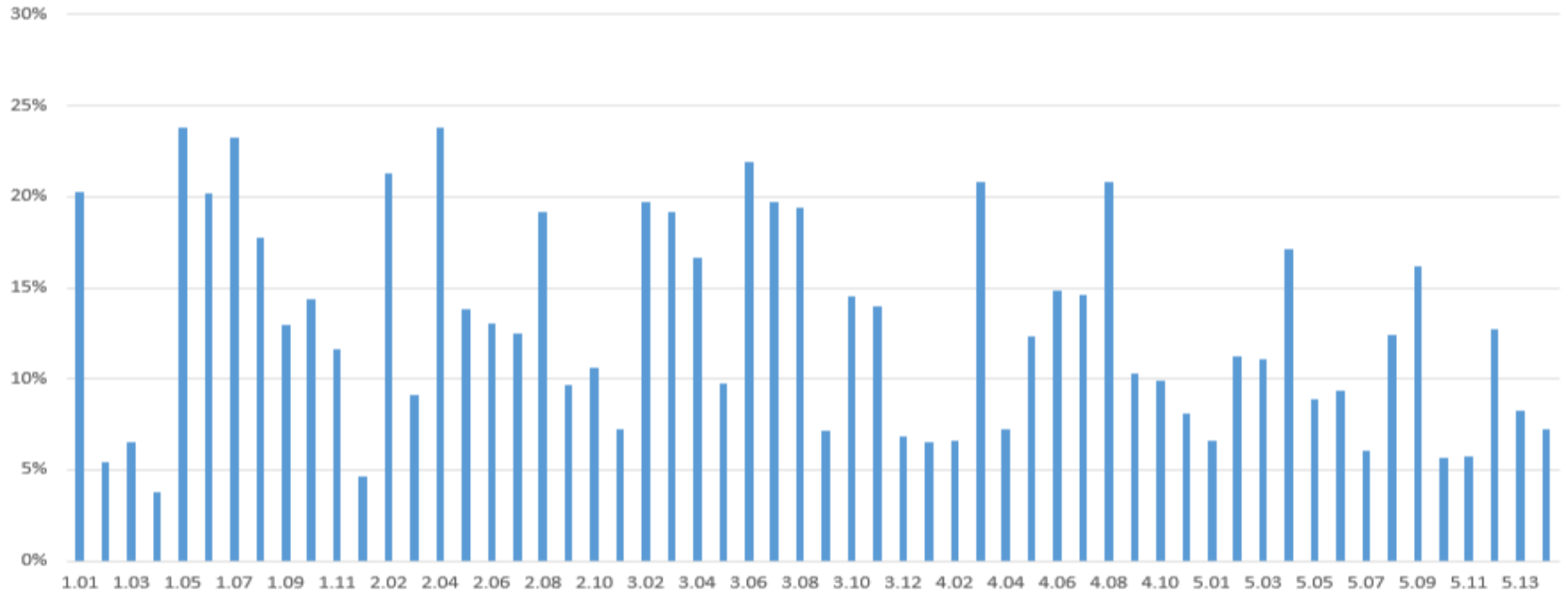Karen Hornby, National STEM Learning Centre

" I really liked how people could comment on your posts and give you **advice or ask you questions**. I felt it was an extremely **reflective** course where I'm critiquing my teaching, planning and students understanding while **collaborating** with colleagues.

Teaching Practical Science: Biology

Percentage of visitors per step who made at least one comment in a five week MOOC

Existing research

- the influence of mentors on forum participation (Mazzolini, 2003; An et al., 2008; Arend, 2009),

- the demographic characteristics of learners who comment (and those who do not),

- the link between commenting and course completion (Beaudoin, 2002; So, 2009; Swinnerton et al., 2017).

- The social and emotional factors affecting participation have also been well explored (Hew et al., 2009, Tawfik et al., 2017).

- the majority of research about the motivation to participate in asynchronous forums is in the context of higher education, where participation is mandated or linked to assessment. (Tawfik et al., 2017)

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Different aspects of a step

- **Time**
- **Participatory design scaffolds, such as using a shared social space to comment on digital artefacts, or building a Moodle glossary (Warburton and Mor, 2015)**
- **ABC design method – evaluate, reflect, select …**
- **Content**

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Authenticity

Liu et al. (2015) reviewed a five week MOOC with 4078 participants, of which 83% of survey respondents were working professionals - participants were generally motivated, but time-poor, and did not complete activities when they could not see the **value** in doing them. However, the study did not explore what types of activities were not valued, and why

The impact of authentic activities on interaction can be seen in a MOOC which was designed to enhance Greek language teachers' use of Web 2.0 tools This course generated high participation rates in the forums Teachers reported that one strength of the course was that the content and activities **directly related their 'classroom reality' and professional role.** (Koukis and Jimoyiannis, 2017).

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Round table discussion

Are the behaviours of professional learners distinct from other learners?

How is authenticity of learning demonstrated through activity design?

What methods can we use to research and evaluate how effective activity designs are for professional learners?

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