



JLDHE Special Issue on Third Space in HE

Title: The contribution of HE third space professionals to educational practice and pedagogy

The Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education (JLDHE) invites submissions for a special issue dedicated to exploring the contribution of HE third space professionals to educational practice and pedagogy. This issue aims to bring together a collection of thought-provoking articles that delve into the complexities and intricacies of third space, providing insights that can inform practice and advance teaching and learning in higher education.

Closing date for submissions: 31 March 2024

Expected publication date: Autumn 2024

Rationale and scope:

Universities rely on the expertise of third space professionals, those who occupy the liminal space between academic and professional services in Higher Education ([Whitchurch, 2013](#)). Third space professionals transcend traditional academic and administrative roles and are characterised by a hybrid and often fluid function that includes elements of academic expertise and administrative/professional service. However, often these individuals and teams do not feel that their contributions to the education landscape and ecosystem are recognised, supported or valued, and this experience varies depending on the local and national context. Third space professionals, such as Academic Developers and other members of Professional Services that are sometimes referred to as 'academic-related' staff, can face challenges in developing effective collaborations with academic colleagues and senior leaders, must navigate complex hierarchies within both academic and professional services structures, and as a result have a liminal identity. This also results in a lack of defined career progression opportunities, particularly in comparison to academic colleagues. Yet we recognise, as stressed by [Abegglen, Burns, and Sinfield \(2023\)](#), that the collaborative work undertaken by many third space professionals in partnership with colleagues and students across their institutions can create opportunities for individuals to gain professional and personal empowerment and agency. The rationale for this special issue is to create a platform for transnational third space professionals to identify, recognise and celebrate their contributions to the education landscape and ecosystems within which they operate, and to address the challenges and benefits of collaborating across professional 'spaces' with other professional services, other third space professionals and with our academic colleagues, in a range of contexts.

We seek contributions exploring topics that include, but are not limited to:

- The impact on power imbalances and hierarchies on collaboration across 'spaces', in particular the challenges of 'structured agency' ([McKay and Robson 2022](#)).
- Models of distributed leadership (Spillane, 2006) in collaborations across spaces.
- The role of trust and credibility in collaborative working across 'spaces' ([Little and Green, 2022](#)).
- The way in which collaboration can create opportunities for third space individuals to gain professional and personal empowerment and agency ([Abegglen, Burns and Sinfield, 2023](#)).

- The role of play and playfulness in collaboration across spaces ([Hoflöd, 2022](#)), and creating a 'Playful University' ([Koeners and Francis, 2020](#)).
- Informing and shaping the practice of academic colleagues through third space knowledge and expertise (Whitchurch, 2013).
- The introduction of V5 'collaborate with others to enhance practice' into UK Professional Standards Framework 2023 ([AdvanceHE, 2023](#)), and what this means for third space professionals.
- Valuing and increasing the visibility of third space professionals ([Hall, 2022](#)).
- Career trajectories and the integrated practitioner ([McIntosh and Nutt, 2022](#)).
- The emergent third space settings and ways of working in cross-cultural and international educational contexts.

We encourage submissions that deepen our understanding of third space in the following formats:

- **Research Papers** (including empirical studies and theoretical perspectives and frameworks) - up to 5,000 words
- **Case Studies** (including practical applications and strategies) - up to 3,000 words
- **Opinion pieces** (including policy implications and recommendations) - up to 2,000 words
- **Brief communications** (including cross-cultural and international perspectives) - up to 1,000 words
- **Book reviews** - up to 1,000 words

Potential contributors could include, but are not limited to:

- Academic, Researcher and People Developers
- Professional Services colleagues in areas such as employability, widening participation, academic skills, library etc.
- Industry leaders
- Graduate and Postgraduate teaching assistants
- Academics
- Clinicians
- Degree apprenticeship teams
- University Leaders

Please follow the [JLDHE Submission Preparation Checklist](#) and the [JLDHE Style Guide](#) when preparing your submission.

Please submit your paper to the [Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education](#) website and choose the option **Special Issue: Third Space**.

You may contact Kelly-Louise Preece at K.Preece@exeter.ac.uk or Tom Lowe at Tom.Lowe@port.ac.uk if you have any questions about the themes or formats for submission.

Thank you – and we look forward to receiving your submissions.

Guest Editors:

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Reference List

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Holfod, K. (2022) 'Playful learning and boundary-crossing collaboration in higher education: a narrative and synthesising review', *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 47, pp. 465-480. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2022.2142101>

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