**Shafina Vohra**

**Teacher of A-level Psychology, Head of Faculty [Options], LEGO Innovation Studio Lead.**

My first degree was in Psychology through which my dissertation was accepted for publication in APA (American Psychological Association). Alongside my role as an honorary research fellow at Birkbeck, my experience of teaching students at UCL & Birkbeck began my journey into A-level teaching. I trained at UCL (Institute of Education) through the School direct salaried route at NELTA (Beal High School) and was awarded an outstanding QTS in Psychology, post-16.

The wealth of experience gained across various schools and education set ups provided me with ongoing opportunities to develop my pedagogy, try new things and refine my professional skills. This led to my being able to innovate new approaches to teaching & learning that were further encouraged when I joined LDEUTC.

My role in developing the LEGO Education Innovation Studio as a certified LEGO Education Academy Teacher Trainer has received much appreciation & recognition as we are now on an international platform. As well as delivering conferences and workshops locally in the UK, we have taken our methods overseas to Italy & Mexico whilst others (Saudi Royals, Russian delegation) have visited us. We also host LEGO primary school workshops with varying focus that have been a huge hit for us in East London. The LEGO learning that I have developed is embedded into Psychology as it provides learners with a playful way to learn, allowing them to take ownership of their learning. Many departments are now also seeing the benefits of this hands-on approach and this has led to my being a PhD candidate at Imperial College where I hope to provide scientific evidence for my work using LDE as a research base, thus allowing a fruitful collaboration with academia & industry.

As Lead CPL I have also had a wonderful opportunity to work alongside senior leaders and enhance the CPL offering at LDE for staff development. This collaborative role has given me insight into excellent practice seen around our college and how we can use our own strengths for curriculum development both inside and outside the college. The support and monitoring system in place at LDE allows for continuous development and gives staff the opportunity to showcase their strengths.

Finally, the Head of Faculty role at LDE has been one of immense learning for me. My team is wonderful and very supportive which further enables me to carry out my duties successfully. Understanding the needs of learners for subjects that I don’t teach has also been a learning curve for me as it strengthens my own professional standing with learners whilst maintaining a focus on development and progress.