Interpreting research data

When we think about using evidence in our planning around Edtech, there are some really important considerations that we need to bear in mind. And the first of these is to really unpack what research evidence tells us about particular types of use of educational technology. Very popular across the Edtech space right now are the use of randomised control trials and quantitative studies looking at whether an intervention using a particular form of Edtech will make a positive impact on learning standards or learning outcomes. Now, we need to be really careful with this kind of research; it's very powerful, however, correlation is not the same as causation. And in any kind of study of this nature we need to really be thinking about the contexts that those research studies have taken place in. What works effectively and impactfully in one school may not necessarily work effectively and impactfully in another school. And why is that? It's because we're human beings. We are all unique and individual. We all bring different values and priorities and experiences to the teaching and learning moments. And schools are all unique places with different priorities, different cohorts, different contexts, different strengths.

So we can look at these sorts of studies and unpack that there is a greater probability that a particular piece of Edtech might help us in a particular context, within particular priorities. But we can't say wholesale, let's lift that from that context and it will work in another context and that's really powerful.

So my challenge to you is to think about what forms of evidence you are using to inform the decisions you're making about the kinds of Ed tech that you are engaging with. Whether that's things you're thinking about purchasing or whether that's things you've already got and you're thinking about how else you can most impactfully use that Edtech going forward.