Developing curriculum expertise: using theory to explain and justify curriculum decisions

Richard Pountney, Sheffield Hallam University

Teachers’ planning and design of the curriculum often brings into question what is considered educationally worthwhile knowledge. The distinction between subject knowledge and everyday commonsense knowledge, and the tension between knowledge that is ‘purely academic’ as opposed to ‘practically useful’, is important to consider in a curriculum design context. Resolving this dilemma requires us to articulate the purpose of the curriculum and, indeed, the value of curriculum subjects. In this presentation Richard explores how the structuring of academic knowledge underpins and drives learning and pedagogy. He explains how this coherence model can inform teachers’ subject knowledge and their curriculum making.

Richard is a Principal Lecturer in Education. He specialises in the design of the curriculum in higher education and professional development in learning and teaching. His research examines curriculum development in HE and he is particularly interested in curriculum innovation in relation to the use of technology. He was awarded a teaching fellowship in 2006 in recognition of his contribution to learning and teaching in the university.