

The place of a teaching consultant in a university

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This poster explores the role of a teaching consultant. It provides a qualitative analysis of the importance of physical place where a teaching consultant's work occurs. Put simply the role of the teaching consultant is to advise academic staff on their teaching. This involves supporting staff to develop and deliver effective teaching using contemporary principles and methods of teaching, learning, assessment and curriculum design. At Massey the teaching includes face-to-face contact as well as online, blended and distance approaches. A teaching consultant mixes formal and informal places of work. The formal aspects occur in classrooms, offices or online where groups of staff meet for academic development. Some of the work happens in the corridors or near water-coolers where informal discussions materialise by chance. This work responds to the immediate issues of the lecturer. For example, lecturer reflections of classes just delivered or challenges of using technology with students. The majority of academic development occurs in the lecturers' departments as staff learn from colleagues through informal discussions, problem solving and working on shared goals. Teaching consultants who work in centralised units need to gain access to these spaces to support staff. Access to staff in informal situations can be an important area of support that increases the value teaching consultants provide. With the teaching consultant role comes the question "Where does consultation for teaching take place?" A discussion of this question considers the function of the teaching consultant and the importance of place which redefines the value of space in a university.