

Tick-box, weasel words, or a transformative experience? **Insights into what educators consider the real impact of HEA Fellowships**

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Tick-box, weasel words, or a transformative experience? Insights into what educators consider the real impact of HEA Fellowships

Global membership of the HEA fellowship scheme is increasing. There is limited research examining whether fellowship delivers on its promise to improve teaching quality and the learning experience. In this comprehensive survey of educators' perceptions in the UK and Australia, our results indicate impact on individuals, practice, and community. Importantly, the reflective act of developing a fellowship has potential to shape the student learning experience. However, some staff are frustrated and disillusioned by their experience. We call for institutions to adopt a critical stance in designing recognition schemes that maximise impact and acknowledge the multiple benefits valued by educators.

Keywords: Professional Standards Framework (PSF), Self-efficacy, HEA Fellow, Teaching Excellence, Reflection, Impact, Intangible benefits

Introduction

Higher Education (HE) is big business, with global growth in tertiary studies and competition amongst providers. Teaching quality is ever-more important, shaped by widening participation and demands to demonstrate impact and value. With market expansion comes increased focus on teaching metrics, demonstrated by the Times Higher Education Rankings, the UK Teaching Excellence Framework, and the Australian Quality Indicators of Learning and Teaching (Department of Education, 2019; Office for Students, 2019; Times Higher Education, 2019). Within this context, our research examined the impact of the standards-based Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowship scheme, a measure of quality adopted by growing numbers of universities worldwide. This paper reports on the impact of fellowship by analysing data from more than 300 respondents from six different institutions in the UK and Australia.

The Professional Standards Framework (PSF) and HEA Fellowship Scheme

The PSF was developed in 2006 by the HEA, Guild HE, and Universities UK on behalf of the sector (Higher Education Academy, 2011, 2016) to enhance students' learning experiences by improving the quality of teaching and learning. The 2011 PSF underpins the HEA Fellowship scheme and enables institutions to align professional development programs to descriptors that articulate teaching and learning standards. In 2018 the HEA, the Leadership Foundation, and the Equity Challenge Unit merged to form the not-for-profit entity Advance HE (AHE), with the objective of supporting continuous improvement through the development of individuals and organisations (Advance HE, 2019), including management of the HEA Fellowship scheme.

The PSF underpins four categories of Fellowship – Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow, and Principal Fellow – encompassing roles from an early-career educator (Associate Fellow) through to strategic leaders in learning and teaching (Principal Fellow). Applicants seek recognition through a reflective account of practice (and referee statements) directly to AHE for assessment, or via an accredited institutional pathway. All applications must be written in English. Since 2014 applications have increased exponentially: there are now more than 135,000 HEA Fellows worldwide, and 334 member institutions including 66 outside the UK (see Figure 1). The majority of HEA Fellows are still UK-based and many UK institutions set strategic priorities for achievement of HEA fellowship (some 100%) within a finite period, in many cases a move linked to the ultimately unfounded expectation that the UK government's Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) would require reporting on this metric. However, fellowships could be reported within institutional TEF submissions where references to HEA Fellowship were much higher amongst institutions awarded Gold or Silver ratings, compared to those awarded Bronze (Moore, Higham, Sanders, 2017). Since 2016 more than two-thirds of Australian universities have joined AHE. The growing global

membership is variously motivated, including a desire to raise teaching quality, benchmark staff development, provide recognition for educators, and develop indicators to support recruitment, performance, and promotion (Beckmann & Cathcart, 2019; Smart, Asghar, Campbell, & Huxham, 2019).

[Insert Figure 1]

Interrogating the use and value of HEA Fellowship

Our systematic literature review identified 94 articles directly referencing HEA Fellowship since 2011. Researchers have focused on a range of recognition methods, including dialogues, peer observation, and reflective writing (Asghar & Pilkington, 2018; Daniels, 2017; Engin, 2016; Pilkington, 2019; Smart et al., 2019). Others have examined taught pathways, such as Graduate Certificates, new educator inductions, or continuing professional development (CPD) frameworks (Butcher & Stoncel, 2012; Fraser et al., 2019; Fung, 2014). More recently, researchers have focused on the inclusive nature of the PSF, examining its applicability to diverse cultures or as part of decolonising the curriculum (Buissink, Diamond, Hallas, Swann, & Sciascia, 2017; Duhs, Evans, Williams, & Chaudhury, 2019). Others have examined the experience of particular groups, including professional staff, librarians, PhD students, and sessional/casual educators (George & Rowland, 2019; Greer, Cathcart, & Neale, 2016). A small number of studies have examined the relationship between HEA Fellowship, teaching qualifications, student satisfaction, and outcomes in the UK TEF (Barkas, Scott, Poppitt, & Smith, 2019; Bell & Brooks, 2019).

Despite the proliferation of research, much of the focus has been on individual UK-based institutions, or on narrow categories of staff. Increasingly, scholars have called for

research to focus on the international community to incorporate a broader conceptualisation of impact (Bamber & Stefani, 2016; Shaw, 2018; Spowart et al., 2019; Turner et al., 2013).

Methodology

The collaborative study comprises partners from five UK (England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) and one Australian university. Institutions represented a range of mission groups, all having well-established HEA accredited routes to fellowship, using a variety of certified and CPD pathways. All routes were, naturally shaped by their institutional context, but shared features including reflection on practice, engagement with the scholarly evidence base, and addressing the PSF dimensions of practice. (see Table 1).

[Insert Table 1]

A survey was used to gather quantitative and qualitative responses from educators who had gained recognition through institutional routes in the three preceding years. The research sought to explore participants' perceptions of how gaining fellowship had impacted on themselves, their peers, and their students. Rather than pre-empt any definitions of impact attributable to HEA Fellowship, a broad conceptualisation of impact was used, building on constructs previously identified (Kneale et al. 2015; PedRio, 2016) including self-efficacy, networks and community, and personal, practice-based, and institutional change. The research focused on staff perceptions of impact, but also encouraged reflection on students' perceptions thereof. Open questions and free text responses elicited detailed answers which enabled a shift beyond narrow impact metrics (Spowart et al. 2019) to instead uncover intangible assets valued by HE educators but which are not easily measurable or quantifiable (Robertson, Cleaver & Smart, 2019). The research had ethical approval and data collection was undertaken in 2017.

Survey design

The survey was developed iteratively, drawing on constructs in the HEA CPD evaluation resource (Kneale et al., 2015; PedRio, 2016) and incorporating questions on motivation, recognition, pathway and the perceived impact of recognition. Respondents also provided demographic information, including gender, fellowship status, the route to fellowship, and years of experience as an HE educator. Questions required quantitative and/or qualitative responses. Quantitative questions used a five-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree (5–1); open-text responses enabled respondents to define impact in ways of their choosing, including in relation to intangibles. The survey concluded by asking for any negative consequences from engaging with the fellowship process.

Sample

The survey was developed in Survey Monkey. Email invitations (together with a reminder 2 weeks later) from the institutional leads for each accredited program were distributed to all staff who had gained a category of fellowship during the three preceding years. Response rates to web surveys are commonly lower than other survey modes with wide variation in response rates used in published studies (Fan and Yan, 2010; Nulty, 2008). Response representativeness is more important than response rate alone, and our sample is representative of the broader demographics of the fellowship population regarding gender, job type, and fellowship category. In total 331 surveys were returned (an overall response rate of 25%), which compares well to those of related studies (Spowart et al. 2017). Table 2 details the sample size and response rates.

[Insert Table 2]

Data analysis

Analysis of quantitative data yielded descriptive statistics to highlight broad trends which

provided the focus for more nuanced qualitative analysis using open-text data.

Initial coding of qualitative data provided the *a priori* analytic categories consistent with the research questions: *motivation* and *impact*. Axial and selective coding techniques using NVivo 10 were then applied to systematically applied to analyse data within each category, identifying emergent themes and generating a thick description of the dimensions of impact relating to HEA Fellowships (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Two researchers undertook initial coding; excerpts were then summarised into code books to identify themes. To achieve theoretical saturation, data analysis was recursive: themes underwent constant comparison through wider research team discussion to confirm interrater reliability (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008).

Results and discussion

Here we report and discuss the results of our data analysis relating to educator perceptions of the impact of the PSF and fellowship scheme.

Demographics

Participants broadly reflected the demographics of the wider fellowship and HE community in that there were more women than men (66%), and the majority had worked in the sector for over 5 years (74%). A total of 21% had held fellowship for less than six months and 16% for more than two years. The sample represented all four fellowship categories broadly mirroring the wider fellowship community, with 42% recognised as fellows. Data relating to ethnicity were not collected. Table 3 provides full demographic details.

[Insert Table 3]

Survey respondents self-designated their learning and teaching role, the majority (62%) selecting 'traditional academic' or 'teaching-focused academic'. Of note are the

percentages of ‘learning support’ (9%), ‘administrative’ (5%), and ‘technical’ (2%) respondents, highlighting a shift to the wider range of roles supporting HE learning.

Most respondents achieved fellowship through an experiential institutional scheme (69%), with fewer undertaking taught courses (24%). Over half had produced a written application (57%), and significant numbers had engaged in oral assessment (29%), reflecting sector-wide diversification through contextualised approaches to recognition (Smith, 2018).

Impact on self, practice, and peers

Our analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data indicates multiple ways in which educators perceive fellowship impacts on their sense of self, practice and community. This includes 1) enhanced sense of self-efficacy and professional identity, 2) a reframing of work as scholarly, 3) career development, 4) use of innovative/effective methods, and 5) connection to a network of people who value teaching. These are considered below.

Self-efficacy and professional identity

Self-efficacy is defined as ‘people’s judgements of their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances’ (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). It has long been associated with examining the impact of professional development because of the relationship between belief in capabilities and persistence, effecting actual behavioural change resulting in improvements to teaching quality (Greer et al., 2016).

Seventy per cent of participants indicated that achieving recognition increased their confidence with educational practice. For some, the use of a professional standard enhanced confidence:

... it is especially helpful for those moving into academia from industry; and, it is encouraging to feel that you are meeting the appropriate professional standards. (Male, Teaching-focused academic, FHEA, UNI-B)

I think I was confident enough in my practice ..., though arguably obtaining a fellowship has given me something of an official stamp of approval, which is obviously useful. (Male, Traditional academic, PFHEA, UNI-E)

For others, confidence came through a feeling of validation and fit within the university context, and of being judged by a community of peers. "Imposter" syndrome within HE is well-documented (Parkman, 2016), and several respondents cited fellowship as an affirmation of belonging:

Many of the things that I just 'do' I thought were standard things that everyone would 'do', but since obtaining fellowship, many colleagues have sought mentoring from me to develop their skills and capacities in the areas that I previously thought were pretty standard and normal. (Female, Traditional academic, FHEA, UNI-C)

In particular, the importance of being judged as 'belonging' was significant for staff in non-traditional academic roles:

Being a fellow, I believe helps 'normalise' our research degree students within the broader student community ...my fellowship allows me to situate my role (as a researcher developer) in a broader teaching and learning environment. (Female, Educational/staff developer, SFHEA, UNI-B)

Engagement with the scholarly evidence base for learning and teaching

The second major impact of recognition was deeper engagement with the scholarly evidence base for practice. This supports the notion of the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL) as 'authentic practice' for professional educators (Kreber, 2013). Engagement with SOTL can shape reflection on practice and empower educators to resolve challenges (Boyer, 1990). Most participants (78%) indicated that fellowship had led them to engage with the scholarly evidence base and, for some, engagement with SOTL as part of developing their recognition claim was a new undertaking:

I was quite new to academic teaching ... and had followed an instinctive approach rather than a pedagogical one. However, I found much of my thinking resonated with the literature, and that gave me confidence alongside peer review of my teaching practice. (Male, Teaching-focused academic, FHEA, UNI-B)

For others, fellowship was an opportunity to reconnect with literature:

It prompted me to revisit some literature that I hadn't looked at for a while, and this sharpened my focus when planning workshops and other learning events for staff. (Female, Learning support role, SFHEA, UNI-C)

Several commented poignantly on their sense of disconnect from the academic community and the scholarly evidence base, and the surprisingly positive impact that achieving fellowship had:

While I was not happy to have to do this after having taught for more than 20 years ... it did help me remember what was important in my teaching, and made me aware of interesting new developments (e.g. concerning assessment). (Female, Traditional academic, FHEA, UNI-D)

Above all, participants talked about feeling empowered by the evidence base they could draw on to find solutions to challenges encountered in practice. One noted, 'I had no idea of pedagogy beforehand' (Male, Traditional academic (blend of teaching/research and administration), FHEA, UNI-F), while another noted:

I now try to take a more evidence-based approach ... Previously, I would work on a mixture of experience and intuition. Now, I look to the literature first. (Male, Learning support role/Educational staff developer, FHEA, UNI-D)

Careers

The third theme of the PSF's impact on individuals was careers; almost half the participants

(47%) stated that fellowship had impacted positively on their career. This reflects the growing number of universities aligning Fellowship with promotion or recruitment (Spowart, et al, 2016). Participants suggested fellowship helped their progression in a range of ways, including promotion, probation, advancement (in non-academic roles), award selection, and invitations to join university committees:

It has been one of the most important selling points on my CV just after my PhD. (Male, Traditional academic, FHEA, UNI-F)

I have received [a] promotion, which I might have done anyway, but it helped. (Female, Traditional academic, SFHEA, UNI-A)

Some noted the emergent sector focus on fellowship as a hurdle to employment, reflecting both the growth in engagement across the sector but also the sense that recognition has become an important form of currency in securing work:

It has been a condition of job offers that I have [an] HEA fellowship. (Female, Traditional academic, SFHEA, UNI-B)

Not having [an] SFHEA was proving a barrier for some work with other institutions ... (Male, Educational/staff developer, SFHEA, UNI-F)

For others, the impact on career was less tangible; however, in the Australian institution particularly, participants clearly believed that achieving fellowship would have a positive impact, with 61% agreeing that it had helped their career. We surmise that this may reflect the relative newness of the PSF to the Australian sector and the fact that although the take-up of the scheme is quickly growing, being a fellow in Australia is less common than in the UK:

It gave me visibility with senior staff (as SFHEA was rare at the time), wonderful supporting comments to use in a promotion application, and confidence that a weakness

in my academic practice had been overcome. (Female, Traditional academic, SFHEA, UNI-C)

There were, however, criticisms and some indicated disappointment when recognition did not lead to expected promotion opportunities. Again, these were more prevalent in the UK-based institutions, with 16.2% disagreeing that fellowship had helped their career, compared to 10% from the Australian institution. Several questioned the authenticity of the recognition process which they saw as a rhetorical exercise:

I worry it is a process very sensitive to people who are able to inflate their contributions with lots of weasel words. (Female, Research-focused academic, SFHEA, UNI-D)

This may reflect an emergent disillusionment particularly in institutions where fellowships form key performance targets and staff are under pressure to achieve recognition:

Was told to get it in order to help my promotion case, at the end (after I got it) was told it didn't matter. (Female, Traditional academic, SFHEA, UNI-D)

...it has not given me any opportunities at all. It was not valued for promotion and not for leadership positions in the department. (Female, Traditional academic, SFHEA UNI-A)

Impact on practice and the student learning experience

Although fellowship often represents one strand within institutional approaches to enhancing students' learning experiences, our results highlight a number of practical ways in which recognition impacted on the way that staff members taught or supported learning. The impact on students of CPD programs aligned with fellowship remains an important but underexplored research area, despite being a primary concern of academic developers (Bell & Brooks, 2019). Our analysis indicates a number of ways in which fellowship impacts on practice with students.

The majority of respondents (82%) stated that the process of applying for fellowship had deepened their understanding of practice, including enhanced academic writing skills, improved reflection on practice, and the use of new teaching methods. Many noted that changes to their practice were shaped by exposure to new pedagogy in the taught components of the fellowship pathway.

...we were asked to formulate lesson plans/approaches for a variety of topics/experiences, deliver the session, gain feedback from students and peer observers, reflect upon overall performance and set objectives for the future. These methods still form the basis for my current teaching. (Female, Teaching-focused academic, FHEA, UNI-B)

For some, changes to practice came from the reflective act of recording and writing about their work, a process that forced them to stop and ask 'why?':

There can be no doubt that having to think hard and record one's teaching practices over many years helps to identify the essential factors in good practice and reinforces them. (Male, Part-time teacher (hourly paid role), FHEA, UNI-A)

Significantly, for some, the application process reminded them of the student perspective, prompting a more thoughtful and empathetic approach to practice:

It reinforced the iterative nature of the reading and writing process; the value of tutor feedback and of listening to the questions and difficulties experienced by others ... as well as in carving out space and time to get writing done. This is the currency of the environment I work in but to experience it for myself, after a period without formal study, helped me to think about the time-management and confidence implications of producing a new genre of writing (in my case, a reflective piece of work). (Female, Learning support role, FHEA, UNI-A)

Over three quarters of participants (78%) stated that the process of applying for recognition had influenced their own learning and teaching approach, and almost half (46%)

felt that this had changed since achieving fellowship. This finding is significant and confirms that the pathway to developing an application for recognition has an important impact on practice. Participants described a new confidence in exploring innovative approaches to support learning; others drew on their emerging knowledge of pedagogy:

I wouldn't be able to mention any dramatic changes; it is more a matter of becoming more aware and consistent and thoughtful about things I already did sometimes – for example, in giving feedback that students can really 'hear'. (Female, Traditional academic, FHEA, UNI-F)

A number noted that the process led them to reconceptualise their students as partners in learning rather than passive recipients. This was shaped by exposure to the PSF, reminding them that student-centredness is at the heart of effective practice:

It has also encouraged me to simplify the language I use and to seek more feedback from students, not least that they have understood points made or instructions given. (Male, Teaching-focused academic, FHEA, UNI-A)

This shift was also evident in responses to questions about the impact on learners. Some talked about the affirming experience of reflection on practice (Heron & Corradini, 2019), noting the inherent challenges but, ultimately, emphasising its value in shaping their student-facing practice :

... I was encouraged to think about studentship, understanding the question, etc., but most importantly, [it] helped me to sympathise with student workloads and deadlines. Reflecting on teaching practice is crucial in understanding what works and what doesn't. (Female, Teaching-focused academic, SFHEA, UNI-E)

Significantly, the professional values within the PSF were clearly seen as shaping staff engagement with students, and, for some, this had a profound impact:

I found them [the dimensions of practice] intuitive and clarifying, on the whole. For example, those on inclusive teaching are important reminders to check habitual practices that might disadvantage some students. (Female, Traditional academic, FHEA, UNI-F)

Others saw fellowship as symbolically significant, giving students confidence in institutional teaching quality:

This allows the university to confidently state that their academic staff are focused on students. (Female, Teaching-focused academic, SFHEA, UNI-C)

Negative perceptions of HEA Fellowship

Not all participants were positive about the impact of fellowship on their practice, and 19% indicated negative consequences (14% in Australia). Some noted that it had actually taken them away from core work:

If anything, it impacted the learning experience of my students negatively – the time spent engaging with the fellowship process could have been time spent thinking about things that would have really made a difference to the students. (Male, Traditional academic, FHEA, UNI-A)

It was a huge drain on my time that necessarily impacted on my teaching... at one point, I had to cancel a class to undertake this activity. (Male, Traditional academic, FHEA, UNI-E)

Others commented on the curious disconnect between the fellowship application process and the student body, questioning whether students were aware of fellowship holders or even whether they had any views on the matter:

I have difficulty imagining why they would know or be interested in this. (Female, Research-focused academic/Part-time teacher, FHEA, UNI-B)

Impact on peers and a sense of belonging to a community of educators

For many participants, developing a fellowship application enabled them to reconnect with institutional colleagues. Almost half (47.2%) stated that the process had led to their engagement in new networks. This highlights the potential impact of the fellowship process in brokering new professional relationships and expanding the usual 'significant networks' drawn on in educational practice (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009, p. 556):

As my tacit knowledge became more explicit... I grew in confidence in the classroom. I knew that a lot of the students liked what I did, but it was good to talk to colleagues about it. We don't do enough of that. (Male, Traditional academic, SFHEA, UNI-B)

Some asserted the positive impact of the fellowship process on practice was rooted in their sense of belonging to a meaningful, supportive and enduring community of practice (Wenger, 2000):

A badge can't improve confidence. The support and encouragement of colleagues and support of the organisation for REAL career long[-term] development is the only way to do that. (Male, Learning support role/Technical, FHEA, UNI-A)

Several participants highlighted the enduring nature of the networks created through the application process whose perceived benefits clearly continued after the award of fellowship, with staff continuing to engage with others encountered through the process.

Conclusions

Our analysis shows that for University educators the process of applying for and gaining HEA Fellowship impacts on their sense of self, their practice, and their sense of belonging to a broader community of educators. Significantly, much of the meaningful impact identified resulted from the process of developing a fellowship application through a combination of exposure to a scholarly evidence base, deep reflection on practice, and structured alignment

with the PSF. The model below articulates this relationship between reflection and the transformation of self, practice, and peers, with the potential to shape the student learning experience.

[Insert Figure 2]

University educators are time-poor, and under pressure to deliver against competing demands. In this context, time spent applying for fellowship must add value for them, their students, and the broader community. The institutional context shapes how staff perceive and respond to fellowship, and, as noted elsewhere, ‘some staff feel pushed to achieve recognition’ (Spowart et al., 2019, p. 1299). Our analysis points to the complex relationship that many have with HEA Fellowship, and the frustration and disappointment experienced when recognition does not deliver the anticipated benefits.

It is clear from our analysis that connection with the community, peer engagement, and support are central to maximising the gains from the fellowship experience. The developmental potential of engaging in this largely self-reflective exercise is augmented when the impact is understood as inextricably linked to relationships with others, and a platform for ongoing collegial networks and development.

Central to enhanced self-efficacy was the reflective process underpinning fellowship applications, and that this reflection on practice made the experience meaningful. This is an important finding, confirming the key role of reflection on practice within professional learning. The new confidence levels were not objectively substantiated; however, previous research clearly aligns self-reported confidence levels with enhanced persistence, performance, and innovative practice (Bandura, 1986; Greer et al. 2016). Above all, our findings point to a role for academic developers in supporting reflective practice that moves fellowships beyond a performative exercise. The power of the PSF lies not in the award (although clearly valued) but, in its enduring impact on practice:

The reflection that is undertaken [for fellowship] was at a depth and intensity that is unsustainable over a longer period. You had to make time to give it attention because it was being assessed. Once that imperative is removed then the impetus is reduced. However, the residual flavour is left behind, and the insights gained remain with you. (Female, Traditional academic, SFHEA, UNI-B)

A limitation of this paper is the absence of student perceptions of the impact of fellowship on their learning experience. Although the article extends the UK-centric focus of previous research by incorporating an Australian perspective, it nevertheless retains an Anglocentric viewpoint. Furthermore, while highlighting widespread self-reported impact, identification of sustained change requires a longitudinal study. In light of recent attention to decolonising the curriculum, and the growth in fellowships outside the UK, these are important areas for future research.

From the results, the PSF and HEA Fellowship scheme impact positively on higher education in a range of ways. Fellowships introduce staff to the scholarly evidence base, create a sense of community, promote teaching standards, and shape confidence and innovative practice. However, institutions may be failing our staff and students by reducing the rich, complex, reflective act of recognition to a metric-driven, tick-box exercise. The view of fellowship, as a formulaic exercise in weasel words and compliance, is misplaced. It is vital that academic developers confront the focus on numbers and highlight the multifaceted benefits of fellowship schemes. This analysis demonstrates broader impact, encompassing stronger academic self-efficacy, deeper connections to peers and scholarship, and, above all, a rich reflective stance, which stimulates a focus on student learning.

Spowart et al (2017 p369) acknowledge that ‘measuring impact is challenging’ and evaluation is ‘poorly conceptualised and understood across the sector’. Our study moves beyond post-event feedback sheets to a nuanced approach capturing both reflections on the fellowship experience and subsequent changes to teaching practices and potentially the

students' experience. Impact is shaped by an institutional context where engagement with the PSF is just one strand of a strategy pursuing educational excellence.

Given the widespread engagement with HEA Fellowship, the paucity of research there is on its efficacy is surprising, and it is hoped that this study will encourage further interrogation including student perceptions, and insights from culturally and linguistically diverse members. Fellowships can be a powerful force for change within HE, but only if we go beyond institutional numbers, and instead consider the rich and profound impact of the PSF on our community.

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Table 1. Participating institutions.

Institution	Nature of institution	Number of academic staff	Accredited provision since	Accredited fellowship categories	Accredited taught pathway to fellowship
UNI-A	UK; medium-sized 1966 university with a reputation for excellence in teaching and research.	<1000	2013	D1–D3	D1–D2
UNI-B	UK; post-1992 public university with an international reputation for graduate employability.	< 1000	2013	D1–D4	D2
UNI-C	Australia; large public university with a strategic focus on real-world learning and high-impact research.	> 2000	2015	D1–D4	D1–D2
UNI-D	UK; large Russell Group university with strong international links; highly ranked for research and committed to research-based education throughout its curricula.	> 4000	2014	D1–D4	D1–D2
UNI-E	UK; large, distributed, pre-1992, university; mission is academic excellence and civic engagement; top 4 for UK institutions on the number of SFHEAs.	< 1000	2013	D1–D4	D1–D2
UNI-F	UK; small, single-campus post-1992 university; its mission is to inspire students and staff to reach their full potential, advance knowledge, and make a positive contribution to the world.	300	2012	D1–D4	D2

Table 2. Sample size and response rates.

Institution	Number surveyed	Response rate %	Percentage of total respondents
A	96	39 (<i>n</i> = 37)	12
B	150	31 (<i>n</i> =47)	14
C	176	41% (<i>n</i> =73)	22
D	460	15 (<i>n</i> =63)	18
E	315	23 (<i>n</i> =71)	22
F	137	29 (<i>n</i> =40)	12
Total	1334	<i>N</i>=331	25%

Table 3. Profile of survey participants.

Demographics	Percentage
Gender:	
Female	66.0%
Male	34.0%
Time teaching/supporting learning in HE:	
Less than 3 years	9.7%
3–5 years	16.7%
More than 5 years	74.2%
Fellowship category:	
Associate Fellow	19.8%
Fellow	42.9%
Senior Fellow	33.7%
Principal Fellow	3.6%
Length of time since recent fellowship:	
Less than six months	21.0%
Six months to 1 year	27.4%
1–2 years	35.6%
More than 2 years	16.1%
Route taken:	
Taught	23.7%
Experiential Institutional Scheme	68.7%
Unsure	7.6%
Previous fellowship:	
Associate Fellow	7%
Fellow	16%
Senior Fellow	2%
None	75%

Fellows – as at 27 August 2020

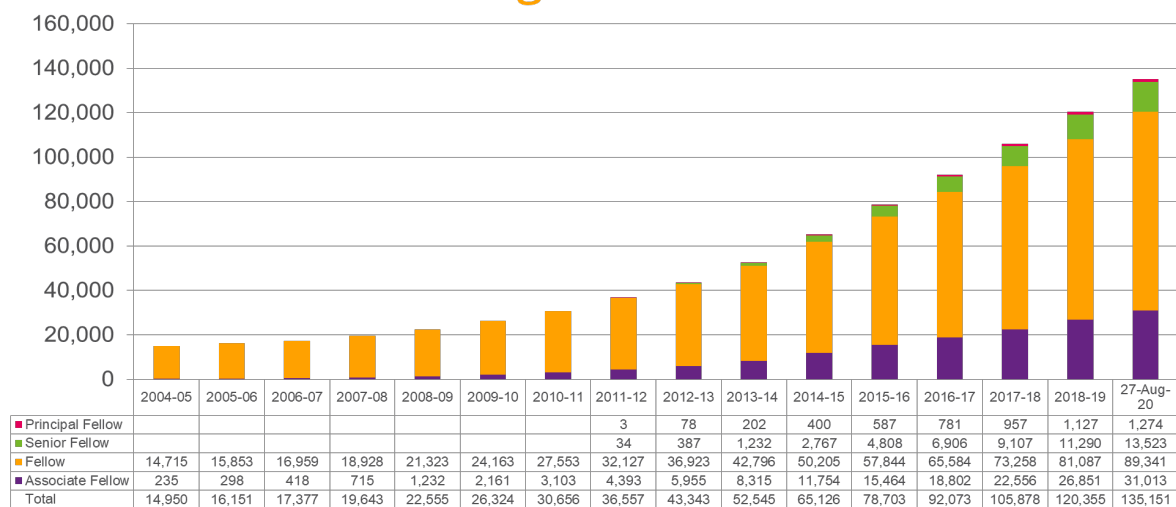


Figure 1. Growth of fellowships globally.

Source: Advance HE, August 2020

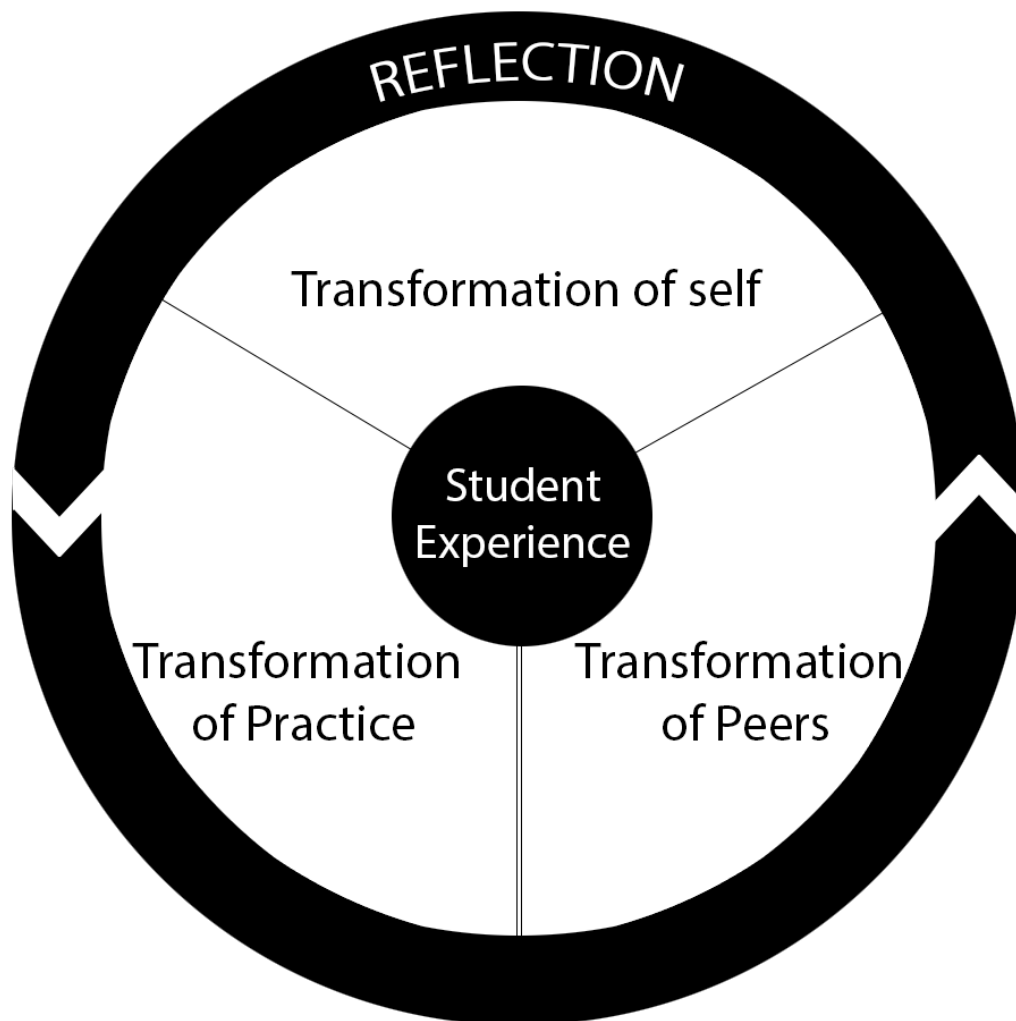


Figure 2. Perceptions of the impact of fellowship on the student experience.

Table captions

Table 1. Participating Institutions.

Table 2. Sample size and response rates.

Table 3: Profile of survey participants

Figure captions

Figure 1. Growth of fellowships globally.

Figure 2. Perceptions of the impact of fellowship on the student experience.