] Okay I think I started with OUA in about 2012, and joined some larger groups, first year groups doing Child development and a health and nutrition unit and at those times I think the teams were about teams of maybe seven or eight other tutors,   and I had some quite nurturing people take me under their wing and help me at that stage. I don't think SETLD was occurring at that stage and I had, I maintained other work as well and doing that. And pretty much stayed in the first units for the next few years until the last year when I've now been doing some third year units on my own as a UC role. Maybe got a little bit braver with some encouragement to do the UC role, but I was quite happy working in a team of other people with the support scaffolding of others initially.

[00:04:45] Yes yes. Yeah. Okay so we will talk more further on about you know any differences as maybe sort of as you are responding to the questions, if you think well this is something that applied when I was a tutor in a team but but not as a U.C. or different things come up as a UC, you know feel free to sort of just draw that distinction as to the particular role that things apply to. Yeah okay so to start thinking oh and the other thing that I should have just said up front is that from the responses from the survey it seemed that for for you and for the other person who was going to be here the reason that I grouped you together was because it was apparent that there were times when you felt more motivated and engaged and times when you felt less so. So I wanted to just explore that and talk first of all about whether you can identify the times when you feel more engaged: whether it's around the timing in the study period or whether it's around certain things are happening or not happening; but can you think of when you feel really motivated?

[00:06:02] I'm really motivated before a study period begins to ambitiously try to engage as many learners as you can and to cover the content and teach it the best you can and share with other tutors in the bigger groups, ideas and the possibilities of it all and then reaching out to them in the first couple of weeks I guess. Sometimes a bit of disengagement sort of probably about week four or five as the e-mails and the posts drop off and the assignments come in and you have a bit of a feeling of they haven't really listened and maybe haven't - yes your efforts and things haven't been as noticed for a percentage. I guess that that was more evident in the bigger groups; not so evident in smaller groups where you're the UC, and therefore then giving back assignments then re-engagement again of igniting; let's try to enthuse everyone again. And I think probably before assignments and the beginning of a study period and then maybe a little bit of a drop off again towards the end as the next study period rolls round and the focus shifts a little bit towards that.If that makes sense.

[00:07:25] Yeah sure yeah ; thank you. So are you able to think of any specific things that the school of education does that helps, You know helps you to get ready, to get involved, to feel connected, to feel engaged with the units, with the school. So that could be things that are you know around getting the Blackboard sites ready; it could be things around the staffing process, it could be things around information sharing. What helps?

[00:08:01] Yeah I think, having a person to touch base with to contact you about the study period initially I think that that, having a person such as XXXXXX ; I feel like there's a bit more of a face of someone to touch base with more. And to kind of -   definitely SETLDs do, to network and join other people; the moderation and the team meetings before a study period are definitely very helpful.   And the staff lounges I always did find helpful when I was in a group of more than one person. So   now as UC on your own I like to network with the people who teach the unit on campus, the other academics that way, via email or chat when possible.

[00:09:05] And was that something that was, were you helped in being able to do that or was that something you had to just kind of navigate for yourself.

[00:09:14] I do feel like that was something I had to navigate myself really, so. c I think though it has definitely got tighter with you moderation plans and working those out really makes you accountable and do those things and see the benefits in those . I think there's been a lot more networking over the last two years   -   the newsletter, I   appreciate that. There's that; the SETLD and the moderation mapping etc. and even down to boards of examiners, it is still a chance to touch base with other UCs and I can ask on strategies and things that are going on.

[00:09:52] Yes yes. So in your role as a UC, do you find that those are the kinds of things are more valuable to you or more crucial than they were when you were a team member?

[00:10:09] Not necessarily. No, I I still feel that you needed to touch base with all the different

people and not necessarily who was in your tutor group at the time would be someone would be someone you gravitate to. I think sometimes the tips that others have are across the units, it doesn't necessarily go just for that unit. I think that's there's plenty of outstanding tutors that have got fantastic knowledge that I would love to share. So I think having all those different means of doing that is just as important.

[00:10:50] Yes I was just sort of thinking you know, ought things to be done differently for different people depending on their situation. But perhaps not.

[00:11:03] No. I think reaching out. And I think spaces that we can talk and share are probably something that I'm looking for more of.

[00:11:14] Yes.

[00:11:16] Because it can be an isolated experience and....

[00:11:21] Well we can talk about that now if that connects well because you you one of my other prompts was to ask you about what you think could be done that isn't being done or what could be done more or in different ways, to make them more effective. So what sorts of things come to mind?.

[00:11:42] I guess the links to things like blogs and Trello boards or padlet   boards maybe or with other people's sharing spaces and ideas for engaging learners and tips etc.. I think they're sort of starting to head that way with Facebook pages and that sort of thing but not necessarily just for tutors.   Yes I think newsletters heading in the right direction but. I appreciate the U.C SETLD days; maybe more of that sort of thing.

[00:12:19] The SETLD days that are specifically for UCs?

[00:12:23] Yes, in that role.

[00:12:27] Well one of the things that's come up is and I'd be interested to just hear your view on it, is that the SETLD days for U.Cs shouldn't be all about formal learning and sessions; that there should be some time factored in there for people to just get together and network. So what's your view on that.

[00:12:54] Yeah I would definitely support that because I guess that's the feeling that I think that, I think some of the great learning and tip sharing comes out of your scaffolded sessions and making us reflect and think why, but that I think often it sparks questions and things that we could then go off and work on a little further. If we made the time for it really. I think there's probably a few of us that would like to work more with each other and have a format, to even just casual conversation.

[00:13:36] What about social opportunities? Do you think that's something that the school has got a role in. Or do you think that that would come under the heading of a nice idea but you probably wouldn't ever do it.   You know what do you think about that?

[00:13:49] I do think that there would be quite a lot of people; yeah I wouldn't mind some social things. Not not all the time,   maybe once every three months or four months maybe three times a year or something but I definitely think that it's lovely, sometimes you spend a lot of time with these people online conversing and have a bit of a laugh together and I think it would be good to catch up with this, it builds a bit of camaraderie

[00:14:18] Yes, have you seen that little slogan it's on the school of education blackboard site under the resources and I found this little slogan - it says I really like the people I work with - some day I might meet them.

[00:14:33] Yes I definitely what you feel like sometimes you get to SETLD and sometimes that person's not there and it might be six months before you even meet in person. So and I You know when we do like a moderation or, not many people would use their camera etc.. We kind of have a bit of a chat but I don't know really, it would be good to personalise it a bit more. Some people are in their pajamas and don't probably feel like it but...

[00:15:08] Yeah; don't want to necessarily. Yes. Oh now I was going to ask you about something else then that somebody mentioned and now it's gone. SETLD.... yes I'll come back, it'll come back. Is there any thing that you can think of, moving away from the routine processes and the things that we do regularly, is there anything that might have happened just once; something that somebody did whether it was a fellow tutor, the unit coordinator or somebody from the administration or whatever; one of course coordinators whoever it might have been. Can you think of any time when something might have happened we thought of that was so good I really felt buoyed up and supported and enthused by that, that thing.

[00:16:08] Might have to go back quite a few years. Sorry.

[00:16:10] No it's all right; if something comes to mind. Sometimes people just say oh it was this time when this was happening and then this person did this and it really helped me at the time. It's all right. It's just that opportunity I'm just trying to make sure that I catch everything. I know what I was going to ask you about. It's about the staff awards and people have quite mixed - there's been some quite mixed feelings and attitudes towards the tutor awards that we have at SETLD. So can you tell us where that fits for you in terms of you know.

[00:16:52] I mean I see the people who get their awards I have accolades for those people and I can see why they would get those awards and so I feel there needs to be some acknowledgement of the fact that here are outstanding tutors and do an outstanding job. So that's a good thing that needs to to occur.

> **Commented [V13]:** awards + but should be able to nominate each other

[00:17:18] Yeah most people do; I've just have had a couple of you know slightly different views around that, so I'm just wanting to know.

[00:17:30] I think, can it be voted in by other other tutors etc as well.

[00:17:36] Are you asking, are you suggesting that might be a good thing?

[00:17:40] Yeah I guess it's hard in the units then when you're on your own. But definitely when you work in a big unit other tutors would definitely be able to recommend ones that they feel are highly skilled.

[00:17:58] Mmmm. Could that be something that could go on the tutor reflection? That we could ask people when they're doing their tutor reflection, we could ask them you know would you like to nominate a fellow tutor. You know that would work possibly? as an opportunity>.

> **Commented [V14]:** n
>
> **Commented [V15]:** nominate each other

[00:18:16] Yes. I think that would.

[00:18:24] Speaking of which, what sort of a role does the engaging in the tutor reflection have for you in keeping you sort of engaged with the role.

[00:18:35] It does definitely focus my energies. It's good to have a look at that at the start of the study period obviously to reflect what my goals are and to energize myself. At the end. Yep a good reflection I guess. But I think it's changed a bit over the last year or so and I like I like the fact that there's more detail there, to try and find . I find the areas that I specifically can see that I need to work on. So I think it's fairly good tool.

[00:19:14] How much of a difference is it make to you if the unit coordinator writes feedback. And gives it back to you.

[00:19:26] Probably not overly - I'm probably more self-reflective about it. Because, I don't feel that they they can see your comments etc. but probably not all your emails and the effort that you go to beyond that.

[00:19:40] So to you it's more of a value for your own purposes; which is you know how it was designed. But again you know these are things that people have slightly different views on. Some people really value the feedback of another person and the people such as yourself   are more oh well that's okay I don't mind it but it's not it's principal purpose. Yeah.Okay. All right moving on now to thinking about anything that we do that's really annoying. Oh that's a bit of an open question there could be lots of things. But what I mean is that there things you know because sometimes things that we do are helpful and other times there are things that we do that we think are helpful but people don't experience them that way, and they sort of think why on earth am I doing that. And it's sort of just getting in my way not not helping.

[00:20:53] No, I just see how far it's come in the last four years. A tighter well oiled machine, like someone's rolled your unit over, someone set   your Grade Centre up, your textbooks your students all know about it - like what it's like I just see that it is really quite a well oiled machine that I don't really think there's anything I think, oh, you do get a lot of feedback and there is a lot of contributing to it. I guess probably, maybe there are so many different people involved that that can be confusing for a new person: who you get   your technology support from, who   if you have a student who can't contact etc. that there's a lot of hidden things that you kinda need to find out.

[00:21:49] Yeah yeah yeah. You don't know what you don't know at first and then you have to try.

[00:21:53] And then for you to ask to get that help. I think that's become a lot clearer but I can imagine for a new person there's a lot of jargon and expectation;   that you'll find out the LMS people will help you with this; that XXX will help with something else. Probably that nature; probably needs to be a bit more of a flow chart etc for new people to uncover that but I think maybe the role that XXXXXXX has helped with all that   - they probably get bombarded with those questions.

[00:22:30] Yes. Yeah. For sure. Okay so now: wish list. Is there anything that, you know this is your opportunity to just think wouldn't it be great if we as a school did such and such; you know that would be so good for tutors, it would just really help us feel it whether it's more engaged with the school or engaged in the work or keep the motivation up at times when it you know runs low. Is there anything that you'd like to see. It's not a test, it's okay, you can just say no it's just you know I want people to have the opportunity to say, well had this really good idea, or some other place that I worked they did X and Y.

[00:23:26] Sorry, no. No innovation for you.

[00:23:27] No that's okay. That's that's quite all right. All right so finally, I just want to ask you to

try and think beyond the school of education and to Curtin as as a University and an institution. How sort of aligned to the goals and the work of the university or the identity of the university as a whole would you say that you feel? And if you like you can talk of it talk about it in comparative terms with the school education. You know if that helps.

[00:24:10] Yeah I guess yeah that's a thank you for that because I think yeah I feel quite aligned to the school of education in that role, but Curtin as a whole entity, I probably wouldn't have much to do with in that role. I would know a little bit of what their possibly goals and the rest of the things that go on in the university. I feel that you know I belong with the school of education. I think that it's probably not as strong alliance to Curtin as such it's more the School of Education.

<comment>Commented [V19]: alliance to School strong +</comment>

[00:24:58] Are you aware of anything that Curtin as a university does to try and include and engage sessional staff.

[00:25:12] Outside of the school of education?

[00:25:13] Yeah yeah.

[00:25:15] No, not at all, no I'm not.

[00:25:17] You know just just wondering about that. And just while we're also talking about the university would you say that you have, what would you say your level of awareness is about Curtin's values.

[00:25:35] Um, well I couldn't name them...

[00:25:35] No, you don't have to; I'm not testing you.I 'm just wondering, what would you say your level of awareness is around what Curtin's values are.

[00:25:47] Not high at the moment.

<comment>Commented [V20]: low awareness of Curtin values</comment>

[00:25:51] Have you - I know it's probably difficult to answer this question, but how confident are you I suppose, that the way the School of Education operates, how confident are you that it would be operating in alignment with Curtin's values.

[00:26:12] Oh I have lots of confidence in that because I have faith in the directors and the head of school etc. that they are a strong part of the university and there's loads of meetings etc. that they are a part of that. So. Yes.

<comment>Commented [V21]: high trust that School is aligned to values ++</comment>

[00:26:35] So you you'd feel a trust that although you personally and there there's no right answer don't worry;   it's just you know either I think other people are very aware for you know on their own regard, but if if they're not, but they think that the people who need to be are and therefore it's filtering down and so you're experiencing them even though you might not know. Whereas other people might say well I haven't; I don't have a clue what they are and I probably wouldn't even really know whether they're being managed at the local level or not.

[00:27:17] I do feel strong faith that they are managed etc. Yes I do. I guess in my OUA unit I don't feel that it's filtered through to that role so much.

[00:27:30] Have you ever had any cause to feel unsafe; alarmed or really bothered by anything in your role as a tutor where you've thought, you know I don't know what to do or I don't like this or this, or this is really rattling me and I don't quite know what to do about it and I'm not sure whether

I should say anything.

[00:27:58] No I think that I have a good support system of people, if I do have issues; people to talk to. No I definitely think that there there's a support system but I'm unsure whether that's just from being in the role for quite a few years really. I think initially there might be cases where you get overwhelmed and not sure how to help a student as such.

[00:28:41] Yeah. Okay. And then lastly what would it take, what would have to happen for you to decide I don't want to do this work anymore.

[00:28:56] Probably if the numbers became bigger and harder to manage my time.

[00:29:05] You mean the numbers of students in a group.

[00:29:07] Yeah yeah   and if the work expectation grew beyond what I thought I was capable of, with fitting in my priorities and the University's priorities, keeping that balance. I value it at this stage of my career for intellectual stimulation.

[00:29:36] So if it became too demanding and you thought oh you know I haven't got   the time or the space to grapple with that. That would be the thing. Okay great. All right, well that's all of my questions that I wanted to make sure that I asked. But before we wrap up I just want to make sure that there's nothing that's come up that's occurred to you while we've been talking that you thought well I should mention this, just sort of generally cutting across everything that we've talked about this afternoon.

[00:30:14] No, I think that's all for now; thank you.

[00:30:21] No no that's okay. I just like to make sure -   I don't want anybody to go away thinking Oh I wanted to just say that; yeah. And so then the thing that I just wanted to check with you too is that it's possible that after I've finished this first round of interviews with everyone and I crunch some of the data and have a look and see about themes that have emerged and it's possible that I might want to loop back to certain people and just to to say this particular thing has really emerged as a strong theme but I just can you just give me a little bit more about that thing? Would that be okay and it wouldn't be as long as this would be sort of you know five or 10 minutes just talking about one aspect.

[00:31:07] That's fine; yes.

[00:31:07] That would be great; thank you. All right. Well I will turn off. Now.

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[00:00:14] Thank you for coming. I just need to double check. I know I've got your informed consent but I just need to double check that that you don't, you have no intentions of withdrawing that and everything is OK.

[00:00:25] Everything is OK.

[00:00:26] Thank you so much. Now here's the exciting bit. Would you like to make up a name for yourself? Any name you like; like yes please, so that we can ensure anonymity. So the first part of the when you did the survey I needed to know who the respondent was so that I could follow up with the interviews. But now I need to make sure that whatever you say won't be identified to you so I just need to have. Any name you like.

[00:00:54] I'll go with my middle name which is Elizabeth.

[00:00:56] All right. Thank you. So I'll try not to use your name further in the in the interview. So the purpose of the interview today is actually just to talk a little bit more about some of the things that came up in the in the survey. So you might recall, I know it was some time ago but you might recall that there were some questions asking about how motivated you feel toward your work; how engaged you feel when you were there was that there was a scale in there that talked about, you know you feel as though time passes quickly or time passes slowly or that sometimes you just wonder why you're doing this and all those kind of things. And there were some questions about the sorts of things that make a difference to how motivated engaged you're feeling and what I'm really interested in, for the purposes of my study, I'm really interested in finding out about what it is that we as an organization do or don't do that actually can make a difference to how motivated you feel towards your work as a tutor and how engaged in you feel at various times. So although the behaviours of students and things like that, will have some impact, it's really the things that we do as an organization and don't do that I'm particularly interested in knowing, because they're the things that we can have a fair bit of control over. And so for my research that's what I'm really interested in finding out. So the questions are designed to try and talk more about those things. From your responses to this survey, it's clear that most of the time you feel highly motivated and highly engaged in your work. So that's why this group of questions will be coming from that from that perspective.

[00:03:05] OK. It's OUA just, isn't it?

[00:03:07] Yes. Yes.

[00:03:08] So we're talking specifically about your online work. When you're working fully online and you're not interacting with staff or students other than you know in that online capacity. So to start with could you just for the record give us a brief summary of your current role in terms of the OUA tutoring? And just how long you've been doing it and what sorts of roles you've done in the time that you've been working in that.

[00:03:37] OK; so five years now. It's gone quick. Five years, so I started as a tutor. In EDP250 and then became a unit co-ordinator ever since after that - accelerated quite quickly. So UC for probably four years. Four years.

[00:03:55] And while you've been unit coordinating, you've still been tutoring for the whole time haven't you?

[00:04:00] Yes. Yes. I've never just been a UC and I haven't had a study period off, and yes, always lucky enough to get an offer. So, yeah, pretty much continuous.

[00:04:11] Yes continuous for that long time. Yes it's a while now isn't it?

[00:04:14] And every SETLD VAL.

[00:04:17] Yes that's right. OK.

[00:04:19] So to start thinking about what I was saying. Can you tell us about some times that you've actually been conscious of feeling highly motivated and engaged, so times you can think of where you thought oh yes I'm going to do this and I want to do that and let's get in and you know can you tell us about some times where you've been conscious that you felt that.

[00:04:42] I always feel like that.

[00:04:44] Do you? Yeah. I mean is it kind of at the start of every study period or the end or does it depend on who you're working with or and on the unit, you know what sorts of things you know really get you going?

[00:04:58] The start of the unit is good. And then you, like I've just started a third year unit. And I had most of them in the first year so to see them two years later in OUA is really good and they're all yelling out "Where's Roy where's Roy?" but we didn't have enough enrolments for two tutors because it's normally Roy and myself in the third year of Brad's first and third year units you know of contesting curriculum and cultural contexts. And yes it's really good to have that connection in the first week.

[00:05:25] Yes. OK. So if we think about that in terms of organizational practices then you could say that the practice of placing you in a first year and the third year where you're going to meet the same students again is helpful in terms.

[00:05:43] They really like it.

[00:05:46] And you do too.

[00:05:48] Yeah - you do recognize their name. And you're proud that they, you know started with a thousand perhaps in first year and we've got the last 120 we've got you know, I wouldn't say cream of the crop but we've got the teachers, the genuine teachers who are going to get through.

[00:06:02] Yes. Is there anything else around... so if you think about things about, the preparation, what's done for you? Or so we're thinking now about what is helpful; what we do that's helpful that makes you feel motivated and engaged. So things I suppose that we would do routinely.

[00:06:28] As an organization?

[00:06:29] As an organization, mm.

[00:06:31] What's really helped is getting the offers in earlier. As a UC. So you can start setting everything up earlier. You don't feel like it's all happening at the last, in the last week. So we get about three or four weeks' notice now or more, which is fantastic. The SETLDs are really good. I wish that week there was time for team meetings, in the SETLD - I know there never has been. So we always have one afterwards. So the SETLD's quite a long day because we have our moderation

meeting then but it's enjoyable. It's over a few shandies Yes. And they like it.

[00:07:05] Which is good because we could not provide that for you!

[00:07:07] No. But the team really like that - some people haven't met before. Especially when we have a new team. So we try to get as many people after a SETLD as possible, across the road I really like that. And I know some people used to try to catch up - if they miss a session you know and all that sort of carry-on. But I find the SETLDs are really good most people try to make it because we have a meeting afterwards. Yeah. And you know Maddie was great and Melissa's FANTASTIC just with their consistency I guess.

[00:07:41] And what about blackboard preparation and how that all works. How helpful is that?

[00:07:48] Yeah Good. And the IT team fantastic.

[00:07:52] Are there things that they do that you know oh thank goodness they do that or isn't that great that I can rely on them you know that study period, this is done.

[00:08:01] Yeah they transfer a lot of stuff; so they transfer the unit and they transfer the unit coordinator information to. Just a lot of that stuff so I don't have to be copying and pasting. So it's a lot of that, I just go then go back and proofread and check everything. But to have that set up like that is good, but I wish somehow the discussion board could be set up. It used to be, like have at least the headers, but now and there's nothing. So you go in every unit and it's completely blank. So especially with the big units I spend hours setting it all up again. Remember when we used to have generic frameworks - all discussion boards look the same. It was messages from the unit coordinator, assignment one questions, topic one, like that; that used to be quite a - that's gone. That hasn't been there for a little while. But that was helpful before, just transferring the discussion board. But no, like we get paid ten hours, so - I think I'd spend the ten hours so by the time you get the unit outline finished.

[00:08:59] Yes. All right. So, that's the things that are routinely there. Is there anything that you've been conscious of that just sort of happened occasionally or out of the blue or ad hoc, that you thought oh that's just great? Gee that really helped me. I mean even if it was a time, during the study period there was an e-mail you got, or was a newsletter - you know, was this something that you can recall in your time that you thought oh that's nice.

[00:09:31] Yeah. Well that inline connections is good. And I say you know the ones that are like them - I have a website or an idea or something like that, just reminding us to go back to where the resources are.

[00:09:42] Yes.

[00:09:43] Yes. You know that prompt or that reminder. And just - I know that we can't have the same teams all the time but boy it makes a difference - whoo! It makes such a difference when you've got people who are familiar. I had two new staff last study period and it was a bit of a nightmare. So because they were both not quite - one had huge literacy problems and one didn't do any marking, through the whole study period, and no moderation - well no, hmmm.

[00:10:12] And did you know that it was going to happen beforehand or was it?

[00:10:15] Oh no he gave me the heads up that he was not coping.

[00:10:18] Oh OK but I mean what I mean is the person wasn't employed under that understanding; it was something that happened afterwards.

[00:10:27] They didn't realize yeah how much work you do - the marking. Yes. When you're teaching full time as well.

[00:10:33] No I just want to check that somebody hadn't been placed in the unit with us knowing that they weren't going to do any marking.

[00:10:39] No that was a surprise. And they also wanted to meet me once a week here after, so it took a lot of my time. And then the other one who had literacy problems wanted to meet me every Friday. So I'm here, I've got a three hour tute and then so I scheduled at 5 o'clock but they never showed up.

[00:10:58] So what did you do when those sorts of challenges come up?

[00:11:05] Well I try to chat to them. I try to be positive. They knew; they were always apologizing for their shortcomings. But I just tried to be supportive.

[00:11:15] And do you feed that back? To them; to us.

[00:11:20] No. Well through the tutor reflections.

[00:11:22] Yes.

[00:11:23] And I'm still waiting for them to come in. So yeah I have 11 staff so I'm still waiting for them to come in. One's got a wedding this weekend so hers hasn't come in, a few haven't come in so I might just send them an email reminder and you know I certainly do put it on there and they've written as well. One hasn't put in for a study period again. One didn't get one and was quite aggressive about it.

[00:11:49] Didn't get one?

[00:11:50] Didn't get an offer.

[00:11:51] Oh I see. Sorry.

[00:11:52] Didn't get an offer - she was quite aggressive and thought that I'd dobbed on her and told people that she was illiterate and blah blah blah I said No no I haven't even put it in yet. It's just staffing and numbers. And then she kept saying I don't believe you.

[00:12:07] Yes. Those are, when those kinds of things happen, which I guess you know when you're working with people anywhere any time, there's always going to be those unknown unknowns. How does that impact on how you feel in terms of your motivation and your engagement in the work?

[00:12:29] No I'm fine - I think because I've been in a manager position before in my previous life, you just take the..... And you do it with grace. And I learned a lot from my experience with another tutor last year. By going straight to you and not handling it myself. So straight to Maddie and that went to you. So I just didn't want to dob or anything. So I just tried to keep communicating with them and coming in when they wanted to meet me and just try to be supportive as possible. Redirecting them to i.t. or you know where they could get help. Things like that.

[00:13:04] So do you feel. Do you feel that the support and the practices and, what am I trying to say - do you feel sufficiently supported by all the things that we as an organization provide when things do go wrong, so that you're not going to have your motivation and engagement compromised, or are there times when you're unsure of that?

[00:13:34] Unsure. Because I think from our previous conversation I would have had to have gone to XXXXXX XXX and I just wasn't prepared to that next level yet and she probably doesn't know them. I've had - not issues, with that course coordinator but I'm sure if I walk past in the past if she doesn't know who I am. So yes I thought I mean I'm not telling her about two tutors she doesn't know and probably just better for me to wrap around and do what I can.

[00:14:00] So there's elements of practices that are not as shored up as maybe they could be for when things start to go a little bit bumpy.

[00:14:11] I'm just not sure of that process, where I can just have a chat to - you can't chat to anyone else in the unit. I don't want to chat to another UC; we don't, I don't really talk to other unit coordinators about staffing issues. We used to, in the unit coordinator training, so that separate day training would have been good for that. A lot of people commented that they missed just debriefing; because they were really packed and it was awesome; there was heaps of good stuff. But a lot of people would have liked a session, to just chat about issues - the UCs that were there. Yeah I think they just wanted it is because we had that had that previously and it was very helpful. We could just say what issues are you having. [Commented [VM12]: UC support and guidance -]

[00:14:52] When you say that happened previously. How did that happen previously?

[00:14:55] In the UC SETLDs - just time allowed for it, in terms of plus minus and interesting, what's happening. Yeah we missed that. I think we did over lunch, instead. Problem-solving.

[00:15:09] Yeah. So you're saying rather than focussing on learning new things or finding out about this or....

[00:15:22] No, learning's good!

[00:15:22] You know I mean saying, if it became a choice between... because obviously a day is only so long, you're saying if it became a choice between having a session that that presented something, you'd rather have a session that provided for UCs.

[00:15:41] That would be helpful. Although the seminars I thought was really good and went into life like Academic plagiarism; the new model was Dixon was fantastic and XXX XXXXXXXX's was great about blackboard set up. There was some really good information. [Commented [VM13]: SETLD PL +]

[00:15:58] Yes but you know it's always a juggle and you have to make choices about what people are going to value most. So you know you're saying that's something that wasn't there that would have been good. Yeah. OK. Is there anything that you aware of that we do routinely that actually impacts negatively? You know are things that we expect or require or ask for or do that you sort of think oh, that's really not helping. In fact in fact it's worse than not helping me; it's impinging.

[00:16:36] No, my only wish, I just wish because I just had one of the biggest units that study period in EDC11, we had a thousand. I wish that the board meetings could be so that I can attend. And I gave when the save the date came out I said oh you know, there's only one week until the student free weeks, so, it would have been helpful just to, three days, have it on the Monday or

something in the student free whereas I won't be there. And XXXXXs is doing and he doesn't like it, he doesn't know any of the students or their situation. Is quite a big fail sheet for first years, you know there's a lot sitting in between the 45 and 49 range. He doesn't like going in.

[00:17:21] So you're saying there then that in order to attend Boards, it would be more helpful if they're held in student free weeks.

[00:17:29] Or just have a look at my time table because I'm teaching four hours that day when they're on so I can't even sort of, I get in. And I would like to represent.

[00:17:38] Of course you'll understand there's lots of people's timetables to take into consideration. Yes. But that's something to be to be aware of. I mean I suspect that that planning board meetings; I know what XXX does is, she has to count back from results release day in and find, sort of the closest one, but of course there would never be enough student free weeks to hold boards in, but that's something to take into account. Yeah.

[00:18:15] Yeah. but then I just have to ask XXXX who what and I have to ask any rate and chase up. But you know that was my that's my only niggly with the big units if the U.Cs that run them could be priority.

[00:18:30] Yeah. All right. What about - so that's something that we, we, well it's sort of something that we don't do and it's something we do do - but is there anything else that you may be thinking that we that we don't do that if we did, it would be really helpful in terms of keeping you motivated and engaged?

[00:18:55] From me? or from... the vibe, there's a vibe - it's not from me There's a vibe that, with the awards that get handed out at SETLD, it's getting a little bit narky. If that makes sense.

[00:19:10] It's getting a bit like the school assembly merit certificates?

[00:19:14] Yeah. People are wondering you know people have been there for seven years and perhaps, know that they're consistently good evaluates, there's never been any complaints and yet somebody that's done one study period gets an award. And there's a lot of eye rolling across the room and you know, debriefing at the pub. People just say that there's nothing for loyal staff. There's no reward for loyalty to this university.

[00:19:41] So yes. OK so you're saying that those awards in themselves are valued?

[00:19:47] Yes. Yes.

[00:19:48] You know so you they are seen as a meaningful indication of the, you know the appreciation.

[00:19:57] People want them. They don't understand why they don't get one when they've been here for five to seven years, and someone who's been here one study period, so they want to know what they've got that someone very experienced hasn't.

[00:20:10] Okay OK. So. Yes. So the clarity of the basis on which they're made, even though we say, that there umm.

[00:20:22] Well the people you read out, people think oh well that's me too.

[00:20:27] So, are you aware of how - the basis of them?

[00:20:34] When I was in that deputy role for a brief time, OUA used to give us a summary of who got votes and things like that and then I know that they didn't and then it was UC's sort of nomination. And it's at the end of the unit you can nominate somebody and it goes on that. But they still don't think it's fair.

[00:20:58] Yeah it actually does still; it is actually still founded, based on the OUA student satisfaction surveys - and that is mentioned in each of the citations but what that tells me is that people don't hear that or really realize that that that is what it is based on.

[00:21:20] Or that it is true. Is that, did that person actually get the most?

[00:21:25] I don't necessarily trust that that that's the case? Oh that's interesting - that's interesting to know. Yeah I think that we might just say that the student evaluations have said this. Rather than thinking that.

[00:21:45] Yeah there's a funny vibe. I know that nurses and everything when they, first year they get a different colour, second year they get this colour third year you get this colour, so it's sort of like a status thing. I think a lot of the tutors want people to know that five year loyalty, six year loyalty, seven years, some sort of recognition.

> **Commented [VM16]:** Awards + and – need more categories

[00:22:00] Of long time in the program.

[00:22:02] Yeah.

[00:22:02] No good; thank you for that. Is there anything else you think you know that changed or if that was added, that would help.

[00:22:15] I like it. I love it. I love it. So I guess that.

[00:22:19] Yes I know.

[00:22:24] I get that consistency of stuff really helps. It just helps. I know that you know we'd like to switcherooney and that's fine. But it does help with the smooth transition and even the students comment that we all get on; it's faultless, it's seamless. We've had the same staff and not one student complained after a thousand cases. t.

> **Commented [VM17]:** IOT consistency+ dealing with Students

[00:22:48] That's amazing isn't it. Absolutely amazing.

[00:22:51] They know the benchmarks they you know.

[00:22:54] Yes because can usually rely on one student to be unreasonable. Even though your systems might be faultless. You can usually rely on one at least!

[00:23:03] Yeah well out of a thousand you'd expect 20, 25, asking you for remarks or have another look. But yeah, that's what I notice.

[00:23:13] So what if we went beyond the school of education and our practices. And you were thinking now more about Curtin University and things that we as a school don't necessarily control or manage or contribute to. But if you thought about the university as an institution, is there anything you could say there that look this is really great, it really helped my motivation

engagement. Or this is annoying, or this is what I wish they would do.

[00:23:43] The University?

[00:23:43] Yeah. Yeah. At university level, is there anything?

[00:23:47] I'm very loyal to Curtin because I went here too. Yeah and I love it.

[00:23:53] So when you say you love and you love working for Curtin, are you able to say why that is. What is it about Curtin?

[00:24:01] They have very good processes you know policies. You feel safe and supported.

> **Commented [VM18]:** Safety and support +

[00:24:12] Is that because of the values?

[00:24:14] Yes.

[00:24:15] That Curtin has.

[00:24:17] And you trust those?

[00:24:18] Yes. Yeah. And you can see it and you feel it.

[00:24:21] Yeah. And what about the sort of day to day, keeping you feeling connected to the university. Do you feel that as a sessional staff member? And if so how do you feel that? How do you feel engaged with the university on a day to day basis? How do you get that when you're online?

[00:24:54] I don't think you necessarily do. But it's not a bad thing.

[00:24:57] It's enough?

[00:24:57] look I try to tell people when they whinge about it or say something negative I say yeah but the positives outweigh the negatives, for sure. You know you don't have big brother I mean there's some autonomy. Yeah. That professional trust - and I quite like that. I know some people are a bit needier but it's probably not my personality.

> **Commented [VM19]:** Autonomy +

[00:25:18] I mean I know that Curtin changed the way, just as an example, I know that they changed the way that they deal with Curtin e-mails. You remember there was the four o'clock emails or five o'clock whatever time was and all the e-mails central came. And they changed that and they now have the Curtin weekly. So you know is that is that sort of thing that you would even notice or not particularly; it doesn't make a difference one way or the other.

[00:25:45] No, they don't really pertain to me anyway, so - I don't lose too much sleep over that.

[00:25:53] So when you say they don't really pertain to you, but it doesn't bother you - so you don't feel out of the loop.

[00:26:01] No!

[00:26:18] You don't ever think that those e-mails will be relevant to you.

[00:26:24] As an OUA person?

[00:26:24] Yes.

[00:26:27] No... I don't think the Curtin...I don't think that's their purpose.

[00:26:30] And is that do you think because you are working fully online in the online program or is it because you're sessional employee. Or is it both?

[00:26:42] Probably both.

[00:26:42] So do you feel about that any differently, because I know you've worked on campus as a sessional, do you feel any differently there.? You know I'm talking in terms of the university communications. So if you've got your on campus sessional tutor hat on, do you feel more inclined to take notice of the university's communications.

[00:27:10] Yes. And what's going on. Yes.

[00:27:12] Yeah. And are you able to think why that is?

[00:27:16] Oh - well, I read the fire drills, you know notices and that; what's happening, IT issues you know things that probably, I pull out things that are relevant I guess.

[00:27:27] So you're more inclined to think that there could be something in there, when you've got your on campus you hat on, Yes because you think well I don't need to know about the fire drills or know when the food trucks are coming and ROOM such and such the IT's down. And you've never really seen or thought that there's going to be a message that's going to be coming you as an off campus. Yeah. Thank you. Yeah.

[00:27:56] And there only thing I can think is I know some Sessionals, long term Sessionals, get their noses put out of joint when they hear that you know they haven't been invited to the Christmas party. And I know that it's impossible to invite everyone.

[00:28:07] Oh well the funny thing about that is was that they used to be. And no one ever came and then we'd have to cancel. But anyway..... yes sure the opportunity. Yes. We'd like to be asked even though we probably won't come.

> **Commented [VM20]:** SoE Comms – include in Christmas party

[00:28:23] That recognition; longevity.

[00:28:33] So just in general, so we've talked about motivation and engagement. And that's sort of your personal experience of how you do your work. But now if I could just shift it just a little bit and talk about the goals of the organization and the objectives of Curtin as a university and the school of education and its goals and its purpose of what we're trying to achieve through the online program particularly. How aligned to those do you feel generally?

[00:29:10] I'm very aligned I think. I don't think; like there's nothing that I question or doesn't make sense.

[00:29:17] Do you feel that you share the purpose of the program, you know the greater purpose if you like of the program?

[00:29:25] Absolutely. And that's why I'm lucky that I got a chance to be involved with the M

teach, you know and develop it, so you're part of that moving forward and the flipped classroom and all that sort of stuff. Yeah.

[00:29:38] Yeah that's good. Is there anything else that you'd like to mention - I just want to make sure that nothing sort of occurred to you pops into your head as we've been talking that you would like to say about you know what makes a difference, both from the Curtin level and the school of education level, or even at the personal level, the things that make a difference to how motivated and engaged you're feeling.

[00:30:12] Just having staff having staff that care about the students and really helps. Having staff that nitpick students and you know, are quite mean, makes it very difficult. Yes I've got a tutor I haven't had for probably two years and she still has a go at me at SETLD about how I run units and how loose things. And yet they're not loose.

[00:30:36] But that's her interpretation of it.

[00:30:37] Fault-finding in student work. We look for rewards and I learnt that from XXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXX was a great first mentor - a rewards based model not fault-finding, everyone fails. There's a few tutors still that - everyone's failed until you prove to me that you should pass.

[00:30:53] So they start from zero rather than starting from a hundred.

[00:30:57] Yeah they don't agree that people should pass, you know it's some sort of rite of passage; they're not client- focussed and satisfaction focussed.

[00:31:07] Have you seen any shift in that over the years, any difference in that over the years that you've been working?

[00:31:14] Yeah - well people that aren't like that tend not to come back to my unit because they can't cope with that: I can't cope with their fault- finding; they call be loose, it's just not right at all. So the team I've got now, they know the expectations in terms of client-focussed.

[00:31:33] And do you see those people still working in the program, just not with you - or you or have they by and large gone from the program?

[00:31:42] No they're still there. Yeah. Because they're very good in other aspects. Some people I don't know how they view the students and what they're doing.

[00:31:51] And that's challenging to you personally.

[00:31:56] Yeah; I just always hope that, they're not on my list. Because you spend a lot of time trying to get them to pass. What is a HD?? Yeah, I've had ring up students on their behalf, and apologize, that sort of thing. But no it's always nice when you don't see their names.

[00:32:23] Yes it's interesting isn't it - different perspectives. Have you had enough opportunity you say all the things that you wanted to say about what helps or hinders, what isn't there, you know what is there that you wish wasn't there. You know what isn't there that you wish was.

[00:32:49] Yeah OK. It just remains for me to say thank you very much for your time. And also I suppose I should just sort of anticipate is the possibility that I might want to come back to you at a later date. If so, it would only be for 10 minutes, just to really tease out a certain point because as I

get further down I might find certain themes emerging that I think I really need to understand this particular thing just a bit better. And these people all mentioned it. So I might want to come back just with one specific question about something if that's OK if you'd be up for that.

[00:33:33] Yeah - the schools call it drilling down.

[00:33:44] Thirty three minutes. We did pretty well.

RR HM Interview 07092017 (2).m4a

[00:00:00] So we're starting to record now so interviews for research interviews for Val Morey and we have two people who are taking part in the semi structured interviews today. Would I be able to ask you for a pseudonym you'd like to use.

[00:00:16] Casey.

[00:00:16] Thank you Casey.

[00:00:16] and Geoff.Now would you like Geoff with a G or with a J?

[00:00:25] Oh Geoff with a G.

[00:00:25] OK. Thank you very much. Okay so the first thing that I want to say is that I'm aware and you're aware that I'm going to be asking you questions about your work as a tutor and we all know that I work in the program. So I want to just make very clear that these questions and this research is in no way related to my work. So I want you to just know that you can express any views opinions or wishes, concerns and they stay completely within the bounds of the research findings and don't inform any of my work practices or anything like that. So I wouldn't want you to think well I'd better not say that you know whatever. So you can say whatever you really think. Yes. So please please do. All right. So I know it's been some time since you did the survey, because you know I've had a few challenges in that time healthwise. But anyway so I'm hoping that you can just vaguely recall that the purpose of the survey was to ask you how you felt in terms of your motivation and your engagement with your work as a tutor and what kinds of things we do as an organization that actually impact on how motivated and engaged you're feeling. So, we know and it did come out in the survey from some of the things that people said. Things that students do and don't do absolutely impact on that. You know people people mention when the students aren't engaging or whatever at that that tends to make me feel a bit low. And so we know that and we recognize that but for the purposes of the research we're really interested in what we do or don't do or how we do what we do as an organization and how that impacts on your motivation and engagement. So as you are responding if you can keep that in mind. And also just keep in mind that we're only talking about your role when you're working in the online program as an online tutor. So all right, just to start with could you each in turn so Casey if you could go first, this could you give us just a brief summary of the roles you've undertaken, how long you've worked in the program.

[00:02:56] Casey: I think I have worked in the program since 2012. It's been mostly sessional tutor; I've done unit coordinating for two small units in that time but I've been the only staff member in those units, I haven't had to manage any other staff. I've done lots and lots of different units. I started off doing some numeracy units which are completely outside of my sphere of experience, but I've picked up a few arts units and teaching & learning in the digital world which has been sort of, being a media teacher in my other role, that's sort of my little niche. And I've picked up quite a few, like the programming unit. Ones about curriculum.

[00:03:44] Thank you. And Geoff?

[00:03:46] Geoff: Mine has been involvement since it began. 2009, is that right?

[00:03:47] It was 2009, yes.

[00:03:48] Geoff: So I've been involved since that time and I've been involved as a tutor. I haven't actually done unit coordination as such - I did almost do it once but didn't. I've been actively

involved certainly with the collaboration side of the program which I find really important to do. And certainly with a lot of moderation and involvement with redeveloping courses, with the Unit Champion.

[00:04:26] Thank you. Thank you. Alright so to get us chatting about first of all what helps to what it is that we do that helps to make you feel motivated; engaged in the work of the program - are you able to identify some things that that we do sort of regularly or routinely that first of all that help with that?

[00:04:53] Casey: I think the SETLD days that we do regularly gets you sort of keyed in like with the program; like we we're meant to be all heading, but also it helps you sort put the face to face with the people that you're working with and you get, sort of every now and then you guys are providing us with like sort of feedback about how courses are going and stuff like that. I know it doesn't really apply to me but I know some people who are very very highly motivated with your awards.

> **Commented [VM1]:** SETLD PL + SETLD networks +

[00:05:20] Oh yeah yeah yeah. Yes.How do you view those. Because you know people have mentioned those in a few different things have been said about that.

[00:05:28] I think they're fantastic. I don't really know sometimes, but I know there are some that are nominated by your peers and you're like your unit co-ordinator for instance can nominate you but some of them I believe are coming from like student nominations and I don't really know how that happens I'm assuming it's through the evaluates from the students.

> **Commented [VM2]:** Awards +

[00:05:55] It's through the OUA student satisfaction survey - similar thing.

[00:05:58] Yeah. I think, those sort of things and also like sort of emails and contacts, not so much that e-mail conversation and online conversation because that's really good, also when we have the staff meetings on Collaborate and stuff like that. So it's actually sort of having those light chats with people and realising that it's real world and not just sort of a faceless person. I think that really helps me.

> **Commented [VM3]:** Team meetings + Informal networks + for connection and suppport

[00:06:27] Yeah. So if that facility wasn't there via blackboard collaborate or wasn't set up you didn't have a space for that - so as far as the organisation is concerned we've provided that space I guess.

> **Commented [VM4]:** Tutor lounge +

[00:06:40] Yeah.

[00:06:41] So if that wasn't there, do you think that would, you'd miss it all of that there would be a lack.

[00:06:48] I think definitely because there's a long way, because even though we do have the SETLD, there's a long way between them and you're going through a lot of stuff in between them; assignments coming in or not, or like issues coming up within unit or with students and stuff like that. And so I found when I first started it was quite hard because back then they didn't have the collaborates, so it was quite hard to just just go by email and stuff. Because the way I work cause I connect with like someone that I didn't know.

> **Commented [VM5]:** Complementary comms SETLD plus other +

[00:07:23] Yes. So that's something that you've seen has changed and that you've thought that's good that we can do that now, I have that now.

[00:07:31] Definitely because I mean we didn't really do phone calls or anything like that when we

started.

[00:07:34] Yeah. Anything to add to that, or?

[00:07:39] Geoff: No, similar.... I think the SETLDs are useful, but I'm not too sure they're much more valued than useful, personally, it depends on the   purpose that you come to them I think; I think the networking bit of them and the collegiality is probably as important as the sessions you actually do - I find those that time really useful to catch up with people, chat to people about things you're doing other things happening in the courses and so forth. The collaborates I find it really useful in terms of working with the students but I find, depending on the units and I suppose Casey's been with our group too, I think we have a group of people who've been working together a fair bit   And I think that helps a lot, because we're probably, in that group I think first year curriculum I think we had about 11 just recently, and of those probably about six of us had worked together on a number of units and I think that's really great. We tend to do our get togethers quite often off campus, you know socially so to speak, you know we all meet.

[00:08:46] And I was going to ask about that because that's come up that you know, would it be something that you would think that we could do, that we could provide - in other words a space, a time, an opportunity, for informal networking that wasn't connected to the Professional Learning Program.

[00:09:06] Casey: I know that works really well and that means and the teams work really well together for that unit. I know not everyone can come to them - some people are interstate and overseas. But it works.

[00:09:14] Geoff: Yeah a lot of them come and we've been able to use it and have it at different sort of times. You know like sometimes we'll meet for afternoon tea, and but we do the work, we have a chat then focus on what we're going to talk about that a bit more chat - sometimes we might meet at lunch so we have it at the coffee shops or uni club.

[00:09:45] Yes yes, so there you've got the flexibility of being able to find a place that suits everyone. So if we were to schedule them you might lose some of that flexibility, but maybe we could provide space or something? Or no, you don't even that would be....

[00:09:58] Casey: The more informal sort of area I think..

[00:10:04] Geoff: Yeah..... I think if you come on campus you sort of bring that element of formality, you sort of think okay, we've got to go to the Uni, and have a meeting. Go down to the uni club is much more relaxing, have a bite to eat, have dinner or lunch or a cup of tea. I can see your point; I can see why some people want to take up but I think that it's working really well for us outside and I think the people involved are chatty sorts of people.

[00:10:42] Casey: I think that's a really important thing though is because when you work in an office space, you do all your work and stuff like that but then you will go out for coffee afterwards and you still maybe talk to me about work or whatever, but it's about building those relationships. [00:10:55] So we wouldn't want to formalize something that's working really well because it is informal and because it is self managing, so let's just keep our fingers out of it.

[00:11:06] Geoff: And if I can add a sort of aside to that - I know you were asking about the positives I suppose the thing that comes out of it sometimes is that the groups work so well that it would be better if those groups could continue as groups because they have built up a lot of camaraderie and a lot of rapport and a lot of understanding between them   - you know we share a

lot of moderation successfully, that sort of thing, and I think sometimes that doesn't happen and that's a bit frustrating for us as a group.

[00:11:41] And that's another thing that has certainly been identified and certainly something that I know we've been working towards trying to do more and more and that over the years we've been, we've become more able to do it than we could at first. It will always be constrained to some extent by the the absolute requirement to staff the program, and people you know people will change their minds about things and not be available and all sorts of different things. But I think it's really important to recognise that as a principle, that preference-wise, that is what people like. Do you have anything to say about that?

[00:12:26] Casey: Definitely because as I said before, like motivation-wise, when you've got a successful sort of thing going with the people, cause I'm a   people person and that's really important, but then also what happens is that you get to know the content of the units, like I was saying before, I can learn the contents of the new numeracy unit or whatever it might be, but when I know the content I'm much more motivated to get on and answer things because I don't have to worry about like you know that whole faking it till you make it.

[00:12:56] So there's no hesitation then jumping in and supporting students because you know your stuff, and therefore you can be helpful.

[00:13:01] Geoff: and people talk about okay look when we did it last time we made a suggestion that you change it like this and that's happened, so we feel like there's some involvement.

[00:13:10] Yes, so you're invested.

[00:13:14] Yes, I think that's important. Sometimes we think,you feel like,oh, why isn't that person in there and I can't quite see they're doing something different. I can see I can see the organization's point of view in that, I can understand that, but agreeing with what you were saying Casey, that you build up that camaraderie which I think is really important as a group to feel like, okay we're getting together again, okay let's all chat about this, what have you been doing.   People sort of get a bit of an understanding about each other.

[00:13:46] So yes yes you could. Thank you. What about administrative support as people who've both been in the program for a while, you would have seen that change over the years, so I'm thinking about you know in the early days you know there was the Grade Center, and you know there was the fail sheets and there was the downloading and there was the this and there was the that and you know a lot of record keeping that had to be done but that now has shifted a little bit. Has that had much of an impact or is it just sort of neither here nor there.

[00:14:27] Casey: I know personally I'm very much living in that sort of cyber space any way - I can sort of roll with the new tools and everything. I think maybe for everyone it might have been a challenge learning the new system, but to me it's heaps easier - it means I can log on and I can just - and I have very good high speed at home as well, so it makes it so much easier that I can do everything in cyber space because it used to be a pain downloading everything, downloading all the assignments   in the Grade Centre before I could even start marking and then it would be at the end another hour an a half uploading. And then if it would lose it you know because it would lose it halfway through for some reason and then I'd lose my scores, and my hard drive died, it was disaster, all of those things - having everything online has made it so much easier. It means - being busy with kids, I have an hour, I can hop online and do it really quickly and then I can sort of get off and go on with the rest of my life. Whereas I used to have to have a chunk of time. So I've found that's really good.

[00:15:35] Geoff: I think the admin side's is good. I think one of the side of the admin I find a bit frustrating is you're never quite sure what you're going to be involved with,   if you're going to be involved with it even, and I find that side of it a bit frustrating, a bit annoying at times.

[00:15:52] Can I just check here you're talking about the staffing of the units each study period. Can you see a way around that?

[00:16:02] Well I would have thought, coming from a schools perspective, that I would staff my school on expertise. And wanting the best person in that role. And I don't know that sometimes people within the OUA, chatting to them, that they get that feeling.And it has been mentioned to me, oh we   do this on equity grounds, well so my comment back was so what are we now a Social Security Agency now, we weigh up people's.....

[00:16:35] Can you say what you mean about equity grounds?

[00:16:37] Oh well I got the impression that because you're doing other things Geoff, you can't do this and other people need to be doing this, even though they're doing internal and external - we need to take you out because of equity grounds you don't quite fit. I felt that was, I found that offensive, from the point of view that expertise was more important than equity. I think that sometimes you get people involved you know chatting to them and so forth, they just feel a little bit like it's a bureaucracy, that there's not much say _ I know we still put a form in, but I've got to be honest I'm not sure why we fill that form in because it says fill in your choices, then it says are you XXXX for anything else, well I know cause I've done it myself, you stick some of the units there but in the end you get told no you didn't actually nominate and that this unit's not available and therefore you're ineligible because you didn't put it in here. And I just think that it's that process of involving people in the decision making at that point that seems to me to be a bit bureaucratic. That's where I'm frustrated from that point of view.

[00:17:55] Casey: And I do know as well, and it hasn't actually happened recently, but I know that I had friends who were later on in the alphabet than me made up about me and I would always get positions like three or four days before them and then they'd still get a position

[00:18:16] Oh that's interesting because it's not done alphabetically.

[00:18:19] But that was quite a long time ago.

[00:18:22] Yes yes yes.But and this is why this is exactly why we're having these kinds of conversations because you know for me personally in terms of my research this is what I need to understand is, how how are the things that are happening are being perceived by the people that they're happening to.

[00:18:40] Geoff: Yeah, well let me give a couple of examples of things that I've been involved with. I remember once it was like a study period the one over Christmas. Yes and I think that there was a feeling that there was a drop in the student enrolments and therefore it needed less tutors and not these members. And then I knew some people missed out altogether. Now I think at that stage I think I wrote it actually to you   and said look I'm happy to pull out of this because if other people if this is their income then I would gladly step aside and let them come in. I think I've got a comment back to say no, we actually need you in that you know. So I want you to stay. Forget what you just said to me and stay. But now I feel like sometimes it's not quite that sort of thought - I don't do that sometimes you are chosen because of your expertise, it's just because oh okay. And I would have thought maybe if they felt like they had to rotate you so to speak then maybe you should have

a system for that. I wouldn't have a problem with that - just say   okay maybe you can only be sure of working three out of four study periods a year or something like that.

[00:19:49] There is no rotation system; I can just tell you that. But but yeah that's, this is so good to know, you know how these things are being experienced by the people.

[00:20:02] Casey: It's because we don't know. We fill out the form but we don't know how you get from that, to the offers.

[00:20:07] Yes yes.

[00:20:09] I think that's, and I know other people, we've had conversations where they go I don't know if I'm going to get a job next time around, not because they've had like a poor evaluate or something; they just don't know.

[00:20:21] That's right and that is you know unfortunately we're stuck with that because of the nature of sessional employment and how it's how it's sort of governed here at the university. But given that, you know our job is to do the best with that that we can you know. So this is why you know I'm interested in knowing are we doing the best with that that we can.   Are there ways we can do it better?

[00:20:47] Yeah it's that, you know I said you're not sure what's coming up, where it's going, you don't feel like you're involved, and then you get an email, that says oh well we've done all the staffing for example. OK I understand that, that 's fair enough. But then you get a letter to be quite honest, if I could give some people some advice I'd say change the letter - I don't know whether you've ever had one of those, Casey -   that says you haven't got a study period thing - but the letter, the tone from my point of view is condescending.

[00:21:14] Right. Yeah. That's interesting to know.

[00:21:17] The way it's worded I think could be a hell of a lot better and then maybe the letter should go out to everybody individually rather than a blanket out to everybody - I don't know how many people you send it out to, but it just seems to me it's not personalised.

[00:21:31] Casey: You know that's that's the one biggest issue that would come up all the time for me is that when you're trying to read a tone in email   or you're trying to, is that you read a lot like how you're feeling in that day, you had a bad day or a good day and just you know you had a car crash you know, it's from whatever's happening; you're not reading it from the point of view of what friend said because you know hearing a voice. Yeah and I know it's like probably impractical to give people phone calls or things like that, I know why you do that sort of stuff through email. But you know it's just one of those things that that's probably very carefully considered.

[00:22:08] Geoff: Yeah. And I think that I think the organization does a good job of trying to promote loyalty within the program and I think that's important you know.

[00:22:17] That was one of the questions I was going to ask, is is the extent to which you feel aligned to the overall work of the school and the program and the overall work of the university. You know the extent to which you feel part of that.

[00:22:36] Geoff: Well I mean generally, I what I was going to add to that, we were   talking about people being employed or not being employed. What gets frustrating for some people is that we know some people are working for other organisations in OUA. Sometimes people feel a bit

frustrated when you chat to them and say Oh I'm just working for Curtin and other people are doing for University X Y and Z. That doesn't seem to be considered and that to me creates some issues.

[00:23:09] Okay so how would you then put that against what you said before about needing to staff units based on expertise. So in other words if you're saying okay we're employing this person because we value their expertise, should we then take away a little bit from that consideration if we know they're also working for another university.

[00:23:33] Geoff: Well I know it becomes difficult but it also comes in for fairness quite a bit because you quite often promote in the letter that comes out that we value your loyalty and all this sort of stuff but really some people will quite openly say and you chat to them and it proves, if they don't want me here I'll go work for them. So the loyalty only runs as deep as while you give me a job otherwise I'm gone. But the   expertise I think there's just something, and I don't know that the people who are making these decisions on allocating jobs -   I don't have anything negative about them personally, but I don't think I would have any faith in them knowing my expertise. I'd be quite sure about that.

[00:24:17] Casey: Well that's interesting. First of all I know there's a new person in that role, I haven't met her - and Maddie who was before that, was a number of years after I started and so I, I never even thought of this till you said that. But like they probably wouldn't have seen my resume.

[00:24:40] Can you think of a mechanism that we use that actually might give us that information?

[00:24:48] Casey: Well there's the there's the staff profiles, the things that we fill out from time to time but like... no?

[00:24:54] Geoff: Maybe people when they're asking for units maybe they say.

[00:24:58] You see this is telling me something really important in that you're   not immediately knowing what it is; so that that's important in itself. It's the Tutor reflections that people do at the end of each study period.

[00:25:14] Casey: Yeah but that wouldn't have in like my education background.

[00:25:20] No no no. But if you're talking about expertise in the role of tutor that's an important part of the information that we use.

[00:25:28] Casey: Which I agree, but I'm sort of thinking more about content. For instance I keep coming back to it,   but like it's a big thing about my motivation, like numeracy versus sort of digital, programming. Like so what do I know about?   I know about these things. Not so much this - I'm   happy to learn that stuff, but you know and the person staffing I don't know they would know that that would be my niche.

[00:25:52] And but what I'm hearing then is that it's important for you to know that, as opposed to just thinking well they probably do. The fact that you don't know whether they do or not makes a difference to you.

[00:26:07] Casey: That's true yeah.

[00:26:07] Geoff: An interesting case came up just just last week. I was talking to somebody , at the OUA graduation thing - and I'm chatting to them and I said to this person, who's on staff - what's happening with the M Teach units, I'm really curious and as I work closely with the Grad Dips, I

have a real passion for the Grad Dip programs I'm working in, I work really hard on the advanced management strategies, I said but you know with the M Teach units, is there going to be two separate units which is what I was advocating for a long time, I said I think that's fantastic. And I said do you know what's actually happening with the staffing for these and I thought to be quite honest, that somebody like XXXX or you maybe it was that sort of role, would be the person driving that staffing for those things and I was told no you've got to contact Mel because she's the one who does the staffing for that. Now this is not a criticism of that person obviously, but it doesn't give me enough faith because I then wrote to her and said look I'm just curious, I've been to look up, and somebody told me a little bit of advice for you, go into there, look at what the units are and then write in and say you're interested in doing it. But I then I wrote in I got an email back - there was nothing wrong with her email, but it was just here yes I'm collating a list of people might want to teach the M Teach units and I'll let you know how it goes. But that doesn't actually give any indication of oh I've got to search around for expertise or it'll be Fred Smith off the block that we just found who came in looking for a role in OUA.

[00:27:38] Probably not but yeah but what you're saying is you don't know.

[00:27:43] Geoff: Yeah yeah in situations, so how does the person who is making these decision know about the background of the people. I don't think the people who are making decisions actually do know the background of the people to be quite honest. There's no criticism of them individually.

[00:27:58] But it's not transparent to you.

[00:28:02] No, definitely not.

[00:28:02] Casey: The other question, that I would, coming from what you were saying before is, because when I actually applied for this role, I sort of said in my resume I am also working in the education department full time; this is what I do. But I've not I haven't had to fill out anything anything else since then. When I work for the education department I have to fill out a conflict of interest.

[00:28:24] Yes. Yeah because the Education Department requires that.

[00:28:25] That's right, a declaration of where I'm employed. But we don't have to let you know where we're working. So essentially then also the point is how does that staffing person know that they're working for other tertiary institutions.

[00:28:38] And you don't. And that's what I'm saying, that is part of what, how the the sessional employment works; the parameters that we work within.

[00:28:49] Geoff: O yeah; I know there's no guarantee of ongoing work.

[00:28:50] Yeah yeah but I mean those are the things that you're mentioning. Can I ask then the extent to which those things that you've just been talking about, the extent to which that impacts on how motivated and engaged you feel in your work when you're doing it. So you've mentioned them as significant but.

[00:29:13] Geoff: Not at all within the unit themselves. Not at all. You know I really enjoy working within a field as a teacher; our role is about communicating, our role is about engaging people and kids and I think that's what our role is meant to be with the students out there in OUA or wherever I'm teaching them, we should be talking to them as teachers, colleagues rather than students. So no

it doesn't affect me at all and I try to get myself fully engaged in the unit. So I do every collaborate , with XXXXX and I; we do the class together, so we run every collaborate and I contribute just as much as she does to the collaborate. That's right and other people come on board. I see what people want and that's that's okay. Yeah that's that's what we want. So I feel that once the unit starts I feel I said to my students use it myself and it's got more tips and fun things all sorts of good news. But that's what I'd talk about in terms of the level of commitment I want to make and then I feel like sometimes you know what. So for sometimes I feel just think maybe that's not for show because they don't know about me right from my Iraqi friends or that they don't have any knowledge of that import. So Casey could have been in a whole lot extra stuff with this student but today nobody actually knows about that. So she usually doesn't get something next study period. All this work is nothing.

[00:30:43] Casey: I think that that's true. Once you're in the unit you're fine. I think it's towards the end of the year when you're looking forward to the next one, and you put in your thing and you go Oh yeah I don't know. It doesn't make you work less in your job but it might put stress on because you go Oh you don't know if you're going to have that income coming up - and so that's a personal stress. I don't think it really affects like the job that you're doing and also because at that time you're normally just marking and winding up anyway. So it's not really impacting on your ability to do your job but on a personal level yes.

[00:31:18] And one of the people that has taken part in these interviews said something similar and so I've said Okay so what would it take, what would it take for you to say right. I don't want to do this any more? And that person said well if I was not offered; you know there was talk around the sorts of things that you've been saying and that person said well if I was not offered a place two study periods in a row then I would probably be thinking I'm not going to do this any more.

[00:31:46] Hah yes I'd ring up XXXXX

[00:31:49] Yeah, so this question is around that. Okay so you know you've said it doesn't impact on my motivation when I'm in the unit, but if you thought more kind of long term what overall, what kind of impact would it have on your willingness to stay engaged with the program.

[00:32:08] Geoff: Well I think that what you said is right, or if you felt like suddenly I'm not inside me I'm not in favor of not being considered. And I think sometimes you chit chat in the group people talk about this from the point of view of how come they're employing new tutors when some of their friends got knocked back this time. So what's, how is their loyalty being rewarded when suddenly they've been dropped out and these new people are in - it's nothing against the new people and they're all very nice. But it's that sort of thing. I think that would be the sort of thing that would lead me to say, look I think you and I probably should just part; let's not not get into an argument about it and I think more recently where I was not put into a unit and I have a bit of   debate with the person, it did   point where it was getting quite tense. In the end I think I was told, look you've got any more questions you probably should direct those to XXXX so I just thought so okay let's forget I think I made my point.

[00:33:10] How about you?

[00:33:11] Casey: I don't think, from memory when I've been prepared, when I've said yes I'm available to work, I haven't been knocked back and probably after a couple of times I'd probably, say   - not that I wasn't loyal to the course, or the school -   but I'd have to start looking for work elsewhere because of the income question. But I've never - the only thing that actually ever made me sort of think I don't think I want to work here anymore is when I've had conflict within the unit with another staff member. I've had plenty of times when students go off, they come on again; just

like you know, they're very needy or they're having their Facebook chat, things like that, and I just get frustrated with that but I just go: it's just the nature of it, it comes with the territory. That's right and even when it really gets quite hard to handle I go okay I can handle them even when they get crazy.

[00:34:04] Geoff: You hear very divergent views about how well some groups are working within the units compared to other units; quite divergent.

[00:34:11] Casey: I mean I know I've had an experience where I thought it was going really well and I wasn't doing one of my responsibilities but I was on there every sort of 24 hours and I was answering questions and I was answering emails. And the unit coordinator said look you haven't been doing this and I go oh look because there'd been like two weeks marking and I'd been sick and it added up to four weeks that I hadn't done this one thing and I go oh look yeah I've been feeling really bad about that, this is because it came in an e-mail that you haven't done this, well blah blah blah. And they said initially six weeks and I go no no no   if you look back on my board I did it, it has actually been four weeks; I'm feeling really bad about that. I will go back and I'll do that. And then the person who was the unit coordinator, and up until that point for those four weeks had sort of been asking me to do extra things and I'd   done extreme things and you know everything was going along well but then they obviously had missed that I hadn't done it for four weeks, and the email came through and then the, I said oh look, feeling really really bad I'm getting on to that in the next 24 hours I'll clean it all up and it'll be done. But then in the next 24 hours when I logged on the following night because I go online at night because I have my kids, it was Oh no I've already done it all for you and the university will dock your pay and pay me instead. And what else was there? I emailed your group so they did an email to my group and told them what a bad job I was doing and that they were following it up and they were going to solve the problem. I'm like Oh my God, that escalated quickly. Where did that come from. After you know, like seriously I heard about it, I felt bad about that and but heard about the problem being a serious problem. Okay I'll get on it and just like from just that.

<comment>Commented [VM38]: UC – need PL in managing staff</comment>

[00:36:03] So that's the missing bit there in terms of what the organisation did do or didn't do or that you would think could be done differently so that, you know?

[00:36:14] You know well in the end because this is what this person was saying, this would happen and this would happen and this would happen and that it was against my contract and all of these sort of things. And I actually rang XXXXXXX and I said look this has all just happened, is that against my contract? I didn't think it was against my contract I've done   this this and this they were the things that I was meant to do. And she said Oh no look, open to interpretation, the unit co-ordinator can ask you to do this in this way or this in this way, so in the end it was resolved, but the problem was, is that when, in the process of resolving it, the unit coordinator I knew had my number, never rang me, never texted me to say that it was a big issue   - knew that I only was able to time, said all this stuff about it being in the contract, but it wasn't, said that they'd just been in for you to coordinate a training and that was the action that they were told to do and sort of blamed it all on that this was the university policy.

[00:37:20] And did you, at the time, I suppose what I'm trying to get to, is that point about how we know that the best possible systems will always be only as good as the people who were enacting them. So what I'm just trying to get to is whether is it...

[00:37:40] Casy: One thing is that in the e-mail, it actually said this is your responsibility.

<comment>Commented [VM39]: SoE comms + clarify role responsibilities; helps with conflict resolution</comment>

[00:37:44] Okay. Okay.

[00:37:45] Yeah I don't know if that's a result of me saying Oh my God this all just happened and that was terrible. It made me so upset and this is what I'm being told I had to do. I have done X Y Z but haven't done A.   Now it says a description.

[00:38:02] So that's helped everyone's clarity because it helps

[00:38:07] Casey: Well it helped mine.

[00:38:07] And it also helped that the person who, to, it also probably constrains the person from trying to say that you needed to do things that maybe you didn't because   - so clarity of role.

[00:38:23] Geoff: I think the detail that's coming out has improved a lot; you know the amount of information and the clarity of it. I think the other thing that I sometimes feel - not negative but for the people who come into OUA teaching sessions need to take it on as a commitment. And I sometimes get a little bit concerned about that because I know sometimes not in you case because you have a whole lot of other factors but in situations where people have dropped down the barrel or dropped off the pace or not meeting up for marking requirements or not meeting up you know and so I think if you take on doing OUA for a study period it seems to me that you're actually committing yourself, to make sure you're available to teach and be available to students.

[00:39:18] So how would the organisation ensure that? What are some of the things?

[00:39:22] Geoff: I think that you just something; what you're currently putting out saying people this is your responsibilities within it and I think that UCs generally are good on in terms of just checking and I think that sort of thing's important. I just think just reminding people look you do need to be on your discussion boards every couple of days or responding to emails every day, not feeling like you can just wander offf and go for a holiday.

[00:39:49] So if I can just drill into what that might look like for you. So when you say the organisation, are you saying those reminders should come from us centrally, from your unit coordinator on the blackboard, you know what might that look like ideally.

[00:40:06] Geoff: Well i think the contract, perhaps should say you are making a commitment to this study period for 12 or 13 weeks. I know some people say look it's okay I'm going to go for a holiday for four weeks - well   I sometimes question whether you have as much contact in that time, and the the linking up that should happen, and I feel like if you're going to do something else that's going to impact your role then maybe you don't take on the role.

[00:40:35] Casey: I know we say that to students.

[00:40:36] So you... yes, so you, I just want to be really sure I'm getting this job right here: so what you're maybe suggesting is that that's signed off on, on a study period by study period basis.

[00:40:51] Casey: I think so, when it comes out on that letter, I can't remember if it's the letter of the offer or the letter of confirmation, but it actually said, or it might be the general one saying staff you know if you're going to apply this is what you have to do. There's one email that has, I've noticed it a couple of study periods in a row so it must be standard now. And it says that you're expected to be on, I think it's like reply to emails in 24 hours and something else within 48 hours and its   really really quite clear   - but that never used to be around. And I think is why this incident happened. I think probably that same standard maybe needs to be in the first email that the UC sends out to everyone as well and that maybe it's repeated by various levels of staff.

[00:41:33] Geoff: Yes during the next 12/13 weeks you are expected to meet these commitments.

[00:41:39] And you would view that as protective and supportive rather than as authoritarian and directive?

[00:41:45] Casey: Definitely.I think it's important.I think so; I think it's very clear, it's not in negative language and it just says look if the UC is just saying in one of the emails look I'm just re-highlighting that these are the other commitments. And then this is maybe something else that we're doing in this unit. You know because sometimes unit to Unit there's different requirements because of the content or the Collaborates or whatever; because the collaborates aren't listed in that from memory; they are extra things that we're doing -   you know,   I think what is listed is the moderation. You know, if it's saying that, just like I'm just copying and pasting what XXXXX has sent out, it's this, and then for our unit you know we're going to do this. If you have a problem with this second bit please feel free to contact and we can make other arrangements or whatever. It's just in the tone, but I think it has to be very clear, because that was, once again this unit coordinator, I'm going to assume what they said was genuine. They thought that you had to do, that you had to reply to every single student, every time they posted, and give valid feedback to everything in all the weekly units and they said, saying once again I'm assuming they were genuine they thought it was in the contract that I had to do that and that was not what I had been told when I first started working.

[00:43:15] Geoff: I pulled out of a study period about four weeks into it once. It was in the early days and I just didn't like the tone and some of the stuff that was coming out from the UC. I thought it was very unreasonable.

[00:43:32] So there's a good example of where you you chose to disengage. Something happened that actually said No.

[00:43:42] Yeah I said don't even bother to pay me; I don't care about being paid, I'm in this for students; I'm here because I'm an educator, but I don't like the tone of what's being said and the way it's been said and I've already   raised this with the UC and it's still happening and so I, it's better for me to say we don't match and I'm pulling out.

[00:44:03] Yes. So in terms of organisation response to that. You know, did you think at the time that there would be an organizational response to that?

[00:44:13] Oh yeah, they were quite shocked; they asked me to come in said well gee you'd better come in and talk to me about that And that person disappeared afterwards, so maybe what I was saying was right.   Maybe it would be interesting, whether you would nominate for units if you who knew who the UC was? Would you nominate for everybody Casey if you knew a certain person was gonna co-ordinate that unit?

[00:44:38] Casey: Oh no, I know I haven't nominated to do that unit because I'm assuming X will be there.

[00:44:42] Geoff: Yeah that's what I'm saying.

[00:44:43] Yes I know; and you know those kinds of things happen in any team any workplace, any organisation don't they?

[00:44:52] Geoff: People say oh I can't work with that person.

[00:44:52] Yes and it's beyond any organisation to control you know all of that. But but what we can control the organisation's responses and you know.

[00:45:03] Casey: Just making sure that it's a unified message, you know once again that it's clear that this has come to the top; I'm reinforcing this, so then the tutor shooter goes I'm going to follow this. I mean it gives me something else that you said.....

[00:45:21] Well maybe I can just shift gears a little bit, you know we're on the same topic but just a different way of looking at it which is to ask you whether you're conscious of anything that we do as a school. So I'm not talking about Curtin University as a whole but anything that you experience from the School of Education that is something that we do do, so we've been talking about what we could do that we don't do to make things better, right?. Is there anything that you're aware of that we do do that you find actually impacts negatively. That you wish we didn't do; something that we do do that you wish we didn't because that actually impacts on your motivation and engagement.

[00:46:04] Geoff: Well my first reaction would be to change that letter of refusal or rejection. I don't find that very rewarding or very reassuring. I don't think there's anything else that you do that I wouldn't expect i would have to do. You're my employer so therefore I feel like I have a commitment to you, I need to be loyal to you and support your philosophies. No no, off the top of my head there's nothing.

> **Commented [VM45]:** Staffing – letter of refusal/rejection

[00:46:40] Casey: I think somebody that used to annoy me was that there were all these different heads of different things and I didn't know who to talk to about things and there were and all these different emails you know, different people. Now I think it had become more streamlined and that's better. I can't think of anything like really sort of stands out.

> **Commented [VM46]:** SoE Comms better more streamlined +

[00:47:02] Well that's good because if there was anything significant you would know!

[00:47:05] Geoff; Oh yes it's made incredible progress over the years since we first started; when you think about, it's becoming a very sophisticated structure in a sense, It's become well organized.

> **Commented [VM47]:** SoE Comms + more organised

[00:47:21] Casey: Yeah that's the big thing. I know who to contact and it generally is only sort of XXXXX or now MMM, sort of contacting us and distributing information unless there's something specifically coming from specific people. Yeah the only lack is just I don't know what I don't know that would annoy me.

> **Commented [VM48]:** CSS + central communics

[00:47:44] Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah. So if we think now about Curtin as a wider organisation and this is not a test, but I'm just wanting to ask: are you aware of what Curtain's values are - or no, I should even take one step back - are you aware that Curtin has values, like has identified certain values as being the Curtin values. Are you aware of that?

[00:48:14] Geoff: Yes I'm aware, I'm sure that we've got the values, I occasionally see them, can't remember, I think they're about equity and so forth, and they're important.

[00:48:25] Casey: And I think that they I think they come out in that you know in the type of training that we have to do? You know those little, I just did one, about equity and and about sort of staff safety. I mean I wouldn't be able to recite them.

> **Commented [VM49]:** Uni comms + mandatory PL reflects values

[00:48:44] No no, as I say i'm not testing you; I just wanted to know if you were aware and then the second part to that question is the extent to which you would think or believe that the school of education, and your experience as a sessional tutor, the way that you were dealt with, would reflect the Curtin - like how confident do you feel that they would, that we do and that they would be

strongly aligned or would you have no idea.

[00:49:15] Casey: I think they'd probably be strongly aligned with like the mission school just because of what I see sort of. But you know what I actually think

[00:49:24] Geoff: It's a different relationship I find to face to face teaching organisation that's for sure - I think the face to face teaching   arrangements are a lot more interactive in terms of employment and so forth and discussion and feeling maybe that you're being employed because of your expertise and so forth and so forth and discussion, and feeling maybe that you're being employed because of your expertise.

[00:49:49] So you might have a little less confidence around that.

[00:49:53] Geoff; Yeah, I think it's got nothing to do with expertise, I think it's just oh here's a name, we'll just put a person in the slot.

[00:50:00] And so you're, coming back to alignment, to Curtin values, your experience might be that you would have a lot less confidence that the practices reflect certain values in the online program than perhaps they might do in the face to face program.

[00:50:16] Yeah. And I think when I see things come out from the...

[00:50:20] Is that a fair summary of what you were trying to say?

[00:50:22] Yeah, well I think it's done differently like I said and I used the example of the M Teach because that did surprise me a little bit I thought OMG you got to be kidding, surely, it's like me asking one of the kids to pick the next teacher....   But no I think that there's a lot more interaction if I want to find out something about more on Bentley campus and then I know I can always contact you or contact XXXXX and have a discussion about it and we'll talk more about the expertise, rather than Oh, we'll just employ you.

[00:50:58] Casey: What you're saying   sort of rings true when I reflect. If I was working here, I probably would see the weekly email coming through from the vice chancellor and the weekly update or the monthly updates and stuff or the Monday emails that come out, I would probably read them. But I skip over them.

[00:51:11] Yeah yeah. And that's probably the sort of thing that I'm interested in knowing about.

[00:51:20] Casey: When I really analyse that, is that I sort of think that quite often OUA in my head is separate from...

[00:51:29] Geoff: That's the danger I think.

[00:51:29] Casey: I mean because now we come into the SETLDs and stuff and because I've been working so long I've picked up a couple other little things so I ended up working on campus and being here like during the day when there's kids around and stuff like that; whereas quite often I revert to thinking well now I'm in this little bubble space here and only just sort of attached by a string to here. And so I think that maybe you know that's why I'm sort of quite, not lacksadaisy, but I don't really mind the idea of that I'm going to have to apply for my job again at the end of 13 weeks and I'll have those couple of weeks where I don't know if I'm gonna do it. Whereas I think you've identified more with Curtin as a whole like what you're saying, is that then, and there are some people who would do that more than me; then maybe I would feel more miffed if I didn't get a

role.

[00:52:20] Geoff: I see Curtin as part of my life. I definitely do. I've been involved with it for so long, that I see it as an important part of my -   teaching was important, my school was important, the Education Department was important but Curtin it's also an important part of my general make-up and that's why I think that it's important to have that discussion about OK we need to do this and here's why. Whereas I think I'll get that feeling about OUA.

Commented [VM52]: Role in self actualisation

[00:52:46] Okay so final - probably final question unless you say some things that prompt more - which I did mention before. It's around what would have to happen or change for you to say you know, I don't want to do this anymore and you've said well if I didn't get offered work - anything else that you can think of; gee I'm, my motivation and engagement would be severely threatened if dot dot dot.

[00:53:19] I think that if I felt that communication became void, that you can't get answers to questions that I ask, and feel that you can get an answer that is reasonable and that explains a few things, that would make me think, I don't think I'm in the in-group here, maybe I should vacate while I'm ahead. Not because I'd necessarily want to but I'd think I not in favour here.

Commented [VM53]: Staffing comms would threaten

[00:53:51] So it's around having appropriate and timely communications.

[00:54:01] Yeah And I think sometimes and it isn't always the same ball game, there   you feel like you in or out can be quite evident in situations.

[00:54:11] And how was that manifested apart from being offered work or not?

[00:54:16] Just the general communication, with people, the sort of feedback from people, the ease of access to getting things, the sort of feedback they give to you get when you ask them ask a questions. Like I originally asked if I was going to be involved in study periods, OK that's fine, it didn't really bother me, because I had all my internal stuff anyway,   I've got so much else on my plate. So we're not really offered, but after about a week when I asked the question the answer was just look didn't you read the last email!   I thought I'm not responding to that to be honest I thought that was an inappropriate response. You know

[00:54:54] So about communicating yes.

[00:54:55] Yeah. Oh gee OK sorry about this; we're going through this process at the moment, this sort of stuff you know. And I know you've got a lot people on your books, but just making it more personal; why is that a blanket email to everybody, that doesn't seem to say to me , Casey and me, sorry we don't need you this study period you know.

Commented [VM54]: SoE comms must be respectful

[00:55:19] Casey: Yeah. And I think that's similarly it's about if you feel sort of respected

[00:55:24] Again then, how would that be manifested for you?.

[00:55:26] Well I think that, because one of the things that, I've sort of moved on because I've realised not everything revolves around that sort of feeling that I felt back then. But one of my biggest thing was how I felt was that well hang on you have my phone number. If that was a really important issue that you would ring me if was that important,   that it had to be resolved within a couple of hours not 24 hours, or if you know if I emailed back and Yes I'll do that. But then you said no that's not good enough I've done it all; it's like people have to show the faith back to you. I think if that sort of thing happened again, and then I was I was very supported by XXXXXX at this

end you know that was very good and that showed that respect. You know if you continue to get e-mails like you said you know and they were very short and you know that would make me walk away.

[00:56:28] And if you experienced something like that again and you didn't have that back up from the school yes then it could be your undoing.

[00:56:40] Well that's right. So it's around communications also. Yeah yeah yeah.Okay.

[00:56:47] Geoff: Well I think that there's a feeling, generally I suppose, maybe e that the communications from that level is sanctioned by you.

[00:57:00] Oh, I'm queen of everything......

[00:57:03] Oh, well in a school if a teacher sends you something you presume the principal sanctioned this. So generally I would think if I got a letter like that and I wasn't happy, I would think that Val probably knows about it and supports it anyway.

[00:57:16] You know it's interesting - this is really just an aside. But but it's interesting, that as I've moved out of, you know in my current role, I actually don't oversee staffing.

[00:57:31] No no but that's the impression because we know you were actively involved in it.

[00:57:40] As you've been there, as I've been there for a while and you see faces over and over again you sort of forget who does what. and you just go oh yes they're a really important person!

[00:57:47] Yes of course oh okay that's it. Is there anything you were bursting to say

[00:58:00] I've got a class but if you want me to clarify anything you're more than welcome.

[00:58:00] Oh good, thank you because that was one thing I was going to ask - yes thank you, thank you so much, you've got to go. So Casey, is there anything you know, if you had a wish list is there anything that you want - this is just a final opportunity to make sure that you've said everything you want to say around the topic.

[00:58:21] Casey: In general I find this a fantastic sort of supplement to income, but also really good sort of supporting my ongoing professional development, so it really fits well with my career and what I'm doing and that's why, aside from that one, because I keep coming back - it's the only thing that I've ever had that's not gone right working here. I think all of the things that you've slowly done have been really good organising it, information about what you have to do   and your responsibilities and with the education hub now where we can all go there's resources and the SETLD days.

[00:58:55] So because your motivation and engagement is perhaps helped because of the fact that it fits in to you know your wider life and career path and so forth that it's something that you can do, that is aligned with that, but you can manage.

[00:59:18] Yeah. I think that it's just something that I'm highly motivated to do especially when I'm in a unit where I feel confident with the material.

[00:59:30] Thank you for coming back to that. All right thank you very much. I'll press stop.

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[00:00:01] Interview with Ann Sumich. Interview conducted Monday 11 September 2017 by Val Morey . Just for the purposes of permission could you just reiterate that you give your permission for this interview.

[00:00:49] Absolutely.

[00:00:50] And I just, and the recording of it.

[00:01:06] Yes.

[00:01:07] That's great. It's just those things we have to make sure we've got covered.

[00:01:14] Yes, I had to do that for my masters, I interviewed XXX XXXXX - I had to ask all the same questions,

[00:01:22] That's right. Okay. So just for a little bit of a preamble and particularly because I'm conscious that it's been such a long time there's been that delay so it's been a long time since people filled out the initial survey. So I'm just wanting to just reorient people to the purpose. So hopefully you do have a vague memory of having done that survey and that you'll remember that I was asking questions about motivation and engagement. So motivation just in broad terms, motivation being what makes you want to do your work. And then engagement being how involved in your work you feel when you're actually doing it.

[00:02:13] Yeah sure.

[00:02:13] And particularly what I'm interested in from my research is what we as an organization do or don't do that can impact either positively or negatively on motivation and engagement or indeed things that we do or don't do that don't make any difference. They're neither here nor there. I noticed in the survey a number of people mentioned things that students do or don't do that impacts on their motivation and engagement. And it was really interesting to see that, but it's not the focus of my research. So if when you're answering today you can think about just from the organizational point of view and also just for you when you're working fully online in the fully online program.

[00:03:06] Sure. And so I just my my perspective and about as an employee.

[00:03:14] Yes yes.

[00:03:16] Yes. OK.

[00:03:17] So to begin can you just give a brief summary of your history in the online program; the roles you've undertaken, the length of time you've been working in the program.

[00:03:30] Sure - I've been in in OUA or Open Universitirs Australia at Curtin since it started in 2009 and worked various roles as a tutor and co-ordinator, for what is it, 2009, 2017, nine years or so, and in various hours or, because of the roles the time or the amount of dedication versus study period was different, so that alternated, so for some study periods I was working you know one unit coordinating and tutoring and other study periods I was tutoring two groups. So only recently I've been coordinating more than one group, so it's been varied in that sense. So for the 9 years it's been quite continuous. There was a, I did take a break to do some further studies and pursue other aspects personally for about a year and a half I think it was, in 2014 early 15. But other than that I've been

working full time mostly just in online education,purely because I love the flexibility and what I get out of it personally to do my further - I learn a lot myself from being in this role. So that's basically where I've been at so nine years in various roles. Every study period continuously apart from a break of about a year and a half.

[00:05:31] Great. Thank you. Thank you for that. So thinking about you know the length of time that you've been working in the roles that you've been in, are you able to identify any particular times that stood out where you felt really really highly motivated and engaged and that might have been to do with the time in the study period, it might have been the unit you were in, it might have been the fact that you had a particular role. You know it could be anything, just to try to identify when you felt particularly motivated or engaged in what was actually causing that.

[00:06:10] Sure. Well absolutely when I first started my initial three or four study periods were very highly motivated. I was very highly motivated with those. The first one purely because it was something new and I hadn't experienced that before and I really enjoyed it - especially working with the coordinator I was with - she was very very helpful and like a mentor to me. And then moving on to being asked to manage and coordinate some my own; that created a new motivation for me. And that continued for quite a while actually, and didn't really go down, I really have always been motivated working online, purely because I enjoy that. I just think there's so much potential with what you can do with it, and unfortunately sometimes I felt that I didn't have enough time to do everything we needed to do. So every study period I was thinking maybe I could do that so it was really good to sort of be back into that role again. When I took a break, that was for me that was good timing too. I tend to like to do everything really well and get very attached to my role; it's a little bit of a personality thing. So the break was good for me. And again motivation peaked when I started again, initially as a tutor which I thoroughly enjoyed and then again being introduced to some co-ordination of some new units which peaked motivation again because it was a new challenge, I really enjoyed that new challenge and new topics, and also because it helped me with my own learning again. And I thought what motivates me is this is something new I can learn too and then I can pass that on. So my motivation has been fairly high most of the time. When you're coordinating the same unit for like a long time say perhaps more than two years, I was looking for more of a challenge. But overall, that's how my motivation personally worked. For me anyway.

[00:08:48] Yes. And these are the sorts of things that we you know that I'm trying to understand a little bit better so that the organization can respond to that. So picking up on what you said about your motivation being from what you said quite tied to whether you're feeling personally challenged and learning new things. Would it then be fair to say then that the fact that the organization can be flexible enough to to sort of place you in different roles or different units, that has helped? If that flexibility wasn't there, it might have impacted on your motivation? If you know, if you'd been stuck with the same unit, sorry that's it; you've got to just keep teaching that unit.

[00:09:41] Excellent question and really interesting because I have some views on it. My motivation might not, would not change, if I was allowed a bit more flexibility to introduce some new and different things but now there's a bit more restriction on being able to do those things online. So that sort of limits you with your creativity from the tutors or the co-ordinator's point of view and that that that can change your motivation. If I had to have that exact same assessment all the time for a long time and not being able to change it and introduce, I know you can modify things slightly. You know. Yes. If was able to as I grew, could help the unit grow; there's no problem with my motivation. If I'm not allowed to help the unit grow, the changing pedagogies, changing ideas, changing technology, and not able to do some of the stuff that I have to offer, then yes I would need motivation to change into a different topic or learning area. Have a bit of a change in that sense. I mean does that make sense. Yeah absolutely.

Commented [V1]: CHALLENGE

Commented [V2]: UC

Commented [V3]: CHALLENGE

Commented [V4]: INNOVATION

Commented [V5]: CHALLENGE

Commented [V6]: PPGROWTH AND CONTRIB

Commented [V7]: INNOVATION

Commented [V8]: INNOVATION

[00:11:12] Yeah. Thank you so much. Because.

[00:11:16] I can stay motivated in the same unit, if I'm allowed some creative exploration. But if restricted in that sense, I would feel like I needed a change, yes. to keep my motivation high.

[00:11:34] Yes. And where do you see that restriction coming from?

[00:11:41] I think as a large organisation; when i first started, there seemed to be a bit more flexibility on what we could do online. And I'm not saying it's not - change is good in that it's needed in order to keep that consistency and also standards within an organization, but that can restrict where, what you can do. So it's got tighter - which is a good thing and a bad thing. I like some aspects of that, because I see more consistency and the standard similar across, but I also feel it does restrict a little bit of creativity with individuals and what they have to offer.It's like students in a classroom really; everyone has something different to offer. I know you have to work within a realm if I had something to help her. And. Not. Have.

[00:12:51] To work. I know you have to work in. But it's nice to have a little bit of flexibility.

[00:12:58] Now that's really interesting. Thank you.

[00:13:02] Is there anything that you can identify that you're aware of that. I'm just going to say the organization by which I mean usually I mean school but when I don't think the school I'll get I'll say that. Anything that you're aware of that the organization does on a sort of regular routine basis that really helps you, makes you feel engaged in your work and supported in your work.

[00:13:33] I really like the support; like there's a central link, of that email, that support person who links everything together and is sending you the common, this is what you have to do, the prompts, the organization. That sort of helps a lot with motivation: Oh yeah I've got to do that, sort of thing. So in that sense having that support from the organization and that personal thing, it's not so, how can I put it - it's not robotic, it's got a little bit of personalisation behind it. I really like that sense, that motivates me, I like working for an organisation that has that bit of personalisation and doesn't treat you like just another tutor or a number; like they acknowledge what you're doing, and that sort of motivates me.

[00:14:42] Yeah no good. If is that same information came from a generalized Curtin university e-mail would that be, would that feel different to you?

[00:14:57] Yes. I like; even though it's a big organization I like the communication to be a little bit personal, a little bit so you feel part of family or a team. That motivates me to want to do more for my family or my team, rather than just a computer sending out a whole lot of things to everyone. And I feel that it is like that, which is really nice, and you get to know people, so there's a little bit of personalisation behind it and you get to recognise people, talk to people and when someone says you're now part of this team and this person's in the team you can say oh yeah I remember that person I've seen that person, you can make a contact or a connection with those people. I would hate to work for an organisation - hate is a strong word, I don't really mean that - where there are so many people you just wouldn't know who you are working for next. And I think that the organisation that I'm in at the moment caters for looking after people for who they are and recognises them for what they have to offer. So I like.

[00:16:31] Yes no. Thank you, so thinking about what you were saying about being able to interact with other team members, how useful or important or value are the spaces, the online spaces that are provided by the school on the blackboard site, for team Members, you know the staff lounge of

those kinds of things. Do you use those or do you tend to sort of do things outside of that?

[00:17:01] Well certainly use everything that's provided online.I do use the staff lounge. I like it when other people value it too. You don't always get other people connecting and wanting to do that and that's a shame. There is the odd occasion where I would invest time with someone, to make that connection and create that working partnership; that works well, especially when you're working with just one or two people.

[00:17:35] Yes. Yes.

[00:17:38] And when you're in a big team it works well but not well for every person in that team if they're not contributing.

[00:17:48] So yes, I'm trying to sort of get - a few people brought that up and I'm just trying to ask people so, are there other things that could be provided by the organization that would facilitate those communications between staff. I mean I know this doesn't apply to you so much but a few people have said oh we really like to get together physically, go to the coffee shop and have a meeting. So I said well what if we provided spaces and times and that sort of thing you to be able to do that on campus and a couple of people said that would be great, a couple of others said Oh no, because the reason we like it is because we can do it where we want, in an informal space, off campus. So no no I don't want you to do that. So what's your view on that?

[00:18:46] That's really interesting - and I tend to think that the organisation provides absolutely enough for people to connect and communicate and so if they're not communicating and connecting in the ways we provide, then they're not going to do it face to face either. I think that no, I don't think that will work. People that are attracted to the online realm and the online field do it because they love the flexibility of being able to communicate at different times outside of the work time so if you say OK we're going to provide a time for you to meet face to face and that intersects with their other work commitments, they're not going to be there anyway. They might say they will but they won't. Then if you say Ok I'll be there after work well no, I don't think that would work because then they have family commitments. No I don't think that.. I think that people who don't connect, who aren't interested in connecting in the online realm, are just wanting to work and not build those work relationships and are not going to do it anyway. I don't think that building those extra things is going to pull other people in so in my sense and my view on it is is that some people love this work and do it becasue they love it and love the connection and love the times that they can do it and how how they do it and other people are just doing it anyway just because it's an extra income. Sorry, this is quite blunt.

[00:20:26] No that's OK!

[00:20:26] It's an extra income and I'm just going to do this as my extra gig . I don't care about making connections with other people and academically connecting at that depth. And there are some people like that that's OK, as long they do their job well and whatever. It doesn't bother me.

[00:20:48] Yes, no these are the things that I'm trying to understand because as you say there's no point to thinking that, well we should do this and we could do that, if as you say it was not really, wasn't really a lack; if it's just a nice idea that as you say people wouldn't pick up on that. There's no point. So we've got to try and make sure that we're doing what is actually valuable and does help. So can we flip the coin now. And ask you about any times where you felt that your motivation and engagement is low or whatever it was that you might have been feeling - frustration or a lack of agency or whatever it might be, because of something that either the organization was doing that was getting in your way, or wasn't doing that you wish that they were, that would have helped you.

[00:21:52] Mmmm, that's a good one. I think motivation actually stems for me, personally, from me. Yeah yeah yeah.

[00:22:01] It's not totally connected completely to the organisation. I'm motivated by education and learning etc and where my motivation is low or not there, it's usually me personally wanting to do something else. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:22:23] It's not in that sense linked to what the organisation does or doesn't do..... I'm just trying to think of an example.... . I'm just know it's, that's how it works for me personally. I've always been motivated by the online so it's there - and when it's not, it's me.

[00:22:46] Yes. All right. Well so, I'll put it a little bit differently and just ask you would you - if you had a wish list - and I know you talked a little bit about being able to have that space for creativity when you're working in units. Can think of anything else that would be on your wish list you know, well now the school is doing well with this but oh if only this , or if only that, is there anything you could ask for?

[00:23:25] For me, personally, I like to think I'm doing what I can. I think we're restricted; sometimes my motivation gets low because, the other end - the student end, they can't keep up with what i want to do. I have to back off and think OK< these people are not ready for for something new or something different. So that sort of affects me in that sense and I get a bit frustrated and like oh well, if you're studying online you should know this or you should be able to but you also understand that you can't - so not getting back from the student cohort what you would like to be able to move forward. But, to me, how do we develop those relationships with those students, is the really key thing and I think it would motivate me more if we could work out some ways to help students in a more personalised way, but when there's a lot of students in the group, like I know the groups are quite large, that's difficult to develop, but understandably that a lot of students don't stay in the group so it's a bit of a juggling thing and, I've come to develop a bit of resilience to not worry too much about it. I know I've done what I can for these students, I can't, they're not reacting or helping themselves, there's not a lot more that I can do and I and I don't take it on board as much now. So in that sense, my motivation stays reasonably OK, because knowing I've done everything I can do.

[00:25:30] That's a good.. that's a good point that you raise though because it says that as an organization who when we try to support staff in their role, maybe that's an aspect that we can address with our staff. Is exactly what you were saying; that there's only so much that you can do and you should feel that you haven't done a good job if the students are not giving back or engaging. Maybe that's a message that we can that we can give to our staff, so that people don't feel like, you know, despondent in any way that they're lacking in what they're doing. You know there might be something that we can do to acknowledge that.

[00:26:15] Yeah. I think so because some of the new tutors are wondering, you know, 20 percent of my students responding I haven't got this and that and they often don't know things like, oh well, such a percentage is not going to turn up, such a percentage won't show - they don't know that information, and I think presenting that up front is going to help a bit too.

[00:26:45] Ok, thank you. So just to finish off with a couple of questions that are about Curtin University as a whole. And this is not a test but I'm just I'm just interested to know are you aware that Curtin university has Values.

[00:27:06] Yes. I do. I actually at the bottom of my my email message have the values statement

and I like to I quite Like those values. I can't iterate them off hand Right now.

[00:27:24] So I said it's not a test. I'm not going to ask you that.

[00:27:26] I to think that everyone sort of abides by those; and as i said I have in fact got them at the bottom of my email message - I notice not everyone does but that would be nice, for people to know and recognise, but yes, I do.

[00:27:45] Yeah. Yeah. Okay. And then just following up with that. To what extent do you feel confident or maybe not at all confident, or you know you could say highly or medium, that the school of education, and the way we run the program and work with staff; to what extent do you see as aligning to the Curtin values. Or you might have an opinion on it.

[00:28:17] Oh I think we align quite well with it, in the sense that we value diversity and the courage; I mean given that it's open university and we're allowing, well not allowing, encouraging, giving everyone an opportunity to gain an education, that fits nicely in with our values and that we do promote fairness and integrity across the course that we do, and we ask our tutors to watch out for that and to be respectful of diversity etc. I think, you know, all tutors or the ones I've worked with and the colleagues I've worked with have been very accepting calls for diversity and fairness and promote it. So I think as a whole school of education certainly upholds that: I have never seen it come across in any negative, any negative feelings towards those values. So yes, I think that they do a good jopb there. It comes from top down. I think that the management and the people people in the higher roles model that for us. And we sort of disperse that down through .... I mean there may some UCs or tutors who don't follow those values but I would imagine the people above them would let them know. And I think that that has happened in the past. So yes; we quite strongly uphold those values.

[00:30:16] Yes, well that;s good - in your experience yes, yes and that's right..

[00:30:24] Okay well I don't have any more particular questions that I wanted to ask you. But I do want to just give you an opportunity to say anything else to do with what we've been talking about. I just don't want it finish before you - if you thought I wanted to say this or I wish she'd asked me that.

[00:30:52] No, I'm all good if you are. I'm quite happy to answer more questions a few days later if you think of something....

[00:30:58] Well i was actually going to say that because what I was going to ask you was because when I finish this first round of interviews and then I'll be doing my analysis and with some particular themes emerge that I really want to know more about just that particular thing I might want to come back to people and say look you mentioned something about that, can I ask you a little bit more just about that. If that's okay I'd love to be able to do that if that happens. Yeah.

[00:31:27] Yeah that's great; no problem at all. Al right. Thank you I'm going to turn the recording off but I'm not going to turn you off.

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[00:00:01] Okay so recording is starting for research interviews for Val Morey on Monday the 11th of September and we have twoo interview participants. Could I just ask you to confirm that you're happy for this to be recorded.

[00:00:17] Yes. I'm happy for it to be recorded.

[00:00:19] Thank you.

[00:00:20] And could you let me know what pseudonym you'd like to use?

[00:00:24] Rene and John

[00:00:35] And could I just double check. I know I have you're informed consent but I'm just double checking that you don't wish to withdraw your informed consent.

[00:00:45] Yep. Yep, you have my informed consent.

[00:00:47] Lovely; I think that's all the little preambles done.

[00:00:51] So I'm conscious that it's some time since the surveys went out, delays for one reason or another. So just to sort of reorient you to what what it's all about: what I'm looking at is ways in which the organisation can support people who are working, academic staff who are working in fully online programs - so they're working fully online themselves and they're teaching students who are also working fully online. So that that's the context because I'm aware that you've both got other roles and you in particular have another role for this organisation. But I'm only talking about that particular role. And the other thing is that, I noticed when the data came back from the surveys that people had talked or identified aspects of student behaviour that impacted on motivation and engagement. And while I am interested in that it's not the focus of the research. So when you're answering if you could bear in mind that we're talking about what it is that that happens in the organisation that makes a difference to motivation and engagement and that we're only talking about that online space. Okay. Any questions about that? Okay terrific. So to start could you just take it in turns and just give a quick summary of how long you've worked in the role and the roles that you've undertaken in that time.

[00:02:31] Renee: So I've probably been doing up five years since I've had children. So I've been unit coordinate and a tutor and main roles early childhood or first year common units.

[00:02:47] John: And I think I've been doing it for four years as well. Seems to have gone pretty quickly; UC at times and tutor at times mainly working in the area of professional practice in the primary schools.

[00:03:01] Okay so you're responding to the things that come up, if you feel that you need to differentiate what you're saying in terms of the slightly different roles that you've had, that's absolutely fine because I mean some people have said well when I'm a tutor this kind of thing really impacts on me. But when I'm a UC it doesn't or vice versa; or if I'm in this unit but that unit you know, so that's fine to qualify your answers. If you think you want to just draw attention to where it's more important than other times. Okay says start with, can you think about times - hopefully there's been at least one time - when you've been conscious of feeling highly highly motivated; engaged in your work and are you able to pinpoint what it is that's been causing that: so it might be the unit you've been in, the time of the study period, the people you were working with, something

that we did or didn't do; you know can you reflect on that.

[00:04:08] I think I'll make a start because I've got it straight away. So I alweays feel really engaged when I am on a Collaborate with students and that I have devised something that is creative, that the students contribute to, that is like a problem solving simulation or something that , a bit out of the ordinary. So that's the time when I actually feel the most engaged in the online teaching space and that's either as UC - that's mainly as a UC because as a tutor you don't really get the opportunity to be creative in that way. But when I when I can devise something that's got the students hopping.

[00:04:54] Great thank you.

[00:04:56] I think it's the student cohort you get; so I'm teaching two humanities unit for the humanities curriculum, and I've got two completely different kind of groups and it's interesting because I've taken the Masters of Teaching for the first time and they're a different types of students than the undergrads, and I've got the smallest group ever but the most interactive group I've ever had at the undergrads.

[00:05:20] So sorry to just interrupt there but if you can, can you bring that back to to what it is you know as I was saying before not so much about what students are doing but about, about what it is that might, so it might be something in the setup or more about what the organisation is doing so you're highly engaged. Yes okay, because of the students but could that then, could you bring that back to sort of say you've been given that opportunity to have, to work in a different type of unit. Did you see what I'm....

[00:06:00] Okay.

[00:06:00] Yeah. Trying to

[00:06:03] Yeah. I see what you mean. I think the engagement is, just engaging with the students on the discussion board and getting those discussions and I've decided to go on a different pathway this time and not just give two or three letter, like word sentences, but actually start going down the infographics and actually providing the YouTube videos that link to their learning and just trying to cater for the more different styles of learners which actually then feeds back in to my content. And I think I've been engaging with more students than just that blocks of writing all the time online. That's one of the ways I've been, I've just been a bit more excited trying new things and experimenting with new things.

[00:06:43] So would it then be true to say that your motivation engagement could have been impacted on, if somebody from the school of education had said I'm sorry you can't do that. You have to do this.

[00:06:58] Yeah, then it wouldn't be very creative; each time I'm trying to I guess engage students in different ways by being creative, because you're online and I'm just aware that online there's a lot of text. I'm trying to somehow find ways to get across the same message in more creative ways.

[00:07:16] John: and it is the case that when you're a tutor or you don't feel as though you have that creativity or that opportunity as opposed to when you're the UC and you can make it up for yourself.

[00:07:24] So what constrains that then, as a tutor; so if we're talking about what could be done differently from an organizational point of view what's the barrier to that?

[00:07:39] Well I think when I work as a tutor for the unit that I work in, the Unit Coordinator takes the sole responsibility which is great, it takes the pressure off me, but I feel lost - for example, she has a answer and question in the assessment thread, where she answers all assessment questions so there's consistency. But sometimes that's the only interaction I get with some students. They don't want to do the discussion board but they want to ask me questions so I feel a disconnect.

[00:08:07] So you've lost that opportunity there to connect with.

[00:08:11] Yeah even though I think it's great and consistent and I know that she worked very very hard, it kind of makes me feel redundant sometimes.

[00:08:19] John: I think as a tutor you're not um, you don't have the responsibility to innovate or extend or, be, provides the students something they really need to think about, something that is not just rational. That's all in the bailiwick of the U.C. So tutors have no real, in my understanding, tutors have no real power to influence anything other than w hat's on the blackboard site and what the UC says to do.

[00:08:56] And for you as a tutor that's limiting.

[00:08:58] For me that is so frustrating it's not funny.

[00:09:00] Reneee: And I think it depends what unit you're in cause some units, we've shared Collaboratives together, and the one I'm in the unit co-ordinator does them all,to the point where I think I can't feel the reasoning to even attend

[00:09:13] because I've got no responsibility.

[00:09:14] John: It's not just.

[00:09:16] And obviously the times are chosen to suit the UC, where 10 o'clock in the middle of the day's not really suitable for me at all. So it's just that I don't feel like I can express the knowledge I have at all; it's just someone else is doing it all for you.

[00:09:30] John: and it's not just that there is a Collaborate, it's how the collaborate is run. In my experience nearly all the UCs I've had access to run the collaborate as a mini lecture and that is not at all engaging and that is not all interactive and they are missing.

[00:09:53] Renee: I've been doing training on how to make an engagement and I've actually run a session where it is engaging; where I ask the questions and the students have to write in it. I've seen the improvement of work; but the issue is if students turn up and I make my collaborative like that, I sometimes don't get any students turning up because I'm a sole tutor/UC, so if I set up an interactive collaborative and only on average over the past four years of running this unit, I've got two students turning up, and I had 10 this week - I could have run this great Collaborative, but I ran the risk of if I make this really great interactive which is how I want to run a collaborative.. and so I've actually had this week, I've run two collaborates and they've turned up, and I'm lecturing them which is not how I want to run it really.

[00:10:40] Alright so just picking up on something that you said about you've been doing training: is that through the SETLD program?

[00:10:47] Just on using the new Ultra Collaborative.

[00:10:48] Yes, and how have you accessed that learning is what I'm wondering.

[00:10:52] We did some of it in the UCs unit here on how to use it, you know how it runs.

[00:10:53] At SETLD? Part of the SETLD program?

[00:10:53] On the UCs SETLD yes.

[00:11:02] Yes yes sorry; so please tell me more about that. So that was part of the SETLD program but it was the program that was just for UCs that we ran a while ago.

[00:11:12] Yes how to use the Ultra Collaborative. How to switch to sharing your computer, obviously how we run the poll and how to do the writing on the highlighting and obviously how you make it much more interactive. How you could run like a YouTube video and switch on and do it. There's just much more...at first I was like oh a new tool to learn, but actually once I , it wasn't actually until I did the training that I actually got how good it was.

[00:11:40] So speaking in general terms about the SETLD program, what would you be able to say about how useful that is, how much that contributes to your feelings of engagement with the with the program and maybe with other people with the school.

[00:11:58] Renee: Sometimes I really wish they were less than 45 minutes cause I'm really getting into something and it's over rather than two 45 minutes sometimes it's good to have a good hour hour and 15.

[00:12:08] So in general terms, the program.

[00:12:10] The program's great but I sometimes feel I get like to eat the entree and I want the main meal. But I think it contributes a lot. I make sure; I've barely missed one in five years.

[00:12:24] Oh okay, so yes you like to come along so that you can maintain that engagement and you hope that you can grow. How about you?

[00:12:34] I think the networking is great. I would prefer to see it done; I would prefer to see us learn the way we teach.

[00:12:44] So can you tell me more about what you mean by that?

[00:12:45] Well I think every second SETLD should be done on line. And that we should be getting good examples, exemplary examples of how to do things online; the collaborative should be run in an exemplary way, should be bringing up ideas. I think we're online teachers; we should be we should be experiencing online learning so we get to feel what they feel and we don't by attending a workshop.

[00:13:12] Yes. And yet other people say that they really value the fact that they're face to face because that's the only opportunity to actually meet people.

[00:13:21] Yes the networking's great - I'm not saying it's bad. But what we don't experience is how they learn. And so I don't think we then are in a position to take into account how we teach with the knowledge of how they learn.

[00:13:33] Renee: I've done it both ways - I've had training online because I because I do some

work for a university in Melbourne; I can't do it any other way. And I come here face to face and I get more value out of the face to face.

[00:13:46] Do you get more learning from it, or when you say value, can you break that into.....

[00:13:50] The networking, making sure I get the support you know I've got some long term friends; I've got friends that live in Sydney actually that fly here and make sure they go to the SETLD. I've got a good network of people that I can call on you know and so I think the networking's good but I just think that face to face to feel connected to the organisation you're in as well.

[00:14:11] Does that help in your work or is it that something that you just enjoy at the time.

[00:14:16] I think it's good to actually know who you're talking to online on the emails all the time as well.

[00:14:20] That's what this is exactly why it's so important to talk to people.

[00:14:28] John: It's not it's not one or the other. It's a balance, but I still come to the view that if not many of our tutors have learned or like then the position they're in to be able to teach online is diminished. And so we should from time to time do a teaching activity online with all of the tutors so that they can experience good practice.

[00:14:53] Yeah yeah. Or even just what it's like to be in that position.

[00:14:56] Yeah yeah or what it's like.

[00:14:57] For sure. Okay so can we move on now to thinking in general terms about some of the other things that are provided regularly, such as you know, e-mails that are sent by the coordinator for sessional staff - if you've probably both been around long enough to remember when we didn't have a coordinator of session staff. Some of the changes that you've seen come in since we've had somebody there; the news letter and just talk about what difference if any that has made.

[00:15:35] Renee: I feel like having a sessional coordinator that the communication was better. So for example before the sessional co-ordinator, we had to go to H.R. which I didn't always find helpful, I don't think sometimes to be honest the pay was explained very well. I remember being interviewed and said I would get 10 hours and then I got hired and it was eight hours so there was that whole disconnect from me on information. And so then you question because you don't actually know what what's right; you'd rather know you know, when you get sent out this is the exact amount you get for assessment Marking, this is the exact amount of hours you're working. It's just knowing your job role. And I just think that part is a lot clearer and.

[00:16:18] John: There's No doubt about it.

[00:16:19] Renee: Yeah I think that increases job satisfaction because you feel quite settled.

[00:16:23] John: and there's someone you can go to that you know is approachable and they'll probably have the answer yes. It's been a great benefit.

[00:16:32] Yeah and in terms of the staffing process which as you know the sessional coordinator manages, do you think that - or no sorry, I'll ask that question differently. How important is it to you that you are placed in a unit where you feel you've got sufficient expertise knowledge and expertise

in the content.

[00:16:55] I think it's quite ironic because I got placed in science and it probably is one of my least strength of a subject but I'm somehow become really good at it. So I don't know; I don't know if it is necessary to be really really good, or if you've got good teaching skills, that you can learn through the unit; I I think it could go either way. I sometimes feel if you always get placed in a unit you're good at, you get too comfortable.

[00:17:20] So you're thinking for you, your motivation could be enhanced because you'll be thinking: something new, I've got to learn some things and find out and really get get into it rather than just going in with that oh yes done all this before and perhaps skim across a bit more.

[00:17:39] Mmm.

[00:17:39] John: With me the other way round, in that it's when things don't happen and you don't get an explanation for it, that is demotivating if you like. So for example I worked as UC for a while in a unit and then - I wasn't; no explanation, no... and so you think well were you doing a bad job. Why is this happening, why hasn't someone talked to me about that. So you know basically, I don't think there's many units that I couldn't take on and I know that for quite a while I was doing quite a good job, so I was motivated for it, and then I started not getting the same work and thinking - oh well maybe I'm not - but I think I am. So what's going wrong?

[00:18:24] So, what part does the tutor reflection play in all that - you know that feeling of I know I'm doing a good job or I know that I was struggling or I know that someone else gave me some feedback that said I was and I was doing better than I thought I was or vice versa. How does that work?.

[00:18:50] That's the ironic thing - you get it when you're a tutor you get the feedback. So I like I did three unit coordinators in a row and then they put me tutor and now I've gone tutor/unit to co-ordinator and it was that question wasn't I good enough for that unit. Didn't I do anything? No one gave me any feedback if I was good or not good but I've never got that unit again. So maybe I wasn't good. I do think you do question it because there is no feedback and it might be as simple as someone else is more experienced or they had to have staff.

[00:19:21] So are you talking about feedback on the staffing decision or feedback on the tutor reflection when you're a unit co-ordinator.

[00:19:26] A bit of both. Like why you didn't get the unit; just so it's de-personalised. Or if it is actually, they do have an issue with you, I'd rather know. Sometimes you get feedback and it's oh, I don't like that and you go away and think about it and go oh yeah well it's probably true; and then I can make improvements on it when there is no feedback you kind of don't know where to go with it.

[00:19:49] But it - can I ask you specifically just on that question of feedback on the tutor reflection when you're you're doing it as a unit coordinator: is it important to you to receive some feedback becausee I'm conscious as you say, at the moment if you're a U.C. no one provides that feedback on the tutor reflection.

[00:20:10] That's correct.

[00:20:10] You do it for your own benefit but no one provides, but for some people they say I don't care really because it's about my reflection. How do you.

[00:20:20] John: yeah I'm in that boat. You know I have my own competency framework, that I self-reflect on regularly, which I see as, if you like, more contemporary than the tutor reflection anyway. So I don't take a lot of stake in it.

[00:20:45] So if you did want to get feedback as a unit coordinator, because you thought well that will - so I'm just trying to differentiate between something that you might like, but something that would actually impact on your motivation and engagement. Okay, because I might have a wish list very long but if I didn't get half, three quarters 99 percent of what was on it I would still be just as motivated and engaged in my job. So what would actually make the difference in terms of feedback that would actually impact only motivation and engagement.

[00:21:25] At the UC level?

[00:21:25] Yeah.

[00:21:25] So it's really hard because, because we've all been doing this thing in this area which is quite new. You want to get feedback from someone who you respect, who knows what you're doing so the feedback is contextualised - and I find that, I don't know that there are many people around who actually are exemplary online practitioners who could provide contextual feedback in that area.

[00:21:55] Would it be the course co-ordinator, possibly, if you're a unit co-ordinator ? Would they be the obvious person?

[00:21:57] Renee: Well finally after running my unit four times, I asked my unit champion was there anything I can improve on and they said no I finally thought I just want to to know am I doing a good job - is there anything, cos they run it on campus, you know you still want to provide that same experience for online students. So I ended up asking.

[00:22:21] Yeah. And did you feel that that was an appropriate thing to do to approach the unit champion?.

[00:22:27] Yeah yeah because if I, obviously we've got to work together to make sure that there's a similar level of assessment and unit outlines so my next question is you know is there anything else I should be doing?. And she said she was happy so I was happy. Yeah just sometimes that feedback I decided I needed it myself. Anything further to add on that?

[00:22:49] I was also to say because I'm a sole you know, UC.

[00:22:52] Yes it makes a difference.

[00:22:54] So I got no feedback, I wouldn't even have a tutor feedback, so if you're obviously in a big group people might give you a feedback feedback you mightn't like or mightn't want, but you'll get some kind .

[00:23:11] John: Yes I think I think that it needs to be some sort of coach there , but a coach who has exemplary skills because, no unit champion has ever been on the collaborate with me - they wouldn't know.

[00:23:30] So do you think then from what you're saying you're very strongly aligning with people who've got specific expertise teaching online, rather than people who are just you know so senior academics or people who've been teaching that content for a while.

[00:23:49] Certainly for this area. Because like I said most of us can pick up any unit and do what we need to do, but working in an online space is quite different. Or you can make it exactly the same or in fact worse; you can make it as just regurgitate or you can make it an engaging experience and if someone's going to critique you then you'd want to think that they had that experience themselves and could appropriately critique you. I think that's the same for any job really I guess but in this case because it's reasonably new and no one's really knocked over the online experience to any great extent other than rehashing, then I think there's this expertise to be built before any feedback is going to be really relevant.

[00:24:49] One of the people that I interviewed said that her regular practice and I hadn't heard anybody mention this before was to set the, she said she comes to doing her to do reflection after she gets her Student satisfaction and evaluate. And she sets each document down at the same time and looks to see if the students think I'm good at that do is that does that match what I thought of the feedback that I got. She said she find that very informative and helpful. Any comments on that as a practice.

[00:25:30] Renee: I really like reading the evaluates actually. I think it's funny you get you know get your good comments and you always concentrate on the negative?

[00:25:40] Oh yes yes.

[00:25:42] I always think I quite like to hear actually the truth, to improve.

[00:25:45] John: Or that student's truth at that particular time. It's not necessarily THE truth.

[00:25:53] Renee: I know; I know that yeah. It's what their preference is.

[00:25:56] For example you know I try to work on a pretty agency- giving students more and more agency to learn, especially in online spaces, sometimes they come back saying they don't want agency , I just want to be told, and I go well I just don't want to tell you!

[00:26:10] and that's we're all different isn't it?

[00:26:11] Renee: They do want a bit more spoon-feeding.

[00:26:16] John: In which case they go out, that's what they'll do as they're teaching methodology.

[00:26:20] So then having said, that if you find that demotivating, is there something that the, that the school as an organisation in terms of messaging then, if you think that there are important messages that you want to give students, do you feel supported or conflicted in giving those messages?

[00:26:47] John: Yeah I think so I think that it would be good if we had a this is good online teaching set of criteria. I don't know that we have articulated that as well as we might have - and then break it down to and here are some practices that will help you meet those criteria.

[00:27:13] Renee: Really I think where we need to go is using our staff lounges.

[00:27:22] I was going to ask you about that. The extent to which you use that.

[00:27:27] Renee: as in week one or two, what are your engagement strategies and you're all sharing. I think we, I think if you come from a coaching point of view where you value who you

work with and they've got strategies that we can all share rather than just the list and that's what we should be doing, we should just be starting from the expertise.

[00:27:44] That's where they should come from, yeah.

[00:27:44] Yeah cos we've all got different expertise.

[00:27:48] So when you say you're thinking that we should be using the staff lounges more.

[00:27:54] Well I feel isolated on the one I'm a tutor in - no-one talks to each other, so which to me makes no sense.

[00:27:58] So what's getting in the way of that then - you know why are people not really using those spaces?

[00:28:06] I think it depends what unit you're in. I've had ones that are over the top and don't I want to open it, there's like so, too much to read and others are like, you can hear the crickets chirping, like your own discussion board. So I think it's the unit coordinator who leads that collaborative environment.

[00:28:21] Do you think the- a couple of other people have said similar things or they might have said look I totally rely on that. It's wonderful, please don't ever take the staff lounges away because that's where I get my motivation, my engagement certainly certainly. And then other people have said either similar things, oh I should really use that more and then other people have said look I do so that sort of thing, but not there - we've got our own Facebook group, we meet at the coffee shop and so it's try to find okay, are we doing it in the right way in the right place. Does it become a matter of well we need to provide the smorgasbord you take which suits. Or do we, you know; what what's the best way do you think - to do it?

[00:29:07] John: Well, I think the function; the software we use for the discussion board is disengaging to start with.

[00:29:16] Well yes. Given that that's what we've got that's what we got.

[00:29:21] Renee: Have you seen any other ones?

[00:29:23] John: Oh there's a zillion other more engaging.

[00:29:26] So perhaps I should have prefaced that with within the constraints of what it is possible to offer, are there are other things that we could be offering to allow that collegiate space.

[00:29:41] Renee: It's quite interesting though when we talk about other spaces online, in your constraints. There are some that, I guess, if our online learners - you know what they look at? They look at their email - so anything we can email quickly to them they're going to engage more on - it's almost like you need a tick on blackboard I'll email that announcement to them. And that's really what online dating is about.

[00:30:13] But for you as an as a professional person and your collegial interactions?

[00:30:20] John: Collegially - I mean it's more purpose. It's more about purpose for the collegial communication. I think. So if our; I'd love to have had a UC who said we're going to use this functionality but I really want to collect ideas from you all about how your simulations or whatever

and so we are using it for that as opposed to what, you know; has just been done on time.

[00:30:57] Renee: I think it's not as though I'm talking about collegiate is setting goals - we're never going to improve unless we set goals. And so I set personal goals myself at the at the beginning but I just think it's nice if you've got a bigger group that everyone sets one or two goals: I might like to use YouTube and talk in a youtube and upload it. I think this teacher period I'm really really terrible at using collaborative, using the new Ultra, that's my goal. I mean it's good. I mean probably looking at the coaching part, and then sharing your expertise and ideas and then what did you try, were you succeeding half way through the study period. Did you actually try any of those strategies?

[00:31:41] John: and where's the evidence for the improvement, yeah

[00:31:45] So that that would, it adds a certain dimension to the role of unit coordinator doesn't it. That may or not .

[00:31:53] Renee: I don't know who would be better to coach because if you add anyone else on it's extra work. But if it's built within it's probably extra work for the UC. But as for the tutor to be involved and interact it's not.

[00:32:05] John: But in a school the principal has responsibility for the improvement of staff. I don't think the UCs see that as their role.

[00:32:16] Yes, I'd question ... that would be a conversation that would have to be had certainly.

[00:32:21] Renee: and it would link back in to the form you have to fill in because the form at the moment is a stand alone that you just fillin and nothing really happens to it.

[00:32:29] Well I think it's not clear what happens to it.

[00:32:32] John: Stuff happens I'm sure.

[00:32:32] Renee: Yes yes stuff happens but we don't get any feedback with that. We fill it in and off it goes. It's just gone; it's just a tick, email I've done it and off it goes.

[00:32:45] John: And it comes back; it can come back to you.

[00:32:46] Renee:Can; doesn't always.

[00:32:46] Doesn't always; I was going to say, it should but probably doesn't always.

[00:32:53] Renee: I didn't know for the first year it was meant to come back to me.

[00:32:56] But like you say the UCs don't get them anyway.

[00:32:58] No that's right and that's definitely a missing thing.

[00:33:04] Like the principal of the school, where the culture is set. That's ....especially in our big units.

[00:33:11] It's it's and this is part of the reason why I'm trying to understand this more because it can be counterproductive to introduce processes and measures and things that people don't find

helpful, or that they resist in fact and that might actually be the opposite. So to go to those things you've got to know that how to do it and whether it's even a good thing to be doing and that's actually what I want to just ask next is you know because we've talked about what does happen and what could happen and what would be good if it did happen. What I'm wondering is whether you're conscious of anything that does happen that you wish didn't because it actually is demotivating. And works against your engagement.

[00:33:59] John: In what specific area?

[00:34:01] Something that is part of your role that you're expected or required to engage in or something that you're asked to do or a way that you're asked - so things that are in place that you think well if I, can I just get that out of the way because it's it's actually stopping me from doing my job the way I'd like to.

[00:34:24] Renee: I think probably now there's this issue to coordinate and I'm given the information I need and any new technology I'm given the information on how to use it. I think the biggest thing, being such a busy person, learning new technology is my greatest stress. Sometimes when I ring the IT and say can I just come in and can you just show me and in five minutes I've got it. So for me that's my hardest thing is just the turnover, sometimes the new technology and it's not that I can't learn it, I just find it really hard and this is where I feel for my students: you're in that room by yourself pressing the wrong buttons and if someone showed you for two minutes you get it. That's probably my greatest stress is just keeping up with technology.

[00:35:07] John: So for me it's the other way round - you might have thought, and there's nothing little that we do but to me the really big disengaging processes is what we seem to think about teaching and learning to start with. Basically our whole course is based on and that is Thought our whole course is based on that and that is. Instructivist delivering learning: delivering units on a week by week basis. That doesn't meet the needs of the students; I feel really frustrated that most of my students do their - you know we structure it so that they are assessment focused.

[00:35:46] Renee: Yes.

[00:35:47] And yet we would not want them to be assessment driven or focus but that's the way we structure it. So in some ways for me it sounds like its a giant problem and I think it is, and I think online learning gives us a chance to really reconstruct that and really reimagine that and I don't think we have. But everything that's in place to support what we currently do, I don't have a problem with, it's what we do I have a problem with, if that makes sense.

[00:36:12] Yeah yeah. And of course in order to address that you know we need to change, University academic requirements and all sorts.

[00:36:23] Or at least we have to find a way to stand up to them because they are in many cases, my view is, our students get a mediocre result when they could get a better result because of the way we taught them and the way we've structured learning for them and not allowing them to , to .....I read somewhere, where students don't improve their executive function one iota when they're at university which means they've had to do no planning and no metacognition, no thinking for themselves; they just get the assessments done and they're right. I get too many students like that. And I would like to restructure our courses, or the units I do at least, to enable more authentic and engaging learning to occur. And I feel frustrated because I can't.

[00:37:14] Renee: I think we're slowly getting there with some of our units. I've seen significant change.

[00:37:19] So that probably leads me into - sorry.

[00:37:22] Well I'd like to see that; I don't think I've seen that.

[00:37:26] Renee: Well just asking for different assessments Like the unit, my science unit, you have to do an on line presentation you know in the arts unit, it's just changing the type of assessments you do.

[00:37:39] John: Yes but in that case there's still no agency. There's still no negotiation with them about the type of assessment; they're going to do what we tell them to do.

[00:37:47] Perhaps I can - a big question but probably not one for today. Maybe for tomorrow.

[00:37:57] Renee: Well they're not going to go to the workplace and negotiate their job, therefore we need to set them up for their job. And you can't, I can't go to my job tomorrow and say well, best not want to teach those students; I'll teach them over there.

[00:38:13] John: It's not who you teach it's how you teach.

[00:38:16] Renee And I also can't, I'm quite often told what I'm going to teach.

[00:38:19] John: and how you going to teach and that's exactly what I'm saying!

[00:38:22] Renee: But that's what's out there in the world.

[00:38:25] So probably what you're saying leads into one of my final questions which is thinking about what would it have to be like, what would have to happen or not happen, in order for you to just decide one day okay that's it I'm not doing this anymore. I just, I'm not motivated i'm not engaged. I've had enough of this. I'm out. What would have to change - and I don't mean for you personally, I mean in terms of your experience that you have.

[00:38:59] Renee: The only thing I'd say is just the back to back and no holiday, always on call that'd be for me; that's.

[00:39:06] Yeah exactly.

[00:39:07] Yo get to that point. There's no mid-term break, no two week break in the Middle it's just back to back to back.

[00:39:14] And you feel you could have a break, if you were at this point where you, like do you feel that you could comfortably and safely say I don't want to work the next study period but then think that then you'll be back the one after.

[00:39:28] Renee: Yeah I probably could.

[00:39:31] John: So the think that would break my back is one thing which didn't, but would if it happened again.

[00:39:38] Yes a couple of people said that - well this happened once I'm okay, but if it happened again....

[00:39:42] Yep yep and that's the assignment where you get half an hour to mark it and it takes two hours to mark it, so you end up doing 160 hours worth of work for 40 hours pay or 20 hours pay. I think that is totally unprofessional and shouldn't ever happen and it's happened to me once. I did say that's not fair; it's not right.

[00:40:04] Yes yes. So if you were put in that position again.

[00:40:08] I'd just say that's it. It's ridiculous. Cause doing the assessments is hard enough anyway, sitting at your desk for all that time - even if they're different topics, it's the same cookie cutter assessment. In teaching always you always give more than you're paid for, that's part of the deal; but not at that rate.

[00:40:35] And for you if you felt that it wasn't possible to have a break then you would have to just go Okay I'm exhausted now I have to leave because I can't have a study period off year then I can't do it. And yeah.

[00:40:50] John: Why couldn't you have a study period off?

[00:40:51] You can; I'm just saying if if something changed.

[00:40:54] Right.

[00:40:55] You know because part of doing things right is not changing things that people don't want changed just you know. So yes if it wasn't possible you'd do that.

[00:41:04] Renee: I'd guess you'd want to know it's okay to have it and still get work - cause that's our fear, that's it's only 13 weeks and you already applied so you want to be that person people want to rehire.

[00:41:17] Anything else that comes to mind?

[00:41:20] In my current trajectory they probably won't offer me another unit anyway so that will be the end of it!

[00:41:29] Ok so finally - well almost finally, the the end of my questions but you can have an opportunity to say more after that if you wish; but I just want to shift the focus to Curtin University more broadly and just talk about the alignment or perceived alignment between Curtin University as a wider organisation. So now this next question is not a test but I'm just wondering are you aware that Curtin University has some defined values that they have identified.

[00:42:02] Renee: Yes I just to do my four compulsory online tests.

[00:42:08] So you are aware that there are Curtin values?

[00:42:10] John. Yes and I'm also aware that they are rewriting the graduates as well.

[00:42:17] Yes they are, which will hopefully link to the values , but OK, so then the next question is the extent to which you think that the school of education, even if you might not be completely explicitly aware, the extent to which you would think or believe that the School of Education aligns to the Curtin values.

[00:42:45] John: Which ones?

[00:42:47] Well as a whole. So if you say, if you're asking which ones you might say okay I think they are aligned to them to some extent but not all because you might think well that one that one and that one but not that one. Or you might just think well I really don't know but I'm just kind of assuming that they do.

[00:43:08] John: So I really don't know and like the student attributes I don't think any of us actually know because we don't keep any data on them.

[00:43:15] But I'm just asking in general terms. So this is a question really about trust in a sense, that you would trust the school of education to behave in a way that aligned with Curtin values or would you think well I don't know so I'm not sure and I wouldn't want to say.

[00:43:34] Renee: No I think they would endeavour to align with the University standards and I think they probably also continually review them.

[00:43:47] What's your view on that?

[00:43:47] John: I think that's probably right. More values than standards but I don't see any unethical practice.

[00:44:03] Renee: I think everyone's treated fairly, equally, given many opportunities.

[00:44:09] John: I think everything's communicated quite nicely; I don't have any problem with that.

[00:44:17] Yes so we've got respect integrity excellence courage and impact. So it's really just a question of well even if I don't feel strongly aligned to them as Curtin directly. Could I trust that the organisation that I do, you know the bit of the organisation that I do work with, is my trust high, medium or low.

[00:44:41] Courage is an interesting one isn't it. I can see the other ones.

[00:44:43] So's impact.

[00:44:48] Impact on the communities we serve.

[00:44:51] I can see how people would work on impact but courage - who's got courage, the staff or the students?

[00:44:57] It's a value it's so it's a Curtin value so it's that it's the way that all the people employed in the organisation are expected to behave, but in so doing, you're modelling those things to the students that you're teaching.

[00:45:14] Renee: Facing life's adversities, that's courage and that's our online students who are balancing the world and all their other problems; it is their courage to go on; sometimes actually their courage to actually physically post thing on the discussion board and see their written words in a public space for them can be quite daunting.

[00:45:35] John So, this as a personal story. But as you know I've done some some software which is , I've had the courage to talk about it; but just recently I've been told not to talk about it so I don't think that's a particularly good ethic.

[00:45:53] So which of the values do you see as being compromised there?

[00:45:55] Courage. Impact. Well, just basically being censored.

[00:46:04] Renee: Is it because it wasn't aligned to Curtin or because it's your own private business?

[00:46:08] Oh, we won't no sorry.

[00:46:09] John: We won't go into that but I'm just saying there are some times. So I'd say yes maybe somewhat but not completely.

[00:46:20] All right. So that's that's all of my prepared questions but I don't want either of you to leave if you would like an opportunity to say anything more around what we've been talking about what impacts on your motivation and engagement: what could be different, what you would never want to be different.

[00:46:45] John: Well. I think we could be, in terms of engagement and in terms of the technology, we could be a lot better than we are. I don't think we put enough energy into improving our general offerings in terms of skills and.

[00:47:05] So we're talking about your engagement in your work. How could that.

[00:47:10] Yes yes yes.

[00:47:12] OK yes, so for me to be more engaged, that energy has got to come from not only me but from there as well. And so I think engagement innovation and excellence are all pretty linked. And so I think we could be a lot better than we are; I could be a lot better than i am, even though I think I'm pretty well out as far as use of technologies goes.

[00:47:39] Renee: But do you not think that part of being good is being reflective and improving because I could always be better?

[00:47:48] John: Absolutely.

[00:47:48] Renee: Even though you know I'm doing a great job, and I guess that was part of that goal setting that I was talking about , it's that grooming and moving on staff. It's that whole motivating and inspiring and being leaders which really was a UC is - you are a leader in your field you are the leader in this field and you should be motivating other people.

[00:48:08] John: And so and so getting that sort of energy at that sort of position would be what we could improve on then.

[00:48:17] Renee: Yeah; yeah. I do agree.

[00:48:18] Yeah ; definitely one of the things that's coming through that was actually even evident in the first survey was the critical role of the unit coordinator.

[00:48:32] Renee: We probably undervalue them and their knowledge and expertise.

[00:48:35] Yes yes and I don't know that it's a case of undervaluing but maybe under supporting and leading them.

[00:48:45] Renee: I didn't really mean undervaluing as in I in I guess not reaching someone's full potential.

[00:48:51] John: Yes, or under-expecting.

[00:48:51] Yes, under-appreciating the power that could be there.

[00:49:02] Yes what they could do as opposed to what they generally do do or have done because it's always in flux isn't it.

[00:49:09] And there has to be that line between motivation and fear, because I've had UCs that you would know who got on my board and it's more of a matter of I'd better get on there; there's that fear they're checking me again. So there is that; to me there is that difference between motivating someone and kind of making people fear-driven to do their job really really well.

[00:49:30] motivating them or whipping them yeah yeah yeah there is a difference. It's true.

[00:49:35] And I have had both. I had better get on that board, it's 43 hours.

[00:49:45] And anything else that comes to mind - I mean I'm not trying to push you it's just want to be sure.

[00:49:51] John: The only other thing Id be talking about is freedom to innovate at whatever level you work at. So if you're a tutor you're not just not an assessment mule and a discussion board mule - you actually can impact. I've got a feeling that most of our tutors don't think they can innovate and lead inside their unit; that they are just there to follow what's to be done.

[00:50:24] Renee: That's really strange. I think I do have two experiences - the sole one is me completely innovating myself and then the tutor only role is very different. That's not as motivating.

[00:50:37] John: And that's I think that's because you can't teach. You can only follow the line.

[00:50:45] Renee: It's also fitting within not stepping over your boundaries as well - so someone else is leading and that's their responsibility and so I don't want to offend and intrude either; knowing your boundaries.

[00:50:54] John: Yes but if one of our values is challenge.

[00:50:54] Courage.

[00:50:54] Yes courage, we should be able to - if we think, oh, I've got to the point now where I don't even question anything UCs want, I just think if they want it I just do it, even if it's not me but that's where we're at. And in fact it is demotivating because it means I don't feel as I'm teaching it.

[00:51:19] But that doesn't stop you coming back; or not yet.

[00:51:24] John: No.

[00:51:24] Renee: You prefer being a UC - is that what you're saying?

[00:51:25] John: I'm never any good at being anyone's 2 IC.

[00:51:34] That's good. Thank you so much. I'll just stop that.

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[00:00:00] So we're away. So okay so could I please just check that you give your permission for this to be recorded.

[00:00:09] I do.

[00:00:09] Thank you. Oh and another thing that I just need to check is that you're informed consent is still current, you don't wish to withdraw it and you don't well I shouldn't say you don't - do you want to make any conditions on it.

[00:00:21] No.

[00:00:22] Thank you very much. And what shall we call you?

[00:00:24] Grace.

[00:00:24] Grace; thank you Grace. So that means now that any of this information will when I'm writing it up and referring to it, it will all be in the name of Grace.

[00:00:37] Okay; no problems.

[00:00:38] So the initial the initial survey that was identified was only for the purposes of identifying who I wanted for this this group. So from now on all of the your data will be attributed to that name. So thank you very much.

[00:00:55] So thank you again for coming. And as you know we're going to be talking at a little bit more length about what it is that impacts on your motivation and engagement when you're working in the fully online program and you yourself are working fully online. And we're only focusing on what it is that we as an organization do or don't do that impacts of that, although I understand that there are things that students do and don't do that impact on that.

[00:01:26] Yep.

[00:01:26] And they're important but for the purposes of the research it's about what we do.

[00:01:31] Yep.

[00:01:32] So just to begin with could you just give a brief summary of how long you've been in the role the kinds of units you've worked in in your time.

[00:01:42] Okay. So I think I started three years ago. I tend to lose track because I go all year round so it's a four unit rotation, so I just keep going. But looking back I think I started about three years ago. And I do first year units; so I basically flip flop between - it might have been four years - I started when the technology and enterprise after the technology and enterprise units were in.

[00:02:08] Oh yes, that must be five years by now.

[00:02:13] You're joking.

[00:02:14] No, it would be - just, just.

So I did two of those technology and enterprise units and then that disappeared and then I moved into the digital world ones and the contesting curriculum and now I just basically flip flop between the two. So wow, okay, I would have put it three, but it's five - all right, that's amazing. And yeah that's basically the teaching role I do.

[00:02:39] Yes okay great. Okay. To start us thinking can you tell us or identify any times that you've been conscious of feeling particularly highly motivated and engaged and that might be around the kind of thing , the particular unit that you're working in, the time in the study period, the people that you're working with, times when you've really felt.

[00:03:07] Okay. So I would have to say that the technology and enterprises prizes were high engagement because that's my baby, that's my area. So I'm a technology & enterprise teacher although they call it technologies now. So I felt like it was a real chance for me to impart the importance of that area. In the primary school units. So I felt like I had a lot to offer. So that was sort of a time of high engagement but it was a very small unit and it only worked with a couple of people.

<comment>Commented [V3]: EXPERTISE</comment>

[00:03:40] Right.

[00:03:41] Whereas another thing that I like in the two units I tend to flip flop between is I tend to work with the same people. And it's nice; so the interpersonal relationships now, even though we barely see each other, we meet each other at SETLD days. That you know like, I I knew that one of the tutors was getting married and even though I didn't go to the wedding and we know was no expectation, it's like "Ah you're getting married and all that sort of stuff and we tend to take an interest in each other's lives.

<comment>Commented [V4]: SETLD NETWORKING</comment>
<comment>Commented [V5]: INFORMAL NETWORKING</comment>

[00:04:12] Yes.

[00:04:13] So that familiarity with the group of people, I would say is engaging because you feel well supported and you can ask questions without feeling stupid or and or just sort of roll your eyes a bit you know and when I say roll your eyes it's all on line - so it's a different sort of communication method but that is motivating. And the other thing I must admit is my U.C. forces for the contesting curriculum one and you probably know who I'm talking about, but she is so warm and supportive and enthusiastic that it tends to make you feel warm and supportive and enthusiastic towards your own unit and the way that you're working. And so three three sort of things.

[00:05:04] Yes. So really what I'm what I'm hearing from you is that the sort of personal dimension the relationships dimension to the work is important, that you can feel a connection to the people that you're working with as well as feeling comfortable with the content area.

[00:05:26] I think cause you're teaching, you're a teacher, that communication aspect is part of your normal role, and I think we're all pretty good communicators. The content, the unit itself, I think because I've been doing it quite a while now, I sort of take that for granted. I do appreciate it when things are really well set up. Engagement and motivation. Sometimes I like to add my own twist to things and that engages me more.

<comment>Commented [V6]: LTS; UC</comment>
<comment>Commented [V7]: INNOV</comment>

[00:05:56] So when you say if things are really well set up, what kinds of things would you consider mean that's something that something has been really well set up?

[00:06:07] OK so I'm just trying to keep in terms of engagement and motivation. I really appreciate when there's a really good marking rubric you know and or that the content is, like the discussion board's well..... the modules are well set up and the links work and all that sort of stuff. That's a

motivator for me because I know I'm not frustrated. So it's like the flip side of being motivated I'm not frustrated. And I find that the students are positive yeah positivity from the students which then impacts on my motivation.

[00:06:45] Yeah yeah absolutely. But we feed that by making sure everything is set up so it doesn't set up a negative.

[00:06:53] And I definitely have seen a big improvement over the time that I've been here. Like I think every study period gets refined and refined. That's sort of like on the content aspect of it. I like really like when I can build in my experience as a teacher because I find that to me, I mentor graduate teachers in the school and I always have prac students. And I find I really enjoy being able to bring bring something to the next generation of teachers you know, and I find that the students like those stories too. And so the more you can build that in, I find the more engaging that is yeah.

> **Commented [V8]:** BB SETUP

> **Commented [V9]:** PPGROWTH

[00:07:40] Yes yeah of course yes. Alright can you now can you identify any particular actions or strategies or activities that we manage as the school of education that actually help to support tutors in their online work and help to keep you motivated and engaged.

[00:08:01] So like I said that unit coordinator role is vital. When I've had you know I've had different unit co-ordinators; when I've got a great one I'm highly motivated and I'm glad to be on there and I check, you know like I find I look forward to opening my emails, and stuff like that and the opposite when I haven't had a strong UC, I, yeah so that UC role is really vital for being out there and the positivity of the UC. So, the SETLD days. I can remember being so nervous when I first came to those first SETLD days cause I had no idea, I knew no-one and it's quite isolating because you don't you don't recognize a face, you don't sit next to anyone at morning tea. So probably the first two or three I found really quite heavy going and going oh what am I doing. And then as you develop the network and I really enjoyed them yeah.

> **Commented [V10]:** UC + AND -

> **Commented [V11]:** SETLS NETW

[00:09:06] Yes. One of one of the comments that has cropped up as I've been talking to people and pretty much everybody mention the SETLD days as being quite central to their sense of engagement and so forth. But, a couple times it's cropped up - most people say it's really really important that those SETLD days are face to face - but a couple of people have said, you know I like them, but I'm not sure why we have to come, Why couldn't we do it all online, after all, we're teaching online and that would be a good opportunity to model and engage in some online teaching processes. What's what's your view on that?

[00:09:47] Well there's the option there isn't there? You've always got a Collaborative option, but, but I like the personal aspect to it. I think that was a huge turning point for me when I started to know the tutors and know their faces and had a laugh in person.

> **Commented [V12]:** SETLD NETW

[00:10:06] Yes, yes.

[00:10:11] And GXXX always builds in if she can a lunch, so your regular group or whoever's working in that unit get invited to a lunch or whatever. Yeah and that again just brings that human aspect - we have a laugh.

> **Commented [V13]:** ONFORMAL NEWTWORKING

[00:10:23] So you value that.

[00:10:23] I really value that and if I can ever get to moderation in person, I will.

[00:10:30] Yes OK, how interesting. What about the role of the sessional co-ordinator. So from the time that you've been in the role you can probably remember when we didn't have a co-ordinator of

sessional staff. That's Maddie?

[00:10:42] Yes and now Mel. So what sort of difference has that made?

[00:10:48] A huge difference in that the communication lines are much much better. I never used to know when I was getting paid I never knew how much I was getting, which bits I was getting paid for, bits came in, so the marking I'm talking about, just that level of communication so much better and I find that I've got a face to a person I don't know, I've got a contact person, even I've had people who are interested in you know like when I tell people what I do, and it's like I've got someone to direct them to, whereas before I had I had not much idea yeah yeah that's a really good role.

[00:11:29] Has it impacted on your engagement or ... how would you say it sort of impacts?

[00:11:39] Well in terms of engagement and motivation, I like things being really well organised. So if I know where I am in a study period and I know when my pay is coming in, if I know I've got this amount time to apply for the next lot, it's all much more organised and I think that has helped.

[00:11:59] Yes it makes you more inclined to feel aligned to the organisation perhaps.

[00:12:03] I wouldn't say it's made a difference in my interaction with the students, but it's made a difference to, probably like you said maybe feeling more of a workforce. Rather than a sole operator.

[00:12:16] Sure, yes, thank you.

[00:12:18] Yeah I know, even that switch to - these are your pay dates and this be like that, I feel professional.

[00:12:29] Yeah yeah. Great thank you. All right. Is there anything, that you're aware of that we do do that actually impacts negatively on your feelings of motivation and engagement or anything that might have happened if it even if it was just a one off. Or something that regularly happens that you know really gets in the way.

[00:12:52] One thing that I do feel sometimes, it happened in the first year and I didn't appreciate it at the time, there was a little break between units.

[00:13:01] Oh yes yes I remember that; I think that happens once every four years.

[00:13:06] It was a week and I just assumed that that would.

[00:13:08] But you know, blame the sun!

[00:13:10] I know it's just about impossible, but I find the, in terms of negative engagement, I find the crossover between the finish date and the start dates of a unit, really intense and can be a little bit overwhelming; you're setting up and trying to greet new people and if you've got a three-assignment, and you know and in contesting curriculum the last assignment was quite big. You just sort of go well okay I'm really trying to tidy, and start, so it's a different level, it's a different, you've actually got a conflict of emotions towards, so you're finishing and that can be quite tiring, yet you're trying to be excited about getting all your stuff up for the new unit. So even I found that there with the digital one we've got an eTest last, and you get the chance to tidy and just monitor and say your goodbyes nicely without the heavy load of marking the assignment. While you then get

excited, because the start of the new unit that's always the exciting bit. Finishing's the awwww bit, and that's always when you have a few issues or you're disappointed for a student or whatever, that they didn't make the line or whatever. But the start of the new one's always the fun bit, the exciting bit, getting to know them, putting up the new staff.

[00:14:42] Yeah. Yes. So is there anything - there might not be, I'm just giving you the opportunity - is there anything that you can think of that that could be done by the school that would help, help tutors through that finishing off bit.

[00:15:03] I know XXXX ,the UC, tends to take a little bit of the load, of just putting in those final grades and stuff. She always does that, I quite often hop in and, and, talking about feeling valued. ..... at the end of the last study period my dad was quite sick and I'd let XXXX know that my dad was quite sick you know, and I had three extensions and she popped in and marked them for me. So just that sort of little care makes a huge difference.

[00:15:37] And that was most appropriate at U.C. level - that's where you felt you wanted that support.

[00:15:42] Yes.

[00:15:42] Directly from the U.C. rather than from anyone here.

[00:15:45] and I just you know and I hadn't asked, Id said to her I'd let you know if I really run into problems. But I got it done and I had the three. And I went in to do them at and she'd done them and I certainly said thank you so much.

[00:15:58] So it really really helped.

[00:16:01] But I always find that little, so like I said the digital world has etest as the last one, and I know they're not ideal. But that does help.With the tidying up.

[00:16:11] And it probably depends on the of nature in the unit. No, that's good, thank you. Anything else?

[00:16:17] No I can't. No no.

[00:16:21] Is there anything that you've sometimes thought, you know I wish they did this, you know that would be so good if this, you know we could have this or have that whether it's more up just to give some examples, a couple of people said, you know we'd really like to know that we can come here at any time and just sort of get together informally, socially. What about having some planned events, maybe just once a year, a Christmas thing, opportunities to interact more informally and socially, is that something that is important to you?

[00:17:01] Well like I said, that happens a bit just within the unit.

[00:17:07] But as a bigger group do you think that would make any difference to you?

[00:17:14] It probably wouldn't; Id probably come, like if it was on. Because I teach all first year units, I know the people who tend to teach up in the,I've heard them talking. You know they get to see the pleasure of the students graduating. Whereas when you're in the first year units it's very much like get the next lot in. If anything I'd like try, If anything I'd like to try, and see what the level of engagement is in the other units. You tend to get a bit stuck down in your little role.

[00:17:52] And that was always the balance between you know people saying I'd like to stay because I know the content I know the team, we need to keep the teams together, please don't mess with the teams too much to keep us stable and then you've got to balance that against , well maybe this person would like an opportunity to do something a little bit different.

[00:18:13] Yes with first years, you put a lot of work into the first years, they're very time consuming. It'd be nice to reap some rewards further down the track. Yeah so that would probably be something that every now and then, that'd be nice.

[00:18:27] So do you think you know the expression of interest process that we use, is there sufficient accommodation on that for people to be able to express those sorts of things?

[00:18:40] There is. I think there is that thing like I'm experienced now, it's Grace would know what she's doing in that unit and I get that, and I also think I've got a skill set for first years but, I don't know, I wouldn't mind.

[00:19:00] But if you wanted to make that request do you feel you could?

[00:19:06] Yes because you've got the form of the expressions of interest. I dunno - I've just heard people talking about doing the third, and even the practicum visits and stuff like that, but then, I teach full time so that's much more on campus kind of thing. Yeah, I don't know if there's anything else. It definitely fits in with my lifestyle.

[00:19:33] Yeah yeah.

[00:19:34] So part of why I do online stuff is because I do it in the evenings after work, yeah.

[00:19:41] So the fact that we don't set work hours, and we say look the emphasis is on you managing the student. We don't need to know when you're working.

[00:19:54] That suits me down to the ground.

[00:19:54] So that would be quite invasive and demotivating if we changed that and said well look actually now we need all our tutors to be working these hours on these days.

[00:20:07] I probably wouldn't be able to it.

[00:20:09] And that actually leads me to my next question which is can you think of anything that would have to happen that would make you say but I'm not doing this anymore I don't want to do this anymore. So that might be one thing.

[00:20:22] MMM yes so I need the flexibility of the hours; I do like the flexibility that if I need take a break I can, so I can take a study period yes.

[00:20:38] So that changed yeah. Yeah.

[00:20:41] I do love it so that. So if you felt what you had to keep going and not take a break in order to be re-employed, do you know what I mean?

[00:20:56] I do.

[00:20:56] I was actually nervous taking a study period off, cause I went "What if they think I'm not interested?" I just need a break. Yes, and I was really pleased to see I got picked up again but I was nervous yes.

[00:21:09] So maybe that's a message that could be made clearer and reiterated every so often that look it's fine.

[00:21:15] To take a study period off, cause it is fairly relentless.

<comment>Commented [V28]: comms</comment>

[00:21:18] Yep, it sure is.

[00:21:18] It's different to teaching. You go all year round. But.

[00:21:31] I think the level of responsibility is about right, we've got it pitched, with the UC, I I think if more of that got devolved down, for the eight hours that would be a problem. Um, what else would be a de-motivator? .

<comment>Commented [V29]: workload/pay balance</comment>

[00:21:50] Some of the things that people have said if they lost the flexibility. Some people said well if I wasn't offered a role for probably two study periods in a row I'd start to think oh well maybe there's nothing for me there then and I'll start you know looking around, doing something different. Other people that doesn't bother them. You know, depends.

[00:22:13] I try and I certainly like to get along to the SETLDS because I think that makes it looks like I'm interested and engaged, just to show that I'm interested in what's going on. I do like the big picture stuff that you guys give at SETLD and to be honest I've taken a lot of that back into my work, into the schools, and that interests me a lot, the picture stuff.

<comment>Commented [V30]: setld gen info</comment>

[00:22:42] So if we stopped communicating about that sort of big picture thing.

[00:22:47] I like knowing the big changes and changes with the literacy tests, and I find that yeah I've found that I make links between my school role, actually quite layered now, so I've got my classroom role, I tend to talk to the students and I've got a much better appreciation of university processes. So I like that crossover. I'm in senior leadership so I find that I've got quite a bit to offer, so in fact Curtin's feeding my job.

<comment>Commented [V31]: prof growth general</comment>

[00:23:17] That's great That's really good isn't it?

[00:23:21] And so any time I've got something to offer I find it motivating. So getting back to the original thing I find that I've got something to give, and offer, I find it quite motivating.

<comment>Commented [V32]: prof contrib</comment>

[00:23:32] MM, mm. So now the last couple of questions we're broadening now to consider the university more widely, rather than just the school of education and the next question is not a test it's just asking you are you aware that Curtin has a defined set of values.

[00:23:56] I do because I did the online module.

[00:24:00] Oh right.

[00:24:00] Don't ask me what they are.

[00:24:02] I'm not going to - that's why I said it's not a test. I was just asking you know whether you were aware that they exist.

[00:24:07] I do cause I did the module, that's one of those online things that you do.

[00:24:07] So without to identify and name each of them, I'm just wanting to ask people about their sort of their belief or their confidence level, that the school of education would be operating in alignment with the curtin values. What's your confidence level?

[00:24:34] I'm very confident. And the main reason I'm very confident is I've got a daughter, two daughters who have gone through another university and I talk all the time about what I do as they see me working as a tutor and they're not getting that. It makes me really frustrated and angry that, I'm going it's so simple! Like good Marking rubrics,you stuff like that, you know the things that we buildin and I know that's not specific to a value but I think the way we treat our students in education as part of Curtin is very respectful and very.

[00:25:16] And respect is one of the Curtin values and it's certainly one that we as a school take very seriously and integrity as well.

[00:25:22] I wonder if it's because we're training people to be teachers that the School of Education is populated by people who have those same sort of values as you see operating.

[00:25:33] It's possible isn't it that we're more naturally aligned or I shouldn't say naturally, but.

[00:25:39] I think you are because you know you look at the school I work at the values are there all the time, I bet you if I named them they'd be very similar to Curtin values, and I think that teachers have that really drummed into them and inbuilt and it's a code of operating. And I know that we do that in the School of Education because you know I get really frustrated with with what goes on with my daughters' Uni studies.

[00:26:10] So if we had a tutor who was not conducting themselves in accordance with the agreed values, how confident would you be that that would be addressed.

[00:26:21] I don't know much about the processes here, but I would assume given the nature of sessional work that they would not be re-employed that it's as simple as that.

[00:26:33] OK that's great. That's the end of my sort of guiding questions but I don't want to finish without just giving you an opportunity just to sort of think back on what we've talked about and just sort of recap the overall intention which was for you to tell me about things that impact on your motivation and engagement just to make sure that you don't go away thinking; Oh she didn't ask me this or I wanted to say that.

[00:27:05] It's hard looking at just motivation and engagement without putting in into like a context of teaching. So I think, so a lot of the time I've been talking about dealing with students or dealing with other people and maybe not so much about motivation and engagement but it's what would keep you coming back.

[00:27:25] Yeah that's it. That's it. And when you're doing your work you're sort of actually engaged with it as opposed to just going through the motions.

[00:27:34] I've told about three or four people you know like to come and you know, apply for work. XXX XXXXXX was one of them. So I'm obviously enthusiastic cause I say this is great, it suits me, you should look into it. Yeah. So Yes a couple people now who I've told about doing it; I wouldn't do that if it was miserable. I wish I got more interaction back from students.

[00:28:03] Yeah yeah.

[00:28:04] That's ongoing. That does get you a bit. When you've got rolling tumbleweed on the Boards, and you know you're putting up things on a weekly basis and you don't tonk anyone read them. However. I'm also an OUA student. So I study as well.

[00:28:27] Oh, I didn't know that!

[00:28:27] Yes so sometimes I don't engage because I'm just busy doing the work.

[00:28:35] Yeah. So you can see that um.

[00:28:37] I didn't get it until I was a student and then I went actually I'm just getting through the day t and if I don't have to I probably won't.

[00:28:46] Yeah yeah.

[00:28:47] Get on there and ask questions and get back off, I'm not there to make friends or whatever. But that's what I want my students to do, as a tutor! So it was really interesting.

[00:28:56] Yeah it is isn't it and it's good to have that insight isn't it.

[00:29:00] So that's pretty much it. I'm pretty happy.

[00:29:04] That's always good. All right so if you're okay that we've covered everything.

[00:29:10] I think so.

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[00:00:01] All right, so thank you, thank you very much for taking part in this interview today. And I just need to check that it's okay with you that we're recording their conversation.

[00:00:14] Thank you.

[00:00:15] And also to ask you whether you are fine with the informed consent or whether you wish to make any conditions around that.

[00:00:27] I'm fine with that.

[00:00:28] Thank you. And could I have a pseudonym for you.

[00:00:33] Call me Sue.

[00:00:33] All right then Sue, I will call you Sue. So, All that is being recorded is the audio of our conversation. So once again thank you. And just to reorient to to what this is all about because I'm aware that at some time since that initial Questionnaire survey questionnaire, for one reason and another. So, the initial survey questionnaire was to gain responses from as wide a group as possible, so that one went out to every single person that has a sessional contact with us, for tutoring in our online programs - one or more of our online programs. And then from that, I've had a look at people's responses just to gain a general idea about what people are saying about what impacts on their motivation and engagement. For the online work. And I've drawn together what I hope is a diverse group of people and by diverse I mean that I've looked at things like: gender, age or life stage and whether people are working full time in a school or whether they have another academic role; whether they're combining the tutor role with raising a family. So all those kinds of things are around the diversity; also in terms of how long people have been involved in the program and how many units they've worked in and all those kinds of things, trying to build in as much diversity amongst the group as possible. So that's why, you've been invited to now take part in a follow up interview sessions after that initial survey; and you might remember that there were some questions about how would you feel when you're engaging in your work as a tutor and also what makes you want to do it. And so today this semi structured interview is going to follow up on some of the things that might impact on how motivated you feel towards doing the work and then how engaged you feel when you are actually doing it. And specifically what it is that we as an organization do or don't do that might impact, either positively or negatively. So there's those four things really it's what we do do that impacts positively what we do do that might impact negatively and then what we don't do that impacts either positively or negatively. And we're specifically just talking about the online and we're not, I'm not looking at what it is that students do or don't do. Which I know of course can have an impact for sure but I'm just interested in what our responses as an organization need to be to ensure that our sessional academic staff who are working fully online are properly oriented supported and informed, included you know all those things. So that's what it's all about. Did you have any questions about anything that I've just said.

[00:04:12] Yes. I can't remember what I wrote.

[00:04:14] So don't worry about that at all and I wouldn't expect that you would and as I said it was really just to give me an overview of generally sort of people's responses. But my inviting the people into this follow up interview didn't really depend so much on their specific responses to the questions. But of course that will form part of the data going forward. So I don't it doesn't matter at all. Okay. So to begin could you just give them a brief summary of your current role with us if any and also roles that you've undertaken with the school of education here; units that you've worked in,

how long you've been involved.

[00:05:03] I haven't been involved for all that long at Curtin. I reckon this is probably only the second year. And I've tutored in the subject, the unit UDP226, which is Professional Studies and classroom management or something like that, and I've moderated on the unit EDP 223 which is the unit that sort of goes before 226. And I've probably taught three terms, I'd Say maybe two and three last year, and we just finished two this year.

[00:05:57] Yes. Yeah. Okay. That's good. Thank you. Can you tell me what it was that actually motivated you towards wanting to to join the school of education and do this work.

[00:06:12] I've been working in the field for many years. At several different universities and every I retired six years ago, and I worked online with Postgraduates for the first two or three years that I was retired - a Masters course. And that sort of dried up, as things do you know, new Head of School, and suddenly you're not needed anymore. Even if you've been, you know, running the course for a certain amount of time. And someone mentioned to me that Curtin was actually quite good at working with sessionals. I have to say I got over the filling out of time sheets and the arguing with admin staff over whether I spent an extra half an hour here or not, knowing I'd doubled the amount of time anyway. And the way Curtin does it is just straight forward. In fact, you don't have to do a thing. And a couple of friends were actually were also recently retired and working for Curtin.

[00:07:22] Oh gosh yes. Okay. I mean, I should probably add that there was a time when we did have that but it's, that time will live on in myth and legend forever as known as that nightmare time when we had to do it. Fortunately it was short lived. And made its way in very quickly and out pretty quickly as well. So we're very pleased about. So it's interesting to hear that that was a significant factor. Yes yes.

[00:08:09] Very sigificant. I wouldn't have been bothered if Id had to do time sheets.

> **Commented [VM1]:** Pay processes ++

[00:08:09] Well there you go. Thank you. I'm wondering if you're able to identify any particular time or times when you felt when you'd been conscious of feeling particularly motivated or engaged. It might be around the unit that you've been offered, it might be around the time in this study period, the people that you're working with, you know. Have you had any times when you've been conscious that you felt highly motivated and or engaged in the work.

[00:08:45] I seriously I am, all the time except for the times when I'm marking and under the pump and getting lousy papers.

> **Commented [VM2]:** Marking -

[00:09:03] yep.

[00:09:06] I'm really pretty dedicated and after working in the area of the practicum; having done all my research both internationally and in Australia, and my Ph D in the area of, we used to call it the practicum, professional experience, got a few on that, I've recently just published, I've got a book coming out as we speak, on educating future teachers in Australia and I've got 14 chapters on the practicum. So I'm really really convinced that people like me who have been involved on every level over a period of 40 years, have a lot to offer. And so I'm motivated; I'm really very motivated all the time.

> **Commented [VM3]:** Professional contribution +

[00:09:53] Yes yes. So I guess that what I can draw from that then is probably the fact that you've got this opportunity to stay involved in that way and to keep offering Your rich experience is a great opportunity for you.

[00:10:20] Yes absolutely. It was a shock though going back to second years, I have to say. However, I think that's where the hard work has to be done. When I was Head of School I always said we need to put the most experienced with the first and second years - but of course, we never do.

[00:10:35] Yes yes, we try to we try to it doesn't always. Yes. But certainly the professional experience units are critical, absolutely critical. So would that change then or what would change for you in terms of motivation and engagement if for instance in a particular study period you were offered a unit completely different. Not professional experience not something that was particularly akin to your experience or expressed interests; if somebody said could you do this for us because we just need someone. How would that impact?

[00:11:18] Ah, unless it was the phys ed unit, an arts unit, a pedagogy unit, um, I'd probably, just wouldn't do it. I mean I want to use my knowledge and expertise, I don't want to go back and start from scratch. Some of the new Social education or whatever - in fact I've just been going through my filing cabinet and throwing out, I have kept a lot of stuff; that I now consider incredibly dated, and so therefore I would be dated on stuff that I hadn't maintained my currency on.

<aside>Commented [VM4]: Units of expertise +</aside>

[00:12:07] Yes. So careful matching in that staffing process is a key factor for you?

[00:12:12] Total.

<aside>Commented [VM5]: Staffing processes + to match to units</aside>

[00:12:32] Thank you. Are you aware of any actions, strategies or activities that we run or provide as a School for Academic staff working in our online programs.

[00:12:45] I am aware, but I'm also aware that the majority of them are on campus - I did notice there was one I could have actually got on, in, you know..

[00:12:52] Collaborate?

[00:12:53] Yeah , recently. But I think the timing was very Western Australia too. And I didn't sort of, and plus I wasn't offered anything for term 3 anyway. So, and I think maybe things are drying up just a little. There was a huge, I mean I've been involved in the online stuff since its inception virtually, at Charles Darwin and Charles Sturt, and I know we got a heck of a lot of , a huge uptake early on, and a lot of brilliant people who'd been waiting for it to happen - and they went through and they were brilliant. But there's also some less than brilliant people now sort of hanging their hat on - this isn't answering your question!

[00:13:55] No that's OK. So is it, do you feel, so you've mentioned some barriers for you in accessing the Professional Learning which as you've said quite rightly, that is one of the things that we sort of very purposefully try to do, but there are some barriers for you in accessing that networking and professional learning. How, to what extent does that impact on your engagement and your motivation.

[00:14:26] I don't think it does. I have run those sorts of things myself in three or four different universities over the years so I'm pretty clued up.

<aside>Commented [VM6]: SETLD PL not significant although might come if here.</aside>

[00:14:40] So it's not a lack that you feel. All right OK. Is there anything that you are thinking, gee, I wish they would do dot dot dot- this is really something that's missing. If sessional academics working online are really going to be made to feel engaged, included, supported, they really should be doing X.

[00:15:13] Well I'm very disappointed in Blackboard.

[00:15:20] We all are!

[00:15:20] Oh; OK. I was using Interact; it was run in a collaboration of about six or seven different universities across the world - one in different universities across the world one in America one in England whatever whatever. And it was so good, so easy to use. Aspects of it are like Blackboard, there is a type of collaborate, t here's chat rooms, there's gradebook, there's you know, marking online. Actually I'm not that keen with Blackboard's marking online, and it's not because I'm not, you know, I'm usually the first to uptake. With Interact you could actually download the entire batch at once.

[00:16:14] Yes.

[00:16:16] And you didn't even have to rename your files - I think you had to put a "marked" after the file name. and that was all.

[00:16:16] Yes yes.

[00:16:29] And you could see what was up, what was down, what was still got to come in, all on one screen. It was brilliant.

[00:16:35] Yes.

[00:16:46] Yes, so I'm really disappointed with Blackboard; I find it clumsy, I find some one like me who spends often an hour or an hour and a half, unless it's a high distinction and then maybe I can get in done in half an hour, but I spend a lot of time making comments etc etc and I just, yes, I'm very disappointed.

[00:17:01] Yes yes it certainly wouldn't be our choice if we had the choice. Yes and a lot of our time and energy goes to probably if I could say making it, less bad, rather than expecting that it's ever going to be what we would like. And we are, we feel the constraints of having to work within the Blackboard environment all the time, so thank you for actually talking a little bit about that. All Right. If I can ask you just just a little bit of a different spin on it now. And say to you. If something or other happened or changed, what would that have to be to make you say I don't want to do this anymore. If we started doing or stopped doing something, or something in the way that we interacted with you, you know if such a thing happened, or stopped happening. What would it take to make you say, That's it, I don't want to do this anymore.

[00:18:19] Despite the fact that I said I'm terribly motivated, I'd have to say half way through the marking every time.

[00:18:19] Yes yes. So if for instance we said Well you've now got a bigger marking load or we're now going to cut the time allocation that we give for marking, you'd go OK, Barleys.

[00:18:29] Probably, probably - because I honestly would say that I spend more than double what I get paid for the marking. Therefore I'd think you'd get to the point where you'd say it's just not worth it.I mean how do you read, and mark, and edit, for a second year, 2000 words in 30 minutes? Well you don't you can't; you spend an hour or an hour and a half on some of them. You'd just go, nah, not worth it. And not worth it, not worth it not about the money but because you're not valued and you're not valuing your students. To say to me that you have 20 minutes to mark 2000 words,

even half an hour is pushing it, but 20 minutes to mark 2000 words is an insult, to both the student and to me.

[00:19:08] Yeah, yeah. So.

[00:19:16] So yeah, that would be it.

[00:19:16] So it's what it signifies. You know I get what you're saying. Thank you. Is there anything that you're conscious of that we that we do as a regular practice that gets in the way for you of your motivation or your engagement? So I'm thinking about communications, administrative tasks or processes that we ask people to do. Any other sort of expectations that come at you that maybe you weren't prepared for? You know anything at all that you're aware that we do that can get in the way.

[00:20:27] No, I've been very lucky, I found, the girl who was looking after the sessionals.

[00:20:27] Maddie.

[00:20:34] Yes Madeleine. Yeah. I found her fantastic. She's got a great future I'm quite sure.

[00:21:34] Yes.

[00:21:57] I find the person I'm teaching with fantastic; we are like chalk and cheese. He's an ex-principal and does not have an academic background, I'm very much an academic, even though I taught for many many years. So we're coming from totally different viewpoints, but it works, because he's just so easy to get along with. And I think he's quite happy with me too.

[00:22:06] Yes. Is there any thing you wanted to say about difficulties or threats to your motivation and engagement?

[00:22:13] Well because I'm not teaching this term it's been quite easy, but that running together from one to the next is a bit of a problem.

[00:22:13] Yes, well just sort of associated with that, one of the things that has come up a couple times is people have said you know what you just said, that the fact that there's no breaks between study periods and they just roll round and round and people who've been working in the program for some time said, you know you can't sustain that indefinitely. There comes a time when you need a break. So in order to have a break you have to have a whole period off; 13 weeks with no work, no income, and that's a long time but they've also said they're nervous about doing that because they're not really sure, you know, whether they'll then miss out the next time. Will they fall off the radar. And we'll forget all about them and we won't offer them again. Can you tell me what your feeling about that is?

[00:23:32] Yes, I think you actually do feel quite vulnerable in that way. Even though I have many many years behind me and I should feel confident in knowing what I'm talking about, I still when I didn't get offered this term went "oh!" I guess new broom, new people, but then when I spoke to Rod about it he said No, there wasn't enough students for another group, for a tutor as well as the UC. and then you feel OK again; but yes you do feel vulnerable. And it would feel worrying, and you do think, well, I'm not going to get it again.

[00:23:53] Yes. And that's important for us to understand because, you know there could be a response that we could have in our messaging, to reassure people that this is how it works, and don't feel worried and. You know it's come up a little bit when people have said when I haven't been

offered work in a particular study period. I've always assumed it's about me.

[00:24:16] Yes.

[00:24:17] And then as you said when they've asked they've found that it wasn't about them at all, it was about totally external factors. But I think that's important for us to understand because then we understand better what we need to be saying to people. So that's good. Thank you. Now; this next question broadens out the perspective of when I say us and the organisation; broadening it now to encompass Curtin university as a whole, rather than just the school of education and I don't mean to be testing you in any way when I ask this question: I'm just wondering are you aware that Curtin University has a specific set of values that it sort of publicizes.

[00:25:10] Yes, I am aware. In fact, I think I had to go through a whole series of tick the box things and learn about stuff and all the rest of it - which is fine because I've done that before in a lot of universities and so I was quite aware that that's what happens so yes, I'm aware.

[00:26:22] Yes.

[00:26:22] And quite cognizant of the fact that I've been a bit of a slackie when it comes to engaging with the wider Curtin because I feel I pretty well know universities and policies so I'm not you know freaking about anything and I know there's always support if you need it.

[00:26:22] Well I've reached the end of my questions. I've come to the end of my questions I have here, but I don't want to finish without just asking if there's something else that you want to say - I don't want people to finish it saying well I would have said that she'd asked me that and I was waiting to say this. So that's really just anything that you want to mention about what affects your motivation and engagement: what you think about your experiences working as a sessional academic online with this university in the school of education, in terms of those things that impact on your motivation and engagement.

[00:27:24] I wrote as I was marking last term - because I knew we were eventually going to talk, I started writing notes, but I have to say most of my focus was about students. You know, and it is another ball game. And I did actually mention to XXX when we were debriefing on this last term, that I think there's a huge gap in the research of the online experience and what is really happening. All my research is, you know, voiced research, it's all writing stories. We don't even know who's doing the work, we don't know the engagement levels of students - how can they work full time and also study - you know, when we compare with the students who used to be on campus - but if you talk about the ones on campus now they're all working too.

[00:28:49] Yes yes, I was going to say - that's changed as well.

[00:29:22] Yes. Everything has changed. I'm worries about things like facebook groups - you know the ones that they have, that we don't have access to, those sorts of things. But that's a whole different ball game.

[00:29:22] MMM yes.

[00:29:22] I was thinking 65 papers in two weeks - that's a bit of a push, but then I remembered, we had a hundred and twenty students a term, when we were working at the Uni.

[00:29:24] Yes we tried to work things out to be roughly sort of on a parity with workloads for people who work on campus; different formulas, but so that the bottom line would be roughly

equivalent for sure. Yeah.

[00:29:40] Yes so I guess overall, I'm disappointed by the number of students who don't co-operate, but that's probably different for different units.

[00:29:48] Yeah. You.

[00:29:53] Yeah so most of the stuff that I've actually scribbled down is about the student experience.

[00:30:00] Yes although sometimes there are implications that arise from that that inform how we should operate, and the supports and the advice and processes that we should instigate and institute in order to support people in their work. Which is why we have the professional learning program and try to talk about some of those things around student behavior. And lack of engagement or lack of visibility of their engagement and those kinds of things. So although it's not directly what I'm asking is it's definitely associated.

[00:30:48] Yes. Yes. And I'm really appreciative that you have that program because I know when I was learning to be an academic we had no-one helping us at all. You just had to struggle on. So things have improved.

> **Commented [VM13]:** IOT + PL

[00:31:07] Yes, yes, well I think that's it then.

[00:31:12] Well I hope that's been useful.

[00:31:12] Absolutely. Thank you so much. Again I can only apologize for the false starts but as you said we finally got to talk and we're on our way so thank you once again. All the best with that little puppy. See you XXXXX.