

Academic career progression: rethinking pathways

—

Professor Sally Bradley

Contents

Editorial	2
Professor Sally Bradley	
Transforming educational excellence at an institutional scale	5
Dr Sarah Floyd	
How do I know who I am? Identities, trajectories and practices for dual professionals	14
Fran Beaton	
A journey toward parity of esteem in academic promotion: an institutional case study	26
Andrea Cameron	
The bridge from practice into academia: a case study of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)	35
Dr Hilary Lindsay and Dr Susan Smith	
Call for action	43
Professor Sally Bradley	

Editorial

Professor Sally Bradley, Senior Adviser (Professional Learning and Development), Advance HE

This publication was put together following the symposium on Academic Career Progression held in December 2019. Several issues were discussed at this conference, including 'race'/ethnicity, dual professionals and the shift to academia, etc. While aware that the careers landscape for academics has changed since this time, due to Covid-19, Brexit uncertainties, Black Lives Matter, the move to working from home and delivery online, it is still worth considering different aspects of career progression. Covid-19 and working from home has been reported (Donald, 2020; Lungumbu and Butterly, 2020) to have had a detrimental impact on some colleagues, particularly women with child care responsibilities, and there has been the additional need for agile upskilling for many in order to move from face to face to blended or fully online course delivery. What impact does Covid-19 have on academic career progression where there is already precarity? Australian higher education (HE) has already seen job losses (Zhou, 2020) as has the UK (Staton, 2020; Mckie, 2020).

This publication takes the reader through a series of four case studies which will be helpful when considering institution-wide strategic development and other more practical, local initiatives supporting career development and transition into a career in HE.

We open with a case study on the development and implementation of an institutional strategy and its Holistic Model for Professional Development for Education Excellence. The model uses multiple lenses of excellence: Individual excellence; Developing own excellence; Collaborative excellence; Profiling excellence. The model guides stakeholders to make key decisions and actions.

From an institutional professional development strategy, we move to the start of an academic career for colleagues entering HE after transitioning from a previous career. These dual professionals, often found in vocationally focused or specialist institutions, bring a wealth of skills and networks of value to students. They are experts in their field of practice, yet a novice within the university setting. How can they navigate this dichotomy and create their own identity?

The question is then raised regarding promotion and parity of esteem for teaching and research. The perception is that research remains the dominant domain when considering progression and promotion despite the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework. The playing field is not level, there is a further gendered and ethnic divide in relation to salaries and status. Can the creation of multiple promotion pathways increase progression?

Can support from a professional body help to reduce the skills shortage in HE? This final case study outlines how one professional accountancy body, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), has developed a range of activities under the umbrella of an Academia and Education Community. One of its roles is to support and inform members of possible career paths in academia. Part of its suite of resources developed to explore potential career routes in academia is the researching accountant development framework (RADF) which provides a practical tool for those seeking to develop along a research career path.

The case studies presented in this publication are important for three main reasons. First, they 'unpack' and examine career progression in a broader context of institutional factors (Miller, 2019), instead of focusing on individuals and groups. Second, they provide important insights into, and accounts of, HE institutions working to 'level up' opportunities for staff by reconfiguring normative progression pathways. Third, they highlight that career progression is a much more expansive and nuanced area than previously conceptualised. Each case study offers something unique to our understanding of institutional habitus (Miller, 2020), and the role of leadership in organisational effectiveness and development.

References

- Donald, A (2020) 'The disproportionate effect of Covid-19 on women must be addressed', Times Higher Education, 25 June. Available at: www.timeshighereducation.com/opinion/disproportionate-effect-covid-19-women-must-be-addressed [accessed 7 December 2020].
- Lungumbu, S and Butterly, A (2020) 'Coronavirus and gender: More chores for women set back gains in equality', BBC. Available at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-55016842?xtor=ES-208-%5B38502_NEWS_NLB_ACT_WK49_Thur_26_Nov%5D-20201126-%5Bbbcnews_100women_newsworld_equality%5D [accessed 7 December 2020].
- McKie, A (2020) 'UK universities axe thousands of jobs during pandemic', Times Higher Education, 8 December. Available at: www.timeshighereducation.com/news/uk-universities-axe-thousands-jobs-during-pandemic [accessed 8 December 2020].
- Miller, P (2019) 'BAME teacher progression in England: towards a conceptual model', International Studies in Educational Administration (ISEA), 47 (3): 18-35.
- Staton, B. (2020) '*Universities to cut thousands of academics on short contracts*'. The Financial Times, 20 July 2020. Available at: www.ft.com/content/67f89a9e-ac30-47d0-83e7-eba4d1284847 [accessed 7 December 2020]
- Zhou, N (2020) 'Almost 10% of Australian university jobs slashed during Covid, with casuals hit hardest', The Guardian, 7 October. Available at: www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/oct/07/almost-10-of-australian-university-jobs-slashed-during-covid-with-casuals-hit-hardest [accessed 7 December 2020].

There are more publications on the Advance HE website which may be of interest:

The [Guiding Principles](#) for teaching promotions is available to download.

Further reading

Advance HE (ND) Universities HR Strategic Enhancement Project: Career progression and staff transitions strategic enhancement programme. York: Advance HE.

Cashmore, A and Ramsden, P (2009a) Reward and Recognition in Higher Education: A collaborative investigation. Interim Report. York: Higher Education Academy.

Cashmore, A and Ramsden, P (2009b) Reward and Recognition in Higher Education: Institutional policies and their implementation. York: Higher Education Academy.

Cashmore, A, Cane, C, Cane, R and Stainton, C (2013) Rebalancing Promotion in the HE Sector: is teaching excellence being rewarded? York: Higher Education Academy.

Fanghanel, J, Pritchard, J, Potter, J and Wisker, G (2016) Defining and Supporting Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: A sector-wide study. York: Higher Education Academy.

Fung, D and Gordon, C (2016) Rewarding Education and Education Leaders. York: Higher Education Academy.

Gibbs, G (2010) Dimensions of Quality. York: Higher Education Academy.

Gibbs, G (2013) Implications of 'Dimensions of Quality' in a Market Environment. York: Higher Education Academy.

GuildHE (2018) Practice-Informed Learning: the Rise of the Dual Professional. London: GuildHE.

Gunn, V and Fisk, A (2013) Considering Teaching Excellence in Higher Education 2007–2013: A literature review since the CHERI Report 2007. York: Higher Education Academy.

Land, R and Gordon, G (2015) Teaching excellence initiatives: Modalities and operational factors. York: Higher Education Academy.

Locke, W (2014) Shifting Academic Careers: Implications for enhancing professionalism in teaching and supporting learning. York: Higher Education Academy.

Locke, W, Whitchurch, C, Smith, H J and Mazenod, A (2016) Shifting Landscapes: Meeting the staff development needs of the changing academic workforce. York: Higher Education.

Transforming educational excellence at an institutional scale

Dr Sarah Floyd, Reader in Higher Education Practice, Ulster University

Ulster University is a civic multi-campus university in Northern Ireland (NI) with a dual focus on research and teaching with strengths in widening participation. It is distributed across NI with four campuses and more than 1000 staff and 24000 students.

This case study focuses on the experience and learning of leading a strategic initiative undertaken at Ulster University to re-align professional learning opportunities with institutional vision for academic excellence. We acknowledged our unique position within the university, demonstrating that, as academic developers, we have agency and a “key role to play in stimulating increased collaboration, coherence, and even organisational learning in the modern university” (Stensaker, 2018, 276). Building on an understanding of staff development as an essential component in creating excellent student learning and changing institutional culture, the Centre for Higher Education Research and Practice (CHERP) took the opportunity to support Ulster’s strategic ambition for high-quality student learning experiences underpinned by skilled staff. We developed an Ulster Plan and Policy for Professional Learning for Education Excellence (PPLEE) articulating this vision, making explicit the interconnections between educational practice, professional learning and nuanced institutional conceptions of teaching excellence (Woods and Feng, 2007).

To support staff in positioning themselves against institutional expectations, and to prepare themselves for reward and recognition opportunities in learning and teaching, it was critical to maximise opportunities for ongoing enhancement and engagement with professional learning. We understood the need to develop staff to be adaptable to a rapidly changing HE environment – locally, through changes to institutional strategy, and more widely through national initiatives such as Teaching Excellence Framework (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2016) and the growing professionalisation of the HE learning and teaching workforce. As of April 2020, there were approximately 130,000 Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellows globally with 334 member institutions (Advance HE, 2020) demonstrating the reach of this increasingly accepted professional benchmark for HE educators.

1.1 Defining Professional Learning

The first step in articulating our vision for professional learning required agreement on how, as an institution, we conceived the nature and range of development that educators might encounter. The traditional nomenclature of professional ‘development’ felt too formal and had connotations of something that was ‘done’ to people. Through discussion we arrived at ‘professional learning’ as being a better fit, incorporating person-centredness, autonomy, flexibility and purposefulness.

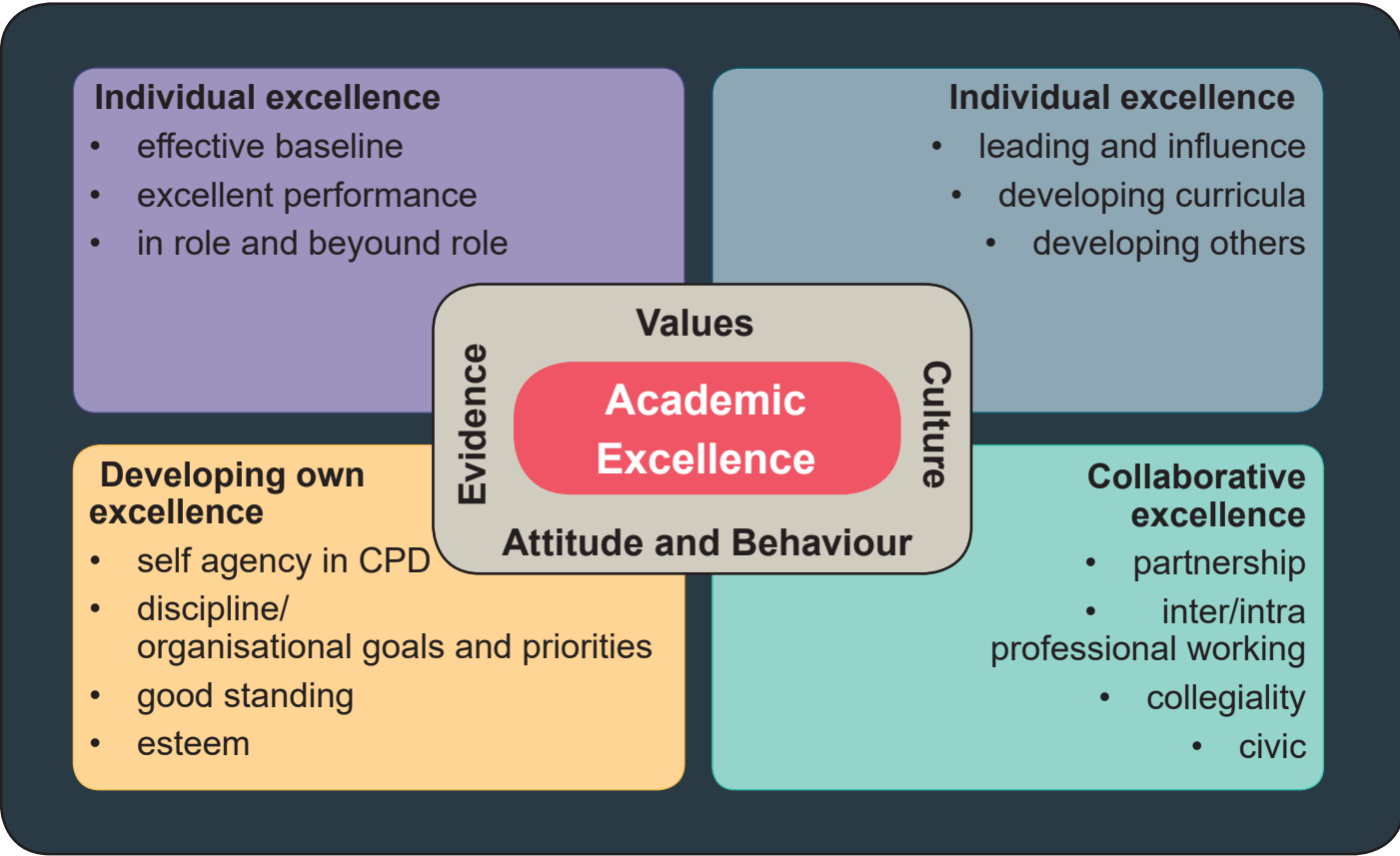
Professional learning at its most effective emerges from informal learning activities and a wide range of non-formal learning situations that vary according to practice and the individual and contextual need.

Adapted from Pilkington, R and Appleby, Y (2014)

The plan

The PPLEE focuses on the specific needs of all staff with roles in learning and teaching, at all stages of their career path. It provides a framework for professional learning and enhancement as well as recognition, enabling staff to respond with agility and resilience. It was critical to support staff positioning themselves against institutional/external expectations, and as excellent educators. To achieve this, we envisaged the Holistic Model for Professional Development for Education Excellence (Floyd 2019, figure 1) that focused on the following excellence lenses: Individual excellence; Developing own excellence; Collaborative excellence; Profiling excellence (these reflected excellence frameworks such as those used in the Advance HE National Teaching Fellowship Scheme).

Figure 1: Holistic Model for Professional Development for Education Excellence



The model framed our decisions regarding the scope and nature of professional learning, development and recognition opportunities provided in support of Education Excellence. Critically important for our plans is the need to be inclusive for all staff involved in the student learning experience, and to be accessible (a challenge for a geographically distributed institution). We saw the evolution of a joined-up strategy for professional learning as being a powerful and strategic vehicle for change.

This model guides a number of key decisions and actions across stakeholders:

- + individuals to consider their own developing practice and to acknowledge the need to share, influence and impact on wider practices; to work collaboratively with a range of partners and stakeholders in achieving these goals
- + staff developing self-agency in their approach to professional learning appreciating their active role in it, and work in partnership with their line manager to identify appropriate goals and priorities
- + line managers in supporting, guiding and encouraging staff in their professional learning decisions
- + strategic direction for the development and nature of professional learning and recognition mechanisms and opportunities in support of education excellence
- + consideration of the different developmental stages, responsibilities and needs of staff throughout their career journey
- + development of new opportunities and processes for shaping and enabling ‘future-proof’ professional learning.

We made a conscious decision to maximise the use of dialogic opportunities as a trigger for ongoing engagement with learning and teaching, leading to the development of meaningful communities of practice and professional relationships (Roxå and Mårtensson, 2009; Wenger, 2000). Dialogue has been shown to encourage reflection and the emergence of ideas (Outram and Parkin, 2020), providing rich opportunities for reciprocal and peer learning. This has been evidenced in Ulster’s ENHANCE Professional Recognition Scheme where more than 400 staff have gained HEA Fellowship through the medium of dialogue, thus giving us the confidence to invest in it as a sound vehicle for professional learning.

Policy: providing clarity around professional learning expectations and reward opportunities

The policy articulates the key principles (Figure 2) and requirements for relevant staff addressing a need for transparency and communication across all stakeholders. By taking this approach we have clarified expectations for ongoing professional learning together with the responsibilities of line managers in supporting and inculcating an ethos of teaching enhancement (Gibbs et al, 2008). To drive teaching excellence forward, managers need to value, encourage and celebrate teaching. The UKPSF, together with national teaching excellence awards, have re-prioritised teaching development.

However, the impact of this approach is diminished if manager conceptions and attitudes lag behind (Floyd and Platt, 2013; Platt and Floyd, 2015). Critical to this has been clarifying mandatory requirements eg completion of the Post-graduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice during probation and achievement of recognition through HEA Fellowship (Ulster metric for 90% of relevant staff to hold a category of Fellowship by 2021).

It was useful to consider the development and expectations of atypical staff who are often overlooked (Harvey and Jones, 2020). This led to the development of a new online course that offers a flexible engagement mode for Ulster Recognised University Teachers aligned with UKPSF Descriptor One.

Figure 2: Ulster plan and policy for professional learning for education excellence: policy principles



The remainder of this case study highlights two developments that illustrate the use of the Holistic Model for Professional Development for Education Excellence in shaping professional learning.

Excellence and self-agency in ongoing professional learning

Ulster educators start their professional learning journey undertaking the Post-graduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice (PgCHEP), culminating in the award of FHEA (UKPSF Descriptor 2). In addition to supporting their development of pedagogic literacy, professional skills and confidence in their developing practice, the PgCHEP creates opportunities for professional networking and dialogic engagement with tutors, others on the course and experienced colleagues. Critical to this is engendering a belief in their capacity to act as reflective practitioners and change agents who draw from a professional evidence base to inform their own and others' practice. We encourage self-agency in identifying professional learning opportunities that support ongoing development beyond the structure of the PgCHEP. As Fellows, all understand the need to maintain their good standing and currency of practice (Advance HE, 2017).

Using the Holistic Model for Professional Development for Education Excellence as underpinning, we recently developed a Master's in Higher Education Practice providing opportunities for experienced staff, who hold a minimum of FHEA, to continue their development taking project-based modules in contemporary areas of practice aligned to institutional priorities (see Figure 3). The broad educational purpose of the MEd is to develop and recognise educators at Ulster who are responsive, student-centred, innovative, effective, reflective, progressive, developmental, scholarly and leaders of learning and teaching. To date, 33 staff have enrolled on the programme, evidencing an appetite for self-development and pursuit of practice enhancement.

Figure 3: Master's in Higher Education Practice (MEd)

The aims of the programme focus on building participant capability to

- + navigate institutional policies, systems and practices
- + identify areas for enhancement
- + further develop personal self-confidence to become active leaders within the university community
- + proactively respond to sector factors, different positions and tensions in HE
- + develop as solution-focused practitioners through the implementation of enhancement projects and initiatives.

Modules:

- + Enhancing the Student Experience through Inclusive, Collaborative Partnership
- + Enhancing Employability and Enterprise
- + Academic Leadership for Enhancement in HE
- + Transforming Professional practice in HE
- + Enhancing Assessment Design and Feedback
- + Developing Excellence in Learning and Teaching
- + Leading Team-based Curriculum Design.

One module (Developing Excellence in Learning and Teaching) takes a personal perspective in guiding staff, developing their self-agency through a process using the Holistic Model as a framework for positioning, shaping and articulating their professional practice, learning and development in pursuit of education excellence. A coaching and dialogic approach supports participants in undertaking the assessment tasks (see Figure 4). Through this, participants maximise their potential to impact positively on the student experience and the practice of others in HE. This has supported a number of participants in seeking internal and external recognition through Fellowships, excellence awards and promotion.

Figure 4: Developing Excellence in Learning and Teaching assessment strategy

Section A: Position paper on educational excellence: research and define your conception of excellence in learning and teaching aligned to institutional and discipline priorities.

Section B: Philosophy of learning and teaching: develop a personal philosophy of learning and teaching that articulates your values and beliefs.

Section 3: Communicating and disseminating excellent practice: write a case study narrative of your current practice and its impact on your students supported by evidence and underpinning pedagogic rationale and your philosophy of learning and teaching. Identify enhancements to further its success and impact.

Section 4: Developing your profile as an excellent educator: produce a strategy and action plan for your ongoing development as an educator and leader. This should focus on:

- + your identification of and rationale for purposeful professional learning opportunities, and priorities and plans for learning and teaching practice development
- + your strategy for influencing wider practice: reflect on your current and future potential opportunities to influence wider practice locally and externally: justify the approaches you have/and will use to disseminate excellent practice and support change.

1.2 Celebrating excellence

Excellent practice should be celebrated. Using the Holistic Model as a guiding framework, the Education Excellence Awards were developed in 2017, encouraging and recognising a diversity of excellent practices impacting on student learning (Figure 5). These include an early career award designed to maintain momentum for ongoing practice enhancement for staff beyond the compulsory initial professional development requirements and awards for teams and professional staff – to date 31 individuals and eight teams have been recognised. The awards now feature at graduation, visibly

demonstrating our commitment to high-quality student learning and celebrating the excellence of our educators with graduates and families.

Figure 5: Ulster Education Excellence Awards

The Early Career Educator Award is awarded to individuals who have been teaching/supporting learning in HE for four years or fewer and can demonstrate an outstanding contribution to learning, teaching and/or assessment practice within the university. Applicants should have achieved Fellowship at the time of making their application.

The Excellence in Learner Support Award is awarded to individuals who have a track record of supporting learning in HE and can demonstrate an outstanding contribution to the student learning experience at Ulster University. Any member of staff who supports learning in a professional service or technician role is eligible. Applicants should have achieved Associated Fellowship (AFHEA), or another category of Fellowship, at the time of making their application.

The Professional Practice Innovation Award is awarded to individuals who have demonstrated an approach that has had excellent impact on the student learning experience at Ulster University. Any member of staff who teaches or supports learning at Ulster University is eligible. Applicants should have achieved AFHEA, or another category of Fellowship, at the time of making their application.

The Sustained Educational Excellence Award is awarded to individuals who have been teaching/supporting learning in HE for more than four years and can demonstrate a sustained body of outstanding practices that have impacted significantly on students and influenced the practice of peers within the university. Applicants should have achieved Senior Fellowship (SFHEA) at the time of making their application.

The Educational Leadership Award is awarded to individuals who have been involved with teaching/supporting learning in HE for more than four years and can demonstrate a sustained body of outstanding, purposeful leadership in learning and teaching that has impacted significantly on learning and teaching practices and/or policy at Ulster leading to transformative outcomes. Applicants should have achieved SFHEA at the time of making their application.

The Collaborative Excellence Award is awarded to teams who have a track record of supporting learning in HE and can demonstrate a team-based initiative that has led to positive impact on learning and teaching. All team leads, and normally all team members, should have achieved AFHEA, or another category of Fellowship, at the time of making their application.

As many excellent educators work in isolation and do not have the confidence to self-identify or position themselves for external recognition, we established institutional processes for NTFS/ CATE in 2017 to encourage, identify and nurture potential applicants. This enables staff to see excellence as achievable and a progressive journey and has resulted in significant impact with five successful NTFS claims (three in 2019, the maximum possible) and one CATE finalist.

Conclusion

Undertaking this initiative has afforded opportunities to crystallise and clarify how professional learning is positioned within the institution. New and refreshed conversations have taken place between stakeholders to ensure that policy and processes align in support of institutional culture change and capability development. Evidencing the impact of this holistic approach to envisaging professional learning is at an early stage but we are seeing greater awareness, valuing of and engagement with scholarly practices in learning and teaching (SoTL) building pedagogic literacies; the surfacing and further development of more hidden academic leaders; knowledge and sharing of the range of effective, and at times, innovative practice going on around the university. We have seen increased success with internal and national measures of educational excellence through awards and HEA Fellowships. At this time of global crisis during the Covid-19 pandemic, staff have responded with agility and resilience, which may be in some part attributed to their ongoing development and capabilities as excellent educators of whom we are proud.

References

- Advance HE (2017) *Fellowship Code of Practice*. York: Advance HE. Available at: www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/fellowship-code-practice [accessed 25 May 2020].
- Department for Business Innovation and Skills (2016) *Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*. London: BIS. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-success-as-a-knowledge-economy-white-paper [accessed 25 May 2020].
- Floyd, S and Platt, A (2013) *Explorations of the role academic managers play in the liminal space of faculty engagement with SOTL*. Paper presented at International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Raleigh, US, 2–5 October 2013.
- Gibbs G, Knapper C and Piccinin S (2008) 'Disciplinary and Contextually Appropriate Approaches to Leadership of Teaching in Research-Intensive Academic Departments in Higher Education', *Higher Education Quarterly*, 62 (4): 416-436.
- Harvey and Jones (2020) 'Leading educational transformation with sessional staff', in Potter, J and Devecchi, C (eds) *Delivering Educational Change in Higher Education: A Transformative Approach for Leaders and Practitioners*. London: Routledge. Available at: doi.org/10.4324/9780429053405

Outram S and Parkin D (2020) 'A tailored undertaking: the challenge of context and culture for developing transformational leadership and change agency', in Potter, J and Devecchi, C (eds) *Delivering Educational Change in Higher Education: A Transformative Approach for Leaders and Practitioners*. London: Routledge. Available at: doi.org/10.4324/9780429053405

Pilkington, R and Appleby, Y (2014) *Developing Critical Professional Practice in Education*. Leicester: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (England and Wales).

Roxå, T and Mårtensson, K (2009) 'Significant conversations and significant networks – exploring the backstage of the teaching arena', *Studies in Higher Education*, 34 (5): 547-559.

Platt, A and Floyd, S (2015), 'Preparing for the UKPSF at Ulster University: an exploration of the role the academic manager plays in engaging and supporting staff preparedness for professional recognition', *Educational Developments*, 16 (1): 5-10.

Stensaker, B (2018) 'Academic development as cultural work: responding to the organizational complexity of modern higher education institutions', *International Journal for Academic Development*, 23 (4): 274-285, Available at: doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2017.1366322

Wenger, E (2000) 'Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems', *Organization*, 7: 225-246.

Wood, M and Feng, S (2017) 'What makes an excellent lecturer? Academics' perspectives on the discourse of "teaching excellence" in higher education', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 22 (4): 451-466. Available at: doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2017.1301911

How do I know who I am? Identities, trajectories and practices for dual professionals

Fran Beaton, retired Senior Lecturer, University of Kent

Introduction

Graduate employability has become a global issue. Increasingly, students, employers and other stakeholders expect universities to prepare graduates for the challenges of future workplaces. For example, work-integrated learning is increasingly part of Australian university curricula (Rayner and Papakonstantinou, 2015) and South Africa has mandated universities and colleges to tailor the curriculum to meet national economic needs (Taylor and Govender, 2013). In the UK, increasing numbers of students enrol in occupationally linked programmes (UUK, 2015). This has led to universities forging closer links with employers (Jackson, 2015), such as work placements where students gain hands-on, real-life experience. Alternatively, university curricula incorporate workplace-like activities into teaching with the aim of helping students develop skills which will be useful for their future employment. This emphasis on workplace preparedness and graduate employment is presented both as a good in itself (see, for example, Moore and Morton, 2017) and as a metric contributing to university positioning in league tables (Belfield et al, 2018).

This focus on workplace preparation has particular implications for how university teaching is staffed. While specialist and vocationally oriented institutions have long employed people with workplace expertise as university teachers, this practice has become more widespread across the sector (GuildHE, 2018). These people, termed blended or dual professionals, may be making a mid-career transition into university teaching or combining university teaching with practice, a significantly different career path to more traditional routes into academia. A research study I report on later in this paper suggests that dual professionals:

- + are likely to have had more varied life experiences, including setting up and running their own businesses or in the public sector
- + may or may not have been to university – and even if they had, it is likely to have been some time ago.

Crucially, they are experts in their practice field but novices in the university setting. What are the implications of this for dual professionals' relationships in their practice and university settings? How do they navigate their positioning in – and in between – these spaces? What helps them make sense of their situation?

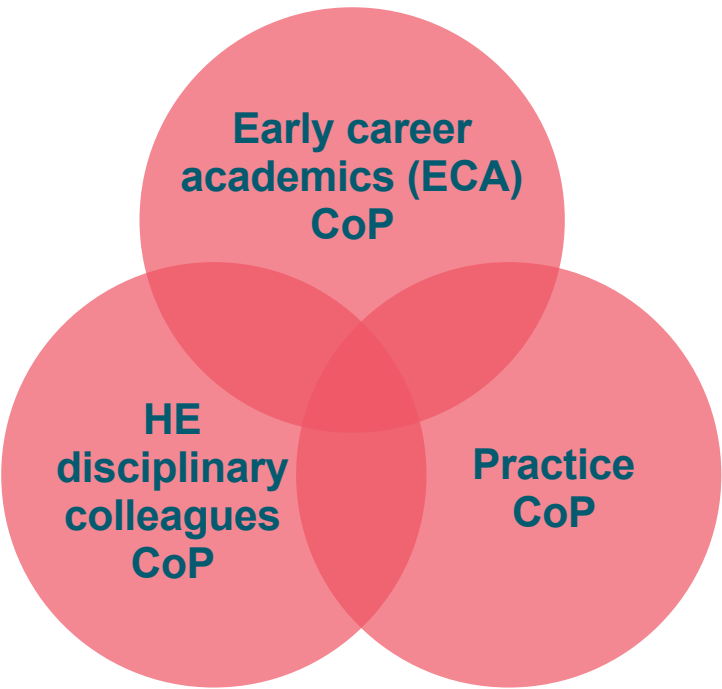
Lessons from the literature

Lave and Wenger's notion of Communities of Practice offers a useful lens to consider these questions. Communities of Practice (CoPs) have three main characteristics:

- + everyone in a CoP has a shared domain of interest, such as a group of teachers thinking about how to motivate their students
- + a CoP helps forge relationships which promote collective learning, such as attending conferences and/or participating in discussion boards or Jisc lists
- + these shared interests and interactions help grow shared resources and strategies to tackle recurring problems. At the time of writing, during the Covid-19 pandemic, lists are buzzing with shared interventions to support students and staff making a rapid transition into remote learning, teaching and assessment.

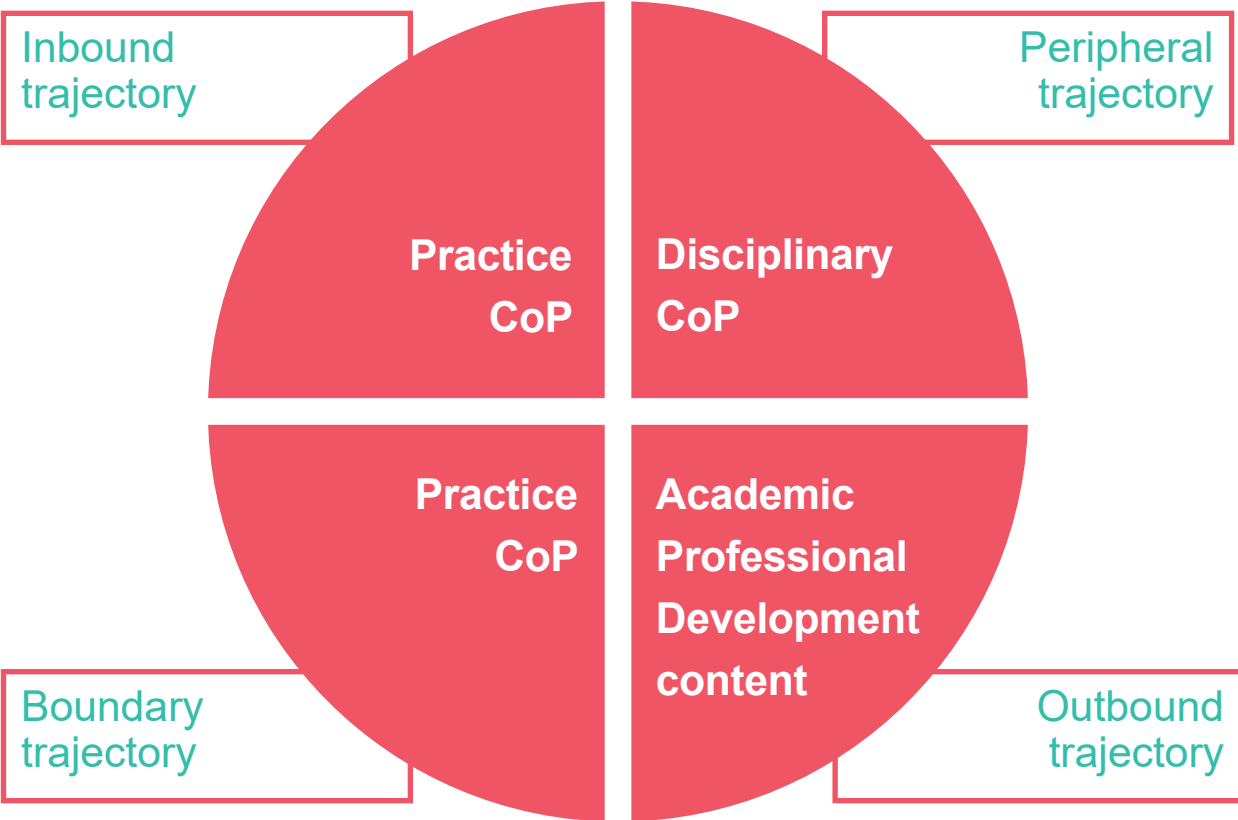
Individuals engage with different CoPs, which support different facets of their identity, and to varying extents. In general terms, each of us may be part of multiple CoPs, such as workplaces, voluntary work, sport, cultural and faith communities. Within any CoP, individuals can be positioned (by themselves or in the view of others) on a continuum from novice/legitimate peripheral participant to expert/someone who is central to the CoP. For dual professionals, the three most significant communities are the practice community, their immediate colleagues in their HE discipline and (potentially) their peers as early career academics – typically fellow participants on a university Postgraduate Certificate or other form of academic professional development.

Figure 1. Potential Communities of Practice



While each of these CoPs is significant, a further dimension is the extent to which an individual engages in them and how their personal positioning may change over time. This is particularly important for dual professionals who draw their credibility as educators from their practice expertise and attach importance to maintaining that expertise to benefit their HE students, while participating in the university environment in various ways. This affects how an individual sees their current and anticipated situation within one or many CoPs, the extent to which an individual's expectations are met through the experiences they have, how individuals envisage their current and future roles and their intertwined trajectories in their practice and HE CoPs. (Wenger in Jawitz, 2009). Trajectories build further on the idea of the novice/expert status but have the important additional dimension of considering individuals' intentions as well as their self-image.

Figure 2: Influences and trajectories



What do these mean in terms of the decisions an individual makes about the nature and extent of their participation in any or many communities of practice?

Inbound trajectory: an individual decides to invest in their identity as a future new member of a group. This includes discerning and buying into the norms, values and behaviours which characterise that group.

Peripheral trajectory: an individual opts for significant (to them, in terms of being committed) but limited (in terms of time) participation in a CoP. For example, a part-time teacher is likely to engage with colleagues and fellow subject specialists in specific ways and at specific times.

Boundary trajectory: individuals aim to sustain their participation across different CoPs. While the balance of activity may vary over time, the overall intention is to remain engaged with both. For example, an individual may prioritise university work in termtime and practice work outside term.

Outbound trajectory: the process of leaving a CoP, instigated either by a change in circumstances or by the individual, but “seeing the world and oneself in different ways” (Wenger in Javitz, 2010, 134). One example of this is the postgraduate journey: from novice researcher, needing a lot of initial guidance and support in a postgraduate CoP, through to completion and transition into a CoP of experienced researchers.

These theoretical perspectives are especially pertinent for dual professionals.

Research process

I wanted to test two hypotheses:

- + trajectory and identity for dual professionals is bound up with their perceptions and experiences in different CoPs
- + dual professionals' experiences might differ in universities with different missions: research-intensive, teaching and research, specialist, teaching and vocational. Institutional classification was based on how each university defined itself on publicly available webpages.

I undertook small-scale research to determine the significance dual professionals attached to each of the CoPs and the effect of the content and experiences of participating in academic professional development on their identity. I contacted professional development leaders in five universities to ask if they would be willing to identify potential interviewees who

- + came from, or remained in, practice fields
- + had embarked on university teaching in the last five years
- + had completed academic professional development in the last three years.

All five leaders generously put me in touch with potential interviewees (Table 1) They also agreed to be interviewed themselves. The study gained ethical approval from the University of Kent’s Centre for the Study of Higher Education ethics committee. Participants were assured of confidentiality and were free to withdraw from the research at any time. Semi-structured one to one interviews with 14 dual professionals, mainly in participants’ workplaces, were transcribed and analysed for key themes, generating case studies which enabled different narratives to emerge. Programme leaders’ interviews were analysed for key themes, particularly in relation to their perspectives of challenges for dual professionals’ transitions into HE and the potential role of professional development in that process.

Table 1: participant profiles

Institution type	Individual	Discipline	Practice experience (yrs)	Academic experience (yrs)	Current HE role	Currently in practice?	Professional development activity	Trajectory
Teaching and vocational	Peter	Social Work	15	5	FT, Senior Lecturer	PT out of hours cover	Fellowship	Boundary
	Frank	Music Tech	15	9	FT, programme leader	‘Peripherally’	Fellowship	Inbound
	Alison	Clinical education	9	1	0.6, Senior Lecturer	GP educator (0.2) and paramedic	PGCert	Boundary
	Liz	Nursing	15	3	0.6	HE placement link and healthcare trainer	PGCert	Boundary
	Alex	Media	15	4	0.7	Yes	Fellowship	Boundary
	Sam	Digital Industries	30	4	0.4 (across 3 HEIs) Senior Lecturer	Yes	Fellowship	Boundary
	Maggie	Visual Arts	15	12	FT	‘Impossible ...there’s so much crap to do.’	PGCert	???
	Sally	Business	10	5	None - freelance	‘I describe myself as a part-time academic and recovering civil servant.’	PGCert	Boundary
	Julie	Art and Design	15	10	FT, Senior Lecturer	‘Not much design work at the moment, I’m too busy to fit it round my HE work’.	PGCert	Boundary

Table 1: participant profiles continued

Institution type	Individual	Discipline	Practice experience (yrs)	Academic experience (yrs)	Current HE role	Currently in practice?	Professional development activity	Trajectory
Teaching and research	Amy	Law	25	4	FT, Lecturer	No	PGCert	Boundary
	Jim	Law	20	9	FT (since 2018), Lecturer	Yes	PGCert	Boundary
	Anna	Journalism	5	2	Lecturer	Yes	PGCert	Boundary
Specialist	Rebecca	Digital Design	20	9	0.1 Lecturer	Yes	Fellowship	Peripheral
Specialist	Paul	Engineering and Digital Arts	7	5	0.5, Course leader	Yes	Fellowship	Boundary

Key findings: dual professionals

Trajectories

For dual professionals, boundary trajectories predominated. Boundary dual professionals felt their practice expertise was central to their identity and credibility, particularly in teaching and vocational universities and particularly with their students. Typical comments included:

“I bring my practice into the university because my students really appreciate it.” (Senior lecturer, social work)

“Our students know we’re preparing them for a tough industry and that we’ve been there on the ground.” (Senior lecturer, music technology)

Boundary professionals in research-intensive and teaching and research universities offer a different perspective. While students are no less appreciative of their practice expertise, practice professionals are seen as different from academics entering HE through traditional route.

“The large department that I’m in has made it clear that my clinical skills teaching is valuable, but I probably wouldn’t be able to run a proper academic research-based module.” (Lecturer, health)

“My academic colleagues seem to think we just train students to apply what they’ve been taught, but what we’re actually doing is developing legal critical thinking.” (Lecturer, law)

However, literature offers some evidence that perceived differences in status can apply in both directions, if dual professionals are

“...suspicious or dismissive of their academic counterparts, whose work they regard as lofty in theory but useless in practice.” (Santoro and Snead, 2012, 391)

Boundary professionals took active steps to remain involved in practice, often working at evenings and weekends or negotiating their HE contracts to enable them to commit regular time to practice work. However, this was not always straightforward. In two cases, such a balance had been discussed at interview but not implemented in practice, a cause of frustration for people who wanted to maintain a boundary role to legitimise their HE identity and benefit their students.

Others envisaged an inbound trajectory into academia, maintaining a sufficient practice presence to inform their teaching and to create practice opportunities for their students. These inbound dual professionals had, and maintained, extensive industry contexts and networks and used these for activities such as inviting practitioners as guest speakers for undergraduate seminars and arranging student work placements and internships. They also drew on their previous experience to bring workplace-like structures and tasks into the HE curriculum, such as setting up an inhouse record label, training students to use live broadcasting facilities, ‘Dragon’s Den’-style events for student teams to pitch projects to industry professionals and mock moots in law.

Engaging with professional development

Individuals’ trajectories affected their expectations of, and engagement with, academic professional development.

Inbound dual professionals, envisaging a long-term academic career, valued being in a cohort with more traditional early career academics:

“It was fun, lots of great discussions... because there was such a mix of folk it made me feel part of the process of being ushered along.” (Lecturer, digital industries, teaching and vocational university)

Professional development offered both a career-boosting credential (such as HEA Fellowship) and content which helped inbound dual professionals feel they had a firmer grip on underpinning principles:

“...more generalised ideas about what teaching is and what learning is about... and develop strategies so things don’t fall apart.” (Lecturer, music technology, teaching and vocational university)

Dual professionals on a boundary trajectory offer a more mixed perspective. There was a single instance of an entire disciplinary team (health, vocational university) attending professional development as a cohort, and this had been a significant and positive experience:

“As a team we spent time on the PGCert discussing matters of common interest, and now at work we spend time talking about what we’ve learnt on the PGCert and how to apply it.”

For this disciplinary team, the in-cohort relationship had further strengthened their workplace relationships and practices. This team was the only example of a whole group participating in professional development at the same time. Nevertheless, the dual professionals in this study were unanimous that their immediate disciplinary colleagues were central in their sense of legitimacy as an educator from a practice background.

Even when a professional development cohort had included dual professionals from other vocational backgrounds, there was limited common ground, either between them or other traditional early career academics:

“We (practice professionals) tended all to sit together and we had kind of shared values, such as professional behaviours and accountability, but there’s a big difference between clinical care and pharmacologists and it’s completely different for, say, historians.” (Lecturer, health, teaching and vocational university)

This is not in itself unusual. Staff undertaking PGCerts or other professional development are usually in multi-disciplinary groups with little more in common than being early career academics, and there is limited evidence that cohort culture persists following professional development. The composition of professional development cohorts (a mix of traditional academics and dual professionals) tended to underline differences and caused some to question their position in the academy.

“I don’t think universities really value people who aren’t committed to being fulltime academics.” (Lecturer, law, teaching and research university).

“I’ve been told that my chances of promotion are low because I am not on a full-time academic contract... it’s crazy - so it’s not enough to be great three days a week?!” (Lecturer, digital industries, teaching and vocational university)

Some boundary dual professionals were also frustrated at the mismatch between their expectations of what professional development was intended to achieve and the reality. They had expected professional development to provide academic and practical preparation for their HE work but were deterred by overly theoretical content “nebulous and confusing” (Lecturer, health, teaching and vocational university) and lack of practical application: “The one thing we weren’t being taught to do was teach!” (Lecturer, digital design, teaching and vocational university). Boundary professionals particularly welcomed professional development which modelled good practice, enabled effective peer learning and helped develop their confidence in their ability both to teach and to work effectively within their institutions. It helped confirm their practice identity, began to mitigate their novice status as HE educators and helped develop confidence and agency in their capacity to navigate their institution.

“I now know that I can just try something out below the radar and not tell anyone. If it works, if it was a pilot; if not, it can be quietly dropped.” (Lecturer, digital industries, teaching and vocational university)

Currency and agency in both practice and HE settings are fundamental to boundary dual professionals’ identity, intertwined as the two aspects are. This means that individuals and institutions need to take active steps to enable these to co-exist. There were two main ways to achieve this:

- + negotiating working patterns: prioritising HE work in termtime and practice work at other times, or working in a practice cover role at evenings and weekends
- + building practice work into their HE role: arranging and monitoring students’ workplace placements or building authentic workplace scenarios into teaching.

Where frustrations arose, it was generally because arrangements had either not been explored at interview or a promised balance had not materialised. This had affected their confidence in the institution and their legitimacy with their students. However, with one exception, dual professionals exercised ingenuity and agency to tackle this situation, enlisting the support of disciplinary colleagues and positive student feedback to underline the importance of maintaining practice work. The exception was actively planning to leave HE and return to full-time practice.

In summary, dual professionals valued professional development which aligned with individuals’ trajectories and aspirations and where there was a clear link between the content and practical applications. With the exception referred to above, they all envisaged a long-term role in HE. There was little evidence that working relationships with other early career academics were forged or maintained during or after professional development. So, if they are not forged there, then where?

The role of disciplinary teams

There is longstanding evidence in the literature, beginning with Knight and Trowler’s (1999) key paper, that academic identity is rooted in the discipline in which individual academics work most closely with their immediate colleagues, although this does not necessarily constitute a CoP. However, my study generated supporting evidence that dual professionals’ experiences were entirely consistent with being in a disciplinary CoP. This was evidenced through formal processes, such as having a disciplinary mentor, and through individuals building collective relationships, based on mutual respect, shared values and expertise and an understanding both of the university and practice contexts. It was these relationships, above all, which enabled dual professionals to thrive.

Key findings: professional development leaders

If the discipline plays such a central role in identity and socialisation of dual professionals, what does this imply for professional development? Programme leaders overall aimed for PG Certs or other routes to HEA Fellowship which balanced individual development, institutional familiarisation and an understanding of the bigger picture, such as different perspectives on challenges and issues in HE and framed by the UKPSF. Programme leaders in vocational and specialist institutions, employing a high proportion of dual professionals, were particularly mindful of the need for professional development that acknowledged dual professionals' practice expertise. Professional development content in specialist institutions, particularly at first, was rooted in the discipline and included activities designed to focus on the application of principles to practice, including possible applications in the workplace. This was less of a feature in research and teaching-and-research universities, where academic professional development was primarily geared to more traditional academics and where workplace applications were discipline-focused rather than context-focused.

However, regardless of institution type, professional development leaders identified a mismatch of expectations between what dual professionals expected their HE role to involve and what their university colleagues expected of them, typified by this comment:

“They’re appointed at senior lecturer level but have no idea what is expected in that role: mentoring other staff, admin and budget responsibilities, curriculum development, promoting quality learning and teaching...”

Professional development leaders' interviews highlighted helpful institutional provision to address this. Strategies adopted included professional development which explores the nature of educational leadership, curriculum content which promoted reflection on the norms and cultures in both practice and HE fields and hybrid professional development (see, for example, Butcher and Stoncel, 2012), where practice and disciplinary staff co-design and co-teach content. This kind of provision acknowledges the significance of local and disciplinary contexts and integrates different CoPs more closely. Professional development is thus key in helping dual professionals make sense of their situation, bringing their professional skills into their HE role and reshaping their identity as educators.

References

- Belfield, C, Britton, J, Buscha, F, Dearden, L, Dickson, M, van der Erve, L, Sibiet, L, Vignoles, A, Walker, I and Zhu, Y (2018) *The relative labour market returns to different degrees*. London: Institute of Fiscal Studies.
- Butcher, J and Stoncel, D (2012) 'The impact of a Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education on university lecturers appointed for their professional expertise at a teaching-led university: "It's made me braver"', *International Journal for Academic Development*, 17 (2): 149-162.
- GuildHE (2018) *Practice-Informed Learning: the Rise of the Dual Professional*. London: GuildHE.

Jackson, D (2015) 'Employability skill development in work-integrated learning: barriers and best practice', *Studies in Higher Education*, 40 (2): 350-367.

Jawitz, J (2009) 'Academic identities and communities of practice in a professional discipline', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 14 (3): 241-251.

Knight, P and Trowler, P (1999) 'It takes a village to raise a child: mentoring and the socialisation of new entrants to the academic professions', *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 7 (1): 23-34.

Moore, T and Morton, J (2017) 'The myth of job readiness? Written communication, employability and the "skills gap" in higher education', *Studies in Higher Education*, 42 (3): 591-609.

Santoro, N and Snead, S (2012) "'I'm not a real academic": A career from industry to academe', *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 37 (3): 384-396.

Teichler, U, Arimoto, A and Cummings, W (2013) *The Changing Academic Profession: major findings of a comparative survey*. Dordrecht: Springer Science and Business Media.

Wenger, E and Wenger-Trayner, B (2011) *Communities of Practice: a brief introduction*. Alexandria, Virginia: National Science Foundation.

A journey toward parity of esteem in academic promotion: an institutional case study

Andrea Cameron, Dean of the School of Applied Sciences and the Intellectual Lead for Teaching and Learning, Abertay University

Introduction

The tension between teaching and research in HE has been documented extensively (Cashmore et al, 2013a; Robertson, 2007; Drennan, 2001) – with a narrative emerging in the last decade regarding the differential impact of these on academic career progression (Locke, 2014; Felder and Hadgraft, 2013). The dominant sentiment being that research still appears to be the most-of rewarded aspect in academic promotions (Gunn and Fisk, 2013; Graham, 2015). This is despite quite clear government directives to acknowledge the importance of good quality teaching and the implementation of an evaluative scheme for this, the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) (Johnson, 2015) as a benchmark to counter-balance the more embedded Research Excellence Framework (REF), and its predecessor, the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) (REF, 2011).

The introduction of the Higher Education Academy's (HEA) United Kingdom Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) in 2006 was a means by which to recognise the knowledge, skills and values that tertiary education colleagues' evidence in their interactions with students (HEA, 2010). The framework aligned well with the government's drive to enhance teaching provision, by professionalising and raising the status of teaching, something articulated in both the Dearing (1997) and Browne reports (2010). This resulted in a number of institutions stating target aspirations for the proportion of their teaching staff with professional recognition, as well as intimating that new lecturing staff would be expected to gain HEA Fellowship in order to complete probation (Thornton, 2014). In the last decade there has been a faster rate of growth in teaching compared to research-oriented academic appointments, with 66% of universities claiming to have a teaching-focused career progression pathway (UCEA, 2019). It could be speculated that TEF and the National Student Survey (NSS), both of which influence highly prized league table positions, may also have been contributing factors to this change in emphasis.

However, academia no longer has a two-dimensional teaching and research focus, as industrial and professional practice are incorporated, and there is growing reference to a further member of the academic workforce, the 'pracademic' (Dickinson et al, 2020). These individuals enter HE from industry positions and may not possess a 'traditional' research profile. They often remain linked to practice in order to sustain their professional status or industry currency, giving added credibility to their student interactions. However, they can feel quite dislocated when transitioning to the HE environment and have voiced feelings of stress and pressure when trying to maintain a practice profile alongside developing a teaching and research portfolio, though the latter may depend on the institutional contract (Gates and Green, 2014).

Despite acknowledgement of the value that a diverse academic workforce can bring to the university community and the student experience (Ramsden, 2008), and suggestions of differentiation in career progression tracks (UCEA, 2019), frustration is still expressed about the capacity to achieve promotion (particularly to the rank of professor) as a consequence of excellence in teaching or professional practice (Hulme and Locke, 2019). The gendered nature of 'academic housekeeping' and the consequent negative impact on research output, funding and therefore career progression has been noted as contributing to the gap in female academic salaries as well as to the low proportion and later achievement of a professorial title for women (Macfarlane, 2018). The emphasis on research status for reward and recognition has been suggested as fostering acts of 'upward toxicity' – with career advancement being gained through abuse of power and a code of silence surrounding poor conduct (Dumitrescu, 2019). This negative ethos is compounded by reports of hostile HE research environments in which unhealthy competition leads to aggressive and bullying behaviours negatively impacting the mental health of staff (Wellcome Trust, 2020). While many who present for promotion will not exemplify these qualities, panels need to be mindful of condoning cultures that are not in line with an institutional tenet of collective cooperation. Accordingly, the quality of collegiality is beginning to emerge within promotion criteria (Grove, 2019; Wooten and Condis, 2018; AAUP, 2016).

However, in acknowledging that tensions and poor behaviours exist, and noting that there are frustrated staff who have gained different categories of Fellowship and evidenced impact, or who have been innovative in their teaching and have gained highly positive student reviews, there is then a requirement for institutional intervention. University leaders need to address the lack of parity of esteem, and reward and recognise the efforts of those whose career path has more emphasis on professional practice (including teaching) (Cadez, Dimovski and Groff, 2017; Fung and Gordon, 2016). This case study describes the actions taken by one HE institution to tackle these perceived inequities.

Case study context

In the featured post-92 university (a former Institute of Technology), academic staff are recruited from diverse routes – professional practice, industry, research institutes, post-doctoral studies. Lecturing staff have a combined teaching and research contract and resource is provided to support staff to gain Advance HE (HEA) Fellowship through the university's accredited schemes. A panel consisting of the principal, deputy principal, all deans, the head of human resources and an external member (usually a vice principal) is convened annually in June to consider the written submissions for promotion. However, despite 71% of academic staff with Fellowship (20% with Senior/Principal Fellowship), repeated staff surveys make reference to the perceived lack of reward for enhancing teaching quality and the student experience, and/or gaining professional status. Evident frustration is palpable from the qualitative narratives.

Intervention

A cross-institution short-life working group (SLWG) led by the deputy principal was formed, with representation from all academic grades (including deans and departmental heads), human resource colleagues, and the relevant unions to refresh the academic role profiles and give more visibility to practice (teaching/professional).

Academic role descriptors from the sector were gathered and shared, as was the Advance HE work around Guiding Principles for Teaching Promotions (McHanwell and Robson, 2018) and the work of Cashmore et al (2013b) on Spheres of Influence. Sub-groups were created and each was tasked with looking at a designated job description and person specification for a particular academic grade. The institution has five academic profiles (Grade 6 – teaching fellow; Grade 7 – lecturer; Grade 8 – lecturer; Grade 9 – senior lecturer; Grade 10 – professor). Monthly meetings of the SLWG were held during the 2018-19 session to articulate progress, as well as to unify discussions around adjustments/ insertions to the existing documents.

A decision had been made the previous academic year to cease recruitment to the grade 6 teaching fellow (TF) post (a teaching-only contract) – recognising the challenges of progressing from this role and the institutional desire to have teaching and research a feature of all academic positions. The few staff still in TF posts, through a dialogue with their departmental head, would be supported to develop evidence/experience matched to the grade 7 lecturer profile, if this was something that they wished to do.

The SLWG determined that there needed to be some changes and expansions of the detail relative to the desirable and essential criteria for a particular academic grade. Additional information was also added to the role-specific duties and responsibilities (see Table 1).

Table 1. Adjusted features of all academic role profiles

Amendment	Notes
Research and knowledge exchange	Previously the statement referred to research only.
PhD or equivalent	Equivalence now defined as leading an innovation which has impacted industry, practitioners or a client group.
HEA status or the capacity to achieve	Now an essential criterion at all grades, previously desirable.
Membership of national/UK/international professional or academic associations, as appropriate to the discipline	A new essential criterion.
Record of effective active citizenship in one’s current or previous employment	A new essential criterion.
Income generation/range of teaching experiences (teaching leadership)/experience of QA&QE	Now a desirable criterion, in recognition of those coming from industry/professional practice.

Guidance notes were produced for applicants, the departmental heads, deans and the promotion panel. The departmental heads and the dean are both required to provide a statement to accompany the application at the point of submission. Line managers are also expected to consider candidates’ career journey in advising them about their readiness for promotion.

The guidance notes provide detail under specific headings (Table 2) and endeavour to embrace the range of attributes that should be evidenced in a promotion application rather than define bespoke career paths.

Table 2. Guidance notes' headings

In tandem with updates to the academic profiles, the promotion application form was also revised. Applicants are now required to complete pro-forma where they provide evidence against the essential criteria for the given grade. Each academic profile is matched to six of the Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) competencies (ECC, 2003) – namely, Effective Communication; Liaison and Networking; Initiative and Problem Solving; Research, Knowledge Exchange and Professional Practice; Teaching and Learning; and Decision Making. Applicants are also invited to provide two examples of how they demonstrate the competency matched to the specific grade articulation of this.

Heading	Notes
Level / impact expected at each grade	External visibility and influence to be evident at higher grades. Associated trajectory to be outlined.
Requirements for promotion	Fulfilment of the essential criteria for the grade need to be evident within the application.
Research and / or knowledge exchange	Generation of new knowledge; dissemination and impact; can include teaching and learning; scholarship; consultancy; professional practice.
Progression between the grades	Articulation of heightened influence and impact as a candidate moves up the grade profiles.
Leadership	Includes teaching, professional practice, and research examples.
External engagement, esteem and sphere of influence	For example, links to professional body/industry, keynote talks, reviewer/advisory roles, external prizes/awards.
Academic citizenship	For example, mentoring, outreach, committee work, supporting events, leading SLWGs, writing policy/procedures.

A workshop hosted by the deputy principal and the deans now takes place annually in March to introduce the process, provide guidance on completion of the application, as well as to give an opportunity to ask questions of individuals who form the core of the promotion panel. The principal, as chair of the panel, also convenes a separate question and answer session in April, prior to staff submitting applications at the end of May. These preparatory events are designed to 'demystify' the process.

An all staff communication in March 2020 highlighted the changes to the academic role profiles. This led to 35 members of staff attending the principal's session on the promotion process, the highest number to date. In a workforce of just fewer than 200 academics, the average number of applications in a typical year would be circa 30 with a success rate in the region of 40%. In 2020, 34 staff submitted paperwork for academic promotion with 70% of the applicants being successful. Staff were promoted across the breadth of the academic grades, and this good news story was shared within the university communication bulletin.

Conclusion

While the new role profiles have only just been put to the promotion 'test', there is a renewed hope in the academic community that fairness, equality and transparency will prevail, and that appreciation of a wider skill set and value of contribution will be recognised within the promotion process. Key to career progression within the case study institution is innovation, impact, influence, esteem and leadership – this can be in research, teaching and/or practice. The acknowledgement of this, as well as the non-linearity of careers, and the recognition that multiplicity can add value to the academy, is central to the dissipation of teaching-research-practice tensions. The celebration and appreciation of difference is inculcated in academia (Brage and Lövkrona, 2016). It would be good to see this transfer to the academic promotion process, and for there to be reward and recognition in equal measure for contribution to the breadth of university business. Only then can the competitive 'toxicity' narrative be tackled and an alternate collegiate kindness emerge – one in which academics support each other on the many paths that form an academic career progression route.

References

- American Association of University Professors (AAUP) (2016) *On Collegiality as a Criterion for Faculty Evaluation*. Washington, DC: AAUP. Available at: [www.aaup.org/file/AAUP Collegiality report.pdf](http://www.aaup.org/file/AAUP%20Collegiality%20report.pdf) [accessed 31 August 2020].
- Brage, T and Lövkrona, I, eds (2016) *Core values work in academia*. Lund: Lund University. Available at: eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/core_values_work_brage_lovkrona.pdf [accessed 30 May 2020].
- Browne, J (2010) *Independent review of higher education funding and student finance* (The Browne Report). London: Department for Business, Innovation & Skills. Available at: www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/docs/s/10-1208-securing-sustainable-higher-education-browne-report.pdf [accessed 31 August 2020].
- Cadez, S, Dimovski, V and Groff, M Z (2017) 'Research, teaching and performance evaluation in academia: the salience of quality', *Studies in Higher Education*, 42 (8): 1455-1473.
- Cashmore, A, Cane, C, Cane, R and Stainton, C (2013a) *Rebalancing Promotion in the HE Sector: is teaching excellence being rewarded?* York: Higher Education Academy.
- Cashmore, A, Cane, C, Wills, S, Sadler, D, Booth, S, McHanwell, S and Robson, S. (2013b) *Promoting teaching: making evidence count*. York: Higher Education Academy.
- Dearing, R (1997) *National Committee of Enquiry into Higher Education*. Available at <https://bei.leeds.ac.uk/Partners/NCIHE/> [accessed 31 August 2020].
- Dickinson, J, Fowler, A and Griffiths, T L (2020) 'Pracademics? Exploring transitions and professional identities in higher education', *Studies in Higher Education*. Available at: doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2020.1744123
- Drennan, L T (2001) 'Quality Assessment and the Tension between Teaching and Research', *Quality in Higher Education*, 7 (3): 167-178.
- Dumitrescu, I (2019) 'Ten rules for succeeding in academia through upward toxicity', *Times Higher Education*, 21 November. Available at: www.timeshighereducation.com/opinion/ten-rules-succeeding-academia-through-upward-toxicity [accessed 25 May 2020].
- Education Competencies Consortium (ECC) (2003) *Higher Education Role Analysis*. London: ECC.
- Felder, R M and Hadgraft, R G (2013) 'Educational practice and educational research in engineering: partners, antagonists, or ships passing in the night?', *Journal of Engineering Education*, 102 (3): 339-345.
- Fung, D and Gordon, C (2016) *Rewarding Education and Education Leaders*. York: Higher Education Academy.

- Gates, A and Green, T (2013) *Inbetweeners: (re) negotiating professional identity in the transition from practitioner to academic*, Practice-Based Education Summit, Sydney, Australia, 10–11 April. Available at: www.csu.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/732434/Session14.pdf [accessed 28 May 2020].
- Grove, J (2019,) 'Glasgow to rate "collegiality" for professorial promotions', *Times Higher Education*, 31 October. Available at: www.timeshighereducation.com/news/glasgow-rate-collegiality-professorial-promotions [accessed 26 May 2020].
- Gunn, V and Fisk, A (2013) *Considering Teaching Excellence in Higher Education 2007-2013: A literature review since the CHERI Report 2007*. York: Higher Education Academy.
- Graham, R (2015) 'Does teaching advance your academic career? London: Royal Academy of Engineering. Available at: www.raeng.org.uk/publications/reports/does-teaching-advance-your-academic-career [accessed 25 May 2020].
- Higher Education Academy (HEA) (2010) *Review of the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for Higher Education*. York: Higher Education Academy.
- Hulme, J and Locke, D (2019) 'Professors in Preparation: Supporting 21st century professorial leaders', in Creaton, J, Gordon, C, Floyd, A, Denney, F, Hulme, J and Locke, D *Leadership in a Changing Landscape*. London: Society for Research in Higher Education Annual Conference papers. Available at: www.srhe.ac.uk/conference2019/abstracts/0313.pdf [accessed 27 May 2020].
- Johnson, J (2015) *Higher Education: fulfilling our potential*, 9 September, speech by Jo Johnson. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/speeches/higher-education-fulfilling-our-potential [accessed 25 May 2020].
- Locke, W (2014) *Shifting Academic Careers: Implications for enhancing professionalism in teaching and supporting learning*. York: Higher Education Academy.
- MacFarlane, B (2018) 'Women professors, pay, promotion, and academic housekeeping', *WonkHE*, 4 June. Available at: wonkhe.com/blogs/women-professors-pay-promotion-and-academic-housekeeping/ [accessed 28 May 2020].
- McHanwell, S and Robson, S (2018) *Guiding Principles for Teaching Promotions*. York: Advance HE. Available at: www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/guiding-principles-teaching-promotions [accessed 25 May 2020].
- Morrish, L and Saunston, H (2019) *Academic Irregularities: Language and Neoliberalism in Higher Education*. London: Routledge.
- Ramsden, P (2008) *The Future of Higher Education Teaching and the Student Experience*. York: Higher Education Academy.

Research Excellence Framework (REF) (2011) *Assessment framework and guidance on submissions*. Bristol: REF. Available at: www.ref.ac.uk/2014/media/ref/content/pub/assessmentframeworkandguidanceonsubmissions/GOS_including_addendum.pdf [accessed 25 May 2020].

Robertson, J (2007) 'Beyond the "research/teaching nexus": exploring the complexity of academic experience', *Studies in Higher Education*, 32 (5): 541-556.

Thornton, T (2014) 'Professional recognition: promoting recognition through the Higher Education Academy in a UK higher education institution', *Tertiary Education and Management*, 20 (3): 225-238.

Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA) (2019) *Higher Education Workforce Report 2019*. London: UCEA. Available at: www.ucea.ac.uk/library/publications/he-workforce-report-2019/ [accessed 29 May 2020].

Wellcome Trust (2020) *What researchers think about the culture they work in*. London: Wellcome Trust. Available at: wellcome.ac.uk/reports/what-researchers-think-about-research-culture [accessed 25 May 2020].

Wooten, C A and Condis, M A (2018) 'Collegiality as a Dirty Word? Implementing Collegiality Policies in Institutions of Higher Education', *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry*, 2 (3). Available at: digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/alra/vol2/iss1/3 [accessed 31 August 2020].

The bridge from practice into academia: a case study of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)

Dr Hilary Lindsay, Honorary Associate, The Open University

Dr Susan Smith, Associate Dean (Education and Students) at the University of Sussex Business School

Entering academia as a practitioner

For many mid-career professionals the move to academia is attractive. There are a variety of reasons put forward (Wilson et al, 2014), including perceptions of academia as flexible and allowing a different work-life balance to the private sector; the prestige that academic titles can bring externally and concepts of altruism or 'giving back'.

Within contemporary business schools, accounting departments have experienced academic labour shortages over recent years that have been well documented in the literature (eg Beattie and Smith, 2012; Hopper, 2013; Smith and Urquhart, 2018). A contributing factor has been the rapid expansion of business schools in the UK in response to universities' international student recruitment policies. In addition, many of those academics who have experienced practice tend to be approaching retirement (Smith and Urquhart, 2018) leaving a gap in faculty expertise. The increasing scarcity of faculty who have experience of practice as an accountant is in direct contrast with the increasing emphasis required to be placed on employability skills by the Higher Education Regulator (Office for Students, 2018a). The experiences of those who have worked outside of academia are important to provide insight into skills needed for the workplace. Further, researchers have cautioned that, without a meaningful link between research and practice, the legitimacy of accounting as an academic discipline is under pressure (Tucker and Parker, 2014).

The literature charts an increase in the barriers to entry over time (Zeff, 2019) as doctoral studies have become the norm for entry-level academic appointments (Njoku et al, 2010). Many doctoral students studying at UK universities are not UK domiciled and return to their home countries following their studies (Beattie and Smith, 2012), resulting in a significantly reduced pool of applicants to academic positions. In an effort to fill the posts required to teach the increasing numbers of students in business schools, teaching-focused posts have become ubiquitous (Smith and Urquhart, 2018). Many practitioners therefore join as teaching-focused faculty. However, to fully embrace the academic role and progress as an academic many will seek to transition to research-active career paths. The combination of practice experience with research skills is thought to offer the optimum skills blend (Paisey and Paisey, 2017), and the availability of institutional support to help develop research skills is an important enabling factor (Hopper, 2013).

The primary concern is that, without a blend of experiences within the faculty base, important research questions may be missed (Zeff, 2019). Practitioners can bring insight into the divide that exists between accounting practice and accounting academia, through practical applications of theory (Simendinger et al, 2000). They can also contribute to the employability agenda, one of the four regulatory priorities of the Office for Students (Office for Students, 2018a). Employability-related metrics form a significant input to the Teaching Excellence Framework (Office for Students, 2018b) which differentiates universities by classifying them as Gold, Silver or Bronze. In addition, the Knowledge Exchange Framework (Research England, 2020) will also increase the linkages between policy, practice and research and is likely to serve to reorient efforts to building closer relations across the three areas. Those who have experience as practitioners are likely to be able to offer contributions to navigating this new landscape for academia.

Given the barriers to entry into academia outlined above, alongside the significant shortage of professionally qualified accountants in academia, it is important to support those who do seek to make this career transition. Those entering roles as lecturers are expected, often with limited formal training, to master a variety of new skills eg curriculum design, assessment, university processes and procedures. This can make the socialisation process stressful as lecturers seek to master multiple new skills simultaneously. Typical induction processes tended to be geared to those who have followed a traditional academic career path rather than mid-career switchers and were not tailored to their needs (Bandow et al, 2007). The literature around making an effective transition emphasises the importance of appropriate induction and mentoring (Smith and Urquhart, 2018; Wilson et al, 2014). In addition, once individuals have moved to academia it is difficult to reverse and return to practice as one's experience of practice becomes out-of-date (Blenkinsopp and Stalker, 2004). As a result it is important that those who seek to make this move are aware of both the challenges and fulfilment that an academic career can present.

Approach

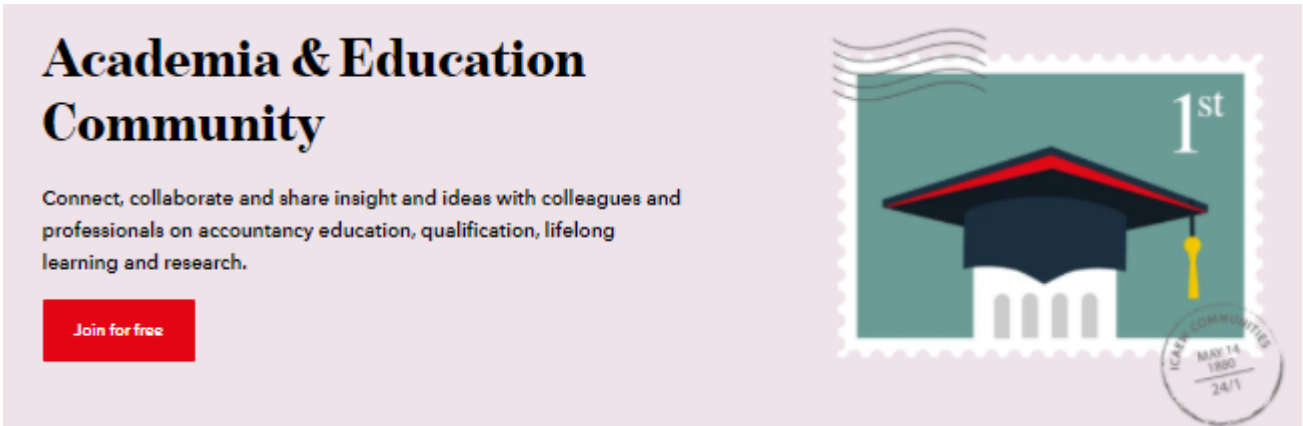
The ICAEW has an interest in both accounting theory and practice as its Royal Charter (constitutional document) terms require it to:

“advance the theory and practice of accountancy, finance, business and commerce in all their aspects, including in particular auditing, financial management and taxation.” (ICAEW, 1948)

It already offered a range of events and activities to support members who are academics or were seeking to make a career move. However, the information was dispersed across various areas of responsibility, which required members to interact in multiple ways to access the information they required.

In 2017 Dr Hilary Lindsay, the incumbent president of the ICAEW, launched the Academia and Education Community, a free of charge online resource open not only to ICAEW members but also to anyone with an interest in accounting education. Figure 1 below shows the logo for the Academia and Education Community.

Figure 1: [Academia and Education Community logo](#)



An advisory board comprising members from across academia, accountancy training providers and ICAEW staff has curated existing activities eg PhD bursaries from the Chartered Accountants' Livery Company, applications for research grants from the research advisory board and the Higher Education Day and has supplemented the existing information with resources to support those seeking to transition into education or academia. The authors are both very involved with the Community: Lindsay chairs its advisory board while Smith is a founder member of the board and a member of the ICAEW Council.

One initial output from the advisory board was a graphic produced to illustrate the potential career paths in academia and education that members of the community may experience or be considering (Figure 2). The graphic reflects the range of different careers that exist in academia and education and helps to focus the discussion around the route which may be best suited to the individual and their aspirations.

Figure 2: [Pathways into academia and education](#)



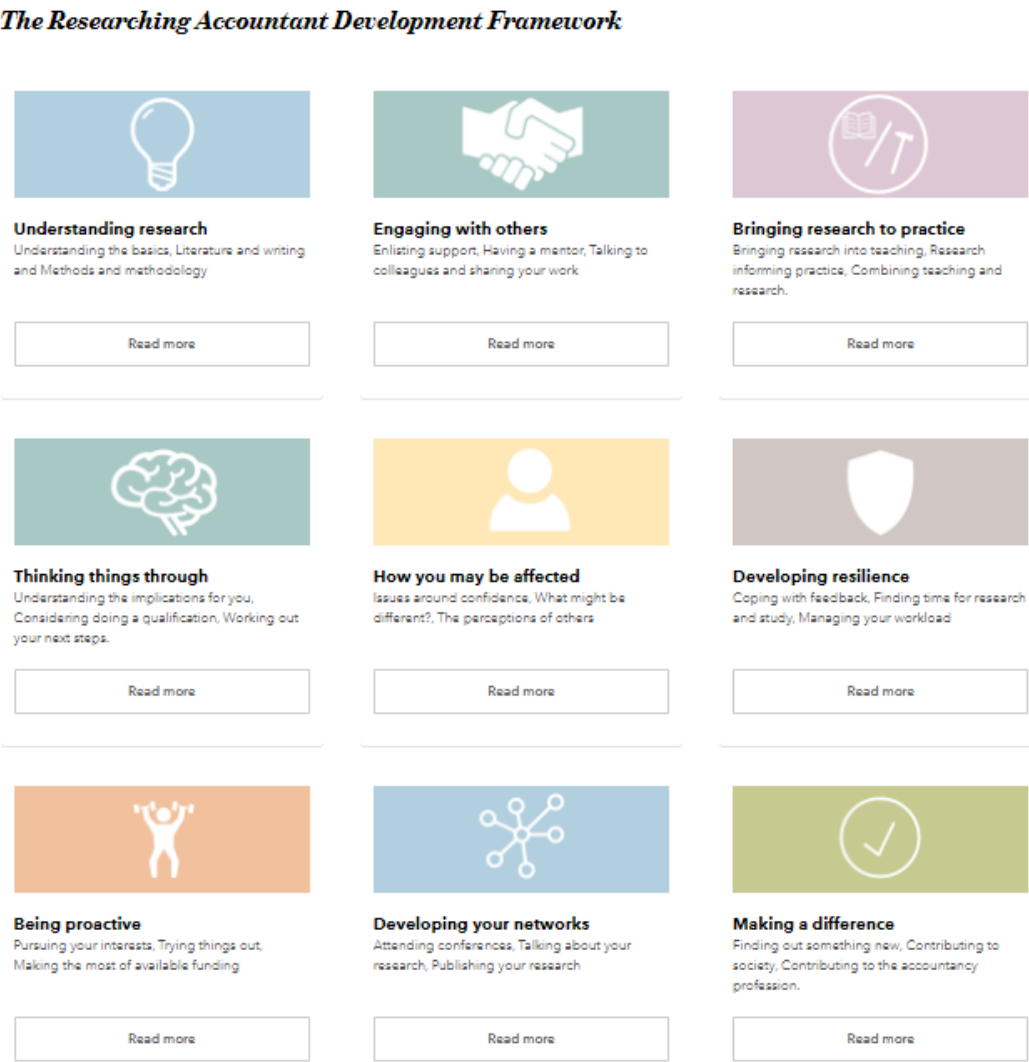
Outcomes

Inspired by the ongoing interest of those considering a move into academia but who were uncertain how to develop their research capabilities and their personal experiences as mid-career entrants to academia, both authors are passionate about supporting others to develop their research capabilities. Research competency is an important aspect of academic roles, both for teaching students and for career progression in teaching and scholarship roles as well as traditional research-active roles. Maintaining the valuable combination of practice and research skills is particularly important to maintain the relevance of the discipline as outlined in section 1.2.

The desire to help answer the questions asked by potential entrants to academia led to new research building on Lindsay’s prior work into patterns of learning in the accountancy profession (Lindsay, 2016). Her initial research led to a framework based on three dimensions of learning: cognitive, intrapersonal and interpersonal (Illeris, 2002). It brought together learning relating to professional competence with that relating to career adaptability, with the latter foregrounding the intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions of learning. Previously, it had been successfully extended for use with professional doctorate students (Lindsay et al, 2018; Lindsay and Floyd, 2019).

The research, which was conducted with a range of accountants in academia, led to the [researching accountant development framework \(RADF\)](#), and the resources that underpin the framework, providing a practical tool to aid those seeking to make such a move (Lindsay, 2020).

Figure 3: The RADF and its nine elements



The resource was launched on the community website in 2018 and, in due course, further research will be undertaken to assess its impact. To date there have been nearly one thousand page views.

In addition, in January 2019 and 2020, the community held 'Flourishing in Academia' events aimed at members interested in moving into academia. The events drew on the expertise of those who had moved into a range of roles in universities. This has directly led to at least one attendee securing employment at a university and others invited for guest lectures, for example on public sector accounting. Some 50 members have now attended a workshop. Videos of the presenters at the first workshop were made available online. To date there have been more than 300 unique visitors to the videos, which can be viewed [here](#).

Each workshop comprised two parts. The mornings were aimed at those considering a move into academia and the afternoons were for those already in academia, although in practice most delegates attended for the whole day. The morning sessions covered topics such as the criteria individuals would need to meet if they wished to take up an academic role and what it is like to teach in HE. The afternoons focused on developing research skills and introducing delegates to the RADF. Throughout both events the intrapersonal and interpersonal skills were emphasised, with a strong focus on developing networking skills, developing your profile as an academic and maintaining a work-life balance. The events were interactive and each delegate took away their own action points. The feedback from both events was very positive with average ratings of 4.7 out of 5 in 2019 and 4.5 out of 5 in 2020. The Academia and Education Community Advisory Group was particularly pleased that it was supporting individuals to make informed choices about any proposed career move and helping them to understand the importance of developing an appreciation of the research process.

The Community is now seeking ways to support research-active academics to undergo pracademic experience (Dickfos, 2019) to help to bridge the research-practice gap from the other side of the equation. In addition, it is working to support teaching-focused members in academia to develop their scholarship in accounting through publishing blogs that members submit and investigating how the Community can offer other outlets for scholarly activity.

References

- Bandow, D, Minsky, B D and Voss, R S (2007) 'Reinventing the Future: Investigating Career Transitions from Industry to Academia', *Journal of Human Resource Education*, 1 (1): 23-37.
- Beattie, V and Smith, S J (2012) *Today's PhD students – is there a future generation of accounting academics or are they a dying breed? A UK perspective*. Edinburgh: The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS).
- Blenkinsopp, J and Stalker, B (2004) Identity work in the transition from manager to management academic, *Management Decision*, 42 (3/4): 418-429. Available at: doi.org/10.1108/00251740410518903

Dickfos, J (2019) 'Academic professional development: Benefits of a pracademic experience', *International Journal of Work – Integrated Learning*, 20 (3): 243-255.

Hopper, T (2013) 'Making accounting degrees fit for a university', *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 24 (2): 127-135. Available at: doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2012.07.001

ICAEW (1948) *Supplemental Charter of 21st December 1948*. London: The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. Available at: www.icaew.com/-/media/corporate/files/about-icaew/who-we-are/charters-by-laws/supplemental-charter-of-the-21st-december-1948.ashx?la=en [accessed 3 July 2017].

Illeris, K (2002) *The Three Dimensions of Learning*. Leicester: Roskilde University Press/ NIACE.

Lindsay, H (2016) 'More than "continuing professional development": a proposed new learning framework for professional accountants', *Accounting Education*, 25 (1): 1-13. Available at: doi.org/10.1080/09639284.2015.1104641

Lindsay, H (2020) 'From fledgling to fledged: how accountants in academia develop their research capabilities', *Accounting Education*, 29 (4): 1-22. Available at: doi.org/10.1080/09639284.2020.1788956

Lindsay, H and Floyd, A (2019) 'Experiences of using the researching professional development framework', *Studies in Graduate and Postdoctoral Education*, 10 (1): 54-68. Available at: doi.org/10.1108/SGPE-02-2019-049

Lindsay, H, Kerawalla, L and Floyd, A (2018) 'Supporting researching professionals: EdD students' perceptions of their development needs', *Studies in Higher Education*, 43 (12): 2321-2335. Available at: doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2017.1326025

Njoku, J C, van der Heijden, B I J M and Inanga, E L (2010) 'Fusion of expertise among accounting faculty: towards an expertise model for academia in accounting', *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 21 (1): 51-62. Available at: doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2008.03.001

Office for Students (2018a) *The regulatory framework for higher education in England*. Bristol/London: Office for Students. Available at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/the-regulatory-framework-for-higher-education-in-england [accessed 5 February 2020].

Office for Students (2018b) *What is the TEF?* Bristol/London: Office for Students. Available at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/about-the-tef/ [accessed 5 February 2020].

Paisey, C and Paisey, N J (2017) 'The decline of the professionally-qualified accounting academic: Recruitment into the accounting academic community', *Accounting Forum*, 41 (2): 57-76. Available at: doi.org/10.1016/j.accfor.2017.02.001

Research England (2020) *Knowledge exchange framework*. Bristol: Research England. Available at: re.ukri.org/knowledge-exchange/knowledge-exchange-framework [accessed 5 September 2020].

Smith, S J and Urquhart, V (2018) 'Accounting and finance in UK universities: Academic labour, shortages and strategies', *The British Accounting Review*, 50th Anniversary Issue, 50 (6): 588-601. Available at: doi.org/10.1016/j.bar.2018.03.002

Tucker, B and Parker, L (2014) 'In our ivory towers? The research-practice gap in management accounting', *Accounting and Business Research*, 44 (2): 104-143. Available at: doi.org/10.1080/00014788.2013.798234

Wilson, M J, Wood, L, Solomonides, I, Dixon, P and Goos, M (2014) 'Navigating the Career Transition from Industry to Academia', *Industry and Higher Education*, 28 (1): 5-13. Available at: doi.org/10.5367/ihe.2014.0189

Zeff, S A (2019) 'A Personal View of the Evolution of the Accounting Professoriate', *Accounting Perspectives*, 18 (3): 159-185. Available at: doi.org/10.1111/1911-3838.12207

Call for action

In our case studies we have seen an institutional approach, revised promotion criteria and the value of professionals entering higher education from practice with encouragement from professional bodies.

Yet what is missing?

Will our students of colour or minority students enter the academy without role models? Can the broken pipeline be fixed in time?

Will pastoral roles remain the domain of female staff at the detriment of their career? The price of student retention is not equal to research funding but costly to an aspiring leader.

How can we address unequal structures so that female academics can thrive in professorships?

And where is the inclusive practice seen in our teaching and learning space replicated in career progression?

How do we value the diversity of experience and knowledge in academic progression?

How do we continuously address and overcome barriers for disabled academics?

What impact is bullying and harassment having on career progression for all – both research and teaching focused staff?

Academic career progression remains a challenge for many in our institutions. It is in hope that we make the changes needed.

Further provocation

THE: Careers intelligence: will the virus crisis change academic careers?

www.timeshighereducation.com/career/careers-intelligence-will-virus-crisis-change-academic-careers

THE: Female academics 'feel less prepared for professorships'

www.timeshighereducation.com/news/female-academics-feel-less-prepared-professorships

THE: Tom Woodbury: Five things I've learned moving from the private sector to academia

www.timeshighereducation.com/career/five-things-ive-learned-moving-private-sector-academia

Leading Routes: The Broken Pipeline – barriers to black PhD students accessing Research Council funding

leadingroutes.org/mdocs-posts/the-broken-pipeline-barriers-to-black-students-accessing-research-council-funding

Dr Nicola Rollock: UK black female professors

nicolarollock.com/black-female-profs

Disability and Society: Nicole Brown and Jennifer Leah: Ableism in academia: where are the disabled and ill academics?

www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09687599.2018.1455627?needAccess=true&

‘What could academic career progression be like in the future?’

Contact us

General enquiries

+44 (0) 3300 416201

enquiries@advance-he.ac.uk

www.advance-he.ac.uk

Media enquiries

+44 (0) 1904 717500

communications@advance-he.ac.uk

www.advance-he.ac.uk/contact-us

   @AdvanceHE

Advance HE enables excellence in higher education, helping it shape its future. Within the UK and globally, Advance HE supports institutions in the areas of excellence in education, transformative leadership, equity and inclusion and effective governance. This is delivered through membership benefits (including accreditation of teaching, equality charters, research, knowledge and resources), programmes and events, Fellowships, awards, consultancy and enhancement services and student surveys.

Advance HE is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales no. 04931031. Registered as a charity in England and Wales no. 1101607 Registered as a charity in Scotland no. SC043946. The Advance HE logo should not be used without our permission.

© 2021 Advance HE. All rights reserved.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and not necessarily those of Advance HE. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any storage and retrieval system without the written permission of the copyright owner. Such permission will normally be granted for non-commercial, educational purposes provided that due acknowledgement is given.

To request copies of this report in large print or in a different format, please contact the Marketing and Communications Team at Advance HE:
+44 (0) 3300 416201 or publications@advance-he.ac.uk