

Assessing the impact of accreditation on institutions

Project report

—

The project team:

University of Plymouth Enterprise Ltd:

Lucy Spowart, Rebecca Turner and Harriet Dismore

Project partners:

Elizabeth Beckmann, Rachael Carkett, and Tashmin Khamis

Contents

Acknowledgments	2
Foreword	3
Executive summary	4
List of acronyms	7
1 Introduction	9
2 Purpose and scope of the project	12
3 Desk-based review of relevant literature	13
4 Survey of accredited institutions	17
5 Institutional case studies	43
6 Case study one	49
7 Case study two	53
8 Case study three	58
9 Case study four	62
10 Case study five	68
11 Case study six	74
12 Case study seven	78
13 Case study eight	83
14 Case study nine	88
15 Case study ten	94
16 Case study eleven	101
17 Summary and recommendations	107
18 References	115
Appendix 1: international online survey	117
Appendix 2: impact by length of accreditation	130
Appendix 3: impact by domain	138
Appendix 4	146

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank all the higher education institutions and individual units within these institutions that responded so fully and enthusiastically to the survey. To those institutions that agreed to be interviewed at a time of global crisis with the impact of Covid-19 we are eternally grateful.

We would also like to acknowledge the support of Kathryn Harrison-Graves and her colleagues at Advance HE, Joanne Masterson, Joanne Davies and Professor Sally Bradley, for their support in distribution of the survey as well as comments on its design and on early drafts of this report. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the support of Dr Mary Fitzpatrick, University of Limerick, in her role as critical friend.

Associate Professor Lucy Spowart, PFHEA

Dr Rebecca Turner, PFHEA

Dr Harriet Dismore, SFHEA

Honorary Associate Professor Beth Beckmann, PFHEA

Dr Rachael Carkett, PFHEA

Dr Tashmin Khamis, PFHEA

Foreword

The success of Advance HE's Fellowship scheme is evidenced by the growing numbers of Fellows globally; there are now almost 140,000 Fellows across 100 countries. Whilst there is an increasing evidence base around the value of Fellowship to the individual, there is little in the literature about the impact of Advance HE accreditation at an institutional level and the contribution that this is making to the professionalisation of teaching and learning in higher education.

As part of a full periodic review of our professional recognition services, Advance HE commissioned independent research into the impact that Advance HE accreditation and the resulting Fellowship is having within member institutions. This research carried out between February and August 2020, led by a team from the University of Plymouth, identifies many significant ways in which accreditation and Fellowship is influencing learning and teaching in institutions and the importance of fellowship as an increasingly recognised global benchmark.

Member institutions applying for accreditation report that learning and teaching is a key strategic priority, underpinned by the professional development, recognition and reward of all staff that teach and support learning. This research report identifies the positive impact of accreditation on the wider institutional culture in key areas, such as in raising the profile of learning and teaching, encouraging cross-institutional collaboration, underpinning career progression for education-focused staff, developing effective educational practices and stimulating engagement in professional development and scholarship. Data also indicates that the impact of institutional accreditation is reflected in changes to institutional strategies and policies around learning and teaching.

Insight provided by in-depth case studies involving key staff and students at 11 diverse institutions further reinforces the positive impacts identified and provides rich data to illustrate how institutions are able to utilise accreditation and Fellowship within their unique contexts and to suit their key strategic priorities.

We are of course delighted to see the impact that accreditation is having identified through independent research and we hope that our member institutions will engage in the webinars with the Research Team to hear more about their work and the findings.

As well as confirming that accreditation is having a positive impact in institutions, the report also makes several recommendations for consideration by Advance HE which will inform a stream of work over the coming year. We welcome these recommendations and the opportunity to further develop and enhance our service.

When we commissioned this research we were unaware that a global pandemic was imminent; we would like to thank the research team for completing this work during that period and to thank the many staff and students in accredited member institutions that engaged in this research and provided such valuable insight at an extremely challenging time.

Kathryn Harrison-Graves

Director for Membership and Accreditation
Advance HE

Executive summary

Advance HE commissioned the University of Plymouth Enterprise Ltd (UoPEL) to conduct research with UK and international institutions to assess the impact of their accreditation to award fellowships in the context of the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning (UKPSF). This research took place between February and August 2020.

This report details the research methods and findings from the research strategy's three strands of activity:

Work Package 1: a desk-based review of i) relevant published literature and ii) a sample of annual CPD reports and accreditation documentation from currently accredited institutions.

Work Package 2: an online survey to capture large-scale data on the perceived and actual impacts of institutional accreditation internationally.

Work Package 3: development of a representative sample of 11 international case studies based on semi-structured qualitative interviews with educational leaders, staff management representatives and students, to showcase the diversity of the impact of Advance HE accreditation on institutions.

Key findings from the desk-based review

The literature review drew on a mix of empirical studies and scholarly reflections that capture the development of institutional accreditation and the contribution it has made to the professionalisation of teaching and learning in higher education (HE). Institutional buy in at the highest level is reported as a significant factor in shaping the impact of accreditation. The literature review identified the necessity of two key factors – a strong strategic steer (often realised via embedding the UKPSF in promotion and probation policies) and support via educational development units and localised departments – to create a positive culture around teaching-related continuing professional development (CPD).

Thematic analysis of the accreditation submission documentation from 30 UK institutions confirmed that learning and teaching is a key strategic priority for institutions, underpinned by the provision of CPD for all staff who support learning and teaching. The four approaches that were most commonly cited as means of embedding the UKPSF into strategic mechanisms were: i) alignment of the UKPSF to institutional strategic objectives, such as key performance indicators; ii) alignment of fellowship awards/categories to promotion and probation policies; iii) target setting in relation to the number of HEA fellowships desired at the institution (usually on a percentage basis or annual quotas); and iv) the embedding of the UKPSF into performance appraisals (eg as targets for individuals).

Key findings from the online survey

The survey, distributed to all accredited institutions globally, drew 55 responses. Overall, results suggest that institutional accreditation impacts on wider institutional culture in five clear ways: i) improving the profile of teaching and learning, ii) increasing the credibility of educational development centres, iii) stimulating professional development, iv) encouraging collaboration cross-faculty and between institutions, and v) increasing scholarship and research in teaching and learning. Large positive impacts were reported in the numbers of staff gaining teaching qualifications and/or professional recognition. Institutional accreditation was also widely reported as reflected in changes to strategies and policies; notably, 58% reported relevant changes to academic promotion frameworks in response to, or in preparation for, Advance HE (re) accreditation. Trends noted in survey sub-samples based on the duration of institutional accreditation strongly suggest that some impacts take significant time to emerge. Some 35% of respondent institutions are formally evaluating the impact of their accredited provision.

While 42% of respondents reported some positive impact of accreditation on student satisfaction, 38% were unsure. Further, 47% were unsure of any link between institutional accreditation and student achievement. 53% of respondents felt that institutional accreditation is UK-centric.

Case studies

To drill more deeply into different perspectives of the impact of accreditation, interviews with key agents (including student representatives) at 11 diverse institutions were used as the basis for more detailed case studies. These demonstrate the varying ways in which institutions engage with Advance HE accreditation. Interviewees noted many positive institutional benefits of accreditation including: i) the importance of an international sector benchmark; ii) enhancing the credibility of the institution; iii) raising the profile of teaching and learning; iv) demonstrating an institutional commitment to the professional development of educators; v) creating opportunities for scholarship in teaching and learning, and vi) sharing best practice. The interviewees provided extensive evidence that the UKPSF is aligned with core institutional strategies and policies and practices, including in teaching and learning strategies and probation/promotions policies.

Interviewees also noted several challenges related to institutional accreditation and the application of the UKPSF, including i) the resource-intensive nature of supporting the delivery and operation of accredited provision (particularly CPD schemes); ii) staff workloads in mentoring, assessing and governance; iii) the direct and internal costs associated with supporting accredited provision; and iv) the difficulty of measuring the impact on the student experience as a specific measure of cost-effectiveness. Although the quality assurance aspect of the accreditation and re-accreditation process was welcomed, current processes were described as time consuming by some, and there may be potential to streamline certain aspects. The student representatives had very limited awareness of the UKPSF or institutional accreditation but saw the value in professional development for lecturers. Engagement with the student body is an important area identified for further development.

Conclusions and recommendations

This research has found that the impact on institutions of Advance HE accreditation aligned to the UKPSF has been significant. Positive impact on each of the following areas was clear:

- + [the provision of, and positive staff engagement with, professional development for teaching and supporting learning](#)
- + [the embedding of the UKPSF in institutional policies and strategies](#)
- + [raising the profile of teaching and supporting learning across the institution](#)
- + [developing effective educational practices](#)
- + [having an international sector benchmark for teaching and supporting learning](#)
- + [increasing scholarship and research in teaching and supporting learning](#)

Evidence of the impact of institutional accreditation and student achievement was unclear. While some survey respondents reported some impact, 47% were unsure. Case study and survey respondents noted the complexities surrounding making direct connections between accreditation, the student experience and student achievement.

On the basis of this research, there are several areas Advance HE could consider to enhance the service provided to accredited institutions and strengthen the evidence of institutional impact.

- 1 Support institutions to undertake impact evaluations by providing training and support.
- 2 Work in collaboration with student representative groups (eg National Union of Students in the UK, similar representative bodies elsewhere) to consider how they might encourage greater collaboration between institutional staff and student bodies.
- 3 Review accreditation processes, especially for institutions that have held accreditation for two or more cycles to consider whether the time spent on accreditation/re-accreditation could be reduced by any changes to process/requirements while maintaining the quality and credibility of accreditation.
- 4 Further investigate any changes to accreditation required to meet the needs of the global sector.
- 5 There is an opportunity for Advance HE to work with human resources leaders in relation to career development.
- 6 Share best practice in workload allocation and advocate for incentive and recognition, particularly with strategic leaders, to support institutions to develop a sustainable approach to their accredited provision.
- 7 Encourage further research to add to the body of literature around accreditation.

List of acronyms

ADTL	Academic Director for Teaching and Learning
AFHEA	Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy
AHE	Advance HE
AL	Associate lecturer
CPD	Continuing professional development
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
FE	Further education
FHEA	Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HE	Higher education
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HEI	Higher education institution
HR	Human resources
JISC	Joint Information Systems Committee
KPI	Key performance indicator
NSS	National Student Survey
PCAP	Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice
PDR	Professional development review
PFHEA	Principal Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy
PGCAP	Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice
PGCert	Postgraduate Certificate
PGR	Postgraduate Researcher
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PSF	Professional Standards Framework
PVC	Pro-Vice-Chancellor
PVCE	Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education
QA	Quality assurance

SFHEA	Senior Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy
SU	Students' union
T&L	Teaching and learning
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
TLC	Teaching and Learning Centre
UK	United Kingdom
UKPSF	UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning
UPEL	The University of Plymouth Enterprise Ltd
VLE	Virtual learning environment

Glossary of terms

Institutional accredited provision – general term used for all Advance HE accredited provision at an institution (both taught and experiential routes to Fellowship). Advance HE accredits institutions to award Fellowships to individuals.

Academic taught programmes – Accredited taught programmes for early career staff eg in the UK postgraduate programmes in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education / Academic Practice are commonly accredited.

Accredited CPD schemes – experiential routes to Fellowship. Other continual professional development (CPD) schemes might also be available within an institution.

Fellowship/professional recognition – used when referring to the professional recognition of an individual. Individuals gain Fellowship rather than accreditation.

1 Introduction

Advance HE commissioned the University of Plymouth Enterprise Ltd (UoPEL) to conduct research with UK and international institutions to assess the impact of their accreditation to award fellowships in the context of the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning (UKPSF). This research took place between February and August 2020.

The UKPSF (2011) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education provides a general description of the main aspects of the role carried out by professionals that teach and/or support learning within the higher education environment. It is written from the perspective of the practitioner and can be used by individuals and institutions to recognise and benchmark teaching and learning support roles within higher education. The UKPSF has two components: Dimensions and Descriptors. Advance HE operates the HEA Fellowship scheme and aligns its four categories of fellowship to the UKPSF Descriptors. There has been a significant growth in the uptake of Fellowship in recent years and there are now more than 135,000 people across the world who have been awarded a category of Fellowship, the majority through the completion of an accredited course or programme within an institution.

Accreditation of taught programmes began in 1997 with the introduction of the Institute for Learning in Teaching (ILT, later to become the ILTHE and then the Higher Education Academy (HEA)). Experiential CPD schemes have been accredited since 2006. While the mechanisms for accrediting provision has evolved over the years, it has always been a peer-review process with defined criteria. The quality and consistency of the accreditation process was further assured with the development of a formal accreditation policy and associated guidance in 2014/15. These criteria and the associated policy undergo annual review. The peer reviewers are trained accreditors who are often involved in leading and managing accredited provision in HEIs across the world.

When this research started, there were 172 institutions accredited against the UKPSF. Of these, 23 were outside the UK and achieved accreditation from 2013. Table 1 illustrates the scope and scale of the service across the UK and international. This international growth in interest and institutional engagement to the point of accreditation reflects a growing global appetite for standards of higher education (HE) teaching and learning against which individuals can be recognised, and an acceptance across diverse international HE sectors of the essential universality of the standards described by the UKPSF. The introduction of the UKPSF undoubtedly represented a quantum shift in the practice of higher education teaching. As a Framework, there is evidence that it has been highly influential, providing a structure through which the educational practice of the HE professional can be conceptualised (Turner et al, 2013). Its transferability to other HE contexts is evidenced by its transferability internationally (Aldulaimi et al, 2019; Asghar and Pilkington, 2018; Beckmann, 2016).

Engagement of staff in accredited programmes or institutional recognition schemes is often used as a proxy measure to demonstrate institutional commitment to teaching and learning (Kandlbinder and Peseta, 2009). In terms of method, to date much of the evaluation of continuing professional development (CPD) and teaching award programmes has relied on post-intervention snapshots in situ, seeking measurements of satisfaction from individual participants rather than indicators of changes to the culture of thinking and practice at both individual and institutional levels,

which may develop over time (Bamber, 2013). While such studies have provided useful benchmarks and ideas for the direction of future work, there has been no research to date that has examined the impact and influence on institutions themselves of achieving Advance HE accreditation to award HEA fellowships – ie on institutional policies, practices and teaching and learning cultures. In this study we sought to look beyond the individual experiences of those directly engaging with courses or recognition schemes aligned to the UKPSF to the strategic or larger-scale impacts of the accredited provision at the institutional level.

Table 1: Number of institutions accredited in UK and international with corresponding number of schemes and programmes accredited

Number institutions accredited	172	
UK institutions accredited	149	
International institutions accredited	23	
New institutions in review process	5	(5 international)

Number schemes/programmes accredited	Total	UK	International
CPD Scheme: Descriptor 1	140	127	13
CPD Scheme: Descriptor 2	147	131	16
CPD Scheme: Descriptor 3	140	126	14
CPD Scheme: Descriptor 4	45	43	2
Programme: Descriptor 1	163	150	13
Programme: Descriptor 2	169	156	13
Overall	804	733	71

In 2013 the then Higher Education Academy (HEA) funded a study (Turner et al, 2013) that reported how implementation of the UKPSF had impacted the following (to varying extents):

- + teaching quality processes
- + CPD frameworks
- + performance management and appraisal systems
- + promotion policies
- + reward and recognition schemes and practices.

Through this research the HEA identified the need for more effective integration and alignment between these different areas or activities and institutional accreditation services in order to maximise impact. In an increasingly global market there is also a need to understand whether the Professional Standards Framework (PSF), intentionally designed and accepted within the UK context, is fit for purpose both in the 2020s and in an international context. There are recent examples from both Australia and New Zealand (Buissink et al, 2017) which demonstrate that the UKPSF allows sufficient flexibility to be adapted and contextualised to enable indigenous perspectives to be incorporated sensitively. However, a greater understanding of how institutions engage with the UKPSF to take into account local culture and context would potentially consolidate and extend existing and future productive relationships. It would also enhance the opportunities for further international commitment. This research provides a timely opportunity to consider ways in which the UKPSF could meet the demand of an increasingly globalised, complex, and fast-paced world.

This report details the research methods and findings from the research strategy's three strands of activity.

Work Package 1: a desk-based review of i) relevant published literature¹ and ii) a sample of accreditation documentation from currently accredited institutions.

Work Package 2: an online survey to capture large-scale data on the perceived and actual impacts of institutional accreditation internationally.

Work Package 3: development of a representative sample of 11 international case studies based on semi-structured qualitative interviews with educational leaders, staff management representatives and students, to showcase the diversity of the impact of Advance HE accreditation on institutions.

It should be noted that during the six-month period that this research took place, the HE sector faced immense challenges due to the catastrophic impact of the global pandemic. All of the countries involved in this research experienced 'lockdowns' with varying restrictions. Many employees were working from home, and university staff were forced to rapidly prepare for and deliver emergency remote teaching. Universities, like many other businesses, face serious financial and logistical challenges ahead. Given this context, we are immensely grateful for the time invested by the survey respondents and the case study interview participants, without whom this report would not be possible.

1 The review of published literature is presented separately (see Turner and Spowart, 2020)

2 Purpose and scope of the project

In February 2020, Advance HE commissioned the University of Plymouth Enterprise Ltd (UoPEL) to conduct research to assess the impact of institutional accreditation against the UKPSF within accredited institutions across the globe. The focus of this research has been specifically on the impact and influence at an institutional level rather than on any impact on individual participants and Fellows, for which there is already a growing evidence base.

The project aimed to establish:

- 1 **The range, scale and motivation for institutional accreditation.**
- 2 **The impact of operating accredited programmes/courses on:**
 - a. The provision of, and positive staff engagement with, professional development for teaching and supporting learning
 - b. Effective educational practices
 - c. Student outcomes and experience
 - d. The profile of teaching and supporting learning across the institution
 - e. Institutional policies and strategies.
- 3 **The extent to which accreditation is:**
 - a. Supported by executive leadership teams
 - b. Aligned to institutional strategy
 - c. Embedded and integrated across an institution.
- 4 **The critical success factors and common features of high-impact programmes/courses.**

The project consisted of three strands of activity.

Work Package 1: a desk-based review of both relevant published literature² and a selection of annual CPD reports and accreditation paperwork, aimed at establishing the range, scale and motivations for seeking institutional accreditation.

Work Package 2: an online survey of all UK and international accredited institutions aimed at gathering data relating to perceived and actual impact of institutional accreditation.

Work Package 3: production of a series of institutional case studies based on semi-structured qualitative interviews with key institutional contacts, the aim being to provide more detailed accounts of the kinds of impact of accreditation on the institutions, including a more detailed understanding of the benefits and challenges of accreditation. A purposive sample of seven UK and four non-UK accredited institutions were selected to ensure perspectives came from a range of higher education institutions in terms of their size, type, location and length of their accredited provision.

This report provides a summary of the research findings and includes recommendations to Advance HE that could inform the development of the approach to institutional accreditation, and the UKPSF itself.

2 The review of published literature is presented separately (See Turner & Spowart, 2020)

3 Desk-based review of relevant literature

3.1 Review of Advance HE Documentation

Advance HE systematically captures valuable ‘intelligence’ regarding institutional accredited provision. This data bank includes each institution’s submission of original accreditation documentation as well as any re-accreditation submissions made by the same institution (such re-accreditation submissions are now required at least every four years). This section of the report draws on the accreditation paperwork from a sample of UK Advance HE member institutions. Outside the UK, accredited institutions are, for the most part, still very early in their accreditation history, and often operating under very different parameters and unique variables, so the decision was made not to include them in the desk-based sample. The intention of the desk audit was to identify the depth and breadth of institution’s own anticipations and perceptions of the benefits of accreditation.

3.2 Sampling strategy

As the accreditation paperwork for each institution is often complex, containing multiple elements, a sampling strategy was required to select a sample that was both representative of institutional diversity and reasonable to review in the timeframe. To select the sample, a three-step process was used. Using data supplied by Advance HE for the UK-based institutions (n= 148), each institution was initially coded according to the number of staff per institution as an indicator of institutional size (Step 1). FE colleges and international campuses of UK-based institutions were not included in the dataset due to their very small numbers. After these exclusions, the remaining institutions fell into five groups – coded A to E – containing from 12% to 27% of the total number of institutions per category (Table 2).

Table 2: Coding according to total staff numbers within each institution

Type	Code	Category	No	%
UK	A	<500	35	23.6
	B	500-1000	40	27.0
	C	1000-1500	25	16.9
	D	1500-2000	18	12.2
	E	>2000	30	20.3
	Total		148	100

Step 2 of the sampling process involved calculating the percentage shift in number of Fellowships over a five-year period (2014-2019). This was used as a proxy measure of impact. The initial coding resulted in eight categories (Table 3). To reduce the number of categories to be sampled, these were then conflated into three change categories of low, medium, high (Table 4).

Table 3: Percentage shift in number of Fellowships within the institution within a five-year period

% SHIFT	No	%
5-10%	22	15.2
10-15%	25	17.2
15-20%	19	13.1
20-25%	22	15.2
25-30%	16	11.0
30-40%	9	6.2
40-50%	7	4.8
Total UK	145*	100

*Three institutions did not have data for the five-year period 2014-2019 and were therefore omitted.

Table 4: Percentage shift in number of Fellowships within the institution within a five-year period

CATEGORIES	% SHIFT	No	%Rep
Low	<10%	47	32
Medium	10-25%	66	46
High	25%-50%	32	22
Total UK		145	100

In Step 3 of the sampling process, institutional size was then cross-tabulated with the percentage shift in number of Fellowships, and grouped according to institutional mission group. A final sample of 30 institutions was then identified using stratified random sampling (Table 5). The accreditation paperwork for all 30 of these institutions was reviewed in detail by two researchers.

Table 5: UK Institutional sample for review by mission group

Mission Group	No per group
Cathedrals Group	5
Guild HE	2
Million Plus	4
University Alliance	4
Russell Group	4
No mission group	11
TOTAL	30

3.3 Findings: range and scale of provision

The currency of the paperwork depended on where the institution was in their four-year re-accreditation cycle. The thematic analysis also provided contemporary insights into the range, scale and motivations for seeking institutional accreditation, alongside data on institutional support, strategic alignment (ie to relevant policies relating to probation, promotion / reward and recognition and teaching and learning strategies) and features of provisions. This informed the development of the online survey. Institutions vary greatly in size and type, and in the composition of their student body: one institution, for example, had 46% of its students aged over 30 and just 10% of its student population aged under 21.

In this UK sample, 80% of institutions offered accredited CPD schemes, with the earliest accreditation dating back to the previous version of the UKPSF in 2006, and the most recent having occurred just ahead of this project's start in 2020. 80% of the sample offered academic taught programmes, such as postgraduate taught certificates (accredited at Descriptor 2, FHEA) and graduate teaching courses or introduction to teaching courses (accredited at Descriptor 1, AFHEA). At some institutions the accredited provision also included specialist teacher development courses such as a Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Education and a Postgraduate Certificate in Digital Education. Some provision was fully face-to-face, some blended and some fully online.

Criterion 1a of the accreditation/re-accreditation paperwork requires individuals to comment on “The alignment of institutional strategies and approaches to the development of staff that teach and support learning with the UKPSF”. Thematic analysis revealed the five most frequently cited examples of strategic alignment identified in submission paperwork (Table 6).

Table 6: Overview of strategic alignment identified in the accreditation submissions

Nature of strategic alignment (institutional impact factors)
UKPSF/accredited provision aligned to institutional strategic objectives eg institutional key performance indicators, Teaching Excellence Framework
UKPSF aligned to promotion criteria
Achieving Fellowship as a requirement of probation
Targets set in relation to number of HEA Fellows
UKPSF aligned to performance appraisal/performance development

Some institutions had set ambitious targets such as: “90% of academic staff to have Higher Education Academy Fellowship Status”; where this was the case, Fellowship was usually a requirement of probation, often to be gained within a 12-month period.

The required structure of the submissions meant that the motivation for accreditation was, in most cases, implicit rather than explicit. The most common themes identified were (in no particular order):

- + raising the profile of teaching and learning
- + developing a community of practice
- + increasing the research and scholarship of teaching and learning
- + sharing good practice
- + recognising and rewarding teaching and learning (eg celebration events)
- + fostering links with senior managers (internal networks)
- + increasing engagement in wider staff development
- + development of external networks
- + providing career development for individuals.

4 Survey of accredited institutions

4.1 Introduction

There are many diverse aspects to institutional context, such as the size and type of institution, its mission statement or ethos, the nature of supervisory support and the extent to which teaching development is recognised, valued and rewarded. All of these aspects contribute to impact and overall institutional responsiveness and all could be considered more effectively and to a greater extent than has been evident to date (Chalmers, 2011; Chalmers et al, 2012; De Rijdt et al, 2013).

Of Guskey's (2000) five critical levels of evaluation of teacher development initiatives (Figure 1), most published work has focused on the first three – academic reactions, conceptual change and behaviour change – with far less focus on the fourth and fifth levels. In this research, the intention behind Work Packages 2 and 3 was to address this gap by focusing our questions on organisational development and change (level 4) and the impacts on the student experience and achievement (level 5). An online survey aimed at gathering quantitative and qualitative data relating to perceived and actual impact of institutional accreditation was sent to ALL institutions accredited by Advance HE at the time of this research (n=172).

Figure 1: Guskey's (2000) Evaluation Model

- 1 Academic reactions
- 2 Participants' conceptual change
- 3 Participants' behavioural change
(changing practice, use of techniques, and different learning strategies)
- 4 Development and change in organisational support for teacher development
- 5 Changes to student learning and performance

4.2 Development of the survey instrument

The survey instrument underwent a rigorous development and piloting procedure, with design feedback solicited from key stakeholders including all members of the project team, Advance HE's project steering group and the project's critical friend. Before the final pilot, the survey was converted into a digital format using the Jisc online questionnaire platform, which was also used for the final survey. The draft survey was then piloted with 10 respondents (selected for their high levels of familiarity with accredited programmes but excluding anyone to whom the survey would actually be sent). Overall, the survey instrument went through six cycles of revision, with feedback carefully considered and addressed in each iteration.

Ensuring relevance to the diversity of HE providers in our target group had implications for the length of the questionnaire. The final survey instrument (see Appendix 1) comprised 18 questions (some with multiple components). To minimise completion time and maximise response rates both tick-box,

Likert-scale and semi-structured qualitative questions were included. This allowed us to capture both quantitative and qualitative data through closed questions and short answer open responses.

The survey's five key sections were:

- 1 Strategic use, impacts and role of accreditation and the UKPSF
- 2 Knowledge and engagement with accredited provision across specific staff groups (eg managers, lecturers, support staff)
- 3 Perceived institutional benefits of accreditation
- 4 Professional development activities in support of teaching and learning, and their alignment with the UKPSF
- 5 Potential institutional challenges associated with accreditation

4.3 Dissemination of the survey

To ensure compliance with UK data protection regulations (General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR), Advance HE sent invitations directly to the 198 named institutional contacts on behalf of the research team at the 172 accredited institutions. The accreditation key contact for each institution varies from programme leader, head of academic development to PVC learning and teaching. These staff are thus well suited to providing relevant insights into evaluation practices and institutional impacts of the accredited programmes. The survey was open for 23 days from 27 April to 20 May 2020.³

By the scheduled meeting with Advance HE on 4 May, only 14 responses had been received. This is likely in part due to the impact of the global pandemic on the sector, but we were also made aware that some contacts who wished to complete the survey had not yet received an invitation, and others were not being passed it by the designated key contact. Following this meeting, and in consultation with Advance HE, it was agreed to post a survey link on the Accredited Programme Leaders space on Advance HE Connect in order to increase response rate. There are more than 400 members of this group with differing levels of seniority and involvement in accreditation. A very small number of individuals from unaccredited institutions (eg some Australian institutions) have access to the Accredited Programme Leaders space on Advance HE Connect as they are working to develop accredited provision.

The 57 responses were reduced to 55 after two were removed. One had submitted two institutional responses and the other had submitted an incomplete response. In the dataset of 55 that were analysed by the project team, one institution was in the process of being accredited and another institution had recently lost its accreditation status.

3 It should be noted that this was at the height of a global pandemic and during the most intensive and widespread disruption to the HE sector ever known

4.4 Analysis of survey data

In total, 57 responses to the institutional survey were received, equating to a response rate of 32% of the total number of accredited institutions globally (n=172) at the time the survey was open. Of these responses, 55 responses (42 UK, 13 international) were included in the analysis. (One response was a duplicate response by the same institution; another was incomplete.) Two respondents included in the sample were not operating accredited provision at the time.

Overview of responding institutions

To gauge the representativeness of the respondent sample, all institutions accredited by Advance HE (as at July 2020) and all institutions responding to the survey were categorised: by mission group for UK institutions or as 'international' for accredited international institutions outside the UK (Table 7). Thus, of 154 accredited UK institutions, 42 (27%) responded to the survey, while 13 of the 26 accredited international institutions (50%) responded.

Table 7: Categories of institutions and survey responses

Mission group	No institutions accredited by Advance HE	% of all Advance HE accredited institutions	No institutional responses to the survey	% institutions represented in survey sample
Cathedrals Group	12	7%	2	4%
Collab Group (157 Group)	1	0.5%	0	0%
Conservatoires UK	2	1%	0	0%
GuildHE	11	6%	3	5%
Independent HE (Study UK)	1	0.5%	0	0%
Independent Universities Group	1	0.5%	0	0%
Million Plus	21	12%	3	5%
Mixed Economy Group	3	2%	0	0%
The Russell Group	23	13%	5	9%
University Alliance	18	10%	7	13%
No mission group	61	34%	22	40%
International	26	14%	13	24%
Total	180⁴	100%	55	100%

⁴ The shift in numbers from 172 to 180 reflects the ongoing nature of accreditation with numbers varying due to institutions being in the accreditation/re-accreditation cycle.

Descriptive statistics were used to review the closed, quantitative data, and thematic analysis was conducted on the open, qualitative responses (Bryman, 2015). Further analysis was conducted to identify potential relationships between institution type as well as length of accreditation and specific themes within the survey responses.

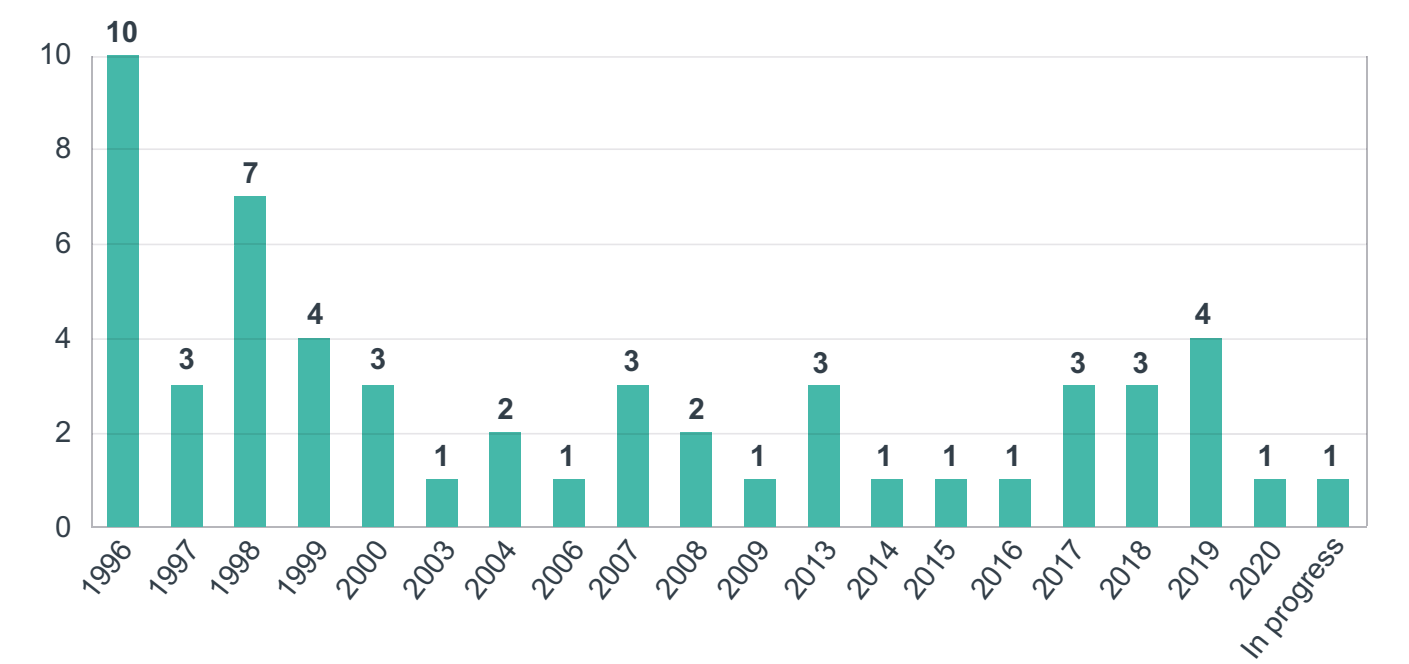
Notes

- 1 To improve readability, all figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number
- 2 Response options to many questions were not mutually exclusive, ie participants were free to select more than one option

Length of institutional accreditation and motivation to apply

Length of accreditation across the sample ranged from 1996 (n=10), which was prior to the UKPSF, to the most recent institution in 2020. It was anticipated that the impact of accreditation would therefore be more significant in those with long-standing accredited provision.

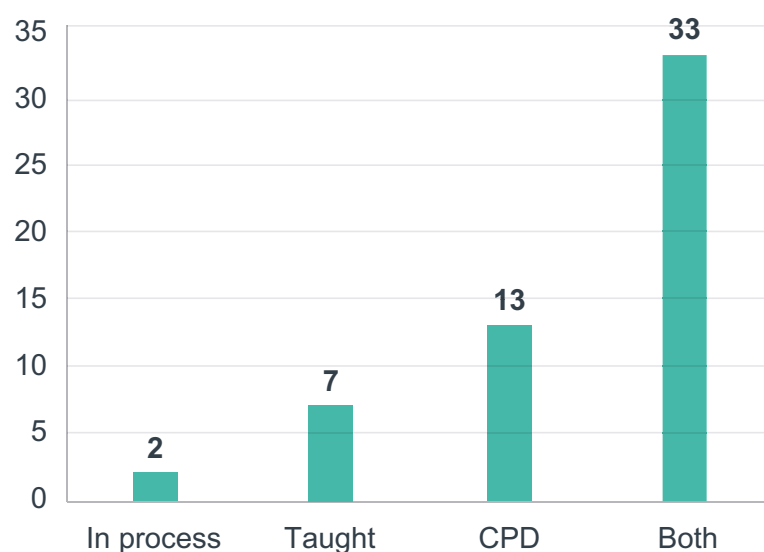
Figure 2: Year of first accreditation



Accredited provision offered at institution

Institutional accredited provision included accredited CPD schemes, academic taught programmes or both, with the latter accounting for 60% of responding institutions (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Accredited provision



Motivation for institutional accreditation

All 55 respondents answered the open-ended question ‘What motivated your institution to apply for Advance HE accreditation?’ The free-text responses often included multiple elements and overlapping themes. There were seven key motivations cited (Table 8).

Table 8: Motivation for institutional accreditation

Benefits/motivation	Number of institutions	Percentage of sample
National/international recognition and benchmarking	15	27%
Enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, including creating a teaching and learning culture	14	25%
Supporting professional/career development opportunities and progression pathways	14	25%
Growing the numbers of staff with recognition, sometimes linked to strategic targets (eg HESA returns)	4	7%
Rewarding staff	4	7%
Value of the UKPSF itself	4	7%
Improving the overall student experience	4	7%
Mixed Economy Group	3	2%
The Russell Group	23	13%
University Alliance	18	10%
No Mission Group	61	34%
International	26	14%
Total	180	100%

External quality benchmarking across the HE sector was mentioned most frequently. Engagement with the UKPSF was regarded as being part of the 'sector norm', with four institutions explicitly mentioning international recognition from an international framework, and a further four institutions specifically citing the UKPSF.

"The sector standing/measurement as a quality benchmark for teaching in the HE sector. HEA Fellowship has real currency in the sector."

Accredited provision was also seen to encourage engagement with professional learning. This was positioned by respondents in multiple ways, with the priority lying sometimes with the institution and sometimes the individual, as typified in these quotes:

"The scheme is part of a strategic initiative to transform teaching and learning. The transformation required increased engagement with professional learning to build capacity. Engagement with professional learning ultimately culminates in Fellowship which is a concrete measure recognised in annual appraisal and promotion processes, hence the motivator to engage with professional learning and capacity building."

"Supporting the professional development of colleagues in the institution."

"There is evidence of the efficacy of fellowship in providing development opportunities and recognition to educators."

Many respondents acknowledged that achieving Fellowship resulted in a portable asset specific to the individual that facilitated staff progression both within and beyond individual institutions. This was particularly noted by the international institutions. Enhancing teaching quality was also seen as a key motivator with one respondent noting the importance of 'making visible to a range of stakeholders that we are concerned about teaching quality'. This was frequently linked to the teaching-research nexus operating in HE:

"As a teaching-focused institution, it is important that we provide opportunities for staff to develop their teaching expertise and also that we are able to recognise and reward this in a sector-wide programme."

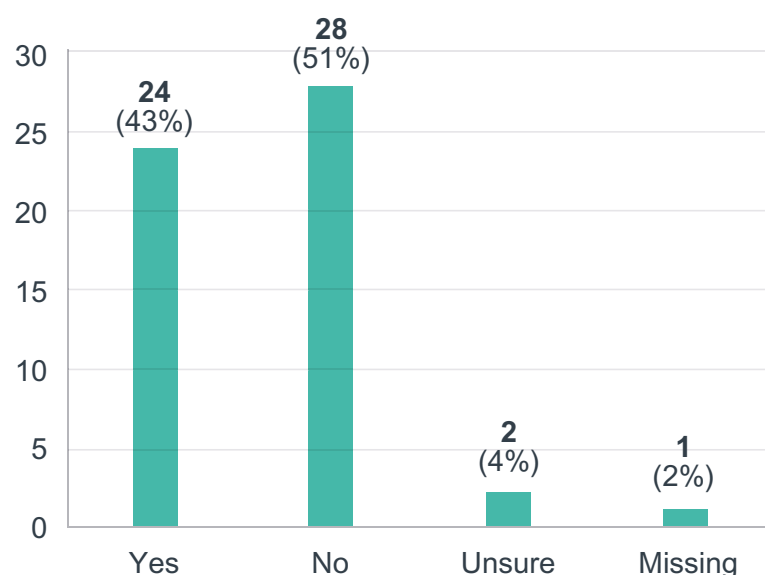
"A desire to provide staff with a robust route to professional recognition, reinforcing the importance of assuring high-quality student education alongside high-quality research."

"Partly it was responding to changing priorities in the sector (data on staff qualifications being made public) – partly it was to raise the profile of teaching in what is primarily a research-focused institution – and partly to impact positively on the quality of teaching."

Students were mentioned four times in the four pages of qualitative comments produced.

"Our institution is committed to excellence in teaching and learning, and applying for accreditation with Advance HE will benefit our staff to pursue their professional development and improve their practices, in turn this ultimately will benefit our students."

Figure 4: Institutional targets relating to HEA Fellowship



While Advance HE does not promote target setting in relation to HEA Fellowship, we were interested in whether or not participating institutions had introduced such targets. 51% of respondents reported no institutional targets relating to HEA Fellowships, 43% reported that such targets were set. 31% (n=17) expanded on this point in the qualitative commentary.

Three respondents stated specifically that target setting was unhelpful –

“We have always resisted setting targets, and annually defend this position on the grounds of prioritising educational enhancement, not metric chasing.”

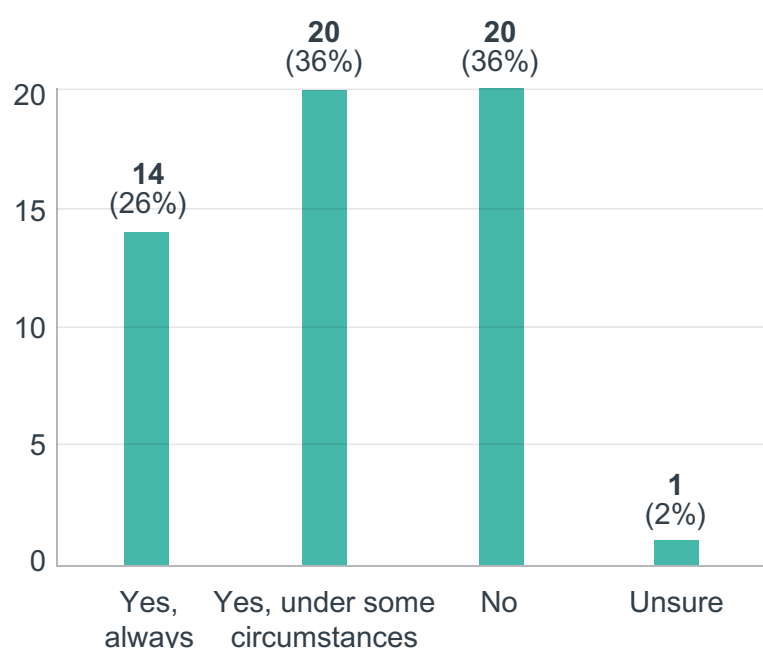
Three reported they were planning on introducing targets in the future and two pointed out that target setting varied across the institution such as departments, schools and faculties.

Of those who had set targets for 2019/2020 and commented (n=24), 15 provided a percentage target. However, 10 of these referred to variables other than simply a number of Fellows, such as a time period, contract features such as staff teaching hours, position or staff grouping, for example “>40% of staff in all departments to hold Fellowship by end 2019” (n=5) or “60% of academic staff to hold a category of Fellowship”. Notably, five respondents provided a specific number target, such as “30 completers” or “D1 =7 and D2 = 18 so 25 in total”.

Fellowship a requirement of probation

Of the 55 institutional responses, 34 (62%) reported Fellowship as having some link to probation requirements (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Fellowship a requirement for probation

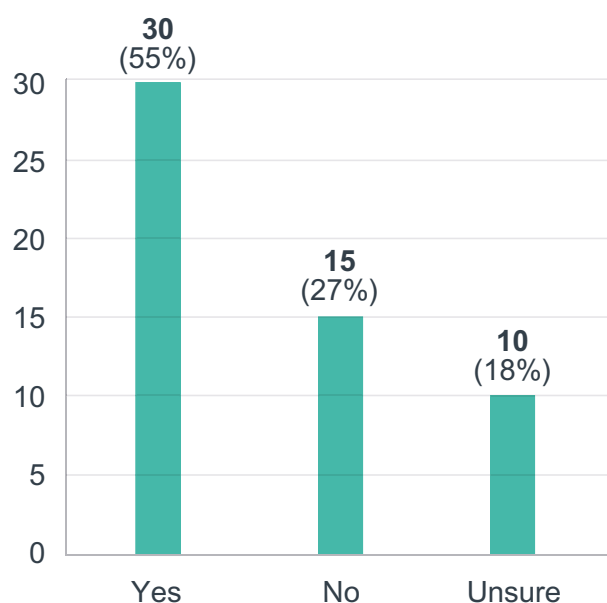


Thirty four open comments were made in relation to this question. For some institutions, there was a time-constrained expectation for achievement of Fellowship (via an accredited programme) for new staff: “New staff with less than five years HE experience are required to undertake the PGCert”. However, there were variations, with two institutions stating that the length of the probation period did not allow for Fellowship to be completed in that time, but there was a probation-independent Fellowship expectation:

“It is not a requirement of probation (as probation is just one year, this is not really achievable) but it is an explicit expectation of all newly appointed staff within three years of joining the university.”

Another influence on this kind of impact of accredited programmes was that decisions were made at local (eg faculty or school) level: “In theory a Head of School could specify that a staff member achieve Fellowship as part of probation, but that is not common.” Other respondents suggested that the relevance of Fellowship was influenced by an institution’s general focus (eg being research-intensive), with one respondent writing that “Senior management do not make quality teaching a requirement for anything as it is not research”, while another noted: “Gaining Fellowship is voluntary but we hope irresistible!”

Figure 6: Fellowship or the UKPSF and the university's strategic direction



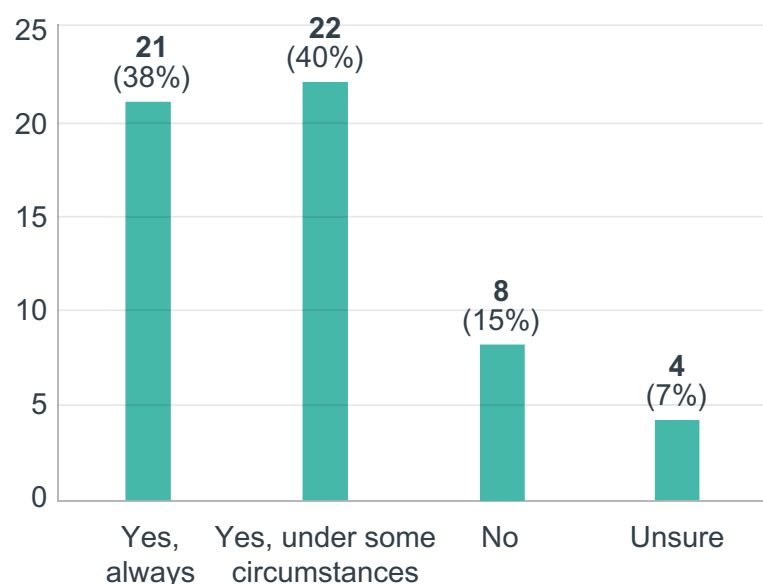
While 30 (55%) respondents noted a clear influence of the UKPSF and/or Fellowship on their institution's strategic direction, in the sense that one or both were mentioned in the relevant institutional documentation, 10 (18%) were unsure if this was the case, and 15 (27%) were clear that there was no such influence (Figure 6). Thirteen institutions added qualitative commentary on this question, with five noting that the documentation was undergoing revision to include, in some cases, a closer alignment, and five described a broadly relevant, rather than specific, reference: "much of the content, especially professional values is aligned but the UKPSF is not specifically referred to." Others explained that it depended on the document:

"The current Strategic Plan refers more broadly to recognition for excellence in teaching and research. More details are in the Learning and Teaching Strategy."

One institution noted that:

"Although not explicitly mentioned in institutional documents, there is strong alignment with the institutional mission and strategic direction."

When asked which documents mentioned Fellowship or the UKPSF, 29 (53%) of the institutional respondents provided details. Of these, 14 specified the Learning and Teaching (or Education) Strategy, and eight included the University Strategic Plan. Only two respondents mentioned relevant references in a Student Success Strategy and Student Strategy, while another two institutions listed an Access and Participation Strategy.

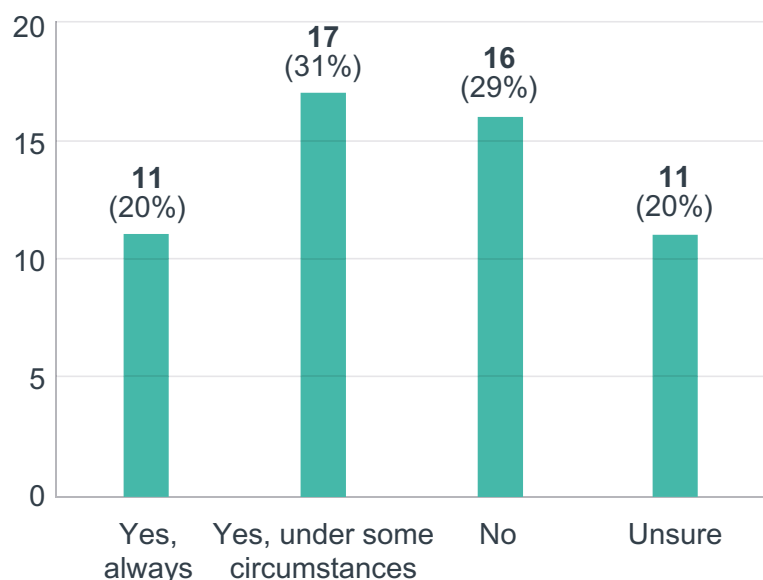
Figure 7: Fellowship or UKPSF linked to promotions

While 78% (n=43) respondents noted explicit mention (or other clear links) between the UKPSF and/or Fellowship in their institution's (academic) promotion strategy or promotion criteria, 7% (n=4) were unsure if this was the case, and 15% (n=8) were clear that there were no such links (Figure 7). Forty comments were received in relation to this question. Six respondents explained that Fellowships were identified as a form of evidence for promotion. However, it was more common for respondents (n=16) to use phrases such as “mapped”, “encouraged”, “usually required”, “expected”, “indicative” and “often a requirement” to illustrate the kind of mention Fellowships or the UKPSF are given. For eight institutions, mention depended on the position of the individual (eg academic or professional services pathways) or category of Fellowship.

Fellowship or UKPSF explicitly mentioned in appraisals

Half the sample (n=28) stated that the UKPSF and/or Fellowship was explicitly mentioned within the staff annual appraisal/performance review system.

Figure 8: Fellowship or UKPSF explicitly mentioned in appraisals



Eleven stated that mention of the UKPSF in the appraisal varied according to factors such as the specific line manager or supervisor involved (n=3), the job role or level (n=2), the specific colleges, faculties or schools (n=2) or the objectives of the appraisal (n=1). Three comments specified that PSF would feature in appraisals for those on teaching and learning pathways. Others merely stated that, for example, “obtaining HEA fellowship is strongly encouraged” or “it’s part of our academic expectation documents.”

Changes to strategies and policies as a result of accreditation

Respondents were asked to identify “What plans, strategies and policies have changed in response to, or in preparation for, Advance HE (re)accreditation?” The responses showed a diverse set of impacts (Table 9). The most significant impact was in relation to academic promotions frameworks, with 58% (n =32) of institutions reporting a change in this context. Alignment to revised promotions criteria was repeatedly mentioned in the associated qualitative comments (n=15), with some making specific reference to SFHEA and PFHEA for senior posts.

Table 9: Changes to strategies, policies and plans

Strategy and policies	Yes	No	Unsure	Missing
Teaching and learning strategies, policies and plans	24 (44%)	23 (41%)	8 (15%)	0 (0%)
Alignment to strategic objectives (evidenced through reference to key performance indicators, such as targets for the number of staff qualified)	25 (45%)	22 (40%)	8 (15%)	0 (0%)
Academic probation/confirmation requirements linked to accredited CPD and/or HEA fellowship of a specific category	26 (47%)	23 (42%)	4 (7%)	2 (4%)
Appraisal frameworks that include reference to HEA fellowship categories and/or the Professional Standards Framework	16 (29%)	29 (53%)	10 (18%)	0 (0%)
Academic promotion frameworks that include reference to HEA fellowship categories and/or the Professional Standards Framework	32 (58%)	19 (35%)	4 (7%)	0 (0%)
Key performance indicators for academic professional development that reference accredited programmes	15 (27%)	30 (55%)	10 (18%)	0 (0%)
Quality assurance policies	12 (22%)	25 (45%)	18 (33%)	0 (0%)
Other	2 (4%)	14 (25%)	10 (18%)	29 (53%)

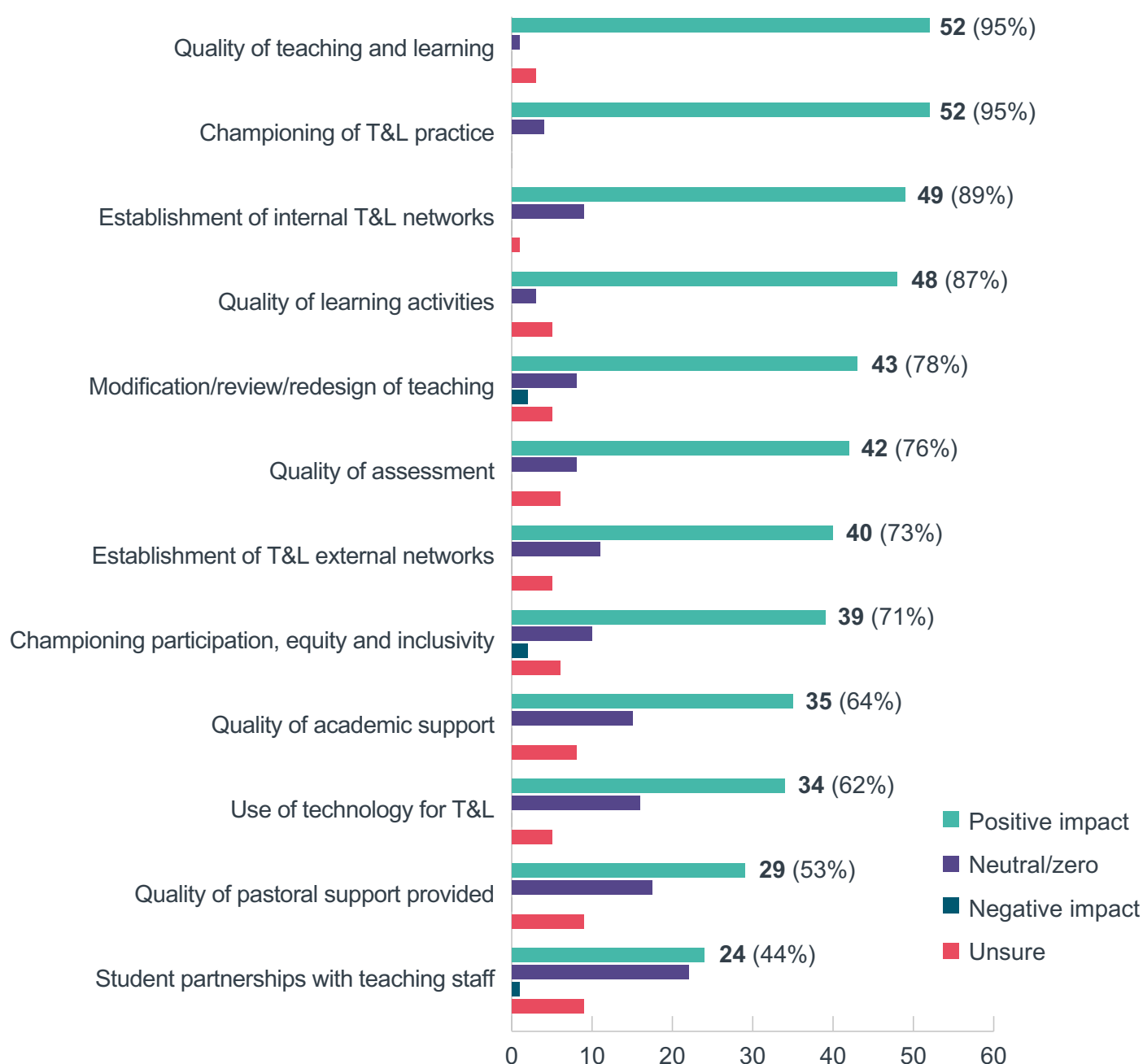
Impact on teaching and learning practices

Respondents were asked “What impact, if any, has institutional accreditation with Advance HE had on teaching and learning practices?” with respondents able to select one or more from a group of pre-set options (Figure 9); note the response frequencies are therefore neither exclusive nor cumulative. More than 80% of respondents felt that institutional accreditation had had a positive impact on four key areas:

- + teaching and learning quality
- + the championing of teaching and learning
- + the establishment of internal networks commonly referred to as communities of practice focused on teaching and learning
- + the quality of the learning activities themselves.

Sizeable majorities of respondents also noted positive impacts in other key areas of teaching and learning (Figure 9). Overall, less than half the respondents (44%) noted a positive impact on student partnerships with teaching staff, but this was one of the findings that was substantially different between UK and non-UK institutions – 55% (n=23) of UK institutions reported a positive impact, compared to 15% (n = 2) of non-UK institutions.

Figure 9: Impact on teaching and learning practices



Qualitative responses cited institution-wide examples that included increasing development opportunities for staff (eg blogs, newsletters), external networks with other institutions, internal networks and communities of practice, and peer mentoring schemes to provide support for Fellowship applicants.

“Impact in developing and promoting cross-discipline networks and collaborations. Making learning and teaching practice more visible and celebrating best practice across the institution.”

Two respondents specifically pointed to the difficulty in determining and evaluating ‘impact’:

“Advance HE contribution is aligned with institutional (and School priorities and plans) so hard to disentangle impact. My gut feeling is a positive impact but scale of impact depends on institutional actions and commitments (which are considerable).”

“It has a large positive impact on the practice of individuals who have participated in the institutional CPD pathways to recognition (and has a positive impact on their teams) as is evidenced in feedback. However, it is more challenging to evaluate impact more widely apart from the initiative of mapping institutional CPD events to the UKPSF.”

Impact on teaching and learning staff

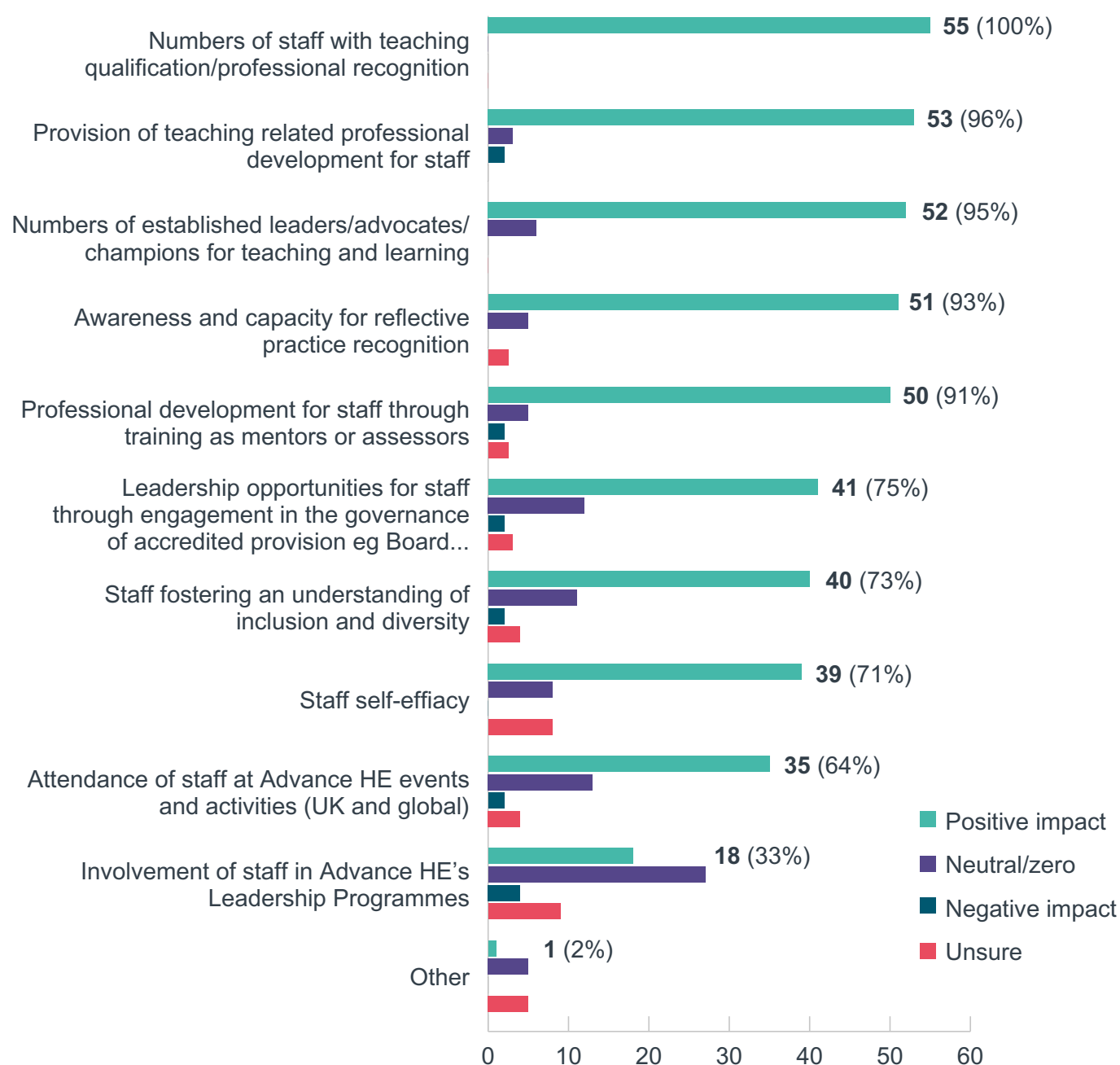
The impact on teaching and learning staff was overwhelmingly reported as positive (Figure 10). Some 93% of respondents noted a positive impact especially in relation to the awareness and capacity for reflective practice, which increased with length of institutional accreditation, while 91% noted professional development opportunities for staff through training as mentors or assessors.

There is some evidence that the level of impact relates not only to the length of institutional accreditation but also to the geographic location of the institution, as the following two quotes illustrate:

“In reality recognition provides a gateway for the academic development team to build relationships, build confidence and self-efficacy in staff to make significant changes to teaching, learning and assessment practices. It has been truly transformational in getting staff to believe in themselves and to realise they do great work and they can influence and change things.” (*UK institution*)

“Too soon to tell many of these aspects. Also too early in an Australian context for engagement with external activities and events – we are reliant on opportunities originating in the UK and these have been limited.” (*Australian institution*)

Figure 10: Impact on teaching and learning staff



Impact on wider institutional culture

Impacts of accreditation on institutional culture were identified across several areas (Table 10), most notably by raising the profile of teaching and learning. When analysed according to length of accreditation, some differences were noted (see Appendix 2). Notably, 67% of recently accredited institutions (less than two years) also reported an increase in the number of celebration events, compared with 46% of those institutions accredited for longer. These differences in responses between those with recent institutional accreditation and those accredited for more than two years might suggest that, as accreditation becomes normalised and agendas shift, sustaining the level of impact may require significant intention, work and continued prioritisation at the institutional level. This raises a concern that impact could decrease in relation to these areas over time. Alternatively, the emphasis on the need for celebration at recent Advance HE network events and preparing for accreditation events may have had an influence on institutions recently accredited. Further research is required to tease out these subtleties.

Conversely, the impact of accreditation on the research and scholarship of teaching and learning appeared to take time to develop, with 33% of recently accredited institutions citing an impact in this area compared to 61% of those who had held accreditation for longer. There was a similar pattern displayed in relation to the impact of increasing inter-institutional interactions.

Table 10: Impacts on wider institutional culture

Impacts	No and % of respondents who agreed	No and % of respondents who disagreed	No and % of respondents who were unsure
Improving the profile of teaching and learning	48 (87%)	4 (7%)	3 (6%)
Increasing the credibility of educational development centres	37 (67%)	5 (9%)	13 (24%)
Stimulating wider staff development eg conferences,	38 (69%)	8 (15%)	9 (16%)
Increasing scholarship/research in teaching and learning	31 (56%)	9 (17%)	15 (27%)
Increasing celebration events	27 (49%)	13 (24%)	15 (27%)
Fostering links with senior managers	19 (34%)	12 (22%)	24 (44%)
Encouraging collaboration between academic and professional staff	32 (58%)	12 (22%)	11 (20%)
Increasing cross-faculty working and collaboration	34 (62%)	9 (16%)	12 (22%)
Impacting on teaching and learning evaluation processes	28 (51%)	10 (18%)	17 (31%)
Increasing formal or informal interactions between/ among institutions	32 (58%)	9 (17%)	14 (25%)

In relation to this question, 20 qualitative comments were provided by those who agreed that accreditation had impacted on the teaching and learning profile. Explanations included: by providing credibility; making it more visible; by rewarding good education practice; and creating a cultural shift. Within these, six respondents provided more specific examples of how this happened, such as: via reflective practice; blogposts; the introduction of a teaching and learning conference; having badges for Fellows to wear; providing focus for teaching conversations: appointing a Teaching and Learning Provost; and providing teaching and learning champions. Others were less certain about the impact, saying for example, that “this is the goal, but the reality is research-based” and “in clusters around the institution, however there is still a way to go before it is university-wide”.

67% (n=37) of respondents felt that institutional accreditation increased the credibility of educational development centres (or similar). One respondent noted that:

“Facilitating conversations on learning and teaching across the institution has introduced the Academic Development team to a wide network of excellent educators, helping us to join up discussions and to demonstrate our own breadth of knowledge in these areas. Achieving our own Fellowships has then reinforced our credibility as educators.”

9% (n=5) disagreed, but on the basis that there was no cultural shift at department or institutional level and that their credibility was already strong. One institution had no educational development centre. Of the 24% (n=13) unsure about this question, answers varied, including that credibility depended on the staff involved, or that, paradoxically, “some of the jumping through hoops of engagement with accreditation damages credibility”.

Overall, 69% (n=38) of respondents agreed that wider staff development had been stimulated by accreditation, with 10 respondents choosing to add a comment. Examples of wider staff development given in these comments were: an annual festival; development of a master’s degree in Education; Champion scheme; and HE Connect. In addition, two others suggested that wider staff development had been stimulated by better signposting to, and raising awareness of, staff development activities. However, as one respondent noted:

“These activities would have taken place without an accredited provision but having the opportunity to benchmark across the sector gives credibility, and the knowledge that Fellowship is portable and recognised sector-wide has helped colleagues to see the value in engaging.”

Cross-faculty working and collaboration was the fourth largest impact with 62% (n=34) of respondents agreeing that this had increased as a result of institutional accreditation. Indeed, this was noted as “the most obvious and immediate impact” for one respondent. Others were more tentative, saying that it occurred “in clusters across the institution” and “there is still work to do here”. Of those unsure (n=4) about this impact, there was a feeling that there was little evidence or that it was too early to tell.

Impact on student outcomes and experience

Overall, 42% of respondents felt that there had been some impact of accreditation on student satisfaction (Table 11). However, there was a notable difference in responses depending upon the length of institutional accreditation, with only 25% of recently accredited institutions noting any positive impact. When analysing the results according to location there was an even bigger difference in response, with only 15% of non-UK based institutions noting any impact on student satisfaction, compared to 55% of UK institutions.

Table 11: Impacts on students

	Large positive impact	Some impact	Neutral/zero impact	Unsure
Student satisfaction	2 (4%)	23 (42%)	9 (16%)	21 (38%)
Student achievement	1 (2%)	15 (27%)	13 (24%)	26 (47%)
Student interaction with staff	4 (7%)	21 (38%)	12 (22%)	18 (33%)
Students' interaction with one another	0 (0%)	12 (22%)	17 (31%)	26 (47%)
Other	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	3 (5%)	12 (22%)

The qualitative comments (n = 16) largely highlighted the significant challenges associated with measuring impact in this area:

“It is a perennial issue of not being able to spot cause and effect between staff development, transformative practice and the student experience.”

“I think that the actual impact on students is the biggest unknown and so difficult to pinpoint. The tools to measure this are undeveloped unfortunately – this would be a great pilot for Advance HE to offer as an opt-in project and build on emergent research linking student evaluation, assessment results, and staff fellowship categories.”

Other responses include: “too early to tell” and “we have not evaluated this”. One respondent did however note that:

“Staff with fellowship are more likely to be nominated for student teaching awards. There are some links between NSS outcomes and areas with high percentages of fellowship.”

Wider initiatives linked to institutional accreditation

Question 13 asked respondents: “Have there been any additional wider initiatives that have developed from, or been influenced by, Advance HE institutional accreditation?” Twenty four comments (44%) were received, with nine responses relating to the development of communities of practice, in the form of “research groups”; “writing circles”; a “pedagogical innovators forum”; “global networks via Advance HE Connect”; “better collaboration between academic development and human resources”; and “a Senior Fellows network.”

“We developed an alumni network of SF, PF, and [UK] National Teaching Fellows⁵ to try to leverage that capacity beyond the individual, and towards a collective effort and organisational development.”

For one institution, the story of the impact was complex and positive. The CPD scheme had led to workshops on teaching dossier development, more leaders interested in becoming Senior Fellows, the establishment of a Teachers’ Academy, and a growing pool of assessors and mentors. One outcome had been that:

“This year, for the first time, engagement in [programme name] and gaining HEA Fellowships has been set as one of the conditions for the most prestigious university-wide award on teaching ... given out at the annual convocation ceremony.”

Other outcomes cited in response to this question included: engagement with the Advance HE external examiner programme; involvement in research and equality and diversity initiatives. While it is difficult from the survey responses to explain how these wider activities directly linked to accreditation, one respondent explained: “Partaking in the EDI in the curriculum project probably stemmed from the wider engagement through accreditation.”

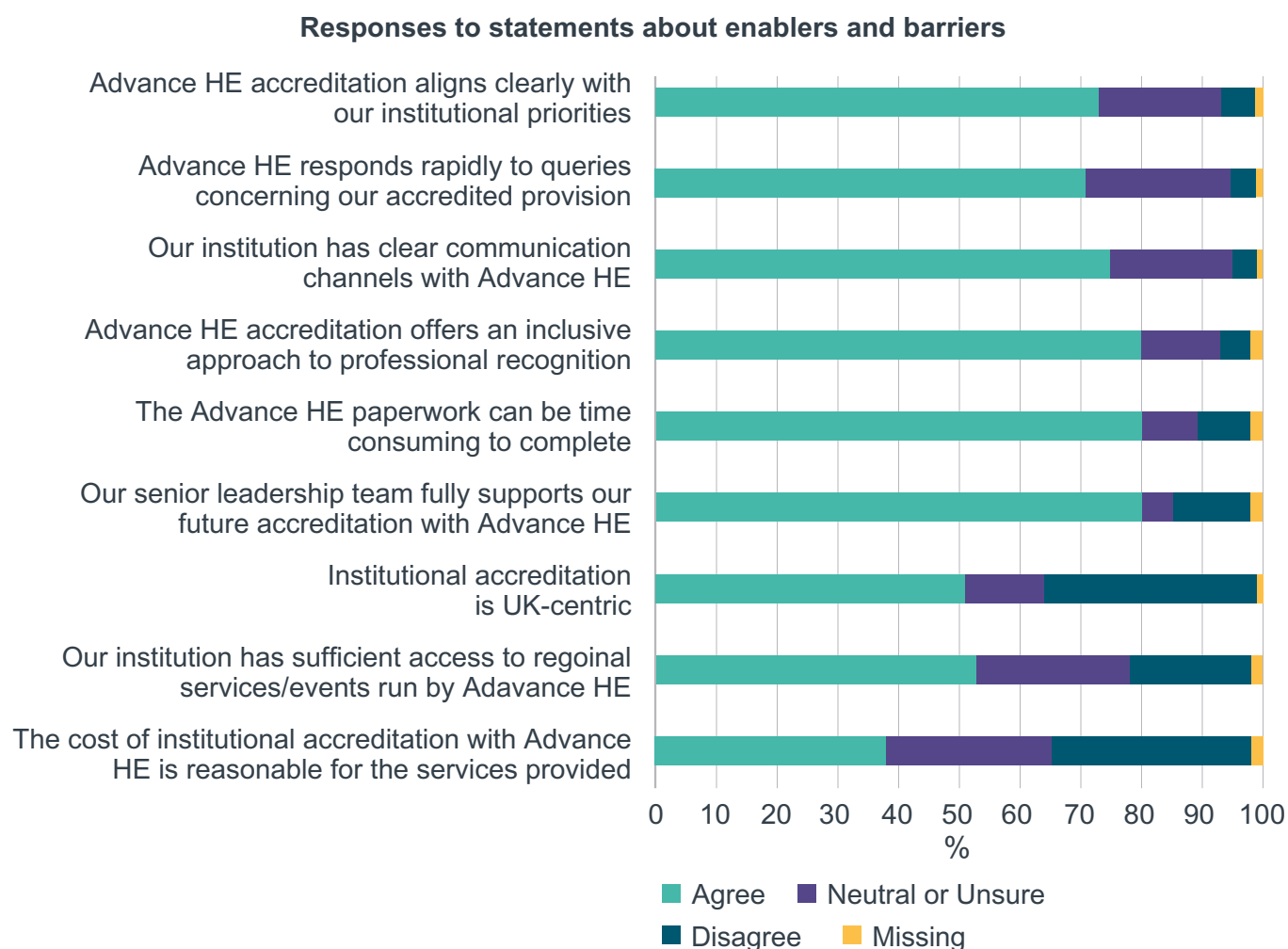
Potential enablers of, and barriers to, institutional accreditation

Survey question 14 used a Likert scale and asked respondents the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with nine statements about potential enablers of, and barriers to, institutional accreditation. Responses are displayed in Table 12 and graphically in Figure 11.

5 It is noted that a National Teaching Fellowship in the UK is not the same as a National Teaching Fellowship in Australia, but is more akin to an Australian Award for University Teaching.

Table 12: Enablers and barriers to institutional accreditation

Statements	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree or unsure	Disagree	Missing
The cost of institutional accreditation is reasonable for the services provided	21 (38%)	15 (27%)	18 (33%)	1 (2%)
Institutional accreditation is UK-centric	29 (53%)	14 (25%)	11 (20%)	1 (2%)
Our institution has sufficient access to regional services/events run by Advance HE	28 (51%)	7 (13%)	19 (35%)	1 (2%)
Our institution has clear communication channels with Advance HE	43 (78%)	3 (5%)	8 (15%)	1 (2%)
Advance HE responds rapidly to queries concerning our accredited provision	44 (80%)	5 (9%)	5 (9%)	1 (2%)
Advance HE accreditation aligns clearly with our institutional priorities	44 (80%)	7 (13%)	3 (5%)	1 (2%)
Advance HE accreditation offers an inclusive approach to professional recognition	41 (75%)	11 (20%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)
Our senior leadership team fully supports our future accreditation with Advance HE	39 (71%)	13 (24%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)
The Advance HE paperwork can be time consuming to complete	40 (73%)	11 (20%)	3 (5%)	1 (2%)

Figure 11: Enablers and barriers to accreditation

Summarised, these quantitative findings suggest:

- + key areas of current overall satisfaction with accreditation are: alignment with institutional priorities (80%); responses to queries (80%); communication (80%) (with some caveats: see below); offering an inclusive approach to professional recognition (75%); and support from senior leadership for ongoing accreditation (71%)
- + some key areas of notably less satisfaction are: accreditation paperwork (73%); a perception of accreditation as UK-centric (53%); cost of institutional accreditation in relation to services provided (38% felt cost was reasonable); and access to regional services/events.

Twenty one respondents chose to add further commentary to support their responses. These qualitative comments were mostly focused on the areas where there was less satisfaction. Communication with Advance HE was raised specifically by six respondents (11%). The negative responses (three) included “at times, the response from Advance HE has been slow and has required sending follow-up emails. There has also been contradictory advice given which has been frustrating”. There was one positive statement regarding communication which came from an Advance HE Accreditor: “as the Advance HE institutional contact, I have very good connections with Advance HE”. Other comments about communication were more mixed, with one respondent reporting that “communication with Advance HE is good when requested, but I would like more regular check-in communication from a named person – to have a continuous dialogue”.

The following extended quote illustrates some of the problems when communication is less than exemplary:

“In terms of the communication channels ... contact with individuals is usually very, very good. However, the communication channels are very unclear with information that should be communicated to all programme managers being heard incidentally or something important is posted to Advance HE connect (which gets missed) or is then communicated to individuals in a way that isn't always clear, meaning it then trickles down to the Programme Leader who may not know anything about it. Clearer communication is needed as there is a feeling of trying to work out requirements or changes through informal channels or detective work.”

The accreditation process was mentioned five times in the additional comments, with three respondents specifically agreeing that the paperwork was time-consuming:

“Goodness it's about 50 times the volume of stuff you have to produce to get a programme approved in an institution. Why do you feel the need to crawl over our handbooks, guidance documents etc.”

Another respondent constructively provided feedback relating to the expectations of associated appendices in the (re)accreditation paperwork:

“I don’t think the paperwork was necessarily onerous, but we did have a large amount of follow-up requests afterwards, so perhaps some expectations on what appendices should be included and be provided may be considered.”

Among the additional comments, four related to cost: two to high subscription costs and one made reference to the “tight budgetary times ahead”. Another factor identified was the cost of attending events, especially as one respondent explained, “many of the available membership services feel more available to those on UK time zones”. These comments relate to Advance HE’s broader membership services rather than just the cost of institutional accreditation.

The extent to which accreditation is UK-centric (52% agreed) was commented on by four respondents who mentioned; for example, the “timing of reporting and professional activities is UK-centric” and the name UKPSF was “outdated”. One respondent noted that, “Covid is enabling Advance HE to be less UK centric with more online webinars but otherwise being outside the UK we do feel disadvantaged not being able to access F2F opportunities with no provision for virtual engagement.”

From this survey question, some key areas that may constitute barriers to future accreditation, and are therefore worthy of early review by Advance HE, are: the accreditation paperwork; accreditation costs in relations to services provided; accreditation as an enabler of inclusion; and the UK-centric perspectives of accreditation. These aspects will be addressed further in the Conclusions and Recommendations (Section 16).

Impact evaluation

The final survey question asked respondents whether they were currently evaluating the impact of their institution’s accreditation with Advance HE. Overall, 35% were formally measuring the impact of Advance HE accreditation, although proportionally more institutions accredited in the last two years (85%) were doing so compared to those accredited pre-2018 (26%). All those ‘unsure’ whether they were measuring impact were UK institutions. Of the 31 institutions (56%) that did not already evaluate impact, 11 (35%) were planning to measure impact in future but did not explain how.

Length of accreditation and impact

When the responses of pre-2018 accredited institutions (n=46) and post-2018 (n=9)⁶ were compared, there were some notable differences (see Appendix 2). Although the sub-sample numbers are too small to conduct any statistical significance measures, this difference was most notable in terms of teaching and learning practices. For example, while 93% of ‘pre-2018’ institutions reported positive impact on the quality of learning activities, 56% of ‘post-2018’ institutions reported this.

6 It should be noted that of the eight ‘new’ institutions, seven were non-UK institutions.

Similarly, 85% of 'pre-2018' institutions indicated positive impact on quality of assessment compared to 33% of 'post-2018' institutions. Only 11% of 'post-2018' institutions reported an impact on student partnerships with teaching staff compared to 50% 'pre-2018'. Interestingly not as many differences were noted in relation to the impact on teaching and learning staff. Exceptions to this were in fostering an understanding of inclusion and diversity (78% 'pre-2018' and 44% 'post-2018') and **"awareness and capacity for reflective practice"** (93% 'pre-2018' and 78% 'post-2018').

However, differences were reported on the impact on wider institutional culture, something we might expect to take time (see Appendix 2). For example, more impact was reported for 'pre-2018' institutions compared to 'post-2018' in terms of increasing interactions between institutions and increasing scholarship in learning and teaching (both 61% 'pre-2018' and 44% 'post-2018').

The reverse was true in relation to increasing celebration events, whereby a greater percentage of 'post-2018' institutions (67%) reported a positive impact on celebration events compared to 'pre-2018' institutions (46%). The same was true for increasing cross-faculty working (78% 'post-2018' and 59% 'pre-2018'). One notable difference found in relation to impact on students was that double the percentage of 'pre-2018' institutions (50%) reported a positive impact on student satisfaction compared to 'post-2018' (22%) institutions.

UK /non-UK institutions and Impact

When analysed according to domain (13 non-UK based institutions and 42 UK-based), the results were similar for most of the questions (see Appendix 3). However, the gap between UK and non-UK based reports of impact on student satisfaction was more pronounced compared to 'pre-2018' and 'post-2018' institutions, with 55% of UK institutions reporting a positive impact compared to 15% of non-UK institutions. Non-UK institutions (8%) were also far less convinced about the impact on student achievement compared to UK institutions (36%). Again, this might suggest that some impacts take time to develop.

5 Institutional case studies

5.1 Introduction

To gain a more nuanced understanding of the impact of institutional accreditation, eleven case studies have been produced, which build upon the data gathered in the online survey through semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders at selected institutions. The aim of the case studies is to provide examples of broader institutional impacts and illustrations of institutional practice and engagement with accredited provision.

5.2 Methodology

Semi-structured interviews are recognised as promoting meaningful dialogue with participants over complex issues (Cousins, 2009), and allow multiple layers of meaning, experience and ideas to be examined (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). A core set of questions was developed, designed to explore the themes covered in the online survey (Appendix 4). Due to the logistics of an international project (multiple countries; different time zones), five members of the project team, all experienced researchers, were responsible for undertaking the interviews, using the semi-structured interview schedule. This also ensured that interviewers had a better understanding of local context and thus were able to focus in on, and contextualise, interviewees' responses in real time. The interview schedule was piloted, recorded and amended with input from the whole research team. Following this process, and prior to the interviews commencing, a team meeting was held with all members of the research group to agree a consistent approach.

In selecting the case study institutions, two different sampling approaches were adopted for the groups of UK and international institutions to ensure that the overall sample size was manageable and as representative as possible of institutional diversity.

Selecting the UK sample

All accredited UK Institutions (n=146) were categorised according to institutional size, the percentage shift in number of Fellowships recorded, and subsequently grouped according to mission group affiliation (see Section 3.2). A random stratified sampling technique was then used to identify an initial list of 30 UK accredited institutions. From this list, nine institutions were initially selected at random by the Principal Investigator.

Selecting the international sample

To sample the much smaller number of international accredited institutions ($n = 26$), a purposeful sampling regime was employed to account for the following factors:

- + range of accreditation routes available (taught postgraduate course/non-academic credited taught course, CPD accreditation routes)
- + length of accredited provision
- + geographical spread.

This resulted in identification of four non-UK institutions across three continents outside Europe.

Working with the institutions

Following the selection process, and to adhere to GDPR regulations, a representative from Advance HE acted as gatekeeper to seek initial permissions. This communication explained the aims of the project and the nature of the institutional involvement required. It was made clear that the project team wished to interview the following institutional personnel where possible:

- + the Strategic Lead for Teaching and Learning ie the Deputy or Pro Vice Chancellor for Teaching and Learning (or equivalent)
- + the Head of the Educational Development/Academic Development unit (or equivalent)
- + a senior representative from human resources
- + the elected Sabbatical Officer for Education from the student body (or equivalent).

These emails were sent at the end of April 2020. At this time the substantial impact of Covid-19 was being felt globally. Most employees in HE institutions were home working under intense pressure to transfer teaching and student support services online. When just five of the nine initially selected UK institutions agreed to participate in the interviews, the project team returned to the sampling list twice to identify two additional institutions who were willing to participate. The final sample consisted of seven UK institutions and four non-UK institutions.

The online survey data was reviewed to frame the interview schedule. Turner et al (2013) advocate limiting the number of open-ended interview questions and allowing time to explore what is 'interesting' about examples specific to individual case studies. In heeding this, we adopted a narrative approach to the interview schedule. Several central (internal) prompts ensured that essential contextual information regarding accredited provision was captured.

Where possible interviews with a member of the student's union (SU) or equivalent at each institution were undertaken. Typically, these were student representatives with a remit for education. We identified this group as ideally positioned to provide insights into teaching related CPD and the potential for student engagement with accredited teaching-related CPD in their institutions. A separate interview schedule was developed for these interviewees. Across the 11 case study institutions, a total of seven student representatives were interviewed, in order to ascertain their knowledge of Advance HE accreditation and/or Fellowship, and their perspectives on teacher education more broadly.

5.3 Data collection

An online interview was held with key contacts in each institution via Zoom. Each interviewer had access to the completed survey for the relevant institution at the time of the interviews. The interviews with the strategic leads and representatives from HR lasted between 35 and 55 minutes. The interviews with the student representatives were shorter (15 to 40 minutes) and were based on a separate interview schedule to reflect the differing levels of knowledge of the student representatives.

Each interview was audio recorded and key sections transcribed verbatim. The interview schedule was used by the interviewer to note the time of the interview where key points were discussed. This resulted in 'attentive listening' to understand the main points of the discussion rather than getting lost in detail (Widodo, 2014). Two Plymouth University members of the project team then analysed the interviewer notes to develop the case study and returned to the audio files as necessary. Extracts of the interview narrative which illuminated the case study were identified. Each case study was written up, reviewed by the Principal Investigator, and then returned to the interviewer for checking. Finally, the draft case studies were verified by the institutional representative, who confirmed the accuracy of the information and that they were happy for the case studies to be published.

5.4 Key findings

Who engages with accreditation?

The 11 institutions selected as case studies are at different stages of engagement with Advance HE accreditation and the UKPSF. While academics are naturally a key target for Fellowship in all institutions, interviewees from nine of the case study institutions discussed the increasingly inclusive nature of their provision that was **"open to anyone who could demonstrate that they have a teaching or learner support role"** (CS8). Broadly speaking, a key growth area is the creation of opportunities for engagement for part-time and non-academic staff (eg librarians, learning technologists, technicians, graduate teaching assistants; and research students). The two recently accredited international institutions are striving for this but, for the time being, are focused on supporting the professional development of academics. Two UK institutions noted difficulties in engaging experienced (as opposed to inexperienced or relatively new) academic staff.

Institutional approaches to staff engagement

Interviewees talked about a range of ways that staff could engage with accredited provision including: taught courses; writing retreats; workshops; online materials; briefings; buddying events; individual mentoring; and conferences. In some institutions, engagement in accredited programmes was required as part of probation, in others there were incentives such as allocated time. One international institution (CS6) gave a promotional incentive for staff receiving an accreditation certificate and a financial reward to staff acting as mentors and assessors. In another institution (CS9) sabbaticals were awarded.

The benefits of accreditation

Despite the diversity in job roles, all interviewees articulated several benefits to institutional accreditation aligned to the UKPSF which were remarkably similar both within and across the institutions. First, the UKPSF was regarded as an important sector benchmark that afforded both institutional and individual recognition. For institutions outside the UK, there was particular value in this being an international quality benchmark providing global recognition. Second, institutional accreditation was felt to be significant in raising the profile of education and educational units, and in demonstrating a strong institutional commitment to teaching and learning. This impact was frequently articulated in relation to the greater importance commonly placed on research.

Interviewees also mentioned the following benefits:

- + increasing the reputation of the institution
- + assisting career development
- + raising the profile of individuals
- + encouraging time for reflection on practice
- + sharing best practice
- + creating a culture or community of practice around teaching and learning
- + increasing scholarship in teaching and learning
- + (in the UK) assisting in preparing for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

Institutional embedding

Institutional accreditation was generally described as ‘well embedded’ and ‘well known’, with the UKPSF aligned with core strategies and policies and embedded into human resources (HR) processes for promotion and probation in most cases. There was evidence throughout the case studies that collaboration between HR and teaching and learning units, and especially support from institutional strategic leaders, were key ingredients to success. Both promoting accreditation and Fellowships via internal communication channels and celebrating successes were regarded as essential to raise the profile and increase visibility. Despite the length of accreditation being much shorter than most of the UK institutions, the experiences of non-UK institutions were very similar with schemes embedded and most being part of promotion policy.

Further professional development opportunities created

Many professional development opportunities extending beyond the accredited provision itself were cited:

- + increasing engagement in internal and external recognition awards such as Institutional Teaching Excellence awards, National Teaching Fellowships and the Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence
- + the creation of leadership opportunities via mentoring and assessor roles
- + development of communities of practice around teaching and learning
- + additional unaccredited CPD (eg focused workshops on topics such as online learning; the flipped classroom and interactive teaching)
- + engagement in the scholarship of learning and teaching.

Challenges with accreditation

Resourcing was cited as the most significant challenge. Supporting the CPD schemes was regarded as particularly resource intensive, especially where individual mentoring was provided. Workload allowances were inconsistent both within and across institutions. There was a frequent reliance on goodwill or ambitious staff who took on mentoring and assessing roles for personal career development.

For the two international institutions where the first language was not English, language (in terms of accreditation documentation, access to Advance HE resources for staff, and applications) was identified as a barrier. There was a specific concern expressed that those who struggled to write proficiently in English, especially in a particular reflective/descriptive style, were disadvantaged.

Other challenges mentioned were:

- + the cost of institutional accreditation, particularly when resources are tight within the HE sector
- + difficulties in measuring impact – particularly on students
- + the paperwork associated with the accreditation and re-accreditation process
- + the lower status of teaching compared to research
- + Fellowship regarded by some as an end in itself rather than part of continual professional development
- + difficulty navigating all of the Advance HE resources on the website⁷
- + communication with Advance HE
- + the UK-centric nature of both accreditation aligned to the UKPSF and of most Advance HE resources.

Student perspectives

Of the seven students interviewed overall, five had not heard of Advance HE. The one student who had a good general awareness was a mature student and a qualified teacher. All interviewees felt that educational development was important for teachers in HE and there was some anecdotal evidence that students felt that staff with Fellowship were more student focused. Students felt that there should be greater engagement with the student body on the topic of teacher development.

⁷ It should be noted that not all of the above relates directly to accreditation. For example, the difficulty navigating resources was understood to mean accreditation resources and other resources. Participants in the study did not always make the distinction clear.

6 Case study one

6.1 Profile

With 6000 students and just over 300 staff, this small UK institution currently has had two HEA Accredited Routes to Fellowship since 2018. The PG Cert in Academic Practice (Higher Education) is currently accredited at D1 and D2. The CPD route supports staff to apply for recognition via an experiential portfolio, accredited at D1, D2 and D3.

6.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

Academics (particularly those new to HE) engage most with the accredited provision but, increasingly, professional service staff, such as careers service staff and library staff, also engage. In general, professional and support services pursue D1, while academic staff seek D2 and D3. Conversations have begun with quality and standards staff about accreditation, with the lead for that department pursuing D3. Doctoral students are also introduced to the PSF before they start teaching, although there was no expectation to achieve Fellowship or Associate Fellowship. The most difficult group to engage with are experienced academics who have taught for a long time and do not see the need to gain recognition. Resources are used more widely.

“Although I’d come from education, I hadn’t worked at a university before so they (the resources) have been hugely beneficial to me personally so I do use them a lot. I use a lot of their support tools, briefings and so on...and we’re doing a lot of leadership development at the moment and they’ve been hugely supportive with that.” (*Director of HR*)

6.3 How do staff engage?

To support individuals to achieve Fellowship, a series of events is delivered including support sessions; writing retreat; briefings; buddying systems (eg for direct entry at D4) and the Festival of Teaching and Learning. An informal mentoring process is used to support direct application at D4. Due to the relatively small size of the institution, informal conversations also take place to check on progress and introduce Fellowship. Committee meetings regularly report data in relation to key performance indicators.

A big challenge is incorporating time for CPD into the workload model. All three staff noted variation in time allocated across the faculties.

“I’d say we were in a transition phase to getting it acknowledged formally. I’m aware that some of our Heads of Department use that to safeguard time for their academics but generally the picture is that it’s not there yet.” (*Associate Dean T&L*)

Collaboration between the Teaching and Learning (T&L) department and HR is very important. An interesting example described by the Director of HR is a mentoring programme for all staff. This includes an HR person mentoring an academic and that academic having 'exposure to' a senior leader. The purpose of this process is to bring academic and non-academic staff together and 'break down the barriers'. T&L staff are instrumental "in demystifying the ways that academic staff operate and work", listening to and understanding HR. Leading on from this, there is a new performance management system planned, drawing on the PSF.

6.4 Benefits of accreditation

All three interviewed staff described the main benefits of accreditation in terms of demonstrating a strong commitment to teaching. This can be traced back to the institution's history and ethos as a teaching college and the accreditation/UKPSF helps to introduce the teaching ethos to new members of staff. It is commonly felt that accreditation is important for benchmarking to national standards, aligning the institution in terms of quality control. Accreditation is regarded as important for supporting staff to become reflective practitioners too and helping their career trajectories.

"It has wide recognition and acceptance within the sector and, of course, it is something that is transportable. So they can take it from one role to another and from one institution to another. It's kind of like a passport for practice as it were." (*Dean of T&L*)

The Director of HR stressed that accreditation helps the credibility of the institution, which in turn can improve recruitment so that the institution competes favourably with other local institutions. They also plan to embed the PSF into a new people's strategy and new job descriptions, to ensure that new members of staff not only understand what is expected of them, but also fully appreciate the CPD opportunities.

6.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

Embedding accreditation occurs through a comprehensive support programme, as well via data sharing with governance committees and the reporting process. They are also beginning to look more closely at how accreditation can feature in their wider marketing approach.

"It's built into the ongoing annual approach to supporting staff and their professional development and of course the strategic mission of the institution. So this is part of a longer term programme of building leadership and it's increasingly seen as something which is a requirement for leadership – having Senior Fellowship is increasingly in itself a requirement for promotion for Associate Professor or Professor." (*Dean of T&L*)

Regarding promotions criteria, the Dean of T&L highlighted that it was “very explicit” so that “it can’t be overlooked”. One area on the agenda is increasing staff with national teaching awards and ensuring more consistency of practice across faculties. As the Associate Dean for T&L explained, the KPIs work well as comparative tool across faculties but there remains variation. Collaborating with HR has helped to better integrate PSF into policy eg introducing bursaries to support staff to do master’s degrees.

There are plans to align the KPIs more closely to other policies. For example, the Director of HR stated that they were trying to develop KPIs referring to staff as well as students. The staff development policy is also being changed in collaboration with T&L to ensure that it’s a document “that they (academics) can read and makes sense to them”.

6.6 Further opportunities for professional development

There are plenty of opportunities for staff in terms of progression; for example, for Fellows and Senior Fellows to become mentors and assessors. Both the Dean and Associate Dean for T&L staff stress the importance of their Academic development Programme framework to provide an overarching body of CPD events. The Festival of T&L helps to share practice, collaborate with partners and ensure the institution’s good standing.

As the Dean of T&L explained, “National emergencies are the mother of invention” and the Covid situation is expected to lead to changes in practice and “more blended ways of working in the future”. Indeed, many events are already being offered online.

Changes to processes are leading to cultural shifts. For example, a university-level review of the operation of programme boards was led by Programme Directors rather than a Dean or Associate Dean. The outcomes were excellent. Following the mentoring scheme (explained above) introduced by HR in collaboration with T&L, professional services will be working more within faculties for more ‘cross over’ and ‘better understanding between groups’. It is hoped that this will lead to an improved awareness of different roles.

“My team is much more embedded in the academic world than they used to be and have a bigger understanding. So my role sits on academic promotions now whereas previously my role didn’t. So again having that insight helps me in terms of my role and getting a feel for what the development needs are... There are clear gaps that I’ve seen through academic promotions that I might not have seen before... So that’s been fascinating. I think if they hadn’t brought my role into that process we might still be working in this very siloed approach, so it’s been a game changer, actually.”
(Director HR)

However, as the Dean for T&L added, academics suffer from a “crowded mental space” following a considerable change in roles over the last 15-20 years. As levels of accountability, transparency and administration have increased their workload, it may be harder for them to find time to engage with the recognition process.

6.7 Challenges

Some communication challenges with Advance HE were noted for re-accreditation, particularly in terms of establishing the revisions required. According to the Dean, discussion over minor or major changes took “a lot of to’ing and fro’ing”. The Associate Dean for T&L also suggested that, although individuals at Advance HE were very helpful, communication was often “piecemeal” and that having one point of contact at Advance HE (rather than separate ones for accreditation, events etc) would help. Using the virtual learning environment (VLE) more effectively was also suggested. More proactive support is needed for HEIs to navigate and digest all the available resources and information that Advance HE provides. As the Director of HR said, “I don’t have time to read though all the daily digests coming through...I don’t know what I don’t know.” There was also a suggestion that Advance HE might like to make direct contact with HR, which “would be very welcome”.

6.8 Student views

The student representative reported that most students wouldn’t know anything about staff training but that as a students’ union representative, they had been more involved, particularly during the induction process for staff and sometimes in the complaints process for students. When asked what might be the main reason for training lecturers, the student explained:

“It’s to instill in lecturers to be I think more conscious of their own biases and their own approach to their teaching in terms of how students learn now. I think especially now in the current pandemic now I think lecturers more so than ever need to adapt to what’s going on around them.”

(SU representative)

7 Case study two

7.1 Profile

One of the largest higher education institutions in the UK, and a member of the prestigious Russell Group, with over 30,000 students and close to 8,000 staff. The institution has a long-standing commitment to supporting colleagues with the development of their academic practice. The PgCert dates back to 1993 and the Accredited CPD Scheme was an early adopter in 2013. Current accredited provision includes three taught courses (one of which is accredited at D1 and two at D2) and a CPD Scheme accredited from D1 to D3. Applicants for Principal Fellowship are supported to apply direct to Advance HE.

7.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

“There is a high emphasis on teaching for everyone here” was the message conveyed. While new academics are considered the “key target” for HEA fellowships, there is also good engagement from staff that support learning and teaching, such as librarians, technicians and faculty learning technologists. Postgraduate researchers have support sessions to develop applications for Associate Fellowship. Colleagues who are on a fully research track, but who are involved in laboratory support or some supervisory work are also encouraged to engage.

Engagement at Senior Fellowship level was identified as an area where more work was required. The Head of Academic Development felt that there were “fewer Senior Fellows than [she] would have expected given [the university’s] track record in student education”. The Head of HR also noted that there were longer-serving staff who had not engaged. To rectify this there was a proposal to establish a network of Senior Fellows across the institution.

7.3 How do staff engage?

There is a dedicated site on the university’s virtual learning environment for professional recognition, and regular briefing sessions are held. Workshop-style sessions are delivered to provide support advice and guidance for colleagues making fellowship applications. There is also a mentoring scheme and a peer support session where colleagues can come and share work in progress and offer mutual feedback. This helps both parties engage and understand the requirements of the scheme and the UKPSF.

Interviewees spoke passionately about the value of all staff engaging in accreditation as the DVC Student Education conveyed below:

“We do run events and ask people in more senior roles why, if they are doing a Senior Fellow-type role, why not get those letters on your CV and why not demonstrate that. But it is all kind of encouragement rather than a requirement.”

7.4 Benefits of accreditation

All interviewees demonstrated an awareness of the need to professionalise education. Both the DVC Education and the Head of Academic Development mentioned the importance of Fellowship in raising the profile of education within a research-intensive institution, as well as creating the time and space for reflection on practice.

“We’ve moved away from teaching people to teach through the objective being embedded reflective practice... I think the UKPSF is a so much better fit and a template and framework that is adaptable so that you can do a good think that makes sense locally. I would always want to see it challenge itself... But it is not causing that feeling of an imposed ill-fitting garment that it used to... The framework itself is still a good read and if everyone was testing and validating their own practice and their own development of modules and programmes against it all the time, I think we would be in good shape. The fact is as valid when we are teaching online as it was when we were teaching in lecture theatres is quite revealing.” (*DVC Student Education*)

Having a tangible, national framework that is well recognised and which people can align their practice to was regarded as a huge benefit at both the individual and institutional level. The portability of individual Fellowships was promoted to staff:

“If you move, people will recognise it in terms of evidence of what you’ve achieved in learning and teaching.” (*Head of Academic Development*)

More broadly, the DVC also discussed the wider benefits to the sector, and other Russell Group institutions, of having a national body and accreditation scheme.

7.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

All three interviewees described accreditation as being well embedded in institutional processes and all cited the promotion and probation policies. Achieving Fellowship was described by the DVC as being “a normal part of academic life here” and was a requirement of probation for academics within two years, and for Academic Fellows within five years.

“The other huge thing is, with some merit, our political masters and wider societies and the commenters, (eg Daily Mail articles), think that we’re crap at education, and that MATTERS! Anything we can do to demonstrate commitment matters greatly... We are in a better shape for having a National Body and a framework... The fact that so many other countries are interested in it [The UKPSF] and emulate it is quite revealing... I am a huge advocate of strengthening and extending and articulating more clearly the role that accredited professional practice development in higher education plays.” (*DVC Student Education*)

“Our senior leadership are sufficiently politically attuned that they have never seen the achievement of numbers and league tables and the proportion of Fellows as the point. They have always got the articulation and professionalisation of education as the point. We want to see the proportion of Fellows keep growing but it is not a KPI we watch.” (*DVC Student Education*)

For promotion it was described as being a “bit odd at Professorial level not to be a Senior Fellow but not absolutely rigidly required”. However, the language of the UKPSF was mirrored in the language of the promotion criteria, and there was a requirement to demonstrate achievement in education on both the teaching-focused track and the academic leadership track. The Head of HR felt that the institution had “taken the lead” in developing clear criteria for promotion on the teaching-focused pathway and noted that it had been difficult to establish the equivalence in teaching and scholarship for promotion to professor. “We are trying to articulate what else counts...and this remains under review.”

Those staff that gain their accreditation via the Postgraduate certificate are allocated time agreed with their Heads of Department. There is also a move to make the time allocation more explicit for PGRs. As the Head of Academic Development explained:

“It’s covered in our code of practice for PGRs who teach. We are just updating that so that it is really explicit about the time that is needed for development.”

For staff that engage with accreditation via the CPD scheme rather than on a taught programme the allocation of time was regarded as an area which “isn’t fully sorted yet”.

“It is firmly on the agenda and we’ve just signed up to the concordat for employment of research staff ...One of the recommendations is the 10 days’ guaranteed time each year for development activity...We got it through the university and yes it is committed to anybody on our research staff having dedicated 10 days’ time. So of course the question now is could we look again at what we say for ALL staff.”

Another good marker of the strategic importance of accreditation was the requirement to hold HEA fellowship as a condition for applying for funding (up to £10,000) from the Institute of Teaching and Excellence.

7.6 Further opportunities for professional development

Beyond opportunities for Fellowship, the institution supports colleagues on the pathway to National Teaching Fellowship or a Collaborative Teaching Award. One of the ways potential candidates are identified is via senior fellow applications. Fellows of the Institute of Teaching Excellence are also seen as the future leaders in student education. “They are starting to get out and about beyond the university and that seems to put them in a good space in terms of National Teaching Fellow and we can start to work with that...” (*Head of Academic Development*)

7.7 Challenges of accreditation

Despite strongly endorsing the benefits of institutional accreditation, both the Head of Academic Development and the DVC Student Education raised the difficulty of measuring the impact of accreditation.

“You would like to measure impact on pedagogic practice but this is extraordinarily difficult...you would never be able to disentangle it all...The habit of reflective practice is not about the impact on pedagogic practice now, it’s building a cohort of educators who will adapt in an informed and research-based way to future demands. And, of course, 2020 was a rather good year for that. Whatever we were saying to ourselves about what we teach and pedagogic practice is irrelevant if it was focused on content and highly relevant if it was focused on reflective practice and research-based teaching...You’re preparing the teaching aspect of your academic staff for an unknown future and the best equipment is a research-based habit.” (*DVC Student Education*)

The Head of Academic Development is currently working on a longitudinal evaluation to find out the impact of fellowship on individuals’ practice. However, she recognised that institutional benefits were less tangible.

While acknowledging that there were always financial pressures, it was felt that “[This university] is a long way down the track of valuing education” and therefore Advance HE accreditation “is very consensual and matters greatly” (*DVC Student Education*). However, the Head of Academic Development noted that providing appropriate guidance and support for accreditation was very resource intensive: “whenever things are tight anything which is seen as development activity is under the microscope and threatened because it’s nice to have”. The annual accreditation fee was described as “a big chunk of money per year”, and there was concern about how this was perceived in relation to the additional local resource required to support accreditation.

“When it comes to re-accreditation...I think if a scheme has been well established and we have an external assessor who has continued to say the scheme meets the requirements I don’t feel like we ever get to a point where it is lighter touch and that’s problematic because you feel like you are going to spend the same amount of time again as you did to get accredited in the first place.”

Another challenge that was mentioned was the lack of feedback from Advance HE following the annual reporting process. This was described as “the black hole”. How do we learn from each other about what’s working well in different institutions?

8 Case study three

8.1 Profile

This large international institution has 20,000 students and just under 4,000 staff. Since 2013, D1-D4 descriptors are accredited via the CPD route. Before their accreditation, the institution ran a six-month full-time master's-level programme which was not deemed feasible for staff.

8.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

Currently more than 500 people have one of the four categories of Fellowship and uptake is growing. Sessional teaching staff (particularly PhD students) also apply for Associate Fellowship which is regarded as a “great strength”. Although the institution is research-oriented, there is a need to recognise and certificate teaching and learning through a formal route. An important strategy for engagement has been to encourage groups of Fellows to support each other and the dialogic route, or professional conversation, is instrumental in this. Senior Fellows particularly find the professional conversation useful as they can fit it into their busy schedule.

“The Senior Fellows are the ones who’ve been driving campus-wide conversations around the value of recognition, you know, creating for other staff the exemplar as to how they might behave.”
(TLC lead)

8.3 How do staff engage?

Compared to previous schemes “the HEA integrated much better with what people were doing in the classroom”. The institution refers to the PSF rather than UKPSF because of its international status but as the TLC lead explains, this also emphasises its universal application.

“So the PSF has a universality that I think most people embrace rather quickly because as soon as you look at it you forget that there is UK on the front because the principles are not intrinsically British and I’m hoping that in future iterations of the PSF it won’t have that “UK” in the name because it really is superfluous and in some ways misleading. It suggests that there’s something distinctively regional about these principles that isn’t.” (TLC Lead)

Applying for Fellowship is encouraged among all faculty and personal mentoring is provided. Individual support is also offered on various teaching and learning issues.

Although gaining Fellowship is not compulsory for promotion, the PSF and Fellowship are embedded into promotion criteria. According to the TLC lead this helps people think about applying for promotion and acknowledge the hierarchical aspect of the PSF categories.

“You can’t claim that the recognition is not hierarchical when the descriptors are nested, apart from Principal Fellow... So, Advance HE ought to stop kidding themselves that describing the categories as not somehow ordered is credible, it’s just not... Our staff understand that these are levels, so we call them categories because that’s what the HEA says they are and categories suggest unordered but everyone infers an order and everyone knows that Fellow is “lower”, in some sense, than Senior Fellow and so on, so that’s just a given, and obvious from the names of the categories and the descriptors themselves.” (*TLC Lead*)

“Embedding reference [of Fellowship in promotion criteria] has had a significant impact ... I’d like to say people were doing it anyway because they’re passionate about teaching and they don’t do it because of any possible benefits to themselves, but we are all extremely busy academics and you know that extra little bit of prompting – as people would do it but the fact that they do it this year and not some unspecified time in the future – I really think that they’ve had a really big impact.” (*PVCE*)

8.4 Benefits of accreditation

The main benefit of accreditation is that it signals a commitment to professional development of teaching and learning. It also helps with benchmarking the institution against others internationally so that they understand what other institutions are doing, whether it is working and what teachers require. The institution was one of the first to be accredited in their country and because of that, took a leadership role in the early days which helped it network nationally.

“We’re no longer the biggest provision outside the UK ... but you know we still see ourselves as being the spiritual leader if not getting accolades for being the biggest.” (*TLC lead*)

Embedding the PSF and Fellowship scheme into the promotion process in particular is raising the profile of teaching and learning and leading to more transparency.

“It doesn’t matter where in the world you are if you say ‘I’m a PFHEA’, I immediately get an understanding of what you been doing and the quality of what you’ve been doing and it’s that transferability across institutions which I think is fantastic and it’s a benefit not only for us when we recruit but also for staff when they apply for positions elsewhere, that they have a transferable qualification in this area of teaching in higher education.” (*PVCE*)

8.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

Fellowships are embedded in all professional development activities and according to the TLC lead, “has gone beyond the teaching activities”. In all colleges (faculties), there is at least one Senior Fellow who acts as a mentor for another faculty and in the words of the TLC lead, “Fellowships now describe education”.

“It is something that has become far more embedded at the university than any other previous attempts at anything like this at the university ...We have been trying for many years, at least two decades and this is the first thing that has taken off, not just the very small group of people who are interested in the theory and methods of teaching.” (PVCE)

8.6 Further professional development opportunities

A series of modules is offered to staff in two-hour sessions focusing on particular aspects of teaching and learning. These have become a key part of their professional development and offer support for staff at all stages of teaching practice, for example developing new units of study. There are also Vice Chancellor awards for teaching that demonstrate enhancement of learning. However, the accreditation process is in itself very constructive and productive. According to the TLC lead, “it’s not about excellence it’s about effectiveness”.

“There’s a clear progression for people to aspire to and it starts with the individual and then ...as you develop you start mentoring other teachers which is unique for Senior Fellowship because until you actually develop your own teaching you cannot start working with others.” (PVCE)

8.7 Challenges of accreditation

The main challenge for accreditation is resourcing. One reason for this is the institutional focus on research, “so finding the oxygen for other parts of education is difficult”.

“I think one of our challenges is to get Fellowship conversations off the back burner for people but that’s a tough one because you know people understand that we’re not going anywhere whereas the grant deadlines pass.” (TLC lead)

Another reason is that, especially in the early days of accreditation, few people had been through the process themselves and therefore weren't able to mentor Senior Fellows. To help address this more support is provided online and it was suggested that Covid-19 might lead to more investment in online education. This is particularly important given that traditionally the institution is research-focused with an emphasis on teaching students face-to-face. The investment in online education is welcome but the cost of accreditation may also become a challenge depending "on how the situation unfolds around the world" given Covid-19.

The issue of Advance HE branding was also mentioned as a challenge:

"Frankly I don't think rebranding has been a success right and everyone still thinks it is the HEA ... think that's been very problematic." (PVCE)

8.8 Student view

Although the student had not heard of the UKPSF or PSF, they were aware of Advance HE as an organisation. They were not aware of specific training available and unsure how lecturers might benefit from participating in training and development. However, they did wonder whether, given the Covid-19 situation and discussion around online learning, there might be more emphasis on the student voice as part of their future training and development. The student was studying for a postgraduate qualification at the institution and had completed their undergraduate degree at another international non-accredited institution. Although unable to make a direct comparison given the different degree levels, the student believed that the standard of teaching at the non-accredited institution was as good (if not better) than at the accredited institution. This calls into question the relationship between accreditation as well as number of Fellows and the student experience.

"Standardised trainings for faculty would definitely help them to improve their teaching and learning. There is a need to engage faculty. Because teaching is not something that people are gifted with, well some might be but not everyone and then many faculty are professionals as well. But when someone puts extra effort in teaching and makes it more fun it shows that they are really passionate about what they are doing, but providing standardised trainings to faculty will definitely help them." (SU Representative)

9 Case study four

9.1 Profile

This large Australian institution is home to 50,000 students. The institution is well known for its emphasis on high-quality teaching and student satisfaction. The institution has seen a significant increase in the number of Fellows in recent years, which has grown to almost 900 across all categories (at the time of interview) since accreditation in 2016. The university offers an experiential pathway accredited at D1, D2, D3 and D4 (with dialogue options at D2 and D3) as well as a comprehensive suite of other teaching development modules that, while not accredited, are aligned to the UKPSF. The institution also offers a specialist award ‘Associate Fellow Indigenous’.

9.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

The accredited provision is designed to be highly inclusive of academic, professional and learning support roles at all levels. The ADTL described accreditation as also “infiltrating the research space” and noted its appeal as being “quite broad”.

“Sometimes it surprises me who has actually applied [for Fellowship] ... I look down the list of faculty members ... ‘Oh, wow, they’ve put in one’...When I have mentor conversations...we talk about their career, where they want to take it etc...I’ll always suggest a HEA Fellowship because it’s one of the truly peer-reviewed processes they can actually go through to evidence the impact of their T&L.” (ADTL)

The Associate Fellow Indigenous is part of the institutional vision to ensure that all staff in every subject are integrating indigenous perspectives into learning and teaching.

“It’s become really powerful and drawn in a different community...it’s drawn in people who are already really decent educators and senior lecturers but they’ve never been a fellow. They’ve just gone straight to Associate Fellow Indigenous because its speaking to something they care about.” (Director, Learning and Teaching Unit)

9.3 How do staff engage?

Staff are well supported to engage with the experiential pathway. Workshops are offered for applicants engaging at all levels where de-identified exemplars are shared to stimulate ideas. Personal mentoring is also widely available. The ADTL described the support to write and put together an application as “absolutely phenomenal”.

“In any single year there are around 50 staff who are formally reviewers or mentors into the scheme and the community has been growing at around 150 people a year ... there was a very deliberate strategy to go to scale and build something for everybody, that everybody saw themselves in, that wasn't just for excellence.” (*Director, Learning and Teaching Unit*)

Both mentors and reviewers are provided with training and these roles are also given recognition via a nominal workload allocation.

“I learn from reading people's applications [to write referee reports for them] about some amazing things they are doing ... just having that awareness helps me in my role ... I can then ask people to contribute to initiatives because I know what they have done. How [else] would I find out what everyone is doing? So, yes, I definitely think it's been good to share.” (*ADTL*)

9.4 Benefits of accreditation

Staff cited numerous benefits to institutional accreditation including: global recognition; raising the profile of both individuals and the institution; encouraging staff to engage in teaching and learning scholarship; providing recognition; creating a community of learners; access to wider resources from Advance HE; and the sharing of experiences.

“The thing that always drew me to it was firstly it was global – it wasn't domestic – [national] – and secondly it was about educational effectiveness not educational excellence ... Excellence isn't most people, most academics will not be excellent...but they do need to be effective. So I was really drawn to this idea that it's a benchmark. It's a level that everyone should be able to achieve in terms of effective practice... The value to me was so obvious because it was making people re-engage with scholarship. It was giving people recognition for caring about learning and teaching and building their practise so that it could be judged to be effective if you're teaching students.” (*Director, Learning and Teaching Unit*)

The ADTL emphasised the importance of individual recognition for teaching and learning when access to grants are so scarce:

“It’s been quite challenging across our careers to ... have some actual recognition ... to be a good teaching scholar ... it’s very hard to get grants in this space now ... you can research around your practice but this [HEA fellowship] is something that gives you recognition [in teaching] whereas an NHMRC grant or category 1 grant ... worth so many millions of dollars ... gives you that recognition [in research] ... it’s not just being a member, it’s the culture, it’s the value, it’s everything that comes with being a partner institution.”

The support provided recently via Advance HE in relation to Covid-19 was particularly appreciated.

“The document on the rapid transformation to online learning ... the webinar that [Advance HE] ran ... was just invaluable in getting me started in transforming an entire Faculty to online. It was so great to have [Advance HE] say ‘Here’s some resources that we’ve pooled; feel free to disseminate; to use this’. That’s what I love about [Advance HE] ... it is a community, and a community of learners who are willing to share resources, and progress things for the good of teaching and learning.” (ADTL)

9.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

The Director, Learning and Teaching Unit and the ADTL described Advance HE accreditation and the UKPSF (they refer to it as the PSF) as being “deeply embedded”, “very well known” and having had an “enduring impact”. The PSF is strategically aligned with core strategies and policies including promotion and the Academic Career Framework.

“We got it featured in the promotion guidance, so not promotion criteria but promotion guidance, which makes a difference because people who want to be promoted look carefully at what will be seen as an indicator. I sent out media releases which gave a profile to it in the region so then people were reading about it in the Saturday newspaper as well as internally on the university website. It starts to take on a power and people start to understand the language.”
(Director, Learning and Teaching Unit)

The HR representative had a slightly different perspective and agreed the accredited scheme was “well known” but “not necessarily pervasive”. While achieving professional recognition is not a requirement of probation, nor explicitly required for promotion, it is used as an indicator of performance. There is variation across the University with some Heads of School requiring new appointments to hold Associate Fellowship.

“In 2019 The Academic Career Framework was developed. This is a comprehensive reference framework used across the whole life cycle of academia from hiring, promotion, career conversations, decisions about promotion ... and within this Framework are three domains, one of them is Learning and Teaching. Now in that domain there’s certainly opportunity to recognise the HEA fellowship space. So in each of either Performance, Planning and Review, career conversations, or promotion, that [HEA fellowship] is one ... piece of evidence or indicator of performance that staff can use to demonstrate within the learning and teaching space.” (*HR Rep*)

Impact has been carefully tracked since Accreditation commenced and the Scheme Leader cited “very strong evidence” of fellowship being referenced in Promotion Committee discussions as well as in national teaching award applications.

“I see great pride among our new fellows and a great commitment to supporting the scheme from people who’ve achieved fellowship in the past so I think it’s created a community of practice that I really truly believe will endure.” (*Director, Learning and Teaching Unit*)

9.6 Further opportunities for professional development

Several related professional development opportunities were cited that specifically support the opportunities for leadership in teaching and learning.

“We built an accredited mentor scheme in 2019 ... so people are recognised at being at three different levels of mentoring ... So anyone who is mentoring anybody to achieve fellowship can do this developmental module: three hours self-directed online and three hours facilitated, and they get level 1 status. People can work towards Level 2 status which is when they’ve successfully mentored an applicant towards HEA fellowship drawing on the principals of effective mentoring from their Level 1. At Level 3 accredited mentors support a distributed group of others who are mentoring applicants directly in fellowship.” (*Director, Learning and Teaching Unit*)

A further suite of developmental modules ‘Leading others in learning and teaching’ had also just been launched as a direct response to demand from the Senior Fellow community. “They basically said you’re offering lots of professional development for how to be an effective educator but we want to have formal development to build on our roles as leaders in learning and teaching.”

9.7 Challenges of accreditation

Three key challenges were identified across the four interviews. The first centred around institutional resourcing, which the impact of Covid-19 has placed firmly in the spotlight. The accredited provision was described by the Director of the Learning and Teaching Unit as having been “run on a shoestring and deep commitment”. Connected with this, the challenge of “demonstrating relevance, importance and value to the institution” was cited.

“I think part of the downfall of our scheme has been that holy grail of being able to say to positivist researchers that there is a clear correlation [ie] if you’re a HEA fellow you get 0.5 more on a Likert scale student evaluation of your unit than if you’re not a HEA fellow ... We [the Unit] have just been informed that there needs to be a move away from external benchmarking and instead more focus on service delivery. So, as of December we are going to close our accredited HEA fellowship scheme which is all pathways for recognition, and from July next year we may close our Associate Fellow Indigenous.” (*Director, Learning and Teaching Unit*)

The second challenge articulated was related to the accreditation paperwork itself which was regarded as “very bureaucratic” and in need of “streamlining”.

“I think there is an awful lot of reproduction and replication across the guidance and the template.” (*Director of the Learning and Teaching Unit*)

Finally, a comment was made which relates to the branding of the UK PSF as UK-centric. “The criticism that you hear within the sector in Australia is colonialism”. At this institution the ‘UK’ had been deliberately removed from any materials for this reason.

9.8 Student view

The student had not heard of Advance HE, PSF or Fellowship before working as an intern at the Learning and Teaching Unit. They thought that students generally expect “standard teaching training to be part of academics” teaching preparation but do not expect to know the details. However, their view was that the quality of teaching has a direct impact on the student experience.

“So it’s really evident when the teachers don’t put the effort in... Or when they just don’t know how to put together a useful PowerPoint slide or Blackboard site or really just basic standards things you would need to use as teaching resources. I’d say that’s another really big thing [about differentiating good from less good teachers] as well.” (*SU representative*)

“It’s definitely something we talk about, it definitely, definitely has an impact on learning if the teachers don’t know what they’re doing or if they can’t deliver the content in a useful way to students.” (*SU representative*)

Moreover, the student interview pointed out that students pay a great deal to go to university and therefore it is important that academics take the time required to learn how to teach well. Indeed, the student also suggested that academics might like to share their experiences of training and development so that students appreciate their efforts.

10 Case study five

10.1 Profile

This international institution has some 3,000 students and 15,000 staff, distributed across several countries/continents. It has been accredited for D1 and D2 CPD routes for about a year.

10.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

The focus so far has been on faculty (academic staff) but there are plans to offer Fellowship to non-faculty staff such as librarians.

“We wanted to benchmark [our faculty CPD] against international standards. We wanted to be sure about the validity of the work we were doing in terms of responding to the needs of the higher education faculty. It is the accreditation with Advance HE that very much provides us that international benchmarking; that validity against targets that are internationally recognised ... aligned with the needs of the faculty and HE institutions in the ways that they function in today’s climate. So [the accredited provision] is an important programme for us and alignment is significant for the wider program [of faculty CPD] as well because the wide programme is now linked to this important initiative of Advance HE.” (*Vice Provost Research*)

10.3 How do staff engage?

Attendance at a three-day introductory teaching development programme, based on a structured and well-known instructional skills workshop, is a compulsory prerequisite to engaging with the CPD fellowship program. This is helping the institution impose a standard minimum understanding of pedagogical theory and skills among its teaching faculty and ensures engagement with UKPSF Dimension A5.

“When it was first rolled out ... when we first said ‘There is going to be a compulsory aspect to this’, there was some initial [push back] ‘You can’t make me do that’, but now I don’t see that at all. I think that the polite conversation is in favour of developing as teachers.” (*Vice President HR*)

“We always try to tell them ‘so after this you are eligible to apply for your fellowship’ and they actually sit up and you can see the wheels turning in their minds because [fellowship] is an achievement. It’s a badge ... that you want to wear very proudly.” (*Associate Director T&L*)

After this, D1 and D2 applicants are provided with a focused writing workshop (usually two half-days, available virtually or in person). An optional writing retreat, with a mentor present for advice, supports further support if required.

In relation to fellowship support, the initial description in the scheme of an applicant's support person as 'mentor' has now been changed to 'critical friend'. In that cultural context especially, the word 'mentor' is associated with hierarchical guidance/sponsorship, leading to unrealistic expectations about the support that would be provided for applicants. As one critical friend explained, "It is a lot of expectation because even with the feedback our applicants ... always say 'Give us more support' but we don't want to give a lot of support because we want to standardise the process."

All CPD activities are increasingly being aligned with the UKPSF, "so that people start to become familiar with what elements /domains of the UKPSF dimensions [the activity meets]." For example, the CPD Manager is trying to ensure that programme fliers state that 'This workshop meets the UKPSF criteria A1, A2 etc'.

The UKPSF will also be used as the standard in future institutional documentation, such as a new Teaching Dossier, to encourage staff to think about how they meet the relevant criteria. The Associate Director T&L stressed that it is important to pass on the message to Fellowship applicants that it is a "doable process, not an impossible task, not as daunting as you think".

"There is still this western benchmark ... [looking to] the UK... So I've not seen a kickback on the UKPSF, although I increasingly refer to it just as the PSF. The reality is that it is the only national framework that I know ... for HE T&L." (*Vice Provost Quality T&L*)

"If you're trying to look at whether to lose the UK [in UKPSF] and find some other name ... over time it could be more inclusive and have a different kind of attraction if it wasn't [based] in one country ... [Advance HE] evolving over time ... global ... international ... multinational ... would be an asset. In (institution) we are already that way and having to balance all these different criteria ... so it's an asset to have this credential that is unifying in a way." (*Vice President HR*)

The institution may seek accreditation for D3 as well as D1 and D2 in its next re-accreditation cycle, as this would address issues around in-house leadership development and give consistency to application formats across D1-D3.

10.4 Benefits of accreditation

One impact of accreditation (and in response to Covid-19) is a new post of Vice Provost T&L, leading the T&L centre. This is prompting questions to senior management such as “if teaching is important, how are we demonstrating this in our promotions?”

“Faculty (academic) development at the University was previously predominantly looked at from a research perspective. There would be faculty development awards and there would be accolades for faculty ... investment in faculty development ... but primarily from a research perspective. What this [accreditation] has done and the work that led to it ... attempts to create a balance between teaching and research.” (*Vice Provost Research*)

“With the scheme now being accredited internationally, it has drawn senior management’s attention to [institution] being aligned to best practice ... and this is very important to the University because, although we are in the developing world largely, we do not want to be seen to be a developing world university. We want to be seen as a university of standing wherever we are, and we realise I think it is much harder to get there with research ... being so small and being where we are in terms of our resources ... being so young... but our teaching experience can be as good as anywhere in the world. So in the first instance the biggest impact has been a benchmark to best practice internationally and giving credibility to teaching.” (*Vice Provost Quality T&L*)

The Vice-President HR noted that students have become more assertive over the years and there is a sense of this student voice being addressed by developing teaching skills and abilities in the faculty. Connected to this, accreditation is helping to promote the work of T&L teams internally.

“I think the linkage and partnership with Advance HE has worked to our advantage and given us [T&L unit] more credibility within the University.” (*Associate Director T&L*)

In the meantime, members of staff such as the CPD Manager are taking full advantage of the Advance HE programmes online and seeking support via HE Connect and promoting this to colleagues.

One unexpected outcome has been the loss of staff who have achieved Fellowship: “I think actually they are using [HEA fellowship] as a qualification and moving [on] ... its providing mobility.” This is slowing the rate at which the cohort of active Fellows is building within the institution, which has implications for the availability of critical friends and internal assessors.

10.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

The institution has only recently achieved accreditation, so it is too early to consider the program ‘*embedded*’. However, there was consensus among interviewees that the University leadership is committed to accreditation, and explicit links to the UKPSF are now being made in policies. This means that “Even if people don’t want to get fellowship, we are able to use the UKPSF as part of our teaching dossier, promotion ... using that as a way of assessing teaching effectiveness”.

“At every opportunity we have [with the faculty] we try to talk about Advance HE, the fellowships, and link it to what they are doing [in the CPD workshop] at that particular point, so that people can begin to see ... and I think we will have to do that much more actively than we have been doing.”
(Associate Director T&L)

“All of a sudden after the scheme came in place we have Programme Directors and Deans coming to us to say ‘Can you help us assess teaching effectiveness?’ So we are bringing in the UKPSF there.” (Vice Provost Quality T&L)

10.6 Engagement

Three programmes run across the institution. The first is a very popular introduction to T&L, the second is an annual redesign workshop which focuses on designing or redesigning courses and the third is a nine-month blended learning course which involves taking a face-to-face course and converting it to a blended learning mode. Since Covid-19, lunchtime CPD sessions run using educational technology. However, there is a determined effort to ensure that all of these are linked.

“I like the fact that all this ... the accredited programme and all [the CPD we are doing] all rests within one network because we are constantly working together to try to make things synchronise ... and that’s been a conscious effort on the part of everybody. We don’t [distinguish] between the [accredited] programme and [our other CPD]. For every [CPD] activity we have, we find we tend to blend [in] our other activities and show the linkages among them all.” (Associate Director T&L)

10.7 Challenges

Cost is a significant challenge, especially with UK full economic costing. The view was presented that if Advance HE wishes to extend its international remit, providing low cost access to consultancy services, moderators or links with peer institutions may be a good way forward.

The language of accreditation is also a challenge. Online resources sometimes refer to UK sector terms and although more effort is being made to support other countries such as China and Australia, the developing world is still regarded as a very different context.

“What I worry more about than the [cultural fit of the] UKPSF is the ability [required] ... if you are better at writing English you are more likely to get through that’s my worry because for none of our faculty is English a first language. So those that write better ... are they more likely [to achieve fellowship]? And that’s what I really don’t want.” (*Vice Provost Quality T&L*)

As the number of applicants grows within the institution, there are workload implications for critical friends and assessors. The CPD Manager experiences the need for “constant follow-up” with critical friends and assessors because of the extra workload, as no one involved in the scheme is given “any additional time to work on their application” or to advise, support or assess.

“A significant challenge is how we ensure the creation of a critical mass [of Fellows] and the sharing of workload so that all components of the University ... not just [those] already more robust ... get developed.” (*Vice Provost Research*)

A key support role for the institution has been the External Moderator for the accredited programme. However, the institution feels that the Accreditation Policy limitations set by Advance HE has negatively impacted on that relationship by restricting the training of assessors and mentors to an Advance HE consultant rather than the moderator.

“Advance HE this year have this rule that your [external] moderator cannot be the trainer. Now I understand the potential conflict of interest there but if they have some way [Advance HE] are vetting the moderators ... and [the moderators] have [professional] integrity, then actually the moderators are the best people to know where the gaps are, and support the training [within an accredited institution]. We benefited hugely by having [our moderator] run the training because she was able to pick on what was very important to cover. For example, there was a confusion between [two areas of activity] ... she was able really to show us where we were going wrong, with examples. There was a relationship she had built with the assessors and mentors that meant it wasn't as difficult for [us to encourage] them to come to the training. But now that we have [Advance HE] external people doing the training (... and I insist on the training because we're too new to pretend we know what we're doing ... there's always room to improve) ... I'm finding that the [training now] is a bit too superficial, a bit too generic ... [our] assessors are less motivated to be there because it's not as relevant ... so I think Advance HE need to look at that [decision].”
(Vice Provost Quality T&L)

10.8 Student views

Of the two student representatives interviewed, one had heard of Advance HE while the other had not. However, they both recognise Fellowship as something creditable and noted that teachers they know who have gained Fellowship are generally those who are well liked and respected among students. These teachers generally made time to interact with students and develop their teaching skills.

“There is a lot of difference in the [lecturers] who are really trying, who are trying, who are upgraded (gain fellowship), who are really working on their educational methods, going to conferences ... who knows what works better .. [Compared to] those who are not upgraded. We can see a visible difference in their [teaching] styles.” *(SU Representative 2)*

“I can say there are some changes because I am in contact with some alumni who have been [previously] at (institution), and we normally talk [about] how they were taught, how we are taught [now] and they are saying ‘You are lucky these days, you are getting this, we didn't get this, we didn't get that’ so I can say there are some changes that are happening in the teaching and learning processes.” *(SU Representative 1)*

11 Case study six

11.1 Profile

This international institution has more than 30,000 students and almost 900 staff. Accredited since 2013, it currently offers CPD routes D1 and D2 and a D1 'new to teaching' course and D2 courses, referred to below as the PCAP or PGCAP. Delivery of the accredited provision is carried out by the Teaching and Learning Unit.

11.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

New staff at D1 and those with fewer than five years' teaching experience are generally expected to undertake the taught programmes. More experienced staff (those with over five years' teaching experience) are encouraged to pursue the CPD routes. None of the programmes are compulsory, but by the end of 2018/19, 25% of academics at the institution were Fellows of the HEA.

Heads of Department monitor course evaluations and encourage staff to join a programme, if it is deemed necessary and helpful. Staff are also appraised and offered opportunities to join programmes as part of this process.

"The head of departments, they have access to the course evaluation results OK, so they can see their faculty, they can directly encourage those faculty to join the programme. If they see that [there] is a need, so this is one way and of course the workshops are always advertised across the University and also there are points let's say which are linked to attending such programmes and these points are given in the appraisal of the doctors." (*Director QA*)

"The positive thing for me is that we're getting more people in the programme every year. I mean it goes up and down slightly but generally it's going up." (*TL Unit Director*)

11.3 How do staff engage?

The Teaching and Learning Unit advertises the programmes at the start of the year and communicate with their Deans and Heads of Departments to encourage their staff to apply. There has been no instance when a Head of Department has denied participation in a programme, although they do have to check their workload is manageable. The Director of Quality Assurance works closely with the Teaching and Learning Unit for faculty development.

If staff are at certain points on the salary scale and receive a Fellowship certificate, then they will be offered promotion.

Financial incentives are provided for people who support accreditation as mentors and assessors, although it is thought that this support would be provided without financial support, given the positive experience gained.

“From my personal experience before joining the PGCAP, I was just thinking that teaching means knowing your discipline but after I attended the PGCAP course I understand that each is completely different issue actually so, we become really educators... I like to be involved as [a] mentor also because being a mentor for me is a way of learning, I mean, at the end you are in it with colleagues and you continue exchanging opinion[s] and you see different way[s] of teaching different disciplines and you see different challenges and you see how people overcome those different challenges, so for me it is really interesting.” (*QA Director*)

“Accreditation is very important – people know their strength[s], their weakness[es] and how to overcome it.” (*DVC Academic*)

11.4 Benefits of accreditation

Accreditation is recognition of the university's efforts to improve teaching and learning and provides the framework which enables staff to master their skills. Staff are provided with the opportunity to demonstrate their talent with others and share good practice. For the institution, this can in turn attract more resources to be used for teaching excellence. For example, the programme has been recognised by the government sponsors of faculty training which has had a huge impact on resources.

The work of the Teaching and Learning Unit is raised in various quality assurance and accreditation agencies and the Advance HE accreditation has been specifically mentioned in the institutional review as something which should be continued. Accreditation also provides international benchmarking for the institution.

“The nationals and regional HEIs...they look at you also differently [so] that you are not only evaluating yourself locally. We have much longer [experience working with] quality assurance authority but also...we have also the international accreditation body and thank goodness there is no clash between the two of these. They said it says you are fine [and] also the other one says it's fine and there is no contradiction.” (*DVC Academic*)

“We are mainly a teaching institution, so having this accreditation and having such accredited programme and so on – it is a recognition that we are putting effort into what we are doing and that we are doing it well.” (*QA Director*)

Internally, accreditation has started to create a culture around staff teaching and learning practices.

“You hear staff using terminologies they wouldn’t have been using a few years ago like: formative and summative engagement and active learning, interactive learning. Use of technology is becoming more and more ... but of course in the current situation of having to go online overnight it has helped a lot and you see staff who have been through this programme are able to overcome this initial shock to the system and able to help other staff in their department.” (*TL Unit Director*)

11.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

The UKPSF is very much embedded into the university approach. For example, as the QA Director explained, “we have a clear teaching and learning policy and teaching and learning policy was developed based on UKPSF framework”.

“Last year we updated our teaching and learning policy and you can see a link clearly between the teaching and learning policy and UKPSF. We also introduced induction programmes for new staff. This is for both part timers and full timers, and the UK PSF is the basis for these programmes.” (*TL Unit Director*)

The Director of the Teaching and Learning Unit also stresses the importance of the UKPSF for reviewing practice, providing the basis for induction programmes and appraisals. It is hoped that the UKPSF can now be embedded into the promotion system.

“All of that is included in the staff appraisal, which is a point system. Academics get points for joining any faculty development programmes or workshop which are aligned to one or two areas of the PSF, to make it easier for staff, to know what area in particular a workshop is focusing on. There are also points for being part of the delivery team of the accredited programmes. So helping colleagues and supporting them to get fellowship is also included as one point in the appraisal and my next step is pushing it towards getting it into the promotion system. I haven’t got there yet but that’s my plan.” (*TL Unit Director*)

To be fully embedded it is important that aspects of the accreditation such as the UKPSF align with their other principles.

“I think this is the good thing with Advance HE they do understand we have our also rules and regulation.” (*DVC Academic*)

11.6 Further opportunities for professional development

Extra workshops have been organised by the University on themes such as online learning platforms and quality assurance. They are offered to staff as a form of encouragement to develop their teaching, often involving internal and external speakers. For example, workshops are delivered on flipped classroom and team-based learning.

Another addition to accredited provision has been an orientation programme for new staff, which includes information about applying for Fellowship.

The webinars and resources offered by Advance HE are found to be very helpful and used by staff across the institution. In turn, staff are contributing to Advance HE events and publications.

“There are several staff who like to publish and share their experience in different conferences in education, I think one of our senior fellows has a paper in this year’s Advance HE conference, it’s going to be an online event.” (*TL Unit Director*)

11.7 Challenges

One of the challenges for this international institution is the language barrier as it presents a barrier for those who do not understand English. Another issue is the workload of staff, especially given that the PGCAP runs for a year, although it is acknowledged that the financial incentive to support mentors and assessors does help with this.

“Sometimes staff want to be part of the programme but it’s a one-year commitment so sometimes there’s [a] certain project they need to work on midway through the programme which makes them unable to complete the programme.” (*TL Unit Director*)

12 Case study seven

12.1 Profile

This research-led institution was first accredited in 2007. Currently it has a D2 PGCert course and CPD routes at categories D1, D2 and D3. With more than 20,000 students and 3,000 staff, the institution has worked hard to increase the number of Fellows, previously having the lowest percentage in the UK.

12.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

Academics, career staff, library staff, support staff, English language and student support staff engage with accredited provision. There is normally at least one librarian attending the PGCert course and two technicians went on to win an internal student-nominated award.

“Our stats, if you look at them, reflect some interesting patterns in terms of whether people are research prominent or teaching prominent in terms of embracing teaching fellowship and we’re quite proud of that, that it’s mixed-economy and that’s a good thing. It’s not just those people who are on teaching strands thinking about their futures and looking to that.” *(Unit Director)*

12.3 How do staff engage?

If academics do not have Fellowship when they first arrive, they have to achieve it as part of their 12 months’ probation, normally via the PGCert. If not on probation, they have to apply and get acknowledgement from their line manager to put it on their timetable. After a “hard fought battle”, staff on the PGCert are also entitled to an afternoon a week to work on it. Interestingly, introducing a more stringent application process for those not on probation to get on to the programme has resulted in more applications.

Some apply for Associate Fellow and then return to achieve Fellow. When the institution reached 500 Fellows, an evaluation was carried out involving interviews with Fellows. When asked why they had completed Fellowship, while some referred to it as a “tick box exercise”, they did acknowledge that the process had been useful and valuable. However, assessors have found the case studies very useful, as they find out what people are doing across the institution and implement strategies into their teaching.

“There aren’t many people who don’t know what Fellowship is. It’s how widely that’s spread on a strategic level. We’ve got to 500 Fellows a while ago and we had a celebration. That’s about a year ago. About 600 Fellows across the institution now which is some movement from where we were but there’s still work to be done.” *(Unit Director)*

“This is what we as an institution have hung our professional teaching hat on as it were, so it runs through all of our academic career pathways criteria. We have clear criteria for every level, depending on their career specialism as well.” *(HR Director)*

12.4 Benefits of accreditation

The main benefits of accreditation are that it provides credibility for the Unit that delivers the accreditation and externally, as a recognised framework to align their practice.

“There is no doubt that accreditation helps us. We hold the TEF gold award at the moment. Who knows what will happen with TEF but part of that is, for a variety of reasons we have been able to demonstrate our commitment to learning and teaching as an institution, but there is no doubt that having that as a kind of, a central plank is something is very robust and clear and sends a clear message from people looking inside from out, but also those people from inside.” *(HR Director)*

“It has enabled us to be much more flexible. It has enabled us to meet the particular requirements of the staff we’ve got within the institution and adapt at times...because of the needs of students a lot of the adaptation has actually been amongst the delivery team as they’ve explored new ways of delivering and developing.” *(PVC)*

12.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

Every type of CPD delivered via the unit has UKPSF embedded in it at least implicitly. The intention is to make this more explicit so that it is part of the natural language used around teaching and learning.

In particular, changes to the promotion process have enabled more embedding of Fellowship to take place.

“We were very fortunate that a change happened in the promotion structure so we were able to embed the requirements for Fellowship there, but it’s had to be a steady process... We even have a new piece of work ongoing at the moment with senior management which is not just about further embedding the notion of Fellowship, but also about further embedding the recognition of assessors. So we are continuing to work towards embedding Fellowship further.” *(Unit Director)*

“Something I see coming through very clearly on the teaching side, or the teachers’ side if you like, is that those who have been through the accredited programmes (and others that are related to that as part of the university), have a much more reflective, and more engaged response to the questions we are asking about teaching and we always ask staff to reflect on the module feedback and do some analysis on the scores. You can tell very easily the difference between those who have gone through the programme and those who haven’t.” (PVC)

“That criteria, it’s not just a document that sits there. It runs through our annual appraisal process, it runs through the academic promotion process, it runs through our recruitment process, it runs through our probation process, it runs through our professorial remuneration process.”
(HR Director)

12.6 Further opportunities for professional development

The Unit actually began as a community of practice, as one of the centres of excellence of teaching and learning. It is now the only centre (now the Unit) that exists and is expanding. The ethos of the Unit is therefore underpinned by the community of practice concept and drew from the experiences of staff from across the institution, including library, careers and academic staff. As the PVC explained, ensuring teaching development was dealt with separately to other CPD in the institution (such as health and safety) was a “positive move” and enabled it to develop according to ‘cutting edge’ teaching and learning practices.

There are 500 staff currently being trained via Zoom by the Unit, whose members upskilled themselves to deliver it. They are moving to a new virtual learning environment in September and developing curated resources to support teaching online.

There are also National Teaching Awards and the Unit holds a one-day learning and teaching conference every year, which attracts around 400 members of staff.

“The programme itself is made up of... ‘packages’ which are available online to staff more generally. The one we’ve been working through most recently has been inclusivity. It’s part of the programme but it is also available to any other member of staff who wants to access the material and the information, or to go back and refresh themselves and so on... actually out of that process (the Unit) is able to deliver and have available a whole series of things that were part of blended learning, programme development, module reflection, that we now want. We’re drawing all our staff’s attention to the fact that they’re there but they are subsections of the accredited programme... So that’s been very helpful.” (PVC)

12.7 Challenges

One challenge is that the named institutional contact for accreditation is outside the Unit and controls the payment, which can mean a delay. Also associated with payment is the cost of accreditation. It is likely that difficult decisions will have to be made soon as the HE sector goes through a period of cost-cutting. Choosing which aspects of subscription to keep is not possible with an all-in-one package, making this harder to manage.

An early challenge was to encourage everyone to understand the UKSPF and that it referred not just to lecturers, but all staff. They have found the support of Advance HE very helpful with this.

Although half a day is allocated for staff on the PGCert to study, there is no institutional workload model and it is left to local management discretion. There therefore remain differences across disciplines and departments.

“A limiting factor in terms of numbers, apart from numbers who apply, is around assessors and having enough people to give up their time to be able to mentor and assess through the process, which we think is absolutely essential. We ask a lot of those who do those [application] processes, but we recognise the number of people coming forward at that level will always be limited. However, these activities are flagged in our electronic system that supports the PDR as examples of good practice to be recognised and acknowledged by the person conducting the PDR.” (PVC)

12.8 Student views

The student had heard of Advance HE but not the UKPSF. In general, the student was not fully aware of the training available to lecturers but believed that training would have a positive impact as long as it was relevant. Benefits might include understanding students better, improve relationships with students and supporting students effectively. As part of the student's manifesto, the student had encouraged more lecturers to go on pastoral training to help address the low retention and progression rates of students. When asked what challenges lecturers might face when participating in training and development, the student explained that time would be the main one and perhaps lack of motivation.

"The greatest challenge would be time. A lot of them have so much on their plate. Some of them are Head of College, some of them are Deans, some of them have other roles. So I'd say time is one of the biggest challenges." (*SU Education Officer*)

Having been asked these questions, the student wanted to know more about the training and development process for lecturers.

"I think this has not just been useful for the interview but also useful for me as well to go back and question things." (*SU Education Officer*)

13 Case study eight

13.1 Profile

This is one of the largest universities in Europe with almost all of its student body studying part-time. Associate Lecturers (ALs), also mostly part-time, provide frontline teaching, support and assessment largely via correspondence tuition and online learning. The institution offers a CPD route to support staff to apply for recognition which is accredited at D1, D2 and D3. Applicants for PFHEA are supported towards direct applications to the HEA.

13.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

The university boasts a significant number of Fellows— “the largest in terms of numbers in the U” – but with 1000 academic staff members and 5000 Associate Lecturers this represents a take-up of around 23% of the academic community, “probably one of the lowest in the UK”. All interviewees described the institutions’ engagement with accreditation as a “journey” and there was a definite drive towards increasing engagement. The scheme is “open to anyone who can demonstrate that they have a teaching or learner support role.” (*PVC Students*)

“We have lots of learning designers or people who work on widening access or people who do commissioning or design an amazing website for a curriculum, they are also eligible to submit for an application. So we typically get a 60/40 split so 60% academic staff and 40% academic-related.” (*Head of Academic and Professional Development*)

This engagement among professional service staff was seen as “a substantial boost in their careers.” Due to their part-time status, and the fact that some work for other institutions through which they may apply for recognition, take-up among associate lecturers was slower.

13.3 How do staff engage?

“The scheme is encouraged right across the institution, at all levels of the organisation, and it is something that we are really pushing.” (*PVC Students*)

To encourage engagement, success is celebrated, and people are also given a time allocation and provided with mentors (~100 mentors across the institution). The workload allocation was cited as five days for Fellowship and eight days for Senior Fellowship. Despite this allocation, the Head of Academic and Professional Development recognised the difficulty of prioritising time to work on the application, which was frequently put on the “back burner”.

“In our workload allocation staff are given time to work on their application. We also have the [scheme name] champions, mostly senior members of staff, so Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching, who encourage the scheme within their respective Faculty. We also have specific mentors within the discipline so say that a person from materials in engineering decides I am going to do a Senior Fellowship then normally we would pair them with a mentor that is from that discipline.” (*Head of Academic and Professional Development*)

Mentors are themselves supported via a range of update sessions drawing on case studies.

13.4 What are the main benefits of accreditation?

A number of benefits of Advance HE accreditation were cited: the opportunity to reflect on teaching practice; the ability to share best practice; key performance indicators in preparation for the TEF; gaining the ‘badge’; and demonstrating an institutional commitment to professional development.

“I think a key benefit is the way it drives people’s behaviours in terms of continuous improvement. It helps people to reflect on their practice and that reflection on practice impacts on their teaching, on the production of their materials.” (*PVC Students*)

“On a strategic level, 98% of our funding comes from students so we have to really make sure that we deliver world class education... sometimes people get a little bit complacent ...It is always a joy to read those [Fellowship] applications but also to see how we might use some of the great research and scholarly work that people have to do in order for their senior fellowship and how can we learn from them and share that.” (*Head of Academic and Professional Development*)

The Head of Talent and Development felt that it was important that professional development was underpinned by accreditation.

“It amplifies the credibility with which our offer, particularly to the academic population is seen, and therefore their likelihood of engagement is greater which benefits the individual, in terms of their career, and [the institution].”

13.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

Interviewees felt that the UKPSF and the institutional Fellowship scheme was “quite well established”, had a “good level of recognition and support” and was integrated into academic policies and practices. There was also a sense of momentum towards further integration, with all interviewees recognising that there was further work to be done.

“We have our ambitions around accreditation that we would want to reflect in our TEF submission... Faculties are semi-autonomous in respect of accreditation. They use a central scheme but it’s up to them to drive people to it. They will write it in to people’s development plans via the Review Process.” (*PVC Students*)

While there is currently no formal requirement for probation, academics are “strongly encouraged to engage.” There is also a move “to introduce a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice to improve the induction and probation process.” The promotional criteria are currently under review but accreditation was described as “an important facet to promotion.” Over the past six months the Head of Talent and Development had been involved in conversations with the Head of Academic and Professional Development about accreditation, and more broadly around academic professional development “from initial induction to more advanced stages of career development.” The goal being to create “clear, holistic pathways for people”.

The PVC Students also noted how recognition “might play into EDI objectives, particularly around the Race Equality work that we want to get involved with.”

13.6 Challenges

Resourcing was noted as a key challenge with only one member of staff working full time on the accreditation scheme.

“People are putting hours and hours in to mentoring, and that is part of their workload, but because no one is saying we need backfill for this, it’s not showing up as a financial cost, even though it is one.” (*PVC Students*)

Another challenge cited was related to the fact that, unusually, many members of academic staff do not necessarily engage with all the key areas of teaching and learning that are outlined in the UKPSF.

“A lot of the small group teaching is done by Associate Lecturers or a lot of our assessments and feedback is done by a specific Associate Lecturer who might mark 100+ essays. The actual design and teaching of the course is all done centrally but a lot of those academics don’t necessarily meet with the students.” *(Head of Academic Professional Development)*

Consequently, the institution had two systems running in parallel to cater for the needs of all staff. These were described as:

“The kind of ‘normal’ HEA programme for lecturers and members of staff who come from outside (institution name) who have been teaching in other universities...Then we have the (Institution name) members of staff route which is much more focused on the element of distance teaching and learning.” *(Head of Academic Professional Development)*

A further challenge related to the potential risk of Fellowship being regarded as an end point, rather than part of continual professional development.

“One of the drawbacks of the Advance HE system is that it is like ‘tick’ you have done this and now you are trained, and you are qualified as a good teacher, but it is what we do after that we tend to forget.” *(Head of Academic Professional Development)*

13.7 Further opportunities for professional development

Scholarship was identified as a strategic priority for the institution, driven by senior management, and this was felt to connect extremely well with institutional accreditation.

“Our community of academics, actively engage with research and connecting their research to their learning and teaching work, is a key strength of the University... We now also have four centres of excellence with scholarship and there is this push forward to embed teaching and learning and to do scholarship work so that is actually really exciting so we are lifting a little bit on that scholarship agenda.” *(Head of Academic Professional Development)*

13.8 Student perspectives

The student was Student Association President, who had a long-standing relationship with the institution (more than 12 years) and had previously been a school teacher. She was familiar with Advance HE's website, the UKPSF, the Fellowship scheme and some of Advance HE's resources. She was also very aware that Associate Lecturers were not required to hold a Fellowship, but that it was a 'nice to have'. She noted that her perspective may not be reflective of the wider student body whom she felt would "[assume that any lecturer has had training](#)".

When asked about the impact of lecturer training on the student experience she responded:

"One of the things you notice is that some people are very much more clued up on the fact that the pedagogy of delivering an online session is different to delivering a face to face session. It stands out a mile the people that do it well, the people who turn it into a 'death by PowerPoint', the people who are scared of it... I'm not necessarily going to assume that everyone who does it well has had lots of training in it, but I would assume that those who don't do it well certainly haven't... I think actually spending the time reflecting on what you're doing can be very helpful because quite often you're kind of stuck in it because you've always delivered things this way and you've always deliver it that way and you never actually think about improving. Sometimes you don't even have the mental space or time to think about improving it, so actually participating in professional development where you've got that dedicated time to think "well actually is this the best way of doing it? Could I do something different?" Sharing good practise with others... you can see a readiness to be a little bit more experimental sometimes as an active benefit."

During the interview the issue of staff workload was raised, and the lower status of teaching compared to research:

"I don't think anyone in any academic role tends to get away with working 9-5 and actually making time for [Fellowship] as a priority, particularly when you're research active and you're worrying about your REF and you're worrying about this that and the other, and so I'd say probably the priority given to teaching is lower in relation to research."

Students were not, according to our interviewee, involved in any conversations about Advance HE accreditation.

"It's not been openly discussed... I mean the obvious place might be the Education Committee but it doesn't get discussed there. We get told when someone's got something like a Principal Fellowship because it's nice, and it's something to celebrate... but no I don't think I've seen it explicitly discussed. That's a good question, we should be explicitly discussing that sort of thing really."

14 Case study nine

14.1 Profile

This research-intensive institution has a population of 37,000 students and 13,000 staff, of whom 6,500 are academic. It currently offers six Advance HE accredited routes: two at D1 in academic practice and clinical education; three at D2 including PGCerts in academic practice, clinical education and digital education; and a supported pathway covering D1, D2, D3 and D4.

14.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

The motivation for applying for accreditation with Advance HE is that it provides an external reference point for the internal learning and teaching CPD framework, therefore ensuring comparability to related provision elsewhere in the sector.

Engagement with all routes is open to all staff, and not restricted to academic staff. According to the Head of the Educational Development Unit, the numbers of staff currently applying for Senior and Principal Fellowship are relatively high compared to those applying for Fellowship. This might reflect an institutional drive to develop local educational role models.

“We try and be explicit that what we offer is open to everyone that has a role in teaching or supporting learning, so that includes learning technologists, it can include librarian type staff, it can include student support officers. So it’s not restricted to academics, it’s open to everyone with those sorts of roles. Like a lot of universities we’ve seen a growth in what I would term people in hybrid roles or third space roles and they’re becoming more and more important.”
(*Head of Educational Development*)

Although an increase in the numbers at Fellow level is desired by the institution, making it compulsory is not necessarily deemed to be the best way to achieve this.

“I’m personally very against any compliance models and I’m also exceptionally sympathetic to our colleagues at that point [FHEA- relevant) in their careers. There’s such a lot going on trying to establish yourself as a researcher and as a teacher.” (*Head of Educational Development*)

Indeed, at this institution the level of recognition is not considered role-dependent but rather tied to practice, in keeping with the spirit of the UKPSF.

14.3 How do staff engage?

The emphasis is placed on providing flexible routes to gain Fellowship. For example, staff on the parallel clinical pathway can move on to the general PGCert in academic practice. There is also an internal mentored CPD route operating at all Fellowship levels known as the teaching award, which is based on a portfolio developmental activity mapped to the UKPSF.

Staff are encouraged to have a conversation about what they consider to be the pros and cons of different pathways. The credit bearing (PgCert) routes generally take longer than the teaching award route. There are no targets at present.

“We didn’t want it to become a tick box exercise, that was the problem. If you set a target then Schools start saying “oh we have to have so many people through this” and they start pushing them through without properly engaging with it. I think that was our nervousness about setting targets... But certainly we’d like to see these numbers increasing.”
(*Institutional lead for Quality and Standards*)

Although it can vary across the institution, some Schools offer some workload allowance for CPD while people are doing it. There are one or two Schools for which the workload allocation is offered when they finish CPD (intending to be an incentive). While in principle this should support engagement, in practice:

“On paper, it’s quite well supported in terms of allocations in workload allocation model, but the problem is the reality. For most colleagues there’s too much to do and the workload allocation model doesn’t actually accurately reflect their experience.” (*Head of Educational Development*)

The institution tries to address any mismatch between workload allocation and actual workload through tailoring the CPD as closely as possible to individual practice. They have also introduced sabbaticals that can create time for people to dedicate to developing teaching, and this has had a positive impact on signalling the value of teaching.

“This [sabbatical] has started to filter out quite a bit more now and I think that is potentially having a real impact on people being able to carve out a particular amount of time and for that to coincide with when they might want to take part in (the accredited programme) or another programme.”
(*Institutional lead for Quality and Standards*)

14.4 Benefits of accreditation

Advance HE accreditation is widely regarded as having external transferability and providing a credible external reference point.

“I think it’s having that recognition that what we’ve got, it’s not just something that we think is appropriate but it’s an outside body, an outside body that has standing and it’s recognised nationally and also internationally, that we’ve got that badge to say that actually, this is something that is comparable with what’s happening across the sector and it’s pitched at standards that are recognised externally.” (*Institutional lead for Quality and Standards*)

The Fellowship in particular has become more recognized in the sector and helps individuals move between institutions and get promoted.

“Our University is getting quite serious about that. It’s mentioned in all of the promotions documentation and is taken very seriously if it’s being done, particularly as people move up to Senior and Principal Fellowship. Criteria for Professorship includes a number of things you could do that will be impressive and contribute towards and one of them is PFHEA.”
(*Assistant Principal, Academic Support*)

Following an extensive external evaluation, involving interviews with participants from across the institution, the Educational Development team identified positive impacts on individual teaching practices as well as a sense of community emerging around teaching and learning – both positive steps for a research-intensive institution. A surprising outcome was the ongoing use of literature around the scholarship of teaching following engagement with CPD. Former PGCert participants were also invited to contribute to the piece of research on provision although the report has been delayed due to Covid-19. Positive impacts in terms of promoting teaching and learning had also been noted since recent leadership changes.

“So we are culturally seeing changes, we’re seeing it in the people around us...we’re seeing the evidence of colleagues taking part in the CPD framework and through promotions and so on. We’re seeing evidence for actually people’s efforts in this are being rewarded and people are saying ‘oh yes, teaching is a good thing to be doing’.” (*Institutional lead for Quality and Standards*)

14.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

The three main ways that accreditation is embedded are in the workforce planning (supporting recruitment and reviewing teaching); formal CPD (linked to specific roles or tasks) and informal CPD (normalising conversations around teaching and learning). The UKPSF cannot be separated from any of these activities. The UKPSF was felt to be deeply embedded into institutional ways of working, explicit to those leading CPD, implicit to those engaging with it.

“It’s working really well. All of the different pathways will have some kind of explicit mapping against the UKPSF as well...We had some people that loved it always, but for the people like myself who was sceptical, I think we’ve moved from a position of it being a block and distraction from deep learning and deep engagement to the programme, to something that is actually a really useful reference point.” (*Head of Educational Development*)

Academic teaching careers are prominent in the University and there are a growing number of Professors in Teaching and Learning (promoted based on their contribution to teaching and learning rather than pedagogical research). This is further reinforced by the introduction of teaching and learning sabbaticals, designed to provide time and space for individuals to dedicate to enhancing practice.

The Institutional lead for Quality and Standards believed that many staff may not know whether the course they are completing is an externally accredited course of Advance HE or not. They believed that this is indicative of the extent to which it has been embedded into the wider CPD offered at the institution.

14.6 Further opportunities for professional development

The bulk of the CPD offered at this institution is not connected to Advance HE accreditation but it does feed in and helps people have a “rounded academic career”.

Together these pathways develop communities of practice, although as an Assistant Principal, Academic Support, explained, “These communities don’t develop because of Advance HE or because of anything in particular. They develop because of the individuals.”

“Over the last few years the routes have been made a bit more flexible in order to allow colleagues to do these on the job and manage their time alongside their other responsibilities. So that should be more attractive to managers as well as participants on the programme. Sometimes I think the flexibility and having a slightly longer amount of time is quite helpful because it allows you to learn and put learning into practice and reflect on things as you’re doing it.”
(*Institutional lead for Quality and Standards*)

The CPD framework is also based on developing exemplars of excellence in education at different levels of career that can be used towards pedagogic research but also support applications for promotion. These can also shared through internal University webpages.

14.7 Challenges

At times gaining accreditation has felt mechanistic, an administrative exercise rather than a developmental one. While Advance HE provides a “*hugely supportive service*”, at times there is also too much focus on England’s HE agenda.

Another challenge has been the focus on research and the REF as well as the general attitudes of academics towards accreditation.

“The prevalent attitudes is that ‘I’m the expert in my subject, why I should I train to teach it?’ And it hasn’t been helped that the HEA (Advance HE) over the years has been seen by some as a mickey mouse organisation so it didn’t do things that brought about huge respect quickly. So it’s seen by some as being ‘if you want to go and tick that box, go tick that box but I’m not going to bother’.”
(Assistant Principal, Academic Support)

“The whole TEF thing has confirmed the worst fears of the doubters. I know the TEF is not Advance HE’s idea but people will bag it in with Advance HE with just a bunch of teaching wonks wasting their time. And the way in which TEF was handled has not been good. So I think that’s not very helpful.” (Assistant Principal, Academic Support)

It is hoped that Advance HE maintains its status as a quality, membership organisation and does not let “*chasing income streams*” undermine the value of Fellowship and the work they do.

14.8 Student views

The student had not heard of Advance HE, nor of the training and development opportunities for lecturers more generally. However, they are concerned about the low NSS scores at the University and thought this might reflect an overall dissatisfaction in teaching.

“It would be good for staff, especially staff that might not be as confident yet or staff who need a refresher (have been around for too long), so to give staff confidence and improve students’ confidence in staff as well, which on a whole is... beneficial to the university.” (*Student SU*)

They thought there might be a lack of incentive for staff to train because they are more celebrated for their research than their teaching. Interestingly, they thought it might be easier for managers to discover and reward good research than find out about and reward good teaching.

They suggested that a partnership model might be more effective, whereby students are asked about how they can be taught best and to train lecturers accordingly. It was also important for the University to reward good teaching, but the student was unsure how best to go about this.

“A lot of students have this misconception that staff are here to do their research and they come in and talk at students for an hour. I think that communicating to students that staff can and do get training to become better would...iron out a misunderstanding.” (*Student SU*)

15 Case study ten

15.1 Profile

This research-intensive, campus institution based in the UK has around 14,700 students supported by around 3,500 staff, approximately 1,700 of whom are on teaching or teaching-related contracts. The institution was awarded a TEF Gold (2017). HEA-accredited development programmes have been available since 2004. It currently offers an Associate Teacher Programme (D1), a modular based PGCAP (D1 and D2), a derivative of this course delivered at international campuses (PGCAP International) and an experiential pathway accredited at D1, D2 and D3.

15.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

The institution takes an inclusive approach to its accredited provision. Certain groups of staff eg academics new to the role with less than three years teaching experience in HE, or experienced academics with no prior teaching qualification, are required to achieve Fellowship as part of their probation, or to secure career progression:

“[...] gaining a teaching qualification is a compulsory requirement to progress. So if you want to standstill it's not compulsory but by definition it becomes compulsory to gain a qualification.”
(HR Representative)

Equally, those staff delivering awards as part of the institution's transnational provision, or who are new to UK HE, are required to engage in accredited CPD, depending on their level of experience, in order to familiarise them with UK HE as well as institutional ways of working.

Accredited provision is popular among PhD students, who can complete the first module of the taught postgraduate course to gain Associate Fellowship. PhD students perceive this as a valuable professional development opportunity. Professional services staff, eg learning technologists, librarians and members of the careers team, have successfully engaged with the CPD scheme in particular and treat it as a valuable developmental opportunity.

15.3 How do staff engage?

Academics are required to engage in a postgraduate teaching qualification as part of their probation if they are new to lecturing. If they are experienced, but do not hold a qualification, they are required to gain Fellowship through the institution's CPD scheme as part of their probation or to secure career progression. The requirement to hold a teaching qualification as part of the career progression process has created significant demand, and though this has at times provides challenging for the team to manage, is seen as positive in terms of promoting teaching-related CPD.

“The demand for the CPD Scheme, all from very experienced staff who didn’t hold a qualification, has been significant, and quite problematic over the last few years. But this shows that evidencing teaching, and teaching excellence is important, and has meant accreditation has become very embedded now in promotions and probationary practices.” *(HR Representative)*

For probationary lecturers, workload remission is built into the postgraduate teaching qualification, and this is managed at the local level. However, this is not a straightforward process, as though agreed in principal, it is not always as well supported as it should be. Equally, often it does not lead to a remission from teaching but instead impacts research time. This can create tensions for those individuals who are research focused:

“We’re not perfect, and I have heard of the odd occasions where people have been on the edge of withdrawing because of tensions between the programme and their workload. The question there is what gets reduced, their teaching or research, and more often not I suspect it eats into their research time.” *(HR Representative)*

Though engagement in the CPD scheme is supported institutionally; the Senior Manager for T&L commented on the absence of a workload allocation for those working towards gaining Fellowship through this route who are not on probation. They questioned whether this sent out the right message in terms of the institutional commitment to teaching-related CPD for established lecturers, and may be an issue that is revisited in the future:

“We may have people who have been here a long time as a lecturer who are trying to become a senior lecturer. They are no longer probationary, therefore don’t have that probationary space, and they may never had the requirement to have a teaching qualification as it wasn’t required when they joined, and yet they have to do that now to get on to the next level. So they have to carve out the space, and this may be negotiated with the Head of Department, but I think it is variable how departments manage this across the institution. So perhaps that is an objective we have to achieve, we need to perhaps review our systems and processes to ensure it is clear we value it, and create the conditions for staff to engage with it.” *(Senior Manager responsible for T&L)*

15.4 Benefits of accreditation

As a research-focused institution, accreditation was perceived as signalling a clear commitment to teaching and learning, for many it “**put teaching on the map**” (Educational Development Representative). Consequently, it was seen as creating a positive environmental for professional learning across all staff groups:

“There was a time, a few years ago where the PGcert was viewed as the domain of academic staff, and there was an element of snobbery around that, I’ve worked quite hard to get rid of that and help people realise the value of learning with people from across a range of disciplines and pools of expertise, and that really has become a characteristic of our feedback – we have created a positive landscape for people to interact with one another.” (*Educational Development Representative*)

The external reference point afforded through the accreditation process was seen as important; it demonstrated that both the team responsible for provision, as well as those engaging in the associated CPD activities, have achieved an externally benchmarked standard. From this perspective, accreditation was talked of in terms of having currency across the sector.

“The fact that it is CV enhancing for the individual, portable, has currency across the sector, it’s not just a [names institution] course. We ask our academics to get our programmes validated and for external scrutiny, therefore I think it would seem strange to be running what is a master’s-level course without that external validation.” (*HR Representative*)

Though initially a “**hard sell**”, the CPD scheme has had a positive impact on the culture and status of teaching and learning in the institution. As increasing numbers of experienced staff became Senior Fellows, a critical mass was reached, creating a visible community of teaching experts. This community was facilitated by the ED unit. Membership was exclusive, dependent on individuals holding Senior Fellowship, people cannot join because they were interested in teaching and learning; they had to have a recognised track record. This was seen as important to ensuring the community has value. The community met termly initially to share ideas and discuss practice, then it evolved into a community used by the institution to advise and consult on learning and teaching:

“We managed to achieve this fantastic culture where senior leaders were happy to test the water with this wonderful pallet of colleagues that ranged from professors to heads of departments to professional services staff, all of whom who had signalled an interest in teaching excellence through gaining Senior Fellowship.” (*Educational Development representative*)

The institution hosts an annual graduation ceremony to celebrate those achieving recognition, at any level, through either the postgraduate teaching qualification or the CPD scheme. It is well supported, attended by both the VC and other senior leaders who support teaching and learning; their presence is seen as important in signifying top level advocacy for teaching-related CPD:

“We make a fuss of the staff who have engaged in CPD, and that is quite visible.”
(*HR Representative*)

Regular updates are shared with Deans and Heads of Department of the numbers of staff achieving recognition. This ensures local acknowledgment of individual successes is forthcoming, and engendered participation from areas of the institution where uptake had been slow, as well as helping to foster further support for the CPD scheme.

15.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

Accreditation and the UKPSF is considered to be well embedded within institutional practice. To raise the status of teaching and learning, changes were made to policies supporting probation and career progression to require staff to hold a teaching qualification. To support this, practices around mentoring were also developed:

“The UKPSF and fellowship is directly referenced and linked to our promotion and probation criteria, discussed as part of the performance development review and we have a strong mentoring culture, and the training we give to mentors includes direct reference to the UKPSF, and how this can be used in the development of junior colleagues.” (*HR Representative*)

Institutionally this was seen as a positive move to signal a commitment to achieving teaching excellence.

However, there was a sense that it may take time for this vision to be realised, and that the institution may be in a ‘transitional phase’ in terms the extent to which the requirement for a teaching qualification would be required for those seeking promotion following a research success:

“[...] so how embedded – the intent and commitment are there in terms of the promotions criteria, but we still have a little way to go to making sure we live and breathe it [...]. We do state the UKPSF levels or HEA Fellowship category for each promotion level. And, in reality, we mainly abide by that, to guide us. However, in some cases, say if someone had a research-led case, then research would lead, and we may accept working towards/registration for the award as acceptable. And really that is to be expected, and it is not to say that the education strategy isn’t important but it is as we transition to that mode, as we have only had education in our promotions criteria for a couple of years so we are still quite early on in that trajectory.” (*Senior Manager for T&L*)

This ‘*transitional phase*’ was also evidenced through the discussion of the mentoring of new staff. All new academics are allocated a mentor who supports them to develop across all aspects of their role – teaching, research and academic citizenship. Due to the relatively recent introduction of the mandatory requirement for staff to gain a teaching qualification, some mentors may not have engaged with the postgraduate teaching qualification, or gained recognition through the CPD scheme. In these cases, therefore, the extent to which they could fully mentor new staff to engage with the UKPSF, and engage with innovative practice, was questioned:

“All lecturing staff get a mentor, an experienced staff member [...] It’s a small proportion of our lecturing staff who are teaching-focused only, and it could be the case that someone is allocated a mentor who is not solely a teaching mentor. While this mentoring is designed to support new colleagues across all activities, it may be that the new lecturer is allocated to someone who is not teaching focused, and therefore fully aware of all of those processes of teaching support. As we develop the pool of staff who are part of our Senior Fellows network and therefore our capability for teaching mentoring, this issue will diminish.” (*Senior Manager for T&L*)

Any member of staff on one of the Advance HE accredited programmes is also required to identify a teaching-focused mentor, typically someone who has recently completed the programme and therefore has a good understanding of the PSF and related requirements. This may or may not be the departmentally assigned mentor and requires a Head of Department sign off.

Though the institution has articulated clear expectations regarding staff gaining Fellowship, which are integral to realising institutional ambitions around teaching excellence, they do not use targets to engender engagement. Targets were perceived as potentially counterproductive, undermining any development that could be achieved through the accredited CPD activity:

“It’s not about the target, it’s about whether or not it is robust development. If we are just about the number I could come up with a scheme that will give us high numbers but it won’t have any impacts on practice.” (*Educational Development Representative*)

Both academic and professional services staff are identified as having significant autonomy in terms of planning their CPD. The UKPSF is integrated into the appraisal process, and they are encouraged to review the UKPSF as part of the preparation for a progress review. Engaging in CPD to secure an advanced level of Fellowship may be an identified outcome of the appraisal process.

15.6 Further opportunities for professional development

The CPD scheme and postgraduate teaching course are only part of the wider teaching-related CPD offer that staff from across the institution can access. They have a central CPD offer, which is supplemented by a range of local, department CPD activities dispersed across the institution. This offer includes an annual teaching and learning conference, undergraduate research conference, numerous practice sharing events and an online CPD offer. Senior managers regularly input into such events and this was seen as important to demonstrating institutional support for teaching-related CPD.

They also have a leadership development programmes, targeted at different areas of institutional practice. Any CPD that an individual engages with can be used as evidence for the CPD scheme.

15.7 Challenges

Accreditation is part of wider strategic developments at the institution to promote teaching excellence and counter the dominance of research. Therefore, accreditation is seen as integral to achieving this. However, the institution was observed to be “slow to change” and so, though there is a clear vision for teaching and learning embedded in the teaching and learning strategy, the extent to which this is currently being realised may be considered as variable. This was attributed to institutional culture rather than accreditation practices.

“In our university, we take teaching very seriously, but it is not always straightforward to engage colleagues with accredited CPD. We have colleagues who have been here a long time and/or colleagues who are very research-focused, and overall are not convinced of the need for this qualification.” (*Senior Manager for T&L*)

For academics, particularly those new to the role, engaging in accredited CPD can be challenging as they report experiencing competing pressures on their time. This can be acute where departmental support for Fellowship or teaching-related CPD is limited.

Equally, experienced staff engaging in the CPD scheme report frustration at the level of paperwork and the time required to gain Fellowship. This was not perceived as a challenge; instead it signified quality and the standard people need to achieve in order to obtain professional recognition. There was a sense this is a message that needed to be communicated through the application process to some groups of staff.

The level of resource (ie size of the team) required to support accredited CPD was discussed, as questions had been raised by those not fully cognisant of Advance HE, or the UKPSF, as to whether the team needed to be as large as it currently is. But there is significant institutional demand for teaching-related CPD, and it was felt these concerns have been addressed.

16 Case Study eleven

16.1 Profile

With 5000 students and just over 160 academic staff, this small UK specialist institution has had two HEA Accredited Routes to Fellowship since 2014. The PG Cert in Teaching and Supporting Learning (Higher Education) is currently accredited at D1 and D2. The CPD route supports staff to apply for recognition via an experiential portfolio, accredited at D1, D2 and D3.

16.2 Who engages with accredited provision?

There are several groups of staff who engage in different ways with the accredited provision available. For example, academics (eg those new to HE) are required to gain HEA Fellowship (D2) via the PG Cert in Teaching and Supporting Learning as part of their contractual/probationary agreement and hence there are often different levels of motivation/engagement evident. Some engage with it because they are active pedagogically and interested; whilst others view it as a box-ticking exercise because the University requires it, and the sector expects it. Some staff new to the institution may not be required to undertake the PG Cert. This decision is based on their level of experience, but they will be expected/strongly encouraged to gain Fellow (D2) within a set timeframe. Others such as Teaching Assistants (employees in specific specialist support roles for some disciplines) and professional service staff mainly access the CPD route. The latter group have a genuine interest and a real sense of the benefits from engaging with the PSF specifically in relation to career progression in some cases. Similarly staff seeking promotion are expected to have the appropriate category of Fellowship (eg SF for Reader and Principal Lecturer, PF for Professor Learning and Teaching). Phd students/ GTAs are often interested in achieving Associate Fellowship and can access the CPD route though completion rates are limited.

“Some staff in professional service roles do guest lectures to students. In fact some of these staff have moved from professional service roles into academic/lecturing roles as they have had that opportunity to develop through the scheme.” (*Director of Learning and Teaching*)

Senior Management’s involvement with the accredited provision is more focused on strategic objectives related to learning and teaching. They are keen for the provision to be available to everybody who has teaching and supporting learning of students as a key aspect of their role.

“We believe we are one of the HEIs with the highest proportion of staff with recognition. There has been a major push here and continues to do so. It is very well supported from the top.” (*Director of Learning and Teaching*)

16.3 How do staff engage?

Staff required to achieve the PG Cert and HEA Fellow are provided with some remission (a set tariff) from their teaching that enables them time to participate and be mentored. However, experience shows that the level of remission can be variable across the different areas and even more so with professional service staff. If professional service staff are accepted onto the PG Cert, they are encouraged to negotiate the time they need to participate with their line managers.

The mentoring of staff is mainly undertaken by those working within the Education Development Centre. These same staff design and deliver the taught programme. Staff who have already achieved Senior Fellow or are working towards that category of Fellowship, voluntarily contribute to supporting others seeking Fellowship through the CPD route by mentoring and assessing. Some are allocated time in their workloads to undertake these activities as part of their scholarly endeavours, though not all have time granted in the workload model. It is often good-will that is relied upon to support the staff in the Centre in these time-consuming activities. Some progress is being made with one of the departments recognising the commitment where time for such activities has been built into the workload model.

“The good will is sometimes stretched and relies on the good relationships that have been built between the [Central] team and the assessors/mentors. It also means that sometimes the assessment and mentoring is done too much by the Centre actually. We absorb that because we must which isn’t good for the scheme actually, but now one department has started to recognise this and has built in allocated time for a couple of staff undertaking these activities.” (*Leader of Academic Development and accredited provision*)

Collaboration between the Educational Development Centre and Organisational Development/HR is very important to keep on top of the figures. They meet routinely to review any members of staff who may have been ‘missed’ in terms of being prompted to gain HEA Fellowship although there will always be a few for whom Fellowship is not appropriate.

16.4 Benefits of accreditation

All three interviewed staff described the main benefits of accreditation in terms of demonstrating a strong commitment to teaching. The Director of Learning and Teaching and the Leader of the provision commented on the value that having the provision accredited gives the institution in relation to status and standing in the sector. In addition, given that numbers of staff with HEA Fellowship is very high (*'upper quartile'*) they felt it enabled them to promote this as a benefit for the student learning experience. The Director of Learning and Teaching also added that it, ...*"made a huge change to the culture as well"*.

"The good will is sometimes stretched and relies on the good relationships that have been built between the [Central] team and the assessors/mentors. It also means that sometimes the assessment and mentoring is done too much by the Centre actually. We absorb that because we must which isn't good for the scheme actually, but now one department has started to recognise this and has built in allocated time for a couple of staff undertaking these activities." (Leader of Academic Development and accredited provision)

Another benefit was acknowledged in terms of how it had enabled many staff to expand their learning and teaching profiles; especially in the area of pedagogic research. The Leader of the provision remarked that having the accredited CPD Scheme was seen as the *"glue that brings the community together"* and has been an *"internal trigger for the pedagogic community"*. They added, *"Action research is embedded in the PG Cert programme and I think that has been a real game-changer in stirring people to get involved in taking initiatives"*.

"What we find is by having a research component within our scheme through the PG Cert, we introduce people how to go and get on with their project and follow their own interest. So it starts as more of a community approach than a fixed track, people can negotiate their own final track to fellowship and that is quite empowering." (Leader of Academic Development and accredited provision)

Targeted funding linked to the CPD scheme has supported a number of projects and research investigations in addressing particular learning and teaching issues. Staff leading those projects tended to have at least Fellow status and many are Senior Fellows. There were other advantageous spin-offs as noted below.

“As a smaller University the really important and unique thing about it is that it [CPD scheme] provides a pipeline that makes all of this activity self-sustaining. By having people who have gone through SF they become ambassadors not in a formal sense but quite informal. I’ll be able to call upon them to do a workshop or ‘I have these new starts, can you do something and evangelise, inspire them somehow.’ It really has driven our pedagogic community I think and has got them talking to each other through those mechanisms.” (*Leader of Academic Development and accredited provision*)

The Organisational Development Manager indicated that achievement of HEA Fellowships is used as the main criteria in promotion. Gaining Senior Fellow is part of the promotions criteria to Reader, Principal Lecturer and Principal Fellow to Professor Learning and Teaching. This was backed up by the Director for Learning and Teaching who stated that it signalled to staff that they should not be going for promotion unless they have Senior Fellow or at least a well-developed plan for making an application for SFHEA. Should a member of staff be successful in gaining promotion before achieving their Fellowship, then in principle, unless they achieve their Fellowship within a reasonable time post-promotion, they could be demoted. Therefore the institution views it as a valuable objective benchmark for staff.

“Also having relied on the benchmark [UKPSF] for promotion decisions, it would be very difficult for us to have a transparent and fair approach to promotions if we weren’t able to use fellowships.” (*Organisational Development Manager*)

16.5 To what extent is accreditation embedded?

All interviewed staff agreed that the UKPSF is well embedded into the University’s processes and policies. For example, it is explicitly woven into the policies relating to probation and promotion. It is also referenced within the Learning and Teaching student experience strategy with clearly defined measurables that are reviewed three times a year. Departments are expected to report on their numbers and what actions are being taken.

“It’s embedded pretty formally and quite rigorously monitored by the institution. It is one of those scenarios which if you set a line in the sand you have to expect it to be measured. We made a decision some years ago that we would actually go for this and make it a part of our strategy and obviously that documentation goes up to Academic Board and Board of Governors. One of the governors has a particular interest what we are doing in these respects. [She is familiar with UKPSF.]” (*Director of Learning and Teaching*)

HEA Fellowships are referred to in the annual Professional Development Reviews. The Organisational Development Manager noted how much the PG Cert and HEA Fellowships are included in the professional development plans for staff who are involved in teaching and supporting learning which is further evidence of it being embedded.

“I would say it is heavily embedded because having spent a bit of time preparing for this interview I have realised that if we didn’t have our AHE membership and work closely with HEA/AHE, we would have to re-write at least 4 policies because it is there ingrained in all of our policies!”
(Organisational Development Manager)

16.5 Further opportunities for professional development

There are plenty of opportunities for staff in terms of professional development. Aside from the CPD Scheme and PG Cert there is funding to support staff in projects, attend external events and workshops. Both central areas and departments have professional development budgets. There are also programmes to support the development of researchers in their teaching and supporting learning practices. A survival course for those new to teaching (enrolment on the PG Cert is every 2 years) offers timely support. As the Leader of the provision on offer explained, “All these options enable staff to carve their own pathway and engagement with the UKPSF has raised the bar”.

Several communities of practice reflecting staffs’ teaching and learning interests are supported and encouraged by the Centre. Other types of CPD opportunities are termed Learning and Teaching forums and full day events prior to the start of the spring and summer terms. These comprise a range of workshops facilitated by internal and external presenters. The annual Learning and Teaching conference (now in its 5th year) held in September is usually sold out with over two-thirds of staff attending. E-learning sessions are tagged with the UKPSF to develop their practice and fellowship applications. These events are offered at the point in time staff are preparing their teaching materials for the next academic year. CPD opportunities (both internal and external) are constantly being reviewed, updated and highlighted to staff via the weekly CPD newsletter.

“Something that has come about due to the pandemic that we have developed in the last couple of weeks is an idea that we get everyone into a training session by sending a ‘allstaff’ email as a meeting invite and people say yes/no so no advertising needed. I’ve got a session with a 193! So we might start to add in these online webinars.” (Leader of Academic Development and accredited provision)

This close relationship of the Centre with OD/HR has benefits with regard to professional development opportunities in the area of learning and teaching.

“We work much more closely together which means I have been able to open up the management and soft skills training I write and deliver or buy in and so certainly our managers who work in Learning and Teaching areas are getting a lot more training and broader range of CPD.”
(*Organisational Development Manager*)

16.6 Challenges

Some challenges with the re-accreditation process were expressed. The Leader of the provision felt that the process and paperwork was too much workload for the team at times. Whilst the Leader acknowledged the importance of maintaining the standards, it was felt that the feedback from the reviewers of their re-accreditation paperwork indicated that the context of the institution had not been fully appreciated. For example, feedback was inconsistent and there was a request for certain expectations to be met that, “didn’t really fit with our institutional culture...dare I say even petty”. It was felt “Those sorts of things are deeply unhelpful”. However, the support offered by the AHE Accreditation team was viewed as ‘brilliant’.

Overall, it was felt that Advance HE needs to be reminded that the UKPSF belongs to the sector.

“I think sometimes it feels like its AHE/HEA’s framework and that’s not right. So I think there is a much greater need for collegiality around it and to come away from it what I perceive as petty bureaucracy.” (*Leader of Academic Development and accredited provision*)

It was suggested that institutions who know what they are doing and are well-established in the sector could be trusted. It was felt the process needs to be easier not harder.

All three interviewed staff commented on the challenges of resourcing the accredited provision in terms of time for the range of associated professional development activities. For example, remission from teaching, participating in the PG Cert and application process, mentoring staff and assessing applications. However, as the Leader of the provision stated, “I think the benefits for us are so strong, that the question is different, can we afford for people not to do it?”

Costs associated with gaining Athena Swan and the Race Equality Charterships were mentioned by the Organisational Development Manager. They would like to see more of a sliding-scale fee being offered to institutions against metrics such as student numbers or income rather than a flat rate for all.

17 Summary and recommendations

17.1 Discussion and conclusions

Most previous evaluations of accredited CPD and taught Fellowship programmes have relied on post-intervention snapshots of outcomes for individual participants rather than changes at institutional levels. Questions such as: “How has accreditation of CPD or teaching qualification programmes helped shape institutional culture?” and “What is the impact of an institution’s accreditation on its teaching quality?” remain unaddressed. Despite the unfortunate timing of this study, with the impact of a global pandemic, this research has provided valuable insights into the impact of accreditation on various aspects of institutional circumstances. The data collected from diverse sources demonstrates that, in the view of the institutions themselves, accreditation has been, and continues to be, significant and has led to multiple positive impacts.

Importantly, such impacts tend to have many layers: some kinds of impact are reported as having increased over time, as accredited schemes have become more embedded in institutional strategic intentions and policies. Indeed, accreditation often appears to influence strategic directions, especially in relation to CPD programmes and academic promotion pathways related to teaching and learning. In particular, aligning teaching-related CPD to the UKPSF, and especially supporting staff to submit their practice to scrutiny against one of the four Descriptors in applications for Fellowship, has clearly become an international sector benchmark in the professionalisation of those committed to high-quality teaching and learning in HE.

This research demonstrates that international institutions experience the same benefits from accreditation as UK institutions, with focus especially on the opportunities provided by an international quality-assured benchmark providing global recognition of a set of essentially universal standards of teaching and learning support in HE.

The range, scale and motivation for institutional accreditation

The range of institutions that have sought institutional accreditation is considerable, varying in terms of their size and type of institution; mission statements or ethos; the number and characteristics of students and staff; employment structures and opportunities for career development; the relative emphasis on research and teaching; and the extent to which teaching development is institutionally recognised, valued and rewarded. Yet, despite this diversity, motivations for accreditation tended to be similar, with the three primary, and often inter-related, motivations:

- + national and/or international recognition and benchmarking
- + enhancing the reputation and quality of teaching and learning, including creating a teaching and learning culture
- + supporting professional/career development opportunities and progression pathways.

Although there are costs involved in administering accredited provision, both in terms of Advance HE accreditation services and internal workloads, it is clear that large numbers of institutions consider accreditation (as opposed to, say, funding direct applications for Fellowship) as an effective means of achieving these goals.

Impact on the provision of, and positive staff engagement with, professional development for teaching and supporting learning, and on effective educational practices

The extent to which staff are engaged in accredited institutional CPD programmes or taught programmes could be considered a proxy measure of institutional commitment to teaching and learning. 84% of survey respondents had CPD programmes leading to Fellowship, 73% had taught programmes, while 60% had both taught and CPD programmes leading to Fellowship (Figure 3).

Overall results suggest that institutional accreditation impacts on wider institutional culture in five clear ways: i) improving the profile of teaching and learning, ii) increasing the credibility of educational development centres, iii) stimulating professional development, iv) encouraging collaboration cross-faculty and between institutions, and v) increasing scholarship and research in teaching and learning.

All case studies referred to positive staff engagement with accredited provision and cited diverse examples of how they support staff to engage, including individual mentoring, workshops or modules, web-based resources, communities of practice, workload relief, etc. Almost half the institutions (43%) reported having annual or overall targets for the number of Fellowships among their staff (Figure 4). The shared language of the UKPSF and the cross-institutional portability of Fellowship, increasingly internationally as well as across the UK, are important factors in the success of accreditation.

Impact on the profile of teaching and supporting learning across the institution

In both teaching-focused and research-intensive institutions, the importance of accreditation in increasing the profile of education in relation to research within an institution was frequently cited. It was very common for institutions to report on perceptions of 'competition' between teaching and research, with the latter still appearing to be given more relative 'status' (at least pre-pandemic).

In most cases the institutions that considered themselves research-focused were using institutional accreditation to strategically rebalance their focus, to raise the profile of teaching and learning, largely through changes to policies and practices relating to teaching and learning (eg embedding the requirement to gain Fellowship in probation paperwork, or setting expectations around certain categories of Fellowship to secure career progression). This was seen as signalling an institutional commitment to teaching and learning but could potentially undermine the non-hierarchical nature of the different categories of Fellowship. There was also variable use of targets. Several institutions, even those that had embedded gaining Fellowship in career progressions policies, rejected the use of targets, considering them as potentially engendering tokenistic engagement, or undermining the development that could be realised through engagement in a CPD scheme. Often though,

the integration of Fellowship into career progression policies were part of wider moves, frequently running in parallel to institutional accreditation, to signal a commitment to teaching and learning eg sabbaticals or communities of practice. Though in many instances policies had been changed, there was a sense that the culture change relating to teaching and learning was yet to be realised, and though progress had been made, in research-focused HEIs in particular, there was still some way for the strategic vision relating to raising the profile of teaching and learning to be realised.

Across all case studies, institutional accreditation was seen as important in signalling that a minimum standard, an external benchmark for teaching and learning had been reached – this was a theme reported in respect to motivations, but was also a significant factor in the benefits articulated by respondents, which helped to demonstrate a commitment to teaching and learning, internally and externally.

Alignment to institutional strategy, policies and priorities, and extent of embedding and integration across institutions

Two thirds of the respondent sample (Figure 2) – all UK-based – reported accreditation dating back well before the revised UKPSF was launched in 2011. This proportion speaks to the commitment of these institutions to re-accreditation over many cycles, and hence to their perceptions of accreditation as deeply embedded in the institutional psyche. Some 80% of institutional respondents reported that accreditation aligns with institutional priorities. The examples reported across the 11 case studies illustrate how diverse institutions from around the globe are embedding the UKPSF into their teaching and learning, strategies, policies, practices and development programmes. International institutions especially tended to report cultural, governance and national contexts that impacted on the relative importance placed on the accreditation agenda in terms of global, as well as national, benchmarking. However, almost 20% of the overall sample were unsure or disagreed about the links between accreditation and institutional priorities, which suggests scope for collaborations between faculty and perhaps between Advance HE and institutions, to help them make such connections clearer.

It is a powerful finding that some 58% of survey respondents acknowledged changes to academic promotion frameworks as a direct result of Advance HE accreditation. The case studies, in particular, demonstrate how links between professional recognition and career progression are becoming more embedded into promotion policies, although in different ways. It is more likely that specific criteria related to teaching and learning outputs or achievements will be included in promotion policies when there are clearly delineated promotion pathways for teaching-dominant, research-dominant and teaching/research roles (Cashmore et al, 2013). However, it appears that accreditation provides an opportunity to establish quality-assured esteem indicators in teaching regardless of the career pathway. This impacts the culture of teaching-related CPD within the institution, as the CPD programmes and recognition activities become instrumental in supporting staff to gain the appropriate qualifications and esteem that demonstrates engagement with, influence in, and leadership of, teaching and learning within an institution.

Support by executive leadership

Engagement with the UKPSF is a sector norm in the UK, and the widespread uptake of accreditation has provided institutional leaders a clear national benchmark for the qualifications and/or professional capabilities of staff in relation to teaching and learning. In international institutions, leaders support accreditation for the global benchmarking against UK, and increasingly other international, higher education institutions in relation to teaching and learning.

Given that accredited provision of professional development entails costs and resourcing needs beyond non-accredited provision, support from senior institutional leadership for initial and ongoing accreditation is clearly crucial. The research findings thus raise a concern in that 28% of respondents were unsure or disagreed that future accreditation was fully supported by their senior leadership team, and just over half the institutions disagreed (33%) or were unsure (27%) that the cost of accreditation is “reasonable for the services provided”.

For some, especially in the pandemic-influenced economic climate, the resourcing associated with accreditation may place schemes at risk, especially at times of changes in executive leadership. Conversely, in some institutions indirect or direct support from senior leadership in the human resources space has facilitated the embedding of Fellowships as indicators for career development and career pathways, especially through integration into mentoring programmes, promotion criteria or guidance (see below and, for example, Case Studies one, two, eight, and eleven). Some institutions suggested an opportunity for Advance HE to connect more with human resources leaders in relation to career development.

A key research finding is that just one third of respondents were engaging in formal evaluation of their accredited provision. Notwithstanding the inherent difficulties associated with measuring the impacts of relatively intangible outcomes (such as the impact of teacher development on student learning, or the impact of achieving Fellowship on academic career development), without formal evaluation, there is a risk that the impacts will be underestimated, or that any negative impacts will not be open to remediation.

Impact on student outcomes and experience

Many researchers have struggled to articulate the impact of an institution’s engagement with teacher development on student learning and student experience (Parsons et al, 2012; Gibbs, 2004). Despite Guskey (2016) considering “changes to student learning and performance” as the most important level of evaluation of “professional learning to impact student learning”, most related studies have tended to be indirect, or one-dimensional, often focusing on student ‘satisfaction’ as a proxy measure of impact (Denson, Loveday and Dalton, 2010). For these reasons, this research methodology gave explicit consideration to the potential impacts of accreditation on student learning and the student experience. The online survey had a dedicated question on the direct impact of accreditation on students’ satisfaction, achievement and interactions with staff or one another,

while other questions explored indirect impacts. Where possible at institutions selected for case study (seven of the eleven), student representatives were interviewed for their perspectives. These student interviewees had very limited awareness of the UKPSF or institutional accreditation, and often assumed, rather than knew about, professional development for staff. Nonetheless, they all reported an understanding of, and interest in, their teachers benefitting from professional development.

Institutions often reported that accreditation was regarded as one measure, among many, intended to enhance the student experience and student outcomes. Just over half the UK institutional respondents reported a positive impact on students' satisfaction since accreditation and 44% reported a positive impact of accreditation on student partnerships with staff (Figure 9). However, many respondents were unsure of impacts directly related to students – indeed, one called it “the biggest unknown”. Newly accredited and/or international institutions were especially unlikely to claim such impacts, which suggests that this area of impact is one of those needing time to develop and/or be measured.

Students are rarely explicitly considered in institutional thinking about the rationale for, or impacts of, accreditation. In the desk-based review of accreditation documentation, few direct references were found to student experiences (Section 3.3), with just two of the 30 reviewed submissions specifically noting consultations with students around accreditation bids. In responses to the open-ended survey question on motivation, just four of the 55 (7%) responding institutions mentioned students or motivations explicitly associated with improving the student experience. Discussing references to the UKPSF in institutional documentation, only two (4%) institutions reported mentions in their Student Strategy.

Being able to identify changes in multiple variables associated with, for example, a specific institutional strategy or approach to teaching-related CPD is essential to evaluating impacts (Spowart et al, 2017; Bamber, 2013). Both survey respondents and staff interviewees noted the methodological and practical difficulties of evaluating engagement with, and impact on, the student body as an outcome of accreditation and structured professional development for staff. One comment summed up the challenges: “It is a perennial issue of not being able to spot cause and effect between staff development, transformative practice and the student experience”. Our attempts to collect more structured data around the impact on students have primarily identified a need for more focus on, and support for, this area (see Recommendations). Indeed, to achieve this it is likely Advance HE and institutions will need to work collaboratively to develop an approach that is sufficiently nuanced to capture indirect impacts on students. Lessons learned from agendas such as students as partners, may help shape future work in this area, as the insights gains from activities such as co-designing curricula, could inform future work.

A key research finding is that just one third of respondents were engaging in formal evaluation of their accredited provision.

Critical success factors in high-impact programmes/courses

Some impacts of accreditation clearly take significant time to emerge, as was indicated by the trends noted in survey sub-samples based on the duration of institutional accreditation (pre-2018/post-2018). For example, only 33% of institutions accredited since 2018 recognised any positive impact on contributions to the scholarship of teaching and learning compared to 61% of those institutions accredited for longer. There was a similar pattern displayed in relation to the impacts on inter-institutional interactions.

Conversely, institutions that have been accredited most recently (since 2018) reported greater positive impacts in terms of improving the institutional profile of teaching and learning, and increasing collaborations across faculties. Whereas the award of Fellowship is worthy of celebration for each successful applicant, celebration events were reported much more by institutions accredited post-2018 and/or based outside the UK than those accredited for longer. This highlights a potential concern around the 'normalisation' of Fellowship over time – just something that staff are expected to achieve – and the consequential diminishing of impact. This may be an issue when numbers of Fellowships are linked to key performance indicators or quotas.

In almost all institutions, relatively small groups of staff within central teaching and learning units and/or education-specialist departments are responsible for both the provision and administration of accredited provisions. Efficient processes and communication around accreditation are naturally appreciated. 78% of survey respondents agreed that their institution had clear communication channels with Advance HE. Respondents identified key areas of current overall satisfaction with accreditation processes as being related to Advance HE's responses to queries from institutions (80% positive) and the fact that accreditation offers an inclusive approach to professional recognition (75%).

A number of challenges associated with Advance HE accreditation were noted:

- 1 The institutional resource-intensive nature of accredited provision, particularly the in-house CPD frameworks, was highlighted most frequently.
- 2 Staff workloads in mentoring, assessing and the governance of accredited provision were rewarded in various ways, with some institutions offering clear incentives.
- 3 The difficulty of measuring the impact on the student experience as a specific measure of cost-effectiveness.
- 4 Institutions did report the accreditation paperwork as a key area of concern, with 73% of all respondents considering it time-consuming (and 20% being unsure), and commentary suggesting benefits to streamlining the processes, especially for institutions seeking re-accreditation of successful accredited provisions (see Recommendations).
- 5 About half the respondents – including many UK institutions as well as international ones – perceive institutional accreditation as UK-centric. Such a perception could have negative connotations, especially with executive leaders, for future new accreditations or re-accreditations. (See Recommendations).

17.2 Recommendations to Advance HE

On the basis of this research, there are several actions that Advance HE could consider to enhance the service provided to accredited institutions, strengthen opportunities for institutions to reassure themselves of the positive outcomes and impact on accreditation, and attract new institutions to accredit.

- + By providing relevant training, Advance HE could support institutions to undertake longitudinal approaches to evaluation of impact. Encouraging individuals and teams to draw on multiple sources of evidence, including existing data, would ensure an evaluation is robust and captures the range of impacts accredited CPD activities can achieve.
- + Advance HE could work in collaboration with student representative groups (eg National Union of Students in the UK, similar representative bodies elsewhere) to consider how they might foster a culture of partnership between institutional staff and student bodies in relation to accredited provision. There are missed opportunities here to create a better understanding of academic life and potentially engage students in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) activities.
- + Advance HE may wish to review accreditation processes, (especially for institutions that have held accreditation for two or more cycles) to consider whether the time spent on accreditation/re-accreditation could be reduced by any changes to process/requirements. This would require a detailed exploration of the value of each stage in the accreditation/re-accreditation process to develop a better understanding of where changes might be made without adversely affecting the positive impacts of accreditation as identified in this report.
- + There are further opportunities to develop a more global approach to institutional accreditation. Of the eight institutions new to accreditation in the last two years, seven were international. These international institutions reported that they were more likely to be engaged in evaluating impact compared to those accredited pre-2018 (26%). Those 'unsure' whether they were measuring impact were UK institutions. Advance HE may consider leveraging international HEIs for their global/international outreach as these HEIs would have the local networks Advance HE (UK) does not.
- + There is an opportunity for Advance HE to work with human resources leaders in relation to career development. In some institutions indirect or direct support from senior leadership in the human resources space has facilitated the embedding of Fellowships as indicators for career development and career pathways. Developing and sharing such examples across the sector may help institutions to enhance their existing provision.
- + Workload allocation was consistently mentioned as a challenge both in terms of providing support for the operation of accredited provision and in allocating time for engagement in teaching-related CPD. Staff workloads in mentoring, assessing and the governance of accredited provision were rewarded in various ways, with some institutions offering clear incentives. Sharing best practice in this area, and advocating for incentive and recognition, particularly with strategic leaders, will support institutions to develop a sustainable approach to their accredited provision.

17.3 Areas for further research and development

In general terms, as the associated literature review noted (see Turner and Spowart, 2020), there is a paucity of research on the topic of institutional accreditation aligned to the UKPSF. The impacts of institutional accreditation on the institution are implicit rather than explicit in much of the published scholarly literature. The following are areas that warrant further exploration and development:

- + the development of measures to evaluate the impact of accredited provision on student outcomes and experience
- + the contributions students can make to the development of teacher-related CPD
- + the impact of the accreditation/re-accreditation process itself on the positive impact of accreditation in institutions identified in the report
- + the link between fellowship and nomination for student-led teaching awards and other awards
- + long-term monitoring of the extent to which career progression policies promote the advancement of teaching focused staff, particularly at professorial level, would be valuable to further research into the reward and recognition of teaching and learning, across all types of higher education institution
- + examining the development of CPD offers, and the interrelationships between the accredited/non-accredited CPD offer could provide institutions and Advance HE insights into the relationships between the two, as these appear to be complex and interdependent
- + the impact and influence of networks – both online and within institutional contexts
- + a recurring theme in both the primary and secondary data analysed for this project was the development of communities of practice around teaching and learning. That said, there is very little known about how these emerge and what the long-term impacts are. Future research could usefully consider this as a specific focus
- + the majority of the published research to date has focused on ‘snapshot’ evaluations of single institution studies. There are further opportunities to work collaboratively (for example, on global initiatives) to undertake work that is inclusive of a broader range of institutions, is longer-term, and examines specific issues associated with accreditation (refer to the Literature Review).

18 References

- Aldulaimi, S H and Abdeldayem, M M (2019) 'How changes in leadership behaviour and management influence sustainable higher education in Bahrain', *International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research*, 8 (11): 1926-1934.
- Asghar, M and Pilkington, R (2018) 'The relational value of professional dialogue for academics pursuing HEA fellowship', *International Journal for Academic Development*, 23 (2): 135-146.
- Bamber, V (2013) *Evidencing the Value of Educational Development – SEDA Special 34*. London: SEDA.
- Beckmann, E A (2016) 'Teaching excellence: Recognising the many as well as the few', in Davis, M and Goody, A (eds) *Research and Development in Higher Education: The Shape of Higher Education*, 39. Refereed papers from the 39th HERDSA Conference, Fremantle, Western Australia, 4-7 July 2016. Hammondville: Melissa Davis and Allan Goody. Available at: www.herdsa.org.au/publications/conference-proceedings/research-and-development-higher-education-shape-higher-1
- Bryman, A (2015) *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Buissink, N, Diamond, P, Hallas, J, Swann, J and Sciascia, A D (2017) 'Challenging a measured university from an indigenous perspective: Placing "manaaki" at the heart of our professional development programme', *Higher Education Research and Development*, 36 (3): 569-582. Available at: doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2017.1288706
- Cashmore, A, Cane, C and Cane, R (2013) *Rebalancing promotion in the HE sector: Is teaching excellence being rewarded?* Leicester: GENIE CETL and York: Higher Education Academy.
- Chalmers, D (2011) 'Progress and challenges to the recognition and reward of the Scholarship of Teaching in higher education', *Higher Education Research and Development*, 30 (1): 25-38.
- Chalmers, D, Stoney, S, Goody, A, Goerke, V and Gardiner, D (2012) *Identification and implementation of indicators and measures of effectiveness of teaching preparation programs for academics in higher education. Final report 2012*. Sydney: Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching. Available at doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.3882.8567
- Cousin, G (2009) *Strategies for Researching Learning in Higher Education: An Introduction to Contemporary Methods and Approaches*. New York: Routledge.
- Denson, N, Loveday, T and Dalton, H (2010) 'Student evaluation of courses: What predicts satisfaction?' *Higher Education Research and Development*, 29 (4): 339-356.
- De Rijdt, C, Stes, A, van der Vleuten, C and Dochy, F (2013) 'Influencing variables and moderators of transfer of learning to the workplace within the area of staff development in higher education', *Educational Research Review*, 8: 48-74.

Guskey, T R (2000) *Evaluating professional development*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Guskey, T R (2016) 'Gauge impact with five levels of data', *Journal of Staff Development*, 37 (1): 32-37.

Kandlbinder, P and Peseta, T (2009) 'Key concepts in postgraduate certificates in higher education teaching and learning in Australasia and the United Kingdom', *International Journal for Academic Development*, 14 (1): 19-31.

Parsons, D, Hill, I, Holland, J and Willis, D (2012) *Impact of teaching development programmes in higher education*. York: Higher Education Academy. Available at:

www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/HEA_Impact_Teaching_Development_Prog.pdf

Rubin, H J and Rubin, I S (2005) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing the Data*, 2nd edn. SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Spowart, L, Winter, J, Turner, R, Muneer, R, McKenna, C and Kneale, P E (2017) 'Evidencing the impact of teaching-related CPD: beyond the "Happy Sheets"', *International Journal for Academic Development*, 22 (4): 360-372.

Trigwell, K, Caballero Rodriguez, K and Han, F (2012) 'Assessing the impact of a university teaching development programme', *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 37 (4): 499-511.

Turner, R and Spowart, L (2020) *Assessing the impact of accreditation on institutions: Literature review*. York: Advance HE.

Turner, N, Oliver, M, McKenna, C, Hughes, J, Smith, H, Deepwell, F and Shrives, L (2013) *Measuring the impact of the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning (UKPSF)*. York: Higher Education Academy.

Widodo, H P (2014) 'Methodological considerations in interview data transcription', *International Journal of Innovation in English Language*, 3 (1): 101-107.

Appendix 1: international online survey

Advance HE Institutional Accreditation Impact Survey

Page 1

This independent project investigating 'Institutional Accreditation Impact' has been commissioned by Advance HE to gain insight into the impact of accreditation on member institutions around the world. It will explore the role of the accredited provision (including continuing professional development schemes and taught courses) aligned to the Professional Standards Framework.

In this survey, 'Fellowship' refers to the HEA Fellowship accredited by Advance HE and the 'Professional Standards Framework' is the UK Professional Standards Framework, sometimes referred to as the UKPSF.

The focus of this research is specifically on the impact and influence at your institutional level rather than on individual participants and Fellows, for which there is a growing evidence-base. We hope that by collecting this information, Advance HE can develop accreditation processes in keeping with the global appetite for standards of teaching and learning.

Participation and Consent

You have been asked to take part because you have a key role within your institution in relation to supporting teaching and learning. The research is being led by Dr Lucy Spowart from the University of Plymouth. This is a collaborative international project with researchers from Africa and Australia.

All of your responses from the survey will be collected, analysed and stored in accordance with the University of Plymouth's data protection policy which is available at: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/students-and-family/governance/information-governance>. The findings will be reported and disseminated by Advance HE and the research team (with the permission of Advance HE). The data you provide will not be identifiable in the research reports.

The project has received formal approval by the Advance HE Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or questions about this research, please contact Dr Lucy Spowart (Project Lead) at lucy.spowart@plymouth.ac.uk.

Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose

to withdraw from the study, you will not be disadvantaged in any way.

Participation Statement

*I understand that participation in this project is voluntary and whether I choose to complete the questionnaire or not will have no impact on my relationship with **Advance HE**. I understand that my responses will be treated with complete confidentiality and no names will be used in any outcomes of the research. Completing the survey is indication of implied consent to participate in this research.*

1. Please enter your institution name * Required

****This institution name will only be used for coding and linking to Advance HE data previously collected. The information will be separated from the data once analysed. Providing the institution name will also ensure you are not contacted again unnecessarily****

Page 2

2. What motivated your institution to apply for accreditation with Advance HE? (please explain)

3. Does your institution set targets relating to Advance HE Fellowship? (please tick one option)

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure

3.a. Please feel free to comment on your answer below

3.b. If yes, what were these targets for 2019/2020?

4. Is achieving Fellowship a requirement of PROBATION for teaching staff in your institution? (please tick one option)

- ☐ Yes, always
☐ Yes, under some circumstances
☐ No
☐ Unsure

3 / 17

4.a. Please feel free to comment on your answer below

Page 3

5. Is Fellowship or the Professional Standards Framework explicitly mentioned in your institution's documentation around strategic direction (please tick one option)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

5.a. Please feel free to comment on your answer below

5.b. If yes, in which documents?

6. Is Fellowship or the Professional Standards Framework *explicitly* mentioned in the PROMOTION criteria? (please tick one option)

- ☐ Yes, always
- ☐ Yes, under some circumstances
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

6.a. If yes, please explain

6.b. Please feel free to comment on your answer below

7. Is Fellowship or the Professional Standards Framework *explicitly* mentioned as part of the annual APPRAISAL/PERFORMANCE REVIEW system? (please tick one option)

- ☐ Yes, always
- ☐ Yes, under some circumstances
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

7.a. If yes, please explain

7.b. Please feel free to comment on your answer below

Page 4

8. What *plans, strategies and policies* **have changed** in response to, or in preparation for, Advance HE (re)accreditation? (please tick accordingly and explain in what way)

	Have they changed?			In what way(s)?
	Yes	No	Unsure	
Teaching and learning strategies, policies and plans	☐	☐	☐	
Alignment to strategic objectives (evidenced through reference to key performance indicators; goals such as targets for the number of staff qualified)	☐	☐	☐	
Academic probation/confirmation requirements linked to accredited CPD and/or HEA fellowship of a specific category	☐	☐	☐	
Appraisal frameworks that include reference to HEA fellowship categories and/or the Professional Standards Framework	☐	☐	☐	
Academic promotion frameworks that include reference to HEA fellowship categories and/or the Professional Standards Framework	☐	☐	☐	

Key performance indicators for academic professional development that reference accredited programmes	☐	☐	☐	
Quality assurance policies	☐	☐	☐	
Other	☐	☐	☐	

8.a. If other, please explain

9. In your opinion what impact, if any, has institutional accreditation with Advance HE had on *teaching and learning practices*? (please tick all that apply e.g. large positive, some negative for the same attribute and comment as necessary)

	Level of impact					
	Large positive impact	Some impact	Neutral/zero impact	Some negative impact	Large negative impact	Unsure
Quality of teaching and learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Modification/review/redesign of teaching	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality of learning activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality of assessment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality of academic support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quality of pastoral support provided	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Use of technology for teaching/learning/assessment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Assessing the impact of accreditation on institutions

Lucy Spowart, Rebecca Turner, Harriet Dismore, Elizabeth Beckmann, Rachael Carkett and Tashmin Khamis

Championing of learning and teaching practice and innovation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Championing participation, equity and inclusivity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student partnerships with teaching staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Establishment of internal teaching and learning networks e.g. community of practice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Establishment of teaching and learning external networks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9.a. Please feel free to comment on your answer(s) below

10. What impact, if any, has institutional accreditation with Advance HE had on *teaching and learning staff*? (please tick all that apply e.g. large positive, some negative for the same attribute and comment as necessary)

	Level of impact					
	Large positive impact	Some impact	Neutral/zero impact	Some negative impact	Large negative impact	Unsure
Numbers of staff with teaching qualification/professional recognition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Numbers of established leaders / advocates / champions for teaching and learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Provision of teaching related professional development for staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leadership opportunities for staff through engagement in the governance of accredited provision e.g. Board, steering group, panel member	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Involvement of staff in Advance HE's Leadership Programmes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attendance of staff at Advance HE events and activities (UK or Global)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff self-efficacy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Awareness and capacity for reflective practice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professional development for staff through training as mentors or assessors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff fostering an understanding of inclusion and diversity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10.a. Please feel free to comment on your answer(s) below

Page 5

11. Do you agree or disagree that Advance HE accreditation has impacted on the wider institutional culture? (Please tick accordingly and explain in what way).

	Agreement			In what way(s)?
	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	
Improving the profile of teaching and learning	☐	☐	☐	
Increasing the credibility of educational development centres	☐	☐	☐	
Stimulating wider staff development e.g. conferences, workshops	☐	☐	☐	
Increasing scholarship/research in teaching and learning	☐	☐	☐	
Increasing celebration events	☐	☐	☐	
Fostering links with senior managers	☐	☐	☐	
Encouraging collaboration between academic and professional staff	☐	☐	☐	
Increasing cross-faculty working and collaboration	☐	☐	☐	
Impacting on teaching and learning evaluation processes	☐	☐	☐	

Increasing formal or informal interactions between/among institutions	☐	☐	☐	
Other	☐	☐	☐	

11.a. If other, please explain

12. In your opinion has Advance HE accreditation had any impact on your institution's *student engagement with teaching and learning*? (please tick accordingly)

	Level of impact					
	Large positive impact	Some impact	Neutral/zero impact	Some negative impact	Large negative impact	Unsure
Student satisfaction	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student achievement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student interaction with staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students' interaction with one another	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12.a. Please feel free to comment on your answer(s) below

13. Have there been any additional wider initiatives that have developed from, or been influenced by, Advance HE institutional accreditation? (please explain)

Page 6

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your institution's ongoing accreditation with Advance HE? (please tick accordingly)

	Level of agreement					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
The cost of institutional accreditation with Advance HE is reasonable for the services provided	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Institutional accreditation is UK-centric	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our institution has sufficient access to regional services/events run by Advance HE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our institution has clear communication channels with Advance HE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advance HE responds rapidly to queries concerning our accredited provision	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advance HE accreditation aligns clearly with our institutional priorities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advance HE accreditation offers an inclusive approach to professional recognition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our Senior leadership team fully supports our future accreditation with Advance HE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Advance HE paperwork can be time consuming to complete	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14.a. Please feel free to comment on your answer(s) below

15. Are you currently measuring the impact of institutional accreditation with Advance HE? (please tick one option)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

15.a. If yes, how and by whom?

15.b. If no, are you planning to measure the impact in the future?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

15.b.i. If yes, how and by whom?

15.b.ii. Please feel free to comment on your answer below

15.c. Please feel free to comment on your answer below

Page 7: Final page

Thank you for completing this survey.

Appendix 2: impact by length of accreditation

Impact on teaching and learning practices	Positive Accredited		Negative Accredited		Neutral Accredited	
	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)
Quality of teaching and learning	45 (98%)	7 (78%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Modification/review/redesign of teaching	38 (83%)	5 (56%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (13%)	1 (11%)
Quality of learning activities	43 (93%)	5 (56%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	1 (11%)
Quality of assessment	39 (85%)	3 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (11%)	2 (22%)
Quality of academic support	29 (63%)	5 (56%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	12 (26%)	0 (0%)
Quality of pastoral support provided	25 (54%)	4 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (33%)	2 (22%)
Use of technology for teaching/learning/assessment	29 (63%)	4 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	14 (30%)	2 (22%)
Championing of learning and teaching practice and innovation	43 (93%)	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)
Championing participation, equity and inclusivity	35 (76%)	4 (44%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	7 (15%)	2 (22%)
Student partnerships with teaching staff	23 (50%)	1 (11%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	16 (35%)	6 (67%)
Establishment of internal teaching and learning networks	38 (83%)	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8 (17%)	0 (0%)
Establishment of teaching and learning external networks	32 (70%)	7 (78%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (22%)	1 (11%)

Impact on teaching and learning practices	Unsure		Missing		TOTAL	
	Accredited		Accredited		Accredited	
	pre-2018	since 2018	pre-2018	since 2018	pre-2018	since 2018
	Count (%)	Count (%)	Count (%)	Count (%)	Count (%)	Count (%)
Quality of teaching and learning	1 (2%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Modification/review/redesign of teaching	2 (4%)	3 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Quality of learning activities	2 (4%)	3 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Quality of assessment	2 (4%)	4 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Quality of academic support	4 (9%)	4 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Quality of pastoral support provided	6 (13%)	3 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Use of technology for teaching/learning/assessment	3 (7%)	3 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Championing of learning and teaching practice and innovation	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Championing participation, equity and inclusivity	3 (7%)	3 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Student partnerships with teaching staff	6 (13%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Establishment of internal teaching and learning networks	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Establishment of teaching and learning external networks	4 (9%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)

Assessing the impact of accreditation on institutions

Lucy Spowart, Rebecca Turner, Harriet Dismore, Elizabeth Beckmann, Rachael Carkett and Tashmin Khamis

Impact on teaching and learning staff	Positive Accredited		Negative Accredited		Neutral Accredited	
	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)
Numbers of staff with teaching qualification/professional recognition	46 (100%)	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Numbers of established leaders/ advocates/champions for teaching and learning	42 (91%)	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)
Provision of teaching related professional development for staff	43 (93%)	9 (100%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)
Leadership opportunities for staff through engagement in the governance of accredited provision	42 (91%)	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)
Involvement of staff in AHE Leadership Programmes	17 (37%)	3 (33%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	18 (39%)	6 (67%)
Attendance of staff at AHE events	30 (65%)	5 (56%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	12 (26%)	3 (33%)
Staff self-efficacy	34 (74%)	5 (56%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (13%)	2 (22%)
Awareness and capacity for reflective practice	43 (93%)	7 (78%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	1 (11%)
Professional development through training as mentors or assessors	41 (89%)	8 (89%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (7%)	1 (11%)
Staff fostering an understanding of inclusion and diversity	36 (78%)	4 (44%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	7 (15%)	4 (44%)

Impact on teaching and learning practices	Unsure		Missing		TOTAL	
	Accredited		Accredited		Accredited	
	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)
Numbers of staff with teaching qualification/professional recognition	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Numbers of established leaders/ advocates/champions for teaching and learning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Provision of teaching related professional development for staff	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Leadership opportunities for staff through engagement in the governance of accredited provision	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Involvement of staff in AHE Leadership Programmes	8 (17%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Attendance of staff at AHE events	3 (7%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Staff self-efficacy	5 (11%)	2 (22%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Awareness and capacity for reflective practice	1 (2%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Professional development through training as mentors or assessors	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Staff fostering an understanding of inclusion and diversity	2 (4%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)

Assessing the impact of accreditation on institutions

Lucy Spowart, Rebecca Turner, Harriet Dismore, Elizabeth Beckmann, Rachael Carkett and Tashmin Khamis

Impact on student engagement with teaching and learning	Positive		Negative		Neutral	
	Accredited		Accredited		Accredited	
	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)
Student satisfaction	23 (50%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (13%)	3 (33%)
Student achievement	14 (30%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (22%)	3 (33%)
Student interaction with staff	21 (46%)	4 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (24%)	1 (11%)
Students' interaction with one another	11 (24%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	14 (30%)	3 (33%)

Impact on student engagement with teaching and learning	Unsure Accredited		Missing Accredited		TOTAL Accredited	
	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)
Student satisfaction	17 (37%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Student achievement	22 (48%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Student interaction with staff	14 (30%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Students' interaction with one another	21 (46%)	5 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)

Assessing the impact of accreditation on institutions

Lucy Spowart, Rebecca Turner, Harriet Dismore, Elizabeth Beckmann, Rachael Carkett and Tashmin Khamis

Impact on wider institutional culture	Agree		Disagree	
	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)
Improving the profile of teaching and learning	40 (87%)	8 (89%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)
Increasing the credibility of educational development centres	30 (65%)	7 (78%)	4 (9%)	1 (11%)
Stimulating wider staff development eg conferences	31 (67%)	7 (78%)	7 (15%)	1 (11%)
Increasing scholarship/research in teaching and learning	28 (61%)	3 (33%)	5 (11%)	4 (44%)
Increasing celebration events	21 (46%)	6 (67%)	12 (26%)	1 (11%)
Fostering links with senior management	16 (35%)	3 (33%)	10 (22%)	2 (22%)
Encouraging collaboration between academic and professional staff	27 (59%)	5 (56%)	8 (17%)	4 (44%)
Increasing cross-faculty working and collaboration	27 (59%)	7 (78%)	8 (17%)	1 (11%)
Impacting on teaching and learning evaluation processes	24 (52%)	4 (44%)	7 (15%)	3 (33%)
Increasing formal and informal interactions between/among institutions	28 (61%)	4 (44%)	7 (15%)	2 (22%)

Impact on wider institutional culture	Unsure		Missing		TOTAL	
	Accredited		Accredited		Accredited	
	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)	pre-2018 Count (%)	since 2018 Count (%)
Improving the profile of teaching and learning	2 (4%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Increasing the credibility of educational development centres	12 (26%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Stimulating wider staff development eg conferences	8 (17%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Increasing scholarship/research in teaching and learning	13 (28%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Increasing celebration events	13 (28%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Fostering links with senior management	20 (43%)	4 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Encouraging collaboration between academic and professional staff	11 (24%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Increasing cross-faculty working and collaboration	11 (24%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Impacting on teaching and learning evaluation processes	15 (33%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)
Increasing formal and informal interactions between/among institutions	11 (24%)	3 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	46 (100%)	9 (100%)

Appendix 3: impact by domain

Impact on teaching and learning practices	Positive		Negative		Neutral	
	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)
Quality of teaching and learning	41 (98%)	11 (85%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Modification/review/redesign of teaching	34 (81%)	9 (69%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (14%)	1 (8%)
Quality of learning activities	39 (93%)	9 (69%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	1 (8%)
Quality of assessment	35 (83%)	7 (54%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (12%)	2 (15%)
Quality of academic support	27 (64%)	7 (54%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (24%)	2 (15%)
Quality of pastoral support provided	24 (57%)	5 (38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	13 (31%)	4 (31%)
Use of technology for teaching/ learning/assessment	26 (62%)	7 (54%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	13 (31%)	3 (23%)
Championing of learning and teaching practice and innovation	40 (95%)	12 (92%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	1 (8%)
Championing participation, equity and inclusivity	32 (76%)	7 (54%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	6 (14%)	3 (23%)
Student partnerships with teaching staff	22 (52%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	14 (33%)	8 (62%)
Establishment of internal teaching and learning networks	35 (83%)	12 (92%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (17%)	1 (8%)
Establishment of teaching and learning external networks	29 (69%)	10 (77%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (21%)	2 (15%)

Impact on teaching and learning practices	Unsure		Missing		TOTAL	
	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)
Quality of teaching and learning	1 (2%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Modification/review/redesign of teaching	2 (5%)	3 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Quality of learning activities	2 (5%)	3 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Quality of assessment	2 (5%)	4 (31%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Quality of academic support	4 (10%)	4 (31%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Quality of pastoral support provided	5 (12%)	4 (31%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Use of technology for teaching/learning/assessment	3 (7%)	3 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Championing of learning and teaching practice and innovation	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Championing participation, equity and inclusivity	3 (7%)	3 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Student partnerships with teaching staff	6 (14%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Establishment of internal teaching and learning networks	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Establishment of teaching and learning external networks	4 (10%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)

Assessing the impact of accreditation on institutions

Lucy Spowart, Rebecca Turner, Harriet Dismore, Elizabeth Beckmann, Rachael Carkett and Tashmin Khamis

Impact on teaching and learning staff	Positive		Negative		Neutral	
	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)
Numbers of staff with teaching qualification/professional recognition	42 (100%)	13 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Numbers of established leaders/ advocates/champions for teaching and learning	39 (93%)	12 (92%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)
Provision of teaching related professional development for staff	40 (95%)	12 (92%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	1 (8%)
Leadership opportunities for staff through engagement in the governance of accredited provision	30 (71%)	10 (77%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	9 (21%)	3 (23%)
Involvement of staff in AHE Leadership Programmes	17 (40%)	3 (23%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	15 (36%)	9 (69%)
Attendance of staff at AHE events	28 (67%)	7 (54%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	10 (24%)	5 (38%)
Staff self-efficacy	31 (74%)	8 (62%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (14%)	2 (15%)
Awareness and capacity for reflective practice	39 (93%)	11 (85%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	1 (8%)
Professional development through training as mentors or assessors	37 (88%)	12 (92%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (10%)	0 (0%)
Staff fostering an understanding of inclusion and diversity	33 (79%)	7 (54%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	7 (17%)	4 (31%)

Impact on teaching and learning staff	Unsure		Missing		TOTAL	
	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)
Numbers of staff with teaching qualification/professional recognition	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Numbers of established leaders/ advocates/champions for teaching and learning	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Provision of teaching related professional development for staff	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Leadership opportunities for staff through engagement in the governance of accredited provision	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Involvement of staff in AHE Leadership Programmes	8 (19%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Attendance of staff at AHE events	3 (7%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Staff self-efficacy	5 (12%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Awareness and capacity for reflective practice	1 (2%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Professional development through training as mentors or assessors	1 (2%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Staff fostering an understanding of inclusion and diversity	1 (2%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)

Assessing the impact of accreditation on institutions

Lucy Spowart, Rebecca Turner, Harriet Dismore, Elizabeth Beckmann, Rachael Carkett and Tashmin Khamis

Impact student engagement with teaching and learning	Positive		Negative		Neutral	
	UK	Int	UK	Int	UK	Int
	Count (%)	Count (%)	Count (%)	Count (%)	Count (%)	Count (%)
Student satisfaction	23 (55%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (12%)	4 (31%)
Student achievement	15 (36%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (21%)	4 (31%)
Student interaction with staff	21 (50%)	4 (31%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (24%)	2 (15%)
Students' interaction with one another	10 (24%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	12 (29%)	5 (38%)

Impact student engagement with teaching and learning	Unsure		Missing		TOTAL	
	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)
Student satisfaction	14 (33%)	7 (54%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Student achievement	18 (43%)	8 (62%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Student interaction with staff	11 (26%)	7 (54%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Students' interaction with one another	20 (48%)	6 (46%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)

Assessing the impact of accreditation on institutions

Lucy Spowart, Rebecca Turner, Harriet Dismore, Elizabeth Beckmann, Rachael Carkett and Tashmin Khamis

Impact on wider institutional culture	Agree		Disagree	
	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)
Improving the profile of teaching and learning	37 (88%)	11 (85%)	4 (10%)	0 (0%)
Increasing the credibility of educational development centres	28 (67%)	9 (69%)	4 (10%)	1 (8%)
Stimulating wider staff development eg conferences	28 (67%)	10 (77%)	7 (17%)	1 (8%)
Increasing scholarship/research in teaching and learning	27 (64%)	4 (31%)	5 (2%)	4 (31%)
Increasing celebration events	19 (45%)	8 (62%)	11 (26%)	2 (15%)
Fostering links with senior management	14 (33%)	5 (38%)	10 (24%)	2 (15%)
Encouraging collaboration between academic and professional staff	25 (60%)	7 (54%)	8 (19%)	4 (31%)
Increasing cross-faculty working and collaboration	24 (57%)	10 (77%)	8 (19%)	1 (8%)
Impacting on teaching and learning evaluation processes	23 (55%)	5 (38%)	7 (17%)	3 (23%)
Increasing formal and informal interactions between/among institutions	24 (57%)	8 (62%)	7 (17%)	2 (15%)

Impact on wider institutional culture	Unsure		Missing		TOTAL	
	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)	UK Count (%)	Int Count (%)
Improving the profile of teaching and learning	1 (2%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Increasing the credibility of educational development centres	10 (24%)	3 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Stimulating wider staff development eg conferences	7 (17%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Increasing scholarship/research in teaching and learning	10 (24%)	5 (38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Increasing celebration events	12 (29%)	3 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Fostering links with senior management	18 (43%)	6 (46%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Encouraging collaboration between academic and professional staff	9 (21%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Increasing cross-faculty working and collaboration	10 (24%)	2 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Impacting on teaching and learning evaluation processes	12 (29%)	5 (38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)
Increasing formal and informal interactions between/among institutions	11 (26%)	3 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42 (100%)	13 (100%)

Appendix 4

Interview questions for case studies for programme leaders, strategic leaders and HR reps

Ensure consent form has been read and signed. To be returned via email.

Introduction points

- + This independent project investigating 'Institutional Accreditation Impact' has been commissioned by Advance HE to gain insight into the impact of accreditation on member institutions around the world.
- + Each interview will take no longer than 45 minutes.
- + Only the audio files will be shared for analysis and securely stored according to the University of Plymouth data protection policy.
- + Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time up to the point at which data analysis will commence, in June 2020. If you choose to withdraw you can do so without any explanation, and it will not disadvantage your relationship with the research team and/or Advance HE.
- + It will explore the role of the accredited provision aligned to the Professional Standards Framework (sometimes referred to as the UKPSF or PSF).
- + The focus of this research is specifically on the impact and influence at an institutional level rather than on individual participants and Fellows, for which there is a growing evidence-base. We hope that by collecting this information, Advance HE can develop accreditation processes in keeping with the global appetite for standards of teaching and learning.

INTERVIEWERS:

Ensure you have accessed the institution's survey responses

Notes on response

OPENING QUESTION (ICEBREAKER): Scope of Accredited provision**Q: How long have you had Advance HE accredited provision at your institution?**

And would you say it is deeply embedded, ie a well-known available opportunity, or something more peripheral?

MAIN THEMES**KEY THEME 1:**

Knowledge and engagement with the UKPSF across specific staff groups

Q: WHO engages with the accredited provision at your institution, and IN WHAT WAYS?*Prompt*

+ Academics; sessional academics; managers, professional services staff (eg librarians; technicians; student union staff; students in educational roles)?

Qb. HOW is engagement with the UKPSF encouraged/supported across the various staff groups?**KEY THEME 2:**

The benefits of institutional accreditation

Q: What do you see as the main benefits to your institution of Advance HE accreditation?*Prompts*

+ Following on from this, are you currently evaluating your AHE offer?

+ If so, what has resulted from this work?

KEY THEME 3: **Strategic use, impacts and role of the UKPSF**

Q: To what extent is accreditation and the UKPSF embedded in your institutions approach to T&L?

Prompts

Can you provide examples?

What is the most important aspect of that embedding in your opinion?

Probe options (already have info on institutional policies/strategies, but this is an opportunity to expand and offer a view from their specific perspective: what works well & why? What doesn't work so well, & why?)

- + Academic probation/confirmation requirements
- + Academic promotion frameworks
- + Key performance indicators or targets for academic professional development
- + Role of accredited programmes in facilitating broader institutional missions eg gender equity, educational leadership development

KEY THEME 4: **Institutional challenges associated with accreditation**

Q: Tell us about any challenges you have faced in relation to Advance HE accreditation?

Qb. Following on from this, are there any ways that Advance HE could support you to address these?

Prompts

- + Financial considerations influencing decisions to accredit (versus preparing staff for direct application to Advance HE or investment in other forms of CPD/recognition)
- + Cultural 'fit'
- + Interest in other national/international frameworks or institutionally ones
- + In-house decision making for Fellowships – how is this managed? (workload, admin)
- + Advance HE Paperwork

KEY THEME 5:**Professional development activities in support of teaching and learning (not for HR)**

Q: What Professional development opportunities are created for staff beyond the actual accredited offer and HOW is this encouraged/supported?

Prompts

- + Through training as mentors or assessors in accredited programmes
- + Leadership opportunities for staff through engagement in the governance of accredited programmes
- + HEA fellowships being seen as pathways/preparation for teaching awards (institutional or national)
- + Wider Advance HE provision (conferences, workshops)
- + Benefits of different types of accredited programmes eg dialogic approaches versus written versus CPD
- + Communities of Practice
- + Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Activities

KEY THEME 6:**FINAL THOUGHTS**

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add regarding Advance HE accreditation and the impact on your institution?

Appendix 5: list of organisations that contributed to the study

Aston University	Lancaster University
Australian National University	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Bath Spa University	Plymouth Marjon University
BIMM Institute	Queensland University of Technology
Bishop Grosseteste University	Robert Gordon University
Cardiff Metropolitan University	St Mary's University
Coventry University	Suranaree University of Technology
De Montfort University	Swansea University
ESIC Business and Marketing School	Teesside University
Griffith University	The Aga Khan University
Harper Adams University	The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
Keele University	The University of Buckingham
King's College London	The University of Edinburgh
Kingston University	The University of Queensland

The University of Sheffield	University of Plymouth
The University of Sydney	University of Portsmouth
Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance	University of Reading
Ulster University	University of South Wales
University of Bahrain	University of St Andrews
University of Bath	University of Sunderland
University of East Anglia	University of Surrey
University of East London	University of the Sunshine Coast
University of Essex	University of the West of England
University of Exeter	University of Westminster
University of Hertfordshire	University of Worcester
University of Kent	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University
University of Leeds	
University of New South Wales (UNSW)	



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.

Unless stated otherwise, Advance HE is not the copyright owner of these case studies. The details and content of the case studies must not be used in any form without the prior express permission of the relevant author(s).

© 2020 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